

Week: 02 April - 08 April 2007

GLOBAL REALITY: THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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

Threat Summary

	<p>Environment. US blocks dire climate change prediction for US. Bees dying, crop failures to follow.</p> <p>Inter-State Conflict. Fourth anniversary of “Mission Accomplished” in Iraq. Taliban rising this year.</p> <p>Proliferation. Thailand interested in nuclear energy, Australia opening project in Malawi.</p>
	<p>Poverty. Africa growing but single-crops, poor infrastructure, incompetence, corruption pushing back.</p> <p>Infectious Disease. Wheat rust fungus spreading; resistant virus in Japan, Thailand breaking patents.</p> <p>Civil War. Kosovo continuing along Cold War lines. Darfur expanding, several divisions now needed.</p> <p>Genocide. Chinese delegation visits Darfur. European convicted of chemical sales to Hussein’s Iraq.</p> <p>Transnational Crime. INTERPOL issues warrants for three Israelis training Colombian drug cartels.</p>
	<p>Other Atrocities. Eritrea has outlawed female circumcision.</p> <p>Terrorism. Another chlorine gas attack in Iraq. Algeria heating up Syria a major state actor.</p>

Policy Summary

	<p>Diplomacy. UK-Iran resolution demonstrates value of adult diplomacy. Miami Cubans favor opening.</p> <p>Security. Documentation of lies that led to war on Iraq. US 911 system antiquated. Chlorine on rails.</p> <p>Society. Boston innovating green health-giving hospitals. Patients heal faster in green surroundings.</p>
	<p>Education. US education policy is “dead in the water.”</p> <p>Health. No major English-language stories, but see Society section on Boston hospitals.</p> <p>Immigration. UK has misplaced 200,000 asylum speakers. US arrests of illegals ongoing.</p> <p>Water. Kyrgyz Water and Energy Academy for Central Asian disputes. Florida going dry.</p>
	<p>Agriculture. See Environment. Bees as the canaries of agriculture, major crop failures anticipated.</p> <p>Economy. US is the world’s biggest debtor. Pentagon cannot explain \$112B, 25% of its old budget.</p> <p>Energy. Renewable projects in Third World showing astounding efficiency. Iran gas for India good.</p> <p>Family. No major English-language stories.</p> <p>Justice. No major stories—US Attorney General a general laughing-stock.</p>

Major Player Summary

	Iran. Russia warns US not to attack Iran—too late. War looms as the edges crumble.
	Venezuela. Contract renegotiations continue—times have changed—no Shah to restore here.
	<p>Brazil. Looking for LNG from Algeria after Bolivia nationalizes hydrocarbons sector.</p> <p>China. Creating strategic corridors into Central Asia with highways. 5 of 8 water plants polluted.</p> <p>India. Strategic corridor into Nepal. Kashmir militants down 90% in 10 years. Pipeline to Iran.</p> <p>Indonesia. Summit of clerics to bring peace in Iraq. Joint Muslim peacekeeping force proposed.</p> <p>Wild Cards. Blood aluminum; transnational revolution; Africa must unite or perish. Pakistan.</p>
	Russia. Nothing significant in English-language.

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

↗	Alert	Nigeria, Timor-Leste, Zimbabwe
↓	Deteriorated	DR Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe
↑	Improved	Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Israel/Occupied Territories, Mauritania, Nepal, Northern Ireland [UK]

↓ deteriorated
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Threats *see daily items with links to full stories on the web at [PDB-Threats](#)*

Poverty
[news list](#)[forecast](#)

↓ In **Chad**, because of spillover of *instability* from **Central African Republic** and **Sudan**, *oil revenue* promised for development is being used for *armaments*. The **World Food Program** is able to cut *food aid* in *southern Sudan* slightly now local *food production* has increased 4%, also aid will now be “traded” for work such as *farm improvements*.

