

# Clinton coming on March 20

292 By C. Raja Mohan 419-1

**NEW DELHI, FEB. 1.** Seeking to build a closer relationship with India despite the differences on nuclear weapons and Pakistan, the U.S. President, Mr. William Jefferson Clinton, will arrive here for a five-day visit on March 20.

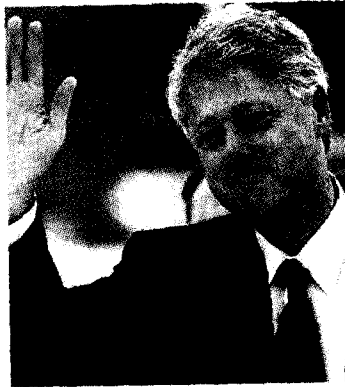
In announcing the dates, the Government today put an end to political uncertainty surrounding the trip, the first by an American President to India in 22 years.

A similar announcement made in Washington tonight by the Clinton Administration has set the ball rolling for a visit that has been in the making for nearly three years. *Indo-US*

Mr. Clinton's extended sojourn in India is expected to "pave the way for a qualitatively new and closer relationship between the two democracies", a Foreign Office spokesman told reporters here.

The focus, according to the spokesman, would be on developing a "new vision" for Indo-U.S. relations that have lagged way behind their true potential. It would be a "mistake", he added, to link Mr. Clinton's visit to any one particular issue.

The American side, which has been looking forward to this visit since Mr. Clinton began his second term in the White House in 1997, has "high hopes" of building a new Indo-U.S. relationship that is "appropriate for the new



century". While India is in favour of Mr. Clinton avoiding Pakistan in his sub-continental tour, the U.S. Administration continues to debate the choice between engaging and isolating the military regime in Islamabad.

In response to questions on Mr. Clinton's plans to visit Pakistan, the Foreign Office spokesman said, "it will not be correct" for the Government to comment on the visit of leaders to third countries.

The final American decision would depend on Gen. Pervez Musharraf's response to the various U.S. demands on a time-frame for restoration of democracy, crackdown on terrorism and pressure on the Taliban to mend its medieval ways.

Meanwhile the Indian lobbying in Washington against the President travelling to Pakistan is likely to continue. Those in Washington

who insist on engaging Pakistan suggest that Mr. Clinton's halt in Pakistan would be very brief and may not include the capital, Islamabad.

By leaving the question of a stop-over in Pakistan open-ended, the Clinton Administration is now in a position to step up the pressure on Gen. Musharraf to deliver on its demands.

Mr. Clinton's trip to India, it now appears, is no longer linked to New Delhi signing the CTBT.

The two governments are exploring a whole range of themes on which they could hang future bilateral cooperation. Besides trade and investment, the new Indo-U.S. template could include energy, environment, information technology, counter-terrorism and promotion of democracy.

Mr. Clinton is planning to visit at least one or two cities in India other than New Delhi. Among the possibilities are Mumbai, Bangalore and Hyderabad. The final choice is expected to depend upon the themes the U.S. President would want to highlight in India.

It is not clear at this stage whether Ms. Hillary Clinton, the American First Lady who is in the race for a Senate seat in New York State, would accompany the President.

But his daughter, Ms. Chelsea, who is a student at Stanford University in California, is certainly expected to come and lend some youthful charm to the visit.

THE HINDU  
2 FEB 2000

# Clinton's 5-day visit to India from March 20

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, February 1

US PRESIDENT Bill Clinton will visit India from March 20 for about five days, it was officially announced here today.

India expects the visit to pave the way for a qualitatively new and closer relationship between the two democracies, said a spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry. He, however, refused to confirm or deny whether Mr Clinton would be visiting Pakistan as well during his S Asian tour.

During Clinton's visit the entire spectrum of issues and themes will be discussed, the spokesman said. He, however, did not elaborate on any of them. Replying to a query, linking the visit to India signing the CTBT, he blandly said: "It will be a mistake to link this visit with any issue or subject."

While the External Affairs Ministry is silent on the agenda for the visit and whether any agreements would be signed at the time, experts say that reducing Indo-Pak tensions and New Delhi signing the CTBT will be high on Mr Clinton's agenda.

India, on the other hand, will be looking towards the US lifting export controls and technological blockades, including dual use technology, that were imposed on it since the 1974 Pokhran nuclear test. The Government will also be interested in increased US investment in the infrastructural sector in India and the lifting of certain trade control regimes.

On CTBT, the Vajpayee Government has maintained that decision on signing the treaty will be taken after evolving a national consensus.

This essentially means that all major political parties will be consulted on the issue and a decision taken thereafter.

Although President Clinton's itinerary in India is being worked out, he is expected to visit at least two other cities, besides New Delhi.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 2 FEB 2000

# It is necessary to bring India closer, says Clinton

Aziz Haniffa

WASHINGTON 2 FEBRUARY

US PRESIDENT Bill Clinton has declared that he is going to India because it is the world's biggest democracy and it was necessary to engage it especially since the two countries have had a "distant relationship" for long.

While the First Lady Hillary Clinton is unlikely to accompany her husband because of her preoccupation with her Senate campaign, daughter Chelsea is likely to be on the trip.

After the White House announcement of the visit during the week of March 20 to India and Bangladesh, Clinton told reporters, "I'm going (to India) because it's the biggest democracy in the world and I think we haven't been working with them enough."

"We have an enormous common interest in shaping the future with them," he added. "Just as I believe we have to engage China that has a political system very different from ours, we have to engage India that makes decisions that sometimes we don't agree with," Clinton said. He was apparently referring to India's decision to test nuclear weapons in May 1998 and New Delhi's failure to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) that Washington has been imploring it to do.

"I think it's unfortunate that the United States has been estranged — or, if not estranged, at least it's had a distant relationship with the Indians — for too long," he said. National Security Council spokesman David Leavy, asked if Clinton might add Pakistan to his itinerary or if Islamabad had been completely ruled out as even a stopover, reiterated, "No decisions have been made about other stops."

"We want to see significant movement of terrorism, on non-proliferation and the restoration of democracy," in Pakistan, Mr Leavy said. Asked if the option of a presidential visit to Islamabad will be held out to entice Pakistan to announce a timetable for a return to civilian rule and to rein in terrorist groups like the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Mr Leavy said, "I don't want to characterise it like that. We have made clear our concerns more broadly and we con-

tinue to engage the Pakistanis, and if that affects the trip we'll let you know."

"The President views strong Indian relations as essential to our own interests, the interests of the American people," Mr Leavy said. "They have an important role to play in the future, not only in terms of strategic interests but also the environment, health, improved trade and investment," he said. Administration sources said it is unlikely First Lady Hillary Clinton will accompany her husband on the trip because she would be "very much in the thick of her Senate campaign" for the New York seat being vacated by retiring Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a Democrat.

But a source said in all probability daughter Chelsea, who will be on spring break from Stanford University at the time, will accompany Clinton. "After all, she went to South Asia with her mother" in 1995 "and will be the perfect tour guide to show her father all the places of interest in India," the source added. —IANS

## Mansingh to visit Washington

Our Political Bureau

NEW DELHI 2 FEBRUARY

AS THE momentum picks up on the US presidential visit to the sub-continent, it is clear this is a visit with a 'compressed' advance schedule. This visit has been planned and postponed for over two years now but delayed announcements have pushed back the preparations.

The foreign secretary, Mr Lalit Mansingh, will be travelling to Washington on February 8-9 to hold discussions on the visit with his counterpart undersecretary of state Thomas Pickering. Subsequently, the expert level group on counter-terrorism, which is one of the largest areas of Indo-US convergence will meet, also in Washington, to work out the details of any 'deliverable' during the President's visit.

*The Economic Times*

• 3 FEB 2000

# US relaxes computer export controls

Aziz Haniffa

WASHINGTON 2 FEBRUARY

**B**OWING TO industry demands, US President Bill Clinton relaxed controls for export of high-performance computers to several countries including India which is one of 50 nations on the administration's restricted list.

In an executive order, Clinton said the administration will raise high-performance computer export limits to 12,500 millions of theoretical operations per second (MTOPS) from the 6,500 MTOPS limit set last year to all countries except the so-called rogue nations that are on the State Department list of countries that sponsor international terrorism.

"This decision reflects my commitment to a control system that will enhance US national security by implementing controls on computer exports that are effective and enforceable," Clinton said in a statement the same day as the US announced he will visit India on March 20.

Clinton said he wanted to work with the Congress to reduce the waiting period from 4-6 months to one month for the new regulations to go into effect.

He also pledged to "work with Congress to explore longer-term solutions to how we control exports of items like computers and microprocessors when they become widely available commodities."

Yesterday's announcement was Clinton's fourth revision to US export control parameters since 1993 which the White House said will "ease unnecessary regulatory burdens on both government and industry."

It said "this action reflects the Clinton administration's efforts to ensure effective controls on militarily sensitive technology while taking into account the increased availability of commodity products such as servers and workstations, of which millions are manufactured and sold worldwide every year."

The White House said the "computer export controls are designed to permit the government to calibrate control levels and licensing conditions depending upon the national security or proliferation risk posed at a specific destination, to enhance US nation-

al security by ensuring controls on computer exports are effective and to minimise impediments to legitimate computer exports which will help preserve the technological lead of the US computer industrial base."

Despite Clinton's order, the decision disappointed many computer companies like Intel, Compaq and Unisys that had sought a ceiling of 25,000 MTOPS so they could sell more of the high-powered Intel microchip to countries like India, Pakistan, Russia and China. They had argued that their

administration removed about 50 firms from the original list in the wake of progress in non-proliferation talks between Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh.

Under the executive order, the licensing threshold for high-performance computer exports to Tier 2 countries (South and Central America, South Korea, ASEAN or Association of South-East Asian Nations, Slovenia, most of Africa) and Tier 3 (India, Pakistan, Middle East/Maghreb, the



Clinton: Easing pressure

AFP

foreign competitors not subject to similar restrictions were taking away many of their clients.

Dan Hoydys, trade policy director for Unisys, said millions of computers that run on Intel's Itanium chip were expected to be sold next year and two-thirds of those sales will be outside the US.

He warned that if US computer companies are blocked from selling to markets like India, Pakistan, Russia and China, it will give competitors like Toshiba Corp. and Siemens AG an unfair advantage.

More than 150 Indian government and private entities remain on the Commerce Department's Entities List as potential proliferation risks although recently the

former Soviet Union, China, Vietnam, Central Europe) has been raised. But companies exporting to the latter will still have to notify the Commerce Department 10 days prior to the shipment of any computer performing above 12,500 MTOPS.

"The administration will continue its policy of maintaining a lower threshold for military end-users than civilian end-users," the order said.

Export guidelines for Tier 4 countries (Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Cuba, Sudan and Syria) remain unchanged, meaning the US will maintain the embargo on computer exports to these countries, considered rogue nations.

— IANS

The Economic Times

3 FEB 2000

P. T. O.

## Clinton visit may pave way for closer ties: US

## US looks forward to open skies pact with India

Our Political Bureau

NEW DELHI 2 FEBRUARY

THE INDO-US economic partnership will be the centrepiece of the new "qualitatively closer" relationship, to receive the ultimate push with Bill Clinton's visit, especially in the absence of substantive movement in the non-proliferation issues. But the fact remains that movement on one is necessary for progress on the other. The US undersecretary of state for economic affairs Alan Larson, addressing the CII on Wednesday, said: "The US and India are approaching a moment of opportunity in their bilateral economic relations. To seize that opportunity fully, we will need to work through my government's serious non-proliferation concerns..."

On the face of it, faster economic reforms by the Indian government will serve as the necessary catalyst. But India finds its economic strides strangled by several US and multilateral sanctions that are still in place against India which are a direct result of the same "non-proliferation concerns."

On the bilateral side, despite the passage of Brownback Amendment II, the US continues to put curbs on almost 150 entities in India, which require licences to conduct business with US companies. Then there are the technology sanctions under which India continues to be denied high technology, especially of the dual use variety.

Even the US Congress' latest move to allow export of encryption technology leaves India out as 128-bit encryption is not allowed in India. This, according to official sources, would seriously affect the conduct of data transfers, even some forms of e-commerce, which is supposed to be a sunrise area for India.

Then there are the controversial IFI loans for infrastructure from World Bank, IFC and ADB.

Our Delhi Bureau

NEW DELHI 2 FEBRUARY

THE US has said it looks forward to negotiating an open skies agreement with India that can dramatically increase air traffic between the two countries and strengthen India's links to the global economy.

This was stated by Ambassador Alan P. Larson, US under-secretary for economic, business and agricultural affairs, US department for state, at a meeting organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) here on Wednesday.

Larson said an open skies policy had done much to expand the US aviation market. "More competition has created even more demand, boosting tourism receipts, making international business easier and more cost effective, making air travel available to an ever increasing number of citizens and extending air services to smaller regional cities. This in turn stimulates economic and employment growth," he added.

He said India should work at expanding competition and investment in the telecommunications sector, financial services sector, including insurance, and in the power sector.

He said the treasury secretary Summers had recently suggested that India was capable of achieving growth rates of 10 per cent but this will not happen unless India expanded its horizons and reforms its economy.

Larson welcomed the investment liberalisation measures announced on Tuesday by the government. "Foreign direct investment (FDI) has brought both of our countries capital, jobs, technology, innovation, and access to foreign markets," he said.

He said US was ready to work with India towards establishing the global consensus needed to launch a new round of trade negotiations.

*The Economic Times*

- 3 FEB 2000

# US Congress hails Clinton's decision to visit India

N.C. Menon  
Washington, February 2

SENIOR MEMBERS of the Congress on Tuesday applauded the announcement that President Clinton would visit India for five days, beginning March 20.

Congratulating the President for announcing the dates of his long-anticipated visit to the world's largest democracy, Congressman Gary Ackerman, New York Democrat, co-Chairman of the Congressional India Caucus, and a leading member of the House International Relations Committee, pointed out that the visit, coming more than two decades after President Carter's trip to India, will be an important milestone in the two nations' relations. "It will lay the foundations of the new parameters that govern the two nations' ties in the new millennium."

Ackerman added: "I firmly believe this Presidential trip will

give both countries a great opportunity to push US-India relations onto a different plane -- a mature and confident relationship that is built on mutual trust; a relationship that sheds old shibboleths, mutual suspicions, and unnecessary recriminations; a relationship that is built on the hopes and aspirations of our two peoples and not on the fears and stereotypes of the past; a relationship that will promote global harmony, international peace and goodwill."

The Congressman reiterated his strong view that President Clinton should not include Pakistan in his itinerary unless he received "iron-clad guarantees" that Islamabad would halt its proxy war against India, outlaw terrorist organisations, close down all terrorist training camps, and hold democratic elections within a specified time-frame.

Ackerman, who was in India for high level meetings in November, asserted: "US-India relations in the post-Kargil period has been show-

ing signs of a new sense of maturity and realism. It is now time to move bilateral relations to a higher plane which would allow Washington and New Delhi to forge a strategic partnership in South Asia. In the past, we have neglected our relationship with India and the legacy of that neglect has been mistrust."

Congressman Sam Gejdenson of Connecticut, ranking Democratic member of the House International Relations Committee, who just returned from leading a trade mission to India, welcomed announcement of the President's visit and declared, "I know the President will be as impressed as I was with the diversity and dynamism of the people and the beauty of the land. India, with its ancient traditions, is a very modern country which represents the fifth largest economy in the world."

Gejdenson said India and the US must work together on a broad range of common issues including

promoting regional stability, combating international terrorism, and promoting increased trade between the two nations.

Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr., New Jersey Democrat and founder of the Congressional India Caucus, who has been urging President Clinton to make the trip, said, "The President's decision to travel to India represents a recognition of the growing importance of India in both regional and global affairs, and the vast potential for US-India partnerships in such areas as trade and investment, security matters, scientific research and educational and cultural exchanges."

Pallone advised the President against going to Pakistan. "It is important that the Administration continues to send the message to Islamabad that we are very concerned about Pakistan's role in fomenting instability in Kashmir, about the links between Pakistan and terrorist organisations, and the crushing of civilian government by the military junta now in power."

## Bill: Biggest democracy yet to draw ample attention

HT Correspondent  
Washington, February 2

CONFIRMING HIS intended visit to India and Bangladesh in March, President Clinton said on Tuesday that he would make an effort to "engage" the world's largest democracy.

The President did not seem to consider it a problem that India had not so far signed the CTBT, which at one time had been paraded as one of the conditions for a visit. "Just as I believe we have to engage China that has a political system very different from ours, we have to engage India that makes decisions that sometimes we don't agree with," Clinton said.

The President echoed the criticism levelled by some members of Congress and others that the US

had not paid sufficient attention to India. "I am going because it is the biggest democracy in the world," he said. "I think we haven't been working with them enough. We have an enormous common interest in shaping the future with them."

This would be the first visit by a US President to Bangladesh. The last presidential visit to India was by Jimmy Carter in 1978.

The White House announced that no decisions had been made about other stops on the president's itinerary -- a broad hint that the option of including Pakistan in the trip is still open.

It is doubtful if First Lady Hillary Clinton will accompany the President because of her campaign commitments in the race for a Senate seat from New York.

HARKAT-UNDERWORLD LINKS TO BE FOCUSSED

# All set for Indo-U.S. parleys on terrorism

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, FEB. 3. India and the United States are getting ready to explore the scope of institutionalised cooperation to counter terrorism radiating from the Afghanistan-Pakistan arc.

These issues, among others, are likely to be discussed during the first meeting of the Indo-U.S. Joint Working Group (JWG) on terrorism. The Indian delegation to the two-day parleys, which begin on February 7, will be headed by the Joint Secretary (Americas), in the External Affairs Ministry, Mr. Alok Prasad. The composite team to the dialogue also includes representatives from the Home Ministry, including the Joint Secretary (Internal Security), Mr. Rakesh Ahuja, and two other specialists on counter-terrorism, an External Affairs Ministry spokesman said.

The Joint Secretary (U.N.), Mr. Dinkar Srivastava, is part of the team. The U.S. side will be led by Mr. Michael Sheehan, Chief Co-ordinator on counter-terrorism in the State Department. Mr. Sheehan recently visited Pakistan and, therefore, has a firsthand account of activities related to terrorism from the Pakistani side.

India is expected to share its perceptions

about the spurt of cross-border militancy in Jammu and Kashmir following the Kargil war, including the increasing role of the Afghan extremists. According to Government sources, the U.S. side is likely to be apprised of the role and external linkages of the Pakistan-based pan-Islamic Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and its connections with the underworld network spread across India, Pakistan and parts of the western world. The *modus operandi* of this organisation's funding operations are expected to be explained in detail.

The Indian side is likely to link its presentation on the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen with the its understanding of the larger forces behind the hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane to Kandahar. The role of the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in aiding and coordinating the hijack is also expected to be analysed. Information about the command and control setup in the Mumbai-based underworld, which is linked to operatives residing overseas, is expected to be shared.

Both sides are also expected to exchange notes on Osama bin Laden and his network of operatives in Afghanistan, Jammu and Kashmir and the industrialised world. The role of the highly-motivated Al Quida group, based in

Afghanistan, which may be part of the Osama network, is expected to be brought into focus. The group, it is suspected, is trained to target U.S. installations, including its overseas financial institutions.

The thrust of the coming dialogue, according to sources, is to define a mechanism for information exchange on terrorism emanating from the region so that concrete steps for cooperation can be undertaken.

The Indian side is attaching great importance to the dialogue. The talks on terrorism precede the visit of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, to India and Bangladesh.

The Indian side is keen that the U.S. hear "its side of the story" well in advance. This is to obviate the "one-sided views" on the subject which Pakistan might express, just in case Mr. Clinton decides to stop over in Islamabad.

The Indo-U.S. dialogue will be followed by two-day discussions between the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Lalit Mansingh, and the U.S. Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Mr. Thomas Pickering. Sources here say this series of official meetings are part of the preparations for Mr. Clinton's visit.

Clinton's pat for Indians: Page 14

410-14  
4/2

# Old issues will figure again

By K. K. Katyal

NEW DELHI, FEB. 3. The players are different. The context has changed too. But some issues that had figured during the visits of U.S. Presidents in the past are certain to be taken up during Mr. Bill Clinton's discussions with Indian leaders next month. Nuclear matters, India-Pakistan relations, the U.S. stand on problems of the subcontinent and, of course, strengthening of bilateral cooperation were the major topics during the earlier trips. Any doubt that these subjects would not be among the main issues now?

There had been three presidential visits in the past — of Mr. Dwight Eisenhower in December 1959, Mr. Richard Nixon in July 1969 and Mr. Jimmy Carter in January 1978. During Mr. Carter's visit, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, then External Affairs Minister, assisted the Prime Minister of the day, Mr. Morarji Desai, in the talks.

Of course, there was a lot different during the three visits during the Cold War and in the era of bloc rivalries, and this fact was abundantly reflected in the discussions. The nuclear issue had acquired increasing importance in the U.S. at the time of Mr. Carter's visit, while Mr. Nixon's discussions included disengagement from Vietnam and the new U.S. doctrine with regard to Asia.

The joint declaration signed during the Carter visit was notable for the call for an equitable economic order — "We are gratified that the process of de-colonisation has democratised the international state-system, giving most nations for the first time an opportunity to participate in making decisions relating to international peace and cooperation. The dis-

parities in economic strength that exist among nations must be bridged and a more equitable economic order fashioned if we are to secure international peace."

India and the U.S., however, differed sharply on the nuclear issue — as was evident by a faux pas at a function in the Capital where Mr. Carter and Mr. Desai were present. Mr. Carter was not happy with the discussions concluded just then with the Indian side on the nuclear issue. He "whispered" to his aide, sitting next to him, that on return home, he would send a "cold and blunt" communication to Mr. Desai. The "whisper", however, was carried by the sound magnifying system, installed for their speeches and heard clearly by the shocked audience.

This was, perhaps, in the context of the U.S. insistence that India accept fullscale safeguards for nuclear installations — a point conveyed during discussions on the U.S. supply, on a temporary basis, of enriched uranium and heavy water for a nuclear power plant. Both sides sought to play down the leakage, with Mr. Desai saying he was not upset by it but found it useful in countering the opposition charge that he was being soft on the issue of fullscale safeguards and was quietly submitting to U.S. pressure.

On the eve of his departure from Washington, Mr. Carter spoke in a television interview, of the varying relationship with the countries to be visited and said, "And then we go to India, the biggest democracy in the world, one that in recent years has turned, perhaps excessively towards the Soviet Union, but under the new leadership of Prime Minister Desai is moving back towards the U.S. and assuming a good role of, I would say, neutrality." The Ja-

nata Government was not happy with this tribute to its "genuine non-alignment".

The headlines during Mr. Nixon's visit and his talks with the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, sure enough, dealt with India-Pakistan issues. Here is a sample: "U.S. may not resume arms aid to Pakistan now: Mrs. Gandhi sees shift in stand." And here is a quote from a report of her session with the American correspondents, accompanying the President: "Mrs. Gandhi said that during her talks with Mr. Nixon, Indo-Pakistan relations were mentioned in passing. She said close cooperation between India and Pakistan would lead to greater stability and progress in this part of the world. Replying to a question, she clarified that there was not very much that a third party could do."

Pakistan was not "missing" during the Eisenhower visit, momentous in many ways — an American correspondent wrote of "the greatest welcome ever received by any American President anywhere" — and notable for the substantive content of the discussions. A New York-dated story provided indirect evidence of the discussions thus: "Pakistan seems to be disappointed with the political results of President Eisenhower's visit, according to reports from Karachi appearing in the Press here today. As expected, Pakistani leaders presented the President with a memorandum setting forth their position on the Kashmir dispute and urged him to use his good offices to get India agree to a settlement. The President evidently declined to interfere in the affair as also in Pakistan's border dispute with Afghanistan."

Let us wait for stories in the U.S. Press next month-end.

THE HINDU

- 4 FEB 2000



HO-11  
52

## U.S. wants India, Pak. to resume dialogue

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, FEB. 4. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, has expressed that hope that his country and Pakistan could work together on Afghanistan; that Pakistan will sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and take other steps to reduce the costly and destabilising competition with India. Mr. Clinton's remarks were by way of a reply to the presentation of credentials by the newly appointed Ambassador of Pakistan, Ms. Maleeha Lodhi.

"Development of nuclear weapons and missile delivery systems by India and Pakistan has raised the awful spectre of nuclear war to a more clear and present danger than we have seen in many years. The United States believes that this competition is fundamentally destructive — not only to the internationally shared proliferation norms but also to chances for reconciliation between India and Pakistan and for increased economic growth and development in both countries," the President said.

He added: "We are mindful that the long-standing tensions and disputes between Pakistan and India fuel this competition; indeed, they make it more dangerous. The U.S. is prepared to work intensively to see the dialogue between Pakistan and India on all issues resume and intensify. However, to make progress in this area, the cycle of mistrust and violence must be broken. I am personally committed to do what I can toward this objective."

Mr. Clinton took note of the historically "close ties" between the two countries since 1947 including the fact that the U.S. and Pakistan "stood shoulder to shoulder" during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and supporting a resistance that eventually pre-

vailed against long odds. "Clearly, the relationship between the U.S. and Pakistan is important to both countries. We hope to continue to develop close ties while candidly addressing those issues on which we differ," the President said.

Mr. Clinton also said that "as a friend", the U.S. was very disappointed by the setback to Pakistan's democracy and hoped that the country would quickly return to civilian rule that is "participatory, accountable and respectful of citizen's rights, including those of minority religious communities in Pakistan."

In her formal statement, Ms. Lodhi argued that the "continuing gross and consistent violations against Kashmir are an outrage and a crime against humanity"; and that India should not be allowed to "demonise" the Kashmiri struggle as a terrorist movement or a communal dispute.

"We are aware of your (meaning Mr. Clinton's) keen desire for an early and lasting solution of the Kashmir dispute. While we would continue to pursue bilateral dialogue with India, international intercession can serve as a catalyst in ending the suffering of the Kashmiri people. Your administration's initiatives in the Middle East, the Balkans and Northern Ireland have rekindled hopes for peace in South Asia. Kashmir should not be an exception to the healing touch", the Pakistani Ambassador noted.

Ms. Lodhi extended an invitation to the President and the First Lady to visit Pakistan. "The U.S.'s relations with India and Pakistan should not be a zero-sum game. But the U.S. needs to maintain a balance in its relations with those two South Asian states," the Pakistani Ambassador said.

THE HINDU

- 5 FEB 2000

# U.S. President offers to help restart Indo-Pak dialogue

## Clinton may include Pak in his tour itinerary

WASHINGTON: U.S. President Bill Clinton has reiterated his willingness to pluck out the thorn bedevilling Indo-Pakistan relations, saying that the U.S. was ready to "work intensively" to restart the dialogue between the two countries. But before that could happen, he said, "the cycle of mistrust and violence must be broken".



Bill Clinton

His statements came in the wake of his accepting the credentials of Pakistan's new ambassador to the U.S., Maleeha Lodhi, late on Thursday. "I am personally committed to doing what I can to work towards this objective," Mr Clinton said, following Ms Lodhi's sharp attack on India and her reiteration of Pakistan's militant stand on Kashmir. Mr Clinton is expected to visit India in March.

Mr Clinton said he was "very disappointed" by the setback to democracy in Pakistan and reiterated his call for restoring democracy and Pakistan's signing of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. He also called on Pakistan to help ensure that Afghanistan did not become a safe haven for terrorists.

"We hope Pakistan will sign the CTBT and take other steps to reduce this costly and destabilising competition, such as those outlined in UN security council resolution 1172," Mr Clinton said. The resolution calls on India and Pakistan to sign the CTBT and resolve their differences through dialogue.

Ms Lodhi politely rejected Mr Clinton's call for reducing "the costly and destabilising" nuclear and missile "competition". She insisted on Islamabad's right to have a nuclear deterrent. At the national prayer breakfast on Thursday, Mr Clinton said the Indian subcontinent had become "the most dangerous place in the world because of the confrontation between two nuclear-armed neighbours over Kashmir". However, he spoke about the Indian subcontinent in the context of other seemingly intractable ethnic problems in the world and the differences among peoples within nations.

Significantly, Mr Clinton indicated that he had not ruled out a visit to Pakistan during his South Asia tour next month. "Well, I probably will" visit Pakistan, Mr Clinton told former Pakistani premier Benazir Bhutto during the prayer breakfast meeting.

Mr Clinton's advisers, it is learnt, are wrestling with the problem of whether or not he should go to Pakistan. On one side is the argument that he will cut a sorry figure if he seems to be "coddling" a dictator. However, the CIA and defence intelligence chiefs have warned publicly that the subcontinent may explode into another war going by present trends. Congressman Douglas Bereuter also advanced the argument that Mr Clinton must go to Pakistan if only to ensure that it remained influential there.

## India too secretive about its nuclear command structure

By Manoj Joshi

NEW DELHI: Pakistan's explication of its nuclear command authority (NCA) on Thursday seemed to have caught India flat-footed once again. Despite New Delhi's being the first of the two South Asian neighbours to test nuclear weapons and the first to bring out a draft nuclear doctrine, it has been excessively secretive about its nuclear command structure.

As a senior defence analyst points out, "There ought to be some things secret about command and control, but there are things that ought to be known so as to promote deterrence." Authoritative sources say that some kind of a rudimentary command and control system was established in 1990 when India decided to cross the nuclear threshold. At that time, India was not a declared nuclear power and there was need to keep this a secret, but although circumstances had changed, government thinking had not.

The senior defence analyst emphasised it was much more important for a country like India that had promised never to be the first to use nuclear weapons to have a visibly effective command and control system. He pointed out that the Indian "no first use" pledge meant that Indian nuclear forces and its command and control system would have to survive a nuclear onslaught and then retaliate. "We need a system that not only works, but will do so under the most adverse circumstances. Only then will an adversary be deterred and the armed forces and public reassured," he added.

As of now, all that is known is the declared official position that the nuclear button is in the hands of the Prime Minister. It is assumed that the Cabinet Committee on Security will be the basic decision-making body in any nuclear employment situation. But thereafter, the situation remains murky since no one knows the chain of command through which this decision will be executed. A strategic policy group comprising the three service chiefs and senior bureaucrats had been established with the National Security Council in 1997, but the body has never formally met, let alone worked together.

## 'No defence talks with U.S. until curbs are lifted'

By Mahendra Ved  
The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: "We have no plans to go to war with Pakistan, limited or otherwise," defence minister George Fernandes said on Friday, rejecting assessments by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to this effect as "speculative forecasting".



George Fernandes

"It is not rooted in fact... unless they have any special knowledge of what is happening in Pakistan," Mr Fernandes told *The Times of India*. With the visit of President Bill Clinton due next month, the defence minister firmly ruled out any security-related dialogue with the U.S. as long as the latter persisted with economic sanctions "that are designed to hurt us and our security... that would be a contradiction of terms".

The agenda for Indo-U.S. talks during the Clinton visit is still being finalised. "However, you cannot possibly have sanctions that affect our economic development and security and have a dialogue. We have got to be concerned with our security. We know what our concerns are and how to resolve them," he said.

Mr Fernandes added, "When it comes to U.S. security concerns and U.S. interest thousands of kilometres away from its borders, the U.S. uses military power against even those who are not capable of protecting themselves. But when it comes to our security, our concerns, you talk of sanctions."

Mr Fernandes ridiculed the Pakistani charge that the Indian army had resorted to "hot pursuit" in Akhnoor on January 22 when 17 Pakistani soldiers were shot while staging a pre-dawn attack.

"There was no hot pursuit. Akhnoor witnessed one of those rare attempts by Pakistani troops to cross the international border and make a foray. Perhaps they were testing our vulnerability, our preparedness in that area. The moment they came in, we took them on, and now they are making out a case as if we crossed the border. Their soldiers were killed on our side and we have returned their bodies," Mr Fernandes said. He termed the shelling and firing along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir as a "manifestation of terrorism in its worst form". "Pakistan indulges in it to infiltrate mercenaries. We are facing this on a daily basis," he said.

Asked if the government was making special efforts to fight the low-intensity conflict in Kashmir, Mr Fernandes said there was no dearth of weapons and equipment to fight insurgency. "But when insurgents use landmines and IEDs (explosives), we have to get landmine protection vehicles. We are fully equipped to deal with insurgency, and also ready for a conventional war, as we did in Kargil."

# Wooing the president

Clinton's visit opens a window of opportunity

**T**HE White House is mistaken if it thinks the really tricky part of the forthcoming Clinton visit to South Asia is deciding whether to stop in Pakistan and for how long. It is certainly going to be tough if he does drop in there to set priorities for Pervez Musharraf because Islamabad is nowhere near meeting any of Clinton's three most voiced concerns in the last seven years — non-proliferation, market reforms and democracy. But all that will not be half as complex and sensitive as working out an Indian itinerary that leaves Bill Clinton at the end of the trip with more friends than enemies. Expectations are high especially about political deals the two governments will make and new economic opportunities being opened up. The Vajpayee government has set the tone, treating the first visit in 20 years by an American president, albeit a lame-duck one, as of the utmost importance, a diplomatic coup and a sure sign that a "strategic relationship" is taking shape. Naturally others are looking for a benediction too. The number of states angling for a presidential visit overtly or subtly exceed the number of days he is going to be here.

It is understood that Margaret Alva is among many pitching hard for Bangalore. Chandrababu Naidu takes it for granted his many admirers in the American business world will lobby successfully for Hyderabad. If Naidu and Krishna are bidding strongly can M Karunanidhi be far behind? It is said in Dhabol that no American president would want to miss seeing the largest-ever American project in India. For the states a Clinton visit would be taken as proof of economic po-

tential and the opportunity to raise their profiles in the American media. But even this much-travelled American president who did six countries in Africa in ten days last year will find it hard to do justice to Delhi, Agra, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Dhabol and maybe Chennai or, who knows, Ahmedabad and a bit of rural India and still have time for associations of business and industry, photo-opportunities with ordinary people on the street and a humanitarian gesture or two.

Apparently an advance team of 15 is already in India working on the itinerary. It may be helpful to point out what this American president should avoid doing. No-go areas are advanced scientific institutions which have been put on a "watch list" and denied knowhow and equipment as part of Washington's sanctions regime after Pokharan. There is justifiable anger at this clumsy American attempt to influence Indian policy. It achieves nothing while putting obstacles in the way of a developing country's scientific and technological advancement. The whole unequal world order is very pronounced here. India's best minds have and continue to contribute enormously to the development of the technology that is driving America's high economic growth rates. As Clinton said in his state of the union address, the US has never known so much prosperity as it enjoys today. Well, good for the US. It ought to recognise however that other countries also hope to benefit from science and technology. It is time Washington thought more about ways of promoting technology for the welfare of people in developing countries and less about ways of blocking access to it.

INDIAN EXPRESS

- 7 FEB 2000

# Don't expect too much

RESIDENT Clinton will be in India between March 20 and 25. Apparently, External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh's discussions with Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott in mid-January, sorted out the more immediate problems related to his visit. They perhaps also came to a general agreement on the terms of reference of discussion between Vajpayee and Clinton. The delay in the announcement of firm dates, to some extent, reflected not just logistical considerations, but perhaps a certain political reluctance in certain segments of US establishment to endorse Clinton's visit to India, without visiting Pakistan. It, however, now seems that unless Pakistan gives categorical assurance about withdrawing support from terrorist activities, signing the CTBT and a return to democracy within some defined time-frame, he may not visit Pakistan. This decision is not certain or final as yet.

The atmospherics of the visit stand negatively affected by Clinton's public statement that he and his government did not have sufficient evidence about Pakistan's involvement in the hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane, in the last week of December. This statement is based on political calculations of the long-term US interests in Pakistan rather than on facts which the US itself has accepted and acted upon. The US State Department and its anti-terrorism office cooperated with the Indian government in investigating the hijack. Though Clinton's statement and pronouncements of official US spokesmen are carefully worded, the public perception in India is that of the US letting General Musharraf and his intelligence agencies off the hook on an incident that agitated the Indian people greatly. Reports about the likelihood of Clinton's stopover in Pakistan (perhaps in Karachi for a day or a half) has perhaps perturbed public opinion here. Then there are apparently contradictory messages on non-proliferation issues. US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott has said that the US is ready to accept the

realities of India's nuclear weaponisation and is willing to deal with India, if it joins the mainstream of the world non-proliferation agenda. It has, however, also been asserted on Washington's behalf that the objective of US policy remains to make India and Pakistan roll back their nuclear and missile weaponisation programmes.

While considering public expectations from this visit in both countries, we should be conscious that Clinton's visit to India does not have the same significance in the American psyche as his visits to China, the Middle East or Moscow. The questions on which his visit would be judged by American public are: Has Bill resolved the problems between India and Pakistan, and brought peace in South Asia, as he



J.N. Dixit

orism? Did he indicate that the deeper US commitment is to the restoration of democracy in Pakistan by keeping the minimum necessary distances from the Musharraf regime?

A Clinton visit to Pakistan will certainly affect public perceptions here. The importance of the visit to India will diminish, if he goes to Pakistan at this juncture. But, beyond a certain point, his visiting Pakistan need not give us high blood pressure for two reasons.

