

Pakistan in Large-Scale Nuclear Expansion

WASHINGTON, July 24—Pakistan is building a reactor that could produce enough plutonium for 40 to 50 nuclear weapons in what would be a major expansion of its nuclear program and an intensified arms race in South Asia, a report showed on Monday.

Satellite photos show what appears to be the construction site for a larger nuclear reactor adjacent to Pakistan's only plutonium production reactor, according to an analysis by nuclear

experts at the Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security.

The assessment, initially reported by The Washington Post, was posted on the institute's Web site, Reuters reported.

The analysts concluded that the diameter of the structure's metal shell suggests a very large reactor "operating in excess of 1,000 megawatts thermal," according to the report.

"Such a reactor could produce over 200 kilo-

grams of weapons-grade plutonium per year, assuming it operates at full power a modest 220 days per year," the technical assessment said.

"At 4 to 5 kilograms of plutonium per weapon, this stock would allow the production of over 40 to 50 nuclear weapons a year."

Pakistan currently is capable of producing about 10 kilograms of plutonium a year, enough for about two warheads, The Washington Post said.

Construction of the new

reactor in Khushab apparently began sometime after March 2000. But the report's authors said Pakistan does not appear to be moving quickly to finish the reactor, and cited possible shortages of necessary reactor components or weapons production infrastructure.

"India is likely aware of this reactor construction in Khushab," the institute's David Albright and Paul Brannan wrote.

"Has this influenced India to increase its own plutonium production

capacity for its nuclear weapons program?"

"South Asia may be heading for a nuclear arms race that could lead to arsenals growing into the hundreds of nuclear weapons, or at minimum, vastly expanded stockpiles of military fissile material."

Pakistani officials would neither confirm or deny the report, but a senior Pakistani official, speaking on condition of anonymity, acknowledged that a nuclear expansion was under way, the Post reported.

Serbia, Kosovo Leaders Confer



Kosovo Assembly speaker Kola Berisha (l), Kosovo President Fatmir Sejdiu and Kosovo Prime Minister Agim Ceku attend in Vienna a new round of talks on the future status of UN-administered province of Kosovo, July 24. (AFP Photo)

VIENNA, Austria, July 24—Serbian and Kosovo Albanian leaders held UN-led talks on the fate of Kosovo on Monday, meeting face-to-face for the first time since the West intervened to halt ethnic cleansing by Serb forces, Reuters said.

The one-day meeting in Vienna formally puts the ethnic Albanian majority's demand for independence on the agenda of a UN-led mediation process that began in February, seven years since NATO bombs drove out Serb forces and the United Nations took control.

Entering separately, the presidents and prime ministers of Serbia and Kosovo sat either side of a square table and posed stiffly for photographers in the Gothic Room of the 16th century Vienna palace. There were no

handshakes.

Concrete results are unlikely, given what diplomats say is an unbridgeable chasm between the two sides. Some 90 percent of Kosovo's 2 million people are Albanians who reject any return to Serb rule, while Serbia sees Kosovo as forever its "Jerusalem."

"Kosovo functions de facto as a democratic state, and needs only of pure recognition," Kosovo Prime Minister Agim Ceku, a former rebel commander, told Reuters before the meeting. "We are not here to negotiate with Serbia or demand recognition from Serbia, but from the international community."

UN chief mediator Martti Ahtisaari has also played down hopes of a breakthrough. He is working to a year-end deadline set by the West

to propose a settlement, but six months of lower-level direct talks on the rights of the 100,000 Serbs still in Kosovo have produced few signs of compromise.

Ahtisaari's spokeswoman said the meeting would give both sides the chance to "formally present and clarify their positions". A second round at this level is uncertain.

Diplomats say the major powers see little alternative to independence, supervised for years by the European Union.

The United States is pushing hard for a deal in 2006, concerned that delay could spark fresh violence in a territory patrolled by 17,000 NATO soldiers. Russia, a veto holder in the UN Security Council and traditional ally of Serbia, has warned against any "artificial timetable".

