

**GLOBAL REALITY: THE WEEK IN REVIEW**

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

**Threat Summary**

	<p><b>Environment.</b> United States third after India and China in death from pollution. <i>Aral Sea is back!</i>  <b>Inter-State Conflict.</b> NYT calls Iraq a lost cause. Logistics attacks triple, Iran uses US' own rockets.  <b>Proliferation.</b> GAO stings US nuclear licensing. China space weapon creates debris. Malaysia leads.</p>
	<p><b>Poverty.</b> Colombia finally discovers that legitimacy can be gains through services to the poor.  <b>Infectious Disease.</b> China threatens the world with potentially pandemic biohazards.  <b>Civil War.</b> Iraq, Sudan, Zimbabwe all into chaos. Serbia and Russia oppose Kosovo's independence.  <b>Genocide.</b> Generally quiet. Darfur a "bye." Visit <a href="http://www.genocidewatch.org">www.genocidewatch.org</a>.  <b>Transnational Crime.</b> Drug gangs out-gunning police in Mexico, buying elections in Guatemala</p>
	<p><b>Other Atrocities.</b> Argentina revokes unconstitutional pardon. Useful precedent for USA and others.  <b>Terrorism.</b> Airport security unaffordable. Around the world, the Caliphate is stressed, US-UK fear.</p>

**Policy Summary**

	<p><b>Diplomacy.</b> President Bush blows off ASEAN (as Secretary Gates blew off Latin America).  <b>Security.</b> Average computer bug has 348 day lifespan. FBI profiling terrorists. NYC cameras galore.  <b>Society.</b> Concerns grow over the failure of institutions that protect the Constitution and legitimacy.</p>
	<p><b>Education.</b> See links.  <b>Health.</b> Surgeon General was censored, full gamut of groups object to new nominee. UK "Fat Tax."  <b>Immigration.</b> See links.  <b>Water.</b> See Environment. Aral Sea is back (and the Dead Sea is also now being brought back to life).</p>
	<p><b>Agriculture.</b> Brazil challenges US farm subsidies in new WTO case.  <b>Economy.</b> U.S. Dollar recovers from all-time low.  <b>Energy.</b> Coal liquefaction and ethanol are losers, not enough focus on sun, water, and ocean thermals.  <b>Family.</b> Sex abuse cost for US Catholics over \$2B. Add to this Muslim abuse of women. Religion?  <b>Justice.</b> Attorney General Gonzales outed as a clear and pre-meditated liar. Shames all Latinos.</p>

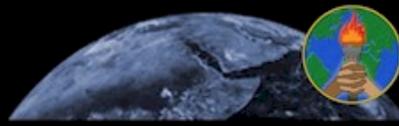
**Major Player Summary**

	<p><b>Iran.</b> Mixed news—IAEA thinks things are getting better, but civil and inter-state war with Iraq loom.</p>
	<p><b>Venezuela.</b> Russian-made submarines in Caribbean. \$4B deal with Iran on offshore rigs and tankers.</p>
	<p><b>Brazil.</b> \$500M for nuclear-powered submarine. US Navy severely vulnerable to mines, missiles, subs.  <b>China.</b> Gift Building for East Timor FM (electronic bugs included) Expelling missionaries.  <b>India.</b> Upgrading ties with Australia. Maoists on the move. Rail traffic to Bangladesh resumes.  <b>Indonesia.</b> Bali police calm in face of Australian terror alert (travel warning).  <b>Russia.</b> 4.500 "missing" from Chechnya. Across the board military build up, Black Sea, in space.  <b>Wild Cards.</b> French-led Mediterranean Union? Poor nations come together. Pakistan conflicted.</p>

**World Crises - from monthly assessments by *International Crisis Group* - JULY 2007**

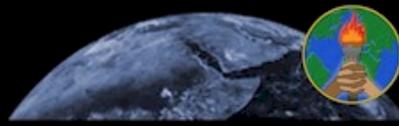
↗	<p><b>Alert: Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Pakistan</b></p>
↓	<p><b>Deteriorated:</b> Afghanistan, Basque Country (Spain), Comoros Islands, Israel/Occupied Territories, Lebanon, Niger, Pakistan, Somalia, United Kingdom</p>
↑	<p><b>Improved:</b> Burundi, North Korea, Yemen</p>
	<ul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

