

Indian Express, 1 May 2006

### **Iran to deal with IAEA, not UNSC; Promises maximum cooperation, else radical measures**

Iran promised today it would show maximum cooperation with a probe into its nuclear programme on condition the case was dealt with by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and not the UN Security Council. We have said that we are ready to solve the questions through dialogue. If the IAEA and the Security Council commit for the case to remain at the IAEA, we are ready for maximum cooperation, Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi told reporters. But if they take radical measures, we will take measures as a consequence. If their decisions are reasonable, ours will be too. If their decisions are radical, ours will be too, he added. Iran says it would allow United Nations inspectors to resume snap inspections of its nuclear facilities, but only if the dispute went again before the IAEA. UN ambassadors from the US, Britain and France are expected to introduce a resolution this week to legally oblige Iran to comply with the SC's demands, hitherto rebuffed by Tehran, that it halt all uranium enrichment work.

The Japan Times, 3 May 2006

### **China seeks six-party restart**

NEW YORK (Kyodo) China has proposed an unofficial meeting of the chief delegates to the six-party talks on North Korea's nuclear development program in an effort to break a nearly six-month stalemate, diplomatic sources said. China has already sounded out some of the delegates. The parties to the stalled negotiations are the United States, North Korea, South Korea, China, Japan and Russia. China, which has hosted the multilateral talks since they began in August 2003, wants to convene the informal meeting in Shanghai in late May, the sources said. Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei, who chairs the six-party talks, is scheduled to visit the U.S. on Monday and is expected to press officials there to agree to the meeting. Beijing hopes an informal gathering will help narrow gaps between the two key players -- the U.S. and North Korea -- and jump-start the formal negotiations. China is worried that a further delay could threaten the six-party framework. The negotiations have been deadlocked since November, when North Korea walked out in response to the U.S. decision to impose sanctions on a Macau-based bank that it suspects of laundering money and counterfeiting for North Korea.

The New York Times, 3 May 2006

### **U.S., Britain and France Draft U.N. Resolution on Iran's Nuclear Ambition**

PARIS, May 2: The United States, Britain and France have drafted a binding United Nations Security Council resolution requiring Iran to stop critical nuclear activities, but Russia and China are resisting, officials involved in the negotiations said Tuesday. The emerging standoff signals the beginning of a new confrontation that is expected to take weeks to negotiate, and even then might not result in a clear outcome. The Americans and the Europeans, who want to move swiftly against Iran, will introduce the resolution in New York on Wednesday or Thursday, according to R. Nicholas Burns, the under secretary of state who has led American diplomatic efforts on Iran. "The Security Council has no option but to proceed under Chapter 7," Mr. Burns told reporters in Paris, referring to the article in the United Nations Charter that makes resolutions mandatory under international law and opens the way to sanctions or even military action. He predicted a drawn-out process in the Security Council, saying at one point that it would take 30 to 40 days and at another point, a month or two. Mr. Burns was in Paris for preliminary talks with the political directors of Britain, China, France and Russia — the four other nations that along with the United States are permanent members of the Security Council — as well as Germany. After Tuesday's talks, one of the European participants acknowledged that "there remain differences on how we take the next step forward," although he called the talks "useful." The talks are designed to pave the way for a meeting of the countries' foreign ministers in New York on May 8, part of an American- and European-led campaign to forge a common position against Iran after it failed to comply with an informal Security Council deadline last Friday to suspend uranium enrichment.

The Washington Post, 3 May 2006

### **U.S. Crafts Response on Iran**

PARIS, May 2: The United States is working with European allies to craft a binding U.N. resolution demanding that Iran immediately stop nuclear-related activities, and will push for tough economic and diplomatic sanctions if it refuses, a senior U.S. official said Tuesday. The statement from R. Nicholas Burns, undersecretary of state for political affairs, came as Iranian officials said they had boosted the purity of their uranium enrichment from 3.6 percent to 4.8 percent, found three new uranium deposits in Iran and would retaliate against Israel if attacked by the United States. Burns spoke before a closed dinner meeting in Paris with senior diplomats from the other permanent members of the U.N. Security Council -- Russia, China, France and Britain -- plus Germany. There was no

immediate comment after the session from the representatives of Russia and China. But a Security Council diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that at the meeting the Russians resisted proposals that the new resolution mention Chapter 7 of the U.N. charter, which is usually invoked to authorize sanctions or military action. Russia and China, which both hold veto power in the council, contend that sanctions would be counter-productive. In numerous previous meetings about Iran, U.S. and Western European officials have failed to persuade them to sign on to the idea. A spokesman for Burns said the parties at the meeting agreed to begin Security Council debate and start negotiations on a resolution. A statement from France's Foreign Ministry said that officials from the three European countries presented the broad outlines of a mandatory resolution.

The New York Times, 4 May 2006

### **Britain and France Press U.N. to Oppose Iran Nuclear Efforts**

UNITED NATIONS, May 3: Britain and France circulated a draft Security Council resolution on Wednesday demanding that Iran give up nuclear activities that the West believes are aimed at building bombs. The measure was drafted under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, which makes resolutions mandatory and opens the way to penalties or military action. The draft does not mention sanctions, which would take a new resolution, but states the Council's "intention to consider such further measures as may be necessary to ensure compliance with this resolution." It would order Iran to cease all uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities, including research and development and the construction of a heavy-water reactor. It also calls upon other countries to "exercise vigilance" in preventing the transfer to Iran of any items that could help it develop its nuclear program. Like the nonbinding statement the Council passed in late March, the resolution asks that the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency report on Iranian compliance with the demands. The March statement asked for that report within 30 days; the new text, with the notation "in (X) days," leaves it for Council members to negotiate.

Washington Post, 4 May 2006

### **Security Council Is Given Iran Resolution**

UNITED NATIONS, May 3: Britain, France and Germany presented the U.N. Security Council on Wednesday with a draft resolution that urges states to restrict nuclear trade with Iran and requires Tehran to halt enriching uranium or face "further measures," a veiled reference to possible sanctions. Russia and China immediately signaled they will oppose the U.S.-backed resolution, which demands that Iran halt nuclear research and development activities, and stop construction on a heavy-water nuclear reactor at Arak because it could be used to produce weapons-grade fuel. The resolution calls on governments to prevent the transfer to Iran of all "items, materials, goods and technology" that could be used to enrich or reprocess nuclear fuel or advance the Islamic state's missile programs. The resolution calls on the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency to present a report on Iran's compliance with the demands to the IAEA board and the Security Council. The United States and the Europeans favor a deadline of two weeks to a month.

Daily Times, 4 May 2006

### **US could punish Iran outside UN: Bolton**

WASHINGTON: With no clear sign the United States can win UN support for sanctions against Iran, the Bush administration said on Tuesday it could work instead with like-minded nations to punish Tehran for its nuclear programmes. The United States, which has its own sanctions on the Islamic republic, is lobbying for the United Nations Security Council to impose international sanctions on Iran but faces resistance from veto holders Russia and China. "If for whatever reason the council couldn't fulfill its responsibilities, then I think it would be incumbent on us, and I'm sure we would press ahead to ask other countries or other groups of countries to impose those sanctions," US Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton told a House of Representatives government reform subcommittee. Under sharp questioning from Democrats who said President George W Bush appeared intent on war with Iran, Bolton dismissed as "fiction" news reports that US covert forces were in Iran. He said Bush was focused on diplomatic remedies. "I think we are going to move ahead very quickly with our Chapter 7 resolution on Iran, and have consultations quickly," Bolton told reporters after returning to UN headquarters to meet with French and British diplomats. The draft would be shown to Security Council members "within a day or two" he said.

Daily Times , 4 May 2006

### **US wants direct access to AQ Khan**

LAHORE: The United States wants direct access to Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan and President Bush, in his recent visit to Pakistan, told President Pervez Musharraf that US experts want to question the detained scientist, said BBC

security correspondent. Speaking at a television programme on Wednesday, BBC security correspondent Gordon Corrao was commenting on a Pakistan Foreign Office statement, which said that the Dr AQ Khan case had been closed and that there would be no further investigation into the matter. He said that such a statement by the Pakistani Foreign Office was an attempt to sweep things under the rug. "But this raises a very difficult question for Pakistan - how a chief scientist was able to leak nuclear secrets to countries like Iran and Libya," Corrao said.

The Japan Times, 5 May 2006

### **Iran's Mottaki seeks confidence steps**

TEHRAN (Kyodo): Japan should propose specific confidence-restoration measures to allay fears over Iran's nuclear programs, Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki told visiting Japanese lawmakers Wednesday. Mottaki made the remark when he met with Katsuya Okada, former leader of the Democratic Party of Japan, and two other lawmakers, the Japanese legislators said. They are on a weeklong visit to Iran and the United Arab Emirates. In asking Japan to make the proposals, Mottaki stressed that Iran had suspended nuclear activities for 2 1/2 years before resuming uranium enrichment activities recently, the lawmakers said.

The Indian Express, 5 May 2006

### **Iran resolution warns of 'future measures'**

UNITED NATIONS, MAY 4: Over Chinese and Russian opposition, Western nations circulated a UN Security Council resolution that would demand Iran abandon uranium enrichment or face the threat of unspecified further measures, a possible reference to sanctions. Britain and France, backed by the United States, hope to wrap up negotiations on the legally binding resolution before a meeting of foreign ministers in New York on Monday. However, diplomats acknowledged that resistance from China and Russia may prolong talks well beyond that. The resolution is the latest in weeks of negotiations over how to confront suspicions about Iran's nuclear programme, which Tehran insists is for peaceful purposes. The United States and France accuse the country of secretly trying to build nuclear weapons. "Once again, the key to this lies in Iran's hands," US Ambassador John Bolton said. "If they give up the pursuit of nuclear weapons, a lot of things are possible. If they continue to bluster and to threaten and obfuscate and try to throw sand in our eyes, then we're onto a different circumstance." The resolution mandates that Iran suspend enrichment and warns UNSC would "consider such further measures as may be necessary to ensure compliance"—language that opens the door to sanctions.

