

The Indian Express, 1 September 2007

Options open at IAEA, says Kakodkar

Mumbai, August 31: Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Anil Kakodkar kept the option open on discussing the safeguards agreement with IAEA during his upcoming visit to Vienna, saying a decision on it will be taken two days ahead of his meeting with the UN nuclear watchdog. "I will be definitely going to attend the 51st General Meeting of the IAEA in Vienna," he told a select group of reporters. "Things are changing every day, but I will be taking the call two days before the General meeting which starts from September 17," Kakodkar said when asked whether he will be discussing the safeguards agreement.

The Indian Express, 1 September 2007

Japan honours Indian judge who dissented during WW II trials

TOKYO, August 31: An Indian judge, remembered by fewer and fewer of his own countrymen 40 years after his death, is still big in Japan. In recent weeks alone, NHK, the public broadcaster, devoted 55 minutes of prime time to his life, and a scholar came out with a 309-page book exploring his thinking and its impact on Japan. Capping it all, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, during a visit to India last week, paid tribute to him in a speech to the Indian Parliament in New Delhi and then travelled to Calcutta to meet the judge's 81-year-old son.

Indo Asian News Service, 1 September 2007

Dark clouds over Manmohan Singh government are lifting

The immediate threat to the Manmohan Singh government over the civil nuclear deal with the United States seems to have disappeared. For a start, it has been able to work out a formula for pacifying the belligerent Left parties by setting up a committee to examine the deal. But it is clearly no more than a typical delaying tactic to defuse the situation and doesn't mean the pact is about to be scrapped. It is really a step that will enable the Left to claim that it has not been roundly rebuffed.

Indo Asian News Service, 1 September 2007

India too important to miss nuclear bus: PM

Tarapur/Mumbai, Aug 31 (IANS) A day after his government agreed to set up a committee with the Left on the India-US nuclear deal, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Friday expressed confidence that India will break its decades-old nuclear isolation, declaring the country couldn't "afford to miss" the nuclear bus. "There is today talk the world over of a nuclear renaissance and we cannot afford to miss the bus or lag behind these global developments," Manmohan Singh said after inaugurating the two 540 MW Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) reactors in Thane district, about 100 km from Mumbai.

The Indian Express, 2 September 2007

India begins talk with Russia for 2nd nuclear submarine

NEW DELHI, SEPTember 1: With just over a year left for India to get its first leased nuclear submarine from Russia, New Delhi last week quietly revived its dialogue with Moscow for a second Akula-class submarine. While India has openly denied any interest

in a nuclear submarine, talks on leasing the second submarine figured in a meeting on August 27 between National Security Advisor M K Narayanan and senior Russian officials including First Deputy Prime Minister of Sergei Ivanov, and Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov.

Indo Asian News Service, 2 September 2007

Confident ISRO targets global launch market

Sriharikota, Sep 2 (IANS) Its confidence further boosted after a successful satellite launch Sunday, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said it was targeting 5-10 percent of the global satellite launch market. "We can offer very competitive satellite launch rates, nearly 40 percent cheaper than the prevailing rates. In the small satellite launch market our rates are lower by 20 percent," ISRO chairman G. Madhavan Nair said. He was speaking to the media here after the launch of the communication satellite INSAT-4CR by the geo-synchronous satellite launch vehicle GSLV F04.

The Indian Express, 2 September 2007

British army exposed Indian soldiers to mustard gas

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 1: Hundreds of Indian soldiers were exposed to mustard gas by the British Army as part of large-scale experiments to determine how much of the poison gas that can cause severe burns was necessary to produce a battlefield casualty, The Guardian reported today citing documents it had uncovered. It says many soldiers may have been duped into taking part in the experiments, which were conducted in the 1930s at a military installation in Rawalpindi by scientists from the British Army's Porton Down chemical warfare establishment who were mandated to develop chemical weapons for use against the Japanese.

Indo Asian News Service, 3 September 2007

India must play larger role in Sri Lanka, check LTTE arms: Rajapakse

Colombo, Sep 3 (IANS) President Mahinda Rajapakse wants India to play "a much bigger role" to end Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict and also to check arms smuggling by the Tamil Tigers by sea. At the same time, he is urging Indian Tamil leaders to guide "misguided" Tamils in his country to unite "behind a peaceful solution" to a conflict that has claimed thousands of lives and shows no signs of ending. Rajapakse also said that while Colombo might keep buying weapons from Pakistan and China, "I will never allow Sri Lanka to be used as a base for operations by any power that may threaten India's security".

The Indian Express, 3 September 2007

Terror groups sneaking in cadre as 'students' via Indo-Bangla border

Kolkata, September 2: They come in as students from Bangladesh to a convenient double-life in India. With "student" stamped on their papers, they don't have to worry about the law enforcement agencies for the duration of their visa. And then, they seem to carry on as illegals at a variety of "Islamic" study centres, from Lucknow to Hyderabad. There is growing evidence of how terror networks along the Bangladesh-West Bengal border are pushing in cadres in the guise of students.

Indo Asian News Service, 3 September 2007

Indian peacekeepers reap harvest of goodwill in Sudan

Khartoum, Sep 2 (IANS) In the southern town of Malakal, dormant animosity between north and south Sudan can erupt into bloody violence any time. And when it does, it's the Indian peacekeeping troops that douse the fire and ensure that the oil-rich region does not plunge into chaos. Lt. General Jasbir Singh Lidder, force commander of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) does not like to give a nationalistic flavour to the multinational peacekeeping mission he is heading in a country that has been embroiled in a civil war between the Arab-dominated north and black-dominated south over the last four decades.

The Indian Express, 3 September 2007

Big B rules hearts of Israelis and Palestinians

Jerusalem, September 2: Israelis and Palestinians, who differ on almost every issue, have a common love :superstar Amitabh Bachchan, who rules over their hearts. The popularity that Bachchan enjoys here will be envied even by Hollywood stars. Walking through the streets of Jerusalem, one can hear songs from Bollywood movies, especially those starring the Big B.

The Indian Express, 4 September 2007

No word from Dhaka on terror arrest so CBI to move Interpol

New Delhi, Hyderabad, September 3: With reports that Hyderabad blasts-accused Mohammed Sharifuddin alias Abu Hamza has been arrested in Bangladesh, the CBI plans to approach Dhaka through Interpol. The CBI is expected to argue that Hamza figured in investigations into the murder of former Gujarat Home Minister Haren Pandya in 2003, a case the agency is investigating. Hamza is alleged to be involved in all three terror strikes in Hyderabad, including the Mecca Masjid (May 18, 2007) and the STF attack (October 12, 2005), and is said to be a close associate of the mastermind, Pakistan-based HUIJI commander Shahid Bilal.