First, the substance of Indo-US relations need not be linked to US interactions with Pakistan. Secondly, given the US track record of dealing with Pakistani regimes over the last 50 years, Clinton's trying to "constructively engage" Musharraf is not unexpected. It would be unre-

## Washington will generate non-punitive pressure on the Musharraf regime, but cannot realistically be expected to certify Pakistan as a terrorist state

did for Northern Ireland and is trying to do it in the Middle East? Has he persuaded the Indians and Pakistanis to abide by the US non-proliferation agenda? Has his visit resulted in a significant expansion of opportunities for American business in India?

The questions to affect the Indian public opinion in contrast would be: Did Clinton lay the foundation of a strong Indo-US relationship, acknowledging India's importance as a democracy and geo-strategic importance in the region? Did he show a willingness to accept the realities of India's nuclear weaponisation and deal with India practically by lifting direct and indirect sanctions? Did he agree to generate pressure on Pakistan to desist from subversive activities against India and ter-

leverages in Pakistan, due to political and strategic considerations.

The contradictions in US policy assertions reflect the important reality of the controversy between the non-proliferationists and realists in the US establishment. India is being considered as a test case by the US, to decide whether realism will work or a doctrinal commitment to US non-proliferation theology be more useful. If India signs the CTBT and proceeds to join FMCT negotiations, the realists would be considered winners. If not, US ideologues will become assertive. The point which these different schools of thought miss is that it is not their agenda or global strategic considerations, but India's own security concerns and interests that will determine India's decision on vital non-proliferation issues. This should be so regardless of difficulties which India may face. The sensitivity which Clinton and his successors show in this regard, would be a major factor affecting the future of Indo-US relations.

If India shows greater dynamism and purposiveness and the US shows greater patience and awareness of long-term prospects, the Indo-US economic and technological cooperation has undoubted prospects of expansion. There is an awareness in India about the necessity and desirability of a substantive and expanding relationship with the US. Reciprocation of this feeling may not be at the same level. This is inherent in the logic of inequalities between the two countries. This is another factor which we should not ignore but should not get emotional about. The attempt should be to achieve the maximum possible on the basis of equality, mutual benefit and respect for each other's substantive interests.

President Clinton's visit will be important, subject to these limitations and complexities. Indo-US relations at the deepest level should not depend only on presidential or prime ministerial visits, but on broad trends of convergence of interests which find expression when such visits take place.

# The Clinton visit

By K. K. Katyal

*There is nothing wrong in India conveying its feelings to Washington, as it weighs the pros and cons of a Clinton visit to Pakistan; but is it correct to make its stand a major issue?*

INDIA RUNS the risk of converting an American predicament into an embarrassment for itself. The U.S. faces an acute dilemma over whether or not its President, Mr. Bill Clinton, should include Pakistan in his South Asian itinerary next month. On the one hand, it would like to refrain from rewarding a military dictator; on the other, it would not want to shun the people, considered important. This choice is not easy and Washington is trying hard to sort out the intractable matter. India would not like the U.S. to give respectability to Gen. Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's Chief Executive, because of his action overthrowing a democratic government. Washington does not dispute this and says the situation has to improve to enable Mr. Clinton to go to Pakistan. But what will happen if Gen. Musharraf announces cosmetic measures to meet the American demands and the U.S. finds the new environment acceptable? Mr. Clinton would be visiting Pakistan even if there is no material change in the situation. In the process, New Delhi would land itself in an awkward situation, while the U.S. may seek to sell the Pakistan visit on the basis of assurances (which could not be phoney), apart from justifying it in the light of its national interest. It will not be hard to imagine Islamabad gloating over New Delhi's failure to influence the U.S. decision. India has placed itself in a position where the success of its diplomacy hangs by a thread — a U.S. 'no' to Pakistan.

The inclusion of Pakistan would mean a qualitative change in the character of the President's trip. The focus on India-Pakistan problems could be direct and close. Already, the recent developments — Kargil, post-Kargil spurt in militancy in Jammu and the Kashmir and the Indian response, the hijacking of the Indian plane, the "jehadi" campaign in Pakistan and the military regime's active support to terrorist outfits — have caused alarm in most world capitals. It is inconceivable, therefore, that Mr. Clinton's visits to India and Pakistan will not become an occasion for a major discussion on what Washington has often described as a nuclear flash-point in South Asia.

In his oft-quoted interview to *The Hindu* last month, Gen. Musharraf

House and, as such, is it good diplomacy to invest in a summit with a lame-duck President? Those making such points obviously put greater weight on personalities and personal factors than on national interest. There were instances — in the reverse direction — when foreign dignitaries came here in the midst of political instability or situations of uncertainty. Germany went ahead with the visit of its President in early 1991 when the fall of the minority government headed by Mr. Chandra Shekhar was widely predicted. What was Bonn's rationale? That "we are dealing with the eternal India." In January 1993, the then British Prime Minister, Mr. John Major, stuck to his India trip (he was the special guest on the Republic Day) even though the country had not recovered from the aftermath of the Ayodhya demolition. The decisions taken during both the visits were of long-term significance, which was not affected by subsequent political changes. In the case of Germany, the appointment of an eminent persons group then added a major dimension to the bilateral relations and in the second case, it became the occasion for the Indo-British Partnership Initiative, a mutually beneficial framework for strengthening economic cooperation.

The White House first mooted the idea of the visit during the initial phase of Mr. Clinton's second term when a comprehensive policy review revealed the need for greater attention to South Asia, India in particular. It was during Mr. I. K. Gujral's tenure as Prime Minister that the proposal was taken up with New Delhi — only to be shelved because of the resignation of his government and the ordering of elections. Consultations on the subject were resumed when the first BJP-led coalition took over. Then came the nuclear tests in May 1998 and the consequent disturbance in bilateral dealings. The resumed moves nearly a year later had to be suspended because of the fall of the Vajpayee Government and another election. The process was restarted after the present government assumed office in October last year.

India could make good use of the Clinton visit for a new broad-based relationship with the U.S., apart from enlisting its active support in the crusade against trans-border terrorism.

U.S., Islamabad announced the establishment of a "control and command" structure for nuclear weapons. It may make appropriate noises on adherence to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and on a return to democracy.

India's case is much stronger but it has not got its priorities right. It was all right, up to a point, to show disapproval of the military takeover of Pakistan, but it is not right to rule out for all time any substantive contact with the new regime. Also, there is nothing wrong in India conveying its feelings to Washington, as it weighs the pros and cons of the Clinton visit to Pakistan. But is it correct to make its stand a major issue? It is primarily a U.S. concern. In 1978, the then President, Mr. Jimmy Carter, came to India but did not go to Pakistan, which had just witnessed the emergence of a military dictator, Zia-ul-Haq. Even now Washington made categorical statements against the coup and called for early, credible steps for the return of democracy. If Washington is satisfied with something less than this, that is its concern.

What India should emphasise is the total unacceptability of terrorism as the means of settling bilateral problems. New Delhi succeeded in getting counter-terrorism inscribed on the agenda of its dialogue with the U.S., which till recently was confined to the issues arising from Pokhran-II. The Joint Working Group, set up during the last round of the Jaswant Singh-Strobe Talbott talks, is getting down to business. A credible advance could help meet New Delhi's concerns and thus create an atmosphere for facilitating the government's job in forging a national consensus on the CTBT which is Washington's top priority. However, New Delhi would not like any linkage established between the Clinton visit and its decision on adherence to the CTBT.

Why the Presidential visit to India now? This is Mr. Clinton's last year in White

U.S. allocates  
\$5m. for reforms

RD-4 in India 9/2

**WASHINGTON, FEB. 8.** The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, has allocated \$5 millions for economic reforms and liberalisation in India besides funds for several welfare schemes in his fiscal 2001 budget.

The amount for India is "contingent on progress in our dialogue with India" and is part of \$20 millions Mr. Clinton has provided for south Asia under the Economic Support Fund, the U.S. State Department says in the budget document.

"These funds would go toward improving the efficiency and transparency of the capital markets and promoting private financing of urban infrastructure," the budget document, presented on Monday says.

Other heads for which the fund would be used include \$5 millions for women and child welfare programmes in South Asia. — PTI

# India visit significant: Albright

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

HD 14

WASHINGTON, FEB. 8. The United States continues to have serious concerns on the issues of non-proliferation and about dealings on Kashmir and hopes that New Delhi understands and would continue to deal with those issues because they are essential, the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, has said.

During a State Department briefing on the Fiscal 2001 International Affairs Budget request, Ms. Albright was asked what would come of the President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to India and about its importance.

"I think it is important. I believe that the U.S. has made it quite clear that having a relationship with the world's largest democracy is important. But obviously we continue to have very serious concerns about the issues of non-proliferation and about the dealings on Kashmir and hope very much that the Indian Government understands and will continue to deal with those issues because they are essential," she said.

Ms. Albright continued saying, "the trip is one that will be important, but it is not just a sign that everything has been dealt with and that all the problems have been resolved. The President wants to make clear the kinds of issues that are out there that we have all been dealing with on non-proliferation."

The Secretary of State said she was not sure if she would accompany the President. "I always like to

travel with the President, especially on very important missions, but we'll have to see what everybody's schedule is at the time. It's a trip that, you know, we haven't made the final decision on," she said.

In fact, Ms. Albright was to have visited India last month as a part of the run-up to the President's visit. Now it is said she may not be able to make it before the President arrives in India; and that her trip may have to be put off to a later date, perhaps in June.

Senior officials of the U.S. and India meet for the next several days discussing issues of mutual interest and concern as also in planning for Mr. Clinton's visit. Besides the broad-based aspects of the emerging relations between the two countries, the U.S. President can be expected to make a pitch for his favourite themes of non-proliferation and peace and stability in South Asia. How much he focusses on these issues and the contentious issues between India and Pakistan such as Kashmir remains to be seen.

Not too long ago the President, during a fund-raising event for the Democratic Senator from South Dakota, Mr. Tim Johnson, said — with Pakistani Americans present in the audience — that he would like to take a real "stab" at the Kashmir issue when he visits South Asia. Among other things, this remark has reinforced the suspicion that Mr. Clinton would include Pakistan in his programme. After all how could he take a real "stab" at the Kashmir issue by only visiting India, it is being argued.

# Don't hope for too much from Clinton's visit, says Albright

WASHINGTON: U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright has poured cold water on the much-hyped visit of President Bill Clinton to India saying it is not a sign of Washington's absolute approval of New Delhi's policies and not much should be expected from the tour.

"The trip is one that would be important, but it is not just a sign that everything has been dealt with and all problems have been resolved," Ms Albright said at a budget press conference on Monday. Citing Kashmir and

nuclear non-proliferation as "very serious concerns" for the U.S., Ms Albright said she hoped the Indian government would find solutions to these issues. But she reiterated Washington's resolve to have a strong relationship with "the world's largest democracy".

"I believe that the U.S. has made it quite clear that having a relationship with the world's largest democracy is important. But obviously, we continue to have very serious concerns about the issues of non-proliferation and about the dealings on Kashmir, and hope very much that the Indian government understands and continues and will continue to deal with these issues because they are essential," Ms Albright said.

Her surprise remarks came as a bolt from the blue because recent statements by officials like assistant secretary of state Karl Inderfurth have given the impression that the two democracies will indeed be turning a new leaf in their relations

despite differences that may persist between the two countries.

Ms Albright's statements regarding expectations of Mr Clinton's India visit came on the eve of crucial talks on terrorism between the U.S.

and Indian delegations which got under way on Tuesday.

Asked whether she would be accompanying Mr Clinton on the South Asia trip, Ms Albright said, "I always like to travel with the President on very important missions, but we have to see what everybody's schedule is at the time, and it is a trip that we have not made a final decision on" (in relation to the

composition of the delegation). Mr Clinton's five-day visit to India, due to begin in New Delhi on March 20, is to be followed by a one-day trip to Bangladesh. (PTI)

## U.S. allocates \$5 m. for reforms in India

WASHINGTON: U.S. President Bill Clinton has allocated \$5 million for economic reforms and liberalisation in India, besides funds for several welfare schemes in his fiscal 2001 budget.

The amount for India is "contingent on progress in our dialogue with India" and is part of the \$20 million that Mr Clinton has provided for South Asia under the Economic Support Fund (ESF), the U.S. State Department said in the budget document. (PTI)



# Indo-US talks on Clinton's visit this week

**CHIDANAND RAJGHATTA**  
WASHINGTON, FEB 8

INDIA and the United States begin crucial engagements this week, with the purpose of one set of talks being to fine tune the agenda for President Clinton's visit to the subcontinent starting March 20.

The parleys come amid a fervid debate in Washington about whether the President ought to visit in an increasingly hysterical Pakistan, which, as one official described colourfully, "is threatening to shoot itself in the head if he doesn't."

Against the backdrop of a rousing debate within the administration over the pros and cons of a stopover, the newly formed Indo-US joint task force on terrorism will have its first meeting on Monday. Indian officials are expected to expatiate their case on the export of terrorism from the rabid seminaries of Pakistan and Afghanistan and discuss how best the two sides can handle this surge of fundamentalism.

The Indian foreign secretary Lalit Mansingh arrives here Tuesday night and will hold talks on Wednesday and Thursday with US interlocutors, mostly Undersecretary Thomas Pickering and Deputy Secretary Strobe Talbott, to work out the modalities of President Clinton's visit.

Mansingh will also call on National Security Advisor Samuel Berger, the chief White House factotum who will put the final seal of approval on the agenda for the President's visit. The nuts and bolts though will be tested by Mansingh

and Pickering, both old hands in Indo-US bilaterals. Mansingh served in the Indian Embassy as the Deputy Chief of Mission while Pickering was US ambassador to New Delhi. The sense conveyed by both sides so far is that the Presidential visit will be weighed heavily with an economic and trade agenda, showcasing the increasing interaction the process of globalisation has enjoined on the two countries and speaking of the potential for greater cooperation.

Pakistan and its neuroses are not germane to the talks, Indian officials also told *The Indian Express* that the administration had not yet made a call on a speculative reporting. "This is a call to be made by the President who wants to be all things to all people," one US official who has tracked the administration's South Asia policy closely said on condition of anonymity.

Elaborating, other officials and analysts said the President was towards the end of his tenure taking seriously his role as a peacemaker and was genuinely concerned about the deteriorating situation in the subcontinent.

The question that was being weighed, they said, was whether it was worth the risk and infamy of

shaking hands with a military junta to bring about some reconciliation, and also to further the US agenda of capping Islamic fundamentalism and nuclear proliferation.

(The peacemaker President, incidentally, was joined by his wife Hillary Clinton, who announced at her Senate race announcement speech in New York last night that she wanted to bring about a rapprochement between India and Pakistan. But she was clearly appealing to the South Asian constituency in New York. She also wanted to bring about peace and the Middle-East and Ireland. New York has a large Jewish and Irish constituency.) With the US looking for some signs from the military junta that some of Washington's concerns in this regard would be met, the Pakistanis signaled over the weekend that they are ready to play ball.

The Musharraf regime has now indicated that it would move towards signing the test ban treaty and strive to rein in its protegee Taliban. Islamabad has also prevailed upon its ISI-run fundamentalist groups to forswear its anti-west and anti-American rhetoric and announce that their own cause is Kashmir. The Pakistanis have also considerably toned down their nuclear rhetoric, moving away from the "will-use-first-at-the-slightest-provocation" line to "will-use-as-a-last resort." Islamabad has also instituted a detailed nuclear command and control chain aimed at reassuring the west that it is not a maverick nuclear power.

Previously, Pakistan's trigger happy nuclear utterances had unnerved the US administration.

not share the Islamabad's "neighbourly obsession."

American officials too say the US-India agenda is more broad-based on not contingent on any one issue or one country. In fact, notwithstanding the sustained and hopeful Pakistani rhetoric on Washington stepping in to resolve the Kashmir issue, US officials have not even once uttered the word outside saying they would like to encourage dialogue between the two sides.

US officials also told *The Indian Express* that the administration had not yet made a call on a speculative reporting. "This is a call to be made by the President who wants to be all things to all people," one US official who has tracked the administration's South Asia policy closely said on condition of anonymity.

Elaborating, other officials and analysts said the President was towards the end of his tenure taking seriously his role as a peacemaker and was genuinely concerned about the deteriorating situation in the subcontinent.

The question that was being weighed, they said, was whether it was worth the risk and infamy of

shaking hands with a military junta to bring about some reconciliation, and also to further the US agenda of capping Islamic fundamentalism and nuclear proliferation.

(The peacemaker President, incidentally, was joined by his wife Hillary Clinton, who announced at her Senate race announcement speech in New York last night that she wanted to bring about a rapprochement between India and Pakistan. But she was clearly appealing to the South Asian constituency in New York. She also wanted to bring about peace and the Middle-East and Ireland. New York has a large Jewish and Irish constituency.) With the US looking for some signs from the military junta that some of Washington's concerns in this regard would be met, the Pakistanis signaled over the weekend that they are ready to play ball.

## US team in Hyderabad, Noida, Mumbai

**■ HYDERABAD:** A 14-member US team led by director of advance programmes Rosen Than had a hectic day here today as state government officials took them round showing a host of institutions and places for inclusion in the itinerary of President Bill Clinton's likely visit next month. The team's assessment plays a role in finalising Clinton's trip to the city. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu hoped that Clinton would visit Hyderabad when he comes to India next month. "I was always confident that he will come."

Officials maintained. "We have merely pointed out that a Presidential visit to Pakistan at this juncture will send the wrong message and legitimize wrongdoing, particularly because we have held them responsible for terrorist activities. Beyond that we have kept our own counsel. The President's visit to India is not conditional to his stop over in Pakistan," one official said.

But to go by the overheated reporting in the Pakistani media, the only item on the Indian agenda now is how to scupper the President's Pakistan stop over. Indian officials however maintain that "Pakistan is not central to our talks with the US" and New Delhi does

tion had not yet made a call on a speculative reporting. "This is a call to be made by the President who wants to be all things to all people," one US official who has tracked the administration's South Asia policy closely said on condition of anonymity.

Elaborating, other officials and analysts said the President was towards the end of his tenure taking seriously his role as a peacemaker and was genuinely concerned about the deteriorating situation in the subcontinent.

# Left to oppose Clinton visit

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, FEB. 7.** The Left parties would organise demonstrations during the U.S. President Mr. Bill Clinton's visit here next month to protest his Government's policies towards India. They are also likely to give him a memorandum listing the areas where they think the U.S. is pressuring India to fall in line with its own positions on issues like the CTBT and WTO-related matters.

The initiative is being taken by the CPI(M) and the CPI, and in the coming weeks they plan to coordinate with other Left parties to build what they expect to be a "massive" campaign of mass mobilisation. The protest, it is stated, would also focus on the Vajpayee Government's "capitulation" to the U.S. on key issues affecting the country's sovereignty.

The CPI(M) politburo member, Mr. Sitaram Yechury, said that the visit would formalise the Vajpayee Government's "subservience" to the Clinton administration. Mr. Clinton's visit, he pointed out,

was coming at a time when the U.S. pressures on India were at a peak. Most of the sanctions it had imposed after the Pokhran nuclear tests were still in force with nearly 150 Indian institutions continuing to be barred from any contact with U.S. agencies.

Mr. Yechury called the Vajpayee Government's attitude "servile" saying that it had made no attempt to fight the sanctions or other "arbitrary" U.S. actions. The Government had shown itself to be particularly "vulnerable" in the economic sphere, and the latest example was the decision to lift quantitative restrictions on imports after the Seattle conference even though the WTO deadline was still three years away.

The Vajpayee Government, Mr. Yechury said, was bending backwards to appease the Clinton administration and was tailoring its entire agenda to Washington's demands. The people, he contended, would "not tolerate" this and the CPI(M) along with other Left parties would help them con-

vey the message to Mr. Clinton.

The CPI charged the Government with "kow-towing" to the dictates of the U.S. administration and said that the second generation of economic reforms were a "phased surrender" of the country's economic sovereignty. "The Cabinet decision on foreign direct investment has come along with the news that the U.S. President 'agreed' to 'grace' New Delhi with his five-day presence in March. The mandarins in the South Block are happy that the Vajpayee Government is creating favourable condition for the 'royal' visit by taking such economic measures which may please the President," the party has said in an editorial in its official weekly *New Age*.

The CPI national secretary, Mr. D. Raja, said that his party was not opposed to Mr. Clinton as a person but as the head of a Government whose policies were against India's national interests he was not welcome.

THE HINDU

- 8 FEB 2000

# Waiting for Clinton

Indian policymakers must try to convince Clinton that India's security and stability would help maintain peace in south Asia

**A little commonsense will show that the US matters more to India than India to the US**

**N**ever before has as much fuss been made about a visiting head of state as in the case of Bill Clinton and that, too, weeks before his arrival. A mix of suspense, drama, circus and hype has been used to hog the headlines almost every day. Yet, all this would not have done the trick if world events had not taken a sharper turn than any thinktank bargained for. It is the collapse of the Soviet Union, the virtual demise of the nonaligned movement, the far more conspicuous presence of United States multinationals everywhere and the big strides made by information technologies in the Silicon Valley which have conspired to surround the American chief executive with a new halo of authority.

This explains the anxiety in New Delhi, and the hope in Islamabad, over the possibility of a brief stopover in Pakistan by Clinton as if this would make a decisive difference to the balance of power in the subcontinent. This is also the screwed logic behind the unseemly wrangle between the chief ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, both canvassing ardently for the US chief executive's visit to Bangalore and Hyderabad to give a boost to their plans to turn their capital cities into mini-Silicon Valleys.

There is a touch of comedy as well as an element of pathos in the way the political establishments in New Delhi and Islamabad and the media men in the two capitals hang on every word coming from the president's aides in the White House, and officials in the state department and the Pentagon. If New Delhi was looking for any endorsement of its policies on issues which most concern the US, it has already had a rude rebuff from Madeleine Albright.

**I**s the legacy of the Cold War still alive? Is the US any more sensitive to India's security perceptions than before? Is Washington still keen to engage Pakistan in the hope that the leader of the military coup in that country may yet prevent the mad *mullahs* from taking over? How far will the US go along with India in fighting the menace of cross-border terrorism? The answers to these and another dozen such questions so far are not such as are likely to please officials in the South Block.

The arrogance of power apart, receiving so heavyweight a guest is no simple operation. It involves complicated questions of security, adequate accommodation, creature comfort and logistics. The aides, advisers, security personnel, newspapermen and television crews accompanying the president will

number 1,500 and require the prior booking and a thorough sanitization of three entire five star hotels. Will New Delhi have all the facilities to meet the exacting demands of the overbearing guests? It need not feel too sorry for its inadequacies. The US has enough resources to make up for any deficiencies. How easy it would be if sci-fi techniques ever made it possible to transport the whole White House along with its chief tenant to wherever he intended to go! That would also make him feel more completely at home in the most bizarre of places.

On the substance of the talks between the distinguished guests and their hosts there has been no breakthrough and there will be no big agreements to be signed. Both claim that the two sides understand each other much better now. But this understanding falls far short of resolving any differences on the many tangled issues dividing them. Contrary to US wishes, India is determined to have a credible nuclear deterrent. The US is reluctant to declare Pakistan a rogue state despite its role in promoting export of terrorism. And it wants New Delhi to resume the interrupted dialogue with Pakistan while India contends that it will not do so unless Islamabad first puts an end to all terrorist attacks in Kashmir sponsored by it.

Going by the slow pace of extending the area of agreement in the last few months, the chances of an early and significant narrowing of differences seem pretty slim. Clinton as usual will raise the scare of a nuclear conflict in the region if the present level of tension between the two neighbours continues for long and also try to pressure India into signing the comprehensive test ban treaty. Atal Behari Vajpayee in turn will put a brave face on what he has been told *ad nauseam* and politely explain the rationale behind the conditions under which alone he could do so.

Whatever the changes in the US's policy, there is no room for any make believe on the score that the shared commitment to democratic values counts for much in determining US responses to the problems of the post-Cold War era. This has certainly not prevented it from being more sensitive to China's security perceptions than to India's or maintaining friendly relations with despotic regimes where they serve its strategic interests.

Nor must New Delhi forget that in the so called global village based on hierarchies of military power, capital resources and technological clout, its bargaining position will always depend on its place in these three pecking orders.

No more than a shred of commonsense will tell it that, as things are, the US matters more to India than India to the US. This crying disparity may hurt the national ego. But essays in vainglory cannot make up for gross inequalities of power.

That is why when the defence minister, George Fernandes, declared the other day that there would be no security related dialogues with the US so long as it persisted with economic sanctions, all that his threat probably did was provoke derisive guffaws in the Pentagon and the state department among the few who cared to notice it.

**D**id it not occur to the loud-mouthed defence minister to pause for a while and wonder whether his own government had not been rebutting all these months what he had said? Were Jaswant Singh and Strobe Talbott only exchanging pleasantries during their unending series of meetings? Did their talks have no bearing on security issues? Why did not the Indian prime minister insist on Nawaz Sharif's undertaking to disband the many terrorist outfits in his country that were spreading fear and panic in Kashmir before embarking on the much touted bus diplomacy?

It is no secret that during the Cold War, the US, as leader of the free world, had no difficulty in establishing cosy relations with a host of odious dictators. It even engineered coups to oust unfriendly democratic governments like the one headed by Salvador Allende in Chile. But then some members of the non-aligned fraternity, too, had no compunction in consigning their own principles to the garbage bin when they kept quiet or slyly condoned the Soviet military interventions in Hungary and Czechoslovakia or in accepting Cuba's credentials as a nonaligned nation. It was a virtual war in which foul play was very often the rule rather than the exception.

**T**he only sensible way of trying to extend the areas of agreement between the US and this country at the March summit will be for the Vajpayee government not to rake up the past or expect the legacy of the Cold War to dissolve into thin air all of a sudden but to approach the problems of building a more meaningful relationship in a spirit free of the least taint of self-righteousness and informed by much greater realism. This calls for much more patience in dealing with a country where the administration is subject to conflicting pressures from a host of powerful lobbies and a clearer realization that, when it comes to the crunch, the US administration will be under great compulsion to go by what advances its strategic interests rather than by what accords with India's security perceptions.

The main endeavour on the part of Indian policymakers should be to convince Clinton that, in the post-Cold War era, there is no real clash of interests in south Asia between the two countries and that, accounting as it does for four-fifths of the subcontinent's population, India's security and stability are the crucial conditions for durable peace in the region. A beginning can be made in the development of a joint strategy in the fight against export of terrorism.

The global reach of US capital, weaponry, technology, media, pop culture, entertainment, and lifestyles of elite groups is not something that can be conjured away by invoking old ideological shibboleths. Nor is it possible to wish away the malignant side of the high-tech civilization, manifest in the continuing degradation of the environment, the intolerable inequalities of wealth and the emergence of a global casino together with a multiplication of shanties for the poor and ghettos for those pushed beyond the pale of the new global order.

The only option for those who fail to come to terms with the new order, having given up all hope of getting a square deal, is to remain confined to their ghettos. Such a choice is not open to a country of over a billion people like India. Adjusting to the changes under way need not, however, mean accepting obscene excesses of wealth and poverty, greed and lechery, cynicism and moral squalor, and lying words and images.

# Indo-US group vows to nab hijackers

## New Delhi agrees to take Washington's assistance in countering terrorism

Washington, February 9

**I**N A major step to counter terrorism, India has agreed to take US assistance in tackling the menace as the two countries decided to intensify their co-operation to bring to justice hijackers of the Indian Airlines flight IC-814 as part of their joint efforts to combat international terrorism.

At the inaugural meeting of the recently set up joint working group on counter-terrorism here yesterday, "the two sides agreed to intensify their joint co-operation to ensure that the perpetrators of the hijacking of Indian Airlines flight IC-814 are brought to justice."

A statement issued by State Department

spokesman James Rubin at the conclusion of the meeting said the two sides expressed concern at the rising menace of international terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking.

"The two sides unequivocally condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious, or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them."

It said that the Indian Government agreed to the US offer of anti-terrorism assistance programmes, the specifics for which would be determined at future meetings. The American side at the talks was led by the state department's co-ordinator on counter-

terrorism Michael Sheehan, while the Indian team comprised Alok Prasad, joint secretary, External Affairs, and Rakesh Hooja, joint secretary in the Home Ministry and two counter-terrorism experts.

The decision to set up the group, laying ground for unprecedented co-operation in anti-terrorism between the two sides, was taken in January 2000 at the 10th round of talks on security and disarmament issues between Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh.

At yesterday's meeting, the statement said, the two sides also decided to convene a meeting of each side's legal experts in April to discuss a Indian-proposed UN terrorism

convention.

Inter-agency teams from the two countries agreed on a range of measures to enhance co-operation between the two countries to combat international terrorism. The two sides would share experience, exchange information and co-ordinate approaches and action.

It said both India and the US have a shared interest in strengthening a regime to counter international terrorism.

"This working group is intended to enhance the effectiveness of our efforts to counter international terrorism world-wide," the statement said. The next meeting of the working group will be held in India at mutually agreed dates, it added. (PTI)

## Albright Forecast

India should be grateful to US Secretary of State Madeline Albright for helping to focus on two issues which need to be urgently discussed during President Clinton's visit to Delhi — nuclear non-proliferation and Kashmir. On these two issues, American policies over several decades have seriously hurt Indian security interests. However, thanks to the information obfuscation policies followed by successive Indian governments, the Indian public has not been kept informed of the negative roles played by different US administrations. During the presidential visit, India must probe the US commitment to non-proliferation seriously because even today the US is permissive of the China-North Korea-Pakistan nuclear and missile axis. The US is aware that China is putting up a solid rocket-fuel plant at Fatehjung in Pakistan and continues to assist in setting up the Khushab plutonium production reactor. Recently, India seized North Korean missile parts in shipment to Pakistan. Any US administration that does not admit to its own legislature the transfer of M-11 missiles from China to Pakistan — even seven years after the event — is unlikely to carry much credibility in India. The US had reassured Pakistan in 1981 that it would not interfere in its military regime or nuclear weapons programme. Today the same kind of situation in Pakistan is being handled by the US apparently with the same degree of permissiveness. Therefore, it would be in the interest of better understanding of both the US and India if President Clinton comes to Delhi fully prepared to discuss the true nature of US policy on proliferation.

Similarly, the Kashmir problem has bedevilled India mainly because the US instigated by Britain decided to support Pakistan's case on Kashmir based on the two-nation theory which is only an earlier *avatar* of the clash of civilisations thesis. The philosophy underlying that is ethnic cleansing, religious fundamentalism and terrorism. This was done because of Cold War considerations and Pakistan's opportunistic military alliance with the West. But even today the same mindset continues to dominate large sections of the US establishment. The US is a party to the Helsinki declaration of 1975 which laid down that in the nuclear era there should be no forcible change of line of control or border. The same principle was logically enforced by President Clinton on Nawaz Sharif on July 4, 1999 during the Kargil war. India would like to ascertain the US views on the two-nation theory and its understanding of the commitment of the present Islamabad military regime to the Blair House declaration. India would also like to know the US stand on Pakistan as one of the breeding grounds for international terrorism and a generator and exporter of narcotics, especially in the light of the recent testimony of the CIA director George Tenet to the US Senate committee on Intelligence. The main problem India will face in such free and frank discussions with the US is the Indian political and bureaucratic mindset. This believes in sweeping inconvenient issues under the carpet and thereby allowing others to gain information campaign advantage over India. Releasing the Kargil committee report without any deletions will signal to the people of India that India is prepared to deal with such issues vis-a-vis the US in an atmosphere of full transparency. The Kargil Report covers these two important issues.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

11 FEB 2000

# 'No change in India's stance on key issues'

Apratim Mukerji  
New Delhi/February 10

THE ASYMMETRICAL diplomatic interaction between India and the US continued today with the External Affairs Ministry maintaining that there was absolutely no change in the substance or nuance of this country's position on issues such as nuclear proliferation and Kashmir dispute, that were bothering the Americans.

Behind the stoic circumspection, however, there is clearly growing uneasiness over the remarkable spate of statements emanating from the Clinton administration even as the first US presidential visit to the country in over 21 years looms nearer.

President Bill Clinton said in Washington yesterday that he wanted to make a trip to South Asia "which maximises the possibilities not only for constructive partnerships

for the US in the years ahead but even more urgently for peace in that troubled part of the world."

"This has enormous implications for people in the US and throughout the world," he continued. "More, I suspect, than most people know. And I hope

in the time that I have here that we can make some progress, because it is something that I remain profoundly concerned about for years and years into the future."

Till now, New Delhi does not seem to be able to explain the high-pitched US stance on South Asia, especially in the context of its perseverance in ignoring any third party attention.

As the raison d'etre for the seemingly

unstoppable US reactions remains unclear, the Ministry spokesman also chose to be circumspect while commenting on the Pakistani action in detaining militant Masood Azhar, one of the three militants India released in order to end the December hijack of an Indian Airlines plane.

Describing the general impression that the man had been detained merely to please the Americans who were insisting on steps against terrorist

organisations as a "matter of interpretation", the spokesman pointed out that it was not "for us" to comment on how individual terrorists were handled by the Pakistan Government.

"We have larger concerns about cross-border

terrorism which, we believe, Pakistan should address," he added. "Pakistan should stop all manners of support to cross-border terrorism and the terrorist infrastructure that exists within that country."

Interestingly, the restrained reaction came in the backdrop of the fast-growing India-US cooperation in combating international terrorism with a special agenda of nabbing the hijackers of the IC 814, the IA plane.

What may be the cause for concern here is the apparent US efforts to broaden its cooperation, enthusiastically embraced by India, from certain already identified areas of international concern. These are combating international terrorism and drug trafficking to region-specific politico-strategic issues like nuclear proliferation in South Asia (making it "the nuclear flash-point", "a tinderbox" and "a most dangerous place") and the Kashmir issue ("a fuse").

## Indo-U.S. talks continue

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, FEB. 10. India and the U.S. continued their talks for the second and final day today. Yesterday the Indian Foreign Secretary, Mr. Lalit Mansingh, had discussions with the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Mr. Thomas Pickering, the Under-Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, Mr. Al Larsen, and a luncheon discussion with the Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott. In the morning, Mr. Mansingh had a meeting with the President's National Security Advisor, Mr. Sandy Berger.

Mr. Mansingh has a busy schedule on Capitol Hill where he is scheduled to meet the Senate Majority Leader, Mr. Trent Lott, and the Democratic Senator from Delaware, Mr. Joseph Biden.

In the House of Representatives, Mr. Mansingh is to meet Mr. Gary Ackerman, Members of the India Caucus, the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, Mr. Benjamin Gilman, the Ranking Member, Mr. Sam Gejdenson, and Members of the International Relations Committee.

The U.S. administration is describing the talks as a consultation on a broad range of bilateral issues and in continuing the dialogue at a senior level. The discussions between the two sides are also to be seen in the context of the visit of the President, Mr.

Bill Clinton, to India starting March 20.

Mr. Mansingh will also participate in a round table involving senior officials of the administration dealing with such areas as narcotics and counterterrorism. The bilateral talks aside, there is some immediate interest in South Asia as a result of Mr. Clinton's trip to India and Bangladesh, and perhaps to Pakistan. On Monday, the President gave further indication at the White House that he might add Islamabad to his programme saying he wanted to make a trip that maximises the possibilities for constructive partnerships for the U.S. and even more urgently for peace in that part.

"We haven't made a decision on the final itinerary yet...I want to make a trip which maximises the possibilities not only for constructive partnerships for the U.S. in the years ahead, but even more urgently for peace in that troubled part of the world. That has enormous implications for people in the U.S.. And I hope that in the time that I have we can make some progress, because it is something that I remain profoundly concerned about," Mr. Clinton said.

Though the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, will make a recommendation to the President on whether or not to visit Pakistan, the final decision will be taken by the President.

THE HINDU

11 FEB 2000

# Stand on Kashmir must be defined clearly

By K. K. Katyal

NEW DELHI, FEB. 10. India's concerns on terrorism are clearly understood by most of the world community but the stand on Kashmir is not fully appreciated. The Government needs to recognise this and treat it as the central point of its Pakistan-related diplomacy. To the extent the two issues are inter-related, it may be easy to carry conviction with others, but when the Kashmir problem is viewed in isolation, India's stand would need to be defined with greater clarity.

As the date for the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit draws closer, it is becoming increasingly evident that Kashmir and terrorism would figure in his talks here. To say that India would reiterate its stand against any third party role and in support of a bilateral approach is to stress the obvious. But the matter may not end there and certain consequential issues may have to be tackled. For instance, India has sought — and secured — U.S. cooperation in dealing with the menace of terrorism. How would New Delhi deny Washington a say in the Kashmir problem to the extent that it is intertwined with terrorism? And in case this aspect is considered fit for discussion with the Americans, how would the other aspects of the problem be shut out of it? Secondly, how would New Delhi reconcile its emphasis on bilateralism with a reluctance to do business with the present Pakistani regime?

To raise these questions is not to suggest a lack of force in India's stand — that trans-border terrorism has to end and a suitable atmosphere created for a dialogue — but to draw attention to the need for formulating a comprehensive strategy and an approach that takes care of all aspects of the matter.

New Delhi could draw comfort from the outcome of the inaugural meeting of the India-U.S. counter-terrorism group in Washington earlier this week. Especially this formulation: "The two

sides unequivocally condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them." This clearly covers the orgies of murder and other acts of violence, committed in the name of "freedom struggle" in Kashmir, as also the "political, diplomatic and moral support" given by the Pakistan Government. That is one side of the coin. The other side is represented by the latest statement by Mr. Clinton and the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright — that "Kashmir is the fuse that makes the situation dangerous".

