

SANDNet Weekly Update, July 25, 2001

Recommended Citation

SANDNet, "SANDNet Weekly Update, July 25, 2001", SANDNet, July 25, 2001,
<https://nautilus.org/sandnet/sandnet-weekly-update-july-25-2001/>

CONTENTS

July 25, 2001

Volume 2, #30

Kashmir

1. Summit Commentary
2. Summit Follow-Up
3. Militant Groups
4. US Role in Kashmir
5. Recent Violence

Nuclear Issues

1. Summit Agenda
2. Pokhran II Test
3. India Nuclear Policy

India

1. Statements on Summit
2. India-Pakistan Dialogue
3. India-PRC Relations

Pakistan

1. Statements on Summit
2. Pakistan-US Relations
3. Military Hardware

Sri Lanka

1. Constitutional Referendum
2. Opposition Protests

Kashmir

1. Summit Commentary

Sashidananda Murthy writes in *The Week* that, during the Agra summit, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf presented Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee with a long list of demands on Kashmir, from recognition of Kashmir as the core issue and APHC participation in talks to the release of militants from Kashmiri jails. Vajpayee attempted to focus on issues such as trade and nuclear weapons, but Musharraf, reports the Indian delegation, threatened increased pressure on India in Kashmir if India did not accept Kashmir as the core issue. The Indian delegation managed to expand the agenda to three issues, including security and Confidence-Building Measures, Kashmir, and drugs and terrorism. Pakistan objected to the use of the term "cross-border" to describe the terrorism, reportedly stating, "Anyway you have to call it cross-Line of Control and that is part of the Kashmir issue." Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar also refused to include references to the Shimla and Lahore declarations unless India made concessions on Kashmir.

Pakistani politicians expressed that they had expected the Agra summit to fail. Mawabzada Nasrullah Khan, a leader of the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy, said, "This result does not come as a surprise," but indicated that the failure to reach an agreement would cause disappointment in Indian and resentment in Pakistan.

However, several analysts saw success in the ability of Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee to sit across the table from each other and discuss their bilateral relations. Jasjit Singh, Director of the Institute of Defense Studies and Analysis, said that while there may not have been an agreement from the summit, "We can not ignore that Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf had more than 10 hours of one to one talks." Singh added, "The issues on discussion have been there for more than 54 years and one can not expect a solution to such complex issues in a day or two." Analysts also expressed that the summit successfully reinforced Musharraf's political position in Pakistan.

Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar stated that the Agra summit was not a failure. He said that the two countries were twice close to agreeing to a final statement, but that he believed an agreement could be signed at the next meeting of the two leaders. Sattar expressed his hope that India would allow the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference to visit Pakistan for consultations soon. He also said that the Indian government prevented Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf from holding a press conference before his departure from Agra.

2. Summit Follow-Up

The Dawn reported that a source close to Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee has said that Vajpayee was pleased with his talks with Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and intends to continue talking with Musharraf. However, the source said Vajpayee was unhappy with how the summit ended. There is some concern about whether it was Home Minister L.K. Advani who was behind Information Minister Sushma Swaraj's statements to the media during the summit, and whether Advani had intended to derail the summit this way.

The Times of India reported that both India and Pakistan attempted to salvage the summit in its aftermath. Speaking after the Agra summit, Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar said that the common ground reached could be used to continue the dialogue. India Minister of External Affairs Jaswant Singh said it was not a failure despite the deadlock and that the summit was a step forward. Singh suggested that it was Pakistan's "segmented or unifocus" concern for Kashmir that prevented consideration of smaller issues.

The News reports that Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee and Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf agreed to meet three times in the upcoming months: in New York in September, in Kathmandu at the SAARC meeting, and again when Vajpayee reciprocates Musharraf's visit with his own to Pakistan. The News also reports that it was Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh who rejected the texts of the summit agreements twice after appearing close to accepting them, and that he also disrupted the summit with his statements before, during and after the summit.

The Dawn reports that Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary Gamini Wijayasiri has stated that the foreign secretaries of India, Chokila Iyer, and of Pakistan, Inamul Haq, will meet on the sidelines of the SAARC meeting in Colombo.

3. Militant Groups

All-Parties Hurriyat Conference leaders Abdul Gani Bhat and Abdul Gani Lone were among those criticizing Indian "hawks" who attempted to sabotage the summit. Both praised Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf for standing firm on Kashmir and renewed the APHC's demand that Kashmiris be included in any talks. Bhat stated, "As a matter of fact both want us to be involved... India would want us to be involved on the internal track, which Hurriyat has already rejected."

