

GLOBAL CHALLENGES: THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Destabilizing Threats, Stabilizing Policies, and Global Powers at a Glance

Threat Summary

	<p>Environment. Pollution kills. Great Lakes could yield \$50B in economic benefits. Maps redrawn.</p> <p>Inter-State Conflict. Iraq continues to be costly quagmire for US. Wrong forces, wrong place.</p> <p>Proliferation. Historians confirming that Bush (and Carter) blessed the Pakistani nuclear program.</p>
	<p>Poverty. African Sahel spirals down. US class war deepens. Togo using information to leap ahead.</p> <p>Infectious Disease. Cholera in synch with climate change; predictive model may give early warning.</p> <p>Civil War. Darfur deepens as Arabs marginalize the south. HJ Heinz sells assets in Zimbabwe.</p> <p>Genocide. Visit www.genocidewatch.org to follow all the active genocides not covered by media.</p> <p>Transnational Crime. Since 1996, 216 confirmed incursions by Mexican military into US territory.</p>
	<p>Other Atrocities. In Colombia, Israel producing a range of rogue militias and gray practices.</p> <p>Terrorism. Indigenous converts broaden Al Qaeda while many view it as a convenient myth for USG.</p>

Policy Summary

	<p>Diplomacy. US Diplomat accuses Israel of providing deceptive and incomplete information to USG.</p> <p>Security. DHS issues terrorist guidelines for chicken farmers. Border entry a complete mess.</p> <p>Society. Top 20 countries include Nordics, Canada, Netherlands, Switzerland. USA 8th.</p>
	<p>Economy. Economic concerns equal Iraq concerns. Castro warns US creating a global depression.</p> <p>Education. Parental limits on television, quiet places to do homework, help avoid future poverty.</p> <p>Health. Read the reviews of <i>The Blue Death: Disease, Disaster, and the Water We Drink</i>.</p> <p>Immigration. US Federal Court blocks focus on 140,000 probable illegal workers.</p> <p>Water. China and India agree to discuss river-sharing.</p>
	<p>Agriculture. US farming moving to Mexico as illegal immigration begins to draw down.</p> <p>Energy. Biomass more productive than wind power. Sales of solar-powered devices jumps 156%.</p> <p>Family. Americans flocking to Guatemala to pay up to \$30,000 for a kidnapped child.</p> <p>Justice. US Constitution and Oaths of Office continue to be ignored at all levels of USG.</p>

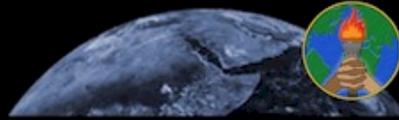
Major Player Summary

	<p>Iran. Israel impatient. US District Court fines Iran \$2.65 billion for attack on Marines in 1983.</p>
	<p>Brazil. “Ethanol euphoria” threatens sustainable and diverse agribusiness.</p> <p>China. China’s economy turns toxic. China hacks Pentagon, arms Taliban.</p> <p>India. Committed to nuclear power. Insurgents interrupt power to lower production. Northeast worries.</p> <p>Indonesia. Buying 10 Russian submarines—shades of Venezuela. Russia displacing US in key places.</p> <p>Russia. Signs uranium deal with Australia. Draws line on Kosovo, missile defense. Joining WTO.</p> <p>Venezuela. Integrating state and municipal police, pressing agenda alarms Paraguay.</p> <p>Wild Cards. Secular Morocco wins. NATO of the East led by India. Tajikistan bridge to AF opens.</p>

World Crises - from monthly assessments by *International Crisis Group* at 01 September 2007

↗	Alert: Democratic Republic of Congo
↓	Deteriorated: Bangladesh, Burundi, DR Congo, Georgia, Guatemala, India (non-Kashmir), Iraq, Philippines, Somalia
↑	Improved: Sierra Leone, Turkey
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unchanged: Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Basque Country (Spain), Belarus, Bolivia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chechnya (Russia), China (internal), Colombia, Comoros Islands, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Gambia, Georgia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran, Israel/Occupied Territories, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Liberia, Macedonia, Mali, Moldova, Myanmar/Burma, Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan), Niger, Nigeria, North Caucasus (non-Chechnya), Northern Ireland, North Korea, Pakistan, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Solomon Islands, Somaliland (Somalia), Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syria, Taiwan Strait, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Western Sahara, Yemen, Zimbabwe

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Threats

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

Poverty

[news list|forecast](#)

- The *African Sahel* exemplifies a region where "agencies and governments have focused too much on short-term *emergency assistance* and failed to address more fundamental issues"; *infrastructure* and *organic solutions*, not *quick fixes*, are needed -- *Sahel - Beyond Any Drought*.

