



Week: 01 – 07 January 2007

GLOBAL REALITY: THE WEEK IN REVIEW

You may not be interested in reality, but reality is interested in you.

Threat Summary

	Inter-State Conflict. Losing Afghanistan, encirclement of Baghdad begins, Somalia active. Terrorism. US losing war of ideas without a clue, Islamists proliferating along with explosives.
	Poverty. US dogs are obese, FDA approves diet pill for dogs while billions of humans starve. Environment. Tibetan glaciers melting, China and India face future droughts as rivers run dry. Civil War. Sri Lanka, Sudan, Congo, among others. Genocide. Rwanda genocide alleged to have been four years in the planning and execution. Transnational Crime. Mexico mounts major operation in Tijuana area, disarming local police.
	Infectious Disease. Tamiflu, a “cure,” could trigger second deadlier pandemic via sewage.
	Other Atrocities. Children dying across Zimbabwe, human trafficking from India to Malaysia.

Policy Summary

	Diplomacy. US is flailing while 43 Jews elected to Congress. Still no global strategy. Security. US intelligence, emergency communications, foreign spying, new signing orders. Social Security. ...
	Immigration, ... Water ...
	Debt ... Economy ... Energy. Energy politics replacing ideological politics. Justice. ...
	Agriculture. ... Education. ... Family. W3C, web standards organization, still debating .xxx for pornography sites.

Challenger Summary

	Iran. Supreme Leader gravely ill, unyielding on nuclear issue, but moderation being discussed. Venezuela. President Chavez closes opposition TV station after winning by a handy margin.
	Brazil. President Lula begins second term, gangs remain a major problem, Doha Round alive. China. Iranian and then Israeli officials visit China, suggesting Middle Eastern play. India. Chinese dams threaten India, India will have two aircraft carriers, varied ethnic killings. Indonesia. Christian sub-text in Free Papua Movement. Wild Cards. British Navy mothballing half its fleet. Pakistan hoping for peace through pipelines.
	Russia. ...

World Crises (extracted from **monthly** assessments by *International Crisis Group*)

↗ Alert	Lebanon
↘ Deteriorated	Basque Country (Spain), Bolivia, Egypt, Fiji, Iran, Israel/Occupied Territories, Kyrgyzstan, Somalia, Sudan, Turkmenistan
↗ Improved	Guinea

[International Crisis Group](#)

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Threats <i>see daily items with links to full stories on the web at PDB-THREATS</i>	
Poverty news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No better snapshot of global inequities ... the FDA has approved the first drug for obese dogs. <p>In Yemen, U.S. military engineers from Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, installed a solar-powered electric pump at a well.</p>
Infectious Disease news list forecast	<p>↓ Scientists warn that Tamiflu use could devastate wildlife and trigger a second, deadlier pandemic when millions of doses of it enter the biosphere via sewerage.</p> <p>A meningitis death spurred a search for 80 at-risk contacts – diseases such as bacterial meningitis can cause as much terror as any jihad.</p> <p>Nearly 200 people have now been diagnosed with malaria since Jamaica's first outbreak of the disease in four decades.</p> <p>The new head of WHO renews warnings on H5NI -- "Dr Chan pledged to take a hard line on countries that do not ... carry out checks against bird flu or hinder global efforts to develop vaccines."</p> <p>Experts said a change in guidelines could help eliminate TB in the US -- "...reclassify all foreign-born residents from high-incidence countries as 'high-risk', regardless of the amount of time they have lived in the US."</p>
Environment news list forecast	<p>↓ "Hot Spots" of mercury pollution have been identified in US and Canada -- "places where the neurotoxin has accumulated in fish and wildlife to such an extent that it could harm human health and local ecosystems." In China, Fujian villagers have protested industrial pollution of their lands by blocking roads.</p> <p>Joining many similar reports from around the world, the melting of Tibetan glaciers is accelerating -- this will eventually (perhaps soon) cause disastrous water shortages in India and Pakistan whose great rivers are fed by these glaciers. Thus hath the Mighty fallen ... by climate: the twilight of the Tang dynasty [618-907ad] began in 751, when the emperor's army was defeated by Arabs but climate change is thought to have finished the demise. "Energy giant ExxonMobil borrowed tactics from the tobacco industry to raise doubt about climate change..."</p>
Inter-State Conflict news list forecast	<p>↗ Even moderate Afghan politicians are pessimistic about the future and predict a "very big war" - mass uprising against NATO-led forces and a civil war -- "Everything is gone now, we have nothing". Britain is said by some to be increasingly out of step with NATO allies in Afghanistan -- like Pakistan, "Britain is increasingly at odds with its coalition partners over its policy of making arbitrary peace deals with the Taliban". [Analysis: As the two parties with most understanding of the region – <u>Britain has already been defeated in Afghanistan twice in the 19th century</u> – it is still possible that Pakistan and the UK know best.]</p> <p>Israel was said to have plans for a tactical nuclear strike on Iran -- "two Israeli air force squadrons had been training to blow up an enrichment plant in Natanz using low-yield nuclear 'bunker busters'." Israel denied the claim. A <i>single-source, uncorroborated</i> report said Iran has a "secret" plan for mayhem in Iraq – it is not just backing Shi'ite elements but doing whatever possible to cause total chaos.</p> <p>A European politician said the Hurriyat umbrella group is not the sole representative of Kashmiris; one cause of intransigence is that several groups seek to</p>

