

Korea Times, 2 December 2007

US Nuclear Envoy to Visit Pyongyang

The chief U.S. nuclear negotiator will begin a three-day trip to North Korea today to discuss the communist regime's denuclearization fulfillment, including a pledge to present a list outlining all its nuclear programs by the year-end. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill will meet with his North Korean counterpart Kim Kye-gwan and possibly key military figures of the regime to discuss ways of speeding up efforts to rid the North of nuclear weapons programs, diplomatic sources here said Sunday.

International Herald Tribune, 2 December 2007

Tehran defiant on nuclear enrichment

TEHRAN: Further UN sanctions will not solve the dispute with the West over Iran's nuclear plans, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said Sunday, a day after six world powers discussed imposing new penalties on Tehran. The powers met in Paris on Saturday after the European Union's top diplomat, Javier Solana, said he was disappointed about his latest talks with Iran's chief nuclear negotiator that had aimed to persuade Tehran to halt sensitive atomic work. A French official went further, describing the London meeting between Solana and Saeed Jalili of Iran as a "disaster."

The Hindu, 2 December 2007

US war game mulls options for securing Pak N-stockpile

Washington (PTI): Amidst concerns that Pakistan's nuclear arsenal may fall into hands of non-state actors, a classified war game in the US has concluded that "there are no palatable ways to forcibly ensure the security of Islamabad's nuclear weapons." The classified war game by US military experts and intelligence officials in Washington explored strategies for securing Pakistan's nuclear arsenal if the country's political institutions and military safeguards began to fall apart.

Voice of America, 3 December 2007

Iran's Nuclear Negotiator to Visit Moscow

Iran's Foreign Ministry says chief nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili will travel to Moscow Monday to discuss Tehran's disputed nuclear plans with Russian officials. The trip comes two days after Russia and five other world powers: the United States, Britain, France, Germany and China, met in Paris for talks on Iran's controversial nuclear program.

Times of India, 3 December 2007

Germany arrests Iranian over suspected nuclear exports

BERLIN: An Iranian businessman suspected of exporting to Iran material that could be used in military nuclear projects has been arrested in Germany, the weekly Der Spiegel reported. Police picked up the man identified as Mohsen V, 48, on Tuesday in Frankfurt on an arrest warrant issued by Germany's highest federal court, the magazine said in its Monday edition. The magazine said the man "illegally delivered" to Iran "American pumps and special Russian cameras" used in nuclear research.

Xinhua News, 4 December 2007

Chinese FM calls Rice on Iran's nuclear issue

BEIJING, Dec. 4 (Xinhua) -- Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi exchanged views over telephone Tuesday with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on Iran's nuclear issue, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said in a brief statement. The call came one day after U.S. National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley urged the world community to "turn up the pressure" on Iran despite a latest National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) indicated the Islamic republic appears less determined to develop nuclear weapons.

BBC News, 4 December 2007

US envoy on N Korea nuclear visit

The United States' chief negotiator with North Korea, Christopher Hill, is to visit the country's nuclear complex at Yongbyon. Mr Hill, who is in North Korea until Wednesday, will be the highest-level US diplomat to visit the site. He will inspect the continuing work to disable the facility and render it unable to produce nuclear bombs. In October Pyongyang agreed to end its nuclear programme in exchange for aid and diplomatic concessions.

Xinhua News, 4 December 2007

IAEA chief hopes Iran deals with nuclear issue transparently

MONTEVIDEO, Dec. 3 (Xinhua) -- Visiting International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Mohamed ElBaradei said here Monday the body hoped that Iran continues to tackle its nuclear issue transparently to boost international confidence in this. ElBaradei told the media that the IAEA is continuing to investigate whether Iran's nuclear program is peaceful or not, and that despite the progress in IAEA-Iran cooperation, much work needs to be done to resolve the nuclear issue.

The Statesman, 4 December 2007

Left sharpens N-deal attack

NEW DELHI, Dec. 3: Ahead of tomorrow's discussion on the controversial Indo-US nuclear deal in the Rajya Sabha, the Left today sharpened its attack on the deal alleging that its larger agenda was to reduce India to the status of the US's subordinate ally in the strategically-significant South Asia, and charging that the Manmohan Singh governments pro-US tilt was evident from the dismal state of Indo-Iranian relations.

Hindustan Times, 5 December 2007

West must acknowledge Iran nuclear rights: Ahmadinejad

Following a US intelligence report that Iran has halted its nuclear weapons programme, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said that the US and its Western allies should acknowledge Iran's nuclear rights. "There is no other way for the US and its Western allies than to acknowledge the rights of the Iranian nation to pursue nuclear technology," Ahmadinejad told Magnus Wernstedt, Sweden's new ambassador to Iran, on Tuesday.

