

The Indian Express, 1 October 2005

Bush dials PM: N-deal on course

NEW DELHI, Sept 30: US President George W Bush today called up Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and assured him that the Indo-US nuclear deal was on track. He reaffirmed Washington's commitment to the July 18 joint statement between the two leaders at a time when the PM is under attack from the Left on India's vote in favour of the EU-3 resolution at the International Atomic Energy Agency. The CPM has also warned the Government to "undo the damage" at the next vote in November. Bush's signal is significant because the Nuclear Suppliers Group is expected to meet in October. For India to be able to participate in the nuclear business, this group will have to remove the restrictions imposed against India. Sources said the Bush-Singh conversation-within two weeks of their meeting in New York-was largely to assure the PM of US commitment to the nuclear deal when he is under pressure here. The PM's media advisor said the two leaders "reviewed the implementation of the July 18 joint statement."

The Indian Express, 1 October 2005

Iran vote in spite of US: Sen

WASHINGTON, SEPT 30: Intense US pressure didn't prompt India to support a resolution that has placed Iran on the verge of referral to the UN Security Council, Ronen Sen, India's ambassador to the United States, has said. In fact it almost had the opposite effect. Top US officials had repeatedly urged India to support referring Iran to the Security Council. In the weeks leading up to the vote, Representative Tom Lantos, the top Democrat on the House International Relations Committee, said India could not expect Congress to support a deal extending US civilian nuclear cooperation if India "totally disregards our interests" on the Iran resolution. Sen, however, said US pressure actually made it harder for India to go through with a vote it always had intended to cast. India's concern that it might appear to be buckling under US pressure was "a huge stumbling block in making the decision, which would have happened anyway".

Newindpress, 1 October 2005

Call Karat's bluff

In threatening the government that he will not "countenance" its vote against Iran's nuclear proliferation at the International Atomic Energy Agency last week, CPM General Secretary Prakash Karat commits three egregious errors. The least offensive one is his selective choice of facts in describing the Iranian nuclear imbroglio. While thundering in defence of Iran's right to develop nuclear energy under the NPT, Karat conveniently ignores the most important fact. That Iran was caught cheating in its secret pursuit of an undeclared nuclear enrichment programme, which would have given it the capacity to produce atomic weapons. If Iran was only interested in peaceful nuclear energy, it could have developed the enrichment programme in the open. Karat refuses to address the primary question of Iran's nuclear weapon ambition. Equally invidious has been Karat's attempt to create new "facts" by blaming Prime Minister Manmohan Singh for a considered and collective decision of the Congress leadership.

The Hindu, 1 October 2005

India, Iran and the Congressional hearings on the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal

In the wake of its vote against Iran in the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Indian Government said "nothing could be further from the truth" than the suggestion that there was any "linkage" between its decision and the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal. The two issues got explicitly linked for the first time at the

House International Relations Committee hearings, on the July 18 agreement, in early September. Though some remarks of Congressmen like Tom Lantos were reported at the time, the full transcript of the September 8 hearings has only recently become available. The Hindureproduces excerpts: REP. TOM LANTOS (D-CA): When the administration called me asking for my support for the issue we are now about to discuss, I gave it, and I continue to do so. But there is a degree of reciprocity we expect of India, which has not been forthcoming.

The News, 1 October 2005

India diminishes itself (Praful Bidwai)

The Manmohan Singh government has shocked the global public -- and millions of Indians - by supporting a resolution sponsored by the European Union-3 (Germany, France and Britain) at the International Atomic Energy Agency. The resolution wrongly censures Iran for its nuclear activities although there's no conclusive evidence that these violate the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or Iran's IAEA safeguards agreement. The resolution furnishes legal grounds for dragging Iran before the United Nations Security Council for possible sanctions. It thus sets a dangerous precedent, which could be invoked against yet another country which may fall foul of the United States. Worse, there is compelling evidence that India acted under Washington's pressure to turn against Iran, with whom India has close, friendly and growing relations. India was repeatedly told that it must "choose" between Tehran and Washington; there's no third option. India made her choice -- to its shame and at the expense of its own interests. India has also broken ranks with the Non-Aligned Movement, of which it was once a proud leader.

Dawn, 1 October 2005

Pakistan, India may sign two accords: Bush phones Manmohan (Jawed Naqvi)

NEW DELHI, Sept 30: The United States on Friday indicated it would closely watch Indian Foreign Minister Kunwar Natwar Singh's visit to Pakistan starting Sunday following a telephonic conversation between US President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh. Mr Natwar Singh's visit is expected to boost bilateral ties. But, official sources said, with improved visa facilities and easier consular access for their prisoners on the cards, the real issue to watch would be the public position both countries take on the Iran gas pipeline and Tehran's nuclear quest. During the 10-minute conversation initiated by the US side, President Bush and Prime Minister Singh "reviewed the implementation of the July 18 Indo-US joint statement and other bilateral issues and touched on developments in the region," the prime minister's media adviser Sanjay Barua said in a statement. Diplomatic sources term the telephone call significant as it came two days before Mr Natwar Singh meets Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri in Islamabad.

Boston.com News, 1 October 2005

U.S. nuke views on N. Korea upheld by U.N. (George Jahn)

VIENNA, Austria --The U.N. atomic watchdog agency took North Korea to task Friday for breaching the nuclear arms control treaty but welcomed its pledge to give up atomic weapons in a resolution that highlights U.S. priorities for future talks with Pyongyang. China refrained from co-sponsoring the text in a reflection of its displeasure with a text focusing on Washington's priorities. Still, diplomats noted that the resolution was submitted to the 139-nation International Atomic Energy Agency's General Assembly only after Beijing indirectly signed off on it. Russia -- which along with China is one of five nations negotiating with North Korea over scrapping its nuclear arms -- also did not co-sponsor the text, showing that it, too, was unhappy with the outcome. The document was adopted by consensus,

but has only symbolic value because the meeting has no enforcement powers.

Dawn, 2 October 2004

Why India voted against Iran (Karamatullah K. Ghori)

India voting on the side of the Americans and the Europeans against Iran at the September 24 IAEA board meeting in Vienna was bound to enrage the Iranians. The jury is still out as to how Tehran will ultimately react to the Indian perfidy. There have, so far, been conflicting reports from Vienna and Tehran. The Vienna missive spoke of Iran immediately retaliating by cancelling the \$22 billion liquefied natural gas deal with India. But later reports from Tehran still left a modicum of shades of gray on the subject. Irrespective of whether Tehran pays the Indians back in the same coin or sticks to its commitment on the gas deal with Delhi, it is not possible to water down Indian treachery and its impact that goes far beyond bilateral ties. Many have been surprised by Delhi's decision to stand up and be counted in the camp of western neo-imperialists out to nettle Iran on the nuclear issue. How can India, the self-proclaimed moral guru of the Third-World, stab a camp follower in the back?

The Korean Herald, 3 October 2005

Will North Korea sign IAEA 'Additional Protocol' soon? (Lee Joo-hee)

For South Korea and the United States, the best scenario once the North Korean nuclear standoff ends is for the North not only to rejoin the Nonproliferation Treaty, but also to agree fully to transparent inspections by the U.N. nuclear watchdog. Concerned by the threat of North Korea's nuclear ambition to stability in Northeast Asia and the security on the Korean Peninsula, South Korea and the United States were dead set on making North Korea sign the joint statement pledging a denuclearized peninsula. According to the statement, signed at the fourth round of negotiations that ended two weeks ago, North Korea is to return "at an early date" to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. The IAEA is responsible for validating that NPT members are complying with the treaty, which bars all countries except China, France, Russia, Britain, and the United States from "acquiring" nuclear weapons. For South Korea and the United States, it is most desired for the North - in addition to returning to the NPT as soon as possible - to sign up on the International Atomic Energy Agency's Additional Protocol, the strengthened version of the Safeguards Agreement of 1997.

Hindustan Times, 3 October 2005

For us, not US (Manoj Joshi)

In our intellectually lazy world, slogans and headlines substitute for analysis and, sometimes, even plain facts. Take the ones that have been prominent in the past week -India's 'ancient ties with Iran' and the 'commitment to non-alignment' that ought to have been the decisive factor in India's vote to refer Teheran's nuclear cheating to the UN Security Council. As for the ancient ties, they are a matter of record, but they have not been uniformly benign. We needn't go back to Nadir Shah's infamous qatl-e-aam (general massacre) in Delhi in 1738, but to more recent times. Gohar Ayub Khan has revealed, for example, that Iran and Turkey provided Pakistan with military material during its 1965 war with India. After the conflict, Iran purchased 90 F-86 sabres from Germany and transferred them to Pakistan. In the 1971 war, Teheran provided Pakistan with a squadron of F-5 fighters, which arrived too late to be used. Just for the record, when Saddam Hussein attacked Iran and the two countries fought a bloody and ruinous 8-year war, India terminated its longstanding military training programme in Iraq.

