

Reuters, 1 July 2005

US Senate Defeats Move to Stop Nuclear Bomb Study

WASHINGTON: Senate Democrats on Friday failed to stop the Energy Department from studying the feasibility of a "bunker buster" nuclear bomb the Bush administration is considering. The bill would provide funds to study the experimental weapon that would penetrate the earth and explode to demolish buried enemy targets. The funds were included in a bill that would fund Energy Department activities in the fiscal year starting on Oct. 1. A House of Representatives version of the bill does not contain funds to study the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator. "We're talking about a study. What's the harm in getting the study?" asked Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John Warner, a Virginia Republican. Democrats said it would send a dangerous signal to other countries that the United States was headed toward development of a new class of nuclear weapons, thus encouraging them to develop their own arsenal. "What moral authority do we have to ask others to give up their nukes if we're determined to develop a new generation of nuclear weapons of our own?" asked Massachusetts Sen. Edward Kennedy, a Democrat.

China Daily, 1 July 2005

US, North Korea discuss nuclear row

U.S. and North Korean officials discussed competing ideas about Pyongyang's nuclear program on Thursday as part of an informal conference that is trying to help break a logjam in six-party talks. The contacts -- at an invitation-only New York academic conference of about four dozen people -- appeared to be heavily circumscribed by Washington and there were only modest expectations about an outcome. "If it's useful, you'll soon hear of a date" for resuming six-party talks aimed at persuading Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear ambitions, one U.S. official said. The conference provided a rare opportunity for U.S. and North Korean officials to communicate directly during a critical period in efforts to end Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programs. North Korea for over a year has boycotted talks seeking a diplomatic solution and U.S. officials say they increasingly believe Pyongyang is determined to keep its nuclear programs. Analysts say continuing administration divisions undermine President Bush's commitment to a diplomatic solution and some increasingly fear Bush will never agree to any deal that props up Pyongyang. "I've reached the conclusion that the administration is no longer willing and capable of signing up to any solution that perpetuates Pyongyang," said Charles Pritchard, a former North Korea negotiator under President Bill Clinton who is now with the Brookings Institution.

The Tribune, 1 July 2005

The arms agreement

The agreement charting a 10-year course for defence cooperation between India and the United States, formalising the intentions already expressed on both sides, is indeed a landmark. It is broad ranging, covering not only arms sales to India but also co-production and outsourcing, joint operations, and defence R&D. It is the culmination of various parallel efforts by the Defence Policy Group, the High Technology Cooperation Group, and the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) Initiative put in place in January 2004, where India and the US agreed to cooperate in civil nuclear and space programmes, high-tech trade and dialogue on missile defence. Its signing is a testimony to the fact that the two countries have come a long way from the days when they were a little more than "estranged democracies." (Those were the days, indeed, when the Nixons and Kissingers could bad-mouth India and Indians without compunction!) Apart from the ending of the Cold War itself, and the rise of India as an economic and technological powerhouse, there were two significant events - the nuclear tests of May 1998, and the attacks of September 11, 2001 - that shaped, and continue to shape, the nature and direction of the relationship.

International Herald Tribune, 1 July 2005

India can be America's best friend (Brahma Chellaney)

NEW DELHI: At a time when anti-Americanism has spread across the globe, a new poll shows that more people in India have a positive view of the United States than in any other nation surveyed. The poll, conducted by the Pew Global Attitudes Project, raises a larger question: How long will it be before the courtship between India and the United States leads to a strategic partnership? Despite a congruence of vital national interests and a shared political goal to build a long-term strategic relationship, the United States has yet to forge a true partnership with India. To be sure, there have been important shifts in U.S. thinking, largely on account of India's rising geopolitical importance, its abundant market opportunities and its role in ensuring power equilibrium in Asia. The United States and India are discussing cooperation on missile defense, nuclear energy, space and high technology. The two have also opened a quiet dialogue on India's largest neighbor, China, whose rise is likely to pose the single biggest challenge to world security in the years to come.

Dawn, 2 July 2005

US, N. Korea hold talks

WASHINGTON, July 1: US and North Korean officials had discussions on Thursday on efforts to resolve the dispute over Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programme, the State Department said on Friday. Spokesman Sean McCormack said Joseph DeTrani, the US envoy to six-party talks on the nuclear issue, met senior North Korean diplomat Ri Gun at a conference in New York. "Yesterday, in the context of the seminar, there was contact between Mr DeTrani and Mr Ri Gun," Mr McCormack said. But he added: "This was not a negotiation."

The Associated Press, 2 July 2005

North Korea Wants U.S. to Withdraw Remark

NEW YORK: North Korea told the United States that it must withdraw its description of the communist nation as an "outpost of tyranny" and treat Pyongyang as a friend if it wants nuclear talks to resume, a senior North Korean official said Friday. North Korea's director general of North American affairs, Li Gun, told reporters after a two-day conference on northeast Asian security that the next step is up to the Americans. Speaking in English, Li said, "We told them (the U.S.) to just withdraw the words 'outpost of tyranny.' We demand it." Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called North Korea one of the world's "outposts of tyranny" during her confirmation hearings in January. She defended the characterization last month, telling Pyongyang if it wants economic help it must give up its nuclear weapons and return to the six-party talks. The State Department confirmed that Joseph De Trani, the top U.S. official to the six-party talks on North Korea's nuclear weapons program, and James Foster, who is in charge of the department's office of Korean affairs, resumed contact with the North Koreans at the conference. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said there were no negotiations between the two sides at the closed meeting.

Aljazeera, 1 July 2005

U.S. Senate approves nuclear bomb study

The U.S. Senate approved a Defense Department research into the feasibility of a "bunker buster" nuclear bomb, officially called the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator. By a vote of 53-43, the Senate refused to block the \$4 million in funds to study the "bunker buster", which could penetrate underground targets. It is now up to the House and Senate negotiators to decide on the fate of the funding bill for the Energy Department's bunker-buster research. The Pentagon believes that 70 countries are trying to protect their key military assets from aerial strikes by burying them underground. Supporters of the weapon say that its funding was only for a feasibility research to see whether a new, sufficiently-hardened casing can be developed for existing warheads to determine whether it could penetrate deep into earth and destroy reinforced underground bunkers. But scientists say that the weapon is not efficient and dangerous. "A bunker buster cannot penetrate into the Earth deeply enough to avoid massive casualties and the spewing of millions of cubic feet of radioactive materials into the atmosphere," said Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif.

The New York Times, 3 July 2005

Editorial: Fusion Power, Elusive and Alluring

A standing joke among scientists is that fusion power - the holy grail of those seeking a boundless supply of energy to supplant fossil fuels - is always decades away. That has been the guesstimate for half a century, and it remained the guesstimate last week when an international consortium announced that it had finally resolved an internal struggle over where to site an experimental nuclear fusion reactor. It will be in southern France, with Japan receiving some consolation-prize benefits. According to a timeline issued by the consortium, this new reactor could put the world on a path toward a commercial fusion reactor by 2050. Or maybe not. The task is so daunting that fusion power may never prove practical. Even so, it is a dream worth pursuing in a world that may be desperate for new energy sources as fossil fuel supplies dwindle and global warming rises. Fusion reactors, which smash atomic nuclei together instead of splitting them, as a conventional nuclear reactor does, are undeniably alluring. They would produce no greenhouse gases, would rely on abundant sources of fuel and would be safer than current nuclear reactors, and their radioactive waste would be easier to handle. But fusion - the nuclear reaction that powers the sun and the awesome blast of the hydrogen bomb - has proved devilishly difficult to harness for peaceful purposes.

Dawn, 3 July 2005

US Senate votes to revive controversial nuclear weapons programme (Maxim Kniazkov)

WASHINGTON: The US Senate has moved to revive a controversial weapons research programme aimed at enabling the US military to conduct precision nuclear strikes against hardened underground facilities, including those suspected of storing weapons of mass destruction. By a vote of 53-43, senators defeated on Friday an amendment sponsored by California Democrat Dianne Feinstein that would have prohibited use of government funds to study the feasibility of the so-called Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator, also known as the "bunker-buster" bomb. The failure of the measure means leading US nuclear research laboratories will in all likelihood receive in fiscal 2006 four million dollars for continued work on the bomb that was interrupted last year under intense

international and domestic criticism. The action came ahead of a Group of Eight industrial nations summit in Scotland, where nuclear proliferation issues are expected to dominate the security agenda. Senator Feinstein insisted expert data available to her indicated that there could be no such thing as a "clean" nuclear strike and any use of a "bunker buster" would result in massive radioactive contamination and substantial loss of life.

The Hindu, 3 July 2005

"We will get matching weapons"

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan said on Saturday that it would do whatever it could to get matching weapons systems in the event of India acquiring armaments but would not join the arms race. "Pakistan will get anything required for its defence but will not join any arms race," Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz told reporters here. He was fielding questions on the India-U.S. defence agreement signed between Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee and U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in Washington. "Pakistan is interested that resources must be used for education, health and infrastructure development in South Asia for the betterment of the masses," Mr. Aziz said. He, however, said Pakistan would continue to strengthen its defence as peace could be achieved through strength and not weakness.

Dawn, 3 July 2005

Editorial: An arms race in the offing?

Quite understandably, Pakistan has reacted strongly to the 10-year US-India defence pact that paves the way for the flow of American arms and technology into India in a big way. On Thursday, the foreign office warned that the induction of advanced weapons systems into the region could destabilize South Asia's strategic balance. He said that, while Pakistan remained opposed to any arms race, it would maintain a "credible minimum" deterrence. Elaborating, he made it clear that he was referring to both conventional and non-conventional defence. On Wednesday, Gen Jahangir Karamat, our ambassador in Washington, said that elements of the Indo-American defence collaboration pact did concern Islamabad. The transfer of technology and the joint production of weapons, he said, could disturb the region's strategic balance. Like the foreign office spokesman, Ambassador Karamat, too, said that Pakistan would have to strengthen its defence either by acquiring missile systems or by increasing its own missile capability. Both the statements, thus, make it clear that the Indo-US defence agreement would lead to an arms race in the subcontinent threatening peace and stability in the region.

The Indian Express, 2 July 2005

Editorial: India's vision void (Bharat Karnad)

Few developments are as full of promise and danger for India as its burgeoning relationship with the United States. Had the Indian government configured the right set of "long haul" policies, there was every possibility of the two countries enjoying huge mutual benefits and, colaterally, firming up regional and international peace and stability. Unfortunately, in apparently seeking only short term gains and trying to please the US, there is the likelihood of the Manmohan Singh government sacrificing the irreducible Indian national security interests and turning India into a US client state in the region. It is a posture that cannot endure because an economically and militarily hefty India will soon begin to chafe at the bit. The looming problems could have been avoided had the Congress-led coalition government shown the self-belief and self-confidence to articulate an expansive strategic vision, an "Indian Monroe Doctrine", to mark out an Indian "sphere of responsibility" to match the country's legitimate great power ambitions. New Delhi could have exhumed the idea of "distant defence" popularised by Lord Minto, Governor-General of British India in the 1810s, a concept encompassing the Indian Ocean basin, the Gulf, the Central Asian Republics and the South East Asian littoral inclusive of Vietnam.

The Asian Age, 5 July 2005

US visited Indian nuclear sites

NEW DELHI: The Americans were given a conducted tour of India's nuclear installations under the guise of mutual concern over nuclear security and expanded "civilian nuclear activities". In February this year the Manmohan Singh government facilitated the visit of a five-member delegation from the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (USNRC) to Indian nuclear installations for a first-hand assessment of India's nuclear safeguards. The USNRC delegation was led by commissioner Jeffrey S. Merrifield and visited the Dhruva reactor, some of the engineering research and development facilities at Barc in Trombay, the Tarapur site where two US-designed boiling water reactor units are operational and two units of 540 MW each of pressurised heavy water reactors are under construction, as well as the Kota site where four PHWR units are operating and two are under construction. Informed sources said a visit by commissioner Merrifield to the military nuclear installations was also organised, although this could not be independently confirmed.

The Washington Post, 5 July 2005

North Korea criticizes Bush over nuclear stance

SEOUL: North Korea criticized President Bush on Tuesday for expressing deep concern about Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program but said it was still neither against nor shunning six-party talks on the plan. The remarks North Korea referred to actually appeared in a joint declaration after a summit between Bush and European Union leaders on June 20 in Washington. In it, they said the North should dismantle its nuclear weapons and programs. "The U.S. chief executive was reported to have expressed deep concern about the DPRK's declaration of its access to nuclear weapons at a recent U.S.-EU annual summit in the White House," the North Korean daily newspaper Rodong Sinmun said. DPRK is short for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the North's official name. It said in February it had nuclear weapons.

Dawn, 5 July 2005

A new generation of N-weapons?

LONDON: Just three days before the last general election, Tony Blair was reported to have secretly decided that Britain would build a new generation of nuclear weapons to replace Trident. The story was denied, which is why so many believed it to be true. Since then it has been very difficult to get a straight answer out of either the prime minister or his new defence secretary, John Reid. In the debate that is happening without them, there have been some surprises. Among them is the assertion by Michael Portillo, the former Tory defence secretary, that "the case for Britain having an independent nuclear deterrent depended on the existence of the Soviet Union". With the downfall of communism, he says, the capability became redundant.

The Washington Post, 5 July 2005

North Korea's Rising Urgency (Carl Levin and Hillary Clinton)

It's been a year since the United States and its negotiating partners sat down with North Korea to discuss the elimination of North Korea's nuclear weapons program. In the meantime Porter Goss, the director of central intelligence, has reported to the Senate Armed Services Committee (on March 17) that the number of nuclear weapons North Korea possesses has increased and that there is now "a range" of estimates above the one or two weapons that may have been produced in the early 1990s. His testimony implies that the intelligence community believes North Korea reprocessed the 8,000 fuel rods that had been kept under strict surveillance from 1994 to 2003 in accordance with the Agreed Framework between North Korea and the United States. If so, this could mean that North Korea has many times the number of nuclear weapons it did before the Bush administration took office.

The News, 5 July 2005

Russia, US warn of massive deaths if WMDs fall into wrong hands

MOSCOW: Russia and the United States warned of apocalyptic consequences on Monday if weapons of mass destruction (WMD) fall into the wrong hands and encouraged more countries to join an anti-proliferation initiative in a joint article published in the Russian daily Izvestia. "Terrorists obtaining nuclear, chemical, biological or radiological weapons would mean only one thing: mass death and destruction far exceeding what happened in the US on September 11," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in the article. Lavrov and Rice welcomed their two countries' cooperation in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), aims to clamp down on the smuggling of materials used in WMD and encouraged more countries to join.

Asian Age, 6 July 2005

Pranab defends defence framework with US

NEW DELHI: Defence minister Pranab Mukherjee on Tuesday defended the new Indo-US defence framework and said it was not signed under duress. He allayed concerns expressed by the Left and said India was pursuing an independent foreign policy, as outlined in the common minimum programme of the ruling United Progressive Alliance. Mr Mukherjee said what was signed in the US was only a defence framework, and that he was not willing to call it an agreement. He said it was neither a treaty nor a pact. Mr Mukherjee explained that since the previous agreement signed in 1995 was for 10 years, it needed to be expanded. "We have neither signed the framework under duress, nor have we applied pressure on the other side to sign it," he said.

The Washington Post, 6 July 2005

Nuclear Dinosaur (Peter Asmus)

The recent call by President Bush to restart a major nuclear power program in this country in response to concerns about our dependence on foreign energy sources and global climate change would have Adam Smith rolling in his grave. There is no power source less compatible with the GOP's love of free markets and disdain for regulation and subsidy than nuclear fission. Without government intervention, there simply would be no nuclear industry. Now, it is true that nuclear energy does not contribute to global climate change. And the new pebble bed

modular reactor may well leak less, greatly reduce the risks of catastrophic meltdown and use less uranium fuel. But nuclear power is far from being clean or green.

The Tribune, 6 July 2005

Opinion: Mission to Washington (H.K. Dua)

Washington has lately been sending across the word that President George W. Bush has ordered an extra length of red carpet to give Dr Manmohan Singh the kind of reception given only to a few heads of government. Key functionaries of the Bush Administration have also been telling New Delhi that the Prime Minister's visit later this month could mark a watershed in the relations between India and the United States. There are influential people in Dr Manmohan Singh's government who are also looking forward to the visit. They tend to believe that the world situation has changed over the years and that the time has come for India to give up its old mindset, look far into the future and evolve a new relationship with the world's most powerful country. Often in the past, the love-hate relationship between the two largest democracies has witnessed hesitations and prevented them from coming closer. Often, adversarial feelings, embedded in mutual distrust, have ruled the relationship. Often, a step forward has led to two steps backwards.

Xinhua, 6 July 2005

India says not to accept missile defense shield from anyone

NEW DELHI, July 5: India Tuesday said it would not accept a missile defense shield from any country including the United States and is developing its own system to counter threats posed by ballistic missiles and enemy aircraft. "What we are interested in is developing our own missile program, which we are doing. There is no question of accepting a missile (defense) shield from anyone," India's Defense Minister Pranab Mukherjee was quoted by Indo-Asian News Service as telling a news conference here. Mukherjee, who signed a 10-year defense cooperation agreement with the United States during a visit to the country last week, said India was interested in acquiring technology to bridge gaps in its indigenous missile defense program. "If we get (the technology) from them (the United States), it is fine. If not, we will continue with our own program," he said. This was the first categorical assertion by any senior leader of the Indian government led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh that India would not join any missile defense shield being forged by other countries.

The Nation, 7 July 2005

Pak seeks N-power plants from US (Shaiq Hussain)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is engaged in intense negotiations with the United States for the acquisition of nuclear power plants to meet its energy requirements but hitherto, no positive indication has been received from Washington which shows the Bush administration's inclination in this regard. For the last couple of months, Islamabad has been discussing with the United States, its energy requirements and it has been demanding at least two nuclear power plants for the civilian purposes, said the diplomatic sources here on Wednesday. These nuclear power plants, the Pakistani authorities believe, could be of great help to meet the country's energy requirements through the power generation up till 2010, the sources said. The response from the United States so far was not positive but it has been decided by the two sides to continue with the discussions in this regard, they added. A source said the provision of nuclear power plants was discussed in detail during the recent visit of US Secretary of State, Dr Condoleezza Rice to Pakistan.

International Herald Tribune, 7 July 2005

Seoul calls Rice tour crucial to North talks (Choe Sang-hun)

SEOUL: Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is scheduled to visit China, Thailand, Japan and South Korea on a tour of Asia set to start this weekend. The South Korean government said on Wednesday that the tour by Rice would be crucial to determining whether talks on ending North Korea's nuclear weapons development could resume this month. Bringing the North back to the negotiating table within this month - or at least getting an agreement - gains urgency because as of August, North Korea may start reprocessing its spent nuclear fuel to harvest a new batch of bomb materials, a step that would further complicate the stalled nuclear diplomacy. Such a move could snap the patience of hard-liners within the Bush administration, who already question the usefulness of the six-party talks. And it would undermine months of efforts by South Korea, which has used shuttle diplomacy to Pyongyang and Washington to build a modicum of understanding between the United States and North Korea. Seoul is currently voicing growing optimism that six-party nuclear disarmament talks will resume soon. Rice's trip is scheduled to begin on Saturday in Beijing.

China Daily, 7 July 2005

Rice may discuss possible options against North Korea with Asian nations

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice leaves on a key mission to northeast Asia this week and will likely

discuss possible options if North Korea fails to return to multilateral talks aimed to end its nuclear weapons program. The fact that Rice's July 8-13 trip would be the second to China, South Korea and Japan in some three months underlines how serious the mission is, analysts said. "It is recognizing that we are down to a critical period, a crossroads in the diplomatic process," said Derek Mitchell of the US Center for Strategic and International Studies. "On the one hand, patience is running out, so there will be discussions on what point is being patient, too patient, and on the other hand, if North Korea does decide and come back with a date for the six-party talks, how we should organize ourselves and what to put on the table," he said. The six-party talks among the United States, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, Russia and China aimed at wooing Pyongyang to give up its nuclear weapons program in exchange for aid have been stalled since June 2004.

The Hindu, 9 July 2005

Accord will hurt security interests: Left

NEW DELHI: The Left parties on Friday cautioned the Manmohan Singh Government against accepting the framework agreement on US-India defence relations, saying it would have serious consequences for the country's strategic and security interests. "Let it [agreement] remain a framework, do not add flesh to it and put it in the dustbin," Communist Party of India (Marxist) general secretary Prakash Karat said at a public meeting organised here as part of an awareness campaign against the agreement, signed by Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee in Washington last month. Mr. Karat said successive governments had treated defence, security and strategic affairs as a "holy cow," and asserted that it was the right of the people and political parties to discuss them. "We will definitely intervene as and when required." The agreement should have been placed before the parties before the Government signed it. Unlike India, the United States was more forthcoming on details.

The Associated Press, 9 July 2005

Rice Sets Off on Visit to East Asia

ANCHORAGE: Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Friday she is confident that China is fully committed to a denuclearized North Korea despite contentions by some U.S. officials that China should be putting more pressure on its longtime ally. China is the first stop for Rice on a four-nation East Asia swing that is aimed primarily at finding ways to encourage North Korea to end a yearlong boycott of multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. "When it comes to making sure that over time we get a non-nuclear Korean Peninsula, that's just a very high priority for the Chinese," Rice said, speaking to reporters before her plane landed in Alaska to refuel. As the principle source for food and energy assistance to North Korea, China has more leverage over its neighbor than other parties to the six-nation negotiating process. Rice declined to pass judgment on whether China has been doing enough. "We want China to do as much as it can," she said. She added that she will ask the Chinese for an update on recent discussions they have had with the North Koreans. She made clear that she is not prepared to hand the Chinese a list of things they should do to pressure the North. Rather, she said, "I'm going to ask them how to get the talks resumed."

The New York Times, 9 July 2005

Rice Has No Plans to Improve Offer to North Korea in Arms Talks (Joel Brinkley)

ANCHORAGE, July 8: Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Friday that she intended to rebuff a South Korean request to enhance an offer that five nations made to North Korea in exchange for dismantling its nuclear weapons program. The South Korean government has urged Washington to add a rich package of incentives to a proposal given to North Korea a year ago, during the last session of six-nation nuclear disarmament negotiations. Chung Dong Young, South Korea's unification minister, presented new offers to Kim Jong Il, North Korea's leader, during a meeting last month in the North Korean capital. After a visit to Washington last week, Mr. Chung seemed to believe the administration had agreed to his government's plan to combine the two proposals. "Both sides agreed that the next six-party talks, when they reopen, will gain momentum if they combine the proposals from the previous talks and South Korea's important proposal," he told Korean reporters.

International Herald Tribune, 9 July 2005

Loopholes closed on nuclear pact

VIENNA: A conference of 89 countries, including the world's largest nuclear powers, agreed Friday to close loopholes in an international pact on the protection of atomic materials against terrorists and saboteurs. The UN nuclear monitoring agency said all of the countries at a conference in Vienna adopted changes to a 1979 treaty that will require states to increase security at nuclear sites and cooperate more to track down stolen or smuggled atomic materials. A key change extends the convention's existing rules for securing international shipments to cover nuclear materials being shipped or stored within a country, the International Atomic Energy Agency said in a statement. The changes to the 1979 Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material were proposed by the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan and 20 European states and backed by Russia and China. According to the agency's Web site, among the countries not party to the convention are Iran, Georgia and

Kazakhstan.

BBC News, 9 July 2005

Rice seeks N Korea breakthrough (Jonathan Beale)

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's four-nation trip to East Asia is her second visit to the region in the space of six months. There is frustration in Washington over the North Korean nuclear impasse. That is not just a recognition of the growing importance of China - but also a sign of frustration in Washington that there has been no progress in persuading North Korea back to the negotiating table over its nuclear weapons programme. Three of the countries Condoleezza Rice visits - China, Japan and South Korea - have been involved in the six-party talks aimed at persuading North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons. It is over a year since those talks broke down. Since then Pyongyang has confirmed it possesses nuclear warheads - hence the sense of urgency to restart the talks. Washington believes Beijing should be using more of its influence - economic as well as political.

The Indian Express, 11 July 2005

The great image meltdown (Bharat Wariavwalla)

At the Carnegie Endowment of International Peace, a liberal think tank in Washington, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee had made an important observation: "Unipolar world is clearly not a sustainable proposition in the long run. India's vision of a multipolar is one of partnership among nations." The word "multipolar" is an anathema to the US. To the Bush administration, there's only one pole and that's the American pole. Moreover it believes it has the power to reorder the world according to its design. Many scholars and policy analysts at the Carnegie seriously question all this and therefore Mukherjee's observation that a multipolar world is not only more viable but desirable must have gone down well at Carnegie. Many security experts and policy analysts in India have been arguing since September 11, 2001, that the world is unipolar and that our alignment with the US can get us global status. Our foreign policy community broke into shrieks of joy when the US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, promised last March that America would make India a global power. They believe that the US is the paramount military and economic power in the world today. The swiftness with which it forced the Saddam Hussein regime out of power in the spring of 2003 so greatly impressed them that they began to argue that a firm alignment of interests and objectives between us and the US is best for us.

The Indian Express, 11 July 2005

N-cooperation: Will Bush go ahead? (C Raja Mohan)

NEW DELHI: As the Left parties chip away at the efforts to improve relations with the United States, they have a powerful ally in Washington - the American bureaucracy committed to old think on non-proliferation and nuclear cooperation with India. With the nuclear question once again becoming the touchstone for measuring the transformation of Indo-US relations on the eve of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Washington this weekend, the resistance to change appears as strong in the American capital as it is here. The Left in India and the non-proliferation bureaucracy in Washington share a deep aversion to India's acquisition of nuclear weapons. But unlike the non-proliferation champions in Washington, President George Bush has been putting out a different political message. In his frequent encounters with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in recent months, including at the Gleneagles summit last week, Bush has reportedly conveyed his empathy for India's attempts to acquire civilian reactors from the international market to boost its nuclear electric power programme.

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Dawn, 12 July 2005

India hopeful of acquiring US nuclear reactors

WASHINGTON, July 11: India hopes that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's first state visit to Washington, which begins this weekend, will lead to the acquisition of civilian nuclear reactors from the US. Although the anti-proliferation lobby within the US administration is still opposed to selling reactors to a country which admits possessing nuclear weapons, insiders say President George W. Bush is sympathetic to India's quest for the reactors. Yet, the latest issue of 'South Asia Monitor', a Washington think-tank, includes New Delhi's effort to acquire civilian nuclear technology from the US among the 'sticky issues that will involve difficult negotiations' during the visit. The other two issues on the Centre for Strategic and International Studies' list are the expected sale of sensitive US defence technologies to India and New Delhi's increasing ties with Iran to secure energy resources. But the CSIS also notes that Mr Singh is visiting the US at a time of unprecedented cooperation between the two countries when bilateral economic ties continue to grow at a moderate pace, despite US domestic concern about outsourcing jobs to India.

Dawn, 12 July 2005

North Korea agrees to consider US plan: End to nuclear row

PHUKET (Thailand), July 11: North Korea has agreed to give a detailed response to a US-led aid-for-disarmament proposal when it returns to nuclear talks later this month, senior US administration officials said. The one-year-old proposal, which Washington says is comprehensive but Pyongyang sees as too stringent, is key to the success of the six-party talks comprising the United States, the two Koreas, Japan, Russia and China. North Korea's Deputy Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan agreed in a surprise move on Saturday that Pyongyang would return to the negotiations on July 25, after the talks were stalled for more than a year. At a dinner meeting, Mr Kim also told US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs Christopher Hill that Pyongyang would respond to the US plan at the talks in Beijing, said the officials accompanying Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on her four-nation Asian trip. Mr Hill had asked Mr Kim whether North Korea was prepared to give a detailed response to the US proposal 'and he said they would', one of the officials told reporters on the plane taking Ms Rice to Thailand from her first stop, China.

The News, 12 July 2005

Rice in Japan to lay groundwork for N-talks

TOKYO: US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice arrived on Monday in key ally Japan to lay the groundwork for talks on ending neighbouring North Korea's nuclear programme after a diplomatic standoff of more than a year. Senior US administration officials travelling with Rice, who arrived in Tokyo from Thailand, said North Korea would respond at the nuclear talks to a year-old US proposal to end the crisis. But at the time the North Koreans rejected the proposal, saying the up front obligations would be excessive and the inspections intrusive. "Five countries put a proposal on the table one year ago. We want to see North Korea come back to the talks with a serious response to that proposal," White House spokesman Scott McClellan told reporters in Washington. Meanwhile North Korea has agreed to give a detailed response to a US-led aid-for-disarmament proposal when it returns to nuclear talks later this month, senior US administration officials said. The one-year-old proposal, which Washington says is comprehensive but Pyongyang sees as too stringent, is key to the success of the six-party talks comprising the United States, the two Koreas, Japan, Russia and China.

The Washington Post, 12 July 2005

North Korea Talks

North Korea's promise to return to negotiations about the possible dismantling of its nuclear weapons program has the ring of good news. The difficulty is that there is no way for outsiders to know why this enigmatic and brutal dictatorship reversed its previous insistence that it had chosen to become a nuclear power and would no longer

bargain over it. Is it because ruler Kim Jong Il finally is prepared to renounce weapons of mass destruction in exchange for economic aid and security guarantees from the West? Or does he merely hope to cash in on South Korea's promise of a massive new aid program, the offer of which seems to have broken the long impasse over the "six-party" talks? Does North Korea intend to set out the terms by which it would give up all of its weapons and nuclear infrastructure -- something it has never done -- or does it want only to avoid being blamed for the absence of negotiations, which might endanger the economic lifeline provided by the South and China?

The Associated press, 12 July 2005

Rice arrives today to discuss N.K. (Lee Joo-hee)

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice arrives in Seoul this afternoon on the last leg of her current Asian tour, invigorated with a new purpose and a new mission: to coordinate steps with South Korea to re-energize the rusty six-party talks now that the North has ended its year-long boycott. Rice's trip to China, Thailand, Japan and South Korea was planned ahead of North Korea's pledge on Saturday to return to the talks, and her revised aim consequently is to discuss how to approach the negotiations to end the North Korean nuclear standoff, government officials said. South Korea itself launched its own preparatory groundwork for the talks, stalemated for just over a year as North Korea demanded a change to what it labeled U.S. "hostility." Unification Minister Chung Dong-young, as head of the presidential National Security Council, presided over a high-level meeting on the nuclear issue. Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon and presidential national security adviser Kwon Jin-ho joined the discussion, held at the headquarters of the inter-Korean economic talks in western Seoul.

The Associated Press, 12 July 2005

Rice Warns North Korea Talks May Fail

TOKYO: The upcoming six-party talks on North Korean disarmament will fail unless the communist state makes a commitment to abandon its nuclear arms development, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Tuesday. "What we really need is a strategic decision on the part of the North that they are indeed ready to give up their nuclear weapons program," Rice told reporters after meeting with Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura. "Without that, these talks cannot be successful," she said. "We agreed that there must be an actual progress in the next round of talks, and we expect North Korea's serious and constructive handling," Machimura said. "We also confirmed the importance of close cooperation among Japan, the United States and South Korea on the issue." On a related matter, Rice expressed no objections to a South Korean donation of 500,000 tons of rice to North Korea, saying the gesture will not undercut the U.S. negotiating position in the talks. She said South Korea was responding to "miserable conditions" in the North and noted that the United States itself in recent days offered 50,000 tons of food aid to Pyongyang.

China Daily, 12 July 2005

North Korea links nukes to US threats

North Korea said Monday it does not need nuclear weapons if it is not threatened by the United States, another sign of progress following Pyongyang's agreement over the weekend to return to disarmament talks. South Korea said Monday its proposal on boosting aid for the North, to be unveiled when the international nuclear talks resume later this month, will be a cornerstone of efforts to persuade North Korea to disarm. Negotiators from both sides of the divided peninsula met Monday in Seoul for talks on economic cooperation and aid for the North. North Korea agreed Saturday to return to six-nation nuclear talks the week of July 25 after refusing to attend for more than a year, citing "hostile" U.S. policies. American officials have repeatedly denied any intention to attack the North, and recently said they recognized it as a sovereign nation. "We do not intend to possess nuclear weapons forever," the North's Rodong Sinmun daily wrote in a commentary. "If the U.S. nuclear threat to (North Korea) is removed and its hostile policy to 'bring down the system' of the latter is withdrawn, not a single nuclear weapon will be needed."

People's Daily, 12 July 2005

US wants "serious response" from DPRK on proposal

The United States said on Monday that it hopes the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) will make a "serious response" to the proposal it made at the last round of six-party talks aimed at solving the DPRK nuclear issue. "Five countries put a proposal on the table a year ago. We want to see North Korea come back to the talks with a serious response to that proposal," White House spokesman Scott McClellan said. "We look forward to talking about how we can make progress toward our shared goal of a denuclearized peninsula. North Korea has expressed that they are committed to a denuclearized peninsula, and they want to make progress toward that goal. and it's important that we do make progress in this next round of talks that begin later this month," McClellan said. The US proposal, offered in June 2004, has been denounced by the DPRK as unbalanced because the DPRK would have been required to disclose all of its nuclear programs and have its claims verified, before the United States took any steps in return.

