

Deccan Herald, 1 July 2007

No radiation fear from Nimitz

Kolkata: Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Suresh Mehta on Saturday brushed aside all apprehensions of the Left parties and a section of the intellectuals about radiation hazards from one of the world's largest nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, the USS Nimitz, during its three-day scheduled docking at the Chennai port.

The Hindu, 2 July 2007

U.S. pleaded with China to "menace" India: book

New Delhi: Recently declassified United States official records throw light on the anger and frustration that seized President Richard Nixon during the 1971 India-Pakistan war and how Washington secretly pleaded with China to "menace" India by moving troops to the border.

The Indian Express, 2 July 2007

USS Nimitz to dock off Chennai today

Chennai, July 1: As politicians and activists geared for protest demonstrations against the USS Nimitz, the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier is all set to dock about two nautical miles from Chennai Port at 6 a.m. on Monday.

Hindustan Times, 3 July 2007

USS Nimitz sails into Chennai

Chennai, July 03: Unmindful of sporadic protests in Chennai, the American nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Nimitz sailed into Indian waters and laid anchor 3 kms away from the Chennai harbour on Monday.

The Times of India, 4 July 2007

US says it would welcome steps by India on customs duty

WASHINGTON: The US on Tuesday said it "would welcome" steps by India to help address its concerns on high customs duty on wine and spirits but stopped short of taking a formal position on the issue.

The Indian Express, 5 July 2007

Rice polishing: US lauds India NAM role

New Delhi, July 4: The US on Wednesday noted that India has played a "major role" in the Non-Aligned Movement and continues to do so, a week after a controversy was created by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's suggestion that New Delhi dump NAM.

Deccan Herald, 6 July 2007

Clinton highlights his role in US-India friendship

Washington: Former US President Bill Clinton took credit for ending the "Cold War rift" between the US and India, saying that establishing a "genuine friendship and partnership" between the two countries was one of the achievements of his foreign policy.

Daily Times, 6 July 2007

Handling of crisis: US pats Pakistan on the back for Lal Masjid

LAHORE: The United States appreciated the Pakistan government for being exceptionally patient with the Lal Masjid crisis, reported Dawn News on Thursday.

China Daily, 6 July 2007

Clinton: Don't fear or ignore a stronger China

WASHINGTON: Senator Hillary Clinton, a leading Democratic contender for the US presidency, has called for frank dialogue with China on issues ranging from trade to currency to human rights and the environment.

Daily Times, 7 July 2007

US reiterates support for Musharraf

LAHORE: The United States repeated on Friday its support for President Pervez Musharraf as turmoil continued in the country.

Daily Times, 7 July 2007

Afghan and US-led coalition forces kill 33 Taliban

KABUL: Afghan and US-led troops killed 33 Taliban after the insurgents attacked a police checkpoint overnight, as three NATO soldiers were killed and five militants arrested, the alliance said on Friday.

The Times of India, 8 July 2007

'Pakistan mission' was aborted in 2005 by US, says report

NEW YORK: A secret 2005 mission to capture senior Al-Qaida members in Pakistan's tribal areas was aborted at the last moment when Bush administration officials decided it was too risky and could jeopardize relations with Pakistan, The New York Times reported on Saturday.

Dawn, 9 July 2007

"Secret US mission in 2005 aborted"

NEW YORK, July 8: A secret US mission in 2005 to capture senior Al Qaeda members in Pakistan's tribal areas was aborted at the last moment when Bush administration officials decided it was too risky and could jeopardise relations with Pakistan, The New York Times reported on Sunday.

The Washington Post, 9 July 2007

Official Calls Mosque Rebels 'Terrorists'

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan, July 9: A day after the death of a senior Pakistani commando, government officials said Sunday that the fighters holed up inside an Islamabad mosque are well-trained and well-armed radicals with connections to known terrorist groups.

Hindustan Times, 10 July 2007

US assurance critical to China's 1962 India attack

A critical element in the Chinese decision to launch military action against India in 1962 lay in an "assurance" to Beijing that Chinese nationalists would not launch twin military operations along with New Delhi against China, according to declassified CIA papers.

The Times of India, 10 July 2007

China denies that its spies are trying to infiltrate US

BEIJING: China denied that it has spies working to infiltrate the US government, responding on Tuesday to advertisements that the FBI ran in San Francisco newspapers asking readers to provide information about Beijing-sponsored espionage.

