

A boost to economic ties?

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PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE



INDUSTRY:

- U.S. Energy Association and CII for joint working group on clean energy and environmental opportunities.
- Knowledge trade initiative — FICCI and U.S.-India Business Council.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- Bank of America with DSQ Software to set up a global IT service company.
- IBM and DSQ.com to supply computer products and services.
- Infodream and Modicom for web portal.
- Neuvis Inc. And DSQ Software for innovations in e-business.



ENERGY

- Ogden Energy with Balaji Group for 106 mw power project in Tamil Nadu.
- Ogden and Shree Maheshwar Power Project.
- Synergies Energy Development and Power Finance Corporation.



ENVIRONMENT

- Global Market Resources of U.S. and Healing Medicads.
- Highstream Technologies and Subhashi.
- Water Systems International and Haryana Industrial Development Corporation.



TOURISM

- World Corporate Club Inc. and Flex.



GOVERNMENT BUSINESS AGREEMENT

- Indo-U.S. Commercial Dialogue — terms of reference signed by U.S. Commerce Secretary and Indian Commerce Minister.
- A public and private sector trade and investment mechanism.

The gameplan for upgrading Indo-U.S. commercial ties had been carefully laid prior to the Clinton visit. The only impetus needed was a green signal from the political leadership of both countries. SUSHMA RAMACHANDRAN takes a look at the results.

ON THE surface it seemed more like a holiday for the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and his daughter. The trip was a visual feast — Mr. Clinton dancing with villagers, posing in front of the Taj Mahal, sighting tigers and pumping hands with alacrity in the Indian Parliament. Undoubtedly a shot in the arm for the tourism industry. But the apparent hoopla over exotic India concealed a far more serious intent. Corporate India was being wooed with ardour by the U.S. President who spoke in glowing terms about Indian achievements in the area of information technology and on the need for closer economic ties.

The gameplan for upgrading Indo-U.S. commercial ties had been carefully laid prior to the visit. The only impetus needed to push it forward was a green signal from the political leadership of both countries.

Mr. Clinton's entire trip, especially the softening of attitudes on strategic issues, laid the groundwork for the subsequent series of agreements that

finally formalised the economic engagement of these two major players on the world scene.

One of the most significant announcements in the "Vision Statement" issued after the Clinton-Vajpayee talks was the creation of an institutional arrangement for a Government-to-Government dialogue on economic issues.

The three-tier mechanism envisages regular meetings at the Ministerial level for discussions on trade and investment. The talks will be held between the Indian Finance Minister and the U.S. Treasury Secretary at one level and at the second level between the Prime Minister's Office and the U.S. Trade Representative's Office. The third tier is the Indo-U.S. Commercial Dialogue for which the Commerce and Industry Minister, Mr. Murasoli Maran, and the U.S. Commerce

Secretary, Mr. William Daley, signed, during the visit, an agreement ratifying the terms of reference.

The unique aspect of the Dialogue is that it will be both at the Ministerial level and on an industry-to-industry basis. The Washington based U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC) will act as the catalyst on the U.S. side with the major Indian Chambers of Commerce being involved at this end. According to Mr. Michael Clark of the USIBC, the dialogue will be largely industry-led and it replaces the five-year-old largely ineffective Indo-U.S. Commercial Alliance.

In fact, with the two Governments having entered into a formal dialogue process, the next step for strengthening business ties lies at the industry level. The business delegation accompanying Mr. Clinton appeared to be enthusiastically seeking a closer relationship and numerous agreements were concluded

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involving an estimated investment of \$1.4 billion.

The major sectors for these tie-ups were energy, environment and information technology, the three areas where there seems to be the greatest complementarity between the two countries. Energy is the area of infrastructure where India needs perhaps the biggest dose of investment from abroad. And U.S. power companies are eager to provide investments in case the climate is right. Similarly, there is complementarity in clean energy technologies with India seeking to upgrade manufacturing facilities and U.S. companies equally keen to provide the needed technology. As for IT, which remained the focus area during the entire Clinton visit, some agreements were signed but these are probably only the tip of the iceberg. The Indo-U.S. Knowledge Trade Initiative agreement entered into by FICCI and the USIBC may

signal the advent of a more formal collaboration as the working groups will now identify specific areas of cooperation between the industry in both countries.

In any case, Silicon Valley already has close links with India as India-born entrepreneurs play a leading role in the U.S. IT industry. No wonder then that the business delegation comprised numerous Indian Americans especially CEOs of IT companies. In fact this was one of the criticisms against the U.S. business delegation. Some industry representatives, however, argue that Indians are now at the helm of affairs in a wide range of industries in the U.S., not just in the IT sector.

They also say it is essential to develop closer ties with Indian Americans, just as China has tapped its diaspora to considerable advantage. In this context, an issue that appeared uppermost among IT companies was the shortage of H-1B

visas for Indian professionals. Talks were held on this problem at the Government-level and members of the Congressional delegation accompanying Mr. Clinton also expressed their willingness to push for an increase in the visa ceiling in the Legislature.

But discussions during a conference on trade and investment revealed that IT companies are looking for more flexibility in the visa regime given the fact that technology makes it easy to operate from anywhere in the world.

One U.S.-based software company employing 2,000 people in Bangalore said visas were only needed for training Indian professionals for two-months at a time in the U.S. Subsequently, operations could be carried out in India, he said. In other words, instead of a continuing flow of hi-tech personnel to the U.S., India could keep its best minds, pay them competitive wages and let them operate from this country. Thus, greater Indo-U.S. collaboration could lead to innovative solutions and mutually beneficial arrangements for both countries.

Domestic industry is already quite upbeat about the long-term impact of the Clinton visit. The Assocham secretary-general, Mr. Jayant Bhuyan, identifies three major plus points flowing out of the visit as far as economic and business ties are concerned. First, he said, India was now seen to be outward-looking rather than insular. This was acknowledged by the U.S. President in his speeches. In turn, he felt U.S. industry would begin to recognise the presence of greater openness in the Indian economy.

Second, he said, the new Commercial Dialogue was extremely significant as it would function both at the Government and the private industry level.

