

The Korea Herald, 1 February 2008

Domestic issues put N.K. nukes on back burner

Silence appears to be the most appreciated virtue lately among the six parties, particularly between the usually antagonistic leaders of the United States and North Korea. Despite the trying delay in the denuclearization process, both U.S. President George W. Bush and North Korean leader Kim Jong-il have refrained from provoking each other during their recent appearances. In a private meeting with Chinese presidential envoy Wang Jiarui on Wednesday, North Korean leader Kim Jong-il was quoted as saying that his country remains committed to implementing the six-party agreement, according to China's official Xinhua news agency.

NPR, 1 February 2008

Radioactive Cargo on Train to Iran Investigated

Authorities in the Central Asian Republic of Kyrgyzstan are investigating why a train traveling from Kyrgyzstan to Iran was carrying radioactive cargo. The amount of radioactive material was not enough to make a weapon. But the Kyrgyz government says it still doesn't know how or when the material was placed on board the train. On Dec. 31, 2007, emergency workers gathered at Belovodskaya station in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, to greet a train that was turned back after it set off radiation detectors in Uzbekistan en route to Iran.

AFP, 1 February 2008

Security Council states want more time on Iran sanctions: France

France said Friday that some UN Security Council members were asking for more time to consider additional sanctions on Iran over its controversial nuclear program. Without naming the countries, French envoy to Washington Pierre Vimont said a "few" members wanted to wait for Iran to clear up questions over its nuclear program with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog.

Dawn, 2 February 2008

France, Japan, US cooperate on N-reactors

France, Japan and the United States agreed on Friday to cooperate in making prototypes of so-called "4th generation" nuclear reactors, according to statements released by each country's energy ministries. These sodium-cooled reactors, which would not come on line until mid-century, produce more energy per unit of fuel than nuclear reactors currently in operation. But early prototypes have been plagued with problems. The liquid sodium cooling agent is highly volatile, bursting into flames if it comes into contact with air, and exploding if it comes into contact with water.

AFP, 3 February 2008

Russia says UN resolution sends 'clear signals' to Iran: Interfax

A proposed UN resolution contains "clear signals" to Iran that it must return to full compliance with the UN's nuclear watchdog, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak said in an interview published Sunday. "When this document is published you will see that it contains clear signals to Iran and anticipates a certain widening of the sanctions regime imposed by the Security Council earlier," Kislyak told the Interfax news

agency.

The Indian Express, 4 February 2008

N-deal in mind, Pranab warns: problems if we don't fall in line

Sending a clear message to the UPA's Left allies who are dead opposed to the Indo-US nuclear deal, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee, while calling for clean energy options like nuclear energy, today said India was "not living in isolation" and "if we do not fall in line tomorrow, there may be sanctions and problems". Speaking at the 176th annual general meeting of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce, Mukherjee said: "Those who argue that thermal power is enough for us are wrong."

Dawn, 4 February 2008

Chashma nuclear power plant restart

The Chashma Nuclear Power Plant has resumed power generation after eight-day closure on account of annual maintenance and repairs, sources told Dawn on Sunday. However, the Chashma Hydro Power Project, which was closed a few days ago owing to development of a major fault in its turbines, is yet to start functioning despite hectic efforts. The nuclear plant contributes 300 megawatts (MW) of electricity to Wapda grid and the resumption of power generation is likely to help Wapda reduce power deficit and overcome loadshedding affecting the whole country.

People's Daily, 4 February 2008

IAEA chief says progress made on Iranian nuclear report

Visiting Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Mohamed ElBaradei said here on Sunday the UN nuclear watchdog was making "good progress" in finishing outstanding issues on Iran's nuclear file. ElBaradei, who is expected to issue a report around Feb. 20 on his visit to Iran and IAEA's inquiry into Iran's nuclear activity, made the remarks following talks with Arab League Secretary General Amr Moussa.

The Indian Express, 5 February 2008

'N-deal outstanding symbol of India's new stand'

Terming the Indo-US civil nuclear deal as the "most outstanding symbol" of the "India's new standing" in the world, Indian ambassador to the America Ronen Sen has said that civil nuclear cooperation with New Delhi was an issue on which there was "complete agreement" among Russia, European and other countries. "The India-US civil nuclear initiative, which has attracted a lot of media attention, is the most outstanding symbol of the new relationship between the two countries as well as of Indias new standing in the world", Sen said.

Hindustan Times, 5 February 2008

Military action can't solve Iran nuclear issue: IAEA Chief

Visiting UN nuclear watchdog chief Mohamed ElBaradei has warned against military action to solve the Iranian nuclear issue, the Egyptian official MENA news agency reported. In an interview with Egyptian TV, ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said on Monday that a military strike to settle the Iranian nuclear issue would complicate the situation and send the Middle East

into a vicious cycle of violence.

The Indian Express, 6 February 2008

Pranab: we don't wish to see more n-weapon states

India on Tuesday said that nuclear proliferation is the biggest security threat facing Asia and the country does not wish to see the emergence of "additional weapon states" as it would endanger international security. "We do not wish to see the emergence of additional nuclear weapon states, for it will only further endanger international security. And our goal continues to be a world free of nuclear weapons," said External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee at the 10th Asia Security Seminar organised by the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) in the capital.

The News, 6 February 2008

Iran's defiance: think tank

The threat of US military action against Iran has decreased, even though Tehran seems determined to flout United Nations resolutions, a leading security think tank said on Tuesday. There is no near-term prospect of US strikes on Iran even though Tehran is making progress with a new generation of nuclear centrifuges, said the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). December's US National Intelligence Estimate report concluded that Tehran had shelved its nuclear weapons programme in 2003. Iran rejects Western fears that it is covertly developing nuclear weapons.