Daily Times, 10 July 2007

US relationship with Pakistan extremely important: Negroponte

WASHINGTON: The United States has an extremely important bilateral relationship with Pakistan, US Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte said, citing cooperation between the two allies in wide-ranging areas, including security and economic development.

The Times of India, 11 July 2007

US, China brace for Lal Masjid backlash

WASHINGTON: The United States and China are bracing for a backlash from Islamic extremists after supporting the Pakistani military's attack on the Lal Masjid complex in Islamabad that killed militant leader Abdul Rashid Ghazi and an unspecified number of fundamentalists.

Daily Times, 11 July 2007

US backs mosque action

WASHINGTON: The US State Department backed Pakistan's decision to storm Lal Masjid in Islamabad on Tuesday. A US State Department spokesman, Tom Casey, said that the militants were given many warnings before the commandos moved on the sprawling mosque compound before dawn.

Daily Times, 11 July 2007

US must ditch "blundering" Musharraf: NYT

LAHORE: America needs to maintain friendly relations with Pakistan, which is why it should "disentangle itself from the sinking fortunes of Gen Pervez Musharraf - a blundering and increasingly unpopular military dictator and a halfhearted strategic ally of the United States," writes The New York Times on Tuesday.

Daily Times, 11 July 2007

US starts F-16 delivery

MUSHAF BASE: The United States on Tuesday started the long awaited delivery of F-16 aircraft to Pakistan when two of the aircraft, which had directly flown from the US in an 8-hour journey, were handed over to the Pakistan Air force (PAF) in a ceremony at Sargodha.

Daily Times, 11 July 2007

Operation, firing continue; USA citizens warned

ISLAMABAD: The operation against Lal Masjid and Jamia Hafsa continued the whole Tuesday night and the firing and blasts kept rocking the federal capital all the night. USA

warned its citizens living in Pakistan to be cautious.

Dawn, 12 July 2007

Al Qaeda settled in safe haven: US officials

WASHINGTON, July 11: Al Qaeda has become entrenched in a remote corner of Pakistan and the United States fears a military strike could spawn new militant activity in the country, US officials said on Wednesday.

The Times of India, 12 July 2007

Al-Qaida has largely regained strength: US intelligence report

WASHINGTON: US intelligence analysts have concluded al-Qaida has rebuilt its operating capability to a level not seen since just before the September 11 terrorist attacks, The Associated Press has learned.

The Washington Post, 13 July 2007

U.S. Official Defends Pakistan's Efforts Against Al-Qaeda

A senior State Department official defended efforts by Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf to undermine al-Qaeda's presence in the country's northwest tribal areas, a day after senior U.S. intelligence officials depicted the terrorist group as operating from a "safe haven" in the region.

The New York Times, 13 July 2007

al - Qaida Works to Plant U.S. Operatives

WASHINGTON: Al-Qaida is stepping up its efforts to sneak terror operatives into the United States and has acquired most of the capabilities it needs to strike here, according to a new U.S. intelligence assessment, The Associated Press has learned.

The Times of India, 14 July 2007

Al-Qaida operates as a 'franchise organisation': US

WASHINGTON: Al-Qaida has become a "franchise organisation" with a number of autonomous groups operating under the guidance of Osama bin Laden, US Defence Secretary Robert Gates has said.

Daily Times, 14 July 2007

US opinion of Pakistan unchanged after Lal Masjid operation

LAHORE: The US opinion on the importance of Pakistan in the war against terror remains unchanged after the Lal Masjid operation, said State Department Spokesman Tom Casey on Friday.

The Hindu, 15 July 2007

Military facility sharing deal with U.S. soon

NEW DELHI: India is close to taking a decision on signing the Access and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) to allow U.S. fighter planes and aircraft freer use of its facilities such as fuel, supplies and non-offensive equipment, a senior American military official said here on Saturday.

Dawn, 15 July 2007

US says Musharraf must regain control of border areas

NEW YORK, July 14: US National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley has said that President Pervez Musharraf has failed to contain Al Qaeda, and he must regain control of areas bordering Afghanistan.

Daily Times, 15 July 2007

Musharraf has failed to contain Al Qaeda: US

LAHORE: President Pervez Musharraf has failed to contain Al Qaeda and must regain control over areas bordering Afghanistan, said Stephen Hadley, President George Bush's national security adviser.