Indian Express, 4 September 2007

Bangladesh suspects got 'character certificates' from Bengal politicians

Kolkata, September 3: Security agencies investigating the arrest of 11 suspected militants this year at the Haridaspur border checkpost in Bongaon about 100 km from here have come up with shocking evidence of political patronage to such elements. Suspected to be key operatives of terror networks, some of the men possess letters issued by local panchayat heads certifying them as bona fide 'local residents' having 'good moral character'. Some letters even urge security agencies to extend all help.

IANS, 4 September 2007

Five-nation war games begin in Bay of Bengal

New Delhi, Sep 4 (IANS) Warships from five nations, with the major component being from India and the US, Tuesday began war games in the Bay of Bengal that are aimed at improving inter-operability between their navies, even as the communist parties staged demonstrations against the drill. Malabar-2007, as the Sep 4-9 exercise is named, features 25 vessels participating in a variety of manoeuvres. These include interception and dissimilar air combat exercises, surface and anti-submarine warfare, maritime interdiction

and VBSS (visit, board, search and seizure) operations to counter piracy and terrorist acts at sea. The Malabar series is now in its 13th year. The drill has previously been a bilateral India-US engagement and has been expanded for the first time to also include Japan, Australia and Singapore.

Indian Express, 4 September 2007

India hopes Bangla will get back democracy

NEW DELHI: India on Monday hoped for an early and full restoration of democracy in Bangladesh. Responding to reports of the arrest of former Prime Minister of Bangladesh Begum Khalida Zia, the spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs said: "We would hope that the people of Bangladesh will be enabled to choose their representatives in a free, fair and democratic process." India's response was in line with its reaction to the arrest of former Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina on July 15 when it said it is "our expectation that the people of Bangladesh will be able to participate in a process leading up to a free, fair, credible and democratic election".

IANS, 5 September 2007

US Congress asked to fix 'deeply flawed' nuclear deal

Washington, Sep 5 (IANS) A leading critic of the India-US civil nuclear deal has asked the US Congress and nuclear supplier states "to stand up to the White House" to fix what he called a 'deeply flawed' agreement. The recently concluded bilateral 123 agreement to implement the deal "contradicts long-standing US nuclear export policies and threatens the global non-proliferation order," said Daryl G. Kimball, executive director of Arms Control Association (ACA). The pact promises India assurances of nuclear fuel supply and advance consent to carry out sensitive nuclear activities that are unprecedented and inconsistent with legislation approved by Congress last year, he said.

IANS, 5 September 2007

India-Bangladesh pact on intelligence sharing under test

Dhaka, Sep 5 (IANS) The India-Bangladesh agreement on exchange of actionable intelligence pertaining to militant activity signed last month faces its first test following last week's blasts in the southern Indian city of Hyderabad, media reports here said. Asked whether Dhaka was requested by New Delhi for assistance during the meeting of home secretaries of the two countries, Bangladesh's Acting Foreign Secretary Mohammed Tauhid Hussain was quoted as saying by the Daily Star: "Yes, but that was back then". Though Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee has said New Delhi had contacted Dhaka over the blasts, Bangladesh Tuesday night denied that any request for assistance from India had been received.

Indian Express, 5 September 2007

Dhaka denies any Hyderabad arrest, says Foreign Ministry to 'lodge protest'

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 4: Denying any Bangladeshi involvement in the Hyderabad twin blasts that killed 44 people on August 25, Dhaka's Home Secretary Mohammed Abdul Karim has said that media reports about the arrest of a Bangladeshi national (Sharifuddin alias Abu Hamza) are "unfounded" and that the Foreign Ministry "will lodge its protest through diplomatic channel." "We will verify the reports of different

international and Indian media," Karim was quoted as having told New Age newspaper in Dhaka.

Indo-Asian News Service, 6 September 2007

Indian, Russian paratroopers to stage joint drill

Moscow, Sep 6 (RIA Novosti) Commandos from the Indian Army's 50 Parachute Brigade are to join Russian forces in joint counter-terrorism exercises in the northern part of the country later this month. The Indian commandos will spend the first few days training at an assault course, practicing parachute jumps and firing Russian weapons. Four Russian-Indian units will then be formed and locate and destroy "terrorist" bases after a three-day, 100-km forced march.

Indo-Asian News Service, 6 September 2007

India takes steps to guard against LTTE air attacks

New Delhi, Sep 5 (IANS) The Indian government has taken "all necessary steps" to protect its territory from possible air attacks by Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers, Defence Minister A.K. Antony told parliament Wednesday. "Necessary security measures are continuously reviewed, assessed and strengthened depending upon the exigencies of the situation," he added.

Indo-Asian News Service, 6 September 2007

Andhra team heads for UAE to help illegal immigrants return

Hyderabad, Sep 5 (IANS) In an attempt to facilitate the return of thousands of immigrants stranded in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Andhra Pradesh government is sending a five-member team to Dubai this week. The team is expected to leave for Dubai on Thursday or Friday to take stock of the situation there and recommend necessary steps to the government to help illegal immigrants from the state come back home. Though the delegation was originally scheduled to visit Dubai last month, the UAE government denied them permission on ground that it was taking all steps to ensure the return of illegal immigrants. The permission came after the Indian government's intervention.

BBC, 7 September 2007

New 'strategic partnership' against China

Ships, aircraft and submarines from four countries begin week-long war games in the Bay of Bengal on 4 September. It is the first flexing of muscles by the newly-formed "Quadrilateral Initiative", which brings together the US, Japan, India and Australia. Many analysts see the manoeuvres as efforts by a democratic coalition to "contain" rising Chinese power.

Indo-Asian News Service, 7 September 2007

Sri Lanka, India set up joint defence committee

Colombo, Sep 6 (Xinhua) The governments of India and Sri Lanka have set up a joint committee on defence related issues, Sri Lankan president's office said Thursday in a statement. Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse's secretary Lalith Weeratunga and Rajapakse's two brothers are members of the Sri Lankan side while India will be

represented by secretaries in the defence and external affairs ministries and the national security advisor.

Indo-Asian News Service, 7 September 2007

India proposes dates for terror talks, Pakistan undecided

New Delhi, Sep 6 (IANS) The recent bombings in Hyderabad as well as in the Pakistani garrison town of Rawalpindi have put the spotlight on the problem of terrorism plaguing both countries, but Pakistan has yet to agree to dates proposed by India for the second meeting to take their anti-terror mechanism forward. "India has proposed two sets of dates for the next meeting on the anti-terror mechanism. But Pakistan has yet to agree to either of them," an official source told IANS. "If Pakistan agrees, the talks can be held this month," the source said.

