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# SANDNet Weekly Update, before May 1998

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## Recommended Citation

"SANDNet Weekly Update, before May 1998", SANDNet, April 22, 1998,  
<https://nautilus.org/sandnet/sandnet-weekly-update-before-may-1998/>

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## CONTENTS

### before May 1998

#### Nuclear Issues

1. NPT, ABT
2. Indian Nuclear Program
3. Pakistan Nuclear Program: Exports?

#### India

4. India-China Relations
5. Foreign Relations: Bangladesh, Singapore, France
6. India-Japan Relations

#### Pakistan

7. Pakistan-China Relations
8. Security Planning

#### Kashmir

9. War Fighting
10. Pakistan Initiatives
11. Indian Initiatives
12. International Dialogue

#### Sri Lanka

13. War Fighting
  14. Domestic Initiatives
  15. Indian Initiatives
  16. Analysis
- 

#### Nuclear Issues

##### 1. NPT, ABT

Mikhail Ryzhov, chief of the international relations department of the Russian atomic energy

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ministry, called for recognition of India and Pakistan as nuclear weapons states and for involving them in the global non-proliferation regimes as members of the nuclear club. He said that Russia was "aware that India was working on its nuclear weapons program" nuclear tests and said the Kudankulam stomic power plant to be built in Tamil Nadu would be under IAEA safeguards.

US President Bill Clinton confirmed that the US would offer missile defense technology to other "civilized nations," including Russia, in order to defuse Russia's opposition to the system.

## **2. Indian Nuclear Program**

Dr. Anil Kakodkar, director of the Babha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), has formed a new safety panel to govern the Indian nuclear program, competing a previous informal move out of the jurisdiction of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). BARC will reportedly continue to follow the safety management norms, codes and standards evolved by the AERB, but this move may also remove transparency regarding India's nuclear policy.

## **3. Pakistan Nuclear Program: Exports?**

British Foreign Office Minister Peter Hein said that Pakistan is becoming "a threat to world peace." He alleged that uranium and plutonium of Russian origin captured in Afghanistan is available for purchase in Pakistan and stated that he will "investigate this matter and take action to alert the international community, the United Nations and other bodies as to what is going on in Pakistan." Professor Hafiz Muhammad Saeed advocated Pakistan sell nuclear technology to generate income for payment of foreign loans. An op-ed article by Dr. Manzur Ejaz said the transfer of nuclear technology by Pakistan to other countries is good for the US military-industrial complex, which has seen a decline in recent years

The Chairman of Pakistan's Atomic Energy Commission, Dr. Ishfaq Ahmed, said that Pakistan has indigenized its nuclear materials and that "embargoes and restrictions could not stop us now."

The Washington Times published a survey claiming Pakistan may have 25 nuclear warheads, while India has 50 and the PRC 300. The report said Pakistan could use short-range missiles or US-supplied F-16s to deliver the warheads, and India could use short-range missiles or British-built Jaguars.

Analysis. An op-ed article by Kamal Matinuddin (in The News) said that, despite predictions otherwise, the acquisition of nuclear weapons by India and Pakistan has not ended low-intensity conflicts between the two states, has not led to a reduction of conventional forces, the adoption of nuclear forces is not as cheap as believed and has not forced a resolution to the Kashmir problem. Moonis Ahmar says (in The News) that no concrete steps have been taken between the two countries towards an increase in perceived security or towards a dialogue on the nuclear issue; he adds that nuclear arms races can not be prevented unless the Permanent-5 nuclear powers take practical steps towards destroying their arsenals. Nasim Zehra reports on three instances in which Pakistan was the recipient of negative statements during the last week as evidence of the international campaign against Pakistan's nuclear program.

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## **India**

### **4. India-China Relations**

President K.R. Narayanan ended his trip to the PRC on June 3, and reportedly said that the visit created a basis for a stronger bilateral relationship and a commitment to dialogues over the border issue as the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is in dispute in many areas. Narayanan acknowledged that

"Tibet is a part of China." He also urged the PRC to support India's effort to reform the United Nations by making it more democratic and more responsive to India and the PRC, which represent 40% of the world's population. India and the PRC have similar positions on opposing international terrorism, agree that the Sino-Indian commercial relationship must be promoted, that frequent high contacts will enable better mutual understanding, and that the closer relationship enables dialogues over outstanding issues.

President K.R. Narayanan's trip to the PRC is not as significant as PRC President Jiang Zemin's 1996 visit to India because Narayanan's position is largely ceremonial, but the visit does promote Sino-Indian relations. The visit also provides the PRC with an opportunity to normalize relations with India.

## **5. Foreign Relations: Bangladesh, Singapore, France**

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad said that once Bangladesh establishes normal relations with India, India could then afford to be generous to its smaller neighbor. Bangladesh has been sensitive to recent Indian proposals to use barbed wire on their shared border.

