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Nuclear Weapons

1. Pakistan Missile Test

Pakistan announced that it will test its indigenously developed Haider-1 ballistic missile in March. The Haider-1 is reported to have a range of 300 km and be nuclear capable.

Humanitarian Issues

1. Displaced Persons

P.R. Chari, in remarks at a seminar held by the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies in New Delhi, stated that South Asia has experienced the movement of 35-40 million refugees since the partitioning. Mahendra P. Lama and Sumbul Rizvi Khan spoke on the refugee management process in South Asia, the participation of refugees in terrorism and other illegal activities, Indian policy on refugees, and the role of the UNHCR in coping with the problem.

India

1. Military Aircraft

India's indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) underwent a successful testing, but analysts do not expect it to be ready for combat until 2007 or 2012. The Kaveri engine to be used is under development in Russia and will not be available until 2005, so India will use the US-built GE-404 engine for now. The Indian Air Force has made contingency plans for the delayed production by completing a USD\$3 billion deal with Russia to produce Su-30 planes. Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes stated the next test flight would be in six to eight months, though LCA project director Kota Harinarayana said it may be only three to four months.

Jasjit Singh argues in the Times of India that there are numerous reasons, including the need for rigorous testing, why the Light Combat Aircraft will not be ready for combat deployment by 2010. Singh argues that unless planning takes this into account, a large fighter gap of 10-12 squadrons will emerge relative to the PRC's fighter force.

Russia stated that it will deliver to India two MiG-21 BIS fighters that have undergone a modernization program. The Indian Air Force's remaining 123 MiG fighters will be modernized in India with Russian assistance.

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited will produce 12 Lancer light-attack helicopters for the Indian Army. The Lancer was designed for counter-insurgency operations.

2. Security Policy

Retired Indian Army Brigadier S.S. Chandel argues that because the Army is small compared to the overall population, India is not equipped to cope with thousands of volunteers in the event of a major conflict with a country like the PRC. Chandel argues in favor of a mandatory conscript Army, drafting for minimal pay college graduates for two years and all others for three.

A.G. Noorani, in an article in Frontline Magazine, points out salient examples of India's historical foreign policy, and argues that India has not learned its lessons from the past. Noorani argues that India needs an intellectual examination of its foreign policy, founded on a realistic understanding of India's history.

Amitabh Mattoo argues in an editorial in the Times of India that, in this time of potential entente between India and Pakistan, India needs to develop a coherent policy on Pakistan to prevent dialogue from being held captive by those on both ends of the political spectrum in India. Mattoo argues that India must "lengthen the shadow of the future" to increase the incentive for cooperation and increase the cost of cheating on any agreements. Mattoo also argues that Pakistan's military must see that its influence will weaken and the state possibly collapse unless it begins normalization with India.

3. Foreign Relations: PRC

The Times of India reported that an upcoming visit by Li Peng, chairman of the PRC's National People's Congress, is evidence that the PRC and India are investing more in their bilateral relationship. The article stated that there have been criticisms that progress on the border issue is slow despite the lack of tensions there.

An article by Chandra B. Khanduri for the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies in New Delhi, argues that the PRC is interested in settling its border dispute with India so that it gains control of the Aksai Chin-Xinjiang road. The road is a major artery for the PRC's four armies in Tibet and Xinjiang, and provides access to strategic locations.

Zhang Mingsong, director of the PRC's apex trade body, expressed concern over the anti-dumping measures put into place by India against some PRC-produced goods. Zhang said it was unfair that India considered the PRC to be a non-market economy and criticized India's high tariffs against competitive products.

PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao denied reports that the PRC had provided the Lashkar-e-Toiba militant group with anti-aircraft guns.

4. Foreign Relations: US, Mongolia

The US government National Defense University released a report which stated, "A regional war involving the United States and India would be an unlikely occurrence." The report said that cooperation between India and the PRC could lead to the US being challenged on a regional level, and that PRC-Russian cooperation could challenge the US in several regions.

Mongolian President Natsagiin Bagabandi visited India. Bagabandi and Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee witnessed the signing of six agreements, including an extradition treaty and a defense agreement.

Pakistan

1. Military Government

Former Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto stated that she is ready to return to Pakistan, pending the decision of the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy's decision to launch a political movement, in order to fill the political vacuum left by rival Nawaz Sharif's exile.

2. Shanghai-Five Bid

Pakistan submitted an application for membership to the Shanghai Five group, whose membership includes the PRC, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Russia. The Shanghai Five group was originally convened to increase confidence among the PRC and the former Soviet republics in border-related issues, including military forces, arms smuggling, and drug trafficking. An earlier response by the PRC had been non-committal. The Russian statement after the request was evasive, though a Russian official stated Pakistan would not join the group, and that India, Mongolia, and Iran had more grounds for admission than Pakistan. Pakistan has been faulted for its support for the Taliban movement in Afghanistan, which threatens to destabilize the PRC's Xinjiang region and the heavily Muslim former Soviet republics.

3. Overview

The Combat Development Board of Pakistan's Army will meet to form recommendations for the further de-escalation of violence along the Line of Control.

An opinion essay in The Dawn by Ghulam Umar argues that the development of a credible nuclear deterrent by Pakistan creates the space for a more complete examination of the question of the preparedness of the conventional forces, including the importance of economic capability and other non-military factors.

Kashmir

1. General Commentary

An article in The Hindu states that a recent speech by Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee raises more questions than it answers about the future of Indian policy on Kashmir. The article states that the challenges are for India to state details on its future-looking Kashmir policy and for its leaders to refrain from the temptation to criticize Pakistan.

