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India

1. Nuclear Issues

An editorial in The Hindu argued that India must develop a clear nuclear policy or run the risk of having its nuclear deterrent lose credibility, which can create strategic miscalculations. An editorial in the Times of India further argued that, as long as neither the US Senate nor the PRC have ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Russia may withdraw if the US goes ahead with a nuclear missile defense system, it makes little sense for India's Congress to consider signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. A large issue is whether India has proven itself to have a credible nuclear deterrent.

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori will visit India and Pakistan in August and urge them to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; Japan has refused to lift sanctions imposed against both until they sign.

2. Security Issues

An editorial in the Times of India argued that while India was eager to be included in the recent Warsaw conference on democracy, it should not be faulted for its opposition to the Aung San Suu Kyi welcome message because there are times when security, in this case India's relationship with the Burmese military, is more important than democracy.

Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes said that the government was considering mandatory military service for all men and women to combat language, religious, regional, and caste divisions that were growing throughout the country.

The Indian Space Research Organization is ready to launch by the end of the year the lower-orbit Test Evaluation Satellite, a one-meter resolution spy satellite, as part of India's goal to develop indigenously the capability of surveillance several times per day.

An editorial in the Times of India argued that India is aligned with Russia, the PRC, and France in declaring its support for a world system that is "polycentric" or multipolar, and that India can play a role as a major power in this multipolar system if the prime minister's co-members of parliament contribute positively.

3. Foreign Relations: Russia

India and Russia agreed to create a military technical cooperation committee. Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes said that the US\$400 million deal for the purchase of 100 Russian T-90 main battle tanks and the licensing of other tanks would be finalized this week and a US\$2 billion deal for "Admiral Gorshkov" aircraft carrier and 2 squadrons of MiG-29 jets would be completed soon. Fernandes said that indigenous production of 124 Indian Arjun tanks would not be affected.

Russian President Vladimir Putin reportedly told Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes that Moscow wanted to see India protected from external threats, that "Russia and India are the closest allies" on defense issues, and that "on all issues discussed our views were identical." Fernandes said that Putin supported India's permanent membership on the UN Security Council.

India and Russia signed an agreement to cooperate in nuclear sciences. Details were not provided, except to say that the agreement included medical applications. The Russian-Indian Center for Computing Research (RICCR) was inaugurated last week and will develop advanced software applications. A joint center for biotechnology research was also set up in India for medical and agricultural products.

4. Foreign Relations: PRC

An editorial in the Times of India argued that in light of US evidence that the PRC continues to

support Pakistan's nuclear missile program, the Indian government's view is that the PRC is playing a nuclear game by supporting Pakistan while professing peace. Signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty therefore should not be brought to Parliament this session. India should develop a more hard-line approach towards the PRC and should develop a nuclear force sufficient to deter the combined strength of Pakistan and the PRC.

5. Foreign Relations: European Union, UK, France, Australia

After its summit with India, the European Union expressed support for India's proposal for a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, but remained noncommittal on India's desire for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. The EU's European Commission will send Chris Patten to India in January as a follow-up to the EU-India summit; Chris Patten and Jaswant Singh are believed to think similarly on many issues.

Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes is seeking guarantees in the purchase of British Hawk advanced jet trainers that their provision and future maintenance will be smooth, as India has had problems with the return of naval aircraft sent for service. The Times of India reported that contrary to Fernandes' statements, there are no aircraft that have been sent to Britain for repairs or retrofit. Two Sea Harrier engines are being serviced and will be returned when service is completed as they have no US components, and two gear boxes for Sea King helicopters were sent in 1998 but are being withheld as the British firm is now owned by the US-based Sikorsky.

India and France discussed a defense deal that would provide India with 10 French Mirage-2000 jets, but France's price is currently too high. Australian-Indian relations are improving since the post-nuclear test freeze, which is important to India because Australia has been among the stronger voices condemning the coup in Pakistan and Australia has still not restored ties with Pakistan.

