



SANDNet Weekly Update, March 15, 2000

Recommended Citation

SANDNet, "SANDNet Weekly Update, March 15, 2000", SANDNet, March 15, 2000,
<https://nautilus.org/sandnet/sandnet-weekly-update-march-15-2000/>

CONTENTS

March 15, 2000

Pakistan

1. Nuclear Strategy
2. Domestic Politics
3. Security Planning
4. Pakistan-U.S. Relations

India

5. Nuclear Strategy: Analysis
6. Security Planning
7. India-U.S. Relations
8. India-China Relations

Kashmir

9. India-Pakistan Interactions
10. International Influence

Sri Lanka

11. Constitutional Accommodation
12. International Mediation

Bangladesh

13. CTBT
 14. Bangladesh-U.S. Relations
-

Pakistan

- 1. Nuclear Strategy**
-

The Federation of Atomic Scientists (FAS) unveiled new satellite images of Pakistani nuclear facilities at Khushab and Sargodha. FAS spokesman John Pike says the images show that "Pakistan has laid the groundwork for a force of dozens of nuclear tipped missiles capable of striking Indian cities and military bases. But Pakistan is in danger of having most of its nuclear eggs in one basket."

In separate interviews, Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee ruled out the possibility of a nuclear war. The full text of the Musharraf interview appears at the link below.

The South Asian press widely reported the U.S. rejection of a recent Russian proposal for a sharp reduction strategic nuclear warheads. According to U.S. State Department Spokesman James Rubin, "We don't want to go any lower because we need these weapons for nuclear deterrence."

2. Domestic Politics

Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf announced that he would unveil "a new system to run the country" on March 23.

Analysis: Sumit Ganguly (in the U.S.-based journal Foreign Affairs) points to the institutional shortcomings that help to explain the coup in Pakistan. He then suggests steps that the current Pakistani and U.S. governments can take to ease Pakistan towards democracy.

3. Security Planning

Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar said that he sees "great danger" of a war with India, especially "taking into consideration India's proactive policy in Kashmir."

4. Pakistan-U.S. Relations

Karl Inderfurth, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, gave a major briefing of U.S. policy interests in South Asia. [Inderfurth's full comments appear at the first link below.] President Bill Clinton acknowledged that "Pakistan was our ally throughout the Cold War. Since I've been president, Pakistan on more than one occasion has helped us to arrest terrorists, often at some risk to the regime." He continued, however, to emphasize that his visit to Islamabad is "not a reward" for the Musharraf regime and to reiterate that the U.S. would not mediate on the Kashmir issue.

Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf said that President Bill Clinton's decision to visit Islamabad represents a gesture of support for the Musharraf government. Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar again expressed his hope that the U.S. would mediate a Pakistan-India dialogue over the Kashmir issue. Indian Ambassador to the U.S. Naresh Chandra said that New Delhi would not ask President Clinton to convey any messages to Islamabad.

Pakistani analysis: M.B. Naqvi (in Dawn) argues that Pakistan and the U.S. can at least begin meaningful discussions on nine issues ranging from nuclear proliferation and transparency to narcotics trafficking. A Dawn editorial urges that the Musharraf government stop celebrating the existence of a Clinton trip and prepare to make it a valuable one.

Indian analysis: K. Subrahmanyam (in Times of India) argues that the Clinton visit to Pakistan works to India's advantage because Clinton will press the Pakistani government to make the kinds of changes that India desires as well. Sunanda K. Datta-Ray (originally in the International Herald Tribune) fears that the Clinton visit to Pakistan will intensify Indian public opposition to U.S.-India relations and lower further the possibility for a substantively meaningful outcome to the South Asia

visit.

India

5. Nuclear Strategy: Analysis

V. R. Raghavan (in *The Hindu*) points to an inconsistency between the state of India's nuclear science and the Indian government's draft nuclear doctrine: the doctrine projects a credible nuclear deterrent but the science appears incapable of generating the nuclear miniaturization required to deliver, without further tests. Srinivas Laxman reports on the cost of nuclear deterrence. New data suggest that a credible nuclear force structure would cost between 0.25 and 0.5 percent of gross domestic product over a 15 to 20 year period.

