



Director of Central Intelligence

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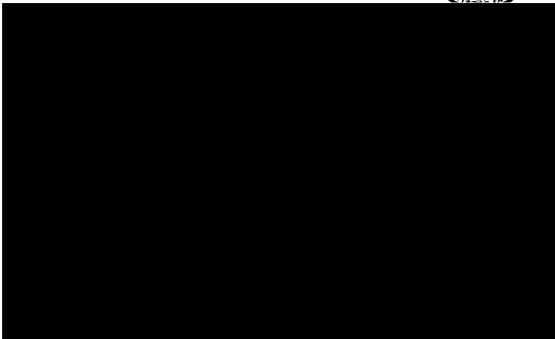
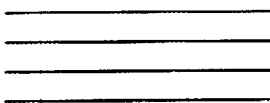
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# National Intelligence Daily

CIA/CPAS - NID 97-093

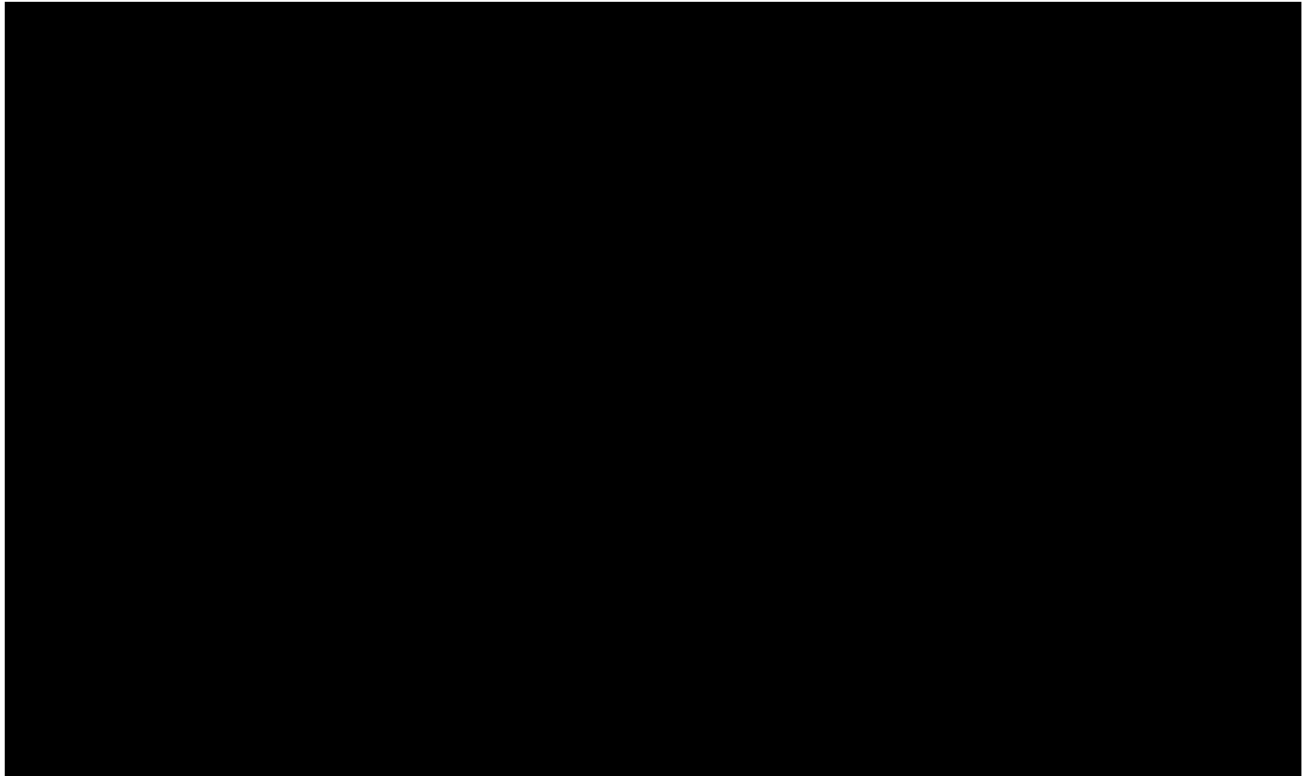
Tuesday, 22 April 1997



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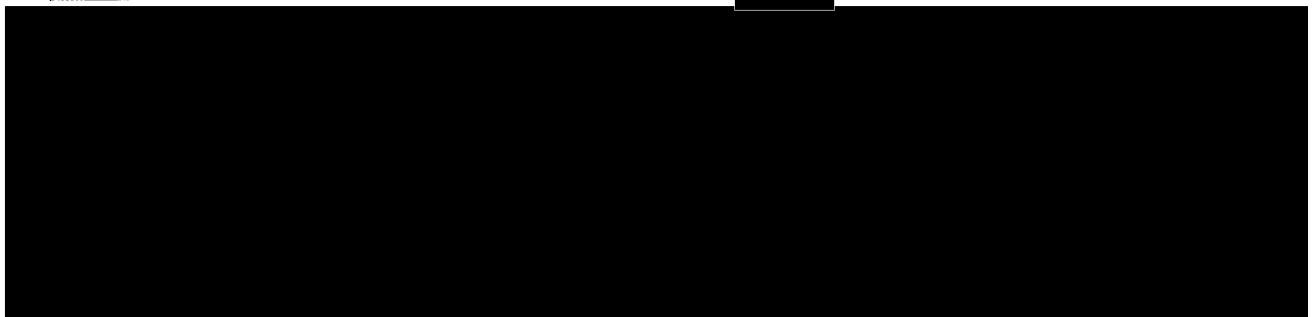
APPROVED FOR RELEASE CPAS NID 97-0093CX  
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## *Sense of the Community Memorandum*

**INDIA:**

### **Weak Coalitions Ahead** [REDACTED]

India faces a transitional period of rule by weak coalitions, including the government cobbled together by the ruling United Front and new Prime Minister Gujral. Most Indian parties will try to avoid a new election—the second in a year—because they fear losing seats and the perquisites that accompany them.

- The Congress Party, which has dominated Indian politics for decades, has lost its ability to gain a majority of seats in Parliament. The party will suffer further factional rifts as its leadership bickers.
- None of the center-left parties will be able to win enough votes to fill the void left by Congress. These parties, including Congress, are banding together to block a government led by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party.
- The Hindu nationalists hold the largest bloc of seats in Parliament and probably would gain more seats in another election, according to some analysts. Nonetheless, potential coalition partners are leery of the BJP's nonsecular platform, preventing the party from using its parliamentary strength to build a coalition. [REDACTED]

The political wrangling in New Delhi is not likely to affect decisionmaking on national security issues. [REDACTED]

- Many analysts believe the public portrayal of the missile deployments will decide their impact on the dialogue. High-profile commentary on the deployments probably would damage prospects for talks by forcing politicians to take more outspoken positions on national security. [REDACTED]

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Broad political consensus continues on other key issues, including economic policy and India's improving relations with its smaller neighbors.

- Almost all Indian parties support economic liberalization, and the Parliament is likely to adopt a budget similar to the United Front's pending probusiness proposal.
- The policy Gujral designed as Foreign Minister—the "Gujral doctrine" of more fraternal ties between India and Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal—has not been attacked during the United Front's 10 months in power. [REDACTED]

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