

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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1. COUNTRY REVIEW

A. SOUTH ASIA

PAKISTAN

- **Musharraf resigns in the face of impeachment charges brought against him; US supports Musharraf's stay in Pakistan; Violence in Kurram Agency and Swat**

The countdown to President Musharraf's ouster began during the week with the draft committee of the ruling coalition finalizing the charge sheet against him. Musharraf was accused of violating the constitution. The military operations in FATA and Balochistan, the iniquitous Lal Masjid incident, as well as charges of financial indiscretion were also leveled.¹ PML (N) chief Nawaz Sharif, addressing a gathering in Lahore on August 14, asserted that Musharraf had committed grave acts detrimental to Pakistan and therefore did not deserve to be granted a safe exit.²

Efforts to persuade President Musharraf to resign from his post bore fruit with Gen. Musharraf resigning on Aug 18. The government on its part had also contemplated the possibility of providing 'blanket immunity' to Musharraf if resigned, under article 248 of the constitution.³

Report noted that the United States intended to ensure that even if Musharraf was impeached, he should be permitted to stay in Pakistan in an 'honourable' way. US Ambassador to Pakistan, Anne Patterson, after discussions in Washington, reached Islamabad on August 16.⁴

In other developments, violence in different part of the country continued. At least 36 people were killed in Parachinagar on August 16 as a result of clashes between two militant groups.⁵ One group of militants reportedly entered the Kurram Agency from North Waziristan. On the same day, security forces killed at least eight militants in Swat when they were attacked in the course of search operations in the area.⁶

¹ "Charge sheet finalised, says Sherry," *Daily Times*, August 13, 2008, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008\08\13\story_13-8-2008_pg1_3

² Babar Dogar, "No safe exit for Musharraf: Nawaz," *The News*, August 15, 2008, at http://thenews.jang.com.pk/arc_default.asp

³ Irfan Ghauri, "Musharraf may get indemnity if resigns," *Daily Times*, August 17, 2008, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008\08\17\story_17-8-2008_pg1_1

⁴ Anwar Iqbal, "US wants 'honourable' stay for president in Pakistan," *Dawn*, August 11, 2008, at <http://www.dawn.com/2008/08/11/top2.htm>

⁵ "Militants enter Kurram from North Waziristan; 36 dead," *Dawn*, August 17, 2008, at <http://www.dawn.com/2008/08/17/top3.htm>

⁶ "Swat clashes leave 8 militants dead," *Daily Times*, August 17, 2008, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008\08\17\story_17-8-2008_pg1_6

NEPAL

- **Prachanda elected as Prime Minister; Ananta: PLA integration key to conflict resolution; Finance Ministry releases money to pay PLA combatants; Demand for Greater Nepal intensifies**

Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda) was elected as the first Prime Minister of Nepal on August 15. He secured 464 votes in his favour while 113 Constituent Assembly (CA) members belonging to the Nepali Congress (NC) voted against him. The CPN-Maoist, CPN-UML and Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) had on August 14 reached an agreement to form a new government under the leadership of Dahal. These parties agreed to quickly implement the seven-point agreement reached by the seven-party alliance earlier. They also agreed to prepare a common minimum programme for the running of the government as well as decided to allocate ministerial portfolios through mutual understanding.⁷ Prachanda defeated former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba of the NC.⁸

The Maoists earned the support of twenty out of the twenty-five parties in the CA, including the pro-monarchy Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP-Nepal). Three parties – Nepal Workers and Peasants Party (NWPP), Rastriya Janashakti Party (RJP) and Rastriya Jana Morcha (RJM), did not take part in the elections.⁹

The CPN-Maoist announced on August 15 that Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) positions held by Maoist party leaders elected to the CA had been terminated. This was a key demand of NC since they signed the comprehensive peace agreement. Senior leader Baburam Bhattarai also informed the CA that the paramilitary structure of the Young Communist League (YCL) was dismantled. He added that his party would implement the agreement reached among the seven parties in June 2008 to return all properties – public and private, to the concerned authorities and individuals. Bhattarai also vowed to dismantle all parallel structures of state mechanism that his party had established during the period of war.¹⁰ However, another Maoist leader, Barsha Man Pun 'Ananta' stated that the CPN-Maoist would try to integrate the maximum number of PLA personnel into the Nepal Army but would not impose its agenda. Ananta noted that the integration of PLA was one of the vital parts of conflict the management “to ensure long-lasting peace in the country.”¹¹

