

Week: 16 April - 22 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. Large cities, made “smart,” could save us all. Caspian Sea dying—435 dead seals.</p> <p>Inter-State Conflict. Iraq Muslim Cabinet—US could leave it to Muslims. Morocco on the rocks.</p> <p>Proliferation. First floating nuclear plant in 2010, six others planned. 12 countries interested.</p>
	<p>Poverty. Transport costs chew up 65% of food. IMF called imperial. Cities key to helping poor.</p> <p>Infectious Disease. One dose cures malaria in mice. Bangladesh H5N1 Dengue in Indonesia.</p> <p>Civil War. Hundreds of rotting corpses, Somalia on verge of catastrophe. Zimbabwe down the tubes.</p> <p>Genocide. Darfur widens to war between Arabs and Africans. France holding Rwandans to account.</p> <p>Transnational Crime. Mexico saw 600 killed in fighting for the Euro billion-a-year traffic into USA.</p>
	<p>Other Atrocities. Displaced populations alarm. 6,700 mines in 11 square kilometers of Ethiopia.</p> <p>Terrorism. “If Afghanistan was a school of terror, then Iraq is a university of terrorism.”</p>

Policy Summary

	<p>Diplomacy. US has no strategy, offer of training rejected by Thailand, Muslim Brotherhood gets nod.</p> <p>Security. CIA outsourced, White House frozen by 14 hour Blackberry meltdown. Food safety?</p> <p>Society. Mass murder in Virginia a sign that US is fatally ill. Rage of the random actor increasing.</p>
	<p>Education. Nothing at this level. See headlines for this topic at home page.</p> <p>Health. Infant mortality rate in Mississippi rises. More bad press on nano-particles.</p> <p>Immigration. 40% UK voters say immigration is their greatest concern.</p> <p>Water. India’s floating desalination plant 1M litres per day. US suffering worst draught in 1K years.</p>
	<p>Agriculture. Nothing at this level. See headlines for this topic at home page.</p> <p>Economy. Nothing at this level. See headlines for this topic at home page.</p> <p>Energy. Breakthrough in solar energy that follows natural design. Venezuela pipeline to help China.</p> <p>Family. Nothing at this level. See headlines for this topic at home page.</p> <p>Justice. Vermont Senate calls for impeachment of Bush-Cheney, rest of Nation slow to show outrage.</p>

Major Player Summary

	Iran. Developing swarm small-boat attack strategy & capabilities. US engineer-spy tip of the iceberg?
	Venezuela. Chavez alienated Chilean president, expropriating oil properties. State horse flipped.
	<p>Brazil. 19 dead in Rio gun battle. Judiciary with “sentences for sale” uncovered.</p> <p>China. Dam bursts and floods two villages. 30,000 of 85,000 other dams severely deficient.</p> <p>India. US visualizing global 1,000 ship Navy while continuing to build fewer less useful big ships.</p> <p>Indonesia. Piracy falling to regional strategy. Indonesia receives respect from US in 5th bilateral.</p> <p>Wild Cards. Nigeria joins Algeria and Morocco in flames. EU not in touch with moderate Islamists.</p>
	Russia. Most dangerous air travel on the planet. Expired (old) rubber bullets kill two Albanians.

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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⚡ ALERT

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

Poverty
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ The **World Food Programme** says fighting in the southern **Philippines** has *displaced* more than 40,000 people; WFP is delivering 85 tonne of rice to areas of **Jolo**.

Inefficiency and costs are chewing up the majority of **US Emergency Food Aid** -- cost of *transportation* - not food -- is now 65% of the total expenditure.

A opinion piece in *The Guardian* paints the **UK** and other members of the **G7** with a terminal *imperial delusion* played out through the **IMF**, "*a plutocracy whose loan conditions continue to condemn developing countries to a vicious cycle of misery.*" -- *If Britain wants to help Africa's poor, it must stop acting like an emperor.*

The UN secretary-general says the world must do more for *displaced Iraqis* -- **Jordan** and **Syria** together already host nearly two million Iraqi refugees (of a total of some four million) and are unable to accept more.