And finally, the visit had enabled India to sensitise the U.S. in the area of multilateral trade as far as developing economies were concerned. It had been able to convince the U.S. to modulate its stand on issues such as trade and environment, he pointed out.

In sum therefore, the U.S. President's visit has had a catalytic effect on the growth of a new economic alliance. Though India is yet to attain its potential on the world stage as an economic power, the U.S. sees it as a major player in the future. With the Indian strengths in knowledge-based industries, it is clear that closer economic and business ties can be a win-win situation for both countries in the long run.

Scrap Rs 3,000 cr. Indo-U.S. telecom venture, says RSS

By Bhaskar Roy

The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: The RSS has demanded that a Rs 3,000-crore joint venture between the Department of Telecommunications Services (DTS) and IUNet, a subsidiary of Carnegie Mellon University in the U.S., be immediately scrapped in view of its serious implications for national security.

RSS ideologue Dattopant Thengadi termed the *Sankhya Vahini* project—billed as a high-speed inter-university data network for India—a “dangerous riddle wrapped in mystery”. In a booklet slated for circulation at the RSS session in Nagpur from March 8, he has stated, “The secrecy with which the Rs 3000-crore project is being promoted is baffling.”

The project, which got the Union cabinet’s approval on January 19 as well as 1,000 acres of land, reportedly provided by the government near Delhi, had been cleared without the approval of the defence ministry, Mr Thengadi claimed.

“This opens up the floodgates for espionage, interception of strategic messages, scientific data, telephone conversations, faxes and e-mail by a foreign power,” he has argued. He fears that the little known IUNet Inc “is not a company that conforms to the definition of the term. At best, it is a facilitating agency”.

Mr Thengadi said that IUNet had not promised to bring any foreign investment into India. “All that they will bring is the know-how, and for this they have managed 49 per cent of the total equity stake of the company,” the senior RSS leader said, and added, “strangely, the foreign partner will control the project for the first five years”. Mr Thengadi, founder of the RSS labour wing, the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, points out that the NDA agenda had promised not to open up the telecom sector to foreign participation.

Pallone urges defence ties with India

N C Menon
Washington, March 1

CONGRESSMAN FRANK Pallone Jr., a New Jersey Democrat and founder of the Congressional India Caucus, yesterday urged President Clinton to utilise his visit later this month to establish closer defence and security cooperation with India in order to respond to common threats and challenges.

"This is an area where the need for US-India partnership is growing increasingly urgent," Pallone said in remarks in the House.

"For years, we have seen how many of the same forces of international terrorism that threaten American interests also pose a direct threat to India's security."

Pallone listed China as another common threat faced by India and the US. China last week threatened Taiwan with military force, "belying Beijing's claims to favour peaceful reunification."

The Congressman added: "I believe it is time for the US to stop basing so much of our Asia policy on the hope of achieving a strategic partnership with China. Instead, I believe we should recognise the benefits of closer defence ties with India, a country which, unlike China, is a democracy. Moreover, India, in contrast to China, does not threaten its neighbours with the kinds of rhetoric and actions that Beijing has most recently demonstrated with regard to Taiwan."

"Towards this end, President

Clinton's upcoming trip to India offers an opportunity to embark upon a new direction in US policy in Asia.

It is an opportunity to confront the threat posed by China to regional and international security, and to make responses to this threat a higher priority."

Apart from China's aggression against India in the 1960s, Pallone said, Beijing was providing missile development and nuclear technology assistance to Pakistan, indirectly but in a real sense threatening India.

Given Chinese behaviour and the common threat it poses, Pallone believed President Clinton should use his trip to India as the occasion to launch a new Indo-US defence partnership.

"While this is a bold new step, I believe we can lay the groundwork now for a far-reaching alliance between the US and India, including greatly expanded IMET (International Military Education and Training), joint exercises and the other military and political links that the US currently maintains with our key democratic allies around the world," Pallone asserted.

"Such a partnership may take some time to fully develop, but now is the time for launching it and pondering the details."

Pallone also maintained his view that Clinton should not go to Pakistan on his South Asia trip "since Pakistan has done nothing to deserve a visit by the President of the United States."

Clinton visit: process is the product

By C. Raja Mohan

AS THE Government gets ready to receive Mr. Bill Clinton in less than three weeks, there is no expectation either in New Delhi or Washington of dramatic results from the first American Presidential visit to India in 22 years. To be sure, India and the United States are working on a slew of substantive agreements in a number of areas extending from business to social development, and from energy to good governance. The prospects for a new strategic economic partnership between the two countries, in the information technology sector and the emerging knowledge-based industries, would indeed be show-cased during Mr. Clinton's stay in Hyderabad.

During the visit, India and the U.S. will also issue a "vision statement" on the future of bilateral relations. But neither the bilateral agreements nor the vision statement are likely to be earth-shaking. The visit, in fact, is unlikely to be judged by the agreements and joint statements that it will produce. The assessment in both the capitals is that the more intensive Indo-U.S. engagement to be initiated by Mr. Clinton will be far more important than the various agreements that will be signed during the visit. In that sense, the "process" of Mr. Clinton's visit may indeed be the most valuable "product" for Indo-U.S. relations.

The objective of the Presidential visit is to create the basis for a sustainable and productive engagement between India and the U.S., which turned out to be impossible during the Cold War and elusive in the decade since. If the Cold War dynamics prevented India and the U.S. from finding a secure common ground for political cooperation, repeated efforts to find one in the 1990s floundered in deep differences over nuclear non-proliferation and the divergence over regional issues, in particular Kashmir. The activist approach of the Clinton Administration on rolling back India's nuclear and missile programmes and its constant harping on a solution to the Kashmir dispute put Indo-U.S. relations on a roller-coaster ride during the 1990s. But, despite the unending rearmament during the last decade over nuclear weapons and Kashmir, there were new elements that gave some stability and damp-

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ened the wild oscillations at the political level.

