

The Tribune, 1 December 2005

### **Separate civil, military N-facilities, India told**

New Delhi, Nov 30: The US Congress will pass the Indo-US nuclear deal after it gets concrete evidence of a marked delineation of India's civil and military nuclear facilities, Mr Dan Burton, leader of a visiting seven-member congressional delegation, said today. Mr Burton, an "India baiter", said at a joint press conference with the congressional leaders - Republican as well as Democrat - that he had fallen in love with India and that the human rights situation in the Kashmir valley had "considerably improved". He said he had always felt that the Kashmir situation should be addressed and now it was being done. "I have always been an admirer of India and its culture. But human rights bothered me. That is now changing," he said. In another context, he said: "Look, I have no horns... I have fallen in love with India, its people and the leadership." Mr Burton and other members of the congressional delegation maintained that the Indo-US nuclear agreement was the "pathway" which both countries could walk together, but there had to be a clear delineation between civilian and military nuclear facilities.

The Indian Express, 1 December 2005

### **Iran signal needed before new talks: EU (Louis Charbonneau)**

BERLIN, Nov 30: Germany, France and Britain will resume nuclear talks with Iran only if Tehran signals it truly wants to dispel international fears about its atomic programme, Germany's new foreign minister said on Wednesday. "A few days ago the EU3 accepted the request of Iran to resume negotiations. But the starting pistol for the resumption of talks has not been shot yet," Frank-Walter Steinmeier told the German parliament after a visit to the US. He said the resumption of talks was "conditional on Iran sending signals that it will ... accept a solution that allows it to get peaceful nuclear energy but rules out the possibility that Iran will have a closed fuel cycle". Steinmeier spent two days in the US, where he met with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. He added the topic of Iran has dominated recent discussions. -Reuters

The News, 1 December 2005

### **DPRK denounces US pressure**

SEOUL: North Korea accused the United States Wednesday of stepping up a smear campaign aimed at forcing the communist country to scrap its nuclear programme before it gets economic and political benefits. The US campaign is throwing "a stumbling block" in the way of six-party nuclear disarmament talks, the North's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said in a commentary. "It arouses apprehension as to the fact that the US will escalate its offensive to stifle the DPRK (North Korea) although the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula is realised in the future," it said. Pyongyang insisted it would not dismantle its nuclear arsenal before Washington supplied it with a light-water atomic reactor to generate electricity. The United States says North Korea must disarm first.

The Associated Press, 1 December 2005

### **Israel to Pressure Iran on Nuke Issue**

Israel: Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said Thursday that he is confident all diplomatic efforts will be exhausted before any military action might be taken against the Iranian nuclear program. When asked if any country is considering a strike against Iran to prevent it from developing nuclear weapons, Sharon said: "I am sure that before anyone goes to take such steps, all attempts will be made to pressure Iran to stop all this activity." "We see that the pressures that are exerted can bear fruit," Sharon told journalists in Tel Aviv. Israel is preparing for the possibility that Iran will acquire nuclear weapons, but won't lead the fight against the Islamic state's nuclear ambitions, Sharon said. Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz said earlier Thursday that the international community should use diplomacy to block Iran's nuclear program. He denied that Israel, which bombed an unfinished Iraqi nuclear reactor more than two decades ago, was considering attacking Iran.

Hindustan Times, 2 December 2005

### **US confident India nuclear deal will be approved**

Washington: The State Department expressed confidence on Thursday that a controversial nuclear deal with India would be approved by Congress and said it would work with lawmakers to make it happen. The landmark US-India accord reached on July 18 would grant New Delhi access to nuclear technology it has been denied for more than two decades because it developed and tested nuclear weapons, but prominent critics complain it undermines non-proliferation goals and should be tightened up. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said the Bush administration understood the concerns of those who say the deal is flawed. "But at the end of the day we think that the majority will see that this is the right deal for America, as well as for global non-proliferation efforts," he told a news briefing.

Hindustan Times, 2 December 2005

### **US urges international pressure on Iran (Carol Giacomo)**

Washington, Dec 1: The United States sought to raise international pressure on Iran on Wednesday, calling on

other nations to react to Tehran's increasingly "radical" policies. Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns said Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had pursued a confrontational foreign policy, an irresponsible nuclear weapons programme, supported terrorism and denied basic human rights to his people since coming to power four months ago. "The world now needs to react to this radical shift in Iran's behaviour," Burns told the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in Washington. "Through its diplomatic contacts and its trade and investment, the world does have leverage ... To convince the hard-liners in Tehran that there is a price for their misguided policies." Iran's foreign minister said on Wednesday that talks on what Tehran says are civilian nuclear plans would begin within days with EU states. But European and US diplomats were sceptical talks could happen that quickly, unless Iran gave assurances it will forsake building a bomb.

Daily Times, 2 December 2005

**VIEW: Iran's nuclear lies** (Kenneth R Timmerman)

IAEA has no authority to determine whether or not a country has a nuclear weapons programme. That is up to the UN Security Council. The IAEA's job is to determine whether a nation has violated its safeguards agreement, and El Baradei has made it abundantly clear that Iran has. Mohammad El Baradei, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), is pressing the agency's board of governors to make one last effort to find a diplomatic solution to Iran's nuclear ambitions before sending the case to the United Nations Security Council for possible sanctions. A decision to refer Iran to the Security Council could come as early as November 24, when the IAEA's board meets to discuss "new information" discovered by inspectors on the ground. Thanks to the IAEA's inspectors, we now have a fairly detailed picture of Iran's nuclear archipelago - at least those facilities that the Iranian government has been forced to open.

The News, 2 December 2005

**'No to Iran's N-weapons'**

TEL AVIV: Israeli leaders warned on Thursday they would never allow Iran to come into possession of nuclear weapons but insisted that diplomacy was the best way to confront their arch enemies in Tehran. "Israel, and not only Israel, cannot accept a situation in which Iran would be in possession of nuclear weapons," Prime Minister Ariel Sharon told journalists in Tel Aviv. "We must do everything possible to prepare for such a situation. But Israel is not spearheading any campaign" against Iran's suspected nuclear weapons ambitions, he added. "It is not only a danger for Israel but for the Middle East as a whole and for other countries." Sharon was speaking after his defence minister, Shaul Mofaz, said that international diplomacy and pressure were the best way of confronting Iran over its nuclear ambitions. "The diplomatic track is the best way of dealing with the Iranian atomic programme," Mofaz told army radio.

Dawn, 2 December 2005

**Pakistan's cooperation lauded** (Masood Haider)

UNITED NATIONS, Dec 1: Mohammed ElBaradei, Director-General of the International Atomic Agency (IAEA) has applauded Pakistan for extending extraordinary cooperation with the agency on resolving many of the Iranian nuclear programme's "pieces of the puzzle." In an interview with New Delhi Television to be broadcast on Friday, partial script of which was made available to Dawn on Thursday, the head of the UN nuclear watchdog agency said: "We are getting good cooperation from Pakistan so I really want to make that clear." "Pakistan for the last year has been cooperating with us [IAEA] in resolving many of the Iranian pieces of the puzzle. In terms of contamination for example, or sources of supply, the Pakistani government has been cooperating," he declared.

Dawn, 2 December 2005

**Iran needs assurance: IAEA chief**

UNITED NATIONS, Dec 1: The head of the United Nations nuclear watchdog has expressed hope that the contentious issue of Iran's nuclear programme could be resolved by assuring international community that 'it is not meant for developing nuclear weapons' and by assuring Iranians they can use the technology for peaceful purposes. In an interview with New Delhi Television, a transcript of which was Released on Thursday, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Dr Mohammed ElBaradei stressed that the Iranians 'need to be fully transparent. But I hope there will be a solution to the nuclear issue'. In the interview, which will be broadcast on Friday, Mr ElBaradei said The United States would have to be involved in the dialogue process 'because some of the security issues we are talking about can only be resolved through the US and not through Europe'.

Dawn, 2 December 2005

**Israel warns of army action against Iran**

TEL AVIV, Dec 1: Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said on Thursday Israel could not accept the emergence of a nuclear-armed Iran, but steered clear of threatening military action. "Israel, and not only Israel, cannot accept a situation in which Iran has nuclear weapons," Mr Sharon told reporters. "We are also taking all the necessary

preparations to be ready for this kind of situation." Mr Sharon reaffirmed Israel's support for diplomatic efforts, led by the United States and the European Union, to curb a uranium enrichment programme in Iran, a country that has called for the destruction of the Jewish state. Iran says its nuclear programme is for energy needs only. Last week, the UN International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) governing board decided not to refer Iran to the Security Council for possible sanctions in order to give Europe more time to talk it into abandoning uranium enrichment activities.

International Herald Tribune, 2 December 2005

**Europa: Mao's 'fight talk' strategy is a winning one for Iran** (Richard Bernstein)

BERLIN Judging from the statements at last week's meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, an international consensus is growing over the necessity to prevent Iran from getting nuclear weapons. Or at least the three European Union countries handling the matter, with the support of the United States, say they need "the widest possible international agreement on how to deal with this file," as Britain's representative, Peter Jenkins put it. And to get that, attention is now focusing on giving the heretofore uncooperative Russians a major role. The next phase in this saga is expected to center on talks based on what are called "the Russian ideas," and, if those talks don't succeed, the chances seem far stronger than before that, with critical Russian support, Iran's activities would at last be reported to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions.

The Asian Age, 2 December 2005

**PM in a nuclear pickle** (Bharat Karnad)

There are two hinges of the India-US nuclear deal. One is the phrase "reciprocally agree" in the July 18 Joint Statement issued by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George W. Bush. The other has to do with the autonomy of India's weapons capabilities. The phrase has quickly become a flash point owing to radically different interpretations about the nature of the mutual commitments. The other issue too has begun sparking. The precariousness of the political perch Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has climbed on to with his suo moto statement in Parliament of July 29, 2005 needs to be noted. Dr Singh in his speech assured Parliament that, "Reciprocity is key to the implementation of all the steps enumerated in the Joint Statement." "We expect," he added, "a close relation between the actions to be taken by the United States and by India. Indian actions will be contingent at every stage on actions taken by the (US)."

The Nation, 2 December 2005

**Indo-US deal: victory for whom?** (Fauzia Qureshi)

It is being said that the Indo-US agreement on civilian nuclear co-operation is not going anywhere. However, the agreement when signed by President Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in Washington on July 19th, was dubbed as 'a historical watershed.' The negotiators told their respective media their side gave up little or nothing to win a great deal. If that was true, it is indeed a historic agreement between two so-called democracies. However, we must ask as to what actually was the agreement and whom does it really benefit the most? There is no doubt that the pact makes India the only country in the world to have inked a strategic defence partnership with both the US and Russia. The Mukherjee-Rumsfeld agreement is extremely vast in scope and envisages a broad range of joint activities, including multinational operations, strengthening the two militaries to promote security and defeat terrorism, and strengthening capacity to take on the proliferation of WMD.

Dawn, 2 December 2005

**US calls for sanctions against Iran**

WASHINGTON, Dec 1: The United States, seeking to step up pressure on Iran, suggested on Wednesday that other countries threaten their own economic sanctions if negotiations over Tehran's nuclear programme collapse. "It might be time to consider a different approach toward the new, more radical, more intolerant Iranian regime," Nicholas Burns, number three in the State Department, said in a speech here. "Through its diplomatic contacts and its trade and investment, the world does have leverage - and that leverage should be used constructively now - to convince the hard-liners in Tehran that there is a price for their misguided policies," Burns said. The United States has long sought UN action to head off Iran's suspected bid to develop a nuclear bomb. Lacking sufficient support, Washington has backed a European attempt to rein Tehran in with economic and security incentives.

Hindustan Times, 3 December 2005

**US expresses impatience with N Korea over N-talks**

Washington, Dec 3: US negotiator Christopher Hill has expressed impatience with North Korea over long-running talks aimed at ending that nation's nuclear weapons programme. "We can't just sit there stalemated session after stalemated session," he said. "I don't want to threaten walkouts," Hill said on Friday in an interview. "But I do want to see progress." The US and its negotiating partners are awaiting word on when talks will resume. Hill said he assumed that bargaining would begin again around January and that preliminary meetings might be held in South Korea, which is one of the six countries engaged in the talks. Besides the US and North Korea, they are China,

Japan, South Korea and Russia. The US and its partners have offered North Korea economic incentives in exchange for halting its acknowledged development of nuclear weapons.

Hindustan Times, 3 December 2005

#### **N Korea urges US to lift financial sanctions**

Seoul, Dec 3: North Korea has urged the United States to lift financial sanctions against the Stalinist state, saying that such a move is a prerequisite to progress in six-party talks to end its nuclear weapons drive. A foreign ministry spokesman, quoted early on Saturday by Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), also warned the country would take "all corresponding self-defence measures" should Washington fail to comply. "It is quite unreasonable for the DPRK to sit at the negotiating table with the party keen to 'bring down its system' and discuss the issue of dismantling the nuclear deterrent built up to defend it," the spokesman said. "Should the US persist in its sanctions and pressure in violation of the joint statement agreed upon by the six parties, the DPRK will be left with no option but to take all corresponding self-defence measures," he said.

The Indian Express, 3 December 2005

#### **Israel successfully tests anti-missile system** (Ori Lewis)

JERUSALEM, Dec 2: Israel carried out a successful test of its missile-interceptor system on Friday when an Arrow II missile downed an incoming rocket designed to simulate an Iranian Shahab-3, the defence ministry said. The test, the latest in a series, came a day after Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said Israel could not accept the emergence of a nuclear-armed Iran, though he steered clear of threatening military action against the Islamic Republic. Israeli security sources have said that the Arrow II system developed jointly with the United States is aimed at boosting the Jewish state's preparedness against what it sees as a threat of a future missile strike from Iran. The Shahab-3, which Iran says has a range of 2,000 km (1,250 miles), is seen by Israel as the main weapon which would be used to target its territory.

The Indian Express, 3 December 2005

#### **EU backs India's joining ITER talks**

BRUSSELS, Dec 2: The European Commission voiced support on Friday for India's participation in talks over a multibillion-dollar experimental nuclear reactor, along with six partner countries backing the so-called ITER project. The next session of negotiations on ITER-planned by the European Union, the United States, Russia, Japan, South Korea and China-will be held in South Korea next Tuesday, the EU's executive arm noted. "The European Commission has today officially informed the Indian authorities that it supports the participation of India in the ITER negotiations," the Commission said in a statement. "India's participation should now be discussed with the other international parties: the US, China, South Korea, Russia and Japan as part of the ongoing negotiations of the international agreement that will set up ITER," it said.

The Indian Express, 3 December 2005

#### **US downplays Russia-Iran missile deal**

Washington, Dec 3: The United States has taken a low profile position on the reported sale of Russian missiles to Iran saying that it has only seen reports to this effect and was evaluating them. Washington's lack of instant criticism or comment against Moscow has to be seen against the backdrop of the latter's active role vis-a-vis Iran in the realm of its nuclear activities. "A couple of things. One, we've seen the news reports. I think there were reports that Iran has signed a deal to buy TOR M1 missiles - Russian tactical surface-to-air missile systems. We are at this point evaluating those reports. At this point, I couldn't confirm the validity of those reports" the state department spokesman Sean McCormack said yesterday in a brief response to a query. The spokesman was asked if the United States would try and stop the deal and what kind of leverage Washington had.

Daily Times, 3 December 2005

#### **US confident about India nuclear deal**

WASHINGTON: The State Department expressed confidence on Thursday a controversial nuclear deal with India would be approved by Congress and said it would work with lawmakers to make it happen. The landmark US-India accord reached on July 18 would grant New Delhi access to nuclear technology it has been denied for more than two decades because it developed and tested nuclear weapons, but prominent critics complain it undermines non-proliferation goals and should be tightened up. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said the Bush administration understood the concerns of those who say the deal is flawed. "But at the end of the day we think that the majority will see that this is the right deal for America, as well as for global non-proliferation efforts," he told a news briefing.

Daily Times, 3 December 2005

#### **'Access to Khan vital to solving N-puzzle'**

NEW DELHI: A direct dialogue with Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan would be immense in helping solve the "puzzle" of the

proliferation of nuclear technology, International Atomic Energy Agency Director Mohamed ElBaradei told NDTV on Friday. ElBaradei said that Pakistan was cooperating with the IAEA, but direct talks with the disgraced scientist would help the agency quickly solve questions regarding the latter's clandestine network. About Iran's nuclear issue, the director said Iran had assured the international community that its nuclear programme was not meant for developing weapons. "Tehran has shown complete transparency in this regard and I hope the situation will be resolved peacefully," he added. ElBaradei described the situation as extremely sensitive, saying Iran was situated in "an unfriendly neighbourhood". He said the issue could escalate if undue pressure was applied. Any complication of the situation will have major consequences, not only for Iran but for the entire region, he added.

The Nation, 3 December 2005

#### **Editorial: Israel's threat**

That the world keeps mum about Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's statement shows its double standards. Mr Sharon said it would not accept the emergence of a nuclear-armed Iran and could even think of using a military option against it if diplomacy failed. Even though his Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz insisted that the diplomatic track was the best way of dealing with the Iranian nuclear programme, the tone of both Israeli leaders was threatening: "Tel Aviv cannot accept a situation in which Teheran has nuclear weapons". Meanwhile, newspapers quoted some independent experts as saying that perhaps with US support, Israel can mount an Osirak-like strike against Iran.

Hindustan Times, 2 December 2005

#### **North Korea ready to scrap nuclear plans**

Seoul, Dec 2: North Korea is ready to dismantle its nuclear weapons programmes if it can better its relations with the United States, Japan and South Korea, China's envoy to Seoul was quoted as saying on Friday. Chinese Ambassador Ning Fukui said in a meeting with a key South Korean lawmaker that building trust between Pyongyang and Washington was essential for advancing six-party talks aimed at ending North Korea's nuclear weapons programmes. "Ambassador Ning said he thinks North Korea has the intention to dismantle its nuclear programme," the main opposition Grand National Party said in a statement. "However, he expressed the opinion that North Korea would want three key things -- improving ties with the United States, Japan and South Korea -- to be resolved in order to dismantle its nuclear programme," Ning told Park Geun-hye, the leader of the Grand National Party, the statement said.

The Indian Express, 4 December 2005

#### **India sounds out Russia over N-fuel (Pranab Dhal Samanta)**

New Delhi, Dec 3: With the July 18 Indo-US nuclear deal gradually easing restrictions on India, New Delhi has sounded Moscow ahead of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Russia visit that it can be the first country to do nuclear business with India by agreeing to supply fuel for the Tarapur reactors. Singh, who reaches Moscow on Sunday, will discuss the issue with Russian President Vladimir Putin besides expecting a firm response to a Russian commitment to supply two more 1000 MW reactors for Koodankulam. Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Anil Kakodkar, part of the delegation, will also discuss the issue with Russian officials. India is keen on Russian initiative in civilian nuclear cooperation as the Nuclear Suppliers Group works on easing restrictions.

The News, 4 December 2005

#### **IAEA cannot contact Dr Qadeer: FO (Mariana Baabar)**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will not allow the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) direct access to nuclear scientist Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan and other scientists. On Friday IAEA chief Mohammed ElBaradei told the media he hoped that in future, the agency would be allowed direct contact with Dr AQ Khan. "We have been cooperating with the IAEA and this cooperation has been appreciated by the agency," the Foreign Office spokesperson told The New on Saturday. Regarding access to scientists, she said President Pervez Musharraf has made it clear on many occasions that whatever information is required will be provided through the government of Pakistan. The nuclear watchdog, which is currently dealing with Iran, claims that Dr AQ Khan had provided assistance to Tehran that amounted to proliferation. Pakistan has culled these claims.

The News, 4 December 2005

#### **Iran to block N-inspections if referred to SC**

TEHRAN: Iran's constitutional watchdog - Guardian Council - approved on Saturday a bill that will block international inspections of the atomic facilities if the country is referred to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions. According to state-run television, the ratification by the Guardian Council means the bill, overwhelmingly approved by Parliament last month, now needs just a presidential signature. The law will strengthen the government in resisting international pressure to permanently abandon uranium enrichment. Iran had earlier frozen its enrichment programme but restarted it in August. The IAEA had warned Iran that its nuclear programme could be referred to the UNSC, which could impose sanctions on the country. But Iran warned to

cancel all voluntary measures it took and implement all scientific, research and executive programmes to enable the rights of the nation under the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Dawn, 4 December 2005

**No fresh request for access to Dr Khan** (Qudssia Akhlaque)

ISLAMABAD, Dec 3: Pakistan said on Saturday that it had not received any fresh request from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for direct access to nuclear scientist Dr A. Q Khan and reiterated the position of it being a "no-go area". Foreign Office spokesperson Tasnim Aslam made a categorical statement on the issue on Saturday in response to a query by Dawn regarding the IAEA Director Mohammad ElBaradei's recent comment that direct dialogue with the father of Pakistan's nuclear programme Dr A.Q. Khan would help in solving the complete puzzle about the network of proliferation of nuclear technology. The IAEA chief said this in an interview to the Indian television network NDTV. Reaffirming Pakistan's stance on the sensitive issue of direct access, Ms Aslam observed: "As far as access to any of Pakistani scientists is concerned, the president on many occasions has made it clear that whatever information is required it will be provided through the Government of Pakistan."

Daily Times, 4 December 2005

**'Myanmar not seeking nuclear power capabilities'**

YANGON: The military regime in Myanmar on Saturday strongly denied accusations by the United States that it was seeking nuclear power capabilities. The US ambassador to the UN, John Bolton, who on Friday succeeded in getting the Security Council to hold a formal briefing on the situation in Myanmar, last month accused Yangon of wanting to develop 'nuclear power capabilities'. "Their accusations are wrong," Information Minister Brigadier General Kyaw Hsann said at a rare news conference here. "It has been said that there is a nuclear reactor in our country, but we don't have anything. Everyone knows we don't have a nuclear reactor. We are fighting baseless accusations," the minister added. In his letter to the UN Security Council president, Bolton pointed to press reports that the regime was "seeking nuclear power capabilities, diverting scarce resources better used to address the needs of the Burmese people".

Daily Yomiuri, 4 December 2005

**Japan, China to join forces for cleanup of wartime WMD**

The Japanese and Chinese governments are to set up a joint organization to speed up the collection and disposal of chemical weapons left behind in China by the Imperial Japanese Army following its rout in the closing days of World War II, Japanese government sources said. The two countries also agreed to seek a five-year extension of the deadline for clearance work, initially set for April 2007 under the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. At the same time, they agreed to revise the estimated number of Japanese wartime munitions in China to a maximum of 400,000, rather than the current 700,000. The convention, which oversees the disposal of wartime chemical munitions internationally, comprises about 170 nations of which Japan and China are members. The two governments will soon sign a memorandum so that work can start on the project, the sources said.

Reuters, 4 December 2005

**Iran Says Not Interested in Talks with US**

TEHRAN: Iran said on Sunday it had no interest in talking to its arch-foe the United States concerning events in Iraq or about its nuclear programme. Media reports last month quoted U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad as saying he had been authorised by President George W. Bush to begin a dialogue with Iran about Iraq. U.N. nuclear watchdog chief Mohamed ElBaradei has also suggested lately that Washington would eventually have to get directly involved in negotiations to resolve Tehran's nuclear standoff with the West. But Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi said talks with U.S. officials were "not on our agenda." "The issue of security in Iraq is an internal matter related to the Iraqis," he told a weekly news conference. "The Iraqi people are mature and wise and they should determine their own future. So there is no need for negotiations with America," he said.

