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Nuclear Issues

1. Overview

Analysts at a Islamabad Policy Research Institute seminar attended by a delegation from the India-based Delhi Policy Group stated that India and Pakistan needed to negotiate confidence-building measures to ease nuclear tensions in South Asia.

The Dawn belatedly covered the US Central Intelligence Agency report "Global Trends 2015," which states that both India and Pakistan will likely expand their nuclear arsenals. The report states that tensions will grow as the economic gap between the two countries continues to widen. Also, prospects for Afghanistan and Sri Lanka are "bleak."

2. India Missile Test

India successfully test-fired its indigenously built Agni-II intermediate-range ballistic missile. This was the second test firing of the Agni-II, which is solid-fueled, has a range of 2200 km and the capacity to carry a one-ton warhead. The Dawn reported that the missile was capable of carrying a nuclear warhead "deep inside China." A Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman stated that the test posed a "direct threat to Pakistan's security." An Indian External Affairs ministry spokesman stated that India gave prior warning to Pakistan and the members of the UN Security Council.

India's anti-nuclear weapons movement, which the Times of India describes as "fledgling," protested the Agni-II testing. The Movement Against Nuclear Weapons released a statement critical of India that stated that the Agni-II would serve as the basis for its nuclear forces and that India was building its forces while most other countries were dismantling their nuclear forces.

Dinesh Kumar and Manoj Joshi, writing in the Times of India, noted that the test firing of the Agni-II missile in "its final operational configuration" is a "decisive step towards its stated goal of deploying a credible nuclear deterrent." They also noted the apparent coincidence that the test took place during the visit by the PRC leader Li Peng. While the Agni-II is unable to reach the PRC's bigger cities, the Agni-III is expected to have a range of 3,500 km and may be tested by the end of this year. They further state that Pakistan will shortly follow with a test of the Shaheen-II, a solid-fueled missile with a range of 2,000 km.

An editorial in the Times of India argues that the Agni-II provides India with a plausible second-

strike capability, but one that is unlikely to provoke an arms race with Pakistan because the PRC, already facing the US threat of its National Missile Defense (NMD) system, will not provide the US with greater incentives to build NMD by transferring to Pakistan additional missile technology.

3. Pakistan Missile Program
The Dawn reported on a report by an unnamed Gulf newspaper that stated Pakistan may soon test-fire a ballistic missile in response to India's testing of the Agni-II.

4. South Asia Arms Race

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf stated that India's recent testing of the Agni-II ballistic missile shouldn't hamper the peace process, but said the testing should be an issue for other countries such as the PRC.

PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao warned Indian and Pakistan against pursuing a new arms race, but did not directly criticize India for the recent Agni-II missile test.

The Times of India reported that the PRC may soon be in an arms race with the US and its allies if US President George W. Bush pushes an aggressive defense policy. The article cited analysts that stated India and Russia would benefit from hotter US-PRC relations.

5. US Sanctions

US Secretary of State Colin Powell stated during his confirmation hearing before the US Senate that he would evaluate whether to remove sanctions on India put in place after the Pokhran nuclear tests. Powell promised to review all current US sanctions. He also said there was a need to help India grow and to focus US foreign policy more closely on India.

Prior to his inauguration, new US President George W. Bush sent a letter to Indian President K.R. Narayanan stating that Bush wanted to improve relations with India.

6. International Regimes

Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan Sadaaki Numata stated that if Pakistan signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, this would end the choice Japan must make between aiding Pakistan and preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

India

1. Security

The Indian Navy organized a tri-services (Navy, Army, Air Force) seminar on the nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) weapons threats facing India. Participants at the seminar determined that India needed a tri-service NBC contingency policy and rapid reaction teams to cope with an NBC attack.

An article by Ravi Sharma in Frontline Magazine states that opponents of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) program say that the fighter, designed to replace aging MiG fighters, will be obsolete by the time it reaches combat deployment. Sharma argues that the program has been afflicted by bureaucratic delays, the lack of indigenous technology, and the inability to contract with certain companies because of US sanctions. LCA Program Director Kota Harinarayana said the LCA would be delivered to the Indian Air Force (IAF) within six years.

John Cherian writes in Frontline Magazine that Russia may be providing the PRC with the same Su-30MKK fighters it promised to exclusively sell to India. Cherian states that the PRC will be able to use these planes to gain air superiority about the same time that India begins to experience a shortfall in the Indian Air Force's fighter squadrons.