India's economic reforms and the American interest in India as a "big emerging market" opened the doors for significant expansion of commercial cooperation between the two nations. Two-way trade has more than doubled to nearly \$ 13 billions now. Equally important has been the coming of age of the Indian community in the U.S. It has begun to assert itself in American domestic politics and has played an important role in positively shaping domestic American perceptions of India and advancing Indo-U.S. relations.

Despite the new stabilising factors, the differences between New Delhi and Washington on nuclear and Kashmir issues appeared funda-

mental and unbridgeable. A radical restructuring of the terms of the Indo-U.S. discourse on these issues could indeed be the greatest contribution of Mr. Clinton's visit. A basic shift has already taken place in the nature of the dialogue between the two nations on nuclear weapons and non-proliferation. The U.S. was deeply angered by the Indian nuclear tests that were seen in Washington as undermining the global non-proliferation regime as well the longstanding American policy of preventing India from emerging as an overt nuclear weapon power. Yet, India's nuclear tests have provided a way of dealing with nuclear differences that was not available before May 1998. For nearly three decades, nuclear non-proliferation was a lump in the throat. They could neither swallow it nor spit it out.

The twelve rounds of nuclear dialogue between the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, and the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott, have provided a framework to reconcile conflicting imperatives of India's nuclear security interests and the U.S.-led global non-proliferation regime. There is indeed a deep disappointment in the U.S. that the

dialogue has not led to concrete actions well before Mr. Clinton's visit to India. Hopes were high a couple of months ago that the Government of India would complete its efforts to build a national consensus on joining the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Clinton Administration would respond by lifting most of the sanctions imposed after the nuclear tests of May 1998.

But the lack of enough creativity in Washington and the absence of a steadfastness in New Delhi to rework its nuclear diplomacy after Pokhran II have forced the two sides to leave the nuclear differences hovering over Mr. Clinton's visit. While In-

dia and the U.S. will have to manage the disappointing over the stalled nuclear diplomacy of the last year and a half, there is enough reason for both sides to be satisfied that they have been able to move a long way from their traditional entrenched positions. For New Delhi, the U.S. has willingly begun to accept the reality of India as a nuclear weapon power; and for Washington, India has drawn much closer to the global nuclear mainstream. The very fact that Mr. Clinton is visiting India in less than two years after the nuclear tests and despite the inability to sign the CTBT suggest that the nuclear question has been bounded and its salience in bilateral relations reduced to an appropriate level.

The Clinton visit will also be watched worldwide for possible signals of a change in American approach to the Kashmir question. On the eve of his visit, Mr. Clinton has made abundantly clear his concerns on the rising tensions between India and Pakistan over Kashmir and his readiness to mediate if both sides want it. With India unwilling to accept third party involvement, the real questions may not be about Mr. Clinton's mediation but an American reassessment of the problem in the context of the nuclear shadow over the sub-continent.

All indications are that Mr. Clinton's visit is forcing the American establishment to intellectually grapple with the challenge of resolving the Kashmir dispute in the context of the nuclearisation of India and Pakistan. Signs of the American rethinking were evident in the approach adopted by the Clinton Administration towards the Kargil confrontation last year, when it pressed Pakistan to unconditionally vacate its aggression across the Line of Control. Mr. Clinton also got the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, to commit himself in a joint statement on July 4, 1999, to respect the "sanctity of the Line of Control".

It should be obvious to Mr. Clinton and his advisers that given the danger of the escalation of Indo-Pakistan tensions to a nuclear war in the sub-continent, any attempt to forcibly change the current national boundaries in the region is an extraordinarily reckless enterprise.

If Washington has understood the nuclear imperative in the sub-continent and its implications for the Kashmir dispute, Mr. Clinton has an opportunity during his visit to highlight the broad principles that should govern the security dynamic of the region. Mr. Clinton should unequivocally assert American support for the unity and integrity of all states in the region and opposition to any effort to undermine the current territorial status quo in the region. Unambiguous signals from the U.S. that it would not support the further partition of any country in the region would create the political confidence and space throughout the sub-continent to respond in a just manner to the aspirations of ethnic, religious and other groups for greater autonomy within the existing framework of national boundaries.

Although Mr. Clinton's visit to the region might not produce great political breakthroughs, it could certainly force the South Asian leaders to think hard about a new security architecture in the sub-continent. By emphasising the importance of democracies, stressing the importance of minorities, federalism, respect for the rights of minorities, and good governance, and calling for regional economic integration, Mr. Clinton could give a big boost to peace and progress throughout the sub-continent.

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Diversifying foreign relations

Beyond the Clinton visit

CLINTON'S forthcoming visit is the fashionable point of attention in Indian foreign policy these days. The importance attached to the visit is logical in terms of the USA's overarching status in international relations. It is refreshing, however, to note that India's foreign policy acknowledges also the reality of other states with a tangible influence on global political and economic equations. Indian diplomacy in recent weeks has moved beyond the acknowledgement of this reality to affirm an approach of encouraging a poly-centric dynamics in international relations.

The government undertook specific initiatives with three countries in February. It received French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine and Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Royuzo Kato, while a high-level economic delegation led by Commerce Minister Murasoli Maran visited Beijing and signed bilateral agreements on expanding Sino-Indian economic and technological cooperation.

In the process, India strengthened linkages with three important centres of regional and global influence covering Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. Before assessing the impact and results of these interactions, it must be noted that there is a certain parallelism in the world-views and perceptions regarding the evolving strategic environment among these countries.

The region-specific security concerns of important countries in Europe, South Asia and the Far East, do not entirely mesh in with the strategic perceptions and security doctrines of the US. This is particularly so in the case of India, China and France. The deliberations preceding the aborted WTO Conference at Seattle clearly indicate the dichotomy and complexities affecting the management of international trade under the WTO regime. There is agreement among a number of countries that international trading arrangements should evolve on the basis of a consensus, taking into account the varied concerns and requirements of countries in different regions at different

levels of development, technological and resource mobilisation capacities. Similarly agreed upon is the need for a consensus on the formulation and implementation of non-proliferation and arms control regimes as well as UN reforms.