The Indian Express, 5 December 2005

**PM to take up nuclear reactor issue with Putin** (Pranab Dhal Samanta)

MOSCOW, Dec 4: As India and US prepare for another meeting later this month of the joint working group on implementing the July 18 joint statement, New Delhi is eyeing Russia to deliver on four additional nuclear reactors for Koodankulam during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's stay here. The PM, who arrived here this evening, will raise this along with the fuel for Tarapur during his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday. The PM made it clear that fuel for Tarapur is a "separate issue" and must not be linked with fulfilling commitments made in July 18 joint statement. In fact, the joint statement is clear that the US will assist "in the meantime" for obtaining fuel for Tarapur. This, sources said, provides Russia with an opportunity to take the lead and expand the scope for civilian nuclear cooperation that is currently restricted by guidelines of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

The Tribune, 5 December 2005

**US seeks Indian plan on separate civil, military N-facilities** (Ashish Kumar Sen)

Washington: The fate of the civil nuclear deal between the USA and India hinges on New Delhi producing a "credible, transparent and defensible" plan to separate its civil and military nuclear facilities, according to Bush Administration officials. These officials say they have discussed this separation plan with their Indian counterparts on "numerous occasions" since the agreement was signed by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in Washington on July 18. However, State Department officials say that contrary to claims in recent reports they have not presented any "blueprint" on separation to the Indian Government. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs R. Nicholas Burns, the Bush Administration's points man on the deal, has not provided any plan on how to separate India's civil and military nuclear facilities, a State Department official said, adding, "We have each reaffirmed that it is the responsibility of the Indian Government to develop such a plan."

The Hindu, 5 December 2005

**Russia raises stakes in Iran standoff** (Vladimir Radyuhin)

Moscow clearly hopes the sale of air defence missiles to Teheran will make it more amenable to compromise on the nuclear issue. Russia has raised the stakes in the row over Iran's nuclear programme by agreeing to sell Teheran advanced air defence missile systems. Sources in the Russian defence and military-industrial establishments said Russia had signed a contract to sell about 30 Tor-M1 missile systems to Iran over the next two years. The deal is part of a broader \$1 billion package also involving upgrades to the Iranian Air Force's 59 Russian-made Sukhoi and MIG fighter jets and the sale of patrol boats. This is the biggest defence acquisition Iran has made in recent years. The mobile Tor-M1 system is said to be the world's only short-range air-defence weapon that can identify up to 48 targets and strike simultaneously at two targets (aircraft or cruise missiles) flying at heights from 20 to 6,000 metres above the ground at a range of over 10 km.

The News, 5 December 2005

**Iran-Russia missile deal worries Israel**

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM: Israel on Sunday lambasted Russia over the sale of anti-missile systems to Iran. Iran has reportedly bought 29 mobile air defence systems from Moscow in a deal worth more than 700 million dollars. "When a country sells arms to Iran, it strengthens the military strength of the state and serves only the interests of the most negative elements in the region," Israeli foreign ministry spokesman Marc Regev told AFP. The contract with Russia, already helping Tehran build a nuclear reactor in Bushehr, coincided with an Israeli announcement it had successfully test-fired an Arrow defence missile against a mock Shahab missile. Tehran's rapid progress on its ballistic missile programme is a major cause for concern in the international community. "For the first time we have verified the Arrow's capabilities against the Iranian Shahab and this test has allowed us to demonstrate that we have the means to counter Iranian threats," Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz said ON Sunday.

Daily Times, 5 December 2005

**Larijani defends anti-missile deal**

TEHRAN: Iran, under pressure over its disputed nuclear programme, has been developing a missile defence system and has bought such technology from Russia, the Islamic republic's top national security official told AFP. "Is this a problem? Do we need permission?" said Ali Larijani, when asked to confirm reports that his country has bought 29 mobile air defence systems from Moscow in a contract worth more than 700 million dollars. "We have contracts with other countries to buy or sell arms. This is not the first time we have signed a contract with the Russians. We have done so in the past with Russia and other countries like China," said Larijani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council. "This is not the first time we have bought an anti-missile system. We also make them ourselves." Larijani said with a smile that Iran's air defences "do not have many weaknesses", but went on to dismiss fears that his country was also seeking to equip itself with long-range ballistic missiles.

Daily Times, 5 December 2005

**Tehran will not back down over nuclear programme, says Larijani**

TEHRAN: Iran will not submit to western demands to limit its disputed nuclear fuel drive and is prepared to maintain a freeze on sensitive activities only for a few more months, top national security official Ali Larijani told AFP. "Iran does not want to make an atomic bomb. And those who dropped an atomic bomb on Japan are in no position to forbid us from having (civilian) nuclear technology," Larijani said in the interview. "We will welcome any proposal that keeps to the following condition: enrichment must take place in Iran, because this is a right," said the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council. "It would not be very complicated to find a formula if both sides in the negotiations are serious," he said, but cautioned that centrifuge building and "research" were outside the scope of any future talks with the EU-3 and could therefore restart at any moment.

The Nation, 5 December 2005

**The AQ equation**

The AQ Khan factor keeps resurfacing every now and then. Now, the Foreign Office has been quick to reiterate

its position that any access to the once revered pillar of the national nuclear weapon programme would be strictly through the government. Though the government has not yet received any fresh request, the comments come in reply to IAEA Director General Mohammad ElBaradei's recent comment in an interview with an Indian TV network that direct dialogue with Dr Khan would help solve the complete puzzle of the international network of nuclear technology proliferation. It bears reminding that at the time Dr Khan was accused of running a clandestine international network, the government conducted a thorough investigation to the satisfaction of all stakeholders, including the US government and also the IAEA. Therefore, for Dr ElBaradei to wish to meet Dr Khan in person is hard to explain, especially since the government's cooperation with the international community cannot be questioned on this count. For the present, access to Dr Khan rightly remains a "no-go area".

Dawn, 5 December 2005

#### **N-blueprint evidence of Iranian plan: Straw**

London, Dec 4: A blue print for making an atomic bomb found in Iran has been traced back to the AQ Khan Research laboratories in Pakistan which, the British foreign secretary believes, could be part of the 'circumstantial evidence' for taking Tehran's case to the United Nations Security Council. Official records reveal that Foreign Secretary Jack Straw told MPs on Nov 29: "The evidence, which originally came from a document from the AQ Khan Research Laboratories in \*Pakistan\*, tells us that the Iranians had in their possession information that could lead to the development of the hemispheres, which for certain have no purpose other than the development of nuclear weapons." The document, provided to the IAEA by Iran, is in addition to the "old and discarded parts of centrifuges", which Pakistan had sent to the IAEA earlier this year for comparative analysis.

Hindustan Times, 4 December 2005

#### **India's strategy on Iran nuke issue seems to be working: PM**

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said on Sunday that India's strategy to resolve the Iran nuclear issue within the IAEA jurisdiction and not allow it to go to UN Security Council seems to be working. "Our concern has been to find a solution of the problem and not allow it go to the UN Security Council and resolve it within IAEA. I am glad to say that our strategy as of now seems to be working", he told reporters accompanying him on a three-day visit to Moscow. He said India has been talking to various players including European Union, Russia and China to find a solution to the problem. Asked whether there was a road block in the Indo-US nuclear deal and whether New Delhi was looking at Russia for supply of nuclear reactors, Singh said India and US had appointed Working Groups and "we are hopeful that things will work out a way we envisage". About the Kudankulam Nuclear Project in Tamil Nadu, the Prime Minister said it was being built with Russian help and there was great scope on expansion of nuclear cooperation with Moscow.

Hindustan Times, 4 December 2005

#### **Iran developing missile defence system: Official**

Tehran: Iran, under pressure over its disputed nuclear programme, has been developing a missile defence system and has bought such technology from Russia, the Islamic republic's top national security said. "Is this a problem? Do we need permission?" said Ali Larijani, when asked to confirm reports that his country has bought 29 mobile air defence systems from Moscow in a contract worth more than 700 million dollars. "We have contracts with other countries to buy or sell arms. This is not the first time we have signed a contract with the Russians. We have done so in the past with Russia and other countries like China," said Larijani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council. "This is not the first time we have bought an anti-missile system. We also make them ourselves." An unnamed top Russian defence ministry official said the deal involved 29 Tor M-1 mobile systems capable of bringing down both aircraft and missiles.

Hindustan Times, 4 December 2005

#### **Great scope for expanding nuke cooperation with Russia: PM**

Moscow: Seeking to give a qualitatively new dimension to India's strategic partnership with Russia, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Sunday said that there was great scope for expansion of nuclear cooperation and energy security would be high on the agenda of his talks with President Vladimir Putin. The Prime Minister, who arrived in Moscow to a red carpet welcome for a three-day visit heading high-level delegation for his annual summit with Putin, told reporters accompanying him that India and Russia would discuss regional and multi-regional cooperation to tackle the issue of energy security and resolve the problem of energy scarcity. Singh is keen on Russia's initiative in civilian nuclear cooperation as the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) is working on easing the curbs on supply of nuclear fuel to India.

The Indian Express, 6 December 2005

#### **India mulls made-in-Russia N-reactors**

Moscow, Dec 5: Following the success of the Kudankulam project in Tamil Nadu, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today conveyed New Delhi's willingness to consider construction of additional nuclear reactors by Russia in

view of India's growing energy demand. "The Prime Minister conveyed India's willingness to consider positively construction of additional reactors by Russia in view of our growing energy needs," External Affairs Ministry Spokesman Navtej Sarna told reporters after the meeting Singh had with Russia's Energy and Industry Minister Viktor Khristenko. Both sides also agreed to promote commercial cooperation among each other's oil companies through various measures including floating of joint ventures and equity participation. The Russian minister welcomed India's interest to invest in Sakhalin III oil and gas project and other areas.

Daily Times, 6 December 2005

### **Netanyahu supports strike on Iran**

JERUSALEM: Former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in remarks published on Monday that he would support a pre-emptive strike against Iran's nuclear programme. This is the first time that an Israeli leader has openly called for military action against the Islamic republic. Netanyahu's comments, made in the heat of a campaign for leadership of the hard line Likud Party, drew criticism from rivals, who accused him of playing politics with the country's security. Israeli leaders have repeatedly identified Iran as the biggest threat to Israel and dismissed Tehran's claim that its nuclear programme is solely for peaceful purposes. Iran's announcement on Monday that it plans to build a second nuclear power plant is likely to heighten Israeli concerns. Although Netanyahu is considered a long shot for the prime minister's post, his remarks threatened to escalate growing tensions with Iran and signalled that the Iranian nuclear programme will be an important campaign issue ahead of Israel's March 28 general election.

Dawn, 6 December 2005

### **Iran to construct 2nd nuclear plant**

TEHRAN: Iran plans to construct a second nuclear power plant, despite international concern over its nuclear program, state television reported on Monday. The broadcast said President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Cabinet ministers decided Sunday night to build the reactor in Khuzistan province, southwestern Iran. Previously Iran has said it would build a second power plant at Bushehr, where its first nuclear reactor is due to begin generating electricity in 2006. Khuzistan province was the site of a French-built power plant that began in the mid-1970s and was stopped after 1979 Islamic revolution. The Iranian parliament has asked for the construction of 20 nuclear power plants. Russia, which built the Bushehr reactor, has offered to build more nuclear plants in Iran. Iran is under intense pressure to curb its nuclear program, which the United States claims is part of an effort to produce weapons. Iran says its program is limited to generating electricity.

Dawn, 6 December 2005

### **France terms move unilateral rejection: Iran's decision on enrichment**

LJUBLJANA, Dec 5: Iran's insistence on enriching uranium on its own soil amounts to a 'unilateral' rejection of a Russian proposal to resolve a nuclear standoff with the West, French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy said on Monday. Douste-Blazy is the first senior European minister to publicly express dismay at the negotiating stance of the Iranians, ahead of fresh talks expected later this month. Iran has said its nuclear programme will enrich uranium only to a level suitable for civilian atomic-power reactors, but the United States and European Union fear Tehran will use the same technology to make bomb-grade material. To minimize that possibility, Moscow proposes taking in Iranian uranium for enrichment and then returning it to Iran. But Tehran has said it will only accept proposals that allow it to conduct a full nuclear fuel cycle at home.

The Washington Post, 6 December 2005

### **N.Korea says US finance row blocking nuclear talks**

SEOUL: A U.S. crackdown on North Korea's financial assets makes it impossible to resume multilateral talks on dismantling the communist state's nuclear weapons programs, a commentary in Pyongyang's official media said on Tuesday. It was the first time the North has openly linked a possible halt in the six-party nuclear talks to the U.S. moves against its finances, South Korean officials said. Washington has offered to brief North Korean officials on the legal reason for its clamping down on firms the United States suspects of involvement in counterfeiting, money laundering and the drugs trade. It says these have helped finance Pyongyang's nuclear programs. North Korea's communist party newspaper Rodong Sinmun called the U.S. measures "sanctions" and demanded that they be lifted, the North's official KCNA news agency reported. "It is impossible to resume the six-party talks under such provocative sanctions applied by the U.S. upon the DPRK," the Rodong Sinmun said.

The Times of India, 7 December 2005

### **Russia asks India to follow nuke norms (Diwakar)**

MOSCOW: Russia on Tuesday promised continued cooperation in the area of civil nuclear energy, but stressed that the process would move in tandem with the steps members of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group have asked India to take. The position, crucial for India's attempt to source fuel for the Tarapur atomic energy plant and to build new reactors, was laid down by Russian President Vladimir Putin at the press conference he addressed with PM

Manmohan Singh at the Kremlin. Asked if Russia would take the lead to ensure that the rules laid down by the Nuclear Suppliers' Group were relaxed to ensure uninterrupted assistance to India in the field of civil nuclear energy, Putin referred to the ongoing negotiations between India and the US on the separation of civil nuclear facilities from the military ones.

Deccan Herald, 7 December 2005

#### **India, Russia ink three pacts**

Moscow: Cementing their strategic partnership, India and Russia on Tuesday signed three agreements, including the one on protection of intellectual property rights to regulate joint defence work. The agreements were signed after one-to-one summit talks between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Russian President Vladimir Putin following delegation-level parleys covering areas of India's requirement of civilian nuclear energy, co-operation in space sector and ways of enhancing bilateral economic and trade ties. International terrorism and ways to combat it also figured prominently during the parleys. The pacts were signed in the presence of the Prime Minister and the Russian President after the talks.

Hindustan Times, 7 December 2005

#### **Empire's new clothes** (Vikram Sood)

Dec 6: A single deft move in the 18th century secured the British empire in India many advantages over the advancing Russians. By sending five English dray horses along with a blue velvet upholstered coach to Maharaja Ranjit Singh in Lahore, upstream from Kutch, the British discovered that the Indus was navigable all the way up. They were given access to Afghanistan through his territories by a grateful Maharaja. The irony is that the British were only returning a gift Ranjit Singh had sent King William IV. Not a single shot was fired but the empire had gained. The opening gambits for empire-building at that time were to flatter, cajole, persuade and, if this did not work, then coerce and control and finally occupy. One hundred and seventy years later, these tactics - access to markets and resources - remain unchanged, although the new empire has shown a greater propensity to violence as a first option. The wooing started a few years ago when opinions began to filter through about a new power rising in the east - democratic India.

The Hindu, 7 December 2005

#### **Russia sees India as long-term partner in energy sector** (Siddharth Varadarajan)

Moscow: Russia sees India as a "long-term partner" in the energy sector and is looking to vastly expand the scope of the bilateral relationship in the field of oil and gas exploration and production, Russian President Vladimir Putin said here on Tuesday. In a joint press conference to mark the end of the sixth annual summit between India and Russia, he appreciated India's equity participation in the Sakhalin-I project and said the new Indian expressions of interest in further developing oil fields in Sakhalin - which require an overall investment of \$10 billion - are "a clear indication of the fact that this has been a very successful beginning." Prime Minister Manmohan Singh described Sakhalin-I as India's "most important overseas investment."

The Hindu, 7 December 2005

#### **India, Russia inching towards fresh nuclear cooperation** (Siddharth Varadarajan)

Moscow: The question how to expand cooperation between Russia and India in the field of energy - and especially civilian nuclear energy - figured prominently in the summit between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Vladimir Putin here on Tuesday, though both sides were wary of publicly fleshing out any of the new nuclear ideas under consideration. Russia has provided two 1000 MW reactors for the Kudankulam nuclear power plant in Tamil Nadu but has so far been non-committal on India's request for two to four additional reactors for the same project, citing its obligations as a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group. But the July 18 Indo-U.S. nuclear agreement has opened up a window which the Indian nuclear establishment is keen to exploit. Accordingly, while the two leaders did not discuss specific figures for additional reactors at Kudankulam, Indian officials said they agreed that there were "good prospects for expanding cooperation in all sectors of civil nuclear cooperation."

The Hindu, 7 December 2005

#### **Indo-Russia ties based on political consensus: PM**

Moscow, Dec. 7: Observing that there was no significant sector in India where it has not been benefited from Russia, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Tuesday night said the bilateral strategic relationship was based on political consensus in both the countries despite the transformations underway. "Our strategic relationship is based on political consensus in both countries. Despite the historic transformations underway in both countries, the essence of our partnership has not been diluted," Singh said in his speech at the banquet hosted in his honour by Russian President, Vladimir Putin. He said there was no "significant sector of our national endeavour in which we have not been benefited from Russia. Today, as before, Russia is a valued strategic partner. Our relationship has adapted very successfully and productively to current requirements."

The Hindu, 7 December 2005

**Russia to lease two nuke submarines to India: report**

Moscow, Dec. 7: India will get two 'Shchuka-B' class nuclear submarines from Russia on lease and an Indian crew has already arrived here for training as part of the aircraft-carrier Admiral Gorshkov deal, a media report said on Tuesday. Two 'Shchuka-B', also known as Akula, are at different stages of construction since the collapse of Soviet Union and could be leased to India for ten years in estimated USD 1.8 billion deal after their simultaneous completion, Russian daily 'Kommersant' reported. Due to slippage in the indigenous Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) project for the development of S-2 nuclear submarine, India is leasing the two submarines as part of the package deal on the acquisition of Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier, the daily said. It said that about 200 Indian naval officers have arrived in Russia in October for a course at Russian nuclear submarine fleet's North-West training centre at Sosnovy Bor near St. Petersburg, the paper wrote.

The Hindu, 7 December 2005

**ITER project: India becomes full partner** (R. Ramachandran)

New Delhi: The International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project on Tuesday admitted India as a full partner into the consortium. This decision was taken at the ongoing ITER Negotiations at Jeju, Republic of Korea. The ambitious multi-billion dollar project is aimed at demonstrating the scientific and technological feasibility of controlled nuclear fusion as a future source of energy. India will be the seventh participating member of ITER. The other members are China, the European Union (EU), Japan, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States. With India's entry, half of humanity is now participating in this unique scientific mission to devise ways of tapping this enormous source of energy. After protracted and acrimonious negotiations, Cadarache in France was selected in June as the site for building the reactor.

Daily Times, 7 December 2005

**Lobbying against US-India N-deal underway**

WASHINGTON: A bipartisan group of 16 former US government officials with vast experience in security-related issues has circulated a letter to all members of Congress aimed at killing the US-India nuclear cooperation agreement, which is widely seen as a blow to nuclear nonproliferation efforts worldwide. With the nonproliferation lobby and several key members of Congress up in arms against what they see as a "sweetheart deal" for New Delhi, Pakistani representatives here show little sign of taking advantage of the situation. Pakistan's lack of any visible concern, it has been said, springs from the assumption, held by certain decision-makers in Islamabad, that once the deal between India and the US goes through, Pakistan will be in a position to demand the same for itself. It is not known what gives these decision-makers the confidence that a similar deal would be on offer to Pakistan from Washington. Informed opinion here is that no such deal is going to be offered to Pakistan. India is seen by the Bush administration as standing in a class of its own, not to be bracketed with Pakistan.

International Herald Tribune, 7 December 2005

**N. Korea ties talks to end of U.S. sanctions** (Choe Sang-Hun)

SEOUL, Dec 6: North Korea said Tuesday that it would quit six-party talks on eliminating its nuclear programs unless the United States lifted financial sanctions imposed on the country for circulating counterfeit U.S. dollars and trafficking in illicit drugs. The announcement was the North's most significant reaction yet to the Bush administration's attempt, which has become more strenuous even as the nuclear talks have proceeded, to exert pressure on the regime by cracking down on its far-flung criminal trade. U.S. officials believe such trade plays a pivotal role in funding the North's nuclear weapons development and for the country's overall finances. Pyongyang's stringent demand, and Washington's thus-far categorical rebuff, reflected a new deterioration in relations between the United States and North Korea and diminishing prospects for a breakthrough in nuclear disarmament talks.

China Daily, 7 December 2005

**Meeting on nuclear talks possible in Dec - report**

The United States has proposed that informal talks by chief delegates to multilateral discussions on dismantling North Korea's nuclear arms programmes be held on December 19 in Cheju, South Korea, Kyodo news agency said on Wednesday. North Korea has said a U.S. crackdown on Pyongyang's financial assets had made it impossible to resume the six-party talks, the most recent round of which broke off last month with the United States and North Korea far apart. Seiji Maehara, head of Japan's opposition Democratic Party, was quoted by Kyodo as saying that Jim Foster, head of the U.S. State Department's Office of Korean Affairs, had told him of the proposal during a meeting in Washington. Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman Akira Chiba said, however, that no formal proposal had been made. South Korea had offered to host an informal gathering on Cheju, a southern resort island, at the end of the fourth round of talks, which include Japan, China, Russia and the United States as well as the two Koreas, in September.

People's Daily, 7 December 2005

#### **Chinese premier visits ITER in southern France**

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on Tuesday visited the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) in southern France. During the visit, Wen highlighted the work of ITER, expressing his hope for an abundance of clean and cheap energy resources in the 21 century to facilitate the sustainable development of economy. The goal of the ITER project is to show that energy production using atomic fission is scientifically and technologically possible. At a time when fossil fuel shortages are just 50 years away, exploring the potential of alternative energy sources is all the more important. According to scientists at the ITER, which is situated in Cadarache, some 70 kilometers northeast of France's second largest city Marseille, just 300 liters of sea water provide one gram of deuterium, and this means that the water in our oceans alone could meet world energy needs for around a billion years.

The Tribune, 8 December 2005

#### **Moscow is willing**

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday have brought to light Moscow's eagerness to help India in acquiring the latest nuclear energy generation technology to meet the country's growing power requirements, which may increase considerably in the near future. Russia is already involved in helping India in setting up two nuclear reactors at Koodankulam in Tamil Nadu. But India needs more reactors, and Russia seems to be willing to oblige it now that there will be no US objection after the July nuclear deal, signed in Washington during Dr Manmohan Singh's US visit. Russia, besides France, is ready to supply the latest nuclear reactors for civilian purposes. Those who opposed the understanding reached between India and the US in the nuclear energy area should realize how the attitude of the world changes once you are on the right side of the fence.

The Tribune, 8 December 2005

#### **Fusion partner**

India has joined the worldwide effort to harness thermonuclear fusion and create a potentially endless, and environment-friendly, source of energy. The consortium building the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) has admitted India as a full partner. The other members include the US, Russia, China, Japan, South Korea and many countries of the European Union. Cadarache, in France, was chosen as the site for the 500 MW reactor in June this year, and India had expressed its interest to join the effort. The bid received a boost when the July 18 Indo-US agreement specifically mentioned ITER, and promised consultations aimed at admitting India. The membership is also politically significant - the consortium is a who's who of the international system's power elite.

The Indian Express, 8 December 2005

#### **Ahead of Foreign Secy visit, US Senate panel chief seeks credible India plan on n-separation (C Raja Mohan)**

WASHINGTON, Dec 7: As India prepares to discuss its plans to separate civilian and military nuclear facilities with the Bush Administration later this month, an influential Senator has urged New Delhi to put as many reactors as possible in the non-military category. Speaking to a visiting Indian delegation here Tuesday, Richard Lugar, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, underlined that India must provide full political satisfaction to the US Congress that must approve the historic nuclear pact signed by President George W Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in July. "I would urge the Indian side to think in maximalist terms and include as many facilities as possible within the scope of the civilian declaration", Lugar said. Under the Bush-Manmohan pact, India agreed to separate its civilian and military facilities in return for full civilian nuclear energy cooperation from the US. Implementation of the pact requires the amendment of current laws by the US Congress in Washington and the Nuclear Suppliers Group that brings all the major international supplier nations together.

