

The Hindu, 1 November 2004

Iran bill approves uranium enrichment

TEHERAN, OCT. 31: Iran's Parliament on Sunday approved the outline of a bill that requires the Government to resume uranium enrichment - an issue of national pride that provides a rare point of agreement between conservatives and reformers in Iranian politics. Shouts of "Death to America!" rang out from lawmakers in the conservative-dominated Parliament after the unanimous vote. Washington has been Iran's prime adversary in its quest to become a nuclear nation, which Teheran maintains is for purely peaceful nuclear energy purposes. The United States, which has secured some support from European nations, accuses Iran of trying to build nuclear weapons. Lawmakers stood up to show their "yes" vote for the bill, details of which would be discussed at a later date.

The Hindustan Times, 1 November 2004

Reliance 'plans' setting up of nuclear power stations

Mumbai, Oct.31: To fulfil the base load requirements of the country, Reliance Energy is looking at possibilities to set up Nuclear Power stations. Dr VK Chaturvedi, the newly appointed Director of New Power Initiative of Reliance Energy said in Mumbai, that perhaps for the first time in the country, any private company would be entering the nuclear power market. Chaturvedi, who was the former CMD of Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL), said, "It will be necessary to have technical support from the Department of Atomic Energy and NPCIL." As soon as the amended Atomic Energy Act gets clearance from the Parliament on private participation in nuclear energy production in the country, Reliance Energy would be the first company to come forward to set up nuclear power plants, Chaturvedi claimed. The idea is to meet the high-energy demand of the country in view of depletion of fossil fuel in the coming years, the Director said. For the country's expected demand of 600 to 700 Gig watts of electricity by 2050, "the new resources should be looked into without any delay," he said on the sidelines of the Founder's Day Celebration at BARC during the week-end.

The Daily Times , 1 November 2004

IAEA inspection to resume in South Korea this week

SEOUL: The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will this week resume its investigation into South Korea's past experiments with potential ingredients for a nuclear bomb, officials said on Sunday. The Vienna-based UN nuclear watchdog has told Seoul it will send a third team of inspectors on Tuesday for a six-day mission, officials at the science and technology ministry said. South Korea has been under IAEA scrutiny since its revelations in early September that its scientists secretly enriched a tiny amount of plutonium in 1982 and uranium in 2000. The IAEA has since sent inspectors to South Korea twice to inspect nuclear facilities, interview scientists and take samples.

The Times of India, 1 November 2004

Nuclear Outlaws: Rogue States Make a Mockery of NPT (K. SUBRAHMANYAM)

When the NPT review conference is held next year, the nuclear member nations not recognised by NPT- Israel, India, Pakistan, North Korea, Iran and the unnamed nation could well outnumber the five recognised members, namely, the US, Russia, Britain, France and China. Of the six outside the pale of NPT, North Korea, Iran and the unnamed nation deliberately violated the treaty, thanks to Pakistan. Israel, India and Pakistan are not signatories to the treaty. It is obvious that the safeguards envisaged in the non-proliferation treaty have failed to stop members from defying the regime and acquiring nuclear weapons. Pakistan, the major proliferator, aided North Korea and Iran to turn nuclear, cocking a snook at the much-touted NPT and yet not attracting any penalties. This has only increased the risks of further proliferation. In view of this, the US and its allies have attempted to put in place new measures to halt proliferation, not envisaged in the NPT. They include criminalisation of proliferation, expediting US help to Russia under Nunn-Lugar amendment to safeguard fissile materials of the Cold War era, tightening supply of equipment and materials, strengthening the IAEA as a policing organisation, among others. Since these measures have been unilaterally mooted by the US and its allies, they have run into opposition, particularly from China, the original proliferator to Pakistan...

The People's Daily, 2 November 2004

IAEA chief calls on Iran to voluntarily suspend uranium enrichment activities

Chief of the UN nuclear activities watchdog Mohamed ElBaradei urged on Monday Iran to suspend all uranium enrichment activities and pursue transparent nuclear policies in order to settle the dispute over its nuclear program through dialogue. ElBaradei said investigation into the extent and nature of Iran's uranium enrichment activities is "central" to understanding the country's nuclear program. ElBaradei also touched the nuclear issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). He said the situation in the DPRK "continues to pose a serious challenge to the nuclear non-proliferation regime." He noted that since December 2002, IAEA has not performed any verification activities in the DPRK, and cannot therefore provide any level of assurance about the non-diversion of its nuclear material. ElBaradei expressed the hope that the six-party talks, involving China, Japan, the United States, Russia, South Korea and the DPRK, would lead to a comprehensive settlement of the crisis surrounding the DPRK's nuclear program.

The Jang, 2 November 2004

UN nuclear inspectors arrive in S Korea

SEOUL: U.N. nuclear inspectors arrived in South Korea on Tuesday to conduct a final investigation before drawing up a report this month on the country's nuclear experiments in 1982 and 2000. The visit marked the third time the International Atomic Energy Agency has sent inspectors to South Korea to collect material for a report to be submitted to the agency's board of governors on Nov 25. The board of governors will decide whether to report the case to the UN Security Council, which can

impose punitive measures. The investigation by the nuclear agency began after South Korea recently admitted conducting a plutonium-based nuclear experiment in 1982 and a uranium-enrichment experiment in 2000. The government has repeatedly said the experiments were unrelated to any weapons program and were for scientific research only.

The Hindustan Times, 2 November 2004

India warns against IAEA being utilised for political ends

United Nations: Observing that the country had made great strides in the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, India has said that efforts to check proliferation should not impose restrictions on utilisation of its capability in the area and pledged to shoulder the obligation flowing from it. "...Efforts to prevent proliferation should not impose undue restrictions on the development and utilisation of nuclear energy," Minister of State for External Affairs Rao Inderjit Singh told the UN General Assembly on Monday intervening in the debate on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Singh warned against the IAEA being utilised for political ends beyond its original purpose "to promote safe, secure and peaceful nuclear technologies."

The People's Daily, 3 November 2004

Khatami rejects uranium enrichment suspension

Iranian President Mohammad Khatami on Tuesday rejected the European demand of unlimited suspension of uranium enrichment, saying the suspension can only be carried out voluntarily. Even so, he expressed optimism that the nuclear talks with the European Union (EU) would not come to a negative end. "I am optimistic, for both sides are showing flexibility," Khatami said, expressing hope that the remaining outstanding issues would be settled through logic and understanding. Khatami also stressed that if the international community decides independently and is not subjected to the US pressure, the nuclear issue of Iran can be closed.

The Daily Times, 3 November 2004

There will be no proliferation from Pakistan: Akram

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan said on Tuesday that it had adopted efficient safety measures in and around its nuclear installations and taken additional measures to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Addressing the plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly on its agenda item entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)", Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN Munir Akram said ...Pakistan was very sensitive to the safety and security of its nuclear installations, particularly as the government was extending its nuclear power generation for economic development. "We are diligently adhering to the principles of the Nuclear Safety Convention, which Pakistan had signed at the time of its inception. We have strengthened security measures around our nuclear installations to avoid any possibility of sabotage or illicit acquisition or trafficking of nuclear material. We will continue participating in the agency's initiative to strengthen the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM)," he added.

The Nation, 3 November 2004

Egypt rejects charges IAEA helping it with secret N-program

CAIRO: Egypt's ambassador to the UN atomic agency blasted as "totally baseless" a French newspaper report Tuesday that the Egyptian head of the agency Mohamed ElBaradei was helping Cairo hide a secret nuclear program. He was reacting to a report in the French newspaper Liberation, citing unnamed Western diplomats, that the now dismantled Libyan nuclear program "had Egyptian links." He was reacting to a report in the French newspaper Liberation, citing unnamed Western diplomats, that the now dismantled Libyan nuclear program "had Egyptian links." The Liberation story said there were charges circulating in diplomatic circles that ElBaradei is "a key element in Egyptian strategic policy, with a mission to favour Cairo in getting nuclear technology and information transfers."

The Korea Times, 3 November 2004

Seoul Seeks Fair IAEA Verdict (Ryu Jin)

South Korea on Wednesday expressed its hope the U.N. nuclear agency will deal with its past nuclear experiments in a fair manner so the surrounding controversy can be brought to an end as early as possible. "We have been fully complying with inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)," Foreign Affairs-Trade Minister Ban Ki-moon said in his weekly press briefing... A five-member delegation from the Vienna-based organization is visiting South Korea from Monday to Sunday for its seemingly final inspection ... But, they remained tight-lipped on their activities as they did during the two previous missions in recent months. The ... 35-nation board of governors, which is to convene a meeting on Nov. 25 ... board will make a final decision at the meeting on whether to refer South Korea to the U.N. Security Council over the experiments.

The Daily Times, 3 November 2004

EU softens demand that Iran should suspend uranium enrichment

VIENNA: The European Union is no longer explicitly calling for an indefinite suspension of Iran's uranium enrichment, diplomats said Tuesday, detailing the EU's latest compromise proposal ahead of an upcoming meeting with the Iranians on their nuclear programme.

The People's Daily, 4 November 2004

India test fires BrahMos missile from ship

India successfully tested Wednesday the supersonic cruise missile BrahMos from a war ship in the Bay of Bengal off the coast of Orissa state in east India. The test marked the seventh successful firing of the missile since June 12, 2001, officials said.

The three-ton missile can attain speeds of up to Mach 3, or three times the speed of sound, and has a range of almost 300 km.. BrahMos, which derives its name from the Brahmaputra and Moskova rivers, was developed by an Indo-Russian joint venture after the two countries signed an agreement in February 1998. It is basically an anti-ship missile that can be modified for launch from air or land.

The Daily Times, 4 November 2004

UN nuke report on Iran may weaken US case

VIENNA: A new report on UN nuclear inspections in Iran may be worded in a way that undermines the US case for reporting Tehran to the Security Council this month, diplomats said on Wednesday. United Nations nuclear watchdog chief Mohamed ElBaradei is due to present a report next week summarising his agency's two-year investigation of Iran's nuclear programme. Diplomats said ElBaradei had told the Iranians he would be able to pen a positive report if there was a constructive atmosphere in their talks on Friday with European counterparts who want Tehran to freeze its enrichment programme. The IAEA report will be crucial in the US push to have Iran reported to the UN Security Council for possible economic sanctions when the watchdog's board meets on Nov. 25.

The Daily Times, 4 November 2004

South Korea lobbies hard at IAEA

VIENNA: South Korean diplomats are lobbying hard to prevent the United Nations nuclear watchdog reporting it to the UN Security Council for violating the global non-proliferation pact, diplomats said on Wednesday. South Korea said in September that scientists at government laboratories had enriched a minuscule quantity of uranium in 2000 and had extracted a trace amount of plutonium in 1982, all without government knowledge or authorisation. "They really don't want to be reported to the Security Council. They're trying to move heaven and hell to avoid it," a Western diplomat on the board of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) told Reuters on condition of anonymity. South Korean diplomats have been visiting missions of key members of the IAEA board to plead their case, he said.

The Korea Herald, 4 November 2004

IAEA starts third round of inspections

A five-member inspection team from the U.N. nuclear watchdog launched the third round of inspections in South Korea on Wednesday (November 03) related to South Korea's past nuclear material experiments. This is the third round of inspections so far for the International Atomic Energy Agency since the country acknowledged in early September that its scientists extracted or enriched small amounts of plutonium and uranium, the two key ingredients of atomic bombs, in 1982 and 2000.

The Daily Times, 5 November 2004

EU rejects talk of military strikes on Iran over nukes

BRUSSELS: The European Union's Dutch presidency dismissed Thursday speculation about a US military strike on Iran to force the Islamic republic to abandon its nuclear drive. Referring to suggestions that some in the United States wanted to attack Iran, labelled part of an "axis of evil" by the re-elected President George W Bush, Dutch Foreign Minister Bernard Bot said "not all people in Washington" endorsed this. Ahead of fresh talks on the nuclear issue between Iran and the EU in Paris on Friday, Bot said the EU had "clear indications" that the Iranian government wants to pursue dialogue... Tehran flexible: Iran appeared set Thursday to bow to a key European demand aimed at ending a dispute with the international community over its nuclear program, at least temporarily, in the hope of avoiding a crisis. Iranian and European officials are due to meet in Paris on Friday for the latest stage of talks that Tehran has described as "crucial".

The Korea Times, 5 November 2004

Nuclear Crisis Looms in Bush's Second Term (Daniel A. Pinkston)

President George W. Bush will be facing several difficult issues in East Asia during his second term. The rise of China and possible conflict in the Taiwan Strait will certainly be important, but the administration's management of the North Korean nuclear problem will also have serious implications for the region. The United States is critical for resolving the North Korean nuclear issue, and failure could trigger a nuclear arms race or even war. A second term should give Bush the confidence to exhibit the flexibility that South Korea and China have requested. So far, the Bush administration has "outsourced" its North Korea policy to China, so bad outcomes can always be blamed on Beijing's failure to provide enough pressure on Pyongyang. However, the contradiction in this approach is that China will not exert serious pressure until the U.S. has held serious talks with North Korea.

The Dawn, 6 November 2004

Moscow opposes UN debate on Iran

MOSCOW, Nov 5: Russia confirmed on Friday that it opposed Iran's nuclear ambitions coming up for debate at the UN Security Council, where it has veto power, saying such a debate could lead to further regional tensions. The Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov said the issue should be taken up for debate by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog that has periodically sent nuclear inspectors to the country and meets on November 25 to decide whether to haul Tehran before the UN Security Council. The comments were issued as Iran and the European Union held last-chance talks in Paris seeking a compromise over Tehran's nuclear program in order to head off a US-led bid to bring the matter before the UN Security Council. Moscow is in the process of completing Iran's first nuclear power plant in Bushehr, although it has refused to provide fuel for the project until it guarantees its safe return to Russia for reprocessing.

The Washington Post, 6 November 2004

S.Korea Asks Bush to Focus on N.Korea Nuclear Crisis

SEOUL (Reuters): South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun called newly re-elected President Bush and won his agreement that ending the nuclear crisis involving the isolated communist North should be a goal of his second term in office. The two leaders will have an opportunity to discuss the crisis that erupted in late 2002 and threatens to destabilize North Asia when they meet on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Chile in November. Bush agreed on the need to push forward with stalled six-party talks on ending North Korea's nuclear weapons programs. China, the United States, North and South Korea, Japan and Russia agreed in June to try in September to hold a fourth round of six-way talks involving senior diplomats to try to end the North's nuclear programs. However, the discussions never took place with Pyongyang appearing to stall while it waited to see who won the U.S. presidential election.

