



Week: 29 January– 04 February 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. Iraq may be America’s Algeria. Pakistan-India stabilizing. Indonesia engaged. Proliferation. Non-proliferation is NOT possible. What is possible is stabilization and neutralization. Terrorism. Islamic nations now feeling the threat of internal Islamic terrorism. Gang-terror ties.
	Poverty. UN emergency funding ineffective. Ukraine dumping grain into the sea. Brazil to Africa. Infectious Disease. H5N1 is 61% fatal. HIV/AIDS moving up the economic ladder in South Africa. Environment. .Al Gore, UN, Canada, France on same page. White House & Exxon disinformation. Civil War. Somalia, Gaza, and Congo unstable. Kosovo-Serbia unfinished war. Genocide. Sudan/Darfur remains a mess but all appear to be ignoring the other 17 active genocides. Transnational Crime. Colombia nabbing cash, Nicaragua coast active in drugs, Pakistan launders \$.
	Other Atrocities. Afghan immunity, Brazilian death squads, Malaysia focuses on Islamic war crimes.

Policy Summary

	Diplomacy. China and Russia highly critical of US lack of diplomacy. 13 CIA rendition arrests. Security. 25% all PCs part of webbot crime network. Identity theft a major problem. Society. Feeding homeless criminalized. CDC not ready for pandemic. 122 levees at risk.
	Immigration. US newly effective on criminal aliens. \$3M needed against Mexican tunnels to US. Water. \$1M prize for simple cheap means of removing arsenic from Bangladesh water. Major gain!!
	Debt. Bush asks for hundred billion for losing war, advanced systems—US insolvent, no one cares. Economy. Not reported, but Medicare savings on drugs in future could be as much as 90%. Education. UK schools to teach all languages. Nicaragua promises schooling for all. Energy. European wind market growth is up, could go to 48GW. Garbage being turned into energy. Justice. Former Guantanamo prisoner running for office in Australia.
	Agriculture. Salt-resistant wheat being developed. US farm subsidies cut but not enough. Family. Not reported, but two-job families and lack of real wealth crippling middle class/blue collars.

Major Player Summary

	Iran. China investing in Iran. US continues to be clueless & ineffective. School indoctrination scary.
	Venezuela. Talking to Iran about making Unmanned Aerial Vehicles for environmental surveys.
	Brazil. Crime continues to plague this Nation around drugs. 15% of candidates have crime issues. China. China rolling across Africa, eliminates space safety, major threat because of its <i>weakness</i> . India. India buys Russian rather than US missiles. Many internal wars. Investing in Myanmar. Indonesia. Islamic militancy emergent. As Ralph Peters has said, Indonesia is “ours to <i>lose</i> .” Wild Cards. Pakistan unrest, Nigeria (a violent Islamic node) squandering oil for elite corruption.
	Russia. Making gains across Latin America (as is China). Considers US too difficult to deal with.

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

↗ Alert	[none]
↘ Deteriorated	Guinea, India (non-Kashmir), Israel/Occupied Territories, Lebanon, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Uganda
↑ Improved	North Korea, Northern Ireland (UK)