The Indian Express, 8 December 2005

#### **Moscow's civil about nuclear energy (K. Subrahmanyam)**

During Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Moscow, President Putin made it clear that Russia expects to play a major role in future civil nuclear energy projects in India. But he saw this as part of a broader international cooperation on enabling India to have access to civil nuclear energy. He said, "As India continues to settle its problems with other countries, including those of NSG, we hope Russia will have an opportunity to participate and contribute to its huge projects and programmes for peaceful use of nuclear energy." He further clarified that he believed that India was "taking all the necessary steps to build its relationship with the international community, including with the countries of the Nuclear Suppliers Group...(It) is separating its military and peaceful programmes. It has adopted the necessary legislation and is actively working with the members of the NSG."

Hindustan Times, 8 December 2005

### **Chain reaction**

The outcome of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Russia is the best proof that the India-US nuclear agreement of July 18 is the key that will unlock the many bolts clamped on India's civil and military nuclear programmes. You don't even have to read between the lines to see that the Russian position on nuclear cooperation, or for that matter that of the French or the British, is identical to that of the US. Russian President Vladimir Putin made this clear on Tuesday when he premised nuclear cooperation with India on its dialogue with the Nuclear Suppliers Group and on "separating its military and peaceful nuclear programmes". In 2001, the Russians supplied 50 tonnes of enriched uranium to keep the Tarapur nuclear power plant going. But during Mr Putin's visit to Delhi, in December 2004, Moscow categorically ruled out providing more, citing NSG rules. They also refused India's request for an additional two 1,000 MW reactors for the Koodankulam nuclear power project.

Daily Times, 8 December 2005

#### **India becomes partner in nuclear reactor project**

NEW DELHI: India said on Wednesday its inclusion as a full partner in the ambitious multinational International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) energy project was an acknowledgement of India being a responsible nuclear state with advanced nuclear technology. The decision was taken by the six partner countries - US, European Union, Russia, China, Japan and South Korea - in Jeju, South Korea on Tuesday. "The decision recognises that India can significantly contribute to such endeavours and also is recognition that India is a country with advanced nuclear technology, including in the field of fusion research," said a spokesman for the External Affairs Ministry. ITER is the experimental step between the latest studies of plasma physics and future electricity-producing fusion power plants. The main ITER facility will be built in Cadarache in France by 2016 and all partners will participate in its construction, development and research.

Daily Times, 8 December 2005

#### **United States looks to India as new global ally**

WASHINGTON: The Bush administration is looking increasingly to India as a core ally as it seeks to engineer what could be a major diplomatic shift away from the power alignments forged after World War Two. Old standby Britain, increasingly important Japan and, according to some of the officials familiar with administration thinking on geopolitics, Australia all join India in a group of countries Washington believes shares its values and goals. "You might call this emerging set of alliances the 'four by four' strategy (which is) built around four great powers - the United States, Great Britain, Japan and India," Thomas Donnelly of the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), a think-tank with close ties to the administration, wrote on the AEI website. Nuclear power India, a growing economic force on China's border and familiarly dubbed the world's biggest democracy, is the relative newcomer to the group. Often an adversary as a Soviet sympathizer and leader of the non-aligned movement during the Cold War, it now enjoys dramatically improved ties under President George W Bush. Presidential aides say the United States is committed to helping India not just prosper but rise as a regional power. One senior official has said privately that the administration also intends to back India for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

The Nation, 8 December 2005

#### **Russia-India agreements**

While it has acquired the status of a strategic partner with the US, New Delhi continues simultaneously to build on its traditional ties with Russia. During Dr Manmohan Singh's three-day visit to Moscow, which ended on Wednesday, the two sides signed a key agreement to regulate intellectual property rights for Russian technology used in joint arms production. They also vowed to intensify cooperation in defence and energy. India is planning to ensure its fast rising energy needs are met, by investing in the Russian oil industry while Russia is increasing involvement in India's nuclear energy sector. Unlike Pakistani leaders who have over the last half century put their eggs in one basket, New Delhi has successfully pursued a policy obtaining for it the maximum benefit from both Russia and the US. Taking the stance of non-alignment during the Cold War, India was courted by the two superpowers. Despite its heavy reliance on Moscow, India enjoyed US support during its conflict with China. India was allowed during the Cold War to import the most sophisticated weapons in Russia's inventory, from navy ships and fighter jets to arms and ammunition for the ground forces.

Dawn, 8 December 2005

#### **US Congress threatens to throw out India N-deal**

WASHINGTON, Dec 7: The chairman of the US Senate's Foreign Relations Committee warned on Tuesday that Congress would throw out any 'opaque' plan by the Bush administration to forge unprecedented civilian nuclear cooperation with India. President George Bush agreed to give India, which is not a member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), access to civil nuclear energy technology under a deal he signed with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in July. But India has to first separate its civilian and military nuclear programs and place its nuclear reactors under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections. Under US law, the deal also has to be approved by the US Congress. "While the Bush administration has, I think, been very clear in discussions

with the Indian government about its expectations, let me emphasize that any Indian plan will have to pass muster with the United States Congress," Republican Senator Dick Lugar said.

The Indian Express, 9 December 2005

### **India gets entry into nuclear fusion project**

TOKYO, Dec 8: The European Union and five participant countries to the international thermonuclear experimental reactor project have decided to allow India to join the project on the condition that the country limits use of the technology to peaceful purposes. The EU and Japan, China, Russia, South Korea and the United States made the decision during a meeting on Monday on Jeju Island, South Korea. They have been discussing India's membership since the country expressed in July its will to join the project. The five members asked India to limit the use of nuclear technology to peaceful purposes as India is not a member of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT). In June, the members decided to build the world's first nuclear fusion reactor in Cadarache, Southern France, after a fierce competition between the EU and Japan. In return, the members agreed to support a Japanese candidate for the chief of the project, in addition to building a research centre in Rokkasho in Aomori prefecture in Northern Japan.

Daily Times, 9 December 2005

### **India tests Trishul missile**

BHUBANESHWAR: India successfully tested its Trishul missile on Thursday in the eastern state of Orissa, defence officials said. The Trishul was fired a day after the Indian military tested its surface-to-air missile, Akash, at the same location of Chandipur-on-Sea. Trishul, which was last tested on October 5, is being designed for use by the army, air force and the navy and can transport a 15-kilogramme conventional warhead up to nine kilometres. The missile has high maneuverability and has been flight-tested in the sea-skimming role and also against land-based and airborne targets. India has stepped up the testing of three of the five guided-missile systems it has developed as part of an ambitious programme launched in 1983 to become self-reliant in missile technology. India, which conducted a series of nuclear devices in 1998, has already developed and deployed two ballistic missiles and a surface missile.

The News, 9 December 2005

### **Complexity of N-deal with US throws India in a bind** (Mariana Baabar)

ISLAMABAD: India will have to open its civilian nuclear facilities to inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) so that the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the US Congress make the necessary accommodations that allow full civil nuclear trade with India. The task has been entrusted to its Department of Atomic Energy. This step is being resisted by several lobbies in New Delhi and, for the Congress government, too, it is a difficult political decision. Congress would like the finalization of this deal when President George W Bush visits New Delhi, probably at the end of February next year. On Wednesday the chairman of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee warned New Delhi that Congress would throw out any "opaque" plan by the Bush administration to forge unprecedented civilian nuclear cooperation unless there was complete separation of the two facilities.

The Indian Express, 10 December 2005

### **Disgraced Pak N-scientist's file missing, Dutch say CIA didn't do it**

Amsterdam, Dec 10: The Dutch justice minister acknowledged today that the dossier of evidence used to prosecute disgraced Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan in the 1980s had disappeared, but said there was no evidence of CIA involvement. Khan worked in the 1970s for a Dutch-based European Nuclear Research Centre, from which he stole secrets used to develop Pakistan's nuclear bomb. He was convicted in absentia in Amsterdam for the theft in 1983, but it was overturned on appeal in 1985 on a technicality. In a letter to the Dutch Parliament released, Justice Minister Piet Hein Donner said a formal investigation had found the dossier was now empty, except for "a few administrative documents, such as the 1983 verdict and the decision on appeal in 1985." He said the dossier had likely been destroyed about a decade after the case concluded, though investigators could not rule out other possibilities. His ministry would draw up new guidelines to preserve materials from important cases.

Asia Times, 10 December 2005

### **US turns the screws on deal with India** (Ramtanu Maitra)

The "historic" US-India nuclear deal of July 18, on which Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh wants to situate his legacy, is in trouble. It is evident that the US Congress is keen to extract the proverbial pound of flesh before it approves the deal. It also seems the optimism that prevailed in the Indian camp earlier is vanishing fast and what India will have to surrender to get the deal through could well be the new worry of New Delhi. At the end of November, Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran was in Washington to attend the inaugural session of the Indo-US High Technology Cooperation Group's meeting. Addressing the China Business Big Picture session, the

Indian visitor said: "The nuclear agreement, as would be appreciated, has larger implications for high-technology trade as it is premised on US recognition of India's impeccable record on non-proliferation. It not only recognizes that non-proliferation is better served with India as a partner, but also sends a clear signal that India cannot be a partner and a target at the same time of technology denial regime." It is evident that the Indian foreign secretary's efforts to grease the wheels did not accomplish much.

The Times of India, 10 December 2005

#### **Editorial: Nuclear Democracy**

Partnership with Moscow will be vitally necessary to meet India's growing energy needs, as Russia can help with oil and gas on the one hand, and nuclear fuels and technology on the other. It is no surprise that this emerged as one of the crucial themes during prime minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Moscow. What should surprise critics of the Indo-US nuclear agreement signed on July 18 this year, however, is the endorsement provided to it by President Putin, who clearly indicated it was the key to ensure future Indo-Russian cooperation in the field of nuclear energy. Those who want to pursue what they have beguiled themselves into thinking of as 'independent' foreign policy have always played off Russia against the US. However, there are signs that Russia and the US are working in greater concord than ever before, particularly on nuclear issues - witness Iran, where Washington has backed a Russian plan for resolving the deadlock on the Iranian nuclear programme by supplying it with enriched uranium fuel.

Hindustan Times, 10 December 2005

#### **Fusion music**

It makes a lot of sense for the international consortium of the US, Russia, China, Japan, the EU and Korea to include India in its International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER), being built in France. Unlike existing fission reactors where atoms are split to release energy, the ITER would generate energy by fusing atoms together. Fusion energy offers several advantages over nuclear power obtained from fission, like the absence of greenhouse gases emitted by fossil fuel power stations and the highly radioactive waste usually churned out by conventional nuclear power stations. Best of all, fusion reactors run on something as cheap as deuterium in sea water, which can be separated by electrolysis. Compare this with the complex and expensive methods required to extract uranium-235 from its sources, and it's easy to see why fusion energy is the holy grail of nuclear power research.

Dawn, 10 December 2005

#### **IAEA warns against strike on Iran**

OSLO, Dec 9: The head of the UN nuclear watchdog agency, Mohamed ElBaradei, on Friday said the international community was losing patience with Iran over its nuclear programme but cautioned against using military action. "The international community after three years is losing patience" with Iran, ElBaradei told reporters in Oslo, where he is to receive the Nobel Peace Prize on Saturday. He insisted however that "I don't believe there is a military solution to the issue." "I think that a military solution would be completely counterproductive," he said, pointing out that diplomacy and cooperation tend to yield "better results than the stick". The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its director, who will share the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize and an accompanying cheque worth \$1.3 million (1.1 million euros), have been instrumental in thorny nuclear negotiations with Iran. The agency has threatened to take the country before the United Nations Security Council for violating nuclear non-proliferation rules.

Dawn, 10 December 2005

#### **Implications of Indo-US alliance** (M. Tayyab Siddiqui)

The July visit of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to the US was hailed by both sides as a "historical watershed". The true import of this visit, however, has not been sufficiently grasped by Pakistan, in particular the long-term adverse impact that growing Indo-US relations, especially in the context of a strategic partnership, would have on Pakistan. Wide-ranging bilateral agreements, particularly those under the rubric of the "Framework for the US India Defence Relationship", establish India as a major world power. Of all the defence-related agreements, the most significant in its reach and impact has been the Proliferation Security Initiative. The PSI will confer on India a special status in the 44-member Nuclear Supplies Group (NSG), granting it permanent exemption from NSG guidelines which currently prevent India from purchasing nuclear reactors and bars nuclear cooperation with non-NPT members.

The News, 10 December 2005

#### **Deal in the doldrums**

The much-hyped proposal for a civilian nuclear cooperation deal between India and the United States appears to be in the doldrums after a Congressional Committee put up conditions that will be too difficult for New Delhi to meet. A deal that was seen as smooth sailing thus far in New Delhi has turned tumultuous after tough positioning

by American congressmen in the name of nuclear non-proliferation. The chairman of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee warned Congress on Wednesday that it would throw out any "opaque" plan by the Bush administration to forge unprecedented civilian nuclear cooperation unless there was complete separation of Indian civilian and military nuclear facilities. India will also have to open its civilian nuclear facilities to inspectors from the IAEA to be able to draw nuclear benefits from Washington. It will certainly be a difficult decision for New Delhi to affect the required separation, as it may lead to the identification of facilities that are engaged in nuclear works for military purposes.

Dawn, 10 December 2005

#### **Resolving Iran's N-issue** (Afzaal Mahmood)

Some new steps in dealing with the stand-off over Iran's nuclear issue offer a flicker of hope that the harsh realities may induce some flexibility in Washington and Tehran, leading to a peaceful resolution of the current crisis. The first and the most important step was taken about two weeks ago by the UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), when it decided to put off the referral of Iran to the UN Security Council. It may be recalled that in September, the IAEA board found Iran in non-compliance with the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) for hiding sensitive nuclear activities, a finding that requires notifying the Security Council which can then impose sanctions. The United States charges that Iran is using a civilian nuclear programme to hide the covert development of atomic weapons, an allegation that Tehran denies. However, this time Washington backed up a call to hold off taking Iran to the Security Council, though Washington did warn that the referral would take place soon if Iran did not meet its non-proliferation obligations.

The Washington Post, 10 December 2005

#### **Keep the Nuclear Watchdog Neutral** (Michael A. Levi)

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its director general, Mohamed ElBaradei, will receive the Nobel Peace Prize today at ceremonies in Oslo. This award has been interpreted by many as a vote for conciliation over confrontation in the fight against the spread of nuclear arms, and to be sure, the less hawkish option has certainly been ElBaradei's preference. But to so interpret this Nobel Prize, or to give it any other narrow political reading, shortchanges the atomic energy agency. To effectively do its job of spotlighting illegal behavior, the IAEA must in fact assiduously preserve its neutrality, not only between countries but between the different arms control strategies those countries prefer. By shining a light on illicit behavior, but then standing back, the IAEA provides other parties with powerful ammunition for more effective diplomacy and more forceful confrontation -- a far greater contribution than supporting any one approach alone.

China Daily, 10 December 2005

#### **Britain accused of Israel nuclear cover-up**

Two British lawmakers have accused the government of a cover-up for refusing to admit that Britain helped launch Israel's nuclear program in 1959 by secretly selling the Jewish state a batch of heavy water - a key ingredient in producing weapons-grade materials. The British Broadcasting Corp. first reported the allegations - contained in previously classified documents - in August, but Foreign Office Minister Kim Howells swiftly denied the claims to the International Atomic Energy Agency. Howells' account "simply flies in the face of the known facts, now that we have access to previously classified documents," Menzies Campbell, a lawmaker and foreign affairs spokesman from the small centrist Liberal Democrat party, told the BBC's Newsnight program late Friday. Jeremy Corbyn, a lawmaker from the governing Labor Party who wants a committee of lawmakers to investigate, told the program that Howell's statement is "simply untrue."

The Associated Press, 10 December 2005

#### **N.Korea Decries U.S. Envoy's Criticism**

SEOUL: North Korea has denounced recent criticism of the communist regime by a senior U.S. diplomat as a "declaration of a war" and threatened to retaliate, North Korean media reported Saturday. The U.S. ambassador to South Korea on Tuesday called the North a "criminal regime," citing its alleged involvement in illicit activities such as money laundering and counterfeiting. Ambassador Alexander Vershbow's comments are "a sort of provocative declaration of a war ... and (North Korea) will mercilessly retaliate against it," an unidentified spokesman for the North's committee on peaceful reunification of the peninsula told the official Korean Central News Agency Friday. "The recent case glaringly revealed once again the ulterior aggressive design of the U.S. to stifle the DPRK at any cost," the spokesman said. "This clearly proved that nothing has changed in its hostile policy toward the DPRK although it signed the joint statement at the six-party talks."

The New York Times, 10 December 2005

#### **Head of Nuclear Agency Again Urges Iran to Cooperate** (Walter Gibbs)

OSLO, Dec. 9: Mohamed ElBaradei, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, warned Iran on Friday to stop hindering an investigation into the country's nuclear energy program, which the United States

and many other observers suspect is a cover to develop nuclear weapons. "The international community has begun to lose its patience," he told reporters here before a ceremony on Saturday at which he is to be awarded the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize. While denouncing Iran's repeated delays in accommodating inspectors from his agency, Dr. ElBaradei also said that forcing a showdown on the matter now could backfire. The United States has urged the agency to report Iran's history of concealment and sluggish cooperation to the United Nations Security Council for possible punitive measures. "Let us not think we should jump the gun and use enforcement," said Dr. ElBaradei, adding that no "smoking gun" had emerged to prove that Iran's intent was hostile. "If you can wiggle your way to cooperation, that is better than the alternative."

The Hindu, 11 December 2005

#### **Nuclear weapons a threat to mankind's survival: ElBaradei**

OSLO: Nuclear watchdog agency chief Mohamed ElBaradei warned on Saturday in accepting the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize that humanity faces a choice between nuclear weapons and survival. He shared the coveted award with his International Atomic Energy Agency - cited for their drive to control the spread of nuclear weapons, especially to terrorists. "I have no doubt that if we hope to escape self-destruction, then nuclear weapons should have no place in our collective conscience, and no role in our security," Mr. ElBaradei said in a text of his speech released in advance. "The hard part is: How do we create an environment in which nuclear weapons - like slavery or genocide - are regarded as a taboo and a historical anomaly?" he said in thanking the Nobel Committee for the honour.

The Tribune, 11 December 2005

#### **US Congress hinders nuclear pact, says newspaper** (Ashish Kumar Sen)

Washington: The Bush administration has hit the brakes on its efforts to implement a civil nuclear technology agreement with India following skepticism about the deal from members of the US Congress, according to a Washington newspaper. The Hill, a newspaper, quoted a congressional source as saying of the agreement with India, "The administration did come and had a discussion with us on general options for their legislative package, but they were not ready to commit on anything." A Bush administration official told The Tribune, the administration intended to "continue to move forward on this initiative and hoped that India will present a civil-military separation plan and begin its implementation by early 2006." The Bush administration's efforts could also be held up by mid-term elections across the United States in 2006. "Next year is going to be a very political year, and the chances for joint congressional action for an issue this complicated could be small unless the administration puts a real push on the Congress," the congressional source said, adding, "There is not a lot of congressional pressure to do this quickly."

Hindustan Times, 11 December 2005

#### **Nuclear talks suspended indefinitely: N Korea**

Seoul: North Korea's foreign ministry has said six-nation talks on dismantling Pyongyang's nuclear programme have been suspended "for an indefinite period" because of US financial sanctions on the Stalinist state. In its latest response to a US envoy calling Pyongyang a "criminal regime" engaged in money laundering and counterfeiting, a spokesman for North Korea's foreign ministry told the Korean Central News Agency the United States was "faking up lies" to disrupt the six-way talks. "The US is now overturning the basic principles of the joint statement reached at the six-party talks one by one," the spokesman said in an interview with the agency conducted on Saturday and carried on Sunday. "It scuttled the DPRK (North Korean)-US financial talks, in particular, holding off the six-party talks for an indefinite period."

The News, 11 December 2005

#### **'UK sold heavy water to Israel for nuke use'**

LONDON: Britain admitted late on Friday that it knew that heavy water it sold in the 1950s, a key ingredient in making nuclear weapons, was bound for Israel, amid claims of a cover-up. An investigation by BBC television's "Newsnight" programme unearthed papers showing a deal was done to export heavy water. The probe showed that "Britain knew that the heavy water was going to Israel and that the Israelis were likely to use it to make nuclear weapons," alleged BBC reporter Michael Crick. Britain's Foreign Office minister Kim Howells has insisted that Britain had merely negotiated the sale back to Norway of surplus heavy water. That surplus was then sold on to Israel. Officials had added that they were unaware that Israel might have nuclear weapons ambitions. However, a Foreign Office spokesman, while maintaining that it was purely a deal between Britain and Norway, admitted Britain knew the heavy water's final destination. "The papers show that we agreed to transfer back to Norway control of 25 tons of heavy water," the spokesman told the BBC. "We were aware at the time that Norway planned to sell the heavy water to the Israeli Atomic Energy organisation," he said, going further than Howells.

The News, 11 December 2005

#### **'EU, Iran prepare for N-talks'**

VIENNA: The European Union and Iran will hold nuclear talks on December 21 but expectations that Tehran will abandon sensitive nuclear activities are "very low," Western diplomats told AFP on Saturday. Diplomats said the two sides would be meeting alone, and not with Russian experts as originally planned. The meeting will probably be held in Vienna, although this could change. "December 21 is confirmed. It will probably be in Vienna but the venue is not totally locked up," said a Western diplomat, who asked not to be identified due to the sensitivity of the issue. This information was confirmed by a second diplomat, who asked only to be identified as a European envoy. The Western diplomat said: "Expectations are very low. The EU-3 (EU negotiators Britain, France and Germany) expects Iran to press for agreement on a pilot centrifuge plant. The EU-3 will make clear that that is unacceptable and that time is about to run out on the Iranians."

Dawn, 11 December 2005

#### **EI Baradei's warning**

While in Oslo to receive the Nobel prize, Mr EI Baradei warned Iran that the international community was losing patience over its nuclear programme. The IAEA chief also cautioned that there was no military solution to the problem. This statement is pretty instructive because it points to the dilemma the world faces today vis-à-vis nuclear arms. Iran is on the right side of the law (as stipulated by the NPT) as far as its nuclear programme goes. As the IAEA's inspectors have confirmed, Tehran has not produced any nuclear weapons so far. But it can in the future if it acquires uranium enrichment ability. And the NPT does not forbid uranium enrichment. To preempt the bomb, the IAEA has been monitoring Iran's nuclear facilities and the EU-3, who have been negotiating with the Iranians, have been trying to persuade them not to go in for uranium enrichment, but so far without any success. The dialogue, which has been put on hold since August, is expected to be resumed soon.

Daily Times, 11 December 2005

#### **Iran determined to produce nuclear fuel, enrich uranium**

TEHRAN: Iran's top nuclear official said Saturday that his country will enrich uranium and produce nuclear fuel in Iran despite the US-led international drive to curb such efforts. "For me, there is no doubt that the process of producing nuclear fuel in Iran will be accomplished," Gholamreza Aghazadeh, head of the Atomic Organisation of Iran, said during a press conference. "There is no doubt that we have to carry out uranium enrichment." Aghazadeh, who is also an Iranian vice president, gave no date for when the processes would start, but stressed they would do so at some stage. "Iran can't trust promises by Europeans that it will deliver nuclear fuel," Aghazadeh told reporters in Tehran. "There is no guarantee that the west will supply us with nuclear fuel." Aghazadeh claimed Iran owns 90 tons of nuclear material that is currently being held in European countries which are refusing to release it. In an apparent goodwill gesture, Aghazadeh said "Iran would not inject uranium gas into centrifuges and won't carry out enrichment" during upcoming Iranian talks with European negotiators.

