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Nuclear Issues

1. Pakistani Nuclear Program

Arnaud de Borchgave's (United Press International) report claims that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have concluded a secret agreement on nuclear cooperation, though a Pakistani official refuted it as "totally wrong" and "out of the question." The Nation quotes a US State Department official questioning the report as "unlikely." Former ambassador to South Asia Teresita Schaffer adds, "Pakistanis and Saudis know very well that this [agreement] involves great dangers if they went too far in this relationship." Pakistani Foreign Minister Khursheed Kasuri denied Israeli charges of Pakistan aiding development of Libya's nuclear program.

2. Indian Nuclear Program

Nava Thakuria (Himalmag, Nepal) reports on uranium exploration and mining in Domiasat, near the Bangladesh border. India's Joint Secretary of Disarmament & International Security Affairs believes that global nuclear disarmament can be achieved "through dialogue and consultation."

3. Related News & Analysis

A new US Congressional Research Service (CRS) report on missile proliferation and its implications for South Asian security advises Congress that "so long as terrorism and Kashmir-related animosity exist between India and Pakistan...the continued proliferation of strategic arsenals in South Asia cannot be viewed with complacence.

Praful Bidwai (Asia Times, Hong Kong) argues that simply because each country views its weapons proliferation as self-defense, "that does not negate the reality of the arms race, or make it less dangerous." On his visit to New Delhi, the mayor of Hiroshima warned that "once the bomb is let loose, it will be pointless talking about academic concepts such as 'deterrence' and 'nuclear umbrellas.' "
"India, Pakistan walk a fine nuclear line"
"Nukes back in fashion, warns Hiroshima mayor"

India-Pakistan Tensions

1. Proposed Peace Initiative

India proposed 12 confidence-building measures (CBMs) including the full resumption of sporting ties as well as the launch and re-establishment of transportation links. Pakistan responded positively to the CBMs, however, noting disappointment that "India has simultaneously reiterated its rejection of Pakistan's offer to resume substantive and sustained dialogue to resolve all issues, notably the Jammu and Kashmir dispute." At the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) summit, Pakistani President Musharraf praised Prime Minister (PM) Vaypayee as "a man of peace" and expressed interest at resumption of peace talks, at the behest of the OIC.

2. Bilateral Exchanges

The Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) denied visas for the Pakistani delegation of a workshop on South Asian security; the host organization, Pugwash, postponed the workshop. An Indian Express editorial observes that the MEA "remain[s] totally out of sync with the spirit it embodied."

In response to President Musharraf's demand for the Kashmiris' right to self-determination, PM Vajpayee called upon Pakistan to vacate its part of Kashmir, since "that land belongs to India." Deputy PM L.K. Advani asked Islamabad to hand over the 20 terrorists that New Delhi had asked for, as a "touchstone" of Pakistani sincerity in improving bilateral ties. He went on to say, "We have to isolate nations which practice terrorism as an instrument of state policy. Beyond isolation, I would say we have to ostracise such nations."
"Pak. must vacate occupied territory, says PM"

A Pakistani team inspected an Indian hydroelectric power project to determine if it is hindering the flow of water into Pakistan and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to abide by the Indus Water Treaty of 1960. A group of Pakistani-born writers now living in India returned to their places of birth for the first time since they left 56 years ago.
"Indian writers' team arrive in Pakistan"

3. Third-Party Perspectives

In the first-ever interview by an Israeli leader to a Pakistani television network, former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres stated, "Pakistan need not worry over Indo-Israel ties. We do not want instability in South Asia." Saudi Arabia deemed the opposite: "this [Indo-Israeli] cooperation is aimed not at the good of the region but to inflame the region."

Afghanistan

1. News & Reports

Coalition forces captured Mullah Janan, a senior commander suspected of being the Taliban's liaison with Al Qaeda. Nearly a dozen Afghan soldiers were killed during a raid on a suspected Taliban hideout. Unemployed military officers demonstrated against the defense ministry in Kabul, while government officials explained that the dismissals were part of reforms aimed at establishing a professional army.