In an effort to consolidate the ongoing peace process, the Finance Ministry approved the proposal of the Ministry for Peace and Reconstruction to pay the

⁷ “Maoists, UML, MPRF to support Dahal, NC fields Deuba for PM,” *kantipuronline*, August 14, 2008, at <http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=156961>

⁸ “NC to field its candidate for prime minister,” *nepalnews*, August 13, 2008, at <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/aug/aug13/news07.php>

⁹ “Maoists earns support from 20 parties,” *nepalnews*, August 15, 2008, at <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/aug/aug15/news09.php>

¹⁰ “Maoist CA members not to hold PLA post,” *nepalnews*, August 15, 2008, at <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/aug/aug15/news10.php>

¹¹ “PLA Integration Key to Conflict Resolution: Ananta,” *The Himalayan Times*, August 13, 2008, at <http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullstory.asp?filename=aFanata0va2qzpc9Pa0ua.axamal&folder=aHaoamW&Name=Home&dtSiteDate=20080813>

outstanding salaries of the previous 14 months to the PLA combatants in cantonments. Towards this end, the Ministry sanctioned Rs. 84 million. The nearly 20, 000 PLA combatants would each get about Rs. 42,000.¹²

In other developments, the Unified Nepal National Front (UNNF) unfurled the map of Greater Nepal in Thankot - the main entry point to Kathmandu on August 12. The map, measuring 10*4 ft, shows Tista in the East and Sutlej in the West as Nepal's territories under illegal Indian occupation. Phanindra Nepal, president of the UNNF asserted that "since the validity of the Saugauli Treaty has ceased to exist...India can no longer occupy Nepali lands. We will initiate nation wide protest programs against Indian expansionism ..."¹³

BANGLADESH

- **Khaleda Zia to be released 'unconditionally'; AL to challenge new electoral rules; FEMA: Aug 4 local body elections well organized; Large scale arrests of JB activists**

Reports noted that the caretaker government finalized all procedures for the release of the detained BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, who would be released "unconditionally."¹⁴ Zia had earlier refused to register as a voter while under arrest.¹⁵ She had also taken a stand that she would neither apply for release by the caretaker government nor accept a parole.¹⁶

The recently elected Awami League (AL)-backed mayors and councilors decided to pursue a legal challenge against the new electoral rules that required the winners to resign their party positions before taking the oath of office.¹⁷ The AL has also demanded that the government officially declare Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as the father of the nation.¹⁸ It also called for the schedule of the ninth parliamentary election to be announced without delay and was against the holding of upazila parishad polls prior to that.¹⁹

Meanwhile, the Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA), an election-monitoring organization, concluded that the standard of polling at the August 4

¹² "Finance Ministry releases money to pay PLA," *nepalnews*, August 13, 2008, at <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/aug/aug13/news02.php>

¹³ "Demand for Greater Nepal intensifies," *The Telegraph Nepal*, August 13, 2008, at http://www.telegraphnepal.com/news_det.php?news_id=3900&PHPSESSID=71e7f9bbe4d220e569a577f8b57bd4bd

¹⁴ "'Unconditional' release for Khaleda very soon: All procedures finalised, says adviser Quader; JCD men vandalise cars for her freedom," *The Daily Star*, August 11, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=49927>

¹⁵ "Khaleda refuses to be voter while in jail," *The Daily Star*, August 12, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=50047>

¹⁶ "Khaleda won't apply for release," *The Daily Star*, August 13, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=50261>

¹⁷ "Elected city leaders won't quit party posts: Plan to launch legal battle," *The Daily Star*, August 12, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=50044>

¹⁸ "Declare Bangabandhu as father of the nation," *The Daily Star*, August 12, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=50094>

¹⁹ "AL asks CG to announce JS poll schedule immediately," *The Daily Star*, August 14, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=50411>

local body elections held under the state of emergency was better compared to any other elections in the past.²⁰