The New York Times, 6 November 2004

Iran and Europe Locked in Nuclear Talks (ELAINE SCIOLINO)

PARIS, Nov. 5: In an effort to stop Iran from producing a nuclear bomb, the 25 leaders of the European Union on Friday offered Iran economic and political incentives if it suspended its production of enriched uranium. The proposal, issued in a statement at the end of a two-day summit meeting in Brussels, coincided with negotiations that opened here in which Iran was seeking concessions from France, Germany, Britain and the European Union to allow it to produce enriched uranium...the Iranians were willing only to consider a temporary suspension of perhaps six months to buy time for a broader agreement and avoid the threat of sanctions, according to officials involved in the negotiations. One European official labeled the Iranian position "suspension minus." The goal of the Europeans, by contrast, has been to push Iran to agree to suspend its uranium enrichment indefinitely in exchange for the promise of economic and political rewards, officials said.

The Tribune, 6 November 2004

Fallacy of nuclear deterrence: Very biological existence in peril (Dhirendra Sharma)

RECENTLY Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee disclosed that India had "credible nuclear deterrence in place". The Defence Ministry is now engaged in raising "specialised forces to tackle nuclear threat in all its dimensions". The minister, however, did not give the details of this high-tech nuclear-deterrence as how credible it could be in a nuclear war theatre. Notwithstanding any scientific assessment of feasibility, the minister's loud speak was at best a costly impracticable shibboleth. Admittedly, we are committed to the No-First Use doctrine, but that does not prevent some reckless enemy to strike first with nuclear bombs. It appears prudent, therefore, to go for credible nuclear deterrence, and be prepared for a retaliatory nuclear strike.

The Daily Times, 7 November 2004

China opposes Iran UNSC referral

TEHRAN: Iran was given crucial backing from China Saturday in its standoff with the UN's nuclear watchdog, with Beijing saying it opposed US efforts to have the Islamic republic referred to the United Nations Security Council. "There is no reason to send the issue to the Security Council," Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing said in a press conference with his Iranian counterpart, Kamal Kharazi. "It would only make the issue more complicated and difficult to work out," Li said, contradicting Washington by saying "the Iranian government is having a very positive attitude in its cooperation" with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The Daily Times, 7 November 2004

Seoul asks Bush to focus on N Korean nuclear crisis

SEOUL: South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun called newly re-elected US President George W Bush and won his agreement that ending the nuclear crisis involving the isolated communist North should be a goal of his second term in office. The two leaders will have an opportunity to discuss the crisis that erupted in late 2002 and threatens to destabilise North Asia when they meet on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Chile this month. Bush agreed on the need to push forward with stalled six-party talks on ending North Korea's nuclear weapons programmes, the presidential Blue House said in a statement. "President Roh proposed making the North's nuclear problem a joint project to solve with close cooperation and to lay the groundwork for peace on the Korean peninsula and in the world," it said of Roh's call to congratulate Bush.

The People's Daily, 8 November 2004

Taiwan intends to build Asia's largest missile base

A large bunker project is being constructed at Jiupeng missile test-launching ground by Zhongshan Scientific Research Institute under Taiwan's "Defense Ministry"...US intelligence satellite noticed recently that a large structure by reinforced concrete is being built at Jiupeng base belonged to Zhongshan institute. From its unusual thickness, the US side predicted it is a bunker able to resist heavy bombs. It is suspected the bunker is built for "special purpose", which may be related to Taiwan's alleged research of medium-range missiles and cruise missile, or even nuclear weapons.

The Nation, 8 November 2004

India testfires N-capable missile

BHUBANESHWAR: India on Sunday tested a short-range ballistic missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead off its eastern coast, defence sources said. The Indian-made Dhanus (Bow), with a strike range of 250 kilometers was test-fired from naval ship INS Subhadra at around 12:20 pm (0650 GMT) in the Bay of Bengal off the state of Orissa, the sources said. The test was the third by India in recent weeks. Sunday's test was the third trial of Dhanus. The missile's debut trial on April 11, 2000 was not all that successful but its second test-fire, on September 21, 2001, went off smoothly. The missile has a payload of 500 kilograms, is 8.56 meters long and one meter wide and has a launch weight of 4,600 kilograms, the sources said. It can carry both conventional and nuclear warheads and uses a single-stage liquid propellant engine.

The Daily Times, 8 November 2004

UN nuclear watchdog ends inspections in South Korea

SEOUL: The UN nuclear watchdog agency on Sunday completed its latest investigation into South Korea's past nuclear experiments and will present a report later this month, officials said. South Korea has been under IAEA scrutiny since its revelation in early September that its scientists secretly enriched a tiny amount of plutonium in 1982 and of uranium in 2000. Seoul officials said the latest inspection was the last before UN inspectors present a report to an IAEA board meeting on November 25.

The Nation, 8 November 2004

Iran, EU reach 'preliminary deal'

TAHRAN: Iranian and European Union officials have reached a "preliminary agreement" on easing concerns over the Islamic republic's nuclear programme following crucial negotiations in Paris, a top Iranian official said Sunday... announcement followed two days of talks between Iran and the EU troika of Britain, France and Germany on getting Tehran to suspend uranium enrichment in order to avoid being hauled before the UN Security Council for possible sanctions. Moussavian said the preliminary agreement included "a collection of political, economic, security, technological and trust-building cooperation regarding the future of Iran's peaceful nuclear activities". He also made no mention of whether Iran had agreed to meet EU demands that it halt its controversial work on the sensitive nuclear fuel cycle, activities that officials here insist are only aimed at producing fuel for civilian reactors.

The China Daily, 8 November 2004

Egypt rejects speculation over nukes

Egypt denied it has a secret nuclear weapons program in an angry response Sunday to reports that the U.N. atomic watchdog is investigating the discovery of plutonium particles near an Egyptian nuclear facility. Diplomats in Austria said Friday that the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency is trying to determine if the plutonium particles are evidence of an Egyptian weapons program or simply the byproduct of peaceful research.

The Hindustan Times, 8 November 2004

Nuclear terrorism threat 'real': UN nuclear watchdog chief

Sydney: Nuclear terrorism is a genuine threat and past assumptions about how to control the spread of nuclear materials need to be radically overhauled, the head of the UN's atomic energy agency warned on Monday. "The threat of nuclear terrorism is real and current," Mohamed ElBaradei, chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said in a keynote speech at the start of a two-day conference in Sydney. The agency's work on suspected nuclear weapons programs in Libya and Iran had revealed an extensive black market for radioactive materials, with around 630 confirmed incidents of trafficking in nuclear or other radioactive materials since 1993, he said. This illicit market "clearly thrived on demand", he said.

The Daily Times, 9 November 2004

IAEA to issue report on South Korea this week

VIENNA: The UN nuclear agency is to present a report on South Korea this week ahead of the agency deciding whether or not the US ally should be taken to the UN Security Council for violating international nuclear safeguards, diplomats said Monday. Seoul has been under investigation by the UN watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) since Pyongyang revealed in September that its scientists secretly enriched a tiny amount of plutonium in 1982 and uranium in 2000. But Seoul says the laboratory experiments were not linked to nuclear weapons programmes. Still, IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei has expressed "serious concern" about the activities.

The Daily Times, 9 November 2004

EU 'pretty close' to nuclear agreement with Tehran

THE HAGUE: The European Union's three big powers are "pretty close" to a deal with Iran that would freeze Tehran's nuclear fuel enrichment and reprocessing activities, EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana said on Monday. Solana told Reuters in an interview that if an agreement was reached there would be no reason to refer Iran to the UN Security Council for sanctions over its disputed programme. Solana, asked if the deal in the offing would bind Tehran to freezing all nuclear enrichment and reprocessing activities, said: "That is the basic element of the agreement".

The Dawn, 9 November 2004

Iran accord must end N-arms plan: US

WASHINGTON, Nov 8: The United States insisted on Monday that any nuclear accord with Iran must prevent the country from developing nuclear weapons and that it was in contact with European allies over a preliminary agreement with Tehran. The United States accuses Iran of secretly trying to develop nuclear weapons under cover of its civilian atomic energy programme and wants the UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), to refer Tehran to the Security Council when the agency meets in Vienna on November 25.

The Nation, 10 November 2004

China reiterates Iranian issue should be kept out of UNSC

BEIJING : China reiterated Tuesday that the Iranian nuclear issue should be resolved within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and not at the UN Security Council. "We hold that this issue should be discussed within the framework of the IAEA because for the time being some countries want to bring this issue to the UN Security Council," foreign ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said. "This is our position." She refused to say whether Beijing would veto, support or

abstain on any potential UN resolution about Iran's nuclear program. Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing on Saturday said in Tehran that bringing the issue to the UN Security Council would only make it more "complicated and difficult to work out."

The Daily Times, 10 November 2004

No deal on nuclear fusion reactor, says EU

BRUSSELS: Talks on where to build the world's first nuclear fusion reactor ended without a deal on Tuesday but the European Union said Japan and the United States no longer firmly opposed its bid to put the plant in France. "There was no agreement but there was no breakdown either. On the contrary, we have done good work and made good progress," European Commission spokesman Fabio Fabbi said after the six-party talks ended without agreement in Vienna.

The Dawn, 10th November 2004

US sceptical about Iran-EU nuclear deal

VIENNA, Nov 9: The United States is skeptical about the EU's efforts to cut a deal with Iran to get it to give up uranium enrichment that could be used to make nuclear weapons, a senior US official said here on Tuesday. Assistant Secretary of State for arms control Stephen Rademaker said the United States is "very sceptical of Iran's good faith in these negotiations."

The New York Times. 10 November 2004

Iran Claims Draft Accord With Europe on Uranium (ELAINE SCIOLINO)

PARIS, Nov. 8 - Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi of Iran on Monday praised the outcome of weekend talks with European negotiators, saying that a preliminary agreement had been reached to suspend Iran's production of enriched uranium immediately. But he emphasized that any suspension would be only temporary. Paradoxically, Mr. Kharrazi and his negotiator in Paris, Hussein Mousavian, were more optimistic in public than the Europeans in describing the negotiations. The two Iranians described the result as a "preliminary agreement," while all of the European participants said only that "considerable progress" had been made toward a "preliminary agreement." The Iranian side is studying a draft agreement that was discussed over the weekend, and European officials said areas of disagreement between the two sides remained when the talks broke up. But the Iranians have made clear in public statements before and after the negotiations that they want a deal.

The Japan Times, 10 November 2004

Dealing with the nuclear-threat hydra (HUGH CORTAZZI)

LONDON -- The U.S. government has named Iran and North Korea as rogue states. Iran is accused of seeking to develop nuclear weapons and breaching the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). North Korea may already have a few nuclear devices and has announced its withdrawal from the NPT. The two states are very different and should not be conflated into a single threat. In the present state of the world, it is hard to imagine the existing declared nuclear powers (U.S., Russia, China, France, Britain, India and Pakistan) being ready to take effective steps to reduce, let alone eliminate, their nuclear arsenals. But we should expect them to ensure that nuclear weapons do not get into the hands of terrorists. Israel should be quizzed about its nuclear capabilities. Russia and Pakistan should be pressed to take firm action to prevent nuclear weapons and know how from leaking.

The Hindu, 11 November 2004

Call for protection against nuclear terror (P. S. Suryanarayana)

SINGAPORE, NOV. 10: An Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on nuclear safeguards and security held in Sydney earlier this week has said an "early and comprehensive implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1540" is a 'priority' task for the international community to "reduce the risk of nuclear and radiological terrorism." The other 'priorities' identified were : global-scale implementation of the IAEA's "strengthened safeguards system," protection of nuclear materials and facilities, an effective control and protection of radioactive sources in a manner consistent with their safe use, effective domestic controls inclusive of those on exports of sensitive materials, and steps to ensure "effective national nuclear security capability."

The China Daily, 11 November 2004

Bush administration divide reemerges over North Korea

As US President Bush prepares for a second term, hard-liners are pressing once again for a more coercive approach if six-party talks make no progress on resolving the North Korea nuclear issue. The United States remains committed to negotiations on the North's nuclear program, but officials, congressional sources and analysts said the policy is being re-examined. Much will turn on whether Secretary of State Colin Powell and Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly, main advocates of diplomacy with North Korea, and Undersecretary of State John Bolton, a key hard-liner, stay on in Bush's second term.

The Daily Times, 11 November 2004

Tehran warns of NPT pullout if West presses

TEHRAN: Iran will pull out of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and develop its atomic programme in secret if Western nations threaten or put pressure on Tehran, a senior Iran diplomat was quoted as saying on Wednesday. Iranian government officials have in the past repeatedly said Tehran had no intention of following North Korea's example of withdrawing from the NPT...Sirus Naseri, a member of the Iranian negotiating team in the talks with the EU, warned Iran - which says its atomic programme is strictly for civilian use - could take drastic steps if the talks did not proceed as Tehran wants. "If they start to pressure or threaten us, then we will put aside the treaty and go underground," the semi-official Mehr news agency quoted him as saying.

The Jang, 11 November 2004

Chen calls for ban on WMDs in Taiwan Strait

TAIPEI: Taiwan's president on Wednesday called for a ban on the use of weapons of mass destruction across the Taiwan Strait, which separates the island from rival China. President Chen Shui-bian said Taiwan was willing to guarantee not to develop or use nuclear, biological or chemical weapons across the strait and urged Beijing to reciprocate. Taiwan's defence ministry says China, which is a nuclear-armed power, is targeting the island with at least 600 ballistic missiles and the number will rise to 800 by the end of 2006.

The New York Times, 11 November 2004

Iran in Deadlock With Europe on Halting Production of Uranium (ELAINE SCIOLINO)

PARIS, Nov. 10: Iran and European negotiators have become deadlocked in their effort to reach a final agreement for Iran to suspend its production of enriched uranium in exchange for possible economic and political incentives, European officials said Wednesday. One outstanding issue is highly technical but considered important by the Europeans. They have demanded that Iran stop its program to convert raw uranium into uranium tetrafluoride. Uranium tetrafluoride is a precursor to the form of uranium that is fed into centrifuges to enrich it for use as fuel that can be used either for peaceful purposes or to develop nuclear weapons, European officials said. Another Iranian demand, so far rejected by the Europeans, is the timing of the delivery of some rewards for Iran, including the resumption of talks on a trade agreement between the European Union and Iran, the officials said. Iran is also seeking precise assurances about a European offer to supply Iran with a light-water research reactor that would produce less fissionable material than could be used for making nuclear weapons, the Vienna-based diplomat added. Iran wants the rewards up front as a "confidence-building measure," arguing that France, Germany and Britain failed to deliver the rewards it promised after Iran agreed in Tehran in October 2003 to suspend its production of enriched uranium.