The Times of India, 12 July 2005

The Ball Is In America's Court: Onus on Bush to refashion Indo-US relations (K Subrahmanyam)

The objective international reality is that the world does not have and will not have any more superpowers and will have to reconcile itself to a six-actor balance of power system. In that system, with the rising Chinese economic challenge, the US will need India and not vice-versa. The US and India have the potential to be natural allies. Whether the alliance firms up in the near future or suffers a setback because of Cold War mindsets depends on the US leadership.

The Hindu, 12 July 2005

Reshaping the US Supreme Court (Editorial)

The cultural conflict between conservatives and liberals in the United States has sharpened after the surprise retirement of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, Sandra Day O'Connor. Democrats and Republicans were already locked in an intense struggle over the nominations that President George W. Bush made to posts in the lower rungs of the federal judiciary. The two parties and advocacy groups associated with them know that the federal judges will play a crucial role in determining the outcome of the cultural war. The Republicans, who control the executive branch as well as both Houses of Congress are well positioned to promote their agenda on issues such as restricting the right to abortion; making religious observances a part of school curricula; limiting the scope for affirmative action; and banning same-sex marriages. They fear that the federal judiciary as it is currently constituted might thwart their plans because it has a liberal bias. Justice O'Connor's retirement offers them a rare opportunity to correct this perceived slant since her opinions were often decisive in a Court that usually split five to four on cultural issues. While Chief Justice William Rehnquist might also soon retire because of ill health, that vacancy might not make much of a difference to the balance of the nine-member Court. In such an eventuality the Republicans can at best replace one conservative with another. Justice O'Connor is more of a centrist than liberal but Mr. Bush is not likely to give up this chance to tilt the Court to the Right.

Asian Age, 13 July 2005

Pressure on PM to get nuclear fuel

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who will leave for Washington this weekend with the promise of "big, big things" from US President George W. Bush, is under pressure from the energy and security establishment here to ensure the withdrawal of US sanctions on allowing India to shop for nuclear fuel and nuclear power reactors in the international market. This, experts here pointed out, would be a visible symbol of a successful bilateral visit. India has been working hard to persuade the US to drop its sanctions and restrictions on the Nuclear Suppliers Group so that the member nations are able to sell not just nuclear fuel, but at least six nuclear power reactors required by India to answer its burgeoning energy needs. The Tarapur plant is currently down to its last stock of fuel from Russia, which has expressed its inability to continue the supply because of the restrictions imposed by the US on India. It is imperative that the Americans now withdraw the sanctions, according to informed sources here, to give teeth to their promise of civilian nuclear cooperation with India.

The Hindu, 13 July 2005

Japan, U.S. for progress in nuclear talks (P. S. Suryanarayana)

SINGAPORE: Japan and the U.S. on Tuesday called for "concrete results" during the next round of six-party talks on North Korea's nuclear-weapons programme. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who met Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura in Tokyo, said North Korea should make a "strategic decision" to give up the programme and dismantle the facilities. Japan and the U.S. are participants in the six-party parleys, the others being host China, the two Koreas and Russia. The last round took place in Beijing over a year ago. The next round is expected later this month following Pyongyang's decision to resume participation.

Dawn, 13 July 2005

First N-bomb test cast shadow over humanity (Stephen Collinson)

WASHINGTON: The world changed forever, at just before dawn, 60 years ago this Saturday, July 16. Deep in the northern New Mexico desert, the United States test-fired its new atomic weapon, and in a flash, mankind had the means of its own potential destruction. The blast's terrible beauty, which bathed nearby mountains in blinding light, sent military and political consequences coursing down the decades, spawning a Cold War arms race and fears of nuclear extinction. "The whole human species has been living with the threat of annihilation ever since," said Peter Kuznick, a history professor specializing in nuclear issues at American University in Washington. Nuclear headaches still dominate US foreign policy - as Japan prepares to mark the 60th anniversary of the US bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki a few weeks after the test at Trinity Site, New Mexico. The United States is mired in the aftermath of an invasion of Iraq it justified by saying that in a new age of terror, it could not wait for a 'mushroom cloud' to establish whether Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction program.

The Hindu, 13 July 2005

Manmohan not going to US with a list of demands (Amit Baruah)

NEW DELHI: India believes that American endorsement of its candidature for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council is a "difficult call" given that the G-4 resolution on expansion of the body will be the centre of attention in New York almost at the same time Prime Minister Manmohan Singh meets President George W. Bush in Washington on July 18. It is up to the United States to announce support for India's case for a permanent seat, South Block sources said. Admitting that there were differences with the US over the G-4 resolution, now being discussed in the General Assembly, the sources said these related to the extent of democratisation of the Security Council and the procedure to be followed for its expansion.

The Hindu, 13 July 2005

America, India and outsourcing imperial overreach (Siddharth Varadarajan)

If there is one document everyone should read to understand the direction relations between the United States and India have begun to take in the past few years, it is The Indo-U.S. Military Relationship: Expectations and Perceptions, a report commissioned by the Pentagon in October 2002. Written by Juli A. MacDonald of the Information Assurance Technology Analysis Center (IATAC), a Department of Defence-affiliated outfit, the 131-page report was based on in-depth, off-the-record interviews with 40 senior serving US officials - including military officers - and around the same number of serving and retired Indian officials and officers. The aim: to "reveal the opportunities for and impediments to military-to-military cooperation" between the two countries.

Asian Age, 14 July 2005

Manmohan in quest of nuclear fuel (Seema Mustafa)

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who will leave for Washington this weekend with the promise of "big, big things" from US President George W. Bush, is under pressure from the energy and security establishment here to ensure the withdrawal of US sanctions on allowing India to shop for nuclear fuel and nuclear power reactors in the international market. This, experts here pointed out, would be a visible symbol of a successful bilateral visit. India has been working hard to persuade the US to drop its sanctions and restrictions on the Nuclear Suppliers Group so that the member nations are able to sell not just nuclear fuel, but at least six nuclear power reactors required by India to answer its burgeoning energy needs. The Tarapur plant is currently down to its last stock of fuel from Russia, which has expressed its inability to continue the supply because of the restrictions imposed by the US on India. It is imperative that the Americans now withdraw the sanctions, according to informed sources here, to give teeth to their promise of civilian nuclear cooperation with India.

Daily Times, 14 July 2005

US close to testing massive 'bunker-busting' missile

WASHINGTON: The United States is close to testing a new missile aimed at destroying deep bunkers where suspected weapons of mass destruction are stored, the British weekly New Scientist says. Four prototypes of the new "bunker-buster" will be tested later this year by Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control of Dallas, Texas, which are working with US Navy scientists on behalf of the Pentagon's Threat Reduction Agency, it says. Traditional bunker bombs are streamlined bombs whose sheer weight enables them to force through soil, rock or concrete before they detonate. The new design is different, the report, in next Saturday's issue of New Scientist, says. The missile has a blunt nose that, combined with high velocity, creates a bubble of air in front of the weapon. The idea is that the bubble forces earth out to the sides as the missile descends, creating a cavity that the weapon can slide through. The warhead could thus reach much deeper buried structures than conventional bunker-busters, the inventors hope.

People's Daily, 14 July 2005

Nuclear issues feature in Rice's trip to Asia

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice concluded on Wednesday her five-day visit to China, Thailand, Japan and South Korea. Except for Thailand, all the other three countries that Rice visited happened to be participants of the six-party talks which were presided over by China to solve nuclear issues on the Korean peninsula. Rice's visit to Asia also coincided with an announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) upon her arrival in Beijing, China, to end its 13-month boycott and to return to nuclear disarmament talks during the week of July 25. Looking back on Rice's rhetoric in the tour, it is not difficult to judge that the top US diplomat was trying to make a final preparation for the upcoming new round of six-party talks. China, the first stop of Rice's Asian tour, is apparently the most important country that Rice visited. In addition to focusing on bilateral relations, Rice talked a lot in her meetings with the Chinese leaders and the mass media about nuclear issues on the Korean peninsula. She spoke highly of China's constructive efforts in the promotion of the resumption of the six-party talks, saying China has played a "very positive" role in the field.

The Korean Herald, 14 July 2005

U.S. backs Seoul's energy aid (Lee Joo-hee)

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice yesterday threw her support behind South Korea's proposal for massive energy aid to North Korea if it dismantles its nuclear weapons program, calling it "a creative idea" to tackle the North's needs without proliferation risks. Rice also called on North Korea to scrap its entire nuclear weapons program, encompassing plutonium and high-enrichment uranium. "Nuclear weapons program means nuclear weapons program, period," she said forcefully during a joint news conference here with Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon, explaining that the aim of the soon-to-be-resumed six-party talks is toward a complete nuclear dismantlement, whether it involves plutonium or highly-enriched uranium. Rice left for home in the afternoon after meeting President Roh Moo-hyun and holding a working dinner Tuesday night with Ban. Her latest visit to Asia, which also took in China, Thailand and Japan, coincided with North Korea's announcement last Saturday that it will end its year-long boycott of the six-party talks and return to the negotiating table in the week of July 25.

The Hindu, 14 July 2005

What the CPI(M) seeks from Manmohan's US visit

NEW DELHI: As Prime Minister Manmohan Singh prepares to leave this week on his first official visit to the United States, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) has asked him to resist from making any announcements on opening retail trade. Among other things, he must tell Washington not to stand in the way of India's quest for energy security. "The policies of the Bush administration have a direct bearing on India's economy, security and national interest. India, for its part, is one of the leading developing countries whose economic and political potential is widely recognised. The outcome of the visit, therefore, will be closely watched not only in India but in the international arena and, in particular, the Third World countries," CPI(M) general secretary Prakash Karat said in an article, "What is expected from PM during his US visit," in the latest edition of party mouthpiece *People's Democracy*. In recent years, he said, due to the pro-American policies of the [previous] Vajpayee Government, the impression had gained ground that India was moving into the orbit of the US as a strategic ally. The Common Minimum Programme (CMP) of the United Progressive Alliance had stressed on an independent foreign policy, which raised hopes that India would correct the earlier distortions and plays its due role as a leading representative of developing countries and a founder of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Hindu, 14 July 2005

Defence framework not military alliance: Saran (Amit Baruah)

NEW DELHI: The defence framework agreement signed last month between India and the United States is not a military alliance, Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said at a press conference on Wednesday in the run-up to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Washington from July 18-20. Suggesting that there was some "misunderstanding" about the defence framework, Mr Saran said it set out the "parameters" within which the two countries can potentially cooperate with each other if it is in their interest to do so. "I do not think anybody can take exception to that," Mr Saran said, adding that it could not have any adverse impact on India's very substantial defence ties with Russia and other countries. There should not be any apprehensions about India's relations with the US.

The Times Of India, 14 July 2005

India's UNSC dreamboat sinks in US waters

WASHINGTON: The United States on Tuesday explicitly came out against any expansion of the UN Security Council for now, virtually ensuring the issue will be taken off the table when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh meets President Bush on Monday. In its most detailed exposition on the matter yet, US representative Shirin Tahir-Kheli told the UN General Assembly debating the G-4 resolution on the issue that the Bush administration did not think any proposal, including its own formulations to expand the Security Council, should be voted "at this stage." "We will work with you to achieve enlargement of the Security Council, but only in the right way and at the right time," Tahir-Kheli, adviser to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told members. "We urge you, therefore, to oppose this resolution and, should it come to a vote, to vote against it."

Reuters, 14 July 2005

Nuclear Energy Tops Indian PM's Agenda in the U.S.

NEW DELHI: India's prime minister visits the United States next week hoping to seal a growing friendship with Washington with a landmark deal over sharing nuclear technology and backing for a U.N. Security Council seat. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's three-day state visit starting July 18 is being seen by New Delhi as a touchstone of President Bush's intention to take the relationship between the world's two largest democracies to new heights. Singh will hold talks on issues ranging from defense to trade, aviation to agriculture. But the success of his visit may be measured by whether the Bush administration agrees to help boost India's civilian nuclear energy program and back its candidature for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council. "What this visit

would be doing is reaffirming at the highest level the transformation that is taking place in India-U.S. relations," Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said. "What we are really looking at is a genuine partnership between India and the U.S."

Dawn, 15 July 2005

'US views India as part of solution to N-problem' (Anwar Iqbal)

WASHINGTON, July 14: The Bush administration views India as part of the solution to nuclear proliferation rather than as part of the problem, says a new study by Carnegie Endowment. The Washington think-tank describes an agreement the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership agreement that the US and India signed last year as heralding "a breakthrough in US-Indian strategic collaboration because it committed both countries to working together in four difficult arenas - civilian nuclear energy, civilian space programmes, high-technology trade, and missile defence." "What made NSSP an event of such significance in this context was that the Bush administration chose to turn Washington's long-standing approach to New Delhi on its head," says Ashley J. Tellis, author of the study titled "India as a New Global Power: An Action Agenda for the United States." "Viewing India as part of the solution to nuclear proliferation rather than as part of the problem, President Bush embarked on a course of action that would permit India more -- not less -- access to controlled technologies even though New Delhi would not surrender its nuclear weapons programme and subsisted in its position formally outside the global non-proliferation regime."

South Asia Tribune, 15 July 2005

Will Nuclear Commerce With India Result in More Proliferation (Michael Krepon and Ziad Haider)

WASHINGTON, July 16: Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh meets with President Bush on July 18 to demonstrate and accelerate the new strategic partnership between New Delhi and Washington. High on the Prime Minister's agenda is breaking through the barriers on nuclear export controls that previous US administrations have spent decades erecting. One of the cardinal rules of nuclear non-proliferation has been an agreement among supplier nations not to engage in nuclear commerce with states that have not been granted the International Atomic Energy Agency's seal of approval by accepting "full scope safeguards" on all of their nuclear facilities. Because India is not a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and has not signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, New Delhi has no constraints on testing nuclear weapons and is free to pursue the production of fissile material for its nuclear stockpile. Eleven of India's fifteen nuclear reactors are not safeguarded.

The Hindu, 15 July 2005

Left leaders meet Manmohan Singh

NEW DELHI: Left leaders met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Thursday ahead of his first official visit to the United States. They expressed their concern over issues such as foreign direct investment in retail trade and the framework agreement on the India-US defence relationship. The Left parties also insisted that the Government clearly convey to the US the stand on the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project. All-India Forward Bloc general secretary Debabrata Biswas told The Hindu that the Government heard the Left concerns. Besides the Prime Minister, those present at the meeting included External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh. The meeting comes at a time when Communist Party of India (Marxist) general secretary Prakash Karat is away on a visit to China.

The Indian Express, 15 July 2005

Poised for the jump Can Bush transform the terms of the India-US engagement? (Arvind Virmani)

US President Nixon transformed US relations with China with his breakthrough trip to China. This led after a decade or so to a transformation of China's role in Asia. President Reagan transformed US relations with the USSR, contributing to the disintegration of the Soviet empire. Will President Bush transform US relationship with India leading to a transformation of India's role in Asia? A change in objective conditions suggests this is likely. There are, however, obstacles on the US side that will have to be overcome. President Clinton, after his statement about China and the US being strategic partners and jointly deploring India's 1998 nuclear tests, repaired relations by condemning Pakistani aggression in Kargil and supporting the Strobe Talbot-Jaswant Singh talks. These talks, along with candidate Bush's advisory group, "Vulcans", that included Condoleezza Rice and Robert Blackwill, laid the foundation for a changed approach of the US towards India. President Bush envisaged a much bigger role to India in global affairs than his predecessors. PM Vajpayee reciprocated by calling India and the US "natural allies." This resulted in the initiative, Next Steps in Strategic & Technological Partnership (NSSTP). The process was, however, sidetracked by 9/11 as the US focus shifted to Afghanistan and Iraq and Pakistan made itself indispensable to the US.

The Indian Express, 15 July 2005

Why space is crucial for PM in US: Bangalore (C Raja Mohan)

NEW DELHI: As Prime Minister Manmohan Singh heads to Washington this weekend for talks with President George W Bush, the prospects for expanding Indo-US civilian cooperation appear to have brightened. With Bangalore emerging as an important centre of a globalising space industry, Delhi and Washington recognise the importance of promoting mutually beneficial space commerce. Translating that recognition into a reality, however, requires some savvy diplomatic footwork before, during and after the summit talks between Singh and Bush next week.

The Hindu, 16 July 2005

G4 resolution will be put to vote despite US opposition

UNITED NATIONS: The resolution by India and three other countries seeking permanent seats in UN Security Council (UNSC) put to vote in spite of US opposition, but a final decision will be taken after tomorrow's meeting of their foreign ministers with counterparts from Africa, diplomats have said. "Absolutely," Indian UN Ambassador Nirupam Sen told reporters when asked if the G4 - comprising India, Japan, Germany and Brazil - would seek a vote despite strong opposition from the US on their proposals. Talking to reporters yesterday after the G-4's discussions with Nigerian Foreign Minister Oluyemi Adeniji, he was however non-committal on whether G-4 and the 53-member African Union (AU) plan to present a joint resolution, saying, "let's wait for Sunday's meeting." But ambassadors expressed confidence that G-4 and AU would be able to reconcile their differences and reach an agreement. Differences remain between the two groups on veto right and African Union's demand for one extra seat in non-permanent category.

The Hindu, 16 July 2005

No defence pact with US, assures PM

KOLKATA: The Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, has reportedly assured leaders of Left parties that India has not entered into any defence agreement with the United States. What had been formulated during Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee's talks with US officials recently was a framework for defence relationships, the Left leaders were told by Dr Singh. Disclosing this here on Friday, the newly elected Rajya Sabha member and member of the Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), Sitaram Yechury, said the Left would continue to oppose any defence agreement with the US and would pursue the issue after the Prime Minister's return from the US.

The Hindu, 16 July 2005

Pranab to meet Left parties on defence pact with US

BANGALORE: Union Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee on Friday said the recent Indo-US defence agreement would not jeopardise India's foreign policy. "The agreement will only widen the relationship between India and the United States," he told presspersons here. Mr Mukherjee said he would soon meet the Left parties to discuss the agreement, which was a broad framework of cooperation in the defence sector. On the Left's opposition to the agreement, he said the issue had been discussed with Communist Party of India (Marxist) and Communist Party of India leaders. "I will also talk to the Revolutionary Socialist Party, the Forward Bloc and other Opposition parties."

The Indian Express, 16 July 2005

Indo-US Ties: Bhishma's Wisdom (K Subrahmanyam)

I deem it a great privilege to be invited to inaugurate the Field Marshal Manekshaw annual lecture series. I have known the Field Marshal since 1968, and interacted with him at the moment of his glory and that of the country - our victory in the Bangladesh war of 1971. Sam, as he was popularly known, proved himself an intrepid soldier in the battlefield - he won the Military Cross in the campaign in Burma - as well as a masterful general and chief of army staff, by the way he managed the Bangladesh conflict. The US has announced its intention to help India to build itself as a world power in the 21st century. With that announcement came the recognition by the Chinese premier that India has a global role to play, followed by a similar statement from the Japanese PM. India is today a candidate for permanent membership in the UN Security Council. Along with China it is invited to the G-8 meeting of leading industrial nations. In the next few days, our Prime Minister and the US President are likely to conclude agreements which will launch a strategic partnership between the world's oldest democracy and the world's largest one. This proposed partnership is for international peace and stability, and to promote rule of law in a globalised international community. Recently the National Intelligence Council of the US produced its forecast for 2020. It assessed that US, China and India would be among the first three markets of the world. Since wars are no longer feasible among the major powers, the rivalry between US and China for their respective pre-eminence in the international hierarchy is not likely to be solved through war. However, there can be no doubt that the US would like to continue to be the pre-eminent nation in the world.

The Times Of India, 16 July 2005

Emerging As A Global Player (V R Raghavan)

Today, Manmohan Singh begins his tour of the US. The visit has raised a flutter about its strategic implications. Some of these opinions spring from Cold War era ideology, others portray India as a vassal state of the super power. Neither reflects today's strategic scene nor one that is likely to prevail in the future. India needs to secure its core interests at present and for the future. The strategic certainties now are of new power centres emerging and a shifting of the global strategic centre of gravity. The prime minister's visit can prepare the ground for both. It would be a serious mistake to view this visit as a make-or-break event. The end of the Cold War, the security situation after the terrorist attacks of 2001, and the rapid advance of globalisation are impacting every state. None, including the US, is unaffected by it, and each is attempting to find ways of securing its core interests. Past barriers are melting down, new partnerships are being forged. India remains one of the few major states that has emerged stronger from the three tectonic events. It has broken away from its ideologically stultified foreign policy. It has successfully demonstrated both its capability in handling international and state-sponsored terrorism and the resilience of its people in standing up to it. It has restructured economic policies and benefited from globalisation. It has repositioned itself to engage with and contribute to the emerging international order. On these issues, there is a large middle ground of political consensus and public support.

The Hindu, 16 July 2005

The India-America nuclear dialogue (R. Ramachandran)

While nothing substantive is likely to result from the Indo-U.S. nuclear dialogue, the climate is opportune to resolve the contentious issue of spent Tarapur fuel. If one were to believe recent media reports in general, the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to the United States, beginning July 18, is likely to result in a major Indo-U.S. announcement on the nuclear front. Nuclear matters came to focus soon after the visit of U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in April when Washington sought to broaden the strategic partnership beyond the ongoing Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) initiative to include nuclear energy as well. A realistic analysis would, however, suggest that little can be expected out of this India-U.S. nuclear dialogue, unless the latter can prevail on the 44-member Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to relax its guidelines and also change its own domestic laws. In fact, even under the NSSP, the U.S. has been inflexible in relaxing controls on the export of a class of nuclear-related dual-use goods - the so-called NP2 controlled items - which could have been easily done without violating its domestic laws or NSG Guidelines.

The Indian Express, 16 July 2005

A nuclear deal is in the works (C. Raja Mohan)

NEW DELHI, July 15: As Prime Minister Manmohan Singh heads to the United States tomorrow, senior Indian officials are in Washington finalising the contours of a broad nuclear understanding between the two sides to be announced on Monday. This could include a potential American facilitation of the supply of nuclear fuel for the Tarapur reactors and likely Indo-US cooperation on the development of the so-called Generation IV reactors and in nuclear fusion research. Officials on either side are unwilling to discuss likely nuclear outcomes in Washington, but are confident that there will be some positive results to be shared with the public on Monday after Singh meets the US President George W. Bush. Before Singh lands in Washington on Sunday, Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran is holding intensive consultations in Washington with the Bush Administration, that are expected to go into the weekend. Underlining Delhi's emphasis on civilian nuclear energy cooperation in the talks with Bush, Anil Kakodkar, Secretary Department of Atomic Energy, has been included in Singh's delegation to Washington.

Dawn, 16 July 2005

US advised to be cautious: N-technology for India

WASHINGTON, July 15: As Washington prepares for the visit of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, a prominent Washington think-tank has urged the Bush administration not to rush into supplying civilian nuclear technology to New Delhi. Stimson Center's study, 'Changing the Rules of Nuclear Commerce', points out that when PM Singh meets President Bush on July 18, high on his agenda will be his desire to 'breaking through the barriers on nuclear export controls that previous US administrations have spent decades erecting'. Authors Michael Krepon and Ziad Haider argue that a relaxation of the international rules for nuclear commerce 'could do more harm than good unless President Bush and Prime Minister Singh can implement good ideas to strengthen global norms against proliferation'. They urge the two leaders to declare how they intend to 'prevent a bad situation from becoming worse' if the US resumes supplying nuclear technology to nations such as India who have not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The News, 16 July 2005

Taiwan: China warns US of N-response

BEIJING: A Chinese general said that if the United States attacked China in a conflict over Taiwan, he believed

Beijing might respond with nuclear weapons, a newspaper reported on Friday. Maj Gen Zhu Chenghu, a dean at China's National Defence University, stressed that he was expressing a personal view, not official policy, The Asian Wall Street Journal reported. Zhu added he was confident that China and the United States would not go to war. "If the Americans draw their missiles and position-guided ammunition into the target zone on China's territory, I think we will have to respond with nuclear weapons," the general was quoted as saying. He said China's territory includes its warships and aircraft. The Journal said Zhu made his comments to a visiting group of Hong Kong-based journalists. While Zhu is a serving officer, he isn't involved in policymaking or in directing military strategy. China claims Taiwan, separated from the mainland since 1949, is part of its territory and has threatened repeatedly to invade should the self-governing island declare formal independence.

Daily Times, 16 July 2005

Tough North Korea verification needed

WASHINGTON: Stiff verification demands must be part of nuclear negotiations with North Korea from the start, an atomic expert told Congress on Thursday as countries prepared for six-party talks with the communist state. The United States, China, Japan, Russia and the two Koreas will meet in Beijing during the week of July 25 to resume negotiations aimed at ending North Korea's nuclear weapons programs after a year's stalemate. David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security, said negotiators should make clear to North Korea that "only denuclearisation is acceptable", while spelling out how disarmament steps would be met with rewards such as energy aid, diplomatic recognition and economic help. "Verification must be integrated right from the beginning in the negotiation process," he told the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific. "Robust verification needs to start immediately when the agreement is implemented," Albright said, describing a lack of intrusive verification as a major reason for the collapse of a 1994 agreement to halt North Korea's nuclear arms ambitions.

International Herald Tribune, 16 July 2005

Chinese general sees U.S. as nuclear target (Joseph Kahn)

BEIJING China should use nuclear weapons against the United States if the American military intervenes in any conflict over Taiwan, a senior Chinese military official has said. "If the Americans draw their missiles and position-guided ammunition on to the target zone on China's territory, I think we will have to respond with nuclear weapons," the official, Major General Zhu Chenghu, said at an official briefing Thursday. Zhu, considered a hawk, stressed that his comments reflected his personal views and not official policy. Beijing has long insisted that it will not initiate the use of nuclear weapons in any conflict. But in extensive comments to visiting correspondents based in Hong Kong, Zhu said he believed that the Chinese government was under internal pressure to change its "no first use" policy and to make clear that it would employ the most powerful weapons at its disposal to defend its claim over Taiwan. "War logic" dictates that a weaker power needs to use maximum efforts to defeat a stronger rival, he said, speaking in fluent English. "We have no capability to fight a conventional war against the United States," Zhu said. "We can't win this kind of war."

The Associated press, 16 July 2005

Chinese General Threatens U.S. Over Taiwan (Joe McDonald)

BEIJING: A Chinese general said Beijing might respond with nuclear weapons if the United States attacked China in a conflict over Taiwan, news reports said Friday. The State Department rejected the warning as "highly irresponsible." The exchange could add to tensions with Washington at a time of U.S. worries about China's military buildup and the proposed takeover of the oil company Unocal Corp. by a Chinese state-run company. "If the Americans draw their missiles and position-guided ammunition into the target zone on China's territory, I think we will have to respond with nuclear weapons," Maj. Gen. Zhu Chenghu, a dean at China's National Defense University, told visiting Hong Kong-based reporters. His remarks were reported by The Asian Wall Street Journal and The Financial Times. Zhu stressed he was expressing a personal view, not official policy, and was confident that China and the United States would not go to war, the reports said. While Zhu is a serving officer, he isn't involved in policymaking.

The New York Times, 16 July 2005

U.S. Rebukes Chinese General for His Threat of Nuclear Arms Use (Joel Brinkley)

WASHINGTON, July 15: A Chinese general who said his country would use nuclear weapons against the United States if the American military intervened in any conflict with Taiwan drew a sharp rebuke from the Bush administration on Friday. Sean McCormack, the State Department spokesman, called the remarks "highly irresponsible" - unusually strong language for Mr. McCormack, who was in Beijing with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice just four days ago. He added, "We hope that these are not the views of the Chinese government." During an official briefing for a visiting delegation of Hong Kong-based reporters on Thursday, the officer, Maj. Gen. Zhu Chenghu, said China would "respond with nuclear weapons" if the United States attacked

China because "we have no capability to fight a conventional war against the United States." The general, considered a hawk, insisted that his comments reflected his personal views, not official policy. China's Foreign Ministry also said late Friday that the general's remarks reflected his own views, but that China would never support independence for Taiwan.

The New York Times, 16 July 2005

Editorial: Going Nowhere on North Korea

It's mildly encouraging that after a year of cooling its heels, North Korea will be returning to the stalemated six-nation talks on its nuclear weapons programs later this month. But since neither Washington nor Pyongyang seems to have changed its underlying attitudes, there is little reason to expect the next round to produce any more progress than previous sessions. The more months that go by without a deal, the more nuclear weapons material North Korea can produce, sell and make into bombs. What is desperately needed is a serious American policy. Unfortunately, there is no indication that the Bush administration has yet come up with one. Facing up to the underlying, unforgiving realities of the situation would help. Here are three, to start: North Korea's regime may be cruel, perfidious and economically incompetent, but there are no realistic reasons to think that it is going to implode and disappear. Washington must base its policies on the assumption that the Kim Jong Il dictatorship will remain in power for some time and that it will press ahead with its nuclear weapons program until it is convinced it would be better off stopping. Publicly insulting Mr. Kim may win cheers from the Republican right, but it is not a promising way of convincing him he does not need a nuclear deterrent.

The Japan Times, 16 July 2005

Editorial: Priorities in the six-party talks

The next round of six-party talks, the multilateral negotiations over North Korea's nuclear-weapons programs, are scheduled to resume the week of July 25 in Beijing. While it is unclear what motivated North Korea to return to the talks, success will depend on whether the other five parties -- Japan, the United States, South Korea, China and Russia -- can convince Pyongyang that nuclear weapons do not enhance its security but rather detract from it. To do so, the five governments must work out a strategy that enables them to speak with one voice. Much has transpired since the last round of talks, which was held over a year ago. At that meeting, the U.S. finally put a detailed proposal on the table: It reportedly provided the long awaited road map that spelled out what Pyongyang could expect in return for agreeing to the dismantlement of its nuclear-weapons programs. Instead of responding, though, the North suspended participation in the talks, citing hostile comments by the government in Washington. Pyongyang was most likely waiting for the outcome of the U.S. presidential elections, hoping for a "regime change" in Washington that would soften the U.S. position. Those hopes were frustrated by the re-election of President George W. Bush, but North Korea continued to hold out, awaiting clarification of U.S. policy.

Daily Yomiuri, 16 July 2005

Powell urges N. Korea to abandon N-program

Former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell on Friday urged North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons program. "The solution to this [nuclear weapons] problem [of North Korea] is quite simple. North Korea should give up its nuclear ambitions. The United States and other nations in the region are prepared to assist North Korea to deal with the fundamental economic problems," he said. Powell was speaking at a lecture meeting held at Kwansei Gakuin University in Nishinomiya, Hyogo Prefecture, and sponsored by the university and The Yomiuri Shimbun, Osaka. In his speech, titled "Where the U.S.A. is Going," he claimed nuclear weapons would provide no security to Pyongyang, saying, "It's time for North Korea to face reality, move forward, get rid of its nuclear weapons programs and join the international community that is standing by and ready to help." Concerning reform of the U.N. Security Council, Powell supported Japan's move to gain a permanent seat on the council.

International Herald Tribune, 18 July 2005

Singh seeks 'engaged' relation in Bush visit (Somini Sengupta)

NEW DELHI: Before departing for the United States on Sunday, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said that persuading Americans to share more of their nuclear technology would be a priority in his meeting with President George W. Bush on Monday and that he hoped the two countries would move from being "estranged" to "engaged" on issues of mutual interest. "It's much too presumptuous on my part to say that I can predict the outcome, but I am looking forward, with hope, that out of this visit we will have a stronger, more durable, more productive relationship with the United States," Singh said in an interview. "People have described in the past our two countries' relations as two estranged democracies," he said. "I would like to work towards a new era where our two democracies are engaged." After India's independence from Britain in 1947, the politics of the Cold War infused India-U.S. relations with mutual distrust. Change came slowly, with the opening up of India's economy in

1991 under the guidance of Singh, an Oxford-educated economist who was finance minister at the time.

Hindustan Times, 17 July 2005

Nuke tech instead of high table (S Rajagopalan)

WASHINGTON, July 17: US officials point to the possibility of a forward push on civilian nuclear and space cooperation with India when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh meets with President George W Bush at the Oval Office on Monday. But on the key issue of support for India's bid for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, it seems Washington will wait until other UN reforms go through first. "We are not yet ready to announce American support for India (over UNSC)," a senior administration official said on Friday during a special briefing on the Prime Minister's visit. "I won't anticipate any change (in the US position) or any dramatic announcement on Monday." A host of bilateral communiques are expected after the Bush-Singh meeting. Washington is making it known that it is giving the visit an extraordinary high profile. As he put it, there is no higher priority for the US now than to expand and deepen ties with India.