[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"> • USAID has provided around \$9 per head for the immediate needs of <i>flood</i> victims in Angola. NGOs say the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), created a year ago improve aid response, is inefficient and actually increases procedural delays. <i>International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center</i> in Nairobi has launched a new <i>drought-tolerant maize</i> variety. Ukraine is <i>dumping</i> thousands of tonne of <i>grain</i> into the <i>Black Sea</i> because of a misplanning and absurd market logic. President Lula of Brazil at the Davos WEF has offered Brazilian technology to <i>Africa</i> to produce <i>ethanol biofuels</i>.
Infectious Disease news list forecast	<p>↓ HIV/AIDS is increasing among South Africa's rich and best-educated -- "<i>The high risk group is growing, it is getting older and it is getting richer. This could represent a whole new wave of the epidemic.</i>"</p> <p>After more than a month in northern Kenya where it killed 478 people and infected 33,000 Rift Valley Fever has now spread into Kenya's central province. <i>Home test kits</i> are recommended in <i>malaria</i>-prone areas to lower deaths rates -- "<i>The study found that the rapid diagnostic kits helped to reduce malaria deaths in the region by nearly one third in four years.</i>"</p> <p>Brief WHO data on H5NI shows 165 deaths from 271 cases (61% fatality) in 11 countries. An outbreak on an English farm was confirmed to be H5NI. Indonesia is about to declare a H5NI "disaster" -- "<i>the president has indicated he will declare it a national disaster so money can be allocated from the state budget's disaster fund.</i>" Russia's chief medical officer is unconcerned over any outbreak of the virus -- "<i>vaccinations against influenza reduced the risk of contracting the new disease by humans.</i>" Experts called for monitoring of <i>cats</i> and <i>dogs</i> for H5NI -- "<i>They worry that if the virus adapts to mammals it could more easily spread among people.</i>" <i>Reuters</i> published a brief <i>chronology</i> of H5NI incidents since January 2006 -- Bird flu developments.</p> <p>In Angola deaths from <i>cholera</i> have risen sharply after <i>floods</i> -- "An average of 90 cases of the potentially fatal intestinal infection are being reported each day..."</p>
Environment news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UN IPCC climate panel issued a much-awaited report saying <i>global warming</i> is man-made -- the consensus is that <i>human activity</i>, rather than <i>normal climatic rhythms</i>, is causing <i>global warming</i>. This fourth in a series of international reports reflects better science and more-precise models; it finds "many, many smoking guns". The UK Environment Minister says "<i>The debate over the science of climate change is well and truly over...</i>"; also all secondary schools in the UK will now see Al Gore's film <i>An Inconvenient Truth</i>. Former Next President Al Gore, a prophet in other lands if not his own, has been nominated for the <i>Nobel Peace Prize</i>. The consensus is that "climate change could be far worse than previously thought". Plausible climate scenarios include famine in China and India. Indonesia may lose 2,000 (mostly uninhabited) islands to <i>climate change</i> -- "<i>We are still in a better position. Island countries like Saint Lucia, Fiji and the Bahamas would likely disappear.</i>" Climate talk dominated the Canadian Parliament -- "Canada's federal

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politicians signaled a political climate shift yesterday...". The 10 main candidates in **France's** upcoming presidential election (except far-right leader Jean-Marie Le Pen) have signed a "**Green Charter**". Certainly *climate change* will be bad -- the only chance of a Future beyond is to strive now not towards "reduction" but towards **CLIMATE NEUTRAL** activity – processes that in aggregate have zero greenhouse effect.

The **American Enterprise Institute** is using some of the \$1.6M it has received from **ExxonMobil** to blunt the certainty of the IPCC report. But some industrialists in the **US** are waking up to *global warming* -- "*If you're not at the table when these negotiations are going on, you're going to be on the menu*". A **US** Congressional committee says it is discovering the **Bush** administration engaged in systematic disinformation on *climate change*. A survey shows 13% of **Americans** have never heard of *global warming* -- people in **Latin America** were most worried while **US** citizens were least concerned with just 42% rating global warming "very serious".

For some the IPCC report is conservative. It is at odds with recent and unexpected **ice-sheet collapses** -- imminent sea level rise may be feet not inches. Also, the cycle of global warming now triggered could last "*more than a millennium*". And **clouds are still a puzzle** -- "global warming" may lead to a rapid cloud build-up and – paradoxically -- a global "**nuclear winter**".

The green credentials of *palm oil* disappear when the **slash-and-burn** of **rain forests** to produce it is considered. [Ecology is a whole-process analysis.] High **DDT** levels have been found off the **California** coast – the areas "*still contain high levels of banned DDT decades after a manufacturer dumped tons of the pesticide into sewers ...*"

Inter-State Conflict
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ In **Afghanistan** the **Taliban** promise 2007 will be the bloodiest year for foreign troops yet; commentators say it probably is a now-or-never year. A **NATO** agreement with **tribal elders** that they would not allow **Taliban** into the town -- somehow – failed and **NATO** seeks to retake the town. **Afghanistan's** President **Karzai** offers talks with **Taliban** -- "while we are fighting for our honour, we still open the door for **talks and negotiations** with our enemy...". The **US** handed over major weapons supplies to the **Afghan** army -- "*This is the first time that we have received such major help for strengthening our army.*"

The **Western Sahara** – that "stalled, forgotten war" – has had a 15 year **cease-fire** but still needs just solution. With feelings running high over **Somalia**, **Ethiopia** says it foiled an **Eritrean**-backed attack -- "*Ethiopia's anti-terrorist task force apprehended all perpetrators of the intended terrorist acts...*".

