

# SANDNet Weekly Update, August 21, 2000

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## CONTENTS

**August 21, 2000**

### Nuclear Issues

1. CIA Reports
2. Pakistan Nuclear Program
3. Conditions on Japanese Aid

### Kashmir

1. Hizbul Mujahideen Ceasefire
2. Split in Hizbul Leadership
3. Role of All-Parties Hurriyat Conference
4. Editorials Related to the Ceasefire Offer
5. India-Pakistan Talks
6. US Role
7. Recent Violence

### India

1. Foreign Relations: EU
2. Foreign Relations: Japan
3. Foreign Relations: PRC

### Pakistan

1. Foreign Relations: Afghanistan
2. Role in Kashmir

### Sri Lanka

1. New Prime Minister
2. Draft Constitution

### 3. Violence

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## Nuclear Issues

### 1. CIA Reports

A US Central Intelligence Agency annual report views nine countries, including India and Pakistan, as acquirers of weapons of mass destruction and said that the PRC and Russia were key suppliers of these weapons. PRC companies increased their assistance to Pakistan while India's nuclear weapons program benefited from Russian and Western European assistance.

Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar admitted Pakistan's cooperation with the PRC in missile-related areas, but added, "I simply want to say that cooperation within the MTCR [Missile Technology Control Regime] is permissible by international law." The US has raised this issue with the PRC on several occasions, but has failed to halt PRC missile assistance to Pakistan. The US is reticent about moving forward with sanctions.

### 2. Pakistan Nuclear Program

A report by Rai Muhammad Saleh Azam, a Pakistani nuclear expert, described how Pakistan carried out its nuclear test, including shipment of the bomb to the test site and the placing of the Pakistani air force on red alert to obscure the test. Rajesh Rajagopalan, a Research Fellow at India's Institute of Defense Studies and Analyses, argued that Pakistan's development of nuclear weapons as a deterrent had the detrimental effect of freezing the conflict over the Kashmir, putting Pakistan's two primary goals in conflict.

### 3. Conditions on Japanese Aid

Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan Sadaaki Numata said that resumption of aid through the Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) program to Pakistan and India was contingent upon their signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and that signing the CTBT would facilitate the resumption of economic cooperation between Japan and Pakistan. Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori is visiting South Asia beginning August 19 to promote Japan's foreign policy goals, which include safe sea routes for energy supplies and nuclear non-proliferation, though the trip is also in recognition of India's status as a rising international power.

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## Kashmir

### 1. Hizbul Mujahideen Ceasefire

The Hizbul Mujahideen withdrew its offer of a unilateral ceasefire and accused India of not responding positively to a demand for trilateral peace talks, but denied it had received any pressure from Pakistan to do so. Local commanders were told to resume fighting against Indian forces. Hizbul supreme commander Syed Salahuddin said, "We can revise our decision once India breaks the barrier of rigidity... We can persuade other armed groups to join hands with us for a peaceful resolution of the dispute." Several Pakistan-based militant groups welcomed the end of the ceasefire.

The Hizbul representative to talks with the Indian government, Fazal Haq Qureshi said, "The

[dialogue] has been delayed but it has to come again." He also said, "If the militants continued to be backed by Pakistan, there would be only death and destruction in the Valley.... We want to ask the leadership of the [All-Parties Hurriyat Conference], who openly came out against the ceasefire, to tell the nation what program they have to achieve freedom for the people of Jammu and Kashmir."

Hizbul supreme commander Syed Salahuddin called for Pakistani troops to enter the Kashmir region. He said, "Pakistan should physically involve itself in Kashmir. We want war because war will solve the issue.... It is better to have a war than to have this kind of life." Professor Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, chief of the parent group of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, also asked Pakistan to send troops across the Line of Control.

A Pakistan foreign office spokesman, in a statement issued hours after the Hizbul ended its ceasefire, said that insincere responses by Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee and other Indian officials mitigated against a peace dialogue, and Indian demand for talks within the framework of its constitution would have negated the purpose of the Kashmiri struggle for freedom.

Bharatiya Janata Party spokesman M. Venkaiah Naidu, speaking after a meeting of the government's Cabinet Committee on Security, said if the Hizbul wanted Pakistan included in talks, they should encourage Pakistan to stop cross-border terrorism. This was reiterated by Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes, who also argued for devolution of powers to the state government. The Indian government issued a statement which expressed regret that the offer was withdrawn, blamed Pakistan for pressuring the Hizbul into withdrawing the offer, and appeared to keep open an offer of dialogue with the Hizbul.

## **2. Split in Hizbul Leadership**

An Indian official in the Kashmir indicated that a split appears likely between the Hizbul in India-administered and Pakistan-administered Kashmir, as those in India-administered territory were in favor of continuing the ceasefire. Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee and Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah reiterated the observation. A Hizbul spokesman denied the possibility of a split within their group.