The New York Times, 17 July 2005

India to Seek Expanded Access to U.S. Nuclear Technology (Somini Sengupta)

NEW DELHI, July 16: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said Friday that persuading the United States to share more of its nuclear technology would be a priority in his meeting next week with President Bush, and said he hoped the two countries would move from being "estranged" to "engaged" on issues of mutual interest. "It's much too presumptuous on my part to say that I can predict the outcome, but I am looking forward, with hope, that out of this visit we will have a stronger, more durable, more productive relationship with the United States," he said in an interview. "People have described in the past our two countries' relations as two estranged democracies," Dr. Singh said. "I would like to work towards a new era where our two democracies are engaged." After India's independence from Britain in 1947, the politics of the cold war era infused India-United States relations with mutual distrust. Change came slowly, with the opening up of India's economy in 1991 - Dr. Singh, an Oxford-educated economist and the finance minister at the time, was its chief architect - and relations fell to a new low in 1998, when India conducted nuclear tests.

The News, 17 July 2005

China refuses to back down on nuclear threat

BEIJING: China refused on Saturday to retract statements made by a leading general that it would use nuclear weapons to repulse US military intervention over Taiwan despite Washington's criticism of the remarks. But Beijing insisted that it would resolutely seek to resolve the Taiwan issue in a peaceful manner. "We will never tolerate 'Taiwan Independence', neither will we allow anybody with any means to separate Taiwan from the motherland," a foreign ministry spokesman told AFP. "We hope the United States will fulfil its commitments (on Taiwan) with concrete actions and join efforts with China to maintain the peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits." The spokesman was commenting on statements made this week by General Zhu Chenghu, dean of China's National Defense University, who said China, could launch a nuclear attack on "hundreds" of US cities if Washington interfered militarily in the Taiwan issue. "If the Americans draw their missiles and position-guided ammunition on to the target zone on China's territory, I think we will have to respond with nuclear weapons," Zhu.

The Hindu, 18 July 2005

India, US not estranged: Manmohan

NEW YORK: Ahead of his crucial summit with the U.S. President George W. Bush on Monday, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has said he was hoping to persuade the US to share more of its nuclear technology with India and reverse the perception that the two democracies have "estranged" relations. "People have described in the past our two countries' relations as two estranged democracies. I would like to work towards a new era where our two democracies are engaged," he said in an interview to *The New York Times*, published on Sunday. Dr Singh, heading a high-level delegation, is arriving on a three-day visit, during which he will have wide-ranging talks on bilateral issues as well as international developments with key US officials.

The Hindu, 18 July 2005

Nuclear cooperation with US: experts urge caution (Siddharth Varadarajan)

When Prime Minister Manmohan Singh meets US President George Bush in Washington on July 18, his attempt to push cooperation in the civilian nuclear field will face one big hurdle: Washington's desire to tighten the already restrictive global regime governing the transfer of nuclear-related material for civilian purposes. No matter how important a position India has come to occupy in US strategic thinking, Washington will be careful not to do anything that will weaken the non-proliferation initiatives announced by President Bush in February 2003. If anything, the ongoing crisis over North Korea and Iran has increased the salience of these initiatives and reduced

the Bush administration's appetite for making exceptions.

The Times OF India, 18 July 2005

Will the United States 'Sing' Indian tunes? (Chidanand Rajghatta)

WASHINGTON: The Tricolor is already up and flying alongside the Stars and Stripes atop government buildings in Washington. The South Lawns of the US Presidential mansion is immaculately dressed for the guard of honour. And the White House silver has been polished spotless for the state dinner banquet. As the excitement builds up for the summit meeting on the first day of Dr Singh's three-day visit to Washington, officials of both sides have reportedly given the final touches to the 16 agreements that will be signed, which include pacts on investment, energy, space exploration, agriculture, science and preserving the endangered Bengal Tiger. President Bush and his administration await Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his team for what a senior administration official who previewed the visit insisted on terming as 'historic,' a much-flogged expression that elicits rolling eyes from seen-it-all hacks.

The Times OF India, 18 July 2005

America and the '71 shadow (P R Chari)

The declassified documents on US foreign relations, specifically referring to the Indo-Pak crisis of 1971, were published by the state department at an inopportune time, just before prime minister Manmohan Singh was to leave for his official visit to the US. The derogatory observations in these official documents against Indians in general, and Indira Gandhi in particular, by former president Richard Nixon and his national security advisor, Henry Kissinger, are difficult to ignore. However, this controversy has deflected attention from important disclosures on the role played by the triangle of powers United States, China, and Russia - in the Indo-Pak crisis. The documents make clear that US foreign policy towards South Asia in 1971 was controlled by the Nixon-Kissinger duo. Their perspectives on the Pakistani military crackdown in East Bengal in March 1971, the steady flow of refugees into India leading to its eastern and north-eastern states coming under immense socio-economic strain, and the growing tensions in Indo-Pak relations was coloured by their need to favour Pakistan, which was secretly negotiating a Sino-American rapprochement. The deal fructified in July, 1971. It was dramatised by Kissinger's flight on July 9 from Pakistan to Beijing, heralding the establishment of a Sino-Pak-US axis. This led India to enter the Indo- Soviet Treaty of Friendship in August.

The Indian Express, 18 July 2005

Expectations high as PM visits US

WASHINGTON: India's prime minister will be warmly received during his visit to the United States beginning on Monday, but he may be disappointed in his quest for nuclear technology and a UN Security Council seat. Experts warn that while Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's state visit will symbolize warming ties between countries that were on opposite sides of the Cold War, the United States and India still disagree over Iran and other strategic issues. Singh is expected to repeat to US President George W. Bush a long-standing request for atomic energy cooperation. The demand has met US opposition because of concerns over India's status as a nuclear power that has refused to join most international non-proliferation regimes despite a 1998 nuclear test. Asked about the prospects for nuclear cooperation, a senior US official said only the two countries were having "dialogue on energy" and shared the goal of reducing dependency on oil.

The Indian Express, 18 July 2005

Rice calls on Natwar ahead of Bush-PM meeting

WASHINGTON: Setting the stage for the meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George W Bush, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice held talks with External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh on a wide range of bilateral issues. Rice, who called on Singh at his hotel here yesterday, said that President Bush was very much looking forward to his meeting with the Prime Minister. Describing the meeting as "a very good one", Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran told reporters that basically what "She (Rice) did was to set the stage for the important meeting between President Bush and the Prime Minister". They reviewed the progress that had been made on the joint statement, which, Saran said, is more or less finalized. The agenda before the two leaders, he said, will be a broad one. "It would be a mistake to look at one single peg on which to hang the visit. One should look at this visit as one in which a number of issues that have emerged in Indo-US relations will become much more broad ranging, much more multifaceted than they have been for some time," he said.

The Indian Express, 18 July 2005

Today is another day In a changing world, Indian diplomacy must not hark back to earlier times (Jagat S Mehta)

The debate whether Lal Krishna Advani was a "traitor" or a statesman groping to prepare for a future coalition

government in which the BJP could be a partner, will and must continue. There are also bound to be two views on whether M.A. Jinnah was at heart secular or had always believed in a separate theocratic state for Muslims. This debate, however, raises a broader question: should we expect lifelong consistency from political leaders? Most professionals and intellectuals find it safer to follow the footprints of the past. It is only statesmen who can repudiate the rhetoric of their earlier perceptions. A.B. Vajpayee led a torchlight procession protesting against the Simla Agreement in 1972 but in 1978 - disregarding virulent warnings in the Lahore press that he was not welcome - went to Islamabad and openly acknowledged it was in India's interest that a sovereign Pakistan should be stable. This transformed the climate of Indo-Pak relations.

The Indian Express, 18 July 2005

On 'historic' visit, waiting for some history to be made India and US need to elevate their relations beyond the ordinary (C Raja Mohan)

WASHINGTON: As Prime Minister Manmohan Singh arrived here on a four-day state visit to the United States, the stage has been set for a "successful" summit - by normal diplomatic standards - with President George W. Bush. Whether it will be a "memorable" one in the wayward history of Indo-US relations might depend on the kind of conversation that Singh and Bush strike up tomorrow morning at the White House. There will be enough wares to show off at the end of the talks tomorrow, including a joint statement that will celebrate shared democratic values and record the intent of the two nations to build a strategic partnership. There will also be agreements - from HIV/AIDS to information technology and agriculture. But the big question remains: Can Singh and Bush elevate Indo-US relations beyond the ordinary? Making Singh's visit to Washington truly "historic", as some American officials have already begun to label it, might involve some major political judgements by the two leaders on the future of Indo-US relations.

The Hindu, 18 July 2005

Nuclear cooperation with U.S.: experts urge caution (Siddharth Varadarajan)

When Prime Minister Manmohan Singh meets U.S. President George Bush in Washington on July 18, his attempt to push cooperation in the civilian nuclear field will face one big hurdle: Washington's desire to tighten the already restrictive global regime governing the transfer of nuclear-related material for civilian purposes. No matter how important a position India has come to occupy in U.S. strategic thinking, Washington will be careful not to do anything that will weaken the non-proliferation initiatives announced by President Bush in February 2003. If anything, the ongoing crisis over North Korea and Iran has increased the salience of these initiatives and reduced the Bush administration's appetite for making exceptions.

Reuters, 18 July 2005

N.Korea Seeks U.S. Trust at Nuclear Talks

SEOUL: North Korea said it wants to build trust and respect with its greatest foe, the United States, at six-country talks next week aimed at ending Pyongyang's pursuit of nuclear weapons, its media reported on Monday. The negotiations, which the reclusive North has boycotted for over a year, will begin on July 26 in Beijing but no date has been set for the discussions to end, a South Korean daily said. North Korea said earlier this month it would return to the talks with China, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the United States in the week of July 25, but it did not give an exact date. "What is most essential for making progress in the six-party talks, and substantial contribution of the Korean peninsula, is for the DPRK and the U.S. to build the relationship of trust and a will for mutual respect and co-existence," the North's Rodong Sinmun said in a commentary reported by Pyongyang's official KCNA news agency in English.

The Washington Post, 18 July 2005

North Korea May Demand More Concessions (Bo-Mi Lim)

SEOUL: It could be called electro-diplomacy - an offer by South Korea to double North Korea's electricity supply if it gives up its nuclear weapons program. The United States likes the idea, but analysts here are warning that North Korea may be leery of having to depend on its neighbor's power. It would run counter to North Korea's national ideology of *juche*, or self-reliance, promulgated by Kim Il Sung, the founder of the communist state and father of its current leader Kim Jong Il. The proposal, made directly to Kim Jong Il last month in Pyongyang and announced by South Korea last week, is believed to have been instrumental in luring North Korea back to six-nation negotiations starting the week of July 25, ending a 13-month boycott. Seoul said it offered to provide 2 million kilowatts of electricity northward if Pyongyang agreed at the disarmament talks to give up its nuclear program. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice praised the idea, saying: "It can be clear to anyone who looks at photographs of what North Korea looks like at night that they have energy needs."

The Hindu, 19 July 2005

India, US can make "significant contribution" to global peace

WASHINGTON: India and the US together could make a "significant contribution" to global peace and prosperity and fight the scourge of terrorism, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said at a rare dinner for a head of government hosted by American President George W Bush. Singh, who had highly successful talks with Bush earlier in the day, said he looked forward to Bush visiting India, adding, he himself had come to the United States with the "firm belief that working together, India and the USA can make a significant contribution to the global peace and prosperity." He stressed on the importance of India and the United States together fighting the "evil of terrorism." "To meet such vital challenges, we must be together on the same page. We must speak the same language and display the same resolve," he said on Monday night. The contribution that the two-million strong India-American community is making to every sphere of activity in the United States is "one indicator of the vast untapped potential in our bilateral relations."

The Hindu, 19 July 2005

Manmohan expresses satisfaction over talks (N Ravi)

WASHINGTON: In a significant development after the meeting that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had with American President George Bush at the White House, the United States, acknowledging India as a nuclear weapons power, agreed to cooperate with it in the area of civilian nuclear energy. This formulation was part of the joint statement to be issued following the talks, according to a highly-placed official source. At the joint press conference held in the East Room of the White House, in reply to a question on how the prospects of lifting restrictions on nuclear material and high-technology supplies to India looked at the end of his discussion with Mr Bush, Dr Singh expressed "great satisfaction" over the manner in which the issue had been addressed. He said they had had "a very constructive and productive meeting" and thanked Mr. Bush for his personal role and interest in facilitating a solution to this complex problem.

The Hindu, 19 July 2005

Engaging with the soft power of US

WASHINGTON: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will be spending all of his four days in the United States in Washington but much of his engagement will be with what Joseph Nye of Harvard University terms the "soft power" of the United States - its universities, businesses, scientific establishments and cultural bodies in contrast to its military and strategic establishments. An interesting event during this trip is the start of the CEOs Forum that would bring together 10 chief executive officers from each side for discussions on the trade and investment climate. The first meeting will be held in the White House executive office during the Prime Minister's visit. The Indian group chaired by Ratan Tata includes Mukesh Ambani, Deepak Parekh, Nandan Nilekani, P C Reddy, Baba Kalyani and Y C Deveshwar, while the American group includes the CEOs of Citigroup, JP Morgan-Chase and Pepsico.

The Hindu, 19 July 2005

Nuclear dialogue a test of the new strategic partnership (N Ravi)

THE INDIA-US dialogue on civil nuclear energy is emerging as a vital area of focus for India's energy security and will test how far the United States is willing to go in this sensitive area in the context of the new strategic partnership. Indian officials have been emphasising that this would be the start of a new process of engagement in this area that both the Governments would have to get used to, moving away from their old mindsets. Such an engagement through a working group or some such mechanism may not result in the signing of immediate agreements but would open the way for specific steps for the supply of nuclear fuel and nuclear technology. For India, nuclear energy has become critical in meeting its needs in the medium term. Right now, the country is heavily dependent on oil imported from West Asia and the increased use of coal would run up against the issue of greenhouse gases and global warming. It would need to expand its nuclear energy programme from 2400 MW to 40,000 MW in the medium term.

The Times Of India, 19 July 2005

End of N-apartheid for India?

WASHINGTON: Three decades of nuclear apartheid against India were swept aside in two paragraphs of a landmark joint statement on Monday as President Bush sought out New Delhi as an overarching ally for the 21st century. By granting India a de facto nuclear power status, Bush overturned a generation of sanctions and hostility from Washington's nuclear non-proliferation ayatollahs towards New Delhi, ever since its first nuclear test in 1974, and aggravating follow-ups in 1998. The full extent of the American leap of trust and its import is best understood by citing verbatim the relevant paragraph in the lengthy joint statement. "President Bush conveyed his appreciation to the Prime Minister over India's strong commitment to preventing WMD proliferation and stated that as a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology," it begins, before lowering the boom on the non-pro crowd - "India should acquire the same benefits and advantages as other such states."

The Tribune, 19 July 2005

PM, Bush for trade expansion (Ashish Kumar Sen)

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and US President George W. Bush on Monday consulted with Indian and American corporate leaders in the first CEOs' Forum in Washington in an effort to "build trade and increase investment." Speaking at a joint press conference with Mr Bush in the East Room of the White House, Dr Manmohan Singh said the two leaders discussed "a growing Indian economy with an accelerated growth rate, and its integration with the world economy expand the scope for commerce, investment and technological collaboration between our two countries."

The Telegraph, 19 July 2005

US stamp on nuclear might (Bharat Bhushan)

WASHINGTON, July 18: In a step that puts India in an exclusive international league, the US has agreed to recognise the country as a nuclear weapons power. It said India was "a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology" and that the country "should acquire the same benefits and advantages as other such states". This clears the way for Indo-US cooperation in civilian nuclear energy, including fuel for the Tarapur Atomic Power Plant. To enable this process, President George W. Bush has committed to seek agreement with the US Congress to change the requisite laws and policies. In a joint statement issued here today, the US also committed itself to "work with friends and allies to adjust international regimes to enable full civil nuclear energy cooperation and trade with India, including, but not limited to, expeditious consideration of fuel supplies for safeguarded nuclear reactors at Tarapur".

The Indian Express, 19 July 2005

Singh, Bush press civilian nuclear button (C. Raja Mohan)

WASHINGTON, July 18: In an unprecedented grand bargain that promises to end India's longstanding nuclear isolation, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George W. Bush hammered out today an arrangement to resume civilian nuclear energy cooperation that could include the supply of nuclear fuel to the Tarapur reactors. The breakthrough, which India has sought for so long, lays down a road map for India's integration with the global nuclear order as a full fledged nuclear weapon state. When completed in a phased manner, the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal, negotiated over the last few weeks, will amount to the first formal restructuring of the nuclear non-proliferation regime in the last thirty years to accommodate a new nuclear weapon power. While the US has agreed to recognise the reality of India's nuclear weapons, Delhi in turn has agreed to undertake the obligations and best practices that go with being a "responsible nuclear weapon power".

The Times of India, 19 July 2005

End of N-apartheid for India?

WASHINGTON: Three decades of nuclear apartheid against India were swept aside in two paragraphs of a landmark joint statement on Monday as President Bush sought out New Delhi as an overarching ally for the 21st century. By granting India a de facto nuclear power status, Bush overturned a generation of sanctions and hostility from Washington's nuclear non-proliferation ayatollahs towards New Delhi, ever since its first nuclear test in 1974, and aggravating follow-ups in 1998. The full extent of the American leap of trust and its import is best understood by citing verbatim the relevant paragraph in the lengthy joint statement. "President Bush conveyed his appreciation to the Prime Minister over India's strong commitment to preventing WMD proliferation and stated that as a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology," it begins, before lowering the boom on the non-pro crowd - "India should acquire the same benefits and advantages as other such states."

The Times of India, 19 July 2005

'N-deal is not a compromise for India (Chidanand Rajghatta)

WASHINGTON: India's foreign secretary Shyam Saran maintained India will not be railroaded into doing anything against its national interest. "We are taking on responsibility or obligations that all other nuclear powers are taking," he said. "We will not be discriminated against." Saran called the developments a "major breakthrough for India." Few disagreed with him. It was bad news only for those who believe nuclear power is cost inefficient and toxic. The joint statement also came as a bombshell to Washington's nuclear non-proliferation gurus who made a career out of branding India a renegade for going overtly nuclear, while rarely uttering a peep about others' transgressions. They came out of the woodworks. Some of them called up wire services to voice their objections. Others hunkered down to rework their sophistry which has kept India in the doghouse for so long. There was no immediate reaction from the Chinese and the Pakistanis, both of whom must be chafing at the bit. It now appears that the Pakistanis had an inkling of the upcoming deal, which is why the visit to Washington of Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz was called off.

Hindustan Times, 19 July 2005

Commitments not too onerous: India

WASHINGTON, July 19: Highly satisfied with the US decision to lift sanctions imposed on it 31 years ago in the wake of Pokhran nuclear tests, India has asserted that commitments given by it in return were not "too onerous" and were exactly what other nuclear weapon states had accepted. Recognition of India as a "responsible state with advanced nuclear technology" by President George Bush and his decision to supply fuel for nuclear reactors at Tarapur as outlined in the joint statement issued after his talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh here yesterday is seen by the Indian side as an implicit acceptance of New Delhi's nuclear weapons status. "What has been achieved is recognition by the US that, for all practical purposes, India should have the same benefits and rights as a nuclear weapons state." Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said at a media briefing on the outcome of Manmohan-Bush discussions on Tuesday.

Hindustan times, 19 July 2005

US walks the nuclear talk, India pleased (S Rajagopalan)

WASHINGTON, July 18: Following US President George W Bush's intervention, India and the US have succeeded in making a forward push on the vexed issue of civilian nuclear cooperation. While details were still awaited, agency reports quoted highly placed sources as saying that Washington has agreed to provide fuel for the Tarapur atomic power plant. But no confirmation was immediately forthcoming. A joint statement, slated to be issued immediately after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's meeting with Bush, got delayed as the two sides were busy sorting out a few glitches. Singh himself expressed satisfaction over the manner the nuclear curbs issue had been sorted out. "The issue has been addressed in a manner which gives me great satisfaction," he said at a joint media appearance after the meeting with Bush at the Oval Office. "We have had a very constructive and productive meeting. I thank the president on his personal role and interest in facilitating resolution of this complex problem."

Hindustan Times, 19 July 2005

India can hope to acquire N-reactors from international market

In the wake of the breakthrough achieved over the highly contentious issue of US cooperation in nuclear energy, India can now hope to acquire nuclear power reactors and fuel from the international market to meet its ever growing energy needs. New Delhi is said to have been keen to purchase at least six nuclear power reactors but was unable to do so in the face of sanctions and restrictions imposed by Washington following the 1974 Pokhran nuclear test. These restrictions were also implemented by the Nuclear Suppliers Group which includes Russia. Under the agreement arrived during talks between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George W Bush on Monday, US had agreed to recognise India as a nuclear weapon state and supply fuel for Tarapore reactors.

Hindustan Times, 19 July 2005

India to get fuel not only for Tarapore but for any reactor (TV Parasuram)

India will, under the agreement reached between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George Bush, be able to get fuel not only for Tarapore but for any other nuclear reactor on the same basis as any nuclear weapon power, Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said. Bush has made a commitment to cooperate with India on nuclear energy, and New Delhi, on its part is making a reciprocal commitment to place civilian nuclear reactors and not military nuclear reactors under IAEA safeguards, he told reporters in Washington on Monday. That, in fact, is what the US and other nuclear weapon powers have done, Saran said. The principle of reciprocity, which has been agreed upon, he said, is very important. "There is very good balance in the joint statement. We have committed ourselves to do exactly what other nuclear states with advanced technology are prepared to do. The principle of reciprocity is very important."

Deccan Herald, 19 July 2005

India's relations with US based on shared values: PM

Lauding Bush administration's efforts in transforming bilateral ties, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said India's vision of relations with the United States was a long-term and strategic one based on shared values and commitments. "We in India have greatly welcomed the extent to which the present US administration has taken forward efforts to effect a major transformation in relations between the two countries," he said at a luncheon hosted in his honour yesterday. "The refashioning of this bilateral relationship is not merely a matter of diplomatic process. Our vision of relations with the US is a long-term and strategic one, based on shared values and commitments. "What we have embarked upon is, therefore, not for tomorrow but I sincerely hope and believe that is for generation to come," Singh said at the luncheon attended by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Deccan Herald, 19 July 2005

India & US: the quantum leap after the 'next steps' (L K Sharma)

The last of the moves under the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership was a giant leap over nuclear energy relations. India and the US have started to grapple with the complex nuclear supplies issue, paving the way for an easier access to high technology items and nuclear fuel. The Manmohan-Bush summit managed to make progress on this vital issue even as a new working group was formed to deal with the entire civilian nuclear energy area. The joint statement by Manmohan Singh and President George Bush was still being finalised at the time of going to the press but the Indian Prime Minister earlier said the way the issue had been addressed gave him "great satisfaction". He was asked about India's demand for the removal of restrictions on nuclear and high technology supplies.

The Hindu, 19 July 2005

Nuclear dialogue a test of the new strategic partnership (N. Ravi)

The India-U.S. dialogue on civil nuclear energy is emerging as a vital area of focus for India's energy security and will test how far the United States is willing to go in this sensitive area in the context of the new strategic partnership. Indian officials have been emphasising that this would be the start of a new process of engagement in this area that both the Governments would have to get used to, moving away from their old mindsets. Such an engagement through a working group or some such mechanism may not result in the signing of immediate agreements but would open the way for specific steps for the supply of nuclear fuel and nuclear technology. For India, nuclear energy has become critical in meeting its needs in the medium term. Right now, the country is heavily dependent on oil imported from West Asia and the increased use of coal would run up against the issue of greenhouse gases and global warming. It would need to expand its nuclear energy programme from 2400 MW to 40,000 MW in the medium term.

Daily Yomiuri, 19 July 2005

Govt to seek complete ban on N. Korean N-development

The government will ask the United States, China, Russia and South Korea to adopt a five-nation policy that will bar North Korea not only from developing atomic arms but also from using nuclear development for peaceful purposes during a new round of six-way talks with Pyongyang at the end of this month, government sources said Monday. As North Korea has shown a desire to become a nuclear power, as evidenced by its February announcement that it possessed nuclear weapons, the government determined it would be dangerous to leave open the possibility of Pyongyang turning its nuclear development to military purposes in the future, the sources said. As well as asking North Korea to scrap its nuclear development, including for peaceful uses, the government will demand that Pyongyang disclose all details of its nuclear program--including uranium enrichment--and allow the other countries to confirm in a verifiable manner that it has frozen its nuclear development program, which would be the first step toward scrapping the program, the sources said.

The Asahi Shimbun, 19 July 2005

U.S. ready to ditch talks on North Korea

The Bush administration is ready to scrap six-nation talks on North Korea's nuclear programs if no progress is achieved at the next round in Beijing in late July. Washington conveyed its position to Japan and South Korea during talks in Seoul last Thursday, government sources said. U.S. officials said continuing the process "will not be acceptable" if Pyongyang continues its tactics of brinkmanship. They made clear that if Washington pulls out of the process, its future strategy will be to exert pressure on North Korea directly. Tokyo and Seoul agreed it is essential to make major progress in the next round of talks, which have been stalled for more than a year. South Korean government sources revealed that U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, during her recent swing through Asia, indicated that the U.S. government is losing patience and intends to resolve the nuclear issue by the end of this year.

The Hindu, 20 July 2005

US will work to lift curbs on nuclear supplies (N Ravi)

WASHINGTON: In a move that recognises India as a nuclear weapons state for all practical purposes but stops short of declaring it as one, the United States has committed itself to working for "full civil nuclear energy cooperation" with the country, including both direct and third party supplies of fuel for the safeguarded reactors at Tarapur. President George Bush will "seek agreement from Congress to adjust US laws and policies" towards this end. In return for such recognition and restrictions-free cooperation, India has committed itself to separating civilian and military nuclear facilities and placing its civilian nuclear reactors voluntarily under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. In the Joint Statement issued with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, President Bush referred to India as "a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology" and spoke of its commitment to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The context made it clear that it was assumed to be a

nuclear weapons state, asserted Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran in a briefing following the joint statement that was issued on Monday evening after hours of hard negotiations that continued well after the talks between the two leaders had ended.

The Hindu, 20 July 2005

Nuclear bargain may prove costly in long run (Siddharth Varadarajan)

The joint statement released in Washington after Monday's meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George W Bush is "historic" in many different ways but none more so than on the nuclear front. Both India and the United States have abandoned positions that were, until yesterday, virtual articles of faith for their respective establishments. The US says it is now in favour of "full civil nuclear energy cooperation" with India, which it describes as "a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology". In return, India has agreed to "separate its civilian and military nuclear facilities and programs in a phased manner" and place its "civilian nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards." While both sides have shown considerable flexibility, it is India that has leapt a greater distance in conceding a key demand of the Bush administration that the IAEA be allowed to monitor the 'non-military' side of the Indian nuclear energy programme. Apprehending such a decision, former and serving scientists at the Department of Atomic Energy had told The Hindu on Sunday that allowing international inspectors access to all civilian nuclear plants would seriously hamper ongoing research work on the fast breeder reactor (FBR) programme and compromise India's long-term energy security. On Tuesday, when news came from Washington confirming that this was precisely the bargain struck, the scientists reacted with anger and disbelief.

The Indian Express, 20 July 2005

US-India N-agreement inks doubt

WASHINGTON: President George W Bush, aiming to boost India as a counterbalance against China's rise, has moved closer to accepting the world's largest democracy as a nuclear weapons state and fueled fears he is weakening decades-old prohibitions against atomic arms. Bush accelerated the US embrace of India, after years of estrangement, during his first term. Monday's decision to permit expansive civilian nuclear cooperation is a further dramatic development. Under-Secretary of State Nicholas Burns called the agreement "the high-water mark of US-India relations since 1947." The approach was developed by former US ambassador to India Robert Blackwill and a close ally, Ashley Tellis, a South Asia specialist at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. It could, however, provoke a fight with the US Congress, which must amend US laws, and with America's other nuclear partners, who must tailor international policies to accommodate Bush's initiative. But Bush's Republican Party controls Congress and US concerns over China's growing military and economic might could make support for India irresistible.

The Indian Express, 20 July 2005

PM tells US Congress why India fit for new N-deal (C Raja Mohan)

WASHINGTON: Even as he savours the historic nuclear reconciliation with the Bush Administration, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today reached out to the US Congress which must change American non-proliferation laws to allow civilian nuclear commerce with India. Informing the Congress of his nuclear pact with President Bush, Singh declared that India is "fully conscious of the immense responsibilities that come with the possession of advanced technologies, both civilian and strategic". Aware of the potential opposition in the Congress to the Indo-US nuclear pact from the vociferous arms control lobby, Singh underlined India's "impeccable" track record on nuclear non-proliferation. The non-proliferation fundamentalists in Washington have been shell-shocked by the sweeping nature of the deal between Singh and Bush, which promises comprehensive Indo-US civilian nuclear cooperation. As Bush seeks to convince the US Congress that India's nukes are "good" while demanding tough action against the "bad nukes" of North Korea, Iran and other wannabe atomic powers in the Middle East, there will be hoarse cries against a nuclear exemption for India.

The Indian Express, 20 July 2005

An Embrace Too Ardent: Ten questions India needs to ask about its relationship with the US (Pratap Bhanu Mehta)

Winston Churchill once called on the British-American relationship to "roll on full flood, inexorable, irresistible and benignant." Whatever the wisdom of Churchill's advice, our admirable strategists are falling head over heels to give similar advice to India. Skepticism about rolling on full flood is dismissed as old fashioned or an aspersion on the government's patriotism. Few deny that India would gain immensely from a close engagement with the United States. The sheer momentum of economic and social links will ensure a substantial measure of cooperation. But it will be fatal if the allure of aligning to US political and military objectives becomes irresistible. It will certainly not be benign. There is some truth to the claim that nothing in our current commitments seriously jeopardises our independence. But equally, it has to be admitted that the discourse on Indo-US relations, as a signal of our

political intent and identity, is taking an alarmingly Panglossian view of how American and Indian interests align.

The Times OF India, 20 July 2005

Washington Summer: New Delhi takes first steps out of the nuclear doghouse

Since India's 1974 nuclear tests, it had been seen by the US principally through the grid of nuclear non-proliferation concerns. That had begun to change recently, and the seal was set on the process by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's current agreement with president Bush, which allows New Delhi to take some giant strides out of the nuclear doghouse. Washington's formally welcoming New Delhi as the sixth member of the nuclear club would wreck the current non-proliferation order, and ought not to be expected. But the next best has happened, with Washington recognising India "as a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology", who should get the same advantages as other such states. Bush has committed to working with the US Congress and with other countries to ease supply of nuclear fuel to Tarapur and other power plants. If he throws his weight behind an amendment of current US non-proliferation laws, it stands a good chance of meeting the approval of the Congress, where the Republicans have majorities in both chambers. But even if such a move is blocked in the Congress, other countries can still supply to India now that Washington has removed its objections.

The Tribune, 20 July 2005

US recognises India as nuclear state: To ease restrictions on flow of N-fuel for space research (H K Dua)

WASHINGTON: The joint statement India and the United States have issued at the end of the talks between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George W. Bush is of far-reaching importance. It virtually recognises India as a nuclear state, if not declare it as a nuclear weapon state. In effect, this means that India will get nuclear fuel for its Tarapur Atomic Power Plant and other nuclear power reactors and also gain access to dual technologies that had been barred to India by the US, which imposed sanctions following the 1998-Pokharan nuclear test. The statement means that the United States recognises that, for all practical purposes, India will have the same benefits as any nuclear state. India has also undertaken responsibilities and obligations as any other nuclear state, a senior Indian official said explaining the implications of the joint statement.

Deccan Herald, 20 July 2005

PM flaunts impeccable N-credentials (L K Sharma)

US Congressmen heard from Dr Singh why they should help their President in adjusting the US laws to help India's civilian nuclear power sector. Amid an applause by US Congressmen, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared that India has never been and will never be a source of proliferation of sensitive technologies. He told a joint session of Congress that as a responsible nuclear power, India's record in nuclear non-proliferation was "impeccable". India maintained this record "even though we have witnessed unchecked nuclear proliferation in our own neighbourhood which has directly affected our security interests". Singh used his formal address to plead for nuclear co-operation with the US and to reiterate India's strong case for becoming a permanent member of the Security Council. On the nuclear co-operation issue, President George Bush could not have found a better interlocutor for him at Capitol Hill. Singh was a star witness for him. The persuasive powers of Singh might make the President's task easy when he approaches the lawmakers to pave the way for nuclear co-operation with India through legal reforms. President Bush needs Congressional support for implementing his India policy.

Deccan Herald, 20 July 2005

Indo-US summit makes nuke breakthrough (L K Sharma)

Welcoming India as a nuke nation, Bush assured 'full civil nuclear energy cooperation'. The Indo-US diplomacy achieved criticality with the Bush administration making a strategic choice in favour of a nuclear India. The US promised to free India's nuclear power programme and high technology sectors from restrictive regimes in exchange for certain assurances from India. The bold initiative taken by President George Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh crowned the success of the summit that may transform the nature of the Indo-US relationship. However, as all things nuclear, the reversal of the US policy shocked the non-proliferation ayatollahs in the Democrat and Republican camps and the think tanks in anti-nuclear organisations. Mr Bush will have to invest considerable political capital if he has to keep his promise of modifying domestic laws and international understanding to accommodate the nuclear India in the order established by the nuclear haves. Similarly, some in India may suspect that the prime minister has made too many concessions to strike the deal with the US.