The New York Times, 5 May 2006

### **Annan Urges U.S. to Talk With Iran**

UNITED NATIONS, May 4 (Reuters): Kofi Annan, the United Nations secretary general, on Thursday urged the United States to enter direct talks with Iran over its nuclear ambitions, saying that step could lead to an acceptable resolution of the crisis. He said the Iranians might have been holding back in previous negotiations with Britain, France and Germany, and might be more forthcoming if the United States were at the table. He made the suggestion in an interview on "The News Hour with Jim Lehrer" on public television.

Reuters, 6 May 2006

### **Russia wants changes to UN draft on Iran: Ifax**

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russia wants changes to be made to a draft United Nations resolution that orders Iran to curb its nuclear ambitions, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak was quoted as saying on Saturday. Kislyak said the draft resolution, prepared by Britain and France and backed by the United States and Germany, needed "major alterations", Interfax news agency reported. "Consultations are only just starting and this is a diplomatic process, not for the press." The question of how to deal with Iran's nuclear ambitions is at the center of intense diplomacy between the world's major powers.

Daily Times, 6 May 2006

### **Direct US-Iran dialogue is a must: Annan**

UNITED NATIONS: United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan urged the United States on Thursday to enter direct talks with Iran over Tehran's nuclear ambitions, saying that this step could lead to an acceptable resolution of the crisis. Annan said that the Iranians may have been holding back in previous negotiations with European Union powers Britain, France and Germany, and might be more forthcoming if the United States were at the table. He made the suggestion in an interview on The News Hour with Jim Lehrer on US public television stations. "If everybody - all stakeholders and key players - were around the table, I think it would be possible to work out a package that would satisfy the concerns of everybody," Annan said when asked whether it was time for the United

States to get involved in direct talks. "Should they (Iran) be offered a diplomatic package allowing them to pursue nuclear energy for peaceful ends "and they resist that, how do they explain it to the world?" he asked.

International Herald Tribune, 6 May 2006

### **Britain and France press U.N. to oppose Iran nuclear efforts By Warren Hoge**

UNITED NATIONS, New York Britain and France circulated a draft Security Council resolution on Wednesday demanding that Iran give up nuclear activities that the West believes are aimed at building bombs. The measure was drafted under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, which makes resolutions mandatory and opens the way to penalties or military action. The draft does not mention sanctions, which would take a new resolution, but states the Council's "intention to consider such further measures as may be necessary to ensure compliance with this resolution." It would order Iran to cease all uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities, including research and development and the construction of a heavy-water reactor. It also calls upon other countries to "exercise vigilance" in preventing the transfer to Iran of any items that could help it develop its nuclear program. Like the nonbinding statement the Council passed in late March, the resolution asks that the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency report on Iranian compliance with the demands. The March statement asked for that report within 30 days; the new text, with the notation "in (X) days," leaves it for Council members to negotiate.

Daily Times, 7 May 2006

### **Russia, China dig in against West on Iran at UN**

UNITED NATIONS: Russia and China on Friday opposed key provisions in a UN draft resolution that orders Iran to curb its nuclear ambitions, making an agreement unlikely before ministers come to New York next week. Both nations object to the use of Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, used in dozens of Security Council resolutions for peacekeeping missions and other legally binding actions. Although Chapter 7 allows for sanctions and even war, a separate resolution is required to specify either step. Moscow and Beijing, which have veto power, fear too much pressure on Iran would be self-defeating or precipitate an oil crisis. Both worry the United States would use a Chapter 7 resolution to justify military action. "I think we have serious difficulty with Chapter 7 and the threat to international peace and security. These are the basic ones," China's UN ambassador, Wang Guangya, told reporters. He was referring to a paragraph in the resolution's preamble that indicates Iran's nuclear programme was a "threat to international peace and security". Wang said both provisions should be struck, even though Chapter 7 is basic to France and Britain, which drafted the resolution, and the United States, which backs it. Russian UN Ambassador Vitaly Churkin said the main purpose of the resolution should be to back the International Atomic Energy Agency. Churkin said the use of Chapter 7 "might in fact detract from the strength of this resolution because (it) might be detracting from our goal of supporting the IAEA in its activities in working with Iran."

International Herald Tribune, 7 May 2006

### **Iran vows to ignore UN resolution**

The Iranian government said Sunday that it would reject any United Nations resolution that punished it for its nuclear activities, and threatened to stop cooperating with the UN nuclear monitoring agency, the International Atomic Energy Agency. "If the Security Council adopts a resolution which does not officially recognize Iran's right, Tehran will not implement it," the Foreign Ministry spokesman, Hamid Reza Asefi, said in a news briefing in Tehran carried by the Islamic Republic News Agency. He added that the involvement of the UN Security Council in Iran's nuclear case and any "incorrect decision" by the council could turn the path of cooperation into one of confrontation. "Any measure by the Security Council will have adverse impacts on the trend of the Islamic Republic of Iran's cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency," Asefi said. Asefi said that if Iran's nuclear program is taken up by the Security Council, instead of the IAEA, then "Iran should not be expected to continue its cooperation with the IAEA." Also defending Iran's nuclear program, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said Sunday that international treaties become "invalid" as soon as they fail to secure the rights of nations. Referring to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, he said that in the case that such rights are violated, "then that nation would revise its decision and the treaty would become invalid," according to the Iranian press agency.

Dawn, 7 May 2006

### **Major Powers still far apart on Iran draft**

NEW YORK, May 6: The five veto-wielding UN Security Council members on Saturday ended another round of talks that apparently failed to bridge differences over a draft resolution requiring Tehran to halt uranium enrichment. The ambassadors of Britain, France, China, Russia and the United States — the so-called P5 — huddled for two hours at the French UN mission here as Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak said in

Moscow that the Franco-British draft “requires major changes”. “All sides tried to propose language that could bridge the differences,” Chinese ambassador Wang Guangya said after the meeting. He said sticking points remained the draft’s reference to Chapter Seven of the UN charter and its suggestion that the Iranian nuclear programme represents a threat to international peace and security. Chapter Seven can authorise economic sanctions or military action as a last resort in cases of threats to international peace and security. The P5 envoys were due to meet informally with their 10 non-permanent colleagues later in the day. In the absence of language acceptable to Russia and China, it was virtually certain that the draft would not be put to a vote before a meeting of foreign ministers from the P5 plus Germany here Monday.

The New York Times, 8 May 2006

### **Iran Says It Will Spurn Any U.N. Nuclear Edict**

The Iranian government said yesterday that it would reject any United Nations resolution against its nuclear activities, and threatened to stop cooperating with the United Nations nuclear monitoring group, the International Atomic Energy Agency. "If the Security Council adopts a resolution that does not officially recognize Iran's right, Tehran will not implement it," the Foreign Ministry spokesman, Hamid Reza Asefi, said in a news briefing in Tehran carried by the news agency IRNA. He added that the involvement of the United Nations Security Council in Iran's nuclear case, and any "incorrect decision" by the Council, could turn the path of cooperation into one of confrontation. "Any measure by the Security Council will have adverse impacts on the trend of the Islamic Republic of Iran's cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency," Mr. Asefi said. He said that if Iran's nuclear program were taken up by the Security Council instead of the atomic energy agency, then "Iran should not be expected to continue its cooperation with the I.A.E.A." President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said yesterday that international treaties became "invalid" as soon as they failed to secure the rights of nations. He said that if a nation's rights under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty were violated, "Then that nation would revise its decision and the treaty would become invalid," the Iranian news agency reported.

The Washington Post, 8 May 2006

### **Iran Threatens Pullout from Nuclear Treaty**

TEHRAN, May 7: Iran's parliament on Sunday threatened to pass legislation that would force the government to withdraw from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The threat, three years after North Korea's departure from the treaty, came as the United States and its allies pressed for a U.N. Security Council vote to force Iran to halt its uranium enrichment program. In a letter to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan read on state-run radio, Iranian lawmakers said they would have "no option" but to ask the government to withdraw from the treaty if the U.N. chief and the Security Council "fail in their crucial responsibility to resolve differences peacefully." The use of the word "peacefully" was widely seen as referring to a diplomatic solution that would avoid a Security Council vote and possible sanctions. The United States is backing attempts by Britain and France to draw up a U.N. resolution that would declare Iran in violation of international law if it did not suspend uranium enrichment -- a process that can produce fuel for nuclear reactors to generate electricity or, if the fuel is sufficiently processed, make atomic weapons. The Western countries want to invoke Chapter 7 of the U.N. charter, which would allow economic sanctions or military action, if necessary, to force Iran's compliance. Russia and China, the other two permanent Security Council members, oppose such moves. All five members have veto power. The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, John R. Bolton, said Sunday that he believed the resolution would move to a vote this week, with or without support from Russia and China. He dismissed the Iranian parliament's threat, saying it would not deter a U.N. resolution.

The News, 8 May 2006

### **Israel and Iran: perceptions and misconceptions**

Israel is at pains to convince the US about Iran’s impending nuclear weapons and its “expansionist” intentions in the region. By presenting satellite images and intelligence reports to the US it is trying hard to prove that Iran poses an “existential threat” to the “beleaguered state of Israel”. Iran is not an immediate neighbour of Israel and has no border dispute with it unlike other neighbouring Arab states. Yet, Iran has an ideological animus towards the Jewish state. It has not reconciled to Israel’s occupation of Palestine and the Holy places, it has rejected the US-sponsored Arab-Israeli peace process and has allegedly funded or armed Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and Hamas organisations. It was the US that in 2002 first included Iran amongst the “axis of evil” countries. On the other hand, Iran’s criticism of the US stems from its deep nexus with Israel, which Iran terms as a “fake state” that “cannot logically continue to live”. Recently Ayatollah Ali Khamenei stated that “if the US ventured into any aggression on Iran, Iran would retaliate by damaging the US interests worldwide.” In return, Israel upped the rhetoric when Israeli Prime Minister

Ehud Olmert reiterated Israel's determination "to make sure no one has the capability or the power to commit destruction against us."

