

GLOBAL CHALLENGES: THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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

Threat Summary

	<p>Environment. Helium scarce, doubled in price, non-renewable resource. All science is earth science.</p> <p>Inter-State Conflict. UN and EU and UK diplomats all caught holding illegal talks with Taliban.</p> <p>Proliferation. Japan to enrich uranium in Kazakhstan.</p>
	<p>Poverty. African doctors fleeing to West for improved prospects, leaving Africa without doctors.</p> <p>Infectious Disease. Travelers at risk from parasites and other neglected tropical diseases.</p> <p>Civil War. Sudan in flames but overall Africa moving toward democratic and peaceful change.</p> <p>Genocide. Tamils displaced by Sinhalese. Arabs ignoring Darfur.</p> <p>Transnational Crime. See links. Illicit economy is \$2 trillion out of \$7-9 trillion.</p>
	<p>Other Atrocities. Former Latin American dictators being hunted (Henry Kissinger is next).</p> <p>Terrorism. Review of global jihad. UN is target for Al Qaeda. Malaysia yielding to Sharia courts.</p>

Policy Summary

	<p>Diplomacy. Hillary Clinton is so totally clueless about international reality as to defy imagination.</p> <p>Security. Data breaches multiply and terrify. Immigration has its pluses. Smart cards cannot be read.</p> <p>Society. Chasm of inequality rips United Kingdom apart, US has a similar problem.</p> <p>Water. Great Lakes, source of water for 40 million, suffers significant declines in water level.</p>
	<p>Economy. US economy slowing, harbinger for rest of world.</p> <p>Education. MIT continues to pioneer free online education. This is utterly brilliant & admirable.</p> <p>Energy. Biofuels continue to be the biggest scam going. China moves on nanotechnology batteries.</p> <p>Health. Future of health up in the air, starting from <i>Betrayal of Trust</i> and <i>Health of Nations</i>.</p> <p>Immigration. Criminal young foreigners in Germany.</p>
	<p>Agriculture. Organic agriculture cannot feed enough—chemical fertilizers still needed.</p> <p>Family. Thousands rally in Spain for traditional family values (Lee Kuan Yew would be pleased).</p> <p>Justice. Only four ideologically pure morons at Justice are cleared to speak to the fascist White House.</p>

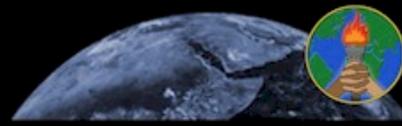
Major Player Summary

	<p>Brazil. MAJOR player, along with India, in setting agenda for trade between rich and poor.</p> <p>China. China's economy half the size previously thought BUT feeds 20% with 7% of land/water.</p> <p>India. US, seriously stupid, brags about edging Russia out in sale of arms to India. Iran pipeline.</p> <p>Indonesia. Radicals testing the government with many attacks.</p> <p>Iran. Signs \$16 billion gas deal with Malaysia.</p> <p>Russia. Arming Iran.</p> <p>Venezuela. Chavez all over, cannot be ignored. Populism is not socialism, ignorance is not idiocy.</p> <p>Wild Cards. Cuba under Raul. Australian submarines. Pakistan, Pakistan, Pakistan.</p>
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World Crises - monthly assessment by [International Crisis Group](#) - 01 December 2007

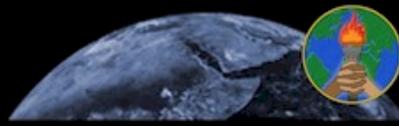
↗	Alert: DR Congo
↓	Deteriorated: Bolivia, Cameroon, Chad, Georgia, Nigeria, North Caucusus, Pakistan , Somalia, Sri Lanka, Venezuela
↑	Improved: Israel/Occupied Territories, Iraq, Sierra Leone
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unchanged: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh,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

↓ deteriorated	• steady	↑ improved	↗ ALERT
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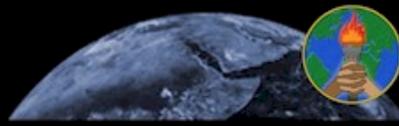


Threats see *daily items with links to full stories on the web at* [PDB-Threats](#)

