

The Hindu, 2 October 2004

**U.S. urged to lift curbs against two scientists**

NEW DELHI, OCT. 1. India today asked the United States to review and withdraw the sanctions imposed on two scientists, C. Surendar and Y.S.R. Prasad, who had worked at the head of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India. On September 29, the U.S. State Department imposed the Iran-related penalty for "transfer of equipment and technology controlled under multilateral export control lists or otherwise having the potential to make a material contribution to the development of weapons of mass destruction or cruise or ballistic missile systems." The External Affairs Ministry spokesman said the Government had conveyed to the U.S. that it did not share the U.S. assessment. Mr. Surendar, the spokesman said, had never visited Iran while in service or after retirement. "Dr. Y.S.R. Prasad initially visited Iran under the aegis of the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] technical cooperation programme. Thereafter, he provided consultancy on safety-related aspects connected with the Bushehr nuclear power plant, which is under IAEA safeguards. He has not visited Iran since the mid-2003. "No sale of materials, equipment and technologies was involved. No transfer of sensitive technology has taken place. The Government of India's commitment to prevent onward proliferation is second to none and our track record in this regard is well-known," the spokesman said. Asked how the retention of seven Indian Space Research Organisation subsidiaries on the U.S. "Entity List" tallied with the fact that India and the U.S. had agreed to the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP), the spokesman said: "You know that [the] NSSP has been agreed to. Phase I has been agreed to and that is indeed a very welcome development in bilateral relations. On this other issue, I would not like to mingle the two. I have stated our position and we have asked for the U.S. Government to review its position."

The Hindu, 3 October 2004

**U.S. resolution blames it on Union Carbide** (Sridhar Krishnaswami)

WASHINGTON, OCT. 2. Legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives recognising the 20th anniversary of the Bhopal disaster and expressing the commitment of the United States Congress to work with the Government of India to ensure that Union Carbide is held accountable for its actions. "The Bhopal disaster is widely regarded as the worst peacetime environmental catastrophe in world history. This important resolution expresses our commitment to work with the Indian Government and others to ensure that Union Carbide provides environmental and medical rehabilitation in Bhopal and is held responsible for its actions," the New Jersey Democratic Congressman and sponsor of the legislation, Frank Pallone, has said. "India is the largest democratic country in the world and enjoys a close and mutual friendship with the United States based on common values and common interests ... our countries should come together to recognise the gravity of the Bhopal disaster and the ongoing environmental problems in Bhopal caused by Union Carbide's policies and disasters," he said. Mr. Pallone's resolution (H. Con Res 503) expresses the Congress commitment to working with the Government of India, the Dow Chemical Corporation and victims of the Bhopal disaster "to ensure that Union Carbide provides complete medical, social and economic rehabilitation to the victims and their families." The legislation calls on the Union Carbide to completely restore the polluted plant site to a habitable condition, remediate the water supply condition and appear before the Bhopal District Court for prosecution of the criminal charges.

Indian Express, 4 October 2004

**H1B visas gone in a day** (PTI)

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 3: The annual limit for the controversial guest worker programme through the H1B visas, which help many Indian technology professionals to emigrate, has been filled for the whole fiscal year in record time, with the cap of 65,000 closing at the opening day itself. This is the first time quotas for the whole fiscal year, which runs from October 1, 2004, to September 30, 2005, have been filled so swiftly, a federal official was quoted by cnetnews.com as saying. The nationality breakdown of visa-holders is not given. United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), which processes applications for the H-1B programme, is no longer accepting petitions for visas for initial employment for this fiscal year, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. The visas, which allow skilled foreign workers to work in the US for up to six years, have frequently been used by technology companies. That the cap has been reached as of the first day of the fiscal year is sure to stir up debate over the visa programme, cnet said. Businesses are seeking an exemption from the annual cap for foreign students graduating from US schools with master's and doctorate degrees. Labour groups oppose the proposal. Legislation to create such an exemption, along with other changes to the H-1B and L-1 guest worker programmes, is under serious discussion in the US Senate.