6. Foreign Relations: US

Sam Brownback, Chairman of the US Senate Foreign Relations Sub-Committee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, was reported by the Times of India as saying that it was outrageous that US President Clinton's administration was lifting sanctions on the DPRK but keeping its sanctions against India, despite Congress granting a waiver to that effect. The Times of India also carried an Israeli report that the US was set to demand the termination of an agreement by Israel to provide India with a "green pine" radar system, which is similar to the Phalcon system that the US hopes Israel won't sell to the PRC, on the grounds that the sale could further destabilize the region.

US Senator Larry Pressler said he would support India for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council as a counterbalance to the PRC, if India helps US foreign policy by shedding its neutrality.

The Hindu carried a report that US Representative Frank Pallone argued that the PRC and Pakistan have teamed up to surround India, and said that it was time for the Clinton Administration to crack down on the PRC's violation of non-proliferation agreements if it wants Permanent Normal Trade Relations for the PRC to go through.

7. Foreign Relations: The Middle East

Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh visited Israel last week to reinforce ties that both nations see as important to their national security: India because Israel is a source of high-tech weaponry and Israel because India's large navy is key to protecting regional shipping lanes. In addition to a visit to the Palestinian Gaza Strip, Jaswant Singh will return to India in time to welcome Libyan Foreign minister Abdul Rehman Shalgam, in an attempt to demonstrate that friendship with Israel does not jeopardize its relationship with Muslim countries.

8. Foreign Relations: Nepal

India and Nepal held talks for three days on strengthening control over their joint border. They signed an agreement to create a joint unit to combat terrorism and share information on cross-border criminal activities, including identity cards for cross-border air travelers over 10 years old.

9. International Organizations: UN, WHO, World Bank, Others

The UN's Human Development Report 2000 has strong praise for India's progress on human rights but also stresses there is much to be done to secure the basic social and economic rights of its people, ensure rule of law, provide primary education, and ease discrimination against women.

Commerce and industry minister Murasoli Maran said that efforts should be directed towards redesigning the World Health Organization to fill gaps created by intellectual property rights, bio-piracy, and the WTO.

The World Bank announced its second renewable energy project for India to be financed with US\$130 million in loans, including US\$80 million from the World Bank, a US\$50 million credit from the Bank's soft loan affiliate, and a US\$5 million grant from the Global Environmental Facility.

India may join the "Shanghai Five," a multinational organization devoted to fighting international terrorism whose membership currently includes Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. The group proposes a UN anti-terrorist center and supports the 1972 ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of stability.

Pakistan

1. Overview

Pakistan has designated an army team to regulate the affairs of the Samjhauta Express, a train line linking Pakistan and India, and several railway officials have been dismissed for corruption.

Pakistan Interior Minister Moinuddin Haider said that Pakistani pressure on the Taliban resulted in some camp closures, but camps were really just being relocated, which Haider said was not good enough. Haider said that Pakistan had requested that the Taliban arrest and extradite wanted criminals to Pakistan, stop the immigration of Arabs into Pakistan, and cut back on production of heroin.

General Pervez Musharraf said that the five politicians who met with him endorsed the government's economic agenda, but added that restoration of the suspended assemblies has been reduced in importance because none of the politicians demanded that they be restored. Chief of the Pakistan National Reconstruction Board Syed Tanvir Hussain Naqvi has begun contacting "clean and loyal" politicians following General Pervez Musharraf's directives for devolution of power and establishment of district governments.

2. Foreign Relations: US/PRC

US Ambassador to Pakistan William B. Milam said that Pakistan should restore democracy as soon as possible because Pakistan was important regionally and to the US.

US intelligence officials have said that PRC experts have been observed around a Pakistani missile factory of PRC design, leading to assertions that the PRC continues to aid Pakistan's nuclear missile program. Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar dismissed these reports, as did other Pakistani government officials.

US intelligence reports will force the US to question the PRC over its missile sales and technology transfers to Pakistan during this week's Sino-US non-proliferation talks. The issue refreshes suspicions of the PRC and may interfere with passage of the bill to grant the PRC permanent normal trading relations-status.