The Hindu, 3 October 2005

Iran: party stands by Manmohan (Harish Khare)

NEW DELHI: On Saturday the Prime Minister was asked about CPI(M) leader Prakash Karat's sharp criticism on India's Iran vote. If Dr. Manmohan Singh seemed to shrug off the personal attack by citing the Gita, it was because a day earlier the Congress leadership had totally endorsed the United Progressive Alliance Government decision to vote against Iran in Geneva. On Friday evening the "core group" met at Dr. Singh's residence. The group comprises Congress president Sonia Gandhi, Dr. Singh and senior ministers Pranab Mukherjee, Arjun Singh, Shivraj Patil, Ghulam Nabi Azad, and political secretary to Ms. Gandhi, Ahmed Patel. It discussed the post-vote controversy.

The Indian Express, 3 October 2005

'US considering energy help to Pak'

ISLAMABAD, Oct 2: Pakistan has said that the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline would remain viable even if India opted out of the project. "A gas pipeline from Iran to Pakistan is viable even if India pulls out of the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline project," Ahmed Waqar, secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources, said. Meanwhile, reports here said the United States is considering a proposal to help Pakistan meet its energy needs as part of its efforts to wean India and Pakistan away from building a pipeline for bringing gas from Iran, officials said. US officials told a group of journalists from South Asia touring Washington that the US offer of cooperation on the civilian nuclear technology to India was also part of its efforts to "stop" the construction of the proposed pipeline. "They (US officials) have not ruled out helping Pakistan meet its energy needs," Dawn quoted Pakistan's charge de affairs in Washington, Mohammed Sadiq, as saying. Asked if the US offer would also include civilian nuclear reactors, sadiq said: "It includes both conventional and non-conventional sources of energy." However, the Pakistan Foreign Office said the US had not made any such formal offer to Pakistan.

The Indian Express, 3 October 2005

US to sell Pak 'acquired' F-16s

ISLAMABAD, Oct 2: Pakistan will buy 77 F-16 jets from the US-which Washington would acquire from a third country-for its Air Force, after they are fitted with the state-of-the-art equipment, Islamabad's Ambassador to America Gen (retd) Jehangir Karamat said. The F-16s would be acquired from a third country but the supply would be made by the US, Karamat was quoted as saying by the local daily The News, but the paper did not specify whether Washington was procuring used aircraft. The upgradation and installation of equipment would be carried out by the manufacturer in the US and all the aircraft would be fitted with state-of-the-art equipment to meet Pakistan's requirements, he said. Karamat said the American government has already approved the F-16 deal with Pakistan and it would come up for discussion before the US Congress in October and November. He said besides approving the F-16 deal with Pakistan, the US would provide it 20 state-of-the-art Cobra helicopters.

The Indian Express, 4 October 2005

Alleging discrimination, Musharraf wants India-US-type nuclear deal

Islamabad, Oct 4: Pakistan has formally approached the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) seeking a deal similar to the one between United States and India to produce nuclear power, saying that it needed more atomic power plants to meet future energy requirements. Pakistan has urged the NSG, comprising developed industrial countries, not to single out Pakistan by providing nuclear energy to India in the region, local daily Dawn quoted officials here as saying. The NSG was apparently

approached after President Pervez Musharraf had been requested by Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) chairman Pervez Butt to formally seek a nuclear deal from the US and the West to meet the country's 8,800 mw of electricity needs during the next 25 years.

The Tribune, 4 October 2005

India, US sign treaty on criminal matters

New Delhi, Oct 3: India and the USA today signed an agreement to help each other investigate offences related to terrorism, narcotics, trafficking, economic and other organised crimes. The protocol of exchange of the Instrument of Ratification concerning Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty was signed here by Union Home Secretary V K Duggal and US Ambassador to India David C Mulford. Speaking after the signing of the treaty, Mr Mulford termed it as "a very, very important step forward" in bilateral relations of the two countries. He said relations between India and the USA touched virtually every area of human activity and the USA would like to develop the relations further. The Union Home Secretary described the signing of the Protocol as yet another step in "our continuing strong friendship." Mr Duggal said India was the 16th country with which the USA had signed the treaty. The treaty has already been ratified by President A. P. J. Abdul Kalam.

Newindpress, 4 October 2005

Triangular ties are tricky (C Raja Mohan)

With the triangular relationship among India, the United States, and Pakistan delicately poised, it is in the interest of all the three parties not to drop the ball now. The triangular interaction in New York last month among the leaders of the three countries underlined the reality that mis-steps in one set of relations could undermine the others. Having achieved the near impossible - a simultaneous improvement of relations with both India and Pakistan over the last five years - the Bush administration ought to be extra-careful that what it does with Pakistan does not harm either Indo-US relations or the Indo-Pak peace process. While cautioning the Bush administration against muddying the peace process with Pakistan and urging Islamabad not to overplay its hand on Kashmir, India should recognise its own responsibility to move the peace process forward. When External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh meets Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf today, he has the challenging task of putting the New York debacle behind and coming up with a better understanding on how to make simultaneous progress on both cross-border terrorism and Kashmir.

The News, 4 October 2005

Iran-US futile nuclear tug of war (Dr Syed Javed Hussain)

The Judeo-Christian fanatic lobbies in the US and the West are working overtime to create an impression of Iran whereby their three-pronged attack: political, economic and military, on Iran should look appropriate and feasible. This time, however, after failing to find Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) in Iraq, they are finding it a bit difficult to net in the ever-gullible secular elements of the world's intelligentsia. You cannot 'fool all the people all the time.' Although regarding the nuclear tug of war between the US and the West on the one hand and Iran on the other, most capitals are neutral yet, in the wake of constant propaganda pouring in from all sides, this neutrality might turn itself into despondent silence. This will be a sure recipe for a crisis of huge magnitude with the potential to engulf the whole region as well as the fate of a couple of coming generations.

Dawn, 4 October 2005

America's nuclear threat (Ghayoor Ahmed)

President Bush's doctrine of pre-emption, enunciated in September 2002, was a departure from the long-standing policy that had been followed by his predecessors to prevent wars. However, the doctrine of joint nuclear operations, pronounced by Washington on March 15 this year, involving the US nuclear forces in the national security strategy, signals a radical change as it stipulates the use of nuclear weapons in pre-emption strikes against the potential adversaries that could threaten the national security interests of the United States and its allies. The doctrine in question seeks to deter the adversaries from undertaking actions intended to harm the interests of the United States and its allies by creating the fear of a pre-emptive nuclear strike against them by the US nuclear forces. In the aftermath of the September 11 tragic events the quest for absolute security by the United States is understandable.

The Washington Post, 4 October 2005

U.S. Presses Russia to Halt Trade In Nuclear Technology With Iran (Colum Lynch)

UNITED NATIONS, Oct. 3: The Bush administration Monday tried to increase pressure on Russia to halt the supply of nuclear energy technology to Iran, citing a recent finding by a U.N. board that Tehran is in violation of its commitment to disclose its nuclear activities. Stephen G. Rademaker, the acting U. S. assistant secretary of state for international security and nonproliferation, said governments needed to rethink their nuclear trade policies in light of the Sept. 24 decision by the board of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The 35-member board declared Tehran in "noncompliance" with its obligations to report advances in its nuclear programs. "We hope that all governments will take note of the board's finding of noncompliance and adjust their national policies accordingly," Rademaker said in a speech to the General Assembly disarmament committee. "We think it self-evident, for example, that, in the face of such a finding, no government should permit new nuclear transfers to Iran, and all ongoing nuclear projects should be frozen." Rademaker did not identify Russia by name, but that country is Iran's main nuclear trading partner. The Bush administration has sought for years to end that trade.

Hindustan Times, 4 October 2005

Iran missed being constructive on its nuclear programme: US

Washington, Oct 4: Iran missed a good opportunity to be constructive when President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad addressed the recent United Nations General Assembly on Iran's nuclear programme, the United States official said. "The Iranian statements at the UN revealed again that Iran's intentions are to pursue this (nuclear) programme at almost whatever the cost," Paula A DeSutter, the US Assistant Secretary of State for Verification and Compliance, told the Voice of America (VOA) on Tuesday. "Iran missed a good opportunity to be constructive," she said while participating in a monthly Persian language programme on the VOA. Asked about the implications of referring Iran's case to the UN Security Council for further action, DeSutter said, "the entire idea of verification for deterrence falls apart if the (international) community can't stand up to a committed violator."

