

# SANDNet Weekly Update, June 7, 2001

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## Recommended Citation

SANDNet, "SANDNet Weekly Update, June 7, 2001", SANDNet, June 07, 2001,  
<https://nautilus.org/sandnet/sandnet-weekly-update-june-7-2001/>

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## **Nuclear Issues**

### **1. Pakistan Proliferation Concerns**

US Assistant Secretary of State Richard Armitage asserted in an interview with the Financial Times that the US was concerned about proliferation by Pakistan, especially in regards to the activities of "people who were employed by the nuclear agency and have retired." US officials are reported to have said there are indications that there have been direct contacts between Pakistani nuclear officials and DPRK representatives.

### **2. India Missile Program**

Indian Defense Minister Jaswant Singh informed a parliamentary committee attached to his ministry that the Agni-II ballistic missile, with a range of 2,000 km, was operational and is in limited production to be inducted into the military during 2001-2002.

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## **India**

### **1. India-Russia Relations**

Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov stated that Russia, "Must conduct a dialogue with the US, China and India to find a common response to the new threats in the 21st century." Referring to the US plan to deploy missile defenses, he said, "We should neutralize these threats, but not at the cost of security and international stability."

Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh began four days of talks in Russia with foreign ministry and defense officials there. Russia is attempting to coordinate international response to US plans to deploy missile defense. The Times of India reports that Russia is likely to use the opportunity to attempt to clarify India's positive response to US missile defense plans, as India is one of the few to not respond with skepticism. The two countries are expected to sign several arms deals during the visit.

### **2. India-US Relations**

US National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice appointed Afghan-born Zalmay Khalilzad, former director of RAND's Project Air Force program on Strategy, Doctrine and Force Structure, to be senior director of the National Security Council's Gulf, South and Southwest Asia and Other Regional Issues group. A study recently completed by Khalilzad proposed that the US encourage a balance of power between Russia, India and the PRC to prevent any of them from uniting against the US or from dominating one another.

The Dawn reports that India's ability to achieve a stronger relationship with the US has been linked with India's efforts to improve relations with Pakistan. An article by US Ambassador Teresita

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Schaffer and Mandavi Mehta in CSIS' South Asia Monitor, cited in The Dawn, states that India may be more receptive than previously to US pressure to encouragement on the peace process. They also argue that India wants the US to acknowledge its increased security interests along the Indian Ocean from the Strait of Malacca to the Suez Canal.

### **3. India-Pakistan Summit**

Indian Home Minister L.K. Advani, speaking about the invitation to visit India extended recently to Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf, said that the relationship with Pakistan would be strong but friendly. He said, "There would be no relaxation in the area of security, but the country was prepared for friendship."

Advani later said that extending an invitation to talks to Musharraf did not accord legitimacy to Pakistan's military regime.

### **4. Kashmir Dialogue**

The Indian government interlocutor for talks in Kashmir, K.C. Pant, speaking as he began talks with representatives of political parties, said the Kashmiris wishes and aspirations were being noted during his talks. K.C. Pant said that all groups which did not assist in the peace process, referring to the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference's resistance to participate, will need to answer to the Kashmiri people for their "obstructionist attitude."

K.C. Pant met with former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and leader of the Awami National Council Ghulam Mohammad Shah. Shah said, "I told Pant 'what is there left to talk about when your Jaswant Singh says that Kashmir is an integral part of India.'" Without tripartite talks, he said, "Proxy war will remain a proxy war and change into regular war, and finally lead to nuclear war."

### **5. Nepal Regicide**

Following the Nepalese regicide, India sealed its border with Nepal to vehicles and placed its troops on red-alert. Border access for vehicular traffic was restored on June 4. The Times of India reports that the 1950 Indo-Nepal treaty guarantees citizens of both countries freedom to cross their shared border.

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## **Pakistan**

### **1. Pakistan-India Relations**

Pakistan's Jamaat-e-Islami, its largest political party, extended its support to Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf's upcoming visit to India. The party's support provides Musharraf with support against those resisting engagement with India, though the party's statement also puts some restrictions upon Musharraf's range of policy responses.

The Times of India and The Hindu reported that Pakistan Rangers opened fire with light weapons, firing upon Indian border posts in Jammu, Akhnoor and Kathua. No injuries or damage was reported.

### **2. Indian Fisherman**

The Pakistan Maritime Security Agency has released 158 detained Indian fishermen, including three

children, and their 34 boats. Their departure was delayed from June 4 to June 7 due to rough seas. 196 Indian fishermen remain in Pakistani custody. India released 160 Pakistani fishermen in April, and 229 remain detained.

### **3. Pakistan-US Relations**

Christine Rocca was sworn in as US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Affairs, replacing Karl Inderfurth. Rocca said during her Senate confirmation hearings that sanctioned against India and Pakistan should be repealed. She said, "My perspective is the sanctions have outlived their usefulness and we need to find a new framework."