Most African countries are still falling short of meeting the *Millennium Development Goals* -- *Africa* has healthy aggregate growth of 5.7% but alleviation of poverty is hampered by single-commodity economies, poor infrastructure, incompetence and corruption. *Eastern* and much of *southern Africa* is the only region in the world not connected to global *broadband* – now **Kenya**, **Burundi** And **Madagascar** have funds to make the connection.

A good quick survey of the *global grain situation* -- *Despite Improved World Cereal Supply, 33 Countries Are in Crisis*.

Thailand is taking a more radical position than even **Brazil** on breaking *patents* on impossibly expensive *pharmaceuticals* -- *Thailand and the Drug Patent Wars*.

Infectious Disease
[news list](#)[forecast](#)

↓ In **India**, 100,000 *vaccine* doses are about to be destroyed – they were prepared rapidly a year ago as a precaution against an *H5NI* outbreak but have now *expired*. [The high cost of public readiness ...]

Further cases of criminals dumping *fake* life-saving *pharmaceuticals* in the “free market” -- *"We've found all kinds of fakes...like antibiotics and anti-malaria drugs"*.

A *drug-resistant* flu *virus* has been found in **Japan** – along with the **US**, Japan is an infamous over-prescriber, and drug-resistant viruses are bred by *over-prescription* and *misuse* of medications. The toxic *algae* that causes *ciguatera* is thriving in *warmer*, damaged oceans; *ciguatera* is rarely fatal but can cause two weeks debilitation.

More details in *Scientific American* on efforts to breed the *super-mosquito* that will (hopefully) supplant all others but can not carry the *malaria parasite* -- *A 'Selfish' Solution for Eradicating Malaria*.

"This thing has immense potential for social and human destruction" -- a virulent strain of black stem rust *fungus* affecting *wheat* continues its advance towards the granaries of the world.

WHO is striving to “internationalize” *health security*, to make public health as synonymous with “*globalization*” as *trade* - threats to public health anywhere are the concern of all.

Environment
[news list](#)[forecast](#)

↓ The **IPCC regional impact predictions** are dire but the **US** excised "severe economic damage" from the *North America* forecast -- *Bleakest warning issued on climate*. On climate change initiatives, **California** Governor **Schwarzenegger** says the **US** response is "embarrassing" and "we don't need Washington". There has been no reversal of the rapid decline in *bee* populations in the **US**; the start of a significant *food crisis* -- "40% of my 2,000 colonies are dead ... the greatest winter colony mortality in 30 years". [Bees pollinate most food crops.] **Lake Superior** is *warming* quite quickly -- "The lake's 'summer season' is now beginning about two weeks earlier than it did 27 years ago." Scientist from **NASA**, **NOAA** and elsewhere say the **US south-west** may return to "*dust bowl*" conditions.