## **6. India-Japan Relations**

Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes traveled to Tokyo to attend the funeral of former Prime Minister Obuchi. Although a Japanese Foreign Ministry statement said that Japan would not provide India with official development assistance until India signs the CTBT, an analysis in the "Times of India" argued that Fernandes might be able to persuade Japan to change its policy.

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## **Pakistan**

### **7. Pakistan-China Relations**

A senior Chinese Foreign Ministry official said that China will not sacrifice its "all-weather" relationship with Pakistan while attempting to improve and develop Sino-Indian relations. A Pakistan Foreign Office statement reiterated Pakistan's recognition that Taiwan is an integral part of China. Pakistan Air Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf Marshal Pervaiz Qureshi said that Pakistan is negotiating the purchase of 50 new Chinese combat aircraft.

### **8. Security Planning**

The French and Pakistan navies will engage in a two-day joint exercise, during which Pakistani boats would accompany France's newest battleship, the "Aconit," from Karachi to the Philippines.

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## **Kashmir**

### **9. War Fighting**

Mujahideen, Indian, and Pakistani forces were all reported to have initiated small-scale but nonetheless deadly skirmishes.

### **10. Pakistan Initiatives**

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf said that India and Pakistan should invite a third party to mediate dialogue surrounding the Kashmir issue because "the bilateral approach" has not led to progress.

### **11. Indian Initiatives**

Indian state and city authorities conducted a fifteen-minute air raid exercise in Jammu: electricity was cut off, traffic was stopped, and firefighting and rescue drills were conducted. [Jammu is the winter capital of India's Jammu and Kashmir state government]. Lieutenant General Chandra Shekhar said that the Indian army will "adopt the principle of offensive action" while countering enemy moves that threaten Indian national security in Kashmir.

The Delhi police arrested a suspected Pakistan Inter-Services Intelligence agent. According to The Hindu, the suspect possessed a paper that summarized "the latest positions of military units in Delhi, Punjab, and Rajasthan."

The monthly "Himal" published five articles that analyze the effects of formal and informal provisions for autonomy in Indian-administered Kashmir.

Analysis. M.V. Kamath (in the Organizer, the official magazine of the Rashtriya Sevak Sangh) argues that Pakistan offers "unconditional talks" only because the country is "too weak to impose conditions." He urges India to negotiate only when Pakistan demonstrates its "sincere" interest in resolving the Kashmir issue.

## **12. International Dialogue**

The French Ambassador to Pakistan, Yannick Gerard, urged the Pakistan government to use "its influence with militant groups to reduce the level of violence in Kashmir." He urged India and Pakistan to settle their bilateral differences peacefully. Russia and the U.S. also issued a joint statement that renewed their call for a resumption of a bilateral India-Pakistan dialogue. M.H. Askari (in Dawn) opens his op ed piece by saying that "Nothing U.S. undersecretary Thomas Pickering said after his talks with authorities in Islamabad suggests that the future of U.S.-Pakistan or Pakistan-India relations could be viewed with any sense of optimism."

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## **Sri Lanka**

### **13. War Fighting**

By all reports, the Sri Lankan government army killed more Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) soldiers than vice versa. 4,000 additional government soldiers were transported to the Jaffna region. The government completed the purchase of Israeli "gunboats, aircraft, and other powerful weapons systems." Reports conflicted as to the effect of this round of fighting on the civilian population; no newspapers reported clearly on any ground level troop movements that may have accompanied this apparent government military offensive.

### **14. Domestic Initiatives**

"The Hindu" (published in Madras, India) reported that "in an indication that Sri Lanka is fast regaining its military confidence, the President, Ms. Chandrika Kumaratunga, has said there is now no possibility of holding 'unconditional' talks with the LTTE." Sri Lanka Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar said that his government is willing to declare a ceasefire with the LTTE if the ceasefire is linked with immediate resumption of talks.

### **15. Indian Initiatives**

Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh repeated the Indian position that India would mediate dialogue between Sri Lanka and the LTTE only if both sides requested Indian involvement. Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee reiterated the Indian position that India will not send its military to Sri Lanka as part of an effort to "solve" the ethnic problem. M. Karunanidhi, President of the DMK party, suggested that a lasting solution to Sri Lankan ethnic strife must include either a "territorial

separation" on the model of the the Czech and Slovak republics or provision of more rights to Tamils. [The DMK is the third largest party in the national governing coalition and governs Tamil Nadu on its own.]

## **16. Analysis**

Najmuddin A. Shaikh (in The News, Pakistan) argues that, "carried away by their own nationalism, Sinhalese politicians carried too far the democratic principle of majority rule, ignoring the equally essential tenet that the rights of individuals and minorities need to be protected against the tyranny of the majority." The monthly "Himal" published five analyses from a variety of perspectives.

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Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

[nautilus@nautilus.org](mailto:nautilus@nautilus.org)