The Hindu, 7 October 2004

**'Not usual for an envoy to write to a chief minister'** (Amit Baruah)

NEW DELHI, Oct. 6. A day after it was reported that the United States Ambassador, David Mulford, had written to the Assam Chief Minister, Tarun Gogoi, offering the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to probe the recent bomb blasts, External Affairs Ministry sources said today that it was "not usual" for an ambassador to write to a chief minister. Asked if the Ministry had taken up the issue with the U.S. Embassy, the sources said that it had been conveyed to the American side that all communications should be routed through the Ministry. The Ministry spokesman refused to go beyond what was stated in a brief statement made on Tuesday. Asked at a briefing whether it was "normal" for an Ambassador to write directly to a chief minister, he said the Ministry's position was contained in the statement issued late last night. Was this a protocol violation on the part of the U.S. Ambassador, he was asked. The spokesman said the entire issue was considered and a statement was issued on Tuesday night. It said the offer would be considered "in terms of the existing guidelines" of the Government of India. However, there is no amplification of what the guidelines are.

The Hindu, 8 October 2004

**'We will go forward on reform path'** (Sridhar Krishnaswami)

NEW YORK, OCT. 7. India needs "large amounts" of foreign investment, institutional and foreign direct investment, and the Government is fully committed to the reform process to transform the country into an economic powerhouse, the Finance Minister, P. Chidambaram, said here. He was speaking to institutional investors at an India Investment Forum gathering organised by Euromoney Institutional Investor and sponsored by Merrill Lynch and State Bank of India. "Let me tell you categorically," Mr. Chidambaram said, "India remains committed to the reform process. We will go forward on the reform path which was started in 1991. We will do our best to go faster in the road of reforms." "We have the human resources. We have the fiscal resources and we believe we can raise - with your support-additional resources. We believe we can bring to governance in India a sense of dedication, commitment and capability...It's not a matter of one individual's aspiration, it's an imperative," he said. India had progressed in the financial, manufacturing and external sectors, but the main concern for the future was infrastructure where the aim was to attract large quantities of investment. Mr. Chidambaram referred to the potential investment in infrastructure in areas such as power and telecom. The two-day investment forum has a high-level of participation from Official India and some of the major players in the Indian corporate world such as the Reliance and the Tata Groups.

The Hindu, 9 October 2004

**'U.S., India have gone beyond talking about ballistic missile defences' (Amit Baruah)**

New Delhi, Oct. 8. India and the United States have gone beyond merely talking about ballistic missile defences in their discussions, the U.S. Ambassador to India, David Mulford, has said in a published interview. The Ambassador has stated that the issue was to "figure out" which (ballistic missile) system is "needed where". In an interview to the October issue of Force magazine, a journal dealing with national security issues, Mr. Mulford shed new light on the current state of discussions on ballistic missile defences. Asked if he saw the possibility of the two countries going beyond merely talking about such defences, the Ambassador was quoted as saying, "Yes. I think that is what is under discussion now. There has already been a discussion about technology and systems." Do you think that ballistic missile defences would destabilise the entire region? No, the Ambassador responded, stressing that these were defensive systems. "The only problem that I see is that it is a technically complicated subject and there are different generations of systems available. So the issue is to figure out which system is needed where. This is a complicated process," Mr. Mulford said. Talks on ballistic missile defences have been a subject matter of controversy in India. The Congress-led Government has continued discussions on the issue — which was embraced with much enthusiasm by the Vajpayee Government. Apart from missile defences, India and the U.S. have been talking on issues such as civilian space, civilian nuclear and high-technology exports.

The Tribune, 9 October 2004

**US "handling" India's plea to lift curbs (PTI)**

Washington, Oct. 8. The US is handling "privately" India's request to lift sanctions imposed on two of its scientists for allegedly selling weapons and providing sensitive technology to Iran. The US is handling "privately" the issue of sanctions imposed on two of India's atomic scientists, Mr Y.S. R. Prasad and Ch Surender, both of whom had headed the Nuclear Power Corporation of India, State Department Deputy Spokesman Adam Ereli told mediapersons here yesterday. The Ministry of External Affairs had earlier this month, rejected the US charge against the two Indian scientists and urged Washington to withdraw sanctions imposed on them. "No sale of materials, equipment and technologies was involved. No transfer of sensitive technology has taken place...the US Government has been requested to review the issue and to withdraw the sanctions imposed," it had said. "The Government of India's commitment to prevent onward proliferation is second to none and our track record in this regard is well-known." It had said the scientists had nothing whatever to do with Iran's alleged nuclear weapons programme. One of them had gone on a UN assignment and the other had not visited Iran at all. On September 29, the US slapped sanctions on the two Indians, seven Chinese firms as also companies from Belarus, North Korea, Russia, Spain and Ukraine for allegedly selling weapons or cruise and ballistic missile technology and equipment to Iran.

