

WORLD AGENDA

DECEMBER 2004

Dec 27: Campaigning starts in the West Bank and Gaza for Palestinian elections to succeed the late **Yasser Arafat**. PLO chief **Mahmoud Abbas** (far right) has the support of old guard leaders and the Fatah faction; but opinion polls show **Marwan Barghouti** (right) – currently serving five life sentences in an Israeli jail – is the people's favourite



Dec 14, Tokyo: Prime Minister **Junichiro Koizumi** must decide whether to continue Japan's reconstruction mission near Baghdad. A 24-year-old Japanese hostage was beheaded in Iraq in October and critics argue that the deployment violates the country's pacifist constitution



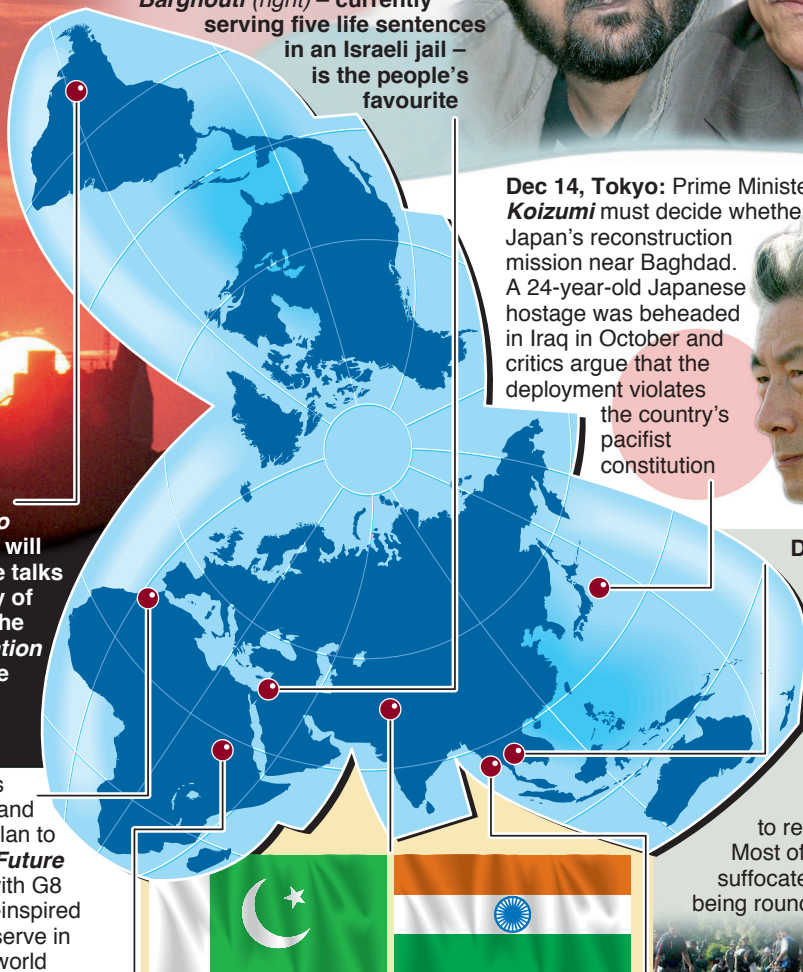
Dec 2, Thailand: A commission investigating the deaths in October of 87 Muslim protestors, campaigning for self rule in the **Tak Bai** province, is due to reveal its findings. Most of those who died suffocated in trucks after being rounded up by police



Dec 7-8, New Delhi: Pakistan and India hold talks on a proposed bus link in **Kashmir**, followed by talks on trade and on nuclear and military confidence-building measures



Dec 31, Khartoum: Date by which Sudan hopes to reach a peace agreement to end both the 21-year civil war in the south and fighting in the troubled **Darfur** region, considered the world's worst humanitarian disaster



Dec 6, Buenos Aires: Implementing the **Kyoto Protocol** next February will be discussed at climate talks on the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change**. The pact was given the go-ahead when Russia ratified it in November

Dec 11, Rabat: Ministers from more than 20 Arab and North African countries plan to attend a **Forum for the Future on Middle East** peace with G8 nations, though the U.S.-inspired project is treated with reserve in the Arab world