Reports noted that the Bangladeshi government, with assistance provided by the United States, would strengthen the capabilities of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), increase the number of border outposts (BOP) and build roads to enhance security in border areas. A border management system to check the smuggling of contraband substances and trespassing of criminals would also be established.²¹

Government sources announced that they had successfully crushed an Islamic guerrilla group - the Jamayetul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), blamed for the over 400 blasts on a single day in 2005 which claimed 28 lives. Authorities noted that large scale arrests of JMB guerrillas had blunted its influence.²²

The government also reinstated August 15 as National Mourning Day and a public holiday to commemorate the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in compliance with the High Court ruling. The previous BNP-led alliance government had cancelled the state observance of August 15 as a holiday in 2002.²³

In other developments, 193 Bangladeshi police peacekeepers in East Timor received UN peace medals for their services in the Southeast Asian country.²⁴

SRI LANKA

- **Madras HC quashes preventive detention order against LTTE cadre; Increased vigil along Rameswaram coast to prevent HMK activists hoist national flag on Kachatheevu; Reports: LTTE constructing bigger runway at Mullaitivu**

The Madras High Court Bench quashed a preventive detention order passed under the National Security Act, 1980 by the Ramanathapuram Collector against a Sri Lankan national, Sathesh alias Tamilvanan alias Thatheeswaran alias Nagulan (31) of Kilinochi, a member of the political wing of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE). The Bench termed the order unwarranted as there was only a remote and not imminent possibility of the petitioner coming out on bail.²⁵ The detention order was passed by the district administration on the ground that there was an imminent possibility of the Sri Lankan being released on bail in a

²⁰ "Fema sees Aug 4 polls free, fair," *The Daily Star*, August 11, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=49944>

²¹ "BDR to be strengthened, BOP increased," *The Daily Star*, August 12, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=50072>

²² "Bangladesh says major guerrilla force crushed," *Associated Foreign Press*, August 17, 2008, at <http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5gtUF4OxKM1wxDtVaWijmHL6zgAGg>

²³ "Govt reinstates Aug 15 as Nat'l Mourning Day," *The Daily Star*, August 11, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=49926>

²⁴ "193 Bangladeshi peacekeepers to receive UN medals today," *The Daily Star*, August 12, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=50120>

²⁵ "Preventive detention of Sri Lankan quashed," *The Hindu*, August 13, 2008, at <http://www.hindu.com/2008/08/13/stories/2008081351020400.htm>

criminal case and the possibility of the individual indulging in activities harmful to the relationship between India and the island nation.

The Ramanathapuram district administration also clamped a blanket ban on entry into Kachatheevu. The state and central security agencies stepped up vigil along the Rameswaram coast to prevent the Hindu Makkal Katchi (HMK) and other organisations from hoisting the national flag on the island on Independence Day.²⁶ HMK planned to unfurl the national flag in Kachatheevu to protest against the Sri Lankan Navy's frequent firing on Tamil Nadu fishermen and to demand the retrieval of the island, ceded to Sri Lanka in 1964. It also urged the governments to ensure the rights of fishermen on Kachatheevu.

Meanwhile, reports noted that the Sri Lankan security forces which had captured the LTTE-held Mullankavil were now hoping to capture the entire region before the end of the current year. The LTTE on its part has urged its cadres to unite in transforming Vanni into a graveyard of the advancing forces. LTTE political leader P. Nadesan, while speaking at the second commemoration of 53 girl students killed in air attacks at Chencholai charged that government forces had "stepped into the land of the Tamils to swallow it. The time is up for the government forces to be taught the right lesson."²⁷

The LTTE was also expanding a second runway capable of accommodating heavy aircraft in Mullaitivu even as government forces backed by air, artillery and armour battled through fortified LTTE defences on the western and eastern flanks. The construction activity was going on in spite of the unprecedented army build-up on multiple fronts in Vanni, where ground forces have inflicted massive losses on the Tigers. The Sri Lankan military noted that the second runway could accommodate larger aircraft as it was longer and wider than the Iranamadu strip. Both runways are located east of the A9 road.²⁸ The Sea Tigers were also reportedly shifting its assets to the Mullaitivu theatre.