The Korea Herald, 11 November 2004

Lawmakers focus on N.K. nuclear issue (Shin Hae-in)

Lawmakers of the ruling and opposition parties today pressed the government to come up with early countermeasures to end the current stalemate in inter-Korean relations and the standoff over North Korea's nuclear weapons program. But the rival lawmakers put forth different views on how to achieve a breakthrough in the deadlocked inter-Korean relations and in the six-party talks on the North's nuclear issue.

The People's Daily, 12 November 2004

Official dismisses assumption of S. Korea's referral to UNSC

A ranking South Korean official on Friday argued it was too early to assume that the country will be referred to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for its past nuclear experiments. "The report was only a summary (of IAEA findings) based on simple facts and it contained no views of judgment," the official was quoted by Yonhap News Agency as saying on condition of anonymity, referring to a preliminary report by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on the country's recently revealed nuclear experiments. The IAEA on Thursday released a report following Seoul's admission in September to two one-off experiments in 1982 and 2000 that resulted in the production of 0.7 gram of plutonium and 0.2 gram of enriched uranium, saying South Korea's failure to report its experiments was a "matter of serious concern." The report, however, also acknowledged that the small amount of nuclear material produced as a result provided no links to a secret nuclear development program.

The Daily Times, 12 November 2004

India and Pakistan courting danger: Michel Krepon (Khalid Hasan)

WASHINGTON: India and Pakistan are traversing a very dangerous passage marked by periods of intense confrontation, while the offsetting of nuclear capabilities on the Subcontinent has made crisis avoidance and conflict resolution more imperative, but at the same time more difficult to achieve. According to Michel Krepon, "...crises have become more prevalent "under the nuclear shadow." "Some in Pakistan have sought to use conventional warfare, backed by nuclear weapons, to leverage a more favourable outcome of the Kashmir dispute," whereas India's "ill-advised policies" have given "ample opportunities for mischief-making in Kashmir." "He noted that so far India and Pakistan, like the US and USSR, have been fortunate to avoid a nuclear exchange and it is possible that this luck will hold and the two countries will make joint efforts to reduce nuclear risks. India and Pakistan also feel more confident since they have both acquired second strike capability. "It is, however, far too early to declare that the tide has turned and that offsetting nuclear capabilities have ushered in a new era of stability on the Subcontinent," he added.

The People's Daily, 13 November 2004

Settlement not referral needed for Iranian nuclear issue

The UN nuclear watchdog, the IAEA, will convene on Nov. 25 to mull Iran's nuclear issue, and solving the issue within the IAEA instead of referring it to the UN Security Council. On Nov. 6, Iran announced that a "preliminary agreement" had been reached between Tehran and the European Union (EU) after two days of "complicated and difficult but constructive and progressing" negotiations in Paris. The details of the "preliminary agreement" have been kept confidential so far, but a cautious optimism was touched off. Some diplomats said that Iran should submit its written statement about the compromise on uranium enrichment to the IAEA in a bid to gain a positive response from the agency, which would prevent the issue from being referred to the Security Council. On the contrary, The United States insists on its position that Iran's case should be

referred. It also expressed doubts about Iran's pledge on the suspension of its nuclear activities, saying that Tehran's commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear technology lacks fidelity.

The People's Daily, 13 November 2004

No conclusion reached at Iran-EU talks on nuclear deal

No conclusion was made here between Iran and the European Union (EU) over Tehran's suspension of some of its nuclear activities and talks would continue on Friday, a source close to the discussions said Thursday. The atmosphere of the talks was "positive," but no final deal was made, the source said. A Western diplomat close to the talks said Iran had asked for more concessions from the EU such as a resumption of frozen trade talks, a request turned down by the EU. Other obstacles to an agreement also included the length and extent of the suspension of enrichment activities.

The Nation, 13 November 2004

EU may reject Iranian bid to modify N-pact

VIENNA : EU officials may reject Iran's attempt to modify an offer for Tehran to suspend uranium enrichment in order to avoid possible UN sanctions over its nuclear programme, a Western diplomat said Friday. The European countries hope to strike an agreement under which Iran would suspend crucial nuclear fuel cycle activities, in return for the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) not sending the Iranian dossier to the UN Security Council, which can impose punishing sanctions. The EU trio was "debating internally whether to send Iran a point-by-point refutation of their reply, or to tell Iran that it must sign the (preliminary) agreement as is without 'side understandings,'" a Western diplomat told AFP, referring to a tentative accord worked out in Paris last week. The EU is seeking a suspension of all uranium enrichment-related activities until a long-term agreement is reached, no matter how long this takes. Iran wants the suspension limited to six months and for certain enrichment activities to still be allowed, diplomats said.

The Nation, 13 November 2004

South Korea happy with IAEA report on past N-experiments

SEOUL (AFP) - South Korea said Friday it was satisfied with a UN atomic energy agency report which showed that unauthorised nuclear experiments by government scientists went further than previously thought. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report showed that South Korean scientists conducted more secret nuclear experiments and on a wider scale than had previously been declared. The report, sent to the agency's 35-member board of governors, confirmed previous reports that South Korean scientists produced small amounts of plutonium in 1982 and enriched uranium in 2000 without informing the nuclear watchdog. It newly disclosed, however, that some of the uranium was enriched up to the 77 percent level, considered very high and close to weapons grade. It also disclosed that South Korea carried out "at least 10" laser enrichment related experiments between 1993 and 2000. Previously, South Korea had spoken of only three such experiments.

The Jang, 13 November 2004

WMD threaten global peace: Commission

VANCOUVER: A global lead agency is needed to deal with the threat of biological weapons getting into the wrong hands, Hans Blix told a meeting of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission which has spent three days here debating proliferation concerns. The international commission was set up last December by Sweden, and is due to report to the United Nations in 2006.

The Daily Times, 13 November 2004

Iran vows to resist pressure on N-plan

TEHRAN: Iran vowed on Friday it would "resist" unfair demands to limit parts of its suspect nuclear programme, as talks with Britain, France and Germany on resolving the standoff appeared to run into fresh difficulties. Speaking in a Friday prayer sermon, the top advisor to Iran's supreme leader called for "resistance" and complained that Tehran was subject to "idiotic and childish" demands. Iran was this week supposed to give its response to demands it halt its uranium enrichment in order to avoid being taken before the UN Security Council for possible sanctions. The terms of a preliminary accord were hammered out during two days of tough negotiations in Paris last week.

The Dawn, 14 November 2004

Hardline policy to be harmful: S. Korea - Warning to US over N. Korea

LOS ANGELES, Nov 13: South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun has issued a strong warning to the United States that a hardline US policy over North Korea's nuclear weapons would have "grave repercussions." Roh, speaking on Friday on a two-day visit to the United States, urged Washington instead to resume multilateral talks with North Korea and to reassure the communist state that it did not face an external threat and that the crisis would be resolved peacefully. The Bush administration's tough policy towards North Korea has put it at odds with Seoul in the past. Roh's comments on Friday focused attention on how Bush, re-elected last week on an aggressive foreign policy platform, ultimately aims to tackle the thorny problem.

The Jang, 14 November 2004

IAEA puts off report again as Iran-EU deal threatened

VIENNA: The UN atomic agency has postponed until Monday releasing a landmark report on Iran's nuclear program as EU officials pursue talks to save a deal for the Islamic Republic to suspend uranium enrichment and avoid possible UN sanctions, diplomats said. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Saturday postponed for a second time in the week the release of the report to give Iran more time to hand over a letter officials hope will announce a halt in uranium enrichment, a key process that makes nuclear fuel but also the explosive core for atomic bombs, diplomats said.

The People's Daily, 15 November 2004

Iran agrees to suspend uranium enrichment

Iran on Sunday pledged to the UN nuclear watchdog in writing to fully suspend uranium enrichment as part of a deal with the European Union (EU) to avoid possible UN Security Council sanctions. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Sunday received an official letter from Iran confirming that Tehran has agreed to suspend uranium enrichment, an IAEA spokesman said. The IAEA has been investigating Iran's nuclear program for more than two years. The board of governors of the IAEA approved a resolution on Sept. 18 demanding that Tehran suspend all activities related to uranium enrichment and clarify all pending nuclear program issues before the nuclear watchdog's meeting on Nov. 25.

The People's Daily, 15 November 2004

DPRK rebuts US allegation on nuclear talks

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on Saturday denied a US allegation that the DPRK only wants to hold direct bilateral talks with the United States for solving the nuclear issue of the DPRK, and reiterated that the key to solving the deadlocked issue is an end of Washington's hostile policy toward the DPRK. In August 2003, mediated by China, the United States, China, Japan and South Korea, along with Russia and the DPRK held the first round six-party talks in Beijing, aimed at realizing the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Up to June this year, three rounds of the six-party talks have been held, all in Beijing. The fourth round scheduled for September failed to take place. Pyongyang has said that the US turning down the proposal of "reward for freeze" advanced by the DPRK and applying "double standards" make the fourth round of the six-party talks abortive.

The Jang, 15 November 2004

EU welcomes N-enrichment suspension by Iran

VIENNA: The European Union (EU) has welcomed the decision by Iran to suspend its nuclear enrichment plans. The decision to suspend uranium enrichment would open a new chapter in the relations between Iran and EU. The diplomat said that EU is analyzing the details of the agreement. The International Atomic Energy Agency announced yesterday that Iran has agreed on completely suspending its nuclear enrichment program.

The Washington Post 15 November 2004

Desire for Nuclear Empowerment a Uniting Factor in Iran (Robin Wright)

TEHRAN: Iranians are deeply divided on politics, the economy, the role of religion in government and a dress code for women. But reformers and conservatives, urban and rural, old and young, rich and poor, and men and women generally agree on one thing: Iran needs nuclear energy, and despite its oil and gas riches, the world should not deprive it of the technology, even though it could also be used to develop weapons.

The People's Daily, 16 November 2004

Iran makes crucial compromise over nuclear case

After two months of complicated and difficult talks with the European Union (EU), Iran said on Monday that it would voluntarily suspend all activities related to uranium enrichment on Nov. 22, signalling Tehran's crucial compromise over its nuclear case. ...the two sides on Nov. 11 opened the sequel discussions in Tehran, which also met with difficulties. In the end, Iran made the crucial compromise on Sunday evening and announced the details on Monday, indicating that Iran plans to carry out a substantial suspension.

The People's Daily, 16 November 2004

US demands Iran have its nuclear promise implemented

The United States reacted cautiously Monday to a new promise by Iran to halt enrichment of uranium, stressing promises must be implemented. "We are making clear, this needs to be more than promises. This needs to be promises made and promises implemented," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher told a briefing here. Secretary of State Colin Powell described the Iranian letter to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna as "a little bit of progress, hopefully." However, Boucher told the news briefing that US officials would examine the agreement with the three European countries before taking a more definitive position.

The China Daily, 16 November 2004

No proof of Iran nuke bomb work -UN

Iran has not diverted any of the nuclear materials it declared to the U.N. nuclear watchdog to any prohibited activities, the watchdog said on Monday, but it could not rule out the existence of covert nuclear work.

The China Daily, 16 November 2004

U.N. OKs Iran deal to suspend enrichment

The U.N. nuclear watchdog agency Monday endorsed Iran's agreement to suspend all uranium enrichment within a week, the key element of a deal worked out with European countries. But the apparent victory for diplomacy falls short of U.S. demands for a permanent suspension - or scrapping - of Iranian activities that Washington asserts are meant to make nuclear weapons. Iran insists it only wants to generate electricity. The deal does not settle the enrichment issue and only buys Iran more time. The agreement commits Iran to suspend enrichment while it works out the details of an aid package with the Europeans or until negotiations collapse.

The China Daily, 16 November 2004

Thaw in sight over Iranian nuclear issue

Iran's latest announcement has basically satisfied the demands of the IAEA and the European Union. Thus, it will resolve a long-standing concern among the international community that the country's nuclear programme will be submitted to the UN Security Council, which would most likely lead UN sanctions against Iran. The United States has for a long time pushed for the settlement of the nuclear issue in the UN Security Council. Iran's referral to the UN Security Council would be another big breach of the basic principle, following Iraq's case, that it is the IAEA, not the Security Council, that serves as the biggest authority in solving nuclear disputes worldwide. It has also clearly shown that the international community's efforts to peacefully solve Iran's nuclear programme are paying off.

The Khaleej Times, 16 November 2004

EU nuclear deal with Iran puts hardline US on spot: analysts

VIENNA: The EU deal that got Iran to freeze key nuclear activities puts the United States on the spot since Washington must now decide whether to continue confronting Iran as an enemy or join Europe in trying to engage it, analysts and diplomats told AFP. The United States charges that Iran is secretly developing nuclear weapons and wants Tehran to be brought before the Security Council. But Iran's agreement to suspend uranium enrichment to prove its peaceful intentions, and the IAEA's inability to find a "smoking gun" proving Tehran's alleged atomic weapons intentions after a nearly two-year investigation, leave the United States with almost no chance of convincing the 35 member states of the IAEA's board of governors to punish Iran.

The Korea Herald, 16 November 2004

Roh seeks more active role in nuke issue

BUENOS AIRES - President Roh Moo-hyun is ready to take a more active role in resolving the North Korean nuclear issue to prevent the tension from either escalating or being dragged on under U.S. President George Bush's second-term, political analysts said Monday. Roh's remarks, which have continued since the beginning of his 12-day trip to South America on Friday, invited severe criticism from opposition and conservative forces, who accused Roh of lacking security consciousness. The South Korean and U.S. governments have different perceptions on the North's nuclear weapons development, with Seoul focusing more on the North's desperateness for survival, and the Bush administration seeing the issue within the context of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The People's Daily, 17 November 2004

Iran's concession on nuclear issue crucial but not conclusive

Iran has made a substantial concession on its uranium enrichment, which is crucial but far from conclusive to the settlement of the country's nuclear case as uncertainty remains concerning the prospects of Iran's nuclear issue. The text of the Iran-EU agreement, it is stressed that the suspension, even very comprehensive, is a voluntary move. Taking into account Iran's repeated stance that voluntary suspension can be resumed anytime, one can easily understand that the claim of "voluntary move" is not only for saving face. Since the IAEA began investigation on Iran's nuclear case, the country has been accustomed to making necessary compromises to avoid an impasse when the situation presents disadvantages to it. However, Iran's past records show that soon after the pressure is relieved, the hardliners of the country would adopt some backward steps or make some new demands.