Daily Times, 16 July 2007

US backs Musharraf against Taliban

WASHINGTON: The US administration Sunday lent its "full support" to President Pervez Musharraf after Taliban militants scrapped the North Waziristan peace accord. National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley said the deal "hasn't worked".

The Indian Express, 17 July 2007

6 yrs after 9/11, US tracks illicit money funding terror

LOS ANGELES, July 16:: Almost six years after 9/11, amid warnings that the al-Qaeda network has strengthened, US law enforcement officials and other experts said last week that they are only now starting to quantify the money terrorists are raising through criminal enterprises in the United States.

Deccan Herald, 17 July 2007

Nimitz to return to India for joint naval exercise

New Delhi: The nuclear-powered American aircraft carrier USS Nimitz that made a port call in Chennai earlier this month triggering protests by the Left parties is all set to return to the Indian shore in the first week of September.

Hindustan Times, 17 July 2007

American way of life

'An obsolete conception and, except under very exceptional circumstances, it is an immoral and shortsighted conception.' When the US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, famously denounced non-alignment on June 9, 1956, the newly-independent countries were loudly proclaiming their adherence to that "conception".

The News, 17 July 2007

US considers safeguards on aid to Pakistan's tribal areas

WASHINGTON: The United States may build safeguards to ensure that aid poured into Pakistan's tribal areas does not fall into wrong hands, officials said.

Daily Times, 18 July 2007

Qaeda has safe haven in Pakistan to attack US

WASHINGTON: The National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), a consensus view of all 16

US spy agencies, released on Tuesday warned that Al Qaeda "has protected or regenerated key elements of its homeland attack capability, including a safe haven in the Pakistani Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)."

The New York Times, 18 July 2007

Bush Aides See Failure in Fight With Al Qaeda in Pakistan

WASHINGTON, July 17: President Bush's top counterterrorism advisers acknowledged Tuesday that the strategy for fighting Osama bin Laden's leadership of Al Qaeda in Pakistan had failed, as the White House released a grim new intelligence assessment that has forced the administration to consider more aggressive measures inside Pakistan.

The Hindu, 19 July 2007

Use force in tribal areas: U.S.

Washington: The United States wants Pakistan to use military force against extremists in its tribal areas bordering Afghanistan and has offered to help upgrade the country's military to get the job done.

The Hindu, 20 July 2007

Nuclear deal matter of time, says U.S.

As top officials of India and the U.S. held hectic meetings to end the logjam in talks on the civil nuclear deal, Washington on Thursday said both sides were committed to reach the agreement and it was just a matter of time. "Certainly, there's no time like the present to reach a deal," State Department spokesman Sean McCormack told reporters here as National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan prepared to meet Vice President Dick Cheney to discuss the nuclear issue. "We [the two sides] had some preliminary discussions yesterday. There are going to be some more discussions with [Under Secretary of State] Nick Burns and [Assistant Secretary of State] Richard Boucher. So we'll see," McCormack said, adding after these parleys "we'll have a better idea" as to "where we are."...

The Hindu, 21 July 2007

Indian team extends U.S. stay

Washington: Differences over "many" issues in the civil nuclear deal with India have been "overcome" and the two sides just need to go the "extra couple of feet," the U.S. said as top officials continued talks to finalise the agreement. In an indication that the talks could have entered the decisive phase, the high-level Indian team has extended its stay here. Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon met U.S. Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns on Friday morning to carry on discussions on the proposed 123 agreement, which will operationalise the deal. Mr. Menon and Mr. Burns held delegation-level negotiations over last two days to sort out the differences over reprocessing and the fate of the deal if India were to conduct a nuclear test in future...

The Hindu, 22 July 2007

'Breakthrough' in nuclear deal

New Delhi: At the end of four days of what was described by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh as the "last leg" of negotiations between India and the United States over the

proposed nuclear accord, the two countries claimed on Saturday to have made "substantial progress" on the "outstanding issues in the 123 agreement." According to a joint press statement issued in Washington, the matter will now be referred to the two Governments "for final review." Authoritative details of what the two sides have agreed upon are not available, though news agencies from Washington are reporting a "breakthrough."...

The Hindu, 23 July 2007

"Nuclear talks satisfactory"

The top brass of the Department of Atomic Energy are "satisfied" with the outcome of last week's negotiations in Washington between India and the United States on the India-U.S. nuclear cooperation agreement. A top DAE official said he was satisfied with the result of the negotiations and happy with the outcome. Asked whether there was "a breakthrough" in the negotiations as reported in the newspapers, he said: "We have reached an agreement. It has to go to the respective governments. It has to go through a formal process. I think it is satisfactory. The details can be released after it is seen by the Government."...