Indo-Asian News Service, 7 September 2007

Kashmir militants ready for Ramadan truce: Sallahuddin

Srinagar, Sep 6 (IANS) A Pakistan-based Kashmiri militant grouping Thursday said it was ready for a truce during Ramadan if a "sincere" offer comes from "responsible quarters in India". Syed Sallahuddin, chairman of the United Jihad Council (UJC), an umbrella group of 12 militant organisations, said the militant leadership has thus far not been approached, either directly or indirectly, with any ceasefire offer. "However, if an honest and sincere offer about it (ceasefire) comes from responsible quarters in India, the leadership will contemplate about the truce in Ramadan," the militant leader said. Sallahuddin heads the largest militant group Hizbul Mujahideen that holds great sway over militants in Kashmir.

Indo-Asian News Service, 8 September 2007

India favours talks to end Iran's nuclear crisis

New Delhi, Sep 7 (IANS) India Friday underlined Iran's "right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy" even as it asked Tehran to "remove all doubts" about the nature of its nuclear programme through "transparent" dialogue with the UN nuclear watchdog. "India's consistent stand was reiterated that Iran has a right to develop peaceful uses of nuclear energy while fulfilling all its international commitments and obligations," external affairs ministry spokesperson Navtej Sarna told reporters. India conveyed to Iran "the need for active and transparent cooperation with the IAEA" and urged Tehran to "remove all doubts and uncertainties" about the nature of its nuclear programme, Sarna said.

Indo-Asian News Service, 8 September 2007

India, Mexico to sign three pacts

New Delhi, Sep 7 (IANS) India and oil-rich Mexico are set to energise their ties when Mexican President Felipe Calderon Hinojosa arrives here Sunday on a four-day visit accompanied by over 100 top corporate honchos eager to do business with Asia's fast-growing economy. India and Mexico will sign three agreements, including an extradition treaty and pacts on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters and the avoidance of double taxation. Calderon will hold talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Monday and discuss with him a range of bilateral and global issues, including intensification of business ties between the two countries.

The Hindu, 8 September 2007

No information on defence panel with Sri Lanka: MEA

NEW DELHI: The External Affairs Ministry says it has no information about the setting up of an India-Sri Lanka committee on defence comprising senior officials. Sri Lanka's official web site on Thursday claimed that the committee was formed following the visit by a high level delegation from Colombo to New Delhi on September 3 and 4. While admitting that the delegation visited India last week, Foreign Office spokesperson Navtej Sarna said the interaction was part of a regular exchange of visits between officials of both countries. Sri Lanka and India, he said, enjoyed extremely close relations and therefore frequently exchanged views on a wide range of issues.

The Indian Express, 8 September 2007

America sees India as global partner

Aboard USS Kitty Hawk, Bay of Bengal, September 8: The United States hopes to build an alliance with friendly navies such as India's to form a global force of 1,000 ships and boost maritime security, a top US naval commander said on Friday. But Washington's naval cooperation with New Delhi is not intended to send a signal to Beijing and the US navy was not looking to build a base in the Indian Ocean region, Vice-Admiral Doug Crowder said. "We all have common interests in keeping the oceans of the world open, free for commerce," Crowder told reporters on board the US aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. "But the United States navy just isn't large enough to do that."

Indo-Asian News Service, 8 September 2007

India, Iran discuss pipeline, business

New Delhi, Sep 7 (IANS) As the Indo-US nuclear deal sharpens the political divide here and the Left parties question the government's foreign policy, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mehdi Safari has arrived in India to push the tri-nation pipeline and to intensify business ties. Safari, who arrived here Thursday on a four-day visit, met Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon Friday morning and discussed a swathe of bilateral issues, including the multi-billion dollar tri-nation pipeline that will bring the Iranian gas to India via Pakistan. He is also likely to meet Petroleum Minister Murli Deora to discuss the pipeline project that is said to be in the final stages of negotiations.

Indo-Asian News Service, 9 September 2007

Saarc nations to finalise anti-terror pact

Dhaka, Sep 9 (IANS) Experts of eight South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) member nations will meet in Colombo Monday to examine an India-prepared draft for a regional anti-terrorism pact. Home/interior ministers of the member nations - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Maldives - are scheduled to meet in New Delhi on Oct 26 to sign the pact that would be finalized a day earlier by the home/interior secretaries. Saarc member nations lack bilateral mechanism for cooperation in this area and a regional pact is seen as a first and a necessity since a significant part of the global phenomenon emanates from this region.

Indo-Asian News Service, 9 September 2007

Squeezed by West, Sudan woos India

Khartoum, Sep 9 (IANS) Ten-year-old US sanctions over alleged human rights violations may have squeezed the Sudanese economy, but it has only spurred a defiant Khartoum to seek new friends and business partners in China and India - both rising Asian powers.

"We want to go eastward, not westward. We look at India as an independent country which has its own mind and is not a camp follower of any superpower," Kamal Obaid, Sudan's ruling party National Congress' chief pointsperson on foreign policy, told a visiting IANS correspondent here. "Historically, we have had very good relations with India. The Indian community is very famous and successful here. Around 10,000 Indians live here. We would like to strengthen relations with India," said Obaid.

Indo-Asian News Service, 10 September 2007

123 overtakes Hyde Act, but a test would test it

Washington, Sep 10 (IANS) Once approved by the US Congress, the 123 agreement to make the India-US civil nuclear deal operational overtakes the contentious enabling Hyde Act in all respects except one - a nuclear test by India, American experts suggest. The deal could come unstuck if India conducts a test "for the sole sake of 'asserting its sovereignty'", experts at leading US think tanks suggested. "The US would be obliged to stop cooperation unless it became convinced, during those consultations, that the circumstances justified invoking the waiver provisions. But basically: India preserved its right to test; the US preserved its right to react if India tests," said Teresita Schaffer, director, South Asia Programme, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

The Hindu, 10 September 2007

APEC not for expansion

SINGAPORE: The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum has decided against expanding its membership for now. The issue will be discussed afresh in 2010. India, seen as a possible candidate for APEC membership, will, therefore, continue to remain outside the premier economic forum. The United States, China, Japan, Russia, and Australia are among the 21 APEC economies, so named because of their inclusion of a few non-sovereign players. The APEC leaders discussed the membership moratorium at their Sydney summit which ended on Sunday. The moratorium, imposed 10 years ago, will now stay at least until 2010.

The Hindu, 10 September 2007

Colombo clarifies on defence panel

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka clarified on Sunday that the announcement it made on Thursday on the constitution of an 'Indo-Lanka High Level Committee on Defence' was the result of 'incorrect interpretation' of information about the recent visit of an official delegation to New Delhi. On Friday, a spokesperson of the External Affairs Minister denied knowledge about the establishment of any new Indo-Lanka committee. In a statement here, the Secretariat said the three-member delegation from Sri Lanka comprising Secretary to President Lalith Weeratunga, Defence Secretary Gothabhaya Rajapaksa and Basil Rajapaksa, Senior Adviser to President, visited India for high-level discussions as part of a regular exchange.