Now that Pakistan and a reactive India have gone through the rounds of bilateral rhetoric, the chances of their addressing the task of finding the basis for resuming the dialogue are not considered totally non-existent. New Delhi needs to take into account this assessment by others in the world community. It is based on the following elaboration. Pakistan's military ruler, General Pervez Musharraf, wants Kashmir to be given "priority in emphasis" in a simultaneous discussion of all issues. Kashmir was the subject of "back-channel" diplomacy, initiated at the instance of the two Prime Ministers, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee and Mr. Nawaz Sharif after their Lahore meeting. There were reasons to believe that Mr. Sharif kept Gen. Musharraf posted with the developments then.

There is force in this point. But New Delhi had not said "no" to talks on Kashmir in the past, though there had been suggestions from important quarters — by the Chinese President, Mr. Jiang Zemin — that this contentious issue be put on the backburner and efforts made to resolve differences on other matters. The willingness to discuss Kashmir remains unchanged. New Delhi is puzzled at the reasons for the step-up in the Kash-

mir-related rhetoric by the new regime in Islamabad. It is, perhaps, meant to promote acceptability of the military ruler.

As in the past, the talks on Kashmir have to be "without prejudice to the recognised position of each side", — a formulation to which both the countries are committed. Not to be underestimated is the importance of other commitments, including the decision not to seek to alter the Line of Control unilaterally, and to prevent the organisation, assistance or encouragement of any acts detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful relations. As such, India is not to be blamed if it expects Pakistan to take credible steps to end trans-border terrorism. That, and not the priority or otherwise to the Kashmir issue, is the crux of the problem.

It will be futile for Pakistan to demand that the Kashmir talks be held on its terms, just as New Delhi would be unrealistic to insist that only its position be the basis for the dialogue on the subject. The former Pakistan Prime Minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, had come out with a suggestion that envisages, among other things, acceptance of the *de facto* partition of the State (along the LoC), opening up of the border and facilitating contacts between the people. During the negotiations for the Shimla Agreement, Z. A. Bhutto, then President of Pakistan, recognised that the settlement of the Kashmir issue along the present line was "the only feasible one".

As Prime Minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, took as inflexible a stand as the present rulers. At one stage, it was her address to the nation on the Independence Day that led the then Prime Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, to declare that the discussions could be held only on the future of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Yet the same Ms. Benazir Bhutto has taken a different line now. This background could not be ignored by Islamabad — and by New Delhi.



HPD-11  
12/2

# Clinton visit to focus on 'new relationship'

By Sridhar Krishnaswami *gws*

WASHINGTON, FEB. 11. Though the finer details and the agenda of discussion during the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to India next month are yet to be finalised, the focus will be on the new relationship, not on transient issues, the Indian Foreign Secretary, Mr. Lalit Mansingh, has said. There are no conditionalities attached to the visit, he added.

"Our understanding is that the focus will be on the new relationship and not on transient issues. We expect to reflect the new friendship in the new situation now," Mr. Mansingh said adding that bilateral relations were no longer seen in the prism of the cold war and that India and the U.S. were now in direct contact with each other on a wide range of issues.

Mr. Mansingh who was here at the invitation of the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Mr. Thomas Pickering, for Foreign Office-to-Foreign Office consultations said bilateral, regional and international issues were discussed along with Mr. Clinton's visit to India starting March 20.

The Foreign Secretary held talks with top U.S. Government officials including Mr. Pickering, the Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott, and the National Security Adviser, Mr. Sandy Berger. He also met top Congressional leaders in the Senate and the House of Representatives.

"We are looking forward to his (Mr. Clinton's) visit which comes after a gap of 22 years. We expect this visit to be an occasion where the new relationship between India and the U.S. is going to be affirmed," the Foreign Secretary said adding that the visit would be an occasion for the leaders of two countries to share views on the contemporary world situation and also look at how they can "forge a relationship into the future".

Stressing that there were no conditionalities attached to the visit, Mr. Mansingh made it clear that a range of issues such as political and economic relations, cooperation in science and technology and cooperation in energy would be discussed. Asked what India was hoping to gain from Mr. Clinton's visit, he said, "we are not looking for any favours. It is going to be a partnership and we will discuss matters of mutual interest."

Asked to comment on the recent statements of the

U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, on Kashmir and the extent to which this would be discussed during Mr. Clinton's visit, Mr. Mansingh pointed out that in any meeting there was bound to be a discussion of differences but in a friendly manner. "Of course American concerns will be expressed and our concerns will be expressed to them. But that does not mean it is not going to be a friendly visit."

Noting that it was customary for countries to raise issues and that he was not ruling out discussions on anything, the Foreign Secretary expressed confidence that the focus of the visit was not going to be Kashmir but on the new relationship between "the most powerful democracy on earth and the largest democracy in the world".

By the same token the Foreign Secretary played down the notion of a lame duck President visiting India saying there was an "institutional aspect" to the visit. "It is the President of the United States visiting India and there's a continuity of policy as we have on our side. So expect that whatever is discussed is going to be carried forward. There will be a follow-up."

At a time when there is a debate on whether the President should include Pakistan in his South Asia programme, Mr. Mansingh said it was a sovereign decision to be taken by the U.S. and that India's invitation to Mr. Clinton was not conditional. "However, we thought as friends we bring to their notice that there might be a public reaction and this has been conveyed to them."

Talking to mediapersons at the Indian Embassy here, Mr. Mansingh said he was going back satisfied after two days of "intense, frank and serious discussions" with U.S. Government officials. On the extent of convergence between New Delhi and Washington on terrorism in relation to South Asia, the Foreign Secretary said he was pleased with the inaugural meeting of the Joint Working Group and said this would lead to greater bilateral cooperation.

One of things discussed was the Community of Democracies Meeting to be held in Poland this June, an initiative that came about after a meeting between Ms. Albright and the Indian External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh. Over 50 countries have responded positively to this meeting which is expected to see the participation of eminent leaders and leading personalities.

# We'll not allow outside interference: PM

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT *S. V. Singh*

**New Delhi, Feb. 12:** We are ready to play our part in shaping a new equitable international order, but we will not brook interference in our internal affairs or allow others to meddle in our bilateral relations or problems, said Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.

Speaking at the inauguration of an international conference on the "Contribution by People of Indian Origin to their Countries," organised by the Indian Council for International Cooperation at Teen Murti Bhawan on Saturday, he

said: "The persons of Indian origin should act as unofficial ambassadors to support India on the Kashmir issue, to control cross-border terrorism. They (persons of Indian origin) are not mere investors, and should work as our links with the rest of the world. They are beginning to play leading roles in governments and political parties abroad. This process is, however, so far slow and needs to be accelerated."

He assured them that his government would facilitate the economic reforms process and turn India into an attractive place for making their

investments. *Q. Singh, W.*

The assurance was seconded by the external affairs minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, who was also present at the function. "We will facilitate the people of Indian origin in every possible way so that they may find the investment process easy," Mr. Singh said.

Recounting the achievements of people of Indian origin abroad, Mr. Vajpayee said many have now become world-beating business men.

ICJC chairman L.M. Singhvi said: "There is visible change in the attitude of the government

towards the people of Indian origin. The bridge between the two should be rebuilt, repaired and strengthened by providing all possible help to them. They are not the indifferent mass and they should feel that they are in there own country."

He urged the government to form a commission to deal with their problems.

The secretary-general of the council, Mr. Baleshwar Agarwal, appreciated the concept of cards for people of Indian origin and urged for a relaxation in the policies meant for them.

# Clinton explores Goa-to-Delhi route



Bill Clinton: Detour

**FROM PRANAY SHARMA**

**New Delhi, Feb. 12:** President Bill Clinton is likely to kick off his five-day tour of India from Goa and not from the capital which will be engrossed in Holi revelry on March 20. He may also make a brief stopover in Islamabad on his way out of the subcontinent.

Because of Holi, it was thought that the US President would halt in Pakistan before coming to India. Though the White House has not made any official announcement on Clinton's travel programme, indications are that he may finally go there, even if it

is for a technical halt or a brief stopover, to hold talks with Pervez Musharraf.

Foreign secretary Lalit Mansingh has told US officials to expect a negative reaction in India if Clinton puts Pakistan on his itinerary. But realising that the President is keen on visiting Islamabad, Mansingh has clarified that the decision to visit any country was the sovereign right of the Americans.

Clinton, in his last term in office, wants to bow out playing peacemaker between the nuclear neighbours.

He has described the subconti-

nent as the "most dangerous place in the world" because of the dispute over Kashmir.

But to ensure that by visiting Pakistan, Clinton does not mar his trip to India — the first by a US President after 22 years — his advisers are thinking of putting Islamabad in the last leg of his visit.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee today made it clear that India would not brook any interference in its internal affairs or "allow others to meddle in our bilateral relations".

"Today's India is ready to play its part in shaping a new and equi-

table international order. While we will not brook interference in our internal affairs, we are ready to engage with any country in a cooperative framework," he told a conference on contributions by people of Indian origin here.

The Prime Minister's assertion coincided with reports in a Pakistani daily quoting foreign minister Abdus Sattar as claiming that Clinton is considering a proposal to call a summit between the nuclear twins.

During his stay in India, the President will hold meetings with almost all top leaders. Meetings with Opposition leaders, includ-

ing Congress president Sonia Gandhi, are also on the cards.

Besides, the government is considering convening a joint session of Parliament to allow Clinton to address members of both Houses.

Besides Goa, the President, along with wife Hillary and daughter Chelsea, is scheduled to spend some time in Agra. Chances are that the Clintons will see the Taj Mahal on a full-moon night. Jaipur is also part of the presidential tour programme, but it is not clear whether Clinton will be able to accompany his wife and daughter to the Pink City.

# The politics behind Clinton visit

A presidential visit by a US head of state to any country is inevitably vested with a great deal of significance, and the visit to India is no exception. This becomes all the more true if such a visit is taking place after a gap of more than two decades. Given the external circumstances, however, it would be a mistake to expect too much from the visit or its eventual outcome. The US secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, was only being realistic in announcing that the returns from the visit are likely to be modest. India and the US, without doubt, are two of the world's largest democracies and share many common ideals, but they are also two very different nations, with differing perceptions, including different yardsticks of what such a visit means or what it is intended to achieve.

On none of the major issues likely to be discussed or debated during President Clinton's visit to this country is there a proper meeting of minds between India and the US. India's thinking on Kashmir, terrorism, military rule in Pakistan, non-proliferation and the CTBT are substantially at variance with those held by the US — in some cases more and in other cases less. Scope for forward movement seems severely limited at this time due to a combination of factors and circumstances. It would, hence, be better not to set our sights too high or raise too many hopes about what is likely to be achieved.

For present Clinton, a professed peace-maker, his visit to South Asia can be deemed a success only if he can "break the ice," if not "broker a peace" between India and Pakistan. Statements emanating from senior echelons of the Clinton administration, including the US secretary of state and the US defence secretary, provide definite indications of where US priorities lie. Both see Kashmir and non-proliferation as priority items on the President's agenda. The focus is on the deteriorating relation between India and Pakistan on account of Kashmir and danger to peace in the region.

For Madeleine Albright, Kashmir is the fuse and the situation highly dangerous after Kargil and the hijacking of an Indian Airlines plane. She, hence, underscores the urgent necessity for a dialogue between India and Pakistan — an unstated aspect of which is, no doubt, that the "good offices" of the US would be available to facilitate such a dialogue. The US defence secretary, William Cohen, is even more categorical that given its unique military and political position, the US can play an active role in promoting region-

al stability and advancing the cause of peace.

If Kashmir and non-proliferation are the key issues likely to figure during President Clinton's visit, then India has her work cut out to prevent the visit from becoming another disaster, as happened with President Carter's visit to India in 1978. India's reluctance to accept the good office of a third party to sort out the Kashmir problem, as also the unwillingness to permit the Kashmir issue to ground out all other issues and jeopardise the prospect of improving Indo-US relations, runs contrary to what the US sees as essential if a settlement on Kashmir is to be effected. From India's point of view, the US approach is highly simplistic and fails to take into account either its complexity or Pakistan's perfidy of the past 50 years and more. Bridging the yawning gap between these two perceptions of India and US

will not be easy.

For President Clinton, moreover, even incremental progress on Kashmir is important for it has the potential of becoming transformed into a foreign policy triumph, which might help offset the setback caused by the US Senate's refusal to ratify the CTBT. To prepare the stage for a diplomatic success of this kind and initiate moves for a fresh round of negotiation between India and Pakistan after months of war, conflict and acrimony, President Clinton does need to visit Pakistan and persuade Musharraf to agree to talks. India, however, has not been receptive to the idea of the President combining a visit to Pakistan with his visit to India. Kashmir represents, as far as India is concerned, a civilisational dilemma rather than a territorial dispute. The issues are such that can hardly be decided by negotiation under third party auspices, even con-

India must be prepared to withstand the intense pressures likely to be generated to compel movement forward on Kashmir during the Clinton visit. After his success in bringing peace to West Asia — and to some extent in Ireland — Kashmir is seen as the next theatre for burnishing Clinton's image as a peace-maker. India can ill-afford to vacillate and must have a proper counter doctrine and strategy. It must not delude itself into thinking that President Clinton's visit is intended to enhance economic cooperation, which lies in the domain of business delegation and the US commerce secretary

THE ASIAN AGE  
14 FEB 2000

ceding that this is conducted in a spirit of give and take.

India must be prepared to withstand the intense pressures likely to be generated to compel movement forward on Kashmir during the Clinton visit. After his success in bringing peace to West Asia — and to some extent in Ireland — Kashmir is seen as the next theatre for burnishing Clinton's image as a peace-maker. India can ill-afford to vacillate and must have a proper counter doctrine and strategy. It must not delude itself into thinking that President Clinton's visit is intended to enhance economic cooperation, which lies in the domain of business delegation and the US commerce secretary. Presidential priorities tend to be very different.

The assertive nature of statements made by the US secretaries of state and defence on Kashmir and their conviction that this region is dangerously poised today and likely to provoke a nuclear conflict, should be seen as a warning. The daily toll of incidents in J&K — from bomb blasts to attacks on well guarded and fortified installations, loss of lives, statements of politicians, Army generals and strategic analysts on the role of Pakistan's ISI etc. — provide a platform for "humanitarian intervention" in keeping with the current philosophy of many western governments. Hurriyat leaders and spokesmen of various militant outfits can be expected to step up their broadside just prior to the Clinton visit. It is better for India to be forewarned rather than be caught unawares.

If India becomes a supplicant in the court of President Clinton, patiently explaining the extent of Pakistan's perfidy, its role as a sponsor of terrorism, and seeking succour from him, it will not then be able to avoid being drawn into the vortex of US arbitration moves in one form or the other. India's strategy needs to be substantially altered, for its logic is becoming highly convoluted viz. seeking US intervention to stamp Pakistan as a "terrorist state" while cavilling at US offers to use its good offices to sort out matters. India must make up its mind: what is the most appropriate policy for it to adopt.

When the discussion turns to non-proliferation issues, India will again find itself coming under pressure. The contradictory notes in the overtures being played on the eve of the Clinton visit notwithstanding, India must decide how best to play the nuclear card — specially on the CTBT theme. It seems most unlikely that the US would be prepared to countenance the reality of India's nuclear weaponisation or its right to maintain a minimum nuclear deterrent after signing the CTBT. To all intents and purposes, the US appears even more determined than before to deny recognition to India as a nuclear power under the NNPT, and will seek to "strip" India of its nuclear weapons as also the ability to make them.

If that be the case, then during the visit, President Clinton can be expected to not only pressurise India to sign the CTBT but thereafter compel India to join the NPT but as a non-nuclear weapon power. How best India can prevent itself going under and maintain a balance will depend on how carefully it marshals its arguments

and presents it in a convincing and forceful manner.

Substantial progress on terrorism issues also appears unlikely. Despite wide acknowledgement by the US intelligence community about Pakistan's role as a hub of Islamic terrorism and documented evidence by US agencies of Pakistan's sponsorship of terrorism in J&K and elsewhere, including specific locations of ISI training camps for Islamist militants as also details of the numbers trained in these camps, Washington and India have yet to forge a satisfactory relationship in this area. The CIA director, George Tenet, has testified before the US Senate Committee on Intelligence that Pakistan is the breeding ground for extremist groups and has provided details of the linkages amongst various terrorist groups and the source of funds, some of it coming from the sale of narcotics.

**R**andom statements that uncertainty concerning the legal status of the regime in Pakistan made formalisation of ties between India and Pakistan difficult, serve no purpose.

The reality is that India cannot write off Pakistan just because of a military coup in that country and when the rest of the world appears willing to do business with it. In the case of Myanmar, India painted itself into a corner by refusing to deal with SLORC. This gave China an opening to secure a strangle-hold over the country and virtually eliminate Indian influence there. India cannot afford to repeat this mistake in the case of Pakistan

The CIA is also aware of the role played by the Saudi terrorist, Osama bin Laden, in organising terrorist violence in J&K. *Newsweek* magazine, in turn, has recently published information linking Pakistan's ISI with various Islamist terrorist groups and how Pakistan is today a staging ground and a rear base for terrorism outside its borders. Yet, Washington to this day continues to demand "conclusive proof" of Pakistan's role in sponsoring terrorism and it is unlikely that there would be a shift in US positions during the presidential visit.

Evidently, India needs to do much more on the diplomatic front to convince the rest of the world about India's concerns and vulnerabilities. The rest of the world must be made to understand how cross border terrorism is being used by Pakistan as a covert weapon, and that this is now beginning to assume alarming proportions.

Absence of accountability regarding Pakistan's end use of terrorist groups is also leading to a situation wherein, with improved chemical and biological capabilities, even the West would soon face a situation in which they become hostage to such terrorist groups. The grim reality of this has yet to sink in and convincing the experts accompanying the US President that such rampaging actions of terrorist groups are irrevocably altering today's strategic configurations has become all the more necessary. Otherwise, all the technological capabilities of the advanced nations of the West would be powerless against them.

The Joint Working Group on Terrorism set up recently by the two countries has, no doubt, received a great deal of publicity but is far from adequate for the tasks ahead. For many years now, close cooperation has existed between intelligence and security agencies of the two countries which has been to their mutual benefit. Some of the more spectacular successes achieved against Sikh terrorists during the Eighties and the Nineties came as a result of such close cooperation and collaboration between Indian and western intelligence and security

Such cooperation was always conducted in a professional manner, shorn of the kind of hype currently associated with the setting up of the Joint Working Group, but even then, it was not adequate to sort out the bigger picture. What is needed is a macro level approach. But the moot point is whether this will be agreed to during the coming discussions.

**D**uring the Clinton visit, India will come up against the issue of how it should structure its relations with the military regime in Pakistan. Random statements by official spokesmen that uncertainty concerning the legal status of the regime in Pakistan made formalisation of ties between India and Pakistan difficult are self-defeating and serve no purpose. The reality is that India cannot write off Pakistan just because of a military coup in that country, and when the rest of the world appears willing to do business with it. In the case of Myanmar, India painted itself into a corner by refusing to deal with SLORC. This gave China an opening to secure a strangle-hold over the country and virtually eliminate Indian influence there. The damage is yet to be rectified. India cannot afford to repeat this mistake in the case of Pakistan by adopting an unrealistic posture.

Irrespective of the nature of the regime, India's stand should be consistent viz. to persuade Pakistan to see the error of its wave, give up its role as a state sponsor of terrorism, and settle Kashmir, and other disputes with India amicably. Who leads Pakistan is, perhaps, best left to the people of Pakistan. India would be better off concentrating on the fundamentals of the relationship and the problems that exist between them. Otherwise, the US or other third parties will try and gain a toe-hold by offering to facilitate or mediate in the ongoing disputes.

*M.K. NARAYANAN is a former chief of the Intelligence Bureau*

## Jaswant no to CTBT talks

① NEW DELHI, Feb. 13. Mr Jaswant Singh today ruled out any discussion on the CTBT and NPT during President Clinton's visit to the country.

Jammu and Kashmir will also not figure in the talks with Mr Clinton, the external affairs minister said. There is no possibility of "inter-mediary facilitation" since J&K is an Indian state, Mr Singh said in the capital.

India has maintained a consistent stance on signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and it would remain so despite the CTBT draft being rejected by the US Senate, Mr Singh said. He said any decision on NPT or CTBT would be based on a Parliamentary consensus. — SNS

THE STATESMAN

14 FEB 2000

# US keen on closer ties with India, despite concerns

N C Menon  
Washington, February 15

HF 12  
16  
THE STATE Department made it clear here yesterday that despite specific concerns, "sometimes profound concerns," the US wanted to have "a close working relationship with the world's largest democracy."

State Department spokesman James Rubin had been asked to explain the apparent dichotomy in the US posture towards India with some officials maintaining that India, as the world's largest democracy, was a natural ally, and another official, Undersecretary of Commerce William Reinsch, stating that India was "neither friend nor foe."

Although Reinsch's statement has been written about, and had been pointed out to Assistant Secretary for South Asia Karl Inderfurth a few weeks ago, spokesman Rubin claimed that he would have to check the comments carefully before he could respond.

But, he added, "India is the world's largest democracy and is only going to get larger, and we do

think it is important to have a good working relationship with India.

That is something we have tried to build."

All that did not mean, Rubin said, there were no problems in the relationship, and "non-proliferation was a major problem."

The spokesman placed the primary blame and responsibility for the nuclear tests on the subcontinent on India.

"The decision by India to initiate a nuclear explosion and the resulting effect on Pakistan and the dangers the whole world felt were created by that led to international views that India must take steps to deal with the dangers of the nuclear arms race to the whole world and to the Indians and to the Pakistanis."

The spokesman said he expected President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who was expected to accompany him, to take up these and other US concerns with the Government of India.

Meanwhile, no decision has been taken so far about including Pakistan in the President's itinerary.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

16 FEB 2000

# U.S. for close relationship with India

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, FEB. 15. The Clinton administration has said that there were a number of issues of specific concerns, sometimes profound, that the President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, would be discussing with the Indian Government; and that the U.S. wanted to have a close working relationship with the world's largest democracy, said the State Department Spokesman, Mr. James Rubin.

Mr. Rubin was asked to comment on the latest round of talks that India's Foreign Secretary Mr. Lalit Mansingh had with senior officials of the Clinton administration last week and also how the United States viewed India. It was pointed out to Mr. Rubin that while on the one hand there was the view that India was a "natural ally" of the U.S. and on the other there were those like the Under Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration, Mr. William Reinsch, who had said India was neither a friend nor a foe.

He said he would like to check Mr. Reinsch's remarks "very carefully". "Clearly India is the world's largest democracy and is only going to

get larger and we do think it's important to have a good working relationship with India. That is something we've tried to build," he said.

Mr. Rubin went on to add that there have been differences between the United States and India. "On the other hand that doesn't mean we don't have problems in the relationship and the non-proliferation was a major problem. The decision by India to initiate a nuclear explosion and the resulting effect on Pakistan and the dangers the whole world felt were created by that led to international views that India must take steps to deal with the dangers of the nuclear arms race to the whole world and to the Indians and to the Pakistanis," he remarked.

"There are a number of issues where we have specific concerns, sometimes profound concerns, and those are issues that I would expect the President and the Secretary to be discussing with the Indian Government. And I don't know how to do the designation other than to say that we want to have a close working relationship with the world's largest democracy," Mr. Rubin noted.

Asked if Ms. Albright was traveling with the

President to India, he said, "I certainly think that's a possibility...a strong one". The Secretary of State was to have traveled to India last month in the run up to Mr. Clinton's visit to India starting on March 20; and one thinking is that Ms. Albright might be traveling to India later this summer as a followup to the Presidential visit.

Between now and the time of Mr. Clinton's visit to India the White House and the State Department would be subjected to questioning on the broad contours of the United States-India relationship, especially in what Washington sees as the future. Officials have been making the point that Mr. Clinton would be looking at the broad canvas of the relationship as it pertains bilaterally, regionally and globally when he travels to India.

But what has also to be borne in mind is that while New Delhi may very much want the American President to confine himself to the so-called "New Relationship", Mr. Clinton is very much likely to also focus on issues that he has been talking about in the last few years—nuclear non-proliferation, Kashmir and the region of South Asia in the context of peace and stability.



# Preparing for the Clinton visit

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

**B**ETWEEN NOW and the time the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, finishes his South Asia visit there is potential for a lot of heartburn in New Delhi — not just in official circles but also among the self-appointed guardians of the national interest, including in the media, who will be appalled at the way the White House goes about its business. This is a result of not playing the cards well or of exaggerated notions of what Mr. Clinton's visit is all about.

Two things can be expected to be talked about a lot in the next several weeks — the continuing clatter about whether or not Mr. Clinton will or should stop by in Pakistan; and what indeed is the President going to say when he is in South Asia, especially in India. Much is being made about what the President is "likely" to say or what the Secretaries of State and Defence have "already" said.

In many respects it would seem that whether Mr. Clinton visits Pakistan is not really India's business. And it would be better if New Delhi focussed on the real agenda of the Clinton visit without getting sidetracked into peripheral issues, creating in the process, ill-will in some quarters in the U.S.

As it is, there can be a lot of argument about what it is that the U.S. and India have to gain, in a short and longer term perspective, from Mr. Clinton's visit. The "institutional" aspect aside, the fact that Mr. Clinton is a lame duck, in the last stages of his Presidency, cannot be missed in all the hype being whipped up about a Presidential visit after a 22-year gap.

There indeed seems to be a dichotomy between what Official India has been saying and what it has been doing — on the one hand talking about a "sovereign decision" to be made by Washington on the President's visit to Pakistan; and at the same time cranking up the lobbyists to work against the idea, if one were to go by what appeared in *The New York Times* this Sunday. And this has prompted an obvious response from Pakistan which has already been working overtime to put its point across.

But if the impression from media reports is one of something out of the ordinary being done, that could be misplaced

*It would seem that whether Mr. Clinton visits Pakistan is not really India's business. And it would be better if New Delhi focussed on the real agenda of the Clinton visit without getting sidetracked into peripheral issues.*

Delhi are in general agreement over the broad contours of the scourge and have in recent months stepped up cooperation in fighting the menace, there is very little to indicate that the Clinton Administration has totally signed on to the BJP's terrorism agenda. Much as New Delhi may wish Pakistan to be branded a "terrorist" state, this is neither an easy process nor something that the Administration is on the verge of doing.

The pressure from pro-India elements, not just from the paid lobbyists but from other quarters as well, has galvanised the "other side" too. While the Indian-American community is a political force and has a caucus on Capitol Hill, the Pakistani-American community is not totally devoid of political connections on Capitol Hill either. In many ways, it is fine-tuned and well focussed. Last September, 46 members of the House of Representatives and nearly 15 Senators wrote to the President asking him to appoint a special envoy on Kashmir. That this never materialised is a different matter. But it did reveal that the Pakistani-American community can get its act together as well, and in a high profile fashion. Now, a concerted effort seems to be under way to argue the case, for a Clinton visit to Pakistan, with the White House, with prominent members of Congress involved.

A lot of "grief" is also going to result if there is this wishful thinking that a U.S. President is going to heed a script written and directed by New Delhi. On the face of it, the focus of Mr. Clinton's visit is going to be on the "New Relationship", and a broad base of issues and challenges. But no one knows what the President has in mind and how he is going to put it across. It will be naive to think that Mr. Clinton will travel more than halfway across the world to South Asia and come away without addressing what the U.S. has for years been saying are the main problems.

If key Cabinet members of the Adminis-

tration — and one could add the President as well — have been talking about Kashmir and non-proliferation, this is hardly surprising even if some in the media took what the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, said and made it appear as though she was saying something unique for the first time, or as some kind of an attempt to put a damper on Mr. Clinton's visit to India. The bottomline again: the State Department only recommends — the buck stops at the White House — and it is left to Mr. Clinton to draw up the parameters of what he will want to emphasise in India.

Two things that Ms. Albright said recently have not gone unnoticed. First, she argued that Washington continues to have "serious concerns about the issues of non-proliferation and about the dealings on Kashmir" and that the Clinton Administration hoped that the Government of India "understands and will continue to deal with those issues because they are essential". Second, she made the point that the President's trip will be important "but it is not just a sign that everything has been dealt with and that all problems have been resolved. The President wants to make clear the kinds of issues that are out there that we have all been dealing with on non-proliferation". Again not a very dramatic statement, for even in the best of relationships the U.S. has areas of differences. And an American President does not always make a trip only to places where Washington has a "perfect" relationship.

Mr. Clinton may not have any great "gameplans" for the resolution of the Kashmir dispute or for any major direct role for the U.S., but it will be truly extraordinary if he comes away from the region without even talking about it. That would be something very unlike Mr. Clinton if the last few years are anything to go by. Among other things, he likes to get involved in "disputes", and in the absence of a script can say anything he chooses to. That should be the "worrisome" part for New Delhi.

The official "wish list" in India is perhaps for a higher degree of concentration by the American President on the "complementarities", as opposed to Kashmir and non-proliferation. Whether Mr. Clinton obliges remains to be seen.

Scenting Delhi unease, Clinton speaks of mediation

US balm on <sup>with consent</sup>

Kashmir

wound

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, Feb. 17: As President Bill Clinton made it clear that India's "sensitivity" on Kashmir would be respected, France, the country's new-found friend in the West, reminded Delhi that the dispute with Islamabad must be settled for it to emerge a world power.

"Unless we were asked by both parties to help, we can't get involved (on Kashmir). In every other case we are involved, both parties have asked us to be involved," Clinton told reporters in White House.

Clinton, who had recently described the subcontinent as the "most dangerous place in the world", said the region had the potential to be "the great success of the next 50 years" if the Kashmir deadlock could be broken.

The President repeated he wants the US to be "more involved" in resolving the Kashmir dispute as a possible conflict between the nuclear twins was a "very real danger" posing grave security threat to American interests.

He, however, emphasised that India and Pakistan "will have to work out this business of Kashmir" between themselves and the US will get involved only if both countries accepted its role as peacemaker.

India has made it clear that it would not allow mediation on Kashmir. By respecting India's "sensitivity", Clinton's wants to ensure that no misunderstandings mar his visit to the country next month.

Though the US President

added that he is still considering whether to halt in Pakistan, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee told a French publication that India's people would "seriously disapprove" of Clinton visiting Islamabad.

However, France, which is keen on forging a multipolar world order to check US domination, today virtually echoed the American stand while reminding India of its responsibilities.

"Negotiated conflict resolution is one of the responsibilities of the powers of today and the poles of tomorrow," French foreign minister Hubert Vedrine said at a seminar on multipolarity here this afternoon.

By identifying India as one of the poles, France is trying to indicate what role it expects from its partners in the future. "Another pre-requisite is that India be a full participant. If a multipolar system is built, I am convinced that India will be and must be one of its poles," Vedrine said.

At the seminar, foreign minister Jaswant Singh asserted that Washington's approach of imposing its own values and standards on nuclear and multilateral trade issues was regrettable. He added that it was not possible for the US to find solutions to all major problems, whether on security-related issues or on economics.

"Since there is a perception, also perhaps reality, that the US action is often driven by its own, short-term, domestic agenda and interest, its approach gets to be perceived by other countries as an attempt at imposition of its values and standards — whether on human rights, nuclear and mis-

sile proliferation, multilateral trade issues and intellectual property rights," he said.

Referring to the US action in Kosovo and Iraq, Singh argued that peace was a product of justice and could not be conferred by any "supra-national authority".

"The world would be poorer if

globalisation became a synonym for de-culturisation or of the imposition of one dimension alone," he said.

"Today, not only do we have new challenges, we also have asymmetries which demand a coalition of interests among equals, rather than alliances built around a hegemony."

### Pak terror blow

US secretary of state Madeleine Albright has said Pakistan has become a transit point for terrorists and it is reviewing "some of" Islamabad's "activities in terms of terrorism".

THE TELEGRAPH

18 FEB 2000

# U.S. will mediate on J&K if asked: Clinton

HD.  
18/2

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, FEB. 17. After saying, initially, that India and Pakistan would have to sort out "this business of Kashmir" between themselves and that Washington could not get involved unless asked to by the two countries, the President, Mr. Bill Clinton, has made it known now that the United States would "absolutely" be willing to get involved to try and help mediate in the Kashmir issue if asked to.

"Absolutely I would. Why? For the same reason we have been involved in Northern Ireland and West Asia, because Number One and most importantly, it is a hugely important area of the world. If the tensions between India and Pakistan on the Indian sub-continent could be resolved, it is my opinion, based on my personal experience with people from India, people from Pakistan and people from Bangladesh, that the sub-continent might very well be the great success story of the next 50 years," Mr. Clinton said.

The President said, "you are talking about people who are basically immensely talented, have a strong work ethic, a deep devotion to their faith and to their families. There is nothing they couldn't do. And it's heartbreaking to me to see how much they hold each other back by being trapped in yesterday's conflicts..."

Secondly, Mr. Clinton said that like Northern Ireland and West Asia, the U.S. "has been deeply enriched by people from the Indian sub-continent, and I think we



are — we might be, because of our population, in a position to make a constructive contribution. But if they (India and Pakistan) don't want us, it won't do any good. We'd just be out there talking into the air, and I'm not in for that."

At a time when there is speculation in India and elsewhere on what the President would focus on during his visit to the region, Mr. Clinton had this to say in reply when asked what Pakistan's military rulers should do to get him to reconsider a trip to that country. "I haven't decided whether I'm going to Pakistan or not...and I will make a decision about whether to go based on what I think will best serve our long-term interests, in non-proliferation, in trying to stop particularly a nuclear arms race and trying to help to promote stability, democracy and a resolution of the conflict between India and Pakistan."

"I think we forget that among some 200 ethnic groups that we have in our country, Indian Americans and Pakistani Americans have been among the most successful in terms of education level and income level. They have worked, have succeeded stunningly well in the U.S. and have astonishingly, may be, had good contacts with one another. And I think the U.S. should be more involved there. And even though I think that they'll have to work out this business of Kashmir between themselves, unless we're asked by both parties to help, we can't get involved," Mr. Clinton said.

"We've been in every other case we're involved because both parties have asked us to be involved. But I will make a decision about where to go and what to do based on what I think will further our long-term goals. And I have not reached a final decision."

## India's stand will not change: PM

PARIS, FEB. 17. The Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, was today quoted as saying that the Indian public would "seriously disapprove" of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, visiting Pakistan after his trip to India next month.

In an interview to the French daily *Le Figaro*, Mr. Vajpayee also said that the U.S. offer to mediate over the Kashmir issue would not change India's position. "Kashmir is an integral part of India..." he said adding that Pakistan must give back the part of Kashmir it had occupied. — PTI

THE HINDU  
18 FEB 2000

# Business may take backseat during Bill Clinton's visit

By Kanwaldeep Singh  
Business Times Bureau

NEW DELHI: India Inc. has worked out a comprehensive business agenda to be taken up during U.S. President Bill Clinton's visit next month even as there are apprehensions among industry leaders here that political and social issues may dominate the high-profile visit.

U.S. business interests in India, covering areas like infrastructure, banking and insurance, are now likely to extend to knowledge-driven sectors like IT, pharma, petrochemicals and advanced technologies in power, industry representatives here say.

"U.S. companies in knowledge-intensive sectors like IT and pharma have so far been reluctant to work with India since an effective system to protect intellectual property was absent," FICCI secretary-general Amit Mitra told *The Times of India*. "Rather than develop new products in partnership with Indian companies, they have been trading in finished products."

With the Indian government working towards a sound intellectual property rights regime, knowl-

edge workers in the two countries may now be able to complement each other. "This has potential to create jobs in both economies," Mr Mitra said.

Industry leaders here expect the U.S. President to steer clear of contentious issues like linking trade to labour and environment standards, or the speedy dismantling of textile import quotas by the U.S. The focus will instead be on "win-win" areas, they said. Mr Clinton can take things further by approving a framework for cooperation like, say, a protocol on knowledge-driven industries for five years.

Corporate representatives admit that the optimism has to be tempered by the possibility of political and social issues overshadowing the business agenda.

"India Inc. is not enthused about Mr Clinton's visit next month, at least not yet," said an industry leader. "There is probably a tussle on in Washington between the state and commerce departments to shape the agenda of the visit," he said. "If the State Department prevails, CTBT and regional security may take precedence over econom-

ic issues."

Another industry representative felt Mr Clinton may choose to focus on social issues like poverty, HIV and development in an election year. "These subjects make good copy for voters back home," he averred.

India Inc. is also watching how U.S. business responds to this visit. Some business leaders there may choose to stay away from the delegation of a "lame duck President". A few others, closely identified with the Republican campaign in the U.S., may also opt out. Corporate leaders here are awaiting the list of U.S. business leaders who will accompany Mr Clinton.

Industry representatives are also lukewarm because they do not know who among them will get to lunch with the U.S. President. FICCI and Assocham are part of the U.S.-India Joint Business Council while CII, the other apex chamber, is not. They all realise the mileage from hosting arguably the most powerful man in the world. The government could have a hand in "swinging" the event in favour of one chamber or the other.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

19 FEB 2000

# *India relieved at Clinton's impartial stand on J&K*

By Seema Guha  
The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: Mandarins in South Block on Friday heaved a sigh of relief after President Bill Clinton's assertion that despite his concerns about Kashmir, the U.S. would not intervene unless asked to do so by both India and Pakistan.

The public reiteration helped clear some of the doubts generated by the statements made recently by Mr Clinton and his secretary of state Madeline Albright. But considering Mr Clinton's desire to leave behind a worthwhile presidential legacy as well as his desire to play the peace-broker in South Asia, Indian officials and commentators are convinced this is not the last word on the issue.

