

Deccan Herald, 1 August 2006

Adopt safety steps, US nuke expert exhorts India

Washington DC: Leading US nuclear safety expert David Lochbaum has urged New Delhi to consider all aspects of security, including evacuation measures and providing potassium iodide pills to people living near nuclear installations that are under terror threat. "What we recommend is to beef up security and defences around the facility. If those measures are not successful, then have plans in hand to evacuate people", said Mr Lochbaum, Director of Nuclear safety at the US-based Union of Concerned Scientists. "Also provide potassium iodide pills as protection against radioactive iodine. The pills saturate your thyroid so that if you are exposed to radioactive iodine released in an accident, or an act of terror, you may breathe in the radioactive iodine but it doesn't stay in your body for long because your thyroid is already saturated". "Without that kind of measure your body is more likely to retain radioactive iodine that is likely to cause harm. Of course these tablets do not protect you against caesium or strontium, but iodine is a gas that you are most likely to be exposed to. It has a shelf life of 10 years, so you don't have to have annual injections or anything like that," he said.

The Tribune, 1 August 2006

Lashkar targeting N-sites

New Delhi, July 31: Acknowledging that Pakistan based Lashkar-e-Toiba is planning strikes on critical infrastructure, military targets and religious places, Union Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee told the Lok Sabha today that the government was taking all possible steps to ensure that such attacks did not fructify. "Special security measures have been taken and more are under consideration to prevent the attacks by LeT on vital installations, including nuclear ones," Mr Mukherjee said during Zero Hour. The issue was raised by BJP's Vijay Kumar Malhotra who quoted media reports about National Security Adviser M K Narayanan alluding to at least one of the nuclear installations being under threats of attack by the LeT. Mr Mukherjee said that the intelligence agencies were constantly monitoring the activities of LeT and there was evidence for some time that the scope of terrorist activities in the country was on the rise. Intelligence agencies had information that LeT modules were planning to attack critical installations, possibly nuclear ones, military targets and religious sites.

Hindustan Times, 1 August 2006

Iran asked to end N-fuel enrichment by Aug 31

United Nations, July 31: The UN Security Council passed a weakened resolution on Monday, giving Iran a deadline -- August 31 -- to suspend uranium enrichment or face the threat of economic and diplomatic sanctions. Iran immediately rejected the action, saying the resolution would only make negotiations more difficult over a package of incentives offered in June for it to suspend enrichment. "All along it has been the persistence of some to draw arbitrary red lines and deadlines that has closed the door to any compromise," Iran's ambassador to the UN, Javad Zarif, said. "This tendency has singlehandedly blocked success and in most cases killed proposals in their infancy." "This approach will not lead to any productive outcome and in fact it can only exacerbate the situation," he said. Because of Russian and Chinese demands, the text was watered down from earlier drafts, which would have made the threat of sanctions immediate. It

now essentially requires the council to hold more discussions before it considers sanctions. The resolution calls on the UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, to report back by August 31 on Iran's compliance with the resolution's demands. If Iran does not comply, the council would move to adopt political and economic sanctions.

Hindustan Times, 1 August 2006

US addressing Indian concerns over fissile cap, Iran

Washington: The Bush Administration says it is working closely with the Congress to meet Indian concerns over addition of new legislative conditions to the India-US nuclear deal that are "beyond the scope of our July 2005 commitments" and could warrant a return to the negotiating table. It has also made clear its own opposition to such provisions requiring India to cap its production of fissile material, restricting its future nuclear supplies by codifying political guidelines of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and asking New Delhi to tailor its policies toward Iran in concert with Washington. The administration is working very closely with the Congress to ensure that fundamental principles of the India-US nuclear deal are not touched so that it can move forward on the agreement, State Department Spokesman Sean McCormack said on Monday. Indian parliamentarians are well familiar with the democratic process in the US and know that its legislative branch has certain prerogatives and they exercise those prerogatives, he said in response to questions about Indian concerns over the enabling legislation passed by the House of Representatives.

The Indian Express, 2 August 2006

N-deal: BJP to move resolution

NEW DELHI, AUG 1: Amidst efforts by the BJP and the Left to evolve a way to reflect a "sense of Parliament" on the India-US nuclear deal, BJP leader Yashwant Sinha said his party would move a parliamentary resolution regardless of whether it was joined by others. The BJP leader's assertion came even though the CPI(M), with whom Sinha has been in touch, had reconciled itself to the fact that getting the government to approve a resolution was "very difficult". The CPI has already said it is not interested in a resolution. UPA sources endorsed this, saying the "feedback" from the Left was that it would not insist on a resolution. But the BJP indicated it had no reservations about moving along with the CPI(M) on the issue. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, who accompanied Sinha, said it had been decided at the BJP parliamentary party meeting, that the nuclear deal was not in India's favour and that the BJP would oppose it, for which it was ready to join forces with the CPI(M) and other parties. CPI(M)'s Sitaram Yechury, who met Sinha on Tuesday, said, "Whether it is a statement or a resolution, one point is clear and that is we want the sense of Parliament to be expressed." He said, the CPI(M) is working with all parties on the issue, among them the BJP and the Samajwadi Party.

The Indian Express, 2 August 2006

Ex-US envoy rebuts Jaswant, says no inkling about 'leak'

NEW DELHI, AUG 1: Former US Ambassador to India Harry Barnes has denied having anything to do with what Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Jaswant Singh claims is the correspondence between Barnes and US Senator Thomas Graham that hints

at a mole in the Prime Minister's Office. Although Singh tonight admitted that he had no idea who the mole was, in the Rajya Sabha he named Graham as the sender and Barnes as the recipient of a 1995 note that indicated a 'senior person' in the PMO had leaked information to the US on 'nuclear testing' deployment of Prithvi and other steps. "I did not write it and this is not my standard language...I do not remember having received such a document (either)," Barnes told The Indian Express from Peacham, Vermont, where he is now advisor to the National Science Foundation for the Siachen peace park project. Barnes said he was not even in India in 1995 when the letter is supposed to have been written (he was US Ambassador to India between 1981-1985 when Indira Gandhi was Prime Minister and for a year when Rajiv was in charge).

The Tribune, 2 August 2006

The Indo-US deal

Two legislatures, separated by miles of land and sea, but inspired by the same ideals of freedom and democracy, presented two different spectacles on July 27 when they discussed their vision of the future of the relationship between their two countries. In the House of Representatives of the US Congress, the sense was of a change of paradigm, the need to remove the last vestiges of the cold war and to foster a new relationship with India. Even the opponents of the nuclear deal were seeking ways of safeguarding their favourite non-proliferation doctrines without hurting the emerging relationship between the two democracies. Those who moved 'killer amendments' to the nuclear deal did so more for fear of rogue states acquiring nuclear weapons than for depriving India of its nuclear assets. Republicans and Democrats alike stressed the importance of India; the non-proliferationists only wished, like The New York Times did, that India and the United States had built their new partnership on something other than 'a bad nuclear deal'. The overwhelming majority, of course, approved the deal. In the Indian Parliament, however, it appeared that the cold war was still alive. Even after the Prime Minister assured the House that India would accept no departures from the July 18 accord and that concerns about the elements added to the deal by the committees of the House and the Senate had been conveyed to the United States at the highest level, the opposition found common cause with the left parties to raise the possibility of a sellout by India of its nuclear autonomy.

Hindustan Times, 2 August 2006

Govt to face resolution on Indo-US nuke deal

New Delhi, Aug 1: Government on Tuesday put up a brave face over BJP's plans to bring a resolution in Parliament against the Indo-US nuclear deal on its own if there was no consensus on the issue with the Left. "They (the BJP) have the right to do so. If they have the guts, let them do so. Why should we create obstacles? We will face it", Parliamentary Affairs Minister PR Dasmunsi told reporters. His comments came hours after senior BJP leader Yashwant Sinha said his party believed the pact was aimed at stifling India's nuclear programme and "not worth the paper it is written on" as a number of fresh conditionalities have been added to it by Washington. "We are trying for a unanimous resolution and are in touch with different parties, including the Left. Parliament also should assert itself. But if no unanimity emerges, the BJP is determined to bring in the resolution on its own in the current session," said the former External Affairs Minister.

The proposed resolution, he said, would call for listing all the assurances that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has made to the nation on the nuclear deal with the US.

Hindustan Times, 2 August 2006

Waiting for Iran

The endgame in the Iranian nuclear imbroglio may have begun, going by the UNSC resolution passed last Monday, giving Tehran a month to suspend its uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities. The draft reportedly received a 14-1 vote, with Qatar the sole dissenter. The vote followed a July 12 agreement by the US, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China to refer Tehran to the UNSC for not responding to the incentives package they had offered. A light water reactor and an international fuel consortium to provide fuel apart, Iran was also offered airplane spare parts and WTO membership. Because of Russian and Chinese demands, the resolution has been watered down and speaks of 'appropriate measures' only to be taken if Iran does not comply, without really spelling out the threat of immediate sanctions. But Tehran's obstinacy could pave the way for a full-fledged sanctions resolution. Tehran's tactic of pledging that it remains committed to negotiations, while declining to clarify whether it would accept international incentives and end the standoff, have now reached the end of the road. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is probably using the nuclear programme not just to challenge the US, but also to divert attention at home from a failing economy. Tehran could also be miscalculating that the war touched off by its protege, the Hezbollah in Lebanon, would divert attention from Iran's nuclear programme.

Daily Times, 2 August 2006

No 'automatic' sanctions against Iran: Russia

MOSCOW: A UN Security Council demand that Iran suspend uranium enrichment does not carry the 'automatic' threat of sanctions, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak said on Tuesday, while China has stressed the importance of diplomacy. 'There is no automatic system, but the UNSC could examine further steps to persuade Iran to carry out the recommendations of the IAEA,' Kislyak was quoted by Interfax as saying. 'Of course, no one is going to look at any use of force,' he added. Kislyak said the resolution adopted on Monday by the UNSC was 'balanced and gives every opportunity for continuing the process of negotiations'. 'We are interested in a political resolution of the problem,' he said. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said: 'China hopes the resolution on Iran's nuclear issue would serve the ongoing diplomatic efforts to settle the standoff.' 'China calls on all parties concerned to keep calm and exercise restraint, and continue to push forward (for an) early resumption of negotiations.'

Deccan Herald, 2 August 2006

Nuclear weapons: a world gone mad

As if the war in Iraq and the battles between Israel and its neighbours were not frightening enough, now comes word of a development in Pakistan that may well be the harbinger of a much greater catastrophe. Over the past few years, Pakistan has been hard at work building a powerful new plutonium reactor that when completed will be able to produce enough fuel to make 40 to 50 nuclear weapons a year. This is happening at a time when the Bush administration is pushing hard for final Congressional approval of a

non-military nuclear cooperation deal with Pakistan's rival, India, that would in fact enhance India's bomb-making capacity. The deal would enable India to free up its own stocks of nuclear fuel to the extent that it could expand its nuclear weapons production from about seven warheads a year to perhaps 50.

The Times of India, 2 August 2006

Kissinger, Nixon had a plan to nuke N Vietnam

WASHINGTON: Former US President Richard Nixon and his national security adviser, Henry A Kissinger, had contemplated using nuclear weapons power against North Vietnamese, at the peak of the Vietnam War, recently declassified documents reveal. Eager to end an unpopular war that killed thousands of marines, Nixon and Kissinger discussed the option of using tactical nuclear weapons as part of preparations for operation "Duck Hook", which was scheduled to be launched against North Vietnam in November 1969, according to the senior scholar at the National Archives William Burr and Professor Emiretus of History Jeffrey Kimball of the Miami University of Oxford, Ohio. According to the researchers, a memorandum from Kissinger aides Anthony Lake and Roger Morris to Pentagon military planner Captain Rembrandt Robinson said the president would need to decide in advance "how far he would be willing to go--" that is, whether the president would be willing to use tactical nuclear arms.

The Hindu, 3 August 2006

Nuclear deal: Government, parties to talk about "sense of the House"

NEW DELHI: The Government is continuing to talk to political parties to arrive at a consensus on how best to express the "sense of the House" on the India-United States civilian nuclear cooperation agreement, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Priyaranjan Dasmunsi said here on Wednesday. "Most likely" the Prime Minister's statement in Parliament would be made "next week, not this week." The Government was keen on "showing the world" that on this issue the nation was united and that the United Progressive Alliance was not divided. Mr. Dasmunsi did not use the word "resolution" in the context of conveying the "sense of the House." Even the Communist Party of India (Marxist) general secretary Prakash Karat on Sunday said his party never talked about the need for a parliamentary resolution. It seems the discussions with parties are centred on the areas of concern that should be addressed in the statement by the Prime Minister or through interventions or clarifications in any debate that may follow. A "larger debate," possibly for as long as six hours, was on the cards on the issue of minimum support price for agri-products and related farmers' problems, Mr. Dasmunsi said.

The Asian Age, 3 August 2006

The Dumb Deal

The Indo-US nuclear deal is not between two individuals or two political parties, but between two nations. Hence, all Indians want to know what the deal entails for them, how the country and they will benefit. Legitimate fears that India's interests have not been safeguarded, therefore, need to be assuaged. The only place this can be done now is in Parliament, where the US Congress Bills should be discussed clause by clause, commas and full stops included. This is not a question of political beliefs and ideologies, or secularism or communism, as the supporters of the deal trivialise the criticism. This

debate is necessary because not many would have the opportunity or the patience to read the two Bills proposed by the US House of Representatives and the Senate; fewer understand the implications of the various clauses, sub-clauses and the caveats. If the government worries about a vote in Parliament or about a "Sense of the Parliament resolution," then obviously it realises and understands, but is not willing to accept, that it is still persisting in its march of folly. The US, with its well-advertised intentions to maintain global dominance, insists on imposing its domestic laws internationally, while habitually ignoring almost all international laws. If the US were serious about its original declarations and promises, then it would have been better for the US to have ensured approval from its N-5 partners before offering the deal.

Hindustan Times, 3 August 2006

India must do a few things for nuclear deal, says US

Washington: The Bush Administration says that it is "fully supportive and fully behind" efforts to see the India-US nuclear deal being implemented, but that India too has to do a few things to see it through. The US House of Representatives has passed the enabling bill and "we're working with the Senate to get a vote scheduled," State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said. The administration is working very closely with Congress to get the necessary legislation passed so that it can implement the agreement, but there are things that the Indian side has to do as well, he said without spelling them out. Once the Senate too has passed the enabling bill, there's has to be a conference and they're going to have to pass, finally, some legislation. So there are still steps to be taken here, McCormack said in outlining the US legislative process. But "we've come a long way and we are fully supportive and fully behind seeing this agreement being implemented," he said, describing it as a "good deal" for India, the US and, ultimately, for the global non-proliferation regime. Apart from the delay in the Senate vote on the nuclear deal, India has expressed concern over the addition of new legislative conditions to the India-US nuclear deal going beyond the scope of the July 18, 2005, joint statement of President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

The Indian Express, 3 August 2006

Backing for the n-deal

The nuclear deal between the US and India has received attention in the Urdu press as well. National Herald group's Qaumi Awaz, in its editorial dated July 29, has hailed it, supporting the deal. It says "those opposing the deal should remove all suspicions once the US government has ensured the passage of the bill in the House of Representatives with a heavy majority". On the other hand, the hardline Jamaat-e-Islami mouthpiece, the bi-weekly Daawat in its editorial dated August 1, titled 'What Nuclear Scientists Say' (Jauhri Science-daan kya kehte hain) has highlighted a special report in a major English daily, saying that India's eminent nuclear scientists are not only apprehensive and doubtful about the Indo-US nuclear agreement, but also see it "detrimental to Indian interests". The controversies emerging after the publication of Jaswant Singh's book, A Call to Honour, have also attracted comment in the Urdu press. Qaumi Awaz, in an editorial titled Jaswant Singh ka Aaitaraf-e-Gunaah (Jaswant Singh's admission of guilt) has focused on his treatment of the demolition of the Babri Masjid and the Gujarat riots. According to the papers, he has mentioned the 'shameful (sharmnaaq) act of demolishing

the Babri mosque but has failed to analyse the negative impact of this incident on Indian society.'

The Japan Times, 3 August 2006

U.S.-India nuclear deal sets bad example

MADRAS: The India-U.S. deal to cooperate in civil nuclear energy signed in New Delhi in March now appears set to be approved by the U.S. Congress. This will end India's nuclear isolation, which began in 1998 when the country first tested nuclear weapons. The U.S. Congress must amend American law to OK this pact. It seems that it will do so. U.S. President George W. Bush can then waive some provisions of the Atomic Energy Act, paving the way for civil nuclear cooperation with India, even though New Delhi has never signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). In India the agreement has been criticized by government allies and opponents, nuclear scientists and analysts. India Left, a partner in India's coalition government, headed by the Congress, wants such important pacts to have parliamentary approval. At present, this is not required. The communist parties are also angry that the nuclear bill to be tabled in the U.S. Congress has a provision seeking that India help restrain Iran's nuclear program. Iran is considered an old ally of India, and the country's large Islamic population is an important vote bank.

The Indian Express, 3 August 2006

N-deal: Atal puts weight behind party resolution

NEW DELHI, AUG 2: The BJP has made up its mind to settle for nothing less than a resolution to get a "sense of Parliament" on the nuclear deal with former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee himself backing such a course. This was made abundantly clear at the BJP Parliamentary Board meeting on Tuesday where the issue was discussed at length. Vajpayee's personal intervention is said to have come after Yashwant Sinha, former external affairs minister, complained to the party leadership that his efforts to evolve a consensus with other parties on a parliamentary resolution on the nuclear deal was not being promoted as the official party line. BJP sources said it was at the meeting that the 'US mole' issue involving party leader Jaswant Singh was also taken up. The former PM said it was imperative for the party to present a united face on issues because divisions were not helping its image. Apart from indicating support to Sinha, the hint was at the opposition to Sinha, who has been in regular touch with CPI(M)'s Sitaram Yechury on how Parliament should express itself on the deal. There is a section in the BJP that feels regardless of the political cost, the party should not move along with the Left on any issue. Sinha's appearance at the BJP's regular media briefing followed this very meeting.

The Statesman, 3 August 2006

Going nuclear peacefully

Those of us who watched the debate over the USA and India Nuclear Cooperation Promotion Act, 2006 in the House of Representatives had tense moments at the closing. Mr Ed Markey, a Massachusetts Democrat and Mr Fred Upton, a Michigan Republican, introduced a motion to recommit the Bill to the House International Relations Committee to include a provision that India must make full commitment to the US efforts to isolate Iran in its nuclear ambitions. It was a daring political subterfuge that would have killed the deal. The intensity of debate over the Markey-Upton motion, and the thin margin

(235-192) by which the motion was defeated, showed how strongly US lawmakers feel about Iran's developing nuclear weapons and that India must pay its dues for the nuclear deal. The impression given by the final count, 359 votes to 68, that the House gave an overwhelming support to the Indo-US nuclear deal is erroneous. There is a strong substratum of opposition, which cuts across party lines as well as scholarly and journalistic communities, to let India bypass the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and indirectly become a member of the nuclear club.

The New York Times, 3 August 2006

U.S. Disputes Report on New Pakistan Reactor

A dispute has broken out between federal officials and a private arms-control group over its claim that a new reactor being built in Pakistan is unusually large and could make fuel for up to 50 nuclear warheads a year. "We have consulted with our experts and believe the analysis is wrong," said Frederick Jones, a spokesman for the National Security Council. 'The reactor is expected to be substantially smaller and less capable than reported.' A large reactor could foreshadow a significant expansion of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, currently estimated at 40 to 50 nuclear weapons. The report last week by the private group came amid debate over the Bush administration's proposed nuclear deal with India and raised fears that Pakistan was trying to speed ahead in a South Asian arms race. Yesterday, the group's experts said they stood by their report, which is based mainly on the examination of commercial satellite images of the half-built reactor. But in interviews, federal officials said their own intelligence indicated that the emerging reactor appeared to be roughly the same size as the small one Pakistan currently uses to make plutonium for its nuclear program, and said the new model might be intended to replace the old one. They spoke on the condition of anonymity because of prohibitions on the public discussion of secretive intelligence issues.

The New York Times, 3 August 2006

Iran Working with N.Korea on Missiles: Institute

SEOUL: North Korea has been working closely with Iran to develop its long-range ballistic missiles, possibly using Chinese technology, and is building large bases to prepare for their deployment, a South Korean state-run think tank said. Communist North Korea is also building new sites near the Demilitarized Zone border for short-range missiles and is deploying missiles with improved precision that can strike most of Japan, the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security (IFANS) said in a report. "The development of Taepodong-2 is conducted jointly with Iran, and it is possible China's technology is used in the development of the Taepodong-2 engine," said the IFANS report, which Reuters obtained on Thursday. The collaboration is part of an international network, including Pakistan, that made it possible for the impoverished North to develop and deploy missiles despite scarce resources and limited testing, the study said. North Korea fired seven missiles on July 5, including the long-range Taepodong-2, which U.S. officials said failed seconds into its flight and fell into waters between Japan and the Korean peninsula. Christopher Hill, the top U.S. envoy to talks on the North's nuclear program, said last month one or more Iranians watched the North's missile launch, deepening concerns about the ties between two countries with troubling nuclear capabilities.

People's Daily, 3 August 2006

US scheming for

"Students and professors from Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and Almaty, Kazakhstan can cooperate with their counterparts in Karachi and Kabul and can learn from them. Benefiting from the modern border controls mechanism, commodities can circulate legally and freely in the areas between Astana and Islamabad. The regional power grid which is supported by oil and gas resources in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan and the water resources in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan can transmit electricity from Almaty to New Delhi" - blueprint for the "Great Central Asia" by US Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher. For historical reasons, Central Asia and South Asia have been isolated from each other and have belonged to different geopolitical plates for a long time. Now, the two regions both appear on the chessboard of the United States for its Central Asian strategy, referred to as the "Great Central Asia" strategy.

The Tribune, 4 August 2006

Nuclear issue rocks Rajya Sabha

New Delhi, August 3: The BJP and the CPM today joined hands in the Rajya Sabha to demand a resolution disapproving some aspects of the India-US agreement on civilian nuclear cooperation. The issue led to noisy scenes and the House had to be adjourned twice. When the House assembled for the day, BJP leader Sushma Swaraj asked whether the government would move a resolution reflecting the sentiments of the House that goalposts on the civilian nuclear cooperation agreement signed on July 18 last year, should not be shifted. Ms Swaraj was supported by CPM member Sitarm Yechury who also wanted the government to come out with a resolution. "We are not going beyond what you said. There should be a resolution, motion, declaration or sentiment," he said. The opportunity for raising the issue was afforded by the first question raised in the question hour by BJP member Maya Singh. While Prime Minister Manmohan Singh who was present in the House declined to respond to demands that he intervene, Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma said that the agreement on the nuclear deal with the US was guided purely by national interest. This did not convince BJP members and they continued to raise the demand for a resolution. The demand was countered by the treasury benches forcing Chairman Bhairon Singh Shekhawat to adjourn the House for 30 minutes till noon.

The Indian Express, 4 August 2006

Backing PM, Sonia snubs CPM: any resolution on nuclear deal unacceptable, will threaten UPA govt

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 3: Firmly backing Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's opposition to any "sense of the House" parliamentary resolution on the Indo-US nuclear deal, Congress president Sonia Gandhi has made it clear to the CPM that any move to press for the resolution could threaten the future of the UPA government. Sonia Gandhi, sources said, conveyed this message to CPM leader Sitaram Yechury at a meeting at her residence on Wednesday, the same day that Manmohan Singh told a CPI delegation that if the Left goes with the BJP on the n-deal issue, "that will be the end of the day (for the government)." The CPM, which has been campaigning against what it calls "shifting of

the goalposts" on the nuclear deal and insisting that the "opinion of Parliament" needs to be spelt out on the issue, was keen to enlist the support of the Congress party, sources said. Yechury met Sonia to underline that the efforts towards a resolution were not aimed against the government and indeed no resolution or "sense of the House" statement would be effective if the Congress, the biggest party in the House, did not endorse it.

The Indian Express, 4 August 2006

Short discussion on N-deal and PM's ?wrap-up? reply

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 3: With the CPI(M) backing off from its move - along with the BJP - to adopt a "sense of the House" resolution on the Indo-US nuclear deal, the UPA government agreed to have a 'short-duration discussion' on the issue in the Rajya Sabha next week. This was decided at the Business Advisory Committee meeting of the Rajya Sabha today. The format and date of the discussion will be finalised by tomorrow morning depending on Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's schedule. Government sources said that the Prime Minister's reply would 'wrap up' the discussion. Senior CPI(M) leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sitaram Yechury said that his party has already given a notice for discussion. It has been admitted and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Suresh Pachouri is coordinating to decide on the date. The BAC meeting was attended by, among others, Pachouri, Yechury, BJP's S S Ahluwalia, Samajwadi Party's Amar Singh and RJD's Ram Deo Bhandari. Commenting on the decision to drop the resolution move, Left MPs said that 'our only intention was to put it across that issues relating to national security will not be compromised' through any international deal.

The Times of India, 4 August 2006

Bush bid to address Indian concerns over N-deal

WASHINGTON: In a bid to address India's concerns, the Bush administration has told a key Congressional panel that it would have preferred to keep a ban on export of uranium enrichment or reprocessing technologies as a policy option and not put into law in the India-US nuclear deal. While India fully understands it would not get such technologies under the Indo-US nuclear deal, it was concerned over this being written into law as a new condition, a senior official told the Senate foreign relations committee on Wednesday. India thus looked at such a legal ban in the draft Senate bill as moving the goal posts set by their July 18, 2005 agreement as such a statutory prohibition - 'a flat ban' - singles out sales to India in the absence of similar bans for other nations, said John Rood, selected to head the State Department's non-proliferation bureau. India also had a major problem with Section 107 requiring US to establish an end-use monitoring system going beyond the IAEA safeguards system to make sure US exports are not diverted to India's weapons programme, he said at his nomination hearing. New Delhi sees this as implying a lack of trust in them. And so naturally, they have some concerns about that, Rood said reiterating the administration's preference for relying on existing mechanisms instead of creating one for India specifically.