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exclusively appropriate the cause -- "*I think there are many representatives of the Kashmiri people.*"

With the collapse of the *Islamist* forces in **Somalia**, US forces on land and sea sought to thoroughly neutralize them. US passports were found on some bodies of Islamist fighters, indicating the "international" nature of the group. 3,500 Islamists were said to be hiding in **Mogadishu**; there was a token attack or two on Ethiopian forces. An analyst said "the Islamists' immediate priority may be to stay alive". As some fleeing Islamists arrived in Yemen, officials there said "Their presence ... creates an opportunity to seek an agreement between them and the transitional government of Somalia". In **Mogadishu** Somalis protested the presence of [hated] Ethiopian forces and at least one protestor was shot dead.

Fugitive Saddam Hussein deputy **Izzat Ibrahim al-Duri** calls also for a "surge", by *Baathist* and **Iraqi** nationalists. The **Amman**-based *Alliance of the People of Baghdad* has named **Ezzah Ibrahim al-Duri** [Saddam's former deputy] as the rightful successor to the late **Saddam Hussein**. The **Iraqi** government has closed down a *Sunni*-leaning **TV channel** owned by a London-based Iraqi for inciting *sectarianism* – as the channel broadcasts from **Dubai** it is not clear what impact the government's order will have. The *death toll* in Iraq for 2006 is reported at 16,273. Saddam's **judge** says the *execution* was *illegal* on a holiday.

In 2006, 22 **UN** peacekeepers and civilian staff were killed -- the deadliest assignment was **DR Congo** (9 killed), followed by **Lebanon** (6 killed).

Modern war strategists are looking towards "*non-lethal*" *viruses* and *bacteria* to "neutralize" cities but what scope remains within the 1972 *Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention* for the use of "*incapacitants*" remains a moot point.

Civil War
[news list|forecast](#)

- In **Sri Lanka**, a *female suicide bomber* killed 15 in a *bus* bombing. A Tamil separatist "*deep penetration team*" launched a *claymore* attack against a government vehicle killing two officials; the government responded with *air strikes* against rebel positions.

The rebel *Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM)* refused to restart peace talks with the **Sudanese** government.

Rwanda mediated between the **Congo** government and a renegade *rebel* general.

Genocide
[news list|forecast](#)

- Despite a court ruling, the **Botswana** government has without explanation not yet allowed the *San* ("*Bushmen*") to return to their lands.

