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India

1. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

George Fernandes, India's Defense Minister, reiterated his government's intention to build the "widest possible consensus in the shortest possible time frame" on the CTBT. U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, in a wide-ranging and widely publicized interview with *The Hindu*, stated clearly that the U.S. government "recognizes fully that only the Indian government has the sovereign right to make decisions on what sorts of weapons and force postures are necessary for the defense of India and Indian interests." In a statement regarding the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (different from the CTBT) U.S. Under-Secretary for Arms Control, John Holum, rejected the notion that India and Pakistan could formally enter the NPT as nuclear weapons states.

The *Hindu* editorialized that Strobe Talbott's statement is an important United States' step toward nuclear accommodation. A *Times of India* editorial expressed concern that, while the United States had conceded ground regarding India's sovereign right to determine India's security requirements, the United States itself has not effectively reassured the rest of the world about its own commitment to nonproliferation. *The Nation* (Lahore, Pakistan) saw the change in U.S. position as "a compromise on its own principles." Prem Shankar Jha, a noted columnist, argued that the international reassurances and cooperation that would follow from an Indian CTBT signature would enable the country to "find a place in the first tier of nations." Urging India to proceed slowly on the CTBT, V. R. Raghavan, Director of the Delhi Policy Group, argued that "the most plausible reason for [the Indian government's] unseemly hurry" to sign the CTBT is "the visit by Mr. Clinton to India."

2. India-U.S. Relations

U.S. President Clinton, in his annual "National Security Strategy Report" to the U.S. Congress, placed the India/Pakistan issue on the top of his agenda. He urged both nations to sign and ratify the CTBT as well as to resolve their regional issues. In preparation for an expected March visit by Clinton, India hosted two U.S. delegations. U.S. Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command Dennis Blair suggested that bilateral military cooperation in the near future would likely be quite limited. Blair also "differed on the prominence with which Beijing was included in New Delhi's security calculus." More optimistically, U.S. Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers said that "there is an opportunity for the United States to forge a relationship with India which goes substantially beyond particular concerns of the subcontinent." The 10th round of talks between Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh and U.S. Under-Secretary of State Strobe Talbott are scheduled to begin on January 18 in London. International and regional terrorism are late additions to the agenda.

3. India-China Relations

The Buddhist Karmapa (the third highest ranking spiritual leader in Tibetan Buddhism) entered India. India granted refugee status to the 14-year-old monk, but did not grant political asylum. This seems to have defused the delicate political situation that might have become a major source of India-China tension.

4. India-Japan Relations

Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes concluded his five-day visit to Japan with an agreement

to begin a dialogue on security issues. Fernandes also asked that Japanese sanctions against India be lifted and suggested that the question of India signing the CTBT would "gain greater momentum" at the Indian Parliament's winter session in February.

5. India Foreign Relations

Shortly after the Indian Airlines hijacking incident ended with the safe release of the hijackers, Japan, Britain, Israel, and Italy agreed to cooperate with India in the fight against global terrorism.

While in Britain, Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh is expected to discuss nuclear issues with British Foreign Minister Robin Cook.

The India-Russia relationship is expected to evolve into a "strategic partnership," and Russia supports India's claim on a permanent UN Security Council seat.

6. Security Planning

Through a variety of policy and publicity mechanisms, the Indian government expressed its concerns regarding terrorism in general and alleged involvement of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence in destabilizing activities on Indian soil. A detailed report in the Times of India explained how, when, where, and even which militants were expected to cross the Nepal border into the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. In response, a high alert was sounded in the western portion of UP, the state Home Department underlined policies for greater India-Nepal border vigilance, and state Home Minister Rang Nath Mishra alleged ISI activities in 23 districts of the state. On January 13, the Home Ministry released a report that alleges a three-pronged ISI strategy to recruit Muslim youths, destabilize the economy by circulating counterfeit currency, and engage in large-scale drug smuggling.

On January 18 the central government re-organized its "counter-insurgency grid." The government's anti-terrorist activities were supported by the Nationalist Congress Party as well as the Vishwa Hindu Parishad. Finally, the Times of India was fined Rs 140,000 for publishing a map that depicted a portion of Kashmir as Pakistani territory.

Pakistan

7. General

Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesperson Tariq Altaf said that India had "miserably failed" in its attempt to implicate Pakistan in the recent Indian Airlines hijacking. The Foreign Office also reiterated its statement that "Pakistan opposes terrorism in all forms and will not allow the misuse of its territory for acts of terrorism, which is a crime under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997."

8. Military

U.S. nuclear expert George Perkovich said that Pakistan is better equipped to put nuclear warheads on missiles and launch them than India is.

9. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar responded to criticism of his support for signing the CTBT by saying that Pakistan "remains determined to develop nuclear capability." Jamaat-I-Islami Chief Qazi

Hussain Ahmad spoke strongly against Pakistan signing the CTBT. The Speaker of the suspended National Assembly, Illahi Bukhsh Soomro observed that the CTBT could be signed only by "representatives of the people," and the current military leadership does not meet that criteria. On the other side, former prime minister of Azad Kashmir, Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, Eshan Wyne of the ANP, Ghinwa Bhutto of the Pakistan People's Party (SB), and Afrasiab Khattak of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan all came out in support of CTBT signature. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, a widely published analyst, also makes a strong argument in favor of signing the CTBT in a Pakistan Today article.