The Daily Times repors that "moderate" Taliban have offered to negotiate with the Kabul administration, in return for amnesty. The Karzai administration confirmed the release (and subsequent house arrest) of the Taliban's former foreign minister, Mullah Wakil Ahmad Mutawwakil. After interrogating Muttawakil about the the hijacking of an Indian plane in 1999, Indian Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officials returned to India with "little to show," according to news reports.
"CBI team meets Muttawakil"

Taliban spokesman stated that "Taliban will not hold any peace parlays with the Kabul government because it has no political stability." Kabul has informed the leaders of the warring factions in the north, namely Tajik Atta Mohammed and Uzbek Rashid Dostum, that violation of the ceasefire would result in their removal from government positions. In an interview with the Christian Science Monitor, Afghanistan's defense minister denies that he's a warlord in waiting. The daily Dawn (Pakistan) welcomes the extension of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) beyond Kabul.
"Going beyond Kabul"

2. Opinions & Analysis

The US State Department's Coordinator for Afghanistan expressed his concern about the security situation: "It is particularly worrisome that Taliban units appear larger and better organized," and added, "Failure is not an option in Afghanistan, but it is still possible." Syed Saleem Shahzad (Asia Times, Hong Kong) suggests the US is trying to find a way out of the complex relationships created by the backchannels of the warlords' dealmaking. Donald Evans, US Secretary of Commerce, however, stressed that the US "won't leave until the job is done." In a Council on Foreign Relations interview, Winston Lord, co-chairman of the International Rescue Committee, believes that Afghanistan has been largely ignored for the past year; thus, "huge problems" remain, leaving "many Afghans concerned [that] they are going to be deserted again." In the daily Dawn (Pakistan), Lutz Kleveman writes that the US' energy policy in Central Asia "jeopardizes the few successes in the war on terror because the resentment it causes makes it ever easier for terrorist groups to recruit angry young men."
"US official admits to anxiety: Taliban regrouping"
"US explores its Afghanistan exit options"
"US won't abandon Iraq, Afghanistan"

Al Qaeda & Pak-Afghan Border

1. Al Qaeda

In an interview with Reuters, President Pervez Musharraf said that "I'm sure [Osama Bin Laden is]

alive. I can't say whether he's on our side of the border or the Afghan side." Iffat Idris (Al Ahram, Egypt) evaluates Musharraf's performance in hunting down Al Qaeda and concluded that he has "not managed to demonstrate concrete success on any...fronts."

The head of a UN committee overseeing global economic sanctions against Al Qaeda and the Taliban claims that both networks are managing to find new sources of funding, especially in narcotics. The head of the NATO peacekeeping forces noted the increase in insurgent activity in Kabul and the southern provinces in particular. The governor of the southeastern province of Paktika, Mohammad Ali Jalali, says that his province is much safer than many other provinces.

2. Pak-Afghan Border Operations

Pakistan has started fencing its border with Afghanistan, erecting checkpoints and watch towers. At a routine security stop, Pakistani police reportedly detained Abu Saleh, an aide to Abu Zubaydah, a senior lieutenant to Osama bin Laden. Authorities also arrested another Yemeni and a Pakistani. A Washington Post report chronicles the ease with which jihadis can cross the Pakistani border into Afghanistan. Parliamentarians from the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA) were prevented from entering South Waziristan Agency, citing a ban on political activities in federally administered tribal areas (FATAs). Mansoor Akbar Kundi (Nation, Pakistan) writes about the FATAs' distinct geographical and strategic existence.
"MMA team barred from entering into tribal areas"

3. Dawood Ibrahim Kaksar

The US Treasury linked crime lord Dawood Ibrahim Kaksar (alias Sheikh Dawood Hassan) with Al Qaeda and labeled him a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist" -- he is wanted by India for the 1993 Mumbai bomb blasts, among other crimes. Pakistan denies that he ever lived within its borders. Syed Saleem Shahzad (Asia Times, Hong Kong) chronicles Ibrahim's criminal career. B. Raman (Outlook India, UK) recommends a stronger course of action: India "should get its act together and act on the US order and move against Pakistan before it is too late."
"Dawood's connections"
"Dawood not in Pakistan, says Rashid"
"Dawood: 'War on terror' takes a strange turn"