Hindustan Times, 10 December 2005

#### **Iran to build nuke reactor without foreign aid**

Tehran, Dec 10: Iran plans to build a nuclear reactor without foreign assistance, the head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation said on Saturday. The news network Khabar quoted Gholam-Reza Aqazadeh as saying the 360-megawatt project had already been approved by the Government and funding would be allocated in the 2006-2007 budget. The new plant will be built in Darkohovayn in southwestern Khuzestan province. Construction is expected to take at least seven years, Aqazadeh said.

The Indian Express, 12 December 2005

#### **N-separation at fairly advanced stage: PM** (Sunit Arora)

ON BOARD PM AIRCRAFT, Dec 11: Indicating that India is pushing to quickly meet commitments made in the Indo-US nuclear deal, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today said that the exercise for separating civilian and military nuclear facilities is at a "fairly advanced stage". Singh's statement on the nuclear deal-made to reporters en route to Kuala Lumpur where he will attend the ASEAN summit and East Asian summit-assumes significance as there have been indications that the US has been going slow in putting in place a legislation to be approved by the US Congress. Informed sources said that India's separation exercise will reflect a definite move forward when Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran visits Washington next week. When questioned about Left parties' pressure to increase the 8.5 per cent interest rate announced by the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), Singh once again dropped the ball firmly in the EPFO's court, refusing Budgetary support, but did say: "If they (EPFO) can sustain a higher rate, I will be happy."

The Times of India, 12 December 2005

#### **India and the nuclear deal** (K Subrahmanyam)

The world is witnessing a rethink on nuclear power. The British prime minister has unveiled a policy review of the need for new nuclear plants for Britain. Finland has inaugurated the largest nuclear power plant in Europe. China is going in for nuclear energy on a large scale. The US administration is of the view that energy problem of the

21st century cannot have hydrocarbon solutions. Major industrialised nations are pooling their R&D efforts for International Thermo Nuclear Energy Research (ITER). A fourth-generation nuclear power reactor is under development and it is expected to be safer and more proliferation-proof. The Bush administration's offer of a nuclear deal with India should be seen in the context of US interest in an economic partnership with India to ensure its own competitiveness and innovativeness. The discussion between prime minister Manmohan Singh and President Bush on July 18 essentially focused on civil nuclear energy and creating conditions to enable the international community (all but three nations are members of the NPT) to permit India access to civil nuclear energy.

The Tribune, 12 December 2005

#### **Nuclear talks to be decisive, says Iran**

Tehran, Dec 11: Iran today said a planned meeting with Britain, France and Germany later this month on its disputed nuclear programme will be decisive for the future of diplomacy over the crisis. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hamid Reza Asefi also reiterated that Iran would stick by its demand to conduct ultra-sensitive nuclear fuel work. "This meeting will be very serious. Everything depends on this meeting," Asefi said of the planned talks - provisionally scheduled to take place in Vienna on December 21. "We expect this meeting to pay attention to the facts and Iran's rights. We believe that we must be treated without discrimination. We don't want more than others and we won't settle for anything less," he said. "The topic will be Iran's right to enrichment," he added. EU-Iran talks collapsed in August when Tehran ended its suspension of uranium conversion, a first step towards enrichment.

The Statesman, 12 December 2005

#### **USA offered share in Iran N-plant**

TEHERAN, Dec. 11: Iran's foreign ministry today offered the USA a share in building a new nuclear power plant in an apparent effort to curb US opposition to its controversial atomic program. "America can take part in international bidding for the construction of Iran's nuclear power plant if they observe the basic standards and quality," foreign ministry spokesman Mr Hamid Reza Asefi said in a news conference. Mr Asefi was apparently talking about a 360-megawatt light water nuclear power plant in southwestern Iran, which the head of the country's top atomic organization announced plans to build yesterday. It was unclear how the Americans would react to the Iranian proposal. Iran said today that a planned meeting later this month with Britain, France and Germany on its disputed nuclear programme will be decisive for the future of diplomacy over the crisis. Foreign ministry spokesman Mr Hamid Reza Asefi also reiterated that Iran would be sticking by its demand to conduct ultra-sensitive nuclear fuel work.

The News, 12 December 2005

#### **Iran allows US to bid for building its N-plant**

TEHRAN: Iran on Sunday opened the door for US help in building a nuclear power plant, a move designed to ease American suspicions that Tehran is using its nuclear programme as a cover to build atomic weapons. The offer, which did not seem likely to win acceptance in Washington, was issued as Israel said it had not ruled out a military strike against Iranian nuclear facilities. "America can take part in international bidding for the construction of Iran's nuclear power plant if they observe the basic standards and quality," Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi said in a news conference. Asefi was apparently talking about a 360-megawatt light water nuclear power plant that the head of the country's atomic organization said on Saturday would be constructed in southwestern Iran.

The News, 12 December 2005

#### **EI Baradie's warning**

Although western quarters have accused International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) head Mohammad ElBaradie of being soft on Iran, his latest warning against the use of military force to pressure Tehran into abandoning its nuclear development plans is politically sagacious as well as timely. Mr ElBaradie, who has received the Nobel peace prize for the year, said in an interview in Oslo that he doesn't believe there is a military solution to the issue, calling such a move counterproductive. Despite the rigidity on the issue shown by Iran as well as western European countries singing the American tune, the IAEA chief seems to have unflinching faith in the power of diplomacy and cooperation to yield better results. However, he also told Tehran to rethink its intransigence as the international community is fast losing patience. His position will certainly keep the door open for a negotiated settlement that is agreeable to all parties involved and ensures Tehran's right to develop nuclear energy for civilian purposes.

The News, 12 December 2005

#### **The Iranian nuclear crisis: a welcome reprieve? (Dr Maqsoodul Hasan Nuri)**

Fortunately, the US-EU-IAEA-Iran game of brinkmanship seems to be heading towards a climbdown. In a

compromise of sorts on November 24 in Vienna, the IAEA Board of Governors deferred its plan to refer Iran to the UNSC for punitive measures in connection with an alleged build-up of nuclear weapons. Instead, it decided that the Russian proposal, launched about a fortnight ago, should be given time so that Iran and the IAEA can restart negotiations. The Russian proposal says that Iran is allowed to convert uranium into gas but the enrichment of nuclear fuel and reprocessing of fuel rods will be done in Russia. This seems a welcome reprieve from the nasty war of words that was escalating on both sides. Lately China and Russia, both UNSC and IAEA members, have been persuading Iran to soften its stand while pressuring it to abandon any plans for 'nuclear weapon' production. The IAEA, for its part, claimed that "a great deal of common ground" has been achieved.

Daily Times, 12 December 2005

#### **'Reaction to Iran's remarks unfair'**

TEHRAN/ JERUSALEM: Iran expressed surprise on Sunday about international condemnation of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's remarks regarding the Holocaust and Israel, and accused the West of not tolerating differences of opinion. World leaders have deplored Ahmadinejad's comments, in which he expressed doubt that the Holocaust happened and suggested Israel be moved to Europe. But Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi said reaction to the Iranian president's remarks was unfair. Speaking in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, Ahmadinejad said: "Some European countries insist on saying that Hitler killed millions of innocent Jews in furnaces ... Although we don't accept this claim ..." "If the Europeans are honest they should give some of their provinces in Europe - like in Germany, Austria or other countries - to the Zionists and the Zionists can establish their state in Europe," the official IRNA news agency quoted him as saying.

Yahoo News, 13 December 2005

#### **Indian PM says nuclear facility separation at 'advanced stage'**

The separation of India's civilian and military nuclear plants, key to a July deal with the United States on nuclear technology sales, is at an "advanced stage," Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has said. Singh was quoted Monday in the Indian press as saying that New Delhi has made rapid progress on identifying those plants to be considered civilian and hence subject to inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The exercise of designating nuclear plants as military or civilian is at "a fairly advanced stage," Singh told reporters flying with him Sunday as he headed to Malaysia to attend three days of meetings with Asian leaders. US President George W. Bush agreed to give India, which is not a member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), access to civilian nuclear energy technology under a deal he signed with Singh in July. But India has to first separate its civilian and military nuclear programs, which could mean an effective cap on nuclear weapons production.

The News, 13 December 2005

#### **Iran's tough N-stance dims hope for talks**

VIENNA: Iran's insistence on enriching uranium on its own soil may undermine the basis for new talks on defusing Tehran's nuclear standoff with the West, diplomats and analysts said on Monday. Iran said on Saturday that diplomacy would revive after a four-month freeze, but focus exclusively on "our right" to a full nuclear-fuel production cycle. The West fears that could yield an atomic bomb but Tehran says it would only power civilian reactors. Talks have been tentatively scheduled for Dec 21, but Iranian leaders have dismissed in advance EU-backed proposal for its uranium to be purified in Russia as "a failed idea". Diplomats within the EU3, Britain, France and Germany, said there might be little to discuss given advance agenda-setting by the Islamic republic. "The fact the meeting should take place is a step forward. But what might come of it doesn't look promising based on what Iran has been saying. It doesn't look too hopeful," said one EU3 diplomat.

Hindustan Times, 13 December 2005

#### **Matters of policy: India should not support the US agenda on Iran (AG Noorani)**

There was, in our legend, a king who drank to excess but forbade his subjects by edict from imbibing alcohol. V.C. Trivedi, India's representative to the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee, once famously taunted the nuclear weapon States. He spoke for all the developing countries. Indeed, the report of the Department of Atomic Energy for 1958-59 said: "India is conscious not only of her own rights but of the rights of several other countries which, till recently, were subjected by colonial powers." The essence of non-alignment was independence of decision-making. On the nuclear issue, India chose its own path; but it need not act with the zeal of a convert of nuclear non-proliferation, still less lap up the lies retailed by a discredited American media on Iran's 'breach' of its international obligations.

Hindustan Times, 13 December 2005

#### **Out of fission**

With the Bush visit four months away, India's timetable for nuclear separation is getting short. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's remarks that India's plans to separate its civilian and military nuclear facilities are in an

advanced stage offer the reassurance that the negotiations with the US on implementing the historic nuclear pact are on track. The longer India lingers on its separation plan, the more likely it is the deal would just drift beyond the grasp of the two nations. Having come this far it would be a pity to squander the deal, which promises to lift the decades-old nuclear blockade against India and transform Indo-US relations. President Bush's visit to India in late February or early March next year offers the forcing event to compel bureaucracies in both the capitals to get their nuclear act together.

The Indian Express, 14 December 2005

**N-energy: Tokyo, Seoul ready to help Delhi** (Sunit Arora)

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 13: Japan and South Korea discussed cooperation with India on civilian nuclear energy during two separate bilateral meetings with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today. Both countries agreed to have further discussions on this matter with India. In South Korea's case, it was decided that both countries' respective National Security Advisors will meet soon to take the issue forward. The PM first met his Japanese counterpart - Junichiro Koizumi - who had visited India earlier this year. Briefing the media, Rajiv Sikri, Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs, said the Joint Study Group on economic cooperation will be available in a few months. This would mark the road forward for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Japan. India and Korea have also agreed to begin discussions on working towards an FTA.

The Tribune, 14 December 2005

**Iran tests surface-to-sea missiles**

Teheran, Dec 12: Iran has successfully tested surface-to-sea missiles with a range of 110 km, the state television reported today. The testing of the Silkworm missiles was the most important project of today's military manoeuvres in southern Iran, the television said. It said the Silkworms have a speed of 290 km per second and a range of 110 km. These can detect targets from a distance of 15 km and have the capacity to destroy a warship. The report did not say whether the missiles could carry nuclear warheads. Iran's armed forces began their biggest military manoeuvres on Friday in national waters in the Sea of Oman and Indian Ocean, close to Pakistan. The drills involved submarines, warships, missiles, jet fighters and gunships.

The News, 14 December 2005

**Pope calls for halt to nuclear arms race**

VATICAN CITY: In the first New Year's peace message of his reign, Pope Benedict XVI on Tuesday condemned terrorism and religious fanaticism and called for a halt to military spending and the nuclear arms race. He said countries which incited their citizens to hostility against other nations-a veiled reference to recent anti-Israeli diatribe by Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad-bore a "heavy burden of responsibility." "In regions particularly at risk they jeopardize the delicate balance achieved at the cost of patient negotiations and thus help make the future of humanity more uncertain and ominous." The message, traditionally released by the Vatican ahead of the Christmas period also makes an impassioned plea for an end to the race for nuclear arms. In his first such message of his reign, the pope said governments who relied on nuclear weapons as a means of guaranteeing their security were being "completely fallacious," adding that in a nuclear war "there will be no victors, only victims."

The Nation, 14 December 2005

**Iran-India disenchantment** (S.M. Hali)

Iran's disenchantment with India continues to grow following India's betrayal of Iran at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governor's vote on September 24, 2005. India's stabbing Iran in the back at Vienna has been the subject of prolonged media debate. The disillusionment has taken more serious proportions. Last week, Iran's ambassador to India S.Z. Yaghoubi's request to visit Indian Occupied Kashmir was turned down by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, which said that he could go only if he agreed to meet leaders of the government's choice. An exchange of communications between the Iranian embassy and the foreign office led to the ambassador withdrawing his request as he was reportedly unhappy with the government's attitude towards the visit.

Dawn, 14 December 2005

**US, Iran reject IAEA proposal: Security guarantees**

WASHINGTON, Dec 13: The United States and Iran poured cold water on Monday on a call by the head of the UN nuclear watchdog to provide Tehran with US security assurances if the former forswears development of nuclear weapons. Deputy State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said Washington backed efforts by EU members Britain, France and Germany to wean Iran off its suspected nuclear ambitions with economic and other incentives. Mr Ereli told reporters that all dealings with Teheran should focus on 'a consistent and established pattern of Iranian misbehavior and Iranian violation of its commitments and Iranian deception. "And before anybody asks the United States to do something, it's up to Iran to answer the questions, act like a responsible

member of the international community, and stop violating its agreements with the EU-3 and others." Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), urged the Americans on Monday to put US security assurances on the table with Iran like they have done in similar talks with North Korea.

The News, 15 December 2005

**Pakistan renews support for Iran-EU N-talks** (Mariana Baabar)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has assured Iran of its full support and reiterated that it would continue to advocate the legitimate rights that Tehran enjoyed as a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Islamabad has also told Tehran that it would continue to fully support the Iran-European Union (EU) dialogue, hoping for its early resumption so that Iran's nuclear issue could be settled within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Pakistan's assurance to its neighbour came in the beginning of a two-day visit of Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki to Pakistan. During his first visit to Pakistan since assuming office in August this year, Mottaki is accompanied by a five-member delegation, including member of parliament Heshmatullah Fallahpishe and senior officials of the Iranian Foreign Ministry. Mottaki paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and held a two-hour meeting with Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmud Kasuri at the Foreign Office. The talks were held in a warm and cordial atmosphere where a host of issues were deliberated. Kasuri clearly told Mottaki that Pakistan opposed the use of force against Iran on the nuclear issue.

The Korean Herald, 15 December 2005

**Editorial: Clouds over nuclear talks**

Clouds are gathering fast over the six-party talks aimed at resolving the North Korean nuclear problem. What's more worrisome this time is that clouds are forming not only over the usual chief antagonists - Washington and Pyongyang - but also between Seoul and Washington. The prospects for an early resumption of the talks, which went into a recess last month, have already dimmed to the point where South Korean officials publicly admit their efforts to call an informal meeting of the talks' chief delegates on Jeju Island this month have gone nowhere. Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon, now in Kuala Lumpur for the East Asia Summit, said he believes the six-party talks will resume next month, but the situation is such that it looks like little more than a wishful thinking. Seoul officials participating in the 17th round of the minister-level talks with North Korea on the same island may well try to persuade the northern side to return to the negotiating table with the other five countries. But with the nuclear issues outside the official agenda, the North is unlikely to heed the calls of the South.

Hindustan Times, 16 December 2005

**Indo-US trade council moves to hasten N-deal** (S. Rajagopalan)

Washington: As the Indo-US nuclear pact debate drags on in US Congress, an influential business lobby has stepped in to speed up matters. The US-India Business Council, an offshoot of the US Chamber of Commerce, has selected Patton Boggs, a well-known law firm, to provide it lobbying support on Capitol Hill. The Chamber is also gearing up to institute a coalition exclusively for the purpose. "Patton Boggs' objective will be to help ensure enactment of legislation needed to permit the US to pursue full-scale civilian nuclear cooperation with India, recognising that India is a secular and stable democracy that has earned trust on non-proliferation," the USIBC said on Wednesday. Approval of the nuke deal by the US Congress will involve amending the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, which at present forbids transfer of civilian nuclear technology to India.

The Tribune, 16 December 2005

**Indo-US N-deal reciprocal: PM**

New Delhi, Dec 15: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said today that the Indo-US nuclear deal was proceeding on the basis of "strict reciprocity" and India was at liberty not to meet its commitments if the US Administration did not fulfil its obligations. Responding to supplementaries during question hour in the Rajya Sabha, the Prime Minister said the decision to put certain facilities and reactors under international inspection was India's and there was no question of doing it under pressure. On the members' apprehension that the US Administration has been asking for more concessions since the nuclear deal was reached, the Prime Minister said the binding constraint for the two countries was the July 18 agreement. Observing that the approval by the US Congress for the July 18 agreement was the concern of the US Administration, the Prime Minister said he expected the US Administration to use its full weight to get the necessary approval of the Congress.

The Statesman, 16 December 2005

**Bush calls 'evil' Iran a real threat**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15: US President George W Bush has called Iran "a real threat," repeating his charge from 2002 that it is part of an "axis of evil," and urged Teheran to prove it does not seek nuclear weapons. Washington accuses the Islamic republic of using a civilian nuclear program to hide a quest for atomic weapons, and has charged that Iran is a destabilising force in Iraq. Teheran has denied that it seeks nuclear arms. "I called it (Iran)

part of the 'axis of evil' for a reason," Mr Bush said in an interview with Fox News. "It's a real threat." The US president first lumped Iran with North Korea and Saddam Hussein's Iraq in an "axis of evil" during his 2002 State of the Union speech to the US Congress. His comments yesterday came amid an escalating war of words with Teheran, whose hardline President Mr Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has stoked outrage in the West by calling Israel a "tumour" in the Middle East and saying that the Holocaust is a myth.

The News, 16 December 2005

#### **N Korea dodges nuclear talks**

JEJU: South Korea criticised North Korea at high-level talks on Thursday for failing to honour inter-Korean accords while the North dodged calls to return to nuclear disarmament dialogue, officials said. During sometimes tense exchanges, South Korea repeatedly urged North Korea to return to six-nation disarmament talks but its delegates refused to respond. North Korea insisted that it would talk only with the US about the nuclear standoff and blamed Washington for the stalemate, said Kim Chun-Sig, spokesman for South Korea's delegation. The North said on Sunday that stalled six-party talks last held in November would be suspended indefinitely because Washington had imposed economic sanctions on it over allegations of illicit financial dealings, including counterfeiting and money laundering. "North Korea says there has been no progress at six-party talks due to Washington's hostile policy," said Kim. "The North believes it should solve the nuclear issue with the United States."

Hindustan Times, 15 December 2005

#### **Many in India, US, S Korea favour building of nuke plants**

New York: While a large number of people around the world support the continued use of existing nuclear reactors and are opposed to new ones, many in India, United States and South Korea favour building of new plants, according to a survey. However, the percentage of Indians supporting construction of new power plants was the lowest among the three countries, the survey conducted by Globescan for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) showed. While 33 per cent Indians favour building new plants, 23 per cent would like the existing ones to continue and are against building new ones. Another 22 per cent would like to shut down all nuclear-based power plants immediately. The maximum support for building new nuclear power plants is in South Korea where nearly 52 per cent would like to see new plants come up with only 34 per cent opposition building new ones and 13 per cent want all plants to be closed down.

The Indian Express, 17 December 2005

#### **Korean talks falter on nukes** (Jon Herskovitz)

SOGWIPO, Dec16: South Korea failed to persuade the North to return to the multilateral talks on ending its nuclear programmes but the two sides agreed today on railway links, family reunions and Red Cross meetings. In a joint statement issued at the end of the first senior-level meeting between the two, Seoul and Pyongyang reiterated existing positions on the nuclear crisis. "Both sides agreed to actively cooperate on a peaceful resolution to the nuclear issue," it said. But it did not mention when North Korea would head back to the table to continue negotiating a deal to scrap its nuclear weapons programmes in exchange for aid, security assurances and diplomatic recognition. South Korean officials said they had wanted to try to prod North Korea back to the six-party talks at the meeting in Cheju, South Korea, that started on Tuesday. But at the ministerial meeting, North Korea accused the US of blocking a return to the nuclear talks by adopting a hostile policy toward it, a South Korean Unification Ministry official said.

The Hindu, 17 December 2005

#### **Keep fast breeder reactor out of IAEA inspections: U.S. expert** (Siddharth Varadarajan)

NEW DELHI: On the eve of crucial negotiations with the U.S. on the separation of India's civilian and military nuclear facilities, a well-known American analyst has strongly defended the Indian atomic establishment's desire to keep indigenous programmes such as like the fast breeder reactor (FBR) outside the purview of international safeguards and inspections. In an interview to The Hindu on Friday, Selig S. Harrison, director of the Washington-based Center for International Policy's Asia programme, said Indian negotiators had to guard against hardline "American nationalists" in the Bush administration who are reluctant to accept India's nuclear status. Among them are Robert Joseph, Under-Secretary of State for Arms Control, whose "abhorrent" testimony at a Senate hearing last month on India accepting 'in-perpetuity' safeguards for all its civilian facilities, Mr. Harrison says, "made my hair stand on end".

The Hindu, 17 December 2005

#### **Iran developing longer-range missiles, says report**

Berlin, Dec. 17 (AP): Iran is developing longer-range missiles with technology from North Korea and Russia, a newspaper reported Friday, citing information from Germany's foreign intelligence service. According to the report in the Bild daily, Iran has bought materials for 18 missiles from North Korea and is using technology from Russian

submarine-launched missiles to extend their range to 3,500 km. "Germany and other parts of Europe could be directly affected by the Iranian missile programme in the medium to long-term," the newspaper quoted from what it said was a new report from Germany's Federal Intelligence Service. A spokesman for the spy agency declined to comment.

The Tribune, 17 December 2005

#### **Unfounded criticism**

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has scotched fears about the India-US nuclear deal signed in July last in his intervention in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday. There are sections of public opinion, even among those who support the UPA government, which believe that there are some hidden clauses in the agreement. The import of his statement is that what guides India's relations with the US on the nuclear issue is the written agreement he and President George W. Bush signed on July 18. In other words, everything is in the public domain. It also means that the fears that the US has obtained from India more than it has given to India are unfounded. The agreement will come into force only if the US Congress passes it and in case the Bush administration fails to accomplish this task, India can opt out of its obligations.

The News, 17 December 2005

#### **North Korea agrees to implement N-accord**

JEJU: North Korea pledged on Friday to implement an agreement reached in September on ending its nuclear weapons drive but made no promise to return to six-nation disarmament talks. The Stalinist country said it would cooperate actively to end the nuclear standoff peacefully, according to a joint statement at the end of three days of high-level talks between the two Koreas. "Sharing the view that the (September) agreement must be implemented as soon as possible for the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, South and North Korea agreed to cooperate actively for the peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue," it said. But North Korea stubbornly refused to respond to repeated requests from South Korea to agree to the early resumption of disarmament talks grouping the two Koreas, China, the US, Japan and Russia.

Dawn, 17 December 2005

#### **Blast near Russian N-plant; no leak**

ST PETERSBURG, Dec 16: A small explosion near a Russian nuclear power station killed a metal worker and injured two others, officials said on Friday, but there was no radiation leak or threat to people living nearby. The explosion occurred on Thursday at a metals smelter near the Leningrad Atomic Power Station, whose second reactor has been under repair since July. A spokesman for the local administration in the town of Sosnovy Bor said one worker had died from burns, while one of the other two men injured was in a serious condition. The smelter was not connected to the nuclear plant. "The radiation background at the Leningrad station and surrounding territory is at a level normal for nuclear reactor use, and does not exceed natural background radiation levels," said the Russian Atomic Energy Agency (Rosatom).

