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Nuclear Issues

1. Proliferation Threats

A US Defense Department report on proliferation in South Asia states that both India and Pakistan are likely to conduct further nuclear and missile tests in the near future, and both are expected to become potential suppliers of WMD technology to other countries. The report stated that both countries likely keep their weapons stored as components, but that they could be assembled and deployed within several days.

US Ambassador to India Richard Celeste stated that the US made a mistake by imposing sanctions on Indian nuclear research institutes in the aftermath of the Pokhran nuclear tests in 1998.

2. Track II Talks

Pakistan's Islamabad Policy Research Institute will host a six-member Indian team composed of former government and military officials for meetings to discuss nuclear risk reduction and related issues. The Indian team is from the Delhi Policy Group and is led by a retired Indian ambassador and retired Lieutenant General V.R. Raghavan. The team received a briefing at Pakistan's Foreign Office and met with Pakistan Foreign Secretary Inamul Huq. They discussed several bilateral issues but expressed that Kashmir and nuclear issues were not interdependent. The meeting is part of ongoing Track II efforts to promote confidence-building measures, but the Indian delegation may meet with Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar.

3. Pakistan Nuclear Program

An admiral in the Pakistani Navy reported that Pakistan was developing a nuclear delivery system for the Navy, but would not specify the nature of the weapon system. The article also cited Navy officials as stating the Pakistan needed to increase procurement of warships because the current fleet is set to begin being phased out of commission.

During his trip to India, PRC Premier Li Peng stated that the PRC was not transferring nuclear arms or related technologies to Pakistan.

4. India Nuclear Program

"Proliferation: Threat and Response," a report recently completed by the US Defense Department, states that India should make an effort to distance itself from an advisory group report which stated that India should pursue a policy of developing a credible minimal deterrent force.

India

1. Li Peng Visit

Li Peng, chairman of the PRC National People's Congress, arrived in India for a state visit. While in Mumbai, prior to traveling to New Delhi, Li met with some political leaders and with the family of Dwarkanath Shantaram Kotnis, an Indian doctor who treated Chinese soldiers during the Sino-Japanese War. Li stated that India and the PRC did not pose a threat to each other and could cooperate in a multipolar world. An article in the Times of India stated that analysts expect that there would be no breakthroughs in India-PRC relations as a result of this visit. Li Peng later stated acknowledged that there was a lack of mutual agreement over issues in India-PRC relations. He also stated that the bilateral India-Pakistan relationship should be improved through dialogue.

The Hindu published an interview conducted with Li Peng.

2. India-PRC Relations

An Indian official stated that India was pursuing stronger relations with the PRC in order to settle their bilateral disagreements, and that India would not allow the PRC-Pakistan relationship to prevent progress.

An essay by C. Raja Mohan in The Hindu stated that, because of their similar concerns for terrorism and religious extremism, Afghanistan was expected to be an important dialogue topic for PRC chairman Li Peng and Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee. An editorial in the Times of India argues that while this is an opportune time for the strengthening of India-PRC relations, more important is the firmer stance that the US is likely to take against PRC proliferation. Further, the editorial argues that the PRC's multipolar world-view, which implies regional hegemony, is at odds with India's polycentric view.

3. Foreign Relations: Southeast Asia, Australia

Manoj Joshi, in the Times of India, writes that the recent visit by Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee to Vietnam and Indonesia is part of an effort to strengthen ties with regional countries that are wary of future relations with the PRC. India signed military hardware agreements with Vietnam.

India and Indonesia signed two bilateral agreements, one of which was for defense cooperation. A joint commission will be established under the agreement to coordinate defense activities between the two countries.

An editorial in the Times of India argues that India was active in Southeast Asia throughout the Cold War, and that recent interactions with Indonesia and Vietnam are not examples of a temporary "Look East" policy. The editorial reviews historic developments in India's relationship with several Southeast Asian states.

4. Foreign Relations: Australia, UK

The Times of India reported that Australia will resume military-to-military contacts with India, severed since the 1998 nuclear tests. Australia reported that ties with Pakistan will not be resumed because Pakistan is still under military rule.

British Secretary for International Development Clare Short stated that Britain would increase its development assistance to India from 105 million pounds to 250 million pounds over the next two to three years.

5. US Policy in South Asia

Outgoing US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Karl Inderfurth held a farewell meeting and stated that it would be up to the incoming Bush administration to make decisions on the remaining sanctions on India, as well as to whether to designate the Lashkar-e-Taiba militant group a terrorist organization.

6. India-Bangladesh Relations

The Dawn reported on a "Zee TV" report that stated that India sealed its border with Bangladesh after a terrorist attack two days prior in an attempt to prevent the terrorists from crossing the border with kidnapped railway employees.

