

GLOBAL CHALLENGES: THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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

Threat Summary

	Environment. Cellulosic ethanol from perennial grasses and woody biomass. Affordable solutions! Inter-State Conflict. Afghanistan in dire straits, humanitarian crisis in effect. Proliferation. <i>The Economist</i> on Viktor Bout thriving on pointless wars in failed dirt-poor places.
	Poverty. Extreme poverty in 60 countries, can eradicate. UN feeds 650,000 in/near Kabul. Infectious Disease. Japan developing all-round vaccine against Bird Flu, targets inside of virus. Civil War. Sudanese Army tanks painted UN white. Aid flights out of gas. 80 surrender in Thailand. Genocide. Dalai Lama on cultural genocide by Chinese in Tibet. Transnational Crime. Drug lords drop US dollar. Korean mafia in Philippines. Mexico captures one.
	Other Atrocities. 71% of females 15-49 in Mauritania have undergone genital mutilation. Terrorism. Road safety a better investment. Fund raising in Saudi Arabia. Political space matters.

Policy Summary

	Diplomacy. US failing in Horn of Africa. US image overseas in the toilet. Russian accuses US. Economy. Bear Sterns bail-out. Fed could sink global economy. Editorial note: Carlyle liquidation. Security. 75% of Americans view government as too secretive. US failures, breaches. UK costs. Society. Log-cabin religiosity, anti-gay campaigns, Supreme Court to rule on guns, sex versus laws. Water. Energy and water linked, both in crisis. Central Asian crisis looms. Peru bets on desalination.
	Agriculture. USG grid-locked on old policy. Africa resists terminator seed. Organic farming needed. Education. US math is broken. Inputs do not correlate to outcomes. One school's base pay: \$125,000. Energy. Argentina in fuel crisis. New pipelines could ease fuel crisis in Western US. See Water. Health. Gulf war veteran's show more illness. Read this book: \$3T War . Health care must be public. Immigration. India upset with UK rules. Arizona and Colorado consider guest-worker programs.
	Family. Nothing significant to report. Editorial Note: other than collapse of US economy. Justice. Nothing significant to report. Editorial Note: White House demands telco indemnification.

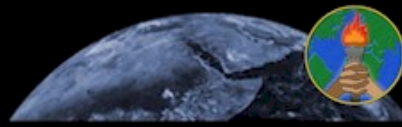
Major Player Summary

	Brazil. Power center, averts regional crisis. Landlocked blockage railway. Environmental rampage. China. Creates five super-ministries. East Turkistan and Uighurs at risk. Arms Myanmar. India. 31 waste to energy power projects, 36 demonstration wind power projects. Low-level conflicts. Indonesia. President visits Iran, abstains from sanctions vote, Iran, Indonesia, Malaysia non-Arab triad. Iran. Some worry Bush-Cheney will order attack on Iran to bolster Republican victory in November. Russia. Nothing significant. Editorial note: US continues to be blind, deaf, and dumb in foreign policy. Venezuela. Oil for Euros. Documentation of Ecuadorean & Venezuelan support to Colombian rebels. Wild Cards. Iran waging peace (see also Memorandum on Chinese). Editorial Note: US clueless.
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World Crises - monthly assessment by [International Crisis Group](#) - 01 March 2008

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

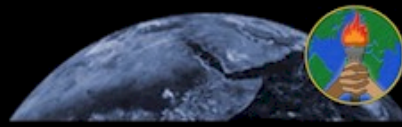
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Threats see *daily items with links to full stories on the web at [PDB-Threats](#)*