Reuters, 5 December 2007

North Korea nuclear disarmament talks delayed

SEOUL (Reuters) - Multinational talks on ending North Korea's nuclear weapons program that were expected to take place as early as this week have been delayed, a South Korean official said on Tuesday. The next session of the talks among the two

Koreas, China, Japan, Russia and the United States would likely outline steps to start taking apart the North's nuclear weapons facilities, and the rewards Pyongyang would receive for compliance.

Indian Express, 5 December 2007

N-deal debate: Govt firm, Left sidelined as Congress, BJP battle it out in Rajya Sabha

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 4: The government stood its ground on the Indo-US nuclear deal today even as Left allies joined hands with the UNPA to oppose it in Rajya Sabha. But the debate turned out to be more of a Congress versus BJP slugfest with the Left, the most vocal critic of the deal, pushed to the sidelines and the BJP making clear it was all for renegotiating the deal. While all parties stuck to their public statements on the deal, Samajwadi Party leader Amar Singh aligned his position close to the Lefts after his party had gone soft in its opposition during the discussion in Lok Sabha last week.

The Hindu, 5 December 2007

Nuke deal a dangerous folly, says CPI(M)

New Delhi (PTI): The CPI(M) on Tuesday warned the government that it would be a "dangerous folly" to proceed with the Indo-US nuclear deal, but steered clear of the BJP's suggestions of voting the government down if it failed to listen. "We cannot allow you (BJP) to come to power riding on our shoulder," retorted senior CPI(M) leader Sitaram Yechury when BJP member Murli Manohar Joshi baited him to join his party to pull down the government if it went ahead with the deal.

Daily Times, 6 December 2007

US nuclear report victory for Iran, says Ahmadinejad

TEHRAN: President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad Wednesday boasted a US intelligence report on Iran's nuclear program was a great victory, as US President George W Bush warned that Tehran remained a security danger. The report by the US intelligence community said Iran halted a drive for atomic weapons in 2003 - despite years of statements by Bush accusing Tehran of actively seeking a nuclear bomb. This report tries to extract America from its impasse but it also is a declaration of the Iranian peoples victory against the great powers, Ahmadinejad told thousands of supporters at a rally in Ilam province.

Al Jazeera, 6 December 2007

N Korea 'may miss nuclear deadline'

North Korea's full declaration of all its nuclear programmes - a key condition of a six-nation aid-for-disarmament deal may miss a crucial end of year deadline, South Korea's foreign minister has said. "There has not been progress on the declaration yet," Song Min-soon told a breakfast forum of business leaders in Seoul on Thursday, adding "we may need to be a little more flexible". As a result, he said, the talks were at a crucial juncture.

Reuters, 6 December 2007

Nuclear deal faces hurdles, but won't quit - India

NEW DELHI (Reuters) - India said on Wednesday it is sceptical about clinching a controversial nuclear deal with the United States, but will not give up trying to convince critics and opponents as the pact is key to the country's growth. New Delhi's doubts over the fate of the deal, which has faced a rough ride since it was conceived in 2005, were voiced at the end of a parliament debate over the pact, which brought Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's coalition to the brink of collapse.

Economic Times, 6 December 2007

Nuclear deal a surrender to US diktat: Advani

KULLU: The BJP on Wednesday accused the UPA government of surrendering before the US on nuclear deal issue and warned that giving up the atomic potential would be fatal for the country. Late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi ordered first Pokhran test while Atal Bihari Vajpayee is credited with ordering the second explosion. But this government is willing to give in writing that it will never do a third Pokhran, Advani said addressing a BJP election rally here in Himachal Pradesh.

Daily Times, 7 December 2007

Iran's less-is-more nuclear policy

The recent United States National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), which reports that Iran once had a nuclear weapons program but suspended it in 2003, means that there will probably be no American attack on Iran during the Bush administration. How could Americas president explain to the world why he was bombing nuclear weapon facilities that his own intelligence services have said do not exist?

Reuters, 7 December 2007

China says wants Iran dispute resolved by negotiation

LONDON (Reuters) - China wants the dispute over Iran's nuclear program resolved through negotiation, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said on Wednesday. Yang did not directly respond to questions on whether a new U.S. intelligence report on Iran's nuclear ambitions had changed the situation or whether China would support new United Nations sanctions.

Time, 7 December 2007

Europe's Missile Shield: NIE Casualty?

That the new U.S. intelligence assessment of Iran's nuclear program has put the kibosh on hawkish calls for a military response has been discussed to death, but there's been very little focus on a second potential casualty: the U.S. plan to base ground-based missile defenses in Poland and the Czech Republic. The plan to station interceptor missiles in Poland and tracking radars in the Czech Republic is regarded warily by citizens of those countries, and with outright hostility by the Russians who see it as aimed at blunting their own missile capability in the event of a showdown with the U.S. The plan has helped freeze U.S.-Russia ties to Cold War levels of enmity, with President Vladimir Putin just last week suspending Russia's participation in 1990s Conventional Forces in Europe treaty.

