

**GLOBAL CHALLENGES: THE WEEK IN REVIEW**

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

**Threat Summary**

	<p><b>Environment.</b> Seven years to stop emissions growth. Toxic electronic trash grows. Islands worried.</p> <p><b>Inter-State Conflict.</b> If Pakistan blows up, US/NATO lose Afghanistan—cannot resupply.</p> <p><b>Proliferation.</b> Advanced small arms tipping tide in favour of terrorists and insurgents.</p>
	<p><b>Poverty.</b> Eliminate corruption and poverty is eliminated also. Global food crisis developing.</p> <p><b>Infectious Disease.</b> Brazil saves US one billion in demanding drug companies bargain on prices.</p> <p><b>Civil War.</b> Lebanon is the critical centerpiece for peace in Middle East, may slide into civil war.</p> <p><b>Genocide.</b> UN seeks to prevent genocide but has no peace intelligence and abdicates on Israel.</p> <p><b>Transnational Crime.</b> See links—illicit crime at US2T joins US500B in corporate tax avoidance</p>
	<p><b>Other Atrocities.</b> Uzbekistan torture record reprehensible. 29,000 child soldiers demobilized, not all.</p> <p><b>Terrorism.</b> Misconduct by officers blows case. War of ideas begins. Must address social issues.</p>

**Policy Summary**

	<p><b>Diplomacy.</b> United Nations and US Statecraft both in dire need of total make-overs.</p> <p><b>Security.</b> US proliferating. Rebels penetrating Army schools. 5000 illegals granted clearances in UK.</p> <p><b>Society.</b> US Army desertion rate up 80% since 2003 while Army veterans commit suicide: 17 a day!</p> <p><b>Water.</b> US water crisis, which we have warned about since we began this report, worsens.</p>
	<p><b>Economy.</b> Hidden costs of Iraq-Afghanistan misadventures: US\$2.6T (\$20,900 per US family).</p> <p><b>Education.</b> See links.</p> <p><b>Energy.</b> Algeria plans solar power cable to Germany. Hydrogen power surging as doable-do.</p> <p><b>Health.</b> US declines in health ranks in 2007.</p> <p><b>Immigration.</b> US federal government in complete disarray with zero leadership zero strategy.</p>
	<p><b>Agriculture.</b> See links.</p> <p><b>Family.</b> See links.</p> <p><b>Justice.</b> Military justice for civilians in Pakistan.</p>

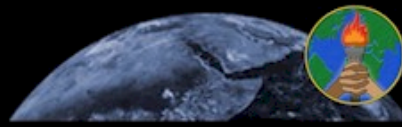
**Major Player Summary**

	<p><b>Brazil.</b> Emphasizes need for UN to change, Britain agrees.</p> <p><b>China.</b> China puts 30.5 billion tons of sewage into Yangtze. Espionage in US. Dominating Africa.</p> <p><b>India.</b> Counterfeiting in India could be catalyst for end of money. Rise of democratic unions.</p> <p><b>Indonesia.</b> EC investing 500M Euro, half for education. Axis with Malaysia attracting investments.</p> <p><b>Iran.</b> Dropped from red—it's the US that is the threat. China not joining 5+1 posse. Reality creeps in.</p> <p><b>Russia.</b> Another Balkans war? US threatens Russia with expensive (unaffordable) missile system.</p> <p><b>Venezuela.</b> Spanish King rebukes Chavez, who smacks him back. Going nuclear for power.</p> <p><b>Wild Cards.</b> OPEC positioning itself to challenge G8 (see also BRIC). Kurds want peace.</p>
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**World Crises - monthly assessment by [International Crisis Group](#) - 01 November 2007**

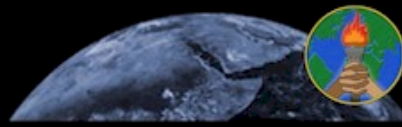
⚡	<b>Alert:</b> Ethiopia/Eritrea, Pakistan
⬇	<b>Deteriorated:</b> Bosnia & Herzegovina, Iran, Myanmar/Burma, Nepal, Pakistan, Somalia, Somaliland, Sri Lanka, Sudan
⬆	<b>Improved:</b> Israel/Occupied Territories
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Unchanged:</b> Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Basque Country (Spain), Belarus, Bolivia, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Chechnya (Russia), Colombia, Comoros Islands, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Egypt, Fiji, Georgia, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, India (non-Kashmir), Indonesia, Iraq, Israel/Occupied Territories, Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Liberia, Macedonia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Moldova, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan), North Caucasus (non-Chechnya), Northern Ireland (UK), North Korea, Philippines, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Syria, Tajikistan, Taiwan Strait, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Western Sahara, Zimbabwe</li> </ul>