10. Pakistan-U.S. Relations

Pakistan-United States diplomacy occurred on several fronts. Pakistani Ambassador to the U.S., Maleeha Lodhi, met a team of U.S. officials headed by U.S. Under-secretary of State Thomas Pickering. On the following day, Ambassador Lodhi issued a statement condemning the terrorist actions of the hijackers.

Washington stated that, although the entities list of Indian companies to be exempted from post-Pokhran sanctions has been pared, the Clinton administration has no plans to change the entities list for Pakistan. John Holum, Undersecretary for Arms Control and Security, stated that Pakistan and India would never be accepted as nuclear weapons states under the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Pakistan hosted U.S. Senator Sam Brownback, chairman of the U.S. foreign relations sub-committee on near-eastern and South Asian affairs. Brownback supported the basic U.S. position: the U.S. should and will develop its relationships with Pakistan and India on individual bases. He also met with Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar and several opposition party leaders, and pledged his support for restoration of democracy in Pakistan.

Pakistan also hosted a four-senator delegation including Thomas Dasche, Christopher Dodd, Harry Reid, and Daniel Akaka. The Dasche delegation pressed the government for a return to democracy, met with Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf--who promised to work with the United States toward global peace--and received a pro-CTBT letter from Benazir Bhutto.

The Clinton Administration announced plans to send two officials to Pakistan, Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Karl Indurfurth, and Michael Sheehan, the Coordinator on Counter- Terrorism.

In a Friday Times article, Ejaz Haider explains why US policy in South Asia may be shifting away from Pakistan to India and how Pakistan's self-imposed isolationist policies may defeat its purposes by strengthening such tendencies.

11. Pakistan-China Relations

On January 18, Chief Executive Musharraf met with several Chinese officials in Beijing. Chinese Premiere Zhu Rongji supported the Musharraf government, saying that "the internal affairs of a country should and must be handled by its own people" and that China would continue to foster its "comprehensive partnership" with Islamabad. President Jiang Zemin expressed his hope that the "strong relationship" between Pakistan and China would be further developed.

12. Pakistan-United Kingdom Relations

Britain's Chief of Defense Staff, Sir Charles Guthrie, completed a 3-day visit to Pakistan, including a meeting with Chief Executive Musharraf. Guthrie urged Musharraf to "find ways to revive the Lahore process, addressing the issue bilaterally," and said that "we are ready to help if progress is

maintained." An Indian Foreign Office spokesman expressed disappointment with Guthrie's visit, which, he believed, "went against the spirit of the Durban Summit [of Commonwealth States], which had come down heavily on the military regime of General Pervez Musharraf."

Kashmir

13. Diplomacy

Both Pakistani Ambassador to the United States Maleeha Lodhi and Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf suggested that they were ready for Kashmir talks "without preconditions." Both also said that the process could be aided by "third party intercession in a Track II approach towards resolving all outstanding issues." The British Foreign office also said that the British Government was "worried about matters concerning the issue of Kashmir and that it was doing all it could to have the issue resolved, and would continue doing so in a more effective way." In response, an Indian Foreign Office spokesperson said that Musharraf's remarks were neither wholly new nor encouraging.

14. Indian Developments

Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee called for a high-level meeting on Kashmir, to be attended by Home Minister L. K. Advani, Defence Minister George Fernandes, Jammu and Kashmir State Governor Saxena, and J&K Chief Minister Farook Abdullah. The Subrahmanyam Committee, which evaluated the causes and implications of last year's Kargil Crisis, issued its report. The report was critical of communication failures between the multiplicity of agencies involved in security and intelligence, but stopped short of calling it an "intelligence failure."

15. Analysis

K. K. Katyal explores alternate scenarios in short- and medium-term India-Pakistan relations. M. D. Nalapat suggests that "it is Pakistani confidence in the inability of India to bring itself to deliver a telling blow that has inspired its repeated forays into India."

Sri Lanka

16. Electoral and Domestic Politics

The State-run Daily News today reported that "several army personnel" were linked to the plot to kill the President and that there were "plans to capture power through a military coup if the President was killed in the blast." The opposition United National Party dismissed the theory as "presidential rage."

17. Ethnic Violence

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam leader Kumar Ponnambalam was killed on January 5. A few days later, another suicide bomber believed to be associated with the LTTE killed eleven people, including herself, near the Prime Minister's office. In response, the government closed off the city and rounded up 500 Tamil "suspects."

Bangladesh

18. Bangladesh-India Relations

Bangladesh and India have come to terms on three important border and transit issues: riparian rights along the Muhuri river, an improvement in the Dhaka-Calcutta bus service, and the first steps toward creating a new rail link between Joyrambati and Kamarpukur.

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