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	<p>The Australian Treasury, unused to any public comment, says "<i>policy on water and climate change would have been far superior had the department's views been more influential.</i>" [Bureaucrat-speak for "We told you so".]</p> <p>All the attention to carbon-dioxide should not divert attention from sulphur-dioxide, the cause of acid rain, which is killing everything from the pyramids of Giza to the oceans -- <i>Acidic oceans threatening sea life, UN panel says.</i></p> <p>Former next US president Al Gore has challenged systems designers who deal with the presuppositions coded into devices to get with the program -- "<i>Gore challenged designers to develop system architectures that have at aim for efficiency and conservation from the start.</i>"</p> <p>Further nails in the coffin of palm oil as a "biofuel" -- "<i>As rain forests are burned out to clear large tracts of land to plant palm trees, the burning releases enormous CO₂ emissions ...</i>"</p> <p>Poorer nations will bear the brunt of ill effects of global warming -- climate change is now a locomotive, <i>slowable</i> but not <i>stoppable</i> in the short term-- even more urgent efforts must now be made towards ADAPTATION.</p>
	<p>Inter-State Conflict news list forecast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the <i>fourth anniversary</i> of Mission Accomplished in Iraq. An indictment of US health-care for the elderly; despite all evidence vice president Cheney is still hearing those voices. -- <i>Cheney still insists al-Qa'ida had links with Iraq, despite evidence.</i> An account of the US raid on the Iranian liaison office in Arbil in northern Iraq; the subtext of much recent interplay with Iran -- <i>The botched US raid that led to the hostage crisis.</i> <p>In Afghanistan, the Taliban are still sometimes seizing ground -- "<i>100 Taliban members overran Khak Afghan district in the troubled Zabul province.</i>" Speaking to <i>Reuters</i> by satellite phone from an undisclosed location in Afghanistan, Mullah Dadullah, the Taliban's military head says he will deploy "thousands of bombers" in the coming killing season -- "<i>this year is regarded as the crunch period both for the Taliban and U.S.-led Western troops.</i>"</p> <p>On the 25th anniversary of the Falklands War, Argentina reminds everyone of its claim to possession -- "<i>Neither war nor the passage of time changes reality: the Malvinas are Argentine</i>" said Vice President Daniel Scioli.</p>
	<p>Civil War news list forecast</p> <p>↓ There has been another fierce battle with Kurdish PKK south-eastern Turkey -- "<i>Annually fighting generally picks up in the spring as PKK rebels cross the border from the northern Iraqi mountains, where thousands of the fighters are based.</i>"</p> <p>Departure of Ethiopian troops from Somalia has been slowed due to the outbreak of heavy fighting in Mogadishu.</p> <p>An interesting defense of Zimbabwe's sovereignty <i>per se</i>, but daring with ridiculous effect to mention Kwame Nkrumah in the same article as the inept and criminal Mugabe regime -- <i>West's Campaign Against Country Doomed.</i> With deft sense of diplomacy, Mugabe threatened that a critical British diplomat may go home in a <i>body-bag</i>. Far too late [hoping as ever to stay with the winners] Zimbabwe's Roman Catholic bishops now find courage to call on Mugabe to leave office or face "open revolt".</p> <p>Kosovo is continuing as an impasse along Cold War lines.</p> <p>Darfur – which once perhaps a <i>brigade</i> could fix would now take several divisions</p>

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	<p>or more – conflict and resulting instability has now spilled over into neighboring Chad and Central African Republic. [Knock-on effects have spread also to nations such as Cameroon.] A rebel <i>ambush</i> in Darfur has killed five <i>African Union peacekeepers</i> -- "<i>the force also has trouble protecting itself, much less the more than two million displaced people living in camps and hiding in the bush in Darfur.</i>" Not only <i>settlers</i>, but also those whose life is to roam great distances – the <i>Arab nomads</i> - is being destroyed by <i>Darfur's</i> conflict.</p>
	<p>Genocide news listforecast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Chinese delegation arranged to visit refugee camps in <i>Darfur</i> -- inscrutably, the Chinese delegation gives no reason other than that it is "get acquainted" with the situation. [This may relate to the likely eventually that Darfur genocide will be considered by the Security Council.] Botswana has uncharacteristically imposed <i>travel restrictions</i> on foreign critics -- since the Court ruling favorable to the <i>San Bushmen</i>, the government seems stung by the ruling and is now not as open to foreign reporters. Rwanda's ex-president has been freed from prison under a <i>presidential pardon</i> -- "<i>Cooperation between [ex-President] Bizimungu, a Hutu, and [President] Kagame, a Tutsi, was intended to symbolize post-genocide reconciliation.</i>" A Dutchman who used a network of shell companies to hide <i>chemical</i> sales to [the late] Saddam Hussein's regime disagrees with his 15 year sentence.
	<p>Other Atrocities news listforecast</p> <p>↑ Two former Peruvian military officers and an Argentine ex-major suspected of committing <i>crimes against humanity</i> in their respective countries have been detained during routine ICE raids.</p> <p>Eritrea has outlawed <i>female circumcision</i> -- if the law is now enforced, this is a significant advance because <u>90%</u> of Eritrean girls are excised.</p> <p>An abducted Zimbabwean journalist critical of the Stalinist Mugabe regime has been found <i>dead</i>; other journalists have also been abducted by the regime.</p>
	<p>Proliferation news listforecast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Australian firm has announced a <i>uranium</i> mining project in Malawi. Iran's <i>Fars News Agency</i> is keen to report Thailand's interest in <i>nuclear energy</i>. Uzbekistan has ratified a treaty on <i>nuclear-free Central Asia</i>.
	<p>Terrorism news listforecast</p> <p>↓ In Iraq, another <i>chlorine gas</i> attack by a truck bomber has killed 30. [In <i>asymmetric</i> conflict, the insurgent is economical and tends to repeat actions that have worked before, until the tactic is thwarted.]</p> <p><i>Key facts on hunted al Qaeda militants in Somalia [FactBox]</i> -- "Washington believes the following six al Qaeda operatives or associates are still in the Horn of Africa nation." The US is interrogating "<i>terror suspects</i>" in Ethiopian prisons -- "<i>would have been irresponsible to pass up an opportunity presented by the Ethiopian intervention in Somalia late last year to learn more about terrorist operations.</i>"</p> <p>A good sitrep on <i>Islamist extremism</i> in Morocco -- <i>Is Al Qaeda's influence spreading to Morocco?</i>. An in-depth review of <i>Islamist extremism</i> in Europe -- <i>Wahhabism: from Vienna to Bosnia</i>. In Algeria there is a new battle between government forces and <i>Islamist rebels</i> -- "<i>more than a week of assaults by thousands of troops in the mountains and forests in the east of the north African country.</i>" An <i>Assyrian Christian</i> read on Syria as a state actor that can not be ignored -- <i>Syria's relationship with al Qaeda</i>.</p> <p>The UK is considering a system of <i>Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ABSOs)</i> against</p>