Pakistan

1. Law & Order

Three alleged members of Harakat-ul Mujahideen have been accused of plotting to kill President Musharraf. Police detained a key member of the banned Lashkar-i-Jhangvi (LJ) in connection with the Suparco killing case. Three separate blasts stunned the city of Quetta, though without fatalities.
"Key LJ member detained"

2. US War on Terror

US officials believe that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the alleged mastermind of the September 11th attacks, is responsible for the death of Daniel Pearl, journalist for The Wall Street Journal. Karachi police deny the reports, according to the BBC. The US Treasury accused Al Akhtar Trust of funding terror, allegations which the organization denied on the basis that it provided medical aid to all patients. Al Akhtar Trust admitted, however, that a suspect accused of financing Daniel Pearl's

kidnappers and killers worked for the organization when it started, but later resigned.
"Charity body dismisses American charges"

Musharraf announced that Pakistan will not send troops into Iraq unless the Iraqi people specifically request it and other Muslim countries send forces. The Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) threatened civil disobedience if Pakistani troops were dispatched.

3. Opinions & Analysis

PM Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali told the Khaleej Times (Pakistan) that "I am running the country as per the Constitution, not the president." In regards to the ongoing disagreement over the Legal Framework Order, Tariq Rehman (Jang, Pakistan) cites the urgency of its resolution: "In the absence of...rules [of exit from positions of power] the Mughal game of war takes over and that is the most unsafe thing any ruler could desire." An editorial in the same paper notes that the MMA must "out-wait" the government in the desire to engage in dialogue about the LFO. The MMA has said that it would not accept an agreement which "does not make a clear mention of the date on which the president would give up his uniform."

A number of editorials appraise President Musharraf's performance four years into his rule. The Daily Times (Pakistan) suggests that to "translate relative economic stability into a process of poverty alleviation" President Musharraf should remember the administration of Ayub Khan and not procrastinate on "issues of grinding poverty and deprivation." Farhan Bokhari (Jang, Pakistan) also recalls historical lessons to illustrate that "a close tie up with Washington has seldom been the long-term guarantee for stability." In the same paper, Praful Bidwai applies the context of the anniversary of the Indian PM's return to power (just a day later than Musharraf) and faults both governments for failing "to reform their old, bankrupt and indeed irresponsibly and dangerously hostile policies towards each other."

3. Military Affairs

Three articles from Jang (Pakistan) outline Pakistan's military tactics to counter the strategic challenge by Indo-Israeli defense collaboration. Zia Iqbal Shahid reports that Pakistan is seeking to purchase or build FT-2000 surface-to-air missiles, also known as "AWACS Killers." Muhammad Saleh Zaafi quotes defense officials who say that Pakistan will seek more than one source for its needs of high-tech planes even after getting more F-16 fighters. Walid Ayubi explains that recent missile tests were veiled responses to announcement of the "Glide Path" -- an Indo-US plan to expand trade in sensitive high-tech areas, space launch equipment, and civilian nuclear industry (also known as the "trinity issues"). Ayubi's comments were echoed by the Daily Times (Pakistan).

Sino-Pakistani joint naval exercises began off the northeastern coast of Shanghai -- it is the Chinese navy's first experience with any foreign country. Pakistan's Chief of the Air Staff visited China, lauding the cooperation on the jointly developed JF-17 fighter. President Musharraf is scheduled to visit China next week, after which he will travel to South Korea.
"PAF chief arrives in China"

4. Foreign Affairs

The Pakistani Interior Minister has accused the Indian intelligence agency (RAW) of setting up camps to train Afghans to carry out attacks in Pakistan (e.g. the shooting of more than 50 Shia worshippers at a Quetta mosque earlier this year). Afghanistan rejected the claims.
"Delhi running terror camps in Afghanistan: India involved in Quetta killing - Faisal"

Prime Minister Jamali visited Iran to discuss free trade and improved bilateral relations. President Khatami assured PM Jamali that Pakistan-Iran relations were of a "special nature."