It is the general similarity of perceptions on some of these issues and trends which affirms the need for consciously structuring a world order based on an equilibrium between important countries. Discussions with the Foreign Minister of France as well as the Chinese and Japanese leaders were aimed at furthering the processes of establishing such an equilibrium. The twin objectives of this diplomatic exercise were to sustain and expand polycentricism in interstate relations on macro-

between India and Japan is desirable to ensure Asian security. There was a consensus that, since the end of the Cold War, economic growth has been accepted as the highest priority in the economic policies, not only in India and Japan, but also in most Asian countries.

Discussions with the Japanese led to an agreement on the factors profoundly affecting the political stability and security environment in the Asian region.

Among these factors is the emergence of a strong China as an economic, political and overarching military power in Asia. The continued tensions between India and Pakistan, on the one hand, and the tensions affecting the Korean Peninsula and the Straits of Taiwan, on the other, besides the eco-



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Japan, France and China are among important centres of power with security concerns that do not mesh entirely with those of the US

level issues, and to expand the content and range of bilateral cooperation in specific areas of mutual interest. A network of bilateral relations and regional cooperation mechanisms will temper and, to some extent, counter hegemonistic tendencies which may originate from one part of the world or the other.

These visits are to be followed by the visit of a former Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto. The visits were preceded by high-level seminars of the Indo-French Forum and another one jointly organised by the Centre for Policy Research and Japan Centre for International Exchange. Scholars and analysts who participated in both these seminars endorsed the validity of the political trends. Though Japan still remains firmly critical of the subcontinent's nuclear weaponisation, there was agreement that economic and technological cooperation

economic crisis in East and South-East Asia, have disrupted the economic dynamism of the region, resulting in political uncertainties, particularly in an important country like Indonesia. Among other factors are the territorial disputes and competition for energy resources in South China Sea, the nuclearisation of our subcontinent which has changed the strategic and security environment, the rise of Islamic extremism in West and Central Asia, and the dangers posed by terrorism and narco-terrorism.

There is a gradual acknowledgement that, despite the geographical diversity and different implications of these factors for India and Japan, the two countries with their respective geo-strategic and economic capacities could structure cooperative relations and lessen tensions and increase stability in the Asian region. For, there is a convergence of interests in

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balancing off China's power potential, enhancing the economic interests of the people of the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean region, cooperating within the framework of the ASEAN, specially in the Asian Regional Forum, and evolving a joint approach to counter terrorism, narco-terrorism and piracies.

As for relations with France, External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh's discussions with French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine were significant. At this bilateral level, France showed a sensitivity to Indian security concerns and nuclear weaponisation policies. France and India agreed that excessive US domination of world politics would be unhealthy for a stable world order. They echoed the conclusions reached in the preceding discussions at the Indo-French Forum that the US had, as no country before it, concentrated all forms of power and influence from the conventional and hard forms such as military power and advanced technologies to soft but much more impactful forms of influence in terms of cultural and informational phenomenon. There was agreement that a multipolar world required the nurturing of alternative power centres like Europe, Russia, China, India, Japan, Brazil and South Africa. France shared India's approach towards UN reforms.

Maran's visit to China was a significant watershed in the revival of the process of normalisation of relations with China, after the post-Pokharan II setbacks. India's endorsement of China's admission to the WTO and the accord on expanding bilateral economic and commercial relations signalled progress towards normalisation. The President's visit to China in May will give a further impetus to stabilising the relations for regional security.

Whatever our anxieties about relations with Pakistan or uncertainties about the outcome of the Clinton's visit, the structured diversification of our policy orientations towards important power centres like Paris, Beijing and Tokyo is a process which merits support.

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Concern over US Defence missile system

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, March 2. — India and Russia have expressed concern over the USA's steps to deploy a national missile defence system.

The issue came up for discussion during the visit of the Speaker of the Russian Duma, Mr Gennady Seleznyov.

Mr Seleznyov said both Russia and India shared their concerns over this development, pointing out that the system being planned by the USA was a menace to international peace.

The views of Russia and India on international and regional

security issues were identical, he said.

Russia has been strongly protesting the system, saying it would destroy the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) treaty which was the cornerstone of the current system of strategic stability.

The external affairs spokesman said the ABM treaty was a bilateral one and any unilateral step that could complicate the security environment should be refrained from.

The Russian delegation,

TALKS WITH DUMA SPEAKER

which called on the President, the Vice-President, the Prime Minister, the deputy chairman of the Rajya Sabha, the external affairs minister and the leader of the Opposition, Mrs Sonia Gandhi, also discussed, during its stay, concerns relating to cross-border terrorism.

The two sides discussed the strategic nature of Indo-Russian relations, it was stated.

Mr Seleznyov said discussions also touched on the need for enhancing cooperation between

Russia, India and China and the building of a multi-polar world.

The three countries, he said, were the guarantors of regional security.

While the Russian Speaker continued to seek clemency for Russian pilots convicted in the Purulia arms-drop case during his visit, the issue would not stand in the way of bilateral relations, he said.

He said the delegation had asked the President to consider with compassion any mercy, a petition that might come before him if the Russian pilots failed to get a favourable verdict from a higher judicial,

Wisner justifies hike in India's defence outlay

London, March 3

FORMER US ambassador to India Frank Wisner has justified the "massive increase" for defence proposed in the 2000-01 Indian Budget, saying it has to be looked at "in a measured way". "The Indians have faced a hostile situation during the course of the summer in Kargil, their forces do need to respond to those purposes but you want to look at it in a measured way, not as an untoward or excessively dangerous development," Wisner said in an interview on BBC World's *Asia Today* programme telecast last night.

Asked specifically whether the "massive increase" in defence spending was a sign that India is belligerent, he said "I think you need to be a bit more cautious." The items on which India would spend those funds also needed to be cleared up, the former Ambassador added.

"If you look back over the past decade in real expenditure terms, the Indian defence budget has been on the decrease. The past increase, which was a very small one, went mainly for increased pay purposes," he said.

"There are, therefore, considerable backlogs in defence spending if India is to maintain a reasonable defence posture commensurate with her size, the exposure of her

borders and her other national defence needs," he said adding one should not rush into judgement in the matter.