The Times of India, 6 February 2008

Iran will have nuclear weapon in three years: Mossad

Israel's Mossad spy agency estimates Iran will develop a nuclear weapon within three years and continue to provide rockets to regional armed groups, a newspaper reported on Tuesday. Mossad director Meir Dagan, in an intelligence assessment presented to Israel's powerful foreign affairs and defence committee yesterday, said the Jewish state would face increased threats on all fronts, Maariv daily said.

The Hindu, 7 February 2008

US to continue cooperation with India to complete N-deal

The United States on Thursday said it will "continue cooperation" with India to achieve the goal of getting the Indo-US civilian nuclear agreement completed. White House Deputy Press Secretary Tony Fratto was asked in his briefing as to where the two sides stand on the accord given that Washington's pointsman for the deal, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns, is scheduled to depart the State Department by the end of March. "We'll continue our cooperation in order to achieve that goal of getting the agreement completed," Fratto said.

The Hindu, 7 February 2008

Call for debate on nuclear energy issues

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) believes that there should be extensive discussions with the public on all issues related to the use of nuclear energy as a safer alternative to traditional forms. Talking to reporters here on Wednesday, UNFCCC executive secretary Yvo de Boer said nuclear energy had a role to

play in meeting the commitments of halving the emissions by 2050, but there were issues related to its use. "Also, the use of nuclear energy would differ from country to country as there is a strong public opposition to it in some countries, apprehensions regarding waste disposal and even security," he said.

The News, 7 February 2008

Iranian rocket raises N-suspicion: Russia

Russia said on Wednesday Iran's test launch of a rocket raised suspicions about the real nature of Tehran's atomic programme, in what could signal a hardening of its stance towards the Islamic Republic. Iran launched a rocket on Monday designed to carry its first locally-made research satellite next year, showing the country's advances in ballistics at a time when Western powers are already wary it may be developing a nuclear weapon. "Any movement in terms of creating such a potential weapon naturally worries us and others," Interfax news agency quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov as telling reporters.

Jerusalem Post, 7 February 2008

Iran reportedly testing advanced centrifuges

Iran is testing an advanced centrifuge at its Natanz nuclear facility, diplomats in Vienna said Wednesday. The new centrifuge would help Iran boost its speed of uranium enrichment. Iran had 3,000 P-1 centrifuges - an old type of centrifuge - operating by November, but Reuters quoted diplomats tracking Iran's dossier as saying that it had started mechanical tests, without nuclear material inside, of a more efficient model at Natanz.

AFP, 7 February 2008

US to send fuel aid to NKorea despite nuclear list delay

The United States said Wednesday it planned to compensate North Korea with a second shipment of fuel oil even though the reclusive state has not provided a full declaration of its nuclear programs under an aid-for-disarmament deal. "We have another shipment which we are beginning to get going on this week," said Christopher Hill, the US envoy to the six-party talks aimed at ending North Korea's nuclear weapons drive.

Wall Street Journal, 8 February 2008

U.S. Pact With North Korea

As the Bush administration seeks to cinch a disarmament deal with North Korea, questions about Pyongyang's past defense cooperation with Syria have emerged as perhaps the principal stumbling block to a successful completion of the pact. North Korea missed a Dec. 31 deadline to fully declare the extent of its nuclear activities, as called for under a six-country negotiating process. But U.S. negotiators are voicing guarded confidence that they will eventually gain disclosure from Pyongyang on two key elements of its nuclear program: the number of atomic weapons and North Korea's believed attempt to develop a uranium-enrichment capacity to produce nuclear fuel.

The Times of India, 8 February 2008

US pressure could aggravate nuclear stand-off: North Korea

North Korea warned the United States on Friday that pressuring the communist nation over its nuclear weapons programs will only aggravate the stand-off and could lead to an "explosive crisis." The North's main Rodong Sinmun newspaper issued the warning, accusing what it called "hard-line conservative forces in the US" of seeking to increase pressure on Pyongyang in an attempt to disrupt efforts to end the nuclear dispute through dialogue.

IRNA, 8 February 2008

Pakistan reaffirms support to Iran on nuclear programme

The Pakistani Foreign Minister was speaking at a Public Talk entitled "Middle East Policy" with Dr Manouchehr Mohammadi, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Education and Research, at the Institute for Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI). The Pakistani Foreign Minister highlighted how Iranian negotiations with the IAEA have been satisfactory. Mr Inam ul Haque, also the chairman of ISSI, introduced the talk with comments on the shared culture, religion, history and civilisation between Iran and Pakistan.

Hindustan Times, 9 February 2008

Burns says 'time is wasting' on India nuclear deal

Saying "time is wasting," US Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns said on Friday he hoped India could quickly get international approvals needed for the US-India civil nuclear deal to go through this year. The agreement would give India access to US nuclear fuel and equipment for the first time in 30 years even though New Delhi has tested nuclear weapons and refused to join nonproliferation agreements.

The News, 9 February 2008

US warns Iran over nuclear centrifuges

A top US envoy warned Iran on Friday that its pursuit of more advanced uranium-enriching technology would intensify the long-running international standoff over its disputed atomic drive. "Any Iranian attempt at a more advanced centrifuge would be an escalation of Iran's ongoing non-compliance with its obligation to suspend all enrichment-related activities," the US ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency, Gregory Schulte, told AFP.