Deccan Herald, 20 July 2005

Nuclear cooperation

The United States, in a dramatic policy shift on Monday, has expressed its intent to co-operate with India in the sphere of civilian nuclear energy, which is the high point of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Washington. This move should help India increase its power generation capacity and can supplement the country's efforts to

meet its burgeoning energy needs. The US may take steps to remove certain restrictions that exist in forging nuclear cooperation for peaceful purposes, as Washington is willing to concede that India is a responsible nuclear power. The US offer has to be seen in the context of Washington's eagerness to improve ties with India, which has a high level of technological expertise, a growing commercial market and strategic importance as a counterweight to China.

The Hindu, 20 July 2005

Civilian nuclear pact; US gets positive response from allies

WASHINGTON, July. 20: The Bush administration has got a "fairly positive" response from its allies overseas and Congressional leaders on a new agreement to help India's civilian nuclear programme, a senior official has said. "I don't expect a lot of opposition in Europe," US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns, said. He said European leaders had been told in recent weeks that a deal might be in the works. However, as the status on the agreement was not clear till the last minute, there was no time to brief foreign and Congressional officials in advance, he told The New York Times. Burns said Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, also spoke yesterday to Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, and that his reaction was "constructive" and "not overly problematic." The paper quoted a spokesman at the Pakistani Embassy as saying there had been no reaction in Islamabad to the deal announced on Monday, between President George W Bush, and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Burns, who has been a point man in the India negotiations, said Rice and Stephen J. Hadley, the National Security Adviser, had hammered out final details of the pact.

The Hindu, 20 July 2005

India will have same obligations as nuclear weapons states: Saran (N. Ravi)

WASHINGTON DC: The commitments India has made, in the joint statement issued here on Monday, include identifying and separating civilian and military nuclear facilities, filing a declaration on its civilian facilities with the IAEA, "taking a decision to place voluntarily its civilian nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards," continuing its unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing, working with the U.S. on a fissile material cut off treaty, supporting international non-proliferation efforts through a comprehensive export control legislation and adhering to the guidelines of the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Asked if the decision to place the nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards was not a departure from the current policy, Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran, in a briefing said India would take on exactly the same obligations as the nuclear weapons states including the U.S. did. There would be no discriminatory safeguards that India would have to follow. The Indian objection had all along been to obligations that discriminated between nuclear weapons states and non-nuclear weapons states and not to any obligations at all that would be taken on by the nuclear weapons states as well.

The Hindu, 20 July 2005

Nuclear bargain may prove costly in long run (Siddharth Varadarajan)

IAEA inspections at civilian plants will hamper nuclear programme, say experts. The joint statement released in Washington after Monday's meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George W. Bush is 'historic' in many different ways but none more so than on the nuclear front. Both India and the United States have abandoned positions that were, until yesterday, virtual articles of faith for their respective establishments. The U.S. says it is now in favour of "full civil nuclear energy cooperation" with India, which it describes as "a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology". In return, India has agreed to "separate its civilian and military nuclear facilities and programs in a phased manner" and place its "civilian nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards."

The Tribune, 20 July 2005

US recognises India as nuclear state (H.K. Dua)

WASHINGTON, July 19: The joint statement India and the United States have issued at the end of the talks between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George W. Bush is of far-reaching importance. It virtually recognises India as a nuclear state, if not declare it as a nuclear weapon state. In effect, this means that India will get nuclear fuel for its Tarapur Atomic Power Plant and other nuclear power reactors and also gain access to dual technologies that had been barred to India by the US, which imposed sanctions following the 1998-Pokharan nuclear test. The statement means that the United States recognises that, for all practical purposes, India will have the same benefits as any nuclear state. India has also undertaken responsibilities and obligations as any other nuclear state, a senior Indian official said explaining the implications of the joint statement. "We will accept only those conditionalities as any other nuclear state", he added, to emphasise that the rights and obligations of India are the same as of any other nuclear power.

The Indian Express, 20 July 2005

US-India N-agreement inks doubt

George W. Bush Washington, July 20: President George W. Bush, aiming to boost India as a counterbalance against China's rise, has moved closer to accepting the world's largest democracy as a nuclear weapons state and fueled fears he is weakening decades-old prohibitions against atomic arms. Bush accelerated the US embrace of India, after years of estrangement, during his first term. Monday's decision to permit expansive civilian nuclear cooperation is a further dramatic development. Under-Secretary of State Nicholas Burns called the agreement "the high-water mark of US-India relations since 1947." The approach was developed by former US ambassador to India Robert Blackwill and a close ally, Ashley Tellis, a South Asia specialist at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. It could, however, provoke a fight with the US Congress, which must amend US laws, and with America's other nuclear partners, who must tailor international policies to accommodate Bush's initiative. But Bush's Republican Party controls Congress and US concerns over China's growing military and economic might could make support for India irresistible.

The Indian Express, 20 July 2005

Crossing the milestone

The nuclear agreement affirms the depth and maturity of the India-US engagement. The new arrangement worked out between President Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on the nuclear issue is a major landmark in several respects. The agreement promises to end India's nuclear isolation. The United States has committed itself to adjusting its domestic laws and international treaties to facilitate nuclear fuel supply to India. India will, as it always has, behave like a responsible power and put in all possible safeguards against proliferation. If the Bush Administration follows through on its commitments, this agreement could pave the way for a massive expansion of India's civilian nuclear energy programme. In the short run, this agreement will pave the way for expeditious consideration of fuel supplies to Tarapur, which is facing a critical shortage of fuel enriched uranium.

The Tribune, 20 July 2005

Step by step

THE new Indo-US joint statement by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George W. Bush reflects the breadth and depth of the transformation that has taken place in the relationship between the two countries. Cooperation in civilian nuclear energy, high technology and space was first announced in January 2004. The new statement has the US President committing himself to working for "full" cooperation in civilian nuclear energy, which would not only need US Congress approval to "adjust" current US laws, but other countries to agree to changes in international regimes governing export of nuclear technology. So, while cooperation in the civil nuclear realm is yet to materialise, progress in other sectors has been visible over the last couple of years, auguring well for the future. A couple of billion dollars worth of high-tech goods have already come in, indicating a steady dismantling of the earlier 'presumption of denial' regime.

The Indian Express, 20 July 2005

From Non-Proliferation to Civilian Energy Cooperation (K Ramanathan & Veena Agarwal)

This is the right time for India to look again at nuclear power as an important source of energy in the future. Energy security is a hot topic today, and so is sustainable development. Environmental concerns relating to carbon emissions are also increasingly centre-stage. The role of nuclear power has to be appraised in this context. The US has already begun promoting nuclear power as a clean fuel. Recently, George Bush stated that nuclear power is "the one energy source that is completely domestic, plentiful in quantity, environmentally-friendly, and able to generate massive amounts of electricity". He further added, "In the 21st century, our nation will need more electricity, more safe, clean, reliable electricity. It is time for this country to start building nuclear power plants again." The US has also recently offered India cooperation in civilian nuclear and other energy sectors.

The Indian Express, 20 July 2005

India must in N-energy club: Russia (Vinay Shukla)

MOSCOW, July 19: Russia today sought exception for India in the global nuclear non-proliferation regime in view of its "impeccable and unblemished" record and welcomed its engagement with US in the field of civilian nuclear energy. "There is a need for making exception for India in the global nuclear non-proliferation regime including the rules of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) as New Delhi has impeccable and unblemished non-proliferation record," chief of Russia's Federal Atomic Energy Agency Alexander Rumyantsev said. "Unlike some countries, Indian nuclear programme is purely indigenous. The adoption of domestic law on weapons of mass destruction and their delivery system in March by Indian Parliament virtually replicates the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT)," he added. He also hailed the Indo-US engagement in the field of civilian nuclear technology and termed it a "positive development." He said Russia considers India as the most prospective market for atomic power generation and is

keen to build some more atomic reactors under the ongoing Kudankulam Atomic Power Project in Tamil Nadu.

The Indian Express, 20 July 2005

PM tells US Congress why India fit for new N-deal (C Raja Mohan)

WASHINGTON, JULY 19: Even as he savours the historic nuclear reconciliation with the Bush Administration, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today reached out to the US Congress which must change American non-proliferation laws to allow civilian nuclear commerce with India. Informing the Congress of his nuclear pact with President Bush, Singh declared that India is "fully conscious of the immense responsibilities that come with the possession of advanced technologies, both civilian and strategic". Aware of the potential opposition in the Congress to the Indo-US nuclear pact from the vociferous arms control lobby, Singh underlined India's "impeccable" track record on nuclear non-proliferation. The non-proliferation fundamentalists in Washington have been shell-shocked by the sweeping nature of the deal between Singh and Bush, which promises comprehensive Indo-US civilian nuclear cooperation. As Bush seeks to convince the US Congress that India's nukes are "good" while demanding tough action against the "bad nukes" of North Korea, Iran and other wannabe atomic powers in the Middle East, there will be hoarse cries against a nuclear exemption for India.

The Indian Express, 20 July 2005

This means a cap on our n-arsenal, says Brajesh Mishra, facts show otherwise (Shishir Gupta & C Raja Mohan)

NEW DELHI, WASHINGTON, July 19: Brajesh Mishra, who was National Security Advisor during the Pokharan nuclear tests in 1998, today questioned Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's assurance to US President George Bush on segregation of Indian civilian and military nuclear facilities, saying it amounts to acceptance of a "cap" on the size of New Delhi's minimum credible nuclear deterrent. Speaking to The Indian Express in New Delhi, Mishra said: "The promise made yesterday in Washington means that we are accepting a cap on the size of our nuclear deterrent with a small number of nuclear weapons." According to Mishra, the NDA government had offered to put a "couple of existing nuclear facilities under full scope guards but the offer was never accepted" by the US. "The idea was that there would be enough fissile material from the reactors not under safeguards for India's minimum credible deterrent...But by effecting a separation between civilian and nuclear facilities, India would in fact be agreeing to the basic provision of a future fissile material cut-off treaty even before an international treaty on that crucial subject is negotiated and put into effect by other nuclear weapon states," he said.

The Times of India, 20 July 2005

Strong protests over US-India nuclear deal (Chidanand Rajghatta)

WASHINGTON: A firestorm of protest has erupted from Washington's nuclear non-proliferation pundits over the Bush administration's nuclear deal with India, indicating just how difficult it will be for the agreement to bear results. Congressional opposition for the deal came even before the ink was dry on the joint statement by President Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. "Now that Russia and China have agreed to adhere to the Nuclear Supplier Groups requirements, the United States is going to ignore the rules? What will Russia say when they want to supply more nuclear materials or technology to Iran?" asked Congressman Ed Markey of Massachusetts. "You can be sure that Pakistan will demand equal treatment. Will the Bush administration soon be announcing equal treatment with them?" Markey, a senior Democrat on the House Energy Committee, said in a statement. The lawmaker threatened to introduce legislation in Congress "to make sure we don't jeopardize the delicate balance of our existing non-proliferation policy."

The Times of India 20 July 2005

N-pact has come with footnotes (Percy Fernandez)

NEW DELHI: India has come a long way from the days of Henry Kissinger's flippant remark that the country didn't figure in the American scheme of things. After decades, both Kissinger and the US have come of age. On Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to the US, George Bush feels that both countries will have to be on the same page, speak the same language and display the same resolve which has marked the end of an era of estrangement and the beginning of a new engagement. In what seemed to be a first round victory for New Delhi, a roadmap has been signed for India's membership in the global nuclear order. That Bush has agreed to an arrangement to resume civilian nuclear energy is a significant pointer towards India's growing importance in geopolitics. Also, importantly, his willingness to bury the Pokhran hatchet is manifestation of his political maturity during his second term in office. But the initial bonhomie that has enveloped the establishments in Washington and New Delhi over this nuclear deal, experts say, may not last.

The Times of India, 20 July 2005

Editorial: Washington Summer

Since India's 1974 nuclear tests, it had been seen by the US principally through the grid of nuclear non-proliferation concerns. That had begun to change recently, and the seal was set on the process by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's current agreement with president Bush, which allows New Delhi to take some giant strides out of the nuclear doghouse. Washington's formally welcoming New Delhi as the sixth member of the nuclear club would wreck the current non-proliferation order, and ought not to be expected. But the next best has happened, with Washington recognising India "as a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology", who should get the same advantages as other such states. Bush has committed to working with the US Congress and with other countries to ease supply of nuclear fuel to Tarapur and other power plants. If he throws his weight behind an amendment of current US non-proliferation laws, it stands a good chance of meeting the approval of the Congress, where the Republicans have majorities in both chambers. But even if such a move is blocked in the Congress, other countries can still supply to India now that Washington has removed its objections.

Asia Times, 20 July 2005

US accepts India as a nuclear buddy (Siddharth Srivastava)

NEW DELHI: It is one more step towards achieving the next level of India-US relations, as well as the US promise to help cement India as a future global power. In a radical shift in nuclear relations between the two countries, the US has decided to treat India on a par with recognized nuclear-weapon states, extending all "benefits and advantages", including nuclear fuel for civilian nuclear reactors. These significant decisions are contained in a joint statement issued after a summit meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and US President George W Bush in the White House on Monday. India, in turn, has promised to be a responsible nuclear state, including placing its civilian nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, continuing its unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests and adherence, among other things, to the Missile Technology Control Regime and Nuclear Suppliers' Group guidelines.

The News, 20 July 2005

US seeks to justify extended detention of 'dirty bomb' suspect

RICHMOND: The US government on Tuesday sought to justify to a federal appeals court the detention of "dirty bomb" suspect Jose Padilla, an American linked to Al-Qaeda who has been held for three years without being charged. The government is appealing against a court order to release Padilla. But the US administration faced tough questioning from Blane Michael, one of three judges on panel. "What in the laws of war authorizes you to detain someone who was not captured on a battlefield?" he asked. "The United States would have to be arguing that in the war on terror, the battlefield includes the American battleground," added Judge Michael Luttig. "Our concern is they would go back to a battlefield," government lawyer Paul Clement said, frequently referring to the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States and official efforts to defend the country. Padilla's lawyer, Andrew Patel, meanwhile, asked that his client be charged, so he can defend himself in court. "It is the birthright of every US citizen to be punished according to law, even for the worst crimes," Patel said. "Charge him, try him - it has always worked for terrorism cases. "I am probably the first lawyer to say this, but I am asking that my client be indicted by a federal grand jury," he said. In February, a federal judge ordered Padilla's release within 45 days, arguing that the government had no right to suspend due process of law. But the judge later agreed to suspend his decision while the government appealed. Padilla, a former gang member, was arrested in May 2002 in Chicago as he stepped off a plane from Pakistan.

The Washington Post, 20 July 2005

Editorial: A New Nuclear Era

The Bush administration is known for gambles, and Monday's about-face on nuclear cooperation with India qualifies as such. By declaring that it would help India build nuclear power plants and import advanced weapons, the administration has made good on its statement that it wants India to become "a major world power in the 21st century." But it has simultaneously set aside the principle that countries refusing to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty should be denied civilian nuclear assistance and, in many cases, face a weapons embargo. The gains from this shift could be considerable, but so too could the risks. Much will depend on the administration's skill in assembling support for its new stance, in Congress and internationally. Start with the potential benefits. India, with a population of just over 1 billion, is already the biggest democracy in the world and will eventually overtake China as the most populous of all nations. Its economy has grown rapidly in the past decade, and it has become a global player in software, computer services and pharmaceuticals.

The Washington Post, 20 July 2005

Bush Officials Defend India Nuclear Deal (Dafna Linzer)

Bush administration officials yesterday lobbied Congress and tried to assure allies that a new deal to supply India with civilian nuclear technology and conventional military equipment was not meant to betray decades of nuclear-control policies or upset the regional balance of power. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, addressing

Congress, said his country, which developed its nuclear program in secret in the 1970s, was a responsible nuclear state that would closely guard any future acquisitions of sensitive U.S. technology. He appealed for U.S. investment that could spur India's economic growth and bring in \$150 billion in the next decade for nuclear power plants and to modernize the country's transportation system. The details of the nuclear deal had been tightly held until they were announced late Monday during Singh's visit to the White House. Under the agreement, India would place its civilian nuclear facilities, but not its nuclear weapons program, under international monitoring and would continue a ban on nuclear testing. The United States would give India access to U.S. nuclear technology and conventional weapons systems.

The Associated Press, 20 July 2005

U.S.: India Pact Not Directed at Rivals

WASHINGTON: The global partnership being established between the United States and India "stands on its own" and is not directed at any potential U.S. rival, including China, says a senior State Department official. "This is a significant point of departure for our foreign policy, not just in South Asia but worldwide," Nicholas Burns, undersecretary of state for political affairs, said Tuesday. U.S.-Indian strategic cooperation agreements in 11 specific areas were announced during the official visit of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who met Monday with President Bush. He spoke Tuesday to a joint meeting of Congress, in which he promised that India never would violate international rules against nuclear proliferation. "Our interests are intersecting," Burns said. He did not accept a questioner's premise that the shoring up of relations with India may have been related to the uncertainties that administration officials have stated repeatedly about China's future intentions in the broader Asia region. As for Pakistan, India's neighbor and traditional rival, Burns said Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice telephoned Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf on Tuesday to explain the agreements with India. He did not characterize Musharraf's response.

People's Daily, 20 July 2005

Opinion: Indian PM's US visit a qualified success

Visiting Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh on July 18 held a bilateral meeting, which lasted more than two hours, with US President George W. Bush at the White House. The two sides conducted broad and in-depth discussions on topics such as defense, economy and trade, energy, anti-terrorism, high-tech transfer and the United Nations reform etc. Singh said after the meeting that his meeting with president Bush was fruitful and constructive. Indian media also generally believed the summit "brought the two countries closer to each other", which is most obviously seen in the US' agreement to enhance cooperation with India in civilian nuclear technology. Singh is the first Indian government leader to visit the United States in the past five years and both sides expect the summit can bring the bilateral relations onto the right track. The United States showed rare enthusiasm for the visit with high-profile receptions "rarely seen except for traditional allies".

The Guardian, 20 July 2005

America to aid India's nuclear power project (Randeep Ramesh)

The US president, George Bush, has agreed to aid India's civilian nuclear power programme, an unexpected decision that reverses three decades of American policies designed to deter nations from developing nuclear weapons. The agreement between Mr Bush and the Indian prime minister, Manmohan Singh, is the first exception to the international bar on nuclear assistance to any country that does not accept monitoring of all of its nuclear facilities. India has not signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, which requires oversight of nuclear installations, and conducted its first nuclear detonation in 1974 and more in 1998. Mr Bush will have to convince Congress to amend domestic legislation that forbids cooperation between the US and non-nuclear states that conduct nuclear tests. India has agreed not to explode fresh devices and will place its civilian reactors, but not its military programme, under the international inspection regime.

The Hindu, 21 July 2005

Breaking out of isolation to meet energy needs (N Ravi)

WASHINGTON: At the conclusion of his four-day visit to the United States, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said that the nuclear energy agreement with the US was a way forward for India to break out of its present isolation and expand international cooperation to meet its energy needs. At the same time, it did not in any way lead to a diminution of the strategic nuclear capabilities that could affect the national security interests, he asserted in his remarks at a press conference. The two countries had agreed on reciprocal commitments, which would be addressed in a phased manner. A carefully selected working group would determine how best progress can be made in the matters reflected in the joint statement.

The Hindu, 21 July 2005

Nuclear deal will lead to a quantum jump: officials (N Ravi)

WASHINGTON: The nuclear deal with the United States by removing restrictions had opened up a huge opportunity and could lead to a quantum jump in the area of nuclear energy, according to official sources familiar with the negotiations. In contrast to the target of 10,000 MW or the likely achievement of 6,500 to 7,000 MW from nuclear energy with a restrictive regime, it would be possible under the new agreement to go to 40,000 MW or even beyond to meet the energy needs in the medium term. As regards India's obligations, they were clearly and unambiguously spelt out in the joint statement. Pointing to the wording that "India would reciprocally agree that it would be ready to assume the same responsibilities and practices and acquire the same benefits and advantages as other leading countries with advanced nuclear technology, such as the United States," the officials asserted that India's obligations were no more and no less than those assumed by the United States, France or any of the nuclear powers.

The Hindu, 21 July 2005

Pranab defends move to promote defence ties with US

CHANDIGARH: The Defence Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, has defended the proposal for an India-US agreement to promote co-operation in the field of defence as well as nuclear technological development. He denied that the present Government had deviated from the national policy or violated any provision of the Common Minimum Programme of the United Progressive Alliance. Mr. Mukherjee was interacting with reporters, after presiding over a function for installing the newly-appointed president of the Punjab unit of the Congress here on Wednesday. He said that the Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, during his US visit, had not deviated from the country's position on the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), which India continues to term as "flawed and partisan." He said neither that nor India's interest had been compromised.

The Hindu, 21 July 2005

Selling the United States of America in India (Harish Khare)

On his way to the United States, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh made bold to say India was not for sale. For good measure he added that no Congress Prime Minister needed any lesson in nationalism or patriotism. This too was the precise refrain of his predecessor, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, when his Foreign Minister, Jaswant Singh, was widely perceived as keen on reducing India to the status of the 51st State of the United States. In fact, it needs to be recalled that during the Vajpayee regime, the pro-National Democratic Alliance sections in the media had criticised Natwar Singh, the Congress party's shadow Foreign Minister, for wanting to question too closely the NDA Government's pro-US slant. Now the same voices are accusing Dr. Manmohan Singh of short-changing India out of its "nationalistic" nuclear autonomy, even as the Bush administration spin-masters choose to describe the nuclear "deal" as "the high-water mark of US-India relations since 1947."

The Hindustan Times, 21 July 2005

US will support India's case in USNC when the time comes: PM

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said on Wednesday that he does not believe the United States is averse to India becoming a permanent member of an expanded United Nations Security Council but the Bush administration's position is that the priority in the world body's reforms lies elsewhere. He is confident, he told a news conference winding up three-day visit in Washington, that when the time comes, the United States would support India's case for permanent membership. This is the impression he had got during the discussion he had with President George W Bush. The President as also other American leaders recognise the capability and claim of New Delhi in this respect, he added. External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh, who elaborated on this point, asserted that India, Japan, Germany and Brazil, who are together seeking permanent seats and are called G-4, would not break up.

The Hindustan Times, 21 July 2005

Rice calls Musharraf, discusses Singh's visit

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to the US and prevailing security situation in the aftermath of the July seven London bombings figured in the telephonic conversation between Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and American Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Rice spoke to Musharraf over the phone on Tuesday night after the President had a lengthy meeting with the visiting Chief of US CENTCOM, Gen John P Abizaid, who frequently comes to Pakistan to review progress on the war on terror, especially in the Pak-Afghan border, Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said. During their conversation, Rice and Musharraf discussed a host of regional and international issues, including Prime Minister Singh's US visit. Their conversation centred around security related issues and Pakistan's much promised crackdown on extremism and terrorism.

The Times Of India, 21 July 2005

Will partisan politics nuke a good deal? (K Subrahmanyam)

Unsurprisingly, the Indo-US joint statement on their future nuclear relationship has attracted flak from certain quarters. Many ask why India, a recognised nuclear-weapon state, should declare which facilities are military and which civilian, and implement IAEA safeguards on the latter? But the fact that we're asked to do that is a recognition of India as a military nuclear power. It's surprising that there are objections to separating civil and military nuclear facilities. The original suggestion for this came from Raja Ramanna, the designer of the first Pokhran bomb. Ramanna's logic can't be challenged. If civilian and military facilities are not separated, it would mean all reactors in India support our military programme. If that were true, other nations would be justified in denying India even a screw for the atomic energy department as that would constitute nuclear proliferation.

The Tribune, 21 July 2005

US State Dept backs Bush's policy on N-energy aid to India (Ashish Kumar Sen)

The State Department on Tuesday said that contrary to some suggestions, it was "fully on board" with President George W. Bush's policy of extending civilian nuclear cooperation to India. Noting that the joint statement issued by the US and India on Monday pointed to a "transformed relationship" between the two countries, State Department spokesman Adam Ereli told reporters this was something that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice "has been, very, very actively involved in." Mr Ereli said the development "represents an important step forward not only in our bilateral relationship, but I think in our strategic relationship in the region." For the agreement to come into effect, the US Congress will have to change a 1978 law barring American nuclear energy aid to nuclear weapons states. Some US diplomats have pointed to the "non-proliferation Ayatollahs" entrenched in the State Department who feel India should be punished for the nuclear tests of 1974 and 1998 and are opposed to any sharing of nuclear technology.

The Indian Express, 21 July 2005

Not just Tarapur, other reactors too will get US fuel supply (C Raja Mohan)

WASHINGTON, July 20: In an impressive gain for India, the Bush Administration has agreed to supply not only enriched uranium to fuel the Tarapur reactors, but also natural uranium for other reactors that are at the heart of the national nuclear energy programme. In one stroke, the US decision under the nuclear pact signed Monday, addresses a long-standing vulnerability of India's civilian nuclear programme-the lack of enough domestic reserves of natural uranium. Well placed sources in the Indian delegation say the Bush Administration's commitment came upon the insistence of Anil Kakodkar, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. Those familiar with the drama of Indo-US nuclear negotiations-that oscillated between success and failure throughout the last weekend-say it was a master stroke by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to include two top scientists in his delegation.

The Indian Express, 21 July 2005

Pokhran's PM slams deal: Not on

NEW DELHI, JULY 20: With the Left still mulling its response and BJP president L K Advani embroiled in internal politics with the Sangh, former Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee led the charge today against Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on the understanding reached with the US on nuclear technology. The BJP, he said, shared the "concerns and fears" expressed by Indian nuclear scientists and defence analysts about the deal. India's reciprocal offer to identify and separate its civilian and military nuclear facilities and programme has "long-term national security implications," Vajpayee said. According to him, it will deny India "any flexibility" in determining the "size of our nuclear deterrent". While acknowledging that India believes in possessing a minimum credible deterrent, he said, "the size of the deterrent must be determined from time to time on the basis of our own threat perception". This judgment, he stressed, "cannot be surrendered to anyone else"

The Times of India, 21 July 2005

Security of Pak nukes is a worry: PM

WASHINGTON: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has warned of "serious" consequences if Islamic militants grabbed power in Pakistan and took control of its nuclear weapons arsenal. Manmohan, wrapping up a four-day visit to the United States, said the Al-Qaeda terror network led by Osama bin Laden had a key base in Pakistan and that there was always the risk of Islamic militants seizing power in Pakistan. In an interview with the CNN broadcasting network on Wednesday, Manmohan said that he was worried about the security of Pakistan's nuclear assets. "Well, the security of (nuclear) assets which are under control of Pakistan does worry us. And we hope that credible solutions can..... be found," Singh said. Asked what specifically worried him about the nuclear weapons, he said, "Well, if they get into the hands of the jihadi elements, that could pose a serious problem."

Hindustan Times, 21 July 2005

US flexible on UNSC expansion: Rice

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has indicated that the US position on the expansion of the UN Security Council is flexible. According to a transcript of a Senegalese television interview on Wednesday with Rice, she said that the discussion on enlarging the council should not divide the UN and detract member countries from undertaking important reforms. Rice said that until now the US has discussed expanding the Security Council by "two or so seats" but that there was some flexibility in that position, according to the transcript, released by the State Department. But Department Under Secretary for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns said it was too soon to agree on Security Council expansion. Burns discussed the issue with African and other UN delegates to convince them not to commit to an expansion plan.

The Tribune, 21 July 2005

PM allays fear of Pakistan, China (H.K. Dua)

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh wound up his momentous visit to the US by assuring both Pakistan and China that what had been achieved in Washington was not directed against any other country. In remarks clearly aimed at Pakistan, he said he had not come to Washington to use it against any other country. The outcome of the visit would benefit the whole of South Asia. He also told newsmen that India would continue with its "constructive engagement" with China. The country had peace and tranquility along its border with China since 1963. India always wanted good relations with its eastern neighbour. The outcome of the visit would ensure balance in Asia and round the world, he added. The assurance to both Pakistan and China had become necessary in view of the reports that Pakistan was feeling concerned about the emerging relationship between India and the United States. Also, the US analysts and commentators were suggesting that the US had decided to co-opt India as a countervailing force against China.

The Tribune, 21 July 2005

Cong clueless on Indo-US nuclear agreements

NEW DELHI, July 20: Lack of synergy between the Congress and the UPA government was evident once again today when the ruling party was clueless on the details of the "historic" Indo-US agreements under which America has favoured "full civil nuclear energy cooperation" with India. Although the agreement has generally been received positively, there is disquiet among security experts and nuclear scientists that India has resiled from its earlier positions. In particular, there is concern about India's commitment to segregate its civilian and military installations and allow inspection of its civilian facilities by international experts. Some concern has already been voiced about India giving in to US conditionalities. However, this debate is bound to pick up in the coming days once details are made available. The Congress, however, appeared completely ill-prepared to pre-empt any criticism primarily because of any feedback from the government.

Deccan Herald, 21 July 2005

Nuke deal: PM deflects BJP criticism

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has deflected criticism from the BJP on the agreements he's reached with the US on nuclear energy cooperation. In Washington last night, he said he hoped national consensus would emerge when he explained the deals in Parliament. The Left is also expected to react publicly to the PM's visit. They had already criticised the defence agreement signed by Pranab Mukherjee. The Prime Minister did not mince his words as he clarified his government's stand on all the issues surrounding his state visit to the US. He started off defending the civilian nuclear deal with the US from criticism from the former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee who had said that the deal compromised India's security interests.

Dawn, 21 July 2005

US-India N-deal may affect CBM talks: Diplomats' apprehension

NEW DELHI, July 20: A controversial nuclear cooperation deal for civilian projects between India and the United States may cast a shadow on the nuclear CBM talks between Islamabad and New Delhi scheduled here on August 5 and 6, diplomats and analysts said on Tuesday. The additional secretary-level India-Pakistan talks were originally expected to consider the usual agenda of advance notification of missile tests that the two countries have not yet resolved. Issues such as the corridor of the missile tests and the point of impact as well as differences over the type of nuclear-capable missiles to be brought under the purview of their discussions has so far been the staple fare of these meetings. Indications are growing though that Pakistan will now "study and react appropriately" to the outcome of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's meeting with President George W. Bush, mainly looking at the nuclear content, diplomatic sources said.

Daily Times, 21 July 2005

China takes note of US-India defence pact

BEIJING: The Chinese government has noted the media reports regarding '10-year United States and India pact

on joint weapons production, cooperation on missile defence', said a spokesman of the Chinese Foreign Office Kong Quan. Commenting on the reports, the spokesman pointed out that the international community has reached a consensus on relevant nuclear issues. "We hope United States and India cooperation on the matter will be helpful to safeguard peace and stability in Asia," he added. Meanwhile, a foreign media report published in China Daily says that United States President Bush, aiming to boost India as a counterbalance against China's rise, has moved closer to accepting India as a nuclear weapons state and fueled fears he is weakening decades-old prohibitions against atomic arms.

Daily Times, 21 July 2005

India has to prove its nonproliferation credentials: Cohen

WASHINGTON: Leading South Asia expert Stephen Cohen said here Tuesday that India has to demonstrate transparently that it is an effective partner in nonproliferation; as it does this the US will change its laws and begin the process of sharing civilian nuclear technology, beginning with the very dangerous US-built reactor at Tarapur. He told Daily Times in answer to a question about US offer to assist India's non-military nuclear programme, Cohen, head of South Asian studies at the Brookings Institution, that it is the beginning of a long multi-sided negotiation - the Executive with Congress, and the US with India - and perhaps within India itself.

The News, 21 July 2005

North Korea expects little progress at N-talks

SEOUL: North Korea said on Wednesday it expected little progress at revived nuclear disarmament talks next week, criticizing moves in Japan and the United States to raise the issues of Pyongyang's abductions of Japanese citizens and alleged human rights abuses. "Such disturbing actions as slandering ... a dialogue partner cannot help the talks progress into a positive direction and will only bring conflict and a breakdown in the end," the North's official Korean Central News Agency said in a commentary. The moves "make it hard for us and other related countries to be optimistic about substantial progress" at the talks aimed at ending the North's nuclear ambitions, KCNA said. The comment comes a day after a Washington conference funded by the US Congress focused on human rights abuses in the communist North.
other issues at the table.

International Herald Tribune, 21 July 2005

India welcomed as new sort of superpower (Anand Giridharadas)

MUMBAI, India The visit to Washington this week by India's prime minister, Manmohan Singh, symbolizes a change in the fraught but inextricable relationship between the world's two largest democracies: an unrivaled superpower and an aspiring one. For decades, it has been a dalliance of love and hate. Indians have craved American visas, denim, movies and music. But the two countries were "estranged democracies" in the past, as Singh said recently. Previously, the Cold War had led to chilled relations, with Washington backing Pakistan and the Soviet Union backing India. This week, in a joint statement issued by the two countries, President George W. Bush called India a "responsible" nuclear country. He also recommended a deal that would allow India to buy fuel and parts for civilian nuclear reactors if it opened its nuclear sites to inspection.

