

SANDNet Weekly Update, October 11, 2000

Recommended Citation

SANDNet, "SANDNet Weekly Update, October 11, 2000", SANDNet, October 11, 2000,
<https://nautilus.org/sandnet/sandnet-weekly-update-october-11-2000/>

CONTENTS

October 11, 2000

Nuclear Issues

1. India-Russia Nuclear Deals
2. India Nuclear Policy
3. India Nuclear Strategy

India

1. Russian President Visit
2. Military Policy
3. PRC Security Threat
4. Flood

Pakistan

1. Military Government
2. India-Russia Relations
3. Japanese Humanitarian Aid
4. Afghanistan

Kashmir

1. Overview
2. Russian Diplomacy
3. Pakistan Military Actions

Sri Lanka

1. Elections
2. LTTE Offensive

Nuclear Issues

1. India-Russia Nuclear Deals

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the governments of Russia and India is likely to be kept secret by the two countries, but is believed to include a Russian commitment to contribute to India's nuclear energy industry. The inter-state Nuclear Suppliers Group agreed in 1992 that any nuclear sales to India would need to be covered by "fullscope safeguards," or full international control over the Indian nuclear program, though India is not likely to accede to such requirements. France has expressed an interest in selling India nuclear power plants, too, but hoped that terms could be decided upon Indian accession to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

The current India-Russia nuclear power project in Tamil Nadu was begun prior to the 1992 agreement on fullscope safeguards. The Russian government has provided a "lifetime supply" of parts and highly enriched uranium for the project. Russia has also allowed India to keep spent fuel.

2. India Nuclear Policy

Russian President Vladimir Putin said the Indian government should sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. However, Putin also endorsed India's current stance and said signing of the CTBT should be based on India's strategic vision and national interests. Putin said, "We believe India will continue to look for ways to move towards nuclear non-proliferation, taking into account its own national interests."

Indian delegate to the UN Saleem Shervani said there was a need to tackle nuclear disarmament and missile proliferation through multilateralism. He said nuclear weapons states' new nuclear doctrines and nuclear weapons retention were contrary to the spirit of nuclear disarmament.

3. India Nuclear Strategy

Defense analyst Sanjay Bardi-Maharaj, in his book "The Armageddon Factor," states that most of India's nuclear reactors and other facilities are out of reach of Pakistan's nuclear weapons. The book examines India's and Pakistan's respective nuclear and other attack capabilities.

Speaking at a seminar at New Delhi's Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes said that India must maintain an effective deterrent using both nuclear and conventional capabilities to dissuade any potential aggressors.

George Perkovich, director of the Secure World Program at the W Alton Jones Foundation and author of "India's Nuclear Bomb," writes in Outlook India that India's nuclear tests did not significantly alter its security relationship with the PRC. He said India's biggest problem, and its barrier to world-power status, is that it "lacks a clear overall strategy for clarifying and obtaining what it wants from China" and from Pakistan.

India

1. Russian President Visit

At the outset of his visit to India, Russian President Vladimir Putin highlighted strengthening the

Indian-Russian relationship in trade, science, and culture, though there was particular emphasis on cooperation in the areas of nuclear energy, defense, and fighting terrorism. India and Russia concluded agreements in these areas.

The Hindu carried the full-text of the "Declaration on strategic partnership between India and Russia" signed by Russian President Vladimir Putin and Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee.

Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes and Russian Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov signed an agreement to create a commission for military-technical cooperation at the ministerial level. They also finalized the Indian outright purchase or licensed production of 310 T-90 tanks, the acquisition of the Russian aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov, and a contract for five Kamov-31 airborne early-warning (AEW) helicopters. Russia agreed to lease to India four TU-22 Backfire bombers.

Afghanistan was a focus of talks between India and Russia, especially the impact of the religious and international terrorism from Afghanistan that threatens regional stability. The two countries' decision to act on the shared Afghanistan issue through the formation of a Joint Working Group was reported by C Raja Mohan as evidence for the strength of their strategic partnership. However, Russia and India explicitly stated they were not forming a military-political alliance. The Indian-Russian concern for terrorism also extended to areas such as Kashmir, Chechnya, the Philippines, and Kosovo.

An editorial in The Dawn argued that convergence of India, US, and Russian interests in Afghanistan has implications for Pakistan's strategy.

An editorial in the Times of India argued that the strengthened India-Russia defense relationship means that Pakistan has only another 18 months to launch another Kargil-like attack before India's recent defense acquisitions cause the strategic balance to shift decisively in India's favor.

An article in The Hindu argues that India needs to diversify its defense procurement away from Russia to avoid putting "all its eggs in one basket." In addition to exploring such relationships with South Africa and France, India should consider increased domestic weaponry production and the servicing of weapons for Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Africa.

2. Military Policy

The Indian Navy is considering the creation of two submarine assembly lines to avoid importing submarines. It will also attempt to equip all future submarines with conventional missiles.

Chief of the Indian Air Force's Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Anil Yashwant Tipnis, said the Indian Air Force had decided on a second-strike strategy for responding to a nuclear attack. The statement reaffirmed India's no-first use policy. The Indian military has been working on use of the Mirage 2000 for air delivery of nuclear weapons, as well as a missile-capable nuclear submarine and intermediate range ballistic missiles.

Chief of the Indian Air Force's Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Anil Yashwant Tipnis, said that because of the new strategic scenario for the region, the Indian Air Force would stress maintaining a deterrent posture.