A conference of experts says *cities* are a key in helping the poor; by 2030 two-thirds of humanity will live in cities, and more than half of all Africans -- it's in cities that most good can be done.

Infectious Disease
[news list|forecast](#)

- **Jakarta [Indonesia]** is struggling with a fight against *dengue fever* because there is a cultural resistance against measures largely accepted in the West -- "*most of the residents do not let us enter their homes even though we've already worn uniforms as identification.*"

In great news for *mice*, one dose of a *new drug* cures *malaria* -- the same synthetic drug modeled on an ancient Chinese herbal folk remedy offers hope to people too.

Bangladesh, another country with large *peri-domestic fowl populations*, is reporting the spread of **H5N1** to more farms.

Environment
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ A new **Stanford** study says *ethanol*-based fuels could be damaging to human health - - "*there would likely be an increase in the number of respiratory-related deaths and hospitalizations.*"

More details on the **Norwegian "Doomsday Vault"** that will store Earth's *seed diversity*; "*Many countries today are sitting there watching these seed collections die.*"-- *Global Effort to Save Endangered Crops Gets \$37.5 Million Infusion.*

An international *cities* conference in **Africa** concludes that *large can be smart* -- "*Large cities are the source of their problems and they are the source of the solutions to their problems.*"

The 'gold rush' for *fine timbers* around the world, particularly *wood flooring*, is destroying endangered habitat at the hands of *illegal (or destructive) logging* -- "*shoppers are unwittingly playing a part in the destruction of one of the world's last great wildlife habitats.*"

The number of dead *seals* on **Kazakhstan's Caspian** coast has reached 435 - these deaths are not the only indication that the Caspian has been destroyed by human activity.

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

↓ The Sunni insurgent group *Islamic State of Iraq* says it has formed an 'Islamic cabinet' for **Iraq** -- "*It has become a necessity at this stage ... to declare the formation of the first Islamic government.*". [Comment: This may be empty bravado, or may be an indication of a move little-by-little towards a *political settlement*.] The **US** in **Iraq** has started to *wall* off a **Baghdad** neighborhood -- "*when the wall is*

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finished, the minority Sunni community of Azamiyah, located on the eastern side of the Tigris River, will be completely gated... ". The Iraqi Prime Minister has asked the **US** to halt construction of the wall -- "*I said that I fear this wall might have repercussions which remind us of other walls, which we reject,*" said Prime Minister **Maliki**. [An obvious reference to the Israeli wall in Palestine.] An unverified report claims that several **armed groups** in **Iraq** are ready put themselves at the disposal of the government and chase **al Qaeda** from Iraq.

With the shock outbreak of **Islamist bombings** **Morocco** sees a new urgency to try to resolve the **Western Sahara** issue -- *Morocco's dual offensive [Analysis]*.

A dramatic insight into how **insurgent groups** can succeed in **Afghanistan**; "*when the snows melt in the spring, men, weapons and supplies begin moving in small groups, often along mountain ridges, on donkeys and motorcycles*" -- *Taliban are eluding U.S. hunters.*

Civil War
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ There are hundreds of dead and corpses rotting in the streets of **Mogadishu** as the battle for **Somalia** escalates -- "*The escalating war has also sent more than 321,000 residents fleeing in the biggest refugee movement in Somalia since the 1991 fall of a dictator ushered in 16 years of anarchy*". "*Unless something is done, the humanitarian crisis is going to turn into a catastrophe very soon,*" says the **UN's** humanitarian coordinator in Somalia.