The People's Daily, 17 November 2004

Why does Iran make concession on its nuclear issue: Comment

Iran submitted a written statement to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog, on 14 October stating that it would fully suspend its uranium enrichment activities. Some diplomats believed that Iran once again made an on-time compromise at a crucial moment when IAEA was about to mull over Iran's nuclear issue at the convention, a major concession made under the European Union's (EU) "The Carrot and The Stick" policy. Some diplomats noted that Iran was apparently trying to gain the initiative as the international community was making great effort to peacefully solve the Iran's nuclear issue. But the final solution was so far still in the air mainly due to the US's long-time hostile policies toward Iran and the IAEA gradually became a diplomatic battlefield for Iran and the US.

The Nation, 17 November 2004

Qaeda wants to smuggle N-material to US

WASHINGTON: Al-Qaeda has considered plans to smuggle nuclear material into the United States through neighboring Mexico, an Egyptian operative from the extremist group told interrogators after his capture in Pakistan, Time magazine reported Monday. Sharif al-Masri, who was captured late August near Pakistan's border with Iran and Afghanistan, has told interrogators of "al-Qaeda's interest in moving nuclear materials from Europe to either the US or Mexico," according to a report circulating among US government officials, the weekly magazine reported.

The Dawn, 17 November 2004

Iran's N-deal hinges on US engagement (Paul Taylor)

BRUSSELS: Europe has taken a first step to rein in Iran's nuclear ambitions, but only engagement by the United States may dissuade Tehran in the long term from seeking atomic weapons, if anything can, diplomats say. Under a deal unveiled on Monday, Tehran agreed to freeze all activity related to enrichment, including making equipment and processing materials, in return for talks on peaceful nuclear cooperation and resumed negotiations on a trade and aid pact. An EU diplomat said the Europeans sought to move forward with the "advice and consent" of the United States, which was an important factor although it was not a party to the agreement.

The New York Times, 17 November 2004

Group Says Iran Has Secret Nuclear Arms Program (DOUGLAS JEHL)

WASHINGTON, Nov. 16: An Iranian opposition group says it has new evidence that Iran is producing enriched uranium at a covert Defense Ministry facility in Tehran that has not been disclosed to United Nations inspectors. The group, the National Council for Resistance in Iran, is planning to announce its finding in Paris on Wednesday. A spokesman in Washington for the National Council for Resistance in Iran provided a seven-page summary of the assertion to The New York Times. It says that the previously undisclosed site, in northeastern Tehran, covers 60 acres and houses biological and chemical warfare projects as well as nuclear activity. It says that the site, known as the Modern Defensive Readiness and Technology Center, now houses operations previously carried out at another Defense Ministry site in Tehran that was destroyed by the Iranian government this year before international inspectors could visit it.

The New York Times, 17 November 2004

Nuclear Deal With Iranians Has Angered Hard-Liners (NAZILA FATHI)

TEHRAN, Nov. 16: Iran's hard-line Parliament reacted angrily on Tuesday to a complex deal reached with Germany, France and Britain over the nation's nuclear activities. "We agreed to make 13 precise commitments while the Europeans only made four vague ones," Ahmad Tavakoli, one of the hard-liners, fumed during a noisy Parliament session on Monday. From the Europeans' perspective, the deal fell short of the comprehensive arrangement they had sought to permanently stop Iran from enriching uranium, a crucial step in the production of nuclear weapons.

The New York Times, 17 November 2004

EDITORIAL Iran Blinks

Nobody knows whether Iran is really ready to give up its ambitions to have nuclear weapons, but its commitment on Monday to freeze all uranium enrichment work and invite back international inspectors is a welcome step toward nuclear sanity. Iran will not be fully in the clear until it agrees to more long-term arrangements, including a permanent end to uranium enrichment and the ratification of an agreement permitting international nuclear inspectors to look wherever they choose without prior warning. The fact that Iran agreed to these terms after several days of hesitation strongly suggests that even the hard-liners now ascendant in Tehran are susceptible to economic appeals. Some of them clearly understand that without increased foreign trade and investment to generate more jobs for a rapidly expanding labor force, the mullahs' grip on power could be threatened.

The Washington Post, 17 November 2004

Khatami Warns Europe Over Nuclear Deal (ALI AKBAR DAREINI)

TEHRAN, Iran: Iranian President Mohammad Khatami called a nuclear deal reached with European nations a "great victory" but said Wednesday that Tehran won't respect its commitment if Europeans fail to support his country at a U.N. nuclear watchdog meeting next week. The deal has prompted strong criticism by hard-liners who have accused the government of ignoring Iran's rights. The deal also prompted conservative lawmakers to summon Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Hasan Rowhani, to parliament Tuesday to question him over the agreement.

The Hindu, 17 November 2004

From confrontation to cooperation (Michael Krepon)

When India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapon designs in 1998, many strategic analysts offered optimistic assessments that a new era of stability would shine on the Subcontinent. These hopes were premature. One reason why crises have become more prevalent under the nuclear shadow is that some in Pakistan have sought to use unconventional warfare, backed by nuclear weapons, to leverage a more favourable outcome of the Kashmir dispute. A second reason is that India's ill-advised policies have given ample opportunities for mischief making in Kashmir.

The Hindustan Times, 17 November 2004

No proof of secret Iranian N-programme: IAEA

Vienna, November 16: The UN atomic watchdog said it has found no proof of a secret Iranian nuclear weapons programme but could not yet conclude there was no covert activity, as Iran pledged to suspend uranium enrichment to prove its peaceful intentions. In a confidential report, the International Atomic Energy Agency said on Monday that while Iran had been guilty of breaching international safeguards, almost two years of inspection had uncovered no proof of an illicit weapons programme. The UN atomic watchdog said it has found no proof of a secret Iranian nuclear weapons programme but could not yet conclude there was no covert activity, as Iran pledged to suspend uranium enrichment to prove its peaceful intentions. In a confidential report, the International Atomic Energy Agency said on Monday that while Iran had been guilty of breaching international safeguards, almost two years of inspection had uncovered no proof of an illicit weapons programme.

The Korea herald, 17 November 2004

[EDITORIAL] Iran and North Korea

Now that Iran, following Libya's example, has announced suspension of its nuclear program, the world hopes North Korea will follow suit. As the two countries are in wildly different situations, a little more patience will be needed to hear a similar announcement from Pyongyang. North Korea is believed to have a more advanced nuclear weapons program than Iran and Libya, so it may seek bigger compensation in any form for its abandonment. But Pyongyang should realize that a delay in resolving the nuclear problem would henceforth mean a greater risk to its security, and that one or two nuclear bombs could never have guaranteed its security in the first place.

The Asahi Shimbun, 17 November 2004

EDITORIAL: Iran's nuclear program

A potential diplomatic breakthrough has emerged that may lead to a peaceful settlement of the mounting international dispute over Iran's nuclear program. Iran has struck a deal with Britain, France and Germany, the three European countries that have been laboring to engineer a diplomatic solution to a problem that is nearing a crisis point. Iran has agreed to freeze uranium enrichment and processing activities in return for technological support and cooperation on the trade front from Europe. While it won't dispel all suspicions about the country's nuclear ambitions, the agreement could be a springboard for further progress in talks. This opportunity should be grabbed to bring about a solution to the dangerous situation. There are many reasons why a diplomatic solution to the issue is so important. First, referring the case to the Security Council, as Washington calls for, would not improve the prospect of an early settlement of the dispute. Voices warning about the security threat posed by Iran are likely to grow dominant within the U.S. administration during the second term of President George W. Bush, pushing the administration toward a hard-line policy vis-a-vis Tehran.

The Khaleej Times, 17 November 2004

Iran says nuclear suspension may last only a few months

TEHERAN: A senior Iranian official said on Wednesday that Teheran was only likely to suspend sensitive nuclear activities surrounding the enrichment of uranium for a few months. "We will give the nuclear experts of both sides three months. If the work groups reach an agreement, suspension will not make any sense anymore," diplomat and nuclear negotiator Hossein Mousavian told state television. "Within three to four months at the most, we should reach a stage where we have an overall conclusion. If they come to no conclusion or say the only visible guarantee would be to halt enrichment altogether, Iran will not accept this," he added. Mousavian's comments also come amid pressure on pragmatists in the Iranian regime from hardliners in parliament, who have blasted the deal with the Europeans as a climbdown.

The People's Daily, 18 November 2004

Russia developing new generation nuclear missile systems

President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday that Russia is developing a new type of nuclear missile system which no other nuclear powers possess, the Interfax news agency reported. While Putin did not disclose the type of nuclear weapon being developed, news reports have speculated that Russia is working on a next-generation heavy nuclear missile capable of carrying up to 10 nuclear warheads weighing 4.4 ton. The current generation Topol-M missiles are limited to a 1.3-ton combat payload. Since 2001 when the US government announced it was abandoning the 1972 ABM Treaty with Moscow in order to develop a new missile defense shield, Russia has been seeking to upgrade its nuclear arsenal. Putin has repeatedly vowed to restore Russia's military power which declined due to budgetary constraints following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The China Daily, 18 November 2004

Bush wants to get N. Korea nuke talks going

US President Bush plans to urge allies at an Asia-Pacific summit in Chile this weekend to press North Korea to return to stalled talks over its nuclear weapons program, senior U.S. officials said on Wednesday. The United States, China, Japan, South Korea and Russia have been trying for more than two years to persuade North Korea to drop its nuclear programs, but the talks have been inconclusive. North Korea declined to attend a meeting in September and was believed to be waiting to see whether Bush was defeated for re-election by Democratic Sen. John Kerry, who had vowed to hold direct talks with Pyongyang if he won. Bush will attempt to revive the negotiations when he goes to Santiago, Chile, on Friday for the annual summit of the 21-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

The People's Daily, 18 November 2004

Russia-Iran nuclear cooperation depends on Iran-IAEA relations: Russian official

Iran's relations with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will have an important bearing on the country's future nuclear cooperation for peaceful uses with Russia, a senior Russian official said Wednesday, Itar-Tass reported.

The China Daily, 18 November 2004

Iran may seek to mate missile, nuclear warhead - US

The United States has seen information suggesting Iran is working on the technology to deliver a nuclear warhead on a missile, US Secretary of State Colin Powell said on Wednesday. The United States accuses Iran of seeking to develop nuclear weapons and wants the matter to be addressed by the U.N. Security Council, which could impose sanctions. Tehran says its nuclear program is aimed at generating electricity. Powell's disclosure came as the United States and the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency -- the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency -- jockeyed over Iran's nuclear program. On Tuesday, the IAEA, summarizing its two-year probe of Iran's nuclear activities, said Tehran had not diverted any of its declared nuclear materials to a weapons program.

The Nation, 18 November 2004

'AQ gave Iran uranium in 2001'

VIENNA :The father of the Pakistani atomic bomb, Abdul Qadeer Khan, delivered in 2001 weapons grade highly enriched uranium to Iran which plans to use it to build a nuclear bomb next year, an Iranian opposition group claimed in Vienna Wednesday. "Dr Khan has delivered a quantity of HEU to Iran in 2001", Farid Soleimani, a senior official of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, said at a Press conference in Vienna. He said the Iranians have also received nuclear weapons designs from the Khan black market network.

The Dawn, 18 November 2004

US readies missile defence system

WASHINGTON, Nov 17: The US missile defence system is still on track to go on alert by the end of this year and key military commands are conducting "shakedown exercises" in preparation, a defence spokesman said on Wednesday. But the spokesman said the US system is not designed to protect against long-range attack from either China or Russia. US ground-based interceptor missiles are being installed in Alaska and California primarily to defend against a limited attack by a "rogue power", such as North Korea. The United States also has proposed a third interceptor site somewhere in Europe to expand coverage against missiles fired from the Middle East...By the end of 2005, the numbers of ground-based missile interceptors are scheduled to grow to 28 at both the Alaska and California launch sites. By 2007, the agency also plans to have 18 Aegis warships armed with new and faster missiles capable of intercepting and destroying medium range missiles. Already two Aegis warships have been deployed in waters off North Korea to serve as platforms for forward radars for the missile defence system.

The International Herald Tribune, 18 November 18, 2004

Guide North Korea away from the brink (Gareth Evans)

SEOUL: The highest priority for the new Bush national security team - right up there alongside Iraq and Israel-Palestine - must be to forge an effective policy toward North Korea, one that transcends Washington's internal divisions, focuses single-mindedly on the immediate nuclear proliferation crisis, and unites its negotiating partners, China, South Korea, Japan and Russia. North Korea remains the least accessible, least understood and potentially most dangerous of the world's countries of concern. No one can be completely confident that it will ever accept a deal, however objectively reasonable, to eliminate its nuclear weapons program in return for security guarantees, comprehensive economic support and normalization of its international relations. But the only way to find out is to put such a deal on the table.

The Japan Times, 18 November 2004

EDITORIAL Iran strikes another nuclear deal

Iran has agreed to suspend its nuclear programs while it continues negotiations with European nations on the future of those efforts. While the government in Tehran is pleased with the results of the discussions, other nations, worried about the possible proliferation of nuclear weapons, should be more cautious. This is the second deal the parties have signed; the speed with which the first came apart is grounds for concern. In addition, contrary to many reports, Iran has not agreed to end its nuclear program, merely to suspend it. The final outcome will show how serious the world is about halting the spread of nuclear weapons.

The Nation, 19 November 2004

Iran denies running secret nuclear site

Tehran (AFP): Iran on Thursday angrily denied allegations by an exiled opposition group that it was running a secret nuclear bomb facility near Tehran, and indicated that UN inspectors would be allowed to visit the site. "I totally deny these allegations. This site is not a nuclear site and has nothing to do with our nuclear activities. Iran has no undeclared nuclear activities," top diplomat and nuclear negotiator Hossein Moussavian told AFP.

The Dawn, 19 November 2004

Afghan war forced US to accept Pakistan's N-plan, says book

A new book on the CIA's role in Afghanistan and Pakistan, "This Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan and bin Laden", reveals how security needs often forced the US administration to bend its professed foreign policy goals such as non-proliferation. The softening of the US policy towards Pakistan's nuclear programme followed the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan in 1979, the book says. Soon after the invasion, Mr Brzezinski wrote to President Carter: "This will require a review of our policy towards Pakistan, more guarantees to it, more arms aid, and, alas, a decision that our security policy toward Pakistan cannot be dictated by our non-proliferation policy." The book also reveals how the Clinton and Bush administrations missed several chances to target Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

The Nation, 19 November 2004

Editorial An alarming allegation

An Iranian dissident group's allegation that Dr A.Q. Khan "delivered a quantity of HEU (highly enriched uranium) to Iran in 2001" is yet another attempt to flog the dead horse of proliferation by the Pakistani scientist and at the same time drag the name of the Pakistan government into the forbidden trade. We must remember that Western proliferation concerns, particularly of the US, come only second to its terrorism worries. When Washington feels it has succeeded in containing the threat of terrorism, it would inevitably turn its attention to proliferation. Then the US would no longer stand in need of Islamabad's favours and may well train its guns on Pakistan for its 'misdeeds,' unleashing economic and military sanctions and whatnot. We can also be certain that India will do its best to feed Western paranoia on this point.