Indo-Asian News Service, 11 September 2007

India, Mexico sign three pacts, to double trade

New Delhi, Sep 10 (IANS) India and Mexico, the fast growing Latin American country that can be a gateway to the North American markets, Monday signed three pacts, including an extradition treaty, and agreed to double bilateral trade to around \$4 billion by 2010. Trade between India and Mexico has reached \$1.8 billion. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Mexican President Felipe Calderon Hinojosa, here on a four-day visit, tackled a broad spectrum of bilateral and global issues as the two countries took a fresh look at lucrative opportunities offered by their growing economies. With the extradition treaty, the two sides signed an accord on rendering mutual legal assistance in criminal cases that will also bring terrorism in its ambit.

Indo-Asian News Service, 11 September 2007

Indo-Bangladesh ties need new approach: Ansari

New Delhi, Sep 10 (IANS) Lamenting lack of sufficient political will to infuse momentum in India-Bangladesh cooperation, Vice-President Hamid Ansari Monday called for an alternate approach to achieve inter-state cooperation. "We have to admit that the traditional paradigm of politics and security has reached an impasse." At the inter-state level, as many as 40 instrumentalities exist for dialogue between India and Bangladesh on matters that are of common concern and depend for success on inter-state cooperation, said Ansari. "The missing element in these is sufficient political will. How to infuse this into the dialogue?"

Indo-Asian News Service, 11 September 2007

400 paratroopers to take part in India-Russia drill

New Delhi, Sep 10 (IANS) Some 400 crack paratroopers from the Indian and Russian armies will participate in a joint airborne drill that begins at the chillingly cold riverine plains of Pskov in Russia on Tuesday. Codenamed Indra-2007, this will be the second in a series of joint drills that began in the deserts of Rajasthan in October 2005. With counter-terrorism as the theme of the 10-day drill, the special airborne forces of the two countries would simulate "joint planning and conducting air and ground manoeuvres to neutralize, under a UN mandate, a concentration of international terrorists in a third country", a defence ministry release said.

Indo-Asian News Service, 11 September 2007

India, South Africa to enhance defence ties

New Delhi, Sep 10 (IANS) India and South Africa will, during the on-going weeklong visit here of the African nation's army chief, discuss measures to enhance their defence ties. "Discussions on enhancing defence cooperation in the fields of training/courses, UN peacekeeping, mountain warfare, sports and adventure activities and defence industry cooperation are likely to be held" during Lt. Gen. Solly Zacharia Shoke's visit, a defence ministry statement said. The inaugural meeting of the India-South African Defence Committee was held in Pretoria in August 1998 that chartered the future course of military cooperation between the two countries.

Indo-Asian News Service, 12 September 2007

India, Pakistan to hold anti-terror talks in October

New Delhi, Sep 12 (IANS) Shaken by a recent spate of suicide bombings and keen to signal its seriousness about countering terrorism, Pakistan, after much dilly-dallying, has finally agreed to hold the second meeting of the anti-terror mechanism with India here next month. The anti-terror meet will be held here Oct 21-22, official sources told IANS. These talks will be followed by a dialogue on conventional and non-conventional confidence-building measures, the sources added.

Indo-Asian News Service, 12 September 2007

Pranab to go to Thailand, South Korea

New Delhi, Sept 11 (IANS) External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee goes on a two-nation tour to Thailand and South Korea Thursday, putting the spotlight on India's increasing engagement with the Southeast Asian region. In Bangkok, Mukherjee will discuss ways to expand ties in diverse areas ranging from trade, transport to defence, security, energy and technology. He leaves for Seoul Sep 16 where he will co-chair the 5th meeting of the joint mission along with his Korean counterpart Song Min-soon. The focus will be on expanding business and investment with both sides determined to enhance bilateral trade from \$7.1 billion in 2006 to \$10 billion next year.

The Times of India, 12 September 2007

Tamil leader P Nedumaran arrested in Nagapattinam

NAGAPATTINAM: Tamil National Movement leader P Nedumaran and 500 volunteers were arrested on Wednesday when they tried to proceed to Sri Lanka by sea with medicines and essential commodities to "help the suffering Tamils" there. Nedumaran, addressing the volunteers, said that they tried their best to send the items including medicine and food to the suffering Tamils legally through the Red Cross society but their efforts became futile as permission was denied.

Indian Express, 14 September 2007

India disfavours military action against Iran

Bangkok, September 14: : Strongly disfavours any US military action against Iran, India on Friday said it did not want "another flashpoint" in its neighbourhood and hoped "good sense" will prevail, preventing the "precipitation" of the Tehran nuclear issue. External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee said the row over Iran's nuclear programme should be resolved through dialogue and the ongoing talks between Tehran and the UN atomic watchdog IAEA should be allowed to reach the logical conclusion. "We do firmly believe that Iran has every right to pursue its nuclear programme for peaceful purposes," he said.

Indian Express, 14 September 2007

'KP' not detained in Thailand: Pranab

Bangkok, September 14: : LTTE leader K Padmanathan, an accused in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, has not been detained in Thailand, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee said in Bangkok on Friday. "We have been informed that the person (Padmanathan) is not yet detained," the Minister said when asked about reports of the LTTE leader's detention in Bangkok this week. This information was conveyed by the

Thai government to the Indian mission in Bangkok and "we are depending on that," he said.

Indo-Asian News Service, 14 September 2007

Indian Army to join UN probe on Congo gold smuggling

New Delhi, Sep 13 (IANS) The Indian Army is to join a UN probe on alleged gold smuggling by its peacekeepers in the Congo - after an internal probe had cleared the soldiers. "We had conducted the probe and found no wrongdoing but it is possible we missed something. Since the UN is now conducting the probe, we also want to be a part of it as it is the reputation of the Indian Army that is involved," official Indian sources said. Rights bodies had alleged that UN peacekeepers deployed in Congo's North Kivu province near the Rwandan border were trafficking in gold. Even now, there is no direct allegation that Indian troops are involved.

Indo-Asian News Service, 15 September 2007

India-China ties key to Asia's rise, says Pranab

Bangkok, Sep 14 (IANS) The India-China partnership holds the key to "Asia's emergence as the political and economic centre of the new international order", External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee said here Friday. "In our view, the India-China partnership is an important determinant for regional and global peace and development, and for Asia's emergence as the political and economic centre of the new international order," Mukherjee said in his keynote address on India's Look East policy at the Institute for Security and International Studies (ISIS), Chulalongkorn University.

The Hindu, 15 September 2007

Sea change in India's policy: Musharraf

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf has said there was a "sea change" in India's Kashmir policy, acknowledging its "core issue" status in relations with Pakistan, while Islamabad had not given up "anything" on its position on the issue. President Musharraf acknowledged it was not going as fast "as it should have been," but he also spoke of "a lot of improvement" in the relations.