South Asia Tribune, 5 October 2005

Was India Used as a US Puppet Against Iran (Prem Shankar Jha)

NEW DELHI, October 6: Dr Manmohan Singh must have known that a decision to vote for a resolution censuring Iran for not living up to its commitments under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty would shock the Indian intelligentsia. But nothing could have prepared him for the storm that broke when the news appeared the next morning. What was previously unthinkable has happened-a marriage of minds between the BJP and the Left. For the first time, therefore, it is beginning to look as if Manmohan's government might not last its full term. The public outrage is justified, for, seldom in the 57 years that

India has been independent has any government taken a decision that goes against the principles of natural justice. The way in which an unsustainable case has been built against Iran for censure by the IAEA board and referral to the Security Council has been described more than once in these columns and elsewhere.

Dawn, 5 October 2005

US linked deal with India to Iran vote: Transcripts of House hearings

WASHINGTON, Oct 4: The US had made it obvious to India, while negotiating the July 18 nuclear deal, that it will have to vote against Iran's nuclear programme if it wants atomic reactors from Washington. The detailed transcripts of two recent hearings of the US House International Relations Committee show that by Sept 8, 11 days before India voted against Iran at the International Atomic Energy Agency's meeting in Vienna, officials in Washington knew that New Delhi would support the US position on this issue. The recently released transcripts show that on Sept 8, US Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Nicolas Burns assured the committee that India did not want Iran to become a nuclear weapons state and that the Indian government had gone on record to say that. Briefing the lawmakers on the negotiations that led to the signing of the July 18 deal for allowing India to acquire civilian nuclear reactors from the US, Mr Burns said the nuclear agreement was signed only after India gave, among other things, a reciprocal assurance of its support at the IAEA on the Iran issue.

Dawn, 5 October 2005

Aftermath of the vote in Vienna (Tariq Fatemi)

The voting that took place at the IAEA in Vienna last week on the EU-3's resolution calling upon the Agency to consider reporting Iran to the UN Security Council for not complying with the nuclear non-proliferation treaty is a major development, not only for what happened during the voting itself, but more importantly, for the message that it sent out to the world. In the first place, the EU-3 (Britain, France and Germany) that had long advocated maintaining the dialogue process with Iran as the only practical option to achieve the goal of non-proliferation, finally gave in to American pressure. Of course, the ground for this policy shift on the part of the EU was already evident from its expression of disappointment at the defeat of the so-called "pragmatic" Rafsanjani and victory for the perceived "hardliner" Ahmadinejad. The latter's strong attack in his speech at the UN General Assembly, at what he characterized as "nuclear apartheid", reinforced the perception of the new leader as a person who would not compromise on Iran's core interests.

The Washington Post, 5 October 2005

U.S. to Push Koreans On Nuclear Program (Peter Baker and Glenn Kessler)

With the fragile framework of a nuclear agreement in hand, President Bush's envoys now plan to push North Korea to begin disclosing the extent and locations of its secret development programs right away to test the sincerity of Pyongyang's commitment to give up its pursuit of atomic weapons. As they plot their next step after the surprise deal reached during the six-nation talks in Beijing last month, Bush and his advisers want to translate the pact's ambiguous language into a more concrete set of obligations, senior officials said. By pressing for tangible actions by Pyongyang, though, the officials acknowledge that they could aggravate the often-prickly North Koreans and jeopardize the precarious accord. "Our objective is to build on the consensus among the five to get North Korea to make a more solid commitment to dismantlement, and to begin working on the implementation procedures for dismantling their nuclear weapons and nuclear programs," said a senior official who spoke on the condition of anonymity, citing administration policy.

Boston.com News, 5 October 2005

U.K., France, U.S.: No Central Asia nukes (Nick Wadhams)

UNITED NATIONS: The U.N. ambassadors of Britain, France and the United States have sent a letter emphasizing their continued opposition to a proposal to create a nuclear-weapons free zone in Central Asia, according to a copy obtained Tuesday. The letter, dated Monday and sent to the U.N. ambassadors of the five Central Asian nations, says that a draft treaty to create the zone still does not address their biggest concerns and that further discussions are needed. It calls for consultations "very soon." The five nations agreed to the draft text for a Central Asian nuclear-free zone in February. Such nuclear-weapon free zones can be signed internally but gain an enormous boost with the support of the five official nuclear-weapon states -- Russia, China, Britain, France, and the United States. Russia and China have already said they support the treaty proposal. While the letter does not state the objections, the text of the draft contains language that Britain, France and the United States have long opposed. In particular, they object to ambiguous language that could give previous security agreements precedence over the treaty.

The Korean Herald, 6 October 2005

U.S. holds contacts with North Korea (Lee Joo-hee)

The United States and North Korea have maintained regular contact through the North's U.N. mission in New York ahead of the planned resumption of six-way talks in November, the chief U.S. nuclear negotiator said. Christopher Hill, assistant secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, told a news conference in Washington on Tuesday that he had no concrete plans to visit Pyongyang but there will be preparatory discussions among the countries working to end the North Korean nuclear standoff. Speculation persists about Hill possibly visiting the communist state before the fifth round of the talks begin as a gesture to hasten reconciliation, but both Washington and Seoul denied any such plans. Easing the imminent crisis over the decade-long nuclear standoff, the six countries involved in talks on the North Korean nuclear standoff agreed last month on a statement of principles outlining a pledge by the North to dismantle all nuclear weapons and programs. In exchange, other countries would provide economic aid, security assurance and enhanced diplomatic relations.

Dawn, 7 October 2005

Acceding to the CTBT (Ghayoor Ahmed)

UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, in his statement to the fourth conference on facilitating the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), held in New York from September 21 to 23, inter alia, said that the conference was being held at a time of heightened global anxiety about weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons and that a collective effort was required to promote and strengthen the various multilateral instruments to reduce the threat these weapons pose to humanity. The secretary-general stressed the enforcement of the CTBT as soon as possible and called upon all states that have not signed or ratified the treaty to do so without delay, particularly those who have to ratify it to facilitate its enforcement force. Pending its entry into force, the Secretary General urged all states to maintain a moratorium on nuclear weapons test explosions or any other nuclear explosions, and to refrain from acts that would defeat the object or purpose of the treaty.

Boston.com News, 6 October 2005

Key lawmaker skeptical of N.Korea nuclear deal

WASHINGTON: The U.S. Congress will probably balk at funding energy aid for North Korea without an

airtight nuclear-disarmament deal, a senior Republican lawmaker said on Thursday. Rep. Henry Hyde of Illinois, chairman of the House of Representatives International Relations Committee, said that with the United States reeling from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and high gasoline prices, Congress would greet requests for energy aid with an "angry shriek." He told a hearing that a broad agreement reached in Beijing last month under which North Korea would give up its nuclear weapons programs in return for aid looked similar to an aborted 1994 pact that many in Congress had been skeptical of. "Such developments lead us to wonder if, in a roundabout way, we are not turning back toward a 'Son of Agreed Framework' and spinning our wheels in the process," Hyde said.

International Herald Tribune, 6 October 2005

Ban (your) nukes! (Charles D. Ferguson and Ray Takeyh)

WASHINGTON While American diplomats have publicly cheered the International Atomic Energy Agency's vote to find Iran in violation of nuclear nonproliferation obligations, it is much too early to pop open the Champagne bottles. The United States still has failed to craft a broad international consensus behind its policy toward Iran's nuclear challenge. This reflects not just maladroit diplomacy, but the contradictions and inconsistencies that have plagued America's anti-proliferation strategy. The 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty offered a unique compact between the five states possessing nuclear weapons and the rest of the international community. In exchange for the "have-nots" forgoing the weapons option, the nuclear-armed states pledged to reduce and eventually eliminate their own arsenal. Contrary to such pledges, since coming to power, the Bush team has dispensed with the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and sided with an influential segment of the Republican Party in its opposition to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Moreover, the Pentagon is contemplating a new class of weapons that could involve resumption of testing.

The Indian Express, 8 September 2005

Peace Prize, in hope

Of all the Nobel committees, the peace prize panel is the least subtle. It is most visibly given to symbolism and this year the contentment in Oslo must be especially hearty. In the International Atomic Energy Agency and its director general, Mohamed ElBaradei, each one of the criteria that have dictated its past announcements has been wholesomely met. Just count the attributes. The IAEA and ElBaradei have been intimately involved in 2005's biggest security crisis, Iran's overt non-compliance with provisions of the NPT, to which it is a signatory. History gives a reason for a loud affirmation of efforts towards nuclear disarmament - this is the 60th anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And honouring the Vienna based team allows the panel to give vent to that other abiding, never-stated obsession - a big snub to that global hegemon, the United States, which has done little to veil its impatience with ElBaradei ever since he refused to certify that weapons of mass destruction could be located in Iraq in the weeks leading to the invasion.