The Dawn, 19 November 2004

US pressures EU to toughen Iran draft

VIENNA, Nov 18: France, Britain and Germany are drafting a resolution on Iran for a key meeting of the U.N. nuclear watchdog next week and Washington is pushing the trio to include some tough language, diplomats said on Thursday. Diplomats said Washington would like the Europeans to include a so-called "trigger mechanism" in the resolution that would set the stage for a referral to the Security Council if Iran resumed activities linked to uranium enrichment or was found to be hiding any more sites from the IAEA. But they said the EU three would prefer to avoid any harsh US-backed language that

could disrupt the delicate talks aimed at persuading Tehran to permanently abandon enrichment.

The Dawn, 19 November 2004

Editorial Iran's right move

Iran has done well by agreeing to a suspension of its uranium enrichment programme. The move comes in the wake of a qualified declaration by the International Atomic Energy Agency that Iran was not trying to manufacture nuclear weapons. The decision gives several advantages to Iran. First, the suspension has put Britain, France and Germany on the defensive. The European three now have no reason to complain of non-cooperation by Iran on the nuclear issue. The decision has paved the way for the signing of the much-awaited deal with the European Union. Second, the freeze decision will enable Iran to get nuclear technology for peaceful purposes from the EU. In fact, nuclear technology will come to Iran as part of an EU package that may include better trade terms. Third, and more important, the issue will not go to the Security Council. The US has been keen on taking it to the council, where it can have an anti-Iran resolution passed.

The Hindu, 19 November 2004

New nuclear missile system has no parallel: Russia (Vladimir Radyuhin)

MOSCOW, NOV. 18: Russia is building four new types of nuclear-capable missiles, a Defence Ministry source said today. He was commenting on the President, Vladimir Putin's sensational announcement on Wednesday that in the next few years Russia would deploy brand new nuclear missile systems that would put it years ahead of any other nuclear powers. The Defence Ministry source confirmed that Russia was indeed developing and testing "fundamentally new systems of missile weapons, both nuclear and conventional." The source disclosed that the new weapon systems included one short-range and three long-range nuclear-capable missiles. All three are reportedly designed to penetrate the National Missile Defence system under development in the U.S.

The People's Daily, 20 November 2004

US claims to have "solid information" about Iran's WMD programs

The US government on Friday defended Secretary of State Colin Powell's comments this week on Iranian missile projects, saying it has "solid information to substantiate clandestine Iranian efforts" in developing weapons of mass destruction. The State Department official made the remarks after the Washington Post reported Friday that Powell's information had been based on what one senior official called an "unvetted, single source" and said that many in the Washington intelligence community had been caught by surprise and angered by the secretary's disclosure.

The China Daily, 20 November 2004

Iran readies uranium for nuke enrichment-Diplomats

Iran is preparing large amounts of uranium for enrichment, a process that can be used to make nuclear weapons, days before its promise to freeze all such activities takes effect, Western diplomats said on Friday. "The Iranians are producing UF6 (uranium hexafluoride) like hell," a diplomat on the governing board of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) told Reuters. "The machines are running." UF6 is the form of uranium that is fed into gas centrifuges, which purify uranium for use as fuel in nuclear power plants or weapons, by spinning at supersonic speeds. Iran had promised the European Union it would freeze enrichment as of Nov 22.

The Nation, 20 November 2004

Nuclear security and terrorism (ALEXANDER DOWNER)

Nuclear terrorism is a dreadful prospect but a threat that is real. The September 11 attacks show that terrorists will not hesitate to inflict mass casualties in populated areas, killing themselves in the process. The only limitation on the horror they are prepared to unleash is the weaponry they can use. And we now know that the 9/11 hijackers considered targeting American nuclear installations. While the exercise is traumatic, none of us would find it too difficult to visualise the terrible human and economic damage from a nuclear explosion in a city. The cost would be horrific and ongoing. Fortunately, this most dangerous form of nuclear terrorism is made less likely by the difficulties terrorists would have in acquiring the necessary fissile material and expertise.

The Nation, 20 November 2004

Iran's nukes and the West (JAVID HUSAIN)

According to the latest reports, Iran has reached an agreement with France, Germany and UK, under which it would freeze all uranium enrichment and nuclear reprocessing activities until it reaches a final agreement with the EU over a package of economic, technological and security incentives in return for objective guarantees that it will not make nuclear weapons. The agreement also recognizes Iran's rights under the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty without discrimination. Earlier reports regarding the deal had indicated that there were some snags like Iran's insistence on continuing converting raw uranium into uranium tetrafluoride (UF4), a precursor to uranium hexafluoride (UF6), which is fed into centrifuges to enrich it for use as fuel in nuclear power reactors or for making nuclear weapons. But it appears that Iran has agreed to drop this demand in view of the opposition by the EU troika.

The Daily Times, 20 November 2004

Iran using lasers to enrich uranium

PARIS: An Iranian exile group accused Tehran on Friday of using advanced laser technology to secretly enrich uranium and of lying to the United Nations nuclear watchdog body about the covert programme. The opposition group, which gave accurate information before and made other accusations on Wednesday, said Iran was making bomb-grade uranium at the Lavizan facility in Tehran it disclosed two days ago, and at Parchin, 30 km from the capital.

The Dawn, 20 November 2004

US experts want to quiz Dr Khan

WASHINGTON, Nov 19: The United States and the European Union should use their influence on Pakistan to allow international nuclear experts to interview Dr A. Q. Khan, US nuclear experts told a congressional briefing in Washington. David Albright, a physicist and former arms inspector, and Kenneth Pollack, former CIA analyst, told US lawmakers on Thursday that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would never learn how close Iran was to making nuclear weapons without interviewing Dr Khan. The briefing on Iran's nuclear program was attended by lawmakers from both Republican and Democratic parties, besides senior officials, academics, journalists, diplomats and lobbyists.

The Daily Times, 20 November 2004

Bush seeks support against terrorists, Korean nukes

KILLEEN: US President George W Bush, meeting with Asian-Pacific leaders, is seeking more international backing to both persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons ambitions and to take concrete steps to cripple terrorist networks around the world. In short, the agenda Bush takes to this weekend's annual 21-nation summit of Pacific Rim leaders looks much like it did last year - and the year before that.

The Washington Post, 21 November 2004

Bush Toughens Line On Nuclear Threats President Singles Out Iran, N. Korea (Mike Allen and Robin Wright)

SANTIAGO, Chile, Nov. 20: President Bush said Saturday that he believes Iran is continuing to pursue a nuclear weapon, which he called "a very serious matter," and said he had won pledges from Asian allies to increase pressure on North Korea's leader to restart disarmament talks. During his reelection campaign, Bush said little about the two nuclear threats. But with aides contending that his victory gave him new international leverage, he took confrontational lines with both countries, insisting they disarm but pledging to pursue that goal diplomatically.

The Hindu, 21 November 2004

Iran move threatens nuclear deal with E.U. (Ian Traynor and Suzanne Goldenberg- © Guardian Newspapers Limited 2004)

WASHINGTON, NOV. 20: A breakthrough deal between Iran and the E.U. aimed at defusing an international crisis over Teheran's alleged nuclear ambitions was thrown into uncertainty last night when diplomats said Iran was rushing to process feed material for bomb-grade uranium. Under last weekend's agreement, Iran is to freeze all aspects of its uranium enrichment programme from Monday. But citing sources within the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, diplomatic sources said Iran was "going all out" ahead of Monday to process uranium concentrate into uranium hexafluoride, the gas that is spun through centrifuge machines to produce nuclear fuel or warhead material. The Iranian move, if confirmed, could wreck the agreement and set the scene for a stormy meeting of the IAEA's 35-strong board next week. Iran said the suggestion was "a lie". But diplomats monitoring its nuclear programme said the activity was a clear act of bad faith.

The People's Daily, 22 November 2004

Chinese, US presidents meet on ties, Korean nuclear issue

Chinese President Hu Jintao said on Saturday that China and the United States have made progress in their constructive relationship of cooperation in the past four years and that China will work for the steady development of bilateral ties during US President George W. Bush's second term. Meanwhile, the two leaders agreed to resolve the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula through dialogue and peaceful means. Hu told Bush that China is for a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula and a peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue through dialogue so as to maintain peace and stability on the peninsula. The nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula is complicated and all parties concerned should show patience, flexibility and sincerity in resolving this issue, Hu said. Bush said that the United States appreciates China's positive role in resolving the Korean nuclear issue, and that the United States would continue to advance the six-party talks for a peaceful solution of the problem. The six-party talks involve China, the United States, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), South Korea, Japan and Russia. So far, three rounds of the talks have been held in Beijing.

The Nation, 22 November 2004

N-fears inject new global security concern

SANTIAGO : Asia-Pacific leaders Sunday wrap up an annual summit, falling in line behind US President George W. Bush's "war on terror" and backing his anti-nuclear drive against North Korea and Iran. Nuclear fears injected a new scale of concern over global security. After meeting Saturday with leaders of China, Japan, South Korea and Russia, Bush said they had a joint message for North Korea: "Get rid of your nuclear weapons programs." A senior White House aide said North Korean officials had let China know in recent weeks that Pyongyang was prepared to return to talks aimed at ending a nuclear weapons crisis, but "when, or how, or who, they did not say."

The Nation, 22 November 2004

Sinister pressure

HARD on the heels of an inspired, though obviously outlandish, allegation by an obscure Iranian dissident group that Dr A.Q. Khan's clandestine nuclear proliferation network had delivered highly enriched uranium to Tehran, two US experts have floated the idea that without interviewing the Pakistani scientist the International Atomic Energy Agency could never know the extent to which Iran has progressed in developing atomic weapons. It is a great pity that despite having extended wholehearted cooperation to the US in its war on international terrorism, whose ulterior motive of hegemonic control of the Middle East and Central Asia has never been in doubt, and which conflicts with Pakistan's own interests, the Pakistan government continues to have an image problem with US experts who have a big say in formulating the country's policies.

The Dawn, 22 November 2004

Iran will freeze enrichment

TEHRAN, Nov 21: Iran promised to meet Monday's deadline for suspending a uranium enrichment process that could be used for making nuclear weapons - a freeze that could spare it UN Security Council sanctions. "We will start suspension of uranium enrichment activities from tomorrow on, as we promised," Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi told a weekly news conference on Sunday.

The Daily Times, 22 November 2004

North Korea vows to bolster deterrence against US 'N-threat'

SEOUL: North Korea on Sunday vowed to bolster its defences against what it called the threat of nuclear war from the United States. Rodong Sinmun, the newspaper and official mouthpiece for the ruling communist party, made the pledge one day after US President George W Bush repeated a call for Pyongyang to drop its drive for nuclear weapons. "The DPRK (North Korea) will make sustained efforts to beef up its self-defensive deterrent force as long as the US persists in its attempt to stifle the DPRK with nuclear weapons," Rodong said.

The Khaleej Times, 22 November 2004

Test for Teheran

AND you thought the crisis over Iran was over. If vibes from Washington are anything to go by, things are only heating up now. Even as Iran and Europe congratulated each other last week on clinching a deal on shelving Iran's nuclear programme, Washington hawks prepared for an Iranian adventure. The EU celebration has been shadowed by the US accusations against Iran. Washington has alleged that Iran is rushing to enrich uranium ahead of the IAEA deadline to resurrect the nuclear weapon programme at a later stage. In fact, the Pentagon hawks are openly talking of military action against Iran including strikes against its leadership and political-strategic targets.

The New York Times, 22 November

Doubts Persist on Iran Nuclear Arms Goals (DOUGLAS JEHL and WILLIAM J. BROAD)

WASHINGTON, Nov. 19: Despite having collected substantial information about Iran's nuclear and weapons programs over the last several years, Western officials have limited intelligence about the crucial question of whether Tehran is trying to meld those two programs to produce a nuclear warhead that can be carried by a missile, administration officials said Friday. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell said this week that he had seen intelligence indicating that Iran was "working hard" to produce a functioning nuclear-tipped missile. American officials said Friday that while such an effort would not be surprising, it would be significant if the new intelligence is true. But they suggested the intelligence had come from a single source and had not yet been verified, a detail first reported by The Washington Post.

The Asahi Shimbun, 22 November 2004

Quick missile defense eyed (TAKETSUGU SATO)

WASHINGTON: Defense Agency Director-General Yoshinori Ono said Saturday that his agency will propose legal revisions to speed the process of mobilizing Self-Defense Forces to deal with a missile attack. Speaking with reporters in Washington, Ono said the agency plans to submit during the regular session of the Diet due to convene next January amendments to laws covering SDF mobilization. Under current law, members of the Cabinet and Japan's Security Council must approve an SDF mobilization. Also, to deal with a missile attack, the prime minister must give a direct order to mobilize the SDF.

The People's Daily, 23 November 2004

IAEA head confirms Iran has frozen its sensitive nuclear work

Iran on Monday froze its sensitive nuclear work including uranium enrichment, the United Nations atomic watchdog IAEA said in Vienna. Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), confirmed the suspension, a move likely to spoil US efforts to refer to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions against the Islamic republic. The top UN inspector welcomed Iran's announcement that it is suspending uranium enrichment activity from Monday as "a step in the right direction". He said he was confident that Iran's weapons program is under control, but cautioned at the same time that there was still more work to be done.

The Nation, 23 November 2004

IAEA to verify Iran enrichment halt

VIENNA: The International Atomic Energy Agency should be able to verify Iran's announced suspension of uranium enrichment activity by Thursday, when the agency meets at its headquarters in Vienna to decide on Iran's nuclear program, its chief Mohamed ElBaradei told journalists Monday. Iran has promised to suspend all uranium enrichment activities by Thursday and ElBaradei said: "I think pretty much everything has come to a halt right now so we are just trying to make sure that everything has been stopped. Hopefully by Thursday I should be able to report that we've verified the suspension," ElBaradei told reporters.

The Daily Times, 23 November 2004

UN referral an option if Iran reneges on enrichment

BRUSSELS: The EU's three big powers may still refer Iran to the UN Security Council if it goes back on an agreement to suspend the enrichment of uranium, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said on Monday. "If there is a failure by Iran to meet its obligations then Britain and also Germany and France reserve our collective right to refer the matter to the Security Council," he told reporters as he arrived for talks with his European Union counterparts. The United States has led calls for

Iran to face sanctions, accusing the oil-rich Islamic Republic of trying to develop atomic weapons behind the veil of a civilian nuclear programme.