Chosun Ilbo, 7 December 2007

A New Crisis Over N.Korea's Nuclear Program?

South Korean Foreign Minister Song Min-soon said Thursday the dismantlement process of North Korea's nuclear program has reached a junction between smooth and bumpy roads, with little progress being made at the stage where Pyongyang must declare all its nuclear programs and stockpiles. U.S. nuclear envoy Christopher Hill, just back from North Korea, said there were clear differences in opinion between Washington and Pyongyang over the declaration of nuclear materials. Hill added resuming six-nation talks this year would be difficult.

Voice of America, 8 December 2007

US Intelligence Report Enters Into Debate on Iran Nuclear Issue

Sixteen government agencies form what is known as the intelligence community in the United States. From time to time, this community puts together reports called National Intelligence Estimates that deal with foreign activities and threats. Parts are sometimes made public. Iran says its nuclear program is only for producing energy. This week, officials released major judgments from a new report on Iran's nuclear activities. It says Iran operated a secret program to develop nuclear weapons but halted that program in late 2003.

Reuters, 8 December 2007

More talk needed on Korea nuclear inventory - Hill

TOKYO, Dec 7 (Reuters) - North Korea is making progress on disabling its nuclear facilities but more talks are needed to complete an inventory of its atomic arms programmes, a senior U.S. diplomat said on Friday. "They are disabling all three facilities and they are moving actually quite on schedule," Washington's top envoy to the nuclear talks, Christopher Hill, told reporters after arriving in Tokyo for talks with his Japanese counterpart.

Reuters, 8 December 2007

Russia says it must have nuclear parity with U.S.

MOSCOW (Reuters) - First Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov, tipped by some analysts as a possible successor to President Vladimir Putin, said on Friday Russia must achieve nuclear arms parity with the United States. "Military potential, to say nothing of nuclear potential, must be at the proper level if we want ... to just stay independent," Itar-Tass news agency quoted Ivanov as saying. "The weak are not loved and not heard, they are insulted, and when we have parity they will talk to us in a different way."

The Statesman, 8 December 2007

Govt urged not to go ahead with N-deal

NEW DELHI, Dec. 7: Amid a growing chorus of political opposition to the Indo-US nuclear deal, both the Left and the Right today again firmly asked the Congress-led UPA government not to go ahead with the deal in view of the majority of both Houses of Parliament being against it, even as the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, while noting some political parties opposition hoped that a positive conclusion would emerge on the contentious issue.

Reuters, 10 December 2007

Indian PM shrugs off new threat from communists

AHMEDABAD, India (Reuters) - Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh brushed aside on Tuesday a new threat from his communist allies to force early elections over a controversial nuclear deal with the United States. In the government's first reaction to a call by the leader of the largest left-wing party for talks on the deal to be stopped, Singh said he would stick to a plan conditionally approved by the communists earlier to push the landmark pact.

Xinhua, 10 December 2007

DPRK accuses U.S. of deploying forces in S. Korea

PYONGYANG, Dec. 11 (Xinhua) -- The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) lashed out at the United States Tuesday for deploying fighter planes and a nuclear submarine in U.S. bases in South Korea. "Such moves are a part of the U.S.... hostile policy toward the DPRK," said the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). "The above-said deployment and frenzied nuclear war exercises by the U.S. are evidently an open challenge to the DPRK, its dialogue partner," said the KCNA.

International Herald Tribune, 11 December 2007

Ahmadinejad calls U.S. report on Iran nuclear program a 'step forward'

TEHRAN: President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Tuesday called a U.S. intelligence report concluding that Iran had stopped its nuclear weapons program four years ago a "step forward" in comments that marked a change from his usually harsh anti-Western rhetoric. Although Iran denies it ever had such a program, Ahmadinejad said an "entirely different" situation between the two countries could be created if more steps like the intelligence report followed.

Voice of America, 11 December 2007

Bush: Iran Must Explain Hidden Nuclear Weapons Program

President Bush says Iran must explain why it hid a past nuclear weapons program from United Nations inspectors. VOA White House Correspondent Scott Stearns reports, Iran says it is enriching uranium only for a peaceful civilian program to generate electricity. President Bush is trying to keep international pressure on Iran after last week's National Intelligence Estimate found that Tehran stopped its nuclear weapons program four years ago.

Xinhua, 12 December 2007

Iran urges U.S. to take more steps to end nuclear disputes

BEIJING, Dec. 12 -- Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says a recent US report on Iran's nuclear intentions, is a positive step and urges Washington to take more steps to end years of disputes. But US President George W. Bush has kept his strong rhetoric on Iran. He's asked Iran to explain to the world its nuclear intentions. Iran's president says a US move to publish a report that contradicts charges Iran is intent on building nuclear weapons is "positive". He has urged Washington to take more steps to end years of disputes.

