

# SANDNet Weekly Update, August 1, 2001

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## **Nuclear Issues**

### **1. Indian Perspective on BMD**

Kannan, a Research Scholar at Jawaharlal Nehru University, writes that India was naïve to support the US missile defense efforts so quickly because US deployment of missile defenses will cause both the PRC and Russia to strengthen their nuclear forces and because India's support reinforces the perception by the PRC that the US is seeking to contain it. Kannan argues, however, that India needs to exploit this opportunity for stronger relations with the US and seek protection under the US missile defense umbrella.

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## **India**

### **1. Statements on Summit**

Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee reiterated that the Agra summit did not produce a declaration or joint statement because Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf maintained that there must be acknowledgement in writing of the "centrality of the Kashmir issue" before talks could proceed on other issues. Vajpayee stated that Musharraf came "as a military man with a specific self-serving goal and was not serious about restoring peace" between India and Pakistan. The News states that Vajpayee has laid the blame upon Musharraf to dispel among Indians the perception that an agreement was blocked by Home Minister L.K. Advani and others hawkish on Pakistan. Vajpayee faced opposition to his proposed confidence building measure, the opening of additional locations along the India-Pakistan border for issuing travel visas, because of concerns that this would spread areas affected by cross-border terrorism.

Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee stated that any future India-Pakistan dialogue would need to address India's concerns about Pakistani support for terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. He said, "We cannot accept that the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir today, with its foreign mercenaries and generous assistance from abroad, is anything but terrorism." He pointed out that there were several massacres immediately following the Agra summit. Vajpayee stated that he has accepted an invitation to visit Pakistan from Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, as has External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh accepted an invitation from Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar.

Indian Prime Minister A.B Vajpayee said that future India-Pakistan talks could be complicated by Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf's assertions to the press that a joint declaration could not be signed at the Agra summit because of a split in the Indian government caused by hardliners.

Indian Home Minister L.K. Advani rejected the assertion of Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf that militancy in Kashmir was the result of a struggle for freedom and not the result of cross-border terrorism. He was also critical of Musharraf, finding him responsible for the Summit's failure to produce positive results.

### **2. Vajpayee Visit to Pakistan**

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf's letter formally inviting Indian Prime Minister A.B Vajpayee to visit Pakistan was delivered on July 27. The text of the invitation has not been made public, but Vajpayee had already accepted the invitation in principle. The Deccan Herald reports that the visit is

not likely to take place this year, though Musharraf and Vajpayee may meet under other circumstances. Vajpayee stated that he was not under pressure to call off his prospective visit to Pakistan.

### **3. Kargil Commemoration**

Indian Prime Minister A.B Vajpayee led the commemoration of the Kargil incident. Vajpayee and other Indian officials and military officers paid homage to those killed during the incident. The Hindustan Times reported that Pakistan shelled Tiger Hill, a battle location during Kargil, as they did during last year's commemoration of Kargil.

Former Chief of the Indian Army Staff General V.P. Malik stated that intelligence lapses contributed to India's failure to prevent the incursion by Pakistani soldiers.

### **4. India-Russia Relations**

The departing Indian Ambassador to Russia, S.K. Lambah, said that after some uncertainty, India-Russia relations have moved into constructive overdrive. The Hindustan times reports that over \$5 billion in new military contracts have been signed over the past two years.

### **5. India-US Relations**

US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christine Rocca said that the US would "work its way through the sanctions" imposed on India in the wake of the Pokhran nuclear test. She stated that the US was reviewing its sanctions policy both generally and specifically for India and Pakistan, the latter created under the 1998 Glenn Amendment. She said, "We will need to work closely with Congress to see how the current situation might be changed." However, the Hindustan Times reports that senior members of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee are upset that US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage has spoken about a timeline for lifting sanctions without consulting Congress.

### **6. India-PRC-Russia Triangle**

Satyajit Moanty, a Research Scholar at Jawaharlal Nehru University, writes that because of the growing influence of the US in areas around Russia, Russia is facing a "Hobson's choice" of strategic partners, which has increased the relative importance to Russia of the PRC, India, and the Central Asian Republics. Meanwhile, the PRC, which had looked to flow into a power vacuum in Asia that never developed, is being driven by the US proposed missile defense program to strengthen its position through cooperation with Russia. For India, problems with the PRC and PRC-Pakistan ties are a good incentive to improve relations with the PRC, though its search for allies against terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism also contribute.