⬇ deteriorated	• steady	⬆ improved	⚡ ALERT
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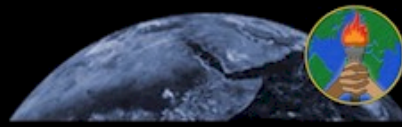
<b>Threats</b>		<i>see daily items with links to full stories on the web at <a href="#">PDB-Threats</a></i>
<b>Poverty</b> <small>news list forecast</small>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Corruption is why we are so poor</b> -- "Of the billions of dollars the world sent to <b>Bangladesh</b> for its economic development, only a mere <u>25%</u> had gone towards that purpose ..."</li> <li>• <b>Food crisis begins to bite</b> -- "Empty shelves in <b>Caracas</b>. <b>Food riots in West Bengal and Mexico</b>. Warnings of hunger in <b>Jamaica, Nepal, the Philippines and sub-Saharan Africa</b>...."</li> <li>• <b>State Accused of Violating Rights of Rural Poor</b> -- "Civil society groups in <b>Paraguay</b> are hoping to persuade a <b>UN expert committee</b> to send international observers to investigate allegations of violations of the rights of <b>peasant farmers and indigenous people</b> in this country."</li> </ul>
<b>Infectious Disease</b> <small>news list forecast</small>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↑ "Bargaining with <b>pharmaceutical</b> firms to bring down the price of <b>AIDS drugs</b> and producing <b>cheap generic versions</b> has saved <b>Brazil \$1B</b>, a study has shown" -- <b>Brazil's AIDS policy 'remarkable'</b>.</li> </ul>
<b>Environment</b> <small>news list forecast</small>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↓ <b>America Ships Electronic Waste Overseas</b> -- "It is being <b>recycled</b>, but it's being recycled in the <u>most horrific way you can imagine</u>."</li> <li>• The <b>Climate Panel</b> got it wrong .... it's all <u>worse than first thought</u> -- . <b>UN Panel Gives Dire Warming Forecast</b></li> <li>• <b>Climate change conference opens in Maldives</b> -- "The world's <b>Small Island States</b> gathered in the <b>Maldives</b> on Tuesday [13 Nov 2007] to highlight the plight of the world's most vulnerable communities to <b>climate change</b> ..."</li> </ul>
<b>Inter-State Conflict</b> <small>news list forecast</small>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pentagon making plans in case [Pakistan] unrest disrupts Afghan war supplies</b> -- "... 'very real areas of concern' because about <u>75% of the supplies</u>, including <u>40% of vehicle fuel</u> supplies, either go through or over <b>Pakistan</b>."</li> <li>• A very competitive benchmark to top: "the latest fighting made the country's <b>humanitarian crisis the worst in Africa</b>" -- <b>Somalia shuts radios as humanitarian crisis deepens</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Unmanned Aerial Vehicles</b> (UAVs) are the hot topic of the decade for <b>surveillance</b>, and <b>attack</b>; <b>Unmanned Reaper drops first bombs in combat</b> -- "dropped a pair of 500-pound, <b>laser-guided bombs</b> on targets in <b>Afghanistan</b> ..."</li> </ul>
<b>Civil War</b> <small>news list forecast</small>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↓ A useful well-documented <b>backgrounder</b> on modern <b>Burma [Myanmar]</b>-- <b>The Geopolitics and Economics of Burma's Military Regime, 1962-2007</b>.</li> <li>• The <b>Zimbabwean</b> people continue to languish under a regime that knows no way forward, and no way back; <b>Zimbabwe 'ready for UK invasion'</b> -- "Mr <b>Mugabe</b> says his country's economic hardships are down to <b>Western sabotage</b>." Also: <b>Cash runs out in land where the bus fare is 1.6M dollars</b>.</li> <li>• The <b>proxies</b> for every interest in the <b>Middle East</b> converge in <b>Lebanon</b>; as goes Lebanon, so goes the region -- <b>Lebanon may slide into civil war</b>. A checklist of the leading colliding interests in <b>Lebanon</b> -- <b>Lebanon's Presidential Front-Runners</b>.</li> <li>• In <b>Sri Lanka</b>, as in many <b>conflicts</b> throughout the world, "current <b>US policy contradictions</b> were on display [at a handover of <b>military aircraft</b>]" ; the US piously urges <b>peace</b> but does not support restrictions on the world <b>armaments</b> trade -- <b>Violence drags on in Sri Lanka [Editorial]</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Key dates in Nepal's Maoist insurgency and peace Maoist-government peace agreement on November 21</b> -- Handy chronology.</li> </ul>