The Daily Times, 23 November 2004

S Korea sends team to IAEA meeting over past N-breaches

SEOUL: South Korea on Monday sent a team of officials to a meeting of the UN nuclear watchdog in Vienna in an attempt to stop the body referring past breaches of nuclear safeguards to the UN Security Council. The 12-member team led by Vice Foreign Minister Choi Young-Jin left for Vienna where the board of governors at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is to meet on November 25 to discuss the issue. "(The delegation) will actively convince the board members that the inspections of South Korea's nuclear experiments should not be subject to a report to the UN Security Council," Choi said before departure.

The Daily Times, 23 November 2004

UN official says North Korea committed to nuclear talks

BEIJING: North Korea remains committed to using six-party talks to defuse a crisis over its nuclear weapons programmes, but only if certain conditions are met, a UN official said on Monday after visiting the reclusive state. Jean Ping, president of the United Nations General Assembly, made the comments in Beijing after holding three days of talks in Pyongyang with North Korea's second-in-command Kim Yong-nam and Foreign Minister Paek Nam-sun. "They are committed to this process, and to the form of the process, the Beijing six-party talks, so this definitely is an assurance," Ping told Reuters in an interview. The United States, China, Japan, South Korea and Russia have been trying to persuade North Korea to drop its nuclear programmes, but talks have been inconclusive and a round slated for September was never held, raising questions about the North's commitment

The Dawn, 23 November 2004

EU carrot, not the US stick (Ian Black)

Buried under an avalanche of events as the world adjusts to George Bush's second term, Palestine without Arafat, and mayhem in Iraq, there was some rare, and important, good news last week: Europeans, acting together, and largely ignoring American wishes, persuaded Iran to stop processing uranium, a key stage in the production of nuclear weapons. The immediate effect will be to prevent Tehran from being referred to the UN security council for concealing its nuclear programmes, to stave off the threat of sanctions and forestall the possibility of US military action against the Islamic republic - included in Bush's "axis of evil". It is unlike governments not to crow over such a success. British diplomats like to say, with bogus self-deprecation, that they don't "do triumphalism". But by quietly working together, Britain, France and Germany - the EU's "big three" - have pulled off something of a coup.

The Korea Herald, 23 November 2004

[Seoul Searcher] Nuclear bombs for defense?

It would be an exaggeration, I must admit, if I said I've lost some sleep in the past, worrying about North Korea's reported efforts to build nuclear weapons. But the feeling of uneasiness, if not insidious anxiety, has always been at the back of my mind as we have been constantly reminded of North Korea's nuclear threat. I'm sure I am not alone. With a bold and sweeping stroke, however, President Roh Moo-hyun tried to dispel those concerns when he declared in Log Angeles the other day, that there was a "reasonable" side to North Korea's claim that it was developing nuclear weapons for self-defense. The North, in other words, is not making nuclear bombs to kill us or anyone else. Nor is it going to use them to threaten the South and other countries or extort money or food from them.

The People's Daily, 24 November 2004

Iran will never prepare to dismantle nuclear program entirely, spokesman

An Iranian spokesman said Wednesday in Beijing that Iran will never prepare to dismantle its nuclear program entirely but pledges further cooperation with the international community. "Iran has the right to pursue the peaceful use of nuclear energy," said Seyed Hussin Mussavain, one of Iranian main negotiators for nuclear issue talks with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), when briefing a press conference in Iran's embassy in China. Iran will have "active" and "proactive" cooperation with the IAEA and oppose to bringing the issue to the United Nations Security Council, he said, noting Iran has committed to and implemented the NPT (Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons) safe code and protocols.

The People's Daily, 24 November 2004

US to deploy "Star War" system in Europe within five years

According to British newspaper The Independent, US plans to deploy "Star War" missile defence system in Europe within five years, which can house at least ten missiles. Meanwhile, the US Defence Ministry has also decided to build a new missile defence base in Europe, which is now being planned. The commander of US Missile Defence Troops officially unveiled the plan in a press interview that the US will purchase missiles next October for a new missile defence base in Europe and decide in which country the base is likely to be set up.

The Daily Times, 24 November 2004

Bush wants verification of Iran nuclear claim

WASHINGTON: US President George W Bush cautiously welcomed Iran's pledge to freeze all uranium enrichment work, saying "I hope it's true" but insisting on international verification. "It looks like there is some progress, but to determine whether or not the progress is real there must be verification," he said during a joint public appearance with Colombian President Alvaro Uribe. "We look forward to seeing that verification," said Bush, who has long charged that oil-rich Iran does not need

civilian nuclear power and therefore must be using its atomic programmes as cover for a secret weapons programme. "Let's say I hope it's true," said the US president, adding that verification of that claim was needed if the Iranians were to "earn the trust of those of us worried about them developing a nuclear weapon."

The Dawn, 24 November 2004

Coping with nuclear proliferation (Ian Traynor)

Iran's decision to freeze the enrichment of uranium, implemented on Monday under intense international pressure, appears to have stalled for the time being the mullahs' moves towards obtaining the key ingredient for a nuclear bomb. The truce in the 18-month dispute between Iran and the west buys time for both sides - for Iran to perfect its techniques in readiness for switching the machines back on should its pact with the EU break down, and for the nuclear inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency and western governments to keep probing the Iranian operations and learn more about a 20-year-old programme. The threat of nuclear weapons spreading to hostile regimes is one of the most formidable challenges confronting President George W. Bush as he enters his second and final term.

The Jang, 24 November 2004

US, Iran heading for diplomatic showdown at IAEA

VIENNA: The United States and Iran were headed for a diplomatic showdown at the UN nuclear watchdog, with Washington demanding Tehran be threatened with tough action if it resumes atomic work it could use for bombs, diplomats say. France, Britain and Germany, who spearheaded an EU offer of incentives if Iran suspended its uranium enrichment programme, circulated a draft resolution that diplomats at the United Nations said was unacceptable to both Washington and Tehran. Washington sees it as too weak and wants to include an "automatic trigger" which makes it clear that resuming any activities related to enrichment would spark a referral to the UN Security Council and possibly sanctions.

The New York Times, 24 November 2004

C.I.A. Says Pakistanis Gave Iran Nuclear Aid (DOUGLAS JEHL)

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23: A new report from the Central Intelligence Agency says the arms trafficking network led by the Pakistani scientist A. Q. Khan provided Iran's nuclear program with "significant assistance," including the designs for "advanced and efficient" weapons components. The unclassified version of the report, posted Tuesday on the agency's Web site, www.cia.gov, does not say explicitly whether Mr. Khan's network sold Iran complete plans for building a warhead, as the network is known to have done for Libya and perhaps North Korea. But it suggests that American intelligence agencies now believe that the bomb-making designs provided by the network to Iran in the 1990's were more significant than the United States government has previously disclosed.

The International Herald Tribune, 24 November 2004

Needed for Iran: U.S. muscle, European diplomacy (Alan L. Isenberg)

STANFORD, California Earlier this month, the so-called EU Three - Britain, France and Germany - achieved an important victory for global security, convincing Iran to suspend its uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing activities pending further negotiation on its nuclear question. Though Iran claims that it does not desire a nuclear bomb, the West has long been skeptical of the oil-rich state's contention that it seeks a nuclear fuel cycle for energy purposes alone. Europe and the United States (and of course Israel) will sleep better knowing that Tehran is not pursuing enrichment activities, whatever their alleged purpose. But the EU3 agreement, which fails to discuss consequences for Iran if it breaks the deal, is vulnerable to being undermined not only by Iran but also by the United States; both have already raised eyebrows in the wake of the accord. Iran raced to produce uranium hexafluoride, a gas that can be enriched into bomb fuel, before it began to observe the temporary suspension on Monday. And both President George W. Bush and outgoing Secretary of State Colin Powell have publicly aired their suspicions that Iran will continue its drive for nuclear weapons under cover of the deal.

The Korea Herald, 24 November 2004

Roh, Bush seek diplomacy on nukes (Seo Hyun-jin)

SANTIAGO: President Roh Moo-hyun and U.S. President George W. Bush reaffirmed on Saturday the principle of pursuing a peaceful and diplomatic solution to North Korea's nuclear issue and promised to give top priority to the settlement of the prolonged problem. While the agreement between the two leaders, on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum in this Chilean capital, allays some fears that the re-elected Bush would push for hard-line policies toward the North, concerns linger as the two sides have to iron out differences on detailed plans to tackle issues pertaining to the communist North.

The People's Daily, 25 November 2004

EU rejects Iran's demand for exemptions from nuclear freeze deal

Iran has asked the UN nuclear watchdog to exempt several dozen centrifuges from a freeze on its sensitive atomic projects, but European Union negotiators rejected the request, diplomats said on Wednesday. A diplomat close to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said Iran is "trying to convince the IAEA to leave several dozen of the centrifuges unsealed for research and development purposes." A Western diplomat believed the request is a clear message that Teheran has no intention of ending its nuclear fuel production. A diplomat revealed on condition of anonymity that EU negotiators have rejected Iran's request.

The China Daily, 25 November 2004

North Korea wants urgent atom talks - UN

North Korea wants to restart six-party talks on its nuclear programs urgently but still wants certain conditions met, a top U.N.

official told South Korea's Yonhap news agency on Thursday. It quoted Jean Ping, president of the U.N. General Assembly, as saying North Korea still agreed with the format of the talks and that North Korean officials told him during a visit that Pyongyang was committed to denuclearizing the Korean peninsula. "North Korea not only agreed to the format of the talks but also believes that the talks should restart urgently," Ping was quoted as saying. North and South Korea, the United States, Japan, Russia and China have met for three inconclusive rounds of the talks but a fourth round set for September did not materialize.

The Nation, 25 November 2004

AQ gave Iran nuclear aid: CIA

NEW YORK : As United States steps up its campaign against Iran's nuclear activities, a new Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) report claims that AQ Khan's network provided the Islamic Republic's nuclear programme with "significant assistance", including the designs for "advanced and efficient" weapons components. In a recent closed-door speech to a private group, former CIA director George Tenet described Mr Khan as being "at least as dangerous as Osama bin Laden" because of his role in providing nuclear technology to other countries, according to The New York Times, which said it had obtained a recording of that speech. Until now, in discussing Iran's nuclear programme, American officials have referred publicly only to the Khan network's role in supplying designs for older Pakistani centrifuges used to enrich uranium. But American officials have also suspected that the Khan network provided Iran with a warhead design as well.

The Daily Times, 25 November 2004

Iran and uranium enrichment - What the controversy is about (Richard Ingham)

ENRICHMENT, at the heart of the storm surrounding Iran's nuclear programme, takes low-grade uranium and refines it, turning it into a material that can power civilian reactors - or an atomic explosion. Iran has told the IAEA it plans to convert 37 tons of yellowcake into UF6 for a civilian enrichment programme - enough, experts have said, to make one to several atomic bombs. An IAEA official has said that Iran had made 15 percent of the amount of highly-enriched uranium needed to make an atomic bomb before it purportedly suspended the process last Monday. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN's atomic watchdog, is to meet on Thursday to verify whether that suspension has taken effect as promised.

The Dawn, 25 November 2004

Al Qaeda can make dirty bomb: CIA

WASHINGTON, Nov 24: Al Qaeda is fully capable of building a radioactive "dirty bomb" targeting the United States and other Western nations and "has crude procedures" for producing chemical weapons, the CIA warned. In an annual report to Congress on proliferation threats, the US Central Intelligence Agency also repeated on Tuesday its insistence that Iran was pursuing "a clandestine nuclear weapons program."...the agency used its strongest terms to alert lawmakers to the threat of terrorist organizations using chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials to harm the United States and its allies, saying the danger of such an attack "remained high."

The Jang, 25 November 2004

IAEA meets on Iran and S Korea's nukes

VIENNA: The UN atomic agency meets on Thursday with Iran having in a dramatic 11th hour move asked the agency to exempt several dozen centrifuges from its pledge to freeze its nuclear fuel cycle, diplomats said. The development has been rejected by the European Union which earlier this month negotiated what was supposed to be a halt in all of Iran's uranium enrichment activities. Iranian and British, French and German officials met until late in the evening in an effort to resolve the last-minute hitch.

The Nation, 25 November 2004

US backs EU resolution on Iran's N-plan

VIENNA : The United States has taken a pragmatic decision to back a European draft resolution that falls short of demanding possible UN sanctions for Iran over suspect nuclear activities, diplomats told AFP. The United States has for over a year been trying to get the IAEA board to take Iran before the UN Security Council, which can impose punishing sanctions, for hiding sensitive nuclear activities for almost two decades. But non-aligned states, as well as the European trio and Russia and China, have opposed this, saying that Iran must be given a chance to cooperate with an ongoing IAEA investigation of its nuclear program. Since the IAEA board adopts most measures by consensus, the United States has been stymied.

The Dawn, 25 November 2004

A nuclear case against Iran? (Dr Iffat Idris)

Does Iran have nuclear weapons? Is it trying to make nuclear weapons? Should it be stopped? What is the best way of doing so? Are we seeing history (the invasion of Iraq) being repeated? These questions pretty much sum up the crisis with Iran's nuclear programme that has been blowing hot and cold for so many weeks.

The International Herald Tribune, 25 November 2004

Report details South Korean cover-up (James Brooke)

For two decades, South Korea covered up a series of sensitive nuclear laboratory experiments by omitting reports, falsifying reports or closing buildings to international inspectors, according to a report by the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Drawing on these resources, South Korea "conducted experiments and activities involving uranium conversion, uranium enrichment and plutonium separation which it failed to report to the agency in accordance with its

obligations," reads the report by the director general, Mohamed ElBaradei, prepared for delivery Thursday to the 35-member board of governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog. While Iran's uranium enrichment program has drawn attention to the agency's meeting in Vienna, the board will also have to wrestle with South Korea's violations of international nuclear safeguards. The United States favors bringing the violations by South Korea, a longtime ally, before the UN Security Council, but for informational purposes, not for sanctions.

The Hindustan Times, 25 November 2004

N Korean missile could hit US with N-weapon: CIA

North Korea's multiple-stage Taep Dong-2 missile, potentially capable of reaching parts of the United States with a nuclear-weapon-sized payload, may be ready for flight-tests, the CIA has said. "North Korea is nearly self-sufficient in developing and producing ballistic missiles and continues to procure needed raw materials and components from various foreign sources," the US Central Intelligence Agency said in a report to the Congress on the Acquisition of Technology Relating to Weapons of Mass Destruction

The Korea Herald, 25 November 2004

Views of parties on Korea-U.S. alliance, N.K. nukes remain apart

The National Assembly is sending a delegation of lawmakers from the two major parties to the United States next month to strengthen the Korea-U.S. alliance and seek a breakthrough on the North Korean nuclear standoff, but the team itself has differing views on the issue. But their opinions after meeting U.S. politicians during their visit underscored the contrasts that remain in the two parties' understanding of the present situation on the Korean Peninsula.