Darfur Displaced Want Janjaweed Disarmed

ZAM ZAM, Sudan, July 24—Almost three months after a partial peace deal was signed, the hundreds of thousands of displaced civilians in Darfur remain unwilling to go home until the Sudanese government's Janjaweed proxy militia has been disarmed, AFP reported.

A committee of elders representing the 43,000 people crammed into Zam Zam camp in North Darfur state heads to a routine meeting with an official from the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS).

"We will stay in Zam Zam until security is

restored, and to achieve that the Janjaweed need to be disarmed," says one of them, Sheikh Ali Mohammed Fadul.

Sheikh Hassan, the most senior of the trio of local notables, is equally determined as he heads to the meeting.

"We want guarantees, we want the presence of an international contingent for a real peace-keeping operation.

African Union (AU) forces are not enough," he says.

An agreement was signed between Khartoum and the main faction of the rebel Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) on May 5 in Abuja, raising hopes of an end to the more than three-year-old civil conflict in Darfur.

Thousands of people were killed and hundreds

of thousands displaced in the scorched earth campaign led by the government and its proxy militia in response to an uprising by rebels demanding a bigger share of the country's resources.

Successive ceasefire agreements backed by the international community have demanded the Janjaweed—accused of genocide by Washington-

be disarmed.

Khartoum submitted a plan for disbanding its militia earlier this month but it has not yet been unveiled and its implementation could prove difficult.

Darfur is populated mainly by pastoralist tribes which, whether pro-government or pro-rebel, have traditionally used weapons to protect their herds.

India Protests to US After Spy Arrests

NEW DELHI, India, July 24—India has lodged a protest with the US embassy here, accusing it of using an initiative against Internet crime as a cover for spying activities, a report said Monday.

According to AFP, the protest follows the arrest of three senior officials—representing India on the cyber security forum—for maintaining "unauthorized contacts" with a US diplomat, the Indian Express reported.

The officer of India's external intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing, and two others from the National Security Council Secretariat, were booked under the Official Secrets Act after confessing to meeting the US diplomat without approval.

The intelligence officer, arrested Thursday, has also admitted to

having 10 portable computer memory devices, the report said.

When brought to the notice of the US ambassador David Mulford, "the American side was as surprised over the developments as the Indians," the Express said.

The US embassy refused to comment on the report.

"As a routine, we do not comment on security and intelligence matters or the ambassador's meetings," a spokesman said.

The Indo-US Cyber Security Forum was launched in April 2002 to counter Internet crime and extremism following a warming of ties between the two nations.

Reports said that despite improved relations, the United States has been keen to strengthen its intelligence-gathering in the nuclear-armed country.

New Delhi was assessing the situation before deciding its future role in the forum, the Express added.

Reports of foreign agents—including those from the US—trying to infiltrate Indian intelligence agencies or luring them to part with secrets are not uncommon.

In 2004, the alleged defection of Indian agent Rabindra Singh to the United States was front-page news here with top officials calling for a revamp of the intelligence setup and stricter rules governing operations.

A similar case—of an Indian intelligence official having "unauthorized contacts" with US diplomats—was detected in 1997 with the then Indian government asking Washington to recall the two officials posted in New Delhi.

Indonesia Forms Special Terrorism Prosecutors Team

JAKARTA, Indonesia, July 24—A special Indonesian prosecution task force was formed Monday to prepare indictments in cases involving transborder terrorism cases, AFP quoted the state news agency

Antara as saying.

Attorney-General Abdul Rahman Saleh officially swore-in the 32-strong task force comprised of staff from his office as well as around the archipelago nation, which has been repeatedly hit by

Islamic extremist attacks.

"While teams from other units, such as the police, start work from the investigation phase, this team of prosecutors will work on the indictment. There will be no overlap," Saleh said according to Antara.

Deputy Attorney-General Basrief Arief said that the team would also prepare cases related to transnational crimes such as money laundering, the trafficking of drugs and humans and illegal fishing and logging. He said the team was established with a 750,000 dollar grant from the United States.

Indonesia has endured several militant extremist attacks, including the 2002 Bali bombing blamed on the Al-Qaeda-linked regional network Jemaah Islamiyah in which 202 people were killed, mostly Western holidaymakers.