Fifty years on, some see parallels between **Iraq** and **Algeria** -- "*De Gaulle got out with nothing. He lost everything because he let it drag on too long and this to my mind is the big danger in Iraq.*" The latest **National Intelligence Estimate** on **Iraq** says It's Broken. A précis of key points – [Quick Highlights of the National Intelligence Estimate Report](#), Some doubts emerged over the reported battle with the messianic (**Madhi**) cult -- Patrick Cockburn of the **London Independent** writing from **Baghdad** called the official account "a fabrication." Former Secretaries of State **Kissinger** and **Albright** accord with the **Iraq Study Group** -- get a STRATEGY and TALK to **Iraq's** neighbors. Admiral **Fallon** says the **US** miscalculated on -- "*Our ability to correctly assess the political, economic and security situation in Iraq has*

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	<p><i>been lacking."</i></p> <p>President Musharraf notes that Pakistan-India relations are better than ever -- "<i>military action is no longer an option by any one of us.</i>"</p> <p>Pakistan and Indonesia, the largest two Muslim nations, "<u>have consonance of views</u> in a requirement of a new initiative" in Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan.</p>
<p>Civil War news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Congo, 100 die in clashes over several days between protesters and police in Congo, in southwestern Bas Congo province. <p>The EU supports independence for Kosovo from Serbia; Russia opposes it -- a nasty situation still lurks in "in Europe's unfinished war".</p> <p>So far there is only token opposition to the transition in Somalia with several rocket and mortar attacks in Mogadishu. The Somali Speaker was removed for having unauthorized talks with the Islamists and a former warlord has been elected to replace him. African nations are hastening to find peacekeepers for Somalia, with little immediate success -- "... <i>failure to deploy could plunge the Horn of Africa country back into anarchy.</i>" The Somali government calls for a reconciliation conference -- "<i>the international community has to remain close to them to help them, to back them, to support them also financially.</i>"</p> <p>In Gaza another Hamas-Fatah cease-fire struggles to take hold, with immense pressure to succeed from neighboring Arab states.</p>
<p>Genocide news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinese President Hu boosts trade with Sudan while quietly urging Khartoum to resolve Darfur crisis -- China's diplomacy of the unsaid (and money) may work better in Sudan than any other approach. Or not. Chad's President openly accuses Sudan of genocide and Chad says the world still has "head in sand" on Darfur. In southern Sudan 100,000 refugees are expected to return home from neighboring countries in 2007, depending on an improved security situation. For the second consecutive year, the African Union has declined to give the rotating chair to Sudan [because of the Darfur situation] -- "<i>Sudan has voluntarily accepted to decline in favour of Ghana. ... We chose Ghana to maintain the unity of the continent.</i>"
<p>Other Atrocities news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An alleged Congolese warlord, Thomas Lubanga, has been ordered to stand trial for grave crimes; he is the first suspect to face judgment before the International Criminal Court rather than an <i>ad hoc</i> War Crimes tribunal. <p>Argentina is seeking extradition from Spain of a 'dirty war' suspect -- documents that may see Ricardo Miguel Cavallo extradited from Spain back to Argentina have arrived.</p> <p>Six more "street kids" have been killed in Rio (Brazil), with police extra-judicial death squads as the prime suspect.</p> <p>In the Philippines, the military is being pressured to dismantle its 'death squads'.</p> <p>Afghanistan's parliament has granted immunity to all Afghans involved in the country's 25 years of conflict. Observer's worry that it is not the Afghan people offering amnesty but members of the Afghanistan's National Assembly many of whom would be suspects.</p> <p>Malaysia's former Prime Minister Mahathir announces he will work to establish a war crimes tribunal "to focus on victims of abuse in Iraq, Lebanon and the Palestinian territories".</p>

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Proliferation
news list|forecast

- **Georgia** and the **US** have signed an agreement to combat *smuggling* of *nuclear materials*.

Terrorism
news list|forecast

- Following an alleged plot against *Muslim soldiers* in the **British Army**, extra protection has been arranged -- there are some 330 Muslims in the 100,000-strong UK armed forces, of whom about 250 are in active service. *Al-Qaeda* is said to have told **UK** "cells" to carry out a wave of *beheadings* -- the "strategic" assassination instruction was issued to dozens of *al-Qaeda* followers in the **UK**. In the face of credible threats, **UK** authorities are holding exercises to handle *Beslan* --style siege -- "the threat is considered so credible that **MI5**, the **police** and the **SAS** have conducted at least two mock counter-terrorism exercises..."