The Asahi Shimbun, 25 November 2004

NUCLEAR REACTORS: S. Korea, U.S. agree to extend KEDO freeze (HAYAMI ICHIKAWA)

SEOUL: -The United States and South Korea broadly agreed to extend for another year the freeze imposed on a project to construct two light-water nuclear reactors in North Korea, South Korean government sources said Monday. In a compromise agreement, the two key parties to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) also said the project might be abandoned altogether if Pyongyang does not respond with substantial progress on nuclear development issues within the year. Washington had sought to abandon the stalled project, while Seoul had hoped to leave open the possibility of reactivating it.

The People's Daily, 26 November 2004

China hopes to solve South Korea's nuclear issue within IAEA

China hopes that South Korea will continue to cooperate fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in providing speedily relevant information concerning its nuclear activities so as to bring about an early solution to the issue within the framework of the agency, a senior Chinese diplomat said on Thursday. The Chinese delegation believes that the report on South Korea's nuclear issue released by IAEA's Director General Mohamed ElBaradei provides a large amount of facts and information, said Zhang Yan, permanent representative of China to the UN and other international organizations in Vienna, at the IAEA's Board of Governors meeting.

The China Daily, 26 November 2004

UN nuke agency to discuss Iran, S. Korea

VIENNA, Austria : Delegates at a key U.N. meeting moved close to agreement Friday on how to deal with illicit past South Korean plutonium and uranium experiments but continued to wrestle with a stubborn dispute over Iran's interpretation of a freeze on uranium enrichment. Hossein Mousavian, the chief Iranian delegate to the board meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency, told The Associated Press that his country was "committed" to the freeze. But differences over what that meant threatened to scuttle the enrichment suspension deal - and increase sentiment for a referral of Iran's nuclear file to the U.N. Security Council. The issue of Iran threatened to drag on into the weekend, which would force an extension of the International Atomic Energy Agency board meeting past its planned close Friday. On the issue of South Korea, delegates said the overwhelming sentiment was to issue a statement of rebuke over the experiments, which produced minute amounts of weapons-grade uranium and plutonium. The delegates from Europe and Asia, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the statement could stop short of letting Seoul off the hook by holding out the implicit threat of being referred to the U.N. Security Council should ongoing IAEA investigations reveal new, serious contraventions of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

The People's Daily, 27 November 2004

Bush demands verification of Iranian nuclear deal

US President George W. Bush said on November 26 that the deal on Iran's nuclear activities must be "verifiable". Bush said that he appreciated efforts by Britain, Germany and France to try to convince Iran to honor their international treaty obligations. "I look forward to talking to the leaders of those countries if they can get Iran to agree to a deal to make sure that it's verifiable," Bush said. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said on Friday said that Iran and Europe were close to agreement on a freeze on Iranian fuel cycle work that could be used to make nuclear weapons. Claiming Iran is on the verge of enriching enough uranium for making nuclear weapons, Washington has been prompting the IAEA to refer Iran's nuclear issue to the UN Security Council for sanctions against Iran.

The Nation, 27 November 2004

Agreement soon on Iranian N- fuel

VIENNA (AFP): Iran and Europe are close to agreement on a freeze on Iranian fuel cycle work that could be used to make

nuclear weapons, in a move that could clear the way to a deal with the UN atomic agency that is investigating Tehran, an agency spokesman said Friday. Iran had insisted earlier Friday that it was honouring a pledge to freeze uranium enrichment, but remained at odds with European countries by demanding that key equipment should be exempted from the deal. Iran now appears to have yielded to demands from Britain, France and Germany to drop its request for 20 centrifuges to be exempted from the uranium enrichment agreement.

The Nation, 27 November 2004

IAEA expected to let South Korea off the hook

VIENNA (AFP): The UN atomic agency was expected Friday to let South Korea off the hook for making small amounts of weapons-grade plutonium, a violation of nuclear safeguards, allowing Seoul to escape a referral to the UN Security Council. An IAEA spokesman said Canadian ambassador Ingrid Hall, chair of the agency's board of governors was working on a statement on South Korea which would almost certainly avoid mentioning the Security Council "to reflect the consensus of what she heard" at an IAEA meeting in Vienna Thursday. The issue of South Korea, a close US ally, has taken on a special dimension since the United States wants Iran to be taken to the Security Council for what Washington says is a covert nuclear weapons program. Diplomats said the United States had been willing for South Korea to be taken to the UN as a matter of principle, in order to not set a precedent for Iran to avoid sanctions.

The Daily Times, 27 November 2004

Meeting on North Korean nuclear talks set for December

TOKYO/SEOUL: The six states involved in negotiations aimed at dismantling North Korea's nuclear programmes will meet in Beijing next month to set the date for a formal round, South Korea's KBS television said on Friday. A flurry of reports hinted at the likelihood stalled talks would resume soon, with Japan's Nihon Keizai Shimbun (Nikkei) newspaper saying a North Korean official will visit the United States next month for talks with US counterparts on the issue. "The members of the six-party talks have tentatively agreed to hold an unofficial meeting in Beijing sometime between December 15 and 23," a senior South Korean government official was quoted in the state-run KBS television report as saying.

The Daily Times, 27 November 2004

Iran nuclear dispute headed to 'normalisation'

TEHRAN: The standoff between Iran and the international community over its nuclear programme is headed towards "normalisation", a top cleric said on Friday, despite a row over whether Tehran has fully suspend uranium enrichment. "It is excluded that the issue will come before the UN Security Council. The affair is heading towards normalisation," Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati said in a Friday sermon in Tehran. "Everything has gone well up until now. We are hoping to obtain everything that we want," said Jannati, who heads the powerful Guardians Council - a body that screens all the Islamic republic's laws and candidates for public office. His upbeat comments, broadcast on public radio, came despite deadlock in talks at the UN atomic agency in Vienna after Tehran asked for exemptions from a deal with the European Union to suspend key nuclear fuel cycle activities. Iran is hoping that the deal will mean that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) does not recommend that the country is hauled before the UN Security Council over its nuclear programme.

The Nation, 27 November 2004

Iran-EU talks on nuclear freeze put off until Monday

VIENNA (APP): Iran-EU talks on a full freeze of Iranian nuclear fuel cycle activities have been put off until Monday as Tehran must still agree to withdraw its request for some key equipment to be exempted, a UN atomic agency spokesman said Friday. "Negotiations are continuing on the draft resolution. It has been decided that the board will reconvene on Monday at 1400 GMT," International Atomic Energy Agency spokesman Mark Gwozdecky said about an IAEA board of governors meeting aimed at passing a resolution on Iran's nuclear program.

The Dawn, 27 November 2004

N-facilities inspection not allowed, says FO

ISLAMABAD, Nov 26: Pakistan on Friday denied reports appearing in a section of the US media that Islamabad had agreed to a limited inspection of its nuclear facilities by IAEA personnel. When asked for official comment on the reports in the Washington Post and the Washington Times, Foreign Office spokesman, Masood Khan, said, "This is not correct." When asked if Pakistan had received any formal request from the IAEA for inspection of its nuclear facilities, the spokesman said: "No, We haven't." According to a report from our Washington correspondent, the US newspapers reported that Mohammed ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, has informed his organization's board of directors that Pakistan has agreed to allow "limited inspection" of its nuclear facilities.

The Dawn, 27 November 2004

Tehran drops demand for centrifuge exemption

VIENNA, Nov 26: Iran backed down in the face of fierce international pressure on Friday and dropped its demand for changes to a key agreement designed to reassure the world that Tehran does not want nuclear weapons. Last week, Iran promised the European Union it would halt all activities related to uranium enrichment, a process that creates atomic fuel for power plants or weapons, in a bid to neutralize the threat of economic sanctions. But the ink on the hard-won accord was barely dry when Tehran demanded an exemption for some 20 enrichment centrifuges for research purposes. Western diplomats said this was impossible and could only deepen suspicions that Tehran has a secret weapons programme, as Washington alleges.

The Jang, 27 November 2004

Berne to fund Moscow weapons destruction

MOSCOW: Switzerland will provide funds to build two new sites for Russia to destroy its stockpiles of chemical weapons under agreements signed Friday during a visit to Moscow by Swiss Foreign Minister Micheline Calmy-Rey. Berne is to pay Russia a total of 15 million Swiss francs (10 million euros, 13 million dollars) over the next five years under the accord signed during talks between Calmy-Rey and her Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov. The money will help Moscow buy equipment for two new sites in the Ural region, which will be built in 2005 and 2008 respectively, to add to the single plant currently functioning in the southwestern Saratov region.

The Khaleej Times, 27 November 2004

A step forward for N-free world (Mohammed A. R. Galadari)

DEAR readers, both Iran and South Korea are off the hook, as the UN nuclear-watchdog wound up its meeting in Vienna yesterday, the signals being that both will not be referred to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions. Remarkably, Iran understood the seriousness of the situation and withdrew from its latest stand: that it wanted to keep some 20 centrifuges off the UN inspections, so that it can use them for peaceful research. Prima facie, the matter was simple and harmless, since the fact is that 20 centrifuges is a negligible number. It would require operation of several thousands of centrifuges for several months to produce weapons-grade uranium. Still, an issue is an issue. But, at the last minute, Iran gave up that claim as well, showing that it is keen on a peaceful resolution of the issue at stake. It was also good that the meeting has pulled up Seoul for its nuke-related activities, though it stopped short of referring the case to the UN Security Council for sanctions. It is believed that South Korea built up a secret stockpile of uranium from its own coal and imported phosphate. Now, however, it is "understood" that it has stopped such activities, and is apologetic about what it has done over the past two decades.

The Jang, 27 November 2004

IAEA opts not to refer South Korea to UN Security Council

VIENNA: The UN atomic agency chided South Korea for making small amounts of weapons-grade nuclear material but opted not to refer Seoul to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions, at a meeting Friday. The International Atomic Energy Agency said "that the quantities of nuclear material have not been significant and that to date there is no indication that the undeclared experiments have continued," according to a statement on South Korea obtained by AFP. It said the IAEA's 35-nation board of governors felt as IAEA director general Mohamed ElBaradei has already said that "the failure of the ROK (Republic of Korea) to report these activities in accordance with its safeguards agreements is of serious concern."

The People's Daily, 28 November 2004

Iran says EU nuclear proposals still unacceptable

Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi on Saturday criticized some parts of the proposals presented by the European Union (EU) during recent nuclear negotiations, terming them as "unacceptable" and "running counter to the Paris agreement." We still find proposals contrary to the Paris agreement, which are unacceptable," Kharazi told reporters, adding it was still possible for the EU to change some parts of their proposals according to the Paris agreement. The European trio on Monday presented a draft resolution on the Iranian nuclear issue to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The draft has been rebuked by Iran, who, with the support from some Non-Aligned Movement members, has been engaged to a fresh round of negotiations to persuade the EU to modify it. The IAEA Board of Governors is holding a meeting in Vienna to discuss Iran's nuclear issue.

The Nation, 28 November 2004

Next stop Tehran

MOUNTING pressure on Iran by the US and three European countries to close down its nuclear facilities, which it maintains are entirely for peaceful purposes and thus justified under the NPT, is indicative of their hidden motives. No matter on what deal Tehran signs, Washington would continue to look at it with a jaundiced eye, accuse it of harbouring secret designs to produce nuclear weapons and demand that any deal reached with Iran would have to be verifiable. What kind of verification it would need to divest itself of the suspicion is not known, though the treatment UN arms inspectors' findings in Iraq received at its hands could give an idea of its attitude in the days to come. President Bush's re-election and the ongoing Cabinet reshuffle designed to strengthen the neocons in the administration do not bode well for members of the so-called Axis of Evil. With the background of inevitably lingering suspicion, Iran is perhaps right in demanding the exemption of 20 centrifuges for research purposes.

The Daily Times, 28 November 2004

South Korea welcomes IAEA verdict on nuclear tests

SEOUL: South Korea welcomed on Saturday the UN nuclear watchdog's decision not to refer Seoul's atomic experiments to the Security Council and said it should not affect nuclear talks with North Korea. The board of governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), meeting in Vienna on Friday, rebuked South Korea for secret experiments that could have helped it develop an atom bomb, but spared it the humiliation of being hauled in front of the Security Council. Seoul had lobbied hard to avoid being referred to the Security Council, and officials expressed satisfaction with the outcome.

The Dawn, 28 November 2004

Iran-EU nuclear parleys break off

VIENNA, Nov 27: Informal Iran-EU talks to rescue an agreement on a promised Iranian freeze of key nuclear fuel-making activities broke off on Saturday, opening the door to possible UN sanctions against Tehran, diplomats said. "We have no progress. It is up to the Iranians now to ponder what they will do," a European diplomat close to the talks told AFP. "They have a very serious decision to make." "If there is not soon a verification of full suspension (of uranium enrichment by Iran), then we'll be in a different ballgame from then on," he added.

The People's Daily, 29 November 2004

Pakistan test-fires nuke-capable missile

Pakistan on Monday test-fired a nuclear-capable ballistic missile, local media reported. A surface-to-surface solid-fuel missile Half-3 with a range of 290 km was test-fired, said the state-run Pakistan Television (PTV). "The indigenously produced missile" had already been tested in 2002 and 2003, said PTV, adding that it has been delivered to the army in February this year. Pakistan regularly tests its missiles and the last conduct was on Oct. 12.

The China Daily, 29 November 2004

Iran makes key nuclear concession

Iran has struck a new deal with the EU on freezing its nuclear programme, ending a week of haggling that threatened to torpedo an agreement meant to help it avoid U.N. economic sanctions, Western diplomats say. The agreement was to be presented to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Monday, lifting an immediate threat that Iran be referred to the U.N. Security Council over U.S. accusations it is trying to develop nuclear bombs. The deal reached with the EU trio requires Iran to freeze all work linked to the enrichment of uranium or plutonium separation -- both of which can yield material for atom bombs.

The China Daily, 29 November 2004

Iran pledges to halt all nuke enrichment

Iran has agreed to what Western diplomats hope is a comprehensive suspension of all activities that could yield fuel for nuclear weapons, half a year after a similar deal between Iran and the European Union collapsed. The agreement was to be presented to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Monday, lifting an immediate threat of U.N. Security Council sanctions over U.S. accusations it is trying to develop nuclear bombs. Iran, though oil-rich, says its atomic program is aimed solely at generating electricity. Under the terms of the deal, Tehran pledged to suspend all activities related to plutonium reprocessing and the enrichment of uranium, a process of purifying uranium for use as fuel in nuclear power plants or, when very highly enriched, in weapons.