Daily Times, 17 December 2005

#### **Russia's strategic missile forces deploy fifth Topol-M ICBM missile**

MOSCOW: Russia's Strategic Missile Forces deployed a fifth Topol-M missile this month, Commander Nikolai Solovtsov said Friday, according to Russian news agencies. Military officials intend to make the Topol-M - an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of hitting targets more than 10,000 kilometres (6,000 miles) away - the core of Russia's modernised missile arsenal, along with a sea-based missile system, the Bulava, which is still being tested. In recent years, the Strategic Missile Forces have acquired a handful of new Topol-M missiles - a rate many experts consider insufficient to replace the aging missile arsenals - and they are struggling to extend the service life of Soviet-built missiles. Solovtsov told reporters at the Vlasikha garrison outside Moscow that the first mobile Topol-M system would be deployed next year in the Ivanovo region of central Russia, the Interfax news agency reported.

Daily Times, 17 December 2005

#### **Dutchman jailed for selling N-technology to Pakistan**

ALKMAAR: A Dutch businessman was sentenced to a one-year jail term Friday for overseeing the sale of dual-use nuclear technology to Pakistan. The court convicted Henk Slebos, director of Slebos Research BV, for making four shipments of dual-use equipment to Pakistan between 1999 and 2002. Slebos (62) was also fined \$120,000 and put on probation for two years. Slebos's company sold the equipment to Abdul Qadeer Khan, who has acknowledged secretly passing on nuclear technology to Libya, North Korea and Iran. Stopping "the spread of weapons of mass destruction is of very large national and international concern," said Presiding Judge Reinier van Zutphen, reading the court's ruling. "The court cannot assess how much damage was done by the shipments but that's irrelevant in this case."

Daily Times, 17 December 2005

**Manmohan says no changes to India-US nuclear deal**

NEW DELHI: India said on Thursday it would permit no changes to a landmark nuclear deal with the United States to ensure its passage by the US Congress. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told parliament the landmark deal struck with President George W Bush when he visited Washington in July giving New Delhi access to civilian atomic technology was a "binding commitment." The agreement would extend full US civilian nuclear energy cooperation to New Delhi, denied access to nuclear technology since 1974 when it first tested a nuclear weapon and refused to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. US Congressional critics complain the agreement undermines international nuclear non-proliferation efforts and needs to be stricter. The Indian prime minister was seeking to allay speculation that Washington had been asking for more concessions and that New Delhi might give in to gain US civilian nuclear cooperation.

The New Nation, 16 December 2005

**Editorial: Will the deal materialise?** (Samuel J Fernandes)

As the US starts outlining its perspective on the nature and scope of Indo-US nuclear engagement, strategic analysts in India interpret it as the beginning of an effort to suck India irreversibly into the non-proliferation architecture with a less relaxed system of exclusion than India would have expected. For many in India, the hopes engendered by the July 18 agreement that the US might usher India into the exclusive club as a de facto if not de jure nuclear power in the emerging global order with all possible privileges legally accruing to it as a nuclear weapon state, have started receding in the wake of the recent statements by US government officials. Close on the heels of Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Nicholas Burns' October visit to New Delhi, the US state department spokesman came out with a statement that the India must begin separation of nuclear facilities before the administration would present any draft for consideration by the US legislatures.

Hindustan Times, 16 December 2005

**Nuke energy critical: Panel**

Bhopal, December 15: A panel of experts set up by the PM to prepare the Integrated Energy Policy has said nuclear energy is critical for India's long-term energy security. The draft policy was unveiled on Thursday by Dr Kirit Parikh, Planning Commission member and head of the panel. "No dramatic finds of oil and gas are expected," he said. "If we want to continue to grow at eight or 10 per cent, we need energy security. Nuclear power has the potential to supply thousands of megawatts of power." "For the next 20-25 years, we won't require it but after that we cannot forego the option," he said.

The Telegraph, 18 December 2005

**Delhi nukes US show-stealer** (K.P. Nayar)

Washington, Dec. 17: With the Indo-US nuclear agreement of July in trouble, India has dramatically turned tables on the non-proliferation fundamentalists in Washington, sending an unambiguous message that where its interests are involved, the country can deal with them on New Delhi's terms and get the better of them in their stronghold. Even as foreign secretary Shyam Saran is packing his bags for Washington for a crucial meeting here on Wednesday with US under-secretary of state for political affairs Nicholas Burns, the Indian embassy in Washington has forced the non-proliferation lobby to back off from a confrontation with New Delhi on the nuclear deal, which could have soured Saran's visit. The confrontation would have centred around India's CIRUS nuclear reactor: it is a research reactor, which was supplied to India by Canada in 1954 and thus accounts for the first three letters of CIRUS, standing for Canada-India reactor. The Americans supplied heavy water for the reactor, adding the last two letters of the CIRUS name.

Daily Times, 18 December 2005

**Civilian nuclear programme: India hopeful of international cooperation**

NEW DELHI: Fuel-hungry India said on Saturday it was hopeful it will soon be able to get international help to develop its civilian nuclear energy capabilities. "I am optimistic through constructive dialogue with the international community, we will soon be part of the mainstream with full civilian nuclear cooperation," said Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. In July India signed a landmark deal with the US that would give it access to atomic technology, to which it has been denied since first testing a nuclear weapon in 1974 and refusing to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. But the pact, which must be approved by the US Congress, is opposed by many US lawmakers as well as nuclear experts who say it undermines anti-nuclear proliferation efforts. Singh's comments came before a second meeting of the Nuclear Working Group headed by Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran and US Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns, which is thrashing out details of the accord.

The News, 18 December 2005

**EU threatens Iran with sanctions**

BRUSSELS: Iran could face sanctions if it keeps provoking Israel and the West, European leaders warned on Saturday even as the Tehran regime's interior minister said the Iranian president's remarks had been "misunderstood." Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad aggravated tensions with the West this week by calling the Holocaust a "myth," a statement that came two months after he called for Israel to be "wiped off the map". European leaders said Ahmadinejad's remarks were the latest "provocative political moves" from Tehran since May. "These comments are wholly unacceptable and have no place in civilised political debate," the leaders said in a summit statement on Saturday. EU leaders warned Tehran they would review diplomatic options for possible sanctions against Iran. The condemnation came as Iran prepares to resume talks on Wednesday with European envoys over its nuclear programme, which the EU and United States fear is intended to build atomic weapons.

The News, 18 December 2005

#### **GCC warns against regional nuclear arms race**

ABU DHABI: Gulf Arab leaders will call on Iran to shun nuclear weapons to avoid more instability in the energy-rich region already affected by volatility in Iraq, a senior official said on Saturday. The six-nation, pro-US Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), whose leaders meet on Sunday, will also urge Syria to cooperate with a UN probe into the killing of a former Lebanese prime minister, GCC Secretary-General Abdul Rahman al-Attiya said. "We don't want a nuclear arms race in this region. We are very worried and concerned about this," he told reporters, referring to Iran's nuclear programme as well as Israel's nuclear facilities. "I think it is time for an agreement to have the Gulf region free of nuclear weapons. ... This will no doubt pave the way to urge Israel to submit its (nuclear) facilities (to inspection)," he told reporters in Abu Dhabi after Gulf foreign ministers met to draft the summit's agenda.

The News, 18 December 2005

#### **Iran law threatens to block nuclear inspections**

TEHRAN: Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad this week signed off on legislation that could limit UN inspections into Iran's nuclear sites if its case is taken to the UNSC, the semi-official Fars agency reported on Saturday. The new law obliges the government to "stop voluntary and non-legally binding measures and implement its scientific, research and executive programmes" if the Iranian case is taken up in the Security Council. It does not refer to specific forms of retaliation, but counter-measures could include refusing to adhere to the additional protocol of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which gives increased inspection powers to the International Atomic Energy Agency. The law was signed by Ahmadinejad on December 13 and came into effect the same day. Ahmadinejad has ordered the head of Iran's atomic energy organisation Gholam Reza Aghazadeh to be prepared to apply the law, the Fars news agency said.

The News, 18 December 2005

#### **Iran N-issue: Russia calls for transparency**

TEHRAN: Russia is calling on Iran to act with full transparency and regain the confidence of the international community over its nuclear programme; Moscow's ambassador to Tehran was quoted as saying Saturday. of Iran to focus on clarifying the remaining issues in its nuclear programme and regaining the confidence of the international community in regard to the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities," Alexander Sadovnikov said in a letter to the Tehran Times. He went on to urge Iran to have a "constant cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), based on complete transparency." "Obviously this will take time and requires serious efforts," he said. The letter was written in response to a December 13 report in the paper that quoted the ambassador as saying Moscow would support Iran's nuclear fuel cycle programme.

The Korean Herald, 18 December 2005

#### **Koreas reaffirm implementation of nuke accord (Annie I. Bang)**

JEJU: South and North Korea yesterday reaffirmed their commitment to implement an international accord in which the North agreed to abandon all nuclear weapons programs at the end of their ministerial talks on Jeju Island. Delegates from the two countries adopted a nine-point statement after the four-day talks. "The South and North agreed to make efforts to resolve the nuclear issue in a peaceful manner for the benefit of South-North joint security, and shared understanding to carry out the Joint Statement of the fourth round of six-party talks soon," a joint press statement said. Stressing the implementation of the Sept. 19 Joint Statement as the "most valuable" way for the South and North to jointly benefit, Chung Dong-young, head of the South Korean delegation, had urged the North to return to the nuclear disarmament talks as soon as possible. The North delegation did not give any promise to Chung's proposal during the talks.

Daily Yomiuri, 18 December 2005

#### **N. Korea talks may resume soon**

Foreign Minister Taro Aso has expressed his desire to hold a new round of talks with North Korea before the end

of the year, saying that the government is doing its best to arrange such a meeting with Pyongyang. Aso made the remark at a press conference after a Cabinet meeting, saying that North Korea had been more forthcoming in response to the proposal than it had been in the past. In the previous round of bilateral talks held in Beijing in November, Japan had proposed that the two sides schedule parallel talks on security issues, the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea, and the normalization of diplomatic relations. Attention is now focused on Pyongyang's response. "Negotiations with North Korea will be difficult because our proposal includes some issues North Korea wants to talk about, and some it doesn't," Aso said.

The Asian Age, 19 December 2005

**Does the U.S. deal really serve India?** (Bharat Karnad)

Any foreign or defence policy wrinkle is justified in terms of its serving the national interest. This is par for the course. But the treating of "national interest" as an overly fungible concept to legitimise even lame and myopic initiatives in the nuclear policy field with plainly injurious consequences to the country, is a seminal development in the annals of Indian foreign and military policy-making and an achievement of the economistic-minded Manmohan Singh-led regime that the Congress Party may find hard to live down. After all, for 57 years of the nuclear programme, successive Indian governments cutting across party lines have been zealous in protecting this high-technology enclave from the predatory attentions of the established nuclear weapons states, and thereby in safeguarding the country's weapons capability and potential size and quality of its nuclear arsenal. It is the nuclear security of the nation that is now endangered.

The Tribune, 19 December 2005

**Logic of separation** (K. Subrahmanyam)

It is to India's advantage to go ahead with N-deal. The July 18, 2005, joint statement of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George Bush was about exceptionalising from the NPT technology denial regime, a non-signatory of the treaty, and not about accommodating India as a nuclear weapon state in the NPT. The United States by itself cannot amend the treaty and make India a nuclear weapon state with equal status with five states recognised as such under Article 1 of the NPT. The exceptionalisation is being done to enable India to have access to civilian nuclear power within the overall framework of the nonproliferation regime. Once this basic fact is understood it would follow that all rights and obligations equal to those of nuclear weapon states envisaged to be conferred on India is still subject to this overall caveat. India will be accepted as a nuclear weapon state outside the treaty and not as a weapon state within the treaty. Therefore, there will be differences between the rights of weapon states and India. No amount of verbal acrobatics can do away with this basic fact of life as of today. It may change some years from now but today this is the reality.

Daily Times, 19 December 2005

**Turner calls for eliminating N-arms from South Asia** (Umer Farooq)

ISLAMABAD: Media tycoon and United Nations Foundation Chairman Ted Turner has said the governments of Pakistan and India should work for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons from South Asia, as what he said the nuke-free region would be a much safer place. "I have mentioned this issue in my meetings with Indian officials and now in Pakistan I will raise the issue of nuclear disarmament in my meetings with the government officials on Monday" said Ted Turner while speaking at a press conference here on Sunday. Members of the UN Foundation accompanied him. A five-member delegation of the foundation, comprising Dr Harlem Brundtland, the former Prime Minister of Norway, Senator Timothy E Wirth, the foundation president, Nafisa Sadik and Mahmmod Younus, is visiting Pakistan in order to get a first hand understanding of the situation in the earthquake-affected areas.

The News, 19 December 2005

**Taking forward the Indo-US nuclear deal** (Jyoti Malhotra)

America is back on the Indian radar this week, despite the north Indian obsession with Pakistan which allows public opinion to stray westward from time to time. And so, Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran is winding his way to Washington DC for talks with his counterpart, Nicholas Burns - and a "drop in" on the most powerful woman in the world, as well as certainly amongst the most interesting, Condoleezza Rice - for talks on how to take the Indo-US nuclear deal forward. The world would do well to keep a close eye on the peripatetic Saran. He was in Nepal last week, during which time he said hello to King Gyanendra and to the major Nepalese political figures - even as the Nepalese army chief was at the exact same time shaking hands with Pakistan's very influential generals in Islamabad. He goes forth from his office in South Block to meet Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in Parliament almost every other day these days, a two-km stretch that is definitely the most influential piece of real estate in this country. And now he's going to the US.

The Indian Express, 19 December 2005

**As Saran heads for US, view from Delhi: key to headway lies in basics** (C Raja Mohan)

NEW DELHI, Dec 18: India believes that a reaffirmation of political objectives that shaped the Indo-US nuclear pact last July will facilitate a mutual understanding on its early implementation. As Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran heads to Washington this week for a critical round of nuclear talks, India hopes a clarification of the fundamentals will help resolve the many complex issues relating to nuclear separation and international safeguards. Motivated criticism in the United States and ill-informed fear in India since the pact was signed five months ago, has muddied the nuclear debate in both capitals and between them. The Indo-US nuclear pact, signed by President George W Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on July 18, was initiated on the political premise in Washington that a strong India is in the interest of the United States. And central to the pact is the explicit American acknowledgement of the existence of a military nuclear programme in India.

The Telegraph, 19 December 2005

#### **Gifting The Future Away** (Bharat Bhushan)

The signals from the US are that it wants India's nuclear plants and facilities to fall neatly into one of the two categories - civilian or military. The argument is that only a clear categorization would allow the US to fend off criticism that by contributing to India's civilian nuclear programme, it was aiding its military programme. The US has also decided, through a joint statement issued in Washington on July 18 that India would be treated in a special category - distinct from the members of the nuclear club as well as those who have nuclear weapons, have not signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, but do not merit nuclear technology co-operation. This is either because of their record of proliferation (Pakistan) or because they do not publicly claim that they have nuclear weapons (Israel).

The News, 19 December 2005

#### **Arab leaders worried about Iran's nuclear ambitions**

ABU DHABI: US-allied Gulf Arab leaders, alarmed at neighbouring Iran's nuclear ambitions, examined proposals for a nuclear-free zone in the world's top oil-producing region during summit talks on Sunday. Delegates said Syria's standoff with the United Nations over the killing of former Lebanese premier Rafik al-Hariri was also discussed during the meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which groups Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman and Qatar. The six leaders, who will resume talks on Monday (today) before issuing a final communiqué, hope to defuse mounting tension in a region already affected by instability in Iraq and militant attacks by supporters of Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network. The United Arab Emirates called for more action and less talk. "What has been accomplished so far does not meet our ambitions and the expectations of our people, who are demanding that we be more resolute and less argumentative," said UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed al-Nahayan in his opening remarks.

The News, 19 December 2005

#### **'Tehran not to accept exorbitant demands in N-talks'**

TEHRAN: Iran warned Britain, France and Germany Sunday not to make "exorbitant demands" during negotiations scheduled this week on the Islamic republic's disputed nuclear programme. "The success of the next meeting depends on the attitude of the Europeans and on the fact that they do not make exorbitant demands," foreign ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Aesfi told reporters. The discussions in Vienna on December 21 should, he said, "focus on the way of recognising Iran's right to conduct enrichment of uranium (and) if the Europeans recognise Iran's rights there will be no worries." But uranium enrichment is something the so-called EU-3 do not want to see Iran carry out. Although Iran insists it only wants to make reactor fuel and generate electricity, the enrichment process can be extended to make the core of a nuclear weapon. The Vienna meeting is aimed at examining the possibility for long-term negotiations-which broke down in August-to resume.

The News, 19 December 2005

#### **US, Europe step up planning to take action against Iran**

WASHINGTON: Faced with an increasingly hard line from Iran, the United States and Europe have stepped up planning for tougher diplomatic action should Tehran follow through on threats to resume critical nuclear activities, according to US officials and European diplomats. The US and its European allies are seeking agreement among themselves on precisely when Iran's nuclear programme will have progressed to the point that the matter should be taken to the UN Security Council and what kinds of sanctions might be pursued there, the officials and diplomats said. Tehran insists it only aims to produce civilian nuclear energy. Allies say the programme is to produce weapons. Russia, which is building Iran's nuclear power plant at Bushehr in southern Iran, remains a serious impediment. The United States fears that weapons grade plutonium could be extracted from the Bushehr reactor once it goes on line.

Dawn, 19 December 2005

#### **GCC leaders discuss N-free zone**

ABU DHABI, Dec 18: US-allied Gulf leaders examined proposals for a nuclear-free zone in the world's top oil-

producing region during summit talks on Sunday. Delegates said Syria's standoff with the United Nations over the killing of former Lebanese premier Rafik al-Hariri was also discussed during the meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which groups Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman and Qatar. The six leaders, who will resume talks on Monday before issuing a final communique, hope to defuse mounting tension in a region already affected by instability in Iraq and militant attacks by supporters of Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda network. "The international community is calling for an end to the spread of weapons of mass destruction. This has become a global demand," Youssef bin Alwai bin Abdullah, the Omani minister responsible for foreign affairs, told reporters shortly before the talks ended for the day.

Daily Times, 19 December 2005

#### **N Korea calls on US to dismantle N-arsenals**

SEOUL: North Korea said on Sunday it was working towards a nuclear-free world and called on the United States and other nations to dismantle their nuclear arsenals. "(North Korea) will as ever make every possible effort to make the world free from nuclear weapons," a North Korean delegate said in a UN General Assembly session on Dec 8, according to the North's state-run Korean Central News Agency. The unidentified North Korean delegate expressed concern that Washington and its allies were insisting only on non-proliferation and not on eliminating existing nuclear arsenals, KCNA said. "For non-proliferation it is necessary to remove its root cause," KCNA quoted the delegate as saying. "It is high time for all the nuclear states to take effective steps for complete dismantlement of nuclear weapons." The delegate also called for an international agreement to prevent nuclear weapons from being used against non-nuclear states, KCNA said.

The Times of India, 18 December 2005

#### **'No change in Iran's nuclear stance'**

TEHRAN: There would be no change in Iran's nuclear stance despite renewed threats to refer its case to the UN Security Council, chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani said here on Sunday. "We will not allow any pre-conditions in the nuclear negotiations with the European Union next Wednesday," state news agency IRNA quoted Larijani as saying. The official added that the talks would be held at experts' level in Vienna and "would only be continued if necessary". Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Saturday ordered the implementation of a recently approved law obliging the government to suspend the additional protocol of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and stop IAEA inspections if the Iranian nuclear case is referred to the Security Council. However, foreign ministry spokesman Hamid-Reza Assefi Sunday played down the presidential order and said whatever nuclear policy would be implemented in Iran primarily depended on the outcome of Wednesday's talks.

The Times of India, 18 December 2005

#### **'Iran can't be trusted with nuke technology'**

WASHINGTON: Iran has shown through the actions of its hardline leadership that it cannot be trusted with technology that could lead to a nuclear weapon, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said on Sunday. Questioned about the international response after Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said Israel should be "wiped off the map" and that the Holocaust was a "myth", Rice told the Fox News channel that she expected Iran's nuclear programme to be referred to the UN Security Council but would not set a deadline for action. "The more we hear from this Iranian government, the more that people recognize and acknowledge publicly that this is a government that shouldn't expect the international community to trust them with technologies that might lead to a nuclear weapon," she said. Questioned about the prospect of international sanctions, Rice told the Fox News channel: "I'm convinced that this will end up in the Security Council if Iran doesn't change course, and I see no evidence that Iran will change course."

The Hindu, 20 December 2005

#### **Stage set for nuclear separation talks** (Siddharth Varadarajan)

New Delhi: With the expert group headed by Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran now en route to Washington, India is set to hold the most detailed round of discussions to date with the U.S. on the planned separation of its civilian and military nuclear facilities. However, senior officials familiar with the issue told The Hindu on Monday that the two sides were not expected to clinch a deal this time, and that additional rounds of technical talks would be necessary before mutually acceptable specific reciprocal commitments could finally be worked out. According to official sources, the Department of Atomic Energy had prepared a number of options and scenarios for the proposed separation, involving the inclusion and exclusion of different facilities.

The Hindu, 20 December 2005

#### **Protests against proposed uranium mine** (Siddharth Narrain)

The villagers in Gamharia Block of Jharkhand's Saraikela-Kharsawan district are up in arms over plans to mine uranium at Mohuldih. They have vehemently opposed to the public hearing to be conducted by the Jharkhand Pollution Control Board (PCB) and the Uranium Corporation of India Limited this week on the proposed mines. In

August, an attempt by the PCB and the UCIL to hold a public hearing was thwarted by the residents of more than a dozen villages around Mohuldih. The villagers said they neither needed a hearing nor a uranium mine. The hearing was meant to discuss the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) report prepared by UCIL's consultants. The EIA report is riddled with inconsistencies. To begin with, it does not qualify as a full EIA baseline data measurement as it is limited to the summer season. An EIA requires all three seasons to be taken into account.

Khaleej Times, 20 December 2005

#### **'Iran laying groundwork for enrichment'**

VIENNA: On the eve of crucial nuclear talks with Iran, diplomats say Teheran is already laying the groundwork for uranium enrichment, a process considered the "breakout capacity" for making atom bombs. "The Iranian National Security Council is at this very time deliberating exactly when enrichment is to be resumed," a diplomat close to intelligence sources told AFP. The diplomat asked not to be named due to the sensitivity of the information. The diplomat as well as the Iranian resistance says Iran has not stopped making parts for centrifuges, which, arranged in cascades, spin uranium gas to distill out uranium highly enriched with the U-235 isotope. Iran and the European Union are to meet in Vienna tomorrow to talk about re-starting formal negotiations on guaranteeing Iran will not make nuclear weapons.

Dawn, 20 December 2005

#### **IAEA probes S. Korea's work on plutonium**

VIENNA, Dec 19: The UN atomic agency has launched an investigation into whether South Korea plans to produce weapons-grade plutonium at a facility it is building, a diplomat said on Monday. The pilot facility South Korea is building uses 'pyrometallurgical processing' to make spent fuel into a compact and less radioactive form so that it can be stored, said the diplomat, who asked not to be named due to the sensitivity of the issue. The advanced spent fuel conditioning process demonstration facility (ACPF) at the Korea Atomic Energy Research institute in Daejeon has been under construction since 2004 and is not expected to come online until 2007, the diplomat said. "What's critical in all this is to make sure that when reducing spent fuel that the South Koreans don't separate out plutonium," said the diplomat, who is close to the watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Hindustan Times, 19 December 2005

#### **Saran to visit US to discuss India's N-plan**

New Delhi: Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran leaves for the US on Tuesday to discuss a plan to separate the country's civilian and military nuclear facilities in line with a bilateral nuclear cooperation pact. The plan, if found credible by the US administration, will be presented to the US Congress and will prove crucial in facilitating civilian nuclear energy cooperation with Washington. Contrary to fears expressed by vocal non-proliferation activists in the US, the Indian plan proposes to place a large number of civilian nuclear reactors under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, diplomatic sources said. "The list is exhaustive enough to satisfy the Bush administration," said a source.