Former foreign secretary J.N. Dixit believes that the Clinton administration has made its concerns very clear. "These are non-proliferation and the easing of tensions with Pakistan." He sees Ms Albright's comments as an attempt to put pressure on the Vajpayee government.

India knows that some of the President's concerns on non-proliferation and fears of nuclear brinkmanship between India and Pakistan over Kashmir will be aired during Mr Clinton's five-day visit. But the concern in government circles is that Kashmir, Pakistan and nuclear non-proliferation should not overshadow the first visit by an American President in 22 years.

Indeed, the Vajpayee government cannot afford to let this happen for political reasons. The U.S. has already been told off by none other than Mr Vajpayee himself, and foreign secretary Lalit Mansingh indicated as much during his talks last week with U.S. officials.

"The U.S. knows very well that Mr Clinton cannot be seen as intrusive, and if he does so, he will be roundly rebuffed," an Indian official explained. "This agenda will be neither in Washington's or New Delhi's interest. The motive behind the Clinton visit is the overall stepping up of ties. Any attempt to go beyond this limited agenda may ruin the symbolism of the visit," he declared.

President Clinton is not coming to India with any illusions of a breakthrough on either the CTBT or India-Pakistan issues. But it would be wrong to underestimate Mr Clinton's enormous powers of persuasion and the U.S.'s undoubted clout, a western diplomat cautioned. "In private, at least, the U.S. President will certainly push India to restart the dialogue with Pakistan," he said.

**THE TIMES OF INDIA**

**19 FEB 2000**

# Clinton restated long-standing Kashmir policy: White House

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, FEB. 18. One day after the President, Mr. Bill Clinton, stated at a press conference that the United States would be willing to play the role of a mediator between India and Pakistan over Kashmir if asked to by both the countries, the White House has made it known that the President was only restating the long-standing policy that Washington wants a peaceful resolution to the issue of Kashmir.

The White House was asked on Thursday if anybody had taken up the President on his willingness to mediate on Kashmir. "Have we heard any nibbles?" the spokesman was asked.

"I don't think so. I think the President was restating our long-stated policy that we want a peaceful resolution to the issue of Kashmir. It is best done through bilateral channels and bilateral dialogue between the Indians and the Pakistanis. If both sides want us to play a role, we would certainly be willing to do that. There hasn't been that kind of a request as yet. I don't think there has been anything since yesterday. So we will continue to hope that both sides can engage each other and try to make progress," Mr. David Leavy responded.

The White House was also asked if there was a cutoff date for Pakistan to comply with the President's guidelines after which it would be logistically not possible to go to that country.

"I don't think the President was intending to put any benchmarks or lay down any pre-conditions for his trip (to Pakistan). I don't think he said that," Mr. Leavy argued, going on to add that there are some areas of concern which the administration had been talking to Pakistan for sometime — such as terrorism, non-proliferation and the restoration of democracy.

"We haven't made a decision on any other stops for the trip. I'm not sure if there's a deadline for the trip per se. I think at some point it becomes logistically more difficult to do that." The spokesperson then stressed the fact that the trip "stands on its own" and should not be viewed through the lens of whether the President went to Pakistan or not.

"I think it is really important for all of you who are going to cover the trip or write about it to look at this as really an important milestone for the U.S. to go to the region. It will really deepen our engagement with India. It is a really diverse and important country for us with many, many issues we deal with there on

from security, non-proliferation, health and the environment. And this is going to be an opportunity to deepen those relationships, deepen those contacts," Mr. Leavy said.

Knowledgeable people here, including senior diplomats, say that given the domestic political compulsions and America's immediate and longer-term interests in South Asia, Mr. Clinton will find it difficult to visit Pakistan. A political snub to Islamabad is not seen to be in the interests of the U.S. Various scenarios are being projected as to when and how long Mr. Clinton could be in Pakistan.

But the bottomline is that while the Secretary of State is expected to make a recommendation on this subject, the final determination will be made by the White House.

By the same token, what is being pointed out is that given the tenor of the President's comments on India, Pakistan and South Asia as such, Mr. Clinton is most likely to discuss a range of issues that would include non-proliferation, peace and stability in the region and Kashmir. The President has shown a lot of interest in these issues and one argument is that little can be accomplished by leaving out Pakistan from the South Asia programme.

# Another team to visit India before President Clinton Itinerary planners arrive on 25 Feb

VINAY JHA  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 18. — Mr Bill Clinton's pre-advance team is expected to arrive on 25 February and take decisive steps to chalk out the itinerary of the President on his India visit.

One team has already visited India for preliminary discussions on Mr Clinton's five-day visit beginning 20 March. There is no word from Washington yet on where the President is going to land in India and when the visit would commence "officially".

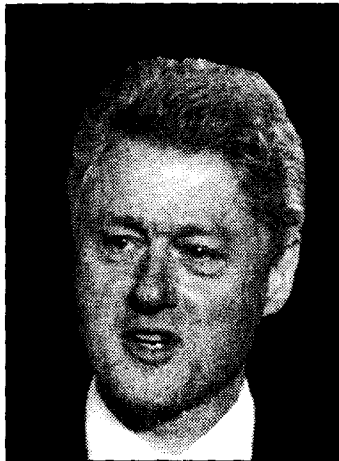
The team which was here earlier this month made a countrywide tour that covered Agra, Jaipur, Udaipur, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Calcutta, Lucknow and Goa. It will report back to the White House to enable it to take a final decision.

This team included schedulers, the Secret Service, White House staff and communications experts, who travelled here on their own plane. The issues this team took up are believed to have included security, media management and protocol.

According to official sources, there is no decision as yet on whether the US President will be received at the airport by the Prime Minister. Such a

decision is taken only in the rarest of cases as a special gesture.

Prime Ministers have



Mr Bill Clinton

received visiting heads of state at the airport in the past but it is being pointed out that since the venue of ceremonial welcomes had now shifted to Rashtrapati Bhawan, the practice of the PM receiving them at the airport had ended.

Incidentally, the minister in waiting will be a Cabinet minister and not a minister of state as is usual during visits by heads of state.

The interest generated by the impending visit is evident when one visits the web site of

51-6 19/2  
the PMO. The opinion poll for this week is on the question: "Will American President Bill Clinton's visit to India lead to significant improvement in Indo-US relations?"

The security for the visit is being coordinated by the IB with the Delhi Police responsible for the area security for the visit. The President's own security, the Special Service, will also be deployed both for proximal security as also area security including advance teams. The equipment for communications and security as also the limousines will be flown in for the visit.

"American security personnel are very fussy when it comes to their President," a former police officer said. The Indians incidentally follow a similar pattern when the Prime Minister goes abroad. An advance team of the IB and the SPG takes stock of the security arrangements well before the actual visit.

According to senior Delhi Police officers, among the steps they expect the Americans to request, include surveillance on arrivals into the country during the visit and the period immediately preceding it. "They might even give us a list of persons on who we should look out for during the visit," a senior officer said.

THE STATESMAN

19 FEB 2000

# Delhi junks Clinton's flashpoint label

1912 Qwdr-ws

## STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 18. — The Indian government today rejected the US assessment of the Indo-Pak situation that it is a serious source of conflict.

Such references by the USA with regard to the relationship between these two neighbours has always been a cause of embarrassment for India.

Mr Bill Clinton had said yesterday that USA could play a constructive role in the situation that poses a very real danger of conflict.

The US President, however, made it clear that there would be no point in mediation unless both parties wanted it.

On Mr Clinton's remarks regarding the danger of conflict, the external affairs spokesman today said: "We do

## Sack 3 embassy staffers, India tells Pak

NEW DELHI, Feb. 18. — India today sought the expulsion of three staffers of Pakistan High Commission for their involvement in activities incompatible with their official status.

The ministry of external affairs summoned the acting Pakistan Deputy High Commissioner, Mr Jalil Abbas Jilani, this afternoon and asked for Mr Mohammed Khalil, Mr Rana Mohammed Saghir and Mr Mohammed Amin to be withdrawn from the embassy by 25 February. Deploring the action, the Pakistan foreign office complained to the Indian Deputy High Commissioner in Islamabad that Mr Khalil and Mr Saghir had been picked up, kept in confinement and beaten by Indian officers. — SNS

not share this assessment".

"To the extent that the USA has said they would not like to involve themselves in this issue, it shows sensitivity to our concerns," the spokesman said, referring to Mr Clinton's comment that the USA would not mediate unless it was asked

to do so.

But the US President's apparent reluctance to mediate where he was not wanted held little comfort for the government.

Mr Clinton's remarks also sparked unwelcome remarks from the visiting French for-

eign minister today. Both countries had touted Mr Hubert Vedrine's visit as a major success, with contentious issues kept on the backburner.

A Press conference by the French foreign minister, however, proved to be a dampener.

Answering questions on President Clinton's offer to mediate, Mr Vedrine said his country was as worried as the USA about the dangerous situation.

He also said that France would be pleased if the USA could turn the course of events in the right direction. The external affairs ministry said it did not need to reiterate its views on the subject as they were well known.

■ More reports on page 6

THE STATESMAN

19 FEB 200



**S**ECURITY CONCERNS, specifically nuclear, will remain the weakest link between India and the US, and the most difficult to reconcile. The issue here will be to manage the divergences without their spilling over on to other, more important, areas like economic cooperation.

The fact that India is still shy of signing the CTBT will inevitably remain the biggest stumbling block. It is in fact the one area which actually impinge on economic ties. It is no longer any secret that the signature of the treaty is conditional for international financial institutions to resume lending to India; for Japanese investment to flow as well as for other sanctions to be lifted.

The Indian government has, over the past couple of years, tried to gather up courage several times to sign the treaty. But every time events have overtaken their fledgling resolve.

From Kargil onwards, the desire to be seen to be not capitulating to the US has confused India's non-proliferation goals with other foreign and domestic policy issues. To the extent that after the December hijacking, the government, smarting under accusations of being a soft state, once again panicked.

To be sure, the failure of the US Senate to ratify the treaty last autumn not only dealt a huge blow to Clinton, but also reduced the US' moral authority to hector other countries like India to accede to the treaty. Among other things it obviated the necessity for the US government to attach this particularly difficult string to the presidential visit.

India would have actually taken advantage of the lack of pressure to sign the CTBT once parliament opened for the budget session next week. However, a variety of factors, including a dictat from the RSS and pressure from hard-line securitywallahs has constrained the government yet again. Now it will be impossible to pen a signature before the Clinton visit.

And yet, both industry and the economy would be relieved with a signature. The Indian economy has withstood the sanctions but for it to be doing great rather than merely good, the signature is necessary because it would open the floodgates of investment.

In an internal memo on the Indian market, international investment bank JP Morgan observes a CTBT signature would radically

# Buzz about the bomb

*The nuclear concern, and issues that flow from the divergence on it, will be the weakest link in Indo-US diplomacy*

increase foreign portfolio and direct investment into India.

There are other issues that flow from the divergent views towards non-proliferation. India wants access to civilian nuclear technology and other dual-use technology for its burgeoning scientific establishment. The US says it is constrained by the obligations to the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the Missile technology Control Regime (MTCR) among others.

India has not only chafed at this denial, but is actively seeking alternatives to the US — to wit, France, with which India has been exploring ways of obtaining nuclear technology especially in the areas of nuclear safety, without the interference of these myriad global arrangements.

However, ten rounds of Jaswant-Talbott tete-a-tetes have not been without their benefits. In the area of security, India and the US have discovered common ground in the ongoing negotiations for the fissile material cutoff treaty (FMCT). Both countries favour a treaty which does not take into account existing stockpiles, only prospective ones.

India's nuclear doctrine, released last year with much fanfare, certainly made the world look up, because a cursory reading revealed it was not minimalist in nature, envisioning as it does the classical triad of nuclear forces and a second strike capability, opening a Pandora's box of miniaturised weapons etc.

This has also opened the door to the overtly

hawkish scientific establishment declaring that the realisation of the nuclear doctrine demands further nuclear tests. The government has, sensibly, dissociated itself from this doctrine.

Therefore current dialogue with the US centres on India's defence and missile posture, on threat perceptions and on India's security environment.

Ten rounds of talks have also succeeded in the US appreciating Jaswant Singh's graphic denial of "fixity" regarding the posture. US deputy secretary, Strobe Talbott put it succinctly in an interview, "Will its approach to the question of defence posture be interpreted by others as provocative and open-ended or as consistent with a commonsense definition of minimum credible nuclear deterrent?"

A happier story is in the area of export controls. India already has a pretty effective system of export controls of sensitive materials, built around the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), but it regards the lists of the Australia Group as discriminatory.

The US, needless to add, is working to get India within the ambit of these rules.

The main hurdles in the IndoUS security dialogue have been surmounted. As Strobe Talbott observed earlier, "this security dialogue needs to expand beyond the recent focus on non-proliferation and deal with issues such as counter-terrorism."

It is, and terrorism is now a major plank of the US-India security relationship. The most important turnaround will come when India acknowledges its responsibilities in the global non-proliferation regime.

To be fair, India has moved from its "total non-discriminatory disarmament" high horse in the aftermath of the 1998 nuclear tests, when the government co-sponsored a UN convention on "reducing nuclear dangers" by de-alerting nuclear weapons and detargeting.

India wants to sit at the global high table. And given the robust character of its nuclear establishment, there is no reason why it should not.

However, in this game India needs to figure out whether more nuclear weapons is better than a more resilient economy.

Until that happens, the nuclear area will remain the only one where India and Pakistan will remain inextricably linked.

■ IB

*The Economic Times*

20 FEB 2000

# US Senator urges 'home' for Kashmir Pandits

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
WASHINGTON, FEB 20

THE Democratic Legislative Party of South Dakota has urged US President Bill Clinton to support the idea of a separate "home territory" (Panun Kashmir) in Kashmir valley for the Pandits during his talks with Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee in New Delhi next month.

In a letter to Clinton in the run up to his India visit beginning March 25, state Senate minority leader Senator Tim Hutmacher and representative Pat Haley, state house minority leader, urged Clinton to raise the question of creating a 'home territory' for Pandits during his talks with Vajpayee.

"We welcome your and Secretary Madeleine Albright's expression of concern for this uprooted community and believe that the time for further action has ar-

rived," the letter said, adding that the Pandits have been refugees within India for over ten years as a result of the ethnic conflict in Kashmir.

"The US has opposed 'hate crimes' in Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo and punished those

leaders of the Kashmiri Pandit refugees have convincingly argued that this unique group cannot survive unless they have the same political status as has been afforded to many other small ethnic communities in India," it noted. "US Senator Tim Johnson

strongly endorse Senator Johnson's recommendation to the Prime Minister of India," the letter said.

"We are certain that you share Senator Johnson's and our concern for the Pandits and hope that you are able to speak to Prime Minister Vajpayee about the establishment of a home territory for them in Kashmir," it added.

## South Dakota politicians ask Clinton to discuss creating a 'home territory' for Pandits during his visit to India

responsible for the religious persecution of minorities. The same policy should be extended to Kashmir to restore normalcy," the letter, written on behalf of the State Legislative Party, said.

Earlier, Democratic member of the Senate from South Dakota, Senator Tim Johnson, had endorsed the idea of Panun Kashmir in a letter to Clinton.

"Well informed experts and

has studied the plight of the Kashmiri Pandits and has already written two letters to Prime Minister Vajpayee expressing his concerns regarding their fate and future," the letter said.

Johnson has called for creation of a "self-governing union territory" in Kashmir for Pandits as the best and most viable solution to the problem of their dispersal throughout India. "We

think tank on minority issues and a Pandit leader, welcomed the legislators' move.

He recalled Johnson's letter to Clinton in which the senator said "remaining silent in the face of the disintegration and demise of this community will surely send a wrong message about India.

"We intend to persuade other legislative bodies in the country to join the South Dakota lawmakers on this important issue," Kaul said.

## Clinton visit should have bilateral focus: Cong.(I)

By Our Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, FEB. 21.** The AICC(I) Foreign Affairs Cell chairman, Mr. Natwar Singh, today said the coming visit of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, should be guided purely by bilateral matters and not other considerations. At a news conference here, Mr. Singh said, "We all want his (Mr. Clinton's) visit to be a great success but his visit to India should not be guided by where else he goes."

The Congress(I) was obviously referring to the statements emanating from Government circles opposing a possible visit of Mr. Clinton to Pakistan. "It is for the U.S. President to decide where he will go. Why should we be bothered?," he asked.

Saying that it was exactly an year ago that the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, had gone to Lahore as part of his much publicised 'bus diplomacy', Mr. Singh added that the subsequent events had exposed the naivete of the Government.

The Congress(I) leader said the Vajpayee Government would have to answer why the Kargil intrusions began exactly three months after the Lahore declaration. He said Indira Gandhi, who signed the Shimla Pact with Zulfikar Ali Bhutto after the 1971 war which led to liberation of Bangladesh, did not lower vigil on the borders.

Mr. Singh referred to the statements of the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, hailing the Lahore declaration as a paradigm shift in relations between the two countries and wanted to know the present state of relations. On the statement of the Prime Minister that India could resume the peace process only if Pakistan vacated the PoK, Mr. Singh said Mr. Vajpayee was only restating the known position. He said Parliament, by a resolution, had asked Pakistan to return the occupied part of Kashmir.

In a separate statement the AICC(I) spokesman, Mr. Ajit Jogi, said events after the Lahore declaration had proved that the PM's vision of peace with Pakistan was not based on anything more than theatrical sentiments. He said it was unfortunate that both the PM and the Foreign Minister were caught unawares by the events which had unfolded after the declaration.

"Just how ineffectual the duo is was further underlined when they acquiesced to the demands of the still unknown hijackers, releasing Pakistani-sponsored terrorists from jail. Mr. Jaswant Singh compounded the humiliation by accompanying the freed terrorists to Kandahar, where he was at the mercy of the Taliban, a despotic fundamentalist regime that few governments have recognised," the statement said.

THE HINDU

22 FEB 2000

# Indo-US relations: from uncertainty to trust

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 23. — When the Vajpayee government plays host to President Clinton next month, it will set the seal on a relationship that began with uncertainty with the US administration unsure of whether a dialogue was possible with the "Hindu nationalist" BJP government.

Tracing the course of the Indo-US relationship in a speech at the Centre for the Advanced Study of India at the University of Pennsylvania, Mr Bruce Riedel, the Special

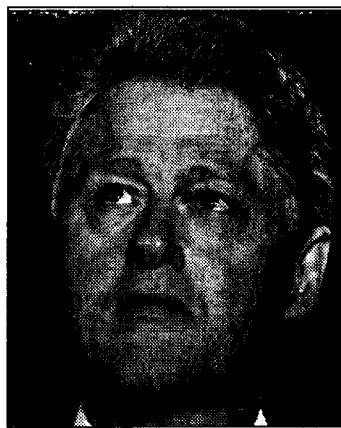
Assistant to the President, revealed the misgivings the US administration had had at the change of political power in India and the developments leading to the President's visit, which, he said, would be a trip to India and not to South Asia.

While saying the nuclear tests had dealt a severe blow to the relations and that non-proliferation might come up during the visit, Mr Riedel said the talks between Mr Jaswant Singh and Mr Strobe Talbott had improved the atmosphere.

The Kargil conflict, in which the US President had intervened, had led to the development of new confidence between the leaders of India and the USA. Mr Riedel, however, said the USA could not ignore CIA's assessment last year that India and Pakistan had come close to a nuclear exchange.

The coup in Islamabad and the hijacking had turned the situation from bad to worse, he said, while adding that the USA did not intend to mediate nor equate the two countries.

India had become a global player and demanded attention



Mr Bill Clinton

and had a role in the balance of power throughout Asia, Central Asia, Persian Gulf and South East Asia, Mr Riedel said. The USA had common interests with India in matters such as terrorism, narcotics and unimpeded flow of energy resources through the Indian Ocean.

A change in the administration in Washington following the US elections would not derail the relationship, Mr Riedel said, since both Vice-President Gore and Governor Bush had recognised the value of India as a partner of the USA.

HD-A  
W

## Redefine Indo-U.S. ties, says Ackerman

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

**WASHINGTON, FEB. 25.** Calling upon India and the United States to move their bilateral relationship to a new plane, the Democratic Congressman from New York, Mr. Gary Ackerman, is stressing that based on the signs of "maturity and realism", there was now the enormous opportunity in the President, Mr. Bill Clinton's trip to build on and re-define the U.S.-India relationship.

"... the President should identify India as our strategic partner in South Asia recognising that India is a responsible democratic nation in the region and one with which we can deal. Such recognition provides the U.S. with the opportunity to establish a new paradigm in South Asia. We should have a policy for India that recognises and supports our common," Mr. Ackerman told a gathering at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies.

Mr. Ackerman, Co-chairman of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans, argued that the U.S. would have to work with India and Pakistan on regional issues based on its national

interests, but that in the pursuit of those regional issues "we should recognise the distinctions between countries and pursue our interests accordingly".

The New York law-maker was critical of Pakistan, especially its role in terrorism and called on the

Terrorists Welcome," the law-maker pointed out.

He spoken of the need to de-link India and Pakistan, or to take that hyphen out between the two countries when it came to American foreign policy.

Meanwhile, the Congressman, Mr. Robert Menendez, described as "misguided" the efforts to schedule a Presidential visit to Pakistan as a part of Mr. Clinton's South Asia programme.

"Recently there has been an effort to pressure the President to include a visit to Pakistan on the trip. Last year Pakistan had a military coup, sent its troops into Indian territory and allowed international hijackers to escape into its territory. Given that record I understand the reasons for not including Pakistan on the President's original itinerary. However, some want the President to turn his back on his long standing commitment to promote democracy overseas by visiting this anti-democratic regime," the Democrat from New Jersey said in a letter to his colleagues.

### 'Clinton will stop in Lahore'

**WASHINGTON, FEB. 25** The U. S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, will make a brief stop at Lahore airport at the end of his trip to India "to prop up pro-western forces in Pakistan," the *Washington Times* reported today. It attributed the information to a "prominent Pakistani-American." — PTI

President not to schedule a trip to Pakistan unless there were "iron clad" guarantees of verifiable steps that the proxy war against India had been stopped; and General Pervez Musharraf giving a date certain schedule for democratic elections. "Pakistan must take back the doormat that says

THE HINDU  
26 FEB 2000

# N-issue at the centre of Indo-U.S. ties: Talbott

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, FEB. 25. While the efforts are on to find "commonality of views" on the non-proliferation agenda, the Clinton administration is making the point that there are a number of other areas that the United States and India could cooperate. But the bottom line was that the agreement on the nuclear issues, which is now seen as "unfinished business" was necessary if the bilateral relationship is not to be constrained, including in area of sanctions.

This was basically the plain and yet blunt message put through by the Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott, at a seminar on India and the U.S. organised by the South Asia Programme of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies. "The President, Mr. Bill Clinton, is under no illusion that the nuclear issue could be solved in one round between him and the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, any more than it has been resolved in 10 or 12 rounds between me and the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh," Mr. Talbott remarked.

Although it has become fashionable to argue that India-U.S. relations had moved away from the dominance of single issues to a more broad-based focus, Mr. Talbott, for the most part, appeared to stress the criticality of the nuclear agenda between the two countries, leaving little doubt that this would be a major component of Mr. Clinton's talks with Indian leaders when he visits the country next month.

"... on the four non-proliferation issues we are going to have to find a way, including in the context of the President's trip, to remain engaged with each other, working candidly with each other, being clear eyed... we talk to each other rather seriously, and not past each other and hope that the positions of the two countries over a period of time narrows."

"I think... there will be certain limitations on our ability to work together and cooperate in all areas. But until we have commonality of views on the non-proliferation agenda there will be plenty of other areas where we could do much more. So that set of nuclear issues is going to be an important test to the maturity of our relationship, the statesmanship of our leaders and also our ability in coming off the President's trip to improve upon the architecture of the relationship..." Mr. Talbott remarked.

Taking issue with the notion that there was something "secretive" in the ongoing discussions between the U.S. and India, Mr. Talbott argued that the substance of the issues, particularly in the realm of non-proliferation, had been thoroughly spelled out

by both Mr. Jaswant Singh and himself in interviews to *The Hindu*. "These are tough issues. These are life and death issues for both of us, in a way. India is grappling with the question of how to ensure its safety and security... We don't want to appear to take that lightly, appear to have all of the answers. We don't want to appear to be trying to impose our experience, which had some scary moments, on India," Mr. Talbott argued. Having said this the point was also made that the U.S. had global interests and responsibilities for non-proliferation concerns and that it had a debt and trust of a number of countries who could have gone nuclear, but did not.

"Our differences with India on the nuclear subject do not in any way connote an accusation of irresponsibility against India. They do not have anything whatsoever to do with exotic, ominous scenarios of potential conflict between the U.S. and India. It has to do with the global non-proliferation regimes," Mr. Talbott said.

"What we are working on our Indian friends is a set of concepts, respectful of Indian sovereignty and of India's sense of its defence needs to see if there are ways that we can agree would constitute to India's making itself more part of the solution and not part of the problem of global non-proliferation. And that's a tough issue," he stressed.

In asking to take note of the extent to which the administration had gone to using the Waiver Authority granted by Congress in the realm of sanctions, Mr. Talbott was very clear that Washington is in no hurry to get rid of some sanctions soon especially as it related to military and defence needs.

"Until we are able to work together to find more common ground on the non-proliferation area, there is going to be some significant, necessary limitations, notably including in the military sphere and we hope that will not be a permanent condition," Mr. Talbott remarked when asked if there was a possibility of easing up some sanctions related to the military spheres in the run-up to the President's visit. He said the President's itinerary in South Asia had not been finalised and that whether or not Mr. Clinton visits Pakistan would be decided on its own merits and not "linked" to any other factor. Here the senior administration official did point out of the contradiction in the Government of India's stance: on the one hand saying that a Presidential visit to Pakistan was a sovereign decision of the U.S.; and yet at the same time India making the point that there would be a negative "blowback" if Mr. Clinton visited Pakistan.

THE HINDU  
26 FEB 2000

# Talbott: Clinton's India visit to open new chapter in ties

N.C. Menon  
Washington, February 25

41-11  
26/2

DEPUTY SECRETARY of State Strobe Talbott said on Thursday that India and the US had common strategic goals and there was much the two nations could do by teaming up with each other in trade and investment, promotion of health, battling terrorism and narcotics trafficking. President Clinton was committed to using his trip next month to show that the two nations were turning a new page in their relationship.

There was, however, important unfinished business and significant differences between India and the US on issues of non-proliferation and nuclear weaponry. "We have quite a bit of additional work to do together," Talbott said. "This will continue for quite some time. We cannot sweep our differences under the rug."

Talbott was speaking at a conference on "Indo-US Relations at a Crossroads", organised by the Center for Strategic & International Studies here. Several perspectives were brought forth by speakers from various spheres.

Talbott made it clear that President Clinton was under no illusion that outstanding problems would be solved during his discussions with Prime Minister Vajpayee. Hence, it was necessary to "improve the architecture of our relationship" after the President's visit, something Secretary of State

Madeleine Albright would pursue with External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh.

Although Talbott was obviously upbeat on economic, trade and scientific relations, his reference to the differences seemed to be a bid to tamp down unrealistic expectations from the visit, particularly here in the US.

The Deputy Secretary pointed to five unfinished items on the agenda: The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), fissile material production cut-off, India's defence posture of a credible minimal deterrence, export controls, and Indo-Pak relations.

"Lots of people told me the last would be the least promising and most difficult," Talbott said. "But thanks to the Lahore process, that seemed to be going best of all the five items -- till it hit the brick wall in Kargil." He said India was not at fault in the Kargil imbroglio. On the four non-proliferation issues, the two nations had to be clear-eyed and find a solution through dialogue. Talbott agreed that elements of cooperation could be diminished unless some commonality was found on proliferation.

Over 50 years, a consensus had emerged around the world to work together to rely less on nuclear weapons. And then came the nuclear tests of 1998.

Talbott made it clear that America's differences with India on the nuclear issue did not indicate any accusation of irresponsibility on the part of India.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES  
26 FEB 2000

# US report on rights indicts India for 'societal violence'

Washington, February 26

**S**OUTH ASIA has been severely assailed in the US State Department's annual report on global human rights abuses, which termed the violation of human rights in the region as "extensive", particularly highlighting alleged abuses in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and China.

India has come under attack for "societal violence" against religious minorities, with its security forces also being charged with committing human rights abuses, most notably in Kashmir, in the US State Department's annual report on the issue.

"The Indian Government policy does not favour any religious group, but tension between Muslims and Hindus and to a lesser extent between Hindus and Christians, continues to pose a challenge to the secular foundations of the state," the report, released here yesterday, said. "The governments at state and local levels too only

partially respect religious freedom," it noted.

"The potential for renewed Hindu-Muslim violence remains considerable" in India as "Hindu extremist groups continue to attack Christians," the report said. It also accused both government security forces and militants in Kashmir and the north-east region

Hindu Dharma Raksha Samiti."

In China, the authorities widened a crackdown on dissent, restricted religious freedom, limited the Press, persecuted minorities, sanctioned extra-judicial killings and ignored worker rights, the report said.

The Dalai Lama, Tibetan experts and others have expressed concern

that development projects and other government policies in China encourage a massive influx of the Chinese into Tibet, overwhelming Tibet's traditional culture and diluting Tibetan demographic dominance, it said.

While the report held both Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) responsible for

gross violations of human rights, it castigated India and Pakistan for their part in human trafficking.

Women continued to face a wide range of human rights abuses throughout Asia, including dowry-related violence in India, Bangladesh and Nepal, the report said. (PTI)

## Rights on Clinton's agenda

THE ISSUE of human rights situation is expected to be on the agenda of US President Bill Clinton when he visits India next month, a senior official has said. "We (also state department) certainly believe it will," said Harold Hongju Koh, Assistant Secretary of State for democracy, human rights and labour, when asked whether the issue would be on the president's agenda.

PTI, Washington

of gross human rights violations and named several organisations affiliated or close to the ruling BJP for violence against other religious groups. The organisations named include the BJP, RSS, Hindu Jagran Manch, Bajrang Dal, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and "a new Hindu militant group, the

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES  
27 FEB 2000



HD-8  
2772

# Six agreements likely to be signed with U.S.

By C. Raja Mohan

**WASHINGTON, FEB. 26.** With barely three weeks left before the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, arrives in India, the administration here is now in overdrive to define the shape and substance of the first American President visit to the region in 22 years.

Although under consideration for nearly two and a half years, Indo-U.S. nuclear differences and the unending argument over Mr. Clinton's plan for a brief stop over in Pakistan had led to delayed decision-making in both the capitals. As a result, both sides are now scrambling to make the long-awaited visit a success.

The final word on Mr. Clinton's halt in Pakistan as well as detailed itinerary of his extended travels in India are likely to be announced in the next few days.

Senior officials here hope that the President's visit would be a "turning point" in Indo-U.S. ties and help build a "qualitatively different and better relationship" between the two nations despite the continuing divergence over the nuclear issue. Officials from both sides are drafting a "vision statement" that will capture the "spirit" of the new relationship India and the U.S. want to have. At a more specific level, the two sides are focussing on a six broad areas of cooperation in which agreements are likely to be signed during Mr. Clinton's visit.

These areas are science and technology, economy and commerce, energy and environment, education and cultural exchange, health and social develop-

ment, and mainly democracy and governance.

Officials here say the visit will not just be a one-shot event towards the end of Mr. Clinton's eight-year tenure in the White House. It will be about generating a "process" of sustained engagement between the two nations and the creation of a "new architecture" for Indo-U.S. ties.

Senior officials working on the visit say Mr. Clinton hopes to lay the foundation for a new relationship during his trip and plans to build on it for the rest of his term, which will conclude in January 2001. The expectations here are that there will be series of high level visits in the next few months to follow up on the President's visit.

And when the new administration — either Democratic or Republican — takes over it would not have to start from scratch.

Sources in the Clinton Administration are confident that all the four candidates in the current Presidential race will "see the wisdom" of Mr. Clinton's engagement of India in the pursuit of national interests.

At the same time, the administration does not want to raise expectations either at home or in India of a dramatic breakthrough in Indo- U.S. relations. Officials here say the U.S. and India cannot quickly jump from "arms-length relationship" of the past decades to a "full embrace".

The effort instead, the sources say, would be to build a mature relationship that can cope with serious differences in some key areas while building a solid cooperation in others.

THE HINDU  
27 FEB 2000

RDS

## Call for lifting all sanctions against India

WASHINGTON, FEB. 26. A senior U.S. foreign policy aide has said that the Clinton administration should drop the remaining economic sanctions against India.

Noting that Mr. Mark Lagon, a senior foreign policy aide to the powerful Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Jesse Helms, did not call for lifting of sanctions against Pakistan, *The Washington Times* said that Mr. Helms, a one-time supporter of Pakistan now tends to view India with a "newfound" sympathy.

"Mr. Swadesh Chatterjee, president of the Indian American Forum for Political Education, has met Mr. Helms and, according to congressional sources, opened him up to a new view of India. Some U.S. strategic thinkers also find India increasingly valuable as a long-term counterbalance to the growth of Chinese influence in Asia," it added.

The India caucus, consisting of 106 members, and leading Republicans have made similar demands. — PTI

THE HINDU  
27 FEB 2000

# Be firm with India, China tells U.S.

By C. Raja Mohan

WASHINGTON, FEB. 27. Under pressure from China and other nations to hold firm on nuclear issues with New Delhi, the Clinton Administration is at pains to suggest that non-proliferation remains an 'unfinished business' between India and the United States.

The decision by the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, to explore a new political partnership with India despite the differences over the nuclear issue is leading to political heartburn in some countries, in particular China.

Chinese officials, according to informed sources here, had some tough questions to the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott, who was in Beijing last week for a round of Sino-U.S. consultations on various strategic issues.

China seems to have told Mr. Talbott, who has led Washington's nuclear dialogue with New Delhi since the tests of May 1998, that Beijing is not opposed to an American engagement with India. But Beijing apparently reminded Mr. Talbott of the American obligations to the international non-proliferation regime and the importance of not accepting additional states into the nuclear club.

Chinese officials have often publicly objected to Mr. Talbott's nuclear dialogue with the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh. They see it as a violation of the U.N. Security Council resolution No 1172 unanimously adopted in June 1998 following the south Asian tests.

The resolution had urged India and Pakistan to give up their programmes on nuclear weapons and missiles and abide by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation regime.

The Talbott-Singh nuclear dialogue, however, is based on the premise that India's need for a minimum nuclear deterrent

could be 'harmonised' with the non-proliferation objectives of the U.S.

The absence of a final nuclear accord between New Delhi and Washington despite 12 rounds of the Talbott-Singh dialogue and the perceived tension between the NPT regime and India's nuclear weapon programme have given an opportunity for countries like China as well as domestic American arms control groups to caution Mr. Clinton against abandoning the U.S. non-proliferation objectives, vis a vis India.

Senior officials of the Administration are walking a fine line to explain the decision of Mr. Clinton to visit India and build a new Indo-U.S. relationship despite the nuclear differences.

They are making three points. First, the U.S. continues to believe that the Indian decision to test nuclear weapons in May 1998 was a mistake and has not served New Delhi's interests.

Second, their dialogue with India, however, is based on the recognition that India has the sovereign right to make its security decisions and that it is not realistic to believe that New Delhi's nuclear weapon programme can be rolled back.

Third, the American decision to improve relations with India, does not mean that the 'non-proliferation skunk' will be kept out of Mr. Clinton's 'picnic party' in India. Mr. Clinton is expected to urge India to join the global mainstream by accepting the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and other benchmarks outlined by the U.S.

The U.S. is determined to build a qualitatively different and better relationship with India, despite the nuclear problem. That does not mean the nuclear issues are out of the Indo-U.S. agenda. They would remain there and ways must be found to address the divergence over arms control and non-proliferation.

THE HINDU

28 FEB 2000

# Penetrating Insights

## The Sub-text of the Clinton Visit

11-12 29/2  
By RAJIV DESAI

WHAT is it about the United States that unhinges those who make and comment on foreign policy? Consider an analysis in a major daily that calls on the Indian government not to indulge in 'panic selling' of 'domestic interests.' Or the prime minister's statement saying India would "seriously disapprove" of a Clinton visit to Pakistan. For that matter, take note of the foreign secretary's statement in Washington that a Clinton visit to Pakistan will provoke a "public reaction" in India. Or other rhetorical comments that derogatorily refer to Clinton as a "lame duck," whom India should not take seriously.

For starters, India has little to sell on the foreign policy market. No matter how India's foreign policy mandarins posture on the CTBT, the nuclear test ban treaty or the NPT that precludes the development of nuclear weapons, there is a conspicuous "no entry" sign posted outside the nuclear weapons' club. Nor is India welcome in other blocs such as ASEAN, consisting of the countries in Southeast Asia, Asem, the Asian-European grouping of APEC, the Asia-Pacific bloc. Besides, there's not much left of NAM, the non-aligned movement on whose stage Indian commissars once strutted and fretted, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

### Measure of Ignorance

As for the "serious disapproval" of or "public reaction" to President Bill Clinton's possible visit to Pakistan, there is no reason to believe that Washington is quaking in its shoes. Such disingenuous posturing impresses nobody, including the likes of the India caucus in the US Congress. In fact, the caucus exists largely as a source for Indian media and as such is portrayed as more influential than it really is. As for the "lame duck" portrayal of Bill Clinton, it is a measure of the ignorance of the Indian commentariat to believe that the US presidency can ever be construed as such. Unlike in India, with its highly personalised politics, US interests transcend the rough and tumble of domestic politics.