The Nation, 29 November 2004

'Khan used affiliates to supply enrichment plant' (IFTIKHAR ALI)

NEW YORK - The American print and electronic media continues to dig into the past activities of A.Q. Khan's so-called global nuclear network and the campaign against him goes on unabated. Sunday's Los Angeles Times, in an extensive dispatch from Johannesburg said that authorities looking into illicit transfers of nuclear weapons technology have recently uncovered a South African-based scheme to deliver a complete uranium enrichment plant to Libya.

The Dawn, 29 November 2004

Nuclear CBMs talks on Dec 14-15 (Arshad Sharif)

ISLAMABAD, Nov 28: Islamabad would host the second round of Pakistan-India talks on nuclear and conventional confidence-building measures on December 14 and 15, officials told Dawn. In accordance with an agreement reached between the foreign secretaries of India and Pakistan in February 2004, expert-level talks on nuclear CBMs were held in New Delhi on June 19 and 20 after having been postponed in May on Indian request because of the change of government in New Delhi.

The Dawn, 29 November 2004

'US satisfied with N-issue handling' (Anwar Iqbal)

WASHINGTON, Nov 28: The United States is believed to have assured Pakistan that it has no plan to ask for extradition of nuclear scientist Dr A.Q. Khan for interrogation as some US lawmakers and non-proliferation activists are demanding. "The US administration has not asked for Dr Khan's extradition," Pakistan's Deputy Chief of Mission here Mohammed Sadiq told Dawn. "And they have assured us that they have no intention to do so," he said.

The Daily Times, 29 November 2004

IAEA delegation to arrive in South Korea in December

SEOUL: The UN nuclear watchdog, which has rebuked South Korea for secret atomic experiments, may send a delegation to the country in mid-December for more inspections, Yonhap news agency reported on Sunday. The board of governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) criticised South Korea on Friday for the experiments that could have helped it develop an atom bomb. But Seoul had lobbied hard, ultimately successfully, to avoid being referred to the UN Security Council. "We were told that the IAEA will send a delegation in mid-December although we have not received an official notice yet," Yonhap quoted an unnamed Science Ministry official as saying. "We expect the IAEA to notify this week."

The Nation, 29 November 2004

Minimum deterrence

DURING his visit to the Strategic Plans Division, the Secretariat of National Command Authority, on Saturday, Mr Aziz reiterated the government's commitment to the nuclear and missile programme and said retaining minimum deterrence was the cornerstone of our national security policy.

The Korea Herald, 29 November 2004

IAEA decision on Korea

South Korea heaved a sigh of relief last week when the International Atomic Energy Agency decided not to refer its unreported nuclear materials experiments to the U.N. Security Council. It could otherwise have been branded a nuclear culprit, if not a

pariah state like North Korea, in the international community. As South Korean officials have explained in the past, the extraction of plutonium and the enrichment of uranium, both in miniscule amounts, were nothing but isolated cases of experiments some curious scientists conducted without obtaining approval from the government.

The Korea Times, 29 November 2004

4th IAEA Probe Due Next Week (Reuben Staines)

Inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will arrive in Seoul next week for their fourth onsite investigation into controversial nuclear experiments carried out by South Korean scientists over the past two decades, the Ministry of Science and Technology confirmed Monday. The four-member team from the IAEA will visit South Korea for about 10 days from Dec. 6 but spend just four days investigating the unreported uranium and plutonium tests, officials said. They will inspect South Korea's main nuclear research center in Taejeon, as well as a smaller institute in Seoul, to gather more information on the experiments, which involved both plutonium extraction and uranium enrichment.

The People's Daily, 30 November 2004

China hopes to solve Iran's nuclear issue properly

China believes continued patience and joint efforts can help properly resolve Iran's nuclear issue within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at an early date, a senior Chinese diplomat said on Monday. The settlement of Iran's nuclear issue will contribute to strengthening the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, safeguarding and reinforcing the IAEA's role and credibility in the areas of international nuclear non-proliferation, Zhang said. Besides, he said, the settlement will also contribute to assuring the rights of all countries, including Iran, in the areas of peaceful use of nuclear energy under strict safeguards. Zhang said that China is prepared to work with all parties concerned and play a constructive role in realizing the goals.

The People's Daily, 30 November 2004

EU nuke resolution "most positive ever": Iran

A top Iranian nuclear negotiator on Monday voiced satisfaction over the latest version of a resolution presented by the European Union (EU) on Iran's nuclear issue, terming it as "the most positive ever", the official IRNA news agency reported. "All the basic modifications demanded by Tehran have been written into the draft resolution. It is the most positive resolution Iran has ever clinched in its nuclear dispute," Hossein Moussavian, spokesman of the Iranian delegation to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors, was quoted as saying in Vienna. On Nov. 22, the European trio of France, Germany and Britain submitted its first draft resolution to the IAEA, which was criticized and disapproved by Tehran and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) members. Meanwhile, Iran made a new demand that 20 of its centrifuges be exempt from the suspension. Under such circumstances, the European trio started a new round of negotiations with the Islamic republic and modified the draft twice.

The China Daily, 30 November 2004

IAEA agrees on plan to police Iran nukes

The U.N. nuclear agency agreed Monday on a plan for policing Iran's nuclear programs designed to avoid a showdown at the United Nations. But Iran's representative immediately raised questions about the wording of the pact, and the United States said it retained the right to take the case to the U.N. Security Council on its own. U.S. chief delegate Jackie Sanders listed more than a dozen open questions about Iran's past nuclear activities still before the International Atomic Energy Agency, despite a nearly two-year investigation. Sanders spoke shortly after the board passed a toned-down resolution authorizing IAEA head Mohamed ElBaradei to monitor Iran's commitment to freeze uranium enrichment activities that can produce either low grade nuclear fuel or the raw material for atomic weapons.

The Nation, 30 November 2004

India to upgrade N-deterrence, special forces

NEW DELHI : India will continually upgrade its nuclear weapons capability despite a no first-use policy and expand special forces to wage high-tech war, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee said Monday. "Although India is committed to a no-first-use of nuclear weapons, we are also clear that conventional deterrence must continue to be backed by a potent minimum nuclear deterrence capability," Mukherjee said. India carried out a string of nuclear tests in May 1998 and then imposed a unilateral moratorium on further tests. "India proposes to have a potent minimum nuclear deterrence to back its conventional deterrence," Mukherjee told a military seminar in New Delhi.

The Nation, 30 November 2004

Pak missile plan guarantee of peace

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz Monday reiterated the country's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation, saying that Pakistan's missile and nuclear programme was the best guarantee of peace in the region. "Pakistan believes in retaining minimum deterrence as a cornerstone of our national security policy and as a responsible and acknowledged nuclear power," he said while addressing the 5th National Security Workshop here at National Defence College. Pakistan's defence capability, the prime minister said, was key to Pakistan's survival and future.

The Dawn, 30 November 2004

Iran won't give up quest for N- bomb: Israel

THE HAGUE, Nov 29: Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom said on Monday that the European Union should not be hoodwinked by Iran, which he claimed would "never" abandon a drive to build nuclear weapons. Mr Shalom said after meeting

the EU's Dutch presidency here that Israel welcomed the deal brokered by major European powers. "But I told them we are very sceptical because we know what the real intentions of the Iranians are, we know that they will never abandon their dream to have a nuclear bomb," he said after meeting Dutch counterpart Ben Bot. Asked if Israel would countenance military strikes to stop Iran building the bomb, Mr Shalom said: "Israel will do everything it can in a diplomatic way to stop the Iranians from having this nuclear bomb."

The Daily Times, 30 November 2004

China, Japan, South Korea vow to cooperate on North Korea

TOKYO: Leaders of China, Japan and South Korea vowed on Monday to work closely on resolving the crisis over North Korea's nuclear arms programmes and to tighten security and economic ties, Kyodo news agency said. The agreement was reached in a meeting among Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun on the sidelines of an Asian leaders summit in Vientiane, Laos, Kyodo said. In an "action strategy" issued after the meeting, the three countries said they would "promote close consultations and cooperation for the peaceful denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula through six-party talks", Kyodo said.

The Jang, 30 November 2004

China warns Japan 'difficulties' remain on N Korea issue

VIENTIANE: Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao called for increased cooperation with Japan and South Korea at a summit Monday but warned difficulties remained on the festering issue of the Korean nuclear standoff. Wen told Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and South Korea's President Roh Moo-Hyun on the sidelines of a regional summit in Laos's efforts should be made to restart six-country talks on North Korea's nuclear program. "(Wen) said that now there are still some difficulties and problems," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said. "So he wishes that the parties concerned will show flexibility and come back to the six-party talks at an early date. China will continue to make its efforts to push forward the negotiation process."

The Daily Times, 30 November 2004

Russia tests new anti-ballistic missile system

MOSCOW: Russia has successfully tested a modernized anti-ballistic missile system, Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov told President Vladimir Putin on Monday, according to the Interfax news agency. Ivanov told Putin that his ministry would "further perfect and modernize the anti-ballistic missile system," the news agency reported. He said the missile had passed its test on Monday morning at the Sary-Shagaz testing range in the former Soviet republic of Kazakhstan. Topol-Ms have a range of about 6,000 miles (9,650 kilometers) and reportedly can maneuver in ways that are difficult to detect. The missile, which can intercept and destroy other missiles, has been deployed in silos since 1998. Russia reacted calmly when Washington withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002 to develop a nationwide missile shield. But Moscow has since complained about Washington's plans to build new low-yield nuclear weapons. Last month, Putin said Russia was developing a new nuclear missile system unlike any weapon held by other nuclear powers.

The Jang, 30 November 2004

Chemical weapons-free world still a long way off: watchdog

THE HAGUE: The destruction of chemical weapons is making progress, but much more needs to be done to wipe out this arsenal as less than 14.3 per cent of known stocks have been eliminated, a watchdog said on Monday. Six countries-Albania, India, Libya, Russia, South Korea and the United States-have admitted they have chemical weapons and committed themselves to destroying them under a convention that came into effect in 1997. The weapons are to be totally eliminated by 2007, exceptionally as late as 2012. The OPCW will continue to help countries ward off any chemical weapons attacks, he said, adding: "An organisation like ours can contribute to the global fight against terrorism." The organisation this year inspected 1,892 chemical facilities and hopes to keep up the same pace next year. According to Pfirter 64 production units have been destroyed so far and 13 are to be converted. The OPCW is an independent international organization which works with the United Nations to monitor the 1997 convention banning the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, and to lobby countries that have not yet joined the treaty to do so.

The New York Times, 30 November 2004

UN action frustrates U.S. on Iran (Elaine Sciolino)

In a defeat for the Bush administration, the 35 countries of the United Nations nuclear agency board adopted a mildly worded resolution Monday welcoming Iran's freeze of a sensitive part of its nuclear program. The resolution, approved by consensus without a vote, means that Iran once again has thwarted the Bush administration's goal of getting the international board to bring Iran before the Security Council for possible censure or even sanctions.

The Hindustan Times, 30 November 2004

N-row: UN inspectors to return to South Korea

Seoul, South Korea, November 29: The United Nations' nuclear watchdog will send inspectors to South Korea next week for more investigations into the country's past secret nuclear experiments, officials said on Monday. The inspection follows a decision on Friday by the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency not to refer South Korea's nuclear experiments to the UN Security Council. However, the IAEA's board of governors criticised Seoul for conducting plutonium and uranium experiments in 1982 and 2000 without reporting them to the agency.

The Tribune, 30 November 2004

Iran closer to nuclear weapon?US shields Pakistan from fallout of proliferation (K. Subrahmanyam)

While the focus of attention is on Iran, the US has succeeded in shielding Pakistan from the consequences of A.Q. Khan's alleged proliferation activities. It is guilty of double standards as it does not expose Pakistan's role in Iranian proliferation while breathing fire and burrstone on Iran. Pakistan is now believed to have proliferated to four countries - North Korea, Iran, Libya and an Arab country. The last, according to the US, is still not identified and in their view, could be Syria, Egypt, Sudan, Saudi Arabia or Kuwait in that order of probability. This appears to be yet another US attempt to shield the true beneficiary of proliferation, namely Saudi Arabia, since like Pakistan, Riyadh is a close ally of the US. According to earlier published accounts, (now reinforced by the latest story), Pakistani help to Iran appears to have gone much beyond Zia's cautious limits and include not only centrifuges but also nuclear weapon designs and components. In spite of this, if Saudi Arabia continues to pour in, hundreds of millions of dollars into Pakistan there can be only one logical explanation - Saudi Arabia is the fourth beneficiary of Pakistani proliferation. Pakistan appears to have played an exceedingly clever balance of power game between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

The Yomiuri Shimbun , 30 November 2004

Unified stance essential in North Korea dispute

How should Japan, China and South Korea deal with the problem of North Korea's nuclear weapons program, a problem that touches on the regional security of all three countries? While all three have officially agreed on the need to cooperate with each other on the issue, the differences in stance among them are very obvious. But the three countries must not let these differences send North Korea the wrong message. Japan, for its part, must do its best to build a cooperative framework among the three countries to pressure North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions. When it came to details, however, the talks were lacking. Everyone agrees as to the vital importance of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula in the interest of regional peace and stability, and on the need to solve the North Korean nuclear issue through the forum of the six-way talks. The problem lies in specific approaches to solving these problems.

The Asahi Shimbun, 30 November 2004

U.S. offer to N. Korea still alive (NOBUYOSHI SAKAJIRI)

WASHINGTON--The United States is still willing to offer a generous assistance package that North Korea rejected two years ago, but time is running out on the "bold approach" offer to get Pyongyang to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. Sources close to the administration of U.S. President George W. Bush recently acknowledged that Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly made the "bold approach" proposal during a visit to Pyongyang in October 2002. But North Korean officials rejected the proposal because it called for the country to abandon all aspects of its nuclear program, the sources said. While Bush and his top officials have often referred to this bold approach to North Korea, details of the proposal have not emerged until now.

The Japan Times, 30 November 2004

One voice on N. Korea issue? (KEIZO NABESHIMA)

Multilateral efforts to stop North Korea's nuclear-weapons program are gaining momentum. Leaders of the United States, China, Japan, South Korea and Russia, meeting bilaterally on the sidelines of the recent Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Santiago, Chile, agreed that six-nation talks should be resumed at an early date to discuss a peaceful solution. U.S. President George W. Bush, at a press conference following his meeting with Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, said, "The leader of North Korea (Kim Jong Il) will hear a common voice" from the leaders of the five nations at the next round of six-party talks.