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Islamist militants considered high risk but who have not committed an offence – ABSOs are already successfully used as a non-custodial preventive mechanism against antisocial youth [under-age vandals, etc]. A scholarly article -- *Hizb ut-Tahrir (Britain) as a New Religious Movement*.

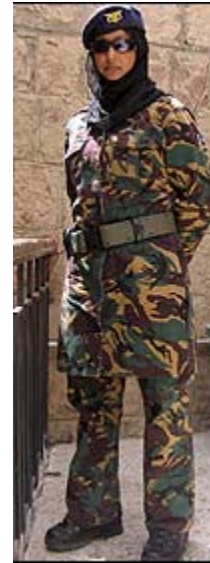
Yemen is recruiting **women** into **counter-terrorism** roles -- "Male terrorists often **disguise** themselves as women ... but Yemen's strict social code means that women suspects cannot be touched by the men on the unit."

An **Australian army** captain has been charged with the theft of eight **M72 rocket launchers** and sale of them to **criminal** or **terrorist** entities.

A raid late last month in Java [**Indonesia**] is thought to be even more significant than first thought -- "It's significant because what it's done is prevented, we believe, future bombing attacks in Indonesia.... The group were well advanced."

There is thought to be a generational change in **al Qaeda** -- "The **jihadis** returning from **Iraq** are far more capable than the **mujahedeen** who fought the **Soviets** ever were." US analysts warn that the "**next 9/11**" could be staged by **Muslims** from **Europe** -- "could be launched by Muslims from Britain or Europe who feel like 'second-class citizens' alienated by a 'colonial legacy'."

Some say the **US Justice Department's** definition of what constitutes a "**terrorism**" prosecution may be on the "**expansive side of the ledger**" -- "the government is counting as domestic terrorism some cases that appear to have little, if anything, to do with the kind of organized attacks perpetrated by Al Qaeda on 9/11."



Transnational Crime
[news list|forecast](#)

- On a **Colombian** request, **Interpol** has issued an international **arrest warrant** for three **Israelis** accused of **training** private armies of Colombian **drug cartels**. A jailed paramilitary boss confirms that the big banana, **Chiquita**, had cynical links to **paramilitary militias** in Colombia -- "the payments were meted out according to which group -- rightist or leftist -- was in control of a region at the time ...".

After massive **coca eradication** efforts in **Colombia**, market forces have forced **drug cartels** to move into **Peru**.

