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India

1. Indian PM's US Visit

Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee spoke before a joint session of the US Congress and touched on

issues such as terrorism and the future of India-US relations.

An editorial in the Times of India argued that Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee's speech to the joint session of the US Congress demonstrates that the US-India relationship is finally moving beyond the Cold War. However, Vajpayee was unable to convince US President Bill Clinton that the conflict with Pakistan over Kashmir is symptomatic of a deeper conflict.

Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee spoke to US businessmen and made appeals to increase investment in India. A joint statement by Vajpayee and US President Bill Clinton said that both countries would seek ways to increase economic ties, including examining the double-taxation of traded goods. Vajpayee and Clinton also announced an agreement under which India would reduce barriers to the import of US textiles.

Outlook India carried an article which stated that many have criticized the poor timing of Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee's visit, considering the current US focus on upcoming elections and Vajpayee's injured knee.

An article in The Hindu argued that Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee's statements against Pakistan are natural because India's primary national security concern is its hostile relationship with Pakistan. The article argued that while India and the US agree on common objectives for peace in South Asia, the US views Pakistan are more benign than does India.

US Vice President Al Gore told Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee that, if Gore is elected, one of his first tasks would be to send the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty back to the US Senate for ratification.

2. India-US Relations

The US Congress passed a resolution urging the removal of remaining sanctions against India. However, officials in the Clinton administration said sanctions should remain linked to India signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

The Commander-in-Chief of the US Navy's Pacific Fleet, Admiral Dennis C Plair, will visit India beginning September 20. He will hold meetings with Indian military leadership and with civilian leaders Defense Minister George Fernandes and Foreign Minister Lalit Mansingh. Plair follows a visit by Indonesian Naval Chief Admiral Achmad Sutaijpto.

3. Nuclear Weapons

In a joint India-US statement, India reaffirmed that it will continue its voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing until the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty takes effect. Assistant US Secretary of State for South Asia Affairs Rick Inderfurth said the statement was, "a clear indication by the Indian government that it is continuing to build a national consensus" toward ratifying the test ban treaty.

Frontline carried an article by Harvard University and Trinity College professor Amartya Sen, entitled "India and the Bomb." Sen discusses his view of the role of nuclear weapons in South Asia, particularly examining whether the development of nuclear weapons is ethical or prudential.

4. India-Russia Relations

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov began a visit to India, during which he is expected to finalize sixteen draft documents prior to the October 2 visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin. The cooperative agreements include areas such as civil aviation, space, energy, defense trade, and,

because of the participation of Russian Atomic Energy Minister Yevgeny Adamov, presumably nuclear energy. Klebanov said that Russia hoped "to participate in setting up at least half of new nuclear power generation capacities planned by India." Defense agreements are likely to relate to the joint production of T-90 tanks, Mig-29 fighters, and submarine repair. Russia also reiterated its intention to transfer to India the renovated and re-equipped aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov.

5. Military Hardware

The Indian government allocated \$328 million to purchase 10 Mirage 2000H fighter aircraft from Dassault Aviation. Deliveries should be completed by 2004.

Indian Air Force Air Chief Marshal AY Tipnis said that the Air Force is seeking the purchase of new aircraft to compensate for acquisition deficiencies. Tipnis said the government is in the process of evaluating the probability of producing Su-30 aircraft domestically, and that India was considering the purchase of AWACS aircraft, but from sources other than Russia.

Twenty-two "major" countries, including the US, Britain, France, and Russia, have confirmed that their naval warships will participate in the Indian Navy's annual International Fleet Review. The five-day event scheduled for February will include a review of the warships by Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee, a parade, and an international seminar.

6. UN Talks

Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh discussed terrorism with UN General Secretary Kofi Annan, and told Annan that India could not have a dialogue with Pakistan until Pakistan stopped cross-border terrorism.

Pakistan

1. Pakistan-US Relations

US officials indicated that while the US is attempting to build a stronger relationship with India, this does not affect the US relationship with Pakistan. US officials also said that the US would not play a mediating role in the conflict.

Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf stated that improved ties between India and the US were not a concern for Pakistan. Musharraf said, "Our relations with the US should be seen independently and it should not be hooked on to US-India relationship."

The Times of India reported on an article by Tahir Mirza in The Dawn which stated that Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf had little success in "changing the Western attitude of passively tolerating the [Pakistani] regime and keeping it engaged while making it absolutely clear that it cannot be endorsed."

2. Pakistan CE at UN

The Dawn reported that Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf met with the leaders of fifteen countries during his trip to the UN Millennium Summit. These included Russia and the PRC, as well as many smaller countries. The Pakistan Foreign Ministry would not reveal which countries had declined to meet with Musharraf.