In the US, class war still means just one thing: the rich attacking the poor -- "Paradoxically, the states with the *highest levels of poverty* and lowest incomes are staunchly *Republican*."

Togo farmers have jumped several generations of technology into modern agriculture and *agribusiness information systems* - *E-Agriculture for Togolese Farmers*.

Over 3,000 people fleeing **Somalia** and nearby violence have gathered for a dangerous voyage to **Aden [Yemen]** at the mercy of *people smugglers* who may dump them at sea or in a desert -- *People traffic set to escalate*.



Infectious Disease

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- *Cholera Moving In Sync To Climatic Changes* – New data "should provide the scientists with the basis for creating a *predictive model* which could improve *early warning of risks* ..."

Environment

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↓ The *APEC climate change* outcome is weaker than expected -- members will aspire to have aspirations ... -- *Greenpeace attacks 'aspirational' emissions deal*.

"A *Brookings Institution* study suggested that restoring the health of the **U.S. Great Lakes** could create \$50 billion in *economic benefit* for the area." -- *Great Lakes cleanup may reap big benefits*.

Pollution kills 50,000 Pakistanis every year: World Bank -- the '*Pakistan Strategic Country Environmental Assessment*' identifies the cost of *air* and *water pollution*.

"In the four years since the last edition of the *Times Comprehensive Atlas Of The World* went on sale, cartographers have been forced to redraw *coastlines* and reclassify types of land." -- *Map 'shows effects of climate change'*.

Inter-State Conflict

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↓ *Yemen Condemns Israeli Aggression, Stands by Syria* -- "*Yemen* condemned infiltration of the *Israeli* aircrafts to the *Syrian* airspace ...".

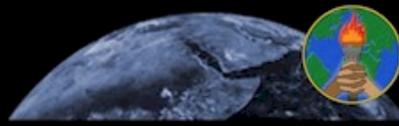
In **Iraq**, the self-sufficient and long-persecuted *Shi'ites* do not need to make deals with the **Americans** in the way the *Sunni* are choosing to -- *Shiite militias may be tougher to overcome*. "It [the 'surge'] has not worked out as we had hoped," General **Petraeus** wrote -- *Petraeus Calls Iraq War 'Exceedingly Complex'*. In **Iraq**, *money* may succeed in an age-old way where dogma and patriotism have not; "*one sheikh* in a town south of Baghdad was given \$38,000 (£19,000) and promised a further \$189,000 over three months ... " -- *US bribe insurgents to fight Al-Qaeda*. At least two *contradictory* views have dug in on **Iraq** -- that of Gen **Petraeus**, and that of Adm **Fallon** -- *Among Top Officials, 'Surge' Has Sparked Dissent, Infighting*.

Fighting forces are not readily transformed; "... *each service* possesses a *preferred way of fighting* that is not easily changed. Since the 1930s, the culture of the **U.S. Army** has emphasized '*big wars*'.... *we don't always get to fight the wars we want*." - *Counterinsurgency Comeback*.

Civil War

- In **Sudan's Darfur**, the *Terjem* and the *Mahria* tribes, who once raped and pillaged

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news list|forecast

together, are now fighting each other -- *Chaos in Darfur Rises as Arabs Fight With Arabs*. One analysis: "*The struggle in **Dafur** is about **Arab** domination and the marginalisation of the people of the South*" -- *Why killings in Dafur persist by Bankie, SSP Spokesperson. Gaddafi pledges help in Darfur talks* -- "*Libyan leader Moamar **Gaddafi** pledged to gather as many **Darfur rebel groups** as possible for peace talks with Khartoum due to be held in Libya next month ...*" [Comment: Previous attempts at lasting treaties failed because they did not include all groups.]