Wall Street Journal, 9 February 2008

Korean Intelligence (Michael McConnell)

'While Pyongyang denies a program for uranium enrichment, and they deny their proliferation activities, we believe North Korea continues to engage in both.' So said Director of National Intelligence Michael McConnell in his statement to the Senate Intelligence Committee this week. The statement didn't get much attention, but it should because it contradicts the impression presented elsewhere in the Bush Administration that North Korea has given up its nuclear plans.

BBC News, 9 February 2008

Nuclear power's history compiled

A National Nuclear Archive is to be created in Caithness in the Highlands at a cost of

£20m. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) said it would potentially hold between 20 and 30 million digital, paper and photographic records. They will primarily concern the history, development and decommissioning of the UK's civil nuclear industry since the 1940s. The NDA will invest £8m over three years to help get the project going. The archive is being proposed in response to the NDA's statutory obligation to manage public records, keeping them safe and making them more accessible to the public and the nuclear community.

Zee News, 9 February 2008

Future nuclear reactors may come up in populated areas

Future nuclear power reactors could come up near populated areas as scientists develop newer and safer technologies to generate clean energy. The much-awaited Advanced Heavy Water Reactor (AHWR) may be the first reactor to come up in populated areas like the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC). The pre-licensing review of the technology demonstrator reactor has been completed by the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) and BARC is making a case for reducing the exclusion zone for the reactor.

The Hindu, 10 February 2008

It's now or never to get the deal, says Mulford

Pressing for conclusion of the India-U.S. civil nuclear agreement during the Bush administration, Washington has suggested that it is almost "now or never" for New Delhi to get such a deal as non-proliferation groups may force additional conditionalities. U.S. Ambassador David Mulford said the deal was good for India and would make the country the centre of a civil nuclear industry in the world. "If this is not processed in the present Congress, it is unlikely that this deal will be offered again to India."

IranMania News, 10 February 2008

Kouchner, ElBaradei to discuss Iran

The French Foreign Ministry says Bernard Kouchner is to meet the IAEA Chief Mohamed ElBaradei in Paris to discuss Iran's nuclear case, PressTV reported. The Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the French Foreign Minister will meet next Thursday with the primary aim of discussing new developments relating to Iran's nuclear dossier, Arab Times reported on Saturday.

Korea Times, 10 February 2008

US Keeps Up Pressures for NK Denuclearization

U.S. officials are putting increasing pressure on North Korea for denuclearization amid prolonged tension between Washington and Pyongyang over North Korea's failure to submit a list of its nuclear programs. But North Korea said that it will not be helpful for the United States to take only a hard-line stance against Pyongyang. Christopher Hill, the top U.S. nuclear negotiator, said at a Senate foreign affairs hearing Wednesday that he is still suspicious of North Korea's explanation over its uranium enrichment program (UEP).

The Hindu, 11 February 2008

Mulford's statement condemned by CPI

The Communist Party of India (CPI) has criticised the United States for impressing upon India to sign the civil nuclear deal during the Bush administration. "This shows the U.S. desperation and an attempt to pressurise India into signing the agreement," CPI national secretary and Member of Parliament D. Raja said on Sunday. U.S. Ambassador David Mulford, in an interview to a private television on Saturday, said that the deal was good for India and would make the country the centre of a civil nuclear industry in the world. "If this is not processed in the present Congress, it is unlikely that this deal will be offered again to India," he said.

The News, 11 February 2008

DPRK nuclear, China mly programmes a worry: Japan

North Korea remains a nuclear proliferation risk and China's military programme lacks transparency, Japan's Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura warned here on Sunday. "The North Korean issues have made the regional security environment extremely difficult since the beginning of the 1990s," Komura told an international security conference in this southern German city. "The international community must continue to be united in demanding that North Korea provide 'a complete and correct declaration' of all its nuclear programmes, including nuclear weapons," and disable nuclear facilities, he said.

BBC News, 11 February 2008

Iran stands firm on nuclear row

Iran's president has warned that his government will not back down one iota in its nuclear dispute with the West. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was speaking at a rally marking the 29th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution. He said Western pressure over the nuclear issue was just "playing with pieces of paper". He said it would be a serious mistake for the UN Security Council to pass a new resolution toughening sanctions over Iran's nuclear programme. Mr Ahmadinejad also announced that Iran would soon be launching two more rockets into space in preparation for Iran putting a satellite into orbit.

Middle East Times, 11 February 2008

Disagreements could delay Iran nuclear report: diplomats

The UN's latest widely-awaited report on Iran's nuclear programme could be delayed by disagreements between atomic watchdog chief Mohammed ElBaradei and his technical staff, diplomats said Monday. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has not announced a publication date, but diplomats close to the Vienna-based watchdog expected it to come out around February 20. The release could now be put off by a few days because of differences between ElBaradei and his technical staff over the report's findings, one Western diplomat told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The Hindu, 12 February 2008

CPI(M) to step up campaign against deal

The Left will ask the United Progressive Alliance Government not to conclude the India-U.S. nuclear deal with the Bush administration, which would turn lame duck in a few months. "We would like the Government of India to initiate a comprehensive talk with the new administrative dispensation that would come to power in the U.S. after the

coming presidential elections," CPI(M) general secretary Prakash Karat said on Monday.

The Hindu, 12 February 2008

Nuclear power sector: no private players for now

The private sector will not be allowed to enter the civilian nuclear power segment for at least another seven years, according to a top government official. The private sector's entry is conditional on a separate set of rules for the country strategic programme and other alterations in the Atomic Energy Act. "Work is in progress and is at varying stages. This means that the private sector will not get an opportunity till 2014," said the official who did not wish to be quoted. Ever since India signed the 123 Agreement on the nuclear deal with the United States, the private sector has been enthusiastically examining the opportunities for setting up nuclear power plants.