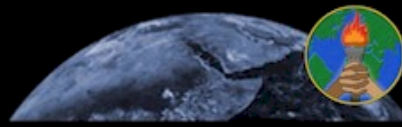
<p>Poverty news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN WFP is distributing <i>emergency food</i> to <u>650,000</u> people in and around <i>Kabul</i>, with aid shipments to remote areas to follow -- <i>UN Food Agency races to prevent humanitarian crisis</i>. • <i>World Bank to increase Africa agriculture loans</i> -- "Because you don't want everything to be a <i>short-term response</i>, we are really trying to upgrade our efforts in terms of increasing <i>agricultural production</i>," says World Bank President Robert Zoellick. • <i>Philippine President Arroyo</i> finds it necessary to order the <i>National Food Authority</i> to stop the corrupt practice of <i>diverting subsidized rice</i> for the <i>poor</i> to the commercial market -- <i>Arroyo to NFA: 'Prudently, strictly manage rice stock'</i>. • <i>A first step for the global poor – shatter six myths</i> – A sensible <i>Christian Science Monitor</i> item: "<i>The last billion who suffer extreme poverty are concentrated in fewer than 60 very small sub-Saharan, Asian, and Latin American countries, which means we've never been in a better position to eradicate it.</i>" <p>see: Agriculture (Africa must resist terminator technologies)</p>
<p>Infectious Disease news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Japan to develop all-round vaccine to protect from Bird Flu</i> -- the new method "targets the <i>inside</i> of the virus, rather than its surface" as the inside of the <i>virus</i> structure rarely changes ...
<p>Environment news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>\$6 million research lab will produce ethanol and other biofuels from grasses and biomass</i> -- a new state-of-the art Biofuels Research Laboratory at Cornell heralds serious work on the conversion of <i>perennial grasses</i> and <i>woody biomass</i> into <i>cellulosic ethanol</i>. [Comment: Note the '<u>loss</u>' here is the materials otherwise used to <i>condition soil</i>.] • <i>US tightens air pollution controls</i> -- a <u>6% reduction</u>: " ... restrict the amount of <i>nitrogen oxides</i> and other compounds that are allowed to be released by <i>power plants, motor vehicle exhaust, industrial facilities</i> and other <i>man-made sources</i>". • <i>20 biggest polluters seek progress on warming</i> -- "the <i>G8 Gleneagles Dialogue on Climate Change, Clean Energy and Sustainable Development</i> ... comes ahead of negotiations at the end of the month[March 2008] in Bangkok on a <u>successor</u> for the <i>Kyoto Protocol</i>". • <i>Brazilian activists go on rampage at Vale, Monsanto & Stora Enso operations</i> -- "Environmental activism reached a fever pitch this past week in Brazil as protestors targeted <i>mining, forestry, and agriculture</i> in series of <i>protests</i> that blocked transportation and vandalized property." • <i>OECD: Climate change solutions are affordable</i> -- "... solutions to the <i>key environmental challenges</i> are <i>available, achievable and affordable</i>, especially when compared to the expected economic growth and <i>the costs and consequences of inaction</i>".
<p>Inter-State Conflict news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ AFGHANISTAN see: Poverty (<i>UN Food Agency races to prevent humanitarian crisis</i>)</p>
<p>Civil War news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ Note: 'Civil War' here includes <i>internal instability</i>.</p> <p><i>Sixteenth delay for Lebanon poll</i> -- "... bouts of deadly unrest in a country still rebuilding from its <i>15-year civil war</i>. It has also poisoned ties between <i>Saudi Arabia and Syria</i>, which back opposing sides."</p>