More allegations emerge on the **Rwanda** genocide and **France's** possible role -- "*The genocide was therefore not a spontaneous eruption of rage but a meticulously planned operation lasting almost four years.*"

Other Atrocities
[news list|forecast](#)

- ↓ In **India**, the 12,000 member *Bharatiya Bar Girls' Union* is educating others throughout **Maharashtra** on how to avoid traps of *human trafficking*.

"**Zimbabwe**, the land of dying children" said a *Times* [UK] report -- "After **Rwanda**, the UN vowed 'never again' but **Mugabe** ... has already been responsible for far more deaths than Rwanda suffered."

Malaysian police detained **Chinese** national *GROs* hiding in secret room. [Note: *Guest Relations Officers (GROs)* is often a cover or euphemism for "sex slave" *human trafficking* victims, in this case from PRC.]

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Proliferation
news list|forecast

- The US is using new *hybrid* design for new and refurbished *nuclear warheads* this raises the question of whether the US will end its moratorium *on underground nuclear testing* to make sure the new design works.

The energy Secretary dismissed the head of the *National Nuclear Security Administration* for a series of *security lapses* at *Los Alamos* and other facilities; but some said "It will take more than a new boss to fix the problems, which are far more systemic and pervasive in nature."

Israel's defense exports are now \$4B making Israel one of the world's top military equipment suppliers.

Terrorism
news list|forecast

↓ The **Australian Army** has blamed the *privatization* of logistics support for the theft of *grenade launchers* -- "The current security problems are a consequence of past wholesale privatisation of Defence Force supply and logistic support."

Canada's intelligence service, **CSIS**, is surprised there has not already been a '*dirty bomb*' incident -- "The technical capability required to construct and use a simple RDD is practically trivial"

The **Bangladesh Rapid Action Battalion** arrest 6 suspected *Islamic militants* seized material including 80 hand *grenade* casings, about 15 kilograms (33 pounds) of a gel *explosive*, a detonator and a *book on "jihad"* or holy war.

Dar al Hayat [Lebanon] published an update on [Islamist movements in North Africa](#). *Daily Star* [Lebanon] published a brief survey of [Islamist movements in the Sahel region](#) (Algeria, Sudan, Chad, Mali.)

A new **Palestine**-based Islamist group, *Saddam Hussein Martyrs Brigades*, swore to "hit America, Israel, Iran and all the traitors to our people". [single-source, uncorroborated]

The US has realized there is a "*war of ideas*" out there, somewhere - "I think we have to think about influencing people." Other utterances revealed the US thinks (in contrast to the *war on terror*) that it is at war with "*Jihadi Islam*" -- finally, the speech-writers are dragged - screaming - into 1995

Forum experts said there are 47 *extremist groups* in *South-east Asia*. In **Thailand** a mysterious series of deadly *bombings* in *Bangkok* seemed to be the work of those opposed to the *post-coup* administration, not the work of southern *Islamic separatists* -- the bombers were "in uniform" said the defense minister, "That is the reason why we have concluded that the bombings had nothing to do with the south ..."

US Treasury has proscribed three entities for supporting **Syria's WMD** proliferation -- "Syria is using official government organizations to develop nonconventional weapons and the missiles to deliver them"

Spanish police discovered a cache of *explosives* [100kg] in the *Basque* region -- although **ETA** had declared a cease fire in March 2006, some elements are still ready for battle.

A new software release called "*Mujahideen Secrets*" offers pretty good privacy for jihad communications.

Philippines authorities are certain that "*Bali bombers*" are sheltering with *Abu Sayyaf* actors in *Jolo* -- "When we captured the camp in Indanan . . . [we got] all of the materials they made for instructions and deployment of bombs." "**Development** is