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	<p><i>Sudan president accuses UN of trying to send <b>intelligence units</b> to Darfur -- "we are convinced that the elements whom they insist to send to us from Sweden and Norway are intelligence elements; namely, <b>MOSSAD</b> and <b>CIA</b>."</i></p>
<p><b>Genocide</b> news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role of the new <b>US Genocide Prevention Task Force</b> will be to "to develop <b>policy recommendations</b> that enable the United States to <u>prevent</u> future genocides", <u>not</u> to explore genocide cases as such -- <i>Israel won't be included in new genocide probes.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Atrocities</b> news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ "About 29,000 children had been demobilized ... in <b>Congo</b> since 2004. But hundreds of <b>children soldiers</b> -- maybe a couple of thousand -- are still believed to be working with armed groups in the area" -- <i>Child Soldiers Released in Congo.</i></p> <p>"When it comes to <b>torture</b>, <b>Uzbekistan</b> has systematically tried it all, according to reports by Western governments and human rights organizations" -- <i>UN Panel Seeks Answers On Uzbek Torture Record.</i></p>
<p><b>Proliferation</b> news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ "... advanced <b>small arms</b> with previously unheard-of <b>range, accuracy and lethality</b> could tip the balance in favor of <b>terrorists</b> ..." -- <i>Report warns new lethal small arms could get in terrorist hands.</i></p> <p><i>South Africa nuclear research facility admits to second break-in</i> -- "Weapons-grade <b>uranium</b> is still stored at the site under international supervision, according to unconfirmed reports."</p>
<p><b>Terrorism</b> news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ "There is an ocean of risk in which we have to learn to swim" -- <i>Biothreats in the Middle East [Conference].</i></p> <p><i>Homeland Security officials say government unprepared for dirty bomb</i> -- "... the <b>United States</b> has a shortage of <b>laboratories</b> to test individuals exposed to <b>radiation</b> after a <b>dirty bomb</b> attack."</p> <p>"Researchers at the <b>University of Arizona</b> are developing a tool that uses these clues to <b>automate</b> the analysis of <b>online jihadism</b>" -- <i>Project Seeks to Track Terror Web Posts.</i></p> <p><i>Suspect in Pearl's killing dies after interrogation: report</i> -- "... the report said Memon was <b>interrogated</b> by both <b>US</b> and <b>Pakistani</b> intelligence services".</p> <p><b>Australia</b> shares the misadventures of "<b>terrorism</b>" cases elsewhere; "the charges against ul-Haque have been dropped after <b>evidence</b> was ruled <b>inadmissible</b> because of the <b>conduct</b> of <b>ASIO</b> and <b>Australian Federal Police</b> (AFP) officers" -- <i>Judge scathing of ASIO officers in dropped terror case.</i></p> <p>Prime Minister <b>Brown</b> [UK] introduces measures ranging from <b>hardening of sensitive locations</b> to countering <b>indoctrination</b> of young <b>Moslems</b> -- <i>Brown announces anti-terror plan to protect public venues.</i></p> <p>Admiral Lord <b>West</b> "later issued an unusual public statement in which he insisted that he had in fact meant to back the Prime Minister's plans" on extended <b>pre-charge detention</b> periods -- <i>Security minister slapped down by Gordon Brown.</i></p> <p>"State-run television in the <b>Maldives</b> has been ordered not to employ women who <b>cover their heads</b> and to stop praising <b>Palestinian</b> suicide bombers ..." -- <i>Maldives moves vs veiled women, jihadis on TV.</i></p> <p><i>Tunisia conference: anti-terror efforts must address social causes</i> -- "Participants said terrorism flourishes in situations of <b>resentment, exclusion, poverty, political repression</b> and <b>human rights violations</b>, as well as under <b>regional disputes</b> ...".</p> <p>The <b>War of Ideas</b> finally begins: "The controversial new manual written by ...</p>

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[Egyptian Islamic scholars], will be released in **Egypt** on Sunday [18 Nov 2007] and is expected to shake up **al-Qaeda**." -- *New Jihadi manual rejects militant violence in Arab-Islamic world*.