Reuters, 8 May 2006

### **Foreign ministers try for Iran agreement at UN**

UNITED NATIONS: Six foreign ministers prepared on Monday to chart a common course on a U.N. Security Council resolution that would order Tehran to suspend its nuclear programs. So far, however, the ministers, invited to a dinner in New York by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, have not agreed on key points of the proposed measure, such as invoking Chapter 7 of the U.N. Charter, used in dozens of Council resolutions for peacekeeping missions and other legally-binding actions. Russia and China, which have veto power, fear too much pressure on Iran would be self-defeating or precipitate an oil crisis. Both worry the United States would use a Chapter 7 resolution to justify military action. Chapter 7 allows for sanctions and even war, but a separate resolution is required to specify either step. In addition to the United States, the foreign ministers include those from Germany, Britain, France, Russia and China. France and Britain, who drafted the resolution backed by the United States, said on Saturday, after an informal meeting of all 15 council members, they were prepared to bring the measure to a vote this week, even without Russian or Chinese backing. But other diplomats said the move was unlikely without prior agreement from the big powers.

The Japan Times, 8 May 2006

### **China unlikely to double-deal over Korea**

LOS ANGELES: China is acting in bad faith on the Korean nuclear issue. That's the provocative suggestion now coming from some Western intelligence circles. It's a scary, foul and ultimately upsetting thought. It may also be wrong. The nasty rumor re-surfaced in the aftermath of China President Hu Jintao's official visit to Washington last month. During the 90-minute session (why only 90 minutes?) of direct talks at the White House between Hu and President George W. Bush, the contentious question of North Korea's nuclear-weapons program arose, as expected. But some accounts characterize Hu's response to the need to achieve de-nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula as far less emphatic than Bush's. If such alarming reports are true, this would be curious -- at best. The principle of a nonnuclear Korea -- for both Koreas, whether divided or even (someday) united -- is a core agreement in the statement of principles hoisted last year by members of the six-party talks as evidence of diplomatic progress. Since 2003 these talks have been organized and hosted by Beijing. They have become the principle vehicle of the dogged multinational effort to reduce North Korea-sourced tensions in the region.

Reuters, 9 May 2006

### **Iran letter faults US, makes no nuclear proposals**

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) - Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has written President Bush a rambling 18-page treatise detailing alleged American foreign policy misdeeds and defending scientific research as "one of the basic rights of nations." The document, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters on Tuesday, argues generally that globally shared religious values should govern political life but makes no proposals for resolving the West's concerns over Tehran's nuclear ambitions. Iran insists it is enriching uranium -- and improving its techniques -- solely to produce electricity for domestic consumption, while the West argues the program is a cover for making nuclear weapons. The letter, received by the White House on Monday but not made public, was the first publicly announced personal communication from an Iranian president to his U.S. counterpart since the 1979 Islamic revolution. The U.N. Security Council is weighing a British-French draft resolution, backed by the United States, demanding Iran suspend enrichment, but parts of the text have run into opposition from veto-wielding Russia and China. Ahmadinejad's letter appears to draw analogies between the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq and U.S. threats against Iran, suggesting the United States lied to justify the war and is now suffering the consequences. "On the pretext of the existence of WMDs (weapons of mass destruction), this great tragedy came to engulf both the peoples of the occupied and the occupying country. Later it was revealed that no WMDs existed to begin with," the Iranian leader wrote in the letter, translated from Farsi.

International Herald Tribune, 9 May 2006

### **Merkel's advice on Iran**

MONDAY, MAY 8, 2006: Angela Merkel has steadily emerged as the European leader to watch. Partly that's by default - Tony Blair and Jacques Chirac have been moved into the lame-duck folder, and Italy's Romano Prodi is barely in office. But since she moved into the German chancellor's office last November, the physicist from East Germany has demonstrated a real skill in effective, low-key diplomacy. It worked in Europe, where she brokered a

key compromise on the European Union budget last January; it worked in New York on Thursday when she became the first German chancellor to address an annual meeting of the American Jewish Committee, and it seems to be working in Washington, where Merkel has gained President George W. Bush's ear with her candor and her "excellent overview of the international situation" (his words). During last week's visit to the United States, she talked about Iran, and we hope Bush listened. Merkel's basic message has been that the best chance of persuading Iran to drop its nuclear-weapons program is patient, step-by-step diplomacy, including direct talks between Washington and Tehran. That makes sense to us, especially since Merkel came to Washington a week after she met in Russia with President Vladimir Putin and two weeks after a meeting in China with President Hu Jintao, the two leaders most resistant to any sanctions against Iran, and therefore the two who would really make a difference if they were to join a common front against Iran.

Daily Times, 9 May 2006

### **Nuclear tests cost taxpayers Rs 60b in dollar purchases**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan suffered an exchange loss of over Rs 60 billion in the post nuclear test period from May 1998 upto June 2001 on account of open market operations including currency swaps, says the Auditor General of Pakistan. This needs to be explained, the AG will say before the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament in testimony today (Tuesday). The AGP claims that the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has made a startling disclosure after 8 years before the PAC that the nuclear tests of May 28, 1998, cost the taxpayers of Pakistan about Rs 22 billion on account of purchase of dollars from the open market at much higher than the then market rates. The SBP admits that following Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's decision to freeze foreign currency accounts and subsequent economic sanctions of G-7 countries, the Finance Ministry under Sartaj Aziz approved the buying of dollars at much higher rates than those prevailing in the market to maintain reserves and pay foreign debt to avoid default on debt payments. Sources told Daily Times that top SBP bosses have for the first time ever confessed in writing to the PAC that about \$14 billion were purchased at much higher than market rates during 1998-2004 which resulted in a collective loss of about Rs20 billion. Reportedly, upto Rs 2 per dollar were paid over and above the market rate of a dollar.

Reuters, 9 May 2006

### **Major Powers fail to agree on Iran strategy**

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters): Foreign ministers of major powers failed to come up with a joint strategy for dealing with Iran after Tehran sought to influence the negotiations with a stunning last-minute diplomatic maneuver, officials said. French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy said a U.S.-hosted, three-hour meeting on Monday of ministers from Russia, Britain, China and Germany did not reach agreement. "We are still considering our work," he told reporters after the late night session had ended. A senior U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the meeting agreed that Iran must pay a price for not complying with U.N. resolutions but did not come to terms on what form that would take. "I think the prospects for an agreement this week are not substantially good," he said. "Clearly we had a ways to go." Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told the Tass news agency: "All of us agreed that Iran must not have nuclear weapons." He stressed Moscow's desire to draw Iran into "fruitful" negotiations on the issue. Major power political directors will meet on Iran on Tuesday in New York and will likely meet again next week but sponsors -- aiming for unity -- have backed off a timeline for security council action, the U.S. official said. Russia and China have been resisting a U.N. Security Council resolution sponsored by Britain and France and backed by the United States that would legally require Iran to halt uranium enrichment. Britain and France had wanted to get the resolution passed before the Monday night ministers' meeting.

The New York Times, 10 May 2006

### **U.S. and Europe Plan New Offer to Entice Iran Away From Arms**

UNITED NATIONS, May 9: The United States and its European negotiating partners are preparing to repackage economic incentives aimed at inducing Iran to cooperate in eliminating its suspected nuclear weapons program, and to add some "new ideas" for Iran to consider, American and European officials said Tuesday. A senior State Department official said the "new ideas" would not substantially change the package of economic incentives offered to Iran last August, when the Europeans told the Iranians they could achieve a full political and economic relationship with the West if Iran ended its nuclear activities, which are suspected to be part of a weapons program. He said that, contrary to some reports circulating Tuesday, the new package would not include security guarantees for Iran and would not allow it to continue enriching uranium, an activity that Iran defends as part of a nuclear energy program but that the United States views as a cover for a weapons program. Disclosure of the new initiative on incentives came from European diplomats on Tuesday, following a full evening of discussions with American

officials on Monday. Envoys from Russia and China also attended that session.

Reuters, 10 May 2006

### **Iran, Indonesia to use nuclear power for good purposes**

JAKARTA (Reuters): Indonesia and Iran are committed to using nuclear power for good purposes, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said on Wednesday. "The two countries are committed to using nuclear power for goodness," he told a news conference during a visit to Indonesia overshadowed by the Islamic republic's controversial nuclear policies.

The Washington Post, 11 May 2006

### **U.S. Under Pressure to Talk to Tehran**

The Bush administration is facing pressure both in the United States and overseas to drop its long-standing refusal to talk directly with Iran about its nuclear program, particularly in the wake of the unusual 18-page letter sent this week to President Bush by Iran's president. Foreign policy moderates from both parties have spoken out in recent days, including Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-Neb.), a potential GOP presidential candidate; former secretary of state Madeleine K. Albright; former national security adviser Samuel R. "Sandy" Berger; and former Middle East negotiator Dennis Ross. All have published sharply worded opinion articles questioning the administration's stance, and Albright was joined in her commentary by five former European foreign ministers who said they were told by Iranian officials in recent months that there is "widespread interest" in holding a dialogue with Washington.

Daily Times, 12 May 2006

### **Prominent Iran opposition figure speaks out**

TEHRAN: A leading Iranian opposition politician said Tehran should scrap uranium enrichment to avoid dragging itself deeper into a nuclear crisis and should not rely on China or Russia to veto any UN action on the Islamic state. Ebrahim Yazdi, head of the banned Freedom Movement, also said President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was in no position to sermonise George W Bush in his letter to the US president. Yazdi said in an interview that China and Russia, which both have energy interests in Iran, would not jeopardise their economic or other ties with the United States if Iran refused to back down from enriching uranium. 'If Iran insists on its stand, we are afraid that the Russians and the Chinese would give up the resistance to the United States and then there would be a consensus on how to treat Iran,' he said. Iran is entitled to enrich uranium, but should look to national interests before a point of principle, Yazdi said. 'Iran has the right to pursue that (enrichment), but the national interests dictate that Iran should stop it,' he said. Iran has been hauled before the UN Security Council for failing to convince the world that its nuclear ambitions are peaceful. But a US-backed resolution obliging Iran to stop enriching uranium has met with resistance from Russia and China. Yazdi, who was a close aide to the Islamic revolution's founding father Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and was foreign minister in the first post-revolutionary government, is an important opposition voice in Iran but has no influence at all on state policy and limited popular support in the country.