4. US Role in Kashmir

US officials distanced the US from remarks made by Secretary of State Colin Powell. Powell had expressed disappointment that the Agra summit did not achieve more, but added, "We will do everything we can to lend our good offices to the improvement of relations between the two countries and the outstanding difficult issues, whether it is Kashmir or nuclear issues." US officials have recently changed how they refer to the India-Pakistan relationship in order to move away from perceptions of their relations as a zero-sum game where gains by one necessarily mean losses by the other.

5. Recent Violence

India and Pakistan again traded artillery fire across the line of control. Pakistan government spokesman Major General Rashid Qureshi stated that Pakistani troops would retaliate if they were fired upon.

Nuclear Issues

1. Summit Agenda

Pakistani Ambassador to Russia, Saeed Iftikhar Murshed reported that nuclear safety issues would be high on the agenda of future India-Pakistan talks.

2. Pokhran II Test

Indian Atomic Energy Commission Chairman R. Chidambaram reacted to claims that the Pokhran II nuclear test achieved a yield of less than 40 kilotons (kT). Chidambaram stated that the yield was near 60 kT, and that international estimates otherwise are mistaken because they have erred in their measurement of interference and geological conditions at the test site. He justified his claims using rock samples and other data.

3. India Nuclear Policy

Indian acting representative to the UN Satyabrata Pal stressed the need for a time-bound abolition of nuclear weapons through a multilateral agreement.

India

1. Statements on Summit

Briefing the National Democratic Alliance parties on the Agra summit, Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee said that he hoped to be able to sign a comprehensive agreement with Pakistan during his anticipated visit there. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pramod Mahajan later stated that the opposition parties backed the decision to continue negotiations with Pakistan. However, he said that the heads of most political parties insisted that the government have a more structured agenda for future talks. Mahajan said that Pakistan apparently wanted to use the summit as a platform for publicizing its views on Kashmir.

Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee said that although he and Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf had agreed on several points, talks broke down because Musharraf would not make any reference to cross-border terrorism in the draft document they were trying to prepare. Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh reported after the summit that Pakistan had refused to allow working-level meetings before the summit to prepare documents and an agenda for the summit.

The Times of India reported that people in India have been critical of the Agra summit, expressing that there was little progress.

2. India-Pakistan Dialogue

Indian Minister of External Affairs and of Defense Jaswant Singh accepted an invitation from Pakistani counterpart Abdul Sattar to visit Pakistan. A date has not yet been set for the visit.

3. India-PRC Relations

A report prepared by the US CIA Strategic Estimates Program states that the PRC believes the chances of war with India are declining, though it does see the increased likelihood of a number of smaller, regional threats. According to the report, the PRC "views the probability of war to be declining with Russia, India and Vietnam, increasing with the US and Japan, and ever present with Taiwan and South China Sea regional states."

Pakistan

1. Statements on Summit

An article in The Dawn includes the text of Musharraf's statement after returning from the Agra summit in India.

During the Agra summit, Indian officials raised the issue of purported Indian Prisoners of War (POWs) held by Pakistan. Indian claims that Pakistan may hold as many as 54 Indian POWs. Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf denied that Pakistan held any POWs but ordered that prisons across Pakistan be checked. The News reports that this may be the same list of 54 POWs that India sought to recover in 1991, but which Pakistan could not find after an investigation into the matter.

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf described the Agra summit as promising for India-Pakistan relations. He said he was hopeful that an agreement could be signed between the two countries, but also said that if both countries had been sincere going into the talks, an agreement could have been

worked out in just a half-hour. Musharraf stated that Kashmir would continue to be the core issue.

2. Pakistan-US Relations

US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher, when asked whether the US had decided to change the honorific used to refer to Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf from "General" to "President," said, "Well, my piece of paper refers to him as President Musharraf, so that's good enough for us at the moment." The Dawn reports this development as US acceptance of Musharraf's self-elevation.

3. Military Hardware

Pakistani media reported that Pakistan will add an additional 300 Al-Khalid tanks to its military by 2007.

Sri Lanka

1. Constitutional Referendum

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga began lobbying members of her ruling coalition to support a referendum for a new constitution. Kumaratunga believes that the new constitution will aid in ending the long conflict with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

2. Opposition Protests

The US Embassy in Sri Lanka issued a warning stating that it expected civil unrest in the event the opposition United National Party follows through with promises of protests. The UNP is hoping to pressure the government to recall parliament after suspending it. The opposition parties have also begun to write up articles of impeachment against Kumaratunga.

View this online at: <https://nautilus.org/sandnet/sandnet-weekly-update-july-25-2001/>

Nautilus Institute

2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org