Observers say it is **Mugabe's** supporters that have most to lose by regime change -- "*as long as Zimbabwean economic and political policies are driven by pure greed then don't expect any changes.*" The brother of **South African** President **Mbeki** has blasted the "*do-nothing*" strategy on **Zimbabwe**. [Comment: The sub-text is that first generation ruling 'liberation' parties in South Africa and elsewhere now feel threatened by second generation 'civil society' parties.] **African Anglican bishops** have given a message of support for **Mugabe** -- from abject cowardice, or as clever tactics, the bishops note that sanctions are hurting Zimbabwe's poor most.

Genocide
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ A key opposition leader in **Sudan**, **Hassan al-Turabi**, says any new **UN Darfur** package will not bring peace; the conflict is now "officially" ethnic -- "*the war between government forces and rebel groups had evolved into a wider conflict among Arab and African tribes*". A UN panel reports that **Sudan** "*is flying arms and heavy military equipment into Darfur ... and painting Sudanese military planes white to disguise them as United Nations or African Union aircraft.*"

Botswana has betrayed the **San** ("Bushmen") that a court has decided can return to their ancestral **Kalahari** land -- "*the government now interprets the judgment as applying only to the 243 original applicants named on court papers ...*"

Rwanda has taken **France** to a **UN court** over **arrest warrants** France has issued on many key Rwandan government officials -- "*the government cannot function properly, as officials like the army chief-of-staff are unable to travel abroad, says Rwanda's justice minister.*"

Other Atrocities
[news list|forecast](#)

• **Russian** soldiers on bail charged with **Chechen murders** have fled -- "*by running away these men have shown to the whole world that they know they are guilty.*"

Amnesty observes that **Taliban** attacks on civilians in **Afghanistan** can be subject of future **war-crimes** action -- "*the fact that such attacks are widespread and carried out as part of Taliban policy makes them also crimes against humanity.*"

Thousands more flee fighting in the **Central African Republic** -- "*government*

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soldiers launched raids on villages on the northwest border with **Cameroon** and **Chad** ... to try to root out gunmen ...". The **UN** has urged **Uganda** to halt 'criminal acts' -- "*indiscriminate and excessive use of force of the Ugandan defence forces resulted in the killing of at least 69 civilians, including women and children*". Despite **UN** pressure, **DR Congo** is still using *child soldiers* -- "*despite the order by chief of staff ... 300 to 500 children, some as young as 13, currently serve in newly formed army brigades*".

The **EU** has undertaken to assist with *landmine* clearance in **Africa** -- "*the United States, China and Russia have refused to sign the convention, and it is estimated that 15 countries are still producing anti-personnel mines.*" **Ethiopia** and **Eritrea** are riddled with *land-mines* -- the 11 sq km already de-mined in Ethiopia since 2005 yielded over 6,700 items of *unexploded ordnance*.

A *radio reporter* murdered in the **Philippines** is the 51st alleged "*extrajudicial killing*" under the Arroyo regime -- "*We have said that 2007, being an election year, could be a violent year for Filipino journalists and it seems that our fears are coming true.*"

The **Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre** reports on a global and worsening problem -- *Global internal displacement crisis worsens, Middle East particularly hard hit, says survey.*

Proliferation
[news list|forecast](#)

- The first **Russian *floating nuclear plant*** will be commissioned in 2010 in **Severodvinsk** on the **White Sea** coast and will be followed by six others; 12 countries have shown interest in the technology.

Terrorism
[news list|forecast](#)

- *Reaching out* ... a **Canadian** has been beaten and threatened with death in Ontario [**Canada**] for articles he wrote about a **Pakistan** group **Minhaj-ul-Quran**.

Displaying an edge vicious even by **Philippines** standards, seven men have been *beheaded* and their heads delivered to the army on the southern Philippine island of **Jolo** – the **Abu Sayyaf** group, more *kidnap* criminals than ideological **Islamists**, are probably responsible.

The **UK High Commissioner** to **Australia** said that Britain's involvement in **Iraq** was not prompted by terrorism, causing much scurrying in the Australian government.