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	<p>a new name for <i>peace</i>” -- the chairman of the Filipino Bishops’ Conference says <i>"Peace is brought about by justice ... the promotion of the common good by one and all."</i></p>
<p>Transnational Crime news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Hong Kong, police rounded up 101 suspected <i>triad</i> gang members. • Mexico has moved to crack down on <i>drug crime</i> which killed some 2,000 people in 2006 in violence between rival drug cartels; the navy patrolled off Tijuana; 4,000 military and state police and federal police entered Tijuana and disarmed the local police.
<p>Policy <i>see daily items with links to full stories on the web at PDB-POLICY</i></p>	
<p>Agriculture news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
<p>Debt news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
<p>Diplomacy news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A professor of political science at Yale says <i>containment</i> [rather than military engagement] has been the key time and again in dangerous political situations -- <i>"When containment has been abandoned, the US has paid a high price"</i>. <i>The Jerusalem Post</i> observes that a record number of Jewish members [43] will enter the new US Congress – <i>"You’re going to see bipartisan continuation of support for Israel"</i> The US will to give Palestinian President Abbas \$86M to provide <i>"provide Abbas’s presidential guard with training and non-lethal equipment, including vehicles and uniforms"</i>. The US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, seems to be deploying a weapon little used of late ... diplomacy – she says the says U.S. “must lead from behind” in Somalia. A second US carrier group will deploy to the Gulf <i>"as a warning to Syria and Iran and to give commanders more flexibility in the region."</i> The US seeks to prevent the escape of al Qaeda actors from Somalia -- <i>"We would be concerned that no leaders, or members, of the Islamic Courts ... are allowed to flee and to leave Somalia."</i>
<p>Economy news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
<p>Education news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A website by the National Council on Teacher Quality promises to shine a light on teachers’ <i>working conditions</i>. The incoming DC Mayor will "reduce the authority of the Board of Education and require the schools superintendent to <i>report directly to the mayor</i>." [A lone mayor adjusts deckchairs on the <i>Titanic</i> of US education when all comparable nations have nation-wide standards.]
<p>Energy news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Russian gas giant Gazrom is exchanging some resource assets for a strategic position in European <i>energy distribution</i>. The Council on Foreign Relations published a briefing on the new energy politics of Europe -- Russia’s Energy Disputes. [Analysis: Ideology politics is rapidly being sidelined everywhere by “energy politics”.]
<p>Family news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W3C, the web standards organisation, is still considering whether <i>pornography</i> should get its own domain [such as (dot)xxx], making it easy to filter – criminals and
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	other opponents are appealing to rights of " <i>free speech</i> ", a purely US concept.
Immigration news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
Justice news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
Security news list forecast	<p>↓ The federal government has revised the <i>anti-terror city grants</i> -- "<i>four U.S. cities will get a fresh infusion of federal anti-terrorism grant money, and four others will be cut off from such grants.</i>"</p> <p>Many observed Negroponte's still curious departure as DNI creates uncertainty for that new position -- "...<i>another blow to an intelligence community that has seen little continuity at the top since the departure of George J. Tenet in 2004</i>". Elsewhere, some observed that the US is still torn between throwing resources behind SIGINT (or HUMINT). [The US labors under the delusion that there is actually a <i>choice</i>.] <i>Christian Science Monitor</i> observed that <i>national security</i> needs more "<i>dreamers</i>" -- "<i>Even in Darwin's time, it was OK to be a scientist and an artist... The fact is, both require a lot of dreaming and conjecture.</i>" The <i>steam kettle</i> joins the <i>War on Terror</i>; the Administration assured everyone there is nothing unlawful with current <i>mail-opening</i> arrangements; but "<i>If they are not claiming new powers, then why did they need to issue a signing statement?</i>"</p> <p>A review revealed big gaps in <i>emergency communications</i> arrangements; in <i>Oklahoma City</i> (19 April 1995) authorities had difficulty communicating; in <i>New York City</i> (11 Sept. 2001) it happens again -- how long does "urgent" take? But DHS says "... <i>basic interoperability at the command level is achievable.... we'll continue to push for closing these gaps by the end of 2008.</i>"</p> <p>The US Army continues to train soldiers for <i>electronic war</i> -- "<i>hundreds of soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines are training at two new Army schools to become electronic warfare operators.</i>" Following the frequent embarrassing loss of government computers and data, <i>Office of Management and Budget (OMB)</i> have issued a directive Protection of Sensitive Agency Information, embracing many measures including <i>full disk encryption</i>.</p> <p><i>Foreign spying</i> on US defense technology is seen to be rising -- "the Defense Security Service Counterintelligence Office recorded an annual jump of nearly 43% in the number of <i>suspicious foreign contacts</i> ..."</p>
Social Security news list forecast	<p>↓ A curfew is being considered in <i>New Orleans</i> as a measure to stop a spate of <i>murders</i> -- "<i>At least seven people were shot and killed in the first week of the year in an outbreak of lawlessness that has sparked a public outcry for action.</i>" There has also been a spate of <i>murders</i> across Puerto Rico; most murders are drug-related and arms dealers oppose any move towards <i>gun restrictions</i>.</p> <p>With the new <i>Congress</i>, the US is set to look again at government <i>medication price negotiation</i>, a ground-shaking revolution for some, a practice well-established for 30 years in other countries.</p>
Water news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
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Challengers see *daily items with links to full stories on the web at* [PDB-CHALLENGERS](#)

