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Nuclear Issues

1. Related News and Analysis

According to a Sunday Times (England) report, Pakistan has been covertly buying high-strength aluminum used in centrifuges for converting uranium ore to bomb-grade uranium 235. China has issued new regulations aimed at tightening controls over missile-related exports.

Afghanistan

1. Current Situation

The daily Dawn (Pakistan) reports that the US decision to start guarding Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai reflects increased concern that warlords pose a direct threat to Karzai's life. The governor of the southeastern Afghan province of Paktika has accused US forces of harassing local inhabitants during the recently concluded 'Operation Mountain Sweep'. Rahimullah Yusufzai's report in the daily News (Pakistan) details the arrest of Haji Roohullah - a former Mujahideen commander and a support of Karzai government - by the US forces.
"Afghan warlords pose threat to US war strategy"

Authorities in Kabul have banned Indian films from state television, and women singing from airing over the radio.

2. Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations

Pakistan and Afghanistan have reiterated their interest in early laying of 1400km-long $3.2 billion gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Pakistan via Afghanistan. The two countries have also agreed to cooperate in efforts to arrest suspected terrorists and battle drug trade.
"Kabul assures Islamabad of help in laying gas pipeline"
"Pak-Afghan troops to help in terror hunt"

India-Pakistan Tensions

1. News and Analysis

Indian Foreign Minister Yahswant Sinha has stated that "what we have done so far does not constitute the totality of steps that one can take short of going to war." Vinod Patney - the former vice chief of Indian air staff - believes that if India is "really serious about ending cross-border terrorism, the air force needs to cross the Line [of Control] more often." An editorial in the daily Nation (Pakistan) accuses India of "suffering from delusions of grandeur." Writing for the daily Dawn (Pakistan) Maqbool Bhatty suggests that the "the maintenance of tension with Pakistan appears to be increasingly tailored to [India's] domestic compulsions."
"India threatens to take further steps"
"BJP's coercive diplomacy"

Brahma Chellaney's essay in the daily Hindustan Times argues that "the Bush team wants to practise a policy of preemptive war to protect US interests, but when it comes to India it applies a different standard." He also writes that "when the Pakistani dictatorship openly employs nuclear terror to

shield its export of terror, shouldn't the right of preemptive war come into effect automatically?"

2. Armitage Visit

During his visit to Pakistan, US Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage stated that "no one, here in Pakistan or in India, thinks that the Pakistan Government is solely responsible for the infiltration [across the Line of Control]." Armitage's assessment that tensions between Pakistan and India have eased was, however, termed as "optimistic" by Pakistan's Foreign Office. A Daily Times' (Pakistan) editorial believes that while "there is no reason for undue optimism [that the tensions between India and Pakistan have eased], there is also no reason for undue pessimism." The daily News termed Armitage visit "a brave effort" but warns that "its success will depend on the extent US is ready to go to settle the half a century old regional conflict." The US is reportedly trying to arrange talks between Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Musharraf during the UN General Assembly meet next month.
"Pak. alone not responsible for infiltration"

Pakistan

1. Pakistan: Domestic Situation

According to a daily News report, Pakistani government has "credible information that militants angered by President Pervez Musharraf's support for the US-led war on terror might launch attacks in Karachi on September 11." Pakistan security forces have arrested 13 activists of banned Haraktul Mujahideen and seized explosives and computer discs containing "speeches of Osama bin Laden and instructions of bomb-making."
"13 Harakat men held with weapons and CDs"

The daily News reports that General Tommy Franks, head of the US Central Command, has suggested that the anti-terror operations "needed to look at countries neighbouring Afghanistan." An editorial in the daily Nation views General Franks comments as recalling "the worst fears of perceptive minds in Pakistan that the free rein we have given to the coalition forces to utilise our facilities for operating against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda could have ominous consequences for us." Meanwhile, residents of Pakistan's border areas have warned that US troops could face attack if they launched a hunt in their semi-autonomous tribal region for al-Qaeda fighters.

The Daily Times published an interview with Maulana Fazlur Rehman, chief of his own faction of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) and a staunch supporter of the former Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

Political parties in Pakistan will be allowed to conduct their political activities from September 1. Essays by Imtiaz Alam and M.B. Naqvi examine the process, and possible outcomes, of the scheduled October general elections in Pakistan.

Pakistan Navy has launched the second, domestically built, Agosta 90-B submarine.

2. US - Pakistan Relations

President Musharraf has warned that US invasion of Iraq will have "really negative repercussions" on the Islamic world. Pakistan has also stated that it needs no "help from abroad" in apprehending suspected Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters.

India

1. India: Domestic Situation

Supriya Chowdhury's essay in the daily Hindu criticizes Prime Minister Vajpayee for supporting Gujarat's Chief Minister Nerendra Modi's desire to conduct elections sooner rather than later in riot-torn Gujarat. Dionne Bunsha's essay in Frontline (India) examines the conditions in Gujarat after the recent anti-Muslim violence. V. Krishna Ananth's essay in the daily Hindu argues that secular forces in India are "letting the communal-fascist forces entrench themselves in the political discourse and expand making full use of all the institutions in the democratic edifice." Sukumar Muralidharan's essay in Frontline examines the set of crisis facing the Bharatiya Janata Party led Indian government.
"Too little, too late, Mr. Vajpayee"
"The march of the Right"

Gen S C N Jatar's essay in the daily Indian Express argues that the Indian government needs to review its plans to acquire Russian aircraft carrier Gorshkov.

Kashmir

1. Internal Situation

Kalpana Sharma's report in the daily Hindu indicates a lack of popular interest in the upcoming elections in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Arun Sharma (Indian Express) reports similar sentiments in primarily Buddhist Ladakh. Muzamil Jaleel (Indian Express) reports on the election campaign of Ghulam Mohideen Sofi - the only significant member of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) to participate in the elections. Praween Swami (Frontline) reports that militants are intimidating "civil society more that politicians and party activists" in their attempt to disrupt the polls.
"Cynicism, the dominant sentiment"

More violence was reported in J&K. According to official accounts, more than 1,900 people have been killed in J&K since January 2002.
"12 shot dead in Jammu"

2. US and Kashmir

Lisa Curtis, senior adviser to US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christina Rocca, met with Abdul Gani Bhat, the chairman of APHC, in an attempt to elicit their participation in the elections. APHC, however, has reiterated its decision to boycott the elections.

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