Asian Age, 21 July 2005

U.S. gets key to nuclear door (Seema Mustafa)

New Delhi: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, in his quest for nuclear civilian energy, has committed Indian nuclear civilian facilities to international inspections by IAEA inspectors in what is perceived by nuclear experts here as a major shift in nuclear policy and approach. US President George W. Bush, in return, has only agreed to "seek agreement" and "consult" the US Congress and friends and allies to see if they would be willing to "adjust" US laws and international regimes to help India in securing nuclear civilian energy. The joint agreement presents a studied contrast in the positions taken by the two leaders. President Bush has said that as a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology India "should" acquire the same benefits and advantages as other such states. This has been projected by spin doctors as a recognition of India's nuclear power status, a view that is strongly refuted here by nuclear experts such as Brahma Chellaney and Bharat Karnad who insist that there is no such US commitment only a viewpoint tempered with the word "should."

People's Daily, 21 July 2005

UN atomic chief says supports US-India nuke deal

The head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog, Mohamed ElBaradei, said on Wednesday he supported a U.S. plan to help nuclear-armed India obtain atomic technology, despite fears the deal could damage global nuclear security. In a statement, ElBaradei said he welcomed the agreement, under which President George W. Bush, in a dramatic policy shift, promised India full cooperation in developing its civilian nuclear programme. In exchange,

India said it would allow snap International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections of its civilian nuclear facilities. "Making advanced civil nuclear technology available to all countries will contribute to the enhancement of nuclear safety and security," ElBaradei said.

Deccan Herald, 21 July 2005

Manmohan and Bush face domestic critics (L K Sharma)

While both the Left and the Right are flaying the prime minister's move the Bush critics are saying he has been too kind to India.

Having taken a bold step together, Dr Manmohan Singh and Mr George Bush are in the same boat. Both are facing domestic critics. They may have done something right since both are being attacked for finalising a blueprint for transforming the relations between their two countries. The critics of Mr Bush are saying that he has been too generous to India. The critics of Dr Manmohan Singh are saying that he has given too much to the United States. The negotiating teams of the two sides must be feeling that their relentless efforts to strike a fair and balanced deal are not being appreciated. Dr Manmohan Singh is being blamed in India by some who fear that the nuclear deal may cap India's development in this field. The Indian prime minister may find that he will have to conduct his America policy in the face of attacks both from the Right and the Left. Of course, that may only strengthen the Congress Party's claim to be a centrist party.

JoongAng Daily, 21 July 2005

6-party talks scheduled to be open-ended

Announcing officially that the six-party talks intended to end the North Korean nuclear crisis would resume July 26, the South Korean Foreign Ministry said yesterday that the negotiations in Beijing would be open-ended with the participants now focused on achieving results. A South Korean official said yesterday that the countries participating in the talks - the two Koreas, China, Russia, Japan and the United States - have agreed that the negotiations needed to bring tangible results. "Considering that the talks are resuming after more than a year, participants are very determined to get visual results rather than just hollow statements," said the official. "There is a sense of urgency here that we might not get another shot at resolving the issue through diplomatic means, if the talks fail this time." After a 13-month stalemate and almost no advance in the earlier talks, Pyongyang said last month that it would return to the negotiation table.

Dawn, 21 July 2005

A new nuclear era

The Bush administration is known for gambles, and Monday's about-face on nuclear cooperation with India qualifies as such. By declaring that it would help India build nuclear power plants and import advanced weapons, the administration has made good on its statement that it wants India to become "a major world power in the 21st century." But it has simultaneously set aside the principle that countries refusing to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty should be denied civilian nuclear assistance and, in many cases, face a weapons embargo. The gains from this shift could be considerable, but so too could the risks. Much will depend on the administration's skill in assembling support for its new stance, in Congress and internationally. Start with the potential benefits. India, with a population of just over 1 billion, is already the biggest democracy in the world and will eventually overtake China as the most populous of all nations. Its economy has grown rapidly in the past decade, and it has become a global player in software, computer services and pharmaceuticals.

The Tribune, 21 July 2005

Editorial: Momentous visit

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to the United States was, by all means, a momentous one. His description of India and the US as "natural partners" while addressing the US Congress, which in itself was a rare honour, exemplified the bonhomie witnessed throughout his visit. The joint statement issued at the end of the summit meeting between Dr Manmohan Singh and US President George W. Bush is one of the most elaborate ones and it covers a whole gamut of bilateral issues. Primarily, it underscores a metamorphosis in India-US relations, which touched a nadir following Pokharan II. The US now recognises India as a nuclear state with all the attendant advantages. This implies that India can look forward to receiving full cooperation from the US in all its civilian nuclear programmes, particularly in power generation.

The Tribune, 21 July 2005

Gains from new status (Rajeev Sharma)

The India-US nuclear deal has vindicated Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's two statements: that India was not up for sale and that his government would do nothing which would surrender its sovereignty. The agreement between President Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is a win-win exercise for both New Delhi and

Washington. The give-and-take formulae, as per the terms of the deal, substantiate this. On the "give" part, India has agreed to place its civilian nuclear facilities under international monitoring. It has also pledged to continue to honour a ban on nuclear testing - a key policy suo motu announced by the previous Atal Bihari Vajpayee government which the UPA government has decided to carry on with. On the "take" part, India has not placed its nuclear weapons arsenal under the international scanner. A move to the contrary would have certainly been a red rag to the Left parties and the National Democratic Alliance alike.

The Tribune, 21 July 2005

A relook at defence agreement (N. Kunju)

This refers to "Mission to Washington" by Mr H.K. Dua (July 5). The 10-year agreement on defence and military affairs regarding future collaboration between India and the US signed by Defence Minister Pranab Mukherji has, ironically, been hailed by the opposition BJP and opposed by the alliance partner CPM. Both have not studied the agreement because there was no time for a study. Nor do they have the expertise to study the agreement, the details of which are couched in vague strategic phrase-mongering that can't be precisely interpreted for actual implementation. The BJP supports the agreement because it thinks that the induction of arms will make India a superpower projecting its might in this part of the world. Some American analysts too fuel this thought of India becoming the dominant power of the East in the near future. With its old anti-Soviet mindset, the BJP thinks America will help India to police the East to safeguard freedom and democracy and to fight Islamic terrorism.

The Indian Express, 21 July 2005

Editorial: Born in the future

Bush and Singh remove past burdens and carve out new spaces in the Indo-US engagement. When Prime Minister Manmohan Singh met President George W. Bush in September 2004, the two leaders had declared that Indo-US relations had never been as good, but that the best was yet to come. As he concludes his visit to Washington, Singh has every reason to be satisfied at the first big steps he has taken with Bush to realise the full potential of Indo-US relations. Some of these steps related to the past and others to the future. For Singh, who faces cynical political classes at home on the prospect of Indo-US relations, removing the burden of the past was important. Bush promised from the very beginning of his second term this year that he is politically committed to the transformation of bilateral relations. But Singh needed one dramatic example of American resolve.

The Indian Express, 21 July 2005

Bush's bold new gamble

The Bush administration is right to want close ties with India, but these will have limits. The Bush administration is known for gambles, and Monday's about-face on nuclear cooperation with India qualifies as such. By declaring that it would help India build nuclear power plants and import advanced weapons, the administration has made good on its statement that it wants India to become "a major world power in the 21st century." But it has simultaneously set aside the principle that countries refusing to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty should be denied civilian nuclear assistance and, in many cases, face a weapons embargo...Start with the potential benefits. India, with a population of just over 1 billion, is already the biggest democracy in the world and will eventually overtake China as the most populous of all nations. Its economy has grown rapidly in the past decade, and it has become a global player in software, computer services and pharmaceuticals.

The Times of India, 21 July 2005

Empires Good And Evil (Sanjay Subrahmanyam)

The PM has simplified the colonial encounter. On June 1, 2004 The Royal Geographical Society in London held a debate whose motion was "The British Empire was a Force for Good". The motion was supported, amongst others, by historian Niall Ferguson, who had recently become a one-man industry on the question of empire, both British and American. In extremis, he made use of a shallow but ingenious counterfactual argument: If only Indian soldiers had not fought in the Second World War, he argued, Hitler would not have been defeated. Since these soldiers were recruited by the British empire, therefore the empire was a force for the good. QED! The motion was passed by a popular vote of the audience.

The Indian Express, 21 July 2005

American idol (Ashok Malik)

India will remain on Bush's radar only if it pushes on with reforms. It must be a good month for ironies. George W. Bush and Manmohan Singh both came into office dismissed as lightweights who paled before their predecessors. Bush succeeded Bill Clinton, among the most cerebral men to live in the White House. On his part, Singh had none of the charisma, aura and political authority of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Yet the two men reached agreements over the past week that could, potentially, shape the 21st century. It was both poignant and paradoxical that they did so building on the framework Clinton and Vajpayee left them. This is the way of great nations. Prime ministers

come and presidents go, but the broader interest moves ahead - thanks to everybody and yet nobody in particular. Nevertheless, being more or less recognised as a nuclear power notwithstanding, there are cautionary tales for New Delhi. The battle has not ended, in many ways it has just begun.

The Hindu, 22 July 2005

Left attacks joint statement

NEW DELHI: The India-US joint statement came under attack on Thursday from the Left parties. They charged that India continued to give more concessions compared to what the United States offered and felt the announcement of the US India Global Democracy Initiative to strengthen democracies in Third World countries must be viewed with scepticism. The Left said the previous Vajpayee Government had also joined the "community of democracies" floated by the Clinton administration.

The Hindu, 22 July 2005

Swallowing some pride to win the nuclear game (K Venugopal)

Belying his sedate and conservative visage, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has cut a deal with the United States on the nuclear issue that none of his predecessors dared, or perhaps wished to, do. Bartering away the country's independence in nuclear policy-making has invariably meant courting domestic political strife; and, as a Congress leader, he would have thought but a hundred times before overturning a policy that was crafted by none other than Indira Gandhi, that lady of steel, who in 1974 stunned the world with nuclear tests at Pokhran, and incurred sanctions from the western world led by the US. So why would Dr Singh have committed himself to opening up for international inspection all the civilian nuclear facilities, and limiting the country's military options?

The Hindu, 22 July 2005

A farewell to the gas pipeline? (Siddharth Varadarajan)

Businessmen and economists who have misgivings about the creditworthiness of one of their projects do not usually advertise that fact when they are in the market for a loan. Which is why it was surprising to see Prime Minister Manmohan Singh being so candid in an interview to the Washington Post on Wednesday on the bankability of the proposed gas pipeline from Iran. Asked about India's discussions with Iran on the pipeline, the Prime Minister said India desperately needed new sources of energy. He then added: "But I am realistic enough to realise that there are many risks, because considering all the uncertainties of the situation there in Iran, I don't know if any international consortium of bankers would probably underwrite this."

The Hindu, 22 July 2005

Will this commitment prove too costly? (Amit Baruah)

"Mr President, India and America are great nations and great democracies. We cherish the openness of our societies and economies. We value our pluralism, our diversity and our freedoms. These shared values that bring us together must be more visible, not only in how we deal with each other, but also in our approach to the world. We must strengthen democratic capacities jointly. We must oppose the evil of terrorism together. To meet such vital challenges, we must be together on the same page. We must speak the same language and display the same resolve." - Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during his banquet speech at the White House on July 18. A Prime Minister and a party that promised to chart an independent approach on foreign affairs have promised to partner the United States in exporting "democracy" to the rest of the world. Much of the debate and discussion around Dr Singh's July 18-21 visit to the US has rightly focussed on the contours of the nuclear deal struck between the two sides but other elements of their joint statement and related documents are equally important.

The Indian Express, 22 July 2005

Learn social justice from US Inc (Chetan Dhruve)

How did we Indians achieve such astonishing success abroad, especially in the US? How did the likes of Infosys and Wipro make it so big? The M-word, merit, is only a half-answer. Behind this success is the much-hated and unacknowledged R-word. Reservations, that is, the American version of it. Strange as it may sound, the root of our success lies in the American Civil Rights Movement of the fifties and sixties. For centuries, Black people had historically suffered from slavery and extreme exploitation, much like the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India. So they fought long and hard to get rid of the injustices they faced, a process that often cost them their lives. This struggle culminated in the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act. American President at the time, Lyndon B. Johnson, recognised that inequalities cannot be removed by simply passing laws. He said: "Freedom is not enough. You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: now you are free to go where you want, and do as you desire, and choose the leaders you please. You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, 'you are free to compete with all the others', and still justly believe that you have been completely fair."

Hindustan Times, 22 July 2005

Britain to continue Nuke-restrictions on India

London, July 22: Despite US government's decision to civilian nuclear technology with India, Britain on Friday said that its restrictions on transfer of such technology to New Delhi would continue till it signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. "The UK policy on the issue remains till India signs the NPT. We want all nuclear countries to adhere to the Treaty," an official spokesman said. As far as Britain and its universities are concerned, India remains on an eleven-year-old 'red-flag' list of countries which British government regard as proliferators or potential proliferators of WMD. India's place on the list, alongside Pakistan, Syria, Egypt, Cuba, North Korea, Iran, Iraq, Libya and Israel means Indians were among 2,000 scientists security vetted in the last four years after they applied to British universities to do postgraduate or post-doctoral work in chemistry, microbiology and biotechnology. 238 of those applications were rejected, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office said.

The Hindu, 22 July 2005

Manmohan remarks unfortunate: Pakistan (B. Muralidhar Reddy)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Thursday dubbed remarks by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on the security of Pakistan's nuclear programme and strategic assets as "unfortunate" and said they created a "misleading impression." "Pakistan's nuclear capability is defensive and based on minimum credible deterrence. Pakistan's nuclear programme and strategic assets are secure, under strict and multi-layered custodial controls," the Foreign Office spokesman said in a statement. An elaborate command and control mechanism, institutionalised in the shape of the National Command Authority had been in place since 2000. "We have studied the models of command and control systems elsewhere, and our multi-layered security structures are at par with the most stringent international systems and practices." The statement said the issue of terrorism, a global phenomenon, should not be used to malign Pakistan, which is in the forefront of the international fight against terrorism. "International terrorism has affected many countries and has historical background and root cause in disputes and deprivation."

The Hindu, 22 July 2005

Will this commitment prove too costly? (Amit Baruah)

New Delhi has bound itself to an institutional arrangement where saying "no" to American demands on a range of issues will not be so easy. "Mr. President, India and America are great nations and great democracies. We cherish the openness of our societies and economies. We value our pluralism, our diversity and our freedoms. These shared values that bring us together must be more visible, not only in how we deal with each other, but also in our approach to the world. We must strengthen democratic capacities jointly. We must oppose the evil of terrorism together. To meet such vital challenges, we must be together on the same page. We must speak the same language and display the same resolve." - Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during his banquet speech at the White House on July 18. A Prime Minister and a party that promised to chart an independent approach on foreign affairs have promised to partner the United States in exporting "democracy" to the rest of the world. Much of the debate and discussion around Dr. Singh's July 18-21 visit to the U.S. has rightly focussed on the contours of the nuclear deal struck between the two sides but other elements of their joint statement and related documents are equally important.

The Tribune, 22 July 2005

Left decries Indo-US N-pact, fears 'compromise' on national security (R. Suryamurthy)

New Delhi, July 21: The much-hailed "breakthrough" in the civilian nuclear cooperation between India and US came in for a sharp criticism from the Left parties today. The Left apprehended that the pact would hamper New Delhi's pursuit of an independent nuclear technology policy for peaceful purposes. "India as a major developing country needs to have a balanced and equitable relationship with the United States," the CPM said. "The joint statement does not give much credence to this aspect. India continues to give more concessions compared to what the United States has to offer," the CPM, in its first reaction to the joint statement, stressed. The party said, "The joint statement and the various briefings of the visit are silent about what the US has got in return for offering civilian nuclear cooperation." "The government should clarify whether any understanding has been reached about buying US defence equipment to the tune of billions of dollars," it demanded.

The Indian Express, 22 July 2005

India's five who made Mission Possible (C Raja Mohan)

India Geneva, July 22: As he prepared to leave Washington on Thursday night after a visit that exceeded all expectations, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh called in his delegation to commend all those who had worked behind the nuclear pact with the United States. That gesture from Singh, on the eve of his return via a brief halt in Switzerland, recognised at once the historic nature of the pact and the intensity of the negotiations with the Bush Administration and within the Indian system itself. Anil Kakodkar, the head of the Atomic Energy establishment,

who brought in much-needed technical clarity to the Indian negotiating position, held the key to achieving the twin objectives-sustaining India's nuclear arsenal and acquiring civilian nuclear technology. But there were five other men, who had to handle the complex political and diplomatic dimensions of India's nuclear policy and contributed to the talks which went right down to the wire.

The Times of India, 22 July 2005

A nuclear India is born

WASHINGTON: The landmark U.S-India nuclear deal has got a crucial multilateral endorsement with Mohammed El Baradei, head of the U.N nuclear watchdog IAEA, welcoming it in a formal statement. El Baradei, who heads the Geneva-based International Atomic Energy Agency, responded quickly to a phone call from U.S Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice intimating him about the deal, saying, "making advanced civil nuclear technology available... will contribute to the enhancement of nuclear safety and security," "Out of the box thinking and active participation by all members of the international community are important if we are to advance nuclear arms control, non-proliferation, safety and security, and tackle new threats such as illicit trafficking in sensitive nuclear technology and the risks of nuclear terrorism," Dr. ElBaradei said. Experts say El Baradei's backing is crucial to win the support of the international community and the Nuclear Suppliers' Group, some of whose members have been stunned by the speed with which Washington and New Delhi concluded an agreement aimed at allowing India access the world nuclear marketplace while prising open India's nuclear program - or what it chooses to reveal in the civilian sphere - to the IAEA.

The Times of India, 22 July 2005

Navy's N-sub project gathers steam (Rajat Pandit)

NEW DELHI: By the end of this decade, India should have a fully-operational nuclear submarine of its own. The Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) project to build a nuclear-powered, guided-missile attack submarine is now on track after years of technical glitches and design problems. "The first functional ATV should be ready for trials by 2007-08. The technical problems, including fitting a miniaturised pressurised water reactor (PWR) and its containment vessel in the submarine's hull, have more or less been sorted out," say top sources. Sources say the two heavily guarded ATV project complexes at Visakhapatnam naval dockyard, where the basic submarine structure is being fabricated, and Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research at Kalpakkam, where the PWRs are being tested, are witnessing a flurry of activity these days. The project has been shrouded in secrecy ever since it was formally launched in 1983, with successive governments either denying its very existence or being deliberately vague about it.

The Indian Express, 22 July 2005

Left slams Indo-US joint statement

NEW DELHI, July 21: After two days of assessment, Left parties have strongly criticised the Indo-US joint statement. The CPI has been strident in its criticism, taking pot shots at Manmohan Singh for yielding too much in return for too little. The CPI(M), a little guarded but nevertheless caustic, has said the Prime Minister agreed on nuclear cooperation without consulting supporting parties, especially the Left. The CPI wondered why the joint statement was being touted as a major achievement when the "US has neither supported India's claim to the UN Security Council membership nor recognised it as a nuclear weapons power". It is angry that "India has agreed to concede its unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing" in return "for these ambiguous and limited assurances". Referring to the nuclear cooperation deal, the CPI(M) has questioned "the manner in which such a vital issue has been decided with the US by the UPA government". It added: "It was incumbent on the Government to place their views and proposals for discussion with all the parties concerned before deciding on the course of action."

Daily Times, 22 July 2005

'India now part of non-proliferation establishment' (Khalid Hasan)

WASHINGTON: India is now effectively a part of the "non-proliferation establishment," ambassador Jehangir Karamat told Daily Times on Thursday. Asked to comment on Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh's Washington visit, the Pakistani envoy said, "Manmohan Singh's just-completed visit to Washington marks a new departure in the relations between the US and India - a relationship that has undergone major transformation in a decade." "Two items deserve particular comment. First: the nuclear bargain. President Bush undertook to work with the Congress to make full civilian nuclear cooperation with India possible. This included making the necessary changes in US domestic law, and to work with other countries to make corresponding adjustments in international regimes." Karamat said, "This is a significant change in 25 years of US non-proliferation policy. In return, India has undertaken to conform its nuclear facilities to a variety of international norms, most importantly separating its civilian from its military facilities and putting the civilian ones under international safeguards. This is likewise a significant change in India's long-standing policy, and one that puts India inside the "non-proliferation establishment."

Asian Age, 22 July 2005

Experts say nuke division too costly (Seema Mustafa)

New Delhi: The agreement reached between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and US President George W. Bush to segregate India's nuclear civilian and military facilities has drawn widespread criticism with the scientists here pointing to the "staggering costs" this exercise would entail. India will have to double, or even further hike funds, not for "productive" nuclear work "but for separating facilities through a complicated process that could leave the entire nuclear programme in a mess", the scientists pointed out. Bhabha Atomic Research Centre former director A.N. Prasad said the proposal might sound fine on paper, but in practice it was totally unfeasible. He told this newspaper that the costs would be far more than the country could afford as the segregation of civilian and military facilities, agreed to by the Prime Minister, would involve duplication of highly expensive equipment. He said the equipment used in the nuclear power plants was also very difficult to get now. Besides, as Dr Prasad pointed out, "If we were to segregate these facilities, which in itself will be almost impossible, we will have to ensure that each has the necessary work load, which might then not always be the case. We cannot afford to keep such costly equipment idle."

The Japan Times, 22 July 2005

Editorial: Breakthrough in U.S.-India ties

Hyperbole is not unusual to describe meetings of heads of state. Yet the visit of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to the United States marks a genuine departure in relations between those two countries. The U.S. agreement to help India secure international assistance with its civilian nuclear-energy program is proof that Washington and Delhi have reached a new understanding. Yet the willingness to aid India's nuclear program challenges the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), and both sides must be careful to avoid excessive expectations. The two countries have their own priorities and needs. Neither party can "use" the other for its own purposes. When U.S. President George W. Bush took office in 2001, one of his goals was to transform U.S. relations with India, a nation that was laying the foundation as a future global power. The end of the Cold War and India's economic resurgence provided the opportunity for India to play a larger role on the international stage. Washington was happy to encourage that process as Indian democracy was aligned with U.S. interests and because the U.S. anticipated that India would serve as a strategic counterweight to China.

The News, 22 July 2005

Too keen to please? (Masooda Bano)

As General Musharraf orders fresh operations in the tribal belt and intense action against madrassas, the United States has announced its decision to accept India as a nuclear state. This means that India will now have access to the same facilities that are enjoyed by the other five nuclear states: US, Russia, China, Britain, and France. Pakistan, however, for all its obedience, gets nothing. This move will further disturb the power balance between Pakistan and India. The US is not blind to that. But it is clear that it has no inhibitions about letting Pakistan down. Pakistani leaders, however, have repeatedly failed to learn the lesson. Regardless of the opinion of the majority of Pakistanis, General Musharraf has been keen to follow every dictate of the United States since September 11. It got to use Pakistan's air bases when it wanted, has been heavily involved in setting up the new security checks at Pakistan's airport as well as in regulating data on Pakistani nationals through computerised ID cards and passports. It got the Pakistan government to undertake military action in Wana.

Dawn, 22 July 2005

Editorial: US-India nuclear deal

The recent Indo-American nuclear deal seems to go beyond the realm of Indo-Pakistan relations and has wider implications. Signed during Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to the US, the deal virtually amounts to America's recognition of India as a nuclear power. The significance of the treaty was spelled out by Dr Singh when he said that it should be seen against the backdrop of India's 1974 nuclear test and the international community's decision to deny nuclear technology to India. The agreement would now enable India to "break out of its present isolation", making it possible for it to get the same cooperation from America in nuclear technology as states which are members of the Nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty without New Delhi having signed it. America has, of course, been quick to reassure Pakistan - and China - that the deal was not aimed against them. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice rang up President Pervez Musharraf to say that there was no secret deal with New Delhi and that the cooperation basically concerned Indian nuclear reactors for peaceful purposes. But, as a State Department official pointed out, the deal constituted "a significant point of departure" from America's foreign policy "not just in South Asia but worldwide".

The Nation, 22 July 2005

US-India accords

During Dr Manmohan Singh's US visit, President Bush declared India a responsible state and agreed to provide it

the same facilities available to the present members of the nuclear club. The accord calls for the first formal restructuring of the nuclear non-proliferation regime in the last 30 years, to fulfil one of India's long cherished dreams to be accepted as a nuclear state at par with the five major powers. The accord would enable India to secure international help for its civilian nuclear reactors while retaining its nuclear arms. New Delhi can now also obtain nuclear fuel for its Tarapur reactor. Another agreement called the "Next Steps in Strategic Partnership," enhances Indo-US cooperation in the areas of nuclear, space and high technology commerce. While India can now have nuclear power plants from the US, pending a green signal from the Congress, Pakistan's request for such plants has been turned down, despite the fact that it badly needs them for its energy needs. This leaves Islamabad, which prides itself on being the frontline state in the US-led War on Terror and a major non-Nato ally, high and dry.

Daily Times, 22 July 2005

Indo-US defence framework (Tanvir Ahmad Khan)

India will not accept a Pakistani restraint on its pursuit of military power but - as part of a larger rapprochement - may well be amenable to arrangements embodying selective demilitarisation and low force zones. The new dynamic injected into South Asia by the Indo-US defence pact would become less alarming as India and Pakistan make tangible progress towards a settlement. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to United States was heralded by the document setting forth the new framework for the US-India Defence relationship signed in Washington on June 28, 2005. Predictably, the details of the agreed strategic collaboration caused much concern in Pakistan. It was seen as a new and ominous development that imperils Pakistan's security, raises the spectre of a crippling arms race in South Asia, revives the apprehension that the US has a long-term and open-ended commitment to the project of building India into a major world power while the much publicised non-NATO ally status of Pakistan is only an expedient for the so-called war on terror. The shift in the US policy would arguably disturb the balance of power so radically that the benefits of the present US engagement with Pakistan would wither away fast.

The Times of India, 22 July 2005

A Great Leap Forward (G Balachandran)

Nuclear ties with US won't hit India's military programme. The Indo-US joint statement issued on July 18 has evoked a mixed response in India. That is understandable since it has initiated Indo-US cooperation in a range of areas. Of course, the one area that has drawn most attention is nuclear cooperation. That is also the most positive element of the joint statement. Before discussing specific elements of the statement one needs to understand the necessity of integrating India in the international nuclear trade regime. At the moment, because of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) restrictions India has been denied nuclear fuel and reactors. The current NSG rules require that India place all of its nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards before any NSG member can engage in nuclear trade with India.

The Times of India, 22 July 2005

Editorial: Two Cheers

The US has given a clean chit to India's nuclear programme. This paves the way for increased fuel assistance to India's atomic power generation. Nuclear power, which accounts for just 3% of our total power generation of nearly 100,000 MW, has the potential to become the energy of the future. Till yesterday seen as a costly and even unsafe means of producing power, it has shot into focus as a viable alternative with oil prices ruling at \$60 a barrel. With the Kyoto Protocol exerting pressure on carbon emissions, nuclear power can circumvent some of its provisions. The availability of enriched uranium with the implementation of disarmament treaties has also given a boost to nuclear power. What is the status of nuclear power worldwide? In the US, nuclear power accounts for 14% of total power consumption, as against 20-25% in Britain and Germany. In France, nuclear power meets almost all its energy needs. In India, nuclear power consumption quadrupled between 1981 and 2003, while thermal power consumption doubled and hydel power consumption actually fell over the period. India's power consumption, now about a sixth of the US, is projected to double by about 2015 in a high growth scenario. By 2020, the nuclear power programme is expected to create a capacity of 20,000 MW or just under 10% of India's requirements. Is this a plausible assumption?

The Hindu, 22 July 2005

Swallowing some pride to win the nuclear game (K. Venugopal)

In bartering away the country's independence in nuclear policy-making, the trade-off Dr. Singh has attempted to secure is the prospect of a dramatic scaling up of nuclear power capacity. Belying his sedate and conservative visage, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has cut a deal with the United States on the nuclear issue that none of his predecessors dared, or perhaps wished to, do. Bartering away the country's independence in nuclear policy-making has invariably meant courting domestic political strife; and, as a Congress leader, he would have thought

but a hundred times before overturning a policy that was crafted by none other than Indira Gandhi, that lady of steel, who in 1974 stunned the world with nuclear tests at Pokhran, and incurred sanctions from the western world led by the U.S. So why would Dr. Singh have committed himself to opening up for international inspection all the civilian nuclear facilities, and limiting the country's military options?

The Hindu, 22 July 2005

Editorial: Some caveats on a constructive deal

There is bound to be a contentious debate on the bargain struck by India and the United States on nuclear energy cooperation and trade that is the most substantive part of the Joint Statement issued from Washington D.C. Unfortunately, this deal, like so much else in the realm of strategic affairs and foreign policy in recent years, including the Indo-U.S. defence framework agreement, has been sprung on the people of India - forsaking the method of democratic discussion and consensus-building in advance rather than after the deal is done. But the substance of the Indo-U.S. nuclear bargain, which has constructive potential for the non-military, peaceful side of India's nuclear energy programme and offers the prospect of the country coming out of its post-1974 isolation in the international nuclear energy arena, must not be missed in the name of criticising the method.

The Hindu, 22 July 2005

Indo - US Joint Statement

The following is the text of Indo-US Joint Statement issued after the delegation-level meeting between the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh and the US President Mr. George W. Bush, in Washington DC on July 18, 2005. "Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Bush today declare their resolve to transform the relationship between their countries and establish a global partnership. As leaders of nations committed to the values of human freedom, democracy and rule of law, the new relationship between India and the United States will promote stability, democracy, prosperity and peace throughout the world. It will enhance our ability to work together to provide global leadership in areas of mutual concern and interest.

Deccan Herald, 22 July 2005

A major breakthrough (Matin Zuberi)

Though the Bush-Singh summit was a breakthrough, there are certain ambiguities with regard to N-cooperation. The United States stopped "playing nagging nanny regarding India's nuclear programme," wrote a former US Ambassador to India in a recent article in the Wall Street Journal. Pointing out the extraordinary favourable circumstances for a new chapter in Indo-US relations, he added that apart from the personal commitment of President George W Bush, never in the history of the US State Department had three policy makers - Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoelick and Counsellor Philip Zelikov - had a global perspective on India. Moreover, Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld and National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley also favoured closer relations with India.

The Hindu, 23 July 2005

India's forex reserves up by US\$ 662 million

Mumbai, July 23: After registering a decline for three consecutive weeks, India's foreign exchange reserves rose by US \$ 662 million for the week ended July 15, 2005. The forex reserves stood at US\$ 1,37,561 million, a rise of US\$ 662 million, during the week under review, according to Reserve Bank of India's weekly statistical supplement released here today. The foreign currency assets also rose by US\$ 650 million to US\$ 1,31,547 million for the reporting week. The rise in the inflows is mainly due to revaluation of global currencies, including the US dollar, analysts said. Gold reserves and Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) remained static at US\$ 4,453 million and US\$ four million respectively. The country's reserve tranche position increased by US \$ 12 million to US\$ 1,557 million, it said. While loans to the state government decreased by Rs 3,462 crore to Rs 200 crore, loans to the central government showed nil balance, it added.

The Indian Express, 23 July 2005

Left slams PM pipeline remark

NEW DELHI, July 22: A day after criticising Manmohan Singh over the Indo-US nuclear pact, the Left today described as "very unfortunate" the Prime Minister's remarks to a US newspaper that the planned Iran gas pipeline was "fraught with difficulties". "It is very unfortunate that the Prime Minister has made such remarks (in an interview to The Washington Post) in Washington when it is well known that the US is opposed to the project," CPI(M) general secretary Prakash Karat said after a meeting of the four Left parties today. The meeting, called at CPI headquarters Ajay Bhavan to discuss various aspects of Singh's US visit, was attended by senior Left leaders, including Harkishen Singh Surjeet, Sitaram Yechury, A B Bardhan and D Raja. "The Prime Minister should immediately clarify whether the commitment to the pipeline project has been diluted as a result of his visit

to the US," Karat said. The US is opposed to the India-Iran-Pakistan pipeline project. When the Left had brought up the US' reservations for discussion earlier, the Prime Minister had said its misgivings were largely unfounded.

Reuters, 23 July 2005

With Bush's Help, GE Courts Indian PM, Nuke Sector

WASHINGTON: Just over an hour after the White House's surprise pledge to help India develop its civilian nuclear power sector, the head of General Electric, the American company that could benefit most from the policy change, sat down for a celebratory dinner. The host was President Bush; a few feet away was India's prime minister, Manmohan Singh, and his top aides. GE Chief Executive Jeff Immelt, a contributor to Bush's presidential campaigns, had a coveted seat at the president's table. Bush's announcement on nuclear trade with India -- followed by a formal dinner in the State dining room -- was not just a victory for Singh. For GE, the only U.S.-owned company still in the nuclear business, it marked a possible turning point in a years-long push to re-enter the Indian nuclear power market, which it was forced to leave in 1974 when India conducted its first nuclear test. "In the short term, it's really business as usual. ... But if things unfold the way it looks they may, then clearly it is a significant opportunity for us," said Peter Wells, general manager of marketing for GE Energy's nuclear business.