The Hindu, 23 July 2007

India insisted on refuel for reactors' lifetime

The fundamental issue during the protracted negotiations between India and the United States on the nuclear cooperation agreement was India's insistence on a U.S. guarantee that India will receive fuel supplies for the lifetime of reactors that it plans to import under the agreement. Sources said India took a very uncompromising position on this. According to the March 2, 2006 Separation Plan, the U.S. assured India that it would support an Indian effort to develop a strategic reserve of nuclear fuel to guard against any disruption of supply over the lifetime of India's reactors. If, despite these arrangements, a disruption of fuel supplies to India occurred, the United States and India would jointly convene a group of friendly supplier countries to include countries such as Russia, France and the United Kingdom to pursue measures that would restore fuel supply to India...

The Hindu, 24 July 2007

'123 fulfils Prime Minister's assurances'

The draft nuclear cooperation agreement negotiated last week by India and the United States fulfils all the assurances Prime Minister Manmohan Singh gave Parliament in August 2006, senior officials told The Hindu on Monday. The agreement - also known as the '123 agreement' - grants India "prior consent" to reprocess spent fuel produced by U.S.-supplied equipment and fuel, a key requirement for the Indian side, though the specific arrangements will be worked out subsequently within a finite time period. The agreement reiterates the fuel-supply assurances provided in the March 2006 separation plan and commits the U.S. to the "continuous operation" of any reactor it sells to India. Officials also say the irksome issue of fallback safeguards and the 'right of return' - as mandated by the U.S. Atomic Energy Act - of American-supplied material in the event of cessation of cooperation have also been satisfactorily resolved...

The Hindu, 24 July 2007

Pakistan warns U.S. against strikes

Hints from the United States that it is considering military strikes in Pakistan against suspected Al-Qaeda bases has evoked sharp reaction from Islamabad, reiterating its determination and military capability to handle the threat on its own and warning that any unilateral action by Washington would be "unacceptable," "ill-conceived" and "deeply resented." Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Monday said Islamabad would not allow any attack by the U.S. on its territory. "Pakistan can handle its own requirements of troops. We do not need any other troops from anywhere to come and help. The sovereignty, integrity and security is the responsibility of Pakistan."

The Hindu, 24 July 2007

"Osama is alive"

Washington: Al-Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden is alive and sheltered in the tribal areas of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan, the U.S. Director of National Intelligence, Mike McConnell, has said...

The Hindu, 25 July 2007

'U.S. knew India had no flexibility'

NEW DELHI: India and the United States were able to finalise the text of their nuclear cooperation agreement - also known as the 123 agreement - largely because Washington understood that the Indian side had no more flexibility and shifted gear to accommodate India's concerns, senior Indian officials told The Hindu. The officials said the fact that the United Progressive Alliance Government had no more room for manoeuvre was underlined by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in his meeting with President George W. Bush at Heiligendamm and Under Secretary Nicholas Burns in Delhi last month. "The law of unintended consequences also operated," said an official, with the strong opposition inside India serving to corroborate the Prime Minister's assertion...

The Hindu, 25 July 2007

Protecting India's interests

Although the text of the draft nuclear cooperation agreement settled in negotiations with the United States has not yet been made public, official accounts of its contents indicate that the assurances provided to Parliament by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh have been fulfilled virtually in their entirety. These assurances revolved round three sets of concerns articulated by the scientific community, the Opposition parties, including the Left, and sections of the media and the strategic community. The first concern was that the implementation of the U.S.-India civil nuclear initiative should not have an adverse impact on the country's strategic programme. Secondly, the integrity of the indigenous three-stage civil nuclear programme should not be compromised. Thirdly, the autonomy and independence of foreign policy must be preserved under all circumstances. After last week's agreement, it does seem that the first two concerns have been adequately addressed. The last concern is more open-ended, requiring continuous vigilance...

The Hindu, 26 July 2007

Cabinet panels approve text of nuclear deal

NEW DELHI: A joint meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA) and the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) on Wednesday approved the text of the '123' civilian nuclear cooperation agreement arrived at between Indian and American negotiators last week in Washington. National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan and Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon, who conducted the Washington talks, briefed the Cabinet members on the "deal." Prime Minister Manmohan Singh presided over the meeting...