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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> <a href="#">news list forecast</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>WHO</b> says <u>13 million deaths</u> could be prevented each year by improving the <b>environment</b>, particularly <b>water</b> and <b>cooking fuels</b> -- <b>Afghanistan, Angola, Burkina Faso, Mali</b> are worst affected.</li> </ul> <p>A <i>revolutionary new weapon</i> against rebels in <b>Colombia</b> ... development; a multi-agency task force operated out of <b>Bogota</b> is building <b>schools</b> and <b>roads</b> and introducing <b>public institutions</b> such as <b>courts</b> in 52 towns.</p>
<b>Infectious Disease</b> <a href="#">news list forecast</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several facts such as "<i>The <b>H5N1</b> virus made the first known jump into humans in Hong Kong in 1997, infecting 18 people and killing six of them</i>" -- <i>Bird flu's spread around the globe [Reuters Factbox]</i>.</li> </ul> <p>The <b>biohazard</b> that is <b>China</b> continues to threaten the world -- <b>pigs</b> that were sick and dying [<i>with an unidentified disease</i>] were butchered daily and transported to market.</p> <p><i>Is <b>HIV</b> a time bomb under the mining industry?</i> -- "<i>Miners -- many migrant workers -- risk their lives to make money daily, so unprotected sex seems a minor hazard</i>" -- from Africa to Russia, from Peru to China.</p>
<b>Environment</b> <a href="#">news list forecast</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A study claims <b>air pollution</b> causes <u>527,700 deaths</u> each year in <b>India</b> -- "... <i>only China has more number of premature pollution-related deaths than India, while the United States comes a close third</i> "</li> </ul> <p>Showing <b>environmental disasters</b> can be tackled, the <b>Aral Sea</b> is slowing returning after devastation by <b>cotton</b> misadventures and other gross abuse -- "<i>We have shown that even the worst environmental disaster can be reversed, somewhat. But we need to be realistic.</i>" [further to the Aral story dated 20070411]</p>
<b>Inter-State Conflict</b> <a href="#">news list forecast</a>	<p>↓ Eight months ago CIA Director <b>Hayden</b> gave a "dark assessment" of <b>Iraq</b>, saying <b>instability</b> seemed 'irreversible'. [Comment: The foresight award still goes to Gen Colin Powell for his 13 Jan 2003 pottery-shop warning: "<b>you break it, you own it</b>" ]</p> <p>"A barrage of up to 35 missiles and mortars slammed into the fortified <b>Green Zone</b> ... the <u>largest such assault to date on the safest place in Baghdad</u>."</p> <p>It's official: the <i>New York Times</i> has called <b>Iraq</b> a '<b>lost cause</b>' -- "<i>the influential daily wrote in a rare, single-issue editorial taking up one-half of an entire news page.</i>"</p> <p>The bomb death toll of <u>around 150</u> in the <b>Shiite Turkmen</b> village of Amerli in northern <b>Iraq</b> is among the war's <u>worst single attacks</u>. [Comment: "<i>Desperate dead-enders</i>" maybe, but still with range and lethality.]</p>
<b>Civil War</b> <a href="#">news list forecast</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understandable but perhaps unhelpful, after a weekend of violence that claimed more than <u>220 lives</u>, prominent <b>Shi'ite</b> and <b>Sunni</b> politicians have called on <b>Iraqi</b> civilians to <u>take up arms to defend themselves</u> -- <i>Iraqis told to arm themselves</i>. A <b>Sunni</b> former officer in <b>Saddam's Fedayeen</b> says "<i>There will be a fierce civil war, a grinding civil war, because Iran will always be there</i>" -- <i>Sunni Insurgent Leader Paints Iran as 'Real Enemy'</i>. But some are trying to defuse the millennium-old antipathy; <i>Iraq, Saudi agree to monitor sectarian fatwas</i> -- <u>if real</u>, the agreement announced by <b>Iraq's</b> national security chief could be a landmark forward in resolving the <b>chasm</b> that runs through Iraq between the <b>Shi'ite</b> and <b>Sunni</b> worlds.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sudan</b> has arrested <b>retired army officers</b> and a former <b>presidential adviser</b> now <b>opposition leader</b>, mainly from <b>central Sudan</b>, for allegedly plotting a <b>coup</b>.</p> <p><b>Zimbabwe's</b> main opposition figure, <b>Morgan Tsvangirai</b>, is sure chaos is looming as President <b>Mugabe</b> struggles to maintain the dying <b>economy</b> by regulation -- "<i>We are</i></p>