<p>Poverty news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "We are the only developed country to implement policies that prevent targeting developing countries in the international recruitment of healthcare professionals" -- <i>Health chiefs are bleeding Africa dry, say MPs.</i> [Comment: Recruitment from developing states adds to their troubles. Strictly speaking, the UK does not recruit in this way, but it is not averse to employing skilled medical personnel who have made their own way to Britain.] • <i>"Top Ten" most underreported humanitarian stories of 2007</i> -- an essential reference by Médecins Sans Frontières.
<p>Infectious Disease news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Neglected tropical diseases burden those overseas, but travelers also at risk</i> -- a brief backgrounder on disease threats -- particularly from parasites -- to travelers to affected regions.
<p>Environment news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Landslide deaths in Indonesia</i> are directly related to clear-felling of jungle, much of it for illegal timber-getting -- <i>President urges better forest management amid floods.</i> • Another resources warning: Helium is scarce, non-renewable and a vital strategic resource -- its price has doubled in 12 months -- <i>High anxiety over shortage of Helium.</i> [Comment: It should no longer be used by the joyless and vapid to send off balloons to choke wildlife miles out to sea.] • <i>African climate change: Blooming Sahara or hunger and war?</i> -- the Sahara was once savannah -- a discussion of possible futures, including the paleoclimate past. • <i>Planet Earth 2007: Top 10 Science Revelations</i> -- from "Impending Oil Peak" to "Arctic Meltdown" to "Good and Bad News on Alternative Energy" all the science happens to be in the domain of environmental science ... no surprise. • see: Water (<i>Declining water levels in the Great Lakes may signal global warming</i>)
<p>Inter-State Conflict news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>al-Qaeda in Iraq 'reduced by 75%'</i> -- the factors ... a drop in foreign funding, Sunni militias once fighting the US are now fighting al-Qaeda, attacks using Iranian-supplied weapons had fallen. [Comment: But simultaneously, al-Qaeda-like activity is increasing in North Africa and Pakistan.] • <i>Iraq's Sunni VP urges integration of Sunni militiamenn</i> -- "... if the government does not assimilate the Sunni militias, Iraq risks reversing its recent improvements in security." • <i>UN and EU diplomats leave Afghanistan after expulsion</i> -- "... accused of holding an illegal meeting with members of the Taliban." • UK Prime Minister Brown has been asked to explain in Parliament what discussions are taking place with Taliban fighters after it was disclosed that MI6 is involved in secret negotiations in Afghanistan -- <i>Gordon Brown called to explain Taliban talks.</i>
<p>Civil War news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Darfur rebel group rejects Egyptian, Chinese and Pakistani troops</i> -- the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) says that Egyptian troops are "nothing but intelligence units used to support the National Congress Party (NCP) government"; it also sees few others as neutral. • <i>Fighting breaks out on north-south Sudan border</i> -- forces of the Murahaleen, Popular Defence Forces (PDF) and SAF (Sudan Armed Forces) have supported Khartoum's army in an attack on southern Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) rebels. • Despite impressions of Africa ... "<i>The overriding trend over the year was towards</i>