Reuters, 12 December 2007

Olmert says Iran still seeking nuclear bomb

JERUSALEM, Dec 11 (Reuters) - Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said on Tuesday that Iran was still pursuing a nuclear weapon and called on the international community to pressure the Islamic Republic to suspend its uranium enrichment programme. It was the first time Olmert commented publicly on a U.S. intelligence report published last week that said Iran's nuclear weapon programme had been on hold since 2003.

The Hindu, 12 December 2007

Pakistan tests cruise missile, can hit targets inside India

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan on Tuesday test fired a medium range nuclear capable cruise missile, with a range of 700 kilometres, which could hit targets inside India, even as army vowed to respond strongly any attempt to seize country's atomic arsenal. The test firing of the missile was successful and "part of a continuous process of validating the design parameters for this weapon system", the army said in a statement.

The Hindu, 12 December 2007

N-arms in safe hands, says Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan asserted its nuclear weapons were in safe hands on Tuesday as it test-fired a cruise missile called Hatf 7. This is third time this year that Pakistan has test fired the 700-km range missile, also called Babur, said to be indigenously developed. The missile, which is capable of carrying nuclear weapons, was tested in March, and then in July this year. A military statement said the test-firing was successful and a part of a continuous process of validating the design parameters of the missile.

Xinhua, 12 December 2007

Russia urges DPRK to supply nuclear information to IAEA

MOSCOW, Dec. 11 (Xinhua) -- Russia has asked the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to supply all the necessary information about its nuclear program to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) by Dec. 31, Itar-Tass news agency reported on Tuesday. "Russia welcomes the disabling of three nuclear sites in North Korea. We also welcome the progress made at the six-nation negotiations on the nuclear problem of the Korean Peninsula," Itar-Tass quoted Representative to the IAEA Grigory Berdennikov as saying.

Reuters, 12 December 2007

Major powers fail to agree on Iran sanctions: U.S.

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - World powers failed to agree on Tuesday on final elements of a new U.N. sanctions resolution against Iran over its nuclear program, but the United States hopes to get a deal within weeks, the State Department said. Senior officials from the United States, China, Russia, Germany, France and Britain spoke via conference call for about 1-1/2 hours and were still working on finalizing the sanctions resolution, said State Department spokesman Sean McCormack.

The Hindu, 12 December 2007

Talks with IAEA as per understanding with Left: Pranab

New Delhi, (PTI): In the backdrop of fresh threat from CPI(M) over the nuclear deal, the government on Tuesday suggested that the talks with IAEA were proceeding as per the understanding with the ally. "We have an institutional mechanism to discuss nuclear cooperation," External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, told reporters referring to the UPA-Left committee when asked about the threat issued by CPI(M) General Secretary, Prakash Karat.

Korea Times, 12 December 2007

US Senator Demands Condition to Removing NK From Terrorism List

A senior U.S. senator introduced a resolution setting conditions for removing North Korea from the U.S. list of terrorism-sponsoring nations, one of the key incentives offered for Pyongyang's denuclearization. Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kansas) submitted Resolution 399 on Monday and so far has three co-sponsors. The resolution urges the administration not to lift the designation until it can be demonstrated that North Korea is no longer engaged in proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and no longer counterfeiting American currency.

Daily Times, 13 December 2007

Iran must explain nuclear programme halt: Bush

WASHINGTON: President George W Bush called on Iran to explain why it had a secretive nuclear weapons programme, and warned that any such efforts must not be allowed to flourish for the sake of world peace. Iran is dangerous, Bush said after an Oval Office meeting Tuesday with Italian President Giorgio Napolitano. We believe Iran had a secret military weapons programme, and Iran must explain to the world why they had a programme.

The Washington Post, 13 December 2007

Misreading the Iran Report

The extraordinary spectacle of the president's national security adviser obliged to defend the president's Iran policy against a National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) raises two core issues: How are we now to judge the nuclear threat posed by Iran? How are we to judge the intelligence community's relationship with the White House and the rest of the government?

Reuters, 13 December 2007

Iran and IAEA end latest round of nuclear talks

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Iran and a team from a U.N. watchdog ended the latest round of talks in Tehran on Wednesday aimed at answering questions about the Islamic Republic's nuclear work, an Iranian news agency said. Experts from the two sides held three days of talks as part of an August agreement to clear up suspicions about Tehran's atomic plans, the ISNA news agency said, without saying whether the meeting produced any results.

The Hindu, 13 December 2007

Govt to quicken talks with IAEA: Kakodkar

Mumbai (PTI): Unfazed by CPI(M)'s threat to the government to end the talks with

IAEA, its chief nuclear negotiator on Wednesday said India will quicken negotiations with IAEA on India-specific safeguards but will ensure that it is done "satisfactorily". "We are doing our best and try to complete the process as soon as possible but everything has to be done satisfactorily as the negotiations are comprehensive and complex," Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Dr Anil Kakodkar said as India concluded its second round of talks with the IAEA in Vienna on Wednesday.