Dawn, 12 May 2006

### **China won't block move against Iran: US**

WASHINGTON, May 11: China 'will not be an obstacle' to efforts to stop Iran's nuclear ambitions if the United States can convince Russia to get tough on Tehran, Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick said on Wednesday. The State Department's number two diplomat, who is in charge of a new US strategic dialogue with China, told a congressional hearing that China, like the United States, wanted to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear power but feared losing access to Iran's oil. China has also invested heavily in Iran's oil industry. 'They've been given a little bit of cushion because of Russia,' Mr Zoellick told the US House of Representatives Committee on International Relations. 'If we can bring Russia along with some of this, my own sense is that China will not be an obstacle in the process,' he said, referring to China's tendency to avoid being isolated on big global issues. The challenge for the United States was to convince Beijing that Chinese concerns about acquiring fuel for its rapidly growing economy were not served by an Iran which destabilises its region with nuclear proliferation, support for terrorism and threats to Israel, Mr Zoellick said.

International Herald Tribune, 12 May 2006

### **Iran leader says he'll talk to U.S.**

JAKARTA: The president of Iran said Thursday that he was ready to hold talks with the United States and its allies over his country's nuclear ambitions, but he warned that efforts to force Tehran to the negotiating table by threatening economic sanctions or military action would backfire. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad also unleashed

a scathing attack on Israel and told more than 1,000 cheering Muslim students in the Indonesian capital that the West was being hypocritical in pressing Iran to stop its uranium enrichment program. The major powers "have a lot of nuclear weapons in their warehouse," Ahmadinejad said during his visit to the world's largest Muslim majority nation amid a standoff over Tehran's nuclear program and suspicions it is attempting to manufacture atomic weapons. "We want to use technology for peace and the welfare of the Muslim people around the world," he told students at Islamic University. "But they want to use it to invade other countries. This is the difference between us and them."

The Korea Times, 12 May 2006

### **Annan Stresses Truthfulness About History (Park Song-wu)**

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan underlined on Thursday the importance of teaching correct history to the younger generations, indicating he wants to see "harmonious" relations between Japan and its neighbors. "We have to be truthful about history," Annan said during an interview with Asian journalists at the U.N. headquarters in New York. As for the security situation in Northeast Asia, Annan said he is supportive of the six-party talks aiming to dissolve North Korea's nuclear weapons program in a peaceful way. He also expressed hope the North Korean leader Kim Jong-il would visit the United Nations in the near future. "I have invited all heads of state, including the North Korean leader, (for the occasions of each general assembly)," Annan said. "He hasn't been here but I hope that someday he may find it possible to come to the U.N. headquarters."

The New York Times, 13 May 2006

### **U.N. Finds New Uranium Traces in Iran**

Atomic inspectors have found traces of highly enriched uranium on equipment linked to an Iranian military base, raising new questions about whether Iran harbors a clandestine program to make nuclear bombs, diplomats said yesterday. It is the second such discovery in three years of United Nations inspections in Iran. As the Security Council debates how to handle the atomic impasse with Tehran, the finding is likely to deepen skepticism about Iran's claims that its program is entirely peaceful. Yesterday, diplomats familiar with the discovery said its ultimate significance was unclear. "There are still lots of questions," a senior European diplomat said. "So it's not a smoking gun." They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly. The main puzzle, the senior diplomat added, is whether the traces of highly enriched uranium could be explained by the inadvertent contamination of machinery that Iran obtained abroad. Even so, the diplomat said, that explanation would still link the discovery to Iran's military, which dissidents have long accused of concealing a secret effort to make an atom bomb. Worse, he said, would be an outcome suggesting that Iran had enriched the uranium to a level far beyond most peaceful uses. He said further analysis of the samples might provide an unambiguous answer.

Daily Times, 13 May 2006

### **No enrichment at all: EU draft**

BRUSSELS: The European Union will insist on Monday that Iran suspend all uranium enrichment despite Tehran's demand that some be allowed for research goals, according to a draft declaration obtained by Reuters on Friday. "The EU Council calls on the Iranian authorities to cooperate fully with the IAEA, suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development," said the declaration drafted for EU foreign ministers meeting in Brussels on Monday. Tehran said on Thursday that a proposal being drawn up by European states on its nuclear programme must allow Iran to enrich uranium for atomic research and development purposes. Diplomats said the "EU3" states of Britain, France and Germany could meet on the margins of the Brussels talks to discuss a new package of incentives and sanctions designed to lure Iran back to the negotiating table. The foreign ministers' declaration gave no details of that package but stated, "The EU would be prepared to support Iran's development of a safe, sustainable and proliferation-proof civilian nuclear programme if international concerns were fully addressed and confidence in Iran's intentions established." The United States said on Thursday that it would not hold direct contacts with Iran and insisted that sanctions must be part of a new carrots-and-sticks offer being drawn up by major powers to curb Iran's nuclear activities.

Daily Times, 13 May 2006

### **US must address concerns: IAEA (Reuters)**

THE HAGUE: Iran has legitimate security concerns that the United States must address if the crisis over Tehran's nuclear programme is to be resolved, said Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Friday. "This is primarily a regional security issue," he said. "When you talk about the Iranian issue, the only solution is a package that should, among other things, include security issues." Only full engagement by the

US could address Iran's security concerns, he added.

Daily Times, 13 May 2006

### **New traces in Iran detected (Reuters)**

BERLIN: UN inspectors have discovered new traces of highly-enriched uranium on nuclear equipment in Iran, deepening suspicions that Tehran may still be concealing the full extent of its atomic enrichment programme, diplomats said on Friday. In its April report to the UNSC, the IAEA said that it had taken samples from equipment acquired by a former research centre at Lavizan-Shiyan. "Preliminary analysis by the IAEA showed traces of highly-enriched uranium in the samples," said a diplomat accredited to the IAEA.

The New York Times, 14 May 2006

### **Iran Rejects EU Bid to Halt Enrichment**

TEHRAN, Iran (AP): Iran's president said Sunday it was pointless for Europe to devise an incentive package if it required Tehran to stop enriching uranium effectively thwarting the latest international diplomatic effort before it even began. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad spoke on state television after returning from Indonesia, where he was warmly welcomed and won developing nations' support for the peaceful production of nuclear energy. The hard-line leader said proposals for a political and economic package being shaped by the European Union were "invalid" if "they want to offer us things they call incentives in return for renouncing our rights." Also Sunday, a Foreign Ministry spokesman declared "insignificant" reports that inspectors from the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency found traces of highly enriched uranium on equipment from an Iranian research center. Refusing to budge in his relentless and strident campaign to assert Iranian regional power and leadership, Ahmadinejad said opponents of Tehran's nuclear program were "living in the era of colonialism" and did not respect Iran's national sovereignty.

Daily Times, 14 May 2006

### **Iran offered Benazir \$4b for nuclear tech: Beg**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's former army chief says Iranian officials came to him for advice on heading off an attack on their nuclear facilities, and he in effect advised them to take a hostage – Israel. Retired Gen Mirza Aslam Beg said he suggested their government "make it clear that if anything happens to Iran, if anyone attacks it – it doesn't matter who it is or how it is attacked – that Iran's answer will be to hit Israel; the only target will be Israel." Although analysts are divided on how soon Iran might have nuclear weapons, Beg said he is sure Iran has had enough time to develop them. But he insists the Pakistani government didn't help, even though he says former prime minister Benazir Bhutto once told him the Iranians offered more than \$4 billion for the technology.

Daily Times, 15 May 2006

### **Iran reiterates will to enrich uranium**

TEHRAN: Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Sunday slammed as "invalid" any European Union proposals demanding that Tehran halt uranium enrichment. In a speech broadcast on state television, the Iranian president said: "They (must) know that any proposal that obliges us to stop peaceful (nuclear) activities would not have value and would not be valid." Slamming the EU for offering "incentives" in return for a renunciation of Iranian rights, he accused the Europeans of living in a "colonialist world". "If they want to decide things that concern us in a place where we are not present, then that body does not have any legal validity or credibility in decision-making." Meanwhile, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi on the same day downplayed last weeks' reports that International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors had found traces of highly-enriched uranium on equipment sampled from an Iranian research centre. "Previously, things like this were said but later inspectors arrived at the right conclusions," Asefi told a weekly news conference. Meanwhile, The White House on Sunday dismissed calls for direct talks with Iran to resolve the stand-off over its nuclear program, saying the United Nations was the best forum for those discussions.

Washington Post, 16 May 2006

### **Iran in focus as China, Russia ministers meet (Reuters)**

BEIJING: The foreign ministers of Russia and China met in Beijing on Tuesday where how to resolve the standoff over Iran's nuclear program is likely to be high on the agenda. Both hold veto power on the U.N. Security Council and have resisted efforts by Western powers to pass a resolution that would oblige Iran, the world's fourth-largest oil exporter, to halt uranium enrichment work or face possible sanctions. "We are very happy today to welcome our old friend," Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing told his counterpart Sergei Lavrov at the opening of their meeting. Lavrov was expected to hold a news conference at 0745 GMT. He said the two would also make

preparations for a meeting between their heads of state at a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in mid-June. At a meeting on Monday of foreign ministers from the SCO, which groups the former Soviet Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan with China and Russia, the group urged negotiations to resolve the Iran issue. Iran has said it would reject any demands to stop its nuclear research, which the West fears is aimed at producing weapons. Tehran says the program is purely to make electricity.

The New York Times, 16 May 2006

### **Europe to Offer Iran Conditional Incentives**

BRUSSELS, May 15: The European Union said Monday that it would offer a new incentives package to Iran, including technology to build nuclear power plants for civilian energy production. But Javier Solana, the European Union's foreign policy chief, said Iran would first have to gain international confidence by ceasing any nuclear enrichment, which Iran defends as part of its nuclear energy program but which the United States and the European Union view as camouflage for a nuclear weapons program. Speaking after a meeting of European foreign ministers in Brussels, Mr. Solana said the European Union was willing to offer Iran "the most sophisticated technology" provided that it would be used for generating energy and not building nuclear weapons. "We want to prove to the Iranians clearly and loudly that we have nothing against Iran using nuclear power for peaceful means," Mr. Solana said. "But we do not have proof that this is the case, and Iranian demands to be able to conduct enrichment for research purposes are something we can't accept." He did not explain how technology could be offered that would allow Iran to produce nuclear power without also enabling it to create weapons-grade nuclear materials. Nor did he explain how such technology could be provided without approval from the United States, which insists that Iran halt all nuclear activities. Iran reacted coolly to the proposals, saying it would reject any European initiative that demanded that Iran halt uranium enrichment. Meeting with the ambassadors of Britain, France and Germany in Tehran, Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said in a statement that "any demand for a suspension or pause" of uranium enrichment "is an illogical and unacceptable demand and undoubtedly will be rejected."