	<p><i>democratic and peaceful changes of political leadership.</i> During the year, <u>22</u> African countries held <i>elections</i> that were predominantly peaceful and declared 'free and fair'. " -- <i>Trend towards democracy.</i></p>
<p>Genocide news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Sri Lanka an allegation by Tamils ... "Once the area was emptied of Tamils by such <i>ethnic cleansing</i>, the Sri Lanka Government declared the area as High Security Zone and prevented the original Tamil residents of the area from returning ... " -- <i>Sinhalese settled in areas emptied of Tamils.</i> <p>A writer says to fellow Arabs "keeping yourself informed about the Darfur's catastrophe may become the first step you need to take to help other human beings who are currently in a dire situation!" -- <i>Arab public opinion uninterested in Darfur's catastrophe.</i></p>
<p>Other Atrocities news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ <i>Italy to arrest former Latin American dictators</i> -- "judicial officials in Italy issued <u>140 arrest orders</u> for persons involved in the so-called "Plan Condor", which involved the <i>detention, torture, and summary execution of dissidents</i> ..."</p> <p>Vietnam's Ministry of Public Security says <u>900 human trafficking</u> cases involving 1,600 traffickers and 2,200 smuggled women and children were detected from 2005-2007 -- detection requires "<u>increasingly cunning methods</u>" -- <i>Human trafficking crackdown.</i></p> <p><i>Child kidnap 'surge' in DR Congo</i> -- "around the town of Goma, <u>all sides in the conflict</u> are making children act as <i>soldiers, sex slaves, porters and spies</i>" says <i>Save the Children.</i></p> <p>US Congress takes a quantitative – not qualitative – step on <i>cluster munitions</i>:", "... <i>the bill bans their transfer to any foreign nation unless the cluster bombs have at least a 99-percent reliability rate</i> <i>The bill also includes a provision to restrict military aid to countries that use child soldiers</i>" -- <i>Congress restricts cluster bomb sales.</i></p> <p>The UN has called Israel's use of <i>cluster bombs</i> in Lebanon "<i>shocking and immoral</i>", but happily an Israeli <i>enquiry</i> finds that Israel is <u>blameless</u> -- <i>Israeli cluster bomb use 'legal'.</i></p> <p>Paternalism and profit, or Compassion -- after a four-day trial, a Chadian court convicts six Zoe's Ark workers for <i>fraud</i> and <i>kidnapping</i> in trying to remove 103 children from Chad to France -- <i>8 Years Hard Labor for French in Chad.</i></p> <p>In Nigeria <i>warrants</i> have been issued in a fiercely-defended case against three staff of Pfizer over <i>deaths</i> in an <i>illegal drugs trial</i> in 1996 -- <i>Pfizer arrests sought in Nigeria.</i></p>
<p>Proliferation news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Japan, Kazakhstan to seal deal on uranium enrichment</i> -- "Japan agreed to enrich Kazakhstan's uranium at the territory of the Central Asian Republic ..."
<p>Terrorism news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>al-Qaida in 2007 -- Part 1 [Analysis]</i> -- a brief review and prospectus of <i>global jihad.</i> <p><i>The U.N. insignia emerges as a global target for al-Qaeda attacks</i> -- "the more the United States and other countries protect themselves, the more the battle goes to the <i>softest target</i>, and the U.N. is always going to be a softer target."</p> <p>When resolved the case of Sheikh Mohammed al-Sayyid Ahmed Mussa will embarrass either the Philippines or Saudi Arabia -- <i>Egyptian 'bomb plotter' an envoy, says Grand Imam.</i></p> <p><i>War, terror and a haunted past</i> -- "the Algerian War of Independence demonstrated</p>



*the revival of **political Islam** as a potent **ideology of revolt** ..."; a useful analysis.*

***Jordan Islamists urge government to respond to HRW report** -- although the unfair electoral decimation of Jordan's **Islamic Action Front** brings short-term satisfaction to some, it breeds the terrorism of tomorrow.*

*Not "Terrorism" but an insight perhaps into its germination ... **Malaysia reverses Allah paper ban** -- this 'minor' issue -- banning a Christian newspaper from using the word "Allah" (and later reversing the ban) -- points to a previously unaccustomed degree of **Islamic dogmatism** in Malaysia. Also: "there has been a series of cases in recent months where **civil courts** have appeared to give ground to **Sharia courts**" -- **Malaysia court rejects Hindu bid**.*

Transnational Crime

[news list|forecast](#)

- [nothing significant to summarize -- see *News List*]

Policy

*see **daily items with links to full stories on the web at PDB-Policy***

Agriculture

[news list|forecast](#)

- **Australia** is considering a **national audit** "to determine where historically **marginal farming and grazing should be abandoned**" -- *As Australian agriculture adjusts to economic, climate changes, is its future in jeopardy?*. [Comment: Generically, an intelligent commentary on **strategic food supply** and **Climate Change**.]

***Organic agriculture can contribute to fighting hunger** -- **FAO** goes on record -- "[**organic agriculture**] produces wholesome, nutritious **food** But you cannot feed six billion people today and nine billion in 2050 without judicious use of **chemical fertilizers**"*

Diplomacy

[news list|forecast](#)

- ↓ ***Clinton demands international Bhutto probe** -- Hilary **Clinton's** reactions to the **Pakistan** situation suggest she (as well as the incumbents and most of the other candidates) is too naive for any role related to international diplomacy. [Comment: Where is the "international probe" into the **JFK killing**?]*

Economy

[news list|forecast](#)