The Hindu, 13 February 2008

Talks finalised for more Russian nuclear reactors

India and Russia have concluded negotiations for constructing additional nuclear reactors and resolved to double bilateral trade in three years. Both also signed two memoranda of understanding (MoU) on Tuesday for promoting defence ties and expanding trade. "We have finalised negotiations in regard to reaching an agreement on cooperation in the construction of additional nuclear power plants in India. We [also] affirmed our commitment to build on our defence relations, which is an important pillar of our strategic partnership," Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said after an interaction with the visiting Russian Prime Minister Victor Zubkov on Tuesday.

The Hindu, 13 February 2008

Pakistan nuclear energy technicians kidnapped

There is no information yet about the fate of the two nuclear energy technicians who were kidnapped on Monday in the north-west frontier or of Pakistan's Ambassador to Afghanistan who went missing near the Afghan border the same day. The technicians of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission were kidnapped by masked gunmen from Sheikh Badin village in the troubled Dera Ismail Khan district. They were on a geological survey of the area. Police say the kidnappers could be militants or a criminal gang.

The Hindu, 13 February 2008

Kakodkar optimistic

Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Anil Kakodkar on Tuesday expressed optimism about clinching an agreement with the IAEA and implementing the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal. "I always work in a positive way. If everything works out, we will do it," he told reporters here when asked whether the talks with the IAEA were going on as planned and would be completed in time. Mr. Kakodkar, who initiated the talks for India-specific safeguards with the IAEA, said a lot of technical details need to be discussed step-by-step. "Talks are going on. Work is in progress."

The Hindu, 13 February 2008

Nuclear deal could be delayed: Canadian envoy

Canada's High Commissioner to India David M. Malone said on Tuesday that the India-

U.S. nuclear deal would probably be put off by a year or two, "unless something changes politically in Delhi." Interacting with the faculty and students of the School of Management Studies on the Cochin University of Science and Technology campus here, he said countries such as Russia and France, which would like to cooperate actively with India in this area, would wait along with the U.S.

The Hindu, 13 February 2008

Burns for expeditious action on India-U.S. nuclear deal

Outgoing U.S. Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns on Tuesday sought to put pressure on India over the controversial 123 nuclear deal, saying that "we don't have all the time in the world" to complete it. Speaking at the Foreign Press Association here, Mr. Burns said that despite 'broad' bipartisan support for the deal in Washington, it was important to push it through before the change of guard at the White House. "We should now move forward and complete it," he said.

The Hindu, 14 February 2008

Pakistan tests nuclear missile

Pakistan on Wednesday test-fired the short-range, nuclear-capable Ghaznavi ballistic missile which can target northern and western Indian cities as the government vowed to "retain a strong conventional and unconventional deterrence". A strategic missile group of the Pakistan Army conducted a successful training launch of the Ghaznavi or Hatf-III missile with a range of 290 km at the end of an annual field training exercise.

The Indian Express, 14 February 2008

Diplomats: Iran Processes Uranium Gas

Iran's new generation of advanced centrifuges have begun processing small quantities of the gas that can be used to make the fissile core of nuclear warheads, diplomats told The Associated Press on Wednesday. The diplomats emphasized that the centrifuges were working with minute amounts of uranium gas. One diplomat said Tehran has set up only 10 of the machines - far too few to make enriched uranium in the quantities needed for an industrial-scale energy or weapons program.

The News, 14 February 2008

North Korea must account for suspected N-programme: Seoul

A year-old nuclear pact has virtually shut down North Korea's production of bomb-making plutonium but it must still account for a suspected uranium-based weapons programme, Seoul's envoy said on Wednesday. Top nuclear negotiator Chun Yung-Woo, marking the first anniversary of the landmark aid-for-disarmament accord, put a positive spin on the process which is currently deadlocked. "It is now nearly impossible for North Korea to produce additional plutonium for the time-being," Chun told a briefing. Eight of 11 measures which the North promised to take to disable its nuclear facilities have been completed, he added, saying it would take more than a year to reactivate the plants when disablement is completed.

The Hindu, 15 February 2008

Rice insists on Hyde Act for accord with the NSG

The Bush administration has said an agreement between India and the Nuclear Suppliers Group which will allow New Delhi to engage in nuclear trade will be supported by the U.S. only if it is 'consistent' with the Hyde Act. "We will support nothing with India in the NSG that is in contradiction to the Hyde Act. It will have to be completely consistent with the obligations of the Hyde Act," Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told the House Foreign Affairs Panel.

The Indian Express, 15 February 2008

US Intel Links Iran With Nuke Bomb Bid

The U.S. has shared new intelligence with the International Atomic Energy Agency that it claims is evidence Iran was trying to make a nuclear weapon, diplomats said Thursday. One of the diplomats said Washington also gave the IAEA permission to confront Iran with at least some of the information in an attempt to pry details out of the Islamic republic as part of the U.N. nuclear watchdog's attempts to investigate Iran's suspicious nuclear past.

IRNA, 15 February 2008

Global summit in London seeks to pave way for nukes-free world

A global summit for a nuclear weapons free world is being opened in London Saturday by the city's mayor Ken Livingstone. The two-day conference brings together international figures, including the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Sergio Duarte and former US President Bill Clinton's nuclear advisor Thomas Graham, now working to promote new disarmament talks. Other leading peace activists campaigners from across the world include the Council of Europe Goodwill Ambassador Bianca Jagger as well as a survivor of the US atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945.