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	<p><i>Zimbabwe enacts ownership law</i> -- "... a law requiring foreign- and white-owned businesses to hand over 51 percent control of their operations to black people ..." <i>Military rattle sabres in support of Mugabe</i> -- members of Zimbabwe's armed forces have declared they will not respect any president other than Robert Mugabe. <i>Darfur rebel says Sudanese army painting tanks with UN colour</i> -- "... an apparent breach and violation of applicable norms of International Humanitarian law and agreements". <i>Darfur rebels raiding aid trucks</i> -- "our humanitarian air operation for aid workers could be forced to stop flying because we have no money, at a time when our helicopters are needed more than ever because of high insecurity on the roads". [THAILAND] <i>80 insurgents surrender in Yala</i> -- "an official from the Yala Islamic Committee also performed a ceremony to annul the religious oath that the insurgents had taken".</p>
<p>Genocide news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ <i>Dalai Lama: China causing 'cultural genocide'</i> -- as at least 80 die at the hands of Chinese security forces, HH Dalai Lama reminds the world of a glaring case of genocide: "... China's treatment of Tibetans as second-class citizens in their own land."</p>
<p>Other Atrocities news list forecast</p>	<p>↓ <i>Chinese security forces swarm Tibet</i> -- "It was the fiercest challenge to Beijing's authority in nearly <u>two decades</u>... on the <u>anniversary of a 1959 uprising against Chinese rule</u>". <i>Activists fear NATO return to Uzbekistan</i> -- "Human rights will recede into the background". <i>Trial on disappearances marks a 'before' and 'after'</i> -- the <u>first trial</u> ever held in Guatemala on forced disappearance opened on [10 Mar 2008]. <i>Rebel lawyers to meet with war crimes court</i> -- "... Lord's Resistance Army rebels insist any final deal with Uganda's government be conditional on the ICC dropping war crimes' charges against leader Joseph Kony and two deputies". <i>Mauritania confronts tradition of female genital mutilation</i> -- "the UN action plan unveiled last week said an estimated 71.3 % of girls and women between the ages of 15 and 49 in Mauritania had undergone female genital mutilation ..."</p>
<p>Proliferation news list forecast</p>	<p>• <i>The Economist</i> has more discussion on arms dealer Viktor Bout: "It is the sort of outfit that thrives on pointless wars in failed, dirt-poor places. But it also plays a part in some bigger conflicts". -- <i>Suited and booted</i>.</p>
<p>Terrorism news list forecast</p>	<p>• <i>Re-thinking counter-terrorism</i> [If saving lives is the issue, road safety would be a <u>much better investment</u> than counter-terrorism.] <i>Australian government seeks secular Muslim advisers</i> -- "the government wanted a broad range of people to help break down the public stereotype that all Muslims are conservatives with hard-line Islamic views". [SAUDI ARABIA] <i>Police hunt distributors of mobile terror video</i> -- "in the video, al-Zawahiri asks Islamists to donate money to the terror network". President Wade of Senegal, presently hosting the OIC meeting, and <u>next Chair</u> of the OIC warns against violent jihad: "we'll be tackling this problem in a reasoned manner, without any excessive passion, and without turning it into a world conflict, which it isn't" -- <i>Senegal's Wade urges Islam to drop jihads</i>. A piece from Bangladesh on one of the drivers of "terrorism": <i>Rise of terrorism blamed on denial of political space</i> -- "denial of political space in a large society is</p>

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conducive to the growth of **extremist and terrorist groups** in the country ..."

A thoughtful Canadian item: **Next wave of terrorists could destroy jihadist movement: expert** -- "**Al-Qaeda** as we know it is dead, replaced by a **leaderless generation of ever-younger homegrown jihadists** whose **venomous beliefs** could poison the movement from within ..."

Transnational Crime
[news list|forecast](#)

- Even Crime is getting out of the **Dollar: Drug cartels 'using euro notes to launder profits** -- "**the money, mostly in €500 and €200 notes, was about to be transported on British Airways flights from Miami to London**".

Korean gangsters in the Philippines? -- "**the Philippines is becoming a haven of Korean mafia**".

Mexico captures 'key drug lord' -- Gustavo Rivera **Martinez**: "**Mexican officials said Mr Rivera Martinez was a key figure in the Tijuana cartel and close to Enedina Arellano Felix, the latest member of the Arellano Felix family to head the drugs ring**".

Policy

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

Agriculture
[news list|forecast](#)

- **Draft horse farm policy for space age agriculture** -- "**but the stalemate remains. Senators cannot agree among themselves on new farm policy, cannot agree with the House on farm policy, and cannot agree with the administration on farm policy**". Also: **Lawmakers bank on \$10 billion more for new farm law** -- "**the House-passed bill was \$14 billion over the spending limit, or baseline, set by budget formulas. The Senate bill was more than \$20 billion over baseline**".

Africa must resist terminator technologies -- "**Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTS) will have damaging effects on Africa's poor farmers. The technology is very expensive and farmers will become dependent on multinationals**".

see: **Poverty** (World Bank to increase Africa agriculture loans)

The new organic -- "**to meet the appetites of the world's population without drastically hurting the environment requires a visionary new approach: combining genetic engineering and organic farming**" says a professor of **plant pathology** at UC Davis.

Diplomacy
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ "The magic is over"

Russia accuses U.S. of double standards on rights -- "**Russia said the U.S. State Department's 'latest opus' on human rights reflects the double standards of a country that uses the issue as a foreign policy tool while failing to examine its own actions**".