**Transnational Crime**  
[news list](#)|[forecast](#)

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

**Policy**

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

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

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

- *Mexico Calls U.S. Border Fence Severe Threat to Environment* -- a Mexican government report says "plans to extend the **U.S. fence** along the Mexican **border** are 'medieval' and would severely damage the **environment**, threatening hundreds of plant species and animals".

*USA-Mexico Anti-Drug Plan Includes 'Private Contractors'* -- reportedly, the **private contractors'** issue "has been among the most sensitive areas of negotiations for both governments" in the new **US-Mexico \$1.4 billion anti-drug aid package**.

**Malaysia** launches another warning-shot, just in case it's needed: *No Excuse For Outsiders To Meddle In Melaka Straits Security Management* -- "with regards to the situation in the straits, the **United States** and other quarters cannot deny that it is safe. There is no reason for them to come in to guard the area".

A few isolated voices grows into a sizable portion of the globe now calling for a rethink of the **United Nations** core structure; "... **Britain** and **Uruguay** have strongly backed the case of **India**, **Japan**, **Germany** and **Brazil** joining the expanded **Security Council** as **permanent members** ..." -- *UNSC membership: UK, Uruguay strongly backs India*. [Comment: The key to all is the **veto power** enjoyed by the Big Five.]see: **Brazil**

*Sixty Years After the National Security Act, U.S. Statecraft May Need Another Reorganization* -- "Sixty years ago, in the aftermath of a catastrophic global war, the **United States** reorganized its instruments of statecraft ... "; is it time for a review?

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

- ↓ With 'hidden' costs such as loan **interest**, long-term **health care** for injured soldiers, and the cost of **oil market disruptions**, the costs of the **Iraq**, **Afghanistan** wars is around **\$1.6 Trillion** so far, about **\$20,900 per US family** -- *Report Puts Hidden War Costs at \$1.6T*.

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

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

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

- ↑ A "global-scale" project worthy of modern challenges: *Algeria plans solar power cable to Germany - paper* -- "... cable would be laid from the Algerian town of Adrar to the German city of Aachen under a project provisionally entitled 'Clean Power From The Desert'".

*University of Virginia scientists discover record-breaking hydrogen storage materials for use in fuel cells* -- "These materials are the next generation in **hydrogen fuel storage materials**, unlike any others we have seen before".

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

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

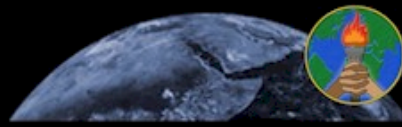
**Health**  
[news list](#)|[forecast](#)

- ↓ "The overall health of the nation [US] **declined** over the past year, despite progress made in several **key health indicators** ..." -- *2007 Rankings Show Decline in Health of the Nation*.

**Immigration**

- ↓ *Candidates Walk a Tightrope on Immigration* -- no virtuous resolution seems

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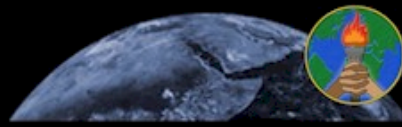


<p>news list forecast</p>	<p>possible while <b>Republicans</b> retreat from 'an arms race on toughness' and <b>Democrats</b> from 'benefits and services', both towards the same ambiguous dissembling in the middle-ground.</p>
<p><b>Justice</b> news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ <b>Military courts for civilians are abominable [Editorial]</b> -- appalling everyone, any act interpreted as being against the "security of <b>Pakistan</b>" can now be tried in a <b>military court</b>, not unlike as is now the case in several <b>Western</b> countries.</p>
<p><b>Security</b> news list forecast</p>	<p>↗ <b>Asymmetric cyber threat</b> -- a summation by a former <b>CINCPAC</b>.  <b>Colombia says rebel infiltrated top army school</b> -- "... the latest in a series of spy scandals, had the military scrambling to determine if the alluring, black-haired agent passed army secrets to her <b>FARC</b> commanders".          In the <b>UK</b>, about 5,000 <b>illegal immigrants</b> have, by oversight, been given clearance to work as staff in <b>sensitive jobs</b> -- . <b>5,000 'illegals' work in security</b>.          ↗ <b>Maxtor drives contain password-stealing Trojans</b> -- "Seagate confirms infection during drive assembly, but says no indication of spying by <b>Chinese</b> authorities".  <b>US plans new space weapons against China</b> -- "... the <b>Falcon</b>, a reusable <b>hypersonic vehicle</b> that could fly at six times the speed of sound and deliver 12,000lb of <b>bombs</b> anywhere in the world <u>within minutes</u>".</p>
<p><b>Society</b> news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ <b>[US] Army Desertion Rate Up 80% Since '03</b> -- "while the totals are still far lower than they were during the <b>Vietnam War</b>, when the draft was in effect, they show a steady increase over the past four years and a <b>42% jump</b> since last year".  <b>'Suicide Epidemic' rampant among US army veterans</b> -- at least 6,256 <b>US veterans</b> committed <b>suicide</b> in 2005 -- an average of 17 a day.  <b>Child Labour Highest in Sub-Saharan Region</b> -- "in 65 countries, about 21% of children under the age of 15 are economically active" [Comment: <b>Child labor</b> has been and is a fact of life in much of the world, but labor with and for family must be distinguished from "child slavery"; it often is not.]</p>
<p><b>Water</b> news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ A taste of the Future: "Many rural communities are suffering as the <b>drought</b> tightens its grip across a wide region, which includes much of <b>Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee and Florida</b>" -- . <b>The big thirst: The great American water crisis</b>.</p>