IRNA, 15 February 2008

Hashemi: Iran determined to develop peaceful nuclear program

Iran's senior presidential advisor Mojtaba Samareh Hashemi says Iran will continue development of its peaceful nuclear program even if the UN Security Council decides to issue more sanctions against it. In an interview with Japanese NHK TV prior to a visit to Japan, Hashemi criticized the group of five UN Security Council members plus Germany for issuing more sanctions against Iran and said "Such a resolution lacks any legal basis and would further downgrade the UN status." Iran also believes that development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes under the IAEA supervision is significant, he added.

The Hindu, 16 February 2008

Rice has spilled the beans, says BJP

The Bharatiya Janata Party said on Friday that the recent statement of U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice vindicated its stand that the Hyde Act over-rides the India-U.S. nuclear deal. Party spokesperson Prakash Javadekar pointed out that the government was all along saying that the Hyde Act was an internal matter of the U.S. government and India was concerned only with the 123 Agreement. Now, Ms. Rice had very clearly stated that any agreement between India and the Nuclear Suppliers Group would be acceptable to the U.S. only if it complied fully with the Hyde Act.

The News, 16 February 2008

US urged to break N-deadlock with DPRK

An influential pro-North Korean newspaper thought to reflect the hermit state's views on Friday urged US negotiators to break the deadlock in a pivotal aid-for nuclear disarmament deal. Chosun Sinbo, published by pro-Pyongyang Koreans in Japan and considered as offering insight into Pyongyang's mind, also urged Washington to keep its side of the agreement by abandoning its 'hostile policy' toward the communist state. "There won't be any progress unless the US side changes, no matter how sincere the DPRK (North Korea) is in its own efforts," the paper said in an editorial.

DNA India, 16 February 2008

N-deal on course, says Kakodkar

US ambassador David Mulford may have sounded a warning bell about the Indo-US nuclear deal by claiming that it could be done either now or never. But Indian officials seem to be unperturbed by these statements. Dr Anil Kakodkar, chairman of Atomic Energy Commission and one of the architects of the July 2005 agreement, said they were working for a completely stable agreement. "It cannot be precariously stable," he said on being asked whether the deal was on the edge and in danger of falling through. When asked about Condoleeza Rice's recent statement on the deal confirming to the Hyde Act, Kakodkar said that the deal has to be consistent with the framework of the July 2005 agreement.

IranMania News, 17 February 2008

Iran resolute in nuclear program: official

Senior Iranian presidential advisor, Mojtaba Samareh-Hashemi, has said his country is determined to continue its peaceful nuclear program, PressTV reported. "Iran will continue its peaceful nuclear program even if the UN Security Council imposes more sanctions against the country," Samareh-Hashemi said in an interview with Japan's NHK Television on Friday. Samareh-Hashemi also criticized the efforts made by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany to issue another resolution for more sanctions against Iran.

DNA India, 18 February 2008

Kakodkar confident of nuclear deal coming through

Atomic Energy Commission Chief and Department of Atomic Energy Secretary Anil Kakodkar on Monday expressed confidence in India signing the nuclear deal with the United States. Dr Kakodkar said, "I am always positive in this regard. The delay in signing the agreement is mainly due to technical process which, as usual, takes a long time since we have to study the agreement keeping in view the benefits the country can achieve." When asked if time was running out as US President George W Bush's tenure was coming to an end, he said "well, the point is we have to get it done as early as possible.

IranMania News, 18 February 2008

Good progress in Iran-IAEA cooperation: official

An Iranian diplomat has said that good progress has been made in cooperation between Tehran and the International Atomic Energy Agency, PressTV reported. In a Friday meeting with the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in New York, Iran's permanent representative to the UN, Mohammad Khazaei, outlined the latest developments in Iran-IAEA cooperation, saying Tehran believes that it has given responses to all outstanding questions in a complete and satisfactory manner.

The Hindu, 19 February 2008

U.S. help must for nuclear trade: Saran

Even as the Left parties have been opposing nuclear cooperation with the United States in preference to Russia and France, Prime Minister's Special Envoy Shyam Saran has said that none of these countries has the 'necessary standing' to open the process for accommodating India in the global nuclear trade. India will not be able to have civil nuclear trade with the international community without the United States taking the "lead on our behalf," he said here on Monday.

Yonhap News, 19 February 2008

N. Korea's nuclear envoy in Beijing for talks with Hill

North Korea's top nuclear negotiator Kim Kye-gwan arrived here Tuesday for talks with his U.S. counterpart Christopher Hill on resuming the stalled multilateral talks over Pyongyang's nuclear program. Kim plans to meet with Hill later in the day in Beijing to seek ways of breaking the deadlock over a dispute concerning Pyongyang's declaration of all of its nuclear programs, according to diplomatic sources here.

Yonhap News, 19 February 2008

N. Korea urges Japan to withdraw from six-party talks

North Korea said Tuesday Japan should pull out of the six-party process of denuclearizing the communist state, saying Japan has no "political ability" to deal with such "sensitive and important matters" like the dispute. Minju Josen, a daily of the North Korean Cabinet, accused Tokyo of trying to hinder the dialogue aimed at peacefully resolving the dispute by raising the issue of Japanese citizens kidnapped decades ago by North Korean agents.

The Times of India, 19 February 2008

Regime change in US won't affect talks: Kakodkar

Atomic Energy Commission chairman Anil Kakodkar has said efforts to ensure success of the Indo-US nuclear deal would go on regardless of regime change in the US. Speaking to reporters after delivering a lecture on Monday at the National Institute of Advanced Studies on India's nuclear energy status, he said: "It is a step-by-step process and takes time. I am not willing to conjecture on what will happen to the nuclear deal in connection with the US presidency, I don't want to say whether the deal will be seen through before or after the Bush presidency, We will continue to talk with the US."