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now approaching another election and Mugabe is on us again." President **Mugabe** has evicted 300 families as fears for his own safety increase -- "*President Robert Mugabe is evicting 300 families from a farm adjacent to his expensive mansion in Harare citing security reasons.*"

Perhaps inspired by action at *Pakistan's Red Mosque*, the **Lebanese** army seemed poised to storm the **Palestinian** camp in **Tripoli** -- "*the army was concerned it was being dragged into a war of attrition with the militants dug in inside the narrow alleys of the camp and decided to move in*".

**Serbia** (and sponsor **Russia**) maintain their position against **NATO**-sponsored independence for **Kosovo** -- "*Kosovo will not gain independence. And no U.S. officials making daily statements in support of Kosovo's independence can obviate that fact.*"

**Genocide**

[news list](#)[forecast](#)

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**Other**

**Atrocities**

[news list](#)[forecast](#)

- The **Argentine** Supreme Court has revoked a *pardon* granted in 1989 by former Argentine president Carlos **Menem** to General Santiago Omar **Riveros**, now 83, because it the pardon was *unconstitutional*.

The UN has suspended the use of *rubber bullets* in *peacekeeping missions* -- "*following an inquiry into the deaths of two ethnic Albanian demonstrators killed by [outdated and unsafe] rubber bullets fired by Romanian police officers serving with the U.N. in Kosovo.*"

Another 26 people accused of forcing or tricking people to work in "unspeakable" *slave labor* conditions in brickyards have gone on trial in **China**.

Police have arrested another group in the **Athens** region for *trafficking women* -- "*the number of women victimised by such trafficking in Greece increased by a factor of 10 between 1990 and 1997, according to human rights organisation Amnesty International.*"

*Thailand's child trafficking industry* -- "*She tells me how she hires a van and goes to the countryside if she cannot find children in the city.*" [Light-weight backgroundner.]

**Proliferation**

[news list](#)[forecast](#)

↓ "*If all goes well, Malaysia will become the first developing country to have its own nuclear monitoring facility and the first in ASEAN*" The facility would be the 16th of its kind in the world.

**Thailand** is investigating construction of a *nuclear power plant* somewhere in the coastal provinces of **Ranong**, **Chumphon** or **Surat Thani**.

*A Nuclear Ruse Uncovers Holes in U.S. Security* -- a sting by **Government Accountability Office** obtained an easily forged *nuclear materials licence* from the **Nuclear Regulatory Commission** for handling of *americium-241* and *cesium-137*.

*Pravda* reminded the world it was better off to buy **Russian weapons** -- "*Today [Venezuela] has to pay billions for having chosen a wrong supplier of arms [the US]*"; *Buying US made arms endangers national security of a buyer*.

**NASA** has been forced to move a *satellite* to avoid *debris* from the Chinese satellite killer test -- "*the current [US] administration has argued a global space-weapons treaty was unnecessary ... because no such weapons existed.... It seems that argument is no longer operative.*"

See: **Russia** (CFE treaty)

**Terrorism**

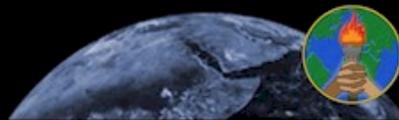
↓ In the **UK**, operators are saying that *airport security costs* are too high. [Comment:

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Terrorism is *win-win* -- prevention is almost as costly as potential losses.]

**Bin Laden's** deputy is said to be behind **Pakistan's Red Mosque** bloodbath -- "Government sources said up to 18 **foreign fighters** - including **Uzbeks, Egyptians and several Afghans** - had arrived weeks before the final shootout ..."