Indo-Asian News Service, 15 September 2007

'Don't make nuclear deal total litmus test' of Indo-US relationship

Washington, Sep 15 (IANS) Former Indian Ambassador to the US Naresh Chandra says New Delhi is fully committed to the India-US civil nuclear deal, but it should not be made a "total litmus test" of their relationship. "If for some reason the nuclear deal is not concluded satisfactorily and soon, everything will not fall by the wayside," he said while participating in a panel discussion Friday with an Indian delegation visiting here for the US-India Strategic Dialogue. Chandra said while the deal had become the highest visible symbol of the growing partnership between the two countries, one must not forget that there was a whole spectrum of opinion, apprehensions and prejudices surrounding it.

The Hindu, 15 September 2007

India keen to work with Thailand

BANGKOK: India has indicated its willingness to cooperate with Thailand in the civilian

nuclear energy sector "once the India-specific arrangement is in place" after discussions between New Delhi and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and after a relevant decision by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). In an independent comment, Thailand Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont said "this is the best time for the relationship between our two countries." He said they were looking forward for closer cooperation in not only trade and knowledge-based sectors but also defence. Thailand was trying to get closer to India "not only on the security side" of the defence equation but also in the field of military-coordinated disaster management.

The Times of India, 16 September 2007

Pranab in Seoul to discuss N-deal, trade ties

SEOUL: External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee arrived in Seoul on a three-day visit to South Korea during which the two sides are expected to discuss the civil nuclear issue besides exploring ways to enhance defence, trade and economic ties. Mukherjee will hold talks with his South Korean counterpart Song Min-Soon on a wide range of bilateral issues and regional matters of mutual interest. During the discussions, the Indian side is expected to seek the support of South Korea, a member of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), for its civil nuclear ambitions in the backdrop of conclusion of Indo-US agreement for cooperation in the field recently.

The Indian Express, 16 September 2007

Facing red flag, Centre revs up for a China overdrive

New Delhi, September 15: Under attack from the Left for "aligning" with the US, the UPA Government is working overtime to show equal progress in ties with China. It is learnt that both sides are looking to hold the next round of boundary negotiations on September 23-24, which would be followed by Congress president Sonia Gandhi's visit to China next month. While India is keen to hold the boundary talks between Special Representatives NSA M K Narayanan and Chinese Vice-Minister Dai Bingguo this month, the final confirmation from Beijing is yet to come though South Block is optimistic. To emphasise the importance of this bilateral relationship, Sonia may visit China in late October.

The Times of India, 16 September 2007

'Improvement in Indo-US ties not at Russia's cost'

MOSCOW: The process of improvement in the Indo-US ties is not being carried out at the cost of Russia which will remain a major defence partner of India, according to outgoing Indian Ambassador Kanwal Sibal. "Dilution of relations with Russia is a wrong perception," Sibal said here on the eve of his departure for home tomorrow after a three-year stint. "Indian political debate is heavily coloured by nuclear deal with the US. This remains in the focus of Indian media also, generating impression of dilution of relationship with Russia," he said, adding there has been no loss of momentum in ties with Moscow.

Indo-Asian News Service, 16 September 2007

Indian nuke talks uncertain as IAEA marks 50th anniversary

Vienna, Sep 16 (IANS) There is uncertainty regarding talks on International Atomic

Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards for Indian nuclear facilities as the UN body starts its annual gathering here Monday. Although renewed global interest in nuclear power and the ongoing nuclear row with Iran are expected to dominate the meeting, it is not clear whether there will be discussions of the application of IAEA safeguards at Indian facilities. There has been no formal application for talks yet by the Indian government, IAEA diplomats said. Informal discussions on the sidelines of the meeting are, however, likely.

Indo-Asian News Service, 16 September 2007

Russia, India begin joint anti-terrorism drill

Moscow, Sep 16 (RIA-Novosti) Russian and Indian airborne troops Sunday began the active phase of the INDRA-2007 joint counter-terrorism exercises in northwest Russia's Pskov Region. With counter-terrorism as the theme of the drill, the forces of the two countries would simulate "joint planning and conducting air and ground manoeuvres to neutralize, under a UN mandate, a concentration of international terrorists in a third country", an Indian defence ministry release issued in New Delhi said. "The exercise will involve multi-directional mass airborne insertion and tactical para drops, regrouping into joint task forces and joint teams - followed by a series of counter-terrorist operations."

Indo-Asian News Service, 16 September 2007

Indian, British troops set for high altitude joint drill

New Delhi, Sep 16 (IANS) Elite soldiers of the Indian and British armed forces will get a unique opportunity to share best practices during the month-long Himalayan Warrior joint training drill that kicks off in the Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir Monday. "This specialist environmental training is the culmination of three years interaction between the Royal Marines mountain leaders and the Indian Army High Altitude Warfare School," a defence ministry release said Sunday. Emphasis will be given to survival and basic infantry skills in order to improve the ability of soldiers to operate at heights above 15,000 feet.

The Hindu, 17 September 2007

Divergence of views not to affect ties with US: Mukherjee

Seoul, Sept. 17 (PTI): In the backdrop of Left parties' opposition to growing Indo-US ties, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee today suggested any "divergence" of views in the country would not hamper development of bilateral relations and defended the nuclear deal as a "landmark" agreement. On a three-day visit here since yesterday, he made it clear that the increasing cooperation between India and the US was not aimed at containing China. "I do not visualize any constraint in bilateral relations (between India and the US). It is expanding very fast," Mukherjee said.

Indo-Asian News Service, 17 September 2007

US firm offers India thorium reactors

Bangalore, Sep 17 (IANS) While India is still debating how to make the Indo-US nuclear deal work, an American company, anxious to enter the Indian market, has offered to build commercial nuclear power reactors in the country. These reactors will rely entirely on India's thorium resources -- except at the start - and thereby remove the objections of

critics.

Indo-Asian News Service, 18 September 2007

US names India among 20 major hubs for drug trafficking

Washington, Sep 18 (IANS) The United States has named India, Pakistan Afghanistan and Myanmar among 20 major hubs for trafficking or growth of illegal drugs in an annual government report. However, the report included India among "certain countries where exceptional factors are at play" noting it has an "exemplary record" on controlling legal opium production, with licensed farmers now being issued with "smart cards" to enable the government to keep a better track of cultivation.

The Hindu, 18 September 2007

Important for India to negotiate with IAEA: U.S.

Vienna: The United States said on Monday that it was "important" for India to negotiate a safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to operationalise the nuclear deal, even as Atomic Energy Commission chief Anil Kakodkar remained tightlipped on whether he would hold talks with the IAEA. Finalising a India-specific safeguards agreement is one of the key steps for operationalising the deal that has been mired in political controversy with the Left parties threatening to withdraw support to the Manmohan Singh government if it goes ahead with the negotiations with the IAEA.