B. SOUTHEAST AND EAST ASIA

MYANMAR

- **UN claims \$1.5 million lost in cyclone relief effort in Myanmar; Suu Kyi discusses detention with her lawyer**

The United Nations estimated that it has lost about \$1.56 million of relief funds - not the \$10 million as earlier cited - meant for Myanmarese cyclone survivors due to foreign exchange rules imposed by the country's military regime. UN spokesperson Farhan Haq disclosed this figure in a statement released on August 14. Haq noted that the amount represented 4.5 per cent of local expenditure, or 1

²⁶ "Steps taken to stop unfurling of flag at Kachatheevu," *The Hindu*, August 13, 2008, at <http://www.hindu.com/2008/08/13/stories/2008081351010400.htm>

²⁷ "LTTE Nadesan says govt. forces will be taught the right lesson," *Lanka-e-News*, August 15, 2008, at <http://lankaenews.com/English/news.php?id=6259>

²⁸ Shamindra Ferdinando, "Tigers busy expanding second runway in M'tivu," *The Island*, August 15, 2008, at <http://www.island.lk/2008/08/15/news20.html>

per cent of total contributions to the relief effort. He added that the earlier estimate of \$10 million - cited by John Holmes, UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, was based on a very rough preliminary calculation.²⁹

Meanwhile, pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi had a rare meeting with her lawyer to discuss the continuing house arrest at her residence on August 8. According to National League for Democracy (NLD) spokesman Nyan Win, the two-hour meeting was the first between Suu Kyi and her lawyer since 2004.³⁰

Reports noted that the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) was reportedly planning to form proxy parties to contest the proposed general election in 2010.³¹

In other developments, Ulla Tørnæs, Denmark's minister for development cooperation stated in a recent interview to the Danish newspaper *Politiken* on August 9 that the economic sanctions on Myanmar and tourism boycott of the country were counterproductive. The minister added that Myanmar would benefit from more tourists and trade with the world.³²

C. WEST ASIA

IRAQ

- **Diyala's governor survives a suicide bomb attack; Shia pilgrims killed in suicide attack; UK Indicates it will withdraw troops from Iraq**

Iraqi authorities imposed a curfew in Baquba, capital of Diyala province after Raad Rasheed governor survived a suicide bomb attack on his convoy. Two people died and seven were wounded in the attack. US-backed Iraqi forces had launched a 2-week old offensive against al-Qaeda and other Sunni militants in the province, in which over 350 people were arrested. Many of such recent attacks had been carried by female suicide bombers, a tactic used increasingly by al-Qaeda in the year.

Political progress in Iraq meanwhile faced a major setback when parliament adjourned for its summer break without passing a law regarding the holding of provincial elections scheduled for October 1. The election law has been held up by wrangling over power sharing by the Kurds in Kirkuk.³³

A roadside bomb killed a pilgrim on a bus packed with pilgrims bound for the Shi'ite holy city of Kerbala, to mark the birth of Imam al-Mehdi. The

²⁹ "UN Claims only \$1.5 Million Lost in Cyclone Relief Effort," *Irrawaddy*, August 17, 2008, at http://irrawaddy.org/highlight.php?art_id=13878

³⁰ "Suu Kyi Discusses Detention with her Lawyer," *Irrawaddy*, August 12, 2008, at http://irrawaddy.org/article1.php?art_id=13826

³¹ "USDA Expected to Form Proxy Parties for 2010 Election," *Irrawaddy*, August 15, 2008, at http://irrawaddy.org/article1.php?art_id=13864

³² "Danish Minister Slams Burma Boycott, Sanctions," *Irrawaddy*, August 12, 2008, at http://irrawaddy.org/article2.php?art_id=13825

³³ "Curfew In Iraqi Province After Governor Attacked," *The New York Times*, August 12, 2008, at http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/world/international-iraq.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

incident occurred even as Iraqi authorities deployed over 40,000 police and soldiers to avert violence. Earlier, 19 people were killed and 75 wounded by a female suicide bomber who detonated an explosive vest among pilgrims who stopped for their evening meal. Suicide attacks in Baghdad and Kerbala during a 2004 pilgrimage killed 171 people. More than 1,000 pilgrims were killed in 2005 during a stampede on a bridge triggered by a rumour of a bomber in their midst.³⁴