The Pioneer, 11 October 2004

**India, US to start 2nd phase NSSP talks today**

New Delhi. The growing strategic relationship between India and the United States will go a step further on Monday with the two countries discussing issues like high technology trade, civilian nuclear and space programmes besides defence co-operation. Termed as the second phase of the next step in strategic partnership (NSSP), these issues would be dealt with by US Under Secretary of State for Commerce Kenneth Juster during his talks with National Security Advisor JN Dixit and Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran here. The two countries had successfully concluded the first phase of the strategic partnership last month before the meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George Bush in New York. The first phase saw the US easing restrictions on supply of equipment and technology for India's civilian space and nuclear programmes, which included removing the ISRO from a prohibition list. The strategic partnership was fashioned by the US President and the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in January this year, with the two countries agreeing to expand cooperation in civilian nuclear activities, space programmes and high technology trade besides agreeing to expand dialogue on missile defence. The cooperation covers expanded engagement on nuclear regulatory and safety issues and missile defence, ways to enhance cooperation in peaceful uses of space technology and steps to create an appropriate environment for a successful high technology trade.

Daily Times, 12 October 2004

**US asked to demand Pakistan's nuclear accounting (Khalid Hasan)**

Washington: "If the United States is serious about keeping the world's most dangerous weapons out of the hands of the world's most dangerous terrorists, it must demand a full accounting of Pakistan's nuclear proliferation activities," says a report in the Chicago-Sun Times on Monday. The newspaper says the shifting of the entire blame on Dr AQ Khan "strains credulity,

given Musharraf's tight control over the Pakistani military." It points out that given the fact that al-Qaida has sympathisers in Pakistan's military, intelligence, nuclear and political establishments, the Bush administration should have demanded that Pakistan unravel the full details of its proliferation network. Instead, it supported Gen Musharraf's assertion that the proliferation network was Pakistan's "internal matter." Because of the lack of US pressure, Gen. Musharraf has refused to cooperate with International Atomic Energy Agency investigations into the network.

Daily Times, 12 October 2004

**U.S. in Talks with Europeans on a Nuclear Deal With Iran** (Steven R. Weisman)

Washington, Oct. 11: The Bush administration is holding talks with its European allies on a possible package of economic incentives for Iran, including access to imported nuclear fuel, in return for suspension of uranium enrichment activities that are suspected to be part of a nuclear arms program, European and American diplomats said Monday. The diplomats said that while the administration had not endorsed any incentives for Iran, it was not discouraging Britain, France and Germany from assembling a package that the administration would consider after the American presidential election on Nov. 2, for likely presentation to Tehran later in the month. Any support of a package of incentives, even if it is to be offered only by the Europeans, would indicate a significant shift in the Bush administration policy of demanding penalties, but not offering inducements, to get Iran to halt activities that are suspected to be for a nuclear arms program.

The Hindu, 13 October 2004

**'Time we stopped equating India with Pakistan'** (Sridhar Krishnaswami)

Washington, Oct. 12. The Democratic nominee for the November 2 Presidential election, Senator John Kerry, has said that he will give the United States-India relationship the attention it "deserves" and argued that the Republican administration decision to designate Pakistan the major non-NATO ally status was another case of President George W. Bush's "botched diplomacy." In an interview to India Abroad, Senator Kerry said: "This was another case where the President botched diplomacy. Time and again the President has damaged our nation's friendships. Ironically, in moving to build our relationship with Pakistan, the President needlessly damaged our relationship with India. I am troubled by the way the administration implemented the decision." He recalled the fact that the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, was in New Delhi before going to Islamabad and did not even give India "the courtesy of a heads-up before dropping the bombshell." If elected, Senator Kerry has said his administration will be committed to an enhanced relationship with India. "Absolutely. It is vital we strengthen and broaden our relationship with India... The time is long overdue for the United States to distinguish once and for all between India and Pakistan and to treat each differently and according to the demands of those bilateral relationships," and that he would recognise the vital global role India would play in the 21st century.