2. Military Hardware

An Indian Air Force MiG-27M strike fighter crashed in West Bengal, highlighting the safety issues the IAF is facing as its MiG fighters age. The IAF lost 48 MiGs to crashes from April 1997 to March 2000, though most of these were MiG-20 fighters. The IAF has pointed to faulty domestic manufacturing and upgrading and the lack of an Advanced Jet Trainer as controllable problems.

The Indian Navy will commission this week two new warships: the INS Mubai, a Delhi-class guided missile destroyer, and the INS Kirch, a missile corvette. The article states, however, that India's Navy is steadily declining, hurt by indigenous production delays and US sanctions.

Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes stated that production of the Arjun main battle tank had been ordered, but that economies of scale could not be achieved without either external collaboration or foreign exports of the tank.

3. India-PRC Border Dispute

At a meeting between Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee and PRC leader Li Peng, the two countries agreed to complete clarifying their disputer border "as soon as possible." They also discussed further visits by political leaders and parliamentary exchanges. Li Peng stated that the two countries needed to cooperate in trade and technology.

Indian Army Chief General Sunderajan Padmanabhan stated that while the border with Pakistan was quiet after ten years of fighting, it was the border with the PRC that was causing problems. The Dawn reported that Indian officials state that PRC troops often cross the border, leaving behind trash to prove their presence. The Dawn cited an official who stated to the Indian Express, "it is their way of keeping the issue alive." The official also said the danger is that it would take India three to four days to deploy troops to the area, but only hours for the PRC.

4. India-PRC Relations

Sonika Gupta, a Research Officer with the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies in New Delhi, stated that the visit by PRC leader Li Peng, while it was only a "feel good exercise," is still significant because it serves as the basis for cooperation over their common interests. However, as the statements about the PRC border by Indian Army Chief General Sunderajan Padmanabhan show, there is an underlying contradiction in all their strategic interactions.

An editorial by C. Uday Bhaskar in the Times of India states that while India is the PRC's regional rival, PRC leader Li Peng emphasized during his visit that the PRC was not a threat to India. The editorial argues that the requirements of comprehensive national security are driving the need to build upon closer PRC-India relations, regardless of whether the PRC is ultimately belligerent or benign.

5. APHC Passport Issue

Citing recent militant attacks, including upon the Srinagar Airport, the Indian government decided to put aside consideration of passports for the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference team intending to visit Pakistan and instead evaluate Pakistan's response to the Indian unilateral ceasefire.

Indian Home Minister L.K. Advani ruled out tripartite talks in statements aimed at the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference. Advani also indicated that India would in effect pick the APHC team by stating that only those who need passports will receive them.

6. Ceasefire

Indian Home Minister L.K. Advani stated that the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) would review the peace process under the ceasefire before Republic Day on January 26 in light of the attack on Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah and the Lashkar-e-Toiba attack upon the Red Fort. He said the government would consult with the Army and security agencies before making its decision. He also said, "We are not ready to believe that the Pakistan government has not control over the militant outfits," referring to those carrying out attacks during the ceasefire. Advani stated that further attacks by militant groups could imperil the ceasefire.

Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes stated that the government was disappointed at how Pakistan was approaching the unilateral ceasefire. He stated that the ceasefire was holding along the line of control, though there hasn't been a letup in the activities of militants groups. Fernandes said, "We expected Pakistan's chief executive to rein in these groups which has not been done so far." Manoj Joshi stated in the Times of India that as attacks against militants dropped off, attacks by militants against civilians increased. Joshi said 150 people had been killed in the first six weeks of the ceasefire, compared to 117 for the previous six weeks.

7. India-Pakistan Talks

An editorial in the Times of India argued that the central point being overlooked in the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference passport issue is that, if the passports are approved by the Indian government, this is one of several unilateral small steps by India which in total add up to something significant.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah stated that, if the ceasefire attempt should fail, India should strike at militant camps in Pakistan. Abdullah was quoted as saying, "If the peace process fails, the only other solution lies in the destruction of the training camps in Pakistan."

At a seminar in Washington, D.C. on terrorism, Political Counselor to the Pakistan Embassy Masood Khan stated that India was running 55 camps for terrorists on its own territory.

An Islamabad meeting between Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf and Indian High Commissioner Vijay K. Nambiar is considered a positive step towards the resumption of bilateral talks. At the meeting they discussed the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference passport issue, Nambiar stressed the need to improve the situation along the Line of Control, and Musharraf stated that militancy in Kashmir should not affect normalization talks. A senior official stated that the talks were essentially a reiteration of their basic positions.

