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# SANDNet Weekly Update, May 16, 2001

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## Recommended Citation

SANDNet, "SANDNet Weekly Update, May 16, 2001", SANDNet, May 16, 2001,  
<https://nautilus.org/sandnet/sandnet-weekly-update-may-16-2001/>

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**Volume 2, #20**

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### Nuclear Issues

#### 1. US Missile Defense Consultations

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US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage met in India with Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee, External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh and National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra to discuss the proposed US missile defense program and other aspects of US President George Bush's proposed strategic framework, including nuclear arms cuts and efforts in nonproliferation and counter-proliferation. Armitage told the press that the PRC had begun its nuclear weapons development program before the US announced its missile defense plans.

The Dawn reports that as India expressed its support for the US missile defense plan, it was met with negative reactions. Iraq, with whom India is negotiating for an oil pipeline, rejected two shipments of Indian wheat.

## **2. Commentary on Armitage Visit**

C. Raja Mohan writes in The Hindu that India is signaling its desire for a significant shift in India-US bilateral relations with its support for the US missile defense proposal, though it remains to be seen if this is the result of high-level talks between the Indian government and visiting US envoy Richard Armitage. Mohan argues that India's response to the speech by US President George Bush was recognition of the two countries' shared strategic interests in the rejection of Mutually Assured Destruction, nuclear arms cuts and new nonproliferation efforts. Mohan also argues that the US pursuit of missile defense permits India to cooperate in building a new world security order, after being marginalized by the "discriminatory" Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

K.K. Katyal writes in The Hindu that the sharp public response to the Indian government's support for the US missile defense plan will affect upcoming India-US talks. Katyal states that this policy decision was like many others in that the opposition party was not consulted, but also states that the opposition's position on missile defense could balance the government's support enough to draw attention to the less desirable implications of missile defense. Anita Katyal reports in the Times of India that the Congress Party's criticisms became suddenly muted after party president Sonia Gandhi and other party officials met with US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage. Katyal states that the Congress Party's statements were likely driven by domestic politics rather than by global strategic concerns.

The Hindu reported on a Straights Times (Singapore) editorial critical of the Bush administration's pursuit of missile defense despite the technical failures and the assertions of experts that the threats are exaggerated. The editorial argues that missile and nuclear arms proliferation is the likely result of missile defense deployment.

## **3. India Nuclear Policy**

India's Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) stated in its annual report that it would continue development of a "minimum" nuclear deterrent. The report did not mention how many nuclear weapons were considered a minimum deterrent. The DAE report also indicated that work is proceeding on India's terra-watt laser, to be used for simulating nuclear detonations.

Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee stated that India would support US plans for nuclear arms cuts, but reiterated India's goal of deploying a minimum nuclear deterrent as a basic security umbrella. He also stated that India had demonstrated that it was a "responsible nuclear power" and not a proliferation concern.

The Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace (CNDP) urged India to rollback its nuclear program and resume the pursuit of global nuclear disarmament.

## **4. South Asian Nuclear Issues**

Jasjit Singh, Director of the New Delhi-based Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, discusses India's nuclear command and control options, pointing out that options flow from India's choices on nuclear doctrine, strategy and force structure. Singh states that India's no-first-use policy means India must have a secure second-strike capability, but also does not need to maintain its nuclear forces on a hair-trigger alert. Singh argues that for constitutional reasons, command and control must be exercised by the Prime Minister. Further, a specific planning body should be the sole party to authorize targeting policy and force deployments, and Singh recommends the Defense Committee of the Cabinet be resurrected to serve this role. Below the ministerial level, Singh states, there is a need to resolve operational command and control, such as through an Indian Air Force-led Strategic Air Command, though the scientific community will maintain the warheads and the Army should provide physical security for the warheads.

P.K. Gosh, a Research Fellow with the New Delhi-based Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, argues that while missile defense deployments may reverse current trends, most nuclear states are now moving towards a minimalist deterrent force with implications for their force structures. Gosh argues states are increasingly dependent upon a second-strike capability, such as that possible with nuclear submarines, and are becoming less dependent upon bomber forces and land-based missiles. Gosh reviews the state of the nuclear triad (land, sea, and air-deployable nuclear forces) in Britain, France, the PRC, Russia, the US, Israel, India and Pakistan. Gosh states that India's and Pakistan's delivery capabilities are tactical or substrategic in nature. Gosh argues that the most distinguishable trend is towards a submarine-deployed, minimalist deterrent force.