3. Foreign Relations: Iran, EU, Russia

Iranian Deputy Interior Minister for Political and Social Affairs Syed Mustafa Tajzadeh and Pakistani Secretary of the Interior Hassan Raza Pasha signed a five-point agreement between the two countries, according to which the two countries agreed to combat drugs and migration across their common border, to create border markets, and to work further towards the Iran-India gas pipeline. Tajzadeh said Pakistan had agreed to both root out domestic poppy production and to pressure the Taliban to do the same.

The EU is preparing a four-member mission to go to Pakistan to resume political talks. An EU diplomat said, "This is not a resumption of a regular EU-Pakistan dialogue. But the EU feels it is time to restart political discussions with Pakistan." Relations between the EU and Pakistan have been on hold since the military takeover in October 1999.

An editorial in The Dawn argued that Pakistan is attempting to develop better ties with Russia, as evidenced by Pakistan ISI head Lieutenant General Mehmud's visit to Russia and the recent ten-minute meeting between Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf and Russian President Vladimir Putin. The article argued that it is difficult to build relations because of the security conditions that existed when Pakistan first became independent.

4. Military Hardware

AQ Khan, a chief scientist in the Pakistani nuclear program, stated a claim that Pakistan could reach all major Indian cities using Ghauri missiles.

Chief of the Pakistani Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Parvaiz Mehdi Qureshi, stated that the prototype Super-7 aircraft would be launched next year. The project had been delayed due to problems importing parts from other countries.

Scientist Samar Mubarak Mand stated that Pakistan had the Shaheen II multi-stage missile ready for testing. The Shaheen II is believed to have a range of 2,500 km.

Kashmir

1. Overview

An editorial in The Dawn argued in favor of viewing the Kashmir situation, as described by Pakistan Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf, as analogous to the situation in East Timor. If the cases are similar, the people of the Kashmir should not continue to be deprived of their right to self-determination. The editorial states that the West has been unsympathetic to this view.

2. Pakistan Force Posture

Indian Army Brigadier Vijay Singh said Pakistan had created a Border Action Team (BAT) to attack Indian outposts along the Line of Control. Referring to these BATs, Indian Major General NS Pathania said Pakistani army regulars were now involved in the proxy war in Jammu and Kashmir.

Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes stated that Pakistan has increased its activities along the Line of Control and said that Pakistan may be trying to create another Kargil-like situation.

3. India-Pakistan Talks

An editorial in The Dawn argued that while the US probably played a role in recent developments in the Kashmir, US President Clinton should have directed more of his statements towards pressuring India to agree to bilateral talks as nothing can move forward until India and Pakistan engage in dialogue.

Prior to Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee's meeting with US President Bill Clinton, a senior US official said, "We do believe Pakistan has a role to play in lowering the level of activity along the line of control...It is something we have raised directly with the authorities in Pakistan."

US Secretary of State Madeline K Albright met with Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar. They discussed regional security issues, Afghanistan, and non-proliferation. Albright also expressed US President Bill Clinton's desire to be helpful in de-escalating tensions.

Pakistan Information Minister Javed Jabbar denied that Pakistan was considering any plan for the division of Kashmir.

4. Hizbul Mujahideen Dialogue Offer

Hizbul Mujahideen spokesman Salim Hashim said the Hizbul would accept bilateral talks with the government of India, if India accepted that the Kashmir dispute would be solved through tripartite talks involving Pakistan. He said, "Before considering any future modalities, India should accept that there are three parties attached to the issue of the Kashmir dispute.

Indian Home Minister LK Advani stated that the government of India rejected the Hizbul Mujahideen's offer. He said, "As far as Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, we are prepared to talk to our own disgruntled people in Kashmir on any issue. But there is no question of involving Pakistan."

Hizbul Mujahideen commander Assad Yazdani, despite its recent offer to open talks with the government of India, reported that the Hizbul "has plans to intensify actions against security forces in Kashmir...to increase the number of skilled militants, acquire more sophisticated weapons, and at the same time garner more public support."

5. Jammu and Kashmir Census

The Jammu and Kashmir government has admitted that the census there has not begun because of the threat by the Hizbul Mujahideen to act against those participating in the census. The state government has stated that the census is not political in nature. Jammu and Kashmir census director Firoze Ahmad said unwed mothers and sex workers would not be counted because of opposition by some states.

6. Kashmir Violence

The Jammu and Kashmir government has issued orders for the construction of 1000 household and 100 community bunkers in shelling-prone areas.

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