Xinhua, 13 December 2007

U..S. calls on DPRK to declare all nuclear activities

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12 (Xinhua) -- The United States said Wednesday that it hopes the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) will keep its promise and disclose all its nuclear activities by the end of this year. "We are hopeful that we will have the complete declaration provided by around the year end," U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Chris Hill said. The DPRK is making progress in disabling its nuclear facility, Hill said.

The Hindu, 13 December 2007

The first report on how India achieves nuclear safety

Recent debates on the Indo-US agreement for cooperation concerning the peaceful use of nuclear energy compelled the media to look at nuclear power more benignly. Members of the public realised for the first time that nuclear power has a role to play in the energy mix of the country. Those who have concerns on nuclear safety, must read the first National Report for the Convention on Nuclear Safety (September 2007), to find out how India achieves nuclear safety.

Voice of America, 14 December 2007

North Korea Responds to Bush Letter Demanding Full Nuclear Disclosure

North Korean leader Kim Jong Il has replied to a personal letter from President Bush that urged the reclusive leader to fully disclose his country's secretive nuclear activities. The White House says the reply was sent through diplomatic channels in New York. North Korea and the United States do not have formal relations.

The Hindu, 14 December 2007

Russia, Iran reach accord on nuclear plant

We have resolved all the problems with the Iranians, said Sergei Shmatko, president of Russian state contractor Atomstroieksport, on Thursday. We have agreed on the construction schedule. I shall define it more precisely at the end of December, Mr. Shmatko was quoted by the Itar-Tass news agency as saying.

Jane's Weekly, 15 December 2007

Political fallout - The threat to Pakistan's nuclear stability

On 28 November, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf stepped down as Pakistan's army chief and handed over control to General Ashfaq Pervez Kiani, former vice chief of army staff and a Musharraf loyalist. Musharraf was sworn in as a civilian president on 29 November in an effort to dispel a growing political crisis between him and the Supreme Court and save his relationship with the military, who felt increasingly undermined by Musharraf's actions.

The Hindu, 15 December 2007

CPI(M) issues fresh threat to UPA on nuclear deal

New Delhi (PTI): In a fresh threat, the CPI(M) has warned that if the Congress-led UPA Government went ahead with the Indo-US nuclear deal then all the "political parties" need to be prepared for elections "any time". Party General Secretary Prakash Karat said the Left was not in favour of India forging a strategic alliance with the US and it does not want the Government to proceed with the agreement.

Indian Express, 15 December 2007

Musharraf takes charge of Pak's nuclear arsenal

Islamabad, December 13: President Pervez Musharraf today tightened his grip on Pakistans nuclear arsenal by issuing an ordinance that made him the head of the National Command Authority (NCA) which is responsible for development and control of atomic weapons. The ordinance gives a more structured character to the NCA, which was originally set up in February 2000 to address concerns about the safety of the nuclear arsenal.

Asia Times, 15 December 2007

Ties on Iran's nuclear program loosen

It's a tough pill for Washington and its European allies to swallow, yet the fact that the new US National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) warrants a considerable revision of Western strategy toward Iran's nuclear program is inescapable and, already, new cracks in the previously rigid US stance on Iran can be discerned.

Economic Times, 15 December 2007

India working on doubling nuclear strike range: official

NEW DELHI: India announced Wednesday it was working on a new ballistic missile capable of hitting targets 6,000 kilometres (3,800 miles) away, which would more than double its current nuclear strike range. "Agni-IV is still in the design stage, and so we cannot give a date for the trials to begin," said V. K. Sarawat, the head of India's strategic missile programme.

Times of India, 17 December 2007

New UN sanctions on Iran unlikely: Ahmadinejad

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has said in a live television interview that there were no grounds for imposing new UN sanctions on his country. Ahmadinejad dismissed the third round of sanctions that the US and other countries have been pushing for to force Iran to halt its enrichment of uranium. "In my opinion, there is no justification," he said on Sunday. "I think it is very unlikely that they, the West, is ready to pressure the agency, once again."

The Hindu, 18 December 2007

Russia ships nuclear fuel to Iran's plant

Russia has begun nuclear fuel shipments to Iran in a major breakthrough that opens the way for starting up the 1000-MW reactor it is building at the Bushehr atomic power plant

in eight months time. The Russian company building the Bushehr reactor, Atomstroieexport, said on Monday the first batch of low-enriched uranium-235 fuel was delivered to the Bushehr plant on December 16 under the control of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The rest of the 180 fuel pellets would be sent to Bushehr in the next two months, Atomstroieexport said on its website.

The Hindu, 18 December 2007

Pakistan's nukes safely guarded: Narayanan

India believes that the nuclear weapons in Pakistan are 'pretty safely guarded,' making it 'extremely difficult' that they will fall into the wrong hands. The U.S. is paying 'very close attention' to the issue. It said the government had a contingency plan in place to deal with a situation of the neighbouring country's nuclear weapons being used by radical elements. "It is extremely difficult for any outside element just walking away with a readymade nuclear device," National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan told Karan Thapar on India Tonight programme on CNBC TV18.