3. Foreign Relations: India, Russia, China, Iraq

Pakistan Commerce Minister Razzaq Dawood first said that Pakistan was giving "active consideration" to extending most-favored nation trading status to India, then rescinded his statement and ruled out the possibility of MFN-status for India.

Moscow Radio was reported by the Times of India as having not commented on the autonomy resolution, but as saying that religious extremism in Kashmir would collapse once Pakistan ended its materiel and logistical support of terrorists in the Kashmir Valley.

Iraq and Pakistan have signed an agreement to increase cooperation in the exploration, extraction, and refining of crude oil.

4. Foreign Relations: Britain

While the British government has condemned the military coup in Pakistan, in the process of engaging the regime, it has decided to process a number of blocked export licenses for "a narrow and well-defined range of equipment." The British Foreign Office denied that Britain had lifted a ban on the export of arms to Pakistan. Exports that will not be useful for internal repression or for a role in Kashmir will be permitted, including parts or ships, planes and helicopters. Of 46 export licenses that were blocked since the Pakistani coup, 20 have been approved and 26 denied. An editorial in the Times of India argued that while Britain denies lifting sanctions on Pakistan which were never formally imposed, even providing naval and other equipment while blocking ammunition and small arms should make others question whether Britain is committed to supporting democracy in Pakistan. India's objections have so far been quiet to prevent disruption of India's own attempts to conclude arms deals with Britain.

Kashmir

1. Autonomy Resolution

An editorial in the Times of India argues that Prime Minister LK Advani has properly taken a non-confrontational stance towards the Kashmir autonomy resolution because he should consider any path to good governance in Kashmir. However, he must also consider if the current resolution creates good governance, because the resolution would exclude many positive institutions without creating replacements.

Indian Union Law Minister Ram Jethmalani said that the recent autonomy resolution adopted by Jammu and Kashmir indicates, "Pakistan has no reason to be happy about it as it clearly accepts the validity of accession and establishes that the people of Jammu and Kashmir do not want succession from India, but only more autonomy." Many in India have come out as opposed to the autonomy resolution. Panun Kashmir's chairman Ajay Chhangoo said, "The Farooq Abdullah-led National Conference is pursuing an agenda aimed at the second partition of the country. This is evidenced by the passing of the autonomy resolution." An editorial in The Hindu by Rajeev Dhavan argued that the passing of the resolution implies that the Jammu and Kashmir assembly accepts that the merger of India and Kashmir is irrevocable, that all of Kashmir, including the Pakistan controlled areas, is an integral part of India, and, finally, that autonomy is not succession. Nationalist Congress Party general secretary and spokesman Devendra Dwivedi said that autonomy demands for Jammu and

Kashmir have different standing than demands from other regions, but the autonomy resolution shows that while it was "ill-timed," the UN plebiscite resolution and Article 370 of the Constitution have become redundant. The Left parties accused the government of confusing the autonomy resolution with a general demand for devolution of power to the states, which they said ignored Jammu and Kashmir's special status.

Congress was quite divided over the autonomy resolution, with some feeling that amends must be made for the gradual loss of autonomy in Jammu and Kashmir, while others argued that the hands of time could not be turned back. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pramod Mahajan reported that the Union Cabinet had rejected the Jammu and Kashmir assembly autonomy resolution. Home Minister LK Advani said that the resolution did not create a constitutional crisis and said that there were clear demands for general devolution of power to the states. The statement by the Cabinet said that the Government was firm that "national integration and devolution of powers to States must go together." Rejecting the autonomy resolution is a rejection of pre-1953 status for the region. As news spread that the Union Cabinet rejected the autonomy resolution, there was celebration in Jammu and Kashmir by students, Panun Kashmir activists, Ladakh Buddhist Association workers, traders and other non-Nationalist Congress party people.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah said that the autonomy resolution was not meant to derail talks between India and the All-Party Hurriyat Conference, because the Hurriyat are "supported by Pakistan" and "the Center should talk to them so that Indian people will realize what the Hurriyat was all about." He met with Prime Minister Vajpayee and was informed of the impending decision on the resolution, which Vajpayee pointed out was firm while restrained and lacked condemnation for the resolution.