**UK** authorities say 4,000 "extremists" from the UK have trained in **Afghan** terror camps -- "The important question is, where are they now?" Also: *More Britons travelling to Bangladesh to train in terror* -- "However, **Pakistan** remains the country posing the greatest threat to Britain's security .... more than 30,000 between the ages of 18 to 35 [visit each year ... often traveling via **South Africa**]." *Concern over radicalisation of educated Muslims* -- "The stories that emerge are of men who led *ordinary lives, often with no criminal record, and no reason for suspicion.*"

The **UK** has **Eurofighters** on 24-hour alert against terror attack from sky -- "The chain of command in such an emergency would always be ultimately **political, not military.**" [That is, bringing down a domestic aircraft.]

*Could Terrorists Spread Killer Virus?* -- "lax security in Britain's hospitals left them vulnerable to the theft of **lethal substances.**" Also: "Brussels will propose an **EU** system of **security clearance** for researchers to combat infiltration by **bio-terrorists.**" -- *University researchers to be vetted to tackle bio-terror threat.*

**Australian** authorities fear a "**lone wolf**" terror attack on the upcoming **APEC** meeting "intelligence authorities are monitoring some 20 people after they were assessed as posing a potential '**homegrown**' terrorist threat ..."

*U.S. Report: Al Qaeda Has Strengthened* -- "**al Qaeda** has rebuilt its operating capability to a level not seen since just before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks"; an assessment coinciding with DHS **Chertoff's** "gut feeling" that the clock is ticking.

The **Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat** used more than one tonne of explosives in a **suicide bombing** on an **Algerian military barracks.**

**Saudi Arabia** again multiplies the world's woes: "Calling oneself a **liberal Muslim** is a contradiction in terms ... one should repent before God for such ideas in order to be a real Muslim." -- *Saudi fatwa against liberals raises fears of violence.*

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

- In **Mexico**, **drug cartels** are **outgunning** town **police** forces -- "Even those who agree to protect one band of traffickers risk being attacked by rival gunmen."

"Along **Guatemala's** drug corridor between **El Salvador** and **Mexico**, drug traffickers flush with money see this year's **elections** as a new way to extend their power."

**Policy**

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

- **Brazil** has mounted a new **WTO** case against **US farm subsidies** -- "the first step in what could become another lengthy dispute between the U.S. and Brazil over the billions of dollars Washington gives out annually in farm subsidies."

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

- The **Washington Institute** reiterates the **US** belief that someone is up to mischief in **sub-Saharan Africa** – *Africa terror threat worries Pentagon.*

President **Bush** has cancelled an upcoming **summit meeting** with **ASEAN**. [Comment: One reason may be to signal dissatisfaction with arrangements in **Thailand.**]

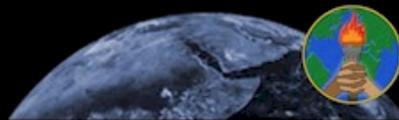
**Economy**  
[news list|forecast](#)

↓ On **Black Friday**, the **US dollar** touched an **all-time low** against the 13-nation **Euro**; retail sales month-on-month have the biggest fall since 2005.

**Education**

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

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**Energy**

[news list|forecast](#)

- President **Lula** of **Brazil** enters the *ethanol* debate [possibly on the wrong side of history] -- [Brazil defends ethanol against detractors](#).  
*Squeezing clean fuels from U.S. coal* – “plants built with the benefit of the knowledge and experience of the pioneers should be competitive at an oil price of \$40 to \$45 per barrel.” [An upbeat, uncritical piece on the *coal liquefaction* process.]

**Family**

[news list|forecast](#)

- ↓ **Los Angeles Roman Catholic Diocese** has opted for huge out-of-court settlements in pending *sexual abuse* cases -- “The settlements push the total amount paid out by the U.S. church since 1950 to more than \$2 billion, with about a quarter of that coming from the Los Angeles archdiocese.”

**Health**

[news list|forecast](#)

- ↓ A “**Fat Tax**” -- a **UK** study suggests taxing certain foodstuffs could prevent up to 3200 deaths from *heart attacks* and *stroke* every year.  
 A range of community groups have expressed their objection to Dr. **Holsinger**, President **Bush’s** nominee for **Surgeon General** -- *HIV/AIDS, LGBT, women’s rights, human rights, advocacy* and other advocates affirmed their rejection in a letter addressed to the *Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee*. The retiring **Surgeon General** says he was *silenced* for political reasons on “hot-button health issues such as *emergency contraception* and *abstinence-only* education.”