Such inane posturing by India's foreign policy mandarins has obscured perhaps the most significant statement of all. Here's what President Clinton has to say about the visit. "I hope that my trip will serve to highlight to Americans the importance of that region to us and the very real danger that a conflict between India and Pakistan not

contained is one of the most significant security threats to the interests of the United States in this new century," he told reporters at a press conference. Translation — the United States proposes to play an active role in the subcontinent where governments, egged on by religious fundamentalists on both sides, have upped the ante by resorting to tit-for-tat nuclear explosions.

### Stunning Success

In his unprecedented public statement, Clinton has committed the United States to managing the conflict. And it is not so much a matter of "US hegemony" but a signal to the American people to pay more attention to this region. As a rule, American horizons do not extend too far beyond Europe. India, as most of us who have had any dealings at all with Americans know, does not figure at all in the public consciousness. Hence, the government remains largely unaccountable in its dealings with India. With his powerful appeal to the American people, Clinton has sought to take Washington's India policy out of the clutches of hawkish diplomats and defence strategists as well as arcane scholars with high society connections. India should welcome Clinton's efforts, not spurn them.

For all his problems, William Jefferson Clinton is arguably the brightest and most perspicacious occupant of the White House in the 20th century. What he had to say about the subcontinent is valuable even for the various "experts" who are leading the debate on his visit. In a subtle way, Clinton reminds us that we live in a region that houses the largest number of the world's poorest and illiterate people. "You're talking about people (of the subcontinent) who are basically immensely talented, have a strong work ethic, a deep devotion to their faith and to their families. There is nothing they could not do. And it is heartbreaking to me to see how much they hold each other back by being trapped in yesterday's conflicts," Clinton said at his press conference. No other politician — Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi or American, has made a more honest assessment of the problems of the subcontinent.

Clearly, Clinton's insight is drawn from his knowledge of the immigrant community from the subcontinent. "(They) have been among the most successful in terms of education and income level.

They have worked and succeeded stunningly well in the United States..." he said. The subtext in his comment is a question: Why do Indians do well in the US but not in India? Just so we understand, would Kalpana Chawla, the Indian-born US astronaut, have even managed to get an appointment with a joint secretary in India's space ministry? More than likely, she would have ended up a frustrated college teacher, not too far from the mofussil confines of Karnal, her hometown in Haryana.

For those of us who live in India in these troubled times, Clinton's observations are on the money. Just consider as India struggles to deal with the problems of governance, infrastructure and reforms, antediluvian forces have raised their voices and tridents to hold law and order to ransom over such trivial issues as the making of a film and the celebration of Valentine's Day. They live by and are willing to die for "yesterday's conflicts" such as the Mughal invasion, British colonialism and what have you.

### Clinton's Insight

Meanwhile, citizens of present-day India continue to suffer the worst form of indignities, whether it is power cuts, pollution, crime and the virtual breakdown of civil society. The bitter fruits of the divisive politics practised by petty men and women are forced down the throats of innocent citizens who want no more than a decent life for themselves and their families, who would practice their faith in private and who want a good life for their children. In the grip of these mediocre people, India has become a hopeless wasteland.

Is it any wonder that lines of visa-seekers outside the western diplomatic missions in Delhi and the various state capitals continue to grow? There is no greater insult to Indian culture than the eagerness of ordinary Indians to leave the shores of this land. Even worse, Indians seem to succeed everywhere except at home. Bill Clinton's insight is penetrating. For that reason alone, we should welcome the visit and never mind the naysayers.

(The author has written a book 'Indian Business Culture', published by Butterworth-Heinemann (Oxford, UK) in 1999)



# US bid to stall military equipment transfer

SRINJOY CHOWDHURY  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Feb. 28. — The US President, Mr Bill Clinton, may be coming to India next month, but the US administration is still trying to stop the transfer of sophisticated military equipment to India.

After the USA sold Pakistan four long-range Orion surveillance aircraft along with 28 deadly Harpoon anti-ship missiles in the '90s, the Indian Navy has begun clamouring for the Israeli Barak 1 anti-missile system. For, its surface ships — the destroyers and frigates — are particularly vulnerable against long-range, anti-ship missiles.

One reason why the Indian Navy has not got this weapon

system is the considerable pressure the Americans have put on Israel not to sell this sophisticated equipment, said senior government officials. The USA, apparently, fears an arms race.

That the Barak (lightning in Hebrew) is purely a defensive weapon — and the US government rarely objects to the purchase of such equipment — apparently makes little difference this time. It is also a system the Navy needs, as the indigenous Trishul anti-aircraft and, possibly, anti-missile system is not only yet to be readied, but far inferior to the Israeli system.

(Considerable US pressure

apart, there is some foot-dragging about the purchase of the Barak in India.)

"It is a vertical launch missile, virtually fire and forget. You fire it and it finds its missile, but with the Trishul short-range missile, you have to point it at the enemy," a senior official said. The Defence Research and Development Organisation is developing the Trishul, but it has been delayed along with its sister missile, the Akash.

The Barak, developed by Rafael and Israeli Aircraft Industries, has a three-second reaction time and a range of about 2.7-3.2 nautical miles, or about 5-6 km. Missile develop-

ment began in the '80s and the first sea-launch took place in 1991. After acceptance tests the following year, the Israeli navy incorporated it in October 1993.

The system is being sold to Chile and Singapore and a live demonstration has been arranged for the Indian Navy recently. The need for such systems rose worldwide after the use of the Exocet against British warships in the Falklands war in 1982 and the first anti-missile missile was tried in the Gulf War by US forces.

The Patriot missile did acquire an instant reputation but it wasn't as successful as it is believed. The Barak, as officials said, "has been tried out and refined" — and is necessary to protect the fleet.

## WASHINGTON FEARS ARMS RACE

apart, there is some foot-dragging about the purchase of the Barak in India.)

"It is a vertical launch missile, virtually fire and forget. You fire it and it finds its missile, but with the Trishul short-range missile, you have to point it at the enemy," a senior official said. The Defence Research and Development Organisation is developing the Trishul, but it has been delayed along with its sister missile, the Akash.

The Barak, developed by Rafael and Israeli Aircraft Industries, has a three-second reaction time and a range of about 2.7-3.2 nautical miles, or about 5-6 km. Missile develop-

# US expert for lifting trade curbs

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

**Bangalore, Jan. 4:** Massachusetts-based S & P Associates president and expert on International Economic and Trade Policy Dr Abdul Shaik Shaik made a strong case for the removal of trade barriers and the opening up of Indian markets for a free flow of trade, both outward and inward.

At a meeting organised by the Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce and Industry here on Monday, he cited the US trade policy as an example well worth emu-

lating. Dr Shaik said the US was the only developed nation that continued to register economic growth. The key reason for this, he said, was the fact that the US followed an open market policy with low tariffs and active encouragement to private innovation.

Refuting the view that the USA was trying to muscle into weaker economies, Dr Shaik said that, on the contrary, the US, with 5% of the world's population, consumes 22% of the world's goods and that the expected trade deficit this year was to the tune of 300 billion dol-

lars. With regard to India as an emerging market, Dr Shaik pointed out that the US estimates there are 350 million Indians with middle or higher levels of income, a figure no other European country can offer.

Why then, Dr Shaik asked, is trade not flowing either in or out of India, the way it is in the rest of the world?

Business, labour and government need to work together with the government acting as a driver rather than an impediment in the process of trade.

The major issues facing Indo-US trade are tariff and non tariff trade barriers, customs regulations, tariff rates and taxes, import license requirements, labelling requirements and export controls, he said.

He said taxes could be either an impediment or a promoter of growth and that tax reforms should be examined in terms of their impact on allocation of resources, production, consumption, distribution of income, demand and the choices between savings and investments.

*The Economic Times*

- 5 JAN 2000

## PERFIDY IS POLICY

5-1-0 Great expectations from the US 7/1

THERE is surprise if not anger in George Fernandes's outburst against the United States for their refusal to declare Pakistan a terrorist state or indeed to do anything effective to discourage terrorism against India. He is also right to point out that things would have been different if Osama bin Laden had been involved; George is well aware of America's allergy on the subject. Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh says much the same thing in different language and the Prime Minister maintains an above it all position which is good tactics. Two points need to be made. One, the consequence of declaring any country a terrorist state is immediate and categorical. *Inter alia*, it means breaking off diplomatic relations. In substance and in fact India has not broken off relations with Islamabad and we are therefore asking the United States to do something we have not done ourselves. Does the point not strike our ministers or are they only making propaganda points? The other aspect is very important and we studiously refuse to face it — we have kept our head in the sand over it for very many years and lived on in hope without expectation. In this instance, it would be a distinct advantage if the same hope did not spring eternal. The central issue is that there are no permanent friends in foreign policy, only permanent interests. In simple terms, from the perspective of the United States, India is a friend, cool and distant most of the time, also unpredictable. Pakistan is a client state, safe and pliable. Is there really a choice between the two? Not in Washington. Hence the refusal to see the evidence, hence President Clinton's anxiety to mediate in Kashmir, a move the Prime Minister lost no time to checkmate. One of the hijackers is seen in Karachi, another in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, and that by independent observers, not Indian agents. But America says the hijacking was only one incident and does not lead to any general inferences about the nature of the state. If they had pointed out that India was asking for something it was not doing itself, it would have placed America in an invidious situation at India's instance which it has no intention of courting.

As for the United Kingdom, if Tony Blair saw anything differently from Bill Clinton it would be a wonder. There is no point in flogging a dead horse. The international community will not brand Pakistan a terrorist state for reasons that are clear and have been clear for some time. The two have indeed called for democracy in Pakistan. But they do business with Musharraf as they did with General Zia even after he murdered Bhutto. The further question arises: how does it help. Our ambassadors may be instructed to go round the world dancing the *bhangra* to this tune but it will not help the situation on the ground where it matters — in Kashmir or in the sub-continent. It matters not whether General Musharraf was correctly quoted about using nuclear weapons. He will use them if he thinks he can get away with it.

Can we grow up please!

THE STATESMAN

: 7 JAN 2000

# Pallone takes up India's demand to blacklist Pakistan

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
WASHINGTON, JAN 6

**DEMOCRATIC** Congressman Frank Pallone is likely to draft a legislation urging the Clinton administration to declare Pakistan a rogue state as "now is the time to do so" with Islamabad being active in international terrorism.

The recently concluded Indian Airlines hijacking crisis is only the latest in a long series of incidents that point to Pakistan's role in promoting violence and instability in the region and its active role in supporting the militants who have been waging a campaign of terror in Jammu and Kashmir", Pallone said.

"Now is the time" to declare Pakistan a terrorist state, Pallone said adding he would formalise his

request in a letter to secretary of state Madeleine Albright.

Pending a response from the department, the former co-chairman of the 110-member India caucus in the house of representatives said he might draft a legislation calling on the state department to declare Pakistan a terrorist state.

Pallone noted that the hijackers were part of the Harakat-ul-Mujahideen, which the US state department has described as an "Islamic militant group based in Pakistan."

The recent hostage situation, said Pallone, "is linked to the militant movement waging a campaign of terror and violence against both military and civilian targets in an effort to end Indian governance of Kashmir".

Stating that "global struggle

## Indo-Pakistan on Clinton's agenda

**WASHINGTON:** US President Bill Clinton has declared that easing of tensions between India and Pakistan and fighting weapons proliferation and terrorism will top his agenda this year, his last in office.

"Easing tensions between India and Pakistan" and "fighting weapons proliferation, terrorism and the nexus between them" are the main goals during this last year of his tenure, Clinton said, in his annual national strategy report to Congress.

against terrorism may have the longer-term effect of more closely unifying the US and India", Pallone said "both our countries have been victims of the international terrorist movement with which Pakistan has been associated".

Pakistan, he pointed out, has acknowledged its "political and moral" support for the separatist movement, "but credible reports from Indian and other sources in-

dicate that Pakistan's support goes far deeper.

"The history of the past few years points to the obvious conclusions that Pakistan is deeply involved in the ongoing campaign of terror afflicting Kashmir, and in terrorist acts elsewhere. The military junta that recently took over in Islamabad has only acted to increase that widespread perception," the Congressman said.

"Last year, Pakistan increased tensions in the region by launching a military campaign against Indian positions across the Line of Control in Kashmir."

While noting that the state department has "reacted with caution" to Prime Minister A B Vajpayee's call for Pakistan to be designated as a terrorist state, Pallone said that he would continue to press for that status to be reviewed.

In the past, Pallone said, he had stressed to the state department the need to place more emphasis on Pakistan and its connection to terrorism.

"Besides the terrorist organisations themselves those countries that harbour terrorist organisations or provide them with technical, financial, political or other sup-

port should also be held accountable," he added.

"For a long time I have been expressing concern about the role of Pakistan in terms of international terrorist activities... In particular, we have seen Pakistan's involvement in the ongoing terror campaign in Kashmir," Pallone said.

He also pointed out that "there have been reports that a significant number of the individuals involved in the terrorist camps in Afghanistan are Pakistani nationals.

"In recent years, we have seen some of the most notorious international terrorists - including those responsible for the World Trade Centre bombings and the shootings at the CIA headquarters - turning up in Pakistan."



## India sees reason in U.S. statement

NEW DELHI, JAN. 7 India today termed as "entirely understandable" the statement by the U.S. asking Pakistan to prosecute Maulana Masood Azhar for his speech in Karachi threatening Americans and Indians.

Reacting to the statement of the State Department spokesman, Mr. James Rubin, a spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry, told reporters here that it was not for the first time that such strong statements had emanated from terrorist groups which had been allowed to thrive in Pakistan.

Mr. Rubin had said that his country would hold Islamabad responsible for Masood Azhar's 'terrorist' activities which threaten the lives of Indian and U.S. citizens. The foreign office spokesman recalled that the terrorist group Lashkar-i-Taiba, during its recent convention in Lahore, had called for the launch of a 'jihad' (holy war) against the U.S. and India and threatened violence against various countries and their leaders. "Pakistan has chosen to overlook such statements", he said.— PTI

**THE HINDU**

**- 8 JAN 2000**

# US experts analysing effects of hijacking

Washington, January 8

THERE'S STILL no sign that the United States will agree to India's request that Pakistan be declared a terrorist state. Despite the fact there's been no outright refusal, analysts in Washington don't seem to believe that it will happen.

Think tanks here are studying the aftermath of the Indian Airlines hijack and are trying to work out where it leaves the Clinton Administration.

In particular, what the implications are for relations with Islamabad. Delhi has called for Pakistan to be designated a terrorist state but America has not done so.

An official at the US State Department said that Pakistan had not joined the list of seven countries considered to be state sponsors of terrorism, because it had

"not reached that level".

The official also said the list is always under review" but some observers doubt that Delhi will get its way, pointing to India's own past.

"In the Indian operations in Bangladesh, which I happen to have supported in fact, and in the Indian operation in Sri Lanka there was official Indian involvement in separatist movements in both cases.

Both Bangladeshi and Tamil Tiger cadres were trained in India and then fed back into the respective countries. The Indian government was complicit in those operations, so the Indian position that this is terrorism and not freedom fighting is a subject of interpretation. My terrorist is your freedom fighter and vice versa," said Stephen Cohen at the Brookings Institution here. (ANI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 9 JAN 2000

# India's complaint prompts USA to renew talks

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

59-10 9/11

NEW DELHI, Jan. 8. — India and the USA have renewed talks on combatting terrorism in the sub-continent after the Indian Airlines hijack crisis.

Home ministry officials say the talks began after India said the USA didn't cooperate during the crisis.

The commander-admiral of the US Army's Pacific Ocean Command, Mr Denis Blair, is in Delhi to hold talks. He is accompanied by five Senate members, though their presence is being linked to President Bill Clinton's visit.

Mr Blair reportedly held detailed discussions with officials, including the security advisor, Mr Brajesh Mishra, and the Services chiefs. The home and foreign ministers too are participating in the talks, it was learnt.

The Cabinet Committee on Security met this evening to review the talks and the stock of the post-hijack situation.

Though the freed militants are in Pakistan, the government feels the hijackers are still in Afghanistan, taking advantage of Kabul not having diplomatic ties with India or the USA.

India reportedly told the USA about its "dissatisfaction" over Washington's role when the IA plane was grounded at Dubai for about two-and-a-half hours.

The government felt that had the US help come in time, the hijackers could have been nabbed. The plane left for Kandahar because of US non-cooperation.

The plane landed at Dubai at 1.35 a.m. (IST) on 25 December after leaving Amritsar. Though Indian authorities are to be blamed for failing to act at Amritsar, the special team, including the home, foreign and civil aviation ministers reportedly got an assurance of help from the USA when the plane landed at Dubai.

Officials say Mr Jaswant Singh got in touch with US authorities from Rajiv Bhavan, where the crisis management group was operating from

The foreign secretary, Mr Lalit Mansingh, reportedly spoke to the US anti-terrorism squad chief, seeking help to free the hostages. India's contention is that since talks with the USA on cooperation in curbing terrorism were already on, this was the best time for Washington to help India.

The excellent US-UAE diplomatic ties was cause enough for Washington to help India, officials said. Besides, a Pentagon team was already in Dubai and could have helped defuse the crisis.

Apparently, the USA promised help and Mr Jaswant Singh was hopeful of resolving the hijack crisis in Dubai. But the USA kept silent for two-and-a-half hours, and the plane left for Kandahar after refuelling.

The US Ambassador is learnt to have spoken to the Indian foreign and home ministers on Thursday and gave an assurance of a report being submitted to the Indian government on what went wrong in Dubai.

# India feels betrayed by US inaction in hijack drama

10/10  
Our Political Bureau 6/1-2  
NEW DELHI 9 JANUARY

**H**ijacking of IC-814 provided an opportunity to India and the US to put their new-found cooperation in tackling terrorism to test for the first time. Unfortunately, however, the two countries got their lines crossed, with the result that India felt let down.

According to highly-placed sources, when the Indian government realised that the plane was heading towards Dubai on the night of December 24, the crisis management group, still reeling from the Amritsar bungling, decided to request the US to help out in Dubai, to terminate the hijacking there. They were banking on not only India's good relations with the UAE, but also US' overwhelming influence in the Gulf.

Conversations between Indian officials and Michael Sheehan, US state department coordinator on counter-terrorism, and also between the foreign minister Jaswant Singh and Strobe Talbott led India to believe that the US had made a commitment of sorts to help terminate the hijacking in Dubai.

Events, as it turned out, took a different twist. Though the plane was in Dubai for over two hours, during which time 27 passengers were also released, India waited in vain for the US to act. The US' silence



AIR TROUBLE: Indo-US convergence fails

was a deep blow to India, which has, in the aftermath of the incident, reportedly expressed its deep disappointment to the Americans.

US ambassador Richard Celeste has been told in no uncertain terms of India's unhappiness. It is learnt that a more thorough review of the reasons for US inaction will be presented to the Indian government.

Indo-US convergence in tackling terrorism has been in the news lately, with Sheehan visiting Delhi and senior MEA officials going to Washington to work out areas of cooperation. There is also a plan to share intelligence

between the two countries by swapping officials.

Other sources point to a residual but perceptible schism within the US state department regarding US' approach to India that continues to cloud

US-India relations. While there is a growing band of "new India" sympathisers within the establishment, led by the President, some old South Asia hands still tend to regard India with some suspicion. They are still hesitant about favouring India over Pakistan and would rather the US maintain the traditional "parity" between the two neighbours.

It is this "lack of clarity" that has led to some confusion in India regarding US' precise intentions in this region. While government sources here assert that they had expected the US to play a far more proactive role during the hijack crisis, US sources publicly maintain that it was India's own affair.

The ranking Democrat member in the US house of Representatives, Sam Gejdenson (D-Connecticut), here to build ties with the Indian government, said the US made "every effort to be helpful," while admitting that additional cooperation could have been made.

## Pak must take serious steps to redeem itself, says US Democrat

Our Political Bureau

NEW DELHI 9 JANUARY

**T**HE HIJACK had reduced the "time-line" of the US-Pakistan relationship, with the result that Pakistan will have to take serious actions regarding terrorism to redeem itself. This was stated by Mr Sam Gejdenson, Democrat member of the House International Committee of the US House of Representatives.

While he does not see the US President including Pakistan in his South Asian itinerary in March, he conceded that the decision might be modified if Pakistan undertakes serious, demonstrable steps to counter terrorism as well as announcing a timetable for the "return of the democratic process" to the country. Unspoken was also the fact that the scales can tilt in Pakistan's favour if it decides to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) as well.

## India, USA to lift trade barriers

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 10. — The USA and India have agreed to lift barriers in agriculture, textiles and other key sectors, one month after the collapse of global trade talks in Seattle.

The agreement calls for India to lift more than 1,400 specific import restrictions, clearing the way for more trade in a wide range of consumer goods and manufactured products, US trade representative Charlene Barshefsky said today.

Half the restrictions will go within three months; the rest will follow by 1 April 2001. India has reached similar agreements with the EU, Japan and other countries to remove trade barriers by April 2003.

The pact with the USA "will provide — for the first time in 50 years for some products — market access opportunities for US producers in key sectors such as textiles, agriculture, consumer goods and a wide variety of manufactured products. This will at the same time stimulate investment, competition, and economic activity in India," Barshefsky said in a statement.

US officials said the agreement was a sign of warming trade relations with India, the USA's 33rd-largest export market. The pact, negotiated from the US side by deputy trade representative Susan Esserman, was signed last week.

India agreed to lift the import bans and licensing requirements following a WTO ruling in August 1999, which found New Delhi in violation of its market-access obligations as a WTO member.

**THE STATESMAN**

**11 JAN 2000**

## U.S., India reach trade agreement

WASHINGTON, JAN. 10. The U. S. today said that it had reached a trade agreement with India to eliminate barriers in agriculture, textiles and other key sectors. The U.S. Trade Representative, Ms. Charlene Barshefsky said that the agreement calls for India to lift more than 1,400 specific import restrictions. Half of the restrictions will be lifted within three months and the rest by April 1, 2001.

40-12 11/1  
"Eliminating these restrictions will provide — for the first time in fifty years for some products — market access opportunities for U.S. producers in key sectors such as textiles, agriculture, consumer goods and a wide variety of manufactured products, and at the same time will stimulate investment, competition, and economic activity in India," Ms. Barshefsky said in a statement.

The agreement was negotiated by Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, Ms. Susan Esserman and was signed last week. India agreed to lift these import bans and licensing requirements following a World Trade Organisation (WTO) ruling in August 1999, that found New Delhi violating its market-access obligations as a WTO member.

THE HINDU  
11 JAN 2001

# Reactivating India, US military ties hinges on Jaswant, Talbott talks

Shishir Gupta  
New Delhi, January 11

REACTIVATION OF military-to-military co-operation between India and the United States is hinged on the final outcome of Strobe Talbott-Jaswant Singh's talks, according to highly-placed Defence Ministry sources.

This was the backdrop under which the visiting US Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Commander, Admiral Dennis Blair, held informal parleys with the three Services Chiefs.

The Pacific Fleet Commander also met External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh alongwith Democrat Congressman Sam Gejdenson at Hyderabad House on Sunday and also exchanged courtesies with Defence Minister George Fernandes.

The three Service Chiefs in their interaction conveyed India's security concerns and views on terrorism to Admiral Blair. While the Services appreciated United States lifting sanctions partially, the visiting dignitary was told about lack of US-made military spares.

Admiral Blair, who heads the most powerful command in the United States forces, met Navy Chief Admiral Sushil Kumar on Monday. During this informal interaction, Admiral Blair was informed that a majority of Indian Navy's Sea Harrier jump-jets and Sea King helicopters were grounded for the want of such spares.

Although the Harriers and Sea Kings are British-made, they have certain vital components that are of US origin. It seems that following US sanctions, a number of aircraft kits that were sent to Britain for overhauling or repairs have not been sent back due to lack of these spares. It is pertinent to point out

that India has short-listed British manufacture Hawk as the advanced jet trainer for the IAF. There is a view in the Services Headquarters that India should only think in terms of British Hawk only if the UK Government assures of uninterrupted supply of spares and take up the Indian Navy's spares problem on a priority basis.

Admiral Blair met Air Chief Marshal A Y Tipnis and Army Chief General V P Malik today. It is understood that there was a convergence of views on terrorism between the Service Chiefs and the Pacific Fleet Commander.

The Service Chiefs made it clear that like Washington, New Delhi was not against anti-Islam, but against the forces that are instrumental for terrorists activities on Indian soil.

However, there were differences over threat perceptions between the Chiefs and the visiting dignitary. Admiral Blair is understood to have differed with the Services over their threat perception over China. The Pacific Fleet Commander was told of cross-border terrorism and the "proxy war" waged by Pakistan in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It seems the Indian defence establishment has kept Admiral Blair's visit on a low-key for want of any policy directions from the political masters.

During the interaction with the visiting dignitary, it became clear that India does not want to commit on forging military ties with the US till such time the Talbott-Singh talks reach a certain conclusion.

Officials said that it was only after the policy framework is decided that India and US can think of reviving the Defence Policy Group and service-to-service steering committees.

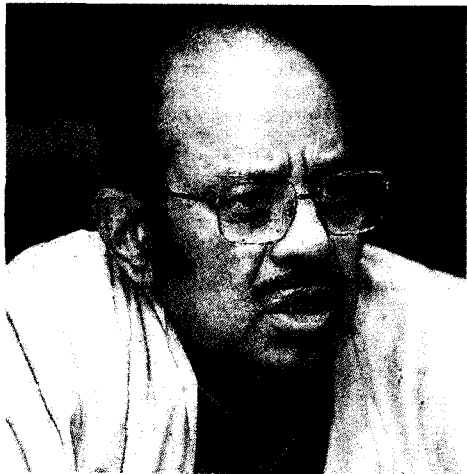
THE HINDUSTAN TIMES  
12 JAN 2000

# India gets 3 more months to end import quotas

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 11. An agreement reached last week on the removal of quantitative restrictions (QRs) on imports between India and the United States ensures that these will be completely eliminated by April 2001. Finalised last week, the agreement implements a decision by the disputes settlements panel of the World Trade Organisation on the issue.

Under the terms now concluded, India will remove the QRs on 714 tariff lines by April this year, while curbs on the remaining 715 tariff lines will be lifted by April next 2001. Though the agreement was not formally announced here, Commerce Ministry officials say the time-frame on the removal of the QRs now agreed upon is slightly better than had been demanded by the U.S. The WTO panel had given India over 15 months to implement the decision from the date of the reports being adopted in September last year. On the other



Mr. Murasoli Maran... vigorous advocate of India's interests at WTO talks.

hand, the U.S. indicated that it was not willing to give even 15 months to India for implementation. Subsequently, after a series of bilateral negotiations, it has been decided to give India 18 months to implement the phase-out of the QRs. Currently, there are 1,429 tariff lines on which the QRs are still maintained by

this country on the ground of balance of payments problems.

The Commerce Ministry said that in anticipation of the decision, it had already been gradually removing the QRs on imports over the last few years. Out of the 1,429 tariff lines, 685 had already been shifted to the special import licence list (SIL).

The U.S., which has fought a long battle to remove the QRs on Indian imports, has pointed out that market access would now be available for American companies in key sectors such as textiles, agriculture, consumer goods and a wide variety of manufacture products. This has been described as a landmark agreement by the U.S. Trade Representative, Ms. Charlene Barshefsky. But the benefit of removing the QRs go to all countries as these have been lifted for all of this country's trade partners. India has already concluded similar agreements on lifting the QRs with several countries including Japan and the European Union.

The U.S. filed this dispute at the WTO on March 31, 1997. Subsequently, several other countries followed suit. But India was able to negotiate a reasonable time-frame for the removal of the QRs with these countries before the issue was taken to the disputes panel.

The entire issue hinged largely on India's claim that its balance of payments situation justified import restrictions. This was based on Article 18 of the GATT 1994 which provided for residual QRs on imports for BoP purposes. The WTO, however, referred to a study by the International Monetary Fund saying that India no longer had a BoP problem that justified such terms. This ruling was given in its report of April 6 last year. India had appealed against the panel's findings to the WTO appellate body. In its report released on August 23 last year, the appellate body ruled that India was not justified in maintaining these QRs on BoP grounds and requested that it bring its measures in conformity with its WTO obligations.

Under the provision of the WTO disputes settlement machinery, the U.S. and India were asked to negotiate a time-frame for India to implement the report. Those talks culminated in the agreement reached last week. The Com-

merce Ministry maintains that during the talks the Indian side had sought more than the normal 15 months for implementation. The U.S., however, was not willing to give even 15 months. Under the present agreement, India has been able to ensure an 18-month phase-out of the QRs ultimately.

The Ministry points out that under the WTO, the members can provide tariff protection to their domestic industry and can also increase tariffs so long as such increase does not exceed the bindings. Besides, safeguard and anti-dumping actions are among the several other instruments available for safeguarding our concerns, it says.

India has already lifted all the QRs for the SAARC member-countries, the Union Commerce Secretary, Mr. P.P. Prabhu, told *The Hindu* today.

PTI reports from Washington:  
Announcing the agreement on Monday, Ms.



Ms. Charlene Barshefsky... tough bargaining.

Barshefsky told newsmen here that items on which India maintained import restrictions included agriculture and textile items. India had originally maintained quantitative restrictions on imports from U.S. in as many as 2,700 items.

Text of the accord: Page 14

THE HINDU  
12 JAN 2000



# Text of the USTR announcement

The following is the text of the USTR announcement:

The U.S. and India have reached landmark agreement to lift longstanding Indian import restrictions.

United States Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky announced an agreement on December 28, 1999, between the United States and the Government of India to lift import bans and import licensing requirements currently maintained by India on a large number of agriculture, textiles and consumer products. The United States successfully challenged these measures in World Trade Organisation (WTO) dispute settlement proceedings. The WTO appellate body agreed with the U.S. that these quantitative restrictions violate India's WTO obligations.

Ambassador Barshefsky applauded the agreement, saying: "I am pleased that we have reached an agreement that is mutually beneficial to both the United States and to India. Eliminating these restrictions will provide — for the first time in 50 years for some products — market access opportunities for U.S. producers in key sectors such as textiles, agriculture consumer goods and a wide variety of manufactured products, and at the same time will stimulate investment competition, and economic activity in India. This landmark agreement, negotiated by Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Susan Esserman, resolves a longstanding issue of importance to the United States."

Under the agreement, India has committed to lift over 1,400 specific restrictions. Half of the restrictions will be lifted within three months, the remaining half of the restrictions will be lifted by April 1, 2001.

This agreement follows an August 23, 1999, ruling by the WTO appellate body that rejected India's claim that its balance-of-payments (BOP) situation justifies import restrictions. That WTO decision sets several important precedents. It rejected arguments that India had made for many years, such as the argument that BOP measures are immune from review by WTO dispute settlement panels. The decision also made clear that countries which have instituted restrictions for balance-of-payments purposes must eliminate the restrictions when their balance-of-payments position no longer justifies such measures. In summary, the decision confirms that countries must act responsibly in utilising WTO procedures, such as the balance-of-payments provisions, that restrict access to their markets.

The agreement signed last week sets a definitive timetable for India to carry out this important decision and remove these restrictions. India had previously reached agreements with the European Communities, Japan and other countries to remove these restrictions by April of 2003. The agreement with the United States advances that timetable by two years.

Moreover, with respect to India's domestic economic situation, the elimination of this regime of import restrictions will permit the growth and competition that will raise economic welfare levels and stimulate entrepreneurial activity in the Indian private sector that began with the reforms earlier this decade.

## Background

India prohibits or severely restricts imports of various industrial,

textile and agricultural products. India maintains a 'negative list' of products whose imports are banned, unless an importer gets a case-by-case licence from the Indian Government. The negative list includes almost all consumer goods, including food, clothing and household appliances. India also channels imports of some agricultural products through state trading monopolies or 'canalising agencies'. In addition, a Government requirement banning imports by anyone except 'actual users' prevents any imports for resale.

India claimed that much of this extremely restrictive import regime is permitted by the balance-of-payments provisions of the GATT. The United States challenged India's claim before a WTO panel. In a report issued on April 6, 1999, the panel ruled that India's balance-of-payments situation did not justify these restrictions. Among other things, the panel report noted that during India's 1997 consultation with the WTO Balance-of-Payments Committee, the International Monetary Fund stated that India no longer had a balance-of-payments problem that justified these restrictions.

India appealed the panel's findings to the WTO appellate body. In its report released on August 23, 1999, the appellate body rejected each of the arguments that India had raised in its appeal. Provisions of the WTO Dispute Settlement Understanding then required the United States and India to attempt to negotiate a period of time for India to implement the report. Those negotiations culminated in last week's agreement.

These restrictions are the largest

## Terrorism to figure in Indo-US talks

INDIA AND the US will discuss a wide range of issues, including terrorism, during the proposed visit of President Bill Clinton to New Delhi and the forthcoming Indo-US talks, Indian Ambassador to US Naresh Chandra said.

Clinton's visit and the Indo-US talks on January 17-18 (Strobe Talbott-Jaswant Singh talks in London) will cover a wide spectrum issues affecting long term relations between the two countries, Mr Chandra told reporters.

However, he disagreed with a reporter about the usefulness of Clinton's visit as his term expires at the year-end. "The discussions between nations cover long range issues, which may have implications for years to come and change in administrations do not affect them."

PTI, New York

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

13 JAN 2000

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 2000

40-12 ✓  
**END OF IMPORT CONTROLS** 13/1

IT IS UNFORTUNATE that it required an announcement in Washington by the U.S. Government for the formal news of a bilateral trade agreement between India and the U.S. to reach Indian shores. Fear of criticism by the political opposition and sections of Indian industry had persuaded the Government that silence was necessary. The agreement on an accelerated timetable for the removal of all quantitative restrictions (QRs) on imports by India had been signed in late December. But silence does not help in tackling the issues that will arise with a shift from QRs to tariff-based measures for the regulation of imports.

For close to half a century India has been maintaining QRs on a substantial proportion of its imports, which has in effect meant that the products were either banned or permitted only on the discretion of the Government. These controls were maintained on the ground that India had balance of payments difficulties. But what could be justified earlier under the GATT/WTO rules came increasingly under criticism in the mid-1990s as India's foreign exchange reserves remained largely over \$25 billion. With all but a handful of countries switching over from QRs to import tariffs, India was taken in 1997 to the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body by the U.S. which had demanded an immediate lifting of all controls. Having lost that dispute, India has negotiated an agreement that brings forward by two years, to 2001, the removal of all QRs. Though the shift to tariffs has been taking place gradually since 1991, the QRs that remain on 1,429 product lines are largely in the 'sensitive' categories of consumer products and agriculture. Controls on the first lot will be removed in April this year and the remaining in April 2001, though the Government is yet to make public which QRs will be removed when. The removal of the QRs will not mean that there will be a flood of imports. The Government will be able to levy import duties of its choosing — provided they are below the

bound rates — in order to regulate imports. With Indian consumers proving themselves to be price-conscious, domestic industry should continue to enjoy a price advantage over imported products. However, in an environment in which the tendency has been to move to a lower tariff regime, the protection now provided by a high average import tariff will not be available for long. The ability of Indian industry to compete against imports — especially of consumer products — will then depend on both price and quality.

In the immediate future, three sets of issues have to be addressed. First, decades ago India had bound its tariffs at GATT on some agricultural commodities at the zero rate. This did not matter as long as these products enjoyed protection in the QR regime. But if Indian farmers and processors are to enjoy a modicum of protection, then these tariffs have to be re-negotiated before all the QRs are removed. The negotiations which have been going on for some time have to be completed quickly. Second, the Government will have to find a way of addressing the anomalous situation of allowing import of some products which are reserved for production in the small-scale sector. The third and high-profile area is import of used cars. With second-hand cars of high quality available at throwaway prices in a number of foreign markets, imports in the post-QR regime could pose a major threat to the producers — India and foreign — in the local market. Since India has so far not bound its tariffs on cars, it does have the freedom of setting the import duty on used cars at a sufficiently high level to at least partially neutralise the price disadvantage of domestic manufacturers. The high tariffs may even have to be supplemented with non-tariff measures such as tough environmental norms and road-worthiness certificates, if the domestic consensus is that the investment that has been made in the local automotive industry should be protected from import of inexpensive second-hand vehicles.

**THE HINDU**  
**13 JAN 2000**

'Indo-U.S. ties not  
dependent on  
CTBT' 14/1

**MUMBAI, JAN. 13.** U.S. Congressman, Mr. Sam Gejdenson said today that his country's perception about its relations with India would not change even if the latter did not sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

There would be no change in Indo-U.S. relations even if India did not sign the CTBT. The present efforts to build the relationship (in the context of President Clinton's visit) would continue and they were unconditional, he told presspersons here.

"The future of Indo-U.S. relations are bright," he said and expressed the hope that the Democrats would maintain their dominance in the Congressional Foreign Relations Committee in the next few years and try to boost the bilateral relations — culturally, socially and in terms of trade.

Mr. Gejdenson, who is leading an 18-member trade mission to India, suggested that the two countries sign an agreement to remove barriers for further growth of trade relations. — PTL.