The Hindu, 8 October 2005

Stage set for India-U.S. defence cooperation (V.Jayanth)

ST. LOUIS: U.S. Boeing Integrated Defence Systems' Vice-President and Chief Executive Officer will be in New Delhi next week to initiate the next round of discussions on building India-U.S. defence cooperation. Though this is not a defence services-to-defence services cooperation, it will be part of a larger canvas of cooperation. "I will be there next Thursday to kick off discussions with the Government of India and will also meet up with private partners. Our whole effort will be to make it a customer-driven exercise," Jim Albaugh, Boeing IDS CEO, told visiting journalists at the company's facility here

on Thursday. Following the high-level bilateral contacts, the defence forces have got together to discuss a framework for cooperation. Simultaneously, Boeing's IDS has got into the act to build "a long-term relationship." A final protocol is expected to be firmed up by the year-end. Mr. Albaugh insists that it is "not just sales, but a partnership" that Boeing and its subsidiaries are looking at. It is true that multi-role fighter planes or combat aircraft are certainly on the table, but it will be open to international competition.

The News, 9 October 2005

US, Kazakhstan to eliminate arms-grade N-fuel

Kazakhstan: A US-based non-proliferation group and Kazakh officials on Saturday unveiled a project to eliminate nearly 3 metric tons (3.3 short tons) of weapons-grade nuclear fuel that could be used to make some two dozen atomic bombs. The \$2 million project is part of non-proliferation efforts that have taken on added urgency in recent years in Central Asia, which has seen the spread of Islamic radicalism since the 1991 Soviet collapse. It was initiated by the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a US-based nonprofits organization dedicated to reducing the threat of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. The group and the Kazakh nuclear industry shared the costs. NTI co-founder Ted Turner used the announcement ceremony to urge the United States and Russia "to reduce their nuclear weapons as much as possible." "Fifteen years after the end of the Cold War, it's crazy," he said. "Today, the most devastating threat is a terrorist attack with the use of nuclear weapons," said former US Sen. Sam Nunn, another NTI co-founder.

The News, 9 October 2005

Iran and the Bomb (Dr Farrukh Saleem)

Tel Aviv is 987 miles from Tehran and Iran's Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant is 986 miles from Israel's Sde Dov Airbase. Iran's Shahab-1 has a range of 180 miles to 200 miles (estimated inventory: 250 missiles). Shahab-2 has a range of 300 miles to 425 miles and an estimated inventory of 400. Iran claims that her Shahab-4 can actually deliver a 1,000 kg warhead over a distance of 1,500 miles. On 14 December 2001, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Iran's president from 1989 to 1997, during his Qods Day speech said, "If one day, the Islamic world is also equipped with weapons like those that Israel possesses now, then the imperialists strategy will reach a standstill because the use of even one nuclear bomb inside Israel will destroy everything. However, it will only harm the Islamic world. Its is not irrational to contemplate such an eventuality (as translated by the BBC)." Tel Aviv claims that Iran is planning to nuke Israel. Let us assume that Iran manages to develop half a dozen fission bombs and a compatible capability to deliver them to a target a thousand miles away.

Daily Times, 9 October 2005

US drafts new proposal on North Korea's nuclear programmes

TOKYO: The United States has drafted a proposal on North Korea's nuclear weapons programmes that would call on the secretive state to declare all weapons and programmes within six months, Kyodo news agency said on Saturday. At six-party talks last month, North Korea agreed to give up its nuclear activities in return for aid, security guarantees and increased diplomatic recognition. The next round of talks grouping the two Koreas, China, Japan, Russia and the United States is scheduled for November. According to US administration sources quoted by Kyodo, the proposal would require North Korea to declare its nuclear activities through a two-stage process - a move that would allow the two nations to build up mutual confidence through a more prolonged verification period. The draft proposal calls for Pyongyang to make a preliminary declaration once agreement was reached at the next round

of talks, focusing on its current nuclear activities such as uranium enrichment and plutonium-based nuclear development.

The Japan Times, 10 October 2005

New Delhi gives U.S. the nod over Iran (B. Gautam)

India needs natural gas from Iran and nuclear technology from America. New Delhi chose to give priority to the latter, and went along with the European resolution at the International Atomic Energy Agency asking Tehran to comply with its nuclear obligations. Iran has been asked to sort out its nuclear problems with the IAEA, so for the time being, the issue will not be raised in the United Nations Security Council. But India's decision has been lambasted by some in the media. The Hindu editorialized: The decision to vote against Iran at the crucial meeting of the Board of Governors of the IAEA is evidence of the Singh government's shameful willingness to abandon the independence of Indian foreign policy for the sake of strengthening its strategic partnership with the United States. The Bush administration had agreed to cooperate with India on its civilian nuclear needs.

Daily Times, 10 October 2005

US says can 'prove' Iranian nuclear warhead works

VIENNA: The United States has briefed key nations on intelligence that it says shows Iranian atomic weapons work, namely research on getting a missile warhead to explode at an altitude that would maximise the blast of a nuclear explosion, diplomats and analysts told AFP. However, a non-Western diplomat said the US briefing, carried out in various capitals ahead of a meeting in September of the UN atomic watchdog, "looks plausible but there is no hard evidence," namely direct proof of a nuclear warhead project. A diplomat close to the Vienna-based watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said that setting a warhead explosion at such a height, which is about 600 metres, the same altitude at which the Hiroshima atomic bomb was detonated, would make sense only for nuclear weapons. Chemical, biological or conventional weapons need to detonate closer to the ground in order to be effective. The intelligence does not indicate whether the weapon the warhead is to hold is nuclear but the US still considers the data the most important information it has on Iran, diplomats said.

Daily Times, 10 October 2005

Iran slams nuclear warhead allegations as 'lie'

TEHRAN: Iran on Sunday hit back at US allegations it is working on nuclear warhead designs, dismissing the latest claims as a 'lie'. "One word: it's a lie. It needs no more explanation," Foreign Ministry Spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi told reporters. Iran says its nuclear programme is a strictly peaceful effort to develop atomic power in order to generate electricity and rejects US charges that it is secretly developing nuclear weapons. Asefi meanwhile congratulated the UN nuclear watchdog and its head, Mohamed ElBaradei, for winning the Nobel Peace Prize - but nevertheless reiterated Iran's concerns that the agency could buckle to US pressure in its investigation of the Islamic republic. "We congratulate ElBaradei, but we do not want the IAEA to drift from its professional standards or from its duties. We hope ElBaradei can keep the agency from political games," Asefi said. "We have had constructive cooperation with the IAEA and will continue. As we have said before our case should have been closed earlier," he said.

The News, 10 October 2005

US incapable of going to war

TEHRAN: Washington is not in a position to go to war against Tehran and its pressure over the Islamic

republic's disputed nuclear programme is nothing more than "intimidation", Iran's top nuclear negotiator said on Sunday. "There will not be a war ahead of us. The situation in America does not allow them to create new fronts," Ali Larijani was quoted as saying by the student news agency ISNA. "War with Iran is hard for them, so they want to intimidate us into committing suicide," he added, referring to Western efforts to make Tehran abandon work on the sensitive nuclear fuel cycle. Iran insists its nuclear programme is strictly peaceful and argues it has the right to carry out fuel cycle work as a signatory of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). But the European Union and United States fear the clerical regime is using an atomic energy drive as a means to acquire the technology to make weapons.

Deccan Herald, 11 October 2005

Shot in the arm

The year's Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded jointly to the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its head, Mohamed ElBaradei. The Nobel Committee has announced that the award of the prestigious prize to the IAEA and ElBaradei is in recognition of "their efforts to prevent nuclear energy from being used for military purposes and to ensure that nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is used in the safest possible way". ElBaradei's efforts to prevent the US invasion of Iraq are well-known. He had appealed to the US and its allies for more time to allow weapons inspectors to determine whether or not Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. He, along with former IAEA chief Hans Blix, at the time head of the UN Monitoring, Inspection and Verification Commission, had appealed to the international community to allow diplomacy to resolve the crisis.