New envoy hopes to better explain U.S. to Muslim world -- Sada **Cumber**, a **Pakistani** native, is the new **US special envoy** to the **Organization of Islamic Conference**.

US policy in Horn of Africa questioned -- "**the entire emphasis of U.S. policy was on counter-terrorism, and particularly short-term elements of counter-terrorism, that is catching bad people, and not focusing on the much longer term root causes of terrorism in the region**".

U.S. image abroad hard to fix, longtime ally says -- "The magic is over"

Economy
[news list|forecast](#)

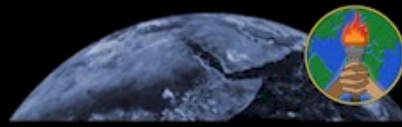
↓ **Bear Stearns latest victim of financial panic** -- "**Bear Stearns is now teetering on the brink of catastrophe - forced to turn to one of its rivals, JP Morgan Chase, and the Federal Reserve for emergency funding**". [Comment: Thieves go to jail but Wall Street whose greed caused the crisis gets public hand-outs.]

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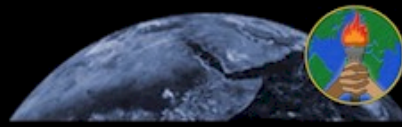
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	<p><i>US monetary policy could sink global economy warns expert -- "the expansionist policies adopted by the US Federal Reserve could bring the global economy to its knees ..." says a Hong Kong expert at a conference in Dubai.</i></p>
<p>Education news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Panel urges schools to emphasize core math skills -- the presidential National Mathematics Advisory Panel says mathematics education in the United States is "broken"; 15-year-olds in the United States trailed peers from 23 industrialized countries in mathematics.</i> • <i>Fighting STDs: Sex education best done in schools [Editorial] -- "Republican legislative leaders won't allow comprehensive sex education or anything approaching it in public schools".</i> • <i>American Legislative Exchange Council's Report Card on American Education -- "ALEC's 2007 Report Card on American Education has found no direct correlation between conventional measures of education inputs, such as expenditures per pupil and teacher salaries, and educational outputs ..."</i> • <i>A product of private schools, advocating for public education -- "teachers should not be fiscal martyrs"; the Equity Project Charter School has set base pay for its teachers - for philosophical reasons -- at \$125,000 p.a.</i> • <i>Education increases life expectancy: study -- a study by the Harvard School of Medicine has shown that people with a better education tend to live longer.</i>
<p>Energy news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New pipelines will even out gas prices -- "the new pipelines will take the Rockies' landlocked supply to major markets in California, the Phoenix area and flood the Midwest, where it can free up other supplies for the gas-starved Northeast".</i> • <i>Argentina strives to avert energy crisis -- "Brazil has declined to cede any natural gas shipments from Bolivia to Argentina, which is struggling to find more energy sources to avoid supply shortages that could derail its fast-growing economy".</i> • <i>see: Water (Troubles getting deeper for U.S., its fresh water supply)</i>
<p>Family news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [nothing significant to summarize -- see <i>News List</i>]
<p>Health news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Obesity cancels the health advantage of the affluent -- Being rich helps, but not if you're fat.</i> • <i>Study finds increasing evidence of health problem in Gulf War veterans -- "Now a study at the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine shows there is increasing evidence of high rates of illness in veterans from the 1990-91 conflict".</i> • <i>Universal health care or universal nightmare? -- it's so obvious: "A system heavily reliant on for-profit health insurance is fundamentally flawed Only a system based on the principle of social insurance can meet this fundamental human need because that is precisely its goal".</i>
<p>Immigration news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>India warns UK on immigration rules -- [The Indian trade minister] said the new restrictions did not square with the UK's claims to be in favour of promoting free trade in services; "In the liberalisation of services, the temporary movement of people is an important thing".</i> • <i>2 states consider guest-worker programs -- "lawmakers in Arizona and Colorado are considering creating their own guest-worker programs to attract more immigrant laborers".</i>
<p>Justice news list forecast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [nothing significant to summarize -- see <i>News List</i>]