- ↓ ***Polls indicate voter anxiety on economy** -- "the **median full-time worker** earns 1% less than he or she did in 2001, after **inflation** is taken into account".*

***Unemployment may rise, factories slow: U.S. economy preview** -- One-by-one, the **Indicators** point towards a **slowing economy**.*

Education

[news list|forecast](#)

- ↑ ***Working for better education smart idea** -- "'I Love My Child' is part of a **grassroots outreach program** targeting the **Caribbean and African communities, Asians and other ethnic minority groups**." [Comment: This is based on the solid knowledge that **parents** are a vital component of education success.]*

***Internet opens elite colleges to all** -- "an **MIT** initiative called "OpenCourseWare" makes virtually all the school's courses available online for free - lecture notes, readings, tests and often video lectures". [Comment: The Internet not only makes **distance education** possible, it gives access to the **world's best institutions**.]*

Energy

[news list|forecast](#)

- ***Snake-oil politicians looking after their merchant electorate ... Biofuels, the biggest scam going** -- "The production of **biofuels** depends on billions of dollars in **government subsidies** in the form of **loan guarantees** for the construction of **biofuel plants, tax exemptions** on biofuels and **direct payments** to farmers".*

***Eye on Uzbek energy [Analysis]** -- a brief **UPI** analysis of **Central Asia's strategic energy issues**.*

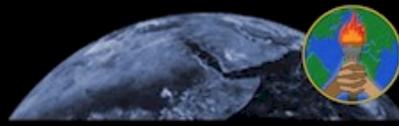
***China and Israel build electric cars with nanotechnology batteries** -- "this battery is a technological marvel, developed in recent years through nanotechnology, with*

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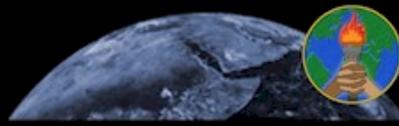
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	<p>properties that make it highly suitable for vehicle motion." Hydrogen - Dec 24 -- not even Hydrogen is the silver bullet -- there is no single silver bullet. <i>An unbiased approach to evaluating transportation fuels</i> -- "It turns out that when compared side by side, an electric vehicle economy will be <u>more than twice as efficient</u> as a hydrogen economy" -- but objective <u>evaluation frameworks</u> are needed to sort truth from vested interest. [Comment: All upstream and downstream inputs and <i>outputs</i> must <u>always</u> be taken into account.]</p>
<p>Family news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Thousands rally in Spain in defense of traditional family</i> -- the bishop of Rome rallies support in Madrid for god-given family "values".
<p>Health news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Top health issues of 2008</i> -- a useful forecast ... from 'the end of cheap food' to 'fixing the FDA/USDA' to 'food labels'. <i>Health care industry braces for '08</i> -- "it's hard to plan for contingencies when the contingencies are unpredictable. But that's what health-sector companies need to do now in anticipation of the 2008 election results ..."
<p>Immigration news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Germany ... <i>State governor wants crackdown on 'criminal young foreigners'</i> -- Hesse prime minister Roland Koch demand that immigrants "<u>stick to the rules of Germany's 'Christian-Occidental' culture</u>" accords with the electorate; and echoes the rhetoric of the far-right. Immigration as an <i>amoral good</i> -- "Immigrants have transformed Perry, a charming Midwestern town of 8,000 people, <u>from a fading outpost to a bustling hamlet</u>" -- . <i>Immigration an issue, even in small-town Iowa</i>. Mexico plans to use smart-cards to track "temporary workers" crossing its <u>southern border</u> from Central America; the US uses similar cards but <u>border posts</u> are not equipped to read them -- <i>Mexico to track migrations over border</i>.
<p>Justice news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A tighter ship at Justice</i> -- now only the <u>top four</u> Justice officials are cleared to speak directly to the White House.
<p>Security news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓ <i>A look at some major data breaches disclosed in 2007</i> -- examples from Japan, UK, US of millions of personal records at risk. <i>For data minders, 2007 was a year of living dangerously</i> -- no company is immune to the threat of data breach, and <u>none is ready</u>. <i>Adult Supervision Required</i> ... Recent scandals in the handling of data in the UK and US adds new fears to the UK's proposed <u>single health database</u> of 50 million patient files -- <i>Privacy Tsar warns over data losses</i>.
<p>Society news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Year in Review: British society</i> -- "This chasm of inequality is beginning to warp British attitudes in ugly ways." [Comment: Useful content but also a good example of radical examination of a society; an equivalent for the US would be useful.]
<p>Water news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The Great Lakes supply drinking water to more than 40 million U.S. and Canadian residents and recent declines in water level are consistent with many climate change projections" -- <i>Declining water levels in the Great Lakes may signal global warming</i>. <i>Sydney embraces water conservation</i>, UPI - USA, 20071229. [26716] Water conservation is possible ... Sydney, largest city of Australia, in the driest continent, has dramatically decreased its water consumption. [Comment: Figures in the article are <u>wrong</u> -- current use is even <u>lower</u> than shown.]



