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Nuclear Issues

1. UK-India Nuclear Diplomacy

British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook stated, after meeting with Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh, that India and the UK would resume diplomacy over nuclear issues in April, with the hope that Pakistan's stand on signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty will be clear by then. They will also coordinate efforts at the UN Conference on Disarmament. British diplomacy with India on nuclear issues may change depending on the results of the US election, as the UK does not take an independent position on nuclear weapons.

"India, UK to resume N-diplomacy"

2. Pakistan Nuclear Policy

A presentation at Pakistan's IDEAS 2000 defense exhibition argued that the nature of Pakistan's threat perceptions, focused on India and Kashmir, requires a reframing of strategic doctrines, because there could not be a distinction between Pakistan's nuclear strategy and its tactics.

India

1. Overview

P.R. Chari, Director of the New Delhi Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, argues that the nature of conflict has changed with the end of the Cold War, with an increased focus on non-traditional internal and transnational threats to state security. Chari argues that these concerns have given rise to a crisis of governance in India, a crisis in which the state is increasingly immobile to act.

The Indian Air Force, Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard began a major exercise near Gujarat. Analysts said that the location was significant because of its proximity to the Pakistani border. The exercises included the participation of India's newest submarine, the INS Sindhushastra, first Indian submarine capable of firing anti-shiping Klub cruise missiles.

2. Afghanistan

The first meeting of the India-Russia Joint Working Group (JWG) on Afghanistan was held in India. Participants were to discuss the Taliban's recent military advances and future developments if the Taliban gains full control of Afghanistan. Also of concern are Taliban-sponsored terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, and drug trafficking. The Taliban's status as an observer at the recent Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) indicated that the its isolation is not likely to continue.

Russian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs V.I. Trubnikov, speaking at the India-Russia JWG on Afghanistan, stated that there was "a lot of scope" for trilateral cooperation on Afghanistan by Russia, India, and the US.

3. India-PRC Relations

An editorial in the Times of India by Manoj Joshi argues that the recent talks between India and the PRC over the disputed Line of Actual Control (LAC) have historically had problems in implementation. Joshi also argues that the separation of the border issues from other security issues has reduced Indian security because of the assistance the PRC has given Pakistan with its weapons programs.

The Times of India reported that the PRC has built a road stretching nearly five kilometers across the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and into India in Ladakh. The article states that the PRC will use the road and evidence of other use of the area to justify its claims to territory along the LAC, as India and the PRC differ by as much as 4-5 km in where they place the border.

4. Foreign Relations: US, Japan

During the visit of James Bodner, the US principle undersecretary of defense for policy, to India, the US and India agreed to restart defense cooperation in the non-controversial areas of peacekeeping, environmental security, search and rescue, and responses to natural disasters. The US continues to see India's 1998 nuclear tests as a constraint upon US-India relations.

Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee will visit Japan in February. The normalization of India-Japan relations will aid economic relations, but the visit will also be seen in the context of reconciliation between the ROK and DPRK.

Pakistan

1. Military Government

Lord Nazir, the first Pakistani member of the British House of Lords, said that Pakistanis living in the UK believe the current military government to be better than previous democratic governments.

2. Military

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf stated that the army was prepared to meet any challenges to Pakistan's borders.

Pakistani Army units will conduct integrated field exercises near the Indian border as part of their winter training.

Pakistan Air Marshal Mushaf Ali Mir stated that Pakistan would buy 30-40 F-7 MiG fighter jets from the PRC following the US refusal to sell F-16s to Pakistan.

3. Defense Exhibition

The Dawn reported that Pakistan's IDEAS-2000 defense exhibition highlighted Pakistani self-reliance in defense production. Presentations by Pakistani experts on indigenously developed weapons systems were included in the schedule.

Saudi Arabia and Malaysia expressed interest in Pakistani-built French Agosta 90-B submarines. Pakistan's second Agosta will be delivered in 2002. Pakistan Navy Admiral Abdul Aziz Mirza stated that Pakistan had received assistance in the shipbuilding industry development from the PRC.

IDEAS-2000 concluded by opening several exhibitions to the public. There were several displays by jet fighters and tanks in mock combat and attacking targets.

4. Afghani Refugees

The Dawn reported that the ban on border crossings into Pakistan by Afghani refugees may be a policy implemented to prevent the crossing of terrorists, as witnesses reported seeing refugees being permitted to cross the border. The Pakistani Home Department clarified that the border is only closed to new refugees, and not to old refugees or those with permits issued by the Taliban.