The Times of India, 19 December 2005

#### **It would amount to playing with fire** (Viny Mishra)

There is little benefit in India persisting with a nuclear programme - whether it is proclaimed to be benign or admittedly malignant. There has never been a 'peaceful' nuclear programme anywhere in the world. If nuclear power is not used to make weapons, at the very least such programmes cause immeasurable ecological damage. Almost half a century after Eisenhower's 'Atoms for Peace' speech, the planet is left with a legacy of nuclear waste that will be radioactive for tens or hundreds of thousands of years. As yet, no safe solution for its disposal exists anywhere in the world, and in this situation, it is unlikely India will come up with a safe disposal system. Considering India's growing cities and villages, it is a matter of time before people start living dangerously close to a nuclear dump or grave.

Hindustan Times, 19 December 2005

#### **Indo-US talks on nuclear issue on Wednesday**

New Delhi: India and the US are expected to spell out the steps taken by them on implementation of Civil Nuclear deal when Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran and his American counterpart Nicholas Burns hold talks in Washington on Wednesday. During the meeting, India is likely to specify its plans for segregating the civil and military nuclear installations, believed to be in advanced stages, as is required under the July 18 joint statement issued after talks between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and US President George W Bush. The Indian side is also expected to seek to know from the US about the steps the Bush administration has taken to lift restrictions on high technology sale, considering the recent assertion by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh that the deal is based on "strict reciprocity".

Deccan Herald, 19 December 2005

**Strategic importance** (G Parthasarathy)

The July 18 Agreement suggests that the US accepts India's nuclear capabilities. Every Prime Minister longs to leave some achievement in foreign policy and national security as a lasting and historic legacy. Jawaharlal Nehru is remembered for his success in pursuing an independent foreign policy. The liberation of Bangladesh was Indira Gandhi's greatest achievement in foreign policy. Atal Behari Vajpayee's greatest contribution was the sagacity shown in resisting foreign pressures following the May 1998 nuclear tests. Dr Manmohan Singh can regard his July 18 Agreement with President Bush as his outstanding contribution to Indian foreign policy, if the Agreement is approved by the United States Congress and existing international sanctions in nuclear and technological co-operation with India are brought to an end.

Boston.com News, 19 December 2005

**Canada urges India to open up nuclear reactor** (Carol Giacomo)

WASHINGTON: Canada urged India on Monday to allow nuclear inspectors access to a Canadian-supplied reactor where experts say the country produces a significant amount of its weapons-grade plutonium. Lack of independent access to the Cirus research reactor, located north of Mumbai (formerly Bombay), is one of the issues slowing implementation of a sweeping nuclear cooperation deal that the United States announced with India on July 18. That deal has come under fire from the U.S. Congress and from non-proliferation experts who say the case of the 40-megawatt reactor raises questions about India's trustworthiness. In a statement, Canada said it has urged U.S. and Indian officials to designate the reactor a civilian facility open to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The Tribune, 21 December 2005

**Nuclear deal and after** (T.P. Sreenivasan)

The think-tanks in Washington are divided right in the middle", said Mr Stephen Cohen, the South Asia specialist at the Brookings Institution. Nothing unusual, I thought to myself. But he proceeded to say: "In Brookings itself, the opinion is divided. So it is in the CSIS, Carnegie and Stimson Centre." Well, that is serious. Think-tanks in the United States ordinarily have coordinated views within themselves as each has a history and an ideology of its own. It is normal to characterise one as conservative and another as liberal. When it comes to non-proliferation, there is even a consensus among them. But on the matter of the India-US nuclear deal, there is no common position even within individual think-tanks. Three of them, the Brookings Institution, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Stimson Center joined together to hear me on "India after the India-US Nuclear Deal". Questioning was not hostile when I outlined the different strands of Indian opinion on the deal.

Hindustan Times, 21 December 2005

**US Congressmen seek to oppose India nuclear deal**

Washington: Two US lawmakers have proposed a resolution expressing congressional disapproval for President George W Bush's "sweeping" nuclear agreement with India, one of the congressmen said. If the resolution passed, it would signal lawmakers' "disapproval" of the July 18 deal, which has generated strong opposition from non-proliferation advocates because it would give India access to previously banned technology. "The administration's move to launch nuclear cooperation with India has grave security implications for South Asia and the entire world," said Democratic Rep Edward Markey of Massachusetts, who introduced the resolution with Republican Rep Fred Upton of Michigan last week. Markey, co-chair of the Bipartisan Task Force on Non-proliferation, is a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, as is Upton.

Daily Times, 21 December 2005

**'India must place civilian N-facilities under safeguards'** (Khalid Hasan)

WASHINGTON: Two nuclear experts have recommended that India place all its civilian nuclear facilities under full international safeguards, in order to obtain congressional satisfaction about its July 2005 nuclear cooperation agreement with the United States. The agreement announced on 18 July by President George Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh regarding the establishment of a US-India "global partnership" will require changes to US non-proliferation laws and policies and could dramatically increase nuclear and nuclear-related commerce with India, David Albright and Susan Basu of the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) argue in a paper issued here this week. According to the analysis, "Part of this agreement is an Indian commitment to separate its civil and military nuclear programmes and put declared civil facilities under international safeguards. Safeguards should apply in perpetuity, with minor, standard exceptions that do not include use in nuclear explosives or weapons.

International Herald Tribune, 21 December 2005

**N. Korea vows to build own light-water reactors** (Choe Sang-Hun)

SEOUL: North Korea said Tuesday that it intended to build light-water nuclear reactors, the type of power plant

that the United States stopped helping to build in the Communist state because of concern that it would use the reactors for weapons development. Accusing Washington of scuttling nuclear disarmament talks, North Korea said it would advance its "peaceful" nuclear energy industry, which U.S. officials say serves as a front for a weapons program. In a long dispatch, the North's official Korean Central News Agency reiterated Tuesday that the country was speeding construction of two graphite-moderated reactors. North Korea can use spent fuel from those reactors to extract weapons-grade plutonium, as it has done with another small graphite-moderated reactor already in operation. But the statement Tuesday was the first time that North Korea has announced its intention of building light-water reactors, or LWRs.

The Korean Herald, 21 December 2005

**N.K. nuclear standoff, back to square one?** (Lee Joo-hee)

With the success of this year's Joint Statement on denuclearization eclipsed by rising hostilities between the United States and North Korea, a turbulent year for the six-party talks is closing with mere flickers of hope for next year. To the disappointment of international watchers, the optimism that hovered over the peninsula in September quickly deteriorated after Washington adopted a harder line against the communist state citing illicit activities and Pyongyang threatened to boost its nuclear deterrent. "This year was definitely a turning point for the nuclear talks, but things do not appear easy for the members to progress to the next step," said Prof. Koh Yu-hwan of Dongguk University. He explained that not only are the North and the United States locking horns, but that coordination between the three allies - South Korea, the United States and Japan - were also faltering. Prospects for the next round of nuclear talks among the two Koreas, China, Japan, Russia and the United States remain foggy because North Korea is threatening to boycott the provisional opening date sometime in January.

The Tribune, 22 December 2005

**India not to compromise on N-facilities** (Ashish Kumar Sen)

Washington: Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran on Wednesday indicated he had come with "certain ideas" on the separation of India's civil and military facilities, a prerequisite for civilian nuclear cooperation with the United States. Prior to his meeting with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Mr Saran told an audience at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, India would be addressing the separation plan "on the basis that this has to be credible, transparent... And, as far as we are concerned, it should not impact adversely our strategic programme." He said predictions that India would offer a minimal separation of its civil nuclear facilities displayed a "lack of comprehension of our objectives in entering into this understanding." "India's energy security will be advanced by obtaining international cooperation on as wide a scale as feasible, without accepting limitations on our strategic programme," he added.

The Tribune, 22 December 2005

**Resolution opposing N-deal moved in US House** (Sridhar Krishnaswami)

Washington, Dec 21: Coinciding with Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran's visit here for talks on the Indo-US civilian nuclear cooperation, two lawmakers have moved a bipartisan resolution in the House of Representatives opposing the deal and claiming that it posed "grave security implications" for South Asia and the entire world. "The current law prohibits the sale of nuclear technology to any country such as India which refuses to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty, refuses to allow full safeguards under the treaty and which develops nuclear weapons and detonates nuclear tests in defiance of the treaty," Democrat Ed Markey, who has co-sponsored the resolution, along with his Republican colleague Fred Upton, said in a statement. "Supplying nuclear fuel to countries that are not party to the NPT derails the delicate balance that has been established among nuclear nations and limits our capacity to insist that other nations continue to follow this important policy," Markey said.

The Indian Express, 22 December 2005

**'N-separation should not affect Indo-US strategic programme'** (Sridhar Krishnaswami)

WASHINGTON, Dec 21: India and the US today began talks here on the bilateral nuclear deal with Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran asserting the separation of civilian and military sites should not affect New Delhi's strategic programme. Saran began his parleys here with a call on US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and followed it up with discussions with under-secretary of state political Affairs Nicholas Burns on the proposed civilian nuclear deal with India. Both Saran and Burns were joined in the discussions by senior officials of the two governments. Details of the meeting are unavailable but the two are said to be discussing various issues, including the civilian nuclear cooperation deal which is said to be in a critical stage of negotiations. The focus of the Saran-Burns meeting is on the civilian nuclear cooperation with the main objective of moving forward the discussions, said a senior administration official.

The Hindu, 22 December 2005

**Saran meets Rice, Burns**

WASHINGTON : India and the United States on Wednesday began crucial talks on the landmark bilateral nuclear

deal, with visiting Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran asserting that the separation of civilian and military sites should not affect New Delhi's strategic programme. Mr. Saran began his parleys here after calling on U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in the morning and followed it up with detailed discussions with Under Secretary of State, Political Affairs, Nicholas Burns, who is Bush administration's pointsman on the proposed civilian nuclear deal with India. Mr. Saran and Mr. Burns were joined in the discussions by senior officials of the two Governments. The focus was on the civilian nuclear cooperation issue, a senior Bush administration official said. Ahead of the talks with Ms. Rice and Mr. Burns, Mr. Saran was at the Carnegie Endowment answering a few questions and used the occasion to outline India's parameters for the talks on the nuclear deal signed on July 18.

Dawn, 22 December 2005

**US think-tank wants India's N-facilities placed under watch** (Chidanand Rajghatta)

WASHINGTON: An American think-tank has produced a wish-list of Indian nuclear facilities which it wants placed under international safeguards. The Institute for Science and International Security's (ISIS) wish-list includes six major fuel fabrication plants, four reprocessing plants, two breeder reactors, four enrichment facilities, nine research reactors, and nine heavy water production plants, all of which the think-tank deems as civil nuclear facilities. The only units recognised as being associated with India's fissile material production for nuclear weapons - and therefore possibly outside the ambit of safeguards - are five facilities in Trombay and the Rare Materials Project outside Mysore. These facilities produce and process plutonium and uranium for possible use in nuclear weapons. Even in this limited list, the ISIS managers have a problem with a couple. The Cirus reactor, which was supplied by Canada and supported by the US under a peaceful nuclear pledge by India, should be safeguarded, the institute said, arguing that "if India declares this reactor as military, it would directly violate its commitment to Canada".

Daily Times, 22 December 2005

**'Pakistan mum on US-India N-ties'** (Khalid Hasan)

WASHINGTON: Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said here on Wednesday that Pakistan had not brought up the July 18, 2005 Indo-US nuclear cooperation agreement under discussion with India at any level. Asked after an address on US-India relations at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, if, given the consternation with which the July 18 agreement between India and the United States was viewed in Pakistan, Islamabad had raised the issue at any level with India, Saran replied, "Never in my knowledge." Asked about the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline, the foreign secretary answered that energy security is a major Indian concern, as it is Pakistan's. He added that India would look at the project from the viewpoint of its economic viability. In his prepared remarks, the Indian official offered a strong defence of the deal which has triggered grave concerns in the nonproliferation community in the United States and Europe, because of the implications the agreement carries for nuclear proliferation in general and the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) in particular.

The Hindu, 22 December 2005

**Russia tests sea-borne nuclear missile** (Vladimir Radyuhin)

MOSCOW: Russia has test fired a new submarine-launched missile that will be the core weapon of the Russian naval nuclear forces in the coming decade. The Russian strategic nuclear submarine Dmitry Donskoy successfully launched the new solid-fuel Bulava ballistic missile in the White Sea on Wednesday morning. The missile hit a target at the Kura firing range on the Kamchatka Peninsula, the Russian Navy's Captain Igor Dygalo said on television. "This was the first underwater launch of a Bulava missile and the second launch conducted as part of a series of tests of the missile," he said. The sea-borne strategic missile system Bulava can carry at least 10 independently targetable nuclear warheads which can hit targets 8,000 km away.

The Indian Express, 22 December 2005

**Iran talks tough on nuke programme with EU** (Mark Heinrich)

VIENNA, Dec 21: Iran reiterated its intention to develop a fully-fledged nuclear programme today as Europe's top three powers revived a dialogue with Tehran over suspicions it is secretly trying to make nuclear bombs. Confrontation rather than compromise has been brewing after declarations from Iran that the Holocaust is "a myth" and Israel should be "wiped out", and a European Union accusation on Tuesday that Tehran has systematically violated human rights at home. Tehran's increasingly vocal hostility towards the Jewish state and commitment to developing sensitive technology that could yield ingredients for nuclear weaponry have stoked Western concern about its atomic programme. Tehran says it aims only to generate more electricity for an energy-hungry economy. But it dodged UN nuclear inspectors for 18 years until 2003 and the West says its cooperation since has fallen short of what is needed to regain diplomatic confidence.

The News, 22 December 2005

**Tehran, EU to revive N-talks next month**

VIENNA: Iranian and European negotiators tentatively agreed on Wednesday to meet for further talks next month,

signaling a possible new start to negotiations meant to reduce fears that Tehran wants to make nuclear arms. European negotiators, emerging from talks with their Iranian counterparts, announced that they would consult with their governments on resuming dialogue with Tehran over its atomic ambitions, including uranium enrichment - a possible pathway to nuclear weapons. Talks on the issue broke off in August after Iran ended a freeze on uranium conversion, a precursor to enrichment. "Both sides set out their positions in an open and frank manner ... (and) agreed to consult with their respective leaderships with a view of holding another round of talks in January," said Stanislas Laboulay, the senior negotiator for France. He said those talks would be aimed at "agreeing on the framework of (further) negotiations.

The News, 22 December 2005

#### **DPRK's reactor plan to hurt N-disarmament**

SEOUL: South Korea's foreign minister on Wednesday urged North Korea to halt its nuclear activities and honour its promise to disarm; denouncing the communist nation for saying it would build up its nuclear facilities. North Korea said on Tuesday it would bolster its "peaceful nuclear activities" to meet energy demands after the US decided to scrap a project to provide it with power-generating reactors amid the latest standoff over the North's weapons programme. South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon criticised the North for the announcement, saying on Wednesday that it runs counter to a September agreement where Pyongyang promised to give up its nuclear ambitions in exchange for aid and security assurances. "In accordance with the spirit of the Sept 19 declaration, North Korea should stop its nuclear activities and sincerely implement steps to scrap nuclear weapons and programmes for the sake of realising a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula," Ban said at a news briefing.

Daily Times, 22 December 2005

#### **South Korea to North: Stop all nuclear activities**

SEOUL: South Korea urged North Korea on Wednesday to cancel its plan to build light water reactors and to resume six-party talks on ending its nuclear weapons drive. "North Korea's claim that it would step up peaceful nuclear activities runs counter to the spirit of an agreement" reached at the six-party talks in September, said Foreign Minister Ban Ki-Moon. In September North Korea agreed in principle to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme in exchange for diplomatic and economic benefits and security guarantees. But at the last session in November it said US sanctions were blocking any progress. It has since said the talks will be suspended indefinitely unless the US lifts the sanctions. On Tuesday the North announced it would build an unspecified number of light-water reactors, saying the United States had reduced a 1994 deal on mothballing nuclear power plants to a "dead document." It also threatened to resume work at two graphite-moderated reactors at Yongbyon, some 90 kilometres (56 miles) north of Pyongyang.

The New York Times, 22 December 2005

#### **Talks With Iran on Nuclear Plans Resume; Little Progress Is Seen** (Richard Bernstein)

BERLIN, Dec. 21: Representatives of three European countries and Iran met Wednesday for the first time since negotiations over Iran's nuclear development program were suspended four months ago in bitterness. After five hours of closed-door meetings in Vienna, the delegates said the two sides had agreed to hold further talks in January. The purpose of what European diplomats were calling "talks about talks" was to see if enough common ground existed for the stalled negotiations to resume next year. "Both sides set out their positions in an open and frank manner," the leader of the French delegation, Stanislav de Laboulaye, told reporters, using a diplomatic code that usually signifies sharp differences. Mr. Laboulaye said the delegates would return to their home countries for consultations "with the aim of agreeing on a framework for negotiations." But it seemed virtually certain that the two sides had failed to agree on resuming substantive talks.

International Herald Tribune, 22 December 2005

#### **U.S. is talking tougher to North Korea** (James Brooke)

SEOUL: With a career steeped in Cold War confrontation and communism's collapse, Alexander Vershbow, the new tough-talking U.S. ambassador to South Korea, has prompted worries that North Korea is seizing on his criticism as an excuse to boycott talks on dismantling its nuclear weapons arsenal. Vershbow is a conservative who spent decades at NATO and in Russia. His arrival in Seoul is viewed by many officials and analysts as a signal that the Bush administration may be reverting to the hawkish approach to the North that it abandoned last summer for negotiation and conciliation. The warmer route has long been favored by the South Korean government. South Korea and the United States have been drifting apart gradually, and Seoul worries that Washington is losing patience with the six-party nuclear talks that Seoul considers the best regional approach to the North.

Boston.com News, 21 December 2005

#### **India defends nuclear deal with US** (Carol Giacomo)

WASHINGTON: India on Wednesday defended a controversial new civilian nuclear cooperation deal with the

United States and rejected demands by American critics that New Delhi accept curbs on its atomic weapons program. Ahead of talks with senior U.S. officials, Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said he was bringing "ideas" to address a centerpoint of the July 18 deal -- India's commitment to place nuclear facilities associated with its civilian energy program under international inspection. But he declined to give details, including how India would treat its Canadian-supplied Cirus nuclear plant, which experts say was intended for peaceful use but was diverted for military purposes. "We are not talking here about a capping of India's strategic (nuclear weapons) program. We are not talking here about a fissile material cutoff" but about how to meet India's burgeoning energy needs, he told the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a think tank.

The Indian Express, 23 December 2005

**On N-deal, Saran is meeting Lugar** (Pranab Dhal Samanta)

New Delhi, Dec 22: Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran may be in Washington for the meeting of the joint working group to implement the July 18 joint statement, but he is using the visit to reach out to other key players involved in the debate on the nuclear deal. In this context, he is meeting today Senator Richard Lugar who chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Given that the Bush administration is planning an India-specific legislation to enable full civilian nuclear cooperation with India, this meeting will be important. It comes at a time when two senators have moved a resolution opposing the nuclear deal. Saran will look to clarify any issues on the deal that Lugar may have encountered during hearings on the agreement. His remarks had generated slight concern in South Block, particularly the point that Washington was not in favour of India negotiating a "voluntary offer" safeguards agreement with the IAEA. New Delhi is of the view that though it's not a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, India is a nuclear weapons state with an exceptional track record on all parameters followed by NPT members. In fact, Saran today made it clear in Washington that the kind of controls India has introduced recently through a legislation to prevent clandestine proliferation puts it in the "NPT Plus" category.

Hindustan Times, 23 December 2005

**India rejects fissile moratorium** (S Rajagopalan)

Washington: While strongly reaffirming its commitment to non-proliferation, India on Wednesday ruled out a moratorium on its fissile material production or acceptance of any new conditions in order to secure approval for the Indo-US nuclear deal. In a clear enunciation of the Indian stance, Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran forcefully rejected some of the new conditions being pushed by the US's powerful non-proliferation lobby. "These suggestions are deal breakers and are intended as such," he remarked. Several leading lights of the NPT lobby were present at Washington's Carnegie Endowment for Peace, where Saran marshaled his arguments to make the point that India's non-proliferation record is such that it belonged to the 'NPT plus' category. On separation of civilian and nuclear facilities, the critical issue that will be the focus of his talks with the US establishment over the next two days, Saran scoffed at predictions that India would offer just a token or minimal separation plan. "This displays a lack of comprehension of our objectives in entering into this understanding," he said adding: "India's energy security will be advanced by obtaining international cooperation on as wide a scale as feasible without accepting limitations on our strategic programme."

The Indian Express, 23 December 2005

**US optimistic on its relationship with India**

Washington, Dec 22: The United States has said that it was optimistic of a "bright" future for its relationship with India and it looked forward to taking the engagement to the next level. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice who met visiting Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran, was "quite optimistic about a bright future for the United States-India relationship and Washington is looking forward to working with India closely to take the relationship to the next steps," State Department Spokesman Sean McCormack said here, quoting her. The Spokesman said that the focus of the nearly 20-minute meeting between the Saran and Rice was the forthcoming visit of US President George W Bush to India. "It was a very general discussion. They talked about the planning for the President's upcoming trip to India. I think that was the focus of their discussions... There's the hope and desire on both sides that the President's trip be a historic trip that really signifies a changed relationship between the US and India that we have been working..On for the past several years," McCormack said.

The Statesman, 23 December 2005

**Arjun Singh allays N-deal fears**

New Delhi, Dec. 22: The human resources development minister, Mr Arjun Singh today reiterated that reciprocity was the bedrock for the civilian nuclear energy understanding between India and United States. During the zero hour, the former foreign minister, Mr Yashwant Sinha had raised concerns that the USA might be "shifting the goalpost" on the 18 July understanding. He quoted the statement of US Congressman, Mr Tom Lantos in the first hearing in August, when he had said in context of India's relation with Iran - "They (Indians) need to be told in plain English either they are with the US or against it." He had claimed that Parliament could not be a "mute spectator" and the country could not place its civilian nuclear installations open to international inspections in

perpetuity in return for a possible bilateral concessions in the field of nuclear energy.

The Times of India, 23 December 2005

**Target: Indian Cirus reactor** (Chidanand Rajghatta)

WASHINGTON: As pressure continues to build on New Delhi to put more and more of its nuclear facilities under international safeguards, US interlocutors are targeting two Indian plants in particular for intrusive monitoring. The first is Cirus, India's oldest nuclear reactor, which is believed to have provided most of the bang for the 1998 tests. The other is among India's most secret facilities -- a uranium enrichment plant outside Mysore that is expected to provide goods for a new generation of weapons and also fuel India's nuclear submarine program. While an Indian delegation led by foreign secretary Shyam Saran began talks with a US team led by Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns on Wednesday, actors in the nuclear field are advancing their agendas to bring India's nuclear program under tighter scrutiny. Canada dusted off a half century old deal with India to demand that New Delhi place the Cirus reactor under IAEA safeguards saying it "would respect the peaceful assurances of our original agreement."