In a fierce engagement in **Iraq**, zealot followers of a *Madhi* showed army-like order - - "They fought according to a military arrangement, and they moved as platoons and companies." [An earlier *Mahdi* ("chosen one") captured Khartoum in 1885.] *Sunni* extremists in **Iraq** did not miss the holiest day in the Shiite calendar -- *Ashoura* -- to stoke Iraqi *sectarian violence*.

"The fight against *violent jihadists* will continue, although we must be careful not to see **Iraq** as the prototype of how it should or will be waged" -- *America's long wars*.

Responding to a perceived threat from the *Muslim Brotherhood*, President **Mubarak** has instigated 34 amendments to the **Egyptian** constitution to thwart *religious parties*. Relations worsen between the **Egyptian** government and the *Muslim Brotherhood* -- "They have made *al-Azhar University* look... like it is exporting terrorism".

An *Islamist* website threatens any **African Union peacekeepers** that deploy to **Somalia** -- "Somalia is not a place where you can come to earn a salary - it is a place where you can die". **Yemen** has granted political asylum to a top **Somali** Muslim leader -- Yemeni officials believe that *Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed* could play a key role in reconciliation in the anarchic country torn apart by clan rivalries. **Yemeni** soldiers were killed in an *Islamist* attack. **Yemen** tells *Shi'ite* rebels to disband or face war -- "Yemen accuses the rebels led by the *Houthi* clerics of wanting to install *Shi'ite religious rule*". An *Islamist* website threatens any **African Union peacekeepers** that deploy to **Somalia** -- "Somalia is not a place where you can come to earn a salary - it is a place where you can die".

Saudi Arabia has arrested 10 in crackdown on terrorist *funding* -- "raised donations illegally and smuggled and transferred funds to suspicious bodies that use them to lure citizens and attract them into turbulent parts".

Islamists battled **Algeria's** army in the most serious *Islamist* attack for several months. **Algeria's** top security official discounts the importance of **Algeria's Salafist Group for Call and Combat** as an threat in North Africa.

Turkish police claim they have detained 46 *al Qaeda* suspects in raids across Turkey - in the provinces of *Konya, Istanbul, Izmir, Kocaeli, Mardin*.

In **Pakistan**, 6 are held for "planning suicide attacks" -- "sectarian literature and a computer disk showing militants *slaughtering two suspected government spies* were also recovered".

In **Thailand** the government seems no closer to the answer on the *New Years Eve bombings* -- dissident elements in the Thai army or southern insurgents.