The Indian Express, 4 August 2006

The house they all built

The Bharatiya Janata Party would not be itself if it stopped playing politics with history. As the real intentions of the BJP in raking up a controversy about an American 'mole' in

P.V. Narasimha Rao's PMO become clear, Sonia Gandhi and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh must stand up and defend the Congress Party's proud nuclear record. The BJP's opposition to the current Indo-US nuclear deal is no longer about the personal egotism of either Jaswant Singh or Brajesh Mishra, the two principal interlocutors with the US and the world on India's nuclear policy after Pokharan II in May 1998. There is no doubt that Jaswant Singh and Brajesh Mishra would have been more than happy to sign the nuclear deal with the US that was negotiated by Manmohan Singh. History, however, does not stop when individuals, even exceptional ones like Jaswant Singh and Brajesh Mishra, move out of government. It marches on, even if it means disappointment for some. The July 18, 2005 deal between India and the United States is a logical conclusion of the nuclear negotiations conducted by Jaswant Singh and Brajesh Mishra during 1998-2004. The BJP's latest line of attack is not merely about the natural opportunism of a party in opposition. Nor is it about picking nuclear nits. The NDA's negotiating record will show that Jaswant Singh was proposing that India sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. And Brajesh Mishra was willing to put a large number of nuclear reactors under safeguards in return for only uranium supplies from the US. Today both of them are making outlandish charges against the government, which has got a far better deal than Jaswant Singh or Brajesh Mishra did.

The New York Times, 4 August 2006

N. Korea May Have Moved Second Missile

SEOUL: North Korea may have removed a long-range missile from a launch site, lowering the possibility of the communist regime immediately carrying out further tests, a South Korean official said Friday. Intelligence reports have said North Korea may have moved two long-range Taepodong-2 missiles to its Musudan-ri launch site on its east coast before test-firing one of them July 5. Fresh intelligence suggests the remaining missile may have been moved somewhere else, a government official said on condition of anonymity, citing policy. But the intelligence is not conclusive and needs further confirmation, he said. The JoongAng Ilbo newspaper carried a similar report, citing an anonymous government official, saying satellite images show the missile disappeared from the launch site in mid-July and South Korea and U.S. intelligence authorities were trying to assess the North's intentions. North Korea also test-launched six shorter-range missiles, along with the Taepodong-2, drawing strong international condemnation. The U.N. Security Council adopted a resolution to denounce the launches and ban countries from missile-related dealings with the North. North Korea has said it has the right to test missiles and vowed further tests.

Daily Times, 4 August 2006

'Iran working with N Korea on long-range ballistic missiles'

SEOUL: North Korea has been working closely with Iran to develop its long-range ballistic missiles, possibly using Chinese technology, and is building large bases to prepare for their deployment, a South Korean state-run think tank said. North Korea is also building new sites near the Demilitarised Zone with the South for short-range missiles and is deploying missiles with improved precision that can strike most of Japan, the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security (IFANS) said in a report. "The development of Taepodong-2 is conducted jointly with Iran, and it is possible China's

technology is used in the development of the Taepodong-2 engine," said the IFANS report, which Reuters obtained on Thursday. The collaboration on the long-range Taepodong-2 is part of an international network, including Pakistan, that made it possible for the impoverished North to develop and deploy missiles despite scarce resources and limited testing, the study said. With more than 1,000 missiles of various ranges, North Korea has come to have the world's fourth-largest arsenal and is at the centre of ballistic missile proliferation, IFANS said, 'not only in terms of the weapons themselves but also the technology.'

The Japan Times, 4 August 2006

North's new missile sites 'target Japan'

SEOUL: North Korea is building new bases on its east coast, possibly to deploy ballistic missiles targeting Japan and its U.S. military installations, a state-run South Korean think tank said. The move could involve plans to deploy the long-range Taepodong-2 missile that the North test-fired last month, the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security said in a report seen Thursday by The Associated Press. The reclusive state is also believed to have obtained Chinese technology via Iran while developing the Taepodong-2, its newest long-range missile and one believed capable of reaching the U.S., the state-run institute said in the report. "New underground missile bases have been built or are under construction around the border with China and along the east coast," the report said. Those "on the east coast could be seen as bases for medium- or long-range missiles targeting Japan and U.S. military bases in Japan," it said. Taepodong-2 and SSN-6 missiles, which have a range of up to 4,000 km, could be deployed to the new bases, the think tank said. The report, dated July 26, didn't give a source for the information. Its main author, Yun Deok Min, could not be reached for comment.

Dawn, 4 August 2006

US finds N-reactor report exaggerated

NEW YORK, Aug 3: The Bush administration officials have taken issue with a private arms-control group which had recently claimed that a new reactor being built in Pakistan is unusually large and could make fuel for up to 50 nuclear warheads a year, the New York Times said in a report on Thursday. "We have consulted our experts and believe the analysis is wrong," Frederick Jones, a spokesman for the National Security Council told the newspaper. "The reactor is expected to be substantially smaller and less capable than reported." The newspaper noted that the episode underscored the uncertainties usually surrounding nuclear intelligence. In recent years, the government had come under fire for warnings of nuclear dangers that turned out to be false, most notably in the case of Iraq's efforts, it added. Critics say the analyses are often subject to political spin. A large reactor could foreshadow a significant expansion of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, currently estimated at 40 to 50 nuclear weapons. The Times recalled that the report last week by the private group came amid debate over the Bush administration's proposed nuclear deal with India and raised fears that Pakistan was trying to speed ahead in a South Asian arms race.

The Asian Age, 5 August 2006

The Deal

Why is Prime Minister Manmohan Singh so dead against a resolution or statement expressing the sense of Parliament? This is the one question that the nation wants answered. After all, if, in a democracy, the majority of political parties want a resolution to express their views to the country and the world, why should a Prime Minister of democratic India resist? And resist in so desperate a manner that he has even threatened that the government will cease to exist in its present form if the members of Parliament insist on a statement defining India's parameters in the execution of the increasingly dubious civilian nuclear energy agreement with the United States. US President George W. Bush, after he had Prime Minister Singh sign the July 18 agreement last year, did not hesitate to point out that the final form of the deal will now be in the hands of the US Congress. The US House of Representatives has passed the first Bill with an overwhelming majority simply because they demanded, and got, a free hand to bring in any number of provisions into the Bill that would satisfy their foremost concern that India should not be granted a status that would bring it anywhere near the nuclear weapon states.

Hindustan Times, 5 August 2006

US slaps sanctions on two Indian firms

Washington: The US government has imposed sanctions on two Indian and five other companies from Russia, North Korea and Cuba for allegedly supplying banned equipment and technology to Iran. These include two chemical manufacturers from India -- Balaji Amines Ltd and Prachi Poly Products Ltd. But the announcement in the US Federal Register Friday, which lists all government actions, did not specify what items were involved. Imposed for allegedly violating a law aimed at preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction to Tehran, the sanctions put a ban on US government procurement and stop American firms from working with affected companies. Also sanctioned were Russian aircraft manufacturer Sukhoi and Rosoboronexport, a state-controlled arms exporter, Korean Mining and Industrial Development Corporation and Korea Pugang Trading Corporation, both North Korean, and Cuba's Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology. The sanctions, however, apply only to the specific entities and their successors, sub-units or subsidiaries and not to their respective countries or governments.

Hindustan Times, 5 August 2006

Boucher dispels doubts, says no change in N-deal

Kolkata, August 4: The US on Friday allayed India's fears over the final shape of the nuclear deal between the two countries, maintaining that the pact would be on the lines of what was originally agreed upon by President George W Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. "I am confident that the final legislation of the nuclear deal will be on the lines of what George Bush agreed upon when he visited India," US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Richard Bucher said here. During Bush's India visit in early March, he and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had followed upon their landmark statement of July 18, 2005 and arrived at an agreement on the Indo-US civilian nuclear deal. However, critics say the legislation the US Congress and Senate are

expected to finalise to allow nuclear commerce with India may contain new conditionalities on New Delhi. "Apprehensions are there in India and in the US but we should not worry about this. We should only think about the final outcome of the legislation which I am confident will be within the framework of what both countries agreed," he said while addressing a function organised by the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC).

The Hindu, 5 August 2006

US imposes sanctions on seven foreign firms

Washington, Aug. 5: The United States has imposed sanctions against seven foreign companies, including two from India, for allegedly passing on technology to Iran that could be used for developing weapons of mass destruction or missile systems, a formal notification said. The Indian private firms blacklisted in the Federal Register notification are Balaji Amines, including any of its subsidiaries and Prachi Poly Products and any of its sub-units and subsidiaries. The sanctioned companies, which also include Sukhoi and Rosoboronexport, the Russian monopoly arms exporter, have come under the US scanner for allegedly violating Sections 2 and 3 of the Iran Non-Proliferation Act based on findings made on July 25 this year. Cuba's Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology and the North Korean firms Korean Mining and Industrial Development Corporation (KOMID) and Korea Pugang Trading Corporation have also been sanctioned. A number of measures have been put in place against the companies involved, the notification said adding that no department or agency of the United States Government may procure, or enter into any contract for the procurement of, any goods, technology, or services from these companies.

The Hindu, 5 August 2006

Manmohan must respond to debate: Left

NEW DELHI: The Communist Party of India (Marxist) is firm that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will have to respond to any debate on the India-U.S. nuclear agreement in Parliament, taking into account the sense of the House and what the Government will do on specifics. With the party having highlighted nine points of departure from the July 18, 2005 agreement and the Bill being processed by U.S. lawmakers, the CPI (M) holds the view that there is enough evidence to show that there has been a "shifting of the goalpost." The party is clear the Left parties want answers to specific points of departure pointed out and will not be satisfied with a "general statement" suggesting that nothing will be done against the national interest. Left leaders say that for instance, there are doubts about the change of sequence including whether or not India will sign an "in perpetuity" agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency before the deal and availability of fuel from other nuclear supplies group in case the U.S. halts it. The sense of House will be determined after discussions on the issue and the Prime Minister's reply should spell out the Government's thinking and what it is going to do, the Left leaders say.

The Times of India, 5 August 2006

Talking Terms

The "sense of Parliament" resolution on the India-US nuclear deal, which BJP and CPM are both calling for, isn't a very sensible idea on two scores. One, it seems strangely imitative of the "sense of Congress" part of the resolution on the nuclear deal approved by the US House of Representatives. We don't automatically have to assume the procedures and jargon used by deliberative assemblies of any country we deal with. Two, there isn't much of a common sense of Parliament on the nuclear deal, as there are widely divergent views. The BJP has, in fact, turned its back on its own earlier positions because Congress has adopted them now. That said, there's nothing wrong with holding full-fledged discussions of the deal in Parliament. When minister of state for external affairs Anand Sharma made a statement on the issue in the Rajya Sabha bedlam followed, and the House had to be adjourned twice. A discussion is scheduled for next week, which should be an opportunity for the government to point out the benefits of the deal, followed by a reasoned debate on it. The latter is essential, because what appears to be discussion of technical aspects of the treaty is often driven by deeply held ideological animuses. It's certainly curious that the Left, which has been hostile to reaching a nuclear understanding with the US (or any other kind of understanding for that matter), should suddenly insist on dotting the i's and crossing the t's of the July 18 agreement, or speak in the language of nuclear hawks.

The Indian Express, 5 August 2006

Indo-Iran gas link can't delink nuke deal: US

Kolkata, August 4: The United States sought to delink its nuclear deal with India from the move to import gas from Iran and voiced confidence that the agreement would be implemented by Washington in its 'true spirit'. "Our nuclear deal is not dependent on that. India was taking a step in keeping with its own interest. We would not like to change that", US Assistant Secretary of State for Central and South Asian Affairs Richard A Boucher told a press conference. Stating that the US had deep respect for the Iranian people and their culture, Boucher said the Bush administration was, however, concerned over the behaviour of the Iranian government which was 'undermining' the Palestinian peace process. "We know from the IAEA that Iran has been developing nuclear weapons for the past two decades. Therefore, it is not surprising that we have a problem with Iran. Even India has said that Iran should not acquire nuclear weapons," he said. Earlier, speaking at the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Boucher expressed confidence that Indo-US nuclear deal would get the approval of the Senate and be implemented in its true spirit by President George Bush after Senate approval.

The Indian Express, 5 August 2006

Mountain in the molehill

Did you notice that in the entire commotion over the Jaswant Singh mole revelation nobody talked about the one aspect which, if any at all, should have mattered today? And it is not so much as to who the mole was, but whether or not a leakage did take place in December 1995 and, if it did, whether it influenced India's ultimate decision to test. Or, put simply, is there any evidence that India, in the winter of 1995, had decided

conclusively, definitely to test but was only thwarted by pressure from Washington after it was tipped off by a 'mole' It may be difficult to conclusively say today who that mole was. But certain facts are very possible to ascertain. Are there any Cabinet, or rather Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (which then was the Cabinet Committee on Security as well) minutes that talk of a decision to go ahead with the tests? Similarly, are there any CCPA/CCS/PMO minutes of any kind of a decision to cancel the tests and the justification for doing so? This is the very bureaucratic, brahminical Bharat Sarkar. This is not Pakistan or North Korea where scientists can be ordered by a strongman on the phone to go ahead and do such things, or pull back. This establishment loves bureaucracy, the written word, instructions, authorisations and so on. Were any 'materials' moved to Pokharan?

Daily Times, 5 August 2006

Taming North Korea

During its first term, the Bush administration hoped that it could solve the North Korean nuclear problem through regime change. The hope was that isolation and sanctions would topple Kim Jong Il's dictatorship. But the regime proved resistant. The fires of the Middle East must not be allowed to distract the world's attention from the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear ambitions, which it demonstrated by its recent test of a long-range missile. Yet that is what appears to be happening. In mid-July, the Group of Eight's summit in St Petersburg ended by calling on North Korea to stop its missile tests and to abandon its nuclear weapons programme. This followed a UN Security Council resolution that condemned North Korea's missile launches of July 5, demanded that it return to the negotiating table, and required UN members to prevent the import and export of any material or money related to North Korea's missile or unconventional weapons programmes. China's President Hu Jintao urged progress in the stalled talks so that 'the entire Korean peninsula can be denuclearised'. This seemed like a diplomatic breakthrough, but there was less forward movement than meets the eye.

Daily Times, 5 August 2006

Khushab reactor will not lead to nuclear build-up, says Durrani

WASHINGTON: Ambassador Mahmud Ali Durrani has dismissed recent newspaper reports which allege that a nuclear reactor being built at Khushab since 2000 will result in a massive build-up of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. In an interview to the editors of the Washington Times published on Friday, Durrani dismissed a private Washington-based think tank's report on the reactor under construction at the Khushab nuclear complex as 'grossly exaggerated', and denied that the new plant could produce enough weapons-grade plutonium to boost Pakistan's production from an estimated two bombs a year to as many as 50. He said the heavy-water reactor would bring some increase in Pakistan's military nuclear capability at a time of heightened fears of a South Asia arms race with rival India. 'The plutonium may certainly be used for military purposes, but it is simply not the case that it will increase our capability X-fold,' said Durrani. The ambassador declined to give production figures for the new plant, but said it would be far less powerful than the 1,000-megawatt estimate given last month by the Institute for Science and International Security. Pakistan's current reactor, located near the new one, is a 50-megawatt unit completed in 1998. 'I would love it to be 1,000 megawatts, because we

certainly have the power needs,' he said light-heartedly.

The Washington Post, 5 August 2006

Pakistani Reactor Not as Significant As Was Reported, Administration Says

Days after it confirmed the existence of a partially completed heavy-water reactor in central Pakistan, the administration took steps this week to play down the significance of the project, saying the new facility will produce far less plutonium than initial reports indicated. That stance puts the administration in conflict with independent nuclear experts over that crucial question and what the answer means for South Asia's nuclear arms race. The nuclear analysts who brought the reactor to light stood by their conclusion that the reactor would dramatically boost Pakistan's capacity to develop plutonium-based warheads. Pakistan is believed to possess fewer than 50 warheads, all of them based on highly enriched uranium. Uranium-based bombs are heavier and harder to mount on missiles. "We are confident that this is a large reactor vessel," said David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security, a Washington nonprofit group that assesses the capabilities and weapons stockpiles of nuclear states.

The Tribune, 5 August 2006

New N-reactor to be used for military purposes, says Pak envoy

Washington: A new Pakistani nuclear reactor is likely to be used for 'military purposes,' Pakistan's Ambassador to the U.S. said on Thursday. In an interview with the Washington Times, Ambassador Mahmud Ali Durrani denied, however, that this would lead to a massive increase in the country's nuclear arsenal. 'The plutonium may certainly be used for military purposes, but it is simply not the case that it will increase our capability X-fold,' he said. The Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) reported last month that Pakistan is building a second heavy water production reactor inside the Khushab complex that could enable the production of up to 50 nuclear weapons a year. The reactor 'could produce over 200 kg of weapon-grade plutonium per year, assuming it operates at full power for a modest 220 days per year. At 4-5 kg of plutonium per weapon, this stock would allow the production of over 40-50 nuclear weapons a year. The reactor could also be used to produce substantial amounts of tritium for boosted fission weapons,' authors David Albright and Paul Brannan wrote.

The Indian Express, 6 August 2006

US blacklisting baseless: firm

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 5: Two Indian firms blacklisted on Friday by the US for allegedly supplying chemicals used to make weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) or long-range missiles to Iran, have refuted the claims and decided to present their defence to South Block next week. The firms, blacklisted until July 2008 under Washington's Iran-Syria Non-Proliferation Act this week, are Hyderabad-based Balaji Amines Ltd, a Rs 150-crore firm listed on the BSE, and a privately held Rs 30-crore Mumbai-based firm Prachi Poly Products Ltd. Both have said the chemicals they exported to Iran have no use in the manufacture of weapons of any kind. Other agencies blacklisted on Friday are Russia's Sukhoi and Rosoboronexport, and firms in Cuba and North Korea. Two other Indian firms - Sandhya Organics and Sabero Organics - were blacklisted under similar charges by the US in December last year. Speaking to The Indian Express from Solapur,

Maharashtra, Balaji Amines director Ram Reddy said, "We have followed all laid down procedures. The items we exported to Iran are used in the manufacture of antibiotics, and we sell the same products to big pharma companies in India as well." Reddy indicated that his firm was unofficially instructed by the External Affairs Ministry last year to stop exporting to Iran, after which the firm complied in December even though its insistence on an official written order from the government did not come through.

The Hindu, 6 August 2006

Natwar Singh mobilising parties against the nuclear deal between India and U.S.

New Delhi: Apparently isolated in the Congress in the wake of the Pathak Authority findings on the Iraqi oil-for-food scam, the former External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh appears mobilising political parties opposed to the India-U.S. nuclear deal. Mr. Natwar Singh had a dinner meeting with Samajwadi Party and Janata Dal (United) leaders Amar Singh and Digvijay Singh on Friday. He is slated to meet SP, CPI (M) and BJP leaders at his residence here on Sunday to fine-tune their opposition to the U.S. legislation to implement the deal. The meeting is likely to discuss the resolution these parties want Parliament to adopt to reflect the "sense of the House" against various provisions of the U.S. law which, they claim, will go against India's interests. After the Pathak report and the Action Taken Report are presented in Parliament, the Congress may consider the course of action against Mr. Natwar Singh, who lost his ministership at the Centre in December last after having been named a non-contractual beneficiary in the Volcker Committee Report on the scam.

The Hindu, 6 August 2006

"Fear of U.S. kept BJP silent on 'mole' issue"

Ahmedabad: Communist Party of India (Marxist) general secretary Prakash Karat on Saturday alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party kept silent on the 'mole-in-the-PMO' issue when it was in power because it was afraid of displeasing the United States. "The BJP was afraid of angering the U.S. and so did not conduct an inquiry into the matter when it was in power," Mr. Karat said, while addressing a gathering of party workers here. "Though the BJP came to power two terms after the Narasimha Rao Government, it did not set up an inquiry though Jaswant Singh knew about the presence of a U.S. mole in Mr. Rao's office," he said. "They did not want to act against the Americans and so they did not bring up this issue when they were in power," he alleged.

The Washington Post, 6 August 2006

6 of 7 N.Korean Missile Tests Successful

TOKYO: An analysis by Japan and the United States has concluded that six of the seven missiles tested by North Korea last month fell within their targets, a major Japanese newspaper reported Sunday. Only a newly developed long-range missile, Taepodong-2, is believed to have failed, the Yomiuri newspaper said, citing unidentified Japanese officials. Based on initial data from U.S. military early warning satellites, Japan's Defense Agency had doubted the targeting accuracy of the missiles, but later discovered that the six medium-range missiles actually fell inside the sea zone North Korea had marked beforehand, the newspaper said. North Korea's July 5 missile tests drew strong international condemnation, prompting the U.N. Security Council to adopt a statement

denouncing the launches and banning countries from missile-related dealings with the North. Although the Taepodong-2, believed to be capable of reaching parts of the United States, crashed shortly after being launched, the accuracy of the other missiles was relatively high, the newspaper quoted the officials as saying.

The Hindu, 6 August 2006

Iran wants nuclear talks, but not at gunpoint

Tehran: In his first reaction to the United Nations Security Council deadline for Iran to suspend all fuel enrichment activity, the Islamic Republic's top nuclear negotiator said his country was always ready for "just and constructive" negotiations but would never agree to change its policies under pressure. Ali Larijani, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, told The Hindu and Frontline in an interview here on Saturday, that by pushing through Resolution 1696 the United States and its allies have "kicked out" the package of nuclear proposals they themselves had presented to Iran in June. The package - drafted by the 'five plus one', that is, the five permanent members of the UNSC and Germany - centres on Iran agreeing to a voluntary suspension of enrichment in exchange for a European commitment to provide Tehran light water reactors and nuclear fuel. Iran had said it would formulate a detailed response to the package by August 22. But the Security Council last week set a deadline of August 31, threatening Iran with sanctions if its fuel cycle activities were not halted by then.

The Times of India, 6 August 2006

Pakistan may use nuke reactor

WASHINGTON: Pakistan has acknowledged that a major new Pakistani plutonium nuclear reactor under construction at Khushab could be used for "military purposes", but claimed it will not lead to a massive increase in the country's nuclear arsenal. This "first official acknowledgment that the heavy-water reactor will bring at least some increase in Pakistan's military nuclear capability at a time of heightened fears of a South Asia arms race with rival India" came from Pakistan's new ambassador in an interview on Friday. "The plutonium may certainly be used for military purposes, but it is simply not the case that it will increase our capability X-fold," Mahmud Ali Durrani, a former top defence adviser to the Pakistani president and chairman of the country's military industrial complex for much of the 1990s, said. He declined to give production figures for the new plant, but said it would be far less powerful than the 1,000-megawatt estimate given last month by the Institute for Science and International Security. Pakistan's current reactor, located near the new one, is a 50-megawatt unit completed in 1998.

Daily Times, 6 August 2006

Controversy erupts over size of Khushab reactor

WASHINGTON: A controversy has broken out over the capacity of the plutonium reactor Pakistan has been building at Khushab since 2000, with the US administration saying that the facility's output will not be as great as being claimed by a private think tank. David Albright of the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) insists that the Khushab reactor, when completed, will give Pakistan the ability to make 40 to 50 nuclear warheads a year. The claim has been denied by Pakistani officials, including the Ambassador to Washington Mahmud Ali Durrani. The ambassador has also refuted

Albright's view that this enhanced capacity will result in an arms race in South Asia. In an interview published by the Washington Times on Friday, Durrani dismissed the ISIS report on the Khushab nuclear complex as 'grossly exaggerated', and denied that the new plant could produce enough weapons-grade plutonium to boost Pakistan's production from an estimated two bombs a year to as many as 50. He said the heavy-water reactor will bring some increase in Pakistan's military nuclear capability at a time of heightened fears of a South Asia arms race with rival India. "The plutonium may certainly be used for military purposes, but it is simply not the case that it will increase our capability X-fold," said Durrani. The ambassador did not give production figures for the new plant, but said it would be far less powerful than the 1,000-megawatt estimate given by ISIS.

The Hindu, 7 August 2006

Nuke deal, Indo-Pak ties to dominate Boucher's talks today

New Delhi, Aug. 7: The Indo-US civil nuclear deal and Indo-Pak relations in the backdrop of Mumbai blasts are expected to dominate the talks that American Assistant Secretary of State, Richard Boucher, will have with officials here today. During the talks, the Indian side is expected to convey to Boucher its reasons for saying that "elements" in Pakistan are engaged in attempts to destabilise India through terrorist acts. The US official had recently suggested that India did not have evidence to blame anybody for the Mumbai blasts, a statement that was strongly objected to by New Delhi. Boucher will hold talks with S Jai Shanker, Joint Secretary (Americas) in the External Affairs Ministry, to "pursue the agenda" outlined by US President George W Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to advance the US-India strategic partnership, including civil nuclear energy cooperation. With concerns being expressed here with regard to certain aspects of the US legislations on civil nuclear cooperation, Boucher is expected to reassure India that there will no shifting of goalposts with regard to the deal outlined in the July 18, 2005 Joint Statement.

The Indian Express, 7 August 2006

Manmohan was opposed to nuke tests: Jaswant

New Delhi: Former External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh on Sunday claimed that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was opposed to Narasimha Rao government's plans to conduct nuclear tests. "I have information that Singh, as finance minister in the Rao government, was opposed to the tests and had cited financial problems which could arise due to the tests," Jaswant told a TV channel. The BJP leader also asked the PM to reveal whether his opinion was sought on the issue or not. "If his opinion was not sought, then it raises a question. If it was sought, what was it." He said the Indo-US nuclear deal was nothing but "a rebirth" of CTBT. Jaswant, who had done somersaults on the alleged mole in the PMO, demanded that the PM come up with a statement if he felt that there was no informer in the PMO.

The Indian Express, 7 August 2006

Iran vows more atom work, to hit back at sanctions

TEHRAN, August 6: Iran vowed on Sunday to expand its atomic fuel work and warned that any UN sanctions aimed at halting its uranium enrichment would incur a painful riposte, possibly including a cut in oil exports. Chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani said

Iran would expand the number of atomic centrifuges. Centrifuges enrich uranium by spinning it at supersonic speeds. "We will expand nuclear technology at whatever stage it maybe necessary and all of Iran's nuclear technology including the (centrifuge) cascades will be expanded," he told a news conference. Such remarks reject a UN Security Council resolution demanding to Tehran halt its nuclear work by August 31 or face sanctions. The West fears Iran will use enriched uranium to make atomic bombs. Larijani said the expansion of atomic work would be conducted under the supervision of the IAEA but even that could be in question if Iran felt unfairly treated. "We do not want to end the supervision of the agency, but you should not do anything to force Iran to do so," he said. He warned the UN Security Council not to impose sanctions on the world's fourth biggest exporter of crude oil.