The outgoing commander of British forces in Iraq, Maj. Gen. Barney White-Spunner indicated that most of the 4,100 troops in the country could be withdrawn by next summer. He noted that the Iraqi-led crackdown on Shia militia groups in Basra had improved security. A Ministry of Defence spokesman however stated that although UK military presence in Iraq would decrease "significantly in the future," it was too early to determine the exact numbers.³⁵

IRAN

- **Barak: US opposed to any Israeli military strike against Iran; Ahmadinejad: Cooperation between Majlis and administration essential for implementation of economic plan; Iran fails to sign energy deals with Turkey; Iran test-fires a new rocket capable of carrying a satellite**

Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak noted that the US was at present opposed to any Israeli military strike against Iranian nuclear facilities. He however urged that 'no option' be taken off the table. Senior US, European, and Iranian diplomats had held rare face-to-face talks in Geneva last month aimed at resolving the impasse over Teheran's nuclear ambitions, but were unable to agree on a deal to resolve the dispute.³⁶

President Mahmud Ahmadinejad has meanwhile called for full cooperation between the Majlis and the administration to implement the economic reform plan. The plan among other issues calls for the subsidies of various products to be paid directly to the people, and calls for measures to save energy (termed a "national asset" by Mr. Ahmadinejad). The plan was devised to tackle the country's economic problems, including rising inflation.³⁷

Mr. Ahmadinejad was in Turkey during the week. After meeting with his Turkish counterpart Abdullah Gul, both sides vowed to continue discussing further energy cooperation, though they failed to sign any energy deals. Gul and

³⁴ "Iraq heightens pilgrimage security as bombers strike," *Khaleej Times*, August 15, 2008, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.aspx?xfile=data/middleeast/2008/August/middleeast_August310.xml§ion=middleeast

³⁵ "Time right' for UK Iraq troops," *BBC News*, August 15, 2008, at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7562179.stm

³⁶ "US against any Israeli strike on Iran: defence minister," *Khaleej Times*, August 13, 2008, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.aspx?xfile=data/middleeast/2008/August/middleeast_August269.xml§ion=middleeast

³⁷ "President enlists MPs for plan to reform economy," *Tehran Times*, August 14, 2008, at http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=175371

Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan have come under fire for inviting Ahmadinejad to visit Turkey, a NATO member with strong ties to the United States and Israel. After Russia, Iran is the biggest provider of gas to Turkey. The volume of bilateral trade was expected to reach \$10 billion in the current year. Turkey and Iran had signed a preliminary agreement to export Iranian gas to Europe through Turkey, in July 2007 - including a provision for Turkey to produce 20.4 billion cubic metres of natural gas in Iran's huge South Pars gas field.³⁸

In other developments, Iranian state news media reported that Iran test-fired a new rocket capable of carrying a satellite into orbit. The test flight came amidst growing Western nervousness about Iran's nuclear program. The White House spokesman Gordon D. Johndroe stated that the announcement was "troubling." The rocket was identified by the media as the *Safir-e Omid* (Ambassador of Peace). Tehran, which hoped to launch four more satellites by 2010, had in the past indicated that it wants to put its own satellites into orbit to monitor natural disasters in the earthquake-prone nation and improve its telecommunications facilities.³⁹

II. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

- **PM warns against 'divisive politics' on Amarnath issue; 15 protestors killed as violence erupts in Kashmir valley over the killing of senior Hurriyat leader Sheikh Aziz**

Coming out strongly against 'divisive politics' on the Amarnath issue, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh called on political parties not to use religion to divide people but come together in finding a permanent solution to problems plaguing the Jammu and Kashmir. Addressing the nation on the 62nd Independence Day on August 15, Dr. Singh noted the sacred shrine of Amarnath was a 'shining example' of secular traditions and cautioned that 'dividing people in the name of religion' could complicate issues further and pose a threat to the country's unity and integrity.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, India on August 12 asked Pakistan to stop meddling in its internal affairs, cautioning such actions did not contribute to creating an atmosphere conducive for the peace process to move forward. The External Affairs Ministry spokesman Navtej Sarna noted that remarks attributed to the Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson Mohammad Sadiq on August 11 constituted clear interference in India's internal affairs. Sadiq on August 11 had