7. Military

The much-touted deal to purchase the UK-made Hawk advanced jet trainer for the Indian Air Force (IAF) has been canceled after Hawk decided to cut production of the plane. Sanjay Suri reported in the Times of India that the Hawk, the production of which for the IAF had been delayed by US sanctions, would have been obsolete by the time it entered active service.

Russia has announced that it will send two warships to participate in India's International Fleet Review in February. This will be the first visit by Russian warships to Indian waters since the fall of the Soviet Union. The announcement was made shortly after Navy chief Admiral Vladimir Kurayedov stated that the Russian Navy would regain its lost glory by returning to patrolling the world's oceans.

8. India-Russia Space Cooperation

Indian Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha arrived in Russia to attend a bilateral conference on trade, cultural and other ties between the two countries. The Indo-Russian Intergovernmental Commission created a working group to increase cooperation on space technologies.

Pakistan

1. Military Hardware

Chief of the Pakistani Navy Staff Admiral Abdul Aziz Mirza stated that Pakistan would spend US\$630 million to acquire a modern PRC warship and build another three under technology transfer. Mirza stated that the acquisition of a PRC warship was to be able to phase out the Navy's British-built destroyers and that he believed that Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and Qatar were interested in joint production of submarines. Pakistan's The News reported that Mirza also hinted that Pakistan may also develop Gawadar Port as an alternative to Karachi, which is vulnerable to Indian warships.

2. Military Government

Major General Rashid Qureshi, a spokesman for the Pakistani military, stated that the government would arrest former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto if she returns to Pakistan from London. Qureshi said, "Bhutto is a convict and the law will take its own course."

3. Middle East Relations: Jordan, Lebanon

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf held talks with Jordanian Prime Minister Ali Abu Ragheb and the two pledged to strengthen their relationship.

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf and Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al Hariri signed agreements promoting bilateral trade, investment and defense cooperation. Musharraf also promised to aid in the de-mining of Lebanese border areas from which the Israeli Army had withdrawn.

Kashmir

1. Overview

The first village-level elections are underway in Kashmir, and will be staggered to permit security forces to protect against terrorist attacks. There have been no local elections since the insurgency began in 1989, and prior to that the village leadership did not function consistently. The All-Parties Hurriyat Conference and Pakistan-based militant groups are encouraging Kashmiris to not participate, equating participation with legitimization of Indian rule.

2. India-Pakistan Relations

Pakistan High Commissioner in India Ashraf Jehangir Qazi stated that there appeared to be a thaw in relations with India. Qazi also stated his perception that the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference, because of the problem with acquiring passports to Pakistan, was worried that its role in trilateral talks was being obviated by a strengthening of the bilateral track. APHC chairman Abdul Gani Bhat said, "When two elephants become loving buddies, it is still the grass that gets trampled," quoting a Tanzanian leader.

Indian and Pakistani officials will meet to discuss an extension of the agreement that covers express trains between the two countries, the Samjhauta Express agreement.

3. Indian Ceasefire

Indian Brigadier A.K. Duggal stated that artillery firing by Pakistani troops in Siachen Glacier has decreased since the ceasefire. Duggal acknowledged that the military can't accomplish its goals without the support of the local people. Atul Aneja reports in The Hindu that the glacier is of strategic importance because it passes between two ranges and because it is a wedge to prevent a link-up between Pakistan and the PRC in the event India faces an unlikely two-front war. Duggal also stated that no withdrawal of Pakistani troops had been witnessed.

Indian Army chief General S. Padmanabhan stated his support for an extension of the unilateral ceasefire in Kashmir. He said that over the last three months, "There is less fighting and more talking." He said the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad were still carrying out attacks, but that "the home-grown militant is sick and tired of fighting."

There was an attempt to kill Jammu and Kashmir State Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah by militant groups, which Abdullah survived. Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee condemned the attack and said that terrorist attacks did not create an environment conducive to peace talks.

Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh stated that he could not rule out a visit to Pakistan this year if Pakistan stopped its support of cross-border terrorism and ended hostile anti-India

propaganda. Asked whether the two countries could reunite, such as the case with Germany, Singh stated that while India and Pakistan may not unify, there is an effort to make the border irrelevant.

4. Pakistani Responses

Pakistan's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) party released a statement that said that Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf has surrendered Point 5353 in Kashmir to India under a secret deal. The PPP statement was critical of the Musharraf regime for using secret deals to reinforce the regime.

Pakistan Interior Minister Moinuddin Haider spoke at a religious conference and said that the religious political parties stop their support of militancy in Kashmir.