The Hindu, 7 August 2006

Design flaw behind Agni-III failure: Force

NEW DELHI: India's longest-range ballistic missile, Agni-III, which failed its maiden test on July 9, has more serious problems than have been reported. Unless rectified and successfully proven, the failed Agni-III test will continue to have serious implications for India's credible minimum deterrence, according to the strategic affairs magazine Force. "The problem in Agni-III occurred in its first rocket itself after the propellant burnt for about 50 seconds. A top Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) official confirmed this to Force. This implies a design flaw that could happen on many counts. The gimbaled nozzles in the first stage of the rocket may not have functioned, there could have been an irregular flow of propellant through the nozzles, and the propellant itself may require an investigation," writes Force Editor Pravin Sawhney in the latest edition of the magazine. The magazine goes on to point out that the more pertinent thing is that nothing of Agni-III as a whole system has yet been validated including stage separation, re-entry at high temperature, the composite (carbon-carbon) bonded material on the nose cone of the re-entry vehicle as the temperature at re-entering the atmosphere would be much higher than 3,000 degrees centigrade, the stability of the warhead within the payload and the guidance system which is imperfect for long ranges.

The New York Times, 7 August 2006

Iran Still Plans Reply to Atomic Incentives Deal

TEHRAN: Iran still plans to reply by August 22 to a big power offer of incentives to stop making nuclear fuel, an official said on Monday, but more senior politicians have already rejected the terms of the package. The United States, Britain, France, Germany, China and Russia proposed two months ago to give Iran trade and technical concessions if it shelve an uranium enrichment program first. But Iran was deemed to take too long to respond and was referred to the U.N. Security Council. The world body promptly passed a resolution ordering Tehran to halt atomic work or face the possible threat of sanctions. Tehran's Foreign Ministry said this resolution would automatically kill off the package of incentives. But government spokesman Gholamhossein Elham said Tehran would still respond. "We are still ready to answer the proposed package in the time frame we gave, and we will answer," he was quoted as saying by the official IRNA news agency.

The Tribune, 8 August 2006

Nuclear blackmail

The Pakistani Ambassador to the United States, Mr Mahmud Ali Durrani, has made it clear that the new plutonium-producing reactor coming up at the Khushab complex in Pakistan is intended to increase Pakistan's arsenal. Pakistan's repeated arguments about wanting to correct a regional imbalance are disingenuous. Ever since the Indo-US nuclear deal was announced in July last year, Pakistan has been seeking a similar arrangement, citing its own energy needs. But the US has stood firm in making a distinction between the two countries. Given Pakistan's track record, the US will have to do more to rein in its nuclear ambitions. Pakistan's latest venture can seriously destabilise the region. The ambassador has sought to link the Khushab expansion with the Indo-US deal. These manoeuvres, including the timing of Mr Durrani's statement, are of a piece with the general strategy of nuclear blackmail being adopted by Pakistan. On the one hand, it sees its nuclear capability as an umbrella under which it can prosecute war of a different kind against India. On the other, it is used as a leverage against the West.

Daily Times, 8 August 2006

ISIS stands by its findings on Khushab reactor

WASHINGTON: The Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) has insisted that its findings on the nuclear reactor at Khushab are correct, saying that a second reactor being built by Pakistan at the site is not a replica of the first reactor but is being constructed for a different purpose than the first. Nuclear experts David Albright and Paul Brannan of ISIS, which first disclosed the news of a second Khushab reactor, said in a message that since the release of its report on the Khushab site, "we have received several comments and criticisms and we want to share our reaction and some additional information. Some people have pointed out that the footprint of the first Khushab reactor is similar in size to the one under construction, implying that the power of both reactors is similar. However, in examining reactors, particularly those for military production, the building size is a poor indicator of the reactor's power. In addition, the reactor buildings and their associated surface facilities look noticeably different, so the new reactor does not appear to be a replica, and it is logical to assume it serves a different purpose than the first reactor."

The Hindu, 8 August 2006

Left will not vote with BJP, says Basu

KOLKATA: The Bharatiya Janata Party might share the views of the Left parties on the nuclear deal with the United States but that does not mean that the latter would vote with it against the United Progressive Alliance Government on the issue, veteran Marxist leader Jyoti Basu said here on Monday. "If the BJP has the same views on the issue, we cannot help it", he said when asked by newsmen whether the Left parties and the BJP, who were opposed to the nuclear deal, would join ranks if it came to a vote in Parliament. Two days ago, Mr. Basu reiterated that the Communist Party of India (Marxist) was not for bringing down the UPA Government, though it had strong reservations against the Centre's pro-U.S. stance. "We have communicated to the Government our objections [to the nuclear deal] and have said so in writing. But they [the Centre] are not listening", Mr Basu said emerging from a meeting of the CPI (M)'s State Committee. The Left parties

had demanded that the matter be discussed in Parliament "so that the people can know the views of the different parties."

The Indian Express, 8 August 2006

Sanctions on Indian firms not justified, US told

New Delhi: India on Monday termed the US sanction on two Indian firms for transferring "chemicals" to Iran unjustified and the same was conveyed to Richard Boucher, US Assistant Secretary of State who is in New Delhi. India said the transfer of chemicals was not in "violation of regulations" or India's "international obligations". The US had imposed sanctions on two Indian companies, Balaji Amines and Prachi Poly Products, hours after US House of Representatives approved the Indo-US civilian nuclear deal with an overwhelming majority, for transferring missile-related material to Iran. "Our preliminary assessment is that the transfer of such chemicals was not in violation of our regulations or our international obligations," said an MEA spokesperson.

The Asian Age, 9 August 2006

India won't accept U.S. nuclear-policing

The Indo-US nuclear deal has gone through a metamorphosis in the hands of the Committees in the American Senate. The July 18, 2005 agreement recognises that India, though not a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, has over the years behaved with great responsibility when it comes to non-proliferation. Our record is perhaps better than some of the weapons countries that have signed the NPT. In light of this fact, the statement seeks to give India a status roughly equal to that of the recognised nuclear weapon states, and to bring it into the mainstream of the nuclear community. However, the tone of the Senate discussions and of the amendments proposed by them, suggests that India still needs to be "policed" by the United States, to the extent that the US President has to give a yearly "character certificate" to keep the nuclear deal alive. These aspects have been elaborated in these columns. This is clearly contrary to the spirit and words of the July 18 agreement, and absolutely unacceptable to any sovereign nation - a fact that even the Indian government now concedes.

The Hindu, 9 August 2006

India, a responsible nuclear actor: U.S.

WASHINGTON: The Bush administration has said that the sanctions imposed on two private Indian firms for allegedly providing Iran with nuclear material did not reflect New Delhi's non-proliferation record and hailed India as a "very responsible actor" in the field. The administration also said it had not deliberately withheld information from the Congress on sanctions against the Indian firms. When asked about the sanctions against the firms, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said: "There are 33 companies that are currently sanctioned under the Iran Non-Proliferation Act. But we believe the Indian Government itself is a responsible actor, very responsible actor on the front of non-proliferation." "We believe that the Indian Government has a very strong record overall on the non-proliferation front and that the deal negotiated between the U.S. and India on nuclear issues is a good one for the U.S., is a good one for the international community on the non-proliferation front." He said he was not aware of any attempt to deliberately withhold information from the Congress in that regard.

The Hindu, 9 August 2006

Iran objects to Boucher's remarks

NEW DELHI: Iran has taken exception to the remarks made by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher that Washington had not found Tehran stable or reliable in anything in the last 10-20 years. In a statement on Tuesday, the Iranian Embassy said: "Criticising a third country in the host country is against international diplomatic norms and does not even reflect American culture." "The interests of the nations of the region require support of all global players to the projects which may bring about prosperity and development and would also help in reducing tension and terrorism," the release added.

The New York Times, 9 August 2006

U.S.: No Sign Iran Will Comply With U.N.

WASHINGTON: With deadlines approaching, the State Department on Tuesday said it has seen no indications that Iran plans to comply with U.N. demands that it suspend enrichment of uranium, a key step in making nuclear weapons. Defiance could trigger efforts by the United States and European allies to impose economic or political sanctions on Iran in the Security Council. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, due in New York this week to oversee U.N. attempts to bring about a cease-fire in the Mideast, will also confer with foreign ministers about how to deal with Iran, said the State Department spokesman Sean McCormack. "There have been a variety of public statements from the Iranians, but we haven't seen any evidence yet that they are complying with the demand and requirement of the international community," McCormack said. World powers in June offered Iran a package of incentives to curb its enrichment program. These included the United States supplying Iran with some nuclear technology for civilian projects. Iran denies that is developing nuclear weapons, describing its enrichment and related activities as civilian in nature.

The Hindu, 10 August 2006

If pressure continues, Iran can change mind on NPT

Tehran : Providing the clearest indication yet of Iran's intention to resist mounting Western pressure on its civilian nuclear programme, President Mahmud Ahmadinejad has said that any attempt to take away the rights his country had under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty could force it to reconsider its adherence to the NPT. In an exclusive interview to The Hindu at the Pasteur complex here on Tuesday, Mr. Ahmadinejad said that he still believed in dialogue, despite last week's United Nations Security Council resolution threatening sanctions against Tehran. Iran was "in the very middle of studying" the European package of incentives and was trying its best to come up with an answer by August 22, the date it had always said it would respond by. "We said we would reply on the 22nd of August and they issued a resolution nevertheless!" he said. "I am at a loss to explain this... The only conclusion I can draw is that they are bullying us... They really are not looking for a dialogue." Declaring that Iran was not concerned at this pressure, he said the United States and its European allies had "miscalculated" and would "regret the miscalculation they have made today."

Hindustan Times, 10 August 2006

Japan renews calls for global N-disarmament

Tokyo, August 9: Japanese city of Nagasaki on Wednesday marked the 61st anniversary of its atomic bombing with renewed calls for global nuclear disarmament and criticism of the India-US civilian nuclear cooperation. Nagasaki Mayor Itcho Ito said there were voices of "anger and frustration" throughout the city and urged nations "that rely on nuclear armaments to heed the voices of peace-loving people, not least the atomic bomb survivors". "The nuclear weapon states have not demonstrated sincerity in their efforts at disarmament; the United States in particular, has issued a tacit approval of nuclear weapons development by India," Ito was quoted as saying by the Kyodo news agency. His criticism was directed against the US' civilian nuclear deal with India, which is not a signatory to the NPT. He also censured North Korea for "threatening the peace and security" of Japan and the world in pursuit of its nuclear ambitions. "The very structure of non-proliferation is facing a crisis," Ito added, also referring to Pakistan, a declared nuclear weapons state, Israel, widely suspected to possess such arms, and Iran, whose plans have caused global concern.

The Tribune, 11 August 2006

Poland returns 40 kg N-fuel

Vienna, August 10: Poland has returned to Russia close to 40 kg of highly enriched uranium, enough to make an atomic bomb, as part of a global effort to secure high-risk nuclear material, a UN watchdog said today. In a secret pre-dawn operation, the uranium was airlifted from Poland's Otwock-Swierk research reactor to Novosibirsk, Russia, where it would be diluted to ensure that it could not be used to build a bomb, the International Atomic Energy Agency said. IAEA safeguards inspectors and technical experts from the US National Nuclear Security Administration monitored the loading of the uranium into canisters. The two-day operation was completed yesterday and secured by armed guards throughout. The highly enriched uranium (HEU) was repatriated under a US Global Threat Reduction Initiative to prevent nuclear materials falling into the hands of militant groups or states regarded as sponsors of terrorism. A statement by the Vienna-based IAEA said a total of around 195 kg of HEU of Russian origin had been returned to Russia from foreign research reactors in the past few years.

Hindustan Times, 11 August 2006

'India will not be dictated on Iran'

Washington, August 11: With India unwilling to accept dictation from external powers, relations between India and Iran may cause policy differences between New Delhi and Washington, says a new Congressional study. This, however, is unlikely to derail their own "global partnership", the study adds. While US policy is to isolate Iran and to ensure that its nuclear programme is used for purely civilian purposes, India has never shared US assessments of Iran as an aggressive regional power, notes the Congressional Research Service report. As US relations with India have grown both deeper and more expansive in the new century, some in Washington believe that New Delhi's friendship with Tehran could become a significant obstacle to further development of Indo-US ties. However, India-Iran relations are unlikely to derail the further development of the Indo-US global partnership, the report on "India-Iran Relations and US Interests" by K Alan

Kronstadt and Kenneth Katzman said. At the same time, given a clear Indian interest in maintaining positive ties with Iran, especially in the area of energy commerce, New Delhi is unlikely to abandon its relationship with Tehran or to accept dictation on the topic from external powers, it opined.

The Statesman, 12 August 2006

Nuke stand fine but

NEW DELHI, Aug. 11: The CPI-M today distanced itself from the BJP on the Indo-US nuclear issue saying the saffron party had brought India at par with Pakistan by virtue of the Pokhran-II blasts from a globally-acceptable stand that India professed earlier. "We have fundamental differences with BJP on the issue. We had opposed Pokhran-II and nuclear weaponisation and we continue to do so," CPI-M Politburo member Mr Sitaram Yechury told reporters here. Reiterating the party's stand that the 'sense of the House' should be reflected on the matter when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh replied to a debate expected next week in Rajya Sabha, he said the government should assure that the Indo-US deal would not affect India's strategic nuclear programme. "We want to be assured that the deal would not bind us to conditions. We had raised nine critical areas of departure made by the USA from the July 2005 joint statement. Government should reaffirm that these concerns would be addressed". Mr Yechury's colleagues Mr Basudeb Acharia and Mr Rupchand Pal said: "The least that was expected of the Prime Minister was an undertaking to never bend to pressure and not go beyond the parameters set by Parliament and the statements he made on the floor of the House."

The Tribune, 12 August 2006

NDA seeks Kalam's intervention on nuclear deal

New Delhi, August 11: Asserting that the events relating to the Indo-US nuclear deal could prove detrimental to India's nuclear sovereignty, the NDA today sought the intervention of President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam to ensure that the UPA government accepts 'The Sense of Our Parliament' on the issue. In a three-page memorandum submitted to the President this evening, the NDA listed 10 parameters and insisted that unless these were met with, this nuclear deal would be wholly biased against national interest and it asymmetrical and totally detrimental to India's scientific endeavours and interests. The delegation was led by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and comprised among others Leaders of Opposition L.K. Advani and Jaswant Singh, NDA convener George Fernandes and BJP president Rajnath Singh. Stating that India's nuclear programme, including its strategic programme, had always been backed by a strong national consensus, the memorandum said the nuclear deal with the US could not be acceptable to India unless it ensured the following: a) it must involve full civil nuclear cooperation with India b) it must accord India the same rights and benefits as the other nuclear-weapons states c) under it, India will undertake only such obligations as adopted by the other nuclear-weapons states d) at any stage Indian action will only be reciprocal and e) India will accept international inspections on its civil facilities or any other binding obligation only after "all restrictions on India have been lifted".

The Hindu, 12 August 2006

Radioactive leak

TOKYO: A negligible amount of radioactive steam released at a nuclear plant in northern Japan escaped outside the compound, but there is no fear of harm to the environment, the operator Tokyo Electric Power Co. said on Friday. An increase in the level of tritium was detected during an air sampling outside the plant on Sunday, and the operator later found that steam containing radioactive material was leaking from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, northeast of Tokyo, the company said. The amount of radiation, however, was negligible and would not harm the environment, it said. The plant shut down the boiler which was leaking the steam, the company said. The plant is currently investigating the cause of the leak, it said. Tritium is a radioactive isotope of hydrogen and is produced in nuclear reactors.

The Hindu, 12 August 2006

Nuclear deal: why avoid sense of Parliament?

The Indo-U.S. nuclear agreement has been at the centre of a major controversy. Serious problems have arisen over the manner in which the nuclear cooperation deal is sought to be implemented. From the time of the July 18, 2005 nuclear cooperation agreement and the first statement made by the Prime Minister to Parliament on July 29, the course of negotiations has resulted in the United States seeking to change the terms and conditions contained in the joint statement. These warning signals became more explicit when the U.S. Congress took up for consideration the bill to amend the Atomic Energy Act to exempt certain provisions to facilitate the Indo-U.S. nuclear agreement. Two versions of the bill processed through the relevant committees of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives have added on various unacceptable conditions and reframed important provisions of the original agreement. The House of Representatives adopted the draft bill (HR 5682), which is exactly the same as what was approved in the House Committee. The Senate is supposed to take up its version of the bill in September.

The Pioneer, 12 August 2006

N-deal: Not yet time to hit panic button

'Amendments not binding, only 123 text matters' ----- US President George W Bush is understood to have conveyed to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh that he too remains committed to the July 18, 2005 Indo-US agreement on civil nuclear cooperation. This matter was discussed between the two leaders when they met on the sidelines of the G-8 summit at St. Petersburg last month. Their discussions took place in light of the opposition to the deal in India and the roadblocks being mounted by US legislators while ratifying the agreement. Officials here say that it is premature to jump the gun and come to definite conclusions about the alleged shifting of goalposts by the US Administration. They say that the legislative process in the US is totally different from India's and, thus, amendments incorporated in the resolutions ratifying the deal by the House of Representatives and Senate may not form part of the legal parameters of the final agreement. The legal parameters would be known only after the reconciliation meeting of the US Houses takes place towards the end of September once the Senate ratifies the agreement. The final text, which will be the basis for the 123 Agreement the two countries will be required to sign, would emerge only after the reconciliation committee

meets to accept or reject various amendments passed by the two US Houses.

Daily Times, 12 August 2006

Pakistan's nukes not a threat to Israel: Perez

LAHORE: Pakistan is a responsible country and its nuclear programme is not a threat to Israel, Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Perez said in an interview with ARY television on Friday. Perez said Pakistan's nuclear bomb was not a problem, but the issue was how responsible the Pakistani government was? "Differences with Pakistan are not on religion, but on responsibility. Everything will be satisfactory if Pakistan has a responsible government," Perez said. He said that Pakistan and Pakistanis were very important for Israel. "Israel doesn't have any conflict with Pakistan and I don't think Israel and Pakistan will ever indulge in a conflict." Perez said that Pakistan and Israel could have normal diplomatic relations, adding that Israel had never refused dialogue with Pakistan. "We want friendship with everyone. It is up to Pakistan to decide if it wants diplomatic relations with Israel." He hoped that India wouldn't use weapons supplied by Israel against Pakistan. He also prayed for the success of the Pakistan-India peace process. Perez held Hezbollah responsible for the ongoing war between Israel and Lebanon, and said that Israel wanted a political solution to the problem. He ruled out friendship with Iran, calling the Iranian government 'irresponsible' and its nuclear programme a threat to Israel. He said Israel did not hate Muslims.

The Nation, 12 August 2006

Pakistan close to N-deal with China

ISLAMABAD-Pakistan and China are close to ink the landmark accord on nuclear energy cooperation, under which Islamabad will acquire six reactors of 300 megawatts each. "Negotiations on nuclear energy cooperation between Pakistan and China are in final stages and the deal is most likely to be reached at during the forthcoming visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao in November, this year," said an official here on Friday. He said Pakistan also wanted to acquire a nuclear power reactor of 600 megawatts from China but the Chinese have just started using its first such reactors hence its provision to Pakistan would take some time. The nuclear energy cooperation deal with China has brought great solace to Pakistan, as the United States is not willing to extend such cooperation to Islamabad despite the months' long talks between the allied nations in war on terror. With Chinese cooperation, Pak would build six new nuclear reactors in next 10 years having capacity of 2,000 megawatts, the official said. This was part of Pak's plan to increase the capacity of N-power generation to over 8,000 megawatts by 2025, he added. China has already helped Pak build a nuclear reactor of 350 megawatts at Chashma near and it was currently building one more at the same place with the same capacity.

Japan Times, 12 August 2006

Illegal export linked to North clinic, bio-war lab

YAMAGUCHI: The freeze dryer illegally exported by a Korean trader to North Korea four years ago may be at a Pyongyang clinic used by top leader Kim Jong Il that is also suspected of being a biological weapons research facility, police sources said Friday. Kim Young Gun, 58, former president of Tokyo-based Meisho Yoko, told investigators that he was of the belief that the dryer would be used at Ponghwa clinic, which is reserved for

VIPs, including high-ranking members of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea but is also believed a biological weapons research lab. Kim Young Gun, a Korean resident of Japan, was arrested Thursday for illegally exporting the freeze dryer, which could have biological warfare applications. Freeze dryers, which quickly dry solid substances in a vacuum, are mainly used to make instant coffee and noodles. Their export is strictly regulated under the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Control Law because they could be used to store and cultivate bacteria over long periods and to create weapons of mass destruction. Meisho Yoko, based in Sugunami Ward, Tokyo, received an order for the dryer in 2002 from a North Korean trading house and exported it to the North.

The Hindu, 13 August 2006

Manmohan Singh to discuss nuclear deal with scientists

New Delhi: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has instructed his aides to arrange for a dialogue with leading nuclear scientists to address the scientific community's misgivings over the proposed India-United States agreement. According to informed sources, the Prime Minister has noted that a number of distinguished nuclear scientists, including former chairmen and members of the Atomic Energy Commission, have been critical of the changes sought to be introduced in the July 2005 India-U.S. framework. It is also realised that the reservations expressed by some of these scientists have helped sustain the larger political opposition to the deal. Accordingly, the Prime Minister proposes to sit down with the critics and to explain the Government's viewpoint. The meeting could come about soon after Independence Day. The scientific community's misgivings have deepened since the two Houses of the American Congress added conditionalities to the July 2005 agreement. The official view is that most of these misgivings are based on unfamiliarity with the American legislative process.

The Times of India, 13 August 2006

Govt gears up to check WMD's use by terrorists

NEW DELHI: The government has drawn up foolproof guidelines to deal with possible terrorist attacks involving nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and formed specialist teams that will swing into action to deal with such eventualities. The three Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) drawn up by the government provide for identification of potential targets and the formation and training of specialist response teams, Home Ministry sources said on Sunday. SOPs for responding to terror attacks using chemical weapons and involving use of radioactive materials have been circulated to concerned ministries and state governments for drawing up their individual action plans and initiating necessary preparedness measures. The sources, however, said so far no inputs have come to the notice of the government regarding terrorists acquiring chemical and biological weapons and radioactive materials for use in attacks. Four of the eight battalions of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been earmarked specially for responding to such terrorist strikes.

The Times of India, 13 August 2006

Security beefed up at BARC

MUMBAI: Security has been stepped up at the country's premier nuclear organisation the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), with deployment of the elite National Security

Guards (NSG) for the first time, following inputs of a possible terrorist attack and in view of the threat perception for the Independence Day, security officials said. "Following inputs of a possible terrorist strike from central intelligence agencies, movements have been restricted within the Anushakti Nagar colony as well as inside the BARC," security agencies, currently operating inside the BARC, said. "In addition to BARC security (without arms), Central Industrial Security Force, Mumbai Police, NSG and Army personnel are posted inside BARC," they said. NSG was deployed in view of the Independence Day threat perception, while CISF was deployed replacing State Reserve Police from June one, they said. The security officials said all the gates to Anushakti Nagar are closed except for two main gates for the scrutiny of more than 12,000 employees as well as more than 1000 contract workers who enter BARC every day for their work.

Hindustan Times, 13 August 2006

'PM should not accept changes in N-deal'

Ludhiana: Asserting that US is deviating from the original parameters of the Indo-US nuclear deal, the CPI-M on Sunday demanded that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh should ensure that the country should not accept any new conditions or changes to the deal that could harm national interests. "We have a lot of doubts about the Indo-US nuke deal and concerns about changes being made by US in it. We demand from the Prime Minister that India should not accept any changes in this deal which could be detrimental to the national interests or nuclear sovereignty," CPI-M polit buro member Sitaram Yechury told reporters in Ludhiana. Yechury said the US had now imposed a fresh condition that India could not re-use or reprocess the thorium extracted from uranium.

The Hindu, 13 August 2006

Do not succumb to U.S. pressure, Buddhadeb tells UPA Government

CHENNAI: Asking the Centre to pursue an independent foreign policy, West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee on Saturday warned against succumbing to pressure by the United States on the nuclear deal. Addressing a public meeting organised by the State Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), Mr. Bhattacharjee said Americans wanted India under their umbrella. "Our country is passing through a very difficult situation on all fronts - economic, political and foreign policy. We are in the midst of a crisis." But the CPI (M) had to support the United Progressive Alliance Government as the alternative was to support the Bharatiya Janata Party. Pointing out that the Public Distribution System had collapsed throughout the country, he said the Government was forced to import wheat from the U.S. This was a dangerous development. Although prices of essential commodities were increasing every day, the Government was sitting idle, Mr. Bhattacharjee said. Thousands of farmers had committed suicide because they could not get adequate prices for their crops.

The Tribune, 14 August 2006

Be ready for unconventional war

New Delhi, August 13: Amidst the climate of heightened security threat and tension between the two South Asian nuclear neighbours, a parliamentary committee has asked the Defence Ministry to be prepared for unconventional war. "Due to changing security

environment the threat of non-conventional-nuclear, biological and chemical-war has increased. The country, therefore, should be well prepared to meet any eventuality in case of such an attack," said Mr Balasaheb Vikhe Patil, Chairman of the standing committee on defence. The report said the Armed Forces Medical Services 'should re-look into our special preparedness and take all steps to deal with such situations more effectively.' 'Proper equipment and training should be provided to troops and bio-medicine developed in this area,' it said. The ministry informed the committee that to provide medical cover to nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) scenario, simplified and standardised treatment protocols had been evolved for prompt and effective NBC casualty management. It said the troops in the forward areas were equipped with minimum individual protective equipment and trained in mitigation techniques, de-contamination drills and for evacuation of casualties to the hospitals.