Daily Times, 17 May 2006

### **North Korea, Iran seen unlikely to follow in Libya's footsteps**

A key difference between Libya and North Korea and Iran is that Libya's nuclear programme is not nearly as developed as the other two. THE United States wants Iran and North Korea to follow the Libyan path to redemption by ending their controversial nuclear programmes, but Washington has an entirely different kind of battle with the two remaining "Axis of Evil" renegades. Unlike US-led economic sanctions which seemed to have worked with Libya, there is little talk of any action that could slow Iran's oil exports considering that a supply cut off would deal a big blow for the world, already reeling from high oil prices. Reclusive and nuclear-armed North Korea also appears unshaken by the years of sanctions imposed by the United States and other Western powers. In Libya's case, oil appears to be a key factor behind the US decision Monday to restore full diplomatic ties with the North African state in return for abandoning its weapons of mass destruction programmes. "They want American oil companies back into Libya," said Selig Harrison, a nuclear expert at the Washington-based Center for International Policy. After a 19-year absence, US oil companies last year agreed to terms letting them resume oil and gas production in Libya, an OPEC member. Another key difference between Libya and North Korea and Iran is that Libya's nuclear programme is not nearly as developed as the other two.

Daily Times, 17 May 2006

### **Annan, Roh want resumption of Korean nuclear talks**

SEOUL: UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun Tuesday called for a resumption of six-party talks to end the standoff over North Korea's nuclear programme, officials said. The pair also discussed the standoff with Iran over its nuclear programme, tensions in northeast Asia, UN reforms and aid for developing nations during the 40-minute meeting, they said. "Secretary General Annan said he supports the six-way talks aimed at resolving North Korea's nuclear issue and expects the talks to resume as early as possible," Roh's office said in a statement. Annan, in Seoul since Sunday on the first leg of a five-nation Asian tour, Monday demanded urgent action to end the nuclear standoffs with Pyongyang and Tehran after talks with South Korea's Foreign Minister Ban Ki-Moon. "President Roh expressed hope that the six-way talks should proceed well," presidential spokesman Jung Tae-Ho said.

The New York Times, 17 May 2006

### **Help With Reactor Included in European Offer to Iran**

Washington, May 16: The leading nations of Europe, working with the United States, are preparing to offer Iran

new assistance in building a light-water nuclear reactor for civilian use in return for Iran's ending activities suspected of being a cover for a weapons program, European and American diplomats said Tuesday. The offer to help with a light-water reactor, which could not easily be used to make weapons, is part of a new package of incentives the Europeans are assembling in one more attempt to salvage their negotiations with Iran. The package is also to contain threats of economic punishments if Iran does not cooperate. In their bid to get Iran to suspend its uranium enrichment activities and reassure the West that it is not making nuclear weapons, the Europeans have previously held out the possibility of Iran's being allowed to have a light-water reactor. But the new package would more explicitly promise Western help to build it, officials said. "The Europeans are dusting off and refining what has already been on the table and seeing what is possible in terms of new ideas," said a senior State Department official, one of several diplomats who discussed the European package, on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to describe the plan, which has not been completed. A light-water reactor requires enriched uranium for fuel, but under the deal to be proposed by the West, Iran would be guaranteed a supply of fuel from outside the country in return for giving up the fuel after it is used. That way, Western experts say, the reactor byproducts could not be used in a weapons program.

The Korea Times, 18 May 2006

### **NK Urged to Abandon Nukes for ?Brighter? Future**

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ban Ki-moon on Wednesday urged Pyongyang to return to the six-party talks, saying North Korea will have a much "brighter and better" future should it give up its nuclear weapons programs. His remarks came as the United States plans to restore diplomatic relations with Libya and remove it from a list of terrorism sponsors, rewarding the Tripoli regime for scrapping its programs for weapons of mass destruction (WMD). "Libya is set to receive various kinds of incentives from the United States as it voluntarily abandoned the WMD programs," Ban said at a weekly news briefing in Seoul. "Seoul urges Pyongyang to realize that there will be a brighter and better future if it gives up its nuclear weapons programs and returns to the six-party talks for an early resolution of the nuclear issue." As for President Roh Moo-hyun's statement in Mongolia on May 9 over Seoul's readiness to make much more concessions to Pyongyang, Ban said it was just a reconfirmation of Seoul's North Korea policies on reconciliation and cooperation. "President Roh did not bear a specific event in mind," Ban said. "The remarks were based on the principle that the government will do necessary things to build trust within boundaries that the public can accept." He said Seoul "fully" explained Roh's statement to Washington and the U.S. government "did not express a different view" on it. "I think Washington's principle to peacefully resolve the nuclear issue through the six-party talks has not changed," Ban said. "Hill's visit to Seoul next week demonstrates that Washington's commitment is intact." Christopher Hill, the lead U.S. delegate to the denuclearization talks, will visit Seoul on May 25.

International Herald Tribune, 18 May 2006

### **U.S. said to weigh a new approach on North Korea**

WASHINGTON, May 17: President Bush's top advisers have recommended a broad new approach to dealing with North Korea that would include beginning negotiations on a peace treaty, even while efforts to dismantle the country's nuclear program are still under way, senior administration officials and Asian diplomats say. Aides say Mr. Bush is very likely to approve the new approach, which has been hotly debated among different factions within the administration. But he will not do so unless North Korea returns to multinational negotiations over its nuclear program. The talks have been stalled since September. North Koreans have long demanded a peace treaty, which would replace the 1953 armistice ending the Korean War. For several years after he first took office, Mr. Bush vowed not to end North Korea's economic and diplomatic isolation until it entirely dismantled its nuclear program. That stance later softened, and the administration said some benefits to North Korea could begin to flow as significant dismantlement took place. Now, if the president allows talks about a peace treaty to take place on a parallel track with six-nation talks on disarmament, it will signal another major change of tactics. The decision to consider a change may have been influenced in part by growing concerns about Iran's nuclear program.

Daily Times, 18 May 2006

### **AJC backs India, US nuclear deal Khalid Hasan**

WASHINGTON: The American Jewish Committee has thrown its weight behind the India-United States nuclear cooperation agreement which is facing hurdles that the Bush administration did not anticipate when it attempted to ram it through the legislature. In a letter to Senator Richard G Lugar, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations chairman, the Jewish lobbying group expressed strong support for the agreement, urging approval of Bill 2429, the enabling legislation introduced by the administration.

Washington Post, 18 May 2006

### **Iran Derides Incentive Bid To Resolve Nuclear Dispute**

TEHRAN, May 17: President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Wednesday swept aside the notion of Iran accepting incentives in exchange for halting uranium enrichment, dismissing an offer that European powers had yet to actually extend. "Do you think you are dealing with a 4-year-old child to whom you can give some walnuts and chocolates and get gold in return?" Ahmadinejad told a cheering crowd in Arak, where Iran is building a heavy-water nuclear facility. A reactor that uses light water, a technology less likely to produce fuel suitable for nuclear weapons, is expected to be the centerpiece of a package three European governments are preparing in hopes of revitalizing negotiations over Iran's nuclear program. "They say they want to offer us incentives," Ahmadinejad said. "We tell them: Keep the incentives as a gift for yourself. We have no hope of anything good from you." Separately, a Foreign Ministry spokesman playfully suggested that Iran was in a better position to make offers than the Europeans. "We are prepared to offer economic incentives to Europe in return for recognizing our right" to peaceful nuclear power, said spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi, according to state radio. "Iran's 70 million population market is a good incentive for Europe."

The New York Times, 19 May 2006

### **Iran's Secrecy Widens Gap in Nuclear Intelligence**

International inspectors could once roam the 20 or so main buildings there, at the Natanz uranium enrichment complex. Operating more like detectives than scientists, they combined painstaking sleuthing with physics and engineering in an effort to ascertain the site's true mission, war or peace. But in February, after three years of unusual openness, Iran drastically reduced access to Natanz and dozens of other atomic sites, programs and personnel. No longer can the inspectors, from the International Atomic Energy Agency, swab machines, scoop up bits of soil, study invoices, monitor videotapes, peek behind doors and gather seemingly innocuous clues. Now they can track only a narrow range of operations involving radioactive material, and then only with cumbersome restrictions. As a result, the world is losing much of its ability to answer pressing questions about Iran's nuclear ambitions: how fast Tehran could make an atom bomb, and whether it harbors a program to do so. Diplomats and nuclear experts say the diminished view increases the risks of miscalculation, and possibly armed confrontation, just as the atomic impasse with the West is reaching a volatile new stage.

Reuters, 19 May 2006

### **Iran wants accord but will enrich regardless**

TEHRAN: Iran wants international help to broaden its uranium enrichment program to an industrial scale but if assistance is not forthcoming it will forge ahead with the work, which it insists is peaceful. A senior Iranian nuclear official, Ali Hosseinitash, told Reuters on Thursday Iran's current focus was perfecting its small-scale research and development enrichment program despite U.N. Security Council calls for it to be halted. "Ending the dispute is valuable for everybody. But nuclear activities and capabilities are also valuable to us," said Hosseinitash, head of strategic affairs at the Supreme National Security Council, which is in charge of Iran's nuclear diplomacy. "We will do our utmost (to reach an understanding) but if our attempts fail we will not stop our work," he said, referring to the large-scale enrichment that could either power a nuclear plant or produce fissile material for an atomic weapon. Iran is slowly building its first nuclear reactor in the southern port city of Bushehr with Russian help. It often says it wants foreign cooperation in its nuclear plans but the row over the program's real nature has deterred all others.