Asked whether it would lead to an arms race in South Asia, the former Ambassador said he would hope both India and Pakistan would proceed with great caution as they view each other.

Noting that there has been an increase in tension in the region, he said "both sides have to think very carefully, now that they have declared themselves as nuclear powers, before they make any moves that would cause an escalation of tensions." "This is a time for restraint and careful reflection not hasty judgement," he said.

To a specific question whether, in his opinion, President Bill Clinton should go to Pakistan during his visit to India and Bangladesh this month, Wisner said the President will visit Pakistan if that visit will make a contribution to an improvement of conditions in the region. (PTI)

Clinton's joint address on March 22, Left may stay out

Kalyani Shanker
New Delhi, March 6 *HR-8*

THE HISTORIC Central Hall of Parliament is getting ready to receive the visiting United States President Bill Clinton who will address Members of Parliament on March 22 at 11.05 am.

The joint address has also become a little controversial with the Left parties deciding to stage a demonstration during the visit and the RSP and the Forward Bloc have already sounded the other comrades for a boycott of the joint session. CPI and CPI-M are yet to take any decision in this regard.

Speaker G.M.C. Balayogi will inform the leaders of various parties tomorrow at a special meeting convened to discuss the impasse in Lok Sabha.

There will be only four chairs on the dais - for the visiting US President, Vice-President Kishan Kant, Speaker Balayogi and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee. The function is likely to last an

hour.

President Clinton's visit and his address to Members of Parliament assumes importance as it is after a gap of almost 22 years that an American President is visiting India. Indian Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi and Narasimha Rao had addressed a joint session of American Congress and Senate during their respective visits to that country.

The Speaker may have a tough time in convincing the Left parties as some of them have plans to boycott the joint address.

The Left parties have taken a political decision to stage demonstrations during the US President's visit. Mr Nilotpal Basu of the CPI-M said the focus will be on the entire gamut of issues including WTO, CTBT and security related issues. The Government as well as the Speaker are concerned about the impasse in the House which has not conducted any business except the President's address, railway budget, laying of economic

survey and budget.

According to Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pramod Mahajan, the expenditure is about a crore of rupees per sitting and there are about 54 sittings during a year. Both the Houses have been stalled during the current session, which may go for recess on March 16 only to meet again for Clinton's address on March 22. The actual hours of business conducted so far are not even about ten hours while a day's sitting is counted as six hours.

BJP spokesman and Rajya Sabha member Venkaiah Naidu is in favour of bringing a concept of "No work no pay" for the members to ensure a smooth conduct of business, though it is in its initial stage.

The Government, gauging the mood of the Opposition, is resigned to accept the inevitable. The Congress, which led the attack on the RSS issue, is not likely to keep quiet. The Bihar issue, which has overtaken the RSS in the last four days, is likely to dominate both the Houses.

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Clinton's visit to broaden ties: U.S. Ambassador

NEW DELHI, MARCH 6. The U.S. President Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to India this month is aimed at broadening relations between the two countries and goes beyond differences over nuclear non-proliferation or Indo-Pakistan tensions, the U.S. Ambassador, Mr. Richard Celeste, said today.

The purpose of the visit "is to broaden the engagement and underscore the range of our relationship," he told foreign correspondents here.

Asked whether Mr. Clinton proposed to visit Pakistan during his upcoming South Asian tour, Mr. Celeste said a decision was "imminent". He emphasised that it would be a mistake to think that the Indo-U.S. relations rested entirely on progress in Indo-Pakistan ties.

The U.S. envoy ruled out direct mediation by Washington on the Jammu and Kashmir issue, saying Mr. Clinton "understands the limitations of U.S. trying to project ourselves into a role inappropriately". However, the U.S. President would offer to do whatever he could to reduce tensions between India and Pakistan.

Six Cabinet Ministers, including the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, would be part of Mr. Clinton's entourage. The two sides would hold wide-ranging discussions on broad-based issues relating to trade, investment, energy, environment and cooperation in science and technology.

Mr. Clinton will arrive here late on March 19. He will leave for Bangladesh on March 20 and is expected to return to Delhi the same day. His official visit to India will begin on March 21 with a red carpet

ceremonial reception at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The U.S. President is slated to address the joint sittings of both the Houses of Parliament on March 22. The same day, he is likely to visit the Taj Mahal. He is also expected to visit Jaipur, Hyderabad and Mumbai before leaving India on March 25.

'No decisions in Pak.'

In Washington, *New York Times* has said Pakistan's Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has so far not done the things that the American Government considers most important, even as the White House ponders over the possibility of including Islamabad in Mr. Clinton's South Asia itinerary.

Gen. Musharraf had not spelt out a plan for restoring democracy. He had not cracked down on an Islamic fundamentalist group that the U.S. had put on its list of terrorist organisations.

And in a decision that was a telling commentary on the General's cautious style of governance, he had not signed the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). The daily quoted the Pakistani Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, as having spoken out in favour of the treaty, but the new government had chosen not to sign for fear that doing so would anger Islamic political parties.

In an interview, Mr. Sattar asked why the new Government should pay the political price for signing when the U.S. Senate had voted against the treaty. "The advantages of signing are unclear and the disadvantages of political opposition at home are concrete," he said. — PTI, UNI

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Clinton for India in Security Council

DESIKAN THIRUNARAYANAPURAM
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, March 6. — India should be a permanent member of the Security Council, along with Brazil and Japan, President Bill Clinton said yesterday, but added that the UN resolution on Kashmir was the main obstacle in the matter.

The US President was responding to a request that he should support New Delhi's bid for a permanent seat in the UN council, at a fund-raiser organised by the Indo-American Political Foundation.

Lifting of curbs unlikely

The possibility of US sanctions being lifted during Mr Bill Clinton's visit were today characterised as unlikely by a senior US Embassy official, SNS adds from New Delhi. As the issue was linked to nuclear non-proliferation, he said it did not appear as though it would be resolved during the visit, agencies reported.

The US disclaimer has come notwithstanding the recent off-the-cuff remarks made by Mr AB Vajpayee, who had said the US President's visit would see lifting of sanctions.