A column in The Hindu by KK Katyal argued that it is likely that there is a split between the local Hizbul Mujahideen and the Pakistan-based sections because of the lukewarm reaction by Pakistan to the ceasefire and the subsequent rescinding of the offer. Katyal wondered whether, when the international community steps up pressure on India to negotiate with Pakistan, India will attempt to "acquaint the world community with the reality" in Kashmir.

## **3. Role of All-Parties Hurriyat Conference**

The executive committee of the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) met on August 9, but would not comment on the withdrawal of the ceasefire offer by the Hizbul. An article in the Times of India by Anshul Chaturvedi argued that since the Hizbul has long been seen as "the armed wing of the APHC or at least that of its constituent, the Jamaat-e-Islami," the APHC's lukewarm response is troubling. It indicates that either the APHC was slighted by its not being included in talks or the Pakistan-based Hizbul was unsupportive of the ceasefire.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah said that the APHC should have offered its own concrete plan rather than opposing the peace process. He also said that he would offer government jobs to the Hizbul if they joined peace talks and also offered to dissolve the state assembly to encourage them to join mainstream politics.

#### **4. Editorials Related to the Ceasefire Offer**

A column in The Hindu by Shujaat Bukhari argued that India should be faulted for the breakdown in talks for imposing conditions before momentum could begin. An editorial in the Times of India criticized the Indian government for not learning from Kargil and being taken by surprise when the ceasefire ended with more deaths. Militants were threatened by the prospect of peace and used violence to harder the stances of moderates who had been willing to negotiate.

Editorials in The Dawn argued that Pakistan has shifted policy and now will not object to any decision the Kashmiri leadership reaches regarding the future of the Kashmir, which makes a Kashmiri solution dependent solely on India. An editorial in The Dawn argued that the Hizbul should have extended its deadline and India, as usual a victim of its muddled responses to Kashmiri peace, should have adapted its policy of no talks with Pakistan.

A column by Radha Kumar in The Hindu argued that Pakistan should acquiesce informally to autonomy for the Kashmir to preserve a role as a monitor in its implementation. Measures should precede a plebiscite to determine whether they belong to Pakistan or India, but peace depends on the end to India-Pakistan hostilities. Attempts to create a new "religio-territorial arrangement," as in Bosnia, will be problematic.

An article in The Hindu argued that the ceasefire was designed, first, to project an image of militancy in the Kashmir as indigenous and independent from Pakistan. Second, to embarrass India, which had enjoyed the upper-hand internationally after the Kargil incident, and show it was "reluctant to explore a negotiated settlement."

An editorial in the Times of India argued that it was naïve to expect the Hizbul Mujahideen ceasefire offer to bring a quick solution to the complex "geo-political equations in Kashmir." It argued that Hizbul supreme commander Syed Salahuddin and Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf are unable to stand up to more orthodox groups, partly as many of the militant groups depend upon terrorism and the drug trade for financial solvency, and that as long as the orthodoxy and "feudal" constituents can dominate the undemocratic state, Kashmir will remain its obsession.

An editorial in the Times of India argued that the ceasefire offer, despite its being withdrawn, opened the way for dialogue. It further argued that the price of conflict is clear for India and Kashmir-based militant groups, but less so for Pakistan, which sees the conflict as "a low-cost option" to "bleed India." The All-Parties Hurriyat Conference could not rise to the occasion, and instead was focused on being marginalized in its influence over pan-Islamic groups and the direction of dialogue.

An article in The Hindu argued that the post-ceasefire environment shows the Kashmiri people's desire to end the long conflict. It argued that as "the Kashmiri people must have by now realized as to who has developed a vested interest in the insurgency," India must mobilize popular sentiment against those who are against peace and must signal a commitment to negotiating peace in Kashmir regardless of attempts to sabotage talks.

#### **5. India-Pakistan Talks**

Pakistan Information Minister Javed Jabbar indicated that Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf could meet with Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee when they are both in New York for the UN millennium session, indicating that Musharraf is prepared to meet Vajpayee but it is up to India to respond. The Dawn and The Hindu reported that the US government was urging at least a "handshake" meeting. An Indian official ruled out the possibility of their meeting, and said, "After

the killing of 100 people last week, it's totally ruled out, even though Pakistan would love it."

Indian Prime Minister SB Vajpayee said, "If democracy is toppled and military takes over, then it is a reason to protest. But we do not make it a condition for our talking to them. We are prepared to deal with whatever form of government exists there." Vajpayee later said that despite incidents of violence, India was still prepared for dialogue with militant groups.

## **6. US Role**

A column by KK Katyal in The Hindu argued that the upcoming meeting between Prime Minister AB Vajpayee and US President Bill Clinton could have served as a catalyst for India's signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and for greater peace prospects in Jammu and Kashmir, but the breakdown of talks and the US election puts peace and non-proliferation on hold.