The Hindu, 18 September 2007

India hopeful of Seoul support

SEOUL: India on Monday said the Republic of Korea (ROK) "may take a positive view" as and when the U.S.-India civilian nuclear energy deal "is taken up in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)." This "hope," expressed after External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee's talks here with top leaders of the ROK, punctuated his "very substantive visit." The discussions took place in the context of a possible move towards "a strategic dimension" in bilateral ties. Ambassador N. Parthasarathi said the two countries were now engaged in "a comprehensive dialogue" of cooperation.

Indo-Asian News Service, 18 September 2007

India to discuss Hyderabad blasts with Pakistan Oct 22

New Delhi, Sep 17 (IANS) India will bring up with Pakistan the alleged links of its intelligence agencies with a top suspect in the recent bombings in Hyderabad when the two countries hold the second meeting of their anti-terror mechanism here Oct 22. The two sides will hold meetings on conventional confidence building measures on Oct 18 and on nuclear confidence building measures Oct 19, the external affairs ministry announced here Monday. India will draw Pakistan's attention to investigations that have pointed to the link between Shahid Bilal, the prime suspect in the Hyderabad attacks, with Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence. The twin blasts in Hyderabad Aug 25 killed 44 people and left hundreds injured.

Indo-Asian News Service, 18 September 2007

India shrugs off Pakistani protest on Siachen tourism

New Delhi, Sep 17 (IANS) Pakistan has protested India's move to open the Siachen Glacier in Jammu and Kashmir, the world's coldest and highest battlefield, to adventure tourism but this has cut little ice here. In Islamabad, the Indian deputy high commissioner was summoned to the foreign ministry and handed a formal protest, ministry spokesperson Tasnim Aslam told reporters. The Indian move could have a negative impact on the ongoing peace process between the two countries, she added.

Indo-Asian News Service, 19 September 2007

India for 'peaceful transition' in Nepal

New Delhi, Sep 18 (IANS) India Tuesday reacted cautiously to the political crisis engulfing Nepal after the Maoists quit the coalition government, saying it was an "internal issue" of the country and hoped that the differences will be "resolved democratically" to allow the Nepalese to choose their own future. "These are internal issues of Nepal, to be resolved by Nepal itself," External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee said in a statement.

Indo-Asian News Service, 19 September 2007

US urges India to take 'last steps' on n-deal

New Delhi, Sep 18 (IANS) With the India-US civil nuclear deal embroiled in a standoff between the government and its Left allies, US ambassador David Mulford Tuesday asked India to take the "last steps" so that the deal can be endorsed by Congress well in time before Washington moves into election mode next year. "Now we must take the final steps. Time is of the essence," Mulford said here at the fourth India-US economic summit. "This involves India completing the safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the rule change by the Nuclear Suppliers Group which will permit this initiative to be global in scope," he said.

The Hindu, 19 September 2007

Boundary talks with China next week

Beijing: China and India will hold a fresh round of boundary negotiations between September 24 and 26. The meeting, which will be the 11th round since Special Representatives were appointed to find a political solution to the border issue in 2003, will be held here, according to Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Jiang Yu.

Indo-Asian News Service, 19 September 2007

India to open fourth mission in China

Washington, Sep 18 (IANS) India is opening its fourth mission in China with a new consulate in Guangzhou, formerly Canton, about 120 km northwest of Hong Kong, reflecting the burgeoning trade ties between the two Asian giants. To be formally inaugurated when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visits in December, the new mission would look after India's interest in eight southern and south eastern provinces. The opening of the new mission follows an agreement between New Delhi and Beijing for opening reciprocal consulates - India at Guangzhou and China at Kolkata.

The Hindu, 19 September 2007

Army to go ahead with civilian trek in Siachen

NEW DELHI: The Army has decided to continue with the first-ever civilian trek to the Siachen glacier from Wednesday, official sources said. Earlier reports said the trek to the eastern Karakoram area was being called off following protests by Pakistan. "There is no move to call it off. The expedition is taking place in an area which is ours," said a Defence Ministry official.

Indo-Asian News Service, 19 September 2007

India-France war game underway in Gulf of Aden

New Delhi, Sep 18 (IANS) Indian and French forces have been engaged in a sea and air war game off the Somali coast and in the Gulf of Aden to help increase the interoperability of the two navies. The exercise, codenamed Varuna-07, commenced Sep 11 and will conclude Wednesday. The joint drill has witnessed manoeuvres such as visits to ships by airborne and sea-borne means, commando projection, air-to-surface exercises and the conduct of maritime patrols, an Indian Navy release said Tuesday.

The Times of India, 20 September 2007

Ignoring Left, govt marches ahead on N-deal

NEW DELHI: Despite the Left parties' veto, the UPA government is waking up from its Left-induced stupor on the nuclear deal, working in concert with the US to take the agreement past the finishing line. As a first step, US ambassador David Mulford met Shyam Saran, the PM's special envoy on the nuclear deal, on Wednesday afternoon. In Vienna, the US called a meeting of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG) to discuss the deal amid indications that IAEA's technical team has given an initial draft of a safeguards agreement for the Indian side to work on.

Indo-Asian News Service, 20 September 2007

India can be hub of global nuclear industry: Kakodkar

Vienna, Sep 19 (IANS) India's nuclear establishment chief Anil Kakodkar Wednesday said that the country was set to become a manufacturing hub of the global nuclear industry and looked forward to opening up of global civil nuclear cooperation that is "sustainable, free from interruption and consistent with its national policy". Kakodkar underlined the potential of the India-US civil nuclear deal to make his country a hub for the export of nuclear reactors and allied services.

The Times of India, 20 September 2007

China pushes south, says remove bunkers

KOLKATA: Moves by the Chinese army along the Sikkim-Bhutan-Tibet trijunction, culminating in a demand for removal of two Indian army bunkers near an outpost called Batang La, indicate that Beijing is pushing south for more elbow room in the area, a senior official in charge of security of the international border said in Kolkata on Wednesday. The Chinese moves assume significance, coming as they do soon after authorities in Beijing in recent months reiterated their claims to Arunachal territory. The Indian army finds it difficult to lodge a formal protest against the Chinese push as the area is located at the trijunction with Bhutan.

The Hindu, 20 September 2007

Come clean on ties with Iran, U.S. asks India

Washington: The United States has asked India to come clean on its military ties with Iran but New Delhi played down its concerns asserting that friendly relations with one country will not affect ties with others. In remarks that have raised the hackles of the Left, on the back of the growing rift between the UPA and the Communist parties on the India-U.S. nuclear deal, the U.S. has said the onus is on New Delhi to explain its military relationship with Tehran.