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Security

news list|forecast

- War is bad for children, donkeys, and **Treasuries**: "the costs of servicing the **RAF's Tornado planes** will be subsidised by the **Conflict Prevention Fund**" -- **MoD plans raid on landmine removal fund to keep Tornados flying in Iraq**.
Sunshine Week Poll: most Americans believe gov't is too secretive -- and spies on the press - "in a democracy whose survival depends on openness, it's sobering to see that three-fourths of Americans now view their national government as somewhat or very **secretive**."
*Amazing **Pentagon breach** happened last Summer* -- "During the attack, **spoofed e-mails** containing recognizable names were sent to **OSD** [Office of the Secretary of Defense] employees. When they opened the messages, **user IDs and passwords that unlocked the entire network** were stolen ..."
Fallon's resignation is not seen as step toward attack on Iran -- "the abrupt resignation of the Pentagon's top Middle East commander has silenced one of the **Bush administration's fiercest opponents** of a **unilateral military strike against Iran**"
Counterfeit chips raise big hacking, terror threats, experts say -- "as more **computer chips** are made overseas, the risk of **hardware tampering** increases, from stealing consumer data to crashing **government networks**. But how real is the threat?"
NATO will lay out new plan for cyberwar -- "... concerns that the alliance is insufficiently prepared for the realities of cyberwar".
U.S. failed to monitor and adapt to insurgent trends in Iraq -- "The [RAND] study, '**Counterinsurgency in Iraq: 2003-2006**' is the latest in a series examining **insurgency and counterinsurgency**, and details how the United States should improve its capabilities for future conflicts".

Society

news list|forecast

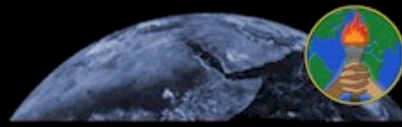
- *Edging (at times clumsily) toward a **post-racial America*** -- does the different treatment of New York Gov. Eliot **Spitzer** and Detroit Mayor Kwame **Kilpatrick** point to the **US racial raw nerve**?
US conservative group ends boycott of Ford for policies it says were gay-friendly -- it is unclear how much the "**boycott**" by **log-cabin religious fanatics** affected **Ford** which had won praise for its **anti-discrimination** policies and health benefits for domestic partners.
Lost in Translation: The Myth of American Freedom -- a **Marxist analysis**: "Like all tools of manipulation, it grants no real **utility** to the ones who rally around it".
*The gun part of **God, Gays and Guns: D.C.'s gun ban gets day in court*** -- "the nine justices, none of whom has ever ruled directly on the **amendment's meaning**, will consider a part of the **Bill of Rights** that has existed without a definitive interpretation for more than 200 years".
*Of Laws and Men - **Bush and Spitzer: compare and contrast*** -- Ralph **Nader** says "We certainly can do better as a country of laws, not men". [Comment: The **US** remains doomed to be ruled by **log-cabin religiosity**, not the **Rule of Law**.]

Water

news list|forecast

- *Troubles getting deeper for U.S., its **fresh water supply*** -- "it takes a lot of **water** to produce **energy**. It takes a lot of **energy** to provide water. The two are inextricably linked, and claims on each are rising".
*EU warns **water shortage in Central Asia could spark conflicts*** -- "the **glaciers in Tajikistan** lost a third of their area in the second half of the 20th century alone, while **Kyrgyzstan** has lost over a 1000 **glaciers** in the last four decades".
*Peru bets on **desalination to ensure water supplies*** -- "Peru plans to start

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desalinating water from the **Pacific Ocean** to make up for declining supplies from fast-melting **glaciers** affected by **climate change** ..."

Challengers

Brazil

news list|forecast

• Brazil is the quiet power center **Latin America: Lula "happy" with end of regional crisis** -- "It seems that speeches gave way to common sense ..."

Brazil landless blockade railway -- "in the past, groups that represent **landless rural workers** focused on **occupying farmland** they regarded as **unproductive** But their actions have been increasingly aimed at **businesses** ..." [Comment: That is, they are becoming **politicized**.]

see: **Environmental Degradation** (Brazilian activists go on rampage at Vale, Monsanto & Stora Enso operations)

China

news list|forecast

↓ **Hu Jintao re-elected as China's president, Xi Jinping as vice-president** -- Beijing radiates **stability** as riots wrack occupied **Tibet**.