Hindustan Times, 11 October 2005

Atom-tomming lies (Brahma Chellaney)

When facts are obscured, the rationalisation can be disingenuous. The Indo-US nuclear deal is a classic example. A range of Indian actions, from the vote against Iran to the conspicuous silence on America's raising to 77 the number of F-16s it is selling Pakistan, have been justified on grounds that India has a lot at stake in this deal. Yet, those presenting the deal in a larger-than-life dimension have shied away from discussing its would-be benefits or the unilateral obligations it imposes, taking refuge instead in tangential issues. Let us assume the rosier scenario and examine the benefits that could accrue. We begin with what the deal won't do. * India will not become a nuclear-club member. As long as the NPT regime survives, only the five nations that tested a nuclear device before 1967 will lawfully remain nuclear-weapons States. With or without this deal, India will stay in a third aberrant category - neither a formal nuclear power nor a non-nuclear nation, but a non-NPT State possessing nuclear arms.

The Nation, 11 October 2005

Iran denies US charge

The US is relentlessly engaged in trying to prove that Iran is involved in activities to acquire nuclear weapons and has briefed the IAEA and some countries about the 'evidence' it has managed to get in this regard. Tehran has dismissed it contemptuously calling it "a lie". The so-called evidence, supposed to have been found in the Persian language computer files by the Wall Street Journal last March, suggests that Iran was doing research work to make a missile warhead explode at a height that could maximise the blast of a nuclear explosion. The height is roughly the same as that of the blast set off by the US over Hiroshima in 1945. A non-Western diplomat has, however, expressed the view that though plausible the briefing, which was given in various capitals ahead of the IAEA's September meeting, does not provide "any hard evidence" of the claim.

China Daily, 12 October 2005

US envoy: North Korea could face isolation

North Korea will find itself in a "wilderness of isolation" if it walks away from a landmark agreement to give up its nuclear program, but will see a host of economic and diplomatic opportunities if the deal sticks, the chief U.S. envoy for talks with the country said Tuesday. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill also suggested that the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council could play a role in verifying North Korea's disarmament if it happens. By turns conciliatory and stern, Hill said North Korea has much more to lose in the next round of talks over its nuclear program because it risks alienating the other countries involved - Russia, China, Japan and South Korea. "If they walk away from this, they would truly walk into a wilderness of isolation," Hill told the Asia Society in Manhattan. "They walk away not just from the U.S. but from all their neighbors."

The Japan Times, 13 October 2005

U.N. resolution stresses NPT

Japan on Wednesday submitted a revised nuclear disarmament draft resolution to the United Nations that underscores the importance of an effective framework for the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The new draft, submitted to the First Committee of the General Assembly, declares a renewed determination to call on all nuclear powers to reduce their nuclear arms in an irreversible, verifiable and transparent manner and eventually completely eliminate such weapons. Japan has submitted draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament to the General Assembly annually since 1994. Amendments are made annually, but this is the first time in five years the draft has been comprehensively revised. The latest is titled "Renewed Determination toward the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons" after being called "A Path to the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons" for the past five years. "The new draft resolution sends a stronger message to take practical steps toward nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation as it comes at a very opportune time, with this year marking the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki," a Foreign Ministry official said.

The News, 13 October 2005

Bush thanks India for quake aid to Pakistan

WASHINGTON: US President George W Bush offered condolences to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh over the Indians killed in the earthquake, offered assistance in rescue efforts and praised Delhi for offering aid to hard-hit Pakistan. Speaking to reporters on Wednesday, the White House spokesman Scott McClellan said, "The president called Prime Minister Singh to extend our condolences over those who lost their lives in the earthquake." McClellan continued, "The president offered to support India's relief and recovery efforts, and noted that a USAID team is in India assessing needs and what help we might be able to provide." The president also praised Prime Minister Singh for reaching out to Pakistan and offering assistance." Prime minister's media adviser Sanjaya Baru, however, told a questioner in New Delhi that Singh had not yet accepted Bush's offer.

Hindustan Times, 13 October 2005

Nuke row: US says ball in Iran's court

Brussels, Oct 11: A senior US official said on Tuesday that the "ball is in Iran's court" over resuming talks with the European Union suspended in August after Tehran resumed controversial nuclear activities. Nicholas Burns, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, underlined that Iran was responsible for breaching an accord struck with the EU in Paris last November, under which it pledged

to freeze the sensitive atomic action. "I think the ball's in Iran's court more than it is in the EU's court," said Burns, whose government suspects Tehran of trying to develop atomic weapons under the guise of its civilian nuclear program. "Here is a country that unilaterally ruptured the Paris agreement... That has resumed conversion in Isfahan... A country that seems to be embarked in a very radical course," he added. Talks with the so-called EU-3 -- Britain, France and Germany -- broke down in August, when Iran slammed the door on an offer of incentives in exchange for a cessation of fuel work.

Daily Times, 14 October 2005

'World may have to live with nuclear Iran'

WASHINGTON: Iran is determined to acquire nuclear weapons and the US may find it less costly to deter a nuclear-armed Iran than to dismantle its weapons programme, according to two US-funded researchers who advise the Pentagon. "Can the US live with a nuclear-armed Iran? Despite its rhetoric, it may have no choice," concluded the report by Judith Yaphe and Air Force Col Charles Lutes, which was released on Thursday. The potential for rolling back Iran's programme, once it produces a nuclear weapon, "is lower than preventing it in the first place and the costs of rollback may be higher than the costs of deterring and containing a nuclear Iran," they said. The two analysts are senior fellows at the National Defence University's Institute for National Strategic Studies, which does policy research for the Defence Department. US intelligence says Iran could produce a weapon in about a decade. Tehran insists its aim is peaceful nuclear energy.

The Associated Press, 14 October 2005

N.M. Governor Heads to N. Korea Nuke Talks

ALBUQUERQUE: Gov. Bill Richardson, who served as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations during the Clinton presidency, is heading overseas next week for talks aimed at persuading North Korea to give up its nuclear arms program. Richardson leaves Saturday and will arrive in North Korea on Monday for three days of talks, his spokesman, Pahl Shipley, said late Thursday. The trip was first reported on The New York Times Web site. Richardson told the newspaper that he won't represent the United States as an official negotiator but said the trip is intended "to move the diplomatic process forward" after an agreement last month in talks between North Korea and the United States. "I am not an official envoy, but I am supportive of the administration's new policy to engage the North Koreans through dialogue and diplomacy," Richardson said.

The Japan Times, 14 October 2005

Missile defense will define Japan-U.S. security alliance (Robyn Lim)

The impasse about the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps air station at Futenma in Okinawa caused U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to cancel his forthcoming visit to Japan. So Rumsfeld, fed up with Japanese foot-dragging for more than a decade, will be going to China and South Korea, but not to Japan. It's not only the bases issue that will be critical for the U.S.-Japan alliance. Japan will soon have to take key decisions about the "architecture" of missile defense. Missile defense demands an instantaneous response after a missile launch has been detected. There is simply no time for the tortuous Japanese decision-making on display in relation to Futenma. Japan, with the missile and nuclear threat from North Korea much in mind, intends to deploy an advanced radar warning system by 2007. A national early warning network will be started up next year. So far, U.S. Forces Japan is on the outside looking in.

The News, 15 October 2005

Rice warns Iran over nuclear programme

PARIS: US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice paid a brief visit to Paris on Friday and after talks with President Jacques Chirac reiterated a warning to Iran to restart negotiations over its nuclear programme or risk being taken before the UN security council. "The Iranians need to get involved in negotiations and restore the confidence of the international community that they are not trying to build a nuclear weapon," Rice said at a news conference at the French foreign ministry. "We have to have a very strong message that of course there is always the course of negotiation but there is also the course of the Security Council. It is a course that is available to the international community and it is therefore important that Iran negotiate in good faith," she said. Rice, who has just completed a tour of Central Asia, arrived in Paris overnight and had meetings with Chirac and Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy before leaving on a flight for Moscow. On Saturday she will be in London.

Daily Times, 15 October 2005

Bush was concerned about WMDs in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan

WASHINGTON: Two months before the Iraq war, President George W Bush told the British Prime Minister Tony Blair that his concern over the spread of weapons of mass destruction went beyond Iraq and mentioned Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, The New York Times said on Friday. The details of a January 30, 2003 telephone conversation between the two leaders, according to notes taken by a Blair adviser, is reported in a US edition of "Lawless World," by Philippe Sands, the newspaper said. The reference, in one sentence in the document the daily said it has reviewed, said Bush "wanted to go beyond Iraq in dealing with WMD proliferation, mentioning in particular Saudi Arabia, Iran, North Korea and Pakistan." WMD is the abbreviation for "weapons of mass destruction," which is generally considered to comprise chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. Taken down by Matthew Rycroft, Blair's private secretary at the time, the comment would be significant since Bush at the time often mentioned in public Iraq, Iran and North Korea as members of an "axis of evil," but never its close allies.