The Times of India, 19 February 2008

Govt renews efforts to build N-consensus

As negotiations on India's IAEA safeguards agreement wear on and the ticking clock

points to a narrowing window of opportunity to get the deal through, the government has renewed its efforts to build consensus on the agreement that is now a victim of domestic politics. Delivering a lecture on Monday, Shyam Saran, PM's special envoy on the nuclear deal, said, "India retains its legal right to test, that has not been compromised. Irrespective of whether we have an agreement or not, there will be consequences if we test. We are asking for changes in the international environment, but in the NSG, 43 out of 45 members have signed the CTBT. To believe that they will not react if you carry out a test is naive."

The Indian Express, 20 February 2008

N-deal tops agenda during US Senate team's visits

Less than a week after concerns were raised in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the Bush Administration's efforts to obtain a 'clean exemption' for India from the Nuclear Suppliers' Group, a three-member team, headed by the Committee chairman Senator Joseph Biden is slated to reach India to hold discussions with top officials on Wednesday on key foreign policy issues, including the nuclear deal. "We will also visit India, to discuss, among many other things, a peaceful nuclear cooperation deal in Delhi," Senator Biden said in a statement before leaving for his trip.

The Hindu, 20 February 2008

N-deal opponents must widen their vision: Kasturirangan

Describing the Indo-US civil nuclear deal as a "balanced agreement", noted space scientist and Rajya Sabh member, K Kasturirangan, on Tuesday said international cooperation was essential for technological advancement. "I would like to clearly say that international cooperation is essential for advancements in technology sectors. This tradition has been followed in space technology," he told reporters here. Asking those opposing the deal to "widen their vision", the scientist said both countries have moved forward considerably with respect to the agreement, that aims to end India's decades-old nuclear isolation.

The Hindu, 21 February 2008

U.S. Senators set July-end timeline

India must complete all necessary steps to conclude the nuclear deal by July-end to ensure that the U.S. Congress approves it before the presidential election. "Otherwise, it will be very difficult for Congress to ratify it. If it is not ratified by Congress by July end, there is no prospect," three influential Senators from the United States told Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during an interaction on Wednesday. This is the first time a timeline for the deal has been set, though several from the U.S. administration, including Ambassador David Mulford, had repeatedly said time was running out for the deal.

The Hindu, 21 February 2008

We want clean NSG exemption: Kakodkar

Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Anil Kakodkar said here on Wednesday that India wanted the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to give a clean exemption without any condition to enable it participate in international civil nuclear cooperation. "We are talking about cooperation with all interested partners. But the fact still remains that any

one of them will get translated into reality only after the NSG changes its guidelines. We want a clean exemption for India without any condition. When that happens this will be possible and for that to happen, we have to go through all these processes step-by-step," he said.

The Indian Express, 21 February 2008

Group Claims Iran Speeding Up Nuke Plans

An exiled Iranian opposition group claimed Wednesday that Tehran was speeding up a program to develop nuclear weapons. "The Iran regime entered a new phase in its nuclear project," said Mohammad Mohaddessin of the Paris-based National Council of Resistance of Iran. Mohaddessin claimed that Tehran has established a command and research center near a Tehran university. And, he said, Iran is developing a nuclear warhead for use on medium-range missiles at a site on the southeast edge of Tehran. Mohaddessin also claimed that the regime obtained aid from North Korea.

The Indian Express, 22 February 2008

US should support India's UNSC bid: US Congressman

Describing India as a 'crucial and proven partner', a Florida lawmaker has urged the US and other 'like-minded' countries to push for the induction of India as a permanent membership at the UN Security Council. "Rather than remaining on the sidelines when it comes to implementing reform at the United Nations, the United States and like-minded nations should actively advocate reform of the UN Security Council, beginning with permanent membership for the world's largest democracy: India," Republican Congressman Gus Bilirakis said in an opinion piece in The Washington Times.

The Indian Express, 22 February 2008

UN Introduces Iran Nuclear Sanctions

Britain and France formally introduced a Security Council resolution Thursday calling for a third round of sanctions against Iran over its failure to suspend uranium enrichment. The United States pushed hardest for the sanctions, but China and Russia - the remaining permanent council members - along with Germany have been in general agreement on them. The six nations circulated a draft earlier calling for bans on travel and equipment that can be used in civilian and nuclear programs, more monitoring of Iran's financial institutions and inspection of air and sea cargo heading to or from Iran.

The Indian Express, 22 February 2008

New US Info on Iran Nuclear Program

For the second time in recent weeks, Washington has given the U.N. nuclear watchdog information on what it says were Tehran's attempts to make atomic weapons, but much of it is of doubtful value, diplomats said Thursday. The diplomats also told The Associated Press that, after handing over a large file last week to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.S. agreed to let the Iranians look at some of the material so they could respond, but Tehran has shown no interest.

The Indian Express, 23 February 2008

Iran: No Justification for UN Sanctions

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad called on the U.S. and its allies Saturday to "apologize" for accusing Iran of seeking nuclear weapons, a day after the U.N. nuclear watchdog released its latest report on Iran. Ahmadinejad said the International Atomic Energy Agency report vindicated Iran and warned that Tehran would take unspecified "decisive reciprocal measures" against any country that imposed additional sanctions against Iran. The IAEA report said many past questions about Iran's nuclear program had been resolved but it highlighted Tehran's continued refusal to halt uranium enrichment.