Eritrea is now an assembly point for **Somali Islamists** and other *dissidents*; "*Many Somali dissidents have already made their home in Eritrea ...*" -- *Somali opposition figures to unite in Eritrea*. In the eastern **Ogaden** region, **Ethiopia** continues to fight a war against ethnic Somali separatists; "*In the vast area of about 4 million people, mainly ethnic Somali nomads, separatist groups have long agitated for greater autonomy from the government in Addis Ababa.*" -- *Aid agency warns of possible starvation in eastern Ethiopia*. Médecins Sans Frontières reports the **Ethiopian** government has denied it access to the **Ogaden** region -- *MSF denied access to Somali region of Ethiopia*. In an interview a senior **Somali** Islamist leader claims the **Islamic Courts movement** is far from defeated; "*The [Islamic Courts] movement is intact. The leadership is still there. Many of them are inside the country, in Mogadishu and elsewhere, in hiding. Others are abroad.*" -- *Interview - Somalia's Islamic Courts movement "intact"*.

In **Mali**, as US forces conduct *military training* in Mali's capital, **Bamako**, as part of the **Trans-Saharan Counter Terrorism Initiative**, there are "terrorist" attacks by dissident **Tuareg** nomads -- *Mali Brands Recent Attacks Terrorism, Plans Regional Defense*.

An alarm perhaps -- *HJ Heinz Company*, one of **Zimbabwe's** first major foreign investors, has sold its assets in the country -- *US food giant pulls out of Zim*.

Genocide

news list|forecast

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

Other Atrocities

news list|forecast

- In **Colombia**, one outcome of buying *counterinsurgency* expertise from **Israel** [**Colombia's largest arms supplier**], has been the emergence of *rogue militias* and a culture of *gray practices*; "... *military options have at best produced a stalemate and created rogue mercenaries providing expertise that, far from ending the conflict, prolonged it.*" -- *Colombia, Israel and rogue mercenaries*.

"*The most infamous **political prison** from **Argentina's** 1976-1983 **dirty war** opens to the public next month as a **human rights memorial**, one of the first of its kind in Latin America.*" -- *Argentina to open notorious dirty war prison*.

Like most other *international high crimes trials*, the trial of Charles **Taylor**, former president of **Liberia**, has been manipulated into more delays -- *Liberian Ex-Leader's War Crimes Trial Is Stalled*.

In the **Philippines** "*a total of 161 Filipinos have been rescued from **human traffickers** over the past three months, according to Bureau of Immigration ...*" -- *161 rescued from human traffickers -- BI*.

Proliferation

news list|forecast

- **Australia** has mentioned for the first time the option of commercial *uranium enrichment*; "*I'm not sure that (enrichment) would be commercially viable either. Quite apart from the political obstacles, I think there are a lot of commercial obstacles as well.*" -- *Australia stakes its claim to uranium enrichment*. [Comment: **Russia** has already mooted a commercial *enrichment* proposal.]

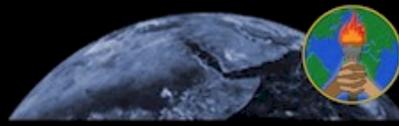
Remarkably, *nuclear weapons* were flown across the **US** in an armed state; "*Nothing*

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like this has ever been reported before and we have been assured for decades that it was impossible." -- [Nuclear Bombs Mistakenly Flown Over U.S.](#)

In raking over history, it seems beyond doubt that the **US** knew about the **AQ Khan network** and knew that it was officially sanctioned; "American officials knew that **Musharraf** had known about the nuclear trade all along. " -- '[Bush winked at Pak nuke proliferation](#)'.

"The bloody conflict between the **Sandinistas** and **Contras** during the 1980s is long gone, but the **Soviet weapons** remain, locked in a kind of limbo ..." -- [Nicaragua's Soviet-Era Missiles Locked in Limbo](#).

The **Cluster Munition Coalition** is disappointed by the failure of **Brazil**, a big producer, to take part in the **Oslo Process** -- [Brazil pressured on cluster bombs](#).

Terrorism
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ "Our analysts assess with high confidence that **Al-Qaeda's** central leadership is planning **high impact plots** against the **American homeland**." -- [Al-Qaeda planning 'high impact plots' on US: CIA chief](#).