Hydro project to come onstream in occupied Kashmir -- the 450MW Baglihar hydro-electric plant will be a boon to energy-starved **Jammu-Kashmir** but the damming of the **Chenab**, a major tributary of the **Indus** system, will afflict the **Punjab**, **Pakistan's** 'bread-basket'.

see: **China** (China begins work on massive **water diversion** project to aid arid north)

Challengers

see *daily items with links to full stories on the web at* **PDB-Challengers**

Brazil
news list|forecast

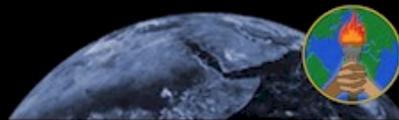
- *Brazil's oil 'blessing' is no energy panacea* -- "Although **Petrobras** is a world leader in **deep sea** exploration, securing oil from such depths has never been done before."
- *Brazil vows to fix 'filthy' prisons after girl jailed with men* -- "... the utter state of **neglect** and **lawlessness** that dominates Brazil's **prison** system"
- *Brazil is setting the agenda for trade between world's rich and poor* -- Brazil [together with **India**] maintains a *strategic role* as a **North-South** link.

China
news list|forecast

- *The great fall of China* -- "China, it turns out, isn't a \$10-trillion economy on the brink of catching up with the United States. It is a \$6-trillion economy, less than half our size" [Comment: These are economist's claims and should be treated as such.]
- *New impetus to China-Africa agricultural cooperation* -- It is about geo-politics but China does have **know-how** -- "China has managed to feed 20 percent of the world's population using 7 percent of the cultivated land [and water]". [Comment: An informative item.]
- *China publishes first book on its population, family planning history* -- China's National Population and Family Planning Commission documents its work that achieved a population 400 million less than expected over 30 years ago.
- *China begins work on massive water diversion project to aid arid north* -- "... an ambitious [\$66B] project aimed at diverting vast amounts of water from the fertile south to the country's arid north." [Comment: **Water** will sadly be China's ruination; water diversion schemes in China is redolent with deck chairs on the *Titanic*.]
- *Xinhua top 10 world news events in 2007 [Yearender]* -- through China's eyes.
- *Beijing police will work with government agencies and telecommunications companies to investigate and punish those using text messages to "spread rumors" or "endanger public security"* -- *Watchdog: Beijing threatens free speech.*

India
news list|forecast

- *The US turns on the charm ... "By reaching out to India, we have made the bet that the planet's future lies in pluralism, democracy and market economics"* says the US -- *US aims to edge out Russia in big arms sales to India.*
- *Pakistan warns about the dangers of "new weapon systems like India's proposed missile defence shield as they could spark an 'unnecessary' arms race"* -- *Indian missile tests will trigger arms race: Pak.*
- *2007 In Terror* -- a review by a retired Indian Cabinet officer.
- *France seeks India's help in war on terror* -- "India is a giant in **South Asia** and we would like to take its help to deal with multiple issues in the region and also in dealing with **Burma, Sri Lanka, Bhutan** and other countries in the sub-continent."
- *More troops to check Red terror* -- "The Union home ministry is planning to help states raise 35 India Reserve Battalions (IRB) and get them to designate some of them as specialised forces trained to crush the **Maoist rebellion** ..."
- *India still part of IPI project - Iran* -- "the \$7.4 billion, 1,700-mile pipeline would run from Iran to **India** via **Pakistan** and supply some 90 million cubic meters of



Iranian gas to India and 60 million cubic meters to Pakistan every day."