The Hindu, 18 October 2004

**India-U.S. negotiations entering crucial stage** (Siddharth Varadarajan)

New Delhi, Oct.17. With India and the United States beginning talks here on Thursday on Phase II of the 'Next Steps in Strategic Partnership' (NSSP), Indian officials say that the negotiations on facilitating high-technology trade are entering the most difficult and crucial stage. "The U.S. is looking to discuss changes in our domestic laws to tighten export controls," a senior official told The Hindu . Washington not only wants stricter controls on possible diversion of its high-tech exports but is keen on India placing restrictions on export of indigenous dual-use products too. Finally, the U.S. is expected to formally flag the contentious issue of "human resources." The U.S. side believes that Indian scientists are valuable to would-be proliferators because they represent the only pool of talent familiar with the "start-up stage" of nuclear weapons and missile programmes. Russian scientists, in contrast, inherited running programmes. For this reason, Washington wants to devise ways to prevent a poorly-paid or retired "Indian A.Q. Khan" from offering his services elsewhere. Asked whether the recent U.S. decision to impose sanctions on two Indian nuclear scientists -Y.S.R. Reddy and C.H. Surender -for allegedly assisting Iran was the opening salvo of a campaign to control the movement of scientific talent, officials said that any attempt to link this issue to supposed security lacunae in India will not be accepted.

The Hindu, 21 October 2004

**Rocca arrives for talks By Our Diplomatic Correspondent**

New Delhi, Oct.20. The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina Rocca, arrived here for talks with her counterparts in the External Affairs Ministry this afternoon. Ms. Rocca's visit is expected to focus on the implementation of Phase-I of the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP), agreed to recently between the two countries. Late this evening, Ms. Rocca, who was in Pakistan on Tuesday, met the Foreign Secretary, Shyam Saran. On October 11, the External Affairs Ministry spokesman had said thatMs. Rocca would be in the capital on October 20 for the first meeting of the NSSP Phase-I implementation group. The group will be headed by S. Jaishankar, Joint Secretary (Americas), on the Indian side. This group will also prepare the ground for the commencement of negotiations on Phase-II of the NSSP, which will have a broader scope and application and will discuss steps for implementing the understandings reached under the Phase-I.

The Hindu, 22 October 2004

**'Why treat India like a rogue nation?'** (Sridhar Krishnaswami)

Washington, Oct.21. A senior Democratic law-maker in the House of Representatives, has slammed the State Department for treating India like a "rogue" nation when it comes to issuing visas for Indian scholars and science students. The New Jersey Democrat, Frank Pallone, in a letter to the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, has argued that he understood the strict standard of review - known as the Visa Mantis procedure - for visa applicants from Pakistan, China, Iran, North Korea, Syria, Iraq and Sudan. "These countries do not operate on democracy and although there are scholars and scientists from these nations who

will not harm U.S. security, the Visa Mantis procedure is necessary to ensure the U.S. remains safe and that sensitive military information remains secure," Mr. Pallone said. He assailed the inclusion of India and has called on the State Department to remove it "from this list of terrorist" states. "India is not only the largest democracy in the world and a pillar of stability in the South Asian region, but in addition, India has a civilian controlled nuclear programme and India has signed the Next Step of Strategic Partnership (NSSP) with the U.S., which is in Phase 1 of implementation."

Indian Express, 23 October 2004

**Washington likely to reconsider ban on Indian scientists** (Carol Giacomo)

Washington, Oct.22. The Bush administration might reconsider sanctions imposed on two Indian scientists for alleged nuclear cooperation with Iran if New Delhi offers "significant and convincing" proof of their innocence, a senior US official said yesterday. The sanctions imposed in late September against Y.S.R. Prasad and C. Surendar-both former chiefs of the state-run Nuclear Power Corporation of India-have angered New Delhi, which insisted the men were implicated and the penalties should be removed. The senior US official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, cautioned against predicting that the sanctions, which bar the men from doing business with Washington, would be lifted or waived. He said, "The Indians are being given a chance now to clarify, rebut, give us any information and we promise we'll consider it."US officials said the penalties were imposed only after talks with Indian authorities who failed to act. The issue was to be raised during Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca's visit to New Delhi this week, which focused on expanding a new US-India strategic partnership. The State Department did not detail the alleged offenses by the two scientists but officials said it involved aid to Iran's nuclear program during the first half of 2003.