After eons of inactivity, the **UK** government says it is forming a group to counter **Islamist propaganda** -- "*If you want to take the fight to the terrorists you've got to defeat their propaganda and their ideas as well as their methods,*" said Prime Minister **Blair** -- *Group to hit back at al Qaeda propaganda.* [Comment: The 10 year delay in implementing this self-evident measure – and intervening events such as **Iraq** -- will probably mean an extra 20 years to reach any real cordiality with Islamic communities; a truce in an 800-year conflict is not achieved overnight.]

A detailed description of the "*layered*" approach now used on some **Islamist** militant *web-sites* -- *British Islamists' Cyber Camouflage.*

The **Islamic Army in Iraq** and other groups have criticized the **al-Qaeda**-affiliated **Islamic State of Iraq** for its tactics. [Comment: It is strategically crucial to remember that various insurgent groups in Iraq have different -- and conflicting -- goals.] An insurgent group in **Iraq** declared it is making its own **rockets**, not a surprise given hundreds of thousands that were employed in the massive Iraqi **arms industry**. Many observers agree with an **al Qaeda**-related **Iraqi** group that Iraq is the best thing that

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could have happened for *Islamic militancy* -- "if *Afghanistan* was a school of terror, then *Iraq* is a university of terrorism".

In *Morocco*, there were questions about the presumed *suicide bombing* near the **US Consulate** in *Casablanca* – a remote detonation system was discovered and the bombers did not have the *profile* of bearded Islamists -- *Bombers 'did not have clear targets'*.

The founder of *Algeria's Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat*, which has recently changed its name to al Qaeda Organisation in the Islamic Maghreb, rejects violence as a tactic – the group is seeking to make a "second Iraq" in Algeria.

A new paper -- *Assessing al-Qaeda's Chemical Threat* [PDF].

Malaysia joins others in calling for a universal informative, actionable definition of terrorism -- head of Malaysia's *Counter-Terrorism Center* says "In your own country, I would hesitate to define terrorist for you, but you would know one when you see one by his conduct." [Comment: In the absence of a definition, "terrorism" is merely a pejorative for those we don't like; our friends are "freedom fighters".]

The **US Congressional Research Service** observes that *success* against a multi-mode, multi-factor phenomenon such as terrorism is measured in viewer-selected ways that may not actually represent success on the ground; *arrests, money spent, deaths* may or may not actually equate with "success" -- *Report: It's tricky to measure terror*.

Transnational Crime
[news list|forecast](#)

↑ Eleven people have now been sentenced to a total of 75 years jail for international *money laundering* in the **UK** -- "officers targeted the activities of a number of travel agencies in the region which used the "*hawala*" system to transfer money abroad."

A **Japanese mayor** has been killed by *mob boss* – although the incident was not "professional" but arose over a private disagreement with local government, this has alarmed the Japanese.

Documents show that the big banana, **Chiquita**, paid up repeatedly to **Colombian militia's** despite warnings -- "It was not the first time that *Chiquita's* operations in *Colombia* had run afoul of U.S. laws."

Nicaraguan authorities said they have dismantled a cell of Mexico's *Sinaloa* cartel - - "in *Mexico*, the cartel is fighting the rival **Gulf Cartel** for billion-dollar (Euro) *drug smuggling routes* into the **United States**." In the same week, **Mexican** police said they had arrested a key leader of the **Gulf Cartel**. Three more died in a shootout in **Mexico** on the **US border**, bringing drug-related deaths this year to more than 600.

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 **US** says it is committed to rebuilding relations with (oil-rich) **Libya**.

The **US** is seeking to sell **Israel smart bombs** -- "recently, *Israel* has objected to *US plans* to sell smart bombs to **Saudi Arabia** ...".

Colombia's President **Uribe** is annoyed that **Al Gore** declined to appear at an event with him -- "I deplore the cancellation of the presence of Vice President **Al Gore** at this meeting," said Uribe.