Brazil

[news list|forecast](#)

- Brazil may send troops to counter violent war-like **gangs** in Rio -- "*It's terrorism and must be dealt with by the strong hand of the Brazilian state.*"

Brazil and the US are to discuss resumptions of the **Doha Round** -- "Brazil is one of the founding members and leaders of the so-called **Group of 20** (G20), which represents developing countries ..."

President **Lula** has been sworn in for his **second term** – his supporters are enthusiastic: "*He's had it tough because he's been governing without support of Congress*" -- "*I'm a faithful believer in his commitment to the poor, he's the face of the poor.*"

China

[news list|forecast](#)

- An **activist** who has publicized that nearly half of the deaths in **Gansu** mining region are due to **cancer** has been denied permission to leave China for treatment of his own cancer.

In the wake of an **Iranian** official visit to China, the **Israeli** PM is visiting, indicating China is increasingly holding court on the **Middle East**.

In as much as China admits any "**ethnic tensions**" in China, it blames outside influences -- "**ethnic separatists** and outside organizations have both received support from the **US** government and religious organizations...." China has donated a culture center to a **Bangladeshi** village -- "*At the library, there are all kinds of magazines and books .. Beijing Review, English version of Mao Zedong on Diplomacy, Islam in China, China Sports, etc.*"

China is rapidly strengthening its **road communications**, over 250,000 km [sic] annually are built or upgraded; an expressway from Beijing to the **Taiwan Strait** is also being built.

Jamestown Foundation published a detailed capability analysis of **China's strategic nuclear force**.

India

[news list|forecast](#)

- From next year, India will have two **aircraft carriers** and Chief of the Naval Staff says the Indian Navy will thenceforth "always have" two aircraft carriers. India is sending its **Madras Regiment** -- the oldest infantry regiment of the Indian Army -- to the **Congo** on a **UN mission**. The government will soon start recruiting retired army officers with expertise to defuse **landmines** laid by **Maoists**.

In **Assam**, separatist rebels have killed 48 "foreign" Hindu workers in multiple attacks -- "*Guerrillas wearing army uniforms bound the hands of 13 kiln workers and fishermen and killed them in a pre-dawn raid.*" Also in **Assam**, the **Rajdhani** express train missed a **bomb** on a bridge by a split-second. India says the **Taj Mahal** is third on Muslim **terrorist** hit list -- "*...they said that striking the Taj would help them target a large number of tourists in one stroke and also send out a global fear perception about India.*"

Seventy-nine **Maoists** were said to have surrendered in **Chhattisgarh** state -- "*...they had lost faith in their comrades' ideology.*" – but days later the opposition revealed that the "surrender" was a fake set up by the **BJP** state government. In **Bengal** violence re-erupted over a land acquisition dispute -- villagers blocked roads with boulders and destroyed a bridge to prevent police access to their areas. Protesting the **Saddam execution**, Muslims in **Agra** stoned a tourist bus -- "*Protestors burning the effigy of US President George Bush mistook the Australian and other tourists for*