But the official made it clear that despite American concerns

CLINTON:

(Continued from page 1)

over proliferation and Indo-Pak tension, the visit would go beyond this and endeavour to establish a long overdue broad-based dialogue. Trade and investment were likely to dominate a large portion of the agenda, and some announcements on foreign direct investment were possible, he said.

While expressing US concerns over Indo-Pak tension, he said the situation was not a flash point. Efforts, during the visit, would be limited to getting the Lahore process back on track, the US official said.

He also identified, in the first official confirmation, the broad contours of the President's itinerary during his visit.

Agra, Jaipur, Hyderabad and Bombay have now been named as definite stops in addition to the two days in New Delhi.

While Mr Clinton's official visit begins on 21 March, the US President will arrive here on 19 March for an unofficial stopover before flying out to Bangladesh the next day for a day. He will return to Delhi the same day, the official said.

■ See CLINTON: page 6

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Carrots and sticks

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US PRESIDENT Bill Clinton's impending India visit has revived discussions on sanctions. While Washington continues to employ sanctions with increasing frequency, study after study shows their questionable utility. Sanctions are a notoriously ineffective instrument of statecraft, but their value for US policy-makers flows from the lack of better policy alternatives to help change the "behaviour" of targeted states.

Having imposed a wide range of technology, entity and economic sanctions against India, Washington from time to time announces some relaxation. This is done either to protect its commercial interests (as happened when, within months, many post-Shakti economic sanctions were lifted) or to give the illusion of a softening in its attitude (illustrated by the removal of some Indian enterprises from the "Entity List", an unconcealed tool of blackmail). Sanctions relaxation in one area sometimes has been followed by new punitive measures in another.

Mr Clinton's visit is an occasion for the "goodwill" easing of some punitive actions, while other sanctions-withdrawal carrots continue to be dangled to cajole India to accept missile and fissile-material curbs as well as the nuclear test-ban treaty. The fact is that outside the group of alleged "rogue" states, India today faces the most extensive and rigorous US sanctions, some in effect for three decades. This writer has just completed an academic study on the impact of US sanctions. Five conclusions emerge:

■ Post-Shakti sanctions have had a minimal economic effect. Belying prophets of doom, the economy has performed better in the 20-month period after the imposition of economic sanctions than in the previous 20 months. This upward trend has occurred not because of the sanctions but despite the sanctions.

This conclusion has also been reached by a recent US International Trade Commission report which places the overall economic effect of the sanctions on India at \$320 million. Those who inflict costs on others also have to bear costs. The report estimates America's cost of the Indo-Pak economic sanctions at \$161 million. The commission concluded: "Overall, the Glenn Amendment sanctions appear to have had a relatively minimal medium-to-

longer-term impact on India's economy". They are also benefiting "alternative suppliers".

It is true that International Financial Institution (IFI) sanctions have hurt India, but its loss due to extra non-concessional commercial borrowing is difficult to estimate. First, loan denials by IFIs such as the World Bank and ADB have not prompted India in a majority of cases to turn to higher-interest commercial borrowing. Had it done so, the interest differential would be up to \$800 million a year. Second, having got into the habit of securing loan commitments far in excess of actual utilisation, India still has access to old, unutilised credit totalling billions of dollars. For the same reason, the halt to new Japanese ODA approvals has proved little more than a fleabite, although the Finance Ministry (with its stash-under-the-pillow approach) clearly misses receiving new loan commitments.

The calculated economic impact of the post-Shakti sanctions thus has been under 0.2 per cent of India's GDP. The initial psychological effects of the US-sponsored sanctions were greater, triggering a downturn in the Indian financial markets, a downgrading of India's foreign currency debt-risk assessment, and a delay in some company bond issues. By 1999, however, not only had India's creditworthiness been upgraded, the initial concerns about investment inflows had dissipated. A major step that helped bring some exchange-rate stability was the raising of \$4.2 billion internationally through the "Resurgent India Bonds".

The very factors that protected India from the effects of the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis have insulated it from the rigours of the economic sanctions. Indian economy is not dependent on exports.

BRAHMA CHELLANEY on the role of sanctions

Moreover, successive governments have pursued a cautious, step-by-step liberalisation approach, maintaining capital controls that shield the country from abrupt short-term capital movements and keeping the volatile short-term foreign debt at a manageable level. The Indian economy relies neither on access to the American or any other single market nor on multilateral assistance. As India continues to liberalise its economy, the wisdom of a balanced approach limiting external vulnerabilities should not be lost.

■ Sanctions nonetheless remain a potent political weapon. Despite their dubious economic utility, sanctions are a powerful political instrument to mount pressure on a weak-willed state. To sharpen their political value, Mr Clinton has worked with the US Congress to replace the administration's rigid adherence to sanctions laws with flexibility to dangle carrots and reward "good behaviour". The India-Pakistan Relief Act of 1998 and the greater sanctions-waiver authority conferred on the President by Congress five months ago do just that.

The US has employed the sanctions card to build leverage in the negotiations with India. Months after the talks began, it blackballed 200 large Indian enterprises, a "discretionary action" outside the purview of the Glenn Amendment. And it helped ease IFI lending curbs against Pakistan but not against India. India, although publicly stating that it will not negotiate on sanctions, has allowed itself to come under pressure on that issue.

■ Pre-existing sanctions actually motivated India to go overtly nuclear. The sanctions bugbear was employed by outside powers for years to dissuade India from crossing the nuclear threshold. Shafts at Pokhran were drilled in the early eighties but the

testing plans remained frozen, beginning to thaw only from late 1995 when an internal government assessment showed that the cumulative international costs of nuclear restraint outweighed the potential costs of overt nuclearisation. Far from winning any rewards, India realised its unique nuclear restraint had increasingly made it a target of technology sanctions.

A point was finally reached when the threat of further sanctions could no longer buy continued Indian restraint. Overuse or prolonged use had blunted the sanctions tool. Pre-existing sanctions thus played an important role in nudging India to gate-crash the nuclear club.