Call for Arroyo's Ouster

MANILA, Philippines, July 24—Deposed Philippine leader Joseph Estrada aired a fresh appeal Monday for Filipinos to oust his bitter rival President Gloria Arroyo, AFP reported.

Estrada accused Arroyo of fomenting "a hard, dangerous and repressive society" and of cracking down on legitimate dissent amid charges of massive corruption in her government.

His comments came ahead of Arroyo's annual "State of the Nation" address later Monday.

Estrada urged the public to "show the real strength of the Filipino nation."

"Let us join hands to change this government and its rotten system," he said in a statement from his villa east of Manila, where he is under house arrest.

"The true state of the nation is a house divided, corrupted and in complete disarray," Estrada said.

"Today, we do not only have a damaged culture, but a damaged republic, weakened by damaged institutions, and adminis-



Joseph Estrada

tered by a government that has lost credibility and working under a damaged system of justice and morality.

"We cannot proceed with this state of the nation for it can only result in a damaged future. We must unite to redeem this nation from the tragedy of corruption, repression and misuse," he said.

Arroyo's aides were not immediately available to comment on Estrada's statement.

But they earlier said that the president would likely veer away from politics and instead focus on her economic and legislative agenda in her address.

13 Terror Suspects Detained in Australia

MELBOURNE, Australia, July 24—Thirteen men arrested in Australia's largest ever counter-terrorism operation were strongly inspired by Osama bin Laden and were involved in a plot to make explosives, a court heard Monday.

Crown prosecutor Mark Dean said one of the men underwent weapons and explosives training at Al-Qaeda's Al Farooq camp in Afghanistan and was committed to jihad, or holy war, AFP wrote.

He told the Victorian

County Court that the men, all from the southern city of Melbourne, were helping a group of terror suspects in Sydney purchase laboratory equipment to make explosives.

Outlining the prosecution case, Dean said a witness who attended the Al Farooq camp had heard Shane Kent, 29, pledge in the presence of bin Laden to commit jihad.

Dean described another of the 13 men, cleric Abdul Nacer Benbrika, 46, of the Melbourne suburb of Dallas, as the spiritual leader of the group.

He recounted a conversation in which the cleric allegedly pledged to die for the cause.

"If we want to die for jihad we have to do maximum damage, maximum damage, damage to their buildings and everything and damage their lives. Just to show them that what we have been waiting for."

You have to be careful. Trust no one," Dean quoted the cleric as saying.

High security surrounded Monday's court proceedings.

Only seven of the 13

men were in court, with the other six remaining in custody at Barwon Prison.

Ten of the men were among 18 Muslims detained in Sydney and Melbourne last November, while the other three were arrested in March.

They face a range of charges including membership of a terrorist organization, and financing and supporting a terrorist organization.

The committal hearing before magistrate Paul Smith continues.

stone of the peace deals that ended Congo's 1998-2003 war, which has killed some 4 million people, mostly from hunger and disease.

Ahead of Kabila's trip to Mbuji Mayi, leaflets were distributed warning the president against visiting the town, which produces millions of dollars of diamonds every year but lacks electricity and running water.

UN sources said peace-keeping vehicles and the governor's car were stoned by the crowds as they drove into town from the airport ahead of the president.

WORLD News In Brief

\$26m Compensation
BANGKOK--Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra on Monday sued an anti-government protest leader and 11 others for defamation and demanded \$26 million in damages, his lawyer said.

New Sanction
TOKYO--Japan plans to tighten rules on companies that do business with North Korea in its latest measure to pressure the communist state after its missile tests, AFP quoted a newspaper as saying Monday.

Parliamentary Polls
MARSABIT--Kenyan herders in the country's arid north trekked for miles to vote on Monday in parliamentary polls seen as the biggest test of President Mwai Kibaki's political popularity before a 2007 general election.

Anti-Ethiopia Rally
MOGADISHU--More than 5,000 people gathered for an anti-Ethiopia protest in the capital Monday, days after troops from neighboring Ethiopia arrived to protect Somalia's virtually powerless government from Islamic militants.