China arms Myanmar military -- as with the **US** and other nation states, China's **foreign policy** has no moral compass: "Not only the Myanmar **navy** but also its **army** and **air force** are equipped with massive Chinese **military equipment**".

China's emissions seen rising faster than thought -- "China is the world's second-largest emitter of **CO₂** and some studies suggest it might already have overtaken the United States last year".

China plans to create five "superministries" -- the **stability** (and **survival**) issues: "Superministries would be created for **energy** and **environmental protection**, **transportation**, **housing** and **construction**, **industry** and **information**, and **human resources** and **social security** ..."

Terror threats to the Olympics -- "the possibilities are incidents not involving the use of violence by the **pro-Western Uighurs** and incidents amounting to acts of terrorism by **pro-Al Qaeda Uighurs**" Also: **China's Curious Olympic Terror Threat**.

China fabricated Olympic terror threat: Uighur leader -- "It seems that the Chinese government has one goal, which is to create this **scenario of terrorism**, and produce a terrorist action itself so that it can blame the Uighur people".

The East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) "the **East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM)** is a **militant Muslim separatist group** in the **Xinjiang province** in northwest China".

China gives Tibetan protesters surrender ultimatum -- China fears '**Split-ists**' and hates to be publicly **embarrassed**: "Criminals who do not surrender themselves by the deadline will be sternly punished according to the law".

see: **Genocide** (Dalai Lama: China causing 'cultural genocide')

see: **Other Atrocities** (Chinese security forces swarm Tibet)

But, Thank God, the **United States** has a big heart and is willing again to be out of step with the entire world ... **US drops China from list of top human rights abusers** -- Abject US cowardice and the puniest reason in history ... "which has raised hopes it will improve human rights by hosting the 2008 Olympics".

India

news list|forecast

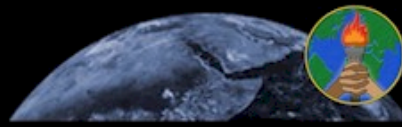
• **India sets up waste-to-energy power plants** -- "the Ministry for New and Renewable Energy said 31 waste-to-energy-based power projects with 68MW capacity in 8 states and 36 demonstration wind power projects with 70 MW capacity in 9 states were set up ..."

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*India can lead world in **renewable energy** - **Al Gore** -- "India has proven its capability in sectors like **information technology** and can be a leader in the world in developing new renewable technologies to combat **climate change**".*

*India looks to bolster CBI -- "powers to the [Central Bureau of Investigation] to directly deal with **terror strikes** and other **serious crimes** like **human-trafficking**".*

*see: **Immigration** (India warns UK on immigration rules)*

*[Comment: These items are merely representative of the daily reports of the **low level conflict** that India faces on every point of the compass.]*

*'Killed **Bangladeshi terrorists** were planning big attack' -- "the gunning down of two Bangladeshi terrorists [11 Mar 2008] has averted a **major terrorist attack** in **Mumbai** ..." Also: "**Ultras** were on **terror mission**"—the insurgents were carrying **2kg RDX**.*

***BSF** hands over list of **141 ultra [insurgent] camps** to **BDR [Bangladesh Rifles]** -- "the list was handed over by **BSF Inspector General (Assam- Meghalaya Frontier)** **P.K. Mishra** to the **BDR** during the first round of the four-day conference between the two forces at the **BSF Frontier Headquarters** here."*

Indonesia
[news list|forecast](#)

- ***Suharto-era crimes** probed in **Indonesia** -- "four teams have begun collecting evidence in the **purge of communists** during **Suharto's** rise to power in **1965** ..."*

***Indonesian president** departs for **Iran**, to discuss **nuclear issue** -- "**Yudhoyono's** visit to **Iran** comes a week after **Jakarta** **abstained** from voting when the **United Nations Security Council** approved a new round of **sanctions** against **Teheran** over its refusal to halt **technical development** suspected to be related to nuclear weapons".*