■ A nation's international standing need not be affected by sanctions. Despite being slapped with new sanctions, nuclear India has improved its international status, even if just a little. The prophets of doom had warned that an overtly nuclear India would get so isolated and squeezed internationally that it would turn into a virtual pariah state. In reality, the opposite has happened. Not only did India get away with a mere slap on its wrist, it is increasingly being seen across the world as an emerging power with whom cooperation is desired. It was inconceivable two years ago that India would have the kind of strategic dialogues it now is conducting with some major powers.

■ Sanctions cannot be fought without a clear counter-strategy. As a target of sanctions for decades, India has to evolve a counter-strategy that employs the limited leverage it has gained from its market-opening initiatives. Sanctions should not remain a one-way street. The same elasticity of the Uruguay Round Agreements and WTO regulations said to permit sanctions and export controls on national-security grounds also justifies reciprocal punitive steps.

Obviously, India cannot hit back in the same areas where it faces punitive actions but will have to select sectors where the sanctions-clamping nation has significant commercial interests. The US strategy of rewarding "good behaviour" can be emulated by New Delhi to provide favoured market access, especially in the consumer and other lower-technology sectors, to nations behaving well towards India. By enacting a Reciprocal Sanctions Act, India will put sanctions-imposing countries on notice.



Clinton to focus on economic ties

By K. K. Katyal

NEW DELHI, MARCH 7. A clearer picture of what the coming visit of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, would be like is available now as a result of preparatory discussions between officials from the two sides, both here and in Washington.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the visiting President, it is certain, will focus on specific steps for enhancing bilateral relations, especially in economic and science and technology-related areas. A schedule for high-level regular contacts in economic and other fields may be announced during the President's stay. The fact that bilateral ties in the last 10 years were free from the shadow of the Cold War and bloc rivalries is considered conducive for this purpose.

The U.S. would have liked a forward move by India for adhering to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in the run up to Mr. Clinton's visit but that has not been possible. Till a month ago, Washington clung to the hope for a positive development but has now reconciled itself to what seems a time-consuming process. There will, thus, be no finality about the CTBT and other issues arising from India's nuclear tests — which would continue to be the main agenda of the on-going dialogue between the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh,

and the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott.

Incidentally, this is regarded by the two sides as a very useful forum. The scope of their discussions has already been expanded so as to cover cooperation in counter-terrorism (a Joint Working Group on the subject, set up during the last round in January, has already held its first meeting and taken concrete decisions).

The dialogue at this level may become a major instrument — after the problem of security, non-proliferation and disarmament has been sorted (or even while it is being sorted out) — for working out measures, now that a push is certain to be given from the political leadership for a significant strengthening of ties.

Early last year, Mr. Jaswant Singh and Mr. Talbott had agreed on an action plan and accepted the concept of mutually-reinforcing steps — by India towards the signing of the CTBT and by the U.S. for easing the sanctions imposed after Pokhran II. The subsequent political crisis in India, leading to the elections, slowed down that process.

Washington recognised India's nuclear reality as was implied by its willingness to discuss its defence posture, centering on a minimum credible nuclear deterrent. There are good reasons to believe that Washington's stand may not be influenced by China's

plea for firmness with India. Washington would not relish the idea of a third party seeking to influence its judgment in fashioning bilateral ties with any other nation.

The Chinese representatives made this point to Mr. Talbott during his recent visit to Beijing when he was reminded of the U.S. commitment to steps finalised by the U.N. Security Council and other multilateral fora. The U.S., however, would brief the other four permanent members of the Council as also the G-8, the group of industrialised countries, on the progress of its discussions on nuclear issues with India.

And, of course, Mr. Clinton would be talking at some length on the aftermath of the tests (regarded as a blunder by the U.S.) with his Indian hosts.

Reports from Washington do not confirm optimism by New Delhi on the easing of sanctions (the latter saw perceptible flexibility on the part of the U.S. in the multilateral financial institutions as against the initial insistence on embargoes on loans for India). As such, there is no change in the American stand, that sanctions are linked to India's adherence to the CTBT.

Mr. Clinton would have liked to take major initiatives on the Kashmir problem and on issues

arising from India-Pakistan relationship. The way Washington made known its thinking gave the impression that it contemplated a mediatory role.

This led India to reiterate, firmly and clearly, its opposition to a third party intervention. The U.S. does not contemplate any such move now.

Mr. Clinton, however, is certain to urge India to resolve Kashmir problem through political means rather than military action and to resume dialogue with Pakistan. India, in turn, will reiterate its stand — that the end of trans-border terrorism is an important factor for India to restart talks with Islamabad.

The U.S. may not accept this linkage but otherwise could be expected to make known its strong disapproval of the activities of terrorist outfits in Pakistan.

PM's assurance on Women's Bill

NEW DELHI, MARCH 7. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today said he was confident that the Women's Reservation Bill would be taken up for discussion during the Budget session of Parliament, according to a woman activist, who was part of the delegation that called on him.

Expert for Indo-U.S. free trade agreement

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 7. India and the U.S. should seriously consider a free trade agreement, jointly address differences in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and multiply channels of communication during Mr. Clinton's trip to India between March 20 and 25, Dr. Richard Haass of the Brookings Institution said here today. Delivering a talk on "The U.S. and India in the Global Economy", he pointed out that India and the U.S. should come to an agreement on labour standards within the framework of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Common ground on labour standards might be realised if the subject could be addressed by the

International Labour Organisation (ILO). A new post-Kyoto institutional mechanism to discuss environmental issues also needed to be evolved, he said.

"Widening" would essentially mean formalising China's entry into this forum. Both sides should also work together to impart greater depth to the WTO. This could be possible by including agriculture and the services sector within the ambit of this organisation.

Dr. Haass pointed out that China's prominence in the international economy would yield

long-term commercial and strategic benefits to India. China's integration in the WTO would encourage it to acquire a stake in the stability of the international system.

India, he said should also find full play in the Asia Pacific Economic Community (APEC). According to Dr. Haass, New Delhi and Washington could enjoy a better economic relationship in an environment of politically stability. A conflict between India and Pakistan, which could be destabilising, should therefore be

avoided, considering the larger economic interests.