**THE HINDU**  
**14 JAN 2000**

# Jaswant, Talbott talks to focus on S. Asia

By K. K. Katyal

**NEW DELHI, JAN. 13.** Adding a new dimension to their on-going dialogue, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, and the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott, will take up, at their two-day meeting in London from January 18, terrorism and related matters. The main focus will continue to be on issues arising from India's nuclear tests — or on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, to use the official description — and terrorism will be one of the many subjects to be considered by the two sides. But its addition to their agenda is significant in view of the heightened concern by New Delhi on this count.

India had been the victim of trans-border terrorism for years, but the menacing magnitude, acquired by it of late, coupled with the increased level of militancy, organised by agencies from across the border, has created a qualitative new situation. As such, it will be considered by the two interlocutors for the first time — at India's instance.

However, comprehensive and structured discussions on terrorism are slated in the next two months at the level of experts. They will address, at length, the nature of the problem in South Asia, steps that are necessary to deal

with it, in general, and to meet specific situations, in particular.

As for the recent developments, the U.S. is not quite impressed by India's demand that Pakistan be declared a terrorist state because of its involvement in hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane. A more realistic course, according to Washington, is to pursue the leads on the whereabouts of the hijackers and to ensure that they are brought to justice.

The hijackers, it is recognised, are members of the Harkat-ul-Ansar, now re-named Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, designated by the U.S. Government as a "foreign terrorist organisation." Masood Azhar, one of the three militants released by India to secure the freedom of passengers — his release was the objective of an earlier terrorist kidnapping too — was known to be affiliated with this organisation. Azhar who received euphoric welcome in Pakistan had since indulged in reckless threats against India and the U.S. The hijackers were known to be in Pakistan and if their whereabouts were not known, it is because Islamabad had chose to keep that a secret. These are tall-tale pointers. How Washington responds to this situation will be of great interest to New Delhi.

The London meeting, like the previous rounds, will be mainly concerned with the

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), curtailment of the production of fissile material, control over exports of sensitive products and technologies, and the issues related to India's defence posture. The very fact that next week's meeting is being held just two months after the last round (in November 1999) as against the gap of nine and a half months between it and the preceding meeting in January last year, suggests an intensification of contacts on the eve of the visit to India by the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, in March.

It will be a pleasant surprise if the two sides are able to work out an agreement on any of the four subjects, under their consideration. The U.S. side would like to know the progress of the move for national consensus on the CTBT by the Indian Government — an essential prerequisite, according to New Delhi, to a decision on adherence to the treaty. This task, as was known, was interrupted because of New Delhi's pre-occupations with the hijacking episode and the sudden turn of events in Pakistan.

India-Pakistan relations, a standard subject of discussions between Mr. Jaswant Singh and Mr. Talbott, too will figure again — in the ominous context of recent developments, in particular the aftermath of the coup in Islamabad, apart from the hijacking case.

# “We are for a qualitatively better relationship with India”

**I**N AN exclusive conversation with *The Hindu* in Washington on Wednesday, the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, **Mr. Strobe Talbott**, responded to a range of queries from **C. Raja Mohan** on Indo-U.S. relations and the prospects for resolving the nuclear differences between New Delhi and Washington. The following is the transcript of questions and answers:

**C. Raja Mohan: What has emerged from over ten rounds of discussions with Jaswant Singh?**

**Strobe Talbott:** First, let me provide a context for my response. Prime Minister Vajpayee stated in New York in September 1998 that the U.S. and India were “natural allies”. There is something unnatural, even perverse, about U.S. and India being at odds, on and off for five decades. During the Cold War, we often seemed to be on a divergent course. But even after we broke free from those constraints and mutual suspicions, we were slow to explore in depth the areas where our interests converged; we didn’t set about laying a fresh basis for managing our differences.

In the summer of 1998, President Clinton and Secretary Albright asked me to launch a dialogue with Mr. Jaswant Singh. He and I, along with our teams (and we’re both extremely lucky in having first-rate colleagues to work with us), have started to establish the foundation for a far better mutual understanding than had existed be-

fore. Such, at any rate, is the judgment of people who have closely observed the bilateral relationship a lot longer than I have.

Now, “understanding” does not, of course, always equate to “agreement”. But it does mean an appreciation for each other’s circumstances, security environment policy objectives, available resources and the domestic factors that shape foreign policy. I also think that we’re getting better at disagreeing without being disagreeable with each other. We are developing the kind of mutual confidence — on a personal level, but I think also on a Government-to-Government level — that is needed to work constructively on sensitive and important issues, including national security, counter-terrorism and non-proliferation.

**There is considerable confusion in India on just how the United States regards India, its national security concerns and particularly its status following the May 1998 nuclear tests. Perhaps you could clarify these points.**

I’d begin with a general observation — a fundamental point of departure for our policy: we desire a stable, secure, strong and united India for several reasons. First, because the Indian people are a great people who deserve that kind of state — who have earned it through their hard work and through their commitment to democracy. Second, because such an India will be a force for good in the world. Third, because it will be a more effective partner for the U.S. in pursuing the many interests and goals we have in common.

An additional general point: while India’s defence posture is an issue for us, that doesn’t mean that we can imagine a direct military conflict between India and the United States. Not at all. Our military forces simply are not going to end up looking at each other through gunsights. Instead, our interactions will be used for commerce, advancement of knowledge, underwriting democracy, the pursuit of common interests regionally and globally — and, on another level, the intensification of the ties of kinship between India and the United States through education, immigration and marriage. If the issues we discuss under the rubric of non-proliferation were relevant only to India and the United States, they would be much easier to solve. Where our objectives diverge is in the impact of these matters on third countries. Both India and the United States have security concerns that extend beyond our immediate geographical boundaries. In that context, we saw the May 1998 nuclear tests as not di-

rectly threatening to the U.S. itself, but as damaging to the global non-proliferation regime in which all of us have a major stake. We are concerned that since May 1998, there is a greater danger of the spread of nuclear weapons, and we’re convinced that’s contrary to everyone’s security, yours or ours included.

We have never been shy about our view that universal adherence to the NPT is desirable. We are, of course, well aware of the view of the Indian Government on the NPT and we recognise fully that only the Indian Government has the sovereign right to make decisions on what sorts of weapons and force posture are necessary for the defence of India and Indian interests.

**Why not just “agree to disagree” on non-proliferation and get on with the positive potential of the relationship?**

We have to do more than that; we have to deal with and manage the consequences that follow from those disagreements. Because of our obligations in the NPT and the Nuclear Suppliers Group, as well as in our domestic legislation, our latitude for cooperating with India on civilian nuclear applications is extremely limited. Our approach to non-proliferation is global and we have obligations to our partners in the Nuclear Suppliers Group to respect the agreed standard of full scope safeguards as a condition of nuclear cooperation. These restraints apply globally, including, for example, to Israel. Similarly, regarding certain dual-use technologies that have missile applications, we and the other countries that participate in the MTCR are highly constrained in what we can export to India. That said, the high technology areas where we can cooperate actively with India are very impressive and we look forward to the day when such cooperation can be intensified. Some steps have already been taken to relax export restrictions and to narrow the entities list. I would also point out that our countries are already engaged in a large amount of high-tech trade. In the area of computers, for example, there has been a very substantial liberalisation in recent weeks.

**Why does the U.S. treat democratic India worse than China?**

We know this perception exists, but if you look closely you will see that in many respects there are more restrictions in our relationship with China than with India. In particular, without the Glenn sanctions, which are tied to India’s nuclear tests, the picture would be very different. For example, U.S. cooperation with China is constrained by Tiananmen sanctions, particularly in the areas of military trade and cooperation, that do not apply to India. Of more importance and relevance, I do not believe that we should use American relations with China or any other country as the reference point for our relations with India. Moreover, we need to engage both India and China since we believe that both

**“We recognise fully that only the Indian Government has the sovereign right to make decisions on what sorts of weapons and force posture are necessary for the defence of India and Indian interests.”**

**“It is no secret that President Clinton wants to visit India early this year. This visit will not be conditional on steps by India regarding the items where the External Affairs Minister and I have sought to reconcile our views.”**

THE HINDU  
14 JAN 2000

P. T. O.

countries are destined to play an increasingly important role in world affairs in the Twenty-First Century.

**What about the view that the CTBT and the FMCT taken together are the backdoor to the NPT?**

Put simply, CTBT plus FMCT does not equal NPT. The NPT requires states other than those who tested nuclear weapons prior to 1968 to forswear the acquisition of such weapons and to refrain from helping others to acquire them. The CTBT bans only explosive testing of nuclear weapons. The Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty deals with production of fissile material. While some states advocate a fissile material treaty that deals with existing stockpiles, India and the U.S. do not. In our view, which Delhi shares, FMCT should deal with future, not past production or current stockpiles. Therefore, a state can subscribe both to CTBT and the kind of the FMCT we envisage without giving up the ability to possess nuclear weapons and to have a credible deterrent. Again, as I noted above, we wish that India would forswear nuclear

weapons, just as India stresses the need to achieve nuclear disarmament. But we both realise that this is not on in the foreseeable future. Thus we are seeking to reconcile to the greatest extent possible our non-proliferation concerns with India's appreciation of its security requirements.

**You said earlier that you look forward to the day when cooperation with India in areas of high technology can be intensified. What will the areas be and when can the intensification occur?**

It is no secret that President Clinton wants to visit India early this year. This visit will not be conditional on steps by India regarding the items where the External Affairs Minister and I have sought to reconcile our views. That said, it's obvious that the positive environment we both seek for this trip will be affected by the extent to which we are or are not able to find common ground. Assuming that we are reasonably successful, I think that the bright areas of a multifaceted partnership between India and the United States will be in plain sight where we should be actively engaged. For example, there are substantial areas of space, environment, medical application, energy security, and harnessing of advanced clear coal technologies that demand attention. The security dialogue needs to expand beyond the recent focus on non-proliferation and deal with issues such as counter-terrorism. Given that our Government may want to address a number of these topics in the weeks immediately ahead, you will understand if I do not try to present an exhaustive list.

**What will be the factors that lead to a more positive outcome, what do you seek from India?**

In a nutshell, the question is whether India chooses to move towards the international mainstream on a variety of non-proliferation and security issues. Setting aside our preference that India not acquire nuclear weapons, will it engage in a destabilising arms race by dint of its nuclear and missile posture? Will its approach to the question of defence posture be interpreted by others as provocative and open-ended or as consistent with a common sense definition of minimum credible deterrent? What concrete steps will India take to strengthen its already effective system of export controls? There are a series of questions, which deeply concern other states that India has not yet addressed in sufficient detail. How it addresses those questions will influence the decisions others make about their own interactions with India. Our goal is a qualitatively different and better relationship with India, not a simple return to pre-test status quo.

**How can you ask for fixity on these questions of defence posture? Surely you know that India will not bind its hand on these points?**

"Fixity" is not the issue. Obviously India will reassess its needs and requirements as circumstances change, and it will adjust its defence posture accordingly. Every state engages in that process and we would expect neither more nor less of India. But the reality is that it requires eight to ten years from the time a political decision is made to acquire a major weapon system and the time such a system can be deployed. The draft nuclear doctrine that was released a few months back was suggestive of a certain range of options. We recognise that the

draft was not an approved policy document of the Government of India. Moreover, the remarks made by the External Affairs Minister to you a few weeks ago seemed to suggest a different course. What we are looking for is not "fixity" but more clarity that India's projected path is consistent with what Indian leaders have told us — India does not seek an open-ended arms competition, but only the minimum necessary to ensure Indian security.

**What are your reactions to my interview with External Affairs Minister Singh?**

I assure you that we read it carefully and were encouraged by several of his remarks. As I noted earlier, we also welcomed clarifications by several senior Indian officials that the recommendations in the draft prepared by the National Security Advisory Board do not constitute the policy of the present Government. That clarification begins the process of correcting what we're authoritatively told is a misapprehension of India's policy and strategy.

**Does not the course the Government has taken on building a consensus in favour of signing the CTBT provide encouragement?**

Yes. We hope India is successful in developing a consensus that will permit it to sign the CTBT. Despite the very unfortunate action by our Senate, the Administration remains committed to the CTBT and hopes to have favourable re-consideration of ratification at the earliest time.

**What would you say to those who argue that the Treaty is discriminatory because it allows the P-5 to do things that are denied to other signatories?**

There is simply no difference whatsoever between the obligations that the P-5 would assume under the CTBT and those of any other state, India included.

**What about sub-critical tests? Are they allowed by the CTBT?**

Our well-known view, one accepted by the other signatories, is that the treaty does not ban sub-critical tests. In fact, since signing ourselves, we have conducted a number of such tests and will conduct more as needed.

**I am struck that you do not mention Pakistan in your answers. Why is that?**

Well, for one thing, so far you haven't mentioned Pakistan in your questions. I see no reason why it's obligatory to mention this or that neighbour of India every

time one talks about India. Contrary to widespread belief, we do not regard India and Pakistan as flip sides of the same coin.

However, now that you've raised the question, I'm happy to comment. It's indisputably the case that the dynamic between India and Pakistan impinges on third countries, including ours. But we see each as having its own differing circumstances and differing concerns and we treat with each on its own merits. We fervently wish for reconciliation between India and Pakistan for reasons of high principle and fundamental practicality: it would make you and the rest of us safer and our job as diplomats immensely easier.

**Does not U.S. policy end up appeasing Pakistan and offending India which believes the U.S. may be determined to "save Pakistan from itself"?**

I will leave it to Mr. Jaswant Singh to judge whether India finds U.S. policy towards Pakistan "offensive". I hope not. Certainly that's not been the tone or substance of our discussions in general or on that subject in particular. And by the way: I doubt very much that Islamabad regards itself as having been "appeased". No country can "save" another from itself. Pakistan is obviously confronting enormous challenges and how it deals with those challenges will affect both India and the United States. This is not the time for public efforts at diplomacy on the question of Indo-Pakistani relations, but let me endorse the view that a stable and prosperous Pakistan is even more in India's interest than it is in ours.

**Why is President Clinton so keen to go to Pakistan despite its aggression in Kargil, the military coup, and support for terrorism?**

There has been no decision regarding a visit to Pakistan by the President. Each of the issues you mention concerns the U.S. greatly and we are trying to engage Pakistan in a dialogue on each. We hope that India will do the same because, as the world has been reminded so dramatically of late, the alternatives to dialogue are extremely dangerous.

*"We wish that India would forswear nuclear weapons, just as India stresses the need to achieve nuclear disarmament. But we both realise that this is not on in the foreseeable future."*

**THE HINDU**

**14 JAN 2000**

# Early solution to nuclear issues will help: Talbott

By C. Raja Mohan *HD-1*

**NEW DELHI, JAN. 13.** An early resolution of the nuclear differences between India and the United States will lead to a "qualitatively different and better relationship" between the two and end the "unnatural" antipathy of the last five decades, according to a top official of the Clinton administration. At the heart of the proposed reconciliation is an American acknowledgement that India's May 1998 nuclear tests cannot be undone and that India's security interests go beyond the subcontinent.

And if "India chooses to move towards the international mainstream on a variety of non-proliferation and security issues", the Clinton administration suggests, "the bright areas of a multi-faceted partnership between India and the United States will be in plain sight". *India US*

In an exclusive interview here to *The Hindu*, the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott, laid out his assessment of the nuclear dialogue with the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, over the last year and a half and a framework for moving the relationship forward.

Acknowledging India's sovereign right to choose nuclear security, Mr. Talbott suggested India could subscribe to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) "without giving up the ability to possess nuclear weapons and

New Delhi's right to build a credible minimum nuclear deterrent.

Mr. Talbott said the Clinton Administration was "well aware of the view of the Indian Government on the NPT and we recognise fully that only the Indian Government has the sovereign right to make decisions on what sorts of weapons and force posture are necessary for the defence of India and Indian interests".

While the Indian nuclear programme was "not directly threatening to the U.S. itself", Mr. Talbott said India and the U.S. could not just "put aside" their nuclear differences and move on, given the global ramifications of the Indian nuclear tests.

Getting up occasionally to put in another log into the fireplace, Mr. Talbott surveyed the state of play in the efforts to resolve Indo-U.S. nuclear differences and sought to dispel the various Indian misperceptions about the CTBT that has become the immediate focus of the dialogue.

Mr. Talbott responded to the concerns in India that the CTBT might be discriminatory and would prevent India from doing the kind of nuclear activity that is permitted for the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

"There is simply no difference whatsoever between the obligations that the P-5 would assume under the CTBT and those of any other state, India included", Mr. Talbott affirmed. Suggesting that

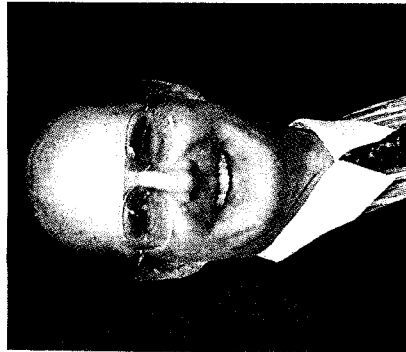
India would be free to conduct the so-called "sub-critical" nuclear tests after joining the CTBT, Mr. Talbott said, "Our well-known view, one accepted by the other signatories, is that the treaty does not ban sub-critical tests". "In fact, since signing ourselves, we have conducted a number of such tests and will conduct more as needed". Calling the U.S. Senate's rejection of the CTBT as an "unfortunate action", Mr. Talbott said, "The administration remains committed to the CTBT and hopes to have a favourable re-consideration of ratification at the earliest time".

Mr. Talbott also rejected the fears that the U.S. is trying to limit the nuclear weapons potential of India, and conceded India's right to define its own nuclear force requirements. He added, "What we are looking for is not 'fixity' but more clarity that India's projected path is consistent with what Indian leaders have told us — India does not seek an open-ended arms competition, but only the minimum necessary to ensure Indian security".

Mr. Talbott insisted that the reconciliation of nuclear differences was not a precondition for the proposed trip to the Subcontinent by Mr. Clinton.

On the prospects of Mr. Clinton's visit to Pakistan when he comes to India, Mr. Talbott said, "no decision" has been made.

**Interview details: Page 12**



have a credible deterrent". In a fire-side conversation at his seventh floor office of the State Department for nearly an hour, Mr. Talbott, expressed the American desire for a "stable, secure, strong and United India", the conviction that India and the U.S. would never be military adversaries, and the confidence that India could be "a more effective partner" to the U.S. in pursuing many common goals.

Mr. Talbott's hopes for a new American relationship with India to come on the eve of a crucial round of Indo U.S. nuclear talks next week in London that could set the tone for Mr. Bill Clinton's proposed visit to India in March.

Explaining one of the central premises of the Indo-U.S. nuclear dialogue, Mr. Talbott said that while the U.S. would have preferred to see India not acquire nuclear weapons, it acknowledged



SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 2000

## TOWARDS NUCLEAR ACCOMMODATION

ONE MORE STEP, albeit small considering the ground to be covered, has been taken to place Indo-American relations on a more realistic basis. By acknowledging that this country's security interests go beyond the subcontinent and by giving up the earlier American insistence that New Delhi quantify its minimum deterrent, Washington's interlocutor-in-chief has given a broad enough hint of nuclear accommodation. The American Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott's comments, during an exclusive interview with this paper, suggest that the path to greater understanding has been successfully mapped. The attitude of coercion and patronage evident at the start of the marathon dialogue between the two countries a year and half ago has given way to greater realism and indirect acknowledgement that India has the maturity to be trusted with the bomb and that its deterrence is a potential tool of self-defence, both aspects highlighted during the Kargil crisis last summer. Clearly, the impending tenth round of the dialogue between Mr. Jaswant Singh and Mr. Talbott has the potential to remove the stumbling block to normalisation of relations through reconciliation of India's security interests and America's non-proliferation goals. Mr. Talbott insisted during the interview that such reconciliation was not a precondition for the proposed visit by the American President, Mr. Bill Clinton, to this country. Certainly it cannot be denied that Washington's punitive approach to resolving these very differences had vitiated the bilateral atmosphere. With the steps to relax the sanctions restrictions against this country, there is every prospect that the imbalance will be removed and a conducive atmosphere created for the long-pending Clinton visit.

Mr. Talbott repeated the known American fear that an Indian minimum deterrent could provoke an arms race in the region. Through its restraint, India proved during the Kargil war that its nuclear deterrent is not a weapon of offence.

Similar unfounded fears had in the past only served to produce a negative trend in the region. By assigning a clear priority to relations with Pakistan through grant of billions of dollars worth of military aid to that country, it was Washington which had provoked the arms race in the subcontinent during the Cold War period. There are again suggestions by powerful lobbies that the U.S. resume its suspended military aid programme to Pakistan, ignoring the fact that such assistance, particularly to the military rulers, in the past was only nominally directed against communism and was in practice used to strengthen that country relative to India. Recent occurrences underline the dangers of such negative policy pursuits. If in the Cold War years these served some partisan purpose, they have even less merit now. Washington must resist the temptation and pressure to resume the military relationship, the major source of tension and armament race in the subcontinent.

1912 15/1  
Mr. Talbott recalled the American desire for a "stable, secure, strong and united India". He was not the first policy maker to express such sentiments. But the marathon effort that the Clinton administration is taking, spearheaded by Mr. Talbott, has helped to blunt the antagonisms of the past and remove some of the distortions introduced in the bilateral relationship by Cold War calculations. The successful conclusion of the technical discussions during Christmas has set the stage for some reciprocal actions. With the clarifications given by the senior official on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, it should be possible for India to sign the CTBT on the basis of the evolved national consensus. This will enable Mr. Clinton to remove the sanctions imposed in mid-1998 and lift the bilateral relationship out of the non-proliferation mode in which it seems stuck so that it can encompass what Mr. Talbott called "the bright areas of a multifaceted partnership".

THE HINDU  
15 JAN 2000

# Republicans bolster India over CTBT

Apratim Mukarji  
New Delhi, January 14

41-12 15/10

**A** REPUBLICAN administration would expect India to make its own decision on signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), leading Republican Senator and Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Sam Brownback said here today, implying that unlike the present democratic administration it would not seek to put pressure on this country to adhere to the treaty.

"The Republican Party looks forward to an expanded relationship with India," he said. The Republican candidate (yet to be chosen) is expected widely to win the US presidential election slated later this year.

Senator Brownback, who is on his third India visit since 1997 ("Nobody complains of Americans not visiting India any more," he commented, referring to the quickly succeeding visits by US officials and politicians to the country). Through his visits he has been facilitating

the "promotion, broadening and expansion" of India-US relations in his own way, made three other significant observations vis-a-vis the CTBT, the US and India. He pointed out that his own party, the Republican Party, which is presently in the opposition but controlling the Senate, had reservations about the present form of the treaty, the very reason of voting it out in the Senate.

Referring to the "significant" question of the verifiability of a nuclear arsenal, he said that unless the treaty was amended suitably to clarify this aspect, among several others, the prospects of the CTBT being ratified by the Senate were rather dim. He said the Clinton administration was overemphasising the significance of Indian signature to the CTBT in furthering bilateral relations.

"There appears to be too much dependence on one issue, the CTBT," he said. "The sanction waiver authority for President Bill Clinton has been held up for the CTBT to be signed." He hoped that the Clinton administration would perceive India-US relations to be much more

important than the single issue of the CTBT's coming into force. He was however quick to add that his party was equally keen to ensure nuclear non-proliferation. Author of the amendment which provided the authority to President Clinton to waive sanctions imposed on India partially, Senator Brownback made the interesting observation: "My understanding is, President Clinton will be waiving more sanctions this spring before he visits India."

While he would prefer to restrict his observations to India-US relations, which he wanted to see expanded in all vital sectors as economic cooperation, trade, environment, science and technology, defence cooperation, agricultural development, countering international terrorism and narcotics terrorism, questions obliged him to address Pakistan-related issues, reiterating that Washington looked at military coups displacing democratically elected governments "very dimly." He also reiterated the well-articulated US position that it would remain engaged "to work with the Pakistan Government" in order to persuade it to revert to democracy.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

15 JAN 2000

---

# Move on to win over India

N C Menon  
Washington, January 16

TREASURY SECRETARY  
Lawrence H. Summers left for India yesterday not only to pave the way for President Clinton's proposed visit in March, but also in part to garner New Delhi's support in restarting the much-heralded global trade talks that unfortunately collapsed in Seattle last month.

"After Seattle, there is definitely an economic challenge in managing the integration between industrial and developing countries," Summers stated before his departure.

"India has had a major voice from the developing country perspective. It is natural that the two largest democracies should consider ways in which integration can be managed."

The Clinton Administration is hoping that with India's help, it can

convince the world community that the rift at the WTO meeting was confined to Seattle and did not represent a total rejection of the concept of globalisation and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) through which it was to be implemented.

According to a report in the *New*

geopolitical and economic partner of the US

One of Secretary Summer's tasks will be to calm feathers ruffled by what was seen as American pressure tactics in Seattle.

"Both sides agree that the time is ripe to create a more positive atmosphere," India's Ambassador Naresh Chandra commented. "But I think the US will find that things move much faster when we are not pushed."

Although India was in agreement with a number of US positions at Seattle, it balked at US efforts to link fresh trade negotiations with labour rights.

Many developing nations, including India, felt that the sudden concern for the wage levels and benefits of third world labour was a thinly veiled non-tariff barrier. The barrier, they felt, intended to keep out third world exports in order to protect workers in developing countries.

## Post-WTO Debacle

*York Times*, the Administration is playing down the possibility of tangible progress during Secretary Summer's visit, but they hope it will lay the groundwork of a "quantum leap" in relations, forming a democratic alliance that could potentially prove warmer and more stable than American ties with China and Russia.

That would also be in accord with repeated calls from senior members of Congress who have urged the Administration to make India a more substantive strategic,

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES  
17 JAN 2000

# India's dispute on QRs may finally have ended

ASHISH GUPTA

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Jan. 17. — With the government opting to reach an agreement with the USA on the elimination of all Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) on imports by 1 April, 2001, two years ahead of schedule, a World Trade Organisation (WTO) dispute that has gone on for more than two years may now have finally come to an end.

Under the agreement signed on 28 December but disclosed only on 12 January by the US Trade Representative's office, India has committed to lift half of the restrictions — on 714 tariff lines — by 1 April, 2000, and the rest — 715 tariff lines — by April next year.

In fact, Commerce Ministry officials are at pains to point out that India was forced into the deal after the WTO Appellate Body last August rejected New Delhi's plea that its balance-of-payments (BoP) situation jus-

tified import restrictions. The US had argued that India's BoP had improved and the restrictions were not warranted anymore.

It had also prompted the International Monetary Fund to testify before the WTO that India no longer had a BoP problem which justified these restrictions.

India countered that it would lift QRs only after its BoP position improved on a "sound and lasting business" basis and begin its international trade battle by initially offering to reduce QRs in nine years and later reducing it to seven years. However, the US did not buy even that argument. In fact, the US had filed the dispute at the WTO on 31 March, 1997.

Accordingly, say Commerce Ministry officials, India and the USA entered into a bilateral agreement on 28 Dec 1999, for a reasonable period of time to implement the rulings of the Dispute Settlement Board, according to which this reasonable period of time will expire on 1 April, 2001, about 18 months after the adoption of the

report in September 1999.

What it means, according to analysts is that American agricultural products, textiles and more consumer items will be available in the Indian market, thereby resulting in greater competition for Indian goods. It also implies that the removal of restrictions will apply to all trading partners — including the European Union, Japan, Australia and Canada — with which India had reached an agreement to remove controls only by 2003.

Analysts point out that the government stated policy of providing added protection to the small scale sector (SSI) will no longer be possible since QRs will be removed on a sector to sector basis ie electronics, automobile etc. Says a renowned trade expert: "The vulnerable SSI sector will now face huge uncertainty because of a shorter transition period. It will also make it difficult for the affected industries to prepare themselves for the coming onslaught of foreign goods."

THE STATESMAN

18 JAN 2000

# Clinton visit soon, says Summers

By Alok Mukherjee

**NEW DELHI, JAN. 18.** The visiting United States Treasury Secretary, Mr. Lawrence H. Summers, today confirmed that the U. S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, would be visiting India "sooner than later," but side-stepped all queries on a possible lifting of sanctions imposed against India after the Pokhran nuclear tests in May 1998.

Asked specifically whether it was normal for the U. S. President to visit a country which was under sanctions imposed by the U. S. itself, Mr. Summers simply said, "it is normal for the President to visit a country with which United States has friendly relations and where he feels that relations can improve in the future."

Responding to a query on sanctions, Mr. Summers said "I have nothing for you on that issue. The lifting of sanctions requires careful judgment and the Treasury Department is not involved in that. But the issue of sanctions

delivered a letter from Mr. Clinton to the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, saying that he was "looking forward to visiting India." Mr. Clinton had also made it clear that issues concerning economic potential were very important to him, Mr. Summers said and added that "when the President comes here, he will be looking forward and not backwards."

Mr. Summers, however, declined to give specific dates of the visit, saying he would leave it to the White House to announce that. The issue of sanctions was raised by the Union Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, too during his meeting with Mr. Summers. Mr. Sinha specifically stressed the need to prune the list of entities on which bilateral interaction was restricted.

He also requested Mr. Summers to lift the sanctions on lending by financial institutions and to resume the facility of General System of Preferences which had been extended to Indian exports

in the past. Other issues of disagreement between India and the U.S., especially about the Washington's insistence on including labour standards in the World Trade Organisation, figured in the separate discussions that Mr. Summers had with Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Sinha.

Mr. Summers said the discussions "helped in better understanding of each others position" and the objective of his visit was not to reach any conclusions on contentious issues. "My visit here is aimed at building better relations between the two countries and to create conditions for the President's visit."

The issue of phasing out quantitative restrictions (QRs) did not figure specifically during the discussions with Mr. Sinha. He said that Pakistan did not figure at all during the discussions here but added that "I know it is an important issue and must have figured in the talks between Mr. Jaswant Singh and Mr. Strobe Talbott."



**The Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, with the U.S. Secretary of Treasury, Mr. Lawrence H. Summers, at his office in South Block, in New Delhi, on Tuesday.**

continues to be a matter of concern for the Indians," he conceded. Mr. Summers said he had

## Jaswant, Talbott begin talks

LONDON, JAN. 18. India and the United States today resumed their talks to narrow their differences on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, disarmament and non-proliferation in the run up to the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to New Delhi, expected in March.

The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, and the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott, began their two-day 10th round of parleys here in a veil of secrecy with officials from both sides unwilling to disclose the venue of the talks.

The two leaders had held talks in November last year here during which New Delhi and Washington agreed to intensify their contacts at all levels and to lay the foundation of a broad-based forward looking relationship between the two countries. The issues being discussed by them related to disarmament and non-proliferation with emphasis on the CTBT, the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, control over exports of sensitive products and technologies and defence posture. The parleys coincide with the visit to New Delhi of the U.S. Treasury Secretary, Mr. Lawrence Summers, who handed over a letter from Mr. Clinton to the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee.

Last month's hijacking of an Indian Airlines plane and Pakistan's involvement in it might also figure in the two-day dialogue.

The two leaders also may concentrate on reducing tensions between India and Pakistan as also other issues of mutual concern, official sources said. —PTI

THE HINDU  
19 JAN 2000

# Lifting of curbs linked to talks on security: US

Bangalore, January 19

THE US Treasury Secretary, Mr Lawrence H Summers, today linked lifting of sanctions imposed by his country on India in the wake of Pokhran nuclear blasts to the outcome of the on-going Indo-US dialogue on security-related issues.

Summers, who is here on a four-day visit, told reporters after talks with Karnataka Chief Minister S M Krishna that he was confident that both the countries would come to an understanding on security issues.

Summers, who remained cautious in his reply to queries on the issue of sanctions, clearly indicated that resolving security issues formed the basis for "formalisation" of all economic relations between the two countries.

Asked how long India would have to wait for the US to withdraw sanctions, he said.

"It will depend on how the talks proceed," Summers said there were certain issues between the two nations, which were beyond the question of sanctions, but did not elaborate.

On the question of according the most favoured nation (MFN) status to India, Summers, who is leading a delegation, said Indian companies should satisfy that they are in the International Patent Regime (IPR).

There are a number of companies in Bangalore that did not fulfill the conditions of the IPR regime, he said and added there were certain trade issues, which the US was looking into.

On a presentation on investment opportunities made by the Chief Minister, he said he appreciated the points made out by the State.

He said Bangalore had grown as a marvel of information technology centre, contributing to India's economic growth. Summers visited Infosys, a leading software company, and its other centres here.

Krishna thanked Summers for his visit to the State during the meeting with US delegation held at the State Secretariat. (PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

20 JAN 2000

40-1  
20/1

# Lifting of sanctions hinges on security talks: Summers

over by

By Our Special Correspondent

**BANGALORE, JAN. 19.** The American Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Lawrence H. Summers, has said that the question of granting the 'Most Favoured Nation' (MFN) status to India could be considered only if Indian companies adhered to the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) regime.

He was speaking to presspersons after meeting the Karnataka Chief Minister, Mr. S. M. Krishna, and the State Large Industries Minister, Mr. R.V. Deshpande.

Mr. Summers said it was for the U.S. companies operating in India to say whether their Indian counterparts respected the IPR regime. He said that there were still problems to be sorted out by the two countries in fields such as agriculture and pharmaceuticals.

The top American official who had declined to answer questions relating to the lifting of sanctions against India at his press conference in Delhi on Tuesday, however was forthcoming to some extent. Stating that he had no announcement to make, he, however, noted that the dialogue between the two countries on security issues was going on.

Security concerns were beyond



**The Karnataka Chief Minister, Mr. S. M. Krishna, (centre) receives the U.S. Treasury Secretary, Dr. Lawrence H. Summers, at the Vidhana Soudha in Bangalore on Wednesday.**

sanctions. Mr. Summers said even otherwise the two countries were moving towards cooperation in a whole range of fields. PTI reports:

Mr. Summers today said the lifting of economic sanctions against India depends on the outcome of the Indo-U.S. Talks on security-related issues being held in London.

Mr. Summers, who is here as part of a four-day visit to the

country, told reporters after talks with the Karnataka Chief Minister, Mr. S. M. Krishna that he was confident that both countries would come to an understanding on security issues.

But resolving security issues formed the basis for the 'formalisation' of all economic relations between the two countries, he said adding a timetable for the withdrawal of sanctions "depend on how the talks proceed."



# US plan to 'strip' India of N-capability

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
WASHINGTON, JAN 20

US President Bill Clinton's top adviser on proliferation John Holum has outlined a two-step plan to "strip" India of its nuclear weapons and ability to make them, and opposed any recognition to New Delhi as a "nuclear power" under the NPT.

In the first stage US President Bill Clinton himself will try to persuade India, before and during his visit to Delhi, to sign the CTBT, allowing New Delhi to retain a nuclear deterrent — nuclear weapons and missiles ready to be fired but taking away its right to test anew, Holum said.

The next step would be to pressure India to join the NPTAS a

non-nuclear weapon power, he said, in a state department world-net programme. The same would apply to Pakistan, he said.

Holum was quite frank about the role that he expects President Clinton to play to sell CTBT to India. He said "so there has been a diplomatic effort (Strobe Talbott-Jaswant Singh talks) underway. The CTBT signature would be an important part of that, something the president will certainly place a heavy emphasis on both in the time leading up to his trip and then when he does go to India."

"In terms of India and Pakistan, what we and others need to continue doing — and I know Japan, China and Australia and many other countries have all been involved in this effort — is to press

the case with both India and Pakistan that ratification and joining the comprehensive test ban treaty is in their interests, because it helps avoid any further escalation of a potentially dangerous arms race in the region." "Now, our credibility unquestionably has been damaged to some degree (by the rejection of the CTBT by the US senate)," Holum said.

"We would much rather be saying to the Indians and Pakistanis: we have ratified this treaty, we encourage you to do the same. Many other countries in the world can make that point, including both Japan and Australia. But we need to be making that argument, that it is in their own best interests.

"Now we are down to a (nuclear non-proliferation) treaty that

has just four states outside — India, Pakistan, Israel and Cuba. So the (NPT) regime is strong.

"What concerns me now is the danger to the regime that has been posed by the tests in South Asia. And so, a very important part of our collective effort to reinforce the NPT, it seems to me, has to be to address that very real and very dangerous situation in South Asia."

He, however, shot down a suggestion that India and Pakistan could be accommodated in the NPT as nuclear powers saying: "It is not possible under the treaty — we don't support it (either). There is a reality on the ground in India and Pakistan (but) we are not prepared, and I don't think the members of the NPT would accept it".

INDIAN EXPRESS

21 JAN 2000

# Congress lauds Indo-US working group

**HT Correspondent**  
New Delhi, January 20

THE CONGRESS has welcomed establishment of the Indo-US Joint Working Group on terrorism, expressing the hope that the two would now work together to apprehend the hijackers of IC-814.

"We hope that the US is also able to put pressure on Islamabad to stop cross-border terrorism," former External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh told today while briefing newsmen on a CWC discussion last evening on the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

Terming the Kashmir scenario as "very grave," he said either the Government wasn't fully aware of the gravity of the situation or it was simply unable to cope with it.

Mr Singh said the Congress would lend its support for building "national consciousness" on the overall situation towards concretising any programme the Government might have to deal with the problem.

As for vesting more powers in the armed forces deployed in Kashmir, Mr Singh said lately the terrorists have managed to penetrate high security areas: "It is for the Government to make a judgement. The general feeling is that the security situation has deteriorated greatly. We would certainly respond if the Prime Minister calls an all-party meeting."