The Hindu, 24 October 2004

**India not aware of U.S. plans to sanction three more entities** (Amit Baruah)

New Delhi, Oct.23. New Delhi said today that it was unaware of American plans to "sanction" three more Indian entities after the Reuters news agency, quoting a senior U.S. official, reported on Friday that three Indian entities were to be sanctioned. "If there had been any such plans [to sanction more Indian entities], then the NSSP [Next Steps in Strategic Partnership] forum would have been the appropriate forum to discuss these cases," the Ministry of External Affairs spokesman said in a response today. Already, the United States had sanctioned two former Indian nuclear scientists, Y.S.R. Prasad and C. Surendar, on September 29 for "transfer of equipment and technology controlled under multilateral export control lists or otherwise having the potential to make a material contribution to the development of weapons of mass destruction [WMD] or ballistic missile systems." "We have seen these [Friday's] press reports. With the launch of the NSSP, we now have a forum for discussions on such issues between the two countries and it is in this forum that all cases of onward proliferation can be brought up by one country or the other," the spokesman said.

The Telegraph, 27 October 2004

**Jaswant refutes Powell claim** (Pranay Sharma)

New Delhi, Oct.26. Former foreign minister Jaswant Singh, often criticised for being "too close" to the US, today came up with a scathing attack on Washington over its claims that it helped "safeguard India's national interests". The senior BJP leader picked on secretary of state Colin Powell, who claimed in a recent interview that the US played a key role in averting war between India and Pakistan two years ago. Short of calling Powell a liar, Singh did everything to disprove his claims of brokering the latest peace process. "The way he has gone about claiming credit is a total concoction and a matter of imagination, the way he conjured up biological weapons in Iraq," Singh told a news conference at the BJP headquarters this afternoon. Singh's claim of pursuing an independent foreign policy is corroborated by Strobe Talbott, a former deputy secretary of state. Talbott said in his book, Engaging India, Delhi ignored US pressure in achieving its foreign policy objectives, both in dealing with Pakistan and Washington.

The Hindu, 28 October 2004

**U.S., India not strategic partners: Kanwal Sibal** (Vladimir Radyuhin)

Moscow, Oct.27. India and the United States are not strategic partners, and have a long way to go before they may become that, India's envoy to Russia has said. "President [George W.] Bush in his National Strategic Review of September 2001 described India as the U.S.' strategic partner," the Indian Ambassador, Kanwal Sibal, said. "But we cannot be strategic partners until issues related to nuclear power, missiles and dual technologies are resolved." In an interview to the Russian daily Nezavisimaya Gazeta, Mr. Sibal recalled that India was still subject to U.S. sanctions.

Hindustan Times, 28 October 2004

**US keen to expand relations with India**

Jaipur, Oct.27. Defining India as a global player politically and economically, US Ambassador David C Mulford on Wednesday said the Bush administration was keen to expand comprehensive bilateral relations in four specific fields as well as in counter-terrorism operations. The Indo-US relationship has undergone very significant transformation in the last three years, Mulford told the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce in Jaipur. India has gained economic and political power not only in the region but also in the world, he added. "President Gerorge W Bush has asked me to identify, expand and formulate policies for specific fields to go along with India, which is now a global player on economy," he said. Mulford identified four areas - civil nuclear, civil space, high tech commerce and missile defence technology - for cooperation between the two countries.

The Hindu, 30 October 2004

**Hope India has conveyed world's concern to Than Shwe: U.S.** (Sridhar Krishnaswami)

Washington, Oct.29. The U.S. State Department has said that the Government of India was aware of Washington's concerns about the situation in Myanmar and hoped that New Delhi had conveyed to the Myanmar leader, Senior General Than Shwe, during his visit the concerns of the international community. "Than Shwe is currently on an October 24-29 State visit to India. The Government of India is aware of our concerns about the situation in Burma. We hope that the Government of India will convey to Than Shwe during his visit the concerns shared by the international community," the State Department spokesman said in response to a question at briefing on October 28. "Those concerns include the failure of Burma's leaders to free political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi, engage in a meaningful dialogue with other political and ethnic leaders to achieve national reconciliation and establish democracy and ensure that the fundamental human rights of the people of Burma are respected," the spokesman said.

Indian Express, 30 October 2004

**Armitage to visit India on Nov 10** (Pranab Dhal Samantha)

New Delhi, Oct.29. India's involvement in Iraq and the ongoing peace process with Pakistan will be on the agenda when US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage visits New Delhi after the US presidential polls. His visit will allow both sides to review the progress on taking ahead the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP). Armitage is believed to be in New Delhi on November 10-11. In India, Armitage will meet Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh and National Security Advisor J.N. Dixit. Sources said Armitage would undertake the visit regardless of the outcome of the US Presidential polls. Both sides are expected to discuss the situation in Iraq and the nature of India's assistance to the country. Washington has been keen that New Delhi play a more pro-active role in ensuring free and fair elections in Iraq.