***Iran** signs deal for new **Indonesia oil refinery** -- "the plan to expand energy cooperation between the three Muslim nations [**Iran**, **Indonesia**, and a **Malaysian** partner] may irritate **Washington**, which is spearheading a drive to isolate **Tehran**".*

***Iran** offers **Indonesia nuclear cooperation** -- "we have common views on the problems of the **Middle East**, **Afghanistan** and **Iraq**.... Cooperation between **Iran** and **Indonesia** benefits both the **Islamic world** and **mankind** as a whole".*

***Yudhoyono's Iranian visit** affirms **RI's foreign policy - observer** – **Indonesia** shows it is no-one's foreign policy barrel-boy.*

*[Comment: **Iran** and **Indonesia** have a natural affinity as the two largest **non-Arab Islamic** nations.]*

Iran
[news list|forecast](#)

- ***Blowback of war** likely to be "terrible" -- "yet some believe the **Bush** administration could still choose to **attack** **Iran**, perhaps so as to ensure a **Republican** victory in the upcoming **November** presidential election".*

*see: **Indonesia** (Iran signs deal for new Indonesia oil refinery)*

*see: **Indonesia** (Iran offers Indonesia nuclear cooperation)*

*see: **Wild Cards** (Islamic world will become global power though unity: Supreme Leader)*

*see: **Security** (Fallon's resignation is not seen as step toward attack on Iran)*

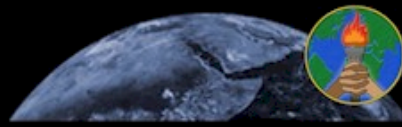
Russia
[news list|forecast](#)

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

Venezuela
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ The shooting war in **Latin America** was averted but ... **Latin America's war of words** may still turn ugly -- "this may have been a **microphone war**, but it has all the elements of a lasting conflict that could turn ugly. Now, both sides have stronger

↓ deteriorated • steady ↑ improved ↗ ALERT



*evidence against each other than they had when this spat started". **Colombia-Ecuador-Venezuela: a close call** – the Council on Hemispheric Affairs say the war of words between Chávez and Uribe is “all about **Bolívar**”.*

The “evidence” starts to surface: ***New docs detail Colombian rebel ties** -- "newly published documents released by **Colombia’s security forces claim the leftist presidents** of Venezuela and **Ecuador** conspired for months with **rebel insurgents** who seek to overthrow the country’s **U.S.-allied government**".*

***Venezuela opts for oil contracts in Euros: report** -- "Venezuela produces 3.3 million barrels of oil a day, according to official figures, and 2.4 million according to the International Energy Agency. Half of its production is sold to the **United States market**".*

***U.S. looking into terror list for Venezuela** -- "the inquiry, by government lawyers, is the first step in a process that could see Venezuela join **North Korea, Cuba, Sudan, Syria and Iran** as countries designated by the **State Department** as **supporters of terrorism**", **Venezuela dares U.S. to put it on terror list** -- "let it be your **soldiers** who die along the southern border with Colombia. We’ll see if the citizens of the **United States**, will accept tremendous atrocity. If not, shut your mouth and understand what is happening in **Latin America**". [Comment: Presumably if Venezuela were proscribed, so would any further purchase of its **oil**.]*

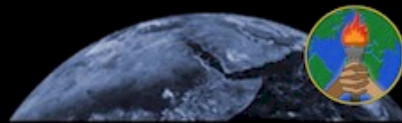
Wild Cards
[news list|forecast](#)

- ***Pakistan faces ‘multi-dimensional’ threats over ‘war on terror’ role** -- "he said the **British imperial forces** devised the present governance system in **Tribal Areas** to expand territorial ambition. 'But Pakistan has no such ambition... '."*

***Analyst says RP might lose claim on Spratlys** -- "Robles doubted that the **Philippines** could meet the [**United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas**] deadline of May 2009 ... "*

***Bolivia funds push for legal coca market** -- "the investment is part of a Bolivian **government plan** to promote the "**industrialization**" of coca leaf - the main ingredient in cocaine - into legal products such as **tea, flour** and **herbal medicines**"*

*[**IRAN**] **Islamic world** will become **global power** though unity: **Supreme Leader** -- "the world of Islam can become a global power through **unity** and **promotion** of **political, economic, cultural** and **scientific cooperation**".*



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