The Hindu, 26 July 2007

The nuclear deal and a Russian initiative (R. Ramachandran)

The workability of the India-United States nuclear deal and its consequent 123 agreement, which finally appears to have been concluded satisfactorily after two years of intense negotiations, could significantly depend on the operationalisation of a component of the Global Nuclear Power Infrastructure (GNPI), a Russian initiative mooted by President Vladimir Putin in January 2006. An important element of the GNPI is the establishment of a network of International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Centres (INFCCs) to provide services including enrichment, under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The first one will be the International Uranium Enrichment Centre (IUEC) at Angarsk in the Irkutsk region of southeastern Siberia, based at the enrichment plant there called the Angarsk Electrolysis Chemical Complex. Russia has volunteered to put the complex under IAEA safeguards towards establishing it as a multilaterally operated pilot project for enrichment services...

International Herald Tribune, 26 July 2007

Bush links Al Qaeda group in Iraq to Al Qaeda of Sept. 11

President George W. Bush is seeking anew to highlight connections between the Al Qaeda group in Iraq and the one responsible for the Sept. 11 attacks, sharply criticizing those who contend that the groups are independent of one another. At a time when Bush is trying to beat back calls for withdrawal from Iraq, his speech at Charleston Air Force Base reflected concern at the White House over criticism that Bush was focusing on the wrong terrorist threat. Bush chose as the location of the speech on Tuesday the same city where Democrats had held their nationally televised presidential debate on Monday, a forum at which the question was not whether to stay in Iraq but how to go about leaving...

The Washington Post, 26 July 2007

Strike by U.S. in Pakistan Is an Option, Officials Say

Top Pentagon and State Department officials said yesterday that U.S. Special Forces would enter Pakistan if they had specific intelligence about an impending terrorist strike against the United States, despite warnings from the Pakistani government that it would not accept U.S. troops operating independently inside its borders. The statements were the clearest assertion yet of the Bush administration's willingness to act unilaterally inside tribal areas in northwestern Pakistan where al-Qaeda's top commanders are believed to have taken refuge. But the officials also voiced strong support for President Pervez Musharraf, who they said has repeatedly backed U.S. anti-terrorism efforts in the region at great political cost...

The New York Times, 27 July 2007

U.S. to Announce Nuclear Exception for India

Three years after President Bush urged global rules to stop additional nations from making nuclear fuel, the White House will announce on Friday that it is carving out an exception for India, in a last-ditch effort to seal a civilian nuclear deal between the countries. The scheduled announcement, described Thursday by senior American officials, follows more than a year of negotiations intended to keep an unusual arrangement between the countries from being defeated in New Delhi...

The Hindu, 27 July 2007

N-deal: lawmakers warn Bush administration

U.S. lawmakers have warned the Bush administration of "inconsistencies" in the 123 agreement after reports that Washington has agreed to allow India to reprocess spent nuclear fuel under the civilian nuclear deal with New Delhi. The warning came after the agreement between the U.S. and India. In a letter to President George W Bush, as many as 23 Congressmen led by Democratic lawmaker Edward Markey expressed their concern that perhaps Washington might have "capitulated" to India's demands...

The Washington Post, 27 July 2007

Congress ties Pakistan aid to terrorism progress

Congressional negotiators have agreed on legislation that would tie U.S. aid to Pakistan to significant progress by Islamabad in cracking down on al Qaeda, the Taliban and other militants, congressional sources said on Thursday. The agreement, which must still be approved by the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, reflects growing concern in Washington that al Qaeda has become entrenched in a safe haven in Pakistan's tribal region near Afghanistan. A new National Intelligence Estimate found a "persistent and evolving" threat to the United States from Islamic militant groups, especially Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network. The government of President Pervez Musharraf has been an important ally in the U.S. war on terrorism declared after the September 11 attacks, but administration officials and lawmakers say it could do more...

The Tribune, 27 July 2007

US plays soft 'mediator' in Indo-Pak talks

Mindful of India's aversion to it playing the role of a "mediator" in the Kashmir dispute, Washington has been working behind the scenes to encourage a rapprochement with Pakistan, according to a senior US official. Undersecretary of State R. Nicholas Burns told a Senate hearing on Wednesday, "I think they want private encouragement and we have a certain credibility in India as well as in Pakistan, and we should influence that quietly, but we don't need to be - and I don't think either side wants us to be - a formal mediator in this process". "The issue of Kashmir is sensitive, and so we've been very careful not to assert ourselves as a mediator. I don't think they want that", he added...