Kashmir

1. Organization of Islamic Conference

The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) has asked UN General Secretary to appoint a special envoy to examine the ongoing problem in Kashmir. The OIC also sent its second fact-finding team to Jammu and Kashmir to investigate conditions there.

2. Militant Groups

The UK's Birmingham area was reported by the Times of India to have emerged as a training center for Mujahideen militant groups. Among the places for which they are being trained to fight is Jammu and Kashmir.

3. Lone Wedding

All-Parties Hurriyat Conference leader Abdul Gani Lone was granted a passport by the Indian government valid for travel to Pakistan to attend the wedding of his son to the daughter of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front chief Amanullah Khan.

At the wedding, All-Parties Hurriyat Conference leader Abdul Gani Lone stated that the marriage would assist "in the integration of the divided Kashmir." The wedding brought together politically opposed groups in Jammu and Kashmir.

Former All-Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) chairman Mirwaiz Umer Farooq did not attend the wedding, which APHC sources said was because of fallout between him and Lone over the APHC. Farooq reported that Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf, whom he met at the Organization of Islamic Conference, stated that he was ready for a negotiated resolution to Jammu and Kashmir rather than insisting upon the UN proposed plebiscite. This statement was rejected by Riaz Mohammad Khan, a spokesman of the Pakistani Foreign Affairs Ministry.

4. Indian Government's Ceasefire Offer

Syed Ahmad Mukhari, a Muslim leader in India, asked Syed Salahuddin, supreme commander of the Hizbul Mujahideen, to observe a ceasefire for the holy month of Ramadan.

Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee announced on November 19 that Indian security forces would observe a ceasefire against Kashmiri militants during the month of Ramadan, which begins November 26. He said, "The government has, therefore, instructed security forces not to initiate combat operations against the freedom fighters in Kashmir during this most pious month." Vajpayee also put the onus on Pakistan by calling for Pakistan to stop supporting cross-border terrorism in honor of the ceasefire.

An article in The Hindu by Atul Aneja reported that the Indian government's ceasefire offer was extended after consulting with the security forces. The Indian Army will reportedly not reduce its presence along the border, though the onset of winter should make border crossings more difficult.

The Indian government's ceasefire offer is timed with the wedding of All-Parties Hurriyat Conference leader Abdul Gani Lone's son to the daughter of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front chief Amanullah Khan, and is reported by the Times of India as putting responsibility into the hands of both Pakistan and Kashmiri militants to push the peace process forward.

5. Kashmiri Responses to Ceasefire Offer

Hizbul Mujahideen sources were reported as having said that the ceasefire offer was welcome and

that the Hizbul should respond favorably. However, the Hizbul Momineen, one of the few groups comprised predominantly of local Kashmiris, denounced the ceasefire offer. Spokesmen for the Harkatul Mujahideen and the Al Badr militant groups rejected the ceasefire offer proposed by Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah stated his support for the ceasefire offer. He said, "I am happy about the decision and hope that militants would also respond to the offer and end the violence in the valley." Abdullah also reported that Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee had indicated that the ceasefire could be extended beyond Ramazan if it is well received.

Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Slahuddin, speaking on behalf of the Muttahida Jihad Council, rejected the Indian government's ceasefire offer unless it were part of a larger political solution that includes Indian recognition that Kashmir is a disputed territory and that a tripartite solution was required.

6. Other Responses to the Ceasefire Offer

The British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Peter Hain, and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister V.I. Trubnikov reported that their countries had reacted positively to India's ceasefire offer.

Pakistani Foreign Office spokesman Riaz Mohammad Khan stated that forward progress on Kashmir required India to end the repression of the Kashmiri people. Khan said that otherwise, the ceasefire offer "could only be tactical and part of India's effort to impose a military solution."

An article in The Hindu argues that while the ceasefire offer does draw negative attention to India in some regards, it creates new space for dialogue in Kashmir.

Sri Lanka

1. Sri Lankan Government

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga expanded her Cabinet to 45 members with the inclusion of Athauda Senevirante as minister in charge of ethnic affairs and national integration.

2. Military

Fighting erupted when the Sri Lankan military launched its first offensive against the Liberation Tigers Tamil Eelam since the recent Norwegian peace initiative. Sri Lankan troops were successful in capturing territory.

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