Dawn, 23 July 2005

Wait for new laws for N-fuel, US tells India

NEW DELHI, July 22: The United States said on Friday India would have to wait for changes in the laws governing the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) before being allowed to buy N-fuel from any one of the members. "The US is prepared to work with the Congress and its allies in the NSG to change rules to allow India access to civil nuclear technology and fuel," Robert O. Blake, charged' affairs at the US embassy was quoted by agencies as saying. He stressed that NSG laws have to be changed before India approaches any of the nuclear fuel suppliers like France. A statement from the French embassy left the issue even more opaque. "France takes positive note of the important agreement between the United States and India on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy," the statement said. "This development is in line with the effort initiated by President Chirac several years ago, in particular in the G8, to allow major emerging industrial countries access to civilian nuclear energy," the statement said.

Daily Times, 23 July 2005

Editorial: Upswing in India-US relations (Abbas Rashid)

There is little doubt that US-India relations have turned a corner, regardless of how far specific agreements between the two countries may get actualised in the years to come. As far as Pakistan is concerned, this could have the unfortunate effect of encouraging India to do less than necessary for the peace process. The US-India relationship suffered a significant setback on May 11, 1998 when India detonated three nuclear devices. By the middle of 2005 it has certainly come a long way. In the last week of June, prior to this week's visit of the Indian prime minister, Manmohan Singh, the United States and India concluded a 10-year defence pact that cleared the way for a significant flow of US arms and technology to India. The agreement signed by the Indian defence minister, Pranab Mukherjee, and his US counterpart, Donald Rumsfeld, was a significant development.

The News, 23 July 2005

Editorial: India sets a bad model (Praful Bidwai)

There is something unwholesome, indeed distasteful, about the triumphalism in India over the nuclear cooperation agreement signed between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George W Bush. This ends India's characterisation as a nuclear "pariah" after the first Pokharan test of 1974. Following this, Washington had walked out of its agreement to supply enriched uranium fuel for the US-built Tarapur reactors. There has always been a special feeling of wounded pride among Indian policy-makers over the "pariah" characterisation. Yet, the US wasn't the only country to stage a strong protest against Pokharan-I. Canada too protested. Their embarrassment and anger weren't contrived. Both had contributed substantially to designing, building, and providing critical materials to, the CIRUS "research" reactor commissioned in 1960. Its spent fuel was the source of the plutonium used in the 1974 test.

International Herald Tribune, 23 July 2005

A bad day for nonproliferation (Strobe Talbott)

WASHINGTON Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India received a warm welcome at the White House this week, but the signal outcome of his visit was not good news for a cause to which both his government and the United States are sincerely committed: nuclear nonproliferation. President George W. Bush agreed to give India virtual membership in the club of recognized nuclear-weapons states created by the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The treaty dates to 1968, when five states had tested nuclear weapons: Britain, China, France, the Soviet

Union and the United States. The upshot was that all other countries would refrain from acquiring nukes in exchange for financial and technical assistance in developing peaceful uses of nuclear energy. By conducting an underground test that caught the world by surprise in May 1998, India put itself unambiguously and irreversibly outside the bounds of the treaty.

The Tribune, 23 July 2005

Nuclear threats

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has raised a significant question vis-à-vis Pakistan's nuclear assets. How will the world handle a situation that may arise if Pakistan's weapons of mass destruction fall into the hands of jihadis in case General Musharraf loses power? This is not unthinkable in the case of Pakistan, where extremist religious leaders, the mentors of jihadis, have a vast following. The world knows that there are elements within the Pakistan Army who sympathise with the extremist "cause", and one should not be surprised if they seize power tomorrow. Religious extremists, who are already in a position to influence the government in Islamabad, can occupy commanding heights by winning an election. Dr Manmohan Singh has the reputation of making statements after giving considerable thought to a subject. Therefore, when he says, "I hope that this does not happen and I pray that this will not happen", his concern cannot be ignored by the world community.

The Indian Express, 23 July 2005

The bomb and the bombast (Shekhar Gupta)

Just a couple of weeks after Pokharan II and Chagai, I got into an entirely avoidable argument with a junior, but high-profile BJP minister at a private dinner in Mumbai. The argument was not so much over whether India's nuke tests were a good thing or bad. It was more on the kind of illiterate jingoism the BJP was unleashing following the tests. The stupidest - and the scariest - of all was the plan of its younger cadres to carry the "holy", but probably radio-active, sands from the Pokharan site all over the country in a kind of victory parade. There was irresponsible talk on both sides of the border on whose bomb was bigger, more destructive or more indigenous. The discourse on both sides was scary. Only one as thick-skinned as my friend Jugnu Sethi of Pakistan's Friday Times could still find it funny: "What are we all getting so paranoid about?" she asked, "India and Pakistan are only arguing over whose 'bum' is bigger".

The Indian Express, 23 July 2005

A 'Sweet Deal' for India (Walter Anderson)

The India-US Joint Statement, agreed to on the first day of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's successful July 18-20 visit to Washington D.C., pledges the Bush administration to push for a cooperative bilateral agreement that would provide India fuel and technology for its civilian nuclear energy, while allowing it to retain its nuclear weapons and delivery systems. "India got a sweet deal" is the way one State Department official working the non-proliferation issue described to me the Bush administration's support for a change in US nuclear non-proliferation policy on behalf of India. The administration's decision to alter our 30-year-old non-proliferation policy on behalf of India was the most dramatic development of the visit and was the issue receiving the heaviest press attention.

The Indian Express, 23 July 2005

American Pie, Humble Pie (Rajeev Shukla)

Few will dispute that PM Manmohan Singh's US visit has been historically successful. It shows in the joint statement, besides which the US has accorded such lavish hospitality on a visiting Indian premier after a long time. A small but widely noticed gesture was the lining of the streets of Washington with Indian flags. Even the banquet hosted by President Bush in Singh's honour is only the fifth of such scale ever hosted by him. Singh's address to a joint session of houses of the US Congress was attended by the who's who of the US political administration and the likes of Hillary Clinton were seen applauding at several instances. These hints are all pointing towards the fact US has finally recognised its natural ally in India, and is now willing to walk and talk with it.

The Indian Express, 23 July 2005

US House Endorses Patriot Act

WASHINGTON: The US House of Representatives has voted to make permanent most of the key provisions of the Patriot Act, the sweeping law passed in the weeks after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks that expanded law enforcement powers to investigate suspected terrorists. Just hours after the London subway system was bombed for the second time in two weeks, House members opened a daylong debate on the Patriot Act. Supporters of the law said the London attacks underscored the importance of the Act. Critics had said Congress should more thoroughly review and amend a law that they contended was passed in haste and could allow government abuses of privacy and civil liberties. The bill passed on a largely partisan vote of 257-171 after

the Republican-controlled House - over Democrat objections - limited debate to less than half the proposed amendments.

The Indian Express, 23 July 2005

A 'Sweet Deal' for India (Walter Andersen)

The India-US Joint Statement, agreed to on the first day of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's successful July 18-20 visit to Washington D.C., pledges the Bush administration to push for a cooperative bilateral agreement that would provide India fuel and technology for its civilian nuclear energy, while allowing it to retain its nuclear weapons and delivery systems. "India got a sweet deal" is the way one State Department official working the non-proliferation issue described to me the Bush administration's support for a change in US nuclear non-proliferation policy on behalf of India. The administration's decision to alter our 30-year-old non-proliferation policy on behalf of India was the most dramatic development of the visit and was the issue receiving the heaviest press attention.

The Indian Express, 23 July 2005

American Pie, Humble Pie (Rajeev Shukla)

Few will dispute that PM Manmohan Singh's US visit has been historically successful. It shows in the joint statement, besides which the US has accorded such lavish hospitality on a visiting Indian premier after a long time. A small but widely noticed gesture was the lining of the streets of Washington with Indian flags. Even the banquet hosted by President Bush in Singh's honour is only the fifth of such scale ever hosted by him. Singh's address to a joint session of houses of the US Congress was attended by the who's who of the US political administration and the likes of Hillary Clinton were seen applauding at several instances. These hints are all pointing towards the fact US has finally recognised its natural ally in India, and is now willing to walk and talk with it.

The New York Times, 24 July 2005

Why (Not) Sell Nukes to India?

WASHINGTON: President Bush in effect legitimized India's nuclear arsenal last week, offering to sell it technology that has long been forbidden to anyone who played outside the world's nuclear rules. So what will senior officials say on Tuesday morning when North Korea opens its long-delayed negotiations with the West? "I can just see it now," said one of those officials, who spoke anonymously because of the sensitivity of the talks. "They come in, throw a newspaper from the other day on the table, and bellow: 'How can America demand that we give up all our nukes, while you just let the Indians keep all of theirs?' "It's not an unreasonable question. The long-term implications of Mr. Bush's decision may not be clear for years, and some short-term risks seem evident to critics now. The timing is particularly awkward, in a summer of extraordinary tension with North Korea and Iran.

Dawn, 24 July 2005

Concern voiced over Indo-US defence accord (Ihtasham ul Haque)

ISLAMABAD, July 23: The National Command Authority (NCA) on Saturday expressed 'serious concern' over the Indo-US nuclear and defence framework agreement and decided to take 'appropriate measures' to ensure the defence of the country. Sources told Dawn that a meeting of the authority presided over by President Gen Pervez Musharraf was of the view that Pakistan should take up the issue of the quantum jump in Indo-US defence cooperation with the Bush administration and at the same time ensure continued credible defence. The NCA took note of the Indo-US framework and decided on appropriate measures. The president told the meeting, held at the strategic plans division in Rawalpindi, that Pakistan was fully alive to developments taking place in its region and it would take all necessary safeguards to ensure that its deterrence capability was maintained.

Khaleej Times, 24 July 2005

Grand bargain or capitulation? (Praful Bidwai)

The Manmohan Singh government seems to have made a habit of signing far-reaching agreements without the least bit of transparency or even the pretence of prior discussion. This happened last month when Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee went to the United States on an "exploratory" visit and returned with the "New Framework" for defence. This has major implications for India's security and for her policy independence. Now, the Prime Minister has himself signed a nuclear "cooperation" agreement with President George W. Bush which transforms India's nuclear status in Washington and significantly alters the global nuclear order. There was no discussion of the agreement's likely content in the Cabinet, its Committee on Security, or National Security Advisory Board. Even the Department of Atomic Energy, which will execute the agreement, was not consulted about its feasibility, likely costs, or other matters. This sets an egregious model of governance, which excludes the people from vital decisions, which are monopolised by a handful of supposedly "wise" men.

Asian Age, 24 July 2005

Bush nukes NPT (Strobe Talbott)

Washington: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh received a warm welcome on the South Lawn of the White House, a rare banquet (the equivalent of a state dinner), presidential hospitality for the Indian CEOs who were part of Indian official entourage, a reaffirmation of the two countries' determination to fight terrorism together, and a raft of agreements that should improve the climate for commercial cooperation. However, the headline outcome of the Manmohan Singh visit was not good news for a cause to which both his government and the US are committed: nuclear non-proliferation. President Bush agreed to give India virtual membership in the club of recognised nuclear-weapons states created by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The NPT dates back to 1968, when five states had tested nuclear weapons: Britain, China, France, Russia (then the Soviet Union), and the US. The treaty was a deal between them and the rest of the world; the "haves" would, over time, negotiate the reduction and eventual elimination of their nuclear arsenals, and the "have-nots" would refrain from acquiring nukes in exchange for financial and technical assistance in developing peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Washington Post, 24 July 2005

Bush's Bold Bet On India (Jim Hoagland)

The United States and India have put aside their troubled past to reach far into the future with a visionary bilateral agreement that challenges both nations and the rest of the world to treat nuclear weapons and nuclear energy with greater realism than they do under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. If Congress agrees to the changes in law sought by the Bush administration to put the agreement signed last week into force, nuclear energy will take center stage from nuclear weapons in the new order of U.S.-Indian relations, which now become crucial to constructing a post-Kyoto consensus on climate change. Energy vs. arms has been an atomic trade-off dictated by the nuclear treaty for nearly a half-century -- before global warming became a major international concern, and before rogue states showed they were not interested in such a trade. New Delhi and Washington give impetus both to the growing acceptance by environmentalists of nuclear energy as a lesser evil and to the Bush Doctrine of post-Sept. 11 security.

The Indian Express, 24 July 2005

More than meets the eye (N K Singh)

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has just returned from a successful visit to the United States. The new initiatives auger well for strengthening Indo-US relations and realising our quest to be a knowledge powerhouse. The freeze of decades from the old mindset about India, when export restrictions on hi-technology and nuclear fuel cramped planning for energy security and realising the gains from our high quality scientific talent. On civilian use of nuclear energy, given the global demand for fossil fuel and the nascent stage of commercially viable non-conventional energy, there is no escape from increased reliance on nuclear power. The agreement concluded provides only a framework for co-operation. Whether it circumscribes the quantum and quality of nuclear deterrence, cost and onerousness of segregating civilian nuclear and military use, their implications for the fast breeder reactor, will need further clarification and examination. They will also be considered by the specialised Working Group.

Newindpress.com, 25 July 2005

Continental to start non-stop US-India air service in November

NEW DELHI: Spurred by the far-reaching civil aviation pact signed recently between India and the US, Continental Airlines is set to start its daily non-stop service between New Jersey and New Delhi from November. "Continental's Delhi-Newark service is being launched Nov 2, 2005. The first eastbound flight will depart Newark's Liberty International Airport Nov 1," a spokesman for the US carrier said. Fares begin from \$499 each way. "The airline will fly Boeing-777 aircraft with 48 seats in the business and first class cabin and 235 seats in the economy class," a spokesman for Europe, Middle East and India told IANS from the airline's London office. The airline official said this would be Continental's longest flight after the service to Hong Kong. "The flying time will be approximately 15 hours and 50 minutes for westbound, and 13 hours and 55 minutes eastbound," he said. "Our non-stop service will offer average travel time savings between New Delhi and New York of at least two hours westbound and two-and-a-half hours eastbound, as well as cutting journey time to and from numerous other US cities."

Dawn, 25 July 2005

US needs to shape closer ties with Indian army: think-tank

WASHINGTON, July 24: The United States needs to build an operational partnership with the Indian army, enabling US and Indian troops to work together in joint military operations across the globe, says a new study by the US Institute of Peace. The Washington-based think-tank, which is funded by the US government, argues that

"recent US-led military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan amply demonstrate" the need for building such partnerships with friendly nations, particularly India which has the world's second largest army. Author Christine Fair, a programme officer for South Asia at the USIP, notes that the Indian army has conducted operations successfully in desert and jungle terrains, tackled rural and urban insurgencies, and operated at home and abroad -- principally in United Nations peacekeeping operations. "Notably, India has a well-honed and exceptional high-altitude warfare capability, of which few countries can boast," says Ms Fair while urging the US administration to develop a closer relationship with the Indian military establishment.

China Daily, 25 July 2005

US, North Korean envoys to meet before Korean nuclear talks in Beijing

The U.S. envoy to six-nation talks on North Korea's nuclear program said Monday he would hold a rare one-on-one meeting with his North Korean counterpart before the talks. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill said he would meet North Korea's envoy on Monday afternoon before the full round of talks begins Tuesday after a gap of more than a year. "We are just trying to get acquainted, review how we see things coming up and compare notes," Hill told reporters. Referring to Tuesday's talks, he said, "We are looking forward to working hard and trying to make some progress." He did not say what progress Washington hopes to make. The talks also include host China, South Korea Russia and Japan. Hill said Sunday that he didn't expect the meetings this week to be the last set of negotiations over demands that the North give up its nuclear program. He said the process is "going to take a lot of work."

Teheran Times, 25 July 2005

Iran will definitely overcome nuclear challenge: foreign minister

TEHRAN: Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said here on Monday that the nuclear issue and regional developments are the two main challenges facing Iran's next foreign minister and expressed hope that his replacement would do better than he had done. Speaking in a farewell ceremony for reporters, Kharrazi told the Mehr News Agency that Iran's nuclear dossier will be one of the most significant challenges for future administrations, but added that Iran would definitely overcome the problems. The Iranian nation is proud of the country's achievements in the field of nuclear technology, all Iranians are determined to support these achievements, and the nuclear negotiations have progressed well so far by relying on this national support, he added. As a significant regional power, Iran should stabilize its position in such a way that all the world, and particularly the major powers, would have to recognize the country's position, and significant steps have been taken to achieve this ideal, he said.

The Nation, 25 July 2005

US-India nuclear pact

It took Islamabad a little while to examine the US-India defence and nuclear framework deal and show concern at its implications for the region. General Musharraf told the National Command Authority at a meeting on Saturday that Pakistan did not want to engage in an arms race but would not close its eyes to the induction of advanced weaponry in its neighbourhood. Nevertheless, the overall reaction remained mild, with an unnamed official earlier indicating that the 'Pakistani government was not much perturbed over' it. The proposed nuclear cooperation needs Congressional approval that should not be difficult for the Bush administration to secure. It affords further evidence that the US policymakers feel neither constrained by international law nor concerned about the reactions of others, including friends and allies, while pursuing their unilateralist policies. Flying in the face of its international obligations and treaties, the US would, if it so chooses, have no hesitation in bestowing favours on a country that could advance its strategic interests, while at the same time seek to punish others it perceives to be violating these very treaties. The deal clearly goes against the stipulations of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group that was, in fact, formed as a reaction to India's nuclear test in May 1998 as well as the NPT.

Dawn, 25 July 2005

India-US pact & our response (Maqbool Ahmad Bhatti)

The signing on June 29 of a 10-year defence agreement between US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld of the US and Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee in Washington reveals the outlines of the strategic partnership, that has been developing between them since 1995. Indeed, the 180-degree turn in US perceptions towards South Asia took place immediately after the end of the cold war in 1989, when sanctions were slapped on Pakistan under the Pressler Law in October 1990. However, though it was decided as early as 1995 to set up a joint defence consultation group between India and the US, matters did not move seriously, even though the Asia Society had recommended in its report a year earlier that closer relations with India were desirable, in view of China's rapid development, and other threats in the region, including religious extremism.

The Times of India, 25 July 2005

Come Together On Nuclear Pact (K Subrahmanyam)

Criticism of the Indo-US treaty is misleading. The debate on the nuclear pact with the US is a sad comment on the Indian political establishment. Politicians as well as some former officials of the atomic energy establishment are making blatantly untenable and contradictory statements about the treaty. For instance, they are saying that our military nuclear programme is only a very small fraction of our atomic energy programme, which is absolutely correct. They then argue that the military and civilian programmes cannot be separated. This is prima facie illogical. I am not a nuclear scientist and I cannot pretend to know the technical aspects of nuclear reactors. But I have been a nuclear strategist for 37 years and am familiar with the working of the atomic energy establishment. I was the convenor of the National Security Advisory Board that drafted India's nuclear doctrine. I have been and still am a consistent advocate of India having a nuclear deterrent.

The Indian Express, 25 July 2005

Dispelling the Spooks about Nukes (Ila Patnaik)

The nuclear energy agreement with the US commits India to separate military and civilian nuclear facilities. India will provide the International Atomic Energy Agency a list of civilian facilities and allow inspection of these civilian facilities, in return for which India will get access to nuclear technology, equipment and fuel.

Daily Times, 25 July 2005

Good day for India, bad for nonproliferation (Strobe Talbott)

India and the United States have both shown a penchant for going it alone. If the Indian and American versions of unilateralism reinforce one other, it will work to the detriment of institutions like the UN and risk turning treaties like the NPT from imperfect but useful mechanisms into increasingly ineffectual ones. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh received a warm (indeed, as it happened, sweltering) welcome on the South Lawn of the White House, a rare banquet (the equivalent of a state dinner), presidential hospitality for the Indian CEOs who were part of Indian official entourage, a reaffirmation of the two countries' determination to fight terrorism together, and a raft of agreements that should improve the climate for commercial cooperation. However, the headline outcome of the Manmohan Singh visit was not good news for a cause to which both his government and the United States are committed: nuclear nonproliferation. President Bush agreed to give India virtual membership in the club of recognised nuclear-weapons states created by the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

The Tribune, 25 July 2005

No threat to national security (K. Subrahmanyam)

Ill-informed arguments against Indo-US pact. Of all the objections to the Indo-US joint statement, the most vociferous one is about its impact on India's national security. Those who put forward this argument cite the Indian agreement to separate civil and military components of our nuclear programme as deleterious to our building up of an adequate arsenal, when taken together with the possibility of the Fissile Materials Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) being concluded in the next few years. Let us analyse this proposition dispassionately and not play politics with it. The first suggestion to offer to place civilian nuclear reactors under international safeguards in exchange for access to civil nuclear technology and nuclear fuel came from Dr Raja Ramanna, who headed the first Pokhran team. It cannot be the contention that he knew less about the issue than some of our journalists and atomic energy officials other than the succeeding chairmen. Dr Ramanna was for a robust Indian arsenal.

The Indian Express, 26 July 2005

Ending our nuclear winter: Why Indo-US pact is a deal every govt in Delhi would have loved to cut (C Raja Mohan)

As you tune into India's great debate on the nuclear pact that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has signed up with President George W. Bush, don't let the experts flummox you with all the jargon. If you leave the nuclear detail to the government and the experts, you will find the latest Indo-US pact a tectonic shift in geopolitics. All such shifts in global order produce delicious ironies. Just savour them. The first irony is that the "unilateralist" Bush Administration has chosen to modify one of the most important treaty arrangements in the world to favour an India that is allegedly passionate about "multilateralism". The Indo-US nuclear pact is about a convergence between the Bush Administration, which views treaties from the pragmatic rather than legal perspective, and a "revisionist" India which has long sought a change in global nuclear rules.

The Indian Express, 26 July 2005

Manmohan had 'very good visit': White House

Washington, July 26: The United States has described Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's recent visit to that country as "very good" and said that New Delhi and Washington moved forward on important issues. "The two

leaders had a very good visit. President George W Bush appreciated the call from Prime Minister Singh after he had returned to India expressing his deep appreciation for the hospitality that the President and Mrs Bush showed," White House press secretary Scott McClellan told reporters here yesterday. "We were able to move forward on some important priorities. That was all listed in the joint statement that we put out," he said.

The Times of India, 26 July 2005

Vajpayee and Dr Singh: United in States (Percy Fernandez)

NEW DELHI: One was left to wonder what happened to Dr Singh during the last leg of his US tour. His remarks on Pakistan to the American press were unseemly if not indecorous. On being asked whether India would expect the United States to say no to Pakistan for a similar nuclear technology agreement that was signed between Bush and Singh, the Indian Prime Minister did say what he had to and rightly, that it's a decision the United States has to make. But he didn't stop there. He went on to add that he was realistic enough to recognize the role that terrorist elements have played in the last few years in the history of Pakistan. He also said Taliban was a creation of Pakistan extremists, how Wahabi Islam flourished and, numerous madrassas were set up top to preach this jihad based on hatred of other religions and Pakistan is not a democracy in the sense that we all know. One would not want to doubt the intentions of his remarks but it was the timing and its appropriateness that is fiercely in doubt.

Hindustan Times, 26 July 2005

'Difficult for India to implement nuclear deal with US' (KJM Varma)

ISLAMABAD, July 26: Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf on Tuesday said it was not easy for India to implement its recently signed nuclear deal with the United States as it is difficult to separate civilian and military nuclear programmes, which is a requirement under the agreement. "The India-US nuclear deal reached during the just concluded visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Washington was not easy to implement as it cannot be enforced until India segregates its weapons and energy related in nuclear programme," Musharraf said in an interaction with Editors of major media organisations in Lahore. "It is not an easy thing to separate the civil and military nuclear programme," he said. The Pakistan President said the proposed acquisition of US-made Patriot missile defence systems by India was a worrying proposition for his country but asserted that the missiles do not have a high success rate.

Hindustan Times, 26 July 2005

Pakistan makes light of Indo-US nuclear pact

ISLAMABAD, July 26: Asserting that it expected the same benefits in nuclear and space technology from United States as given to India, Pakistan on Monday said the Indo-US agreement on nuclear expertise worked out during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Washington did not amount to recognition of New Delhi's nuclear power status. "We have noted the understanding between India and US on cooperation in civilian energy. US has made it clear that this does not amount to recognising India as a nuclear weapons state," Pakistan Foreign Office Spokesperson Naeem Khan told reporters. In the light of emerging US-India cooperation in the fields of civilian nuclear energy, Pakistan has "expectations" that it will be able to expand its cooperation with United States "in multiple fields, including peaceful uses of nuclear energy and space technology," Khan said.

Deccan Herald, 26 July 2005

Nuclear deal: PM to meet BJP, Left leaders

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will meet leaders of the BJP and other Opposition parties as also of Left parties to clear the air on the nuclear deal with the US before making a statement in Parliament on the issue on Friday. On Tuesday Dr Singh will meet leaders of the Left parties who have voiced apprehensions over the agreement on civilian nuclear energy signed during his recent visit to Washington. They said the deal "marks an end" to India's disarmament policy and continues the NDA's "pro-US shift". The CPM and the CPI, key allies of the UPA government, had attacked the Indo-US defence cooperation framework and said there were "legitimate apprehensions" that restrictions hampering the pursuit of an independent nuclear technology policy for peaceful purposes would be imposed. Official sources said Dr Singh's efforts were aimed at explaining the advantages of the agreement, removing suspicions and forging a national consensus. Under the agreement, the US has implicitly recognised India as a nuclear weapons state and agreed to cooperate in the country's civilian nuclear programme.

Daily Times, 26 July 2005

US will not recognise India as nuclear state, says Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The United States has assured Pakistan that it would not recognise India as a nuclear state in consequence of its defence pact with India, said Foreign Office spokesman Naeem Khan in his weekly press briefing here on Monday. "We are reviewing the US-India defence pact. We will take all measures for the security

and defence of our country. The US has made it clear that it will not recognise India as a nuclear state," he said. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice twice talked to the Pakistani leadership during Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's presence there and took them into confidence, said Khan. "We hope the US will sign a similar defence pact with Pakistan so that the balance of power is not upset," he said. He said that countries having nuclear regime should understand "ground realities about nuclear-armed countries". Pakistan will need 8,800 megawatts of electricity by 2025 to meet its energy requirements. "We want to meet this requirement using nuclear fuel," he said.

Daily Times, 26 July 2005

Editorial: India-US nuclear cooperation and Pakistan

Pakistan's reaction to news of US-India nuclear cooperation agreement has so far been mature. It has not betrayed panic. This is good. Panic is not going to solve anything and in any case the movement that we have seen along the India-US track should not come as a surprise for those who have been plotting the course of India's US diplomacy since the Clinton administration. The increasing tendency of the Bush administration to seek allies and supporters for its causes outside the United Nations framework has also ensured that Washington should look upon an ambitious India as a strategic partner. To take the edge off the agreement on nuclear cooperation, the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called up General Pervez Musharraf after the signing and assured him that it would have no impact on power relations in the region since the cooperation is confined to India's civilian nuclear programme and energy generation.

Daily Times, 26 July 2005

Experts divided over Indo-US nuclear deal (Iftikhar Gilani)

New Delhi: Even as the Communists are edging to join hands with the BJP-led opposition to nail the Government on the prime minister's deals with the United States, experts are divided over the agreement he signed with Washington to import nuclear fuel and reactors. After decades of "self-reliance", the sudden attempt to seek the US help is not appreciated by some experts who say the Department of Atomic Energy plan to produce 20,000 megawatts(mw) of nuclear power by 2020 with such help is unrealistic. At present, India produces only 2700 mw of electricity from its nuclear plants. Except for two US-made reactors in Tarapur and one in Rajasthan, all operating reactors are based entirely on indigenous research efforts. The department of atomic energy has been unable to import nuclear fuel or technology for decades because of sanctions against India, prompted by its nuclear tests in 1974. Nuclear power experts estimate that India's reserves of natural uranium will support 10,000 mw of nuclear power. While uranium deposits have been detected at sites in Andhra Pradesh and the Northeast, efforts to mine the mineral have failed to take off.

The News, 26 July 2005

US and South Asian nuclear question (Nasim Zehra)

On July 19 late night, President General Pervez Musharraf received a call from the US Secretary of State Dr Condoleezza Rice. She wanted to reassure him that advances in the US strategic partnership with India was not at the cost of Pakistan's interests. Specifically, the US-Indo nuclear cooperation raises questions regarding Washington's de facto acceptance of India as a nuclear power. Earlier the US Undersecretary of State, Nicholas Burns, pre-empting Pakistan's concerns had said, "The fact is that India has a record of non-proliferation, which is exceptional; very strong commitment to protection of fissile material, other nuclear materials and nuclear technology; and there is a transparency about India's programme, which has been welcomed." A similar statement from Washington on Pakistan could obviously not be forthcoming. In fact moving beyond into the broader question of US strategy in South Asia the undersecretary added: "There is no reason for us to have a hyphenated strategic framework for South Asia. There are issues where the US policy intersects and there are issues where we can have individual relationships with both countries."

The Japan Times, 26 July 2005 (B. Gautam)

New Delhi and Washington grow closer

MADRAS: It seems that India and the United States are finally on the same side. After years of mutual suspicion during the Cold War -- when New Delhi veered toward Moscow and Washington played the China card -- Indo-American relations appear set to follow a mature path and agenda. This process might have occurred sooner but it was delayed by the 9/11 terror attacks on the U.S., which led Washington to lean toward Pakistan due to its strategic geographic location. Following the recent signing of an agreement by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and U.S. President George W. Bush, New Delhi is happy that Washington now recognizes its concerns with terrorism and has come close to accepting India as a nuclear power despite the fact that it has not signed international nonproliferation treaties. Although Washington has refused, at least for the time being, to support New Delhi's bid for a permanent seat on an expanded U.N. Security Council, the U.S. has agreed that, as a responsible state with "advanced nuclear technology" (a euphemism for nuclear weapons), India should accrue

the same benefits and advantages as other nuclear powers.

Newindpress.com, 26 July 2005

As good as it gets (C Raja Mohan)

As you tune into India's great debate on the nuclear pact that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has signed up with President George W. Bush, don't let the experts flummox you with all the jargon. If you leave the nuclear detail to the government and the experts, you will find the latest Indo-US pact a tectonic shift in geopolitics. All such shifts in global order produce delicious ironies. Just savour them. The first irony is that the "unilateralist" Bush Administration has chosen to modify one of the most important treaty arrangements in the world to favour an India that is allegedly passionate about "multilateralism". The Indo-US nuclear pact is about a convergence between the Bush Administration, which views treaties from the pragmatic rather than legal perspective, and a "revisionist" India which has long sought a change in global nuclear rules.

The Indian Express, 26 July 2005

Ending our nuclear winter (C. Raja Mohan)

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The Hindu, 27 July 2005

US labour unions headed for split

NEW YORK: The American trade union movement was poised for its greatest rift in almost 70 years as unions representing a third of the membership announced plans to set up a rival organisation. In a move that could have serious implications for the Democratic Party's electoral machine, four of the country's largest unions said they would boycott the annual convention of the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labour-Congress of Industrial Organisations) in Chicago to form the Change to Win coalition. The dissident unions say the national leadership should concentrate on stemming the decline in union membership, which has fallen from more than 30 per cent of private-sector workers when the AFL-CIO was formed 50 years ago to about 8 per cent today. They want greater devolution of funding and the merging of unions into larger organisations that can take on global giants such as Wal-Mart. The schism is of broader political significance because of the huge amount of money and manpower the unions contribute to the Democratic Party at election time.

The Hindu, 27 July 2005

Iran and the US (Hamid Ansari)

Making his first public speech since being elected President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said in Mashhad on July 21 that he would not allow a violation of Iran's legal rights on peaceful use of nuclear technology. He reaffirmed that Iran would never pursue weapons of mass destruction. The same day American journalist Michael Klare wrote in *The Nation* that "Bush has given the Defence Department approval to develop scenarios" for an attack "if Teheran proceeds with uranium-enrichment activities viewed in Washington as precursors to the manufacture of nuclear munitions." Mr. Klare said the President was giving the same kind of signals that he gave in the summer of 2002 in relation to Iraq, signals that we now know - thanks to the 'eyes-only' British memorandum of July 2002 that Tony Blair was compelled to make public during the election campaign - reflected decisions already made.

The Indian Express, 27 July 2005

Gujral praises N-deal, calls for a united front Listen carefully to Singh, don't rush into polemics: former PM's advice to parties (C Raja Mohan)

NEW DELHI: Expressing political satisfaction with the recent visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Washington, former Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral called for a reasoned parliamentary debate on the Indo-US nuclear pact. Gujral, who stoutly resisted US pressures on India to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty during 1996-98, said the new nuclear pact signed with the United States could "bring stability to India's nuclear policy". "The Indo-US nuclear pact should be judged in perspective rather than derogatory adjectives," Gujral said in a conversation with *The Indian Express*. Responding to the BJP and Left criticisms of the pact, Gujral emphasised the "essential continuity in India's foreign and nuclear policies" and called for a "consensual

approach" in the impending parliamentary debate on the Indo-US nuclear pact.

