

# SANDNet Weekly Update, November 21, 2001

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## **Nuclear Issues**

### **1. India Nuclear Safety**

Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee told both Houses of Parliament that India and the United States might start a dialogue to make Indian nuclear power reactors safer.

["Indo-U.S. talks on n-safety soon: PM"](#)

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## **Afghanistan War and Implications**

### **1. Afghanistan: Current Situation**

Uzbek warlord Gen Rashid Dostum announced on late Monday night (November 19) that his forces have reached an agreement with the Taliban to end the siege of the northern Afghan city of Kunduz. The next day, however, the Northern Alliance told the Taliban to surrender Kunduz in three days.

["Taliban deny Dostum claim on Kunduz pact"](#)

["Taliban get 3-day ultimatum on Kunduz"](#)

According to Afghan Islamic Press reports, 150 civilians were killed in the U.S.-led bombing of areas around Khost.

["150 civilians killed in US air strikes"](#)

The Hezb-i-Islami chief, Gulbuddin Hikmatyar has reportedly directed his commanders to take control of Chaharsayyab, an old military base about 15 miles southeast of Kabul.

["Hikmatyar to take hold of Chaharsayyab"](#)

Former Afghan president Burhanuddin Rabbani, forced out of power by the Taliban in 1996, has returned to Kabul.

["Former Afghan president returns"](#)

The American and Australian aid workers released by the Taliban after three months of captivity told reporters that they were "well treated" by their captors.

### **2. Afghanistan: Future Prospects**

According to unnamed defense sources in London, troops from the Royal Marine's Special Boat Service may be pulled out of Afghanistan.

Afghan exiles favoring the return of the former Afghan King Zahir Shah to Kabul have voiced their feeling of exclusion from a role in post-Taliban Afghanistan. Meanwhile, Hamid Karzai, a Pashtun leader sympathetic to the former King has indicated that some high-ranking Taliban officials may agree to be a part of a future set up in Kabul that includes King Zahir Shah.

["Afghan royalists sidelined and bitter"](#)

The leaders of the Northern Alliance have formally accepted a UN invitation to meet with other Afghan factions to discuss power-sharing arrangements. The meeting is likely to be held on November 26 in Germany. Meanwhile, over 200 participants are expected to take part in a three-day conference on Afghanistan's post-war reconstruction. The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank are hosting the conference jointly.

In her column for The News, a Pakistani daily, political analyst Nasim Zehra examines the efforts of the United Nations and U.S. to suggest that "there are signs" that the U.N. and the U.S. are "genuinely trying" to find a workable political solution for Afghanistan.

### **3. Humanitarian Crisis**

Reports in Pakistani newspapers indicate that more Afghan refugees are moving towards Pakistan. Meanwhile, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has started to move Afghan refugees from the makeshift camp at Jalozai to prepared sites inland. Pakistani tribesmen opposed to the establishment of refugee camps in their area reportedly attacked a refugee camp.

A report in The Frontier Post, a Peshawar based Pakistani daily, chronicles the worldwide growth in the refugee crisis.

Reports in Pakistani newspapers have warned that the capture of Kunduz - an Afghan province bordering Tajikistan - by the Northern Alliance may lead to large-scale massacres.

A press statement issued by the Human Rights Watch has warned that unexploded cluster bombs pose "an extreme hazard to civilians, not just now, but for years to come."

["Unexploded cluster bombs pose threat to civilians"](#)

### **4. Pakistan**

The Pakistani government has completely sealed the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in Balochistan while at the same time, posting 3000 troops to prevent Afghan fighters from entering the country. The United States has promised to give seventy three million dollars to support Pakistan's efforts to keep its border closed to fleeing Afghan fighters.

["Pak-Afghan border sealed completely"](#)

### **5. Osama Bin Laden & Al-Qaeda**

Sayed Navi Hashimi, a pilot for Afghanistan's national airline Ariana, has revealed that the airline was used to support the activities of al-Qaeda network. A report in Al- Watan, an Arabic daily, has suggested that Osama Bin Ladin would do his best not be captured alive.

### **6. General Assessments**

Writing for the Asia Times, Nadeem Malik suggests that "beneath the celebrations of new aid commitments being showered by the international community on Pakistan for its unstinting support of the United States in the Afghan war, there are nagging fears within the country of being branded as a loser in the end game."

["W\(e\)ary of wartime relations"](#)

An editorial in the Asia Times argues that "peace in Afghanistan will ultimately come only as economic development takes hold. Premature attempts to impose peace and governance from the outside are bound to lead to failure."