Indo-Asian News Service, 20 September 2007

Germany, India seek co-operation on climate change

Berlin, Sep 19 (DPA) German Economic Minister Michael Glos and Indian Finance Minister P. Chidambaram meeting in Berlin Wednesday have proposed greater co-operation between their two nations on reducing CO2 emissions. In particular both ministers saw the chance for German companies playing a key role in India's infrastructure development, including in the energy sector, and as a result underpinning efforts to address climate change.

The Hindu, 21 September 2007

"Deal will alter balance to India's advantage"

CHENNAI: The India-U.S. civilian nuclear deal will alter the geo-strategic balance in Asia to the advantage of India, Union Minister of State for Industries Ashwani Kumar said on Wednesday. The '123 Agreement', in fact, is better than the one that China has had with the U.S., and, it is a triumph of sorts for India that Pakistan was denied a similar deal, Mr. Kumar said.

Indo-Asian News Service, 21 September 2007

India-IAEA negotiations next month

New Delhi/Vienna, Sep 20 (IANS) As the US briefed the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in Vienna Thursday, the Indian government firmed up a tentative timeline to conclude its negotiations with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) by next month - a move that is set to force a confrontation with its Leftist allies.

The Hindu, 21 September 2007

Moscow for lifting NSG sanctions against New Delhi

NEW DELHI: Russia favours the lifting of curbs on India at the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), according to information made available here. Following a meeting with Atomic Energy Commission chairman Anil Kakodkar in Vienna, head of Russia's Federal Agency for Nuclear Power Sergei Kiriyenko said: "Our nuclear cooperation with India is positive, and we urge a decision to lift the NSG sanctions against India."

Indo-Asian News Service, 21 September 2007

India may have to quit Tajik military 'base'

New Delhi Sep 20 (IANS) India is likely to be evicted from its sole, albeit fledgling, overseas military facility at Ayni air base near Tajikistan's capital Dushanbe under pressure from Russia, which is concerned over New Delhi's burgeoning ties with Washington.

The Times of India, 25 September 2007

India watches developments in Myanmar from sidelines

Even as oil minister Murli Deora oversaw the signing of much sought after gas contracts with Myanmar in Yangon on Sunday, hundreds of thousands of pro-democracy protestors marched with Buddhist monks through Yangon and other cities. India's interests in Myanmar are rooted in energy, security, keeping insurgents in check and countering China's overpowering influence on India's doorstep. Myanmar is also important to an India seeking to extend its power into southeast Asia, politically and militarily, standing as it does at the mouth of the Malacca Straits. These interests have kept India and China engaged with the unpopular military regime in Yangon.

Indo-Asian News Service, 25 September 2007

British MP condemns India's ties with Myanmar

New Delhi, Sep 25 (IANS) A British parliamentarian who recently visited India says New Delhi's policy towards a "brutal and illegal regime" in Myanmar is deplorable, rubbishing its argument that it respects that country's sovereignty. "India's policy towards Burma is frankly deplorable. Providing arms and military training to one of the most brutal regimes on the planet is inexcusable and it simply won't do for the government to defend itself by arguing that it does not interfere in the internal affairs of another country," said John Bercow, a Conservative Party MP from House of Commons for Buckingham and the co-chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Democracy in Burma.

Indo-Asian News Service, 25 September 2007

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Indo-Asian News Service, 25 September 2007

India, China kick off boundary talks

Beijing, Sep 24 (IANS) Special representatives of India and China Monday kicked off another round of talks here to resolve the contentious boundary dispute that has hobbled their bilateral ties for over four decades. The two-day talks will begin Tuesday. The in-camera talks are aimed at finalising an agreed framework - a euphemism for a package settlement that may involve mutual territorial adjustments - to resolve the dispute that has cast a shadow over their bilateral ties since a brief but brutal war between the two Asian countries in 1962.

The Hindu, 25 September 2007

Protests over military exercise in Ladakh

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan said on Monday that it summoned the Indian and British envoys to the Foreign Ministry and lodged a protest over Indo-British military exercise in the Ladakh mountains and their plan to hold similar exercises in Siachen. "Pakistan feels that this is illegitimate activity because Jammu and Kashmir is internationally recognised disputed territory and more than any body else, Britain should be aware of it," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Tasneem Aslam said at a weekly briefing.

The Indian Express, 26 September 2007

Britain backs India for Security Council veto

London, September 26: Britain is backing South Africa, Japan, Brazil and India for permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council, Foreign Secretary David Miliband said in an interview broadcast. "We think, very clearly, that the South Africas of this world, the Japans of this world, the Brazils of this world, the Indias of this world, have a very clear claim (for a permanent seat), and we will be arguing for UN reform," Miliband told the BBC on Tuesday.

The Hindu, 26 September 2007

Progress in border talks, says Wen

Beijing: Negotiations between the Special Representatives of India and China ♦?? National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan and Executive Vice Foreign Minister Dai Binguo ♦?? on the border dispute began here on Tuesday. This is the 11th round of talks since the appointment of the Special Representatives. The in-camera talks, which will continue till Wednesday, are focused on devising a framework agreement for resolving the dispute on the basis of the "political parameters and guiding principles" finalised during Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to India in 2005.

Indo-Asian News Service, 26 September 2007

Sonia Gandhi to visit China

Beijing/New Delhi, Sep 25 (IANS) Sonia Gandhi, who heads India's ruling coalition and is the Congress party president, will go to China soon on a visit a top official in Beijing said will be of "great importance". Congress sources here confirmed that Gandhi, 61, would fly to Beijing next month, after returning from the United Nations in early October. The exact dates of the China trip are yet to be decided.

Indo-Asian News Service, 26 September 2007

Northern Ireland-India trade ties on the upswing

London, Sep 26 (IANS) Northern Ireland has been better known in India for trouble and turbulence, but is fast emerging as one of the most prominent trading regions of Britain with Indian companies investing there and Northern Ireland companies winning major contracts in India.

The Times of India, 27 September 2007

Iran warns India over Pakistan gas pipeline deal

TEHRAN: Iran warned India that it would sign a multi-billion dollar gas pipeline deal with Pakistan alone if New Delhi did not swiftly agree terms on transit pricing with Islamabad. Iranian and Pakistani officials are holding a new round of talks this week over finalising the long-delayed pipeline, which would see Iranian gas sent to Pakistan and to India via Pakistan. But Indian officials have been absent from the talks over the so-called "peace pipeline" as New Delhi and Islamabad have yet to agree over the payment of transit fees by India to Pakistan.

Indo-Asian News Service, 27 September 2007

India, China term boundary talks 'positive'

Beijing, Sep 26 (IANS) Ahead of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Beijing later this year, India and China Wednesday hinted at progress on the boundary issue as they wrapped up "useful and positive discussions" on a framework for the settlement of the decades-old dispute.