The Christian Science Monitor, 27 July 2007

Can US woo Al Qaeda's own haven? (Howard LaFranchi)

Despite the blustery talk from the White House about "all options being on the table" for

dealing with Al Qaeda in Pakistan, the thrust of US plans is more about winning "hearts and minds" and less about unilateral military intervention. On State Department and Pentagon drawing boards are plans to spend more than \$1 billion over five years on a campaign in the remote tribal areas, where the latest National Intelligence Estimate says Al Qaeda has rebuilt its organization. The US effort is in part an economic development program and in part a military plan, similar to that in Iraq's Anbar Province, which is aimed at winning over local tribesmen in the battle with Al Qaeda. To work, the US effort would rely heavily on cooperation with the government of President Pervez Musharraf...

The Washington Post, 28 July 2007

U.S. and India Finalize Controversial Nuclear Trade Pact

After two years of controversial negotiations, the United States and India yesterday announced a deal on peaceful nuclear cooperation that allows trade in nuclear reactors, technology and fuel, permits India to reprocess nuclear fuel and opens the way for the United States to become a "reliable" supplier for India's energy program. "This is perhaps the single most important initiative that India and the United States have agreed to in the 60 years of our relationship," said R. Nicholas Burns, undersecretary of state for political affairs, in announcing the deal. It is also a boost to an administration struggling with diplomatic initiatives in the Middle East, Africa, Russia and other parts of the world. The deal could foster greater strategic cooperation between the two nations and open up markets for U.S. energy and defense industries. The so-called 123 agreement still faces significant hurdles, however, notably in Congress, which must approve the accord...

The New York Times, 28 July 2007

In Its Nuclear Deal With Indi, Washington Appears to Make More Concessions (Somini Sengupta)

After a year of negotiations, India and the United States on Friday announced completion of a civilian nuclear accord, which Indian officials hailed as preserving India's national security interests and as a testament to its emerging strategic importance to the United States. The Indian national security adviser, M. K. Narayanan, called it "a touchstone of a transformed bilateral relationship between India and the United States," In Washington, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called the agreement a "historic milestone" that would enhance relations with India. The agreement, which was forged during five rounds of negotiations, requires India to separate its civilian nuclear power reactors and open them to international inspections. But in the end it was the United States that appeared to make more concessions. India stuck fast to its demand to be able to reprocess spent fuel from the reactors on the civilian side, which had raised concerns in Washington about opportunities to produce weapons-grade plutonium for India's military arsenal...

The Tribune, 28 July 2007

123 breakthrough, Some give and take by both sides (Ashish Kumar Sen)

The nuclear cooperation deal struck in Washington last week addresses all the concerns raised by critics in New Delhi and Washington and is the product of some give and take by both sides, according to senior Indian and American officials. A handful of sticking points were whittled down to just two by the time negotiators sat down for talks in

Washington last week. Burnt by experience, India was insistent to secure a guarantee of fuel supply in the eventuality of a nuclear test and get reprocessing rights for spent nuclear fuel. The big breakthrough came when the Americans accepted an Indian proposal to build a dedicated reprocessing facility for U.S.-origin nuclear fuel. As per the 123 Agreement, India will now build this facility. This will be under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards but will be set up in consultation with the United States, which has laid down benchmarks of safety and non-diversion...

The Tribune, 28 July 2007

India 'retains' right to conduct fresh nuclear tests

The Indo-US civilian nuclear cooperation agreement was formally announced this evening, with India categorically stating that it retained the right to conduct fresh nuclear tests and its strategic programme remained untouched by the 123 agreement. National security advisor M.K. Narayanan admitted that "the deal is not the best, but is a very good one". Asked what he felt were the shortcomings of the agreement, Narayanan said India would have liked to get reprocessing and enrichment technologies. Foreign secretary Shivshankar Menon said there were "no conditionalities" attached to the deal. Atomic Energy Commission chairman Anil Kakodkar said the deal was "satisfactory" and there was no reason to be unhappy...