Hindustan Times, 23 December 2005

**No favours to US firms in N-contracts** (S Rajagopalan)

Washington, Dec 22: India has sought to scotch speculation in some quarters that it will favour US companies with nuclear contracts over rival foreign firms in return for US help in clearing the decks for civilian nuclear cooperation. The watchword here will be "level playing field", according to Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran. "Once the market is open, there would be a level playing field for all potential suppliers," he said during a Q&A at the Carnegie Endowment. Asked if US firms will get the first shot on nuclear contracts, he explained that India was talking to all major partners, including Russia and France, besides the US, over plans for "a very major expansion in our nuclear energy programme". Russia, in fact, is already building two 1,000 MW reactors in Koodankulam in Tamil Nadu, he pointed out. Saran estimated that once the current restrictions on technology transfer are removed, the share of nuclear power in India's overall energy supply will move into double digits from the present lowly three per cent.

Daily Times, 23 December 2005

**India considering uranium plant in AP**

NEW DELHI: India is considering a uranium mining and processing plant at Nalgona in Andhra Pradesh, the Rajya Sabha (Upper House) was informed on Thursday. The Times of India quoted Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office Prithviraj Chavan as saying that Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL) has proposed an opencast mine and an underground mine at Lambapur, and two underground mines at Peddagattu in Nalgonda. UCIL has also suggested a uranium processing plant at Seripally village in Deverkonda Mandal at an estimated cost of Rs 5.5b, the Times of India reported. The Ministry of Environment has cleared the site for the installation of the mines.

Hindustan Times, 23 December 2005

**Cross-border terrorism figures in Indo-US talks**

Washington: The issue of cross-border terrorism figured in the talks Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran had with senior Bush administration officials who assured him that it was a "matter very high" on the agenda of US-Pak parleys. "In the spirit of our relationship I have shared with the United States administration the phenomenon of cross border terrorism as well," Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said in response to a question at the end of his two-day visit to Washington. In the course of his visit, Saran met a number of senior administration officials, including Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley and the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns. Saran maintained that officials of both sides have used the latest occasion to discuss a range of issues. "I have brought to their attention that we still do not see a clear pattern in terms of decrease and elimination of cross-border terrorism and infiltration," Saran said. When asked what the response of the Bush administration had been, the Foreign Secretary said, "we have been assured by the US that this is a matter very high on the agenda of US-Pakistan talks.

The New York Times, 23 December 2005

**Foreign Minister Says Japan Sees Military Threat in China Buildup** (Norimitsu Onishi)

TOKYO, Dec. 22: With diplomatic relations between Japan and China already chilled by a succession of events this year, the Japanese foreign minister on Thursday bluntly described China's military buildup as a threat, immediately drawing an angry response from Beijing. In a news conference, the foreign minister, Taro Aso, said China was "a neighboring country with one billion people, nuclear arms, military spending that has shown double-digit growth for the last 17 years, with extremely little transparency." "It's becoming a considerable threat," Mr. Aso said. In Beijing, the Chinese Foreign Ministry's spokesman, Qin Gang, called the comments irresponsible and said China was committed to "a path of peaceful development." "We'd really like to know his real motive this time

in raising groundless claims of a China threat," Mr. Qin said.

The Washington Post, 23 December 2005

**China Vows Peaceful Use Of Its Power** (Edward Cody)

BEIJING, Dec. 22: The Chinese government, responding to doubts in the United States and neighboring Asian countries, made what it called a "solemn promise" Thursday that its growing power will never become a threat to other nations. Instead, the government said in a foreign relations white paper, China's swift economic development over the past 25 years has created a lucrative market of 1.3 billion people for businesses around the world and a source of cheap manufactured goods for U.S., European and other consumers. Everyone, including China, has an interest in keeping this peaceful trade going, the paper said. "To stick to the road of peaceful development is the inevitable way for China to attain national prosperity and strength and its people's happiness," said the document, which was issued by Premier Wen Jiabao's State Council, or cabinet. It added: "China's development will never be a threat to anyone."

International Herald Tribune, 22 December 2005

**China punishes general for talk of strike at U.S.**

BEIJING: A Chinese general has been punished for telling reporters that China could use nuclear weapons in the event of U.S. intervention in a conflict with Taiwan, military sources said Thursday. Major General Zhu Chenghu received an "administrative demerit" recently from the National Defense University, which bars him from promotion for one year, said the sources, who requested anonymity. "He misspoke," one source said. "But the punishment could not be too harsh or we would be seen as too weak toward the United States." An administrative demerit is the second lightest punishment on a scale of one to five, but still potentially damaging to an officer's career. The lightest is an administrative warning, while the heaviest is expulsion.

Hindustan Times, 22 December 2005

**Nuclear cooperation will help India, US: Saran**

Washington: Visiting Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran has made a strong case for the Indo-US civilian nuclear cooperation deal, saying it would not only help India's energy needs but open vast doors to American business. The senior Indian official is in Washington to negotiate on the finer aspects of the historic civilian nuclear cooperation agreement signed by President George W Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh July 18 last year. "To believe that civil nuclear energy is unimportant because it constitutes only three percent of India's current energy production betrays a lack of understanding of our energy requirements and their emission implications," asserted Saran, addressing an audience of US business, academic and policymakers at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace here. "Civil nuclear energy is currently limited precisely because of technology denial. If freed from current restrictions, there is little doubt that it will rapidly move into percentages of double digits," he said in what must surely appeal to American business as yet another field opening up in doing business with the emerging economic powerhouse. His visit comes in the backdrop of a resolution introduced by two US Congressmen warning against such a deal on grounds it endangered global nuclear weapons pre-emption.

Hindustan Times, 24 December 2005

**No opening up nuke facility: NSA**

New Delhi: National Security Adviser MK Narayanan has expressed confidence that the India-US nuclear deal will be implemented soon, but this may not happen before US President George W Bush's visit in New Delhi in early March. "I don't think it will happen before Bush comes to India. But by the time he comes, which hopefully will be in early March, most of the issues will be sorted out," he told a news channel in an interview. He also clarified that India's commitment to put its civilian facilities under international inspection will not compromise its strategic programme. Answering a question, Narayanan also ruled out demilitarisation along the Line of Control (LoC). "Troop reduction can be considered if there is a reduction in violence, but the worrying factor is the increase in infiltration," he said. During Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran's visit to the US that concluded on Thursday, India and the US made a "considerable advance" on civilian nuclear energy cooperation. During his discussions with US officials, including his counterpart and Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns, Saran for the first time unveiled a credible separation plan of the Indian civilian and military nuclear facilities to Washington.

Deccan Herald, 24 December 2005

**'Issues on nuke deal will be resolved'**

New Delhi: India on Saturday said it was hopeful that many of the contentious issues on the nuclear deal with the US would be resolved before President George W Bush's visit here early March and an agreement in principle firmed up on its implementation. New Delhi is also expecting Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran, who held talks with his American interlocutors in Washington, to bring a draft legislation, which the US will present to the Congress for its approval of the July 18 understanding reached between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Bush. "If both

sides are reasonably satisfied with this as also certain changes and guidelines of Nuclear Suppliers Group, it is possible to move forward," National Security Adviser M K Narayanan told NDTV. During Singh's visit to Washington in July, the US had implicitly recognised India as a nuclear weapon state and agreed to supply fuel for Tarapore reactors following a series of commitments by India, including that of separating civilian and military facilities. Asked whether India saw the US legislation coming through before the arrival here of Bush, Narayanan candidly said "No, I don't think it will happen before President Bush comes to India."

The Indian Express, 24 December 2005

#### **Expect some significant advance on n-deal: Saran**

NEW DELHI, Dec 23: India and US stayed on course to take the nuclear deal forward with Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran indicating at the end of his two-day visit to Washington that "significant advance" can be expected on this initiative even before US President George W Bush's visit to India. The Foreign Secretary said his talks with Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs -his counterpart in the Joint Working Group on implementing the July 18 joint statement-were positive and should lead to a successful outcome in the days ahead. The Indian side is understood to have shared ideas on plans to separate civilian and military nuclear entities. For its part, US appraised the Indian delegation of its efforts in introducing a legislation making a special exemption for India from controls that currently prevent full civilian nuclear cooperation between the two countries. The other crucial issue in this connection is the kind of safeguard agreement India will sign with the IAEA. It may be noted that Saran had made it clear a day earlier in Washington that India had a military nuclear programme and so, the model of safeguards agreement signed by non-nuclear weapons states cannot apply to India. While no details were divulged on discussions over this subject, the Foreign Secretary said he was going back "extremely satisfied" with the progress in this round of talks.

The Times of India, 24 December 2005

#### **Indo-US N-deal in on course: Saran** (Chidanand Rajghatta)

WASHINGTON: The US-India nuclear cooperation deal is on course to being tied up for implementation by the time of President Bush's visit to New Delhi in early March. After two days of talks with key American officials in Washington, India's foreign secretary Shyam Saran said his meetings had produced "very positive forward movement" and he was "going back very encouraged by the environment" with respect to the implementation of the nuclear deal. "As far as civilian nuclear cooperation is concerned, we had a very positive exchange of views and come to the conclusion that we should be in a position to make significant advance on this initiative before the Bush visit," Saran told correspondents at the end of his visit. He declined to even countenance the possibility that the visit could be derailed by wrinkles or hurdles on the nuclear issue, although he maintained growing ties between the two sides could not be pegged to any single subject. The foreign secretary's upbeat assessment was evident in his use of the word 'positive' a dozen times in his exchange with reporters, and his rejection of doubts that non-proliferation lobbies could trip-up the deal. But Saran said his meeting with Lugar was "extremely positive" and he sensed a "very encouraging environment" in seeing the nuclear agreement through.

The Associated Press, 24 December 2005

#### **Moscow Offers to Move Iranian Enrichment**

MOSCOW: Russia's Foreign Ministry said it made a formal offer to Iran on Saturday to move its uranium enrichment program to Russia, raising diplomatic pressure on Tehran to accept the Western-backed plan it has so far rejected. The Russian Embassy in Tehran on Saturday handed over a formal note containing the offer to the Iranian authorities, Russia's Foreign Ministry said in a statement. The note said that "an earlier Russian offer to Iran to establish a joint Russian-Iranian enrichment venture in Russia remains valid," the ministry added. Iran has insisted that it would enrich uranium and produce nuclear fuel domestically despite international efforts to curb its atomic program. Iran says its nuclear program is only aimed at producing electricity, but the United States accuses Iran of running a covert atomic weapons program. Washington is pushing for Tehran to be brought before the United Nations Security Council, where it could face economic sanctions for violating a nuclear arms control treaty. Germany, France and Britain have suggested shifting Iran's enrichment activities to Russia, where nuclear material would be enriched only to fuel levels and not to weapons grade. But Gholamreza Aghazadeh, head of the Atomic Organization of Iran, has dismissed the offer as unacceptable earlier this month.

The Tribune, 24 December 2005

#### **Indo-US defence cooperation** (Air Marshal R.S. Bedi (ret))

Left's proclivity for opposing the UPA government on devious issues came to the fore when it decided yet again to hold demonstrations against the government decision to conduct a joint exercise between the US and the Indian Air Force. Attempt to block the exercise at the field level was rather bizarre. Notwithstanding, the government went ahead with the exercise, codenamed "Cope India 2005" which commenced on schedule on November 7, heralding a new chapter in Indo-US defence relations. Perhaps, the CPM is of the opinion that this nature of defence collaboration, especially with the US, may eventually lead to leasing out the military bases. It doesn't

augur well for India's strategic interests and independent foreign policy, they feel. What's the basis of this perception is hard to understand, for India had always pursued an autonomous defence policy in the past. In fact, India has been quite sensitive on this aspect of its foreign policy.

The Indian Express, 25 December 2005

#### **US mosques secretly monitored for nukes**

WASHINGTON, Dec 24: US officials have secretly monitored radiation levels at mosques and Muslim homes, since September 11, 2001 as part of a secret programme searching for nuclear bombs, the US News and World Report said on Friday. The news magazine said in its online edition that the far-reaching programme covered over a hundred sites in the Washington, DC, area and in at least five other cities as well. "In numerous cases, the monitoring required investigators to go on to the property under surveillance, although no search warrants or court orders were ever obtained, according to those with knowledge of the programme," the magazine said. Federal officials cited by the report maintained the programme was legal and said warrants were not needed for the kind of radiation sampling it conducted. According to the magazine, the programme began in early 2002 and was run by the FBI and the Department of Energy's Nuclear Emergency Support Team. At its peak, the effort involved three vehicles in the Washington area monitoring 120 sites a day, nearly all of them Muslim targets such as prominent mosques and office buildings selected by the FBI, the report said, adding that the programme also operated in at least five other cities -Chicago, Detroit, Las Vegas, New York, and Seattle-when threat levels there have risen.

The Indian Express, 25 December 2005

#### **N-deal: Now, focus on IAEA safeguards** (C. Raja Mohan)

NEW DELHI, Dec 24: As India and the United States put the implementation of their nuclear pact on a fast track, the government is expected to shortly begin consultations with the International Atomic Energy Agency on safeguards arrangements for its civilian nuclear facilities. Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran and his US interlocutors last week in Washington appear to have concluded that an early closure to the deal would dramatically change the political setting for Bush's India visit in late February or early March. El Baradei, who received the Nobel Peace Prize this year, strongly defended the US nuclear deal with India in a conclave of non-proliferation hawks in Washington last month. Under the nuclear pact signed by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, the US will resume atomic energy cooperation with India, once India identifies its civilian military facilities and puts them under IAEA safeguards. India's nuclear separation plans are inextricably linked to the type of IAEA safeguards to be put in place. A unique safeguards arrangement with Delhi, that fully recognises the reality of a military nuclear programme in India, would make it easier for Delhi to put a larger number of facilities on its civilian list. Analysts say, it would make sense for India to negotiate a separate agreement with the IAEA-referred to in the IAEA jargon as Information Circular 66-for every nuclear facility it chooses to put under international safeguards.

The Tribune, 25 December 2005

#### **Burns' crucial visit to India next month** (Rajeev Sharma)

New Delhi, Dec 24: United States' Under Secretary for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns will come here next month on a crucial visit during which the final nuts and bolts for implementation of the July 18 Indo-US nuclear agreement are expected to be fastened, diplomatic sources said today. It is also expected that India will complete its ongoing exercise for separation of its civil and military nuclear facilities by the time Mr Burns comes here next month-end. The attempt of the two countries will be to finalise and finetune everything so that when President George W. Bush comes for his "historic" visit to India in early March, he can make a major announcement. Mr Burns will hold the fourth meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) which has been specially created for ensuring implementation of the nuke deal. The JWG is headed by Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran from Indian side and Mr Burns from the American side.

The Hindu, 25 December 2005

#### **Russia's offer to Iran**

MOSCOW: The Russian Foreign Ministry said it made a formal offer to Iran on Saturday to move its uranium enrichment programme to Russia, raising diplomatic pressure on Teheran to accept the Western-backed plan it has so far rejected. The Russian Embassy in Teheran on Saturday handed over a formal note containing the offer to the Iranian authorities, Russia's Foreign Ministry said in a statement. The note said that "an earlier Russian offer to Iran to establish a joint Russian-Iranian enrichment venture in Russia remains valid." Iran has insisted that it would enrich uranium and produce nuclear fuel domestically despite international efforts to curb its atomic programme. Iran says its nuclear programme is only aimed at producing electricity, but the United States accuses Iran of running a covert atomic weapons programme.

The News, 25 December 2005

### **N Korea, Japan discuss nuclear programme**

BEIJING: Japanese and North Korean officials met in the Chinese capital on Saturday for talks aimed at normalising ties between East Asia's economic powerhouse and the isolated Stalinist state. Negotiations focused on key bilateral stumbling blocks-North Korea's past abductions of Japanese citizens to train its spies, mostly in the 1970s and Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions. The meeting came after Japan approved a joint missile defence programme with the United States, a system to shoot down incoming missiles mid-air. Japanese and North Korean delegates in their meeting focussed on the format of future talks and a Japanese plan to break them up into three working groups-on the issues of normalizing ties, abductions and North Korea's nuclear programmes. While the two sides fell short of an agreement on such a new format in their three hours of talks, Japan's chief delegate Akitaka Saiki said he was hoping for "concrete results" on Sunday, Jiji Press reported.

Dawn, 25 December 2005

### **Fair treatment sought on N-technology access (Ihtasham ul Haque)**

ISLAMABAD, Dec 24: Pakistan has sought the support of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in its quest for being treated on a par with India by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) which controls developing countries' access to nuclear technology. Informed sources told Dawn on Saturday that IAEA was aware of Pakistan's needs for nuclear technology to meet its growing demand for energy. IAEA believes that Pakistan's requirements of nuclear technology should be met to help it generate more electricity and eliminate widespread salinity and water-logging. While Pakistan has taken up the issue of acquiring from the United States nuclear energy for peaceful purpose, it is also asking IAEA to use its influence with the Bush administration as well as other members of the NSG to get a fair treatment. Pakistan has been suggested to ensure that nuclear exports are carried out with appropriate safeguards, physical protection and non-proliferation conditions. The NSG seeks to restrict the export of items that can contribute to proliferation of nuclear weapons. Pakistan, the sources said, was told by the IAEA officials that several US think tanks and nuclear-related bodies believed that Washington should treat India and Pakistan on an equal footing in helping them meet their energy needs.

The Indian Express, 26 December 2005

### **U.S. eyes big arms sales to India in '06**

WASHINGTON: The Bush administration is maneuvering to balance possible big new U.S. arms sales to archrivals India and Pakistan in the new year. In the past week, U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld have made separate visits, not announced in advance, to Pakistan, a key ally in the U.S.-declared war on terrorism. Islamabad will make up its mind in the coming year on a U.S. offer to resume F-16 fighter aircraft sales after a 16-year break, Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri was quoted by the Associated Press of Pakistan as saying after Cheney left. Separately, the United States is poised to push in the new year for major arms sales to India, a hedge against China's growing regional military clout and influence. The Bush administration is weighing, among other things, whether to let India buy a state-of-the-art radar system as part of a U.S. bid for a potential \$5 billion contract to supply 126 multi-role fighters, Kohler said in the interview. The possible supply of Active Electronically Scanned Array Radar, or AESA, would boost U.S. prospects against expected competition from Sweden, France and Russia. The technology is meant to let U.S. fighters detect and destroy enemy aircraft at significantly longer ranges.

The Tribune, 26 December 2005

### **Pak seeks parity with India, moves IAEA**

Islamabad, Dec 25: Pakistan has sought the support of the UN nuclear watchdog IAEA in its quest for being treated at par with India by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), which controls developing countries' access to nuclear technology. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was aware of Pakistan's needs for nuclear technology to meet its growing demand for energy, local daily 'Dawn' today quoted "informed sources" as saying. It claimed that IAEA believes that Pakistan's requirements of nuclear technology should be met to help it generate more electricity and eliminate widespread salinity and water-logging. Pakistan has informed the IAEA it has launched a Rs 178 million programme to reclaim 25,000 acres of waterlogged and saline land across the country. "But this programme needs nuclear technology from the United States and other members of NSG," a source was quoted as saying by the daily, adding that the country would also be needing 8,800 MW of electricity by 2030. The sources told the paper that the US and other Western countries should treat Pakistan at par with India to ensure equilibrium in the region.

The Hindu, 26 December 2005

### **Iran rejects Russian nuclear proposal (Atul Aneja)**

DUBAI: Iran has formally rejected a Russian proposal allowing Teheran to process uranium on its soil, complicating efforts to defuse the crisis revolving around the nuclear programme. "We have still not received the concrete offer, but it is clear that we will accept positively the propositions and the plans that recognise the right of the Islamic republic to carry out enrichment on its own soil," said Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza

Asefi on Sunday. Fearing that Iran could be developing atomic weapons, the European Union (E.U.) and the U.S. are backing a Russian proposal that would shift Iranian uranium enrichment to Russian territory in a joint venture facility. Consequently, Iran would not be in a position to divert enriched uranium towards nuclear weapons. Russia on Saturday said its proposal to create "on Russian soil a joint Russo-Iranian undertaking to enrich uranium still stands," notwithstanding the tepid response from Iran earlier.

People's Daily, 26 December 2005

#### **Six-Party Talks set to resume next month**

The Six-Party Talks on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula are expected to resume next month, a senior Chinese official has said. "We hope all the parties concerned make joint efforts to help start the second phase of the fifth round of the nuclear talks in January," Vice-Foreign Minister Wu Dawei told China Central Television (CCTV) over the weekend. Wu is also the chief Chinese negotiator in the talks; and the parties involved are China, the United States, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the Republic of Korea (ROK), Russia and Japan. The first session of the fifth round talks ended in Beijing on November 11 with a chairman's statement. According to the document, all the parties agreed to formulate concrete plans, measures and steps to fulfil the pledges made in the fourth round of the talks in line with the principle of "commitment for commitment, action for action" to achieve verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula at an early date. Getting in the way are differences over economic sanctions the US has imposed on DPRK financial institutions. Pyongyang has said it would not return to the Six-Party Talks unless Washington lifts the sanctions, citing them as proof of Washington's hostile policy. But there has been a flurry of diplomatic activities from all sides in the past month pushing for the negotiations go ahead.

The Indian Express, 25 December 2005

#### **US ties can balance rising China: India**

New Delhi, November 28: Growing warmth in ties between India and the United States can help offset China's rising economic and military clout in Asia, a top Indian official said on Monday. Ties between India and the United States, once on opposite sides of the Cold War divide, have warmed in recent years, with the two nations forging a strategic partnership encompassing many areas from military to economic and space. The high point came in July when Washington took a landmark decision to resume cooperation with India on civil nuclear energy after a gap of many years. "If we are looking at Asia in the coming years, there is no doubt there is a major realignment of forces taking place in Asia," Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said. "There is the emergence of China as a global economic power. There will be increased capabilities that China would be able to bring to bear in this region and even beyond," he told an India Economic Summit in New Delhi. Analysts have long said that Washington's growing interest in developing strong ties with New Delhi is aimed at offsetting Beijing's rising influence in Asia.

The Tribune, 27 December 2005

#### **Russia awaits reply from Iran on nuke proposal**

Moscow, Dec 26: Russia is waiting for Teheran's reply to a proposal to move Iranian uranium enrichment facilities to Russian soil, a compromise Europe is seeking to resolve a standoff over Iran's nuclear programme, a Russian diplomat in the Iranian Capital was quoted as saying today by Interfax. Iran denied yesterday that it had received a proposal from Russia, which announced on Saturday that it had sent the plan to Teheran. "We presented an official memo to Iran on Saturday. We are waiting for a reply," Mr Vyacheslav Moshkalo, a diplomat at the Russian Embassy in Teheran, was quoted as saying. The Foreign Ministry in Moscow declined comment, but it said in a statement that a meeting took place today between Iranian Ambassador Gholamreza Ansari and Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Alexeyev. The two nations' contradictory statements may be the result of an Iranian attempt to gain time without directly rejecting a proposal from Moscow, a longtime ally. Uranium enrichment is a key step in the nuclear process that produces either fuel for a reactor or the material needed for a warhead. The United States has accused Iran of seeking to develop nuclear weapons. Iran insists its programme is aimed only at generating electricity.

China Daily, 27 December 2005

#### **China to build two new nuclear plants (Wang Ying)**

Following the operational start-ups of 11 nuclear reactors in the south and east, China next year will begin building two nuclear plants which contain two reactors each, in Northeast China's Liaoning Province and East China's Shandong Province. The Liaoning plant, consisting of two 1,080-MW (megawatt) reactors, will cost US\$2.8 billion. It will be the first nuclear base in Northeast China, located at Hongyanhe, the coastal city of Dalian, a senior official from China Guangdong Nuclear Power Group (CGNPG) said. "We expect to get the final go-ahead (to build the Dalian nuclear plant) from the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) by the end of this year," said the official, who did not want to be identified. CGNPG sources last week said that they plan to start the Dalian project as soon as possible. For the plant in Shandong Province, CPI has reached an

initial agreement with the country's biggest nuclear plant constructor, China National Nuclear Corp (CNNC), to jointly build a nuclear plant at Haiyang. The Haiyang plant, which contains two 1,000-MW reactors, will process at the same pace as the Dalian plant, CPI director Liu Changqing told China Daily yesterday. The Chinese Government has included both projects at Dalian and Haiyang in the country's 11th Five-Year Plan (2006-2011), a CNNC spokesman said last week. Further details were not available for the Haiyang plant in Shandong.