A study has concluded that **spam** costs US businesses over **\$700** per employee annually, or **\$71B** to all US businesses.

Policy *see daily items with links to full stories on the web at [PDB-Policy](#)*

Agriculture
[news list|forecast](#)

- [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]

Diplomacy
[news list|forecast](#)

↑ The surprising resolution of the **UK Marines** incident speaks to the benefits of adult supervision in the **foreign service**; "a grave diplomatic crisis was resolved with a speed that surprised everyone ..." -- *The invisible men who defused the crisis*.

Now 55.2 % of **Cuban Americans** in **Miami-Dade** favor "unrestricted" travel to **Cuba**.

Economy
[news list|forecast](#)

- The Tehran Times* [**Iran**] writes, not without joy, of the **US** as *The world's biggest debtor country* -- "shantytowns could spring up, making the United States look more like Haiti and South America..."

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	<p>The Pentagon has been unable to give explanations for <u>\$112B</u>, about a quarter of its <i>budget</i>, to the House Appropriations Committee.</p>
<p>Education news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education policy in the US is dead in the water; "<i>decision-makers have 'talked the talk'; now we should insist that they 'walk the walk'</i>" -- <i>Reform's Missing Ingredient</i>.
<p>Energy news listforecast</p>	<p>↑ Renewable energy projects in the <i>developing world</i> have an astounding efficiency; they obviate the need (and impossible cost) of <i>regional electrification</i> -- <i>Loans fund renewables for poor</i>. ↑</p> <p>The only real future for "biofuels" will involve <i>enzymes</i> and a new alchemy of <i>microbes</i> -- <i>A Better Biofuel</i>.</p> <p>The World Bank says Iran gas is India's best energy option -- "<i>the proposed pipeline from Iran could bring gas to Mumbai at a cost one-third cheaper than the closest alternative ...</i>" [The US opposes the project for political reasons.]</p> <p>"<i>Mechanisms Count, Not Targets.... The U.S. could learn a lot from Europe, if we would only look.</i>" [and more on the Gore version of the "<i>intelligent grid</i>".] -- <i>Energy from Hot Air</i>.</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>Health 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"> • Immigrants [legal and otherwise] marched in <i>Los Angeles</i> against the Bush plan on <i>fin</i>es and <i>work permits</i>-- "<i>charging that much, Bush is going to be even more expensive than the coyotes</i>". <p>Eighty (80) <i>illegal immigrants</i> were found in a home near <i>Phoenix</i> -- this is the second bust in a week of a large group of illegal immigrants along with <i>coyotes</i>. So-called "<i>collateral arrests</i>" have netted many "innocent" illegal immigrants along with <i>fugitives</i> -- <i>Crackdown on Fugitives Nets Many Arrests</i>.</p> <p>Britain can't find 200,000 <i>asylum-seekers</i> -- "<i>some of the cases date back as far as 15 years, and as many as 200,000 of the 450,000 people in the country are untraceable.</i>"</p>
<p>Justice news listforecast</p>	<p>↓ [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]</p>
<p>Security news listforecast</p>	<p>↓ A plethora of documentation now shows that there was no rational basis for linking Iraq to <i>9/11</i> or <i>al-Qaeda</i> -- <i>Hussein's Prewar Ties To Al-Qaeda Discounted</i>. [Now everybody on the planet -- except Douglas Feith and Dick Cheney - agrees on the facts.]</p> <p>The <i>New York Times</i> says the <i>911 [emergency]</i> system is incapable of tracking <i>cellphone</i> calls, and is dangerously outdated in other ways. [A vast and increasing proportion of 911 calls come from cellphones.]</p> <p>It is fortunate the US has no real and present security threats -- six refused candidates down the list, the post of <i>deputy to DNI</i> still sits <i>vacant</i> after <u>eleven months</u>. The office of DNI warns that "<i>espionage did not go away with the end of the Cold War</i>" -- competitive <i>trade secrets</i> are now a major target.</p> <p>A <i>solar flare</i> in December 2006 disrupted <i>GPS</i> and other <i>satellite</i> services including <i>military</i> -- "... <i>this was an unexpectedly serious new effect.</i>" [Most "smart" bombs and missiles depend on GPS.]</p>