Reuters, 16 October 2005

US Moving Forward on Nuclear Deal with India

WASHINGTON: The Bush administration this week is expected to begin laying out in more detail its plans to change U.S. and international rules so India can acquire restricted nuclear materials under a controversial deal some say undermines non-proliferation standards. India improved its chances of having new rules approved when it voted with the United States and key European states last month to threaten Iran with referral to the U.N. Security Council for its nuclear activities. But some members of the U.S. Congress remain deeply concerned that the U.S.-India deal, agreed in Washington on July 18, is too permissive and will advance, not stem, the spread of nuclear weapons. There also are doubts about whether India, which has a burgeoning strategic relationship with Tehran, ultimately will vote to send Iran's case to the Security Council, where sanctions could be imposed.

Dawn, 16 October 2005

Russia, US clash over Iran's N-rights

MOSCOW, Oct 15: Russia and the United States feuded openly on Saturday over Iran's nuclear programme, with Moscow defending Tehran's right to enrich uranium for atomic energy while visiting US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Iran could not be trusted with the process. Speaking to reporters after discussing the issue, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Rice staked out starkly differing positions on the specific question of whether the Islamic republic should be allowed to

enrich uranium for any purpose. "All members of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) have this right," Mr Lavrov stated, adding that Russia had seen no evidence to support US claims that Iran sought to develop nuclear weapons under the cover of a civilian nuclear energy program. Ms Rice retorted: "It is not a question of rights... the NPT doesn't come only with rights but also with obligations. This is not an issue of rights but of whether or not the fuel cycle can be trusted in Iran."

Guardian, 17 October 2005

Britain and US give Iran new warning not to back insurgents

Britain and the US issued a fresh warning to Iran over its suspected support for Iraqi insurgents yesterday as Tony Blair and the US secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice, met for talks at Chequers. What we have presented to the Iranians is evidence which, in our judgment, clearly links the improvised explosive devices which have been used against British and other troops, mainly in the south of Iraq, to Hizbullah and to Iran

The HindustanTimes, 17 October 2005

25 Asian American doctors in Pak relief work

A team of about 25 specialist doctors, including Pakistanis and an Indian American, are in Pakistan to help with the relief efforts in that country's quake-hit areas. According to a release by a representative, the team that left last week includes Americans, Pakistanis and an Indian American doctor. Most of the physicians are from Washington but some from Tennessee and New York have also joined the team. Two American nurses have also volunteered for the relief mission. Khalid Athar and Najam Farzad of the Georgetown University Hospital here spearheaded the mission to put together the team. Most of the medical equipment was donated by George Washington University Hospital here.

The Indian Express, 18 October 2005

Bush waits and watches leak probe unfold.

It's not often that US President George W. Bush, who casts himself as decisive and bold, is cut off from decisions of grave importance to his presidency. But as he and his team brace for the results of a lengthy CIA leak investigation that has reached inside his cloistered White House, Bush is watching, powerless, from the sidelines. The immediate risks are clear: the possible indictment of Karl Rove, among Bush's closest and most influential advisers; of I. Lewis Scooter Libby, Vice President Dick Cheney's powerful chief of staff; or of others in his administration.

NewYorkTimes, 18 October 2005

Yes' Ballots Hit 90%

Iraqi election officials said Monday that they were investigating "unusually high" vote totals in 12 Shiite and Kurdish provinces, where as many as 99 percent of the voters were reported to have cast ballots in favor of Iraq's new constitution. The investigation raised the possibility that the results of the referendum could be called into question. In a statement on Monday evening, the Independent Election Commission of Iraq said the results of the referendum on Saturday would have to be delayed "a few days" because the apparently high number of "yes" votes required election workers to "recheck, compare and audit" the results.

International Herald Tribune, 18 October 2005

Rumsfeld voices concern over China's defense budget

U.S. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld on Tuesday accused China of understating the scope of

its defense spending, and he said this is sowing suspicion about how China intends to use its growing military might. Rumsfeld arrived in the Chinese capital for his first visit since he became U.S. President George W. Bush's defense chief in 2001. He was scheduled to meet Wednesday with President Hu Jintao, who also is chairman of the Central Military Commission, which runs the Chinese military.

International Herald Tribune, 19 October 2005

Saddam on trial for 1982 massacre

Saddam Hussein went on trial Wednesday for alleged crimes against fellow Iraqis, appearing in a tightly secured courtroom in the former headquarters of his Baath Party nearly two years after his capture and facing charges in a 1982 massacre of nearly 150 Shiites that could carry the death penalty if he is convicted.

The Guardian, 19 October 2005

US air strikes kill civilians in Iraq, say witnesses

American air strikes have killed more than 70 people in western Iraq, including dozens of women and children, witnesses said yesterday. Staff at a hospital in Ramadi, a provincial capital west of Baghdad, said they treated numerous civilians injured in Sunday's bombing of two nearby villages. Television pictures showed women and children among bandaged patients. The US military confirmed that warplanes and helicopters had fired missiles and killed more than 70 people but said the dead were insurgents engaged in operations.

The Hindu, 19 October 2005

India, U.S. sign science and technology pact

After 15 years of hard negotiation, India and the United States have finally signed an umbrella agreement on cooperation in the field of science and technology. The pact was signed by Union Science and Technology Minister Kapil Sibal and U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. In a press release from Washington, where the agreement was signed on Monday, the Ministry of Science and Technology said the cooperation would be based on shared responsibilities and equitable contributions.

The New York Times, 20 October 2005

Miers Is Asked to Redo Reply to Questions

The Supreme Court nomination of Harriet E. Miers suffered another setback on Wednesday when the Republican and Democratic leaders of the Senate Judiciary Committee asked her to resubmit parts of her judicial questionnaire, saying various members had found her responses "inadequate," "insufficient" and "insulting."

International Herald Tribune, 20 October 2005

Rumsfeld warns against a new 'wall'

The U.S. defense secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, urged the next generation of China's Communist leadership on Wednesday to become "a major player" in the global economy by taking steps to strengthen the system and not just reap the financial rewards, and he warned against erecting "another type of Great Wall" restricting free expression and choice.

The Dawn, 20 October 2005

Bush aide sees war for Islam's soul

A senior aide to US President George W. Bush on Tuesday linked the global campaign against terrorism to a war for the soul of Islam in which moderate Muslims must help stamp out extremism. In this battle of ideas we must encourage Islamic moderates to dispute the distorted vision of Islam advanced by the terrorists, White House National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley said in a speech to be delivered here. Hadley's remarks to the Council on Foreign Relations think-tank came a day after Bush told US Muslim leaders and diplomats from nations with large Muslim populations that all responsible Islamic leaders must denounce what he called the terrorists' extremist ideology.

The Dawn, 20 October 2005

India's outsourcing services booming: Legal sector

India's growing pool of lawyers are being tapped to provide paralegal services for customers from the United States as the next frontier in the country's booming outsourcing sector, executives say. Companies in India are offering trained lawyers using legal databases such as Westlaw and Lexis/Nexis to provide law firms in the United States with low-cost research, writing and analysis in a move to capture a market worth billions of dollars. We did a survey of corporate houses in the US in which 86 per cent identified the high cost of legal services as their number one cost worry, said Sanjay Kamrani, co-founder of the legal outsourcing firm Pangea3 LLC.

The News, 20 October 2005

US doesn't want to mediate over Kashmir

The United States is encouraged by a nascent rapprochement between nuclear rivals India and Pakistan but does not wish to mediate, especially over Kashmir, a senior US official said on Tuesday. "Kashmir is so sensitive in the relations between India and Pakistan that I think it is best left to the Indians and Pakistanis to work on together," said Nicholas Burns, undersecretary of state for political affairs. "I think both governments desire it to be so and, obviously, we wish them well," he said in a question-and-answer session after speaking on US policy toward India in his speech at the New York-based Asia Society.

International Herald Tribune, 21 October 2005

Ex-Powell aide assails Bush's foreign policy

The retired colonel who was Secretary of State Colin Powell's chief of staff has offered a remarkably blunt criticism of the administration he served, saying that foreign policy had been usurped by a "Cheney- Rumsfeld cabal" and the comments came in a speech Wednesday by Lawrence Wilkerson, who worked for Powell at the State Department from 2002 to early 2005. His remarks provided an unusually frank look at key cleavages in the Bush administration - particularly during the first term - and come a time when the White House has been under mounting pressure on a variety of fronts. In the speech to the New America Foundation, an independent public-policy institute in Washington, Wilkerson suggested that secrecy, at President George W. Bush had left the country more vulnerable, not less, to future crises.