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## **India**

### **1. US-India Security Relations**

US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage met in India with Indian officials to consult on missile defense, but was also seeking assurances that India would limit its nuclear weapons development program. Armitage reportedly hopes that such assurances will appease nonproliferation advocates in the US and enable the Bush administration to end sanctions against India. He said, "It is the beginning of many consultations and it is the beginning of a new relationship between the US and India." Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh said, "We are endeavoring to work out together a totally new security regime which is for the entire globe."

### **2. India-PRC Military Contacts**

Indian Air Force (IAF) Air Chief Marshall Anil Y. Tipnis will visit the PRC for one week at the invitation of the PRC. While India and the PRC held their first security dialogue last year and exchanged high-level political visits, security contacts have been low-level.

### **3. Regional Security Issues**

Jyotsna Bakshi, a Research Fellow with the New Delhi-based Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, examines the implications for India of the changing role of Russia and the PRC in Central Asia. Bakshi states that both Russia and the PRC have an interest in using the Shanghai Five group to increase stability and peace in Central Asia. Bakshi argues that India also has an interest in these goals, but may not want to join the Shanghai Five because of its ongoing border dispute with the PRC.

Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee and Tajikistan President Emomali Sharifovich Rakhmonov signed five agreements and a joint declaration on their bilateral relations. Foreign ministers for each country also signed a treaty on mutual assistance to tackle problems with terrorism.

Sanjana Joshi, a Research Officer with the New Delhi-based Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, writes that India is expanding its security perimeter to areas of the Asia-Pacific where it comes into contact with Japan's similarly expanding security perimeter. Joshi argues that because India and Japan's security interests overlap on a regional and global level, they should be able to cooperate on security issues.

#### **4. India-Kashmir Dialogue**

The Indian government interlocutor for talks with Kashmiri groups, K.C. Pant, indicated that he may hold talks with separatist leader Shabir Shah.

The Dawn reported that Indian newspapers are stating that the Indian government's Kashmir policy includes the two goals of dividing Kashmir along communal lines while also splitting anti-India groups with power-sharing agreements.

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### **Pakistan**

#### **1. US Missile Defense Proposal**

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf relayed Pakistan's objection to the proposed US missile defense shield. Musharraf said, "It would undermine international efforts aimed at arms control and disarmament." He also said missile defenses would stimulate a new arms race.

#### **2. Pakistan-PRC Economic Relations**

PRC Premier Zhu Rongji visited Pakistan as part of a five-nation tour of Asia. He met with Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf and President Rafiq Tarar, and thanked Pakistan for supporting the PRC in difficult times. Pakistan and the PRC are expected to sign seven agreements improving their economic relations. Zhu said the PRC was ready to bring new vitality to their bilateral relationship.

The PRC Foreign Ministry invited a local representative of the Indian High Commission to a joint PRC-Pakistan press conference for the international media in order to emphasize that PRC-Pakistan ties were not directed against any third country. PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhang Qiyue said, "India is a close neighbor... We would like the ties to develop further."

The PRC Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation announced that it was ending 'soft' loans to Pakistan and would instead be offering concessional state loans. The Ministry stated that this change was pursuant with market-oriented reforms in the PRC.

PRC Premier Zhu Rongji said the PRC supported Pakistan's calls for the peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue. Zhu acknowledged that resolution of the issue would not be easy, stating, "Kashmir is a leftover of history and a very complicated issue."

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### **Kashmir**

## **1. India-Pakistan Border Talks**

At a biannual meeting of India's Border Security Forces and Pakistan's Rangers, the two forces agreed to end firing across the border, targeting of civilians, and the building of fences or other security structures along the Working Boundary. They were also to discuss routine topics such as illegal border crossings and drug smuggling.

## **2. Recent Violence**

The Hizbul Mujahideen claimed responsibility for two attacks in New Delhi, which left one person injured.

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## **Sri Lanka**

### **1. Peace Process**

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar took a step towards peace talks with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) by asking Norway to assist in arranging a pre-negotiations truce with the LTTE. These moves are to alleviate the hardships violence imposes upon civilians, said Kadirgamar.

LTTE chief negotiator Anton Balasingham stated, however, that there have been discussions but that it was premature to say that an agreement had been reached. Norwegian diplomats indicated that they agreed with the LTTE that there was no agreement at this time.

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