**Challengers**

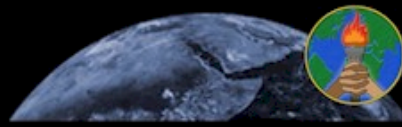
<p><b>Brazil</b> news list forecast</p>	<p>• <b>Brazil's Lula Tells UN Chief United Nations Must Change</b> -- "... <u>it is not possible that 65 years after its creation, the [Security] Council remains the same, given that the current geopolitical context is completely different ...</u> "          see: <b>Diplomacy</b></p>
<p><b>China</b> news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ China has pumped a new record <b>30.5 billion tonne</b> of <b>sewage</b> and <b>industrial waste</b> into the Yangtze -- <b>China pumps record sewage into longest river</b>.          ↗ "Chinese <b>espionage</b> activities in the <b>United States</b> are so extensive that they comprise the <u>single greatest risk</u> to the security of American <b>technologies</b>" -- <b>U.S. panel urges vigilance on China spying, cyber war</b>.  <b>China issues blueprint for communist-led political system</b> -- There are now principles of <b>multi-party</b> 'cooperation', but "We are still far away from advancing out of the primary stage of socialism .... We must stick with the basic development guideline of that stage <u>for 100 years</u>" says Premier <b>Wen</b>.          "The most recent activities of China in <b>Africa</b> have been almost breathtaking because they've come with such vigor and energy, and with <b>resources</b>" -- <b>Chinese Investments</b></p>