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	<p>The US is again undertaking a study to look at shortening the "<i>commander's cycle of tasking sensors to collect intelligence, analyzing the information and disseminating it to the warfighters</i>".</p> <p>Blast-related injury experts from eight countries have met to share expertise -- "<i>Learning from nations that have experienced conventional weapon attacks on their civilian population is critical to improving preparedness worldwide.</i>"</p> <p>The military have taken to the use of UAVs ["drones"] in all shapes, sizes, applications, and prices but they are losing many due to mishap and are faced with a shortage in supply of some types -- "<i>some of the losses have been the result of collisions with smaller army UAVs.</i>" [The subtext is a turf battle -- the Air Force wants control of anything flying over 3,500 ft.]</p> <p>Chlorine is being constantly shipped to water treatment plants throughout the US [and other countries]; some suggest "<i>how water utilities can get chlorine gas off the rails and out of American communities</i>" -- Toxic Trains and the Terrorist Threat.</p> <p>The Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) in Greater Manchester [UK] has been enlarged and given wider powers; other CTUs in West Yorkshire, West Midlands and London will follow. In the UK, security cameras that allow monitoring centers to speak to the scene are shades of big brother but have proven effective in countering street crime.</p> <p>The National Nuclear Security Agency continues to attract the scorn of the world for its dismal incompetence – now, 20 computers are missing.</p>
<p>Society news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The administration's point-man on abstinence has prematurely withdrawn himself from office. <p>Holistics: Boston is promising hospitals that are both green and health-giving -- "<i>the new greener outlook is <u>not just about energy conservation</u> <u>buildings that are more in tune with the environment help patients heal quicker</u></i>" Why 3-year olds are cheerful and adults are not -- "A friendly bacterium found in soil has the same uplifting effects as those produced by anti-depressant drugs" -- Getting dirty could prevent depression.</p>
<p>Water news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the EU's support, the Kyrgyz foreign minister has proposed a Water and Energy Academy in the Kyrgyz capital (Bishkek) in the hope of resolving Central Asian water disputes. <p>Waters Run Short In South Florida -- "<i>There are solutions, but they are not cheap, and they are going to take a while</i>". A compendium of projects, outdated water laws, and desperation in the US dry West -- No Longer Waiting for Rain, an Arid West Takes Action.</p>
<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"> Brazil is negotiating supply of LNG from Algeria -- "<i>Brazil is looking to reduce its dependence on gas supplies from neighboring Bolivia after it nationalized its hydrocarbons sector.</i>"
<p>China news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ China is embarking on a number highway projects in Central Asia -- "the longest highway would stretch <u>1,680 kilometers</u> from Urumqi the capital of Xinjiang region, to Istanbul." China is supporting construction of a China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway -- transit corridors through Central Asia are of significant strategic importance.</p>