2. Ceasefire

Praveen Swami, writing in Frontline Magazine, argues that conflicting interests in Jammu and Kashmir and in Pakistan seem determined to disrupt the ceasefire agreement and the larger peace process. Swami reported that there has not been a significant decline in the number of terrorism-related deaths since the beginning of the ceasefire, and that several militant groups are conflicted over how to proceed. Swami stated that Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf, under pressure from hard-liners in Pakistan, has also apparently rejected a moderate approach.

3. Military Actions

Sources within the Indian Border Security Forces reported that Pakistani troops fired "heavily" upon Indian positions along the Line of Control in Jammu, breaking a month-long lull in cross-border violence. Pakistani Major General Rashid Qureshi, director general of the ISPR, refuted the reports. Qureshi said Pakistan had not attacked any Indian border posts and criticized India for not reciprocating Pakistan's peace initiatives. A Pakistani government spokesman also criticized the decision of the Jammu and Kashmir state government to hold local elections at a time when it should begin dialogue with Pakistan.

Pakistani Major General Rashid Qureshi reported that the withdrawal of troops from along the Line of Control had been completed, though there were no details as to how many were withdrawn. The Indian government claims that no withdrawal has occurred.

4. India-Pakistan Relations

Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee offered to meet with Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf under certain conditions. Vajpayee said, "Show us you can rein in the jihadis, and you are welcome here." This statement ends a year-long Indian policy of not engaging the Pakistani military leadership. Vajpayee stated that India would focus on a "lasting solution" to Kashmir and not just a peace treaty, that the Kashmir issue had elements that were both internal and external to India, and that Jammu and Kashmir will not be divided along communal lines.

Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar stated that Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf was ready to visit India. Sattar said Pakistan is pleased to see that India is putting Kashmir as the priority in India-Pakistan relations.

Mansoor Ijaz, a member of the US Council on Foreign Relations, argues that the question in India-Pakistan talks is not whether India can trust Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf, because the Pakistani Army is the only institution in Pakistan that can make a peace agreement stick, but whether Musharraf can arrange a summit within the constraints of militant groups.

An Indian court sentenced 133 Pakistani fisherman, originally arrested in 1999, to eighteen months in prison and a fine for fishing in Indian waters near Okha port.

5. APHC Visit to Pakistan

The All-Parties Hurriyat Conference reported that their seven-member executive council decided not to appoint the team that would ultimately travel to Pakistan for talks until India released passports for all seven members. It has been reported that passports have been approved for five members. It was decided that Abdul Gani Bhatt would be empowered select the team, though Bhatt stated that he would pick the team only after all passports had been approved. It was also reported that Bhatt is making plans in case this does not happen. There has not been a response from the Indian government on this issue.

A Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman requested that the Indian government approve all seven passports. Pakistani President Rafiq Tarar stated that the visit could pave the way for tripartite talks.

All-Parties Hurriyat Conference chairman Abdul Gani Bhatt met in India with Pakistan High Commissioner Ashraf Jehangir Qazi. Bhatt is under pressure amid reports that there is a growing split within the APHC and that Bhatt has no real agenda for the visit to Pakistan.

The leadership of the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference made statements to the effect of threatening to cancel the trip to Pakistan. They cited the delays in India's approving passports and apparent disinterest in the visit by both India and Pakistan.

Kashmiri Pandit groups stated that they opposed the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference proposed visit to Pakistan. They stated that the APHC is not the true representative of the Kashmiri people and they want the APHC to clarify its agenda for the trip.

Ghulam Nabi Fai, executive director of the US-based Kashmiri American Council, wrote in the Washington Times that the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference is apparently prepared to negotiate an independent constitution for Kashmir that meets India's security needs, and includes both a no-war clause and a statement of permanent neutrality.

6. Militant Groups

The Muttahida Jihad Council, an alliance of Pakistan-based militant groups, has rejected the unilateral ceasefire offered by India and promised to continue with its operations in Jammu and Kashmir. The Harakat-ul Mujahideen also pledged to continue "until Kashmir is liberated."

The Stimson Center published an interview it conducted with Hizbul Mujahideen commander in Kashmir, Abdul Majid Dar, who had announced in July a unilateral one-month ceasefire. Dar stated that his ceasefire was bold because the largest problem is the absence of confidence among the players, but he said the current ceasefire is not helpful if it does not lead to a peaceful settlement. Dar stated that Pakistan is not officially involved in cross-border movements of militant groups, but that it was impossible for these groups to operate without Pakistan's blessings. The Stimson website also carries extensive comments on the interview by other South Asian experts.

7. Recent Violence

The Times of India reported that an Indian government spokesman stated that Pakistan-sponsored militant group actions killed 2,389 lives in 2000 in Jammu and Kashmir. The report provides additional statistics on violence for 2000 in Jammu and Kashmir. The links below provide coverage of violence that occurred in the past week in Jammu and Kashmir.

Sri Lanka

1. LTTE Ceasefire

The Hindu reported that there has been growing pressure upon the Sri Lankan government to respond to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam unilateral ceasefire. Eleven moderate Tamil parties with Parliamentary representation stated that they would put pressure on the government to respond to the ceasefire. The Sri Lankan government repeated that it would not consider a reduction in hostilities until peace talks began and it called upon the LTTE to provide concrete proposals for negotiations.

2. Peace Initiatives

Norwegian peace envoy Erik Solheim was expected to arrive in Sri Lanka in order to meet separately with Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga and LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran. Solheim reportedly had new proposals to discuss with the Sri Lankan government.

3. Military Actions

The Sri Lankan Army is reportedly ready to attempt to retake Elephants Pass. The capture of the pass by the LTTE in May allowed it to launch offensives all over the Jaffna peninsula.

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