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	<p>An ex-<i>Guantanamo</i> inmate will run in an Australian election -- <i>Mamdouh Habib</i>, released in January 2005, was held in Guantanamo Bay without charge for almost three years. A new Australian Crime Commission task force will investigate the possibility that <i>motorcycle gangs</i> are selling <i>weapons</i> to <i>terrorists</i>.</p> <p>The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission says making <i>nuclear facilities</i> crash-proof is against terrorists is "<i>impracticable</i>".</p>
<p>Transnational Crime news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Colombia, a tip-off under the reward system led police to a further stash of \$19 million in hard cash, bringing to almost <u>\$80 million</u> the amount of <i>drug cash</i> seized in recent weeks. <i>Cocaine</i> is the key industry on Nicaragua's Caribbean coast -- "<i>on the islands, entire communities provide logistics support for the narcos.... Everybody is involved, one way or the other. Everybody.</i>" Another anti-violence, anti-<i>cartel</i> campaigner has been killed in Mexico, reflecting again the total <i>impunity of drug gangs</i>. <p><i>Money laundering</i> of <i>drug</i> money [Afghan opiates] in Pakistan is estimated at <u>\$2B</u> to <u>\$4B</u> annually.</p>
<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"> • Genes from "seed libraries" may be able to be used in breeding a <i>salt-tolerant wheat</i> -- "our aim is to eventually produce <i>wheats</i> able, like <i>barley</i>, to grow in highly <i>saline soils</i>." <p>The US cut billions from farm subsidies hoping it would send "a strong signal to countries considering whether to resume the <i>Doha Round</i> of world trade talks." The EU said rather promptly that the new <i>US Farm Bill</i> would not be enough to revive <i>Doha</i>.</p>
<p>Debt news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ President Bush is seeking \$100B for wars in 2007 -- the funding requests for Iraq and Afghanistan will be submitted to Congress in the form of <i>emergency budget "supplementals."</i></p>
<p>Diplomacy news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ The US has taken China to the WTO in a dispute over <i>subsidies</i> -- "<i>Our decision to bring this case to the WTO comes after our efforts at dialogue failed.</i>"</p> <p>Russia and the US are at odds over Syria's role in the <i>Middle East</i> -- "<i>Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov suggested the United States is being shortsighted by not engaging countries who could help fix problems...</i>".</p> <p>China aired rare public criticism of Bush Iraq policy -- "<i>Unilateralism and terrorism breed each other, fight each other, but neither can overcome the other</i>". More reports show US money has been squandered in Iraq -- endemic <i>corruption</i> and <i>carpet-bagging</i> of criminal proportions have done irreparable damage to the <i>Iraqi</i> people.</p> <p>In Germany 13 arrests have been ordered in the alleged CIA kidnap/rendition case - - "<i>The El-Masri case has been a sore point in otherwise good German-U.S. relations</i>".</p> <p>Commonwealth Secretary-General McKinnon says the Commonwealth is a key partner in <i>African</i> affairs -- "<i>18 of the Commonwealth's 53 countries are in Africa</i>".</p>
<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"> • In the UK more schools will be able to teach not just <i>languages</i> like <i>French</i>,
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	<p><i>German</i> and <i>Spanish</i>, but <i>Mandarin</i>, <i>Urdu</i> and <i>Arabic</i> as well."</p> <p>Education experts in <i>Illinois</i> have urged the governor to increase charter public school funding -- "<i>Charter public schools are public schools first and foremost, but the state capital funding ban treats charter public school students unequally</i>".</p> <p>Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega has promised access to schooling for all -- "<i>We are lifting the public school sector from the neo-liberal market.</i>"</p>
<p>Energy news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the US further funds have been awarded in the \$38.6M of Nuclear Energy Research Initiative funds granted since 2005. India will construct four more breeder reactors -- "<i>The new breeders would first use mixed uranium-plutonium oxide as fuel and later switch over to metallic fuel.</i>". <p>European wind market growth is up -- the total wind power capacity in the EU is now a not inconsiderable 48GW.</p> <p>Researchers have developed a portable generator that turns many types of refuse into electricity -- "<i>The biorefinery generator initially runs on diesel oil for several hours until the gasifier and the bioreactor begin to produce fuel...</i>". Continuing research may see the roof cladding itself turned into a photo-voltaic collector.</p> <p>The World Bank published an account of its involvement in renewable energy initiatives -- World Bank Group Progress on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency</p>
<p>Family news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
<p>Immigration news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More US Immigration officers are liaising with prisons to identify criminal aliens -- "<i>starting in 2008, ICE plans to assign 220 more employees to jails through its Criminal Alien Program.</i>" <p>US agencies need \$3M to plug effectively tunnels under the Mexican-US border -- critics say the unfilled tunnels pose an unnecessary national security risk Dozens of tunnels have been discovered underneath the border.</p>
<p>Justice news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
<p>Security news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The US DOD issued its electronic-warfare doctrine [<i>Joint Publication 3-13.1 - Electronic Warfare</i>] on January 25. Incoming DNI McConnell says there henceforth will be no 'cherry picking' of intelligence. Members of Congress have condemned security at Los Alamos Security -- "<i>There is an absolute inability and unwillingness to address the most routine security issues at this Laboratory.</i>" In the US, the States are revolting against the Real ID Act of 2005, partly because they say it's "<i>a honey pot out there that's going to be irresistible to identity thieves</i>". <p>Australian and Indonesian Special Forces [<i>Special Air Service Regiment and Kopassus</i>] are planning their second joint exercise.</p> <p>Vint Cerf says a quarter of Internet PCs are [unknowingly] part of a webbot network -- "<i>Cerf estimates that 100 to 150 million of the 600 million internet PCs worldwide are infected with bots...</i>". Shielding jackets for RFID ePassports are appearing on the market. In the UK, some proposed X-ray scanners could be installed in street furniture -- "<i>The real question is ... how you respond to it when the technology says there's something unusual.</i>" In the UK, the eavesdrop aircraft used in Northern Ireland are again in the air -- "<i>a mysterious aircraft has been spotted in the air in</i>"</p>