BBC News, 23 February 2008

Iran defiant over sanction threat

Iran's leader Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says that no amount of UN sanctions will deter Tehran from its nuclear path. "If they want to continue with that path of sanctions, we will not be harmed. They can issue resolutions for 100 years," he said in a TV interview. His remarks came after a UN report said Iran was being more transparent - but had not given "credible assurances" that it was not building a bomb. Following the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said there was a "very strong case" for a third round of sanctions over the disputed nuclear programme.

The Hindu, 25 February 2008

Talks with IAEA from today

India will begin another round of talks with IAEA in Vienna from Monday for negotiating the safeguards agreement. - PTI

The Indian Express, 26 February 2008

Hopeful on nuclear deal, President tells House

With crucial talks with the IAEA underway in Vienna, President Pratibha Patil today expressed the hope that the India-US nuclear deal will be possible. "It is our hope that civil nuclear cooperation with the USA and other friendly countries will become possible," Patil said in her first address to the Parliament at the start of the Budget session. Patil's remark defines the latest Government position. Given the opposition of both the Left and the BJP to the deal, the issue is set to stir domestic politics all over again once the Government makes any forward move. The Left is firm against operationalisation of the deal while the US is trying to persuade New Delhi to take a final decision by May.

The Hindu, 26 February 2008

Left parties sound a note of warning

The Left parties on Monday reiterated their opposition to the India-U.S. civilian nuclear deal and warned the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government that it would risk its stability if it decided to go ahead with the nuclear deal. The Left parties were reacting to hints given by President Pratibha Patil in her address to Parliament that the deal would sail through. Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader Sitaram Yechury said the "stand on the nuclear deal remains the same." His Polit Bureau colleague M.K. Pandhe said the government had promised to bring the proceedings of its negotiations with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to the Left-UPA Joint Committee on the

Nuclear Deal before taking any final decision.

BBC News, 26 February 2008

Rice urges China to press N Korea

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has urged Chinese leaders to put pressure on North Korea to move ahead quickly with nuclear disarmament. She was speaking during a two-day visit to Beijing, her first for over a year. Ms Rice met President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao, and held talks with foreign minister Yang Jiechi. China is North Korea's closest ally and chairs the six-nation talks which produced a historic disarmament agreement a year ago. Under the agreement, Pyongyang was promised aid and diplomatic concessions in exchange for disabling its nuclear plant at Yongbyon and submitting a full declaration of all its nuclear activities by the end of the year.

The Indian Express, 27 February 2008

Clock ticking on N-deal, says US Defence Secy

Pressing for early conclusion of the civil nuclear deal, the US said 'the clock is ticking' and hoped the UPA government would be able to end the domestic deadlock on the issue in time. US Defence Secretary Robert Gates, who held wide-ranging talks with Defence Minister A K Antony, said the nuclear agreement has 'positive global consequences' besides serving the interests of both the countries. "The clock is ticking in terms of how much time is available to get all the different aspects of an agreement implemented," Gates said.

The Indian Express, 27 February 2008

N-deal talk with IAEA progressing well: Kakodkar

Discussions with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on the Indo-US Nuclear deal were progressing well, Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission Anil Kakodkar said on Wednesday. "Discussions are progressing...there are complex issues involved that have to be taken forward step by step," he told reporters on the sidelines of the inauguration of a three day international conference on Nano Science & Technology organised by the Department of Atomic Energy in Chennai. Asked how soon the talks were expected to be finalised, he said "we would like to do it as fast as possible. But we have to see that India's requirements are properly met".

The Indian Express, 27 February 2008

Nuclear-capable undersea missile test fired

India on Tuesday conducted the first complete system test firing of its Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM), christened K-15, from a fixed undersea platform off the Vishakapatnam coast. However, it remains unclear whether the nuclear-capable missile, with a range of over 700 km, met all test parameters or was a 'partial success' like the first attempted test firing of the Agni III in July 2006. Officials said that the missile, fired from a submersible pontoon, was seen breaking the sea surface before taking off into the sky but it remains to be confirmed whether it managed to stay on the designated trajectory to validate all its systems.

The Indian Express, 27 February 2008

US hopeful on nuclear deal: Gates

US Defence Secretary Robert Gates, who arrived here on Tuesday on his first visit to India after assuming office in December 2006, said he was hopeful that India would clear the civil nuclear deal - although it was not on the agenda of his tour - and make way for Washington to take it forward. "We are certainly hopeful that India can get done what it needs to, so that we can get done what needs to be done, and get this agreement completed," Gates told reporters, adding that he believed the nuclear agreement "is a good deal for both the countries".

The Hindu, 28 February 2008

Sagarika will spark arms race: Pakistan

India's underwater test-firing of a new missile would spark an arms race in the region, but Pakistan would endeavour to ensure that it did not have any adverse impact on the region, Navy chief Admiral Muhammad Afzal Tahir said in Karachi on Wednesday. He was responding to a question from a journalist on the test-firing of Sagarika, a nuclear-capable missile fired from underwater. "Well, my reaction is that this is going to start a new arms race in the region. We are aware of these developments and these developments are taking place with a view to putting nuclear weapons at sea and it is a very, very serious issue."

The Hindu, 28 February 2008

U.S. for India joining missile project

While pressing India for the early signing of the military-to-military logistics sharing agreement (LSA), the United States was cautiously optimistic of drawing New Delhi into its plans for the global missile defence project. At Defence Ministry-level talks between both countries on Wednesday, India expressed misgivings about two other pacts sought by Washington. The LSA has been pending with the Union Cabinet for over a year, primarily due to objections from the Left parties. The Left is opposed to the pact as it fears that some Indian military bases could become permanent ports of call for the U.S. military engaged in non-U.N. authorised military operations.