Reuters, 19 May 2006

### **N.Korea may be preparing missile launch: reports**

TOKYO (Reuters): North Korea may be preparing to launch a long-range ballistic missile that could reach parts of the United States, Japanese media reports said on Friday, but Japan's government said it did not believe a launch was imminent. Quoting unidentified South Korean government officials, public broadcaster NHK said satellite pictures showed there have been signs since early this month around a site in northeastern North Korea that pointed to a possible firing in the near future. Analysts have said, though, that development of a multiple-stage version of a ballistic missile that can take payloads deep into the continental United States is years away. Japan's top government spokesman, Shinzo Abe, said he could not comment on specific security issues, but added, "At the moment, we do not believe that a launch is imminent." The latest reports come amid a deadlock in six-party talks aimed at dismantling North Korea's nuclear programs, and ahead of a visit to China next week by the chief U.S. negotiator to the talks that involve the two Koreas, the United States, Japan, Russia and host China.

Daily Times, 20 May 2006

### **Iran to cooperate with UN inspectors**

VIENNA: Iran's top nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani promised that Tehran would cooperate with UN inspectors, in a meeting late on Thursday in Vienna with International Atomic Energy Agency Chief Mohamed ElBaradei. "The discussion was that of course Iran is continuing its cooperation with the IAEA and that inspectors will continue their work in accordance with the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty comprehensive safeguards," Iran's ambassador to the IAEA, Ali Asghar Soltanieh, said on Friday. IAEA Spokesman Marc Vidricaire said Larijanai and ElBaradei had "talks about the usual things, issues that are still unanswered and of course the requirements of the IAEA board of governors to provide some confidence-building matters." "The purpose of the meeting was really to discuss the remaining unanswered questions regarding Iran's past nuclear programme and the request by the board for confidence-building measures," Vidricaire said. He did not provide details. Larijani's visit came as the European Union is readying a package of trade, technology and security benefits in return for Iran guaranteeing that its nuclear programme is peaceful. The EU and the United States want the United Nations Security Council to impose sanctions on Iran if the Islamic republic rejects this package, which the five permanent Security Council nations plus Germany are to finalise at a meeting next Wednesday in London.

Daily Times, 20 May 2006

### **Israel, US disagree on N-treaty draft**

JERUSALEM: Israel and the United States are at odds over a draft US international treaty that would ban the production of plutonium or enriched uranium for use in nuclear weapons, reported an Israeli newspaper on Friday. Israel made a last-minute effort to dissuade the United States from submitting for discussion the draft, which was on Thursday presented to the UN disarmament commission in Geneva, said the liberal Haaretz daily. The Jewish state - widely believed to be the only nuclear power in the Middle East - is worried about any move that could undercut its policy of nuclear ambiguity and generate future pressures on its activities.

The New York Times, 20 May 2006

### **Western Powers Disagree on Elements of Iran Proposal**

WASHINGTON, May 19: The United States and Europe are divided over the latest phase of their negotiating strategy on Iran, with the Bush administration resisting a new European offer that includes a proposal for a Middle East security "framework" for Iran if it gives up its nuclear activities, diplomats from each side said Friday. The diplomats said the administration was also resisting the idea of protecting European companies from punishment by the United States for violating its sanctions if they did business with Iran, as called for in the European proposal. The disagreements on these issues are clouding the possibility of a deal with Iran on its nuclear program, even as tensions have increased over Tehran's refusal to change its behavior, the diplomats said. In addition, they said, Europe, the United States and Russia have not agreed on the need to impose sanctions on Iran if it continues to defy the West. The diplomats and other officials requested anonymity because, following diplomatic protocol, they are not authorized to speak publicly about ongoing negotiations. The European proposals for how to deal with Iran were transmitted to the United States only on Thursday, American and European officials said. A senior administration official said the proposals were being studied by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and others.

Daily Times, 21 May 2006

### **UNSC may drop case if Iran cooperates**

VIENNA: World powers are considering dropping UN Security Council involvement in Iran's nuclear file if Tehran agrees to suspend uranium enrichment, but could push for selective sanctions backed by the threat of force if it doesn't, diplomats said on Saturday. Citing from a draft proposal now being considered by the five Security Council nations plus Germany, one of the diplomats said it could still undergo revision before the six nations sit down on Wednesday to approve it. The proposal says the international community will "agree to suspend discussion of Iran's file at the Security Council" if Tehran resumes discussion on its nuclear programme and suspends enrichment during such talks and lifts a ban on intrusive inspections by experts of the International Atomic Energy Agency. It also offers help in "the building of new light water reactors in Iran", offers an assured supply of nuclear fuel for up to five years and calls for Tehran to accept a plan that would remove its own enrichment programme to Russia to prevent misuse for a possible nuclear weapons programme. If Iran does not cooperate, however, the draft calls for bans on travel visas, freezing assets and banning financial transactions of key government figures and those involved in Iran's nuclear programme; an arms embargo, and other measures including an embargo on shipping refined oil products to Iran.

Dawn, 21 May 2006

### **Pakistan asks west to engage with Iran: Mediatory role offered**

SHARM-AL-SHAIKH, May 20: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said on Saturday the world needed to engage with Iran to end its controversial nuclear standoff with the West and Pakistan was willing to play a role in a peaceful settlement of the dispute. The prime minister warned that use of force against Iran will 'create complications and challenges' besides having a global impact on the supply of oil and gas. He was talking to international media during the World Economic Forum on Middle East at the Red Sea resort of Sharm-al-Shaikh, where he represented Pakistan. "We have to build bridges and communicate . . . In a quiet way, we are using our best offices as we want to see a reduction in tension," he said. However, the prime minister made it clear that Pakistan was under no illusions that it was mediating in any way. "There should be no proliferation in any form directly or indirectly and everything should be open for inspection by the IAEA," Mr Aziz said when asked about Pakistan's position on the Iranian nuclear issue.

Daily Times , 22 May 2006

### **Iran says security pledges can't solve atomic dispute**

TEHRAN: Iran said on Sunday it had little faith in security guarantees from the West as a means to resolve a dispute over its atomic programme, further dousing hopes that EU incentives could stop Tehran making nuclear fuel. Britain, Germany and France, the so-called EU3, are trying to put together a generous package that could offer a nuclear reactor and security guarantees to Tehran. But their gambit seems doomed with both Iran and Washington unimpressed by the terms. Washington is loathe to exempt EU firms from US sanctions if they get involved with Iran's nuclear work and even more wary about any form of security pledge to a country that has threatened to "wipe Israel off the map". Tehran says there are no incentives that could persuade it to halt its uranium enrichment work. That would be the only step that could convince the West that Iran is not building a bomb. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi said it was of little consequence that the United States would not offer security guarantees, as such a feature in the final EU package could not be trusted. "Firstly, they have not kept their promises and made good on obligations to different countries including Iran in the past so no one should think that such security guarantees are important," he told a news conference. "America itself needs security guarantees because it has many problems and is not in a position to give security guarantees to other countries," he added. Iran often boasts of its invincibility, saying its nuclear facilities are safe from attack while US troops are bogged down in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Hindu, 22 May 2006

### **Nuclear power target doubled**

TARAPUR: Anticipating international nuclear cooperation following the Indo-U.S. deal, India has raised its nuclear power target of 20,000 MWe by 2020 to 40,000 MWe by 2030. "With the possibility of opening up of the civilian nuclear cooperation, we are trying to get additional capacity and accelerate our own domestic programme," Anil Kakodkar, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), told reporters after the country's second 540 MWe pressurised heavy water reactor here attained criticality on Sunday. This raised the installed nuclear power capacity to 4120 MWe. The new reactor designated Tarapur Atomic Power Project-3 and its twin, TAPP-4 would not be classified as civilian facility under the proposed separation plan. Dr. Kakodkar said India was also negotiating with France and Russia and was going ahead with all pre-project work at sites in Jaitapur and Koodankulam for getting four 1000 MWe light water reactors.

The Telegraph, 22 May 2006

### **Fissile time running out for India**

Washington, May 21: Contrary to the whisper that South Block is putting out in order not to rock the boat on the Indo-US nuclear deal, India may not have the luxury of producing fissile material for nuclear weapons for any longer than a few months. Stephen Rademaker, the US assistant secretary of state for international security and non-proliferation, has said in Geneva after formally tabling a draft Fissile material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) before the UN Conference on Disarmament (CD) that the Bush administration wants the treaty to be approved for signature by the international community "by the end of this year's CD session". India now has to think long and hard before extending any support for the latest US non-proliferation initiative because Rademaker also issued a veiled threat at the CD to pull America out of this UN body unless its members were ready to toe the Bush administration's line. Formally announcing the nomination of a new US ambassador to the CD, Rademaker attempted to bully other countries into agreeing to his mandate and negotiating schedule for a new FMCT. "I urge all delegations to work with us in order to ensure that she does not serve as the last US ambassador to the CD," he

threatened. India's dilemma on what to do with the new US plans to stop the global production of weapons grade uranium and plutonium for military purposes is compounded by President George W. Bush's new choice of that ambassador.

Reuters, 23 May 2006

### **Iran, N.Korea nuclear crises in focus at Asia talks**

DOHA (Reuters): Efforts to block Iran and North Korea's nuclear programs will be in the spotlight when ministers and officials from 28 Asian and Middle Eastern countries begin talks in Doha on Tuesday. Host nation Qatar says the Asia Cooperation Dialogue aims to foster cooperation in energy, finance, technology, agriculture and tourism. "It is going to focus on economic issues, not politics," said Mohammed Abdullah Al Rumaihi, a Qatari assistant foreign minister, ahead of the forum which ends on Wednesday. But on the sidelines of the forum, Asia's biggest foreign policy players are set to discuss the nuclear ambitions of Iran and North Korea and try to smooth over nagging disputes. South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon is due to meet his Chinese and Russian counterparts, Li Zhaoxing and Sergei Lavrov, to find ways to end a months-long deadlock in six-way talks on North Korea's nuclear program. Japan, the United States and North Korea are also involved in the talks. Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso also hopes to hold bilateral talks with Li, the first meeting of foreign ministers from Japan and China in a year.