South Asia Tribune, 27 July 2005

India Should be Forced to Open Up its Nuclear Installations (Sampathkumar Iyengar)

AHMEDABAD, July 28: Civilian nuclear cooperation between US and India is touted to be greatest achievement of the visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during his US visit early this month. Spin doctors have gone to town with the claim that the Indian delegation has struck a great deal with the US. Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran claimed immediately after the release of the Singh-Bush joint statement that it would help India get "the whole range of civilian nuclear energy cooperation open to us, including what many people have been talking about - fuel for the Tarapur Atomic Power Station near Mumbai." Seen dispassionately, he pointed out, this was clearly a "major breakthrough for India." Bored of all hullabaloo and hype, the factual position of the outcome of the visit is not as dramatic. President George Bush did promise India full cooperation in developing its civilian nuclear power program in exchange for New Delhi's commitment to adhere to international regimes aimed at curbing arms proliferation, provided the Indians move quickly to fulfill their obligations.

Hindustan Times, 27 July 2005

North Korean nuke talks enter second day (Anil K Joseph)

Beijing, July 27: The six-party talks on the "complicated" North Korean nuclear issue entered the second day in Beijing on Wednesday with close-door meetings and negotiations, official sources said. Negotiators will have a plenary session in the morning at the heavily guarded Diaoyutai State Guesthouse. Bilateral talks will be held in the afternoon, sources said. At a press briefing on Tuesday, spokesman for the Chinese delegation, Qin Gang said the resolving of the nuclear issue is a "complicated" process, and that it is hard to predict what results can be achieved. The duration of the talks depends on how the talks is going on, he said. Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, at the opening ceremony on Tuesday urged all the negotiators to show flexibility and take a pragmatic attitude to seek "positive progress". The in-camera talks, involving North Korea, United States, South Korea, China, Russia and Japan, started after a 13-month gap. The delegations held a plenary meeting held in the morning and had direct bilateral meetings.

Dawn, 27 July 2005

US says it won't attack DPRK

BEIJING, July 26: The United States on Tuesday reassured North Korea it viewed the country as a sovereign nation which it would not attack, as a new round of talks began to address the North's nuclear weapons programmes. North Korea also struck a less confrontational tone, announcing that it wanted to work towards a nuclear-free Korean peninsula in language observers saw as a positive sign that progress could be made after a 13-month deadlock. The US approach, just months after Washington described the secretive Stalinist state as an "outpost of tyranny", will go some way to placating the North which has long urged the US to recognise it as a legitimate government. But the United States made no mention about normalizing ties, another key demand of North Korea before it agrees to work on ways to dismantle its atomic weapons. "We view the DPRK's sovereignty as a matter of fact. ... And we remain prepared to speak with the DPRK bilaterally in the context of these talks," chief US envoy Christopher Hill said in opening remarks.

Guardian, 27 July 2005

Good start to North Korea talks (Jonathan Watts)

Unusually positive signs emerged yesterday from the new round of six-nation talks on North Korea's nuclear ambitions, as Washington indicated that it had no intention of attacking the North. The chief US delegate, the assistant secretary of state, Christopher Hill, stressed that America recognised North Korea's sovereignty. North Korea's top negotiator said a breakthrough in the nearly three-year standoff would require "very firm political will and a strategic decision by the parties concerned that have an interest in ending the threat of nuclear war". A Chinese spokesman said the talks had started on a "sound footing" but said that formidable obstacles lay ahead. Washington wants a prior agreement on the "verifiable and irreversible" dismantling of Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programme before it provides security guarantees and economic aid. North Korea demands a phased schedule in which it will be rewarded for each step it takes towards denuclearisation.

The New York Times, 27 July 2005

U.S. Tries a New Approach in Talks With North Korea (Jim Yardley and David E. Sanger)

BEIJING, July 26: The Bush administration appeared to show signs of new flexibility in talks with North Korea on Tuesday, with American and North Korean diplomats meeting here at length to discuss the delicate question of how aid or energy assistance may be provided to the North as it begins the process of dismantling its nuclear weapons program. Delegations from the two countries met alone here for the second straight day to discuss a

proposal the administration put forward in June 2004 before North Korea walked away from talks. Christopher R. Hill, who is leading the American delegation, told reporters that the "businesslike" meeting again raised the prospect of a three-month "freeze" period on North Korea's nuclear activity, followed by a rapid dismantlement of their nuclear plants. In return, the aid spigot from South Korea and other neighbors would begin to open wider.

Reuters, 27 July 2005

Day Two of N.Korea Crisis Talks - Mood Upbeat

BEIJING: East Asian regional powers held a second day of six-party talks on Wednesday aimed at ending the crisis over North Korea's nuclear ambitions with positive signs from both Washington and Pyongyang raising hopes for progress. The atmosphere surrounding the long-delayed fourth round of discussions between the two Koreas, the United States, Russia, Japan and China has been upbeat, but few expect a breakthrough. Delegates held a plenary session of almost three hours on Wednesday at which they had been expected to clarify their positions. China's Xinhua news agency said the parties would be holding bilateral meetings in the afternoon. Japanese chief negotiator Kenichiro Sasae told the morning session: "North Korea must make a strategic and substantive decision to commit itself to abandoning its nuclear programs with the aim of denuclearising the Korean peninsula." "We strongly hope that North Korea will accept demands for the complete dismantlement of all nuclear programs including a uranium enrichment program in an internationally reliable and verifiable manner," the Japanese embassy quoted him as saying.

Daily Yomiuri, 27 July 2005

North Korea ready to talk on N-program (Hidetoshi Ikebe and Masahiko Takekoshi)

North Korea's chief delegate to the six-way talks said Tuesday his government was ready to form a "strategic decision" to make the Korean Peninsula nuclear-free, but stopped short of clarifying whether Pyongyang would abandon development of such weapons immediately. In his opening remarks to the fourth-round of six-way talks, North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye Gwan said a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula would happen only if all parties show their political will and make strategic decisions. "We're ready [for such a decision]. I believe the delegates of the United States and all other members also are ready," Kim said, attending the six-way talks that were being held for the first time since June 2004. Later Tuesday, the United States and North Korea held bilateral talks, during which Pyongyang responded to a U.S. proposal made in previous discussions to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula.

The Asahi Shimbun, 27 July 2005

Editorial: Six-party talks : Solving nuclear crisis is key to settling abduction issue.

After a hiatus of 13 months, six-party talks on the North Korea nuclear standoff have resumed in Beijing. The main thing is to resolve this issue peacefully. The North's declaration that it possesses nuclear weapons has made what was already a grave situation much more serious. We cannot feel optimistic about the outcome of the talks. The objective is for North Korea to scrap its nuclear programs and put in place arrangements to verify Pyongyang's compliance. As long as North Korea believes that its nuclear arms are the key to safeguarding the Kim Jong Il regime, it will not get rid of the arsenal until it has the security assurances it craves. War is out of the question. The only possible way will be to seek a comprehensive solution, which will consist of normalizing relations between North Korea and the United States, and Japan, and providing economic assistance in exchange for Pyongyang's pledge to scrap its nuclear programs.

Daily Yomiuri, 27 July 2005

Future of 6-way talks hanging in the air

The latest round of six-way talks aimed at persuading North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions opened in Beijing on Tuesday after a hiatus of 13 months. The denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and regional stability can only be achieved by having Pyongyang agree to abandon its nuclear programs. The other five countries involved in the talks--Japan, China, South Korea, Russia and the United States--need to do their utmost to achieve this goal. The preceding three rounds of talks failed to bring about any results whatsoever. Should there also be no progress this time, the *raison d'etre* for the six-way talks will be lost. And if this happens, the issue will be taken up for discussion at the U.N. Security Council, possibly prompting the international body to take punitive measures against Pyongyang. During the previous round of talks in June last year, the United States made a comprehensive proposal to North Korea, urging it to make the strategic decision to dismantle its nuclear programs.

The News, 27 July 2005

Changing equations in Asia (M B Naqvi)

Two recent developments in Asia need to be kept in sharp focus to better understand the changing equations in

the region. The first is intense growth of the affair between the US and India. They have signed two major agreements in recent weeks. One of them is the framework for defence cooperation in which the Americans have offered maximum military cooperation. This includes India's buying of military equipment, training in the US of Indian military personnel, more joint operations by the Navies of the two countries, co-production of F-16s and F-18s and, of course, inclusion of India in naval operations to interdict suspected nuclear material being carried in the Indian Ocean. The other agreement between them is over civilian nuclear reactors. India is required to sharply divide its nuclear facilities into military and civilian. While the military ones will remain outside the international inspections, the civilian ones will be sold by the US, but will come under the IAEA's bailiwick.

The Nation, 27 July 2005

Indo-US nuclear deal (S. M. Hali)

Pakistani media has reacted strongly to the Indo-US nuclear deal and it should for India has practically achieved twin objectives - sustaining India's nuclear arsenal and acquiring civilian nuclear technology. The deal virtually amounts to America's recognition of India as a nuclear power. This leaves Islamabad, which prides itself on being the frontline state in the US-led War on Terror and a major non-NATO ally, stumped. However, the saner elements in the Indian media are not only questioning the deal but advocating rationality. "Belying his sedate and conservative visage, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has cut a deal with the US on the nuclear issue that none of his predecessors dared, or perhaps wished to, do. Bartering away the country's independence in nuclear policy-making has invariably meant courting domestic political strife; and, as a Congress leader, he would have thought but a hundred times before overturning a policy that was crafted by none other than Indira Gandhi, that lady of steel, who in 1974 stunned the world with nuclear tests at Pokhran, and incurred sanctions from the Western world led by the US.

The Statesman, 27 July 2005

Partnership for prosperity

By offering India "full civilian nuclear cooperation nuclear energy," President Bush has made a bold move in establishing long term strategic and economic relations with a country that many US experts perceive as a reliable global partner. Mr Bush did not let the nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty stand in the way of his new global vision, where an economically strong democratic India would play a stabilising role in world affairs, especially in Asia. The partnership to help India "become a major power in the 21st century" is not about containing any other rising power but to let India develop as an alternative model of economic growth without compromising fundamental freedoms. Rapid economic growth of India, 8-9 per cent a year for the next few decades, would lift millions of Indians out of abject poverty.

The Indian Express, 27 July 2005

A power less exotic (Ila Patnaik)

If India sets out to build nuclear reactors that could generate 20,000 megawatts (MW) or 40,000 MW of electricity, this could be a large-scale effort, involving perhaps \$40 billion of imported equipment. Eventually, this could be a way to "use foreign exchange reserves" to build infrastructure. But it is important to be sure that these big decisions are made wisely. The nuclear energy agreement with the US commits India to separate military and civilian nuclear facilities, like nuclear weapon states do. India will provide the International Atomic Energy Agency with a list of civilian facilities and allow inspection of these facilities, placing them under safeguards. In return, India gets access to nuclear technology, equipment and fuel. The time it will take to achieve this gives us breathing space to address domestic issues. It is time for us to separate nuclear weapons work from the task of nuclear reactors as a tool for electricity generation.

The Indian Express, 27 July 2005

Gujral praises N-deal, calls for a united front (C. Raja Mohan)

NEW DELHI, July 26: Expressing political satisfaction with the recent visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Washington, former Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral called for a reasoned parliamentary debate on the Indo-US nuclear pact. Gujral, who stoutly resisted US pressures on India to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty during 1996-98, said the new nuclear pact signed with the United States could "bring stability to India's nuclear policy". "The Indo-US nuclear pact should be judged in perspective rather than derogatory adjectives," Gujral said in a conversation with The Indian Express. Responding to the BJP and Left criticisms of the pact, Gujral emphasised the "essential continuity in India's foreign and nuclear policies" and called for a "consensual approach" in the impending parliamentary debate on the Indo-US nuclear pact.

Deccan Herald, 28 July 2005

US warns customers against buying Iran oil & gas (L N Sharma)

The Bush administration took its campaign against Iran's energy economy, to the Senate by cautioning customers, such as India and China, against buying gas or oil from Tehran. A senior State Department official told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the willingness of China and India to invest in countries such as Iran and Sudan was "a more troubling aspect of the recent surge in overseas energy deals". He said Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has already expressed concern over the proposed Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project. "Both Chinese and Indian firms have reportedly been involved in oil and gas sector deals in Iran that raise concerns under US law and policy," said Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Anthony Wayne. He said India, and to a much larger extent China, have significant upstream investments in Sudan's energy sector. Then in diplomatic language, he went on to say that the deals with Iran and Sudan, 'can undermine efforts to encourage policy changes that will reduce global instability and energy security for all'.

Deccan Chronicle, 28 July 2005

US sure of tech transfer to India

NEW DELHI: Even as the Left parties remain unconvinced despite Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's best efforts yet to explain his government's position on the nuclear cooperation between India and the United States, Washington has said it is optimistic of securing the US Congress' nod because of a "bipartisan consensus" among lawmakers there. France and the UK also have joined the US in welcoming nuclear cooperation with India. The deputy chief of mission in the US Embassy in India, Mr Robert Blake, has observed that 19 out of the 38 members of India Caucus in the Senate are Democrats. Likewise, 173 representatives in the House are members of the India Caucus; 100 of them are Democrats. He expected some progress to be made by the time US President George W. Bush arrives in India next year. Mr Blake has said Washington was prepared to work with the US Congress, key allies and the Nuclear Suppliers Group to change the rules to enable full nuclear cooperation with India.

The Tribune, 28 July 2005

Bush looks forward to visiting India

WASHINGTON: US President George W. Bush is looking forward to his proposed visit to India next year, White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan has said. "I know the President looks forward to visiting India next year," he said here yesterday. Referring to the recent visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Washington, McClellan said "certainly he had a very good visit with Prime Minister Singh."

The Indian Express, 28 July 2005

IAEA terms under US pact won't tie India's hands (C. Raja Mohan)

NEW DELHI, July 27: Contrary to assertions here that the separation of India's civilian and military nuclear programmes and placing the former under international safeguards will undermine India's nuclear deterrent, a reading of similar agreements by other nuclear weapon states suggests the government will retain full operational flexibility under any such arrangement. Besides choosing which facilities of the nuclear programme it wants to designate as civilian and place under international safeguards, India will have the option of removing facilities from the list it would eventually submit to the International Atomic Energy Agency. In addition, India, like the five other nuclear weapon states, would also retain the option of withdrawing nuclear material, if national security reasons so demand, from the facilities on which it voluntarily accepts IAEA safeguards. Under the nuclear pact signed with the United States last week in Washington, India has agreed to place its non-military nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards in return for comprehensive civilian nuclear energy cooperation.

The Times of India, 28 July 2005

Bush looks forward to visiting India next

WASHINGTON: US President George W. Bush is looking forward to his proposed visit to India next year, White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan has said. "I know the President looks forward to visiting India next year," he said here on Tuesday. "The President meets with world leaders on a frequent basis and has opportunities to visit individually with world leaders at various summits or forums that are going on. So he looks forward to being there next year, as well," McClellan said. Referring to recent visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Washington, McClellan said "certainly he had a very good visit with Prime Minister Singh."

Daily Times, 28 July 2005

Pact with US doesn't mean India will take part in army action: Mukherjee (Iftikhar Gilani)

NEW DELHI: India has made it clear that the framework agreement signed with the United States on June 28 does not imply that Indian armed forces are participating in any military action initiated by the US against international terrorism. "We have not contemplated any such participation or implied it in the arrangement. Participation in operations will be guided by the national interest and our foreign and defence policies, including

our independent stand on international issues," Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee told the Rajya Sabha. In a written reply to Rajya Sabha member Shahid Siddiqui, the defence minister said that the framework he signed was "nothing new as it only reflects the agreed minutes of the defence relations between the two countries signed back in January 1995 for common security interests". Maintaining security and stability, defeating terrorism and violent religious extremism, and preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) are some of the common interests, he said.

The News, 28 July 2005

North Korea urges US to remove nuclear threat

Calls for normalisation of ties

BEIJING: North Korea said Wednesday it would give up its nuclear weapons only after the alleged US atomic threat is removed from the divided Korean Peninsula and relations with Washington are normalised, according to a South Korean report. The North also demanded the United States abandon plans to topple its communist regime and instead establish mechanisms for peaceful coexistence, according to a report from Yonhap news agency, citing a source close to the talks. The comments were reportedly made by the head of the North Korean delegation, Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye Gwan, at the start of the second day of six-nation nuclear disarmament talks Wednesday. Both Washington and Seoul deny there are any US nuclear weapons in the South, and South Korea had earlier raised the possibility of opening South Korean and US bases for some form of verification of that fact by the North.

The Washington Post, 28 July 2005

Meetings Signify Shift On Talks With N. Korea (Glenn Kessler)

During a flight to Africa two years ago, then-Secretary of State Colin L. Powell met with President Bush to discuss the crisis over North Korea's nuclear programs. A key point was that the State Department's chief negotiator at disarmament talks needed to be able to talk one on one with North Korean officials. Powell ultimately won permission for one brief meeting, on the side of a room filled with officials from other countries. But Powell's negotiator, James A. Kelly, was permitted only to say the same thing to any question raised by the North Koreans: Go back and read my prepared statement. But now, almost unnoted, an important shift has taken place in the Bush administration's approach to North Korea: The ban on genuine one-on-one talks has been all but abandoned. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's chief negotiator, Christopher R. Hill, sealed a deal for North Korea to return to the talks during a private three-hour dinner this month in Beijing with his North Korean counterpart. Since then, Hill has held several bilateral meetings with North Korea, including a session before the talks formally began on Tuesday.

The New York Times, 28 July 2005

North Korea Seeks U.S. Aid Before It Halts Its Nuclear Program (Jim Yardley)

BEIJING, July 27: North Korea on Wednesday criticized an American plan to defuse the nuclear crisis, saying the proposal demands too many steps toward dismantling the country's nuclear program before providing any corresponding aid or energy assistance, a senior United States official said in a background meeting with reporters. North Korea's criticism of the American plan, first proposed in June 2004 before the talks broke off, was not unexpected, noted the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the private nature of the discussions. But it underscored the "fundamental differences" between the countries as participants in the six-nation nuclear talks took on the difficult task of finding common ground to resolve the crisis, now in its third year.

The Associated Press, 28 July 2005

Scientists Experiment With Current in Nev.

LAS VEGAS: Scientists at the Nevada Test Site said they generated a current Wednesday equal to roughly four times all the electrical power on Earth. The current, which created pressures in materials millions of times greater than normal, was part of an experiment to better understand nuclear weapons. The experiment was conducted at the test site's Atlas Pulsed Power Facility by scientists from Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, along with staff from the test site and contractor Bechtel Nevada. During the few millionths of a second that it operated, the 650-ton Atlas pulsed-power generator discharged nearly 19 million amps of current through an aluminum cylindrical shell about the size of a tuna can, the National Nuclear Security Administration said. Atlas, which works as a giant power multiplier, was designed as part of an Energy Department program to determine the readiness of the nation's nuclear stockpile without underground testing.

The Guardian, 28 July 2005

Tehran accuses US of nuclear double standard (Simon Tisdall)

Iran accused the Bush administration yesterday of operating a double standard and undermining the Nuclear

Non-Proliferation Treaty by agreeing to aid India's civil nuclear programme, while insisting that Tehran abandon its nuclear ambitions or face international sanctions. The Iranian accusation will raise the temperature as the EU3 - Britain, France and Germany - prepare to unveil a "final" draft proposal on curbing Iran's nuclear programme early next month. The US and Israel suspect Iran is only months away from acquiring nuclear weapons capability, a charge Tehran flatly denies. The EU3 plan is expected to offer limited economic incentives and energy generation assistance if Iran forgoes uranium enrichment, which is associated with the manufacture of nuclear weapons. But Iranian resistance to the proffered deal may have been reinforced by President George Bush's unexpected decision last week to acknowledge India's status as a nuclear weapons state and offer "full civil nuclear energy cooperation and trade", despite the fact that India, unlike Iran, has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The Washington Post, 28 July 2005

North Korea Rejects U.S. Plan on Arms (Edward Cody)

BEIJING, July 27: North Korea on Wednesday formally rejected the terms of a long-standing U.S. proposal for resolving the standoff over Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program, diplomats said. The North Korean objections, although expected, underlined the difficulties negotiators face in newly resumed six-party talks here despite improved atmospherics and what diplomats described as increased resolve to make progress toward banning nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula. "The DPRK is a country that prides itself on being different, and this is certainly proving true in these negotiations," a senior U.S. official said, using the initials of North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. "Things are not easy." As described by U.S. officials, the proposal first made in June 2004 would provide aid and security assurances to North Korea if it agreed to a schedule that would do away with its nuclear weapons program.

Dawn, 28 July 2005

Indo-US strategic pact (Agha Shahi)

The signing of the New Framework for the US-India Defence Relationship by the defence ministers of the two countries in Washington on June 28, marked the commencement of "a new era" in their evolving strategic partnership and a follow-up to the signing last year of the next steps in strategic partnership agreement. After noting that the US-India defence cooperation had advanced to an unprecedented and qualitatively different level since 1995, when the agreed minute on defence relations between the US and India was signed, the latest agreement clearly states that it would support and be an element of the broader US-India strategic partnership. It "builds on past successes, seizes new opportunities and charts a course for the US-India defence relationship for the next ten years." The latest US-India defence pact claims to advance their shared security interests which include; maintaining security and stability; defeating terrorism and violent religious extremism; preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction and associated materials, data and technologies; and protecting the free flow of commerce via land, air and sea lanes.

Dawn, 28 July 2005

Dealing with North Korea

While it is encouraging that the six-party talks, involving North and South Korea, China, Japan, Russia and the US have restarted in Beijing after a gap of 13 months, impediments remain in the way of persuading North Korea to give up its nuclear programme. The latter has been a major source of tension in Southeast Asia for several years now, and especially after North Korea withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 2003 and scrapped an accord with South Korea for keeping the region free of nuclear weapons. Several times North Korea has also fired missiles into the sea, setting off alarm bells in the region, and has violated peace accords, including the 1994 Agreed Framework according to which Pyongyang would abandon its nuclear plans in return for oil and light water reactors from Washington. Blowing hot and cold over the issue, it has gone ahead with its ambitions giving rise to fears of a nuclear strike in the region - a scenario that cannot be ruled out given North Korea's erratic leadership in the person of Kim Jong-il.

The Nation, 28 July 2005

Manmohan's Pakistan bashing (Inayatullah)

The Indian Prime Minister's resoundingly successful US visit, preceded as it was with the Indian-US defence agreement signed by Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee, was remarkable in many ways. It marked the climax of the process begun with Jaswant Singh-Strobe Talbott rounds of talks and Bill Clinton's historic 5-day visit to India where contours of a "common vision" were spelt out. "We meet as leaders of two great democracies committed to working together", said President Bush in his welcome speech at the White House, "for a better and safer world". And added that: "the relationship between our two nations has never been stronger and will grow even closer in the days and years to come. US and India have built a relationship of great potential. As we face this century's challenges, we look forward to building and expanding this relationship to lay the foundation for peace and

prosperity for our children and grandchildren". The words "grandchildren" are significant indicating as they do, the envisaged, long-term close relationship.

The Indian Express, 28 July 2005

Indo-US Ties: Why the Flak? (Radha Kumar)

Manmohan Singh's recent visit to the US has come in for criticism from both hawks and doves, most of it undeserved. In fact, there are plenty of real issues for debate, not whether Uncle Sam's embrace will be a bear hug. Manmohan Singh's recent visit to the US has come in for criticism from both hawks and doves, most of it undeserved. The relationships that he set up will serve to strengthen India's interests at both national and civic levels. While they give substance to the partnership that was launched by the NDA government, they have broadened its parameters and shifted its emphasis, from being centered on defence to including development, democracy and peacemaking.

The Indian Express, 28 July 2005

Who's next for a regime change?

Iran and North Korea's nuclear programmes pose a diplomatic challenge to the US. Although a third of the "axis of evil" is now occupied by US forces, the other two thirds - North Korea and Iran - remain clear threats to US interests. Consider North Korea: in February 2005, Pyongyang announced that it had nuclear weapons, and it is now thought to have several of them, or at least the material to build them. Over time, if the United States does nothing, North Korea's arsenal will surely grow, as will the amount of its fissile material. The results of this growth will be destabilising and potentially disastrous: a sizable North Korean nuclear arsenal might well stimulate similar weapons programmes in both Japan and South Korea, diminishing the region's stability. The repercussions could also spread far beyond Northeast Asia if Pyongyang decides to sell its new weapons or nuclear fuel for hard currency - as it has with drugs and missile technology in the past.

Asia Times, 28 July 2005

US risks Asian arms race (Stephen Zunes)

For more than two decades, arms control experts have argued that the most likely scenario for the hostile use of nuclear weapons was not between the former Cold War superpower rivals, an act of terrorism by an underground terrorist group or the periodically threatened unilateral US attack against a "rogue state", but between India and Pakistan. These two South Asian rivals have fought each other in three major wars - in 1947, 1965 and 1971 - and have engaged in frequent border clashes in recent years in the disputed Kashmir region, coming close to another all-out war as recently as 2002. It is ironic, then, that President George W Bush - who reiterated in the 2004 presidential campaign that his primary concern was the proliferation of nuclear materials - is actively pursuing policies that will likely increase the risk of a catastrophic nuclear confrontation on the Indian sub-continent.

The Korean Herald, 28 July 2005

U.S., North Korea put down new demands (Lee Joo-hee and Kim Man-yong)

BEIJING: The United States and North Korea unveiled at the six-party talks yesterday the newest versions of their demands, with reportedly diverse positions which are likely to be an additional burden as the two sides strive for substantial progress. Chief delegates of the six countries trying to end the North Korean nuclear standoff laid out their positions as the fourth round of the long-stalemated negotiations moved through a second day. But the United States and North Korea remained on parallel courses, with the former promising security assurances and economic aid in return for verifiable nuclear dismantlement and the latter demanding normalized relations with Washington for a full dismantlement, it was understood. The United States reportedly presented a three-step proposal that would first require North Korea to dismantle all nuclear weapons and programs through effective verification. Other parties would then provide security assurances and economic cooperation. The parties would also deal with multilateral issues, including North Korean missiles and human rights concerns.

People's Daily, 28 July 2005

US says good exchange of views with DPRK despite differences remains

The United States and the Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK) agreed to keep exchanging views on the uranium enrichment issue, which would not be a stumbling block to the new round of six-party talks, a senior US official said at a press briefing Wednesday. "One of the issues we talked about with the DPRK was the issue of highly enriched uranium," a senior government official said, referring to bilateral contact on Tuesday. Delegates held a plenary session lasting almost three hours Wednesday at which they clarified their stances and offered views on how to denuclearise the Korean Peninsula. The issue of highly enriched uranium, which can be used to produce nuclear explosive devices, was also mentioned in a keynote speech by the United States at the fourth round of six-party negotiations on Wednesday, he said. "We obviously have some differences with them about the

sequencing of these issues," he said, "we did not achieve an agreement with them on that but we did agree to keep talking about it."

People's Daily, 28 July 2005

US official: six-party talks should focus on denuclearization of Korean Peninsula

The six-party talks should focus on the denuclearization of the Korea Peninsula, a US senior government official said at a news briefing in Beijing Wednesday. The official, who spoke under anonymous condition, said that at the plenary this morning, all the parties concerned discussed the need to focus on the denuclearization of the Korea Peninsula. "The real efforts are to keep focusing on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," the official said. He said participants were now focusing on agreeing some form of statement as a framework, "a set of agreed principles on the basis of which we can narrow the scope of issues and lay out an eventual schedule for negotiation of an overall agreement." "We obviously have some differences with them about the sequencing of these issues," he added. The official said it is not necessary to solve all the issues within the framework of the six-party talks. Instead, some of the issues could be solved through bilateral mechanism.

Financial Times, 28 July 2005

Nuclear deal with India spells division in Washington (Caroline Daniel and Demetri Sevastopulo)

In the state dining room at the White House last Monday, the floral "trumpeting elephants" made of carnations and saffron silk tablecloths were laid out well in advance for the official dinner welcoming Manmohan Singh, Indian prime minister. Yet less than 90 minutes before President George W. Bush was due to toast his visitor, senior officials were frantically trying to secure agreement on civil nuclear co-operation. The joint statement was finally rushed out at 6.28pm. "It came together faster than we expected," conceded one senior administration official. "The night before, we were not sure we would have much of an agreement." For the first time, the US acknowledged India's status as a nuclear weapons power. In return for India agreeing to accept additional inspections and tighter nuclear controls, the US offered "full civil nuclear energy co-operation and trade".

Business Standard, 28 July 2005

Atoms of uncertainty (D Shyam Babu)

The recent India-US deal brings in many uncomfortable questions. That India and the United States could conclude a nuclear deal after a gap of more than forty years means the triumph of hope over experience. For India, it is presented as a non-military, apolitical commercial deal giving precedence to economic factors. But in real world matters economic and political remain indivisible, and much of the commentary has rightly taken note of the big picture. It is not the point, either, that New Delhi has not made strategic calculations but the question is whether it will succeed in the gamble. It is indeed a gamble because India has sought to accomplish long-term goals of giving fillip to its civilian nuclear sector and leading the way (ultimately) to its being accepted as a nuclear weapons state. The US has been guided by at least one short-term goal: scuttling the Iran gas pipeline to India. The deal also brings Washington a bit closer to its objective of co-opting India as an ally in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Hindu, 29 July 2005

The truth behind the Indo-US nuclear deal (Siddharth Varadarajan)

In the fullness of time, last week's nuclear agreement between India and the United States will be seen as one of those decisive moments in international politics when two powers who have been courting each other for some time decide finally to cross the point of no return. The US and India have 'come out', so to speak, and the world will never be the same again. Every world order needs rules in order to sustain itself but sometimes the rules can become a hindrance to the hegemonic strength of the power that underpins that order. Following India's nuclear tests in 1998, the US had two options: continuing to believe the Indian nuclear genie could be put back, or harnessing India's evident strategic weight for its own geopolitical aims before that power grows too immense or is harnessed by others like Europe or China. The US has chosen the latter option, and the joint statement released by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on July 18 is the most dramatic textual manifestation of what Washington is attempting to do.

Deccan Herald, 29 July 2005

Impact on South Asia (M B Naqvi)

Although the context of new Indo-American relations is larger, its impact on South Asia is also important. The two Indo-American agreements - on Framework for Military Cooperation and the other on civilian nuclear cooperation - are extraordinarily significant. It might mark the beginning of the end of Indo-Pak Peace Process. Mr Manmohan Singh, who once called it irreversible, now says "if Pakistan does not stop sending jihadis into Kashmir", he would be forced to stop it. New Delhi's complaints of infiltration are growing. President Musharraf's recent remarks after a meeting of the National Command Authority were a reply to Mr Singh's Washington statement. That body is the

apex of Pakistan's Command and Control System. What the President said was "Pakistan would take appropriate actions to counter the changes that might occur as a result of the two agreements being implemented". He stated that Pakistan would keep its nuclear deterrent not merely safe but would ensure that it remains up-dated and credible. He in fact made several swipes at the Indian PM. In one context he said that Mr Manmohan Singh is afraid of making serious and painful decisions - suggesting that he is a weak leader.

The Indian Express, 29 July 2005

US and us (a non-expert view) (Saeed Naqui)

One gasps at the audacity of pundits who plunge head long into debates - ranging from Imrana to the US-India nuclear compact or the Iran pipeline - without making sure that they are in possession of the basic facts. It transpires that Imrana may not have been raped and that there was no fatwa from Deoband. And yet thousands of column inches have been expended on the lady. Scores of TV debates must have raked in millions by way of advertising support. Before the prime minister had said a word on the nuclear deal, 'experts' in Delhi were screaming "sell out". Pardon my ignorance, but to my knowledge expertise on nuclear and strategic issues in India is confined to retired IAS officers, ancient armed forces personnel and some smart journalists who also double up as strategic thinkers. Many of them live, think and expire around New Delhi's India International Centre.

The Indian Express, 29 July 2005

Aiyar denies US pressure on Iran pipeline

NEW DELHI: Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar denied today there was US pressure on India over the Iran pipeline, but said that two US officials had expressed reservations on the project. In reply to queries by Narendra Kumar Kushwaha and Mohammad Tahir during Question Hour, Aiyar declared that "at no official level, at no stage, has there been any attempt to pressurise us". Calling such perceptions on the issue "completely misplaced", he was emphatic that the matter had "not even come up" during the India-US talks. The minister, however, confirmed that "there are two senior US officials who have expressed their opinions against the project". Stung by suggestions from BJP deputy leader V.K. Malhotra that the US was applying pressure to have the project shelved, Aiyar mounted a counter-attack, alleging that there was "genuine US pressure" on India when NDA Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh had said there was no way "India could agree to an overland pipeline project unless some fundamentals are addressed".