Two **German Muslim converts** and a **Turkish** German resident "... were in the advanced stages of plotting **bomb attacks** that could have been deadlier than those that killed dozens in **London** and **Madrid**." -- [German Police Arrest 3 in Terrorist Plot](#). Similarly, in **Denmark** ... [Danes hold 2 in alleged terrorist plot](#) -- "Police evacuated a building in the Danish capital before searching an apartment, where they found large quantities of **explosive material**."

One of **Bin Laden's** Sudanese teachers contributes to the conspiracy-theory; "After the collapse of **communism**, they were looking for a target. They found it in bin Laden. The devil is now everywhere. Bin Laden is a myth. It's like **Che Guevara**. It's an image." -- [Osama a myth, couldn't be behind 9/11: Bin Laden guru](#).

According to the **UN**, "the phenomenon of suicide attacks in **Afghanistan** is inherently linked to a variety of structures and institutions across the border in **Pakistan**." -- [U.N.: Most Afghan Suicide Attacks Start in Pakistan](#).

India is trying to verify the arrest in **Bangladesh** of **Huji** leader **Mohammad Sharifuddin** (aka **Abu Hamza**), a mastermind of the **Mecca Masjid** and **Hyderabad** attacks -- [Interpol to verify Hamza's arrest](#). An **Indian** report claims **al-Qaeda** has moved some of its operations to **Bangladesh** away from **NATO** forces in **Afghanistan**; "[Al-Qaeda base in Bangladesh planning to target practice suicide and remote controlled bombings in Indian crowds before attacking the West](#)." -- [Al-Qaeda base in Bangladesh planning to target practice suicide and remote controlled bombings](#).

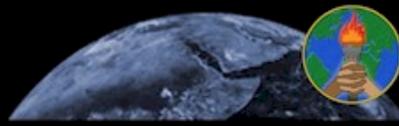
Lebanon: [The victory - Profile of Fatah al-Islam](#) – "[Fatah al-Islam emerged in November 2006 when it split from Fatah al-Intifada \(Fatah Uprising\), a Syrian-backed Palestinian group based in Lebanon](#)".

Transnational Crime
[news list|forecast](#)

• [U.S. agents fired at on Mexico border](#) -- "Since 1996, there have been of 216 confirmed **incursions** by the **Mexican military** into the **U.S.**"

In **London**, three **Nigerians** have been convicted of **money laundering**; "... the money, which was heavily contaminated with **heroin**, was believed to be the proceeds of **drug-trafficking**." -- [Nigerians sentenced for laundering millions](#).

Colombian authorities claim a major setback for **FARC** rebels in the death of **Tomas Medina** (aka **El Negro Acacio**), a commander who managed massive **drug** and **arms** smuggling operations -- [Colombian air force kills rebel leader in bomb raid](#).



Colombian drug barons use Spain to launder money -- "... almost three billion euros of illicit drug money was seized by Spanish authorities in 2006 ..."

Policy

Agriculture
[news list|forecast](#)

- As farms realize they can not count forever on the 50% - 70% of **farm workers** that are **illegal immigrants**, they are moving their operations to **Mexico** -- *American Farmers Cross the Border for Labor.*

Diplomacy
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ *'Israel gives US unreliable intel'* -- Edward **Abingdon**, who served as **US** consul-general in **Jerusalem** during the 1990s, said the **Israelis** had an "agenda" and provided "selective information to try to influence US thinking." [Comment: Examples of this may be "intelligence" on **Iraq's** WMD and on **Iran**.]

Economy
[news list|forecast](#)

- *Bad News Puts Political Glare Onto Economy* -- "For the first time in four years, **economic concerns** are rivaling the **war in Iraq** as a top issue on the political agenda." *US economy loses jobs for first time in 4 years* -- "The Labor Department said US employers unexpectedly shed 4,000 jobs in August, marking the first drop in payrolls since August of 2003."