The Guardian, 21 October 2005

US on attack over Taiwan's defence

Concerned by China's rapid military buildup but anxious for closer strategic ties with Beijing, the Bush administration is insisting that Taiwan - the most likely future military flashpoint between the two countries - does more to defend itself or face reduced US support. During a visit to China this week the defence secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, restated US worries about Beijing's intentions - and the secrecy cloaking its military spending. "It raises some questions about whether China will make the right

choices, choices that will serve ... regional peace and stability," he said.

The Indian Express, 21 October 2005

Terror in quake-hit J&K unacceptable

Terming as unacceptable acts of terrorism committed in Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of the killer earthquake, the US has said the need of the hour was to save innocent lives and overcome the natural disaster which has ravaged the state. Testifying before the US House' Asia-Pacific subcommittee yesterday, Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca said, "there are those who are cynically using the situation" caused by the earthquake to conduct violent terrorist acts as demonstrated by the assassination of Jammu and Kashmir state Education Minister Ghulam Nabi Lone.

The Dawn, 21 October 2005

System to monitor quake data set up

An information-sharing web portal Pakistan Relief and Information Systems for Earthquakes (RISE) was launched this week to provide information about the 4,000 earthquake-affected villages in the largely rural areas of the NWFP and Azad Kashmir. RISE has been developed and will be maintained by a consortium of experts drawn from American and Pakistani universities, the World Bank and the private sector with support from the government of Pakistan.

Washington Post, 22 October 2005

Quake Aid Helps U.S. Alter Image in Pakistan

High in a remote valley, the U.S. Army transport helicopter settled Thursday with a bump on the dry riverbed, and the earthquake survivors came running. Jostling and shoving for space, they crowded around the rear cargo hatch as the soldiers on board began tossing out tents, blankets and biscuits until they had no more to give. As the helicopter revved its engines for takeoff, a balding man with a beard leaned across the edge of the lowered cargo ramp and, smiling his gratitude, extended his hand toward Brandon Chasteen, a 21-year-old Army medic from Chattanooga, who gave it a hearty shake.

The Indian Express, 22 October 2005

US lawmaker DeLay arrested, appears in court

After turning himself over to the Houston police on Thursday, US Representative Tom DeLay, now on bail, appeared in court on Friday to face campaign-finance charges. But the session was cut short by his lawyer's argument that the judge is a Democrat who cannot give a fair trial to the former second-ranking Republican in the House of Representatives. State District Judge Bob Perkins said he would ask another judge to rule on a motion filed on Thursday by DeLay attorney Dick DeGuerin. The motion asks that Perkins step aside from the case on the grounds that he gave money to Democratic candidates and the activist group MoveOn.org.

The Dawn, 22 October 2005

'Cheney-Rumsfeld cabal' hijacked US policy: ex-Powell aide

Former secretary of state Colin Powell's top aide has accused Vice President Dick Cheney and Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld of creating a "cabal" that has hijacked US foreign policy. Retired colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, who was Powell's right-hand man for 16 years in the public and private sectors, also skewered President George W. Bush, saying the US leader was "not versed in international relations and not too much interested in them either." "I would say that we have courted disaster in Iraq, in North Korea, in Iran," Wilkerson, who was Powell's chief of staff at the State

Department, said Wednesday at a policy forum at the New America Foundation.

The News, 22 October 2005

US, S Korea to boost mly ties

The United States and South Korea agreed on Friday to accelerate talks on switching the command structure of Korean forces in wartime in what would be a major shift in the half-century-old alliance. US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld reaffirmed the US commitment to South Korea's defence and to the provision of a nuclear umbrella to deter aggression from North Korea. But Rumsfeld, at the close of annual security talks with his South Korean counterpart Yoon Kwang-Ung, said that the alliance was evolving.

The Indian Express, 23 October 2005

India,U.S. Discuss Nepal Democracy

Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran and US Under Secretary for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns today exchanged notes on Nepal after having spent Friday on bilateral issues. Burns was slated to visit Kathmandu but could not accommodate it in his schedule as he had to be present in Paris for the EU-Russia ing. However, Indian Ambassador to Nepal Shiv Shankar Mukherjee came to Delhi to be present for the talks today.

The Dawn, 23 October 2005

US troops kill 20 fighters

US forces in Iraq killed 20 insurgents on Saturday near the Syrian border while conducting raids on houses believed to be hideouts for Al Qaeda foreign fighters, the US military said. A statement said US forces found two large caches of weapons, including rocket-propelled grenades, mortar rounds and bomb making materials, during the raids in the western town of Husayba. It said one insurgent was captured in the operation.

New York Times 24 October 2005

A Trail of Ruin as Storm Churns Toward Florida

Hurricane Wilma churned toward heavily populated southwestern [Florida](#) and the Florida Keys on Sunday evening after pounding the Yucatan Coast of [Mexico](#), still a major storm, with winds of more than 110 miles per hour and the power to generate devastating flooding. The Associated Press reported that at 5 A.M., Wilma was a powerful Category 3 centered about 55 miles southwest of Naples and moving northeast at about 20 mph with no signs of weakening.

The Hindu, 24 October 2005

Editor opens rift over CIA "leak"

Fallout from the scandal of how a secret CIA operative's name came to be leaked to the U.S. media, which is threatening to engulf the White House in crisis this week, has also reached the newsroom of the venerable *New York Times*. In an extraordinary memo to the paper's staff, Executive Editor Bill Keller has launched a thinly-veiled attack on its controversial reporter Judith Miller, who spent 85 days in jail to protect the identity of a secret source in the affair of the CIA operative Valerie Plame.

The NewYork Times, 25 October 2005

France and U.S. to Press U.N. to Demand Syrian Cooperation The United States and France said

Monday that they would push for Security Council action to demand that Syria end its obstruction of the United Nations investigation into the assassination of the former Lebanese prime minister, Rafik Hariri. "This is true confessions time now for the government of Syria," said John R. Bolton, the United States ambassador. "No more obstruction, no more half measures. We want substantive cooperation and we want it immediately."

The Washington Post, 25 October 2005

U.S. Extradites Accused Drug Dealer From Afghanistan.

A Taliban-linked man who allegedly sought to poison U.S. streets with millions of dollars of heroin in a deadly "American jihad" has become the first person extradited from Afghanistan to face federal charges, officials said Monday. Drug Enforcement Administrator Karen P. Tandy said Baz Mohammad, one of the world's "most wanted, most powerful and most dangerous" drug kingpins, had helped finance the Taliban by selling opium since 1990.

The News, 25 October 2005

Wilma plows into Florida's southwest coast at 125 mph

Hurricane Wilma plowed into southwest Florida early on Monday with howling 125 mph winds and dashed across the state to the Miami-Fort Lauderdale area, shattering windows, peeling away roofs and knocking out power to millions of people. The same storm that brought ruin over the weekend to resort towns along Mexico's Yucatan Coast came ashore in Florida as a strong Category 3 hurricane, but within hours had weakened into a Category 2 with winds of 105 mph

The Indian Express, 25 October 2005

Indian troops no, US troops yes: Pak

The US on Monday said it has increased financial assistance to earthquake victims in Pakistan by another \$4.5 million, taking Washington's total aid to around \$60 million. Announcing this, the US embassy also said nine more helicopters would be sent for relief operations in addition to 21 already in operation. It is also willing to nearly double its military forces to 1,000. The higher troop levels will come as Washington takes on bigger responsibilities in reconstruction and medical aid, including the setting up of two mobile hospitals with facilities to perform major surgeries, military officials said.

The New York Times, 26 October 2005

U.S., France and Britain Join to Press Syrians at the U.N.

The United States and France circulated a draft Security Council resolution Tuesday evening ordering Syria to cooperate with the United Nations investigation of the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri of Lebanon and threatening sanctions if it did not. The measure, cosponsored by Britain, also called for people identified as being involved in the killing or its planning to be subject to an international travel ban and assets freeze.

WashingtonPost, 26 October 2005

2,000th Death Marked by Silence and a Vow.

Washington marked the 2,000th American fatality of the Iraq war with a moment of silence in the Senate, the reading of the names of the fallen from the House floor, new protests and a solemn vow from President Bush not to "rest or tire until the war on terror is won." In a speech delivered just hours before the Pentagon announced the death of Staff Sgt. George Alexander Jr., Bush's voice cracked as he acknowledged those who have died in the war. "Each loss of life is heartbreaking" he said.

