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Nuclear Issues

1. Related News and Analysis

Pakistan's Ambassador to the UN, Munir Akram, has criticized the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for denying developing countries access to latest technologies relating to nuclear energy "despite their adherence to safety norms."
"Pakistan blasts IAEA's double standards"

Pakistan has denied a recent report by the New York Times that it helped North Korea develop its nuclear weapons program in return for missile technology. A Daily Times editorial states that "international experts would be better off accepting Islamabad's word" on Pakistan-DPRK nuclear technology transfer issue.

R. Ramachandran essay (Frontline, India) argues that nuclear energy can help developing countries meet targets set by the Kyoto protocol to control greenhouse gas emission.

Afghanistan

1. Current News

Turkey is reportedly reluctant to extend its mandate as the commander of the international force in Afghanistan beyond December 20. The European Union, the largest single donor of aid to Afghanistan, has threatened to withhold support unless improvements were made in upholding justice and human rights. Six students, reportedly protesting water and food at Kabul University's dormitories, were killed in a clash with the Afghan police.
"Six killed in Kabul university protest"

Afghan police reportedly foiled an attempt to destroy a power plant near Kabul. According to a US military spokesman, coalition troops have destroyed a large cache of weapons found in northeastern Afghanistan. According to a former Taliban official, Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) is trying to broker an alliance between the leaders of Taliban and Hekmatyar, an anti-US warlord. A previously unknown group calling itself the Red Army of Muslim Mujahideen has claimed stepped-up military operations against the US and Western troops in Afghanistan during the last two months.
"Afghan police foil 'terrorist' attack"

Campaign Against Al-Qaeda

1. News and Analysis

The daily News (Pakistan) reports that, following the recent telecast of Osama bin Laden's message, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has expanded their network for scanning telephones in Pakistan. According to an unnamed Pakistani official, local law-enforcement agencies, aided by the FBI, have arrested 14 suspects in connection with the bin Laden tape. A story in the daily Dawn describes how the Islamabad-based correspondent for the Arab TV network Al-Jazeera received the audiotape of bin Laden's statement.

"How Osama's tape was given to Al Jazeera"

Two Pakistanis and an Indian-born US citizen charged with a plot to buy Stinger missiles for the al-Qaeda network appeared in a Hong Kong to fight extradition to the US.

India-Pakistan Tensions

1. News

The Indian government has officially admitted that the Pakistan Army had crossed the Line of Control (LoC) and occupied an Indian post for several days in the last week of July.

2. Analysis

Brahma Chellaney (Hindustan Times) urges India to stop "stop running to the Americans every time there is a major terrorist attack in this country" and "evolve a resolute punitive strategy against terrorists and their sponsors." In a two-part essay A.G. Noorani (Hindustan Times) argues that India should discuss with "Pakistan the political issues, Kashmir and the rest, in a process 'parallel' with talks on ending cross-border infiltration." Premvir Das, the former director-general of India's Defence Planning Staff, argues that India must "create a decisively stronger military capability versus the adversary."
"The war that never was"

Pakistan

1. Domestic Politics

Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, a consensus candidate of pro-military Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid-i-Azam (PPP-Q), has been elected as Pakistan's 16th Prime Minister. Earlier, Amir Hussain of the same party was elected as the speaker of the National Assembly. The list of 21 members of the newly elected cabinet has also been announced.

President Pervez Musharraf took fresh oath under the amended constitution for another five years in office.
"Musharraf takes oath for new term"

Editorials in the daily News and the Daily Times see difficult times ahead for both the new Prime Minister and the country.

2. Legal Framework Order

Members of the newly elected National Assembly have expressed sharp criticism of the military government. Imtiaz Alam (News) writes that "by taking oath before the opening session of the National Assembly under the Legal Framework Order (LFO), authorized by the Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO), General Pervez Musharraf has staged yet another coup by making the LFO a fait accompli and keeping a hung Parliament dependent upon his will." Barbar Awan's essay in the daily News looks at various issues involved in the debate on the controversial Legal Framework Order (LFO) promulgated by President Musharraf. The Supreme Court will discuss the issue of LFO after the completion of transfer of power.