Japan has granted Rs 7.1 million (US $123,600) for community projects in the Northern Areas. The US ruled out the possibility of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Pakistan, though Kenya is considering free trade talks.
"Japan gives Rs7.1m for N. Areas' projects"
"Kenya, Pakistan consider free trade"

5. Saudi-Pakistani Relations

During his visit to Pakistan, Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz expressed concern over the growing Indo-Israeli ties and the importance of a peaceful resolution to the Kashmir dispute and decided to raise the Saudi development assistance package to Pakistan from $65 million to $100 million. Pakistan hoped to close the recent gap in US-Saudi relations by persuading the US to declassify information on Saudi involvement in the September 11th attacks. Two editorials (from Pakistani dailies Jang and Dawn) comment on the shared histories and current policies of the two nations. According to the Saudi Defense Minister, "no military agreements were concluded between [Saudi Arabia] and Pakistan during the Crown Prince's visit to Islamabad," dispelling a recent report of secret nuclear cooperation between the two nations.
"Saudi-Pakistan affinity"

6. The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) Summit

The OIC granted "observer status" to Russia, while denying India's request for the same. The Indian Express opines that the OIC's lack of a universal stand on terrorism has done the group's goals more harm than good. President Musharraf proposed that every member contribute a percentage of its gross domestic product (GDP), to which the Nation (Pakistan) responds pessimistically: "it would be unrealistic that there is much sign of such a will emerging at Putrajaya." Nasim Zehra (Jang, Pakistan) believes the OIC can be, but isn't currently, the multilateral forum to handle a global security arrangement.

India

1. Law & Order

Mumbai police seized a large cache of explosives (ammonium nitrate and wired detonators) and were on alert following communal tension arising from a number of unrelated incidents.

The government has tightened security over heightened threat perception from The People's War Group (also known as "Naxalites"), which attempted to assassinate Andra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. Tarun Vijay (Hindustan Times, India) criticizes Communist terrorist organizations, saying that India cannot "tolerate another jihad of the red hue." In the daily Hindu (India), K. Srinavas Reddy chronicles the growth of the Naxalite network in isolated parts of the state.
"Security upgraded"
"We will hit back at naxals: DGP"
"An insidious campaign"

2. Temple & State

Authorities prevented the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) from illegally congregating at the contentious Ayodhya temple site by sealing off entry into the city and surrounding areas. The VHP general secretary, Praveen Togadia, said that the VHP would not accept "any kind of compromise" on the Ayodhya issue. Saba Naqvi Bhaumik (Outlook, India) writes that the restless VHP was a "spoiling for a fight." Several editorials praised deft management by the authorities for preventing a potentially destabilizing event.
"VHP bid to hold meet in Ayodhya foiled"
"VHP rules out `any compromise' on Ram temple"
"Making trouble but going nowhere"
"A 'crisis' deftly defused

The Congress party criticized the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for its "open support" of the VHP, maintaining that its support emboldened the Sangh Parivar to carry forth its agenda. Arun Bhattacharjee (Asia Times, Hong Kong) challenges the notion that Prime Minister Vajpayee is too influenced by his Hindu background, an accusation coming from within his own party, the BJP. In a Daily Times (Pakistan) editorial, Ishtiaq Ahmed reveals the emergence of a new type of democracy, "which privileges the majority community in some constitutional and legal sense, but allows the minorities to enjoy political participation within limits." In another essay from the same paper, Asma Yaqoob examines the state of India's Muslim population, post-communal riots: Indian Muslims, she concludes, "are deeply concerned about their status in the mainstream society; at the same time they want to protect their interests as a community...in the face of the mounting tide of Hindutva."
"Cong. criticises Govt. for its `support' to VHP"
"Vajpayee's Bali move irks Hindu critics"

3. Military Affairs

According to an International Institute of Strategic Studies report, India is the second largest buyer of arms in the world (behind Saudi Arabia). Arun Sahgal (Asia Times, Hong Kong) tracks the flurry of India's bilateral and multilateral military engagements, marking an "increasing realization of Indian geostrategic location." Refurbished Russian T-90 Main Battle Tanks (MBTs) are expected to be completed at the Avadi Heavy Vehicles Factory by December. The Army announced plans to enhance its infantry's firepower capabilities.
"India: The world's parade ground"
"T-90 tank likely to roll out by Dec. end

