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Nuclear Issues

1. Pakistan Nuclear Safety

Speaking on CNN, Mohamed El-Baradi, Director of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), stated that the nuclear weapons program in Pakistan is adequately protected.

Indian writer Praful Bidwai argues that it would be "suicidal" to discount the possibility of Pakistan's nuclear weapons falling into pro-Taliban hands.

2. India Nuclear Safety

A study by the Islamabad-based Institute of Strategic Studies has suggested that Indian nuclear facilities are not adequately protected against the danger of either theft or leakage.

3. Related News and Analysis

Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee has claimed that Indira Gandhi, India's Prime Minister in the 1970s, was in favor of conducting nuclear tests.

Afghanistan War and Implications

1. Afghanistan: Current Situation

General Abdul Rashid Dostam, an ethnic Uzbek who leads one army of the Northern Alliance force, has claimed that his men have taken control of the strategic northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif. The Taliban rejected earlier reports that the Northern Alliance had advanced towards Mazar-e-Sharif.

"Afghan opposition 'captures' Mazar-e-Sharif"

"Anti-Taliban forces near Mazar"

"Taliban deny fall of Sholgara"

A spokesman for Harkat Jihad-i-Islami, a militant group allied with the ruling Taliban, has reported casualties in northern Afghanistan.

"Eighty Five Harkat fighters killed in bombing"

Afghan Islamic Press has reported civilian casualties and claimed the downing of four U.S. planes.

["Taliban say 37 civilians killed"](#)

Writing in the Asia Times, Pepe Escobar describes the secretive political activities of Afghans in Quetta, Pakistan.

["Operator, call a sat-phone number in Toba"](#)

2. Afghanistan: Future Prospects

According to a report in The News, Iran and Pakistan have been discussing the possibility of a broad-based future government in Afghanistan. Turkey, however, has stated that it is opposed to the inclusion of the Taliban, while accepting the need to include Pashtuns in a future Afghan government.

Shaheen Sehbai, editor of a major newspaper in Pakistan, argues that Afghanistan "cannot be ruled by one person or one government sitting in Kabul."

3. Humanitarian Crisis

The United Nations has begun moving Afghan refugee from their temporary camps just inside Pakistan to safer inland sites.

4. Pakistan

The Pakistan government has asked the Taliban to close down its consulate in Karachi.
"Taliban asked to shut Karachi mission"

Pakistan's Interior Minister Moinuddin Haider has announced that activists of religious parties will be prevented from entering Afghanistan.
["Jihadis not being allowed to cross border"](#)

President Gen Pervez Musharraf has again called for a halt in the US-led bombing on Afghanistan during Ramadan.
["Musharraf for quick end to US operation: Talks held in Iran, Turkey"](#)

5. India

India has denied allegations that its army officers are working with U.S. forces in aiding the Northern Alliance

Writing in Economic and Political Weekly, Balraj Puri argues that "in its post-September 11 role India has neither been able to promote its national interest nor raise its moral and political stature in the world."

6. U.S. Role

Wali Masood, ambassador to London of former Afghan president Burhanuddin Rabbani and a senior diplomat with the Northern Alliance, has warned that "imposed (political) formulas have never worked in Afghanistan."

In a report from Uzbekistan, Priscilla Patton has warned that the US support for Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov may bring an anti-Washington government into power in Uzbekistan.
["US turns a blind eye toward its Uzbek hosts"](#)

7. General Assessments

United Nations human rights officials have criticized the U.S. decision to simultaneously bombard Afghanistan with bombs and food.
["Bombs for fathers, bread for children' under attack"](#)

In his weekly column in Dawn, Pakistan, Ayaz Amir sharply criticized both the U.S. actions in Afghanistan and the Pakistani government's decision to support the U.S.

Waldon Bello's essay in Frontline, India, argues that "in the war between the United States and Osama bin Laden, the latter is coming out ahead."

A report in Asia Times by Marc Erikson detailed Al-Qaeda's finances and suggested that "maintaining and efficiently controlling the highly compartmentalized Al-Qaeda international

network of cells, operatives and support personnel requires in the range of US\$5 million a year."
["Islamic terrorists' budgets"](#)

Pakistani scholar Kaiser Bengalis wrote in Dawn, Pakistan that the war in Afghanistan "is a war for achieving strategic economic and political objectives for the exclusive benefit of the United States." He argues that "the removal of the Taliban regime through war will have disastrous consequences for Pakistan."

["Contextualizing Afghan War"](#)

Pakistan

1. Domestic Situation

Widespread anti-government protests were reported in various cities of Pakistan.

["Pakistani protesters apply the brakes"](#)

2. Pakistan-India Relations

Speaking in Paris, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf criticized India's position on Kashmir and accused India of conducting "state-terrorism" in Kashmir.

Pakistan has accused India of launching artillery and mortar barrages at civilian targets across the Kashmir border.

["Unprovoked shelling by India, says Pakistan"](#)

India

1. India-U.S. Relations

Press Trust of India has reported that a U.S. proposal for a "major military alliance" was rejected by India.

Kashmir

1. Internal Situation

Shops and businesses remained closed in Kashmir valley on Friday in response to a strike called by militant anti-Indian groups.

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