The Statesman, 14 August 2006

'Pak defence impregnable'

ISLAMABAD, Aug. 13: Claiming that the defence of the country has been made 'impregnable', Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf today said a comprehensive strategy is in place to ensure it goes from 'strength to strength'. Those on the 'fringes of society' and 'obscurantist elements' who do not wish to see Pakistan on the path of progress and prosperity, should not be allowed to succeed, he said in his independence day message. Pakistan will celebrate its 60th Independence Day tomorrow. 'It is our collective duty as citizens of the state not to let such elements succeed in their evil designs,' Musharraf said, adding 'we have the example of our founding fathers before us to emulate. We cannot afford to let down the vast majority of moderate and peace-loving citizens'. Musharraf claimed reforms and policies initiated during the last seven years have led to many achievements in all fields but there were still challenges ahead. 'While keeping in view the lofty objectives for which our country was created, it is our duty to take our beloved country forward in attaining its rightful place in the comity of nations,' Musharraf said.

Daily Times, 14 August 2006

Iran insists on nuclear right, threatens to quit IAEA

TEHRAN: Iran said on Sunday Western threats and pressure would not resolve a dispute over its atomic programme but could push Tehran to review its nuclear policy. Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi did not say what policy would be reviewed but President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has previously said Iran might reconsider membership of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The UN Security Council has demanded that Iran suspend sensitive atomic work by Aug. 31 or face the threat of sanctions. The West says it is being used to develop nuclear weapons. Iran denies the charge. "If they (the West) do not change their path, Iran will act proportionally," Asefi told a weekly news conference. "Iran will not yield to the language of threat and pressure. If they continue to pressure us, we will review our policy." Iran insists it wants to enrich uranium to make fuel for power stations not for producing material to make bombs. Iranian parliament speaker Gholamali Haddadadel said on Sunday Iran might follow North Korea out of the NPT in response to the UN resolution. Parliamentarians have previously threatened to present a bill calling for Iran to quit the treaty. "There is no reason to be a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) if Iran felt unfairly treated,"

the official IRNA news agency quoted Haddadadel as saying.

The Asian Age, 15 August 2006

N-Deal is an unmitigated disaster

The India-US nuclear deal will stunt India's emergence as a genuine nuclear weapon state, cripple its strategic deterrence, and reduce it to a US satrapy. Government's motivations in pushing ahead with it are, therefore, open to speculation, particularly as informed opinion is against it. Government has stymied a sense of Parliament resolution, designed to have set the basic parameters for the nuclear deal, on the grounds that the move was premature, since the related US legislation had still to be finalised, and that, in any case, it would ensure that the deal would remain within the framework of the July 18 understanding. This line of argumentation is unconvincing. The July 18 understanding, even if implemented as is, would irreparably compromise our nuclear programme, both civil and military, and place us squarely under the US yoke. Moreover, this understanding has been changed out of all recognition, over the last one year, in a manner adverse to India. Government, if not actually complicit in such changes, has been incapable of thwarting them.

The Indian Express, 15 August 2006

8-km strong security clamp on Kalpakkam

Chennai, August 14: The Indian Army along with the elite commandos of the National Security Guards (NSG) has taken over security of the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR) at Kalpakkam, imposing an 'informal curfew' in and around the facility within a radius of 8 km, beginning 6 pm today. The measures are part of a massive arrangement by the NSC to strengthen security at vital installations across the country on Independence Day eve. IGCAR is one of the most sophisticated and multi-disciplinary research programmes located on the Bay of Bengal coast. According to defence sources, the army and the NSG personnel reached Kalpakkam on Thursday and Friday. Two naval ships have also been patrolling the seas near Kalpakkam since August 10 and naval planes have been doing sorties to ensure that the area is 'sterile'. Fishermen have been prohibited from venturing into sea. An 'informal curfew' has been imposed in the township "so that any stranger coming into the area could be easily detected," CISF sources said, adding that shops had been instructed to close by 6 pm '.

Hindustan Times, 15 August 2006

North Korea nuclear talks need patience: Seoul

Sydney, August 14: South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon on Monday urged patience in attempts to lure North Korea back to talks about its nuclear weapons ambitions rather than risk a "negative" response from the secretive state. North Korea spurned calls at a regional security forum last month to return to the six-party talks, even threatening to quit the ASEAN Regional Forum altogether. The talks have been stalled since November and attempts to bring the communist state to informal discussions at the ASEAN forum in Kuala Lumpur failed, but Ban urged caution and diplomacy despite the lack of progress. "We need to be at this time to be patient, not to take any premature actions which may press North Korea to take negative responses," he said after addressing a foreign policy think tank in Australia. Fears about North Korea's nuclear

ambitions were exacerbated when Pyongyang defied international warnings and fired seven missiles into waters east of the Korean peninsula on July 5, an act Ban described as provocative.

The Hindu, 15 August 2006

`Set ground rules on nuclear deal'

New Delhi: Concerned by the legislative shape the India-U.S. nuclear agreement is taking in Washington, a group of senior nuclear scientists has called on Parliament to take a "unanimous decision" rejecting any "restraint in perpetuity" on the country's freedom of action or research capabilities in the nuclear field. The statement, signed by eight top scientists, including three former chairmen of the Atomic Energy Commission, is likely to strengthen the Left's demand for Parliament to adopt a resolution highlighting India's concerns about the deal. The scientists hail the July 18, 2005 agreement with the U.S. and welcome India's prospective entry into the "international nuclear community." But they say the U.S. Congress has "modified ... the implementation of [the] agreement" and that if the draft U.S. law is passed in the present form, "the `product' will become unacceptable to India." Stressing that it will be difficult to scrap these modifications once legislated, the scientists say Parliament must "work out, and insist on, the ground rules for the nuclear deal, at this stage itself."

The Times of India, 15 August 2006

Scientists voice concerns over Nuke deal

Mumbai: Top Indian scientists on Monday highlighted four points to express their anxiety about the Indo-US nuclear: one, that India's nuclear weapons programme shouldn't come under any international scrutiny; two, facilities developed indigenously shouldn't come under safeguards; three, indigenous R&D should remain autonomous; and four, Parliament should uphold national interest in this regard. They feel on all four counts there was danger of crippling compromise. While the development will certainly curtail the government's wiggle-room on the deal, on Monday it sought to put up a brave front as official sources claimed that it was precisely because of these "legitimate concerns" that the government took care to craft a deal that protects all of them. And whenever there were deviations, the government had taken them up with the US at the highest level. In fact, the scientists seem to have appreciated this. In their statement, they noted that the PM "has already taken up with President Bush the issue of the new clauses recommended by the US House of Representatives."

The New York Times, 15 August 2006

Iran Says Won't Back Down Over Atomic Rights

TEHRAN: Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said on Tuesday Iran would not yield to Western pressure to give up its home-grown nuclear technology. His comments came days before an August 22 deadline Iran set itself to respond to a demand by six world powers that Tehran give up uranium enrichment in return for economic and other incentives. Iran has so far shown no signs it will accept. "Today, we are fully mastering the nuclear fuel cycle for our peaceful atomic activities. It is a native technology... No one can take it away from us," Ahmadinejad said in a televised speech to a rally in the northwestern city of Ardebil. The United States, China, Russia, Britain, France and

Germany proposed in June to give Iran trade and technical incentives if Tehran halted all enrichment-related activities. Iran said it would reply by August 22. But this was deemed too long and Iran's case was sent back to the U.N. Security Council, which passed a resolution demanding Tehran halt the sensitive atomic work by August 31 or face possible sanctions.

The Asian Age, 16 August 2006

How to blunt US strategy

Certain fundamental aspects of US President George W. Bush's India policy are becoming clearer. Coming to terms with a nuclear-armed India on a fast-paced economic growth curve, Washington settled on a two-pronged approach. The first prong would co-opt the powerful non-proliferation lobby in Washington, once the small print and the Congressionally-mandated conditions in the reformed US laws began to be appreciated as a clever means of bringing India's nuclear military ambitions to heel and its foreign policy in line with US thinking. The second prong of this strategy, with immediate benefits to American financial institutions in mind, aimed expeditiously to open up the Indian economy, especially the potentially most profitable banking and insurance sectors, and to permit the entry of American "hedge funds" — "hot money" with a proven record of decamping at the first sign of economic downturn or even minor political hiccups unrelated to the economy, precipitating severe crises of the kind experienced some years back by the "little dragons" in Asia.

The Tribune, 16 August 2006

N-deal: PM to meet scientists today

New Delhi, August 15: Ahead of the Rajya Sabha discussion on the Indo-US nuclear agreement, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will hold a meeting tomorrow with scientists in the field, apparently to finalise the government's response on the issue. Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Anil Kakodkar will be among the nuclear scientists who will attend the meeting, official sources said today. The meeting assumes significance in the light of reservations expressed by eminent scientists on the Indo-US nuclear deal in the light of attempts by the US House and Senate committees to shift the goalpost to the detriment of India's interests. The government has already rejected the Opposition demand for adopting a sense of Parliament resolution on the issue, but the matter will come up in the two Houses in the form of a short discussion — on August 17 in the Rajya Sabha and next week in the Lok Sabha. The Prime Minister is expected to make a reply in the two Houses.

The Tribune, 16 August 2006

Nuclear uncertainties

The future of the Indo-US nuclear deal is becoming increasingly uncertain. India may not accept the changes the US Congress may make if they are not in consonance with the agreement signed by Dr Manmohan Singh and President George Bush on July 18, 2005. The deal falls through if the US Congress does not approve of it unchanged. Substantive changes by the US Congress could make it difficult for Dr Manmohan Singh to sell it to his party, its partners in the UPA and the Left which have all along been critical of the deal in any case. The Prime Minister, who has invested a lot of political capital in the

nuclear deal, has given a commitment to Parliament that India will stick to the deal only if the US stands by its own part of the bargain. Next few weeks will be critical for the fate of the July 18 agreement. Much will depend on how the Bush Administration pushes the deal through Congress before it adjourns. While the nuclear deal has to cross a few more hurdles before it becomes a reality, eight senior nuclear scientists have in a statement sought to underscore the point that all that is going on in the US Congress in this regard should not deprive India of the gains made in its nuclear programme with the efforts of its scientific and technological brains. They are feeling upset with certain clauses in the Bill passed by the US House of Representatives to amend the law to allow nuclear trade with India. They fear that the US Congress may make a law that will ultimately not be in conformity with the July 18 agreement.

The Indian Express, 16 August 2006

PM to tell House: US laws can't shape our diplomacy

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 15: Responding to criticism of the Indo-US nuclear deal, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will make it clear in Parliament on Thursday that India's foreign policy will not be guided by legislation passed in other countries, in this case the nuclear co-operation bill. What matters to India, the PM will say, is the content of the bilateral cooperation agreement being negotiated with the US. This agreement will be signed after the legislative process ends on Capitol Hill. Singh will also underline that India can back out if the legislation contradicts the spirit of the July 18 agreement. In the wake of opposition by Left parties and now an appeal by eight scientists, formerly with the nuclear establishment, a short-duration discussion is planned in Rajya Sabha on Thursday which will be followed by a response from the PM. He will emphasise that the July 18 joint statement remains the bottomline for India. He had also conveyed the same to US President George W Bush in St. Petersburg on the margins of the G-8 Summit. There is, however, a broad recognition in South Block that the debate is now more a political one than about the technical details of the deal as was the case before the separation plan was drawn up.

The Statesman, 16 August 2006

Scientists want nuke freedom

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI, Aug. 14: With Parliament getting ready to witness a debate on the Indo-US nuclear deal this week, eight prominent nuclear scientists have sent an open letter to MPs to ensure that the agreement does not inhibit India from exercising its nuclear option or stop indigenous development of nuclear technologies. The two-page letter has been signed by eight scientists, including three former chairpersons of the Atomic Energy Commission, Dr HN Sethna, Dr MR Srinivasan and Dr PK Iyengar. "India should continue to be able to hold on to her nuclear option as a strategic requirement in the real world that we live in, and in the ever-changing complexity of the international political system," the scientists said in a joint statement. "This means that we cannot accede to any restraint in perpetuity of our freedom of action", said the joint statement, issued to the media just days before Parliament is expected to debate the issue. "Universal nuclear disarmament must be India's ultimate aim, the dream of great leaders and until we see the light at the end of the tunnel on this important issue, we cannot accept any agreement in perpetuity," the scientists stressed.

The New York Times, 16 August 2006

Official Says Iran Is Ready to Discuss a Halt in Uranium Enrichment

TEHRAN: The Iranian foreign minister said on Wednesday Iran was ready to discuss the issue of suspending uranium enrichment in talks with the West but would seek to explain that Tehran believes any halt was "illogical." A package of incentives backed by six world powers demanded Iran suspend enrichment before starting negotiations. Iran has said it would respond to the proposal by August 22 but Iranian officials have so far given no indication they will accept. "We are ready to discuss all the issues including the suspension. There is no logic behind the suspension of Iran's activities. We are ready to explain this to them," Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki told reporters. The package of economic and other incentives was offered to Iran in June but Tehran's self-imposed deadline of August 22 to respond was deemed too long. Iran's case was then sent back to the U.N. Security Council, which passed a resolution demanding Tehran halt the sensitive atomic work by August 31 or face possible sanctions. "The resolution is illegal and politically motivated and has no value for us," Mottaki said. Iran says it wants to enrich uranium to make fuel for nuclear power plants. The West accuses Iran of using its civilian nuclear programme as a smokescreen to build atomic bombs.

Daily Times, 16 August 2006

Can Iran quit the Non-Proliferation Treaty?

In strict legal terms, Iran does not require the consent of the Security Council or other parties to quit the NPT. However, from the political viewpoint it is a different ball game altogether. The way the Security Council dealt with North Korea, when it sought to quit the NPT, is instructive in this regard. The United Nations Security Council last month upped the ante on the Iranian nuclear issue when it fixed August 31, as the deadline for Iran to suspend uranium enrichment failing which it would face sanctions. The response from Tehran was defiant; the Iranian president warned of withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in case the threat was carried out. Subsequently, in a letter addressed to the UN secretary-general, the Iranian parliament reiterated the warning. This is not the first time the Iranian leadership has threatened withdrawal. It had already done this in the course of EU3-Iran negotiations during the Khatami regime. Given that the sanctions increasingly appear to be a distinct possibility, unless Iran backs off — can the latter pull out of the NPT?

The Tribune, 17 August 2006

PM consults 2 top scientists

New Delhi, August 16: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was today updated by two top scientists on the Indo-US civilian nuclear cooperation agreement - a politically explosive issue on which the Rajya Sabha is scheduled to have a short duration discussion tomorrow, to be followed by the Prime Minister's reply. National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan was also present during the meeting wherein Dr R. Chidambaram, Scientific Adviser to the Prime Minister, and Dr Anil Kakodkar, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, briefed the Prime Minister on broad contours of the nuclear deal. Eight former nuclear scientists had written to the Prime Minister two days ago, expressing their reservations against the nuclear deal and saying that the US Congress had shifted the

goalposts. The government's stand on the subject is that it is dealing with the Bush Administration, not with the US Congress. Mr Narayanan told this correspondent that the meeting, which lasted nearly an hour, was a 'routine' one. He reminded that the Prime Minister also held additional portfolio of Atomic Energy. The NSA replied in the negative when asked whether Dr Manmohan Singh had today met the eight retired nuclear scientists who had written to the Prime Minister on August 14 on the nuclear deal.

The Tribune, 17 August 2006

Differences on N-deal worry govt

New Delhi, August 16: Although the UPA government has rejected the demand of the Left parties and the BJP regarding the adoption of a resolution or a statement conveying the 'sense of Parliament' opposing any changes in the Indo-US nuclear deal, the Centre is worried that this matter will be raised when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh replies to the debate on the nuclear pact in the Rajya Sabha tomorrow. This was indicated at the last meeting of the Rajya Sabha's business advisory committee (BAC) called to fix the day and time for the short duration discussion on the Indo-US nuclear deal. Several Opposition and Left members, it is learnt, reiterated their demand that the debate should also include a 'sense of Parliament' statement or resolution. This demand, which has been recorded formally in the records of the BAC's meeting, shows that the differences on this issue have not blown over yet even as the Prime Minister braces himself to confront critics of this deal both from the Left and the Right tomorrow. On its part, the government is very firm that it will never accept the demand for a 'sense of House' resolution and has conveyed as much in the series of meetings it has held with the leaders of the Left parties in the run-up to this debate. Both the Prime Minister and Lok Sabha leader Pranab Mukherjee are also learnt to have expressed their reservations about the Left parties teaming up with the BJP on this issue.

The Times of India, 17 August 2006

India will reject extra burden on Indo-US nuke deal

NEW DELHI: On Thursday, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will strongly defend the nuclear deal with the US, but will make it clear that India will prefer to pull out of the pact rather than accept any new conditionalities that some US lawmakers want to impose. Singh will give his reply on a discussion in the Rajya Sabha that the government had to concede after the opposition and Left raised the ante over the new obligations the US lawmakers are insisting on. He will stress the differences between the "binding" and "non-binding" parts of the US legislation, and assert that India is committed only to the goalposts set by the July 18 joint statement and the March 2 separation plan. Recognising the pitfalls of the perception being fanned by the opposition as well as Left partners that India might succumb to US arm-twisting, the PM sat down with top policy-makers for a strategy meeting on Wednesday. He reviewed the state of play in the nuclear deal with DAE chief Anil Kakodkar, scientific adviser R Chidambaram, national security adviser M K Narayanan and foreign secretary Shyam Saran.

The Asian Age, 17 August 2006

Sense of the House is must on nuclear deal

It is unfortunate that the government did not accept the proposal made by almost all the Opposition parties and the Left parties to have a "sense of the House" resolution on the Indo-US nuclear deal. In a very rare display of the spirit of cooperation, the BJP and the CPI(M) have been vigorously pushing this proposal for some days now. The leader of the CPI(M) in the Rajya Sabha had even agreed during his intervention in a discussion on the subject that if the government had objection to the use of the word "resolution," any other name could be thought of, but the government was unwilling to accept the need for a sense of the House resolution. Some doubts have since arisen about the continued interest of the Left parties in joining hands with the BJP for such a move. Whatever may be the final format for expressing the views of the Opposition and the Left parties in the House, government is the loser in rejecting a sense of the House resolution. The Bill for Indo-US nuclear cooperation has undergone many major changes during the recent deliberations in the US House of Representatives marking serious departures from both the focus and contents of the joint statement of July 18, 2005 by the Indian Prime Minister and the US President. This has caused serious doubts on the practicability of the implementation of the assurances given by the Prime Minister in his statements before the Parliament on July 29, 2005 and on subsequent occasions.

Hindustan Times, 17 August 2006

PM statement on nuclear deal in Parliament today

New Delhi: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will on Thursday make a statement in Parliament on the current status of the Indo-US civilian nuclear deal to address political concerns about it. He will attempt to dispel the concerns and give "a clear message" that the government has not, and will not, compromise on its strategic programme or indigenous R&D capability. Government and official sources said there had been no change or forward movement on the proposed bilateral agreement either in the US Houses of Congress or with the Nuclear Suppliers Group, or the IAEA since the PM last made a statement on July 27. On Wednesday, to prepare for the statement and to ensure that the concerns of the scientific community - reflected in Monday's letter by top nuclear scientists - were addressed, the PM held an "internal, high-level review" of the deal, the sources said. Those present at the meeting included Atomic Energy Commission chief Anil Kakodkar, NSA MK Narayanan, principal secretary to PM TKA Nair, scientific adviser R Chidambaram and foreign secretary Shyam Saran. The government sources said there was no constitutional provision for Parliament to review the government's agreements with other countries.

The Indian Express, 17 August 2006

As India debates N-deal, China & Pak move to close rival pact

New Delhi, August 17: As India's nuclear debate enters the Rajya Sabha on Thursday, Beijing and Islamabad are moving towards deeper bilateral atomic energy cooperation. Recent reports from Islamabad say a deal on buying six 300 MW nuclear reactors from China might be finalised, when President Hu Jintao visits Pakistan at the end of this year. As the Opposition quibbles over real and imagined problems of the non-proliferation conditions that New Delhi accepted in the deal with the United States, China is preparing

to rapidly expand its own nuclear power programme. Beijing accepted far more stringent conditions in its attempt to secure access to Australian uranium resources. If China is interested in long-term political outcomes in its nuclear diplomacy, India appears hobbled by a debate that is more focused on words rather on practical moves. or, in theory, as a declared nuclear weapon state, China was under no obligation to accept the unprecedented international safeguards that Australia sought in return for supplying natural uranium ore. At a time when major nuclear power producers are scrambling to gain control over uranium resources around the world, China had no hesitation in accepting the tough Australian conditions.

Hindustan Times, 17 August 2006

Wheeling dealing

The informed debate currently taking place in the country on the Indo-US nuclear deal reflects the growing maturity of Indian democracy. The issues are by now very pervasive in the media and need little repetition. We have consistently articulated our apprehensions. It is indeed gratifying now to see the eight high priests of the Indian nuclear establishment who have built India's nuclear capabilities, defying and overcoming US-led sanctions in the past, reinforce the essence of our fears. If reconfirmation were ever necessary, this nails the lie that our questioning the deal arises not from our 'congenital anti-imperialist rhetoric'. Our apprehensions arise from our non-negotiable responsibility to safeguard India's sovereignty. It is well-known that the Left has all along opposed India's nuclear weapons programme. We had opposed Pokhran II and continue to oppose nuclear weapon stockpiling. But then, we are firm defenders of the right that any decision in this regard will have to be a domestic Indian decision, not influenced by any power across the seas. Having said this, there are other issues that need to be a part of the current debate. The first of these refers to civilian nuclear cooperation. In other words, this means that India, aiming at a high-growth trajectory, requires to bolster its energy resources. There is no contesting the fact that an 8 per cent plus GDP growth rate requires a significant augmentation of energy resources. The current Indo-US deal is being trumpeted for such an augmentation.

The Indian Express, 17 August 2006

Boys will be boys

If we go by the assessment that the Left parties and the BJP are determined to embarrass the government on the nuclear issue, there is no reason to expect much light from today's Rajya Sabha debate on the Indo-US nuclear deal. To be blunt, the debate is badly timed. Given the fact that the US nuclear legislation is only half cooked - the Senate has to first approve it and the differing versions of the legislation in the two houses of the US Congress have to be reconciled - the Left and the BJP are free to posture. It will be even easier for the government to thunder that India will not accept any conditions other than those it has already agreed upon in the joint statements with the US on July 18, 2005 and March 2, 2006. Manmohan Singh has already told the George Bush that certain aspects of the draft nuclear legislation are unacceptable to India. The Bush administration has insisted that it will not let the US Congress renegotiate the nuclear pact with India. Even more important, the administration has objected to the congressional poaching on the president's constitutional right to make foreign policy. What exactly is the purpose of a

parliamentary nuclear debate when Bush, Manmohan Singh, and Prakash Karat are all saying the same thing: no new conditions must be attached to the nuclear deal?

The Indian Express, 17 August 2006

Nuke numbers: deal adds up

The Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal has led to much debate in both countries. While the US is primarily concerned about the dilution of its non-proliferation agenda, India is apprehensive about aspects like the cost and implications of IAEA safeguards, the uncertainty of nuclear fuel supply and the likely impact on its independent foreign policy choices. Today, as the Rajya Sabha debates the issue, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is expected to clarify his government's position on the deal. Yesterday, he had met senior scientists of the Indian nuclear establishment and assured them that their concerns would be kept in mind. It would help clear a lot of confusion if India were to do a cost-benefit analysis at this stage since the broad contours of the final package are more recognisable now. Clearly, while India would like to have unconditional civil nuclear technology cooperation, it is becoming increasingly clear that the US sees this as an opportunity to bind India to as many nuclear non-proliferation conditionalities as possible and also gain its support for US foreign policy objectives linked to WMD proliferation. This, however, should not surprise Indian thinkers because that is the price India must be willing to pay for access to nuclear fuel for its urgent energy needs. In the process, it can also hope to gradually stop being a target of nuclear technology embargoes.

The Indian Express, 17 August 2006

Why our scientists have (unwittingly) succumbed to the lure of popular politics

Winston Churchill once gave sound advice: "Never try to climb a wall that is leaning towards you. Never try to kiss a woman who is leaning away from you. And never - never - write about a topic to a group whose speciality is that topic." What prompts me to deviate from such distilled wisdom is not any sense of presumptuousness; it is my sense of surprise and anguish at the fact that our senior nuclear scientists have chosen to address an appeal directly to parliamentarians requesting them to ensure that our strategic nuclear options are not compromised - suggesting that the Government has already compromised our position. Speaking as a citizen, I am disappointed. I believe that our distinguished scientists have (unwittingly) succumbed to the lure of popular politics. We all need to know that in India, unlike in the US, there is no separation of powers between the Executive and the Legislature. The Government is made up of elected representatives of the people and represents the will of the people; they are, of course, always accountable to Parliament.

The New York Times, 17 August 2006

Iranian Says Talks Can Cover Uranium

TEHRAN, Aug. 16: Iran's foreign minister said Wednesday that Iran was willing to discuss suspending uranium enrichment during negotiations with European countries and China. The foreign minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, spoke two weeks before the Aug. 31 deadline set by the United Nations Security Council for Iran to halt the enrichment or face sanctions. Other Iranian officials, including President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, have responded defiantly to the demand to suspend the program, which Iran says is intended to

make fuel for nuclear power plants and is not a cover for a secret effort to make nuclear weapons. Iran has said it will respond by Tuesday to a European-led offer of incentives to suspend enrichment. "We declared that the best way is to resume negotiations," Mr. Mottaki said at a news conference here, the ISNA news agency reported. "We can even discuss the issue of suspension, which is not acceptable based on any logic," he said. Mr. Mottaki added, "The Islamic Republic of Iran will not back down from its rights under any circumstances."