³⁸ "Iran, Turkey fail to sign energy deals," *Khaleej Times*, August 14, 2008, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/theworld/2008/August/theworld_August907.xml§ion=theworld

³⁹ "Iran Reports Test of Craft Able to Carry a Satellite," *The New York Times*, August 17, 2008, at http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/18/world/middleeast/18iran.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

⁴⁰ "PM warns against 'divisive politics' on Amarnath issue," *Daily Excelsior*, August 16, 2008, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/08aug16/news.htm#11>

expressed concern at the violence in J&K, and stated that the incidents had “serious humanitarian implications.”⁴¹

Fifteen protestors were killed in firing on the protest rallies and clashes between protestors and security forces all over the Kashmir valley on August 12. This was the worst incidence of violence since the state government’s decision to grant land-use rights sparked massive protests last month.⁴²

Earlier on August 11, seven persons, including senior Hurriyat Conference leader Sheikh Abdul Aziz, were killed when the security forces opened fire at several places in the Kashmir Valley to stop people from marching towards Muzaffarabad - the capital of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). The protesters took to the streets to break the ‘economic blockade’ of the Valley imposed by Shri Amarnath Yatra Sangarsh Samiti. Sheikh Aziz was leading the march, when the security forces tried to stop the marchers at Chehlan near Baramulla, and opened fire.⁴³

Meanwhile, Hurriyat Conference leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani on August 16 urged Kashmir’s pro-India politicians to immediately resign or else face social boycott. Geelani also warned Jammu and Kashmir Police to immediately stop “shameful atrocities on the (Kashmiri) nation or face the social boycott.”⁴⁴

OTHER INTERNAL SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS

- **M.K. Narayanan: 800 terror cells unearthed; Ahmedabad police: Brain behind serial bombings held**

Indian intelligence agencies have reportedly unearthed as many as 800 terrorist cells across the country operating with ‘external support’. National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan told *Straits Times* in an interview in Kuala Lumpur on August 12 that New Delhi was concerned about the “great deal of external inspiration and support...”⁴⁵

With the arrest of Abul Bashir Qasbi, the alleged mastermind behind the Ahmedabad serial bombings, from a village in Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh on August 16, the Gujarat police claimed that they had unraveled the conspiracy that led to the bombings. Announcing the breakthrough at a press conference in Ahmedabad on August 16, the Gujarat Director-General of Police P.C. Pandey

⁴¹ “Don’t meddle in J&K: India to Pak,” *Daily Excelsior*, August 13, 2008, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/08aug13/news.htm#5>

⁴² “Fifteen shot dead in Jammu & Kashmir,” *The Hindu*, August 13, 2008, at <http://www.hindu.com/2008/08/13/stories/2008081360960100.htm>

⁴³ “Muzaffarabad marchers fired upon, 5 killed,” *The Hindu*, August 12, 2008, at <http://www.hindu.com/2008/08/12/stories/2008081256610100.htm>

⁴⁴ “Geelani asks pro-India leaders to resign or face ‘social boycott’,” *Daily Excelsior*, August 17, 2008, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/08aug17/news.htm>

⁴⁵ “800 terror cells unearthed: NSA,” *Daily Excelsior*, August 13, 2008, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/08aug13/news.htm#5>

stated that Qasmi was arrested by a joint team of the Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat police.⁴⁶

III. SPACE AND MISSILE REVIEW

MISSILES

- **Indian Army orders additional BrahMos**

The Indian army ordered an additional batch of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles from the Russian-Indian BrahMos Aerospace joint venture. The BrahMos missile can carry a conventional warhead weighing up to 300 kg (660 pounds) to a range of 290 km (180 miles). It can also hit ground targets flying at an altitude as low as 10 meters (30 feet). With a top speed of Mach 2.8, it is about three times faster than the subsonic Tomahawk cruise missile of the US. Reports noted that India could purchase up to 1,000 BrahMos missiles for its armed forces in the next decade, and export around 2,000 during the same period.⁴⁷