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	<p>recent days at the same time as three "no-fly" zones have been in operation in the West Midlands."</p>
<p>Society news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>War on Poverty</i> continues -- In <i>Orlando</i> it is now illegal to feed the <i>homeless</i>; "a week before Orlando's ordinance took effect, <i>Las Vegas</i> criminalized giving food to even a single transient in any city park." US Presidential candidate John Edwards announced he would introduce <i>health-care</i> closer to the standards of most industrialized nations. CDC held an <i>exercise</i> practicing for the "Big One" and discovered shortcomings (as exercises should) -- "<u>some [necessary] information was <i>classified</i>, so some key public health experts didn't have all the facts.</u>" [And the exercise was called off due to weather.] The US Corps of Engineers lists 122 <i>levees</i> at risk from coast to coast -- "the list was released in response to <i>Freedom of Information Act</i> requests filed by news organizations...". A <i>quality of life</i> report place the US fifth, following 1-France 2-Australia 3-Netherlands 4-New Zealand. <i>Unions</i> say "technology developed for security will be used to track, label and <i>control workforces</i>."
<p>Water news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A scenario that sees <i>tankers</i> shipping emergency water to needy cities has added credibility given that <i>single hulled oil tankers</i> are being phased by 2015 out and will become available at scrap prices. 32% lower flows in the <i>Indus</i> this year, and a 20% less <i>snowfall</i> around the headwaters, are a taste of <i>water crises</i> to come in the sub-continent. Water development projects in Ethiopia's part of the <i>Nile</i> basin, the home of 20 million people, is said to be crucial to <i>poverty</i> alleviation. [But, as ever with river projects, someone somewhere else will be adversely affected.] The US National Academy of Engineering has awarded a \$1M prize to Bangladeshi scientists for an ingenious low-technology system that filters <i>arsenic</i> from Bangladesh's arsenic-laden groundwater.
<p>Challengers <i>see daily items with links to full stories on the web at PDB-Challengers</i></p>	
<p>Brazil news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A retired Brazilian ambassador to the US says "<i>There are in Brazil sectors, although minorities, that have an aversion to the United States ...</i>" By 2015 Brazil hopes to commission 42 locally-built <i>oil tankers</i>. Almost 15% of the 513 people taking seats as elected <i>representatives</i> in the new Congress are under <i>investigation</i> or have been <i>convicted</i>. A six-state operation targeted global <i>drug-trafficking</i> and <i>money-laundering</i> cartel/s.
<p>China news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> President Hu visited Zambia as part of an <i>African</i> tour amid growing discontent about Chinese <i>investment</i> – the <i>Zambian opposition</i>, who were excluded from ceremonies, said "<i>The president of China should be aware that there is more than one view of China in Zambia.</i>" President Hu pledged a new <i>presidential palace</i> to Sudan's al-Bashir – in some way, a case of spending money where it will do most good.

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Some space scientists say China's recent *space-weapon* has trashed *Space* -- pieces of debris have already come within 5km of a *space asset* over 500 times.

There was another report of "murders" in China to harvest *human organs* for *transplant tourism*, but no new evidence.

A Chinese report says that *labor disputes* threaten China's stability -- the sort of proletarian revolution China doesn't want at present. Another report said *protests* over *land grabs* for development are down but "pent-up discontent" remains a danger; China has committed to increase *spending* in the largely neglected *rural areas*.

A subtle analysis from *Central Asia* said [China ought to be feared because of its weakness, not strength](#) -- "global domination implies global responsibility for the processes taking place in the world".

India
news list|forecast

- *Standard & Poor* has raised India's *Sovereign Rating* to **BB+/B**.

India's *BrahMos supersonic cruise missile*, jointly produced by the *Defence Research and Development Organisation* (DRDO) and **Russia's** *NPO Mashnistroyemias*, was successfully test fired. **Google Earth** has agreed to blur pictures of key Indian sites -- "images of these locations will not be of more than 25-50 metre resolution". The **US**, through *Lockheed Martin*, has offered India sale of the *Aegis* missile system. After lengthy investigation. India has opted to use the **Russian GPS** system -- European *Galileo* which **China** uses was rejected because it was unclear whether it was "adequately *firewalled*".

India may invest in the development of the port of *Sittwe* in **Myanmar** to benefit India's landlocked *northeast* -- development may thwart *insurgencies* in these remote states; also it bypasses dependence on the **Bangladesh** port of *Chittagong*. *Asian Tribune* published a checklist of the *conflicts* that thoroughly surround India -- [India's Unstable Neighborhood](#).