A Pakistan foreign office spokesman dismissed the autonomy resolution as "farcical" and reiterated Pakistan's position that the Jammu and Kashmir assembly was populated in rigged elections and that the conflict must be decided by the will of the Kashmiri people.

2. International Mediation

US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher urged restraint for both India and Pakistan, but would not comment on comments by US congressman that Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee be invited to speak before the Congress. Pakistan High Commissioner in India Ashraf Jehangir Kazi said that Pakistan favored intervention in the conflict by a third party, especially the US. He said, "the air of distrust that prevails between the two countries should not come in the way of talks, and if need be, then the intervention by a third country should be welcome."

India was unfazed about an Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) statement, drafted by Pakistan, that called for self-determination for Kashmir and international mediation in the conflict, partly because the OIC is struggling for relevancy and is given little political weight by its own members.

3. Pakistan-occupied Kashmir

The Times of India quoted Indian Army sources as saying that more than 250 people from villages in the Jammu district of Rajouri have migrated to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) because they had heard rumors of impending war and had been offered financial incentives.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah said, "Pakistani people might be keen to normalize relations with India but their government is not sincere in materializing this." He added that Pakistan must create an atmosphere supportive of talks by ending border hostilities and crossings by militants.

Sri Lanka

1. Overview

The government pushed an extension of the nationwide state of emergency through the Parliament despite strong opposition. Several days earlier, the government had reimposed restrictions on the media, with government spokesman Ariya Rubasinghe quoted as saying, "News that will affect our war efforts against terrorists will be censored. About other news, we leave it to journalists to use their own discretion about what to write." The restrictions apply to local and Colombo-based foreign media, and come three days after the Supreme Court ruled them illegal.

Muslims in the Trincomalee district barricaded roads and forced shops to close to protest the killing of a Muslim man by the LTTE, and demanded that the government protect the Muslims from the LTTE. The LTTE has been accused of driving out Muslims, which is one explanation for the recent rejection by Muslims of an LTTE offer to join together to fight for a homeland.

The LTTE last week suffered a series of defeats as government troops recaptured areas of the northern Jaffna Peninsula, north and east of Jaffna City, with the LTTE admitting to losing more than 35 people. The Sri Lankan army began rounding up 1,500 deserters, with Brigadier Palitha Fernando saying, "There will be no more amnesties for soldiers who deserted the army."

2. Draft Constitution

The LTTE rejected the present proposal for an interim council, saying it was too similar to an older British proposal that failed. The LTTE rejected the proposal, "because it has nothing substantial to form the foundation for a permanent solution to the Tamil national question." While moderate Tamil parties generally are attempting to create distance between themselves and the LTTE, there was consensus among them that the proposal was insufficient and that without the participation of the LTTE any proposal would be counter-productive.

The ruling People's Alliance and the opposition United National Party should have finalized an interim solution to the Tamil crisis in the draft Constitution, with the two sides deciding upon the powers of the executive president over the regional councils, regulations concerning the declaration of an emergency, and the transitional powers of the president. The package will then be presented to the moderate Tamil parties, but they are expected to reject it because the LTTE had unanimously rejected the proposal. The Norwegian envoy was prepared to take the proposal to the LTTE regardless. The new Constitution will be presented in late July to the Parliament for approval.

3. Regional Relations

In response to Sri Lanka's request for assistance, Pakistan provided ten multiple rocket launchers for fighting the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE); the PRC and Czech Republic offered similar weapon systems but they have yet to be delivered.

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga sent a special envoy to Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee to keep India informed of the most recent devolution package. Sri Lanka is aware that any shift in India's position on the Tamil crisis will have important effects in Sri Lanka. The envoy was told that India supports a political solution to the conflict.

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