US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher expressed US regret over the decision by the Hizbul Mujahideen to suspend its ceasefire offer and reiterated the points emphasized by President Clinton to resolve the Kashmir dispute: the need for restraint, respect for the Line of Control, renunciation of violence in Jammu and Kashmir, and renewal of dialogue. Boucher said that it was up to India and Pakistan to decide the structure of any bilateral talks. The US had not given up on trying to get their respective leaders to meet at the UN.

## **7. Recent Violence**

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah blamed Pakistan for the recent massacres. He said, "The violence that was perpetrated ... where we lost over 100 innocent citizens, was completely orchestrated and planned by our hostile neighbor through their Lashkar-e-Taiba militants." Some reports suggested many in Pahalgam may have died in the crossfire between militants and security forces.

An editorial in the Times of India reported that the US-based Washington Times reported that there were 1.75 million men being trained in Pakistan for waging jihad in Kashmir and elsewhere, and attributed this to the failure of the state-run educational system. It argued that while India faces similar development problems, its educational system is somewhat successful, except in Kashmir where Pakistan is able to exploit the lack of opportunity.

Indian security forces were put on high alert in response to the end of the ceasefire. Five militants were reported as killed by Indian security forces.

The Hizbul Mujahideen claimed responsibility for several attacks after the withdrawal of the ceasefire offer, one of which killed twelve Indian soldiers at an army base in Kashmir. The Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Hizbul Mujahideen claimed responsibility for an explosion in Srinagar killing thirteen and injuring thirty.

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## **India**

### **1. Foreign Relations: EU**

France is to lead official-level talks with India as it takes over the rotating presidency of the European Union. The meeting will discuss economic and political relations, and it will be a precursor to ministerial-level talks between India, the EU, and the European Commission.

## **2. Foreign Relations: Japan**

Japan ruled out using the opportunity of Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori's upcoming visit to declare the mutual support by India and Japan for permanent seats for each other on the UN Security Council. Japan would also not resume economic aid until India signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, though that would not be a major focus of the visit.

## **3. Foreign Relations: PRC**

PRC Ambassador to India Zhou Gang said that the PRC's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) would improve bilateral relations between India and the PRC. Bibek Debroy, Director of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, welcomed PRC entry into the WTO, but said that the PRC's pricing policies make it an economic threat to India, and the PRC already has a better negotiating position relative to India.

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## **Pakistan**

### **1. Foreign Relations: Afghanistan**

After receiving warnings that Osama Bin Laden's Afghanistan-based group is preparing to attack US interests in Pakistan, the US State Department issued a travel advisory for US citizens traveling to Pakistan.

An opinion column in The Dawn by A. Abdulla and K. Hasan argued that a political fusion of Pakistan and Afghanistan would be rewarding for them and the whole Muslim world.

### **2. Role in Kashmir**

Pakistan was condemned at a recent UN Human Rights Commission meeting for supporting religious militancy in Jammu and Kashmir. Juanita Olivier, of the European Union Department of Public Relations, said, "Violence continued in the name of religion as a result of Pakistan-led jihad on Kashmir soil."

Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar said that Pakistan will maintain the ceasefire despite the breakdown of talks between the Hizbul and India, and said, "Our troops will not fire unless provoked." He also repeated that a settlement in the Kashmir is impossible without including Pakistan in the dialogue.

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## **Sri Lanka**

### **1. New Prime Minister**

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike resigned from the Cabinet to permit President Chandrika Kumaratunga, her daughter, to bring in a defector from the opposition United National Party to jumpstart re-election campaigns. Bandaranaike retained her seat in the Parliament. She was replaced as Prime Minister by Ratanasiri Wickremanayake.

Prime Minister Ratanasiri Wickremanayake was sent to mediate with Buddhist prelates who had protested the draft constitution because they had not been consulted.

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## **2. Draft Constitution**

Prime Minister Ratanasiri Wickremanayake announced to party leaders in Parliament that discussions on the draft constitution would continue and it would not be put to a vote before the August 24 dissolution of Parliament, as had been planned previously by the government. He will head a panel to review the draft.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga failed to press ahead with the draft constitution, but said it would be brought up in the next Parliament. She also said that unless the United National Party offered its support by August 24, she would convert the next Parliament into a Constitutive Assembly, enabling constitutional amendments to be passed with a simple majority. She promised enactment of the draft within two months of the next Parliament.

## **3. Violence**

Maravan, a top Liberation Tiger of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) commander, was among 17 Tamil Tigers killed by Sri Lankan troops. The Tamil Tigers increased their attacks on Sri Lankan security forces, leaving thirteen dead last Wednesday.

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