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf stated that his government desired a normalization of relations with India, and that the troop withdrawal along the Line of Control would reduce bilateral tensions. Musharraf also reiterated that Kashmir must be on the agenda for bilateral talks to move forward.

5. Musharraf Visit to India

Indian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Monika Mohta stated that the Indian government denied reports that an invitation to visit India had been sent to Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf. Brajesh Mishra, the chief secretary to Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee stated that there were no plans under consideration for an India-Pakistan summit.

Mubashir Hasan, a Pakistani local PPP party leader and an active participant in Track II diplomacy with India, urged Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf to visit India. The possibility of a visit has sparked interest in a possible dialogue. Pakistan Foreign Secretary Inamul Huq stated that Musharraf would not travel to India in the near future because a formal invitation has not been received from India.

6. All-Parties Hurriyat Conference

The anticipated visit by the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference leadership to Pakistan is in doubt because the APHC is demanding that all seven passports be approved before selecting their team. The Indian government stated that all seven can't be approved because not all seven have submitted applications. Hasan Akhtar argues in The Dawn that while the APHC-Pakistan meeting may not occur on January 15, talks are still likely to occur at a later time.

All-Parties Hurriyat Conference Chairman Abdul Gani Bhatt stated that the obstruction of the APHC visit to Pakistan by the Indian government could affect the ceasefire negatively. Pakistan indicated that it is awaiting the APHC visit but that the APHC would be received as a representative of the Kashmiri freedom movement and not as state leaders.

All-Parties Hurriyat Conference leader Mohammad Yasin Malik reported that the APHC had decided to send a five member team to Pakistan, should their passports be approved, consisting of Jaamat--Islami leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Mirwaiz Umer Farooq, Abdul Gani Lone, Moulvi Abbas Ansari and Shiekh Abdul Aziz. Of the five, only two currently have passports. The Dawn reported that analysts believed the APHC chose their team to prevent the Indian government from de facto doing so.

All-Parties Hurriyat Conference leader Abdul Gani Lone stated that India would be taking a positive step forward by approving the APHC passports for travel to Pakistan. Abdul Gani Bhat later stated that the team would not go unless travel was approved for all five members, a development from

earlier demands that passports be approved for all seven members of the APHC Executive Council. Bhat reported that the agenda for the trip would include discussing with the Pakistani government and Pakistan-based militant groups a "joint strategy" for the "final settlement" of the Kashmir dispute. Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Forum (JKDF) president Bhushan Bazaz also requested that all five passports be approved.

The Dawn reported that a Pakistani Foreign Office spokesman stated that the Pakistani government welcomed the decision by the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference to send a five-member team, and encouraged the Indian government to grant travel documents.

Indian Home Minister L.K. Advani stated that the government was considering the passport applications of the seven members of the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference leadership. An Indian government official stated that the government had delayed because it wanted the APHC to pick its team, and that now that the team had been picked, India would soon make its decision on the passport requests. Indian National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra stated that the decision on whether or not to approve the passport requests by the APHC would be made after Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee returned to New Delhi on January 14. Mishra said that the decision would likely be affected by recent terrorist attacks.

Gul Mohammed Shah, a former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, welcomed tripartite talks between India, Pakistan and the Kashmiri people, and said the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference visit could break the ice, he said the APHC does not represent the Kashmiri people.

7. Militant Groups

Sultan Shahin, in an editorial in the Times of India, discusses the Islamic prohibition against suicide and its relationship to the use of suicide attacks and religious motivations by militant groups.

Hizbul Mujahideen spokesman Salim Hashmi stated that attacks upon Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah and others would continue as long as the struggle continues to free Kashmir.

Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin challenged the point of the trip to Pakistan by the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference, saying that it was up to the Indian government to demonstrate its sincerity.

Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front chief Amanullah Khan commended the recent steps to dialogue and peace by India and Pakistan, and stated that the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference visit to Pakistan could be the beginning of efforts to solve the issue.

Twelve small groups in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, including the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, have formed the All-Party National Alliance. The group is intended to form a united front to fight for reunification and independence of the Kashmiri state.

The Harkat-ul-Mujahideen chief Farooq Kashmiri stated that India should bypass Kashmiri politicians such as the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference and speak directly with the militant groups. The Lashker-e-Taiba, however, ruled out talks with India.

Panun Kashmir, an organization of Kashmiri Pandits, criticized the Indian government for allowing the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference to assume the role of mediator between the Indian and Pakistani governments. The group stated its intent to send its own delegation to Pakistan.

Sri Lanka

1. Ceasefire Attempts

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga reiterated the government's intent to not agree to a ceasefire until the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) agree to begin talks to end the war. Kumaratunga stated that the LTTE is not interested in peace.

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