

International Intelligence

India-Russia strategic partnership developing

The Russian news service Itar-TASS reported on Jan. 14 that "Russia and India are determined to develop strategic partnership in the third millennium. This was stated in New Delhi on Friday [Jan. 14] before the opening of the sixth meeting of the intergovernmental commission on commercial, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation.

Co-chairmen Russian Deputy Premier Viktor Khristenko and Indian Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha held a joint press conference at which Sinha said the meeting is to define bilateral relations based on confidence and mutual understanding. Areas of cooperation include economics, trade, science and technology, defense, peaceful uses of nuclear energy, space exploration. He also said relations between the two countries had been elevated to the level of a strategic partnership. This will be sealed at the regular Indian-Russian summit, wrote Itar-TASS.

Khristenko noted a number of successes Moscow and New Delhi had scored since the November 1998 commission meeting, including a 30% increase in trade over nine months. Khristenko also called for joint projects "which will give an impetus to the increase of trade turnover and will bring the Russo-Indian strategic partnership to a new level," including aircraft construction, telecommunications, production of new medicines and information technologies.

Khristenko was also scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, Power Minister Rangarajan Kumaramangalam, and Civil Aviation Minister Sharad Yadav.

China: Nanjing massacre was 'written in blood'

China's relations with Japan have been "seriously hurt" by a right-wing conference held in Osaka on Jan. 23, denying Japanese war crimes during the infamous Nanjing massacre of 1937. Some 250 people attended the Osaka forum held by the Society to Correct the Biased Display of War-Re-

lated Materials. The Chinese Foreign Ministry issued a formal protest to Tokyo on Jan. 23, and Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao blamed a Japanese Supreme Court ruling that allowed the event, which had "seriously hurt the feelings of the Chinese people and disturbed the growth of Sino-Japanese Relations," he said. "The Chinese government and people hereby express their extreme indignation and strong condemnation." Estimates are that Japanese invaders butchered 300,000 Chinese in the city.

"Lies written in ink cannot cover up facts written in blood," said an editorial in the *People's Daily*. "Japanese rightists' attempt to decorate the world-acknowledged Nanjing massacre as a 'lie' is indeed a mockery of history and the height of absurdity." The official Xinhua news agency also issued a special editorial saying Japanese right-wing groups were using the Nanjing massacre in a bid to cover up all of Japan's wartime atrocities in China. "If the adverse trend of denying the hard historical facts of Japanese aggression runs rampant, the foundation for Japan's road to peace and development will be foundering and the political basis for the Sino-Japanese relationship will be undermined."

Myanmar 'God's Army' takes hostages

A group of 20 members of an ethnic Karen militia from Myanmar, named "God's Army," hijacked a bus and seized control of a hospital in the town of Ratchaburi, Thailand, on Jan. 24. Thai military sources estimated that there were up to 750 hostages in the hospital. "God's Army" is a religious splittoff of the Karen National Union, the largest of the Myanmar ethnic armies at war with the government for 50 years. The leaders of "God's Army" are believed to be twin brothers, about 12 or 15 years old, whose followers believed they have mystical powers. A senior Thai official confirmed that the group is linked to the Vigorous Burmese Student Warriors (VBSW), which seized the Myanmar embassy in Bangkok in October 1999. At least one VBSW member was among the group that seized the hospital.

The Thai military is taking a harder line

than they had last year, and was able to retake the hospital within days.

Among the demands of the "God's Army" hijackers is that Thailand treat wounded Karenni fighters, that it persuade the Myanmar government in Yangon to halt its offensive against the group along the Thailand/Myanmar border, and that Thailand open its borders to all Karen. However, security officials in Bangkok said that Thailand would only agree to treat civilians wounded in the fighting, not Karen rebels.

Among the biggest sponsors of the Karenni rebel operations against Myanmar are the Burma Project, funded by George Soros, and Christian Solidarity International, of Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords Caroline Cox. In addition, the International Republican Institute set up "non-violent" training camps both in the border areas with Thailand (where George Bush's cousin Elsie Walker is a big defender of the Karen), and the western borders of Myanmar.

The Karen have been a special project of British operations against Burma/Myanmar for more than 50 years. The officers of the British Burma Army were largely Karen, who, in turn, were the first to break with the Union of Burma after the British-authored assassination of Gen. Aung San and several of his key officers.

Indonesia cracks down on spreading violence

In a Jan. 18 interview, President Abdurrahman Wahid said he has issued orders to the police chief and to Coordinating Minister of Political and Security Affairs, General Wiranto, to go after what he claims is a small group of religious fanatics and retired military officers who are behind the violence of recent weeks, especially in Maluku. Armed Forces head of Territorial Affairs Lt. Gen. Agus Widjojo reaffirmed the military's support for Wahid earlier in the week, and attributed the violence in part to civilians and military adjusting to the more democratic process in the country.