WashingtonPost, 26 October 2005

Bigger, Stronger Homemade Bombs Now to Blame for Half of U.S. Deaths. After 31 months of fighting in Iraq, more than half of all American fatalities are now being caused by powerful roadside bombs that blast fiery, lethal shrapnel into the cabins of armored vehicles, confronting every patrol with an unseen, menacing adversary that is accelerating the U.S. death toll. U.S. military officials, analysts and militants themselves say insurgents have learned to adapt to U.S. defensive measures by using bigger, more sophisticated and better-concealed bombs known officially as improvised explosive devices, or IEDs. They are sometimes made with multiple artillery shells and Iranian TNT, sometimes disguised as bricks, boosted with rocket propellant, and detonated by a cell phone or a garage door opener.

International Herald Tribune, 26 October 2005

Relief workers plead for more aid.

Representatives of key donor nations were gathering Wednesday for a summit to raise money for quake-devastated Pakistan, as international relief officials warned that only weeks remained to reach hundreds of thousands of people before the winter snow cuts them off in remote Himalayan villages. The meeting comes as aftershocks continue to rattle the region after the massive Oct. 8 earthquake. A magnitude-5.2 aftershock shook Islamabad, the northwestern city of Peshawar and the quake-hit town of Mansehra on Wednesday, but there were no immediate reports of injuries or damage.

The Dawn, 27 October 2005

CIA leak: jury nears decision

The federal grand jury investigating the leak of a covert CIA operative's identity met on Wednesday with special counsel Patrick Fitzgerald amid signs the prosecutor was preparing to seek criminal charges. Fitzgerald, who has interviewed many senior White House figures as he seeks the source of the leak, declined comment as he left the session that lasted three hours. It was unclear whether the grand jury voted on indictments during the secret meeting. An announcement could still come on Thursday or Friday, when the panel could meet again for a final time. The grand jury is scheduled to expire on Friday unless Fitzgerald extends it.

The Hindu, 27 October 2005

U.S. to relocate Okinawa air base

The United States on Wednesday accepted a Japanese proposal for the relocation of a U.S. air station on Okinawa, resolving a dispute that had blocked progress on military realignment talks and caused friction between the two allies. The plan, which scuttles a U.S.-favoured proposal to construct a heliport on a coral reef, will move the functions of Marine Corps Air Station, Futenma, from a congested city to inside another American base on the island, Japan's Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura said.

The Indian Express, 27 October 2005

US Senate raises H1B visa cap.

A proposal to raise the annual quota of H1B visas, which will give more Indian professionals a chance to work in the US, received a major boost in the Congress with the Senate Judiciary Committee voting overwhelmingly in favour of raising the its cap from 65,000 to 95,000. During an executive business meeting for the Senate Judiciary Committee on October 20th, Senator Arlen Specter proposed adding 60,000 to the cap, but the committee instead chose to support Senator Diane Feinstein's (D-Ca) amendment adding 30,000 H1B visas to the cap

International Herald Tribune, 28 October 2005

Bush's pick for court withdraws

Harriet Miers asked Thursday for her nomination for the Supreme Court to be withdrawn after weeks of increasingly heated debate over the depth of her conservative beliefs and her qualifications to fill the seat to be vacated by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. Miers, who is President George W. Bush's White House counsel, told the president in a letter that she feared that the confirmation process "presents a burden for the White House and our staff that is not in the best interest of the country."

The Dawn, 28 October 2005

US troop strength in Iraq rises to 161,000

The United States has increased its forces in Iraq to the highest total of the invasion at 161,000 troops, and the Pentagon said on Thursday it expected a similar number in place for the December elections. The US military increased its force in Iraq in advance of the Oct 15 referendum in which Iraqis approved a new constitution. The current total is about 23,000 higher than the usual level of 138,000, which includes 17 brigades. Iraqi voters go to the polls again on Dec. 15 to select a new government.

The Indian Express, 28 October 2005

US spy agencies told to promote democracy.

A new strategy document issued Wednesday by the Bush administration ranks efforts to "bolster the growth of democracy" among the three top missions for American intelligence agencies. John Negroponte, the director of national intelligence, said the rankings were intended to align the work of intelligence agencies with the administration's broader national security goals. The top two "mission objectives" are efforts to counter terrorism and weapons proliferation.

29 October 2005

Cheney Aide Libby Is Indicted

Lewis "Scooter" Libby, Vice President Cheney's chief of staff, was indicted yesterday on charges of lying to federal investigators and obstructing justice in the 22-month CIA leak investigation. Libby, the first sitting White House aide charged with a crime in recent history, resigned. Karl Rove, the president's top strategist, narrowly escaped indictment after providing new information during eleventh-hour negotiations with Special Counsel Patrick J. Fitzgerald but could still be charged in the case, according to three people familiar with the talks. A source close to Rove said the senior strategist's fate will be known soon.

29 October 2005

Russia, U.S. to revise norms for nuclear tech transfers to India

Russia is working with the United States to revise the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) guidelines to allow nuclear technology transfers to India, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Friday. Mr. Lavrov told External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh here that Russia was "mindful of India's impeccable record on non-proliferation," the Indian Embassy said in a press release. "In this connection it was felt that exception could be made for India in terms of norms observed by the Nuclear Suppliers Group. The Russian side indicated that cooperation between India and Russia in the field of civilian nuclear energy could be expanded."

The Dawn, 29 October 2005

Tons of relief goods await transportation

Over 100 tons of relief goods — winterized tents, winter clothing, blankets donated by Pakistani and American people, are lying at New York's John Kennedy Airport as Pakistan International Airlines is unable to cope with the huge load of donated items. Pakistan's deputy permanent representatives at the United Nations told Dawn that the government was trying to enlist support of NATO or some other entity which had big planes to help transport the goods to Pakistan.

The Dawn, 30 October 2005

Radicals tried to take over Pakistan: Bush

President George Bush has said that Pakistan was one of the few countries that radicals had specifically targeted for a takeover. The terrorists goal is to overthrow a rising democracy, claim a strategic country as a haven for terror, destabilize the Middle East, and strike America and free nations with ever-increasing violence, he said. Over the past few decades, radicals have specifically targeted Egypt and Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and Jordan for potential takeover, he added.

The Dawn, 30 October 2005

Donors conference planned on Nov 19: Bush has formed fundraising body: Aziz

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Saturday announced that the international donors conference on reconstruction and rehabilitation would be held in Islamabad on Nov 19. Talking to reporters after a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Reconstruction and Rehabilitation, he said the UN secretary-general and presidents of the World Bank and Asian Development Bank had been invited to attend the conference. The meeting decided to inform the prospective participants about different dimensions of the quake damage and reconstruction requirements by Nov 15 so that they came to the conference fully prepared with their response.

The Indian Express, 30 October 2005

US upbeat about Syria resolution, Russia hesitant.

The United States and France are confident a tough resolution against Syria will be adopted at a UN foreign ministers meeting on Monday although Russia and China still have misgivings. We are very close. We are close to resolving it, US Ambassador John Bolton told reporters. We will need what we need to do for this resolution to be ready for consultations on Monday. Bolton also said he already had the minimum nine votes needed to adopt a resolution. Some 13 foreign ministers of the 15 council members may attend the session, Bolton said. Syria's Foreign Minister Farouq al-Shara is also expected to speak.

WashingtonPost, 31 October 2005

President To Name Nominee For Court

President Bush planned to announce a new Supreme Court nomination today, moving quickly after a weekend of consultations to put forward a replacement for the ill-fated choice of Harriet Miers in hopes of recapturing political momentum, according to Republicans close to the White House. Judging by the names the White House floated by political allies in recent days, Bush seems ready to pick a candidate with a long track record of conservative jurisprudence -- one who would mollify the Republican base, whose opposition to Miers's nomination helped scuttle her chances.

The News, 31 October 2005

CIA leak case: Senate leader urges

Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid said Sunday that President George W Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney should apologise for the possible involvement of their aides in the alleged illegal disclosure of a CIA undercover agent's identity. Reid also said Bush should pledge not to pardon any aides convicted as a result of the investigation into the disclosure of CIA officer Valerie Plame's identity.

Indian Express, 31 October 2005

Syria treads diplomatic track to ease pressure

In an effort to drum off a tough draft Security Council resolution backed by the US and France, Syria launched its own investigation on Saturday into the killing of Lebanese former Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri. The inquiry will question Syrian civilians and military personnel and co-operate with a UN inquiry, officials said. Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Walid al-Mualem was touring the Gulf on Sunday for Arab support on the eve of the UN meeting. King Abdulla confirmed that "the kingdom stands by Syria's side against the pressures it is being subjected to by some international sides," Syria's state SANA news agency said.

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