The Asian Age, 19 December 2007

Left will demand report on N-talks after poll results

The Left parties will formally ask the government about the status of the civil nuclear energy agreement with the United States as soon as the Gujarat election results are declared. The next course of action will depend on the government's response. The Indian team has returned from Vienna after the second round of negotiations with the International Atomic Energy Agency on the India-specific safeguards agreement. There has been no word from either Atomic Energy Commission chief Anil Kakodkar or the government about the results of these negotiations, and whether the draft agreement has been finalised.

The Asian Age, 19 December 2007

'Iran has right to peaceful use of N-energy'

Backing Iran's right to peaceful use of nuclear energy, India has said "no country can put pressure" on Tehran in that respect as it sought establishment of strategic partnership with the oil-rich Persian country. Foreign secretary Shivshankar Menon, who was in Tehran for talks on expansion of ties in energy and other fields, emphasised that the issue of Iran's controversial nuclear programme should be investigated "only" by the IAEA.

Korea Times, 19 December 2007

US Defense Nominee Unsure If NK Will Give up Nuclear Ambitions

A senior U.S. defense official on Tuesday questioned whether North Korea is willing to give up its nuclear ambitions, and stressed that Pyongyang can prove its commitment to denuclearization with its nuclear disclosure, due by the end of this month. James Shinn, tapped as assistant secretary of defense for Asian and Pacific security affairs, said the current troop levels in South Korea and Japan are appropriate for U.S. defense needs but would be open to continuous evaluation for increase.

Tehran Times, 20 December 2007

NIE, IAEA reports influenced Russia's approach toward Iran: politicos

The recent IAEA and NIE reports have made Russia adopt a more realistic approach and finally ship nuclear fuel to Iran, MP Mohammad-Ali Rudaki said here on Wednesday. The latest National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) report on Iran, which was compiled by sixteen U.S. intelligence agencies, and all the reports by the International Atomic Energy Agency have said that Iran does not have a nuclear weapons program.

Chosun Ilbo, 20 December 2007

U.S. Team to Inspect N.Korea Dismantlement

A delegation of U.S. government officials is visiting North Korea from this Wednesday through Sunday to check on the disablement process under way at the Yongbyon nuclear complex. U.S. State Department Spokesman Tom Casey said the group, led by Korea expert Kim Sung, will also seek to advance the nuclear dismantlement process under the six-party framework during talks with their North Korean counterparts by urging a prompt declaration of all atomic programs.

The Times of India, 20 December 2007

French nuclear group targets third of new reactors

Areva, the world's largest nuclear power group, wants to account for a third of all new nuclear reactors built worldwide between now and 2030, company chief executive Anne Lauvergeon has said. "Between now and 2030 we believe there could be 100 to 300 (nuclear reactors built around the world)," she told the French National Assembly's economic affairs committee on Wednesday. "We want a third of that business."

The Hindu, 22 December 2007

France for nuclear pact with India

French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Bernard Kouchner said on Friday that Paris was keen on having a pact with India for cooperation in the civil nuclear sector. It wanted the groundwork to start soon so that the pact was ready by the time the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) accepted India as part of the nuclear mainstream, Mr. Kouchner said.

The Asian Age, 22 December 2007

N. Korea tubes had traces of uranium

Traces of enriched uranium have been found on smelted aluminium tubing provided to the United States by North Korea in its effort to prove it was not operating a secret nuclear programme, the Washington Post reported. Citing US and diplomatic officials, the Post said the discovery by US scientists apparently contradict North Korea's claim that its acquisition of thousands of aluminium tubes were for conventional purposes rather than a nuclear programme.

Tehran Times, 22 December 2007

Russia says Bushehr reactor to open late 2008

Iran's Bushehr nuclear power station will not be operational until late 2008 at the earliest, the state-run Russian contractor building the site has said. The announcement came days after Iran received its first delivery of enriched uranium from the company. Russian officials have said previously that the plant could be working within six months of

deliveries starting.

IRNA, 22 December 2007

Bushehr NPP operation to place Iran atop list of ME, Muslim states in nuclear power plants

Inauguration of Bushehr nuclear power plant, which is under construction in cooperation with Russia, will put Iran on top of the list of countries in the region and the world of Islam in terms of possession of nuclear power plants. Iran's ambassador to Russia, Gholam-Reza Ansari told IRNA that though it should have been operational long ago and that certain technical and financial problems, created by Russians, were the factors prolonging the project, operation of Bushehr nuclear power plant would give way to new conditions in the region and Iran.