6. Security Planning

Defense Minister George Fernandes said that "an experts group" would be created to advise the government about how to implement recommendations from the Subrahmanyam Committee report on the Summer 1999 Kargil conflict. "Government sources" report that Pakistan has imported enough special equipment to outfit an entire battalion in winter high-altitude gear. This information led Defense Minister Fernandes to warn of a new build-up on the Pakistani side of the Line of Control in Kashmir.

7. India-U.S. Relations

Karl Inderfurth, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, gave a major briefing of U.S. policy interests in South Asia.

Analysis: Siddharth Varadarajan and Manoj Joshi (in *Times of India*) urge Prime Minister Vajpayee to "get away from a naïve fascination with grand strategy" and focus on concrete "deliverables." Sridhar Krishnaswami argues that new statements by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Karl Inderfurth and U.S. Senator Sam Brownback underscore the new relationship that is developing between the U.S. and India.

8. India-China Relations

China and India completed their first-ever security dialogue. China strongly urged India not to nuclearize its military. India insisted that China stop providing nuclear and ballistic missile technology to Pakistan. Both sides said that the talks were productive, friendly, and helped to enhance bilateral trust.

Jasjit Singh, director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, predicted "a period of growing India-China cooperation in the coming ten years." Chinese President Zhiang Zemin announced that the People's Liberation Army would be reduced by 500,000 troops to a new total of two million soldiers.

Rai Di, the second-highest leader in Tibet's Communist Party, alleged that the Dalai Lama has "attempted to control and use the 17th Karmapa to serve their own ulterior motives. Separately, the Dalai Lama said that the Indian government has "informally, unofficially" indicated that the Karmapa Lama, who traveled from Tibet to India in January 2000, would be allow to stay in India.

Kashmir

9. India-Pakistan Interactions

The Times of India reports that Indian army analysts are concerned that Pakistan might try to trigger an Indian "hot pursuit" following a Pakistani-supported freedom-fighter attack along the Line of Control (LoC). In response, the Indian army plans to implement a strategy called "vigilance in force." Rather than pre-empt or respond to LoC tensions, the new strategy intends to deter Pakistani actions.

Pakistani Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf said that his ability to control terrorist activities in Kashmir was limited. Musharraf explained that, if over 700,000 Indian troops in Kashmir could not stop infiltration, how could he do so? The Pakistani National Security Council agreed that President Bill Clinton would be briefed about the "hegemonic designs of India."

10. International Influence

Both Indian and Pakistani press probed the possibility that President Clinton might attempt to engage the Kashmir issue without becoming an official mediator. The U.S. State Department once again said that Clinton would not mediate on the Kashmir issue.

Sri Lanka

11. Constitutional Accommodation

President Chandrika Kumaratunga chief opposition leader Ranil Wickeremesinghe met, for the first time in two years, to discuss the substance and process of constitutional devolution of powers for the northeast. The meetings are expected to continue for several months.

12. International Mediation

The Norwegian government fell on March 9, leading to questions regarding Norway's role as a mediator for Sri Lanka. The new government promised to continue the process, but no foreign minister has been nominated for the task.

Bangladesh

13. CTBT

Bangladesh ratified the CTBT. Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad refused to link CTBT ratification with the U.S. State Visit planned for March 20.

14. Bangladesh-U.S. Relations

Dhaka plans to seek expanded defense ties and military purchases from Washington during next week's State Visit. Clinton is certain to ask Bangladesh to sell more natural gas abroad. American Chamber President Forrest Cookson estimated that Bangladesh could earn \$600 million annually

through gas exports to India. Over 300 Bangladeshi students clashed with police in another Dhaka protest against the presidential visit.

View this online at: <https://nautilus.org/sandnet/sandnet-weekly-update-march-15-2000/>