**Immigration**

[news list|forecast](#)

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

**Justice**

[news list|forecast](#)

- “It appears the **Attorney General** also failed to disclose the truth about when he first knew of widespread abuses by the **FBI** of **National Security Letters**,” Leahy said -- [Report: Gonzales Knew of FBI Violations](#).

**Security**

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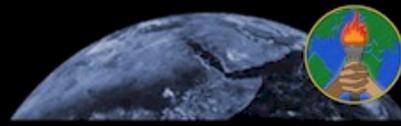
- Choosing its words carefully, the **FBI** says it intends to get more formal about **Risk Assessment** [in the *Israeli* manner] -- “assigns risk scores to possible suspects based on a variety of information, similar to the way a credit bureau assigns a rating based on a consumer’s spending behavior and debt” -- [FBI Plans Initiative To Profile Terrorists](#).  
*On Leave, Hurricane Center’s Director Is in the Eye of the Storm* [What’s killing off the great chiefs of America?]  
*Military Papers Found Unprotected Online* -- “military detainee **holding facility** in southern **Iraq**. Geographical surveys and aerial photographs of two **military airfields** outside **Baghdad**. Plans for a new **fuel farm** at **Bagram** Air Base in Afghanistan” all on the *internet*.  
 “[S]omeone with inside access to the cellphone company switches had been bugging more than 100 high-ranking government officials and dignitaries including the **prime minister of Greece**” -- [Engineers as Counterspies: How the Greek Cellphone System Was Bugged](#). [It ends in a “suicide”.]  
 The average **zero-day bug** has 348-day lifespan [i.e. has been around almost a year before it is admitted] -- “When discovered and not disclosed, these bugs can be used by hackers and criminals to break into corporate systems to steal or change data.”  
 Emulating **London’s** “ring of steel”, up to 3,000 surveillance cameras may be installed in **New York** in the large area comprising *Wall Street* and the *World Trade Center*; funding permitting.

**Society**

[news list|forecast](#)

- [Putting the President in His Place](#) -- It’s nothing personal... it’s the **Balance** between institutions of government that is the key to stability.  
[As Bush exits, his issues will linger](#) -- “the unfinished business **Bush** will leave for

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*his successor is unprecedented since at least World War II."*

**Water**

[news list|forecast](#)

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

**Challengers**

**Brazil**

[news list|forecast](#)

- Brazil will invest \$500 million to revive a long-stalled navy project to build a **nuclear-powered submarine** for coastal patrol duties.

Rio's **police** announced a **strike** four days ahead of the *Pan Am Games* -- "*They are fighting for the restitution of a **bonus** that has been removed from their monthly wages to pay chiefs, military policemen and the fire brigade.*"

*"Violent conflicts involving **Indians, landowners and police** have increased over the past year as more of the 40,000 Kaiowa and Guarani Indians ... seek to reclaim their **ancestral lands.**"*

**China**

[news list|forecast](#)

- The Chinese gift of a **building** for the **Foreign Ministry** of **East Timor** is yet another example of canny aid to loosely-aligned nations throughout the world.

China's **Communist Party** accepted 2.6 million new members in 2006 from the 19 million who applied to join -- total membership is now 72.39 million.

There are reports that **Uyghur** girls from the **Islamic** far west have been forced into labor far from home by Chinese officials -- "*'training' programs offered by local officials became effective **slave labor**, parents and officials say.*"

China has been quick to **execute** a convicted **drug agency official** -- a handy fall-guy in current embarrassing quality **scandals** is only the fourth ministerial-level official executed in 30 years.

China continues to **expel Christian missionaries** -- "*... the Chinese government launched a massive expulsion campaign of foreign Christians, encoded Typhoon No. 5, in February 2007.*"

To maintain the **One Child Policy** the government will crack down on **corrupt officials** and will **increase fines** for the newly rich who can afford to break the law.