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	<p>China announces it is ready to make "positive contributions" to <i>South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)</i>. [<i>Multilateral groupings</i> are now key to diplomacy in <i>Asia</i> and <i>Central Asia</i> -- SAARC, SCO, EAS, ASEAN.]</p> <p>China issued new regulations banning trade in <i>human organs</i>. [Perhaps genuine, perhaps lip-service before the upcoming <i>Olympiad</i>, China seeks to clean up its act on <i>organ harvesting</i>.]</p> <p><i>Polluted drinking water</i> is now a risk for 2.5 million people in south China -- "five of eight water plants have been contaminated by <i>heavy metals, chemicals and other industrial pollutants</i> ..."</p> <p>A backward leap -- <i>illiteracy</i> has <u>grown</u> by 30 million to 116 million in the five years to 2005 as rural children leave school early for the hope of work in the <i>cities</i>.</p>
<p>India news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Maoists</i> ("<i>Naxalites</i>") attacked a train in <i>Bihar</i> and stole arms. <i>Naxalite</i> attacks killed over ten in several attacks in <i>Jharkhand</i>. <i>Naxalites</i> in <i>Bihar</i> and <i>Jharkhand</i> have repeatedly mounted surprise operations involving over a 100 fighters -- are they good, or are the authorities flying blind? <p>India is considering several alternative routes for a <i>railway</i> to <i>Nepal</i> -- India must make a strategic counter to the <i>Chinese</i> link into <i>Tibet</i> and a rumored extension from Tibet to Nepal.</p> <p>Planning discussions of <i>Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) pipeline</i> continue with India asking <i>Pakistan</i> to waive <i>transit fees</i> -- the <i>IPI</i> will be more an achievement of <i>politics</i> than <i>engineering</i>.</p> <p>Intimation by <i>Jharkhand</i> police that they will withdraw <i>Z-category security</i> [high-grade close personal security] from some former politicians brought controversy -- withdrawal of <i>Z-category</i> is in some cases tantamount to a death-sentence.</p> <p>India estimates <i>militants</i> in <i>Kashmir</i> now at around 1,400, <u>one-tenth</u> the strength of 10 years ago, and may now decrease its troop numbers from <u>600,000</u> to 100,000.</p>
<p>Indonesia news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambitions towards <i>nuclear power</i> are problematic in highly <i>volcanic</i> Indonesia -- "a <i>nuclear plant on that site could become a genocide for the people of Java</i>" say some experts; "But the reactor will withstand earthquakes" say others. <p>The editor of the newly commenced (and closed) <i>Playboy Indonesia</i> has been cleared of <i>indecentcy</i> charges, but the <i>Front Pembela Islam (FPI - Islamic Defenders Front)</i> is not likely to accept this degree of "pluralism" readily.</p> <p>Influential <i>clerics</i> from several Muslim countries have gathered, some secretly, in Indonesia to discuss resolution of <i>Sunni-Shi'ite</i> conflict in <i>Iraq</i>. Indonesia suggests a <i>joint Muslim peacekeeping force</i> for <i>Iraq</i> to replace the present <i>foreign</i> forces "after a period of national reconciliation".</p> <p>The Indonesian equivalent of the House <i>Foreign Affairs Committee</i> is insisting President <i>Yudhoyono</i> and the UN <i>ambassador</i> explain why Indonesia voted with the <i>consensus</i> on <i>Iran</i>.</p>
<p>Iran news list forecast</p>	<p>↑ On 20070402 the <i>USS Nimitz battle group</i> left California to spread goodwill off the coast of Iran.</p> <p>Iranian President <i>Ahmadinejad</i> decorated the <i>Revolutionary Guards</i> who captured the 15 <i>UK Marines</i> and hours later announced the Britons would be freed "to be with their families ... for Easter". They were sent off with new suits and gay gift bags of Iranian products.</p>

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Iran says there is no record of any arrest of a former **FBI** agent missing in Iran -- "*but Levinson drew the attention of security forces, the report added, when his Iranian host registered in the same hotel room.*"

An Arab-language source said **US** aircraft have been probing Iranian *airspace* in the south-west. The head of **Russian** General Staff warned **Washington** it should think twice before launching a military campaign against **Tehran** as it would have *global implications*.

It is an open [deniable?] secret that the **US** is supporting *Jundullah*, a *Balochi* group from neighboring **Pakistan** which has taken responsibility for the deaths and kidnappings of more than a dozen Iranian soldiers and officials -- *The Secret War Against Iran*. Another commentator amplifies this; "*the US and Britain are already at war with Iran ...*" -- *The Long History of British and American Covert Provocation and Action in Iran*.

Russia

[news list](#)|[forecast](#)

- [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]

Venezuela

[news list](#)|[forecast](#)

- Venezuela's coercive renegotiation of *petroleum resource contracts* continues to hit a tender nerve with the **US** and others. A *Jewish* lobby is adding to Washington's anti-**Chavez** pathology; "*another concern is over Chavez's increasingly close economic and political ties to Iran.*"-- *Under Chavez's Rule, Jews Fear for Future in Venezuela*.