Dawn, 17 August 2006

Iran says it is ready to discuss N-freeze

TEHRAN, Aug 16: Iran said on Wednesday it was ready to discuss suspension of uranium enrichment, barely two weeks before a UN Security Council deadline to halt the sensitive nuclear work or risk sanctions. "Even the proposal to suspend enrichment, which we regard as illogical, can be discussed in negotiations," Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki told a press conference. "We do not see any logic in suspension so we are ready to explain and express that to the other side." The United States, which is leading the campaign against Iran's nuclear programme, dismissed Mr Mottaki's comments. Tehran has said it will respond on Aug 22 to an offer by the five UN Security Council members, plus Germany, for a package of incentives including cooperation and multilateral talks in return for suspending enrichment. Iran has repeatedly rejected suspension as a pre-condition to negotiations aimed at ending the long-running standoff with the West over its nuclear programme, which the United States suspects is a cover for plans to build the bomb. Tehran says it wants to develop nuclear fuel for energy generation and insists it has the right to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The Times of India, 17 August 2006

India, yes, but US will not abandon Pak

NEW DELHI: The United States wants stronger military and strategic relationship with India. However, it shall never abandon Pakistan, says an American expert on South Asia. "The US cannot and will not jettison Pakistan, nor is it in India's interest that America do so," says John H Gill, an internationally recognized military historian. "Indeed, both the US and India have a common interest in Pakistan's stability, prosperity, moderation and progress towards democracy. A forward looking US-India dialogue on Pakistan could make a major contribution in setting Pakistan on a more hopeful trajectory." He makes the comments in " US-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21st Century ", a book that will be released on Friday at the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies. Gill, a retired US Army South Asia Foreign Area Officer, says Washington and New Delhi having overcome many of the inhibitions associated with the Cold War, "currently enjoy an unprecedented level of military-to-military cooperation. "Indeed, military ties have developed into one of the most important and robust aspects of the US-India bilateral relationship..." He says that since 9/11, the military relationship has expanded rapidly to include numerous high-level visits, exercises, training exchanges and a nascent programme of military sales, calling much of it "truly unprecedented". According to Gill, the US military would benefit from increased dialogue with New Delhi on security issues in Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

The Indian Express, 18 August 2006

Purified by opposition

The only good news from Thursday's nuclear debate in the Rajya Sabha is that the prime minister has finally stood up to defend the constitutional right of his government to conduct foreign policy. Seen from a political perspective, the Congress party's decision to draw a line against a sense of the House resolution on the nuclear issue and a joint parliamentary committee was perhaps more important than the impressive defence of the nuclear deal that the prime minister put up in the Rajya Sabha. No one would have been shocked if the UPA government, which seemed so eager to please all comers, had yielded to the insidious attempt by the CPI(M) and the BJP to tie its hands on sensitive nuclear negotiations with the United States and the world. No one doubted that it would be a cakewalk for the government to defend its nuclear negotiating position with the Bush administration. For its record has been impeccable in the conduct of nuclear negotiations with the United States. The government, well before the CPI(M) woke up to the new conditionalities in the draft nuclear legislation in the US Congress, had already taken up the question at the highest political levels with the Bush administration. It needed little more than common sense to see that the government has retained the right to reject unacceptable modification of an agreement that has been negotiated with great care.

The Indian Express, 18 August 2006

Linking n-deal to growing India's energy hunger, PM says trust me, won't bend

New Delhi, August 17: Aware that the dissent in the Opposition and within his Left allies on the nuclear deal had as much to do with politics as strategy, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today invoked his personal credibility and reputation as a reformer in an emotionally charged preface to his reply in the Rajya Sabha. BJP N-campaign fizzles out, party says speakers academic Between PM's lines is message to the US he answered us, says Left; no, says Right The US-Pak Weapons Deal: No bang for the bucks Why our scientists have (unwittingly) succumbed to the lure of popular politics. Even while dismissing the charge that India's foreign policy was influenced by the US as quid pro quo for the nuclear pact, Singh made a personal assertion, stating, "We have not allowed any country, including the US, to influence our policy. This will not change until I am the Prime Minister." He linked the deal to India's growing hunger for energy and the question mark over oil and fuel supplies. "If India has to grow at 8-10 per cent, it needs rising amounts of energy. We can use coal, but its low grade and high ash content causes many problems, including higher carbon emissions. Hydrocarbon prices can go shortly to \$100 a barrel. Prudence demands we must widen our energy options. All development is about widening human choices. We should be able to use nuclear power if the need arises."

Hindustan Times, 18 August 2006

N-weapons programme: 'We will make our own assessment'

New Delhi, August 17: With an impassioned defence of the Indo-US nuclear deal, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Thursday largely swung the Rajya Sabha in his favour on the issue that had, at one stage, threatened a combined Left-BJP campaign against the government. By the time he was through, the PM had secured the CPM's Sitaram Yechury's open approval and the BJP's Yashwant Sinha's grudging acceptance that he

was 60 per cent satisfied with Singh's response, though some key questions he had raised remained unanswered. However, Sinha's qualified support lost meaning with top scientists -- who had earlier raised doubts about the deal -- also welcoming the PM's assurances. On his feet for over an hour, the PM began his speech by recalling that he was similarly accused of compromising the national interest while initiating economic reforms as finance minister in the early 1990s on being handed over a bankrupt economy by Sinha, who initiated the nuclear debate on behalf of the BJP. "Today the nation stands tall, strong and fast-growing because of the decisions then taken," he said. "So I speak with some experience, though I may be a novice in comparison with the skills of Jaswant Singh, Sinha and Arun Shourie (of the BJP). I'll discharge my duties for the country to the last ounce of my blood."

The Times of India, 18 August 2006

BJP for JPC on Indo-US N-deal implementation

NEW DELHI: Accusing the Government of succumbing to fresh US conditionalities on the nuclear deal, the Bhartiya Janata Party on Thursday demanded setting up of a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) to oversee the implementation of a resolution reflecting the sense of Indian Parliament. Opposing the "fundamentally flawed" deal which would have a "deleterious impact", senior BJP leader Yashwant Sinha said in the Rajya Sabha that India cannot bend to the will of the US Congress and this message should go loud and clear. The former External Affairs Minister, who initiated the Short Duration Discussion on Indo-US nuclear deal, said his party was opposed to the deal signed on July 18 last year because from the very next day "diametrically differing interpretations of the deal started coming from the US side". Demanding a resolution reflecting the sense of the House, Sinha, who led the Opposition attack, said a JPC should be constituted with members from both Houses to oversee implementation of the resolution. Terming the deal as one-sided, he said the pact did not assure supply of fuel and full civil nuclear cooperation. "India should not accept these crippling and humiliating conditionalities," he said. The BJP leader said the NDA was not against strategic ties with the US. But, the ties must be built on sovereignty, reciprocity and mutual respect and should not be on shaky foundation, he said.

The Times of India, 18 August 2006

'Reciprocity is the key'

NEW DELHI: About the nuclear Bill passed by the US House of Representatives, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Thursday made a point by point reference on the possible deviations, be it full civil nuclear cooperation, reciprocity, annual certification by the United States president, inspection by US officials, uninterrupted supply of nuclear fuel and separation arrangement. "Reciprocity is the key to implementation of the deal. I stand by that commitment. "When we gave the separation plan, we told US that it is not being given in anticipation of future restrictions," he said. Initiating the discussion, Yashwant Sinha said his party was opposed to the July 18 agreement and explained how diametrically opposite views on the deal started appearing within few days. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh presented an exhaustive account of departures made in the Bill passed by the US House of Representatives. Yechury reiterated most of the reservations that CPM has raised for the past two months. SP leaders Amar Singh and

Shahid Siddiqui felt getting the "sense of the House" would only strengthen the PM in the negotiations.

The Hindu, 18 August 2006

Nuclear deal will widen energy options: Manmohan

New Delhi: Strongly supporting the India-United States nuclear deal, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said on Thursday that the move would widen the country's energy options and reduce its dependence on depleting hydrocarbons. The nuclear deal is all about "widening human choices," he said in his reply in the Rajya Sabha to the short-duration discussion. The primary motivation of the deal was energy, and defence came much later. Conventional sources of energy such as oil and coal were also hazardous to the environment, apart from being non-renewable. If India's economy has to grow at 8-10 per cent, "we have to take care of the growing energy needs." Although nuclear energy will not answer all the problems, it would give a wider energy option. Dr. Singh pointed out that security concerns in the neighbourhood were also worrying. "We have legitimate security concerns. These are uncertain and unpredictable." This country must think big, and the path "that I have developed is the right path." Many of the concerns shown by the members of the House were born out of genuine concerns, and nothing would be done that would have a bearing on national sentiments.

The Hindu, 18 August 2006

Left parties welcome assurances

New Delhi: The Left parties have welcomed Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's assurances in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday on the India-United States nuclear deal, but the Opposition BJP said the statement did not fully address concerns over the deal's future. The Left parties said the Prime Minister's assurances could be accepted as the "sense of the House" on the issue. "Let us assume it as the sense of the House resolution," CPI (M) leader Sitaram Yechury suggested in the Rajya Sabha after Dr. Singh completed his hour-long reply to the seven-hour debate on the nuclear deal. Mr. Yechury said the Prime Minister held out assurances on "many of the issues raised and therefore his reply could be accepted as the "sense of the House," which the Left parties had been demanding. CPI secretary D. Raja said Dr. Singh tried to respond to all the issues raised by the Left parties as well as by senior nuclear scientists. "Since the Prime Minister has not differed on concerns expressed by us, his assurances to the Rajya Sabha can be considered as the 'sense of the House'," he said.

The Hindu, 18 August 2006

Reactor for nuclear submarine fully operational

CHENNAI: The reactor for India's nuclear-powered submarine project at Kalpakkam, near here, is working smoothly at its full capacity of 100 MWe, informed sources said. Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee inspected the project on July 18 while taking part in the 20th anniversary celebrations of the commissioning of the Fast Breeder Test Reactor there. The project is called the Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) programme. The sources said the reactor, which went critical towards the end of 2004, was fully operational now. A miniaturised version of the reactor would be built and fitted into the submarine. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited the ATV facility on October 23,

2004, when he launched the construction of the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) there. Substantial progress has also been made in building the submarine's hull at Visakhapatnam, the sources said. The ATV is a joint project of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) of the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), the Navy and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

China Daily, 18 August 2006

N.Korea may be preparing nuclear test

WASHINGTON - Activity at a North Korean facility suggests Pyongyang could be preparing its first test of a nuclear bomb, U.S. media on Thursday cited U.S. officials as saying. But U.S. officials said they had no new evidence of such a plan, and a diplomatic official in Seoul familiar with the North's nuclear program said he was skeptical of the reports. ABC News quoted an unidentified senior military official as saying a U.S. intelligence agency had observed "suspicious vehicle movement" at a suspected North Korean test site. A senior State Department official, who was also not identified, told the network, "It is the view of the intelligence community that a test is a real possibility." CNN reported U.S. military sources said satellite images had shown wire bundles appearing at a suspected test site that could be used to monitor an underground test. It said the wires had not been connected to anything and that it was still unclear if a test was being prepared. Asked about the media reports, a senior U.S. official told Reuters, "We have no new evidence to support that." Another official, who also declined to be identified, said there was no indication of a threat in the near term.

The Tribune, 19 August 2006

Nuclear plans intact

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's reply to the marathon discussion on the Indo-US nuclear agreement in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday should allay all doubts about the deal. He has particularly disarmed the BJP and the CPM critics that the nuclear deal is not in India's interest. The long and the short of his speech is that whatever the US Congress may legislate on the issue, India is bound only by the July 18 agreement the Prime Minister signed with US President George W. Bush. In other words, New Delhi will not accept any changes that the US Congress might make in the agreement compromising India's national interest. India's nuclear programme will be guided solely by its own legitimate concerns in 'an uncertain, unpredictable world' as Dr Manmohan Singh put it. Sceptics should draw solace from his categorical assertion that India will not allow a situation whereby American officials enjoy free access to Indian nuclear facilities. It is in the fitness of things that he allayed apprehensions of a large section of the people who keenly followed the proceedings in the US House of Representatives on the trajectory of the nuclear deal.

Deccan Herald, 19 August 2006

Nuclear doubts

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's spirited defence in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday of the proposed civil nuclear energy cooperation deal with the United States stands out for the sheer political punch packed into his argument. The soft-spoken economist-turned-politician has hitherto been better known for his administrative skills and not for political

adroitness. His effort on Thursday baffled his critics and colleagues alike in equal measure. At the end of his long-winding reply to a House debate on the issue, the Prime Minister's critics in the BJP-led NDA Opposition as well as his Left partners were left a bit disarmed and allies and colleagues in the treasury benches were thrilled over his unexpectedly persuasive political arguments in defence of the contentious nuclear deal. The job of defending the deal was arguably a tough and delicate one. Besides political parties, the country's top former nuclear scientists had just come out publicly airing their serious reservations. Dr Singh could have simply dismissed all those concerns as unwarranted and unfounded. He could not have done that without triggering uncomfortable questions since he himself had conveyed almost similar concerns to US President George W Bush at St Petersburg just a month ago. Yet, to give up under these testing circumstances and at this stage - a year after tedious negotiations with the US - would be nothing less than a huge foreign policy disaster for his Government.

The Indian Express, 19 August 2006

How we built the bomb

If India ever decided to single out a date for marking some sort of an anniversary of its nuclear weaponisation, March 18, 1989 will be a pretty good choice, probably even more fitting than the two dates of May 1974 and 1998, Pokharan I and II respectively. Rajiv Gandhi was now in the last few months of his prime ministership. He had suffered a great deal of attrition from fighting both internal and external crises. But on national security and foreign policy Rajiv had not lost the focus in the least. Some frantic searching of our nuclear basements and barsatis, whatever you call them, during the Brasstacks crisis had revealed that our deterrent was far from ready and the complacency that 1974 had created was dangerous. Also, by early 1989, it became evident that Pakistan was either very close to a deliverable weapon or had one already. Americans were already talking of Pakistan being a mere 'last turn of the screw' away from the bomb. Sure enough, 1989 was the last year the US administration gave Pakistan their annual certificate of nuclear virginity, even though they were desperate to save it from sanctions; the 'good' jihad in Afghanistan was at its peak.

The Indian Express, 19 August 2006

Being prime ministerial

These are moments that come rarely to prime ministers. Moments when they earn the adjective, 'prime ministerial'. Before Manmohan Singh rose to reply to Thursday's day-long discussion on the Indo-US nuclear deal, the anxiety in the Rajya Sabha did not draw just from details of the proposed inspection and separation regime. In both Houses of Parliament this session, MPs have been agitated over niggling fears that as legislators they stand isolated from policy orientation and international treaties. The anxiety expressed itself through flirtation with concepts alien to parliamentary democracy like 'sense of the House'. It is his success in addressing this anxiety that makes Dr Singh's 80-minute reply a milestone in his prime ministerial tenure. He embedded his response to specific objections to the nuclear deal in his long and varied career. The argument: his proven experience in taking a beneficial risk and bringing reform within an existing consensus on what is the national interest. And the objective: to win the legislature's trust for executive decisions.

The Tribune, 19 August 2006

PM to inform Parliament before inking N-pact: CPM

New Delhi, August 18: The debate on the nuclear issue is not yet over, it has only taken a break, with the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh assuring that he would report to Parliament before signing the deal with USA. Talking to newsmen, CPM politburo member and Rajya Sabha MP, Sitaram Yechury, visibly elated with the assurances given by Dr Manmohan Singh, said "a new and healthy precedent is being set with the Prime Minister assuring that Parliament will be taken into confidence before the deal is finalised." He said the Prime Minister had given categorical assurances on several counts on the nuclear deal and also made it clear that the deal would not go ahead if it went beyond the July 2005 Indo-US agreement. This was why "we considered the PM's reply as reflecting the sense of the House," he said. Asked whether the government would stick to its stand later, Mr Yechury said the assurances given to Parliament should be taken 'positively'.

The New York Times, 19 August 2006

President Says Nuclear Power Is Iran's Right

LONDON: President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad insists that nuclear power is Iran's right and "no one will stop us" developing the country. In an interview with Britain's Guardian newspaper, he said a United Nations resolution insisting on the suspension of its nuclear activities was U.S-inspired and would fail. "They are trying to deny our right to develop nuclear power. But no one can impose anything on the Iranian people. They will not succeed," he said while on a campaign tour of the north of his country. "Our main task is to develop and build the Iranian nation. No one will stop us. "Iran has insisted it is enriching uranium to generate electricity from nuclear power. The United States, Britain, France and Germany among others fear it is a cloak to disguise a program to build nuclear weapons. The U.N. Security Council passed a resolution at the end of July calling on Iran to suspend uranium enrichment by August 31. Iran has set itself an August 22 deadline to respond to an offer of economic incentives designed to persuade it to comply with the suspension demand.

The Indian Express, 19 August 2006

US says Iran must expect swift UN action on N-row

WASHINGTON, August 18: The United States expects the UN will act fast next month to punish Iran over its nuclear programme, with Washington arguing the case for sanctions has been bolstered by Iran's role in Lebanon. US Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns, who handles much of the Iran portfolio at the State Department, said on Friday he expected the UNSC would 'take up its responsibilities' and impose sanctions if Tehran did not stop its enrichment programme. 'We have an agreement with Russia and China and with the other members of the (UN Security) Council that we will go to Chapter 7 sanctions (if Iran does not comply),' Burns told reporters. 'The will of a lot of countries has been strengthened by watching the Iranian government trying to destabilise both Lebanon and Israel over the last 30-40 days.' He added: 'I think that will reinforce the effort to hold Iran accountable should they not provide the clear answer needed (to give up their nuclear programme).' Some analysts believe the US obsession with pointing

fingers at Iran during the Lebanon conflict was part of a campaign to further isolate Tehran before any Security Council action.

The Indian Express, 19 August 2006

'N Korea may be preparing N-bomb'

WASHINGTON, August 18: North Korea may be preparing an underground test for a nuclear bomb, ABC News said on Thursday, citing unidentified US officials. had recently observed "suspicious vehicle movement" at a suspected North Korean test site. A senior State Department official told the network, 'It is the view of the intelligence community that a test is a real possibility.' Asked about the report, a senior US official said: "We have no new evidence ." ABC reported the activity at the suspected test site included the unloading of large reels of cable outside an underground facility called Pungyee-yok in northeast North Korea. The intelligence was brought to the attention of the White House last week, the report said.

The Korean Herald, 19 August 2006

Seoul: No nuke evidence

The South Korean government yesterday said there was no evidence supporting reports from Washington that North Korea appeared to be preparing for an underground nuclear test. Unification Minister Lee Jong-seok, in a parliamentary questioning session, said that there were no signs of a nuclear bomb test. Another South Korean official, on condition of anonymity, said, "Although (North Korea testing a nuclear weapon) is logically possible, no activity has been detected." Saying it was always difficult to verify a nuclear-related activity, the official cited a previous case in 1998 when Washington claimed North Korea could be preparing for a nuclear test in Geumchang-ri. The claim later turned out to be a false alarm. South Korea believes that North Korea is now technically capable of carrying out a nuclear test.

The Tribune, 20 August 2006

Electricity through nuclear power

The basic question regarding the Indo-US nuclear deal is whether we really need it. It is said, the deal will give a boost to our power sector. Several issues need to be examined with sobriety: whether nuclear power is an economically viable proposition; whether any risks are involved to the human population in the process of producing energy through nuclear power; whether political and strategic issues favour our country and help promote regional peace and harmony; whether the deal would lead to a guarantee against the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region; and whether this is the only alternative available. The nuclear deal, if implemented, will add 20,000 MW power in the next 20 years. But experience suggests that it may add 5,000 to 7,000 MW. In 1998, instead of an installed capacity of 2,180 MW from the nuclear power plants, we got about 872 MW of power - less than 40 per cent of their designed capacity. India has invested over Rs 80,000 crore on these nuclear power plants. At present, 25 per cent of our energy budget goes to the Department of Atomic Energy which accounts for less than 3 per cent of total power output.

The Washington Post, 20 August 2006

Iran Tests Short-Range Missile

TEHRAN: Iran on Sunday test-fired a surface-to-surface short-range missile a day after its army launched large-scale military exercises throughout the country, state-run television reported. "Saegheh, the missile, has a range of between 80 to 250 kilometers (50 to 150 miles)," the report said. It said the missile was tested in Kashan desert, about 150 miles southeast of Tehran, the capital. Nora Boustany's column reporting on Washington's diplomatic community appears each Wednesday and Friday in The Post. Iran has routinely held war games over the past two decades to improve its combat readiness and to test equipment such as missiles, tanks and armored personnel carriers. But the new tests, in the wake of the Lebanon-Hezbollah fighting, seemed certain to create new tensions with the West. State-run television said the missile was built based on domestic know-how, although outside experts say much of the country's missile technology originated from other countries. State-run TV showed video showing 10 missiles being launched from mobile launching pads.

Dawn, 20 August 2006

Iran lodges protest against inspector: Two IAEA officials barred

VIENNA, Aug 19: Iran has formally complained about a UN atomic inspector, after refusing to admit two other inspectors, with tension high over Tehran's nuclear program, diplomats said on Saturday. Iran is to respond on Tuesday to a call by six world powers to suspend uranium enrichment - the process that makes nuclear power reactor fuel but also raw material for atom bombs. If Iran refuses, UN sanctions could follow. Iran has recently filed a verbal complaint with the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which has been investigating Tehran's nuclear program for over three years, about an IAEA expert 'acting outside the responsibilities of an inspector', a senior Western diplomat close to the IAEA said. This apparently involves comments the inspector made while in Iran recently and even alleged spying activities but this could not be confirmed. The diplomat, and a second source close to the International Atomic Energy Agency, said Iran had 'withdrawn the designations' of two other agency inspectors, in March and April. There had been no such previous incidents since the IAEA began its investigations in Iran in Feb 2003, the diplomats said.

Dawn, 20 August 2006

Foreign investors to get more incentives: Setting up of N-power plants

ISLAMABAD, Aug 19: The government has decided to offer additional incentives to foreign investors for setting up nuclear power plants in the proposed 'Designated Nuclear Power Parks' under the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) safeguards. A government official told this correspondent on Saturday that the Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PPIB) was being asked to work out fiscal and non-fiscal incentives to attract foreign investment. He said the country's growing energy requirements would be partly met by nuclear power for which it was imperative to provide enhanced facilities and tax concessions to the foreign investors interested in setting up private nuclear power plants in Pakistan. The official pointed out that the setting up of nuclear power plants by foreign investors under the IAEA safeguards would address 'proliferation concerns' of the United States and other western countries. However, other sources said that attracting considerable foreign investment in the nuclear power parks would prove difficult owing

to opposition by the United States. 'The United States is willing to provide financial and technical assistance to Pakistan to import electricity from Central Asia rather than helping us to have foreign investment for setting up nuclear power plants,' a source said.

The Asian Age, 21 August 2006

The questions pm did not answer

For some of us who have been striving to ensure that the one-sided India-US nuclear deal does not pass muster in Indian Parliament, August 17, 2006 when the Rajya Sabha debated the issue, was a day of partial satisfaction, of partial victory. I have no doubt in my mind that if we, in the various political parties, other writers, commentators and editors, and the nuclear scientists had not expressed our reservations against the deal, the Prime Minister would not have been compelled to offer the clarifications he offered in Rajya Sabha on that day. Let us not forget that when the House of Representatives of the US Congress passed the Bill, there was no official response from the government of India. In fact, through background briefings of a section of the media which is blindly supporting the deal, the government sent out a message that it was happy at the outcome. August 17 is a victory of sorts because the Prime Minister has been forced to dismount from his high horse. But a large number of questions remain, which the Prime Minister deliberately ducked that day. Even when I put some of these questions to him directly and pointedly at the end of the debate, he decided to remain glued to his seat and chose not to respond to them. If we want an equal and mutually beneficial deal with the US, these questions must be answered satisfactorily. And until that happens, we must not give up.

The Hindu, 21 August 2006

The speech that could not be delivered

K. Natwar Singh, M. P. and former External Affairs Minister whose Congress membership has been suspended, was denied permission by his party to speak in the August 17 Rajya Sabha debate on key issues raised by the India-U.S. civilian nuclear cooperation agreement under negotiation. "Had I been allowed to speak," he says, "I would have given the Prime Minister my critical support. For I believe that leaders should not only contemplate problems, but must find solutions for them. India is not a commodity. It is a unique and durable civilisation, a never-ending pilgrimage." On Dr. Manmohan Singh's reply to the debate, his former senior Cabinet colleague comments: "I regret to say the Prime Minister said a lot and conveyed very little in his speech. The bureaucratic jargon was wrapped in fog-making generalities. His 70-minute speech was comprehensive and covered a lot of the wrong ground. It begged all the serious questions and answered very few. He might have also ensured the death of a deal which in its original form was beneficial for us." The former Foreign Minister said that as one "intimately connected with the deliberations leading up to the nuclear deal," he began to have doubts in April 2006, when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice made the July 18, 2005 agreement "stand on its head" in her testimony before Congressional committees.

The New York Times, 21 August 2006

Iran Fires Practice Missiles and Affirms Nuclear Stance

TEHRAN, Aug. 20: As Iran fired 10 short-range missiles on the second day of a large-scale military maneuver, officials on Sunday reiterated Iran's stance that it did not intend

to halt its uranium enrichment program. The statement comes two days before Iran's self-imposed deadline of Aug. 22 for responding to a package of incentives offered by six Western nations in return for halting the program. The United Nations Security Council has set a deadline of Aug. 31 for Iran to suspend the program or face the possibility of economic sanctions. Statements by officials so far suggest that Iran will neither agree to the incentives deal nor yield to the Security Council. A Foreign Ministry spokesman, Hamidreza Assefi, said during a weekly news conference on Sunday that Iran would not suspend the program. "The issue of suspension means returning to the past," he said. "Suspension is not on our agenda." The missiles fired on Sunday, called Saegheh - thunder in Persian - had ranges of 50 and 150 miles, the official ISNA news agency reported. In April, Iran unveiled new weaponry, including radar-evading missiles and high-speed torpedoes.

The News, 21 August 2006

Iran military exercises show danger of nuclear ambitions: US

WASHINGTON: The White House said Sunday that Iran's military exercises, which included a short-range missile test, was a reminder of the danger of the Islamic republic's nuclear ambitions. President George W Bush's administration also recalled that Iran has until August 31 to respond to a UN Security Council demand that it suspend uranium enrichment and warned that failure to comply could swiftly lead to sanctions. "We have made clear that if Iran fails to comply with the Security Council's mandate we will move quickly at the United Nations to impose sanctions," Emily Lawrimore, a White House spokeswoman, said in a statement. "Iran's show of military force while it continues to defy the international community's unanimous demands regarding its nuclear program serves to remind us of the dangers of its nuclear ambitions," Lawrimore said. "Iran sits at the nexus of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism; we know that Iran is producing and developing delivery systems that could threaten our friends and allies in the Middle East and Europe and eventually the United States itself," she said.