Indo-Asian News Service, 27 September 2007

Nepal, India agree to beef up border security

Kathmandu, Sep 26 (Xinhua) Vigilance along Nepal-India border is being beefed up to contain the violence in the southern Nepal's Terai region and to strengthen the security along 1,700 km-plus open and porous border. The two governments also agreed to reactivate district level committees, comprising chief of the security agencies of both countries, to exchange security related information. Both countries, and especially the urban centres in the Terai region, are witnessing increased cross-border criminal activities in recent years.

Indo-Asian News Service, 27 September 2007

Indian Air Force contingent heads for Congo

New Delhi, Sep 25 (IANS) Wearing their blue berets with pride, a 243-strong Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent is all set to leave for Congo to perform UN peacekeeping duties in the troubled African nation. Led by Group Captain N.J.S. Dhillon, the contingent will be based at Goma, "located amidst dense tropical forests, active volcanoes and ocean like lakes adjacent to Congo-Rwanda Uganda border", an IAF release Tuesday said. "The contingent will operate in a hostile environment dotted with inhospitable terrain in the northeastern part of Congo," the release added.

The Times of India, 27 September 2007

Pranab meets Rice in New York

NEW YORK: External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice met in New York and reviewed bilateral relations across "a gamut of items of cooperation" and discussed international issues of concern.

Indo-Asian News Service, 27 September 2007

Six Indians freed by Bangladesh

Agartala, Sep 26 (IANS) Six Indian nationals from the northeastern state of Tripura have returned home after three years in jail in Bangladesh, officials Wednesday said. The six were taken into custody by Bangladesh Rifles troopers three years back while they were

working in their fields along the India-Bangladesh border.

The Hindu, 28 September 2007

Undertake political reforms: Pranab

NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee has urged the Myanmar government to undertake political reforms and expedite the process of national reconciliation of sections that have been left out of the ruling structure.

Indo-Asian News Service, 28 September 2007

Progress made on India-China trade arrangement

Beijing, Sep 27 (Xinhua) Chinese and Indian officials have made progress in joint exploration on the feasibility of initiating a regional trade arrangement, China's ministry of commerce announced Thursday. The two sides met in Beijing for a two-day consultation, which ended Wednesday, and reached a basic agreement on cargo and service trade, investment as well as trade and investment facilitating measures, said ministry spokesman Wang Xinpei. The consultation was the fifth of its kind since March 2006, and the two countries planned to conclude the talks at the sixth consultation meeting to be held in New Delhi by October, Wang said.

The Times of India, 28 September 2007

Sukhoi base in east to counter China

NEW DELHI: As part of the counter-measures against the Chinese build-up of military infrastructure in the Tibet Autonomous Region and south China, India will progressively base squadrons of its most potent fighter Sukhoi-30MKIs in the eastern sector from 2008-2009 onwards.

The Times of India, 28 September 2007

India cool to Iran talks with Pak on LNG pipeline project

NEW DELHI: India remains unfazed by the latest round of meetings Iran had with Pakistan on September 24 to discuss the proposed \$7.4 billion tri-nation pipeline being billed as the Asian energy lifeline. India skipped the meeting, saying there were still issues such as periodicity of price revision and transit fees through Pakistan that need to be resolved. More than the unresolved issues, however, it was the timing of the talks that did not suit the government. In the crucial stage of its nuclear deal with the US, New Delhi will not like to be seen talking serious business with Tehran.

Indo-Asian News Service, 28 September 2007

Benazir wants 'peace treaty' between India, Pakistan

Washington, Sep 27 (IANS) Pakistan's self-exiled former prime minister Benazir Bhutto has said she wanted to see a treaty between India and Pakistan in the 60th year of their Independence that "promises" peace for the coming generations.

The Times of India, 28 September 2007

Pranab, PC assure US India is on track

WASHINGTON: Top Indian cabinet ministers met their U.S counterparts here on Wednesday to assure them about New Delhi's commitment to advancing bilateral

relations and agreements in the first high-level interaction between the two sides in several months, amid mounting concerns that domestic political pressures are undermining milestones reached between the two countries.

Indo-Asian News Service, 28 September 2007

India will not accept emission targets

Washington, Sep 27 (IANS) India cannot compromise on economic growth but it was equally determined not to let its greenhouse gas emissions increase beyond those of industrialised nations, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee said here Thursday. "The key issue for India and other developing countries is developing the ability to cope with the adverse impacts of climate change and adapt to it," he said at a US sponsored meeting of the world's 17 major economies to search for a new framework for energy security and climate change.

Indo-Asian News Service, 28 September 2007

N-deal will help India launch second Green Revolution: Rice

Washington, Sep 27 (IANS) The India-US civil nuclear deal will help New Delhi meet its people's economic aspirations by launching a second Green Revolution, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said here Thursday. "Once finalised, this agreement will help one of the world's fastest growing energy consumers to meet its people's economic aspirations by launching a second Green Revolution," she said.

Indo-Asian News Service, 28 September 2007

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The Indian Express, 29 September 2007

US to 'move ahead' on N-deal when India is ready

In the face of Left opposition, the Bush administration has refused to set a time-line for moving the Indo-US nuclear deal forward, saying it will start work towards operationalising the agreement when New Delhi is ready. "We will deal with it as it comes. We'll deal with it in terms of the opportunities that are there when India is ready to move forward," Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Richard Boucher said.

Indo-Asian News Service, 29 September 2007

New EU envoy for pushing trade pact with India

New Delhi, Sep 28 (IANS) Ahead of the India-European Union (EU) summit on Nov 30, Daniele Smadja, the new envoy of the European Commission, Friday called for pushing negotiations on a broad-based trade and investment agreement between the two sides. "I am particularly pleased to arrive in India at a time when the European Union's relations with India are going from strength to strength," said Smadja.

The Times of India, 29 September 2007

India warned of suspicious transactions

NEW DELHI: The Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) has forwarded a list of suspicious transactions, including hundreds of cases of suspected terror financing and doubtful foreign remittances, to Intelligence Bureau and other investigating agencies. In its first annual report released recently, the FIU identified several accounts having a common beneficiary with huge and unexplained money transfers made to them. Tasked to keep an eye on money laundering and combating terror financing, the FIU report said many of these foreign remittances were doubtful with scant information on the source of funds and actual beneficiaries. Some such account holders were even found to be on the Interpol's watch list and were known criminals.

Indo-Asian News Service, 29 September 2007

India teaching water management, local governance to world

New Delhi, Sep 29 (IANS) India may have its fair share of problems but experts from 20 countries who toured eight states are full of praise for its panchayati raj, or local self-governance, and water management systems. Over 80 delegates from 20 countries, including Bangladesh, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Djibouti, Sudan, Yemen, Egypt and Ethiopia, visited eight states over nine days to get a first hand experience of the development taking place in India. The International Learning Exchange Programme was organised by the Indian government and Unicef with the objective of sharing India's achievements in this field with the world.