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Nuclear Weapons and Missile Defense

1. India-Pakistan Nuclear Relations

A commentary in Nepal's Himal South Asia states that the dangerous nuclear confrontation between Pakistan and India was the forgotten issue at the recent Agra summit.

M B Naqvi writes in The News that the next India-Pakistan summit meeting will focus more on nuclear weapons issues and mutual assurance measures.

Prof Chintamani Mahapatra of Jawaharlal Nehru University writes that the US role in promoting India-Pakistan summitry results from increased US interest in South Asia following 1998's nuclear tests.

2. US-India Nuclear Relations

The Deccan Herald reported that lifting US sanctions on India now has bipartisan support in Washington and could happen "within days."

The Times of India reported a New York Times editorial stating that lifting "ineffectual" US sanctions on India might be warranted, but that it should not be done in a way signaling declining US interest in nonproliferation.

3. China Missile Issues

The Dawn reported that US-China talks in Beijing on Chinese missile technology exports ended inconclusively. Chinese representatives refuted claims that China has broken its agreement last year to halt all exports of nuclear-capable missiles and components, saying that "relevant policies have been carried out earnestly."

4. US Missile Defense

The Deccan Herald reported a New York Times article stating that the US national missile defense systems planned by the Bush Administration would be least effective against countries said to pose the greatest risks, such as North Korea, because those countries would fire rudimentary missiles with warheads that are hard to track because they wobble and tumble in flight.

5. US Security Policies

L K Sharma writes in the Deccan Herald that the United States is pursuing "fool-proof security" with policies "based on the premise that just nuclear weapons are not enough." The piece cites US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as stating recently that even possession of "overwhelming nuclear power" does not deter every type of conflict.

The Dawn reported that the US Customs Service has begun training border officials in five Central Asian republics to halt the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

6. Asian Regional Security

An article in Frontline discusses the implications of the strategic cooperation agreement reached between Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Il at their summit meeting earlier in the month.

India

1. India Security Policies

Two articles discuss Indian domestic debate over security policies and revival of anti-terrorism laws.

Ambassador Dev Mukherji, speaking in Nepal, said India will help Nepal monitor Maoist insurgents, while Nepal will not be a base for Pakistan's "terrorist" activities.

Palestine President Yasser Arafat met with Indian Prime Minister A B Vajpayee in New Delhi and reportedly sought India's support for resumption of the Palestinian-Israeli peace process.

2. Pakistan-India Relations

An editorial in The Organizer discusses the positive international reaction India has received following the Vajpayee government's "fresh peace initiative" in inviting Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf for talks.

3. Russia-India Relations

Russian President Vladimir Putin was quoted as saying that Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee's upcoming visit to Russia would build on Putin's October 2000 visit to India and "further developing the Russian-Indian strategic partnership."

4. India Arms Acquisitions

India reportedly has carried out a successful test of the first indigenously upgraded MiG-21-93 fighter aircraft.

The News reported that Indian MPs have urged Prime Minister Vajpayee not to allow further delay of plans to buy military jet trainers.

Pakistan

1. India-Pakistan Relations

Pakistan reportedly has conveyed President Pervez Musharraf's desire to meet with Indian Prime Minister A B Vajpayee on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session in New York next month.

Pakistan Commerce Minister Abdul Razzak Dawood reportedly has stated that trade between India and Pakistan is unlikely to grow significantly until political relations improve.

2. US-Pakistan Relations

The Dawn quoted Peter Rodman, US assistant secretary of defense for international affairs, as stating that the United States will not "lose sight" of its "valuable" relationship with Pakistan. "Pakistan has been an ally over many decades," Rodman stated, adding that "India is not going to become an ally of the United States."

Shireen M Mazari, Director General of the Institute of Strategic Studies in Islamabad, writes that the emerging "US-Israel-India relationship" challenges prospects for US-Pakistan relations. US

goals, Mazari writes, are to circumscribe Pakistan's nuclear capability and to "discredit Pakistan internationally so as to make it easier for the US to get its new ally India accepted as a major global power."

3. Domestic Developments

Two articles and an analysis convey ongoing debate over the domestic political role of Pakistan's military.

Pakistan reportedly will seize "prohibited-bore weapons" throughout the country in an effort to control sectarian organizations.

Kashmir

1. Diplomacy

US Senator Robert G. Torricelli, a ranking member of US Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, has stated that India should accept "international assistance in resolving the Kashmir problem."

United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan reportedly would prefer to see the Kashmir problem solved through bilateral dialogue between India and Pakistan.

The Azad Jammu & Kashmir Council, presided over by Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, rejected Indian efforts to initiate a "political process" in Kashmir.

The All Parties Hurriyat Conference said it will seek to involve itself in negotiations over Kashmir if Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee and Pakistan President Musharraf meet and make progress in New York.

Sri Lanka

1. Domestic Developments

Two articles describe developments in efforts by Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga's government to retain power after losing its parliamentary majority.

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