The Dawn reports that US plans for missile defense will be among the issues discussed during Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar's trip to the US. The Times of India reports that since the recent warming of India-Pakistan relations, Sattar's proposed visit is being viewed in a more positive light.

### **4. Kargil Incident**

Former US President Bill Clinton revealed to the BBC that it may have been partly at his insistence that Pakistan withdrew from Kargil and that subsequently then-President Nawaz Sharif was ousted in a coup. When Sharif sought to visit the US and meet with Clinton on July 4 of that year, Clinton said, "You cannot come for this emergency meeting unless you're prepared to withdraw Pakistani troops back over the Line of Control and the second thing is you cannot expect me now to say I intend to mediate in this conflict because the Indian's will not have it."

### **5. Pakistan-Russia Relations**

The Russian daily Izvestia published an interview with Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf, in which he expressed displeasure at Russia's one-sided support of India, but also asked for Russian mediation in the dialogue on Kashmir. Musharraf also stated that Pakistan would conduct nuclear tests and develop its nuclear arsenal if needed to keep pace with India. Musharraf also inquired as to what changes Russia would like to see in order to approve fighter jet sales to Pakistan.

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf also said in his interview by Izvestia that Russia should recognize the Taliban's rule in Afghanistan in order to increase stability there.

### **6. Military Hardware**

Pakistan will roll-out the first batch of fifteen Al-Khalid main battle tanks, manufactured in collaboration with the PRC, for trials in July. Defense officials stated that they hoped that fifty could be manufactured per year beginning at the end of 2002. "Pak to roll out Al-Khalid tanks next month"

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## **Kashmir**

### **1. India-Pakistan Relations**

Indian Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pramod Mahajan stated that Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf was likely to visit India during the first half of July for the summit meeting with Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee. The summit cannot take place in June because Vajpayee is scheduled to undergo knee surgery.

### **2. Commentary on India-Pakistan Relations**

Badri Raina writes in *The Hindu* that Indian hard-liners must avoid antagonizing the situation, just as Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf must have already recognized that India is humbling itself by inviting him to talks. Raina states that India must be prepared to put forward honest proposals at the summit, but that Musharraf must also recognize the validity of India's constraints.

An essay in *The Hindu* argues that Kashmiris are awaiting the Musharraf-Vajpayee summit for developments concerning Kashmir, because K.C. Pant, though he was purported to be the Indian government's negotiator, appears to be concerned primarily with development issues. The essay also states that many Kashmiri militant groups are not prepared to enter talks with the Indian government on present terms, though the essay does not explain why specifically. The essay does state that harsh statements by External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh eroded Pant's credibility.

Vijay Pushkarna writes in *The Week* that Kashmiri people were hopeful because of the gesture by Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee, and not necessarily because Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf is to visit India. However, Pushkarna argues, the ease with which rumors spread regarding violence points the ease with which saboteurs can pre-empt and derail summit talks.

Pran Chopra writes in *The Hindu* that India-Pakistan summit talks could follow the agenda of the Lahore talks, but that Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf should feel free to propose changes to this agenda. Chopra argues that both countries must not disown any agreement on the basis of a change in government. Chopra states that Pakistan has already endangered the talks by seeking a mediation role for Russia in the summit.

### **3. India-Kashmir Dialogue**

The Panun Kashmir group stated that their delegation had met with Indian interlocutor K.C. Pant and told him that the best solution for Kashmir would be to have Kashmir reorganized with the status of a Union territory.

### **4. Militant Groups**

All-Parties Hurriyat Conference chairman Abdul Gani Bhat expressed confidence that the APHC would play a central role in any realistic dialogue between India and Pakistan over Kashmir.

Hizbul Mujahideen commander Abdul Majid Dar stated that his group would stop militant activities in Jammu and Kashmir if Pakistan and India adopted a "realistic approach" to solving the Kashmir issue. Dar said the Hizbul would not be an impediment to the peace process, but did not indicate what specific steps would lead to a cessation of violence by the group. Dar came into prominence when he declared a unilateral ceasefire last July.

### **5. Recent Violence**

Three militants who had been trapped in a mosque for twenty hours in Srinagar were granted safe passage to escape in order to preserve the sanctity of the mosque. Two Indian security force troops had been killed and another injured.

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## **Sri Lanka**

### **1. SAARC**

Sri Lanka informed regional foreign ministers due to visit for the June 8 meetings of the SAARC

Standing Committee of Foreign Secretaries that it was postponing the meeting out of respect for the recent regicide in Nepal.

## **2. LTTE Ban**

The Sri Lankan government, said media minister Anura Yapa, would not lift its ban on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) prior to the beginning of Norwegian-back peace talks. This statement dims the likelihood of imminent talks.

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