Reuters, 23 May 2006

### **S.Korea's ex-leader urges North, US to cooperate**

SEOUL (Reuters): Former South Korean President Kim Dae-jung urged North Korea and the United States on Tuesday to adopt a give-and-take attitude and return to six-way talks aimed at ending Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programs. The talks have been deadlocked due to Pyongyang's refusal to return to the table unless Washington ends a crackdown on firms suspected of aiding the North in illicit financial activities. "North Korea must completely give up its nuclear weapons program, and in return, the United States must guarantee North Korea's safety and lift economic sanctions. Such a give-and-take deal must be carried out simultaneously," Kim said. Kim went to Pyongyang in 2000 for an unprecedented meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il, paving the way for closer ties between the two Koreas. The former South Korean president won the Nobel Peace prize for the summit diplomacy. He is scheduled to make a return trip to the North late next month and is expected to meet the North Korean leader again. "We will be talking about how we can promote cooperation with the regional powers and above all, how we can unify the Korean people," Kim said, adding he also hoped it would help break the deadlock in the six-party talks. There can be no lasting peace on the Korean peninsula unless North Korea and the United States make a fundamental pledge to resolve their long-lasting animosity, he said. "For peace on the peninsula and for the unification of South and North Korea, we need the absolute cooperation of the U.S.," he said. South and North Korea, the United States, Japan, Russia and host China reached a tentative agreement in September that would have given the North economic aid and improved ties with regional powers in return for dismantling its nuclear programs.

The News, 23 May 2006

### **Annan wants greater effort on N Korea**

BEIJING: UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called on Tuesday for a doubling of efforts to end the North Korean nuclear stalemate and urged East Asia's feuding neighbors to find ways to ease their tensions. Wrapping up a five-day visit to China, Annan gave a speech at Peking University pressing the international community to work much harder to rein in North Korea's nuclear ambitions. "We can not allow the current stalemate to continue. All parties will need to redouble their efforts," Annan said. Annan singled out China, which is host of the drawn-out six-nation talks on the issue and believed to be the country that has the most influence in Pyongyang, as having a critical role.

International Herald Tribune, 25 May 2006

### **U.S. rejects direct talks with Iran**

WASHINGTON: The Bush administration on Wednesday rejected calls for a direct dialogue with Iran over its nuclear program and declared that the United States had taken steps toward closing differences with Europe, China and Russia on a package of incentives and threats of punishment for the Iranian government. After a day of talks in London on a package intended to persuade Iran to give up its uranium enrichment program, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said more work needed to be done in coming days or weeks. "The London meeting had good progress," Ms. Rice told reporters at the State Department after meeting with Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency. "We did not expect that they were going to finalize all matters, and I

think they're still working on some matters." The United States and Europe are working with China and Russia on an approach that everyone involved calls "carrots and sticks" for Iran. The carrots are a set of benefits, effectively integrating Iran into a web of cooperation with the West on economic, nuclear energy and security issues if it suspends uranium enrichment and takes other steps. The sticks are a set of economic and diplomatic sanctions if Iran refuses. So far Iran has said it will not suspend uranium enrichment, an activity it defends as civilian in nature while some Western governments have maintained that it is a prelude to making nuclear weapons. European and American officials indicated Wednesday that the two sides still differed on their approaches toward incentives and punishments.

The Korea Times, 25 May 2006

### **Hill in Seoul to Discuss Nukes**

Christopher Hill, the U.S. top envoy to the six-party talks, arrived in Seoul on Thursday after visiting China where he said there could be no progress until North Korea agrees to return to the table. During his two-day stay in Seoul, Hill plans to meet with his South Korean counterpart, Chun Yung-woo, to discuss ways to resume the denuclearization talks that have been stalled since November. Before coming to Seoul, Hill agreed with Wu Dawei, China's top delegate to the talks, on the need of an early resumption of the six-party talks, but apparently failed to find a way to bring North Korea back to the negotiating table. "We had some discussion about the fact that we need to get going on this, and that it is not helpful (North Korea) has continued to boycott the talks," Hill told reporters in Beijing. He also said the United States will not offer North Korea any "sweetener" to lure it back to Beijing, the venue for the talks that are attended by the two Koreas, the United States, China, Russia and Japan.

Reuters, 26 May 2006

### **US links talks with Iran to N-enrichment suspension**

WASHINGTON, May 25: The White House has urged Iran to suspend uranium enrichment before it considered holding direct talks with Teheran. White House press secretary Tony Snow said that Iran should suspend uranium enrichment before the United States considered the possibility of direct talks on the Iranian nuclear programme. "When that happens, all right, then there may be some opportunities" for talks, he added. Mr Snow said the US would not want to divide the coalition of major countries that Washington was working with to force Iran to abandon its nuclear programme by holding direct talks.

Daily Times, 26 May 2006

### **Iran ready to stop enrichment: IAEA**

WASHINGTON: Iran is ready to give up uranium enrichment on its territory for several years as part of a deal to allay Western fears over its nuclear programme, the chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said on Wednesday. But Mohamed ElBaradei, who met in Vienna last week with Iran's top nuclear negotiator, said that the question of Tehran's sensitive atomic research activities was still under discussion. ElBaradei made his remarks to reporters after conferring here with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on Western efforts to rein in Iran's suspected bid to develop a nuclear bomb. ElBaradei suggested that Tehran's position was more flexible. "The Iranians, as far as I know, agreed in principle that for a number of years (uranium) enrichment should be part of an international consortium outside Iran," he said. He said that the Iranians told him that once negotiations resumed on their nuclear programme, they were ready to apply the 'additional protocol' to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) aimed at tightening inspections. "There is still this issue of Iran doing R&D (research and development) with regard to enrichment and that's an issue still being discussed," ElBaradei said. ElBaradei said that he briefed Rice on Tehran's position "which is rather different than the US point of view".

Daily Times, 26 May 2006

### **Iran's right to nuclear technology 'non-negotiable'**

Islamabad: Iran's right to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes is not negotiable, said Iranian Vice President Pervez Dawoodi while addressing a joint press conference with Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz at Prime Minister's House on Thursday. "How can Tehran expect the world to fulfil its energy requirements?" queried Dawoodi. "How is it possible to stop any country from scientific advancement and if Iran accepts this, the world may force us to close down our chemistry and physics laboratories in our universities." The Iranian vice president said Iran had been under sanctions and "hostile countries" had even refused to provide spare parts for passenger planes. "Iran cannot accept assurances of anyone fulfilling its energy needs under such circumstance," he said. Nuclear arms had no place in Iran's military strategy but every nation had the right to use nuclear technology peacefully, he added. "Iran is willing to continue negotiations with the world, and countries not hostile towards it

— who think nuclear technology is their sole right.”

The Tribune, 26 May 2006

### **Approve N-deal, IAEA chief appeals to US Congress**

Mohammed ElBaradei, director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, on Wednesday urged members of the U.S. Congress to approve a deal that would let the U.S. share civilian nuclear technology with India. “To me, this is a win-win agreement and I hope it will be also for Congress,” Dr. ElBaradei said after a meeting with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in Washington in which the two discussed the India deal. Miss Rice noted Dr. ElBaradei's support for the deal, and said this was so “not because he is trying to intervene in U.S.-India relations, but as we have talked about it because we need to broaden our concept of the nonproliferation regime in order to deal with anomalies like the Indian situation.” Dr. ElBaradei said the U.S. and the IAEA were trying to “look to the big picture in making sure that we have innovative measures to ensure that sensitive proliferation technology, like enrichment or reprocessing is contained.” The reaction from Democrats in Congress to the deal has ranged from lukewarm to hostile. There are 10 co-sponsors of the Senate bill on the deal, but none are Democrats.

Daily Times, 26 May 2006

### **India, partners sign ITER**

NEW DELHI: India and six partners — the European Union (EU), Russia, China, Japan, South Korea and the United States - have signed the International Thermo Nuclear Energy Reactor (ITER) agreement. “This signifies the start of a major international effort towards developing an energy technology which provides virtually limitless energy for supporting global development,” said Dr Anil Kakodkar, secretary, department of atomic energy, and chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. “Energy is an issue for the whole world but it is much more crucial for the developing world, particularly for India which is one-sixth of the world’s population,” said Kakodkar, adding that the “programme has potential to provide access to a much larger quantum of energy” for India’s galloping energy needs.

Dawn, 28 May 2006

### **"Bhutto faced US pressure on nuclear issue"**

WASHINGTON, May 27: Former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto faced tremendous pressure from the then US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on his efforts to acquire nuclear capability for Pakistan but refused to give in. A new set of previously classified memos, made public on Friday, show that the nuclear issue had begun to affect US-Pakistan relations in the mid 1970s. The memos, released by George Washington University's National Security Archive, show that Mr Kissinger tried to prevent Mr Bhutto, from acquiring nuclear technology as early as 1976. One memo quotes Mr Kissinger as telling Prime Minister Bhutto that the US was against Pakistan's efforts to buy a reprocessing plant from France. In 1976, Mr Bhutto negotiated and concluded a deal to buy nuclear reprocessing plant from France. In August 1976, Mr Kissinger met Mr Bhutto at Governor House Lahore to dissuade him from acquiring the plant. Mr Kissinger said that it was offensive to US intelligence when Mr Bhutto insisted that Pakistan needed the reprocessing plant for its energy needs; but Mr Bhutto demanded that the US should also not insist that Pakistan give up the reprocessing plant.

Daily Times , 28 May 2006

### **Case against AQ Khan closed: FO**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan insisted on Saturday that the nuclear proliferation case against scientist Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan had been closed and all important information had been collected and shared with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the United States. A leading US nuclear expert insisted in his testimony before the US Congress on Thursday that the case against Dr AQ Khan was “far from closed” and many questions, especially about Iran, remain unanswered. “We have completed our investigations and shared information with the IAEA and the US. We do not have any new information to share with the US,” acting Foreign Office spokesman Suhail Mehmood said while responding to the US nuclear expert’s remarks. Reports suggest that the American nuclear expert has asked President Bush to pressure President Musharraf to reopen the Dr AQ Khan case.