Korea Times, 23 December 2007

Seoul, Washington Discuss Disabling NK Nuclear Program

South Korea and the United States on Saturday discussed ongoing efforts to get North Korea to disclose its nuclear weapons program and disable all facilities that could be used to make weapons of mass destruction. Diplomatic sources in Seoul said U.S. officials led by Sung Kim confirmed that the disabling of the Yongbyon reactors is on schedule.

The Asian Age, 24 December 2007

Nuke deal likely to be on hold

The Congress party, silent under the shock of decisive defeat in Gujarat, is not likely to be in a rush now to operationalise the civilian nuclear energy agreement and force a mid-term poll on the nation. Sources said that the alternative formula proposed earlier by minister of external affairs Pranab Mukherjee could come into play now, where the government virtually allows the deal to lapse without firming the safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Chosun Ilbo, 24 December 2007

N.Korea 'Refusing to Dispose of Nuclear Fuel'

North Korea claims that nuclear fuel and a cooling tower are not subject to disablement of nuclear facilities under a six-nation agreement signed in February, it emerged Saturday. According to diplomatic sources in Washington, a U.S. delegation of nuclear experts has visited North Korea several times, demanding the North dispose of unused nuclear fuel and destroy the nuclear cooling tower during the disablement stage.

Chosun Ilbo, 24 December 2007

Two Koreas, China to Discuss Non-Fuel Aid to N.Korea

The two Koreas and China will meet in Pyongyang this week to discuss providing non-fuel energy aid to North Korea. Under a deal reached in early October countries to the six-party nuclear talks agreed to provide North Korea with energy-related materials and equipment equivalent to the value of 500,000 tons of heavy oil. In return the North must declare and disable its nuclear facilities by the end of the year.

The Statesman, 24 December 2007

Iran to float tender for 19 nuke plants

What could further increase the West's worry over Iran's nuclear ambitions, a top Iranian official said today the Islamic country would soon float an international tender for construction of 19 new 1,000-megawatt nuclear power plants. The measure will be taken in line with a Majlis (Iranian parliament) approval for generating 20,000 megawatt of electricity to meet domestic demand, said Mr Kazem Jalali, rapporteur of the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee of Iran, official IRNA news agency reported.

The Statesman, 24 December 2007

N Korea denies running uranium enrichment programme

North Korea has again denied it has a uranium enrichment program, a South Korean official said today, just days before Pyongyang's year-end deadline to declare its nuclear programmes. The USA accused North Korea in late 2002 of seeking to secretly enrich uranium in violation of an earlier nuclear disarmament deal, an accusation that sparked the latest nuclear standoff.

AFP, 24 December 2007

Iran's first home-built nuclear plant ready in 9 years: MP

Iran's first home-built nuclear power plant is scheduled to come online in around nine years, a top MP said on Monday, citing a report by the Iranian atomic energy organisation. A Russian contractor is building Iran's first atomic power plant in the southern city of Bushehr but the 360 megawatt plant in Darkhoyen in the western Khuzestan province would be its first using domestic technology.

People's Daily, 25 December 2007

Iran's first home-made nuclear power plant to be operational in 9 years

A senior member of the parliament said on Monday that Iran's first home-grown nuclear power plant is scheduled to be operational in about nine years, local ISNA news agency reported. The power plant "is scheduled to come online by the (Iranian) year of 1395 (March 2016 - March 2017)," said Alaeddin Boroujerdi, head of the parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission, in a report issued by Iran's Atomic Energy Organization.

The Indian Express, 25 December 2007

N-deal quivers

As the world becomes impatient with the UPA government's vacillations on the nuclear deal so patently in India's favour, there is mounting speculation that the Congress leadership might abandon it, following the Gujarat defeat. The Congress leadership has no one to blame but itself for turning a rare diplomatic triumph for the nation into a seemingly unbearable political burden at home. After letting bureaucratic opposition delay the deal, it let the Communists frame the issue as a political surrender to the US.

Chosun Ilbo, 26 December 2007

N.Korea Likely to Miss Critical Deadline

North Korea is likely to miss an agreed deadline to declare all its nuclear programs and stockpiles and disable nuclear facilities by the end of this year. A South Korean

government official on Tuesday said, "There is no sign yet that North Korea has decided to make an accurate declaration. It's improbable that the North will declare its nuclear programs by the end of the year, with only a week remaining before the New Year."

Chosun Ilbo, 27 December 2007

N.Korea Mulling Delay in Nuclear Disablement

North Korea is mulling a delay to the disablement of its key nuclear facilities because heavy fuel oil it has been promised as a reward is late, Japan's Kyodo News reports from Pyongyang. Hyon Hak-bong, the deputy director of the North Korean Foreign Ministry's American affairs bureau, said Wednesday his country is considering "inevitably adjusting the speed of nuclear disablement" due to a delay in the provision of energy promised under six-nation denuclearization agreements.