Maoists attack railway station in India's Chhattisgarh -- "Although Naxals did not cause any harm to the railway staff, they took away all the communication equipment from the railway station ..."

see: Water (Hydro project to come onstream in occupied Kashmir)

Indonesia
[news list|forecast](#)

• *Radicals test Indonesia tolerance -- "In recent years radical [Islamist] groups have attacked bars, brothels and Christian churches. And that is causing concern for Indonesia's government."*



see: Environment (President urges better forest management amid floods)

Iran
[news list|forecast](#)

• *Iran, Malaysia sign US\$ 16 Billion gas deal -- "Golshan gas field, 180 km southeastern of Bushehr in the Persian Gulf 42 to 56 trillion cubic feet of gas reserve and Ferdos gas field 9-13 trillion cubic feet."*

see: Russia (Russia to deliver S-300 missile system to Iran)

Russia
[news list|forecast](#)

• *Russia to deliver S-300 missile system to Iran -- "S-300 is considered as among the most advanced anti-missile systems in the world capable of targeting various types of missiles and warplanes at different altitudesThe decision follows current Russian arms trade policy ... stressing Russian right to pursue opportunities regardless to US restrictions that affected Russian defense exports in recent years". [Comment: Russia would say it the US that started this round of hard-ball with missile defense in Europe.]*

Venezuela
[news list|forecast](#)

• *Hostage release in Colombia postponed -- a complicated handover process, involving several countries in the region, the ICRC, President Hugo Chavez, and film-maker Oliver Stone has been delayed again for "a day or two".*

Chavez vows to put "revolution" back on track -- chastened, President Chavez vows to address what government is really about ... garbage collection, and crime-fighting.

Chavez warns of assassination plot -- President Chavez may not attend the inauguration of Guatemala's new president because there is evidence of a plot to assassinate him there.

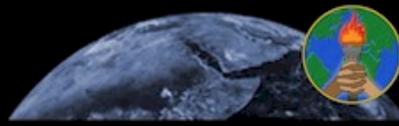
A Bagman's Tale -- "did Hugo Chávez purchase the allegiance of Argentina's new president?"

Chavez proposes oil-for-goods deal -- "President Hugo Chavez has proposed a deal under which poor Caribbean countries can use their products to pay for oil from the world's No. 5 oil exporter".

Wild Cards
[news list|forecast](#)

• *Raúl talks with the population in Fidel's electoral district -- useful report of a meet-the-people visit by General of the Army Raúl Castro Ruz to Fidel's electorate.*

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"Australia will build the world's most lethal conventional submarine fleet ..." -- Navy's new lethal subs.

PAKISTAN

*"Some believe the **Bush** administration should be more specific on how its **military aid** to Pakistan is spent" -- US aid to Pakistan lacks focus toward **counter-insurgency** [Analysis].*

*PPP claims government provided faulty jammers to Bhutto -- "This is the third time that the **PPP** has complained to the Interior Ministry about **jammers** provided to Bhutto being faulty". [Comment: A news item one day before the assassination. Ominous, but "jammers" have no effect against **directly-detonated** bombs like the one used.]*

*Pakistan's **Bhutto** killed in gun, bomb attack -- "Bhutto, 54, died in hospital in Rawalpindi. Ary-One Television said she had been shot in the head. Police said a suicide bomber fired shots at Bhutto as she was leaving the rally venue in a park before blowing himself up."*

*'We assassinated America's precious asset,' boasts top al Qaeda commander -- "A death squad, made up of **Punjabi** associates of the anti-Shia militant group **Lashkar-i-Jhangvi**, carried out the killing under **al Qaeda** orders".*

*Pakistan offers to **exhume** Bhutto body if her party wants*

*Telltale images expose fatal **security flaws** : Benazir's assassination -- "Another image shows the sharpshooter open fire on the unsuspecting political leader with remarkable aplomb. He is just a couple of metres away from his target".*

*Sharif's party says likely to run in Pakistan vote -- "... Nawaz **Sharif**'s party is likely to abandon plans to **boycott** an upcoming general **election** ..."*

***Anglo-American** ambitions behind the assassination of Benazir Bhutto -- A one-eyed assessment but with useful connections; "In other words, **Bush-Cheney** wins, no matter which asset winds up on the throne".*

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