Indonesia
news list|forecast

- Observers warn that the firefight and killing and capture of *militants* in *Poso* (**Sulawesi**) may become a *cause célèbre* for Islamic militants -- "*Communal fights like Poso attract a wide range of activists to defend fellow Muslims, not just hardcore militants.*" Further arrests were made of the leader and number two in a group behind 14 cases of violence in Central Sulawesi, including the *beheadings* of three Christian girls in 2005.

Iran
news list|forecast

- **China** will invest billions in Iran to develop *petroleum* reserves and upgrade decrepit *infrastructure*.

Several retired **US** generals said the crisis over Tehran's nuclear program must be resolved through **diplomacy**. Admiral **Fallon**, nominee for head of **USCENTCOM**, has urged diplomatic caution with Iran -- "*I believe we have to be cautious and ... work with colleagues in the State Department to find out the best way forward.*" The **US** takes new steps to "isolate" Iran by freezing the sale of all *F-14* fighter parts and a warning about *blockading* the Gulf. A commentator said "the **US** needs to remember what a serious spoiler the **IRGC** [Iran's *Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps*] can be when provoked." Highly opinionated John **Pilger** says "*The well-informed Arab Times in Kuwait says that Bush will attack Iran before the end of April.*"

Washington Times, using an **Israeli** source, finds *cultural indoctrination* in Iranian

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Week: 29 January– 04 February 2007

	<p><i>school textbooks</i>. Conservative clerics accuse President Ahmadinejad of "tolerance and laxity" in cultural matters [that is, <i>religious</i>] matters.</p>
<p>Russia news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interior Minister Adilgirei Magomedtagirov barely escaped <i>gunmen</i> and a <i>bomb</i> in <i>Dagestan</i>. <p>Russia's <i>domestic debt</i> is up 2.8% in January 2007 to \$40B -- <i>net borrowing</i> in 2007 will be 213.5 billion rubles (\$8.02B). Russia's <i>military spending</i> in 2007 will be <u>23%</u> higher than last year and account for <u>16%</u> of overall budget expenditure.</p> <p>Russia looks to a new generation of relationships with <i>Latin American</i> countries -- high tech products and services to Latin America; raw materials, foodstuffs (and <i>Brazilian aircraft</i>) to Russia.</p> <p>Russia's foreign minister says that the US is "difficult" to deal with -- "<i>too much potential for crisis has built up in addition to Iraq and Afghanistan.</i>" President Putin says that Russia will have an "effective" response to US missile plans; Russia already has <i>Topol-M</i>, but is also developing a "completely new system of <i>strategic weapons</i>."</p>
<p>Venezuela news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amid concerns over plans to take control of the oil sector, some observe "<i>Chavez isn't going to commit political suicide by driving out foreign oil interests with an unreasonable takeover.</i>" With legislative approval giving power to president Chavez to <i>rule by decree</i>, the pressure is on to show that benevolent dictatorship can get things done. Chavez says "<i>We are increasing power, but it's the power of the nation, national power. It's not anyone's personal power.</i>" <p>Venezuela may build unmanned airplanes with Iran -- "[UAVs] can be used for <i>environmental, surveillance</i> and <i>border</i> patrolling purposes." Venezuela intends to buy Russian anti-aircraft missiles "to defend <i>oil installations</i>."</p>
<p>Wild Cards news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ A string of three bombings in Pakistan came amid tight security for <i>Shi'ite</i> ceremonies, posing the grave danger of sectarian Muslim violence. Many believe that a deteriorating situation would give Pakistan's President Musharraf an opportunity to consolidate his position with the imposition of a <i>State of Emergency</i>. An analyst said "<i>The United States is blaming Pakistan for its own mistakes</i>" -- Facts on the ground in Pakistan</p> <p>Nigeria is said to be squandering its <i>oil</i> riches -- "<i>Much of this windfall has been lost to the extravagance, waste and corruption that characterise state government spending.</i>"</p> <p>Although the outcome of the Turkmenistan presidential elections are for many a foregone conclusion, candidates are promising electors all the right things – the <i>Washington Post</i> says "<i>It could be Iowa -- if it weren't Turkmenistan</i>".</p> <p>Turkey warns that it claims the right of <i>hot pursuit</i> of PKK (<i>Kurdish</i> separatist) elements into Iraq.</p>

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