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	<p><i>Are Taking the Lead in Africa.</i></p> <p><i>China Warns Against Protesting at Games</i> -- China promises to punish anyone who takes part in a <i>political, religious</i> or <i>ethnic demonstration</i> or <i>protest</i> "<u>in any form</u>" at the coming <i>Olympics</i>.</p>
<p><b>India</b> news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In India, a <i>doctor</i> has been <i>jailed</i> for 12 months in a region with one of the lowest sex ratios, <u>800 females for 1,000 males</u> -- <i>Doctor Jailed for Illegally Conducting Sex Determination Test</i>.</li> </ul> <p>India sees the increasing <i>counterfeiting</i> of its <i>currency</i> as "<i>a major threat to national security</i>" -- <i>India seeks global help to fight fake currency racket</i>.</p> <p>India relishes the idea that recent events may cut <b>Pakistan</b> off from <b>US military</b> largesse; "<i>India ... may finally find some relief if Washington is serious about its decision to review its aid to Islamabad and does a fair job of it</i>" -- <i>US arms aid review to Pak may benefit India</i>.</p> <p><b>Russian</b> commentators also see the possibility that India may gravitate closer to the <b>US</b>; "<i>another sign that Delhi might get drawn into the orbit of US politics is the recent consultations on creating a <u>union of Asian and Pacific democracies</u> according to <b>Japan's</b> initiative</i>" -- <i>Delhi Might Turn Back on Moscow</i>.</p>
<p><b>Indonesia</b> news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>EC to give Indonesia 500 million Euros worth of grants</i> -- "... with 80 percent of the amount to be allocated to the <i>education</i> sector."</li> </ul> <p>Either <b>Malaysia</b> or Indonesia will house the <b>Japan</b>-proposed <i>Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia</i> (ERIA) -- <i>Malaysia, Indonesia Likely To House East Asia Think-tank</i>.</p> <p>The in-flight <i>arsenic</i> "spy scandal" inches forward: <i>Ex Garuda director links spy agency to midair murder of activist</i> -- "<i>I received a letter from <b>BIN</b>, requesting Polycarpus to be placed on board as <i>aviation security</i> because as a flag carrier, security of Garuda needed to be tightened</i>"; the letter was later stolen from his car.</p> <p><i>US war on terror an 'insult to Muslims', says Islamic leader</i> -- "<i>the United States has become a 'national security state' that is using the so-called <b>war on terror</b> as a disguise to promote opposition to Islam ...</i>".</p> <p><i>Indonesia's Garuda Contingent XXIII-B leaves for Lebanon</i> -- "... the Indonesian military contingent consists of <i>joint</i> military personnel from the three services in the <b>TNI</b> ..."</p> <p>Indonesia will be a <i>military</i> player .... within reason: "... the government was focusing the use of its budget on <i>education</i> and <i>health</i> development, including creating jobs" -- <i>Navy's plan to build <u>one more fleet command</u> not postponed</i>.</p>
<p><b>Iran</b> news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Iranian hardliners accuse former nuclear negotiator of leaking secrets to UK embassy</i> -- "<i>attacks on Mousavian appear to be part of a broader offensive against a coalition of <i>pragmatic conservatives</i> and <i>reformists</i> allied to <b>Rafsanjani</b> ...</i>"</li> </ul> <p><i>China quits 5+1's meeting on Iran</i> -- in pulling out of the November 19 meeting so late -- due to 'scheduling problems' -- <b>China</b> confirms it will be no easy task to get the Powers to a consensus on the Iran <i>nuclear</i> issue.</p> <p><i>US general says Iran halting flow of weapons to Iraq</i> -- "<i>we have not seen any recent evidence that <i>weapons</i> continue to come across the border into <b>Iraq</b></i>" Major General James <b>Simmons</b> said.</p>
<p><b>Russia</b> news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Death by Disillusion: Kosovo Albanians</i>, who may soon be at the centre of another <i>Balkans</i> war, managed only a <u>45%</u> <i>turnout</i> to <i>elections</i> that will lead to a vote on</li> </ul>

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*independence from Serbia -- Independence loses its magic in Kosovo vote.*

*Army Chief: US Shield Aimed at Russia -- Missile defense elements the US plans to deploy in Central Europe are definitely directed against Russia says Russian Chief of Staff Yury Baluyevsky.*

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

- "Venezuela will start developing a **nuclear power** sector for peaceful purposes," Hugo **Chavez** said in an interview with the French TV channel France 24 -- *Venezuela set to launch peaceful nuclear program - Chavez.*

President **Chavez** refuses to let the **Castilian King** have the last word: *The king is a head of state like me,* Chávez said, *"only I've been elected three times with 63% support"* -- *Behind the King's Rebuke to Chávez.*

**Wild Cards**  
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- At only the third summit in **OPEC's** history it is positioning itself -- partly under the influence of the Bolivarian President **Chavez** of **Venezuela** -- as an alternative force to the **G8** -- *OPEC Countries Form Political Cartel.*

The **PKK** has "counted on deep **Kurdish** nationalism for decades to protect their supply lines and hideouts in the northern **Iraq**", but now Iraqi Kurds are getting used to the quiet life and are more hesitant to risk everything on a **Greater Kurdistan** -- *Iraqi Kurds show cracks in rebel support.*

**Pakistan:** "... allegations surfaced that **Inter Services Intelligence** used dirty tricks to pressurize **Supreme Court judges**, who were to deliver key judgment against the military ruler" -- *ISI used dirty tricks to bully judges in Pakistan: British newspaper.*

President **Musharraf** wants "complete **civilian democracy**", according to a close advisor -- *In the shah's footsteps? [Analysis].*

To date, **paramilitary border forces** have been engaged in the fighting "**Taliban**" forces in the **Swat Valley**, without resounding success; it is now the **Army's** turn -- *Army takes over command of security forces in north-west valley.*

As **Pakistan's** politics becomes increasingly ill-mannered, some say an earlier deal annulling Benazir **Bhutto's** **corruption** charges may be withdrawn -- *'Amnesty to Bhutto may be overturned'.*

John **Negroponte** has told President **Musharraf** 'what the reality and facts are' but - in reality -- **Washington** seems left with little but pious hopes and the power of the purse -- *Emergency to continue for now, Musharraf tells US*

But it's not all bad news out of **Pakistan**... *'Over 20,000 Pakistani lawyers in detention'; "one in every four lawyers in Pakistan has been put away".*

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