3. Other News

Mir Aimal Kasi, a Pakistani convicted of killing two CIA employees in 1993, was executed in Virginia, USA. The members of Pakistan's National Assembly offered fateha (prayers for the departed soul) for Aimal Kasi. The daily News reports that Kasi funeral was attended by thousands of people. Roedad Khan (Dawn) writes that while he does not approve of Kasi's actions, he feels that "all self-respecting Pakistanis must hang their heads in shame for the role of our executive authorities in this sordid, tragic drama."
"Aimal Kasi executed"
"In search of truth"

Dr Amir Aziz, an orthopedic surgeon and philanthropist, was released after spending 29 days in captivity with the FBI and CIA officials who questioned him about his links with Osama Bin Laden and Taliban. Many in Pakistan protested his arrest. A Pakistani court ordered the release of Hafiz Saeed, the leader of the banned Lashkar-e-Taiba. The daily News reports that after his release, Hafiz Saeed told a press conference that "Musharraf government had made a blunder by changing policies on Jihad and Kashmir under the US and Indian pressure."

The Pakistani government has amended an anti-terror law allowing the police to detain a suspect for up to a year without any charges. The law has been strongly criticized by the Pakistani press.
"Suspect can be detained for a year now"

India

1. Domestic Politics

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee has stated his support of an Election Commission directive banning the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's (VHP) proposed Vijay Yatra in Gujarat. State elections in Gujarat are scheduled for December 12. Vajpayee's statement, as well as an earlier statement by Deputy Prime Minister L.K. Advani that "India can "never be a Hindu state" has drawn the ire of more radical Hindu parties. Sandeep Shenoy (Asia Times) writes that the discord among various Hindu parties - sometimes collectively referred as Sangh Parivar (united family)- is the "classic case of a family that stuck together during the bad times but cannot help but feud during the good times." The Hindustan Times writes that with "VHP threatening to oust the prime minister, the game of doublespeak [among parties of the Sangh Parivar] may have gone out of hand."
"VHP turns a deaf ear to Vajpayee"
"Thackeray assails Advani's remarks"
"India: Trouble in the family?"

Neera Chandhoke (Hindu) argues that the "arousal of communal passions simply outstrips the efforts of the very leaders who had incited them, to command them." Prem Shankar Jha (Hindustan Times) writes that "there is a profound change taking place in the right flank of Indian politics and it is one that does not bode well for the country, at least in the immediate future."
"The unleashing of a monster"

Frontline magazine carried a profile of India's Chief Election Commissioner James Michael Lyngdoh who has been the target of criticism by radical Hindu parties.

A report by The Concerned Citizens' Tribunal headed by a former Supreme Court chief justice has described Gujarat's former Chief Minister Modi as "the author and architect of all that happened in

Gujarat after the Sabarmati Express carnage''.

A daily Indian Express report examines the various assessments of the threat of HIV/AIDS in India.
"The Great AIDS Numbers Game"

2. Foreign Relations

Man Mohini Kaul (Indian Express) suggests that the recent India-ASEAN Summit indicates "India's emergence as a key player in the Asia-Pacific region." J.N. Dixit (Hindustan Times) writes that the summit represent a "valid 'mission statement" that needs "to be translated into operational realities."

Indian and Chinese official have been seeking settlement of the boundary dispute between the two countries at the 14th meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on the boundary question.
"India, China hold discussions on border dispute"

Wasbir Hussain (Hindu) suggests that "while the India-Bangladesh border may not be as live as the one with Pakistan, it is not an easy stretch to manage as it might seem." Pranay Sharma (Telegraph) writes that "India's tough line on Bangladesh may have been prompted by the pressure put by the US and other western nations on the Khaleda Zia regime in Dhaka over the rise of religious fundamentalists and the presence of al-Qaeda activists in the country."
"West heat sets Bangla tone"
"Friendly neighbour, unfriendly acts"

Kashmir

1. Internal Situation

Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) was hit by violence after a short period of relative calm.
"Terror strikes in 2 Jammu temples"
"Lashkar's back after a lull: 6 CRPF men killed"
"12 killed in J&K blast"
"J&K Minister survives attack"

Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) leader Yasin Malik was released on parole after more than six months in prison. Malik has alleged that he was tortured during his captivity. The All Parties Hurriyat Conference has decided to continue talks with the Kashmir Committee (KC). Malik is opposed to continued talks with the KC.
"Yasin Malik released on parole"
"Yasin Malik says he was tortured"
"Hurriyat to continue talks with Kashmir Committee"

Kuldip Nayar (Hindu) suggests that any conciliation process in J&K will require the release of "those under detention on suspicion or for holding another point of view." J.N. Dixit (Telegraph) writes that "the dialogue between the state government and the Centre should be first on the agenda of the new government [in J&K]. Priority should also be given to deal with political groups in Jammu and Kashmir who did not participate in the elections." Balraj Puri (Hindu) argues that the elections provided an alternative expression to the "urge for dignity, identity and empowerment of the people in Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh."
"Restoring rights"

"A tenuous beginning"
"Danger of relapse in J&K"

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