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## **Pakistan**

### **1. Pakistan-US Relations**

Syed Talat Hussain reports in The Dawn that while the US is likely to soften sanctions against India, it will be hardest to ease those imposed upon Pakistan because of the coup and failure to return to democracy. These sanctions, imposed under Section 508 of the Foreign Appropriation Act, will be discussed when US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christine Rocca visits Pakistan next week. Hussain quotes diplomatic sources as stating that while the US did not publicly oppose the

elevation of Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf to the position of President, it privately took strong exception to the move.

Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar reported that Pakistan would not be concerned about growing India-US ties as long as they do not harm Pakistan.

## **2. PRC Missile Proliferation Concerns**

The Dawn reports that the Washington Post reported that the US has formally protested to the PRC its continuing exports of missile-related parts and technology to Pakistan and other countries. US Secretary of State Colin Powell was due to discuss the issue during his recent visit to the PRC.

## **3. Pakistan-India Relations**

Pakistan government spokesman Riaz M. Khan denied that Pakistan had made settlement of Kashmir a precondition to normalization of relations with India. Khan also stated that the confidence-building measures (CBMs) proposed by Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee prior to the Agra summit have been officially communicated to Pakistan and were being considered.

Pakistan reported that thirty-one Indians held for illegally entering Pakistan near Baluchistan would be released as soon as India provided them with travel documents and other formalities were completed.

Bush administration officials have indicated that they are interested in India and Pakistan resuming their high-level talks. The first order of business for the new US ambassadors to the region is to push for these talks. US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christine Rocca will also visit the region soon and will be pushing for talks.

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## **Kashmir**

### **1. Summit Commentary**

Brahma Chellaney writes in the Hindustan Times that the Agra summit was a good example of mistaking diplomacy for blindness, stating, "India closed its eyes to reality, shut its ears to the pre-summit messages from Islamabad and stayed mute to Pakistan's propaganda war." Chellaney argues that Pakistan successfully hijacked the summit to improve its legitimacy and refocus attention on Kashmir, leaving the summit itself to stall on the continuing conceptual divergence over their bilateral relations. The summit, he states, shows Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf was not ready to move ahead, constrained by the other generals in his junta.

An editorial in the Hindustan Times argues that Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf's invitation to Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee to visit Pakistan shows Musharraf is hoping for another media event. However, the editorial also argues that India is unlikely to permit another summit that serves only to promote Pakistan's one-point agenda of Kashmir.

Retired US Ambassador Dennis Kux, currently at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, D.C., said in a recent book that both Pakistan and India have been willing at points in the past to settle the Kashmir dispute based upon the status quo.

### **2. Recent Violence**

The Lashkar-e-Taiba has threatened to kidnap and hold hostage Indian cricket players.

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## **Sri Lanka**

### **1. Airport Attack**

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam staged a suicide attack upon Sri Lanka's international Bandaranaike airport near Latunayake. The elite "Black Tigers" squad of the LTTE succeeded in destroying thirteen aircraft at the airport, including eight military jets, helicopters and trainer planes. The Defense Ministry reported that thirteen LTTE and eight security personnel were killed and another twelve people were injured.

Sources reported that the attack left the government of President Chandrika Kumaratunga confused as it was preparing several important initiatives. The Sri Lanka Muslim Conference attributed the attack to "abandonment of the peace process initiated by the government of Norway for petty party political gains."

The Sri Lankan police arrested seven people and took into custody two buses in connection with the airport attack. The airport returned quickly to normal activity, though under greater security. Sri Lanka's Sunday Times reported that the attack could have been prevented as there were three times in the prelude to the attack where things were noted as unusual but nothing was done.

### **2. SAARC**

The Sri Lankan External Affairs Ministry spokesperson stated that, notwithstanding the airport attack, the SAARC Foreign Secretaries meeting next month would be held as scheduled.

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