On Jan. 19, in Maluku, which has been rent by sectarian violence, Brig. Gen. Max Tamaela issued a shoot-on-sight order against anyone attempting to incite unrest,

and imposed a Jan. 23 deadline on surrender of weapons. Failure to comply will lead to immediate arrest and trial. On Jan. 18, there was a two-day meeting in Jakarta of 120 Maluku community leaders, led by military Commander Admiral Widodo and respected academic Selo Soemardjan, which reached agreement to end the conflict, with religious leaders representing Muslims, Catholics, and Protestants apologizing to one another and pledging support for a joint statement, issued by Governor Latuconsina.

On the tourist island of Lombok, where nearly a dozen churches were burned Jan. 17-19 by rampaging Muslims protesting the Maluku violence, President Wahid also issued a shoot-on-sight order on Jan. 19, which contributed to bringing the strife under control.

Russia scholar: 'Putin is only part of the picture'

Mark Kramer, the director of the Harvard Project on Cold War Studies, and a senior associate of Harvard's Davis Center for Russian Studies, penned an editorial commentary for the *Washington Post*, on Jan. 23, polemicizing against the fixation on "personalities" that tends to hamper most U.S. studies of Russia today. He cited the fact that the new "National Security Conception for the Russian Federation," signed by acting President Vladimir Putin on Jan. 10, was almost identical to the document endorsed by President Boris Yeltsin last year. Both versions, Kramer emphasized, reflected Russia's increasing wariness over NATO's policy following the Balkan War, and the pressures from the United States for Russia to modify the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972.

"As Russia has made abundantly clear to U.S. officials, Kosovo marked a turning point in U.S.-Russian relations. Whether rightly or wrongly, Russian officials believed that the Clinton administration ignored Moscow's concerns as the crisis developed. . . . The strong showing of Western air power in Yugoslavia came as a jolt to Russian military commanders, who realized how far their own forces had fallen behind. The perceived slights, combined with the

displays of Western air prowess, prompted a major reassessment in Moscow of the country's strategy—and provided the catalyst for redrafting the doctrine." (*EIR's* analysis of the new doctrine appeared in the Jan. 28 issue, p. 44.)

Kramer noted that the first work on the new national security doctrine coincided with the NATO 50th anniversary summit in Washington last April, and the plans to expand NATO eastward, possibly including the Baltic republics—a taboo in Moscow. Kramer concluded: "We should not allow our focus on leadership politics and personalities to detract from a sound understanding of the forces driving Russia's new security policy."

South Korea, China on diplomatic offensive

South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung said on Jan. 20, "If our party secures a comfortable majority in the elections, I will propose an inter-Korea summit to the North, to discuss peace on the Korean peninsula." The President was speaking to his New Millennium Party. Recently, Kim had said that he wanted to meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il, before his Presidential term ends in 2003. "Inter-Korean relations have shown some meaningful changes in the past two years, although any fundamentals changes have yet to come."

Meantime, China's Defense Minister Chi Haotian began a five-day goodwill visit to South Korea on Jan. 20, the first for such a high-ranking military official. South Korean Defense Minister Cho Sung-tae had visited China last August.

During his meeting with Chi, President Kim said that his government and the country's enterprises will participate in the development of China's impoverished northwest.

Kim told Chi: "We share a common interest in maintaining peace and stability in Northeast Asia, as well as on the Korean peninsula. I want further economic, cultural, and military cooperation to be of mutual benefit in the future."

Chi has just completed a three-day visit to Russia. Before that, he was in Great Britain, and he was to visit Mongolia before returning to China.

HOSNI MUBARAK, Egypt's President, travelled to Syria on Jan. 22 and met with President Hafez al-Assad in an effort to restart the stalled Israel-Syria peace talks. Both President Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak asked Mubarak to step into the fray.

SEVEN BALKAN prime ministers from countries bordering Yugoslavia met in Bulgaria on Jan. 22 to discuss how to implement the "Stability Pact for Southeast Europe." Attending were the prime ministers from Bulgaria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, and Hungary. Croatia's Zlatko Matesa and Bulgaria's Ivan Kostov denounced the sanctions against Yugoslavia. Kostov said that sanctions are stopping development of the region.

BRITAIN has sent a high-level operative, Sir Alistair Goodlad, to Australia as its ambassador. Goodlad's appointment is an escalation in the British game plan to break up the nations of Southeast Asia and lock up their resources for the Commonwealth, as spelled out in a 1995 Royal Institute for International Affairs report by Katharine West.

TURKEY AND GREECE'S foreign ministers met in Turkey in late January, marking the first time in 38 years that the two governments have met at the foreign ministerial level. President Clinton has been involved in behind-the-scenes efforts for years to get a breakthrough in relations and the thorny issue of Cyprus.

STANISLAV GOVORUKHIN, a Russian filmmaker, announced on Jan. 22 that he will run for President. In June 1994, Govorukhin visited Washington on a tour sponsored by the Schiller Institute, to show his documentary "The Great Criminal Revolution," which portrayed the devastation and criminalization resulting from the liberal economic "reforms" imposed on Russia.