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES  
21 JAN 2000

## U.S. plan to 'strip' India of n-capability

HPD-14  
21/1

WASHINGTON, JAN. 20. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's top adviser on proliferation, Mr. John Holum, has outlined a two-step plan to "strip" India of its nuclear weapons and ability to make them, and opposed any recognition to New Delhi as a "nuclear power" under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

In the first stage, Mr. Clinton himself would try to persuade India, before and during his visit to Delhi, to sign the CTBT, allowing New Delhi to retain a nuclear deterrent — nuclear weapons and missiles can be kept ready to be fired but the right to test anew would be taken away, Mr. Holum said.

The next step would be to pressure India to join the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon power, he said in a State Department worldnet programme. The same would apply to Pakistan, he said.

Mr. Holum was quite frank

about the role that he expected Mr. Clinton to play to sell the CTBT to India. He said "so there has been a diplomatic effort (Strobe Talbott-Jaswant Singh talks) underway. The CTBT signature would be an important part of that, something the President will certainly place a heavy emphasis on both in the time leading up to his trip and then when he does go to India."

"In terms of India and Pakistan, what we and others need to continue doing — and I know Japan, China and Australia and many other countries have all been involved in this effort — is to press the case with both India and Pakistan that ratification and joining the CTBT is in their interests, because it helps avoid any further escalation of a potentially dangerous arms race in the region."

"Now, our credibility unquestionably has been damaged to some degree (by the rejection of

the CTBT by the U.S. Senate)," Mr. Holum said.

"We would much rather be saying to the Indians and Pakistanis: we have ratified this treaty, we encourage you to do the same. Many other countries in the world can make that point, including both Japan and Australia. But we need to be making that argument, that it is in their own best interests."

"Now we are down to a (nuclear non-proliferation) treaty that has just four States outside — India, Pakistan, Israel and Cuba. So the (NPT) regime is strong.

"What concerns me now is the danger to the regime that has been posed by the tests in South Asia. And so, a very important part of our collective effort to re-inforce the NPT, it seems to me, has to be to address that very real and very dangerous situation in South Asia." — PTI

## Hasten slowly H/13

CONSIDERING THAT the recent Indo-US agreement on counter-terrorism has already yielded information about where the hijackers of IC 814 are hiding, there is obviously much to be said for the kind of cooperation in this field that is being envisaged by the two countries. There is no doubt that apart from the exchange of information between New Delhi and Washington being of great help to both to face this menace, the new arrangement will also have a deterrent effect on some of the sponsors of terrorism because of American participation. Pakistan, for instance, is likely to see the setting up of an Indo-US joint working group as further evidence of Washington's growing proximity to New Delhi at the expense of its earlier friendship with Islamabad. For such a change in the South Asian equations, Pakistan has only itself to blame, for had it not sought to add fuel to the fire in Kashmir by sending in Islamic *jehadis* and collaborating with the Taliban to convert the Pak-Afghan region into a virtual haven for terrorists, the US may not have abandoned its trusted ally of the Cold War days. But terrorism and India's growing importance as a market as well as its future as a major power have evidently persuaded the US to shed its earlier, somewhat inexplicable, antipathy towards India. New Delhi, too, cannot but be pleased at the termination of that earlier unfriendly phase and signs of the beginning of a new chapter in mutual relations.

The heightened fears of terrorism caused by the hijacking, which also hinted at Pakistan's connivance, have evidently played a leading role in bringing India and the US even closer. But while there may be a great deal of satisfaction over the projected cooperation between the two democracies, India will nevertheless have to fashion its policies with great care in this context. The reason is the link which Pakistan has tried to forge between terrorism and insurgency in Kashmir. It is an old ploy where one man's terrorist is another's freedom fighter. If the trick has not worked for Islamabad, it is because of India's widely admired democratic record and Pakistan's particularly poor one. Even then, it may be just one step for US involvement in tackling terrorism in South Asia assuming an interventionist character in Kashmir, which is exactly what Pakistan wants. It will be worthwhile for India, therefore, to consider whether informal consultations with the US (and, indeed, any other country) on tackling the problem will not be better than forming a bureaucratic panel which will institutionalise an American presence.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES  
22 JAN 2000

# Indo-U.S. JWG on countering terrorism will isolate Pakistan

*Format will be chalked out at February meeting in Washington*

By Seema Guha

The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: It is too early to say what the Indo-U.S. Joint Working Group (JWG) on counter-terrorism can achieve. However, on paper it is a shrewd move to isolate Pakistan on the terrorist issue. Ever since Kargil and the hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane, India's efforts to pin down Pakistan internationally has become a major plank of Indian diplomacy.

At the moment the JWG on counter-terrorism is still nebulous. Its format and work plan will be chalked out at the first meeting scheduled for February in Washington.

"This move is not directed against any country, it is basically against terrorism," a Western diplomat said, trying to play down suggestions that it is anti-Pakistan. The U.S. has such cooperation with other allies like Israel, Britain,

France and Japan. "From Washington's point of view, the more countries on board in the fight against terrorism, the better," the diplomat said.

For the first time, there will be an institutional framework for the two countries to work on. During the recent hijacking, the U.S. did help out whenever possible. "It

## NEWS ANALYSIS

was an ad hoc approach. Now this will be formalised, leading to regular meetings which can go a long way in apprehending terrorists or stopping a terrorist act," an Indian official said.

Intelligence sharing is going to be a vital aspect of this cooperation. Training a special force to tackle terrorist acts is also on the cards.

Washington can give valuable suggestions on crisis management. This is something which, New Delhi thinks, is essential at a time

when it expects stepped-up efforts by the Pakistan-backed Kashmiri militants.

The ministry of external affairs will be the nodal body for the group. The home and defence ministries are also likely to be involved.

These details are still under wraps, but it will have representatives perhaps even from the National Security Council.

Authoritative sources in the government are aware that the fight against terrorism has to be fought alone.

However, a helping hand is always welcome, especially if it is forthcoming from a powerful country like the U.S. Washington can exert pressure on Pakistan and it sets the tone for its allies in the Western world to follow. It also binds the U.S. to take note of the problems faced by India in Kashmir.

# No sell-out to the U.S. on QRs removal: Maran

By Our Special Correspondent

**CHENNAI, JAN. 22.** "It is a travesty of truth to say that the Government yielded to the U.S. on removal of the remaining quantitative restrictions (QRs) on imports," the Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Mr. Murasoli Maran, said here today. He was responding to allegations that the BJP-led Government could have negotiated a better bilateral agreement with the U.S. rather than agree as it had to an accelerated phase-out of all import controls by the year 2001.

Mr. Maran said that the U.S. had in the course of bilateral negotiations in 1997 made "stringent conditions" in its offer of an extended phase-out period of six years leaving India no choice but to continue with the case in the Dispute Settlement Body of the World Trade Organisation. India eventually lost that dispute forcing the country to come to an agreement with the U.S. on an earlier removal of the QRs.

The Minister was referring to criticism by the former Union Minister, Mr. P. Chidambaram that the BJP-led Government

missed an opportunity to strike a favourable deal with the U.S. after a positive meeting in late 1997 between the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton and the former Prime Minister, Mr. Inder Kumar Gujral. Mr. Maran said that the U.S. in its 1997 offer while agreeing to a six-year phase-out (which would have meant that the last of the QRs would have been removed only in 2003) had insisted that India's import controls on all sensitive products should be removed within two years. This, Mr. Maran said, would have led to a front-loading of the lifting of QRs, with the controls on products of concern to India being removed by 1999 itself rather than in 2001 as in the present agreement.

He added that the U.S. offer at that time included the harsh condition that even during the phase-out India would have to seek an annual waiver from the Balance of Payments Committee of the WTO. Accepting this condition meant running the risk of a denial of an extension of the QRs that remained even during the phase-out period of six years. The possibility of new conditions in granting the annual waiver

could also not be excluded, said Mr. Maran. India therefore could not accept, he added, such an offer which would have been both 'humiliating' and 'replete with serious consequences' for the country.

"These issues were carefully considered by the Union Cabinet at that time and it was decided that the best course would be to go through with the dispute settlement process at the WTO," Mr. Maran said. "Therefore, the argument that the Government failed to come to a favourable bilateral agreement with the U.S. is contrary to fact. Such criticism is a wrong inference based on gaps in information. The fact is that there were fundamental disagreements with the U.S. on systemic issues," Mr. Maran said.

The Commerce Minister said that India had been autonomously removing import controls, a process that had gathered momentum during Mr. Chidambaram's tenure as Commerce Minister. He said that the removal of QRs now did not mean the opening of the flood gates. Imports would now be regulated with tariffs and fiscal

measures. "We are only following the best practices of reform."

Mr. Maran also denied that there any attempt to hide the details of the recent bilateral agreement with the U.S. "The agreement was signed by India and the U.S. and notified to the WTO on December 28. A press release was issued by the Government of India on January 11."

"I do not want to go into more details because of the sensitivity of the budgetary process and the upcoming Exim policy. But our endeavour will be to give adequate protection to domestic industry. We will not be sitting on the top of an ash hill of Indian industry wearing the crown of globalisation."

Mr. Maran also refuted the criticism that Indian industry was not consulted in the decision to remove QRs. "Indian industry is being taken into confidence and a detailed analysis of the removal of the QRs on small-scale industry is also being undertaken. Seminars are being held by the Commerce Ministry to sensitise all concerned."

## 71-12 Holding US Hostage 29/11

The tenth round of talks between external affairs minister Jaswant Singh and US deputy secretary of state Strobe Talbott concluded in London without much fanfare. According to Mr Singh, the discussions covered international terrorism, nonproliferation and bilateral relations. There are reports of these talks being institutionalised and no longer remaining exclusively focussed on the unilateral issue of nonproliferation. An Indo-US joint working group on counter-terrorism is to start functioning and its next meeting will be in February. Two of the participants in the Indo-US talks, US assistant secretary of state Karl Inderfurth and Ambassador Michael Sheehan, flew straight from London to Islamabad to discuss with the Musharraf regime concrete measures to curb terrorism emanating from Pakistani soil. In a sense, the three issues — international terrorism, nonproliferation and Indo-US bilateral relations — have become intermeshed. Pakistan is using nuclear blackmail to hold the US hostage to its irrational behaviour. Washington suffered a major setback to its credibility when its warning to the Pakistani military not to stage a coup was contemptuously ignored and the Clinton administration was forced to deal with the military dictator on his own terms. The US has been hijacked by the threat of Pakistan proliferating its nuclear weapons to other rogue states — and of the mullahs in khaki being followed by those in robes. The more it compromises with the Islamabad regime, the more the latter is encouraged to defy it. General Musharraf's visit to China is a warning to Washington that Islamabad can align even more closely with Beijing; having compromised itself by not giving a finding on the China-Pakistan missile transfer for over seven years, the US is not in a position to take a tough line.

The Pakistanis are conscious of the helplessness of the US in dealing with them. Having gone nuclear with active Chinese help and tacit US consent, they now treat Washington with a certain amount of condescension. While the US considers Iran as a state sponsoring terrorism, it dares not take any action against Pakistan, even though more US citizens have been killed by Pakistanis than Iranians: The Clinton administration fears the consequences of a nuclear Pakistan going bankrupt. Therefore, the American ability to influence Pakistan should not be overrated in India. What India has to guard against is the possibility of the US, as a hostage, falling prey to the Stockholm syndrome, developing sympathies with its hijacker, Pakistan, and applying pressure on India on the Kashmir issue. The Pakistani leadership has been a good pupil of the thesis that irrational behaviour generates pressure on rational actors and can yield rewards. Pakistan's leaders boast of having used nuclear blackmail against India on three occasions and, as a consequence, attempt to terrorise the international community by shouting about Kashmir being a nuclear flashpoint. In these circumstances, educating the US on the realities of terrorism in this region and encouraging them to stand up to Pakistan's blackmail are not going to be easy tasks. Joint working groups are just a beginning. The government of India has to do a lot of hard thinking and come out with a credible and effective strategy to deal with the terrorist state of Pakistan.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

24 JAN 2000

# Clinton sees stronger Indo-US ties

N C Menon

Washington, January 23

CONVEYING HIS greetings to a celebra-

tion commemorating the golden jubilee of the Indian Republic, President Clinton yesterday said the observances marked the strong ties and enduring relationship that the peoples of India and America had created during more than 50 years of close cooperation.

The celebration was impressive because it was jointly organised by the five main Indian-American organisations in the region. Such an unusual display of unity was greatly appreciated by all Indian Americans and their American friends.

President Clinton also made the point that by working together, India and the US could make the world safer for future generations.

He was sure that Indo-US relations would become even more important in the future. The President also referred to the significant role played by people of Indian origin in enriching America.

Another friend of India who referred to the "remarkable contributions" Indians had

announced," Harrison adds.

The President should not authorise further military sales to Pakistan that would undercut relations with India.

The expert noted that military regimes in Pakistan have tended to be more destabilising for the region. "History has shown that military regimes in Islamabad have not only been just as corrupt as civilian governments, but have invariably relied on tensions with India to fortify their domestic control."

Harrison noted that the Islamabad's ruling junta was deeply divided between its front man, Gen Pervez Musharraf,

and two more powerful generals with longstanding ties to the Pakistan-based Islamic fundamentalist group responsible for the hijacking (of the IA plane); Lt. Gen. Mohammed Aziz, chief of the general staff, and Lt. Gen. Mahmood Ahmed, director of ISI.

The expert also revealed that the danger that Aziz and Ahmed would elbow Musharraf aside was growing. After the army staged its coup, Musharraf demoted Aziz to a corps command, but was forced to back out when Aziz resisted.

Harrison concluded: "The IA hijacking ordeal has vividly not only in the region, but also for its role in the world," Senator Sarbanes said.

He hoped that President Clinton's visit to India will take place in the near future, and economic issues would be high on his agenda.

Maryland Assembly Delegate Kumar Barve, considered a symbol of Indian Americans' success in the political arena, pointed out that India had given the lie to

## US warned against coddling Pak military regime

dramatised why the US should stop coddling the military regime in Pakistan and use its economic leverage to promote an early return to civilian rule.

It was clear, he added, that the increasing power of fundamentalist sympathisers in the military leadership enabled Islamic extremists to operate in Pakistan with impunity.

Harrison also warned against the US making "a devil's bargain" with Islamabad, offering military aid and other inducements for Pakistani help in getting Afghanistan to turn over terrorist leader Bin Laden.

HTC, Washington

the view held by some that only rich nations could afford democracy.

He also had a word of cheer for India. At 50 years old, America had far greater difficulties. In his message, Ambassador Nareish Chandra declared that the Indian Constitution had stood the test of time. "It is the foundation of our vibrant democracy, secularism and pluralism," Mr Chandra added.

He also had a word of cheer for India. At 50 years old, America had far greater difficulties. In his message, Ambassador Nareish Chandra declared that the Indian Constitution had stood the test of time. "It is the foundation of our vibrant democracy, secularism and pluralism," Mr Chandra added.

He also had a word of cheer for India. At 50 years old, America had far greater difficulties. In his message, Ambassador Nareish Chandra declared that the Indian Constitution had stood the test of time. "It is the foundation of our vibrant democracy, secularism and pluralism," Mr Chandra added.

He also had a word of cheer for India. At 50 years old, America had far greater difficulties. In his message, Ambassador Nareish Chandra declared that the Indian Constitution had stood the test of time. "It is the foundation of our vibrant democracy, secularism and pluralism," Mr Chandra added.

He also had a word of cheer for India. At 50 years old, America had far greater difficulties. In his message, Ambassador Nareish Chandra declared that the Indian Constitution had stood the test of time. "It is the foundation of our vibrant democracy, secularism and pluralism," Mr Chandra added.

He also had a word of cheer for India. At 50 years old, America had far greater difficulties. In his message, Ambassador Nareish Chandra declared that the Indian Constitution had stood the test of time. "It is the foundation of our vibrant democracy, secularism and pluralism," Mr Chandra added.



## HT 13 US ambivalence

INDIANS WILL welcome US Assistant Secretary of State Karl Inderfurth's warning to Pakistan about the terrorist groups operating from its territory. But some of us may be forgiven for being a little disappointed by the terms in which the warning was phrased. Judging by Mr Inderfurth's statements, the United States' chief priority is to secure Pakistan's co-operation in the hunt for Osama bin Laden. The US believes that the Taliban is protecting bin Laden whom it holds responsible for attacks on US embassies. Mr Inderfurth, speaking on behalf of his government, would like Pakistan to pressure the Taliban to hand over bin Laden. On the issue of Pakistani sponsorship of terrorism in Kashmir or of terrorist acts aimed at the Indian State, however, Mr Inderfurth is carefully ambivalent. His statement that the hijackers of IC 814 "simply can't disappear off the face of the earth" and will therefore be found one day, stops well short of accepting the Indian claim that the ISI organised the hijacking.

The ambivalence will worry those who are concerned that the joint Indo-US working group on terrorism will not do much to advance India's interests. Judging by statements made by US officials, we have to accept every claim they make (including the one that bin Laden bombed their embassy in Nairobi) while our complaints about Islamabad are viewed with lofty impartiality, lest the US be accused of taking sides in a regional dispute. Thus, if we raise questions about the Taliban's role during the hijacking crisis, the US will gravely nod its assent, but were we to try and expose the ISI link, then Washington will immediately adopt a hands-off policy.

Such double standards will concern all Indians who fear that Washington intends India to become just another rider in a posse that it organises to pursue its enemies. It should also worry the United States which has not learnt the bitter lesson that a terrorist is a terrorist, whatever the colour of his hat. In the 1980s, the CIA set up one of its largest stations in Pakistan and trained Afghan rebels in the arts of murder and wanton destruction. That operation succeeded in driving the Russians out of Afghanistan but backfired on America once its former pupils (the likes of bin Laden, for instance) turned on their teacher. Much the same will happen again. It is foolish for Washington to pretend that a hood who maims and murders in Srinagar or Amritsar will not extend his bogus *jihad* to Washington or New York. At the end of the day, the world needs to fight all terrorists, whether they are sponsored by the Taliban or by the ISI.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

25 JAN 2000

# Pak. shadow over Clinton visit

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, JAN. 27. As Washington sends mixed signals on its assessment of Pakistan's role in the hijacking of IC-814 last month, the dates for the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to India are unlikely to be formalised soon.

A series of reports, citing official sources, in the U.S. media over the last few days have pointed to the involvement of terrorist groups with links to the Pakistani security establishment in the hijacking. Responding to questions on these reports, Mr. Clinton had said on Tuesday that, "we do not have any evidence that the Pakistani Government was in any way involved", in the hijacking.

Mr. Clinton's denial on the Pakistan Government's involvement in the brutal hijacking incident is not being seen here as the last word from Washington. The Government believes that the Clinton administration's "assessment of the event and the attendant circumstances is not yet complete".

Answering questions on Mr. Clinton's comments, the spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry said today that the Government had no reason to alter its views on Pakistan's involvement. He insisted that the assessment on Islamabad's involvement had in fact been "further strengthened" by subsequent developments.

The spokesman referred to official statements from the U.S. administration "confirming the involvement" of the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, and "the support and patronage this terrorist organisation has received from official Pakistani agencies over the years". It was widely expected that New Delhi and Washington would simultaneously announce the travel schedule of Mr. Clinton to India and Bangladesh this week. But following the hijacking of IC-814, the Pakistan factor cast a shadow over the prospects of the visit.

Informed sources here say that the Government is fully aware of the on-going internal debate in Washington on the evidence about Pakistan's involvement as well as the future American response towards Pakistan's support for international terrorism.

It is believed here that the final outcome in Washington would depend upon the kind of results the Clinton administration would get from Islamabad, after the recent trip there by Mr. Karl Inderfurth, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs.

As the U.S. completes its internal debate on the hijacking of IC-814 and mulls over the political consequences, the next few days are likely to be crucial in shaping America's long-term approach to the sub-continent.

THE HINDU  
28 JAN 2000

96-8

# CTBT and a lame duck President

# Be prepared for a Bush

28/1

**P**UT it down to traditional Indian hospitality, that Chelsea Clinton's college vacation will be taken into account when dates are finalised for the US President's visit towards the end of March. That is something we can do. What we cannot do, alas, is to coax that elusive national consensus which is an absolute pre-requisite before the CTBT can be signed.

Of course, US interlocutors will argue: "by not signing the treaty you are letting Pakistan off the hook". Will you kindly explain to us this convoluted logic?

"Didn't you see how tough Assistant Secretary of State Karl Inderfurth was with Gen Musharraf?" the interlocutors will continue. "Inderfurth gave the Pakistanis a clear check list of the number of things Islamabad had to do before Clinton makes up his mind on whether or not to include Islamabad on his itinerary - signing of the CTBT, ending links with terrorism, movement towards democracy are items at the top of this list. By not signing the CTBT, New Delhi will have furnished Islamabad with an excuse not to sign too. New Delhi will thus help remove an obstacle in the way of Clinton's visit to Islamabad".

This is simply to give you a flavour of conversations one has recently had in American circles close to the strategists at the National Security Council. This discussion would have had some validity over two months ago when the government had initiated a national debate on the CTBT with a clear intention to create a consensus for signing the treaty.

At that stage important scientists involved with Pokharan II were willing to certify that the country had obtained enough data not to require any more tests "for the next ten years or so". This "10 years or so" was the time limit in the context of the anticipated security environment as it was likely to evolve in the decade ahead. But, there were, among the scientists, those who

were agnostics on this count too.

The arcane and the technical aspects of the nuclear debate apart, there was a growing body of people questioning the tactics of handing over the nuclear card to a US President who would soon be a lame duck. On current showing the next US administration would be in Republican hands. What sort of access do we have to Governor Bush, for instance? Are we about to make the same mistake in Washington that we made in London? So completely identified was the High Commission with the Conservatives that the next High Commissioner, Lalit Mansingh, had to do monumental repair job with the new Labour administration in Britain.



SAEED NAQVI

## What sort of access do we have to Governor Bush, for instance? Are we about to make the same mistake in Washington that we made in London?

There is a very influential Indian community with strong Republican connections. Have they been mobilised? Have we identified the foreign policy elements that are likely to man the State Department, Pentagon and the National Security Council? Have we spoken to them?

Every visiting head of state finds time to call on Sonia Gandhi. Surely, Jaswant Singh, Brajesh Mishra and sundry others who travel frequently for the national purpose can engage Americans who are likely to occupy key positions in a future US administration.

This line of thinking is dismissed by American friends of India currently close to the Clinton administration. "Grab whatever is coming your way", they suggest. "A bird in hand is worth

two in the Bush". The implication is that the next Republican administration (a pity no one is giving Al Gore much of a chance at least at this stage) will fashion its own priorities.

The architecture of a new strategic partnership with India the Clinton administration has embarked on will fall into neglect.

It is a fact that the comprehensive dialogue Jaswant Singh has had with

Strobe Talbott, spread over nine, extensive sessions marks a historic turning point in Indo-US relations. Considering that every Secretary of State in recent years (Warren Christopher or Madeleine Albright) has primarily been Secretary of State for the Middle East, Strobe Talbott was

Indian and Pakistani premiers with meticulous even handedness.

Even so, I suspect the CTBT may have been signed prior to the Clinton visit had the Indian Airlines hijack and a widespread perception that the Americans had been particularly unhelpful during the crisis not vitiated the atmosphere. Home Minister L.K. Advani and others were extremely angry at being let down by the Americans. They had given the Home Minister a firm commitment that the aircraft will not be allowed to take off from Dubai.

Had Ambassador Richard Celeste not rushed to the Home Ministry with his explanations (the pilot had panicked and taken off), the President's visit itself might have been in jeopardy.

The divisions within the BJP (at one stage it was the Prime Minister and Jaswant Singh versus the rest) got aggravated after the hijack to such a point that it became politically difficult to give continued support to what was increasingly seen as the Foreign Minister's project. This perception too was faulty because Singh, though convinced of the advantages of signing the CTBT, was averse to the propaganda gaining ground that the signature was being contrived only because the President was coming.

Not just the CTBT, but all manner of understanding with the US is possible provided there is evidence that Washington will do the following: lean on Pakistan till it disengages itself from transborder terrorism and sits down with India to discuss all issues including Kashmir. It must not be forgotten that Kashmir is part of the internal politics of both India and Pakistan. The issue, therefore, cannot be addressed so long as Pakistan keeps up the temperature on that subject. Washington has the levers to persuade Pakistan to desist. This Washington can and must do for a lasting engagement with India and the subcontinent. In that framework, obstacles like CTBT will become easily surmountable.

## 11/15 The Clinton visit

EVERY COUNTRY interested in forging close relations with the world's sole surviving superpower eagerly seeks a US presidential visit. India too was greatly enthused when the idea of a Bill Clinton visit was first broached in 1997. After repeated postponements due to assorted reasons, the good news is that Clinton may finally come in late March. The bad news is that the proposed presidential visit has increasingly turned into an instrument of pressure, with Washington making unreasonable demands on India. Equally troubling is the White House's continuing interest in a brief Clinton stop in Pakistan, even if it be Karachi. The search of a justification for such a stop has prompted the White House to still not announce the dates of his visit to India and Bangladesh. How the planned trip to the subcontinent is clouding and distorting issues can be seen from Clinton's clean chit to Pakistan on the hijacking affair. Ignoring Washington's own evidence on the Pakistani military and intelligence links with the Harkat ul-Mujahidin terrorist group that staged the hijacking, Clinton publicly stated that Washington does not believe Islamabad is culpable in the affair.

The oddity of the most powerful democracy's President shaking hands with a new military dictator brazenly flouting international democratic norms has not deterred the White House from considering a stop in Pakistan. Nor has General Pervez Musharraf's latest ouster of the Chief Justice and five other Supreme Court judges to make martial law supreme prompted Washington to discard the visit idea. The reason is simple: Clinton, in his last year in office, wants to do in South Asia what he is doing in the Middle East. He has given fresh expression to his desire to be a peace broker by saying the United States should work to reduce Indo-Pak tensions. His earlier statement that "the Kashmir issue is perhaps the most dangerous one in the world" only showed that whenever he publicly refers to India, he does so in the negative context of either Kashmir or nuclear proliferation. It is not in India's interest to grant him any mediatory role despite his legacy ambitions. The Vajpayee government has done well to convey to Washington two things: One, that it cannot accept any preconditions to the Clinton visit, including signing the controversial Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; and two, a Clinton stop in Pakistan would signal disrespect towards India and a continuing US commitment to "even-handed" Indo-Pak balance. If a Clinton visit is to be useful, the lame-duck President has to treat with respect the country that is home to one-sixth of humanity and abjure the US' traditional Indo-Pak games.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

29 JAN 2000

# Opposition to Clinton Pak visit may stymie Islamabad stopover

CHIDANAND RAJGHATTA  
WASHINGTON, JAN 28

AMID a chorus of protest from American lawmakers, analysts, and the media against a proposed Presidential "stopover" in Islamabad, the Clinton administration is expected to formally announce in the next few days a trip to the subcontinent. It will leave Pakistan out of the full itinerary "for now." There is a last gasp effort by the administration to schedule an "airport halt" for a Clinton tete-a-tete with Gen Musharraf, but it is being attacked as a hare-brained idea within and outside policy circles.

"Exactly what would it take to get the State Department's South Asia experts to stop promoting an ill-advised trip by President Clinton to Pakistan in March? I shudder to think," Jim Hoagland, a respected foreign policy commentator wrote in a hard-hitting editorial page comment in the *Washington Post* on Thursday.

Hoagland directly attacked Karl Inderfurth, the administration's South Asia pointman, saying the latter's reasoning for promoting a Clinton visit to Islamabad (by saying the US needs to be engaged and the President is the best engager) "has to win an award for a political appointee simultaneously buttering up the boss in print and trying to manipulate the said boss."

In several interviews to the US media, a senior US official, presumably Inderfurth, has hinted at the possibility of an unconditional Presidential stopover in Islamabad because of the need for Washington to remain engaged with a dangerously unstable Pakistan. "Engagement is not a self-contained goal or policy. It has to produce results that advance US interests. Pakistan does not pass that simple test," Hoagland countered.

Opposition to the stopover also came from the Congress where influential lawmaker Gary Ackerman said the President must not include Pakistan in his itinerary unless Islamabad offered iron-clad

guarantees that it would stop the proxy war against India by banning terrorist organizations like Harkat and Lashkar-e-Toiba, and shut down the terrorist training camps. "This means that Pakistan cannot be fully recognised among world's decent nations until it hangs out the sign that says: 'Terrorists Not Welcomed'." Ackerman said. US officials themselves this week nailed Islamabad's complicity in terrorist activity by disclosing for the first time that "some Pakistani agencies" have been in cahoots with Harkat and other terrorist organizations that are active in Kash-

**Lawmaker Gary Ackerman demands that Pakistan not be recognised among world's decent nations until it hangs out a sign saying: 'Terrorists Not Welcomed'**

mir. While subsequently clarifying that the US had no evidence that the Pakistani government was involved in the latest hijacking episode, the officials once again reiterated the involvement of Pakistani intelligence agencies with terrorist organizations.

Some administration sources now concede that it is has become pretty much impossible for the President to stop by in Islamabad following Pakistan's intransigence on several issues, including its stand on terrorism and return to democracy. The military dictatorship has also snuffed out the little chance there was for a stopover with its subversion of the judiciary on Wednesday. "It is not a good situation. We regard it as a negative development," an administration official said about the developments in Islamabad.

The White House is therefore expected to announce the visit to India and Bangladesh, most likely in the last week of March, while saying there will be a Presidential visit to other countries in the region under more propitious circumstances. Hoagland termed as "a risky enterprise" a Clinton visit to shore up the Musharraf regime and said "withholding this visit is the minimum that needs to be

done to send a message to Pakistan and other regimes that flout international norms and expect to get rewards."

Pakistan's support to terrorism, now officially and publicly disclosed by the Clinton administration in interviews to the media, has also been the subject of scathing editorial commentary. While commending India for its "laudable restraint" in the recent conflict with Pakistan, the *New York Times* said in an editorial on Wednesday that "If the extremists operating within Pakistani territory are not brought under control, their next target could be Pakistan itself."

Hoagland was more blunt, saying "the fingerprints of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence agency were all over the escape of the hijackers back to the

Kashmiri territory controlled by Pakistan." The theory that Pakistani intelligence was involved in the hijacking figured even in Wednesday night's Republican presidential debate and was endorsed by contender Steve Forbes who said "Our people did not know in the White House that apparently Pakistani operatives were behind that recent hijacking."

Pakistan has said that if the President skips Islamabad it would strengthen the hands of Islamic fundamentalists and create an anti-American atmosphere. Officials and analysts here concede that Washington would lose leverage even more in Pakistan, but the developments in that country leave the administration with little choice. The administration is "desperately keen" to remain engaged with Pakistan and retain a handle on a country that appears to be spiraling out of control. "A visit is one way to turn things around, but it looks very difficult," one official said.

New Delhi has not taken any stand publicly about a Presidential visit to Pakistan, but Indian officials say in private that if Clinton goes to Islamabad it will be a travesty of all the values the US professes to stand for.

# Clinton not to interfere in India's affairs, say officials

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA  
WASHINGTON, JAN 29

THE US State Department has made it clear that President Bill Clinton's desire to work for defusing the crisis between India and Pakistan does not mean any kind of interference in India's affairs or, in any way, harming its interest.

Replying to a question about the President's observation to this

effect in his state of the union address on Thursday, US state department's Deputy Director of Policy Planning James C O'Brien, on Friday said, "I don't think he (Clinton) was proposing anything that in any way runs against the interests of the Indian government."

"So, I would warn you against interpreting anything that he said as a suggestion of US meddling where it's not wanted," he said in

reply to the question by an Indian journalist.

He said President Clinton had expressed "a strong interest in, and intention in visiting India and engaging with the Indian government, including on the issues that are of concern with Pakistan. But I don't believe he will — you know, there is no suggestion there of anything that would interfere with the Indian government's interests."

Asked whether Clinton would visit Pakistan during his visit to South Asia in the spring, O'Brien said Secretary of State Madeleine Albright would make a recommendation about it. "Obviously, the president will have to make his decision as he gets closer to the time of the visit," he added.

Asked whether Clinton would visit Pakistan during his South Asian trip, O'Brien said, "I think

(State Department spokesman James) Rubin dealt with this pretty well on Friday." He said, "We have engagement with the Pakistani government on a number of issues. We are very concerned about its return to civilian democratic rule quickly and, in that sense, deplore the notion that government attempted to go outside the review of the independent courts."

"We have continued engage-

ment with them on terrorism, non-proliferation and other regional concerns. The issue will be what sort of engagement with the government will assist in achieving those us interests. The Secretary (Secretary of State Madeleine Albright) is considering what recommendation she would want to make to the president—a decision he will have to take at the time," O'Brien said.

110-8  
300

## "Clinton will not interfere in India's affairs" *India us*

WASHINGTON, JAN. 29. The U.S. State Department has made it clear that the President, Mr. Bill Clinton's desire to work for defusing the crisis between India and Pakistan does not mean any kind of interference in India's affairs or, in any way, harming its interest. To a question about the President's observation to this effect in his State of the Union address on Thursday, the U.S. State Department's Deputy Director of Policy Planning, Mr. James C. O'Brien, on Friday said, "I don't think he (Mr. Clinton) was proposing anything that in any way runs against the interests of the Indian Government."

"So, I would warn you against interpreting anything he said as a suggestion of U.S. meddling where it's not wanted," he said to the question by an Indian journalist. He said Mr. Clinton had expressed "a strong interest in, and intention in visiting India and engaging with the Indian Government, including on the issues that are of concern with Pakistan. But I

don't believe he will — you know, there is no suggestion there of anything that would interfere with the Indian Government's interests."

Asked whether Mr. Clinton would visit Pakistan during his visit to South Asia in the spring, Mr. O'Brien said the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, would make a recommendation about it. "Obviously, the President will have to make his decision as he gets closer to the time of the visit."

Mr. O'Brien, however, said, "We have engagement with the Pakistan Government on a number of issues. We're very concerned about its return to civilian democratic rule quickly, and in that sense, deplored the notion that the Government attempted to set itself outside the review of independent courts. We have continued engagement with them on issues of anti-terrorism, non-proliferation and other regional concerns."

When asked as to why India

and Pakistan should listen to the U.S. advice to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) when it had failed to ratify the pact, Mr. O'Brien said the international norm in the CTBT provided protection for all people in the world, and "it does that by laying down a rule that impedes the development of nuclear weapons by forbidding a particular means of developing them, the testing."

The U.S. had already committed itself not to conduct those kinds of tests. "We're maintaining that moratorium even after the Senate action, and I think, thus, by our actions, we are reflecting a commitment to the norm that lies at the heart of the non-proliferation regime."

The U.S. remained a world leader on non-proliferation issues. "We continue to work whenever there is a threat to that particular international regime. We hope to develop and then reinforce and enforce other international regimes." — UNI

THE HINDU

30 JAN 2000

# The Clinton visit's aftermath

By C. Raja Mohan

By recasting Indo-U.S. relations during the Clinton visit, India has increased its room for foreign policy manoeuvre.

NDIA IS all set to significantly expand its relationship with the United States. But would that come at the expense of New Delhi's relations with other major powers? "Not at all," the mandarins of the security establishment insist. There is a new confidence in the Government that by recasting Indo-U.S. relations during the visit of the American President, Mr. Bill Clinton, India has increased its room for foreign policy manoeuvre in all directions.

Despite the onset of what looks like a blistering summer in the capital, Indian diplomacy is now getting into high gear and the outlook for foreign policy has never looked so bright since the deafening noise from Pokhran in May 1998 outraged the world. There is no question that the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, took a huge foreign policy risk in conducting nuclear tests two years ago and declaring India a nuclear weapon state. Built into the risky decision was the counter-intuitive conclusion that a nuclear India would be able to fundamentally reconfigure relations with the U.S.

All the immediate predecessors of Mr. Vajpayee had indeed considered the question of conducting nuclear tests, but were convinced that such a decision would invite considerable opprobrium from the U.S. and isolate India in the international community. They were not wrong; but were just too cautious and paralysed by the fear of the political consequences of crossing the nuclear Rubicon. The BJP Government instead gambled by opting to go against the conventional wisdom on nuclear tests and relations with the U.S.

There was very little going, however, for the BJP Government on the foreign policy front in the wake of the nuclear tests. Faced with sharp domestic criticism as well as severe international reaction, the gloomy predictions about the impact of the nuclear tests appeared to come true. The U.S. imposed sanctions against India, and mobilised the international community against the nuclear proliferation in the sub-continent. As a consequence, the world renewed its political interest in Kashmir. India's relations with Pakistan took a nose-dive despite New Delhi's ef-

orts to improve relations with Islamabad at the Lahore summit in February 1999.

Pakistan was determined to use the new sense of nuclear parity with New Delhi to step up the conventional military confrontation with India as well as the scale of terrorist violence in Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan's diplomatic objective was to exploit the new global concerns about a nuclear flashpoint in the sub-continent and get the international community to intervene in the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir with India.

In this bleak post-Pokhran scenario for India's foreign policy came the small opening for a dialogue with the U.S. that began a few weeks after Pokhran II. Despite the visible anger that marked the U.S.