4. Sino-Indian Relations

India and China began border talks for the third time in 25 years. New Delhi has always maintained that the (Aksai Chin) territory "illegally" ceded by Pakistan to China in 1963 is a key element of any conversation it can have with China, while Beijing believes that any talks with New Delhi cannot be complete without stating that the McMahon Line that divides India and China in the east is "illegal." Jyoti Malhotra (Indian Express, India) affirms that the two country's representatives know well that "the memories of more recent victories and defeats can be enough to sink the possibilities of new beginnings." Taking up another border issue, Mohan Malik (Asia Times, Hong Kong) uses India's interpretation of China's recent delisting of Sikkim as an official country as a starting point for analyzing the Sino-Indo dynamic.
"India's Dragon delusions"

Indrajit Basu (Asia Times, Hong Kong) believes that India's space program is not far behind that of China. A Hindustan Times reports compares the space programs of China and India. Two editorials (Indian dailies Indian Express and Hindustan Times) lament China "basking in its recent achievement" in light of India "floundering in domestic burdens".

"India unfazed by China's space antics"

5. Foreign Affairs

Kumar Amitav Chaliha (Asia Times, Hong Kong) considers India's foreign policy in Central Asia, particularly India's bid to enter the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) . The third India-Central Asia Regional Conference will convene in Taskent, Uzbekistan next week. Alam Srinavas (Outlook India, UK) analyzes India' strategy of improving relations with oil-rich Islamic nations as a way to prevent energy dependency on one source. President Kalam identified oil exploration and refining as an area of joint capability between India and Sudan.
"India moves on Central Asia"

Jammu & Kashmir (J&K)

1. Attack on Chief Minister (CM)

Days before the year anniversary of the J&K Chief Minister (CM) Mufti Mohammed Sayeed government, two militants detonated grenades and killed two Border Security Force personnel at his home, though the CM was away at the time of the attack. Authorities eventually killed the two militants after a 24 hour standoff at a local shopping center. Two relatively unknown militant groups, Farzandan-e-Millat and Al-Nasireen, claimed responsibility for the attacks. Despite the attack, Sayeed agreed to maintain his residence. The daily Hindu (India) believes that the attack "probably intended to provide additional incentive for [the CM] to deliver on his party's promises, whatever the consequences."
"Bullets with a message"

2. Political Affairs

As part of New Delhi's proposed peace bid, the central government assigned Deputy PM L.K. Advani (replacing Home Secretary N.N. Vohra) to open talks with the moderate Maulana Abbas Ansari's All Parties Hurriyat Conference. Ansari's APHC welcomed the offer, but said it would try to build consensus before engaging in a dialogue with New Delhi. The two militant groups who claimed responsibility for the attack on the CM's house, Al Nasirin and Farzandan-e-Milat, warned the Hurriyat against "walking into the trap laid by the Indian Government." The more hardline APHC Chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani declined the talks, citing that only tripartite dialogue with Pakistan would permanently resolve the Kashmir dispute. Police detained ("took into preventive custody") Geelani, along with J&K Liberation Front (JKLF) chief Yasin Malik, inciting angry crowds to protest in the streets.

Geelani had dissolved the APHC executive committee and restructured elements of the APHC constitution. Talks to reunite the divided APHC failed. Iftikhar Gilani (Daily Times, Pakistan) details the divisions that led to the internecine struggle. The Border Security Force announced that it will phase out its counter-terrorism operations in J&K, though no specific deadline was given.

3. News & Reports

Scott Baldauf (Christian Science Monitor, USA) writes that Kashmir's growing narcotics trade is flourishing in areas where militants are most active. Yusuf Jameel (Al Jazeera, Qatar) also reports on drugs in Kashmir: "narcotic crops such as the hemp, poppy and cannabis worth $55 million have already been flattened, and the campaign goes on, despite the complaints of villagers who claim to

have lost their only source of livelihood." In the Daily Excelsior (Kashmir), Sanjeev Pargal documents the militants' use of satellite phones and other advanced, secure communications technology.

Sanjeev Miglani and Myra MacDonald (AlterNet, UK) report that at Siachen Glacier, fighting "remains a huge psychological challenge, [but] ambitious young officers are all too keen to get a Siachen posting." Despite a weak electric and connectivity infrastructure, the Indian government announced a (US $8.2 million) plan to set up and interconnect 139 community information centers across Kashmiri villages. A group of Kashmiri-American expatriates urged the J&K government to facilitate the employment and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits.