The Indian Express, 29 July 2005

Manufacturing the nuclear scare Rest assured, Dr Singh has not given away our nuclear jewels to the US
(A Gopalakrishnan)

One major controversy gaining ground in India about the Indo-US civilian nuclear cooperation is that it will lead to a serious debilitation of our national security due to the consequent capping of the fissile material inventory. The fear is that this would limit the level of our "minimum nuclear deterrent" in course of time. These objections have several reasons, but the root cause is differing perceptions about the deterrent itself. Some in this country feel that India need not have a nuclear deterrent at all. A comparable, but small, fraction of the population considers the current nuclear arsenal to be insufficient in quantity and quality, and believes that we must perfect better and more powerful weapons, including thermonuclear devices of the megaton level. This group includes a large number of the currently serving and retired nuclear weapon scientists as well as key leaders of certain political parties. But, the majority of Indians, while they are proud of India's nuclear attainments, are increasingly opposed to any significant increase in the nuclear arsenal and would like to see the country's funds and talent directed to rapidly meeting the dire needs in energy, drinking water, health, primary education, and science and technology development for industrial growth. The framework of cooperation between India and the US in the nuclear arena must be viewed in the backdrop of this current mood in the country and not through the eyes of a few who feel a serious threat to their own status or others who find opportunities to their advantage in opposing this initiative.

The Indian Express, 29 July 2005

Bush's Bold Bet On India (Jim Hoagland)

The United States and India have put aside their troubled past to reach far into the future with a visionary bilateral agreement that challenges both nations and the rest of the world to treat nuclear weapons and nuclear energy with greater realism than they do under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. If Congress agrees to the changes in law sought by the Bush administration to put the agreement signed last week into force, nuclear energy will take centre stage from nuclear weapons in the new order of US-Indian relations, which now become crucial to constructing a post-Kyoto consensus on climate change. Energy vs. arms has been an atomic trade-off dictated by the nuclear treaty for nearly a half-century - before global warming became a major international concern, and before rogue states showed they were not interested in such a trade.

The Statesman, 29 July 2005

Koreas pledge to work for nuke talks' success

VIENTIANE, (Laos) July 28: Foreign ministers of South Korea and North Korea pledged today to work towards the success of six-party talks in Beijing aimed at getting North Korea to scrap its nuclear weapons programme. The South Korean foreign minister Mr Ban Ki-moon met briefly at a hotel in the Laotian capital with the North Korean foreign minister Mr Paek NamSun during a conference of the Association of South East Asian Nations Regional Forum. "Both North Korea and South Korea will work together to expedite the process and to contribute to the early resolution and peaceful settlement of the nuclear issue and achievement of the ultimate goal of denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula," they said in a joint statement after their meeting. Earlier, Mr Ban noted that the last time the two ministers met was an year ago during the Asean Regional Forum in Jakarta. "We hope to have regular meetings between the North and South Korean ministers," Mr Ban said before heading into the meeting with Mr Paek. .

The Tribune, 29 July 2005

Pranab defends Defence pact

New Delhi, July 28: The Defence Minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, today told the Lok Sabha that the "New Framework for United States-India Defence Relationship" signed recently will enhance the capabilities of India's armed forces without committing the country to any specific actions or obliging it to do anything that was not in the national interest. Mr Mukherjee, replying to supplementaries in the House during question hour, said his visit to the USA in June 2005 opened that country as a potential source of advanced defence equipment and technology, increasing India's options and leverages vis-a-vis suppliers in the acquisition of defence technology. "It will promote cooperation with the USA to enhance the capabilities of India's armed forces and defence industries and increase our strategic maneuverability in international affairs without committing India to any specific actions, nor obliging us to do anything that is not in the country's national interest," Mr Mukherjee said.

The Tribune, 29 July 2005

Policy and public opinion (Inder Malhotra)

Indo-US nuclear deal's harsh lesson. IF the overheated and ongoing debate on the nuclear deal between India and the United States has proved anything it is that in this country even the most sensitive national security issues become almost instantly a football of partisan politics. As after the Shakti series of nuclear tests in May 1998, so now, partisanship and acrimony have distorted the public discourse. Both the trenchant critics of the July 18 agreement between the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, and the US President, Mr. George Bush, and the somewhat staid defenders of it have had their say elaborately and repetitively, generating far more heat than light. Ultimately, the collective judgment of Parliament would prevail. But the problem is that even a majority verdict loses its shine if the gulf between the majority and the minority is wide and their schism bitter, especially on nuclear policy that calls for, in Dr. Singh's own words, "consensus and continuity". It is in this context that some aspects of the current contention deserve the attention they haven't yet received. The first is the reaction in the US to the Bush-Manmohan deal that so many here - including those who had personally negotiated inconclusively a similar though not identical arrangement with Washington - have denounced so vehemently. Intriguingly, the American reaction has been a mirror image of that in India.

The Tribune, 29 July 2005

India's nuke controls intact (Ashish Kumar Sen)

To the casual observer, India might seem to be a "weak link" in the international non-proliferation regime. But New Delhi has compiled a track record of controlling proscribed dual-use exports that compares favourably with most signatories to the export control regimes, according a new report published by the Centre for International Trade and Security at the University of Georgia. Noting that India is a significant potential source of advanced dual-use technologies, which has also refrained from joining the Non-Proliferation Treaty or any of the multilateral export control arrangements, namely the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, and the Wassenaar Arrangement, the report's authors - Anupam Srivastava and Seema Gahlaut - point out that India nevertheless has a "decades-old" system of export controls.

Daily Times, 29 July 2005

Indo-US pact not Pakistan specific: Bush

ISLAMABAD: The United States-India defence pact is not directed against Pakistan and Washington will not allow the South Asian balance of power to be disturbed, American President George W Bush assured President Pervez Musharraf in a 30-minute telephone talk on Thursday. The two leaders discussed various matters including regional peace and security and the war on terrorism. Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed confirmed the conversation, adding that the leaders discussed regional and global issues. Sources said that Bush praised Pakistan's security agencies capture of Hashim Qadeer, an accused in the Daniel Pearl case. He said the US was

Pakistan's strategic partner and the whole world highly appreciated Islamabad's cardinal role to root out terrorism. President Musharraf has taken bold decisions to eradicate terrorism and extremism, said Bush, according to sources. The US president added, "Washington has assured Musharraf that it is aware of Pakistan's security requirements and will fulfil them."

Daily Times, 29 July 2005

'US pact will put India's N-programme in jeopardy' (Iftikhar Gilani)

NEW DELHI: Experts here have warned that Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh's promise to the United States to sign the additional protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would "put the whole nuclear programme in jeopardy". India's nuclear facilities will be greatly hit if they are opened up to international inspectors, as there has been hardly any demarcation between civilian and military research facilities, they said. "The scientists who are involved in the nuclear power plants and other facilities are the same ones who research on nuclear arms. Even the nuclear fuel mines are common for both civilian and military purposes," said an expert while analysing the significance of the PM's promise on the Indian nuclear programme. Experts say that the prime minister's nuclear bargain with the United States to get nuclear fuel and equipment for nuclear power plants is "fraught with the danger of exposing India's defence preparedness on the nuclear front".

Daily Times, 29 July 2005

US seeks Korean nukes inspections

MOSCOW: The United States proposed that international inspectors enter North Korea in September to check its nuclear facilities during a bilateral meeting with the Stalinist state Thursday, a Russian report said. The proposal was made in talks between North Korea's chief delegate Kim Kye-gwan and US counterpart Christopher Hill, their third this week, on the sidelines of wider international talks on denuclearising the Korean peninsula, Interfax news agency quoted a North Korean source as saying. The two countries on Wednesday restated their uncompromising positions on the three-year standoff, revealing that major differences remained despite a better atmosphere and softer rhetoric.

The News, 29 July 2005

IAEA seeks global cooperation to counter nuke terror

NEW YORK: Observing that some countries still lack programmes and resources to respond properly to the threat of nuclear and radiological terrorism, the UN nuclear watchdog agency has called for global cooperation to help them strengthen national capacities. "Global cooperation is the key to harnessing nuclear energy in the service of development and peace," the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said in its annual report. "Global nuclear developments in 2004, such as the changing outlook for nuclear power, the increasing role of nuclear applications in global sustainable development initiatives, greater international cooperation in matters of safety and security, and the increasing recognition of the need to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime, have created new challenges and opportunities for the Agency," it says.

The News, 29 July 2005

US warns Iran against violating N-deal

WASHINGTON: The White House warned Iran on Thursday against resuming key work on its nuclear fuel cycle, saying it could prompt the United States and its European allies to pursue UN sanctions against Tehran. On Wednesday outgoing Iranian President Mohammad Khatami said Iran would resume some work on its nuclear fuel cycle, which the West suspects is part of a clandestine effort to produce a bomb. "Iran made some commitments to suspend their uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities. We expect them to abide by that commitment," White House spokesman Scott McClellan told reporters. "If Iran is going to violate their agreements, then we would obviously be looking at discussing with (the) Europeans, who have also committed to doing so, looking at going to the (United Nations) Security Council," McClellan added. "If they were to begin those activities again, they would be violating the commitment they made under the Paris agreement with the Europeans," McClellan said, adding "And we have made it very clear that Iran has a history of hiding their nuclear activities from the international community."

The New York Times, 29 July 2005

U.S. Offers North Korea Evidence That Nuclear Secrets Came From Pakistani's Network (David E. Sanger and Jim Yardley)

WASHINGTON, July 28: In negotiations with North Korea this week, the Bush administration has for the first time presented the country with specific evidence behind American allegations that North Korea secretly obtained uranium enrichment technology from a founder of Pakistan's nuclear program, two senior administration officials said. The decision to share the intelligence with North Korean negotiators, the officials said, was part of an effort

to convince North Korea that any discussions about disarmament must cover not only the nuclear weapons program it has boasted about, but a second one that it now denies exists. Putting on the table the evidence that North Korea obtained technology from the network built by Abdul Qadeer Khan is significant because it is an effort to break an impasse over the scope of North Korea's nuclear program.

International Herald Tribune, 29 July 2005

North Korea Talks: Regional side effects (Leon V. Sigal)

NEW YORK Now that North Korea has returned to six-party talks, the question remains, will the Bush administration continue to watch Pyongyang arm without trying to do what South Korea and Japan think just might get it to stop: sustained diplomatic give and take? Most hard-liners in the Bush administration are unilateralists who couldn't care less what allies think. Others take it on faith that North Korea is determined to arm, not deal, and believe that a nuclear-arming Pyongyang will drive Seoul and Tokyo further into Washington's arms. The administration insists that six-party talks are further isolating North Korea and that pressure by China and others will bring it to heel. With a negotiated resolution viewed as desirable and possible in South Korea and Japan, however, administration misplaying of North Korea is threatening to unravel U.S. alliances in Northeast Asia and enhance China's influence.

The Korean Herald, 29 July 2005

6-way talks move to crucial phase

BEIJING: After five days of bilateral exchanges and a third day of official sessions, negotiations on the North Korean nuclear standoff yesterday entered a critical bargaining stage with delegations weighing how to start drafting the first joint declaration ever to emerge from the six-party framework. "We would like to see if we can get some six-party drafting in the next 24 hours," top U.S. negotiator Christopher Hill was quoted as telling reporters after a lengthy morning meeting with the North Korean counterparts. American and North Korean diplomats met face-to-face for nearly three hours to talk about their parallel interpretations of the Korean Peninsula's denuclearization in their third rendezvous since Sunday. Aside from the different demands made by each country in their keynote speeches, the United States and North Korea have been and still differ significantly and fundamentally on the meaning of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula.

Dawn, 29 July 2005

A peace built by nukes and cash (Rajan Menon)

The Bush foreign policy squad has not had much to cheer about lately. The Iraqi insurgency won't die. Iran is suspected of seeking nuclear weapons. North Korea already appears to have acquired a small stash. But as the president met with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh last week, the White House could take heart from what's happening in South Asia. For starters, nuclear weapons have promoted peace in that volatile region, it turns out. When India and Pakistan went nuclear in 1998, most people in the West believed that South Asia had become a more dangerous place. That was a gloomy assessment, considering that the subcontinent had seen full-scale war between India and Pakistan, intermittent skirmishes and terrorist attacks. But now South Asia is more stable than it was a decade ago, and the prospects for a settlement of the competing claims to Kashmir are better, arguably, than they have ever been. What accounts for the turnaround?

Daily Times, 29 July 2005

Bush starts to get it right on India's nuclear status (Jonathan Power)

The new policy has all the advantages of jettisoning hypocrisy. The next step, which logically should grow from it, would be to revise the Non-Proliferation Treaty to make India formally one of the established nuclear powers, and thus gain India's membership of the Treaty. The critics of President George W Bush's new nuclear deal with India have got it back to front. They appear to have no understanding of the history of US-Indian nuclear relations. They draw their pessimistic and sanctimonious conclusions about how this new policy of relaxing the supply of advanced nuclear materials to India will further undermine the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as if no water had ever flowed under the bridge.

The Tribune, 29 July 2005

Parliament must support the PM (H.K. Dua)

The Prime Minister is to make a statement in Parliament today on his recent visit to Washington, which indeed brought about a qualitative change in relations with the United States. People's reaction to the outcome of the visit in the country has been warm. Hopefully, Parliament will not grudge Dr Manmohan Singh the support he is entitled to after what he has achieved in talks with President George W. Bush, notwithstanding the noises of the BJP as well as the communists. India has gained a lot from the Prime Minister's visit. It has virtually run out of nuclear fuel needed for the Tarapore and a few other nuclear power plants. No member of the Nuclear Suppliers'

Group is prepared to give India the nuclear fuel because of the US restrictions on it after the 1998 nuclear blasts at Pokharan. With oil prices soaring to astronomical heights and limited thermal and hydroelectric resources, India has no choice but to develop nuclear energy. This requires the import of nuclear fuel which India can now get from the United States, or from a third country, possibly Russia.

The Hindu, 29 July 2005

The truth behind the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal (Siddharth Varadarajan)

In opening the door to nuclear commerce with India, Washington has confirmed how much an alliance with New Delhi is worth to it. But is anybody on the Indian side doing the math? IN THE fullness of time, last week's nuclear agreement between India and the United States will be seen as one of those decisive moments in international politics when two powers who have been courting each other for some time decide finally to cross the point of no return. The U.S. and India have 'come out', so to speak, and the world will never be the same again. Every world order needs rules in order to sustain itself but sometimes the rules can become a hindrance to the hegemonic strength of the power that underpins that order. Following India's nuclear tests in 1998, the U.S. had two options: continuing to believe the Indian nuclear genie could be put back, or harnessing India's evident strategic weight for its own geopolitical aims before that power grows too immense or is harnessed by others like Europe or China. The U.S. has chosen the latter option, and the joint statement released by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on July 18 is the most dramatic textual manifestation of what Washington is attempting to do.

Deccan Herald, 29 July 2005

Impact on South Asia (M B Naqvi)

The agreements have a bearing on a larger geo-political situation than just Indo-Pak peace process. Although the context of new Indo-American relations is larger, its impact on South Asia is also important. The two Indo-American agreements - on Framework for Military Cooperation and the other on civilian nuclear cooperation - are extraordinarily significant. It might mark the beginning of the end of Indo-Pak Peace Process. Mr Manmohan Singh, who once called it irreversible, now says "if Pakistan does not stop sending jihadis into Kashmir", he would be forced to stop it. New Delhi's complaints of infiltration are growing.

The Indian Express, 29 July 2005

US says no to bilateral nuke pact with N. Korea

WASHINGTON, July 28: Despite agreeing to further one-on-one talks with North Korea, the United States insisted once again on Thursday that it would not negotiate any bilateral agreement with Pyongyang on its nuclear programme. "We have no intention of negotiating any bilateral agreement with North Korea. That approach was tried and it failed," White House spokesman Scott McClellan said. The US is engaged in six-party talks in Beijing to try to end North Korea's nuclear programme and is resisting any pressure from Pyongyang to come to a bilateral agreement with the communist state.

The Hindu. 30 July 2005

A persistent irritant goes with a grand bargain (N Ravi)

For decades in India-United States relations when there was little else in terms of shared perceptions, the democratic condition was invoked as a binding virtue. Even in times of bitterness and chill, the leaders of the two nations spoke of the world's oldest democracy and the world's largest coming together and their declarations sounded quite hollow. When, however, President George W. Bush spoke of the shared democratic values and freedom and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh responded in like manner during his latest visit, the usual emptiness behind the references to the democratic commonality seemed to have disappeared. For at the end of their two hour meeting in Washington, the single major irritant in the relations for the last three decades had moved towards a resolution. State hospitality is often used symbolically to convey subtle messages and very often pomp and ceremony serve to mask sharp differences. A cynical President Richard Nixon provided Prime Minister Indira Gandhi an effusive and Grade A welcome ("slobbered over her," as his National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger, put it) in the tense days preceding the Bangladesh war so that she would not be able to say that the US did not give her a warm reception and so in despair she had got to go to war. This time though, Mr. Bush's effusive hospitality - full state honours topped with a grand dinner in which he even overcame his natural reluctance to don a tuxedo - was not to serve as a cover for strong demurrals nor was it designed to make up for the results falling short.

The Indian Express, 30 July 2005

US ignores India, will jet F-16s to Pak

WASHINGTON: The Bush administration has approved an initial shipment to Pakistan of two F-16 fighter jets, a

down payment on what is expected to be a larger sale of newer U.S. fighters over Indian objections, congressional sources briefed on the plan said on Friday. The decision to initially provide Pakistan, a war on terrorism ally, with two older but refurbished F-16s comes less than two weeks after President George W. Bush reversed long-standing U.S. policy by promising to help India, Pakistan's nuclear rival, develop its civilian nuclear power sector.

The Indian Express, 30 July 2005

The PM's response to fears raised about the India-US treaty was forthright and clear

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's statement to Parliament on Friday on his recent trip to the United States, can well be perceived as a model of forthright statesmanship. The statement achieved three principal objectives. It clearly laid out the terms of the Indo-US cooperation, it responded honestly and convincingly to the apprehensions that have been raised about the India-US treaty, and it provided a forceful articulation of India's national interest. The statement refutes every major objection that has been raised against the treaty. The prime minister clarified, above all, that the treaty did not impinge upon India's autonomy. On the contrary, it enhanced it by giving India access to technologies and fuel that has long been denied to it. In discussions of the treaty, there was some confusion over how the obligations imposed upon India and the United States would be sequenced. The prime minister made it categorically clear that India's obligations were contingent upon the United States fulfilling its obligations. This should allay any fears that the treaty would trap India.

Asian Age, 30 July 2005

PM on N-deal: It's quid pro quo

NEW DELHI: Dismissing criticism over the civilian nuclear deal with the United States, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told Parliament on Friday that there had been no compromise on India's strategic needs, and nothing that curbed its nuclear weapons programme. Security interests will remain "our highest priority", he said. Dr Singh also made clear that India's actions were reciprocal to the United States following its own side of the understanding set out in the joint statement released during his recent visit to Washington. "There is nothing in this joint statement that amounts to limiting or inhibiting our strategic nuclear weapons programme over which we will retain unrestricted, complete and autonomous control," said the Prime Minister. "We expect a close correlation between the actions to be taken by the United States and by India. Indian actions will be contingent at every stage on the actions taken by the other side," he said.

Asian Age, 30 July 2005

US doesn't see India N-arms status (Seema Mustafa)

New Delhi, July 30: Has the United States recognised India as a nuclear weapons state? There appears to be a major communication gap between New Delhi and Washington on this with India insistent that there is tacit recognition in the joint statement signed by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George W. Bush of this desired status, but US officials are firm that this is not so. The recognition is essential to India's claim that it has sufficient leverage and flexibility as a nuclear weapons state to implement the commitments made by Prime Minister Singh in the joint agreement with President Bush. US undersecretary of state for political affairs Nicholas Burns, a key negotiator in the deal, told reporters in Washington just after the meeting between the two leaders, "This is all about nuclear power. It is not about nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons were not the subject of this agreement. By taking this decision we are not recognising India as a nuclear weapons state. We are simply opening up a channel in order to cooperate on a commercial basis and a technological basis on nuclear power itself, and that is a very important distinction."

China Daily, 30 July 2005

The nuclear talks enter uncharted territory

A South Korean official said China had presented a draft joint statement for discussion. Previous rounds have failed to secure a common position. U.S. chief negotiator Christopher Hill said on Saturday: "Seriously, we will have a lot of discussion about text to see if we can come to some agreement among the six." "But I want to let you know it's going to take a while, this is not going to be finished today or even tomorrow because even though the text will be rather brief (it will be) rather important too." The talks have come a long way from the early days of the administration of George W. Bush, when the president labelled North Korea part of an "axis of evil" alongside Iran and pre-war Iraq, or even from early this year when his secretary of state called Pyongyang an "outpost of tyranny". This time the discussions involving the two Koreas, the United States, Russia, Japan and China have remained open-ended. If lacking in major concessions so far, they have featured a more thorough airing of viewpoints that the parties hope could point to possible consensus.

Xinhua, 30 July 2005

US says DPRK should not retain civilian nuclear capability

WASHINGTON, July 29: The United States said on Friday that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) should dismantle its nuclear weapons programs and should not retain a civilian nuclear capability as well. The remark came after Christopher Hill, top US envoy to the six-party talks currently being held in Beijing, suggested that Washington could be willing to allow the DPRK the peaceful use of atomic power if the DPRK rejoined the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). The DPRK withdrew from the NPT in 2003. "We don't challenge the fact that they have the rights to this under the treaty, but we challenge whether they should be exercising these rights," Hill told reporters in Beijing on Friday. However, Sean McCormack, a State Department spokesman, said on Friday that Hill was clear that the DPRK should not be allowed to retain civilian nuclear capability. "I think he was very clear and we're very clear that we do not think that North Korea should retain a civilian nuclear capability," McCormack said, stressing that the US goal is to achieve a denuclearized Korean Peninsula.

The Korean Herald, 30 July 2005

'Discussion' or 'negotiation'? Washington wavers (Lee Joo-hee and Kim Man-yong)

There is no doubt that the most prominent addition to the nuclear talks currently being held in Beijing is the unprecedented bilateral talks between the top negotiators of Washington and Pyongyang. Although the two sides have shared one-on-one talks in previous rounds of disarmament talks, they were never as frequent or as lengthy. Moreover, the outcome of the six-party negotiations hinge almost entirely upon progress in the bilateral talks between these two nations, who share contrasting interests on the single issue of defining what denuclearizing the Korean peninsula means. But while North Korea openly welcomes one-on-one bargaining with the United States, the latter is more careful not to describe it as a "negotiation." The United States has been neurotically sensitive about the phrase "bilateral negotiations" with North Korea, understandably due to the unfavorable memory of the Geneva Agreement fallout in 2002.

Deccan Herald, 30 July 2005

N Korea-US nuke talks deadlocked

North Korea nuclear crisis talks enter uncharted territory today, with the six parties sitting down with hopes of drafting their first joint statement to cap the longest negotiating session yet. The main protagonists, the United States and North Korea, appear as entrenched as ever, diplomats say, with Pyongyang sticking to its demands for security guarantees and aid and Washington insisting the nuclear programmes be dismantled first. Still, the first round of talks in more than a year has seen an unprecedented level of contact between the US and North Korean sides, who have met for talks five times already this week after refusing to budge from scripted position statements in three previous rounds. "I have the impression that the United States and North Korea have deepened their understanding of each other's positions after hours and days of bilateral discussions," a Japanese delegate said today. "But I believe the two sides remain far apart," he said. "Our work to draft a joint document will get into full swing today," he added.

The Indian Express, 30 July 2005

US ignores India, will jet F-16s to Pak

Washington, July 30: The Bush administration has approved an initial shipment to Pakistan of two F-16 fighter jets, a down payment on what is expected to be a larger sale of newer U.S. fighters over Indian objections, congressional sources briefed on the plan said on Friday. The decision to initially provide Pakistan, a war on terrorism ally, with two older but refurbished F-16s comes less than two weeks after President George W. Bush reversed long-standing U.S. policy by promising to help India, Pakistan's nuclear rival, develop its civilian nuclear power sector. India had expressed concern to Washington about its proposed sale of F-16s to Pakistan. Nuclear-armed rivals India and Pakistan have fought three wars and were on the brink of another in 2002. One congressional source said of the timing of the decision, "They (Bush administration officials) didn't want to start moving F-16s to Pakistan until after the Indian prime minister had come and gone."

The Indian Express, 30 July 2005

We don't give until we take: PM on N-deal

NEW DELHI, July 29: The Government will place its non-military nuclear facilities under international safeguards only after all restrictions on civilian nuclear energy cooperation with India are lifted, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told both houses of the Parliament today. In a suo motu statement on the nuclear pact he had signed with President George W. Bush last week, Singh underlined that "reciprocity" would be the key to implementing the India's new nuclear commitments. "There is nothing in this joint statement that amounts to limiting or inhibiting our strategic nuclear weapons programme over which we will retain unrestricted, complete and autonomous control," said the Prime Minister. He explained that India's commitments on the nuclear issue would be "conditional upon, and reciprocal to, the US fulfilling its side" of the deal.

The Hindu, 30 July 2005

PM's statement on US visit generally alright: Basu

New Delhi, July 30: With CPI(M) asking the Government not to make any commitments on the nuclear issue so long as US assurances to India on nuclear supplies were implemented, veteran Marxist Jyoti Basu today said Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's statement on his US visit was "generally alright". The issue came up for discussion on the concluding day of the two-day meeting of the party's Polit Bureau here. "It seems generally alright" was Basu's cryptic comment when asked about the Prime Minister's statement in Parliament. CPI (M) Polit Bureau member Sitaram Yechury yesterday said "we think the Prime Minister himself believes that so long as there is no concrete assurance from the US, we should not initiate any action in this direction."

Dawn, 30 July 2005

US presents DPRK with 'evidence': Links with A.Q. Khan

NEW YORK, July 29: The Bush administration has for the first time presented North Korea with specific 'evidence' behind American allegations that it secretly obtained uranium enrichment technology from the founder of Pakistan's nuclear programme, the New York Times said, quoting two senior administration officials. The officials told the newspaper that "the decision to share the intelligence with North Korean negotiators was part of an effort to convince North Korea that any discussions about disarmament must cover not only the nuclear weapons program it has boasted about, but a second one that it now denies exists". Putting on the table the evidence that North Korea obtained technology from the network built by Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan is significant because it is an effort to break an impasse over the scope of North Korea's nuclear programme. American officials were reluctant to describe the North Korean response, but one official told the paper that when presented with the evidence "they argue with us about it."

Dawn, 30 July 2005

Indo-US pact - a gamble? (Afzaal Mahmood)

Three weeks after the signing of a 10-year defence agreement that will enable New Delhi to buy sophisticated US military equipment, President George W. Bush has now agreed to provide American civilian nuclear knowhow and nuclear fuel to India, indicating a major policy shift in global and regional implications. Under the accord hammered out at a White House meeting between President Bush and the visiting Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, the US will enhance Indo-US cooperation "in the areas of civil nuclear, civil space and high technology commerce". The arrangement agreed to between the two leaders will enable India to secure international help for its civilian nuclear reactors, while retaining its nuclear arms. In the case of India, President Bush has set aside the long-term American policy that countries refusing to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty should be denied civilian nuclear assistance and, in many cases, face a weapons embargo.

The Tribune, 30 July 2005

No compromise on strategic interests (Rajeev Sharma)

New Delhi, July 29: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today defended in Parliament the nuclear deal he signed with President George W. Bush during his recent visit to the US and made two important declarations: that India's strategic arsenal will remain outside the scope of any external interlocutors and that his government will not allow any fissile material shortages. Dr Manmohan Singh also sought to set the record straight on fears that India might not reap the benefits of the nuclear deal even after throwing open its nuclear facilities for international inspection and announced that the deal would be governed by "reciprocity". By this he meant that India would not move ahead in a pre-determined manner even if Washington did not reciprocate. "Reciprocity is key to the implementation of all steps enumerated in the joint statement. We expect a close co-relation between the actions to be taken by the US and by India.

The Tribune, 30 July 2005

Document: PM's statement in Parliament on US visit

The purpose of my visit was to sensitise the US Government about the full extent of the changes that have taken place in India since 1991. These changes have given us a stronger capability to work with the United States on more equal terms as we address common concerns and challenges. I also sought to emphasise that the Indian economy is stronger than it has ever been and we hope to participate in and benefit from the economic processes of globalisation. We are determined to be a competitive destination for investment, including foreign investment and the US business community could contribute to development in India through greater investment and trade. We are uniquely placed to enter into such mutually beneficial interaction drawing on the strength of our knowledge sector. Hence another important goal was to underline to the US that the emergence of India as a centre of knowledge based industries and services would provide a good basis for long-term collaboration between our economies.

Daily Yomiuri, 28 July 2005

U.S. may tolerate peaceful N. Korean nuclear program

The United States told North Korea it would allow Pyongyang to maintain a peaceful atomic power program if the reclusive state rejoined the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill said Friday afternoon. The proposal was made during their fifth round of bilateral talks aimed at bridging disagreement on the meaning of "denuclearization" of the Korean Peninsula. The U.S. envoy proposed possibly excluding North Korean nuclear development for peaceful purposes, with certain conditions, from the denuclearization. The U.S. compromise may lead to a breakthrough in the standoff over North Korea's nuclear program. However, North Korea may demand that the United States normalize diplomatic relations and provide other incentives before Pyongyang scraps its nuclear program. Hill said the United States believed that North Korea had a right to a peaceful nuclear development program if it ratified the NPT.

The Indian Express, 31 July 2005

Basu okays N-deal, signals comrades to dilute hard red line

NEW DELHI, July 30: Scotching speculation of a widening rift between the UPA and the Left, the CPI(M) politburo today inched closer to Manmohan Singh's foreign policy. It was apparent that the two pro-Congress elders in the party, Jyoti Basu and Harkishan Singh Surjeet, had swung the opinion within the politburo the Manmohan way. Surrounded by mediapersons this afternoon, Basu surprised everybody by underplaying the differences with the UPA on Indo-US nuclear deal. When asked if his party would continue to make an issue of the nuclear deal, Basu replied in the negative. When asked how he regarded the Prime Minister's statement in Parliament yesterday, he just mentioned, "okay." It was fair indication that opinion was changing inside A K Gopalan Bhavan on the crucial nuclear deal. And given the reams of anti-Manmohan Singh and anti-US statements that have been published recently by both AKG Bhavan and the CPI headquarters of Ajay Bhavan, it was obvious that Basu and Surjeet have squeezed out a positive interpretation of yesterday's statement made by Singh in Parliament.

The Associated Press, 31 July 2005

Nuke Talks Focus on China Draft Statement

BEIJING: Talks to persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons focused on a draft statement that the main U.S. envoy praised as a good basis for discussion, a sign of possible progress as an unprecedented sixth day of meetings opened Sunday. However, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill stressed differences remained with North Korea on a resolution of the 2 1/2-year-old nuclear standoff, which has raised regional tension and concerns that it could spark an arms race in East Asia. Hill has met five times with the North Koreans amid the talks and said Sunday he would probably see them again. No end date for the talks has been set, and Hill said "it's going to take a while" -- noting the process requires translating texts into five languages of the nations at the talks: Chinese, English, Japanese, Korean and Russian. "I want to caution everyone that it's a lot of work to look at a document and go line by line by line," Hill said Sunday afternoon at his Beijing hotel. "Things are moving, we have to see how it goes."

Dawn, 31 July 2005

India's quest for nuclear status (Ghayoor Ahmed)

According to a joint statement issued in Washington on July 18, US President George W. Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh have resolved to transform the relationship between their two countries and establish a global partnership in areas of mutual interest, including the nuclear field. US Under-Secretary of State Nicholas Burns called it a "high water mark of US-India relations since 1947". It is generally believed that President Bush, aiming to boost India as a counterbalance against China's growing military might, has moved closer to accepting it as a nuclear weapons state, notwithstanding his rhetoric of a vigorous non-proliferation policy. While welcoming the Indian prime minister to the White House on July 18, President Bush appreciated India's strong commitment to preventing nuclear proliferation and stated that as a responsible state, with advanced nuclear technology, India should acquire the same benefits and advantages as other such states are entitled to.

The Times Of India, 31 July 2005

US Senate okays Patriot Act renewal

WASHINGTON: Casting a wary eye on terrorist attacks in Britain, the US Senate on Friday voted to make permanent most of a controversial law that vastly expands the government's search and surveillance powers. But it struck down some of the key items from the Bush administration's wish list and refused to follow the lead of the House of Representatives that last week offered the Federal Bureau of Investigation broader powers to spy on Americans. Senate Republican majority leader Bill Frist said the London bombings reminded Americans that

terrorists continue to plot new attacks against them and their allies. "We must stay vigilant and tireless in our pursuit - breaking up their cells, chasing down the money trail, and bringing each and every collaborator to justice," Frist said shortly after the Senate moved to reauthorize the USA Patriot Act by voice vote. The Patriot Act will help defeat terrorist cells operating right here in America," he added. Enacted barely six weeks after the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington, the act is seen by the Bush administration as a key legal tool in the war on terror.