Daily Times, 21 August 2006

Iran says will not suspend atomic work

TEHRAN: Iran said on Sunday it would not suspend uranium enrichment, ruling out the main demand in a package of proposals backed by six nations aimed at resolving its nuclear standoff with the West. "We are not going to suspend (enrichment). The issue was that everything should come out of negotiations, but suspension of uranium enrichment is not on our agenda," Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi told a weekly news conference. Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki had said on Wednesday Iran was ready to discuss the issue of suspending uranium enrichment in talks with the West but would seek to explain that Tehran believes any halt would be 'illogical'. "As the proposal has had several dimensions, our answer will be multi-dimensional too," Asefi said. The package included offering Iran state-of-the-art nuclear technology, easing of some trade restrictions and other incentives. Iran's file has already been sent back to the UN Security Council because the Aug 22 deadline was deemed too late to reply. Last month, the council passed a resolution demanding Iran suspend enrichment by Aug. 31 or face possible sanctions. "The resolution is unacceptable and without legal grounds," he said, reiterating Iran's previous rejection of the UNSC's

decision.

The Korean Herald, 21 August 2006

Seoul beefs up watch on North

The South Korean government and the military have heightened their monitoring of North Korea's nuclear activities following the July 5 missile launches, sources here said yesterday. "We have been closely watching for any signs, 24 hours a day, based on a judgment that the suspension of nuclear negotiations and the July 5 missile launches have increased the possibility of North Korea carrying out an underground nuclear test," a government source was quoted as saying by Yonhap News. But government officials said the stepped up surveillance is not related to recent reports suggesting the North was close to testing a nuclear device. "The measures have been in place since early July. This report has not changed the government's position in monitoring North Korea's nuclear activity," a government official said on condition of anonymity. News reports from Washington last week said North Korea may be preparing for a nuclear test. South Korean government officials have responded that there were no signs of any immediate test plan. The ministry dispatched six military experts to the Korea Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources, a state-run organization that monitors seismic tremors on the Korean peninsula, the source was quoted as saying. The soldiers, with degrees in geoscience, will be working at the institute until November.

The Asian Age, 22 August 2006

India's elusive consensus

Manmohan Singh's third Independence Day speech from the ramparts of the Red Fort was also the 59th prime ministerial oration from that august rostrum in celebration of the magic day when, in Jawaharlal Nehru's memorable words, India had its "tryst with destiny." The first 17 of these were delivered by Nehru himself - a record that is unlikely to be equalled, given the increasing fragmentation of the polity and the decreasing stature of most of those plunging into politics. Indira Gandhi was close on the heels of her "pappu" but with a crucial difference; the 16 Red Fort speeches she made were in two separate instalments of 11 and five. Having spoken from the same hallowed spot during six sequential years, Atal Behari Vajpayee comes next to her. Rajiv Gandhi spoke on five occasions, as did P.V. Narasimha Rao. Nehru's successor, Lal Bahadur Shastri, and Morarji Desai, who replaced IG, each addressed the nation twice. Charan Singh, Deve Gowda and Inder Gujral did so only once each. The luckless Chandrashekhar never got the opportunity.

The Indian Express, 22 August 2006

Rescued from the abyss

The prime minister's statement in the Rajya Sabha on 17 August was a triumph for him - after months and months of seeming to be dragged along, he stood up. He spoke for the country. He drew a line. And it was equally a triumph for all who have led the campaign to alert the country to the abyss into which we were being pulled. Leading defence analysts like Bharat Karnad and Brahma Chellaney; Yashwant Sinha from the BJP; Digvijay Singh from the JD(U); Prakash Karat and Sitaram Yechurry from the CPI(M); and several others deserve the country's gratitude for their unremitting labours in this

regard. It is after a very long time that a public campaign has had a salutary outcome. The most influential voice, of course, has been that of the scientists. And in that lies an important lesson which transcends the nuclear deal. They are the ones who have over the decades built our nuclear capability. They are the ones who know. That is why what they had to say on the nuclear deal just could not be ignored. But their voice also carried greater weight because they are professionals. And in that lies a lesson. When Siachin is at stake, were the retired Army Chiefs to speak up, their message would count for more than anything anyone else could say.

Hindustan Times, 22 August 2006

Calling for trouble

A US federal judge's ruling calling for an immediate end to the Bush administration's practice of eavesdropping, without a warrant, on the phone calls and e-mails of US residents suspected of links with Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups is hardly any surprise. Detroit District Judge Anna Diggs reportedly ruled that the National Security Agency's (NSA) wiretapping programme, initiated in 2002 in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, represented 'an abuse of presidential power', and violated the privacy and free speech provisions of the US Constitution. This is the second time in a month that the Bush administration is facing a major legal setback in its war on terror. Last June, the US Supreme Court denied President Bush the authority to try terrorism suspects held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, with military tribunals. The apex court held that the tribunals not only lacked Congressional authorisation, but also violated the Uniform Code of Military Justice and the Geneva Conventions. The civil rights groups that sued the NSA obviously had their own reasons for seeking to scrap the domestic spying programme as it hampers the ability of journalists and scholars to communicate with sources overseas and conduct research. Besides, the NSA evidently overstepped its authority since it already had adequate emergency powers under an existing foreign surveillance law, which allows it to tap international communications of people in the US and go to a secret court later for retro-active permission

The Hindu, 22 August 2006

Little chance of nuclear compromise

In 1983, some 20 years before Iran was accused by the United States and its allies of having a clandestine nuclear fuel enrichment programme, Tehran approached the International Atomic Energy Agency with a request for technical assistance in setting up a pilot plant for the production of uranium hexafluoride (UF₆). UF₆ is the basic feedstock in the uranium enrichment process, in which the gas is spun through centrifuge machines in order to produce low enriched uranium for reactors - or highly enriched uranium for bombs. At the time, Iran was specifically interested in restarting work begun in the Shah's period on converting U₃₀₈ into UO₂ pellets and then going on to set up a pilot facility for UF₆ production. Since the IAEA Statute commits the agency to provide technical assistance to member states, a team of experts travelled to Iran to interact with scientists at Entec, the Iranian atomic establishment set up in 1974 with French assistance to work on the fuel cycle. According to an account provided by Mark Hibbs in Nuclear Fuel, one of the most authoritative newsletters of the international nuclear industry, the IAEA experts recommended that the agency assist Entec to help their scientists overcome their

lack of practical experience. They also suggested that the IAEA provide expert services in a number of areas including the fuel cycle.

The Hindu, 22 August 2006

Project to define futuristic nuclear reactor

CHENNAI: Baldev Raj, Director, Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), Kalpakkam, has been elected chairman of a seven-country international project to define a future fast reactor with closed nuclear fuel cycle (FR with CNFC) that will contribute to the generation of 300 GWe to 500 GWe of nuclear power by 2050. This futuristic reactor will meet seven specific requirements: safety, economy, non-proliferation, technology, environmental concerns, waste management and infrastructure. The seven countries are India, Russia, China, France, Japan, South Korea and Ukraine. They represent half of the world's population. The U.S. and Canada are likely to join the project. The initiative is under the auspices of the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycle, called INPRO, of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This reactor will have a capacity of 1000 MWe. The fuel that the reactor will use will be identified soon. Dr. Baldev Raj said: "There is already a consensus in this world body (INPRO) that this new reactor system should satisfy the requirements of sustainability. We have estimated in this body that about 300 GWe to 500 GWe of nuclear power will be generated by fast reactors with closed nuclear fuel cycle by 2050. So you can imagine the impact that this new nuclear system [reactor] will have on power generation."

The Washington Post, 22 August 2006

Iran Rejects Offer For Nuclear Talks

The Iranian government has told senior European officials that it will not accept the only condition set by the Bush administration and its Western allies for talks on the country's nuclear program and will continue enriching uranium, despite the threat of international sanctions, several senior U.S. and European officials said yesterday. Diplomats in Washington, Tehran and European capitals said the Iranian government is willing to enter negotiations and to consider a freeze of the program, but it will not accept a freeze as a precondition for the talks. Ali Larijani, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, informed Javier Solana, foreign policy chief for the European Union, of the decision in a phone call over the weekend. The two men will likely meet again today, along with representatives of France, Britain and Germany, to discuss the Iranian position. But U.S. officials said they would push for strong financial sanctions against the Tehran government and expected support from Europe. The Iranian position is nearly identical to its initial reaction to the offer, which was presented in June and includes a package of U.S.-backed economic and political incentives. U.S., British and French diplomats concluded yesterday, after receiving word of Iran's intention, that the government simply bought time to advance its nuclear program, rather than scale it back as the U.N. resolution requires.

The Asian Age, 23 August 2006

Last chance for U.S. to decide

The Prime Minister, in his reply to the Rajya Sabha debate on August 17, has once again reaffirmed the government's position on the Indo-US nuclear deal more emphatically and lucidly than in the past. It would appear that he has attempted to reasonably address all

major issues raised by the Opposition parties and the scientific and strategic communities for the time being. But in spite of similar statements in the past to Parliament, the direction in which the US Congress is continuing to frame the associated law is seriously in departure with the stated policies. One, therefore, hopes that the clear policy stand of the government enunciated in Parliament, in its totality, will indeed be formally conveyed by the PM directly to President Bush immediately, so that the Americans have no excuse later of not having been officially forewarned. The PM stated that he has "conveyed to President Bush that the proposed US legislation must conform strictly to the parameters of the July 18, 2005 statement and the March 2, 2006 separation plan.

Deccan Herald, 23 August 2006

Is it a road to self-reliance?

There is no doubt that the Indo-US nuclear co-operation deal is being steered by the US focusing more on the non-proliferation aspects rather than the civil nuclear co-operation, deviating from the July 18, 2005 Joint Statement. This is evident from the contents of the Bill H R 5682 passed by the House of Representatives in June 2006 and the Bill before the Senate for consideration in September 2006. Naturally, this has created ripples in the minds of various political parties, strategic analysts, the media and top nuclear scientific community in India culminating in a debate in the Rajya Sabha on Aug 17, 2006. The Prime Minister's statement with his detailed response to various points of concern keeping the July 18 statement and the March 2, 2006 Separation Plan as guiding documents has to a large extent helped clarify the Indian stand and the ball is now squarely in the US court. It will be interesting to watch whether this will be insisted upon in letter and spirit by India and to what extent the US will be willing to go along. Among the various issues, the following require careful scrutiny.

The Tribune, 23 August 2006

No intrusion in Kakrapar N-station

New Delhi, August 22: After several hours of combing operation, jointly conducted by the CISF and Gujarat police, the Centre has been informed that there is no breach of security at Kakrapar Nuclear Power Station in Gujarat. 'The CISF has informed the Ministry of Home Affairs that nothing has been found after the combing operation,' Home Ministry spokesperson Omkar Kedia told The Tribune here. Ever since there was a report about the possible intrusion, Union Home Secretary V. K. Duggal had been in constant touch with the Gujarat police DGP and the CISF Director-General, the spokesperson said. Earlier in the day there was a report that the villagers had informed the local police that two armed men were seen entering the Kakrapar station. Immediately, the Gujarat police and the CISF which provides security in the inner power station, sealed the premises and started the combing operation. Commandos took up positions inside the control room for the reactors while CISF troops along with local police combed the 1.6 km 'exclusive zone' between the Kakrapar station's outer fence and an inner barrier around the nuclear plants. Protection systems were also in place to shut down the reactors in case of any eventuality.

The Indian Express, 23 August 2006

This is about energy, did you say?

While we are being treated to lullabies - that the agreement with the US is all about nuclear energy - the laws that the US Congress is passing are absolutely clear in the objectives for which the agreement is being entered into. Section 2(5) of the Bill that the House of Representatives has passed states that the objective is to bring within the ambit of NPT discipline countries that haven't signed. In view of the dust that is thrown in our eyes, it is important to bear in mind two different aspects of non-proliferation. One implication of the expression is that India will join others in ensuring that more States and groups do not acquire nuclear weapons. That is a desirable objective, an objective as vital for India as for others, and everyone subscribes to cooperation for this purpose. But, as we shall soon see, the US has a second meaning in mind too: and that is to halt, roll back, and eventually eliminate the nuclear weapons capability of a country like India. The US Bills make no bones about this at all. Section 2(6)(C) of the Bill notes that the agreement that President Bush and Prime Minister have signed, and which our Government has been saying does not at all put a cap on our nuclear strategic programme, 'induces the country' to 'refrain from actions that would further the development of its nuclear weapons program.' Section 3(b)(5) clearly states that the US policy is to 'Seek to halt the increase of nuclear weapon arsenals in South Asia, and to promote their reduction and eventual elimination.'

The Indian Express, 23 August 2006

Iran delivers formal N-response

TEHRAN, August 22: Iran's top nuclear negotiator said on Tuesday that Tehran was ready to enter 'serious negotiations' over its disputed nuclear program but did not say whether it was willing to suspend uranium enrichment - the key Western demand. Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Ali Larijani, hand-delivered Iran's response to the Western package of nuclear incentives to ambassadors from Britain, China, Russia, France, Germany and Switzerland, the television said. Officials close to the meeting said Iran's response has offered a 'new formula' to resolve the dispute over Iran's nuclear activities but gave no further details. The permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany in June offered Iran the package that aims to persuade Iran to roll back its nuclear programme. The United States is represented by Switzerland, which looks after US interests in Tehran because it has not had diplomatic relations with Iran since 1979 when Muslim fundamentalists overran the US Embassy. A top Iranian nuclear official said Tehran's response will provide 'an exceptional opportunity' for a return to the negotiating table for a compromise. "Iran's response to the package is a comprehensive reply that can open the way for resumption of talks for a final agreement," Mohammed Saeedi, deputy head of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran, said in comments published on Tuesday.

The New York Times, 23 August 2006

Iran Sanctions Could Fracture Coalition

WASHINGTON, Aug. 22: It was always going to be tough for Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to hold together her fragile coalition of world powers trying to rein in

Iran's nuclear ambitions. The Israel-Hezbollah war in Lebanon has made that job harder. While Iran's official response to the package of carrots from the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China was, at 21 pages, voluminous, the key point is that Iran's leaders did not agree to suspend enrichment of uranium, the central demand of the coalition. Now the question is whether Ms. Rice, who returned from vacation this week and was studying Iran's response, can keep the coalition together to take out their sticks against Iran. That will not be easy, in part because the entire United Nations Security Council is supposed to vote on the sanctions package. While only the permanent members can veto, the rising fear, particularly among European diplomats, is that smaller countries on the Council are so angry over how the United States, and now France, have handled the Lebanon crisis that they will give Russia and China political cover to balk against imposing tough sanctions.

The New York Times, 23 August 2006

Iran Won't Give Promise to End Uranium Effort

TEHRAN, Aug. 22: Iran responded Tuesday to a set of incentives from Europe and the United States aimed at ending its nuclear program, but did not agree to suspend the enrichment of uranium by the end of the month, the West's primary demand. In its response, Iran offered 'serious talks' over its nuclear activities but did not raise the issue of suspending enrichment by Aug. 31, the deadline established by the United Nations Security Council, Western diplomats said. "What they have not done is address the key point, whether or not they are going to suspend," said one senior European official involved in the Iran negotiations. Following traditional protocol, the official and other diplomats spoke only on condition of anonymity. As European and American diplomats analyzed the 21-page counterproposal on Tuesday, it increasingly appeared that Iran's efforts to push past the Aug. 31 deadline would be considered unacceptable and that they would be likely to lead to calls for imposing sanctions. The United States, Britain, France and Germany plan to meet Wednesday in New York to discuss the proposal and their response. John R. Bolton, the United States representative to the United Nations, said Tuesday that Washington was prepared to move rapidly on a new Council resolution calling for economic sanctions.

The News, 23 August 2006

Nuclear-armed Iran would be "dangerous", says US

WASHINGTON: The White House warned Tuesday that a nuclear-armed Iran would be "dangerous" to the world but declined to assess Tehran's reply to a offer to end the standoff over its atomic programmes. "Let's let the diplomats take a look at this response before we parse it out too much here," spokeswoman Dana Perino said as US President George W Bush traveled here for an event focused on health care reform. "We are aware of the rhetoric that's been coming out of the regime about a nuclear program, and the president made very clear to everyone yesterday in his press conference that he thinks that that would be a mistake, and dangerous for the region and the whole world," she said. On Monday, Bush had urged the United Nations to act swiftly if Iran refuses to stop sensitive nuclear activities by an August 31 Security Council deadline, warning that there must be "consequences" for ignoring UN demands. The UN Security Council has given Iran until the end of this month to halt uranium enrichment -- a process that makes fuel

for nuclear power plants but can be diverted to make weapons -- or face possible sanctions.

The News, 23 August 2006

The News

BEIJING: China said Wednesday it was carefully studying Iran's response to an international offer over its nuclear program and urged the Islamic republic to be constructive in its dealings on the issue. Iran delivered a response Tuesday to the deal aimed at ending a long-running standoff over its nuclear program and, while it did not disclose the details of its reply, said it was ready for talks. "China is carefully studying the reply," the foreign ministry said in a statement to AFP. "China hopes Iran will earnestly consider the concerns of the international community and adopt the necessary constructive measures." China hoped "the other parties will maintain calm and patience and exercise flexibility while persisting in the direction towards a peaceful solution, so as to create conditions for a speedy resumption of talks," it said.

The Hindu, 23 August 2006

North Korea warns U.S.

SINGAPORE: North Korea declared on Tuesday that it "is no longer bound by the armistice agreement" that brought the Korean War of the early 1950s to an end without a formal peace accord or a political settlement. The comment was monitored by South Korea in Seoul that has served as a listening post for matters concerning North Korea in the past several decades. Pyongyang asserted its right to resort to a "pre-emptive strike" against the United States, South Korea's ally. The comment, seen in Seoul as a "threat," was made in the context of the ongoing annual military exercise involving the U.S. and South Korea. Pyongyang's Korean People's Army (KPA) spokesman was quoted as saying the exercise could lead to an actual war. North Korea would, therefore, reserve the right of a pre-emptive strike in "self-defence." The U.S. did not have a monopoly over the right of a pre-emptive strike, the KPA spokesman said.

The Pioneer, 24 August 2006

Future of the nuclear deal

After having wasted huge amounts of public money for two weeks on puerile controversies generated by the foibles two former Foreign Ministers, Jaswant Singh and Natwar Singh, the Members of the Rajya Sabha showed they are capable of raising parliamentary debate to very high levels that the country can be proud of, on August 17, when the Indo-US civil nuclear cooperation deal came up for discussion. The Left parties pointed out the serious implications of long-term dependence on nuclear fuel from the US on the independence of our foreign policy. The BJP established the dangerous implications for our national security of provisions in proposed US legislation, designed to "cap, roll back and eliminate" our nuclear weapons capabilities. The Treasury Benches came up with spirited replies. But, above all, the day belonged to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who came out with a high voltage parliamentary performance combining nostalgia and emotion, with a clear enunciation of what precisely India would and would not accept in any American legislation.

The Indian Express, 24 August 2006

India will retain right to conduct future nuclear tests: Manmohan

New Delhi, August 23: Ruling out any bilateral pact with the US that would put a cap on India's military nuclear programme, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said New Delhi will retain the 'sovereign right' on deciding whether to carry out any atomic tests in the future despite the civil nuclear deal with Washington. He told the Lok Sabha that while the deal with the US would put India at par with five nuclear weapon states, there was a 'question mark' on the issue of inter-changeability between military and civilian nuclear reactors as New Delhi does not have the status of a nuclear weapon state as per the NPT norms. Winding up the crucial debate on the deal, Singh assured the House that his government would work for a 'broad national consensus' on the issue.

Hindustan Times, 24 August 2006

Nuke-switch option not clear: PM

New Delhi, August 23: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh admitted in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday that there was a question mark over the inter-changeability option - from the civilian to military and vice versa - in the separation plan New Delhi has furnished to Washington under the proposed Indo-US nuclear deal. The question originally was raised by the BJP's Yashwant Sinha after the PM's response to the Rajya Sabha debate on the nuclear issue last week. While Singh did not respond to the query in the Upper House, he addressed it as some length in the LS debate on the issue today. He said while the status was unclear on the inter-changeability question, "we will be free to build new reactors and whether to declare them civilian or military will be our option." Sinha had raised the subject in the context of claims that the US has accepted India as a de jure nuclear weapons state by seeking to formalise changes in its existing legislations "to pave the way for India-specific IAEA safeguards" that bar nuclear cooperation with non-NPT States. "If we are a de facto weapons state, do we have the inter-changeability option" that was Sinha's question after the PM's exhaustive reply to the debate.

The Tribune, 24 August 2006

Road ahead for N-deal: India cannot accept ban on fissile material

After having wasted huge amounts of the tax payer's money for two weeks on puerile controversies generated by the foibles, two former Foreign Ministers, Mr Jaswant Singh and Mr Natwar Singh, the members of the Rajya Sabha, showed they are capable of raising parliamentary debate to very high levels that a country can be proud of, on August 17, when the Indo-US nuclear deal came up for debate and discussion. The Left parties pointed out the serious implications of long-term dependence on nuclear fuel from the US on the independence of our foreign policy. The BJP established the dangerous implications for our national security of provisions in proposed US legislation, clearly designed to "cap, roll back and eliminate" our nuclear weapons capabilities. The Treasury Benches came up with spirited replies. But, above all, the day belonged to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who came out with a high voltage parliamentary performance combining nostalgia and emotion, with a clear enunciation of what precisely India would and would not accept in anything the US Congress may legislate.

The Hindu, 24 August 2006

Manmohan: I have Bush's assurance

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Wednesday told the Lok Sabha that United States President George W. Bush had assured him that he did not intend shifting the goalposts of the July 2005 civilian nuclear agreement. However, if extraneous elements, not envisaged in the agreement, found their way into it, we would draw "appropriate conclusions," Dr. Singh said. The U.S. Congressional process was not yet over and he could not predict what would emerge. "If it goes in a direction that hurts us, we will draw appropriate conclusions and will do nothing that will compromise the scope of our strategic programme, which will be determined by the people, the Government and Parliament," he said in a 40-minute reply to a discussion on the agreement. Dr. Singh assured the members that there would be no cap on fissile material production, the additional protocol to be signed with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would be India-specific and fast breeder reactors excluded from surveillance. Dr. Singh said the Iran vote at the IAEA came in a different context and was not linked to the deal with the U.S. In addition to building close ties with the U.S., India was reaching out to Russia, the European Union, the Arab world, China and the neighbouring countries. "Our foreign policy is "subservient [to] only national interest."

The Indian Express, 24 August 2006

PM fails to impress

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's defence of the Indo-US nuclear deal in Rajya Sabha last week may have earned him a lot of admirers and silenced both BJP and the Left, but Organiser is clearly not impressed. In a front page article titled 'Obfuscation', M D Nalapat insists that the PM's address "can best be described as an exercise in point-wise obfuscation in order to conceal the reality of surrender." Relying more on John Rood's testimony at the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on August 2 (to confirm his nomination as the new assistant secretary of state for international security and non-proliferation), Nalapat says it revealed that the July 18, 2005 Joint Statement "is itself a camouflage and that Manmohan had effectively subscribed to the stringent NPT-like conditions applicable to non nuclear weapons states." The Organiser article also laments that the Left parties had swallowed the PM's "line of deception in toto" and had given up efforts to introduce a binding sense of the House resolution "although this is the only way to prevent the Sonia-Manmohan sellout of the country's energy security and strategic future." The Organiser is not impressed with the "new found love of DMK ministers for temples and community feasts in temples" either. The sudden religious turn taken by the avowedly atheist Dravidian party is attributed to vote bank politics.

The New York Times, 24 August 2006

U.S. Says Iranian Nuclear Proposal Is Inadequate

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23: The United States, in its first formal reaction after Iran's counteroffer to an incentives proposal to quit its nuclear program, said Iran's position 'falls short' of United Nations demands. A State Department statement said the United States was 'consulting closely' with members of the United Nations Security Council over its next steps. "We acknowledge that Iran considers its response as a serious offer, and we will review it," said the acting spokesman for the department, Gonzalo Gallegos, in the

statement. On June 1, the five permanent members of the Security Council, along with Germany, offered Iran a package of incentives in return for Tehran's suspension of uranium enrichment, a crucial step in any creation of a nuclear weapon. Iran's official response on Tuesday, in a complex 21-page counterproposal, in effect offered to hold negotiations on its nuclear program but did not address the Security Council's demand that it halt enrichment. Bush administration officials are pushing their European, Russian and Chinese counterparts to impose sanctions on Iran at the end of the month, after a Security Council deadline for Iran to suspend enrichment expires. But Russia and China, which have deep economic ties with Iran, have resisted any move to penalize the country severely.

The Tribune, 24 August 2006

Iran's No

The much-awaited Iranian response to the UN Security Council's demand that Teheran should suspend its uranium enrichment programme by August 31 or face economic sanctions has created a tricky situation. In its 23-page letter Iran has rejected the offer of incentives, including civilian nuclear cooperation, in exchange for abandoning its nuclear power programme. At the same time, it has come out with counter-proposals for further talks but under a 'new formula'. Reports suggest that Iran may agree to a suspension of its nuclear programme so long as the talks under the formula it has suggested go on. But it has made it clear that it has no intention to ultimately scrap its nuclear project, which the West suspects is meant for acquiring nuclear weapons. The West is worried that a nuclear programme for peaceful purposes can also help in manufacturing bombs. The Iranian refusal to abide by the Security Council resolution could lead to the imposition of economic sanctions after August 31. But this is not so easy, given the serious differences among the Council's permanent members plus Germany. Russia and China, which have huge economic interests at stake in Iran, are opposed to a coercive approach to deal with Teheran for its nuclear transgressions. Even if Russia and China succumb to western pressure for a milder sanctions regime, Iran is confident of weathering the storm with its coffers bulging with petrodollars.

The News, 24 August 2006

Tehran's response

Keeping to the deadline it had named for its response, Iran gave its formal reply on Tuesday regarding the package of nuclear "incentives" the west had offered it. Predictably, it ignored the demand by the UN Security Council that it freeze its enrichment of uranium before the end of August. Tehran responded despite what its chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani described as "the other parties" illegal move to refer to Iran's case to the Security Council," something for which "there is no justification". One would have to see this in an approving light, and also Tehran's insistence that it will not freeze enrichment of uranium, on the premise that asking it to do so implies the employment of a blatant double standard. The fact is that there seems no valid reason for the action against a signatory to the NPT which seeks to exercise its sovereign right to pursue a peaceful nuclear programme, including enrichment of uranium. For argument's sake, if one were to accept the US charge that Iran's programme is not intended for energy production, then instead of asking it to suspend uranium enrichment, Tehran

should be asked to submit itself to a check by nuclear monitors. Besides, all those asking Iran to stop enriching uranium themselves are declared nuclear powers.