In two separate grenade attacks, militants killed two and injured sixty civilians. Militants also took a dozen villagers hostage after troops surrounded a house where the rebels were hiding. The 30-hour standoff ended with authorities killing the militants.

4. Opinions & Analysis

In the Hindustan Times (India), Sudeep Chakravarti writes about the opportunity and challenge for the current administration's one-year anniversary: "[CM] Mufti has more on his hands than just walking the India-Pakistan tightrope and the attendant Pakistan-fed bursts of terrorism. He has to unsnarl the economic system of J&K to make it credible and workable all over again." In the Daily Times (Pakistan), Brian Cloughley disputes the notion that the Kashmir dispute is an "Islamic" one -- it is conflict between two countries, not between religions.

5. OIC & UNMOGIP

India barred the United Nations Military Observer Group for India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) from accessing the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu & Kashmir, and the Organization of Islamic Conference asked India to reconsider. The OIC supported Musharraf's call for the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination. The Hindustan Times criticized the OIC's statement: "the concept [the OIC] is supposedly looking for in Kashmir is absent in most Islamic countries, including Pakistan whose warped vision it blindly endorsed." The International Kashmir Alliance, an amalgam of expatriate Kashmiri leaders, hoped the OIC "does not make a fundamental mistake by accepting the influence of Pakistan, which is at variance in many ways to the overall case of the people of Kashmir."
"India bars LoC access to U.N. observer group"

Region

1. Sri Lanka

After a series of meetings in Ireland and Norway, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is expected to present its proposals for an interim administration of the embattled northeast. Ranga Jayasuriya (Daily News, Sri Lanka) reported that the LTTE proposals focus on "the conflict resolution process in various parts of the world" and emphasize "interim arrangements suited to the Sri Lankan context." The Daily News also reported that the LTTE has indicated readiness to resume peace talks even before the government has reviewed the movement's proposals. The Sri Lankan government is reportedly seeking a preliminary meeting with the LTTE next month to discuss a time frame for the next round of peace talks.

The Sri Lankan navy is reportedly developing new operational procedures in tracking alleged LTTE

arms smuggling. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has embarked on an official visit to India for talks on the peace bid and to boost defense and economic cooperation.

2. The Philippines

The Manila Times reported that peace negotiations between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) are likely to start next month. Mohager Iqbal, a member of the MILF central committee and former rebel information officer, has replaced MILF chairman Al Haj Murad as the chief peace negotiator. Ann Covera (Philippines Star) reported claims by an Abu Sayyaf member that recently killed Indonesian terrorist Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi was given refuge by the MILF. Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita announced the arrest of a senior member of Jemaah Islamiah (JI) while stating that about 40 more JI activists are hiding in Mindanao. A report by the Philippines Star examines possible links between Islamic militants in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, and the Philippines.

Six members of the Philippines cabinet walked out in protest during US President George Bush's speech to the joint session of Congress during his short visit to the country. The US State Department has asked the US Congress to allocate over $10 million for law enforcement assistance to the Philippines. The US has given $808 million in assistance to the Philippines this year. About 900 US Marines will be taking part in a joint military exercise with the Philippines military.

3. Nepal

More violence and killings were reported in the ongoing conflict between the Communist Party Nepal - Maoist and the government. The Maoists have reportedly changed their strategy of individual killings and announced a halt to the destruction of country's physical infrastructure. The Nepali government announced new measures to protect country's public installations like telecommunications and electricity and reportedly launched new operations against the Maoists. Amnesty International reported that "more than 250 'disappearances', hundreds of alleged extrajudicial executions, thousands of arbitrary arrests and numerous reports of torture, have taken place in the context of the 'people's war.'" Nepali Prime minister Surya Bahadur Thapa stated that the "the government will hold polls soon after restoration of peace in the country."

4. Bangladesh

The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between India and Bangladesh reportedly faltered on the issue of non-tariff and para-tariff barriers on Bangladesh's export to India. Bangladeshi government officials have stated that built-in loopholes and underhand dealings that add to the cost of doing business in Bangladesh frustrate foreign investors.

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