The **US** says it is ready to train **Thai** forces if asked -- "*US troops* could instruct *Thai forces* on how to use a 'softer touch' to win over local populations ..." [The US track-

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	<p>record in this area of expertise is not given.] Thailand declined the US offer of military support -- it is an "<i>internal matter</i>".</p> <p>Now the US has no coherent strategy on anything it must return to the doctrines of Truman's NSC-68, Weinberger and Powell as the only hope -- <i>Future of the US hinges on a strategic pullout from hot spots [Analysis]</i>.</p> <p>A UK Coroner has launched another attack on US lack of cooperation -- "<i>It seems to me inexcusable that witnesses could come to assist this inquest but they are not allowed to do so.</i>"</p> <p>Malaysia will cooperate but is "<i>uncomfortable</i>" about formally joining the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI).</p> <p>Reliable cocktail chat indicates the US may be finally recognizing the importance of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood -- <i>US attitude towards Muslim Brotherhood changing: report</i>.</p>
Economy news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
Education news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
Energy news list forecast	<p>↑ US DOE is now funding a <i>cellulosic ethanol</i> project -- "<i>One of our goals is to reduce the cost of the process and make it applicable for commercial production.</i>"</p> <p>Imperial College London has been granted \$8.5M to research <i>hydrogen</i> energy systems.</p> <p>A breakthrough in <i>solar cell design</i> proves again the power of applying <i>natural</i> designs; "<i>similar to the veins in tree leaves</i>" -- <i>Plastic solar cell efficiency breaks record</i>. The <u>largest solar power plant in North America</u> will soon be providing electricity to Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada.</p> <p>The <i>South American oil and gas summit</i> opened in Venezuela -- "<i>The presidents will tackle other projects, such as a gas pipeline between Venezuela and the Pacific Coasts of Colombia and Panama ...</i>" In a clash with President Lula of Brazil, President Chavez continues to argue against a vapid faith in <i>non-cellulosic ethanol</i>.</p>
Family news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [nothing significant to summarize but see links to stories in this topical area]
Health news list forecast	<p>↓ In the US, improvement in the <i>infant mortality rate</i> in Mississippi and several southern other states has stalled and then <u>risen</u>. [This is not good news for a developed nation.]</p> <p>More bad press on the possible downsides of <i>nano-particles</i> -- <i>Nanoparticles can damage DNA, increase cancer risk</i>.</p>
Immigration news list forecast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40% of UK voters now rate immigration as their top concern; "<i>Here are a set of changes which have made Britain richer but have deeply unsettled the country</i>" -- <i>Immigration has 'deeply unsettled' Britain</i>.
Justice news list forecast	<p>↓ The Vermont Senate in a 16-9 vote mentions "<i>abuse of public trust</i>" in a motion to <i>impeach</i> President Bush and Vice-president Cheney.</p> <p>Attorney-general Gonzales has apologized but some US Senators smell blood -- "<i>Each is a fine lawyer and a dedicated professional. I regret how they were treated, and I apologize to them and to their families.</i>"</p> <p>Release by the US of an alleged <i>bomber</i> of a Cuban aircraft has angered Cuba --</p>