Dawn, 24 August 2006

Iran's response

Iran's response to the package of incentives offered to it three months ago by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany provides an opening for further negotiations - that is, if the US and Europe are willing to seize it. Matters were complicated by the West's impatience at Tehran's unwillingness to hasten its response when the package was offered. In July these powers went to the Security Council, which adopted a resolution demanding that Tehran freeze its uranium enrichment programme before the end of August or face economic sanctions. Unsurprisingly, Iran rejected this promptly. In their latest communication the Iranians have not changed their position on uranium enrichment, but there are indications that they might be inclined to accept suspension of the programme during the course of negotiations. With the Bush administration harping on the Security Council resolution 1696 of July 31 and Iran focusing on the package of incentives, it is plain that the two sides are following two parallel tracks that may never meet.

The Asian Age, 25 August 2006

We need nuclear power to energise growth

The debate on the India-US nuclear issue was rather tame, and clearly, the Prime Minister and the government are doing the right thing. And on this issue there is little need to fire blanks in the air (which the Left parties are doing). If we look at the political and economic benefits that can be derived from this arrangement, then logic indicates that a political consensus is necessary. The nuclear deal has many advantages for both sides, but the critical factor is the energy security we require for the future. We are going to have a constant battle for the next two decades for building our infrastructure. And to match an eight-nine per cent growth rate, we need energy. Without this deal, it is just not possible to do so. Look at the energy situation all over the country. See how hundreds and thousands of crores are spent on diesel and petrol for generators to run our industrial establishments. Sadly, even today, we have to live with two to four hours of power cuts in Delhi (the situation is much worse in other states). The nuclear benefits should be explained in simple terms which will be easy to understand. Clearly, in an "open" global society, where benefits from trade and commerce give us a chance to attain superpower status, we cannot ignore the global reality and the window of opportunity which has come our way.

The Asian Age, 25 August 2006

PM is Risking national interest

Compelled by political pressure from all sides, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in Parliament finally defined the limit of concessions beyond which he thinks he cannot go in placating the United States in the proposed nuclear deal without destabilising his government. But this belated spine-straightening act may spur the non-proliferationists in Washington, who want to leave India no wriggle room, into insisting the Senate version of the amended US Atomic Energy Act containing many of the measures the PM has, in

effect, dubbed "deal killers," become law. Short of the US Congress removing the offensive provisions or Manmohan Singh going back on his word, a breakdown of the deal is imminent. Indeed, it is the politics of US Congress' non-proliferation law-making that all along held out the hope that India would escape strategic strangulation by default, particularly because the Manmohan Singh regime has not shown it can discern what is in the country's best interests, leaving it vulnerable to the official American line that gives the impression of mutual gain when actually it mostly serves US interests. I said this as a panellist in a discussion held at the India International Centre on August 3, 2005 - a prognosis proved right a year later. The Prime Minister keeps justifying what he has done by invoking "enlightened national interest." But according to the evidence thus far, this seems only a rhetorical veil behind which he has felt free to make indefensible concessions.

The Tribune, 25 August 2006

No dilution of N-deal: PM sends a signal to US Senate

The sceptics have now the reason to feel comfortable after the extensive debate over the Indo-US nuclear deal in both Houses of Parliament and the Prime Minister's categorical reply to their questions. If everything goes according to the July 2005 Joint Statement, India will have got what it had been seeking for some time. There is no threat to the country's strategic and other interests. India's declaration of a voluntary moratorium on further nuclear tests can be withdrawn the moment the country's national interests demand. The deal will not come in the way. Dr Manmohan Singh has made it plain that it will be India's sovereign right to build as many nuclear reactors as it wanted, whether civilian or military in nature. The civilian nuclear cooperation agreement with the US does not bind India to the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, as it does not fit into India's scheme of things. The safeguards agreement to be signed with the International Atomic Energy Agency will be only India-specific - exactly on the lines given in the Joint Statement.

Daily Times, 25 August 2006

US warns banks of stigma of Iran, N Korea links

WASHINGTON: Banks handling money for North Korea or Iran run the risk of some day being exposed to the same stigma associated with banks linked to Nazi Germany, a senior US government official said on Wednesday. "You don't want to be the one ten years from now who's got (Korean leader) Kim Jong Il's money," Treasury Undersecretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Stuart Levey said in an interview with Reuters. "(It's) just like we saw during the (former US President Bill) Clinton administration when they exposed the Nazi banks," Levey said. Swiss banks were embarrassed in 1997 by revelations that the German government had passed funds through the Swiss National Bank and other Swiss banks during World War II to finance the Nazi war effort. "You don't want to be on the wrong side of that. I think banks understand that. I just don't know whether they are taking all the steps that they can and we would encourage them to do it," he said. Levey directs Treasury efforts to stop funding for terrorism, weapons proliferation, and illicit activities that could undermine the financial system. Reuters

Daily Times, 25 August 2006

Iran and IAEA clash over underground site

WASHINGTON: Iran has taken issues with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on the inspection of certain underground facilities at the Natanz nuclear site, according to David Albright and Paul Brannan of the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS). The Washington-based nuclear watchdog said, "Iran over the weekend denied IAEA inspectors access to underground facilities at the Natanz site in Iran. This latest incident stems from a clash between IAEA inspectors and Iranian officials over the frequency of inspections of the underground halls in which Iran intends to house centrifuge cascades but which currently remain empty of centrifuges. The IAEA wants monthly visits to the underground facilities which Iran refuses to permit. The design verification visits which Iran now refuses to permit are intended to ensure that what Iran is building at the underground site matches the designs that Iran has already provided to the IAEA".

Dawn, 25 August 2006

US defers call for sanctions on Iran

WASHINGTON, Aug 24: The Bush administration has deferred its call for immediate sanctions against Iran although it did say that Tehran has failed to respond adequately to a UN demand for verifiably suspending its nuclear enrichment programme by Aug 31. The change in Washington's approach followed a 21-page counter-offer that Iran sent on Tuesday. While the details of the response have not been made public, Iran said its response offers an opportunity for 'serious' talks on the issue. US officials told reporters that the White House had intended to issue a stronger statement rejecting Iran's response and calling for talks on sanctions to begin quickly, but America's European allies - particularly Britain and France - persuaded it to allow time to carefully consider Tehran's offer. Ultimately, the US yielded to their pressure and on Wednesday afternoon the State Department issued a milder statement which defined Iran's response as inadequate but refrained from demanding immediate sanctions. In a three-paragraph statement, the State Department promised to review Iran's response. "We acknowledge that Iran considers its response a serious offer, and we will review it," the statement said.

The Asahi Shimbun, 25 August 2006

Iran's nuclear thorn

We cannot help but suspect that Iran is trying to buy time. Tehran has submitted a response to a comprehensive package that the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council put together with Germany to settle Iran's suspected nuclear program. The response makes clear Iran's refusal to accept a proposal to stop uranium enrichment and demands instead that negotiations continue. This is in line with Iran's apparent strategy to keep its uranium enrichment program intact. Despite the fact that Iran is party to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, it acquired the necessary supplies and technology through the black market and secretly advanced the construction of facilities that could lead to the development of nuclear weapons. The uranium enrichment plant is the centerpiece. If Iran halts its uranium enrichment program, the international community would cooperate with its effort to advance peaceful use of atomic energy. The United States, which has severed diplomatic ties with Iran, would also take part in the

negotiations. These points are said to be the pillars of the U.N. proposal, although specific details have not been disclosed.

Dawn, 25 August 2006

Tehran asks West to outline timetable: Offer on N-plan

VIENNA, Aug 24: Iran's reply to an offer of incentives to halt nuclear work asks world powers to clarify key points including a timeline to implement the package, Iranian experts with diplomatic contacts said on Thursday. The accounts of the three Iranians, two of whom have had good links to Tehran officialdom, appeared the first to detail some of the 100 or so questions Iran posed in a response it has touted as an opening to talks to end a standoff with the West. The United States and Germany said Iran's request for talks fell short of a UN Security Council demand that it stop enriching uranium by Aug 31 to qualify for the incentives, suggesting sanctions on Iran could loom after the deadline. Western diplomats and Iran alike have withheld details of the 21-page response other than to say Tehran had ruled out suspending enrichment as a precondition for talks but offered to discuss doing so in the course of negotiations. Abbas Maleki and Kaveh Afrasiabi, in a report distributed by the Agence Global news and opinion syndicate, said Iran's questions focused on what it saw as vague elements of the offer, including the lack of a proposed timetable. They said Iran wanted a brief reference in the offer to a possible Iranian role in a regional security arrangement - a critical concern for Tehran, given US hostility to its current leaders - to be fleshed out.

The Asian Age, 26 August 2006

Let Iran Save Face

With New Delhi having marginalised itself on the Iran nuclear issue, a new global hotspot is developing right in India's neighbourhood, with the United States itching for a showdown over Tehran's defiant refusal to bow to the United Nations Security Council demand that it immediately suspend uranium enrichment. India can do little more than watch from the sidelines as the embattled US President George W. Bush pursues an approach on Iran in which the carrots are dangled merely to legitimise his first choice for the sticks. Bush is eager to divert attention from his failures in Iraq and Afghanistan, and if he decides to use the sticks against Iran - either by imposing new sanctions or carrying out punishing air strikes - India's interests will be hurt more than any other country's. In its long-delayed response this week to the package of incentives offered by the five permanent Security Council members and Germany, Tehran has refused to suspend enrichment as demanded by the recent Security Council Resolution 1696. Instead it has shrewdly proposed immediate talks on finding a compromise settlement, tantalisingly leaving open the possibility that it might suspend enrichment as part of a negotiated bargain. Not surprisingly, this offer has been rejected by the Bush team.

Hindustan Times, 26 August 2006

PM meets nuclear scientists today

New Delhi, August 25: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will seek to allay scientists' fears over the Indo-US nuclear deal when he meets a group of nuclear scientists and members of the Atomic Energy Commission in the capital on Saturday. The meeting with the scientists is taking place at a time when the agreement with the United States on civil

nuclear cooperation has come under attack from political parties and the scientific community. Former AEC chairmen HN Sethna, MR Srinivasan and PK Iyengar, former Atomic Energy Regulatory Board chairman A Gopalkrishnan, former Nuclear Power Corporation managing directors SL Kati and YSR Prasad, former Bhabha Atomic Research Centre director AN Prasad, and former Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research chief Placid Rodriguez are among those who have been called by the Prime Minister for the deliberations. He will also have a meeting with AEC members. The AEC is chaired by Anil Kakodkar and its members are Minister of State in PMO Prithviraj Chavan, National Security Advisor MK Narayanan, Principal Secretary to PM TKA Nair, Cabinet Secretary BK Chaturvedi, Department of Economic Affairs Secretary AK Jha, eminent scientist CNR Rao, former AEC chairman MR Srinivasan, former Atomic Energy Regulatory Board chairman P Rama Rao, BARC Director Srikumar Banerjee and Head of the Management Service Group of Department of Atomic Energy, K Muralidhar.

The Hindu, 26 August 2006

"Bush dedicated to moving forward on nuclear deal"

CHENNAI: United States President George W. Bush "is dedicated to moving forward" on the nuclear agreement with India "on its [agreement's] terms," according to James L. Connaughton, Chairman, Council on Environment Quality, U.S. Asked about the extraneous conditions introduced in the Bill passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, which were not in the Joint Statement of July 18, 2005 by Mr. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the agreement of March 2, 2006 on the separation of military nuclear facilities from their civilian counterparts in India, Mr. Connaughton said: "We are working very closely with our legislature to achieve the broadest possible support so that this agreement is not [merely] between two leaders but a lasting agreement between two countries. Our legislature is actively engaged as your legislature, and it is a very positive and powerful development. And as they [the legislature of India and the U.S] understand the needs of the two countries, we are confident that a strong legislative package will be produced." Mr. Connaughton's choice was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on June 14, 2001 and appointed by Mr. Bush four days later to serve as Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality. In this capacity, he serves as the senior environmental, energy and natural resources adviser to the U.S. President. He is also director of the White House Office of Environmental Policy, which coordinates interagency implementation of environmental programmes. He was here on August 23.

The Indian Express, 26 August 2006

The doctor and the scientists

On Saturday, the the prime minister will honour his commitment to meet the scientists who had submitted a memorandum expressing concern about the Indo-US nuclear agreement. This is a welcome move. The scientists who had submitted the memo are among the best and brightest of the Indian nuclear science and engineering field who, along with the pioneers of Indian nuclear science, had built the infrastructure that exists today as one of the bright achievements of Indian science. Long before the July 18, 2005 statement in which the US recognised India as a 'responsible state with advanced nuclear technology', India had been designated a member of the IAEA Board of Governors since the latter's inception for being one of the '10 members most advanced in technology of

atomic energy', a distinction made possible only because of the dedication of many of these scientists, and their mentors at the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE). It is, therefore, only natural that the Prime Minister would want to assure them that their legitimate concerns would be addressed properly. One, for example, would be the right to reprocess spent fuel obtained from the use of either imported fuel or imported nuclear facilities. There is no doubt that the refusal of the US either to take back the spent fuel from Tarapur or give India the right to reprocess it had placed enormous strain on the resources of the Indian nuclear establishment for the safe storage of an ever increasing stocky of hazardous material.

The Indian Express, 26 August 2006

... Israel seeks its own in N-subs

JERUSALEM, AUGUST 25: With the purchase of two more German-made Dolphin submarines capable of carrying nuclear warheads, military experts say Israel is sending a clear message to Iran that it can strike back if attacked by nuclear weapons. The purchases come at a time when Iran is refusing to bow to growing Western demands to halt its nuclear programme, and after Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has called for Israel to be 'wiped off the map.' The new submarines, built at a cost of \$1.3 billion with Germany footing one-third of the bill, have diesel-electric propulsion systems that allow them to remain submerged for longer periods of time than the three nuclear arms-capable submarines already in Israel's fleet, the Jerusalem Post reported. The submarines not only would be able to carry out a first strike should Israel choose to do so, but they also would provide Israel with crucial second-strike capabilities, said Paul Beaver, a London-based independent defense analyst. Israel is already believed to have that ability in the form of the Jericho-1 and Jericho-2 nuclear-capable ballistic missiles, which are buried so far underground they would survive a nuclear strike, he said. "The Iranians would be very foolish if they attacked Israel," Beaver said. German officials have said the contract for the new submarines was signed July 6, and the Jerusalem Post reported this week the subs will be operational shortly.

The Indian Express, 26 August 2006

Iran wants guarantees against sanctions...

PARIS, AUGUST 25: Iran wants guarantees that it won't face UN sanctions before it is prepared to restart negotiations over its nuclear programme, Germany's Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said on Friday. He called the condition unacceptable. "I have always said that we must begin negotiations without preconditions. ... That is why Iran must understand we cannot come to the negotiating table when every day new centrifuges are being constructed," Steinmeier told reporters. The foreign minister said Iran, in its response to an international package of incentives, was willing to hold new talks provided the five permanent UNSC members and Germany pledge to hold off on UN sanctions. An Iranian opposition group also said on Friday that Iran has assembled and is testing 15 so called P2 centrifuges which can speed up uranium enrichment, the process which makes nuclear fuel or atom bomb material. The national council of resistance of Iran said it had also located what it called a secret production site for the equipment near Tehran. The claim, made at a press conference in Paris, came as Iran seemed headed for a showdown at the UN Security Council next week over its nuclear programme and facing

the threat of sanctions for failing to freeze enrichment. Having P2 centrifuges-more sophisticated than P1 versions-would give Iran an increased capability to enrich uranium for nuclear fuel or atom bomb material. Europe and the US fear Tehran is using a drive for energy as a cover for developing atomic weapons. "At least 15 P2 centrifuges have been assembled so far and are being tested," said NCRI's Mohammad Mohadessin.

Daily Times, 26 August 2006

Call to attack Iran and take out its N-assets

WASHINGTON: While a document recently circulated to Congress and the media paints a dire picture of the Iranian 'nuclear threat', a Washington Post columnist has called for a military attack on Iran. Charles Krauthammer, who is known for his hawkish views but who reflects the thinking of a fair number of conservative Americans, commenting on the written answer provided by Iran to the permanent members of the Security Council this week on the nuclear standoff, wrote: "Iran's answer is now in . . . Iran barred International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors from the uranium enrichment facilities at Natanz. Our exercise in multilateralism has now reached criticality. We never expected Iran to respond positively. The whole point in going the extra mile was to demonstrate American goodwill and thus get our partners to support real sanctions at the Security Council. But this will not work. The Russians and Chinese are already sending signals that they will allow Iran to endlessly drag out the process. Even if we do get sanctions imposed on Iran, they will undoubtedly be weak. And even if they are strong, the mullahs will not give up the glory and dominion (especially over the Arabs) that come with the bomb in exchange for a mess of pottage."

Daily Times, 26 August 2006

South Korea certain North has N-bombs

SEOUL: South Korea is certain North Korea has nuclear weapons and Seoul's best estimate is Pyongyang has produced one or two bombs, its defence minister said on Friday, amid reports that the North may be preparing a nuclear test. Defence Minister Yoon Kwang-ing has previously said he believed the North had one or two nuclear weapons, but his remarks in parliament on Friday were among the strongest yet on the North's possession of atomic bombs. "It is estimated that the North has one or two," Yoon told a parliamentary hearing when asked about the North's nuclear arsenal. When asked if the South has no doubt about the North's possession of a nuclear weapon, Yoon said: "That's correct." Yoon also said there was not enough evidence at present to conclude the North is about to conduct its first nuclear weapons test. North Korea declared in February 2005 it possessed nuclear weapons. US and Japanese news reports have said the North might be preparing to conduct an underground nuclear test. In July, the communist state defied international warnings and test-fired seven missiles, prompting condemnation by the UN Security Council.

Daily Times, 26 August 2006

Khatami justifies nuclear Iran

TOKYO: Former Iranian president Mohammad Khatami on Friday defended his nation's right to the peaceful use of nuclear power, insisting that the Islamic republic had no desire to build an atomic bomb. "We are seeking a peaceful use of nuclear technology,"

Khatami told a seminar at the United Nations University in Tokyo. "Iran doesn't want to get access to nuclear weapons. Not at all. We do not need them," said Khatami, a reformist who was president from 1997 to 2005 and has since been replaced by the more hardline President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Khatami reiterated Tehran's view that it has 'the legitimate right' to produce energy from nuclear technology as other countries do. Khatami on Thursday met with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and warned against possible UN sanctions on Iran over its disputed nuclear programme, foreign ministry officials said. The standoff over Iran's nuclear program has to be resolved through negotiations, Khatami told Koizumi. Koizumi said that Japan - a major importer of Iranian oil - wants Tehran to take a cooperative stance toward the international community and to suspend uranium enrichment. Khatami later said in an interview with Japan's public broadcaster NHK that he hoped to visit the United States to encourage dialogue. Washington has said it is considering a visa application by Khatami to visit the capital next month.

The News, 26 August 2006

Iran rejects 'language of force' over N-programme

TEHRAN: Iran is ready for unconditional talks over its nuclear programme but rejects the West's "language of force" over the issue, one of the Islamic republic's religious leaders said on Friday. Iran also said that it would soon announce new nuclear successes in its quest for nuclear power that the West fears is aimed at acquiring atomic weapons. "Iran is favourable toward negotiations that are just, logical and without preconditions, but refuses the language of force," Ahmad Khatami said in a Friday sermon broadcast on state radio. "Using the language of force with Iran is a foolish and clumsy attitude," said Khatami, who is a member of Iran's Assembly of Experts, which supervises the work of supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The United States and other world powers have reacted coolly to Iran's response to a package of incentives offered by the five permanent Security Council members and Germany in return for a moratorium on sensitive uranium activities. "During the war in Lebanon, the Security Council showed that it acted as the United States' valet ... We advise Russia and China not to fall into the Americans' trap," he said.

The New York Times, 26 August 2006

Russia Says It Opposes U.N. Sanctions on Iran

MOSCOW, Aug. 25: Russia's defense minister said Friday that it was premature to consider punitive actions against Iran despite its refusal so far to suspend its efforts to enrich uranium as the United Nations Security Council has demanded. Although Russia agreed to the Security Council's resolution on July 31, Defense Minister Sergei B. Ivanov's remarks made it clear that Russia would not support taking the next step that the United States and Britain have called for: imposing sanctions against Iran or its leaders over its nuclear programs. The Council set Aug. 31 as the deadline for Iran to respond to its demand. Russia has repeatedly expressed opposition to punitive steps, even as President Vladimir V. Putin and others have called on Iran to cooperate with international inspectors and suspend its enrichment activity. But on Friday Mr. Ivanov went further, saying the issue was not 'so urgent' that the Security Council should consider sanctions and expressing doubt that they would work in any case. "I know of no cases in

international practice or the whole of previous experience when sanctions achieved their goals or were efficient," Mr. Ivanov, a close ally of Mr. Putin who also serves as deputy prime minister, said in televised remarks in the Far East.

The Asahi Shimbun, 26 August 2006

5 arrested in illegal exports

Police on Friday arrested the president of high-precision instrument maker Mitutoyo Corp., a world-leader in the field, and four others suspected of exporting equipment that could be used in the production of nuclear weapons. Police said the highly sophisticated technology ended up in Libya and Iran. Investigators with the Metropolitan Police Department began searching the company's offices in Kawasaki's Takatsu Ward on Friday morning. The devices that Mitutoyo is suspected of exporting without securing government approval are three-dimensional measuring machines that map cylindrical shapes to great detail. They can also measure centrifuges used in uranium enrichment. A centrifuge is a device that enriches uranium to a level at which it can be used to make nuclear weapons. MPD officials said three such instruments, including one shipped to Malaysia in 2001, were found in Libya during inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency from late 2003 to early 2004. Police said they suspect Mitutoyo illegally shipped high-precision measuring devices overseas on a systematic basis. Police also searched the company's offices in February.

The Tribune, 27 August 2006

Scientists voice fears over nuclear deal

New Delhi, August 26: Seven of the eight retired nuclear scientists, who had voiced their concerns over certain aspects of the Indo-US nuclear deal on August 14, today met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and reiterated their fears. The scientists said they were concerned about the changes being sought by members of the US Congress to the July 18, 2005 Joint Statement signed by Dr Manmohan Singh and US President George Bush. The Prime Minister reiterated the assurances he had given to Parliament, saying that India would go ahead with the nuclear deal only and only if it were to be within the parameters of the Joint Statement. He also reiterated his assurance given in the Lok Sabha earlier this week that 'the Indo-US nuclear agreement will not be allowed to be used as a backdoor method of introducing NPT-type restrictions on India.' The scientists who met the Prime Minister at his Race Course Road residence this evening for 90 minutes were the former Chairmen of the Atomic Energy Commission, Dr H. N. Sethna, Dr M R. Srinivasan, and Dr P. K. Iyengar, and former Chairman of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board, Dr A. Gopalakrishnan.

The Hindu, 27 August 2006

Manmohan allays fears of scientists

NEW DELHI: The country's top nuclear scientists, who went public on August 14 with their concerns at the direction the Indo-U.S. civilian nuclear deal was taking, have welcomed Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's recent statements on the issue in Parliament. The scientists, who met the Prime Minister for 90 minutes at his Race Course Road residence on Saturday evening, appeared satisfied with their discussions. An official statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office said, "One of the scientists, Dr.

M.R. Srinivasan, [former Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission] summed up the view of the group stating: `Your [Dr. Singh's] statement was beautiful. We loved it.' "Dr. Placid Rodriguez, former Director of the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research, told The Hindu : "The meeting was excellent. We are satisfied with the assurances given by the Prime Minister." Asked if their concerns had been addressed at the meeting, Dr. Rodriguez said Dr. Singh had addressed those during his August 17 speech in the Rajya Sabha. According to the statement, the scientists reiterated their concerns at the changes being sought by members of the U.S. Congress to the July 18, 2005 joint statement issued by U.S. President George Bush and the Prime Minister.

The New York Times, 27 August 2006

Rumsfeld Eyes ICBMs in Terror War

FAIRBANKS, Alaska: U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on Sunday warned North Korea may pose a threat as a weapons seller to terrorists and that America would consider taking the nuclear warheads off intercontinental ballistic missiles so they could be used against terrorists. Rumsfeld, in Alaska to visit a missile defense installation weeks after Pyongyang test-fired a long-range missile believed capable of reaching the United States, said North Korea is testing missiles to show the capabilities to potential buyers. "They sell anything to anyone," he said. "They sell our currency that they counterfeit. They're selling illegal drugs. They're selling basic missile technologies. There's not much they have that they wouldn't sell either to another country or possibly to a terrorist network." In fact, Rumsfeld said North Korea is more a danger as a proliferator than a military force to challenge South Korea. "I think the real threat that North Korea poses in the immediate future is more one of proliferation than a danger to South Korea," he told reporters. The defense secretary also met with Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov on Sunday to discuss missile defense and cooperation on defense technologies, among other things.

Daily Times, 27 August 2006

Iran opens Arak heavy water plant: Nejad says N-facility not a threat to Israel

KHONDAB: President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad insisted on Saturday that Iran was no threat to Israel as he inaugurated a heavy water production plant just five days before a UN Security Council deadline to suspend sensitive nuclear fuel cycle work. Opening the controversial facility which the West believes may be used to acquire an atomic weapon, Ahmadinejad repeated Iran's desire for peaceful nuclear energy, saying his country posed no threat to arch foe Israel. "The message of the Iranian nation is peace, calm and co-habitation with all nations based on justice ... We are no threat to any nation, even the Zionist regime," he said. "They must accept the reality of a strong Iran, developed and a supporter of peace," he said as he opened the Arak plant which will supply heavy water to be used as cooling fluid for a 40 MW research reactor due for completion by 2009. The International Atomic Energy Agency has voiced concern over the risk of diversion of nuclear materials as the research reactor could produce 8-10 kilogrammes (about 20 pounds) of plutonium a year, enough to make at least two nuclear bombs. But Ahmadinejad also said Iran would defend its right to nuclear technology "with force". "One cannot deprive any nation from its rights. The Iranian nation will defend its rights to nuclear technology with force," Ahmadinejad said. "The Iranian nation is seeking

nuclear energy and I am in charge of pursuing the nation's demand."