**India**

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- "*The **Glasgow attack** is the first known act of global terror involving an **Indian Muslim***"; the Muslim community in (post-Partition) India has no radical tradition -- **Global terror's India connection.**

**Australia** and **India** [already both members of the **Commonwealth**] are to upgrade **defence ties** -- "*China, on its part, remains deeply suspicious of this emerging so-called **quadrilateral 'axis of democracy'** in the **Asia-Pacific** region.*"

*Soon, **US jets can refuel here**; "the UPA government, much like the previous NDA regime, is steadily stepping up India's already robust defence and **strategic relationship with the US**"* – India and the US have entered into a large number of defence deals, contracts, and understandings. [see article] Elsewhere: The **US** says India's **phytosanitary** standards for **wheat** are higher than the US can meet but India refuses to shift.

In **Bihar**, **Maoists** have made good their promise to **kill farmers** who disobeyed a ban on cultivation as part of a political campaign against authorities -- "*the farmers were picked up and taken to a nearby forest for defying the **Naxalites'** diktat against cultivation.*" *Tribal groups caught in armed conflicts* -- the **landless indigenous groups** of India's heartland do not share the dreams of the **Maoists** of establishing a **proletariat state** in India but the Maoists articulate the indigenous people's plight.

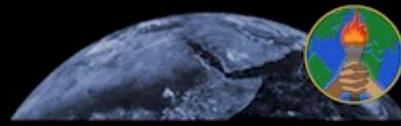
23 Indian troops remained "missing" after a clash with **Maoists** in **Chhattisgarh** --

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"the men were part of a 100-strong unit investigating a tip about the possible location of a camp run by the ultra-leftist insurgents". After the loss, security forces planned a major assault on Maoist rebel hideouts.

The *Dhaka* [Bangladesh] to *Calcutta rail service* has been resumed 40 years after it was suspended during the India-Pakistan war.

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

↑ **Bali** police are calm about an **Australian travel warning** on Indonesia -- "The warning advised that terror attacks in Indonesia were "imminent", but a senior Bali Police officer said the island's security was suitable and would not be tightened in reaction to the notice."

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

• Iran said it has uncovered and arrested twenty people five new **spy networks** "linked to **Western intelligence services**".

**IAEA** secretary general **ElBaradei** announced that Iran has "slowed" its **uranium enrichment** activity and was markedly up-beat on the opportunity to "to cool things down" on the issue.

Abu Omar **al-Baghdadi**, leader of the self-styled **Islamic State in Iraq** has threatened Iran with consequences if it does not withdraw its support for Iraq's **Shi'ites** -- "In the first such threat by his group, **Baghdadi** said that unless Iran meets his demands, the group will wage a 'brutal war' against Iranians."

**Satellite images** show **new work** near an Iranian **nuclear site** -- Iran is putting in a pool, or something else.

Reportedly, Iranian **artillery** started bombarding the area known as *Hajj Omran* in a **Kurdish**-controlled area of **Iraq**.

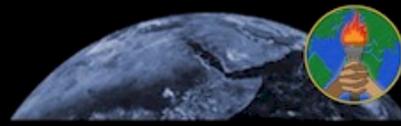
**Russia**  
[news list|forecast](#)

• "More than 4,300 people are considered **missing** in Russia's North Caucasus republic of **Chechnya** since 1994, the republic's human rights ombudsman said."

The **US** formally declined Russia's offer of a **joint missile shield**; somehow mistrust has been dragged from the jaws of *détente* -- the US says it will proceed with plans in the **Czech Republic** and **Poland**; Russia says it may deploy **new missile units** to the westernmost **Kaliningrad** region.

Then ... it was as though the **Kremlin** had the press releases ready to go...

- [Russia to Build New Nuclear Submarine Base in Kamchatka](#) -- the town of Vilyuchinsk in the **Kamchatka Peninsula** will host a modern base for the **nuclear submarine forces** of the **Pacific Fleet** in the next two or three years.
- [U.S. missile shield plans affect Asia - Russian FM](#) -- "we realize that this region [**Central Asia**] will certainly feel the consequences of these unilateral [US] actions," Sergei **Lavrov** said at a meeting of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organization** (SCO) in the capital of **Kyrgyzstan**.
- [Kremlin chief 'sacked to pave way for Putin'](#) -- "**Ivanov's** departure is either a sign that a reform is in the making to elevate the role of the security council or that some influential figure wants to take it under his control".
- [Russia declares its independence in space](#) -- the **Plesetsk** space center in the **Arkhangelsk** Region meets Russia's goal to have access to outer space without relying on any other country for launches or vehicles.
- [Russian Navy chief says new Black Sea base complete by 2012](#) -- "as a result, the base will be able to accommodate up to 100 ships of the **Black Sea Fleet**." says Russian Navy Commander Admiral Vladimir **Masorin**.
- [Russia suspends application of arms control treaty](#) -- "The suspension is