The Hindu, 28 July 2007

U.S. can seek return of nuclear technology, says Nicholas Burns

The U.S. on Friday said that it reserved the right to seek return of nuclear technology and fuel if India conducted an atomic test. "On the issue of so-called right of return, of course the American President under the Atomic Energy Act has the right to ask for the return of nuclear fuel and nuclear technology if there is a (nuclear) test (by India)," Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns said. "The right of return is preserved....Both sides build in protections and if there is any reason for the U.S. to invoke the right of return, we can certainly do so," he said, briefing reporters on the conclusion of the 123 agreement...

The Indian Express, 28 July 2007

Musharraf rules out US strikes in Pak

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf said on Friday his forces were fully capable of dealing with al-Qaeda militants and dismissed the possibility of US forces taking anti-terrorism action on Pakistani soil. His remarks came after a spate of statements from US officials suggesting the US military kept open the option of a strike against Taliban and Qaeda targets on Pakistani territory. "It is very clear that here on Pakistani territory only Pakistani troops will operate. Nobody should have any doubt on it," he told reporters before departing for a visit to Saudi Arabia. "It is the arrangement with the US and we are capable to defend in our area. We don't need any one to help us."...

The Hindu, 29 July 2007

No nuclear deal with others: Nicholas Burns

Stating that India was a "unique" case, the Bush administration has ruled out a similar civilian nuclear deal with any other country including ally Pakistan, and stressed that the

"very high bar" of the Nuclear Suppliers Group on proliferation would prevent other nations from getting the same "treatment" as New Delhi. "This is complicated enough, I can assure you, that the United States is not going to suggest a similar deal with any other country in the world. We've always felt of India as an exception," Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns said during a briefing on the Indian civilian nuclear initiative here on Friday...

The Hindu, 29 July 2007

U.S. retains strike option

Amidst a war of words between the U.S. and Pakistan over the issue of incursions in tribal areas to flush out militants, America has said it respects the sovereignty of its South Asian ally but would retain the option of targeting Al-Qaeda in its remote areas. Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns said, "Are there any scenarios under which the United States might take its own action? And when we're dealing with Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda, we could foresee - we can foresee such scenarios. But it's always our preference to work with Pakistan,"...

The Hindu, 29 July 2007

Same facts, two fact-sheets news analysis (Siddharth Varadarajan)

On the surface, India and the United States choreographed the "outing" of their nuclear agreement perfectly. The text was withheld and the contents of the deal were painted in the broadest of broad brushes at virtually simultaneous press conferences held in New Delhi and Washington D.C. on Friday. In both tone and spin, National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan and U.S. Under Secretary for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns were remarkably consistent. Even if each was conscious of the nature of his domestic audience, neither gave answers to contentious issues like nuclear testing or fuel supply assurances that would discomfit the other. And yet, the two press conferences - and separate 'fact-sheets' on the deal put out by the Foreign Ministries - also provided an early indication of the different concerns and expectations that still animate both sides as they move towards the next steps in implementing the July 2005 nuclear deal...

The Washington Post, 29 July 2007

Bet on India

In large part, modern U.S. nuclear nonproliferation policy began with India. India received U.S. aid under the "Atoms for Peace" program of the early Cold War era - only to lose its U.S. fuel supply because India, which had refused to sign the 1968 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), exploded a nuclear "device" in 1974. Decades of U.S. noncooperation with India's civilian atomic energy program were intended to teach India, and the world, a lesson: You will not prosper if you go nuclear outside the system of international safeguards. Friday marked another step toward the end of that policy - also with India. The Bush administration and New Delhi announced the principles by which the United States will resume sales of civilian nuclear fuel and technology to India, as promised by President Bush in July 2005....

The Times of India, 30 July 2007

'N-deal better than anticipated'

National security adviser (NSA) M K Narayanan has expressed apprehension that some members of the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) may pose difficulties to India's civil nuclear deal with the US. Stating that the 123 Agreement with the US was much better than anticipated, the NSA said as far as being convinced by the NSG was concerned, the US had promised to lobby for it, besides offers of help pouring in from countries like Russia, France and the UK. "We are very clear that no post-conditions, as they are generally referred to, would be agreed to by us, unless it's something that is minimal because I think what we are seeking is a clean exemption from the NSG," the NSA said...