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	<p>"for that reason, Mr. Bush, you are as much of a terrorist as Posada Carriles and his accomplices."</p>				
<p>Security news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a continuing effort to defuse Russian objection to the proposed <i>missile defense systems</i> in Europe, the US is offering some degree of "<i>integration</i>" with Russian systems. <p><i>Outsourcing</i> key government functions, including those of the CIA, seems to have gone too far; "today in Baghdad a private contracting company ... decides where CIA officers can go and who they can see." -- Outsourcing the CIA.</p> <p>The BlackBerry outage was felt across North America, all the way to the White House -- "we're 14 hours into no BlackBerry, so you can imagine how things are. We've already started a 12-step group."</p> <p>More details emerged on lax security at Los Alamos.</p> <p>Hackers last year used <i>e-mail</i> to break into State Department computers -- "a department employee in Asia opened a mysterious e-mail that quietly allowed hackers inside the US government's network." Hackers have been invited to <i>tempest-test</i> the new Philippines electronic voting system.</p> <p>98% of <i>food imported</i> by the US is not inspected for <i>food safety</i> -- "the 1.3% that is inspected reveal contaminations of some form or the other." [Comment: This item may be misleading – no mention is made of <i>statistics</i>-based testing.]</p> <p>A retired US General says a <i>stressed army</i> is a <i>vulnerable army</i> -- "the disastrous state of the U.S. military is putting the country in <i>strategic peril</i> ..."</p> <p>Another report similar to many previous shows the great gulf between intimation and <i>actionable intelligence</i> -- France Warned CIA of 2001 Hijack Plot.</p> <p>A research student at <i>Texas A&M University</i> was afflicted by the <i>brucella</i> pathogen during a <i>bioweapons</i> experiment -- "under Federal law, such incidents are supposed to be reported within seven days to the Centers For Disease Control and Prevention."</p>				
<p>Society news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ Proving again the adage that those who <i>live by a gun, die by a gun</i>, another mass killing in a public place shocked the US and the world. Does the "world's greatest nation" have a terminal disease -- Massacre triggers world criticism of U.S. gun laws. "Even by US standards, gun culture in <i>Blacksburg</i> was an obsession" -- Blacksburg a town 'saturated with guns'. And there was an intelligent look at why the <i>Second Amendment</i> [like <i>witch burning</i>] is an anachronism in the modern world -- The right to bear arms. Then, with stunning incisiveness, Congress thought it had the answer - U.S. Congress may act to keep guns from mentally ill.</p>				
<p>Water news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As Australia continues through its worst <i>drought</i> in <u>1,000 years</u>, the government is preparing to turn off <i>irrigation</i> water to farmers. <p>India has developed its <i>first floating desalination plant</i> with a capacity of one <u>million litres per day</u> off the Chennai coastline.</p>				
<p>Challengers <i>see daily items with links to full stories on the web at</i> PDB-Challengers</p>					
<p>Brazil news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brazil Federal Police are uncovering a "<i>sentences for sale</i>" racket -- "this is the largest police offensive in recent memory against the Brazilian judiciary." <p>Another gun battle in Rio leaves 19 dead. Despite the urgency to tackle crime in Rio, the <i>military</i> is reticent to get involved in any long-term arrangement -- the Defense Minister says Lula is "obsessed" with helping Rio but that the <i>constitution</i> must be</p>				
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">↓ deteriorated</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">• steady</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">↑ improved</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">↗ ALERT</td> </tr> </table>		↓ deteriorated	• steady	↑ improved	↗ ALERT
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	<p>respected.</p>
<p>China news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two villages were flooded as a dam burst in north-west China -- "<i>China has more than 85,000 reservoirs, of which 30,000 have <u>serious structural problems</u>, including 200 large and 1,600 medium-sized dams ...</i>" <p>A farmer killed a village official and injured others in a suicide bombing over a land dispute -- "<i>the attack came after village leaders had destroyed Yue's crop and forced him to plant tobacco ...</i>". [A disgruntled rural population is a growing theme.]</p>
<p>India news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Peoples Daily</i> indicates the regime's cool view of the first joint naval drill between the US and India, off Japan's eastern coast -- "<i>It is absolutely not new for Japan and the U.S. to sit down and <u>plot conspiracies</u> together but it is rather intriguing to get India involved.</i>" The US recognizes India's role as a rising naval power is important to the US vision of global thousand-ship Navy coordinating "<i>the collective capabilities of free nations</i>". [Whatever <i>free nation</i> means this season ...] <p>Two more <i>members of parliament</i> have been named in human trafficking racket -- "<i>at the heart of the racket that involved sending people abroad on passports of politicians' family or forged documents provided they coughed up big money.</i>"</p> <p>The 1.5-million-strong Indian armed forces are seeking a pay increase of up to 400%.</p> <p>Finland, a key member of Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG), has promised to support India's integration with international civil nuclear commerce.</p> <p>Pakistan's President Musharraf has claimed the 'best ever' ties with India at present -- "<i>there is positive movement in resolution of issues of conflict, especially Kashmir</i>".</p> <p>India will clear debts with Russia in kind with the supply of titanium.</p>
<p>Indonesia news list forecast</p>	<p>↑ At the <i>5th Indonesia-United States Security Dialogue</i>, the US has confirmed Indonesia is not unimportant to the US; also there may be some genuine respect for Indonesia's way of doing things -- "<i>For us it is an amazing thing that Indonesia has been able to overcome various difficult situations.</i>"</p> <p>"<i>Pirate attacks in Southeast Asian sea lanes [e.g. Malacca Strait] fell to their lowest level in five years ... due to increased patrols and other anti-piracy measures ...</i>"</p>
<p>Iran news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ethnic-Iranian US engineer has been accused of taking access codes to Iran – all parties say it was an innocuous incident involving <i>training materials</i>, an embarrassment rather than espionage. <p>Iran continues to build naval defense facilities supporting a "swarm strategy" -- "<i>the deployment of small assault vessels that could surround and strike much larger US warships</i>".</p>
<p>Russia news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rightist parties, in a show of unaccustomed unity, have agreed on a single candidate in an attempt to make gains against the Putin dynasty. <p>[<i>Kosovo</i> is a political tug-of-war between Russian and NATO ...] In <i>Kosovo</i>, the unintended death of two Albanian protestors from UN rubber bullets which had time-expired in 1994 [and hence unsafe] will not assist resolution of the issue.</p> <p>IATA has rated Russia [who brought the world no-frills flying] as the most dangerous place for air travel.</p>
<p>Venezuela</p>	<p>↓ Venezuela is praying to Christ, Bolivar and Marx; and the horse on the state Coat of</p>