*motivated by some points of the initial 1990 accord 'concerning the security of the Russian Federation'.*"

**Russia rediscovers its swagger** said *The Telegraph* [UK] - "The Kremlin believes it has three key weapons — its abundant natural reserves, its vast nuclear arsenal and its permanent seat on the UN Security Council ..."

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

- For some, Satan is again on the move again; "wealthy and middle class citizens are fleeing, just as their counterparts did soon after Fidel Castro seized power in Havana more than 40 years ago" -- [Venezuelans, fleeing Chavez, seek U.S. safety net](#). [Note: Chavez won power in several consecutive elections.]

As expected, Venezuela will buy new **Russian submarines** -- "experts said the appearance of these "silent killers" in the **Caribbean** would seriously alter the regional balance of power."

Venezuela and **Iran** will spend \$4B on four Aframax **tankers and offshore oil rigs** in Venezuela's **heavy-crude-producing Faja del Orinoco**.

**Wild Cards**  
[news list|forecast](#)

- In a season for new **multilateral arrangements**, French President **Sarkozy** went to **North Africa** to sell his proposal for a **Mediterranean Union** -- "Sarkozy intends to defend his proposal to create a "Mediterranean Union" among nations on the north and south shores of the Mediterranean basin."

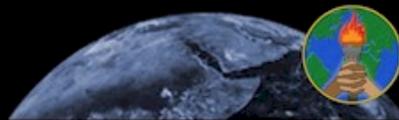
[EU kicks off Great Game in Central Asia](#) gave yet another cut-and-dice on planet earth's **Wild West**.

The world's **poorest nations** gathered in **Istanbul** organized by **Turkey** and **UN** agencies including UN Development Programme (UNDP) and **FAO** -- [Poor nations discuss impacts of globalisation](#).

A concise backgrounder on the issue that is **Turkey**, the **PKK**, and northern **Iraq** -- [Reports of Turkish troop concentrations on Iraqi border spur debate about possible invasion](#). Separately, a **bomb** probably the work of **PKK Kurdish** rebels has derailed seven cars of a **freight train** in eastern **Turkey**.

In **Pakistan** hundreds were killed; and then the real nastiness started. "There is **intense engagement** ... Militants are taking positions in almost every room, they're fighting from room to room, they have positions in the basement, on the stairs." A turning point: [Pakistan's Red Mosque leader killed](#) -- "other reports said **Ghazi** was killed by followers when he tried to surrender. There was no way of independently verifying the claims." Then the wisdom of hindsight was everywhere: [Think tank report faults Pakistani military](#) -- "Pakistan's **military** leaders have mobilized **religious parties, militants, foreign 'freedom fighters,**' and other players to get and keep national **power and resources**." Pakistan's *Daily Times* gave some insight into the complexity of Islamic politics behind the mosque siege -- [Lessons of Lal Masjid \[Editorial\]](#). "How could **Islamic radicals** build a fortress under the noses of **intelligence agencies** in the capital?" some asked. Official statements clarified some





details on the death toll but unanswered disparities remained -- *300 confirmed dead in Lal Masjid Operation*. Operation Silence was over; "how come everyone in the corridors of governance was blind and deaf to this gathering storm?" -- *A deafening silence*. [Comment: In a simple sense, *Lal Masjid* was avoidable but in another it was the 'Lal Masjid' that Pakistan had to have if it is to resolve its *Islamist, Secularist, Civil* and various *ethnic* identities.]

**Pakistan** remains one of the keys to the *Kingdom*, recognized not least by **China** as a firm *strategic partner* -- "Chinese assistance to Pakistan has been instrumental in strategic projects such as the *JF-17* aircraft, *F22* frigates and *al-Khalid* tank". Also, an excellent thumbnail background on **India, Pakistan**, and Yuri **Andropov** appeared in *The great game: The KGB and Pakistan*.

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