Minister of the Interior Pedro **Carreño** bemoaned the *escape* of a former opposition **governor** imprisoned for corruption -- "*briberies from those that have money and elude justice are the negative values of capitalism*". Many were arrested in the wake of the escape – one scenario involved the old sleeping draught in the guard's cake trick....

Venezuela says it has 15 million *reservists* to defend the nation -- "*the risks posed by US military maneuvers in the Caribbean, as well as the near presence of the Plan Colombia and a base for "ranger" training in Guyana.*" Venezuela says it will "not fold its arms" if the **US** attacks **Iran** -- "*we feel a party to this conflict, not because we are in the region, but because we do respect self-determination.*"

Wild Cards

[news list](#)|[forecast](#)

- ↓ President **Gaddafi** of **Libya** says *Africa* should have a *continental army* to defend itself against future predators -- "*They have left us in poverty. They have carried off our resources and raw materials to their countries ...*". A "federal" army is just one element of the germinating idea of an African union entity like the *European Union*. *The United States of Africa - The Challenges* -- examining the "United States of Africa" idea 50 years after **Kwame Nkrumah** said "*Africa must unite or perish!*".

At a time when the West roundly commended "*globalisation*" for all, it is no surprise that global movements have a new efficacy; *Marxist-Leninism*, *Arab nationalism* and *Islamic fundamentalism* are just some examples of *international revolutionary movements* -- *Policy Watch: Transnational revolution*. [Environmentalism dating from the 1920s is another example.]

An **International Crisis Group** assessment of **Guinea** -- *Blood Aluminum?*

Morocco – a special friend of **NATO** -- is likely to remain an example like **Turkey**, **Malaysia**, and **Indonesia** of *democracy* [in its local idiom] and *Islam* working together -- *Morocco's Islamic question*.

Pakistan

↓ deteriorated

• steady

↑ improved

↗ ALERT

Week: 02 April - 08 April 2007

Exiled former Prime Minister Benazir **Bhutto** is threatening to return to Pakistan to assist in the restoration of *democracy* -- a tussle for power in Pakistan at this time may have far-reaching -- and unpleasant -- consequences. A retired Pakistani general and military analyst warns that the middle class will not tolerate interim arrangements forever; "*the nonmilitary institutions are asserting their rights*" -- *Battle Brews Over Rule By Military In Pakistan*.

Following *riots* in *Afghan refugee camps* in Pakistan, the UN has stopped the refugee *repatriation* program indefinitely.

Deputy Speaker of the *Balochistan* Assembly has warned that Pakistan must *consult* local people on *development* in Balochistan -- Pakistan's *Punjabi*-centered heavy-handed control of development in Balochistan -- with the *Gwadar* port the most recent -- breeds ever deeper resentment.

Pakistani tribesmen beat the *drums of war*; literally -- following approval by the *jirga*, the *dhol* drums were beaten to raise a *lashkar* [local militia] to confront the *foreign militants* [*Uzbek* and *Arab*] in their territory. "*Tribal elders of Ahmedzai Wazirs gathered in the bazaar and approved raising a lashkar of 900 volunteers.*" A few days later, the tribal militias had encircled *Uzbek* militants in three areas and requested *air and artillery support* from security forces. By 20070406 Pakistani troops secured an area seized from *al-Qaeda* by the tribal militias -- "*The tribesmen overran several bunkers held by Central Asian rebels. They were very strong bunkers and Uzbek fighters were well entrenched there.*"

Elsewhere, around *Parachinar* in the *Kurram* tribal region, near the *Afghan* border, running skirmishes involving *mortars* and *RPGs* broke out between *Shi'ites* and *Sunnis* and government forces attacked both combatants to try to stop the fighting. [Even this dangerous destabilizing situation -- as well as the tribal attack on "foreigners" -- probably accords with President **Musharraf's** view that a *local* solution is the only one that will survive in Pakistan's never-conquered border country.]

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