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	<p>Americans and started pelting the bus with stones..."</p> <p>India says Chinese dams are a threat to India -- "<i>the building of the Parechu dam and other dams on the Sutlej and its tributaries bordering Himachal Pradesh can be used as weapons of war ...</i>" The Prime Minister has told India's scientists that success in eco-sustainable energy initiatives is integral to the country's future -- "this is a major development challenge facing us." Indian leftists groups say they will campaign against the US nuclear deal -- "<i>the Central Committee calls upon the party to launch a campaign against the dangers inherent in the Indo-U.S. nuclear agreement.</i>"</p>
<p>Indonesia news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indonesian police have accused the Kingmi Church of being the religious arm of the OPM (Free Papua Movement). [There is an undeniable Christian subtext to the Free Papua movement.]
<p>Iran news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign sources say Iran's Supreme Leader is "gravely ill" -- "<i>But talk of the 67 year-old Khamenei's health is taboo and officials have denied he is seriously ill ...</i>" Iran says that quitting the NPT is an option -- "<i>If we are put under pressure and deprived of our rights we can use our capacity to decide whether to stay within the treaty or to quit it.</i>" Iran's former president Rafsanjani has counseled moderation in the nuclear issue; more significantly, his views are quoted by the state news agency. Iran's parliament has raised the voting age ... from 15 to 18.
<p>Russia news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putin opponents say the BBC has been penetrated by FSB (KGB) agents.
<p>Venezuela news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following re-election with a handy margin, President Chavez appoints a vice president and ministers. <p>A prison revolt left 16 dead -- "<i>...the revolt at the prison around 400 kilometres from Caracas was brought under control through military intervention.</i>"</p> <p>Following President Chavez's statement of intention to not renew the license of an opposition TV station, Venezuela's prelate cardinal expresses support for the station. The Organisation of American States (OAS) also warns Chavez not to close the station -- "<i>The closing of a mass communications outlet is a rare step in the history of our hemisphere and has no precedent in the recent decades of democracy.</i>" Chavez calls the Secretary of OAS "an idiot" and reminds the world the TV station was directly involved in fomenting the Opus Dei coup against him.</p>
<p>wild-card news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ The British Navy is to mothball half of its fleet -- "senior officials said the plan would turn Britain's Navy into nothing more than a coastal defense force."</p> <p>Five or six RPG launchers stolen from an Australian defence supplier may be in the hands of "terrorists".</p> <p>In Pakistan, some see a peaceful future linked through pipelines "... we could even in near future have oil and natural gas pipelines running from the Caspian Sea through Central Asia to Jammu and Kashmir on to [India]"</p> <p>A Harris Poll reveals differences -- In the US and UK the greatest challenge is terrorism, for continental Europe it's global warming and religious fanaticism. China and a European country have offered Pakistan high-to-medium-altitude air defence systems.</p> <p>World Politics Watch says a bitter struggle between Sunnis and Shi'ites is possible</p>

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-- as with centuries of violence between *Catholics* and *Protestants* in *Europe* – but an equivalent of “*Thirty Years War*” may eventually also lead the Muslim world to a its version of the *Treaty of Westphalia* and the modern era.

In **Nigeria**, *violence* and *kidnappings* against *oil assets* continues -- in one case the ransom was paid and the hostages stayed captive -- "*We are prepared to keep them for as long as we find them useful and after that, who knows?*"

The **Muslim Brotherhood** in **Egypt** said that 29 more members had been arrested -- "President Hosni Mubarak proposed constitutional reforms that would ban religious groups from forming political parties."

Turkey is aggressively pursuing a *military satellite program* that may be “a model for emerging regional powers” -- “...*the Turkish military is not going to allow local industrial politics to get in the way of ... sovereign regional observation.*”

For the sixteenth year, **India** and **Pakistan** exchange a list of *nuclear installations and facilities* covered under a 1998 agreement.

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