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news list|forecast

Arms has been turned around to now move *right* towards the *left* -- [Extremes of Hugo Chavez's ideology](#).

Chile's president told President **Chavez** to watch his mouth after he described the Chilean Senate as controlled by *fascists*.

Venezuela says it may not *compensate* large *oil companies* in the impending oil takeovers -- "*Venezuela had previously warned it did not want to give compensation in cash and would possibly offer some kind of payment in oil.*" Chavez warns that aggression by the US would launch a "100 years' war" -- "*Venezuela is free, it is nobody's colony.*"

The government is set not to renew the license for *Radio Caracas Television* because it was actively involved in not reporting but *fomenting* the 2002 coup.

Wild Cards

news list|forecast

- **Eritrea** has suspended membership in the regional **Inter-Governmental Authority on Development** after a rift with **Ethiopia** over **Somalia**.

Islamists attacked police in **Kano** in northern **Nigeria** -- the army has been sent in and police have evacuated the area. EU observers said there are many *irregularities* with the *election* in **Nigeria**.

The *Ahmadzai Wazirs* in **South Waziristan [Pakistan]** are said to have requested renewed government security presence in the area.

A growing revolt against President **Musharraf's** *secular* regime by an *Islamist* group in **Islamabad** points to the two alternatives for Pakistan; the West must support one of them.



There has been an awkward exchange between **Afghan** and **Pakistani** troops over a *border fence* Pakistan is building along some parts of the border -- "*the Afghan army moved to the area and removed the fence. Pakistani troops fired on our forces. The Afghan army returned fire*".

"... *the present lack of EU policies on engaging with moderate Islamists leads them to be at best curious about the EU and at worse to be suspicious of it*" -- [Political Islam and Europe](#).

Not a terrorist group, but the inspiration of many groups that are, the **Muslim Brotherhood** will defy the **Egyptian** ban on its existence and seek election -- [Muslim Brotherhood to Run in Election](#).

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