Aljazeera, 28 August 2006

South Africa may enrich uranium

South Africa, which has backed Iran's right to enrich uranium, says it is considering processing its own uranium and envisages building up to six more nuclear reactors. Buyelwa Sonjica, minerals and energy minister, said that any enrichment of uranium by South Africa would be pursued within international obligations. South Africa has said it hopes to expand its economy by around six per cent in the future and would need new energy capacity to fuel the expansion of the continent's biggest economy. Sonjica said: "I therefore believe that time has come for South Africa to conduct a cost-benefit analysis into the beneficiation [processing] of uranium. I will soon be making certain announcements in this regard." South Africa abandoned its nuclear arms programme before the end of apartheid in 1994. But it opposes forcing nations to abandon uranium enrichment, saying this could hurt its potential commercial activities to supply the nuclear power industry.

The Indian Express, 28 August 2006

Who makes policy?

More or less everyone with an interest in nuclear policy welcomed Saturday's meeting between the prime minister and nuclear scientists. There was much bonhomie; the scientists complimented the PM for his 'beautiful' parliamentary statement and the PMO's statement was brimming with the optimism that these VIP interlocutors have been convinced. Sorry to spoil the party but not all was well with the meeting. It set a sort of a precedent that can be referred to again and again when executive policy decisions draw loud opposition, as indeed they will in a robust democracy. Hosting a group of retired government scientists who appealed to Parliament against the government's policy may look like mature and gentlemanly. In real fact it is giving up on a fundamental working principle of Indian democracy - the executive draws its powers from majority support in Parliament, American-style legislature-executive separation of powers doesn't exist. The scientists, who were employed by the government once and were drawing upon that career profile, had no business talking to Parliament directly. They deserved to be reminded of that enormously serious lapse. It doesn't seem that was done at Saturday's meeting. On the contrary, they seemed to have been invited to offer their wisdom as the nuclear negotiations proceed. The DAE chief and the national security advisor are to act as liaison men. Surely, there's something wrong if two of the government's most key officials are asked to obtain de facto clearances from retired government servants?

The Indian Express, 28 August 2006

Defiant Iran to continue N-activities

TEHRAN, AUGUST 27: Iran will pursue its nuclear fuel activities despite mounting international pressure to halt the disputed operations, chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani was quoted on Sunday as saying. Production of nuclear fuel is our strategic aim, state radio quoted Larijani as saying. Iran wants guarantees against sanctions...Cartoon exhibition in Iran mocks Holocaust West likely to reject Iran response Iran wants talks, France says stop atomic work first Iran delivers formal N-response. The UNSC has

demanded Iran suspend atomic fuel work by August 31 or face the threat of sanctions. The West accuses Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons, while Iran insists its nuclear work is meant only for generating power. Any measure to deprive Iran of its right will not change our mind about our aim, Larijani said. Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Reza Baqheri reiterated that Iran would never halt uranium enrichment. It is our red line. We will never do it, he told the official IRNA news agency. Earlier, Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi said the country's newly opened heavy-water production plant was a peaceful project and not associated with Tehran's disputed nuclear programme.

The Indian Express, 28 August 2006

Defiant Iran launches nuclear reactor

ARAK, August 26: Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad launched a new phase in the Arak heavy-water reactor project on Saturday, saying Tehran would not give up its right to nuclear technology despite Western fears it is aimed at producing a bomb. "No one can deprive a nation of its rights based on its capabilities," Ahmadinejad said in his speech to inaugurate the project. The plant's plutonium by-product could be used to make atomic warheads. "Iran is not a threat to anybody, not even to the Zionist regime," Ahmadinejad said, using Iran's term for its arch-enemy Israel, which it does not recognize. Iran faces possible economic sanctions if it does not heed the UN deadline of August 31, but divisions among world powers over how to handle Iran could delay any action. The Los Angeles Times said on Saturday Washington had indicated it was ready to form an independent coalition to freeze Iranian assets and restrict trade if necessary. Iran is likely to raise further fears in Western capitals by pressing ahead with the heavy-water project near Arak, 260 km southwest of the capital Tehran.

The New York Times, 28 August 2006

Iran Dismisses US Threat

TEHRAN: Iran said on Monday a U.S. threat to form an independent coalition to impose sanctions if the U.N. Security Council failed to act over Tehran's nuclear program was an insult to the council's work. The Los Angeles Times reported on Saturday that the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, John Bolton, had indicated Washington was prepared to act independently with allies to freeze Iranian assets and restrict trade if the council did not. The United States has called for a swift response if Iran does not heed the Security Council's Thursday deadline to halt uranium enrichment. Analysts say divisions, particularly opposition from veto-wielding powers Russia and China, could delay any moves. "These remarks (by Bolton) are an obvious insult to the Security Council," Iranian government Gholamhossein Elham told a weekly news conference. "These remarks are just bullying and baseless remarks and show that they are not competent to be a member of the Security Council," he added.

The Washington Post, 28 August 2006

Rumsfeld Unsure of Ability To Intercept Korean Missiles

FORT GREELY, Alaska, Aug. 27: After his first look inside the nerve center of the U.S. missile defense system, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld on Sunday sounded a note of caution about expectations that interceptors poised in 10 underground silos here

would work in the event of a missile attack by North Korea. Asked at a news conference whether he believed the missile shield was ready for use against a North Korean missile like the one test-fired unsuccessfully on July 4, Rumsfeld said he would not be fully convinced until the multibillion-dollar defense system has undergone more complete and realistic testing. "A full end-to-end" demonstration is needed, Rumsfeld said, "where we actually put all the pieces" of the highly complex and far-flung missile defense system together and see whether it would succeed in destroying a warhead in flight. Rumsfeld also said North Korea does not pose a military threat to South Korea, calling Pyongyang more of a danger as a distributor of weapons to other countries and perhaps terrorists.

Deccan Herald, 29 August 2006

US backtracks on FMCT

In the volatile international arena, Iran is back to the centrestage once again. Teheran's latest response to a package of political and economic incentives from the United States, Britain, France, Germany, China, and Russia if Iran agreed to give up its uranium enrichment activity in line with a resolution from the United Nations Security Council is unlikely to satisfy key Western countries. In its long-awaited reply last week, Iran said it is prepared to hold 'serious talks' with the six countries but would not back off from uranium enrichment cycle. The US State Department said Iran's position "fell short" of what Teheran is required to do in return for the package of political and economic concessions. Clearly, Washington and its allies are bound to raise the stakes by demanding sanctions in the UN Security Council against Iran for failing to stop enrichment. But Russia and China may oppose sanctions against Iran and press for carrying out serious negotiations with Teheran. Since the drama would unfold in the UN Security Council sometime this week, India does not have to worry this time around because it is not a member of the Council. New Delhi suffered political embarrassment last year when it voted along with the Western countries led by the United States to refer Iran's nuclear issue to the UN Security Council at the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The Hindu, 29 August 2006

Prototype reactor to be ready before 2010

Coimbatore: A prototype fast breeder reactor that can produce 500 megawatts of electricity is likely to begin functioning at Kalpakkam before 2010, Baldev Raj, Director, Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), said here on Monday. Mr. Raj told media persons at the PSG College of Technology that construction work on the reactor was going on ahead of schedule. The reactor was expected to supply electricity to the State grid at Rs. 3.22 a kilowatt hour (kwhr) or 'unit.' Advanced reactors can produce electricity at Rs. 2 a kwhr. To cater to the increasing energy needs, there were plans to establish four more nuclear reactors. Using current technology, it could generate up to 500 giga watts. All conventional energy sources in the country would not be enough to meet expected future requirements, so there was need to concentrate on nuclear energy. .

The Indian Express, 29 August 2006

Iran dismisses US threat of sanctions

TEHRAN, AUGUST 28: ran said on Monday a US threat to form an independent

coalition to impose sanctions if the UN Security Council failed to act over Tehran's nuclear programme was an insult to the council's work. The Los Angeles Times reported on Saturday that the US ambassador to the United Nations, John Bolton, had indicated Washington was prepared to act independently with allies to freeze Iranian assets and restrict trade if the council did not. "These remarks (by Bolton) are an obvious insult to the Security Council," Iranian government spokesman Gholam Hossein Elham told a weekly news conference. "These remarks are just bullying and baseless remarks and show that they (the US) are not competent to be a member of the Security Council," he added. The United States has called for a swift response if Iran does not heed the Security Council's Thursday deadline to halt uranium enrichment. Iran also said on Monday it is not concerned about this week's UN deadline demanding it suspend a key part of its disputed nuclear programme or face political and economic sanctions. "Moving in the international framework is not a matter of concern for us," said Elham.

Daily Times, 29 August 2006

'Indonesian should cooperate with Iran on N-projects'

JAKARTA/ TOKYO: Indonesia should cooperate with Iran on nuclear enrichment projects for peaceful purposes, a leading lawmaker said on Monday, calling on Jakarta to help defend Tehran against mounting pressure from the West. House speaker Agung Laksono made the comments after meeting with an Iranian delegation of parliamentarians, saying he was confident that their government did not intend to develop nuclear power for military purposes. Indonesian lawmakers who visited Iran last month reported that the enrichment projects were being used only for power generation, agricultural and medical purposes, he was quoted as saying by the national news agency, Antara. "I think we can establish cooperation with the Iranian government in the pursuit of nuclear enrichment projects in the future as long as they are designed for peaceful objectives," Laksono said. "I told the Iranian delegation that Indonesia will support Iran," Laksono was quoted as saying. Indonesia, which is the world's fourth most populous nation and boasts the largest number of Muslims, has been seeking to raise its international profile in recent months, offering to help mediate in the Iranian and North Korean nuclear disputes.

The New York Times, 29 August 2006

Japanese Company Suspected of Selling Nuclear Equipment to Iran

TOKYO, Aug. 28: An investigation into a Japanese manufacturer suspected of exporting sophisticated measuring devices to Libya's former atomic weapons program has increasingly focused on whether the company also sold similar equipment to Iran, a government official said Monday. The police and regulators have broadened their investigation of the company, the Mitutoyo Corporation, a maker of precision instruments, as evidence has emerged that it may have also sold equipment to Iran for use in making centrifuges to enrich uranium, said an official in the Trade Ministry, which administers export restrictions. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment on the investigation, led by the Tokyo police. On Friday, the police arrested five Mitutoyo officials, including the president, on suspicion of exporting equipment to Libya before that country scrapped its weapons program three years ago. The police say the equipment was shipped to Libya by Scomi Precision

Engineering, a Malaysian company linked to Abdul Qadeer Khan, the Pakistani scientist who later confessed to selling nuclear technology. The increasing focus on Iran has shed light on the clandestine routes it has used to obtain nuclear-related technology to advance its enrichment program. Iran is in a standoff with the United Nations over the program, which Iran says will create fuel to generate power, but which the United States and others fear will be used to build nuclear weapons.

The Indian Express, 30 August 2006

Procedural linkage slows Senate clearance

NEW DELHI, AUG 29: An unforeseen hindrance has briefly halted the quick pace at which the Indo-US civil nuclear cooperation Bill was moving in the Senate where an internal US Bill on implementing its own IAEA Additional Protocol has been tagged with the India Bill leading to a delay in slotting the vote. Hectic efforts are on to delink this from the India Bill. With both India and the US keen to keep to the November deadline to get the India-specific legislation in place, a major lobbying effort is underway on Capitol Hill. The implementation of the US Additional Protocol is being contested hotly by some of the Senators and if it remains linked, the legislation on India will be delayed. It's learnt that Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Richard Lugar tagged on the US Additional Protocol Implementation Act with the India Bill when the latter was cleared by the Committee and forwarded for vote before the full Senate. There is no political linkage between the two, but a procedural method to club smaller items with a bigger Bill so that clearances happen faster. The problem, however, is that many Senators do not see the US Additional Protocol Implementation Act as that small an issue. Packaged as a positive signal to non-nuclear weapon states, this Act provides for more detailed access to US civilian nuclear facilities but retains the right for US as a nuclear weapon state to withdraw any facility from the list on account of national security reasons.

The Telegraph, 30 August 2006

The nuclear debate has become one of subjective judgments

The parliamentary and public debate on the Indo-US nuclear deal has, predictably, focussed on two questions. To what extent has the United States of America shifted the goal post since the July 18 agreement? What fetters will the nuclear deal impose upon the development of India's nuclear programme? These concerns underlie the open letter that a group of prominent scientists have written to the prime minister. In some ways this is an awkward moment to discuss these questions, because the deal is still a work in progress. What will be the final shape of the deal that emerges from the Congress? What exactly are the protocols we will negotiate with the International Atomic Energy Agency? The answer to these questions is not entirely clear. The scientists are, rightly, concerned that if the evidence of the debate in the House of Representatives and the separation plan we have supposedly presented, are anything to go by, India is going to accept more restrictions than we originally admitted. But in his statement to the parliament on Tuesday, the prime minister did as statesmanlike a job as anyone could have to allay some of these fears. Even for those who are not ultimately persuaded by the deal, the prime minister's statement was a rare example of public reason at work that vastly elevated the debate.

Hindustan Times, 30 August 2006

PM's science czar wants pvt sector in N-energy

New Delhi/Washington, August 29: The time for private participation in the nuclear-power sector seems to have arrived. Hear the knock? CNR Rao, head of the Scientific Advisory Council to the PM, has sought reforms in existing regulations to allow the private sector in the field of nuclear power. He wants the government to build a consensus on the issue. In the US, ambassador Ronen Sen has said that India needs commercial investments in the nuclear sector -- Indian investments and private foreign investment. Therefore, the eagerness to see the nuclear deal go through. In his reaction to the approach paper for 11th Five Year Plan, Rao said the rapid expansion of the nuclear-power programme would help in improving the situation of the country's energy sector. "Rapid expansion of the nuclear-power programme would also greatly benefit from the private sector joining hands with the public-sector Nuclear Power Corporation." Rao's suggestion has evoked a strong reaction in the government as officers say allowing private participation in the field of nuclear energy will give rise to questions about safety and safeguarding the national interest. "We've to see whether such a proposal is feasible under the present regulations," said a government official.

The News, 30 August 2006

Debate on Indo-US nuclear accord

In recent weeks, the debate within India's ruling elite over the Indo-US nuclear accord has intensified. On August 17, Prime Minister Mammohan Singh gave a major parliamentary address in response to warnings from the scientific-military establishment that the US Congress is trying to attach new conditions to the accord, and last week the Lok Sabha debated its merits. From all the speeches, press commentary, and political manoeuvring, several conclusions must be drawn: Although it is unlikely, the Indo-US accord could yet fall apart because of concerns within the US political establishment about India's reliability as an ally and whether the US's long-term geopolitical interests are served by sanctioning India's acquisition of nuclear weapons in defiance of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and world nuclear regulatory regime. India's Congress Party-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government considers the accord and the Indo-US strategic partnership that it is meant to cement to be a cornerstone of India's twenty-first century foreign policy. India's corporate elite stands solidly behind the UPA government in its push for the accord.

Hindustan Times, 30 August 2006

'Iran reference in nuke bill a terrible mistake'

Washington, August 30: A noted American non-proliferation expert says the US House of Representatives made a "terrible mistake" in making a reference to Iran in the enabling bill on the Indo-US nuclear deal. It was equally "unfair and wrong" to suggest that "we bought India's vote" against Iran in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), according to George Perkovich, vice president for studies and director for non-proliferation at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Knowing India and its role as a major architect of the IAEA, they would have done it on their own, but overt US pressure may have made it more difficult for New Delhi to carry out the policy it had

already chosen, he said in a lecture at the World Affairs Council. The enabling bill passed by the House in July 2006 contains language on securing "India's full and active participation in United States efforts to dissuade, isolate, and, if necessary, sanction and contain Iran for its efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction." An amendment seeking to make such cooperation binding was defeated by a vote of 235-192. However, the enabling legislation approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee contains no language on Iran.

Hindustan Times, 30 August 2006

Iran seeks India's support for nuclear programme

New Delhi, August 29: In a bid to garner Indian support for Tehran's "peaceful" nuclear programme, visiting Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mehdi Safari on Tuesday met senior Indian officials, including Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran and National Security adviser MK Narayanan. "The nature of Iran's nuclear programme and response of Iranian government to reactions of the international community in light of recent developments were among the issues discussed during Safari's visit," an official said. "The Iranian envoy tried to emphasise the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme which has earned the ire of large sections of the international community," the official added. During the talks both sides expressed concern over the fate of the ambitious tri-nation natural gas pipeline project in the wake of the recent escalation of violence in the Pakistan province of Balochistan. The proposed pipeline will bring gas from Iran to India via Pakistan where it will pass through Balochistan. The visit of Safari, who came for a day, will be followed by that of Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki next month.

The Washington Post, 30 August 2006

Iran Enriching More Uranium

Iranian nuclear specialists have begun enriching a new batch of uranium in an apparent act of defiance just days ahead of a U.N. Security Council deadline for Tehran to stop such work or face the prospect of economic sanctions, officials in Washington and European capitals who have been monitoring Iran's efforts said yesterday. Inspectors with the International Atomic Energy Agency plan to formally disclose the new enrichment work, as well as additional Iranian nuclear advances, in a report due out tomorrow, according to the officials, some of whom spoke on the condition of anonymity. The officials stressed that the Iranians are working at a slow pace with small quantities of uranium, and that they are enriching the material to an extremely low level that could not be used for nuclear weapons. Still, it is unlikely that the Iranians will stop the work in time to meet the Security Council's deadline. For three years, Iran and the United States have publicly sparred over a nuclear program that Tehran says it built to produce energy but which the Bush administration believes is a cover for nuclear weapons work. IAEA inspectors have been trying, without success, to determine the true nature of the program, which Iran kept secret for 18 years.

Dawn, 30 August 2006

N-plants: Chinese help sought

ISLAMABAD, Aug 29: President Pervez Musharraf has sought increased Chinese military and economic support, especially to meet Pakistan's growing nuclear energy

needs. Talking to a 17-member delegation of the Communist Party of China which met him on Tuesday, he called for developing close political, economic and defence cooperation between the two countries. He said Pakistan would welcome Chinese investment in the country's proposed industrial parks for establishing nuclear power plants. He said Pakistan had earlier urged the United States and western investors to set up nuclear power plants under International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguards. Source said China, which had provided two nuclear power plants of 300 megawatts each, was expected to offer four more plants at the request of President Musharraf to help meet the country's 8,800MW requirement by 2030. The sources said the president apprised the Chinese delegation of the latest energy situation in Pakistan with special reference to ongoing power shortage. The head of the delegation, Liu Yunshan, assured the president that he would apprise his leadership of Pakistan's military and energy needs. The sources said he also promised to help increase Chinese investment in Pakistan in various fields, especially infrastructure and power.

The Asahi Shimbun, 30 August 2006

Deployment of USS Shiloh a shield against N. Korean missile strikes

YOKOSUKA, Kanagawa Prefecture--The USS Shiloh, an Aegis-class cruiser equipped with missile-intercept systems, arrived here Tuesday for forward deployment at this sprawling naval base south of Tokyo. The 9,950-ton cruiser was formerly homeported in San Diego. Its mission is to reinforce Japan-U.S. joint missile defense in light of a continuing military threat from North Korea, officials said. On July 5, North Korea test-launched a flurry of missiles. Of the seven launched, one was a long-range Taepodong-2 missile. The rest were medium-range Nodong or short-range Scud missiles. The cruiser is equipped with Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) interceptors systems to detect, track and shoot down missiles. The Shiloh will perform its duties in tandem with other U.S. Aegis-equipped warships operating in Japanese waters, officials said. The other warships are not equipped with SM-3 interceptors. The U.S. Navy said Shiloh's deployment "builds upon the Long- Range Surveillance and Tracking (LRS&T) capability already in place in the Western Pacific with the capability to intercept short and medium-range ballistic missiles." The Shiloh is one of three U.S. Navy Aegis-equipped warships upgraded to give them the capability to intercept ballistic missiles and is the first to be forward-deployed outside the United States.

The Times of India, 31 August 2006

Nuclear Synergy

Despite prime minister Manmohan Singh having won over top atomic scientists who had earlier opposed the India-US nuclear deal, bureaucratic opposition to the deal remains entrenched. There's been a flap following the sensible suggestion from C N R Rao - who heads the PM's scientific advisory council - that the private sector should be allowed entry into the nuclear energy field. Nuclear power plants are long-gestation projects. They require enormous investments in the beginning, but produce cheap power over the long term. Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL), the PSU tasked with generating nuclear power in India, has not covered itself with glory. Its plants are unreliable and considered among the most inefficient in the world; their safety record too has been widely questioned. It's curious, therefore, that officials opposed to the entry of

the private sector have proffered safety as a reason. The major benefit of the India-US nuclear deal was supposed to be a boost to civilian nuclear power production in India, but this can't be realised if the sector remains starved of capital and technology.

The Tribune, 31 August 2006

Importance of N-deal

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stunned everyone into silence, in Parliament, Press rooms, think tanks and retirement homes with his candour and determination as he spoke in the Rajya Sabha on August 17, 2006, on the Indo-US nuclear deal. He spoke only the obvious, based on his position spelt out clearly on earlier occasions, but self-fulfilling prophecies had clouded the atmosphere so much that it appeared as though it was a new gospel for the Indian Prime Minister to say that there has been no change in "the basic orientation of our policies" or "our independent judgment of issues of national interest". To say that India had many differences with the United States appeared to be a revelation. He had to say that India was engaged not only with the United States, but also with other countries in promoting our national interests. And strangest of all, he had to assure the House that "there is no question of India being bound by a law passed by a foreign legislature", an elementary lesson in sovereignty. But are we about to throw the baby with the bathwater? Was Mr Natwar Singh right when he said in his non-speech in the Rajya Sabha that the Prime Minister "might have also ensured the death of a deal, which in its original form was beneficial to us". To proceed on the assumption that the choice for India is only between servility to the United States and defiance of it is to challenge India's ability to work in the post-Cold War environment.

The New York Times, 31 August 2006

Iran May Face Sanctions

VIENNA: The U.N. nuclear watchdog is likely to report on Thursday that Iran has defied a deadline to halt atomic fuel work, exposing it to possible sanctions over Western fears Tehran may be secretly trying to build atom bombs. Washington said world powers are poised to begin discussing punitive measures next week against Iran if, as expected, the International Atomic Energy Agency finds Tehran ignored a U.N. Security Council demand to stop enriching uranium by August 31. As time was running out, Iran vowed never to drop the project and launched one of its key elements, a heavy-water plant. Tehran is also pressing ahead with enriching uranium in small amounts at its pilot centrifuge site, diplomats said. But Iran's August 22 reply to the powers' offer of incentives not to enrich, saying it could negotiate the scope of its plans, has spurred some U.S. allies in Europe to ask for exploratory talks with Tehran, two Western diplomats said. "This is to gain more time and postpone the expected sanctions," one said, reflecting underlying European Union preference to find a compromise with Iran rather than isolate one of Europe's biggest oil suppliers. In a possible nod to EU concerns, U.S. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said that even if sanctions discussions began, Iran could still opt to halt enrichment work and spur broader negotiations to implement the trade sweeteners package.

The New York Times, 31 August 2006

U.S. Drafts List of Sanctions as Iran Ignores Deadline

WASHINGTON, Aug. 30: With Iran defying a Thursday deadline to halt production of nuclear fuel, the United States and three European allies are assembling a list of sanctions they would seek in the United Nations Security Council, beginning with restrictions on imports of nuclear-related equipment and material. R. Nicholas Burns, an under secretary of state, is expected to spend part of next week in Germany helping to address Iran's nuclear program. Eventually, punitive measures might expand to restrict travel by Iran's leaders and limit the country's access to global financial markets, according to diplomatic officials involved in the talks who spoke only on condition of anonymity. Aside from the effort in the Council, the Bush administration is also seeking to persuade European financial institutions to end new lending to Iran. Some Swiss banks have already quietly agreed to limit their lending, American officials say. Even as an agreement shapes up among the United States, Britain, France and Germany, the push for sanctions faces a high hurdle in the Council, given Russia and China's possession of veto power and their opposition to discussion of serious punishment for Iran.

Daily Times, 31 August 2006

Iranians confident of nuclear status despite Western pressure

TEHRAN: Bolstered by a string of foreign policy successes, Iran is confident that Western pressure will not hold back a nuclear programme which has become a source of national pride, Iranian analysts say. Iran could be willing to discuss a very limited and temporary suspension of sensitive uranium enrichment work as long as it does not impede the progress of its nuclear energy drive, according to former nuclear negotiator Ali Agha Mohammadi. "Certain Western countries are demanding a suspension of enrichment but in reality it is an indefinite suspension that they want. They are looking to deprive us of nuclear technology," Agha Mohammadi said. "But the suspension can be discussed during the negotiations. If the aim is to deprive Iran of technology, it is unacceptable. But if it is to have guarantees over the peaceful nature of our programme, we can discuss," he added. "UN sanctions could do some harm but will not change the position of Iran," Agha Mohammadi said. The West must "accept the role of Iran as a regional power." Uranium enrichment is at the centre of fears over Iran's nuclear programme as the process can be used both to make nuclear fuel and, in highly enriched form, the explosive core of a nuclear bomb.

Hindustan Times, 31 August 2006

Why not talk it out?

It seems likely that as the sun sets today in Tehran, nothing will have changed on the nuclear issue. The deadline of August 31 set by the UN Security Council for Iran to suspend its uranium enrichment activities will probably pass with Tehran doing nothing of the sort. On the contrary, Iranian leaders have kept up their posture of defiance, with President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad inaugurating a new heavy-water reactor last week. Ahmadinejad's call last Tuesday for a televised debate with President George W Bush was clearly part of this defiance. However, taken in conjunction with a letter he had written to Bush, it could also be a reflection of Iran's wish to hold direct talks with Washington. Of the limited non-military options before it, the Bush administration seems keen on a new UN resolution to impose tough sanctions on Iran. These could include preventing Iran's import of equipment to help its nuclear programme and petroleum

refining (while Iran is a major oil producer, it lacks adequate refining capacity to meet its petroleum needs).