3. PRC Security Threat

PR Chari, Director of the New Delhi Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, reviews the arguments, and the official Indian government position, on the threat the PRC poses to India. Chari argues that, by a process of eliminating certain PRC threats based on their likelihood, that the only threat India

faces from the PRC is that of nuclear and missile technology transfer by the PRC to Pakistan.

4. Flood

The official Indian death toll from the West Bengal flood rose to 1,020 people last Wednesday. More than 21 million people have been affected by the flooding.

Pakistan

1. Military Government

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf said that the government will make public the report of the Hamoodur Rahman Commission that explored the failure of the Pakistan Army in 1971 and the subsequent creation of Bangladesh. Various governments of Pakistan have resisted release of the report since 1974.

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf promised national elections in 2002, but provided no specific date. He also did not specify the system of checks and balances he thought would be necessary.

2. India-Russia Relations

The Times of India reported that Pakistani newspapers were suspicious of the strengthening India-Russia relationship. However, Russian President Vladimir Putin's statements on Kashmir were considered positive.

3. Japanese Humanitarian Aid

The Japanese Foreign Ministry announced that it would provide Pakistan with \$4.5 million in emergency grants to aid recovery from a prolonged drought. Humanitarian grants and loans are the only aid Japan is providing under the post-nuclear test sanctions.

4. Afghanistan

Ahmad Shah Masoud, Afghan military leader of the anti-Taliban United Front, said Pakistan was behind the latest Taliban offensives and warned Pakistan against continued meddling in the domestic affairs of Afghanistan.

Kashmir

1. Overview

The Hindu's Frontline magazine carried analysis of the statements and agreements that concern the legal and historical disposition of Point 5353, a mountain peak that is located along the Line of Control separating India and Pakistan. The article argues that the Indian government has obscured the disposition of Point 5353, and that such obfuscation is dangerous to deterring Pakistani aggression.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah said conversion of the Line of Control into an

international border was the only way to solve problems between India and Pakistan.

The Hindu's Frontline magazine carried an assessment of the origins and nature of militant groups active in Jammu and Kashmir, written by Frontline lawyer and analyst AG Noorani. Noorani argues that armed militancy is central to the Jammu and Kashmir problem, having created a vicious cycle of alienation and violence. He concludes with a quote by French journalist Eric Rouleau: "If you want to forge a lasting peace, you have to negotiate with those who are firing on your soldiers; you don't negotiate with those with no blood on their hands because they are irrelevant."

Outlook India conducted a poll of 581 people in Jammu and Kashmir as a follow up to a poll conducted in 1995. They found that those favoring a merger with Pakistan had declined, while those favoring autonomy under India had increased. They also found that 70% favored an end to Pakistan's support for militancy, but as many as 40% were unaware of the autonomy resolution passed by the Jammu and Kashmir assembly.

2. Russian Diplomacy

Russian President Vladimir Putin made statements about the Russian position on the Kashmir issue, which did not significantly differ from the Indian government's position. Putin said, "Kashmir has been the cause of tensions between India and Pakistan," "Foreign interference should be stopped," and resolution should be "on a bilateral basis through compromise."

Russia expressed its support for a normalization of ties between India and Pakistan, and that they should do so on the basis of the 1972 Shimla Agreement. Putin also said, "The Lahore dialogue process could be resumed only when necessary measures are taken for the cessation of support for cross-border terrorism and for respect for the Line of Control."

3. Pakistan Military Actions

Lieutenant General Vijay Oberoi, Vice Chief of the Indian Army Staff, said Pakistan was placing large groups of mercenaries, armed with heavy weapons and under the cover of Pakistani artillery fire, in positions along the Line of Control. The Deccan Herald reported this pattern of infiltration as matching that used in the Kargil incident. The Times of India reported that this mortar fire, covering areas from Bhimbar Gali to Poonch, was Pakistan aiding infiltrators as well as targeting civilian casualties and property destruction.

Indian defense sources reported that Pakistan was supplying militants with longer-range weapons, such as Stinger missiles.

Sri Lanka

1. Elections

Sri Lanka Deputy Defense Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte said the LTTE, and not the Sri Lankan government, which was planning an offensive to interrupt the election.

Thirty-one parliamentary seats representing Tamil areas in north east Sri Lanka are being contested for by 965 candidates, though the Tamil United Liberation Front and the Eelam People's Democratic Party are expected to win a significant share of the seats.

The Hindu reported that the election in Sri Lanka is expected to result in a coalition government by

either the larger United National Party or People's Alliance cobbling together a coalition with several smaller parties in the center of the political spectrum. Himal Magazine published a commentary on the possibility of such a "hung" parliament, which argued, "nothing could be better for the country than the PA and the UNP working together."

The Times of India reported that a victory for the UNP could create a constitutional crisis between the presidency and the opposition-led parliament.

2. LTTE Offensive

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wichremanayake said the government had ruled out further talks with the LTTE. He said Sri Lanka would not pursue a Norwegian-brokered peace initiative. President Chandrika Kumaratunga said the Norwegian peace process was on hold. She said, "there is no alternative but to concluding the war successfully," because "the LTTE has no interest in peace at the moment."

The LTTE carried out a coordinated attack in Jaffna that began two days prior to the national election, forcing the areas only airport to shut down.

View this online at: <https://nautilus.org/sandnet/sandnet-weekly-update-october-11-2000/>

Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org