Chosun Ilbo, 28 December 2007

N.Korea Hints at Halt in Nuclear Disablement

North Korea has warned it could halt the process of disabling its nuclear facilities until it gets energy aid it feels entitled to as a reward, casting a pall over the future prospects of six-nation denuclearization talks. Hyon Hak-bong, deputy director of the U.S. affairs bureau at the North Korean Foreign Ministry, on Wednesday said the other nations in the six-party talks "are dragging their feet on their fulfillment of economic compensation duties. We have no choice but to control the pace of the disablement of nuclear facilities."

Chosun Ilbo, 28 December 2007

Ex-Foreign Minister Gloomy on N.Korean Nuke Issue

Yoon Young-kwan, the first foreign minister of the Roh Moo-hyun administration, on Thursday offered a gloomy prognosis for North Korea's progress in ending its nuclear ambitions. Yoon, a professor at Seoul National University, said it "seems highly likely that North Korea will remain uncooperative about its nuclear problem for about a year to a year and a half."

AFP, 28 December 2007

Russia delivers more nuclear fuel to Iran: official

Russia has delivered a second consignment of nuclear fuel to Iran's Bushehr power plant, the official news agency IRNA quoted the deputy head of the Iranian Atomic Energy Organisation as saying on Friday. "The second consignment of fuel for the Bushehr nuclear plant arrived in Iran on Friday," Ahmad Fayazbaksh said, adding that the delivery was the same amount supplied in the first consignment on December 17.

Guardian, 28 December 2007

How Benn encouraged sale of nuclear reactors to the Middle East

Tony Benn, secretary of state for energy, encouraged Britain's nuclear industry to export reactors to Middle Eastern countries. In a letter to the prime minister in early 1977 he explained: "Both Kuwait and Iran have expressed definite interest in buying from the UK and [I] have encouraged NPC (the Nuclear Power Company) to compete. Benn sought approval from Number 10 for the export push. Iran was at that time a friendly trading partner of the west.

IRNA, 29 December 2007

Russian company: necessary equipment for Bushehr power plant delivered

Spokesman for Toul Company, the Russian producer of Bushehr nuclear power plant fuel said the necessary equipment for commissioning nuclear reactor in Bushehr has been delivered. According to the report of Russian news agency " Ria-Novosti" on Saturday, the company's spokesman added, "Along with the second consignment of nuclear fuel for Bushehr power plant, part of important and necessary equipment for the nuclear reactor, including protective guide cylinders have been dispatched to the power plant."

AFP, 30 December 2007

Iran nuclear plant to start in summer 2008: FM

Iran on Sunday insisted its first nuclear power station would be launched in the summer of 2008, despite the plant's Russian constructors saying it will not go on line until the end of the year. "The Bushehr nuclear power station will launch at a capacity of 50 percent next summer," said Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki, quoted by the state news agency IRNA.

Chosun Ilbo, 31 December 2007

What Next as N.Korea Misses Nuclear Deadline?

North Korea has failed to declare its nuclear programs and stockpiles as promised by year's end. Following the disablement of nuclear facilities, the disclosure is the next stage in a roadmap to make the Korean Peninsula nuclear-free. But there are no signs of progress as North Korea and the U.S. disagree over the North's alleged uranium enrichment program.

Chosun Ilbo, 31 December 2007

U.S. 'Reaching Out to N.Korean Military Leaders'

Washington is attempting to include senior North Korean military officers in bilateral talks with Pyongyang to help it implement its promise to abandon its nuclear ambition, the Wall Street Journal reported Saturday. The newspaper said the U.S. initiated this new policy as it is not fully convinced whether the North Korean military leadership will comply with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il's instruction to abandon nuclear assets and programs.

Chosun Ilbo, 31 December 2007

New U.S. Bomb Could Target N.Korean Bunkers

The U.S. has developed a large bomb that can penetrate up to 60 m underground, or a fortified 20-story underground bunker, before exploding. According to the websites of the U.S. Forces Korea and the U.S. Air Force, a U.S. Air Force team of weapons specialists recently test fitted a 20-foot mock-up of the bomb in the bomb bay of a replica of the B-2 stealth bomber at Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri.

People's Daily, 31 December 2007

Larijani: Iran ready for nuclear technology co-op with Egypt

Visiting Iran's former chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani said here on Sunday that his

country has the willingness to cooperate with Egypt in the field of nuclear technology, Egypt's official MENA news agency reported. Speaking at a press conference held at the Egyptian Press Syndicate, Larijani said that Iran is fully ready if asked to cooperate with Egypt on nuclear technology.

BBC News, 31 December 2007

Iran gives early date for reactor

Iran says its Bushehr nuclear power will start working in mid-2008. The announcement seems to contradict the state-run Russian contractor building the site which gave a start date of the end of the year. The Iranian announcement came two days after Iran received a second delivery of enriched uranium from the company. The plant is still being built. Tehran says it will not stop its domestic enrichment programme despite the threat of more UN sanctions.