Fidel **Castro** warns that the **US** may be leading the world into another *Great Depression*; Washington's coffers were depleted during the *Vietnam War* and "*since then the United States economy is sustained by natural resources and the savings of the rest of the world*" -- *Fidel warns of coming global recession.*

"*Classified R&D will comprise 23 percent of the \$75.1 billion the **Pentagon** plans to spend on research and development by all of the services and defense agencies ...*" -- *'Black' U.S. R&D Budget Estimated at \$17.5B.*

Education
[news list|forecast](#)

- *Two-tongued teaching gains ground in US* -- "What we've seen here is that students who take **languages** do better in other subjects, and they score better on standardized tests." ["Not to be confused with controversial **bilingual education** designed to mainstream non-English-speaking children, subjects taught in a foreign language are designed to make a child fluent in speaking and writing two languages."]

A new **Islamic** school in **New York** has been attacked by a "Stop the Madrassa" group almost before it opens its doors; "*To be attacked so viciously has been unbelievably unfair and quite sad.*" -- *New York public school accused of radical Islamist agenda.*

"*Circumstances in childhood which result in low qualifications help transmit **poverty across generations.***" - the "circumstances" include a quiet place for **homework**, limits on **television**, and **parental involvement** -- *Education today: reading replaced by TV.*

Energy
[news list|forecast](#)

- *Biomass 'more attractive investment' than wind* -- "... a Euro 15M **biomass** might sell 4.1m Euro of power per year, twice the value of the energy produced by an equivalent priced **wind farm.**" [Comment: Biomass is continuous; wind is sporadic.]

"[In the **UK**] ... sales of items that run on the **sun's energy** are up by 156% on last summer" -- *Solar-powered sales go sky high.*

Family
[news list|forecast](#)

- *Guatemala's child-snatching plague* -- "**American** couples are flocking to the hotels of **Guatemala City** in the hope of embracing a bouncing new addition to their families - a **baby**, priced at about \$30,000."

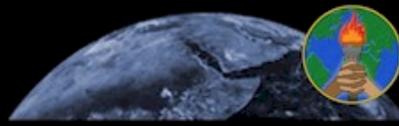
Health
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Immigration
[news list|forecast](#)

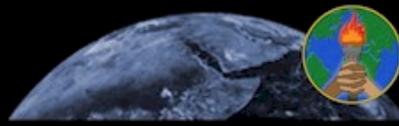
↓ A **US Federal Court** has stalled a **DHS** move to send about 140,000 letters to **employers** querying the incorrect **Social Security** details of some **employees** -- *Illegal*

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	<p><i>immigrants in US get reprieve.</i></p> <p><i>Mexican President Assails U.S. Measures on Migrants -- "... I again issue an energetic protest against the ... persecution and the vexing treatment against undocumented Mexican workers."</i></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"> Draft DHS regulations for the <i>chemical industry</i> range from good sense, to silly ... to the wrong such as <u>1 tonne as the minimum</u> amount of TNT that comes under the regulations -- <i>Terror rules for chicken farmers.</i> The <i>queues</i> are building at border crossings; "... lines nearly as long as they were after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks" -- <i>Stepped-up checks mean longer lines at borders with Can., Mexico.</i> <i>Oops, another top secret exposed</i> -- "The image - which appears on Microsoft's Virtual Earth mapping service - is of the seven-bladed propeller used on an Ohio class ballistic missile submarine." <i>Bush taps new DHS preparedness chief</i> -- "Robert Jamison was named the nominee to be undersecretary for national protection and programs at the department ..." <i>Homeland Security Drops Data-Mining Tool</i> -- "Testing of the program was suspended in March [2007] after questions arose over its compliance with privacy rules." A <i>laser missile-killer system</i> for commercial aircraft has passed another development stage; "one of the final hurdles before a live-fire 'lethal demonstration' is conducted in 2009" -- <i>Laser Plane Closer to Missile Kill.</i>
<p>Society news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego has reached a settlement of almost \$230 million with <u>144 victims</u> of sexual abuse by clergy -- <i>US Catholic Church settles 144 sex abuse cases.</i> <i>American Girls' Suicide Rates Rise</i> -- "Overall, suicide was the third leading cause of death among young Americans in 2004, accounting for 4,599 deaths." In the UK [as elsewhere] urban renewal has led to neglect of the suburbs -- <i>Suburbs 'starve' as £1bn diverted to cities.</i> <i>Top 20 countries for quality of life</i> -- 1. Norway, 2. Iceland, 3. Australia, 4. Ireland, 5. Sweden, 6. Canada, 7. Japan, 8. USA, 9.= Finland, Netherlands, Switzerland, ... <i>California Passes Bill To Ban Forced RFID Tagging</i> -- " ... the forced implanting of under-the-skin technology into human beings is <u>just plain wrong</u>. ... I'm deeply concerned that this isn't a given for the industry."
<p>Water news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>China agrees to discuss river-sharing</i> -- "officials from [China and India] are meeting this month to start discussions aimed at allaying Indian concerns that Beijing had designs on rivers like the Brahmaputra."
<p>Challengers</p>	
<p>Brazil news listforecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ethanol Divides Agribusiness</i> – Even in Brazil, the sugarcane monoculture of "ethanol euphoria" is now seen by some as "a green tsunami" that is a threat to sustainable and diverse agribusiness.
<p>China news listforecast</p>	<p>↓ <i>China's economic miracle turns toxic</i> -- It's War! "This is a special war to protect the safety and interests of the general public, as well as a war to safeguard the 'Made in China' label and the country's image."</p>