Syed Saleem Shahzed examines diplomatic efforts of Iran, Russia and India designed to safeguard their strategic interests in Afghanistan.

["Moves to get a foot in Afghanistan's door"](#)

Indian columnist Kuldip Nayar discusses the efforts of a group of South Asians who "are fired by a common purpose they cherish - to work towards a more humane and just South Asia."

In his essay for The Asia Times, Marwaan Macan-Marker warns that the US-led military campaign in Afghanistan has strengthened Islamic nationalist sentiments in the region."

["More Asian Muslims put religion ahead of state"](#)

In his column for the Dawn, Pakistan, Edward Said argues that in the post September 11th world, Palestinians need to make their "resistance respected and understood, not hated and feared as it is now by virtue of suicidal ignorance and indiscriminate belligerence."

["Anti-Arab campaign in the US media"](#)

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## **Pakistan**

### **1. Pakistan Domestic Situation**

President Pervez Musharraf has reportedly ordered Pakistani law-enforcement authorities to take strict action against Afghan refugees who may create "law and order problems."

In his column for the Dawn, Pakistan, Shahid Javed Burki examines the state of Pakistan's economy before the start of the Afghan war.

["The economy before Sept 11"](#)

Writing for the Asia Times, Muddassir Rizvi, notes that the "Taliban retreat has completely dampened the fervor over the so-called jihad that had gripped Pakistan in the wake of events after the September 11 terror attacks."

["Taliban's retreat undercuts hardliners"](#)

In his essay for the Dawn, Pakistan, Rafi Raza warns that "in the midst of the West's 'fight against terrorism and for freedom', concerns about democracy in Pakistan have clearly been downgraded."

["Negotiated transition"](#)

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

In a message to nation, the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, accused India of "preparing for adventurism" against' Pakistan.

["Musharraf warns India"](#)

### **3. Iran - Pakistan Relations**

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohsin Aminzadey visited Pakistan for "bilateral consultation" on the Afghan crisis. Iranian Interior Minister Abdolvahed Mussavi-Lari has applauded Islamabad for its "efforts" towards a rapprochement with Tehran over the Afghan crisis.

["Iranian deputy FM arrives"](#)

["Tehran welcomes Islamabad bid: Rapprochement"](#)

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## **India**

### **1. India Domestic Situation**

The Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance (POTO) has caused serious tensions between the Indian government and opposition political parties.

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["We will not support POTO in present form: Sonia"](#)  
["BJP plans joint session of Parliament to pass POTO"](#)  
["Vajpayee has fight on his hands over terror law"](#)

Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee has defended his appointment of George Fernandes' as the Defense Minister.

["Amendments if necessary, says PM"](#)

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

India's Union Home Minister, Mr. L.K. Advani has accused Pakistan of continuing to support terrorism in Kashmir.

["Pak. attitude unchanged"](#)

## **3. U.S. India Relations**

Indian government has denied receiving any proposal from the United States for a military alliance. Meanwhile, high level bilateral military and civilian defense talks between the U.S. and India are scheduled to be held in New Delhi over the next few weeks.

["No U.S. proposal for military alliance"](#)

["Indo-U.S. defense dialogue"](#)

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## **Kashmir**

### **1. Internal Situation**

Abdul Gani Bhat, chief of the All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC), the main separatist alliance in Kashmir, has called for a 'cease fire'. His call, however, was met with some opposition from within the alliance. A call for peaceful resolution of the conflict in Kashmir by Hizbul Mujahideen was also met with dissent from within the party. The Indian government has stated that it would examine Hizbul Mujahideen's proposal. Violence, however, continued in the valley. Meanwhile, the fall of the Taliban have led to fears that Islamic militants may try to make their way into Kashmir.

["Hizb rules out role for foreign militants"](#)

["10 Indian soldiers killed in Valley"](#)

["Ambush toll 17"](#)

A report by Human Rights Watch - summarized in the Pakistani daily The Frontier Post - has accused India of using criminals for special operations in which "the costs in terms of human lives and the Army's reputation were likely to be too great."

### **2. India and Pakistan**

Political commentators in India and Pakistan have been examining the implications of the 'war on terror' and the fall of the Taliban on the Kashmir conflict.

["Kashmir at the crossroads"](#)

["The challenges in J&K"](#)

["Taliban's fall precursor to peace in J&K"](#)

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