- **ATK conducts successful AARGM flight test**

Alliant Techsystems, the US Navy, and the Italian Air Force successfully completed another challenging missile firing of the AGM-88E Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile (AARGM) at the Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, on August 3.⁴⁸

MISSILE DEFENCE

- **Russian expresses displeasure over US missile plan**

Russia on August 15 expressed its displeasure over US plans to place a new missile system in Eastern Europe. It warned that these weapons, directed at Moscow, would be a fair military target to strike. Speaking at a news conference in southern Russia, President Dmitry Medvedev stated that, despite Washington's denials, the United States had Russia in mind in basing elements of the system in Poland and the Czech Republic. His comments came a day after Poland announced that it had reached an accord with the US on plans to install US interceptor missiles on its territory.⁴⁹ The missile deal will have to be approved by the Polish parliament.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ "Brain behind the Ahmedabad blasts held," *The Hindu*, August 17, 2008, at <http://www.hindu.com/2008/08/17/stories/2008081757330100.htm>

⁴⁷ "Indian army orders additional BrahMos cruise missiles," August 05, 2008, at <http://en.rian.ru/world/20080805/115775137.html>

⁴⁸ "ATK Conducts Successful AARGM Flight Test," August 06, 2008, at http://www.asd-network.com/press_detail/17241/ATK_Conducts_Successful_AARGM_Flight_Test.htm

⁴⁹ "Russia vents fury over US missile plan," August 15, 2008, at http://www.spacewar.com/reports/Russia_vents_fury_over_US_missile_plan_999.html

⁵⁰ "Bush says Breakaway Regions Must Remain Part of Georgia," August 16, 2008, at <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,404937,00.html>

- **Turkey set to create missile shield in Ankara, Istanbul**

A Turkish Defense Ministry Undersecretary on August 11 stated that Turkey planned to buy eight missile defense systems to protect itself against possible missile attacks. Two missile shields would be deployed in and around Ankara and Istanbul by 2010. Ankara was currently negotiating a deal with Russia, the United States, China and Israel to buy these air defense systems, expected to cost about \$1 billion.⁵¹

SPACE

- **Dr. Singh: India hopes to send spacecraft to moon**

Speaking from the ramparts of Red Fort in Delhi on the occasion of the 62nd Independence Day, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh hoped that India would send a spacecraft to the moon in the current year. Dr. Singh noted that the launch of the Chandrayaan would be an important milestone in the development of the country's space programme.⁵²

- **NASA: Space shuttle successor not to fly before 2014**

NASA announced that it had pushed back the launch of the Orion, the spacecraft designed to replace the agency's aging space shuttle fleet, by one year to 2014. NASA had been hoping to launch Orion on its first mission in September 2013. The Orion is a component of the Constellation program, a NASA program that includes new launch vehicles and a lunar lander. The new crafts will re-supply the International Space Station and carry out other missions such as landing on the moon.⁵³

- **Russian rocket to launch US commercial satellite**

A Russian Proton-M rocket carrying an Inmarsat communications satellite will be launched August 19, a spokesman for the Russian Federal space agency, RSA stated on August 15. The Russian-American joint venture, International Launch Services, will launch the satellite from the Baikonur space center in Kazakhstan.⁵⁴

⁵¹ "Turkey Set To Create Missile Shield In Ankara, Istanbul," August 13, 2008, at http://www.spacewar.com/reports/Turkey_Set_To_Create_Missile_Shield_In_Ankara_Istanbul_999.html

⁵² 'India hopes to send spacecraft to moon', August 15, 2008, at <http://www.ndtv.com/convergence/ndtv/story.aspx?id=NEWEN20080061592>

⁵³ "Space Shuttle successor will not fly before 2014: NASA," August 12, 2008, at http://www.space-travel.com/reports/Space_Shuttle_successor_will_not_fly_before_2014_NASA_999.html

⁵⁴ "Russian Rocket To Launch US Commercial Satellite August 19," August 18, 2008, at http://www.space-travel.com/reports/Russian_Rocket_To_Launch_US_Commercial_Satellite_August_19_999.html