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Illegal mapping in China by foreigners on rise -- "... most of these foreigners came into the country under the disguise of scientists, tourists, expeditionists, and archaeologists."

Taleban 'getting Chinese weapons' -- "... the **Taleban** have recently begun boasting that they have now got hold of much more sophisticated weaponry although they refused to say from where."

Pentagon: Chinese military hacked us -- "The **PLA** has demonstrated the ability to conduct attacks that disable our system...and the ability in a conflict situation to re-enter and disrupt on a very large scale." "Last May Chinese **spy software** was discovered in computers in the office of the **German chancellor** ..." -- *Beware the Trojan panda.* "China has the greatest potential to compete militarily with the **U.S.** and field **disruptive military technologies** that could, over time, offset traditional U.S. military advantages" -- *China Details Scramjet Missile Program.*

India
[news list|forecast](#)

- Why India needs an **FBI-like** agency -- *Federal agency need of the hour to fight terror.*

"[**Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami**] has emerged as the 'new face' of radical **Islamist** terror, according to sources in the **security** establishment" -- *HuJI in state supported by Simi splinters.*

Maoists set up technical unit in Jharkhand -- "The outlawed **Communist Party of India-Maoist** rebels have also set up a **mobile CTU**, which is shifted from one place to another, particularly in the jungles." [Comment: The mobile CTUs assemble and repair **military equipment** and **weapons**.]

"Police sources said they have found leaflets and posters in which the radicals have vowed to intensify attacks on **iron ore facilities** in the **Bailadila hills** in Dantewada district." -- *Maoists plan to attack India's iron ore stocks.* [Comment: The insurgents have been able to disrupt ore extraction by **sabotaging** critical equipment and power supplies.]

India's **Prime Minister** affirms his country's commitment to **nuclear energy**; "*India is now too important a country to remain outside the international mainstream in this critical area*" -- *India cannot afford to miss the global nuclear bus: Manmohan Singh.*

Stability in India's **north-east** is **strategic** importance; "*the ultimate aim of the groups backed by the **Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence (ISI)** is to cut off the [north east] region from the rest of the country.*" -- *NE on radar of Bangla-based Jihadis.*

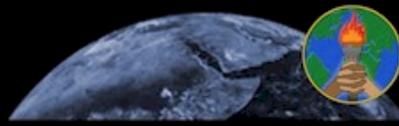
Indonesia
[news list|forecast](#)

- Some Indonesian **clerics** have said a proposed **nuclear plant** is **haram** [forbidden]; "*a nuclear power plant due to be built in Central Java is religiously forbidden because its **danger** outweighs potential benefits ...*" -- *Indonesian clerics say nuclear plant forbidden.*

*Indonesia to deploy 140 **peacekeepers** to Darfur in December* -- "Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, sent about 1,000 troops to a **U.N.** peacekeeping mission in **Lebanon** last year to enforce a cease-fire between Israel and the armed group Hezbollah."