The Tribune, 30 July 2007

N-deal not to interfere with weaponisation: Pranab

India today said the civilian nuclear deal with the US would not interfere with the country's weaponisation programme and hoped to finalise the agreement to operationalise the deal "as soon as possible." "Our weaponisation programme will not be interfered with in this arrangement," external affairs minister Pranab Mukherjee said in an exclusive interview on board a special aircraft while returning to Kolkata from Bhutan after a three-day official visit. Mukherjee said the draft agreement hammered out at the official level talks at Washington recently was expected to be released simultaneously by India and the US in New Delhi and Washington some time after August 2...

The Tribune, 30 July 2007

N-deal reflects new world reality (K. Subrahmanyam)

The 123 Agreement between India and the US has been finalised and frozen, pending its being further processing. India has to conclude a safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and thereafter obtain the necessary clearance from the 45-member Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). Then the agreement will be presented to the US Congress by the President for its formal approval. This agreement has taken two years and two days to conclude since the signing of the Joint Statement on the enhancement of Indo-US relations by the Prime Minister of India and the President of the US on July 18, 2005. When compared to similar agreements on civilian nuclear cooperation involving reprocessing rights (signed by the US with Japan, Euratom and Switzerland) this is the fastest negotiation...

The Times of India, 30 July 2007

US & India Ride On (David C Mulford)

As with all great moments in history, when two major nations agree to overcome past differences and set a new course for the future, there are those who get lost in the world of "who did what to whom", and those who see, in large scale, the vision for the future. George Bush and Manmohan Singh set the vision for the normalisation of civil nuclear relations between the US and India in July 2005 and reaffirmed the way forward when the US president visited India in March 2006. Today, the vision is reality. The future now belongs to those who transform the vision into a working strategic relationship between the US and India across all fields of human endeavour...

The Indian Express, 30 July 2007

India's nuclear summer (Pranab Dhal Samantha)

Finally, India and the US have a bilateral document on the N-deal other than the joint statement of July 18, 2005. The landmark agreement is an important milestone towards implementing the nuclear deal and it draws hope that it will stand the test of time. Two years might seem like a long time to reach an agreement. But so complex is the deal that few realise it is, perhaps, the shortest ever time frame in which an agreement under Section 123 of the US Atomic Energy Act has been concluded. Ask the Chinese, who started negotiating one with Reagan's administration and saw it operationalised only under Clinton's. On July 21 when the principal negotiators accepted the final version of the agreement, they accomplished a task that continues to bewilder several countries around the globe...

The Hindu, 31 July 2007

Fuel from other countries won't be hit, says Mulford

U.S. Ambassador to India David Mulford said India's (proposed) strategic fuel reserves sourced from other countries would remain unaffected even if it was to conduct a nuclear test. "The testing issue is not mentioned in the agreement. There is [also] no regulation over India's strategic nuclear capability. India has accepted that U.S. laws on this matter [nuclear test] are not going to change but the right of return is a discretionary right by the U.S. President and it has been preserved," Mr. Mulford told newsmen over telephone from his home in Wisconsin on Monday. "I hope this won't occur and India's commitment of a unilateral moratorium on further testing would hold out. But fuel from other countries would not be affected. India has come out with a very secure position," he added...

The Times of India, 31 July 2007

'Nuke deal with Pak not similar to that with India'

The United States has again ruled out a nuclear deal with Pakistan "just because it has signed a civilian nuclear agreement with India" maintaining that "a very different situation" exists between the two Asian countries. "This is not something that should be viewed as somehow an action that we take with India requires a similar action in the case of Pakistan," State Department Deputy Spokesman Tom Casey said on Sunday. "We've also been very clear that because of the issues with proliferation from Pakistan that it's a very different situation between those two countries. And the fact that we have this agreement with India now is a clear recognition that there is a real difference," he said. "India has been a responsible actor. It's been outside the nonproliferation regimes, but it's actually behaved responsibly. It hasn't proliferated weapons technology..."

The Washington Post, 31 July 2007

Pakistani Premier 'Disappointed' by U.S. Pressure

Pakistan will do what it takes to eliminate extremists operating in the country for its own sake, not because of rising pressure from the United States, according to Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz. Aziz said in an interview this week that efforts to force Pakistan to do more are unnecessary and that the government was "disappointed" by U.S. legislation that ties aid for Pakistan to its performance fighting terrorism. The legislation, which officials expect President Bush to sign, is part of a major bill passed last week aimed at

implementing many recommendations of the Sept. 11 commission. The possible new restrictions on aid come as there are growing doubts in Washington that Pakistan's government is willing to take painful steps to eliminate alleged havens for al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters in the country's northwestern tribal areas...