The Hindu, 28 February 2008

Talks with IAEA going on 'step by step': Kakodkar

Negotiations on the nuclear deal with the U.S. are now centred on addressing India's requirements as a country that has an established nuclear development programme, Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Anil Kakodkar said on Wednesday. Interacting with reporters on the sidelines of a conference on nano science and technology, Dr. Kakodkar said that given the complex technical details involved in the issue, the discussions with the International Atomic Energy Agency were being taken forward 'step-by-step.' Dr. Kakodkar, who initiated talks for India-specific safeguards with the IAEA, said discussions on this aspect of the deal were progressing and the intent was to reach an agreement 'as fast as possible.'

The Indian Express, 28 February 2008

US Defence Secy's turn to say: deal clock ticking

US Secretary of Defence Robert Gates today said he has conveyed it to the Indian

leadership that while Washington understands the domestic political compulsions of the UPA government on the nuclear deal, it is important to realise that the 'clock is ticking' in the US as this is an election year and the Senate needs time to ratify the agreement. Underlining that the civilian nuclear agreement 'serves the interest of both countries', Gates said: "The real key here is providing time for our Senate to ratify the final arrangement. This being an election year, there is an open question of how long the Senate will be in session beyond the summer and September."

The Indian Express, 28 February 2008

US: IAEA Report Raises Questions on Iran

A new report by the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog raises "very troubling questions" about Iran's engagement in weapons production and will open a new page in the probe into Tehran's alleged activities, a senior U.S. official said Thursday. The International Atomic Energy Agency released a report last week saying that suspicions about most past Iranian nuclear activities had eased. But it also pointed to Tehran's continuing efforts to enrich uranium. It called weaponization "the one major unsolved issue relevant to the nature of Iran's nuclear program."

The Times of india, 28 February 2008

India and IAEA conclude fifth round of talks

India and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Thursday concluded the fifth round of talks on India-specific safeguards agreement which is crucial for Indo-US civil nuclear deal. The consultations which began on Monday were to have concluded on Wednesday but were extended by a day, IAEA sources said. There was no official word from either side on the outcome of the talks. India and IAEA are engaged in preparing an agreed text for India-specific safeguards. It is not immediately clear whether this was the final round of talks or a more discussions were required for finalizing the template on safeguards specifically for India, a key requirement before the Indo-US deal is operationalised.

The Hindu, 29 February 2008

India has to act courageously on nuke issue: Burns

The chief U.S. negotiator of a nuclear agreement with India said it will be impossible to complete this year unless India quickly makes a "courageous decision" to endorse it. President George W. Bush, who leaves office next January, considers the pact a major accomplishment of his administration. Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns said Thursday that a dispute within the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's governing coalition is jeopardizing an agreement that benefits both nations. "I'm afraid it's time for the government to decide. We hope the decision will be positive," said Burns, who is retiring from the State Department next week.

The Hindu, 29 February 2008

We respect internal debate on the nuclear deal: French envoy

French Ambassador to India Jerome Bonnafont said while France respects the internal debate now going on in India over the civilian nuclear deal, it still believes that concluding the deal in nuclear energy will be a win-win situation for India as well as the

world. Mr. Bonnafont said India had a pressing need on the energy front and since 1998, France was trying to work with India to define a new system through which India could enter the area of tapping civil nuclear options. He however noted that there were several other areas where the two countries could work together.

The Indian Express, 29 February 2008

Iran Sanctions Expected Saturday

Britain and France said Thursday they expect the Security Council to vote Saturday and approve new U.N. sanctions against Iran for refusing to suspend uranium enrichment. The two countries cosponsored the resolution that would impose a third round of sanctions on Iran. The two previous sanctions resolutions were adopted unanimously, but this one is currently facing difficulties from four non-permanent council members who have raised a variety of concerns - Libya, Indonesia, South Africa and Vietnam.

The Indian Express, 29 February 2008

US: No link between n-deal and hi-tech trade

Seeking to delink high-technology trade from the proposed civilian nuclear agreement, the United States on Thursday said it was committed to make it easier for 'responsible' Indian companies to import dual-use controlled items. "I do not want to make any hard connection between high-technology trade between the two countries and the civilian nuclear deal. We are here to find constructive ways to facilitate trade in high-technology products between India and the US," the US Under Secretary of Commerce for Industry and Security, Mario Mancuso, said on Thursday.

The Indian Express, 29 February 2008

Too late for n-deal, Advani tells Gates

It's too late to rescue the Indo-US nuclear deal, but the BJP considers India and US as natural allies, Leader of Opposition L K Advani told US Secretary of Defence Robert Gates. Gates returned 'happy and pleased', after realising that the BJP's opposition to the deal does not mark any change in the party's stand towards the US, party sources told The Indian Express. Advani told Gates that his party considered the deal as India's co-option into the nuclear non-proliferation regime, which all parties have been opposing for long.

The Korea Herald, 29 February 2008

U.S. 'ready to lift sanctions' on N. Korea

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in Japan on Wednesday that Washington is ready to remove political sanctions on North Korea in order to move to the next phase of denuclearization. Her remarks came as chief U.S. nuclear negotiator Christopher Hill extended his stay in Beijing this week for further discussions. "North Korea now needs to file a declaration that can give confidence that we know what we are dealing with going forward. We are ready to discharge our obligations, the United States is ready to discharge its obligations," Rice said in an interview with Japan's NHK television.