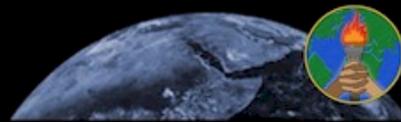
"**Japan's** Government called on Jakarta to explain why it needs up to 10 Russian **submarines**" -- *Japan concerned at new subs for Indonesia.*

"The [Indonesian] **Transport Ministry** says the [US] **Coast Guard** found seven terminals that did not fully comply with the **International Ship and Port Facility**



	<p><i>Security Code</i>" -- <i>Indonesia to improve port security.</i></p> <p><i>Russia to sign <u>US\$1 billion defense deal</u> with Indonesia</i> -- "The two nations also hope that, by strengthening military and economic ties, they will be able to counterbalance growing US influence in global affairs, analysts said."</p>
<p>Iran news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President Ahmadinejad announces that Iran has now reached a production goal in uranium enrichment [implying it will cease expansion] and the IAEA declared there had been progress in Iran's degree of cooperation; "But the United States reiterated its insistence on Iran suspending uranium enrichment to win international confidence, and downplayed the IAEA claim of progress" -- <i>Iran reaches uranium centrifuge goal.</i> <p><i>Is a US attack on Iran indeed imminent?</i> -- "Israel is growing ever so impatient and after its 'defeat' from Iranian sponsored Hezbollah is <u>looking to make it 'square'.</u>"</p> <p>A US District Court has made the <u>largest-ever judgment against another country</u> - against Iran for its part in the 1983 attack on the Marine barracks in Beirut -- <i>Iran fined \$2.65 billion for terrorism.</i></p>
<p>Russia news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign Minister Lavrov said that Russia's foreign partners "must realize" that Moscow "is not trying to bargain"; the missile defense shield and Kosovo are red lines in Russia's foreign policy -- <i>Kosovo, Missile Defense Mark 'Red Line' In Foreign Policy.</i> <p><i>NATO head urges closer ties with Russia</i> -- "we see that, even after a decade of steady progress, the NATO-Russia relationship remains vulnerable to Cold War stereotypes. <u>We have to get beyond this state of affairs.</u>"</p> <p>Russia has U.S. backing in its WTO bid - economics minister -- "Russia has completed an unprecedented number of talks, and we have every chance of joining the WTO in 2008."</p> <p><i>Putin signs uranium deal with Australia</i> -- "Any uranium that is sold to Russia will be sold under very strict safeguards."</p>
<p>Venezuela news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a light-weight article calling Chavez "weird", <i>Time</i> weirdly fails to understand daylight saving time and reconnaissance dirigibles -- <i>Time Out of Joint in Venezuela.</i> <p>Venezuela's instructions to its diplomats in Paraguay has caused alarm; "Although the text calls on Venezuelan diplomats to <u>advance Chavez's strategies and pet projects</u>, none of the directives appears illegal or even subversive" -- <i>Chavez 'plan' alarms Paraguay.</i></p> <p>A Colombian insurgent group has expressed thanks for assistance with the peace process from President Chavez; "We highly appreciate the support provided by the Bolivarian government of Venezuela to the peace process in Colombia." said a press release from ELN on the Internet -- <i>Colombian guerrillas appreciate Venezuela's support.</i></p> <p><i>Peru Gives Political Asylum to Leader of Venezuelan Oil Industry Shutdown</i> -- "Ortega led the <u>illegal shut-down and sabotage of the oil industry</u>, together with the national Chamber of Commerce Fedecamaras and the upper management of the state oil industry."</p> <p><i>Venezuela Organizes National Police</i> -- "The initiative seeks to put an end to the lack of coordination between state and municipal police ..."</p>
<p>Wild Cards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Afghan bridge exposes huge divide</i> -- To explain the significance of the first bridge

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[news list|forecast](#)

over the *Pyanj River*, the first ever to connect **Tajikistan** and **Afghanistan**, is to understand the many facets of the *Great Game*.

In **Morocco**, despite an early lead in the count, a moderate *Islamist* party has failed to defeat the *secular* governing party but has increased its following -- *Islamic party stars in Morocco's elections*.

Bangladesh Army-backed government detains ex-prime minister -- "Bangladesh's [military] leaders now are holding two former prime ministers, and myriad other politicians, in custody."

An analysis of **SCO** by a former Indian diplomat -- *The new 'NATO of the East' takes shape*.

Advice to President **Musharraf**: "... he should field a *presidential candidate* of his own choice and retain the powerful post of the *army chief*" -- *Musharraf is advised to consider Chilean model of dictatorship*.

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