## WORLD VIEW

reaction to the Indian tests, the nuclear decision did get substantive American political attention that New Delhi had rarely received in the past. It culminated in the successful visit of Mr. Clinton to India. The 12 rounds of nuclear dialogue over the last two years between the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, and the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott, turned out to be the most sustained consultations on core security issues between the two nations in the last five decades.

Although the dialogue did not resolve the nuclear differences, it generated a much better understanding of each other's perceptions. It also facilitated American support for India during the Kargil crisis and helped build a new framework for Indo-U.S. cooperation against international terrorism. It also prepared the ground for Mr. Clinton's visit that ended the historic U.S. tilt towards Pakistan, unveiled a positive framework for dealing with the Kashmir dispute, and initiated a sustainable engagement with India. Having moved the big American piece in the post-Pokhran diplomatic puzzle, India is now well-placed to pursue a more vigor-

ous foreign policy agenda in the coming months. With the American ties set to move in a positive direction, India's foreign policy options have improved.

Meanwhile, India's other interlocutors, too, will be assessing the results of Mr. Clinton's visit to India and reviewing their ties with New Delhi. The first signs of a changing attitude towards India have come from countries such as Australia and Japan, that went way ahead of the U.S. in condemning India's nuclear tests and took it upon themselves to isolate New Delhi in various international fora. But in the last few months, as signs of improvement in Indo-U.S. relations came into view, both Japan and Australia began to see the folly of their earlier positions of link-

ing normalisation of relations with India to the nuclear issue. Their efforts to de-link ties with India from non-proliferation could only acquire greater momentum after the Clinton visit.

But it is to the other great powers we must now turn to understand the impact of the Clinton visit to India. There will be some questions about the future of India's relations with Russia in the context of a new framework of Indo-U.S. relations. Since the end of the Cold War, relations of third countries with Washington and Moscow have ceased to be a zero sum game. New Delhi places special value on its close ties with Moscow and there is no reason to believe these will come under strain now. Although the new leader of Russia, Mr. Vladimir Putin, is expected to be more purposeful in his pursuit of national interest, it is not necessary that he will adopt a more confrontationist posture towards the U.S. India is confident of expanding cooperation with Putin's Russia with which it has a large number of common regional security concerns centred around the export of terrorism from Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Stronger concerns about Indo-U.S. re-

lations have come from China, where there may be real apprehensions about the so-called "natural alliance" between India and the U.S. The decision by India and the U.S. to draw close to each other, their proclamations about the virtues of democracy and the need for Asian balance of power comes at a time when Sino-U.S. relations are going through a difficult and uncertain phase. But India is certainly aware of the considerable depth and breadth of Sino-U.S. relations and knows that a new Sino-American Cold war is not in its interest. India's diplomatic thrust in the next few years would be in expanding relations with both the U.S. and China.

China also may have some fears about a perceived American tilt towards India in its confrontation with Pakistan. But it is not likely that Beijing will intensify its cooperation with Islamabad to a point where it begins to lose all prospects of a reasonable relationship with India. Although China is unlikely to abandon its special relationship with Pakistan, the change in Indo-U.S. relations could help Beijing recognise the importance of pursuing a more balanced policy in the sub-continent and the need for a *modus vivendi* with India.

The weight of the European Union in India's diplomatic agenda has vastly increased in the last few years. And this is unlikely to be affected by an improvement in Indo-U.S. relations. In drawing closer to Washington, New Delhi is also ending the Cold War political hiatus with the West in general. To be sure there are interesting points of tension between the U.S. and the European Union, and France in particular, on a range of political and economic issues. These contradictions within the Western world in fact improve India's leverages with both the U.S. and Europe. Since Pokhran II India has nurtured a special relationship with France and there is no case for India to go slow on that front after the Clinton visit. At the same time New Delhi would expect less ambiguity in the European positions on Kashmir, terrorism, and Indo-Pakistan relations on which Mr. Clinton has set a new standard for the West to emulate in the sub-continent.

THE HINDU

13 APR 2000



## U.S. links ties with India to NPT

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, APRIL 28. The U.S. Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Mr. Thomas Pickering, has said that the multi-dimensional potential in the U.S.-India relationship cannot come about unless the two countries made further progress on the issue of non-proliferation.

Speaking at the School of Advanced International Studies of the Johns Hopkins University here on Thursday, Mr. Pickering, who was introduced by Ms. Shirin Tahir-Kheli, Director of the South Asia Institute at the university, said: "No issue is more important to American security than our efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons and their means of delivery.

"Even as we seek to build a new and qualitatively closer relationship with India, that relationship cannot realise its full potential without further progress on non-proliferation. We also cannot and will not be able to cooperate on military issues until there is substantial progress on non-proliferation. We face similar problems in our relations with Pakistan," Mr. Pickering observed. Mr. Pickering, who will be visiting South

Asia next month to discuss among other things, 'Asian security', argued that the near-term American objectives with India were simple: early signature on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; strengthened export controls; cooperation in the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, and pending its conclusion, a moratorium on production; restraint in the development of missiles; and prudence in shaping defence postures.

The senior Clinton administration said that progress on export control has been registered and that continuing convergence on this and other non-proliferation items will be high on the U.S. agenda with India.

Earlier, commenting on Indo-Pak relations, Mr. Pickering sought to debunk the idea circulating in Pakistan — that if only events were allowed to spiral in Kashmir towards an all-out conflict with India, the U.S. would be compelled to mediate on more favourable terms. This, the official maintained, had been rejected by the President, Mr. Bill Clinton, when he was on a short stopover in Pakistan. But the message on tensions was both to India and Pakistan. "Publicly and privately

the President urged mutual restraint by the parties, respect for the Line of Control, rejection of violence, and renewal of dialogue. The tragic cycle of violence continues to claim precious lives in Kashmir," Mr. Pickering said.

THE HINDU

29 APR 2000

## Unrestrained Reserve

Even as President Clinton was eloquently questioning in New Delhi the wisdom of India going nuclear, his administration had finalised plans to renovate more than 6,000 nuclear warheads over the next 15 years. Under the START-II treaty, the US is permitted to have only 3,000 deployed weapons; the other 3,000, according to American officials, are meant as an "inactive reserve". This exemplifies the 'nuclear restraint' the US practises, while asking India whether it had become more secure after Pokhran II. Unlike India, the US does not border states which reject democracy, possess nuclear weapons, and have an ongoing nuclear proliferation relationship. The US President will shortly have an opportunity to demonstrate his 'nuclear restraint' in specific terms when he has to decide on national missile defence. Polls in the US suggest that the missile defence programme does not have majority approval. The US administration must ask itself whether America will be more secure after the proposed deployment which undermines the first arms control agreement — the anti-ballistic missile treaty — and could unleash an arms race. Is this course of action in conformity with the international trends which President Clinton talked about in Delhi? As a friend, the Indian government should make clear its views on the matter, respectfully but firmly and unambiguously.

President Clinton also offered US partnership to India in a further dialogue on proliferation. This is to be welcomed. But about the same time the director of the Central Intelligence Agency testified before the US senate that his organisation had reported to Washington the transfer of Chinese missiles to Pakistan as soon as it took place. How that information was handled by the US administration was, according to him, not the agency's responsibility. The Federation of American Scientists recently published satellite images of the Pakistani missile site at Sargodha; together with the CIA director's testimony, they show that the US administration has for the past six years been fudging the question of Chinese missile proliferation to Pakistan. If President Clinton had paused to reflect on Washington turning a blind eye to 20 years of China's nuclear proliferation and ten years of missile proliferation to Pakistan, he would have had a better understanding of India's need for a minimum nuclear deterrent. Now that Mr Clinton has performed his pro forma obeisance to non-proliferation theology — which the US did not practise in respect of the China-Pakistan relationship over the last two decades — the appropriate next step would be to recognise the facts on the ground. President Clinton referred to Bangladesh's freedom struggle not getting the support it deserved from all countries, thereby obliquely conceding the US failure on this front. He ought now to admit that non-proliferation norms were not observed by all nuclear weapon powers in South Asia, thus compelling India to go nuclear. Once this compulsion is acknowledged, Washington and Delhi can further their relationship beyond a ritual crying over spilt milk.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

5 APR 2000

# Laxman assures Celeste of religious tolerance

Our Political Bureau

NEW DELHI 11 OCTOBER

THE BJP, on Wednesday, affirmed its commitment to the principle of religious freedom as enshrined in the Indian Constitution but said it was watchful of the militant activities of certain Christian groups, which had links with insurgent groups in the north-east.

BJP president Bangaru Laxman met US ambassador Richard Celeste to assure him of his party's continued support to all religious groups, as stated in the Constitution.

Mr Laxman's meeting followed RSS chief K. Sudarshan's call to Christians to have govern-

ment sponsored churches. He told Mr Celeste, during a 45-minute meeting, that the BJP-led NDA government had no objections to conversions, provided it did not involve coercion or inducement.

The problems arose only when allurements were given, he said. The BJP chief pointed out that even before the NDA government came to power, states like Arunachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa had enacted legislation against conversions.

RSS sources said, the chief's call was made in view of the fact that the Vatican had recently said, Catholicism was the purest form of worship.

Mr Laxman said, in Turkey,



**Bangaru: Secular soiree**

Islam had been indigenised as it was in Indonesia and Malaysia, though nobody was willing to go by

the Chinese example of appointing own bishops and priests. RSS sources said, this would also take care of the "silent turmoil" within the Indian Christian church, which had leaders imposed on them from foreign countries.

Mr Laxman, who discussed a wide range of subjects with the US envoy, told him that one could never be certain of Pakistan's stand, as "it has always let us down and also in view of the frequent changes of government and instability there."

In a release, the party said, Mr Laxman informed Mr Celeste that the Indian government had freed Hurriyat leaders of Jammu and Kashmir so as to create an atmo-

sphere conducive for a dialogue, to help restore normalcy in the state.

On CTBT, the party president said, the government was committed to evolving a national consensus and it was also necessary that the countries pledge total nuclear disarmament within a timeframe.

Earlier, while addressing the Kisan Morcha, Mr Laxman said, the BJP, since its inception in 1980, was never for people of only certain religions or groups. The party belonged to all Indians, as its very name signified. He added that BJP would launch a nation-wide two-month campaign from November 1, to explain the Nagpur message to the common people.

## **Vision statement to seek lifting of U.S. sanctions**

By Our Legal Correspondent

**NEW DELHI, OCT. 8.** The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the U.S.-India Business Council today signed a vision statement to work for lifting the remaining sanctions imposed by the United States that are still inhibiting the flow of technical assistance from the U.S.

The statement was signed by Dr. Amit Mitra, Secretary General, FICCI and Mr. Raymond E. Vickery, jr. United States- India Business Council at the conclusion of a four-day India-Chem 2000 exhibition and conference. 9/10

The statement said that both sides would work together to obtain support as well as funding for a programme to offer world standard training to Indian environmental enforcement personnel.

In the field of taxation and tariffs, the two sides would work with their respective governments to implement the joint statement of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, on reciprocal tax measures. They would provide analyses of the effects of tax simplification and tariff rationalisation on investment and trade in the Indian chemical industry. 9/10

In the area of Research and Intellectual Property Rights, the statement envisaged scope for unlimited potential in the context of passage of a strong IPR Bill on expanding investment in Indian research and development.

In the area of e-commerce, the two sides would pursue vigorously a cyberspace partnering initiative to promote trade and investment between the U.S. and Indian small and medium enterprises in the fields of chemicals, petrochemicals and pharmaceuticals. It was decided to review the progress in implementing the vision statement at the next meeting to be held in Washington in June 2001.

### **Minister's appeal**

Participating in the valedictory session of the conference, the Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilizers, Mr. Satya Brata Mookherjee, today urged the chemicals sector to concentrate on creating research and development centres and also to increase exports in the years ahead.

THE HINDU

- 9 OCT 2000

## Indo-U.S. relations are bound to improve: Gujral

By L.K. Sharma

The Times of India News Service

LONDON: Indo-U.S. relations are bound to improve, irrespective of who assumes the presidency, former prime minister I.K. Gujral has said.



I.K. Gujral

Relations with India are not an emotional or personal thing and are based on hard calculations regarding India's standing and prospects. The new appreciative view on India is being shared by the Democrats as well as the Republicans, Mr Gujral said.

He also said that he had spoken to Hillary Clinton over the telephone. She said she wanted to visit India and, Mr Gujral said, he suggested that she bring Bill Clinton along! The former prime minister was on his way back home after attending the U.N. general assembly and addressing university gatherings on India.

Mr Gujral said that he was impressed by the high profile that India and Indians in general have acquired in the U.S. The prism of the cold war has faded and now India is being seen as a major player on the world scene.

Indian Americans were contributing to this perception and the reawakening of the interest in India in American academic circles was remarkable.

Mr Gujral has been asked to join a group studying the implications of aging in Europe, America and Japan. The ambitious study by the Institute of Strategic Studies will cover countries like India and China, where the ratio of younger people is higher. Thus, while some countries are getting old, others are getting younger.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

15 NOV 2000

## Bush at helm will be good for Indo-US ties: Pressler

HT Correspondent

New Delhi, November 10

IF GEORGE W Bush finally becomes President, relations between the United States and India will improve "qualitatively", according to former US Senator Larry Pressler. All for removing the existing sanctions on India, Mr Pressler, a Republican, said: "Sanctions don't achieve anything. If they are an impediment to plumbing the terrific potential of collaboration between the world's oldest and biggest democracies, they should go. Besides, Governor Bush has said clearly that if elected he would not force the CTBT on America. So where is the question

of expecting India to sign it?"

Mr Pressler, commented that despite the back-to-back visits of President Clinton and Prime Minister Vajpayee this year, the content of hype in bilateral relations could not be denied. In his view, there was a need for Washington to articulate its interest in cultivating India more seriously in view of China's emergence as a pan-Asian power.

President Clinton had perhaps accelerated the process to nuclearisation of the South Asian region by repealing the Pressler Amendment, he added. "I am surprised that the hype generated during the March visit did not take this into account."

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

71 NOV 2000

## Clinton warns India on proliferation

WASHINGTON, NOV. 10. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, has warned India that Indo-U.S. relations cannot reach their full potential "without progress on our non-proliferation and regional concerns" and feels there are no encouraging signs of resumption of talks between India and Pakistan soon.

Mr. Clinton expressed his views in a letter to the House Speaker covering U.S. policy in various regions and dealing with nuclear and missile issues relating to In-

dia mainly in the Pakistani context. In the context of the warmth in Indo-U.S. relations assumed after Mr. Clinton's rousing welcome in India and the equally warm welcome to the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, in the U.S., the Clinton message came as a cold shower to analysts of the Indian scene.

Mr. Clinton said he discussed non-proliferation and Indo-Pakistan issues with the two countries during his trip in March and with Mr. Vajpayee here in Sep-

tember. "With India, we have stressed that our relationship will not be able to reach its full potential without progress on our non-proliferation and regional concerns. With Pakistan, we also emphasised the importance of progress on regional security and non-proliferation, among other pressing issues.

The U.S. President said the Kargil conflict and the military coup in Pakistan resulted in the suspension of the bilateral dialogue initiated in Lahore. — PTI

THE HINDU

11 NOV 2000

## LTTE hijacks Russian ship

A GROUP of stranded Sea Tigers, the naval cadres of the LTTE, last night hijacked a Russian tug and forced its crew to take them to the Mullaitivu coast, informed sources in Trincomalee said.

The Sea Tigers were part of a force of six supply boats and four escort vessels, which were attacked by the Sri Lankan navy off the Mullaitivu coast. In the battle, three of the LTTE's boats were completely destroyed and three others were badly damaged. The navy suffered no losses. Though badly battered and stranded, some LTTE men managed to board the passing Russian tug 'Utyos' and forced the crew to take them to the Mullaitivu coast. When they got close enough to the coast, they got off.

**HTC, Colombo**

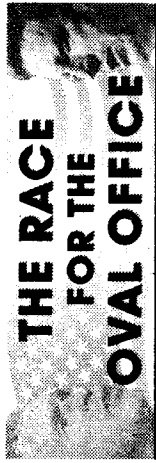
# George Bush closer to India on CTBT

**Pramit Pal Chaudhuri**  
New Delhi, November 2

'destabilizing' and 'dangerous'. Just like Gore. The Vajpayee government would probably be relieved to not have to put together a 'national consensus' on the CTBT. The treaty is largely symbolic. However, it is soaked in nationalism and there is a large domestic political price tag

ASK NEW Delhi's foreign policy wonks to bite one reason George Bush's worldview will be easier on India than Al Gore's. The commonest answer: The Republican presidential candidate opposes the comprehensive test ban treaty. Bush publicly and loudly opposes the CTBT. Gore praises the treaty, calling it "the tide of history." Bush says it is "not the answer" to proliferation.

Bush is lukewarm about a global nonproliferation regime. India seems to have a similar view. New Delhi avoids signing the CTBT, drags its heels on the fissile materials cutoff treaty and believes missile control regimes are baloney. All top the Gore foreign policy agenda and could slow progress in Indo-US relations if the Democrat wins next week. But India also criticizes Bush's alternative nuclear strategy: a continent-wide, national missile defence system. Indian ministers call US plans for an NMD



attached. Indo-US relations tend to run aground on small rocks, minor disputes that cause disproportionate acrimony. The fewer there are, the smoother flow relations. CTBT is a very noisy small rock. And under a President Gore, the racket would be tremendous.

Two points to keep in mind. As Marshall Bouton, the New York City-based Asia

Society's India watcher, has warned, "A Bush in the Oval Office will not be able to just throw away the CTBT." A test ban, perhaps as a US-backed international norm, will continue. More importantly, Bush has said he wants to go straight for the real meat of nonproliferation, a FMCT. This treaty will be more intrusive and constraining than the CTBT.

Second, India's approach to nonproliferation is fuzzy enough that it is unclear which US candidate is less likely to rub India the wrong way. Rejecting the CTBT and opposing the NMD is a contradiction, not a policy. New Delhi needs to clarify, in word and deed, whether it wants a nonproliferation regime. If it opts wholeheartedly for the latter, it can expect fewer problems with a globally-minded Gore than with a do-it-alone Bush.

If New Delhi goes solo, balks at treaties and builds a minimum nuclear deterrent, the reverse is likely to be true. India seems inclined to take latter path. Generally on nukes, Bush should be India's choice - by a neck.

## Beatles to launch new web site

London, November 2

THE BEATLES will launch their first official Web site this month, 30 years after the group split up, a spokeswoman for the band said.

The site, thebeatles.com, will go live on November 13 and will be the band's only official presence on the Internet among a flood of unofficial fan sites.

The launch of the site will be tied in to the release of the band's latest collection, simply called '1', which features all 27 of the Fab Four's number one hits.

The band's management has been resistant to the idea of setting up a Beatles site until now but hopes the new venture will appeal to a younger audience more familiar with using a computer than an old-fashioned record player.

(Reuters)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

3 NOV 2000



# India, USA want bigger role for UN peacekeepers

H BULA DEVI (11) 5/11/8  
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Nov. 2. — The Indo-US Joint Working Group on UN peacekeeping operations have agreed that the role of troop-contributing countries should be increased to craft the mandates and operations of peacekeeping forces.

At the two-day JWG meeting between the two countries which ended here today, the two countries decided on exploration of ways to do so.

Incidentally, the Indian Army sometime back strongly advocated this proposal. Former Chief of Army Staff, Gen. VP Malik had said that the prospective troop-contributing countries should be involved in the early stages of planning of a mission and "they should be consulted on any major decisions regarding the mandate".

At the sixth international seminar on Challenges of Peacekeeping and Peace Support, on 13 September, Gen Malik said that before launching any peacekeeping mission, "a careful politico-military analysis of the situation should be undertaken by the UNDPKO. To that extent, Somalia and now Sierra Leone are bad examples".

India and USA exchanged views on functional aspects such as command structures, logistical support, training and preparations for effective UN peacekeeping. The scope of these discussions included both "civilian police and military components of today's UN peacekeeping operations".

## Soren warns of *jhatka*

NEW DELHI, Nov. 2. — "Aisa *jhatka dunga ki yaad karenge*, (I'll give them a jolt they will not forget in hurry)" said Mr Siby Soren today after landing here tonight. In a last ditch bid for the chief ministerial post he will meet Mr AB Vajpayee. But a PMO spokesman said the

THE STATESMAN

3 NOV 2000

---

# Indo-US meet on UN peacekeeping operations today

HT Correspondent  
New Delhi, October 31

THE UNITED States and India will begin a two-day meet from tomorrow to discuss ways to strengthen the United Nations peace-keeping operations. The decision to set up a Joint Working Group on this was taken during the Prime Minister's US visit.

The US is the biggest contributor to the United Nations and India is one of the most frequent participants in its peace mission, having participated in 33 such exercises since 1953.

Since peace-keeping has become one of the most controversial aspects of the UN in the recent years, the two countries have decided to find ways to save the institution.

Sources are hopeful of a positive outcome. Proposal to set up a permanent blue helmet force under an unified command, which has been proposed for sometime now,

might come up for discussion. A permanent institution could be the answer to the problems that the UN faces every time it decides to intervene either as a peace-keeper or peace-enforcer.

Both the nations want the peace-keeping unit to carry on, though their recent experiences have not been very pleasant. The Somalian mission for the US and India's recent stint in Sierra Leone had put the governments of both the nations on a defensive in their parliaments.

The US delegation will be headed by deputy assistant secretary of state, Leonard Howley, while Alok Prasad, joint secretary (Americas), in the Ministry of External Affairs, will lead the Indian side.

Defence, internal security and foreign affairs officials will also participate in the two-day deliberations.

India, though having announced its decision to withdraw from Sierra Leone, will continue to send its troops for the blue helmet duty.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

1 NOV 2000

We have many common international interests: Clinton

THE REST OF THE BILL CLINTON INTERVIEW: THE US PRESIDENT TALKS ABOUT RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES, INDIA AND THE CTBT, THE ROLE OF INDIAN AMERICANS AND HOW THE WORLD'S TWO LARGEST DEMOCRACIES CAN WORK TOGETHER

India and the United States have had several rounds of a nuclear dialogue. What have been the tangible as well as intangible results of this dialogue? Our senior level dialogue on security and non-proliferation has been going on for more than two years. It has been the most intensive and productive discussion on these issues that our countries have ever had. We have established much clearer understandings of our countries' positions on these issues and established ties of trust and respect that allow us to quickly cooperate on

common goals or address differences. We have identified some areas of agreement on the issues of security and non-proliferation, including support for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, beginning negotiations in Geneva to end production of fissile material for weapons, and enhancing export controls. We also continue to discuss ways to achieve restraint in nuclear and ballistic missile systems while still providing for vital security needs. A nuclear arms race in the region would not be in India's interest — nor the world's. We have

made some useful progress in our discussions, but there is more to be done. I look forward to continuing these talks during and after the Prime Minister's visit. Do you expect India to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)? Has not the failure of the U.S. Senate to ratify the treaty effectively killed it? People in India are asking: Why should we sign it now? The Indian Government has said it intends to build a consensus to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. The Treaty is still very much alive. My Administration has signed, is

committed to its ratification and will continue to participate in international efforts to implement it. India's action in joining the Treaty would be an important step in bringing the Treaty closer to implementation. You have often talked of the United States and India as two great democracies. On the basis of our shared faith in the will of the people being supreme, what kind of political cooperation do you foresee between India and the United States? Our two countries truly are great democracies. Shortly after my visit to South Asia, the United States and

India cooperated closely in assuring the success of the first meeting of the Community of Democracies in Warsaw. We will continue to work together to nurture and strengthen the Community and, more importantly, democratic institutions around the world. I expect that we will work even more closely together to advance the cause of peace around the world through the United Nations and other international organizations. This will include further cooperation in international peacekeeping. Our two countries have many international interests in common, and I am glad that we will increasingly be pursuing them together. There is a large population of Indian-Americans which is coming of age politically in the United States. What role do you see this community playing in U.S. affairs as well as in strengthening Indo-U.S. relations? It gives me great pleasure to see the one million strong Indian-American community take an increasing role in the political affairs of our country. This is a key part of the immigrant experience for Americans and a cornerstone of our vital democracy. The community will increasingly serve as a bridge between India and the United States. Already, its leaders

have regular consultations at the White House, the State Department and with members of Congress. More members of Congress have joined the India Caucus than any similar group on Capitol Hill. Indian-American entrepreneurs are making a tremendous contribution to the United States, and in many cases taking their expertise and capital back to India as well to create jobs and opportunities in cutting-edge industries. What is your message to the people of India? My greatest wish for the people of India is that they see increasing peace and prosperity as their nation's role in world affairs continues to grow. As the twenty-first century begins, India and the United States can look forward to a great future together — as growth in trade and investment raises the living standards of all our people; as scientific and medical research leads to highly beneficial breakthroughs; as cultural exchanges allow us to share the best of our cultures; as we work together in world affairs to seek greater peace, stability and democracy for ourselves and for all nations. It is also my strong hope that Indians will be able to enjoy these blessings along with their neighbors in this new millennium.



A VALID TRIP

NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER BRAJESH MISHRA ON WHY IT MAKES SENSE FOR VAJPAYEE TO GO TO WASHINGTON NOW.

BY KALYANI SHANKAR

Many question the timing of Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to the US. Why now and why not after the new US President takes over? This question arises because people are looking at this as primarily a US visit. But it is a visit to the UN as well. There is a millennium summit at the United Nations. If we are saying we have a good case for India to become a member of the UN Security Council, we have a role to play in the UN. How can you keep away from the millennium summit? We should take that as a starting point. Then we have to look at the invitation given by the President Clinton to the Prime Minister. He said, "Hopefully, we can meet before the end of my term." It is not a question of the visit coming at the end of the term or something like that. Secondly, there is continuity in the US policy. There were some policy considerations and those still apply. When a new administration comes in — be it of the Republicans or Democrats, the same policy considerations will remain.

What is going to be the thrust of the visit? There will be a dialogue with President Clinton on political, economic and scientific and security issues. There was this vision statement released at the end of his India visit in March. They will have a look at it; how far we have travelled on that route and what needs to be done and what we would like to do here? There will be an overall review of Indo-US relations.

We have to see what matters to the US and what matters to India. We cannot see it as a one-way street. There will be a mutual exchange of views. There will be a meeting between the President and the Prime Minister.

How do you see the role of India in the UN? India is bound to play a role in the UN. Kashmir is an internal matter. But it will be in the context of Indo-US relations. And we have to see about it in that context.

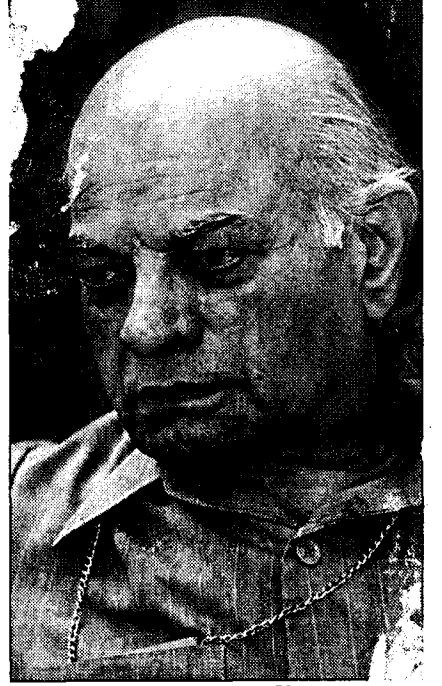
How will you tackle terrorism? We will talk about terrorism. Exactly. It is the sabotage of hidden cells that argue more urgently.

How will you tackle the UN? We will talk about the contribution made by India in the UN, our role in international affairs, our claim for permanent membership of Security Council. But Kashmir will not come up. We will not talk of Kashmir even if Pakistan raises it.

On the Security Council, the Prime Minister is not going to the UN to lobby for our case. But during any bilateral meeting with the heads of state, he will state India's case. We are looking at the bilateral meetings in the UN framework and obviously this matter will also come up.

There has been speculation about the Prime Minister running in Gen Musharraf in the UN lobby or the reception. Do you think it is possible? It is most unlikely, most unlikely.

What are the substantive issues, which may come up during the visit with President Clinton? Political, economic and scientific. But I cannot tell you. The non-proliferation issue will certainly come up for CTBT is raised, we will deal with that. We will tell them to build consensus within our country. Will the PM meet the US Presidential candidates? The problem is about scheduling. We have let the Prime Minister will be in such and such a place on such and such a day. If Governor Bush crosses that path, they will meet. If not, no certainty about it. As for Al Gore, the Prime Minister will be hosting a lunch for him as vice President. He is hosting a lunch for Mr. Vajpayee. The talks will be a dialogue. The talks will be a dialogue. The talks will be a dialogue.



Mishra: 'Why not go now?'

IMPORTANT ERRAND

APART FROM MEETING THE US PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER VAJPAYEE HAS SEVERAL TASKS BEFORE HIM, WRITES SAURABH SHUKLA

A TIGHT SCHEDULE and a brimming diary leave Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee with his hands full when he visits USA the coming week. He addresses (in Hindi) the UN's millennium summit, goes for a one-to-one with the US President Bill Clinton and with his deputy Al Gore, who is also the Democrats' presidential candidate. The tete-a-tete with the Republican hopeful George W Bush may possibly fall through, as the presidential candidate is likely to be busy canvassing in California. However, contrary to earlier reports, there are chances of squeezing in a meeting or two with the Indian community. So, how much to expect from Vajpayee's visit — given the fact that Clinton's a lame duck president, the pollsters are downizing Gore in the presidential race, and the country gripped by election fever to take notice the visting heads of state? Of course, there's the honour of being put up at the prestigious Blair House during the final leg — notified as state visit — at Washington. Of the previous Indian heads of state visiting the US, only Jawaharlal Nehru and Morarji Desai have been housed at Blair House. New Delhi is obviously agog with speculations on the importance of the visit. While many in South Block see

the visit mainly focusing on the first leg of Vajpayee's September 7-12 itinerary — that is, purely on the 'margins' of the UN millennium summit in New York. The official part of the US visit starts from September 13-17.

Senior officials admit that the timing was not what they would have wanted, but the visit was not possible otherwise. "The visit to the US is happening only because the Prime Minister is going to US for the UN millennium summit. Otherwise, a visit could not have been scheduled at this time," concurred a South Block official.

But there are others who disagree. Says former prime minister Inder Kumar Gujral, "The visit is quite important as PM can give quality time to make Americans aware of the threat of radical fundamentalism and terrorism, and take up the core issues that form the part of the Vision 2000 statement signed in Delhi by Clinton and Vajpayee in March." On the issue of US 'tilt', Gujral is of the opinion that, traditionally, US foreign policy is bipartisan and will continue in the same direction even if George Bush was to become the next US president.

The arithmetic of the visit also lends to it a considerable degree of importance, as it comes after a span of six years. The last Indian prime minister to visit the US was P V Narasimha Rao in 1994. The Prime Minister's Office says that it has been inundated with over a hundred odd invitations from people ranging from US governors of states, senators and Congressmen to business groups including those of the high-profile Indian community settled there.

Analysts are cautious not to discount the importance of the visit. Former foreign secretary M K

Rasgotra doesn't agree with those who see the importance of PM's visit resting just on the UN millennium summit. Confirming that there's already a positive tilt after Clinton's March visit, Rasgotra is hopeful that the visit will consolidate the goals set out by the Vision 2000 statement. But his optimism is not shared by many. Gujral says, "Sanctions are a part of US laws, so it will take time to lift them. But ways and means can be found to work along."

The visit also highlights a growing Indo-US convergence in fields earlier considered taboo due to Cold War compulsions. Mandarins in South Block confess that cooperation in

areas such as exchange of information regarding intelligence and security has been phenomenal in the past one year. "I don't expect the Americans to let time and help in the midst of the Indian Airlines flight crash," says a senior official. "Important intelligence inputs are in close touch at the highest and that interaction is continuing the candid comment from senior officials."

The business delegation and professionals as part of the entourage, the vibes of convergence will clearly be dominated by economic and scientific cooperation. While IT (Information Technology) figures high on the agenda, CTBT (Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty) may well get low priority as there are enough indications that Vajpayee's delegation will have no real disarmament expert from the MEA. Non-proliferation is bound to crop up during discussions but it may play it down this time in the treaty US Senate.

Personal and Gore, Vajpayee will be lending ears to the powerful strategic community in Washington. He will be meeting the top of influential think-tanks like Brookings Institution, RAND Corporation and Henry Kissinger in Washington. There are no big expectations of any gains from the visit. The growing dialogue between the two countries, says the Vajpayee's

IN THE PAST TENSE. 1. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, October-November 1949. President Truman. Three weeks. Differences linger on on US's stance on Kashmir. 2. December 1956. Nehru's second visit to US. Relations improve as talks with President Eisenhower successful. 3. November 1961. Nehru's third official visit to the US. The President was John F. Kennedy. 4. March 1966. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi meets President Johnson, new warmth in relations. US sanctions food aid to India, discontinued following India's protest. 5. November 1971. Indira Gandhi visits US. Meets President Nixon, not much change. 6. July 1982. Indira Gandhi visits US. Meets President Reagan, warming of relations in the Reagan era. 7. July 1985. Her son Rajiv Gandhi visits US. Continues relations with President Ronald Reagan. 9. May 1994. PM, PV. Narasimha Rao. President Clinton. Growing dialogue between the two countries.

THE VISIT

# 'Going back to Lahore will be appropriate'

By Malini Parthasarathy

CHENNAI, NOV. 29. The Clinton administration views the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee's Ramzan ceasefire initiative in Kashmir as a welcome development deserving of a response from the Kashmiri militant groups. According to a senior administration official, Mr. Karl Inderfurth, who is now in Delhi as part of his farewell trip to the region, "after several false starts in recent months, the Prime Minister's new initiative could be the step that leads to a new opening in addressing the Kashmir dispute."

Mr. Inderfurth, who is Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia in the outgoing Clinton administration and who has played a major role in the radical improvement of the context of U.S.-India relations which ensued despite the differences over India's nuclear tests, expressed hope over the recent developments in Kashmir, in a conversation in a brief stopover here in Chennai on his way to Delhi from Sri Lanka. While he took care to say that at that point in time, he was not really up to date on the latest developments in regard to the ceasefire, he did note that a dialogue between India and the Kashmiri groups would be "a good thing".

Asked for an elucidation of the U.S. stance in the context of the



Indian official argument that a dialogue with Pakistan was not possible until there was a complete cessation of cross-border terrorism, Mr. Inderfurth said: "It has been our view consistently that dialogue is needed between India and Pakistan but that it is also important for Pakistan to take important steps to demonstrate its seriousness in seeing that dialogue is resumed." This would include "steps to see that the level of violence is reduced in Kashmir."

Explaining that the United States saw the Lahore process as an important step, the Clinton administration official said, "we were then very disappointed with Kargil... we made it clear that Pakistan needed to see those forces withdrawn back across the Line of Control... we know that there were political costs here for Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Jaswant Singh as a result of Kargil..." Therefore, as a result of the Kargil episode, "a demonstration by Pakistan of its sincerity that it wants to resume the dialogue and to go back to the Lahore process would be an appropriate step to take." Mr. Inderfurth also noted that in the context of the process of address-

ing the Kashmir dispute, the United States also believes that "at some stage Pakistan would need to be involved in the process." He made clear that this was not to suggest that Pakistan be included in a three-way discussion. The idea was that there could be several tracks of discussions, for instance, one involving India and the militant groups and another between India and Pakistan. "India and Pakistan need to resume their dialogue in a serious and sustained fashion."

The U.S. Assistant Secretary, who is on his final tour of the region before the Clinton administration makes its exit in January, said that under the leadership of Mr. Bill Clinton and Mr. Vajpayee, the two countries had been able to "chart a new and positive relationship". The new turn in U.S.-India relations, Mr. Inderfurth asserted, had become a "significant part of the redefinition of U.S. foreign policy for the 21st century." He pointed out that Mr. Clinton considered "this new relationship as one of the high points of his presidency." The initiative to improve ties with India was "a top-down initiative" by Mr. Clinton, fuelled in part by the end of the Cold War, India's own steps "towards the global marketplace" and the fact that both were "vibrant democracies".

Outlining the implied tasks for the next U.S. administration in

sustaining the new momentum in U.S.-India relations, the Clinton administration official said that the new foundation laid during the Clinton era would have to be built upon. Striking a note of caution, he said: "We must be vigilant that we do not relapse into old ways of dealing with each other... the old sensitivities, and we all know what they are, are receding and we are beginning to have a greater degree of confidence in what we have to say to each other but that does not mean that we will agree on every issue and we should not expect to."

"Over the next several years, we will be testing the proposition that by expanding our relationship to encompass a broadbased agenda, we will be better able to narrow our differences on those issues that have proven difficult for us in the past, like nonproliferation..." Mr. Inderfurth said, adding that his hope was that "a few years from now, we will be able to look back and say that this period truly did represent a fundamental change in the U.S.-India relationship but it will take us a few years to make that determination..."

According to Mr. Inderfurth, the changed relationship was "so much in line with larger US national interests" and enjoyed "such broad support across the political spectrum in the United States, from both the Democrats and the Republicans", that this

changed perspective on U.S.-India relations was certain to continue into the next administration. But, he underlined that it was also important to recognise that while the foundation for the relationship had been laid, "expectations" should "not be too high" so as to evoke subsequent disappointment. "It is important to place our expectations at a realistic level," said the outgoing U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, whose farewell visit here virtually draws down the curtains on the Clinton administration's engagement of South Asia.

THE HINDU

30 NOV 2000