8. India Trade Relations

The Indian government signed an agreement with Russia and Iran to create a trade corridor to reduce the cost of shipping to Russian and beyond. The route will enable transport of goods through the Caspian Sea.

Pakistan

1. Military Exports

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf created the Defense Exports Promotion Organization (DEPO), to be headed by Major General Ali Hamid. DEPO will promote exports of indigenously produced defense equipment.

2. Pakistan-US Relations

US Central Commander in Chief General Tommy R. Franks met with Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf during a visit to Pakistan. The Dawn reported that they discussed "professional" issues.

Kashmir

1. Elections

Polling was completed without violence in a number of areas in the Kashmiri districts of Poonch, Rajouri, and Kupwara. It was reported that 63-85 percent of eligible voters went to the polls, with the lower turnouts attributed to severe weather. The second phase is due to begin February 10.

2. India-Pakistan Railway Talks

Indian and Pakistani railway officials met in New Delhi to discuss a bilateral rail communication agreement set to expire on February 7. Under the previous agreement, for six months out of the year, each country sends goods abroad and then returns with goods to be sold on consignment. The agreement also covers the Samjhauta Express, a bi-weekly passenger train. Talks continued for five days as Pakistan was requesting that the train extend further into India.

India and Pakistan agreed to extend the railway agreement for an additional three years. Official representatives stated that passenger and freight service may be expanded.

3. Recent Violence

The links below provide coverage of violence that occurred in the past week in Jammu and Kashmir. After attacks in recent weeks on the Red Fort and upon Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, there were notable attacks upon the Srinagar Airport. Indian media reported that militant groups were attempting to sway the upcoming decision on the extension of the ceasefire.

4. APHC Passport Issue

The Dawn reported that after a meeting with his cabinet, Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf said that Pakistan was waiting to welcome the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference delegation. Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman Riaz Mohammad Khan urged India to issue passports to the APHC executive committee, lest the opportunity for moving forward on the peace process slip away.

The Indian government has reportedly delayed its decision on whether to issue passports for the executive committee of the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference because of recent attacks by militant groups (see above), leading the APHC to consider changing its list of delegates.

Speaking prior to a meeting of the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference, leader Abdul Ghani Bhat said there would be no change in the composition of the delegation seeking to visit Pakistan. The APHC

executive committee meeting resulted in no decision as to what to do next regarding the visit, but accused Indian Home Minister L.K. Advani and other Indian leaders of scuttling the peace process initiated by Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee.

5. Militant Groups

Protests and riots continued in Kashmir over the acute power crisis. The Lashker-e-Taiba issued a threat of attacks if power is not restored to Kashmir.

Sri Lanka

1. Government Offensive

Sri Lanka military spokesman Sanat Karunaratne stated that a fresh offensive has been launched against the LTTE.

2. LTTE Ceasefire

Tamil students at the Jaffna University held a demonstration urging the Sri Lankan government to call a ceasefire to match the LTTE's declared ceasefire, and to enter into talks with the LTTE. Sri Lankan Media Minister Priyadarshini Yapa stated that the government is amendable to peace talks, but first wants the LTTE to submit a substantial proposal.

The LTTE has stated that they will not extend their one-month unilateral ceasefire unless the Sri Lankan government reciprocates and enters Norwegian-backed peace talks. LTTE spokesman Anton Balasingham said that Norway had proposed several confidence building measures to the government, but the LTTE received only a new offensive in return.

Manoharan, a Research Officer with the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies in New Delhi, stated that the ceasefire declared by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was not unexpected because of the military reversals the LTTE has recently suffered. Manoharan also argues that the Sri Lankan government's response to the LTTE was also not unexpected, because the government will not grant the LTTE conditions that will allow it to regroup and again go on the offensive.

Afghanistan

1. Taliban Movement

Pakistan has complied with UN sanctions against the Taliban, ordering that all offices of the Taliban and Afghan Airlines be closed and all assets of suspected terrorist Osama bin Laden be frozen. The UN sanctions came into effect on January 19.

Bangladesh

1. Troop Movements

Bangladesh and Myanmar reinforced troops along their shared border over the building of an

embankment along a river shared by both countries. Bangladesh Army Colonel Shawkat Ali said that Myanmar had deployed 25,000 troops along the border. Last week there had been exchange of small arms fire by border troops and 2,500 people have fled the Ulubunia village.

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