Daily Times , 28 May 2006

### **US mulling direct talks with Iran (Khalid Hasan)**

WASHINGTON: A debate is underway within the Bush administration whether direct talks should be initiated with Iran or not. According to a report in the New York Times on Saturday, European officials who have been in contact with the Bush administration in recent weeks said the discussion was heating up, as Secretary of State worked with

European foreign ministers to persuade Iran to suspend efforts to enrich uranium. European officials say Rice is discussing the issue with top aides at the State Department. Her belief, they say, is that ultimately the matter will have to be addressed by the administration's national security officials. The report says, "But others who know her well say she is resisting on the ground that signalling a willingness to talk would show weakness and disrupt the delicate negotiations with Europe. Rice is also said to fear that the administration might end up making too many concessions to Iran. Administration officials said President Bush, Vice President and Defence Secretary have opposed direct talks, even through informal back channels. As a result, many European officials say they doubt that a decision to talk is likely soon." The Europeans are now working with the US, Russia and China on a revised package of incentives if Iran ends enrichment. Also being sought, at least by the Europeans and the US, is an agreement to take Iran to the SC if it continues to defy demands for compliance on nuclear issues. European officials say discussions about possible US-Iran contacts are not part of the talks, but would be a way to improve the atmosphere with Iran.

International Herald Tribune, 30 May 2006

### **Pentagon seeks nonnuclear tip for sub missiles**

WASHINGTON: The Pentagon is pressing Congress to approve the development of a new weapon that would enable the United States to carry out nonnuclear missile strikes against distant targets within an hour. The proposal has set off a complex debate about whether this program for strengthening the military's conventional capacity could increase the risks of accidental nuclear confrontation. The Pentagon plan calls for deploying a nonnuclear version of the submarine-launched Trident II missile that could be used to attack terrorist camps, enemy missile sites, suspected caches of biological, chemical or nuclear weapons and other potentially urgent threats, military officials say. If fielded, it would be the only nonnuclear weapon designed for rapid strikes against targets thousands of miles away and would add to the president's options when considering a pre-emptive attack. General James Cartwright, the chief of the United States Strategic Command, said the system would enhance the Pentagon's ability to "pre-empt conventionally" and precisely while limiting the "collateral damage." The program would cost an estimated half a billion dollars over five years, and the Pentagon is seeking \$127 million in its current spending request to Congress to begin work.

Daily Times, 30 May 2006

### **Russia opposes use of force against Iran**

TEHRAN: The chief of Russia's security council, Igor Ivanov, said Sunday that Russia opposes any use of force against Iran over its controversial nuclear program, the Iranian state-run television reported. Unlike the U.S., Russia believes Iran's nuclear program needs to be resolved only through dialogue. Any use of force will further complicate the issue and will cause tension in the region, Ivanov was quoted as saying by the television. Ivanov made the comments during a meeting with Iran's top nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani.

The New York Times, 30 May 2006

### **Iran's Drive to Nuclear Fuel Slows, Diplomats Say**

The diplomats say the slowdown may be part of a deliberate Iranian strategy to lower the temperature of its standoff with the West over its nuclear program, and perhaps to create an opening for Washington to join the negotiations directly — something President Bush has so far refused to do. In discussions with White House and State Department officials in recent days, Europeans have described the inspectors' findings, clearly hoping to influence a debate within the Bush administration over whether to change strategy and engage directly with Iran. But hard-liners in the administration say they are unconvinced and think any slowdown may be merely a tactical ploy by the government of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. "It could simply mean we're not looking in the right places," said one senior official with access to the intelligence and who has long suspected that Iran has a secret weapons program. Nuclear experts, accustomed to measuring the efficiency of uranium centrifuges rather than of diplomatic initiatives, caution, too, that the slowdown may mean that Iran has run into technical obstacles on its nuclear road. Centrifuges are machines whose rotors spin extraordinarily fast to enrich, or concentrate, uranium into material that can fuel nuclear reactors or atom bombs. Diplomats, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the topic's political delicacy, say that Iranian engineers stopped pouring a raw form of uranium, called UF<sub>6</sub>, into arrays of centrifuges after just 12 days, even as the nation erupted in celebrations of the enrichment feat. The reports, which have now been widely circulated, say the Iranians kept the empty centrifuges spinning, as is standard practice because slowing the delicate machines can cause them to wobble and crash.

The News, 30 May 2006

## **Iran conducts research on nuclear fusion**

TEHRAN: Iran has conducted research into nuclear fusion; an Iranian nuclear official said Monday as the country signalled its determination to proceed with its nuclear programme despite the gathering international opposition. "Iranian nuclear scientists are competing with the advanced world in the field of producing nuclear energy through fusion," the official, Sadat Hosseini, was reported as saying by state television. Nuclear fusion is the process by which multiple nuclei are joined to form a heavier nucleus. It is accompanied by the release or absorption of energy, depending on the masses of the nuclei involved. Hosseini, who runs the technical department at the Nuclear Research Center of Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation, added: "The first research of nuclear fusion in Iran was done five years ago." It was not immediately clear why Iran had decided to announce the research only now, but the move seemed to be part of the country's defiance of world calls for it to limit its nuclear programme to activities that could not be used for making weapons.

The Japan Times, 30 May 2006

## **China, S. Korea out of naval exercise**

China and South Korea have canceled participation in a multinational naval security exercise, the Japan Coast Guard said Sunday. The drills began Saturday with Japan and three other participants -- the U.S., Canada and Russia -- a coast guard official said. Although Japanese officials refused to give a specific reason for the cancellation, South Korea said it was because of concerns that part of the exercises may upset North Korea, whose nuclear ambitions are a major regional concern. China and South Korea were expected to rejoin the maneuvers next month, the Japanese official said.

Reuters, 30 May 2006

## **UN powers to meet to finalize Iran package**

VIENNA: Major world powers will meet in Vienna on Thursday to finalize a package of incentives for Iran to halt nuclear fuel enrichment along with penalties if it keeps defying international pressure, officials said on Tuesday. The United States, Britain, France, China, Russia and Germany failed to resolve differences at London talks last week over the extent of sweeteners for Iran or the nature and timing of sanctions if Tehran clung to enriching uranium. The Chinese government said the sextet's foreign ministers would convene on Thursday in Vienna, where the watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is based. British and European Union officials also confirmed the meeting. "We hope the meeting will achieve positive results," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said in Beijing. EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana indicated on Sunday some differences remained but that the six powers were "getting very close" to consensus after further consultations. Tehran says it seeks nuclear energy only for electricity. Western powers suspect Iran's program is a civilian cover for efforts to master technology to build atom bombs. Contacts between the six powers' top diplomats sought to bridge lingering differences over key aspects of the package, including the legal basis of a Security Council resolution to underpin it, an EU diplomat said.

The New York Times, 31 May 2006

## **U.S. Accepts Draft on Iran That Omits Use of Force**

WASHINGTON, May 30: The Bush administration, seeking to enlist Russian support for a United Nations Security Council resolution on Iran, has agreed to language ruling out the immediate threat of military force, American and European officials said Tuesday. The American agreement has improved the chances that the Russians will go along with the resolution, European diplomats said. The resolution is to call on Iran to suspend various nuclear activities that are viewed in the West as part of a clandestine weapons program, but that Iran maintains are peaceful in nature. President Bush called President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, President Jacques Chirac of France and Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany to press for agreement on a Security Council resolution demanding that Iran stop enriching uranium or face possible punitive action. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's office announced that Ms. Rice would fly to Vienna on Wednesday for more talks on Iran with top Russian, Chinese and European envoys. The American goal is to get an agreement on a Security Council resolution this week, for possible approval in June. Also being negotiated are a package of benefits in nuclear energy, economic activities and security to be offered Iran if it cooperates in ending its nuclear activities. The Europeans are to offer this package with American support, but the Bush administration has quietly expressed misgivings about some of its possible elements. I think that we could safely say at this point that we feel like we're in good shape heading into Vienna," Sean McCormack, the State Department spokesman, said at a department briefing. He added that Ms. Rice's top aide on the issue, R. Nicholas Burns, the undersecretary of state for political affairs, had worked with his counterparts over the weekend on various disagreements. "That list of open issues is being whittled down, being narrowed," Mr. McCormack said.

Reuters, 31 May 2006

### **Iran wants fresh nuclear dialogue**

PUTRAJAYA, Malaysia: Iran said on Tuesday it wanted to resume nuclear negotiations with the EU and could even talk to Washington if its arch-foe "changed behavior". Tehran also said it was willing to negotiate on the number of uranium-enriching centrifuges it uses for research, but stressed it would not stop running the devices entirely as the U.N. Security Council has called for. Washington, which along with its allies suspect Iran could use even limited enrichment facilities to master the technology required to make atomic weapons, dismissed the overture. Tehran says it seeks nuclear energy only for electricity. The five Security Council permanent powers and Germany will meet in Vienna on Thursday in hopes of finalizing a package of incentives for Iran to halt enrichment along with penalties if it keeps defying international pressure, officials said. Iran has vowed that nothing will dissuade it from having full-fledged nuclear technology on its soil, spurring one senior EU diplomat to say on Tuesday that the painstakingly crafted incentives could end up an "academic and theoretical exercise".

The New York Times, 31 May 2006

### **Ireland: Setback in Nuclear-Plant Protest**

The European Union's highest court found that Ireland, which wants Britain to close an aging nuclear power plant with a poor safety record, had illegally appealed to a United Nations tribunal when it should have used the Union's internal legal procedures. The Irish government claims the nuclear waste reprocessing facility at Sellafield, about 60 miles from the Irish coast, pollutes the Irish Sea with radioactive waste that includes Technetium 99. Irish officials said they would continue efforts to close the plant.

Reuters, 31 May 2006

### **ElBaradei: Iran not an immediate nuclear threat**

Monterey, California (Reuters): Iran does not pose an immediate nuclear threat and the world must act cautiously to avoid repeating mistakes made with Iraq and North Korea, the head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency said on Tuesday. Mohamed ElBaradei, director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said the world shouldn't "jump the gun" with erroneous information as he said the U.S.-led coalition did in Iraq in 2003, nor should it push the country into retaliation as international sanctions did in North Korea. "Our assessment is that there is no immediate threat," the winner of the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize told a forum organized by the Monterey Institute of International Studies south of San Francisco. "We still have lots of time to investigate."