The Japan Times, 27 December 2005

#### **New fast-breeder reactor after Monju eyed for '30**

The government plans to build a new fast-breeder reactor around 2030 for practical operation, succeeding the existing prototype Monju, sources at the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said Monday. The ministry's Agency for Natural Resources and Energy filed the plan during the day's session of an advisory body on energy and natural resources for discussions. Under the plan, basic research at the Monju reactor will be completed around 2015. Design and development policies for the new reactor, to be named the Post-Monju, will then be worked out. It is to be built around 2030. The plan also envisages construction of a new plant that will reprocess spent nuclear fuel to produce uranium-plutonium mixed oxide fuel (MOX) for use at the fast-breeder reactor. The MOX fuel produced at the new reprocessing plant may be used for plutonium-thermal reactors if the development of the fast-breeder reactor is delayed or global demand for uranium eases. However, if uranium supplies become tight, the government may speed up work on the fast-breeder reactor.

Daily Times, 27 December 2005

#### **Arms sales to Pakistan, India in 2006: Rivalry could put US 'on the hook'**

WASHINGTON: The Bush administration is manoeuvring to balance possible big new US arms sales to archrivals India and Pakistan in the New Year. In the past week, US Vice President Dick Cheney and Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld have made separate visits, not announced in advance, to Pakistan, a key ally in the US-led war on terrorism. If their rivalry flared anew, the United States could be on the hook to deliver sophisticated weaponry to a region on the brink of war, said Matt Schroeder of the Federation of American Scientists' arms sales monitoring project. Islamabad will make up its mind in the coming year on a US offer to resume F-16 fighter aircraft sales after a 16-year break, Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri was quoted by the Associated Press of Pakistan as saying after Cheney left. In May, the Pentagon told Congress it was proposing to let Pakistan buy 300 AIM-9M-1/2 'Sidewinder' heat-seeking, air-to-air missiles and 60 Harpoon missiles with a combined value of up to \$226 million. India as the China hedge: Separately, the United States is poised to push in the new year for major arms sales to India, a hedge against China's growing regional military clout and influence. The Bush administration is weighing, among other things, whether to let India buy a state-of-the-art radar system as part of a US bid for a potential \$5 billion contract to supply 126 multi-role fighters, Kohler said in the interview. The possible supply of Active Electronically Scanned Array Radar, or AESA, would boost US prospects against expected competition from Sweden, France and Russia. The technology is meant to let US fighters detect and destroy enemy aircraft at significantly longer ranges.

Dawn, 27 December 2005

#### **Nuclear clouds gather over Asia (Praful Bidwai)**

NEW DELHI: The Asia-Pacific region has not only emerged as one of the main engines of the world economy but it has also taken the global centre-stage in developments pertaining to nuclear weapons and efforts to acquire a capability to make them. From Iran and Israel in West Asia, through India and Pakistan in South Asia, to North Korea and Japan in the East, the region exhibited, in 2005, unprecedented activity in the nuclear field that can only intensify in the coming years. In each of these countries, the United States plays a major role. Its policies of selectively favouring or opposing their nuclear activities will alter the strategic balance in some of the world's most volatile regions. "This is a marked shift from the cold war period, where the global nuclear centre of gravity lay in the all-out confrontation between the eastern and western blocs, which was most intense in Europe," says Achin Vanaik, professor of international relations and global politics at Delhi University. 2005 witnessed two landmark nuclear developments - an attempt by the US and its allies to censure Iran and prevent it from enriching uranium, either for military or civilian purposes, and an Indo-US agreement to "normalize" India's nuclear weapons status and resume civilian nuclear commerce with it.

Aljazeera, 26 December 2005

#### **Iran rejects nuclear 'apartheid'**

"We do not accept global nuclear 'apartheid' and scientific 'apartheid'," Mottaki said. Iran is willing to discuss its NUCLEAR plans with any country, but that doesn't mean it needs permission for access to nuclear technology, Iran's Foreign Minister said on Monday, according to Reuters. Iran's right to peaceful nuclear technology is backed by "many countries of the world," Manouchehr Mottaki told a press conference during a one-day visit to the Afghan capital, Kabul. "We do not accept global nuclear 'apartheid' and scientific 'apartheid'," Mottaki added. Tehran is ready to discuss its NUCLEAR PROGRAM, "but that does not mean that we are waiting for any

country's permission for the right of Iranian nation and the Islamic Republic to enjoy nuclear technology," he said. The Islamic republic insists that its NUCLEAR PROGRAM is strictly aimed at the peaceful generation of electricity, but the U.S. and the EU suspect that it is a covert for developing atomic weapons. Last week, Iranian nuclear negotiators met their counterparts from the EU trio of Britain, Germany and France in Vienna to set terms for their nuclear talks. Both sides agreed to meet again in January.

The Hindu, 28 December 2005

#### **U.S. sanctions on two Indian firms**

Washington: The United States has imposed sanctions on two Indian firms, six Chinese Government-run companies and an Austrian company involved in selling missile goods and chemical arms materials to Iran, the Washington Times says quoting unnamed Bush administration officials. According to the report, these sanctions against the Indian and Chinese firms have been under consideration since April and were approved by Deputy Secretary of State Robert B. Zoellick over the past several weeks. The announcement about the sanctions will be published in the U.S. Government's Federal Register in the coming days, the Times report said on Tuesday. At the same time, the U.S. Government announced that it had lifted the sanctions imposed last year on Chaudhary Surendar, one of two Indian nuclear scientists linked to Iran's nuclear programme. India had denied that Mr. Surendar was linked to Iranian proliferation activities. Sanctions were imposed on him in September 2004 for his alleged role in providing weapons of mass destruction and missile goods to Iran under the Iran Non-Proliferation Act. The other scientist, Y.S.R. Prasad, continues to face sanctions until they expire in September next.

Hindustan Times, 28 December 2005

#### **Indo-US nuke deal aimed at making world more secure: Sen**

Washington, Dec 27: Dismissing the notion that its agreement with the US on sharing civilian nuclear technology amounts to weakening of non-proliferation regime, India has said the deal is based on a "very close" understanding of security interests of the two countries and aimed at making the world more secure. "India has a unique track record. It is the first country in Asia to build a nuclear reactor on its own. You are talking about a country which has about 50 years of experience of handling nuclear assets," Indian Ambassador to the US Ronen Sen said in an interview to the Dallas Morning News. He rejected the notion that the Indo-US nuclear deal amounts to weakening of the non-proliferation regime. "Absolutely not. It is based on a very close understanding of the national security interests of both our countries and to making the world a safer and more secure place," he told the paper. Citing "with justifiable pride" India's track record on proliferation, Sen said, "Nothing has leaked from India. We put into place such tight controls on preventing anything from leaving our country. And we've had these in place much before they were codified in international treaties and norms. It's an impeccable track record. And this is recognised." He said that one reason why the agreement is so important to India in spite of the country's long know-how with nuclear technology is because of the fact that India is "uniquely disadvantaged" in terms of access to energy resources.

Hindustan Times, 28 December 2005

#### **US sanctions on Indian firms unfair: Centre**

New Delhi: India on Wednesday termed as unjustified the US decision to impose sanctions on its two firms for supplying some chemicals to Iran, asserting that the transfer did not violate Indian regulations or its international obligations. The sanctions imposed by the US government on two Indian firms -- Sabero Organics Gujarat Limited and Sandhya Organics Limited -- under the US Iran Proliferation Act, 2000 relate to transfer of some chemicals, External Affairs Ministry spokesman Navtej Sarna told reporters in Mumbai. "Our preliminary assessment is that the transfer of such chemicals is not in violation of our regulations or our international obligations," he said. Sarna said the imposition of sanctions by the US on Indian firms, "which in our view have not acted in violation of our laws or regulations, is not justified." The spokesman emphasised that India's commitment to prevent onward proliferation is second to none. "We have instituted a rigorous system of export controls and our track record in this regard is well known," he said, adding India is working with international community including with the US as a partner against proliferation.

The Tribune, 28 December 2005

#### **Changing times** (K. Subrahmanyam)

Even US is adjusting itself to new reality. What distinguishes true statesmanship from the run-of-the-mill foreign policy practitioners is the ability to recognise critical changes at international level and exploit them to the advantage of one's own country. Mediocre minds tend to look at international relations as linear extrapolations of the past and thereby allow crucial opportunities to slip by. That the present is an extraordinary time - "one in which the terrain of international politics is shifting beneath our feet and the pace of historical change outstrips even the most vivid imagination" has been recognised in an article by the US Secretary of State, Dr Condoleezza Rice, in the Washington Post of December 11, 2005. Her plea is that "we must transcend the doctrines and debates of the past and transform volatile status quos that no longer serve our interests. What is needed is a

realistic statecraft for a transformed world". This is very sound advice not only to her countrymen but to the Indians as well. She defines the new international threat as weak and failing states serving as global pathways that facilitate the spread of pandemics, the movement of criminals and terrorists and the proliferation of the world's most dangerous weapons.

Reuters, 28 December 2005

#### **Iran Sounds Positive Note on Russian Atomic Plan**

TEHRAN: Iran said on Wednesday it would "seriously and enthusiastically" study a Russian proposal aimed at reducing international fears about its nuclear programme, the ISNA students news agency reported. The remarks by Javad Vaeedi, deputy head of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, were the most positive yet by a senior Tehran official about Moscow's offer to form a joint venture with Iran to enrich uranium in Russia. The Russian proposal is backed by the United States and the European Union. It is aimed at easing international concerns that Tehran could make atomic bombs from highly enriched uranium, after having concealed a nuclear programme from U.N. inspectors for 18 years until 2003. Iran says it only wants to purify uranium to a lower grade suitable for use in power stations. "The Russian proposal could revive some of the unimplemented regulations of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty for transferring nuclear technology to countries which do not have access to this technology, and break the scientific monopoly of this issue." Previously, Iran poured cold water on the Russian proposal, saying it would not accept any plan which did not allow it to carry out a full nuclear fuel cycle, including enrichment, on its own soil. But EU diplomats and arms control experts have noted that Tehran has stopped short of outright rejection of the plan, which could weaken Russian opposition to EU and U.S. efforts to refer Iran to the U.N. Security Council for possible sanctions.

The Associated press, 28 December 2005

#### **State Dept. Sanctions 9 Foreign Companies**

WASHINGTON: The Bush administration is punishing nine foreign companies, six of them in China, for selling missile goods and chemical arms material to Iran. In making the announcement Tuesday, State Department spokesman Adam Ereli said the sanctions were based on "credible evidence," which he did not disclose. Two of the companies are Indian and the other is Austrian. As a result, Ereli said, the United States will not provide export licenses to the companies for doing business here and will ban U.S. government purchases from the companies. The action was taken under the Iran Nonproliferation Act, which Congress passed in 2000 to deter international support for Iran's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programs and for missile-delivery systems. "It's an important and effective tool in constraining Iran's efforts to develop missile and weapons of mass destruction capabilities," Ereli said. "It does have an impact, particularly in alerting governments to activity taking place in their countries," he said. Preventing proliferation of dangerous technology is difficult "and there are always going to be those who put narrow commercial self-interest above greater social good or public welfare," the spokesman said. China, in the past, has denied its government or any of its companies have supplied missile or weapons-related material to Iran.

Dawn, 28 December 2005

#### **Government classifies control lists: Goods related to N-material**

ISLAMABAD, Dec 27: The government on Tuesday classified the control lists of goods, technologies, materials and equipment related to nuclear and biological weapons and their delivery systems, which will be subject to strict export controls. Foreign Office spokesperson Tasnim Aslam said that effective and robust export controls should also facilitate international cooperation in the area of civilian nuclear technology under safeguards. She said that the listing of goods was done according to international standards. On being asked if the classification of goods was done because of any external pressure, the spokesperson said it had been done keeping in view national requirements. An official announcement of the foreign office said all of Pakistan's existing nuclear power-generating plants are under IAEA safeguards. The control lists have been classified pursuant to the Export Control Act, which was adopted by parliament in September 2004. The control lists adopted by Pakistan encompass the lists and scope of export controls maintained by the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group, which is related to biological agents and toxins, and the Missile Technology Control Regime. The classification system was based on the European Union's integrated list, which constitutes latest international standards in this regard.

The News, 28 December 2005

#### **India tests nuclear-capable missile**

NEW DELHI: India successfully tested its nuclear-capable, short-range Dhanush ballistic missile, defense officials said. The locally-developed missile, a naval version of the surface-to-surface Prithvi, was tested from a ship in the Bay of Bengal off the east coast of Orissa state, official sources informed. Dhanush -- which means bow in Hindi -- has a range of 250 kilometers (156 miles) and can carry a payload of 500 kilograms (1,100 pounds).

International Herald Tribune, 28 December 2005

**U.S. deal is a bad choice for power generation** (Brahma Chellaney)

A much-trumpeted deal between the United States and India seeks to employ the lure of assistance with commercial nuclear power to bring many Indian nuclear sites under international inspections. Even as tough negotiations are now under way to implement the deal, few have examined its premise - that the way for India to meet its rapidly expanding energy demands is to import nuclear power reactors. The deal's very rationale is fundamentally flawed because generating electricity from imported reactors makes little economic or strategic sense. Such imports will lead to energy insecurity and exorbitant costs. India should not replicate in the energy sector the major mistake it has pursued on armaments. India should not think of compounding that blunder by spending billions more to import overly expensive reactors when it can more profitably invest in the development of its own energy sources. India should think instead of tapping its vast hydroelectric reserves and exploiting its coal reserves, which are among the largest in the world.

Daily Times, 29 December 2005

**Unresolved CIRUS question integral to US-India N-deal** (Khalid Hasan)

WASHINGTON: A leading nuclear nonproliferation expert has said that the July 2005 US-India agreement on nuclear cooperation will have to deal with the CIRUS question before it can find final congressional approval. CIRUS is still being used and India is being pressed to lay it open for inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). India's reluctance to do so could well act as a deal breaker for the nuclear cooperation agreement. In an interview with India Abroad, Leonard Spector, a former senior US official and currently with a top California-based think tank specialising in security and nonproliferation issues, said when asked about CIRUS, "I don't believe CIRUS has been identified specifically as a source of concern, but it seems to be part of the range of concerns that the (Capitol) Hill is concentrating on. No one can look at this overall situation and not identify CIRUS as a question. It may not be the be-all and end-all in the minds of certain congressmen and senators, but the document that they have in front of them, when they decide how hard they are going to push on various items, one choice they will have to make is about CIRUS." Spector said there is room for negotiation with India to do the right thing.

Dawn, 29 December 2005

**More nuclear power plants planned: PM**

CHASHMA, Dec 28: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has warned against failure in construction of water storages, saying Pakistan will be loosing existing storage capacity of six million acre feet (MAF) by 2,010 and will be critically short of water availability with a gap of 1300MAF by 2,025. Mr Aziz said: "We recognize that to remain competitive and a fast growing economy in the rapidly globalizing world, water and energy security are critical. Therefore, we are aiming at constructing new water reservoirs following a consultative process to sustain high agriculture growth, ensure water supply for drinking and commercial use and generate hydropower." He said climate change as well as global warming and consequential phenomenon of desertification made it even more important to start the process of building dams now. The premier said survival of Pakistan and competitiveness in the coming decades largely depended on substantially increasing the share of hydro and nuclear power in the overall electricity production.

The Independent, 29 December 2005

**The uncertain nuclear future of India** (Amulya Ganguli)

The longstanding unanimity of views among the nuclear 'haves' - the Big Five comprising the US, Britain, France, Russia and China - on India's nuclear status was again confirmed during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's recent visit to Russia. By hinting that India should abide by its recent agreement with the US on the nuclear issue, Moscow indicated that it was with its old adversary, Washington, on this matter. There is nothing surprising about this attitude since even at the height of the Cold War, the then Soviet Union had not hesitated to side with the US to advise India to accept the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) even though Moscow was one of New Delhi's closest friends. What this stance showed was that when it came to nuclear power, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council had no differences over refusing an outsider entry to their exclusive club. India was - and still is - an outsider, having refused to sign the NPT and acquiring a nuclear arsenal in defiance of world opinion, as the nuclear 'haves' allege. Pakistan and Israel too are in the same category, with the exception that the latter has not officially let it be known that it possesses nuclear weapons. It was only in last July that the US agreed to formally accept India's nuclear status in an unprecedented departure from the norms of the NPT, demonstrating how the world had changed since the end of the Cold War. India's reputation as a responsible power induced America to modify its earlier policy.

The New York Times, 29 December 2005

**New Twist in Iran on Plan for Nuclear Fuel** (Richard Bernstein and David E. Sanger)

BERLIN, Dec. 28: In what may herald a sharp reversal of previous statements, a senior Iranian official said

Wednesday that Iran would "seriously and enthusiastically" study a Russian proposal aimed at breaking the deadlock on efforts to block Iran from enriching nuclear fuel. The official, Javad Vaeedi, deputy head of the Supreme National Security Council, was referring to a proposal made by Russia several weeks ago under which Iranian-produced uranium gas would be processed into fuel in Russia and returned to Iran. The circuitous route would ensure that Iran would be able to produce fuel only for nuclear power, and could not enrich the uranium into a form that could be used in weapons. It would also slow Iran's ability to obtain enrichment technology. Iran has insisted on many occasions that it has the right to develop the technology to produce nuclear fuel on its own territory. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has responded that the issue is not one of rights under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which Iran has signed, but rather a question of whether Iran can be trusted, after repeatedly deceiving the International Atomic Energy Agency about its facilities and abilities. Iran claims that its nuclear program, parts of which it carried out clandestinely for 18 years before it was discovered by United Nations inspectors, is only to generate power, but the United States and Europe believe the true goal is to develop nuclear weapons.

People's Daily, 29 December 2005

#### **China firmly opposes U.S. sanctions on Chinese companies**

China has expressed strong dissatisfaction with and firm opposition to the U.S. government's sanctions on Chinese companies, said Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang in Beijing Wednesday. The United States announced on Tuesday it was imposing sanctions on six Chinese companies which were accused of supplying Iran with military equipment and technology. Asked to make comments on this issue, Qin said that the U.S. government imposed the sanctions in line with its so-called domestic law. "We are strongly dissatisfied with and firmly opposed to the U.S. move," he told the press. The Chinese government has always held a serious and responsible attitude toward the non-proliferation issue and has adopted a series of effective measures to strengthen export management and control, the spokesman said. The U.S. move was not beneficial to China-U.S. cooperation in the non-proliferation field, Qin said, demanding the United States change this wrongful action.

International Herald Tribune 29 December 2005

#### **Europeans criticize U.S. sanctions as potential risk to Iran talks** (Dan Bilefsky and David E. Sanger)

New U.S. sanctions against nine foreign companies accused of aiding Iran's weapons programs could signal a harder line toward Tehran by the Bush administration and could hinder diplomatic efforts by Europe to end the standoff over Iran's nuclear program, EU officials and analysts said Wednesday. The companies include six in China, two in India, and an Austrian arms manufacturer. Reacting to the sanctions, which apply to Steyr-Mannlicher of Austria, over its sales of armor-piercing rifles with scopes to Iran, the Austrian government on Wednesday defended the company and questioned the sense of the U.S. move long after the deal was completed. EU officials said an increase in U.S. pressure on Iran could complicate the diplomatic efforts of the Union, which is trying to end the nuclear standoff with Iran while also acting as a mediator between Tehran and Washington. A senior EU official said, "It is very important that the EU and Washington speak with a united voice and that the EU continue to take the diplomatic lead." But the official noted that the European Union was growing increasingly impatient with Iran over its intransigence. The official, who requested anonymity because of the sensitivity of the talks, said that Washington and Brussels were in close contact and had been taking a coordinated approach.

The Tribune, 29 December 2005

#### **Pak notifies control lists of N-exports**

Islamabad, Dec 28: Pakistan has notified the control lists of goods, technologies, materials and equipment related to nuclear and biological weapons and their delivery systems, which will be subject to strict export controls. The control lists have been notified pursuant to the "Export Control Act on goods, technologies, materials and equipment related to nuclear and biological weapons and their delivery systems", which was adopted by Parliament in September 2004, a Foreign Office statement said here. The control lists adopted by Pakistan encompass the lists and scope of export controls maintained by the nuclear suppliers group (NSG), the Australia group (AG) which relates to biological agents and toxins, and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

The Tribune, 30 December 2005

#### **India, Pak nukes a serious threat** (Simranjit Singh Mann)

The Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) is against the nuclearisation of India and Pakistan and their arsenals of weapons of mass destruction. Our party opposes the policies of some Western democracies in giving nuclear technology to India for civilian purposes. We fail to understand how the military side of India's nuclear programme will be stopped from acquiring nuclear knowledge once the civilian side has the methodology? The Indian subcontinent is a powder keg, waiting to be lit by a spark. Would responsible Western democracies and the Nuclear Suppliers Group want to do just that and destroy the Sikh race in its entirety? How will India expose its nuclear reactors to the International Atomic Energy Agency? Or, voluntarily place its civilian nuclear facilities

under IAEA safeguards? A nuclear strategist of the former Clinton administration suggests that the US Congress should modify the law to permit nuclear cooperation with states which have not signed the NPT but are "responsible nuclear powers". I am sure one day we would have people who supervise blood banks say, "Dracula could also be engaged to guard such banks".

The Indian Express, 31 December 2005

**Iran still determined to keep uranium enrichment at home** (Paul Hughes)

TEHRAN, Dec 30: Iran's agreement to discuss Moscow's plan to enrich uranium in Russia does not mean that Tehran has abandoned its drive to enrich uranium on its own soil, a senior Iranian official was quoted as saying on Friday. The remarks by Javad Vaeedi, deputy of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, appeared to dash faint hopes that Russia's proposal could resolve Islamic republic's nuclear standoff with the West. The proposal, which is backed by Washington and the European Union, involves the creation of a joint Iranian-Russian company to enrich uranium in Russia. But Vaeedi said Iran had only agreed to study Moscow's joint-venture proposal on the assumption that it did not affect Iran's plans to develop a full nuclear fuel cycle, including enrichment, on home soil. "Securing Iran's rights, based on the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, to enrich uranium on Iran's soil within the framework of International Atomic Energy Agency regulations would be the first assumption for assessing Russia's proposal," the semi-official Fars news agency quoted him as saying.

Daily Times, 31 December 2005

**India concluding separation of civilian, military N-installations** (Iftikhar Gilani)

NEW DELHI: India is moving to conclude the separation of its civilian and military nuclear installations before the visit of US President George W Bush. It is also ready to give the assurances that the nuclear material would not be diverted towards third countries or to military installations. Official sources said on Friday that nuclear agreement with the United States was "on track" and both countries were making progress. The sources said that while India was ready to give assurances and separate its installations, it had made it clear that the country would not accept anything that will adversely affect its strategic interests. Sources said that conditions regarding India and non-nuclear states would have to be different. They also said that India was in touch with the 44-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), including China on the issue. But, they stated that the main responsibility lay with the US to convince the powerful nuclear group. India had got a sense that within the NSG, a positive environment existed in terms of making an exception for India, he added.

Daily Times, 31 December 2005

**Govt will make Pakistan's defences impregnable: PM**

ISLAMABAD: The government will do all that it can to make sure that the country's defences are impregnable, said Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Friday. Addressing the 99th foundation day celebrations of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (PML), he said all national issues, including the construction of water reservoirs, would be resolved amicably. He said President Pervez Musharraf had led the country on the road to progress and the nation had unified in the wake of the October 8 quake. He said Pakistan would continue to support the Kashmiris in their quest for the right of self-determination. He called the ruling PML the most popular political party in the country. PML President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, said he would reunite all PML factions.