New Delhi and Washington, he said, had a common stake in promoting regional stability by encouraging a strategic relationship.

The wide agenda of Indo-U.S. concerns could be tackled only by a finely networked web of institutionalised relationships. This should be prioritised during Mr. Clinton's visit to India, he observed.

US justifies decision of Clinton to visit Pakistan

N C Menon
Washington, March 8

9/20/00
H-22

THE WHITE House has justified President Bill Clinton's decision to pay a brief visit to Pakistan on his way back from India, saying that Washington has "important" national interests there, which need safeguarding by maintaining communication links with the Pervez Musharraf Government.

A senior administration official explained, "It is important to a number of key US national interests that he (Clinton) engage with Pakistan at this time." He listed these interests as avoiding the threat of a conflict in South Asia, promoting the return of democracy to Pakistan, fighting terrorism, preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and creating an environment of regional peace and security.

The official was also at pains to point out that the decision was taken because "the Pakistani nation is a friend, not because the President approves of or acquiesces in the Government of General Pervez Musharraf." He also stressed that President

Clinton was not planning to mediate in the Kashmir dispute.

The official added that President Clinton and Prime Minister Vajpayee had spent "almost the

that, of course, where the President goes is US decision. I think the reaction was that he understood this was the President's call to make", the official said, adding the Indian premier only wanted to focus on being a superlative host during the President's visit. "We will be spending five days in India. The primary focus on where we are hoping that this trip will make a departure in US policy, is in the relationship with India."

On Pakistan, the official said that Gen Musharraf recognised the fact that the effects of the Mujahideen, the *jihad* and Kalashnikov cultures were spilling over into Pakistan. The US believed that all this placed Pak, itself, at risk. Mr Clinton would, therefore, advise Gen Musharraf that "they need to get some control over these organisations. And we believe the first place to start is with one organisation, the Harkat ul-Mujahideen, which the US has designated a terrorist organisation", the official said.

On the other hand, "if Clinton does not go to Pak, he would be playing into the hands of the anti-democratic forces," he said.

Pak happy

PAKISTAN ON Wednesday welcomed a White House announcement confirming President Bill Clinton will stop over in Islamabad during his South Asia visit beginning March 20, calling it a diplomatic victory. "We welcome President Clinton's visit," Javed Jabbar, the media advisor to the Gen Pervez Musharraf, told reporters. The Pakistani Press also hailed the much-awaited announcement. "It will be fair to say that the visit will mark a triumph for the Govt of (military ruler) Gen Pervez Musharraf," Islamabad's daily *The News* said.

DPA, Islamabad

virtual entirety of their conversation", on phone yesterday before the formal announcement of the visit, talking about US-India relations. "The Prime Minister said

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 9 MAR 2000

Diplomatic defeat

AA-6 9/3
Finally, the suspense is over. US President Bill Clinton has politely informed Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee that he will be stopping at Islamabad after all. And that India's aggressive opposition to this had been noted but overruled. President Clinton has decided according to his country's interests and these do not allow the exclusion of Pakistan from his visit to the region. This is a reality which the government here chose to ignore in its obsessive desire to teach Pakistan a lesson. If not directly, at least through the US. Indian diplomacy became a joke in diplomatic circles as the foreign secretary, India's ambassador to the US and other senior officials were pressed into service to ensure that the President did not visit Pakistan. In fact, after running out of arguments against the visit, the government sought to impress upon the US that a presidential visit to the neighbouring country would create considerable animosity amongst the people of India. US officials tried to tell their counterparts to mind their own business but the polite noises were ignored as the government turned on the diplomatic taps to score, what it hoped would be a major victory. The hype generated had been of such a level, that now the decision by President Clinton to stop in Islamabad comes as almost a defeat for Delhi. And Prime Minister Vajpayee was right when he told President Clinton over the telephone that Pakistan would project the decision as a victory. Chief Executive General Pervez Musharraf will definitely ensure that the presidential visit is seen as a recognition of the military dispensation and a victory for Pakistan. Particularly as he has conceded nothing to the Americans. Despite the pressure on him the General has refused to give any time bound frame for the return of democracy in Pakistan. He has also been steadfast in disclaiming any responsibility for terrorism, going to the extent of drawing a distinction between *jihad* and terrorism per se. Unlike his predecessor, deposed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif who alienated his people because of his dependence on Washington, General Musharraf has deliberately drawn a distance between himself and the US government. He obviously knows that President Clinton cannot ignore Pakistan for more than one reason, the least being the fact that India's hostile neighbour was a close ally of Washington during the Cold War. The years have seen a strong bonding between Pakistan and the US and there is today a very powerful lobby in Washington which will not allow a dilution of these ties. Also, it was very clear right from the beginning that President Clinton, with his declared commitment to peace in every corner of the world, could not talk of Kashmir and tension in the region without paying a visit to Pakistan. It was imperative for him to keep the channels of communication open with all the concerned countries in the region, and hence the short visit. US assistant secretary of state Karl Inderfurth and others had been advocating a brief halt in Islamabad to kill the proverbial birds with one visit. In brief, to offset criticism about any dealings with a military regime and two, to keep Pakistan engaged. India should now turn its attention to strengthening bilateral relations with the US, and not continue with its short-sighted diplomatic manoeuvres that are having a negative impact on the world image of the nation.

THE ASIAN AGE

- 9 MAR 2000

51 Indian institutes off US taboo list

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, March 9

DAYS BEFORE US President Bill Clinton begins his India tour, Washington has paved the way for the removal of an avoidable irritant in Indo-US relations, by deciding to notify the removal of fifty-one Indian research institutes from the Entity List in its Federal Register, announced nearly three months ago.

A spokesman for the External Affairs Ministry said today that the notification in the Federal Register was "likely to happen very shortly." He was, however, emphatic that the US step should not be considered connected in any manner with the forthcoming Presidential visit.

Even though the organisations were removed from the Entity List back on December 16 last, the US



Bill Clinton

administration inexplicably sat over issuing the necessary notification thus, in effect, continuing with the sanctions against them.

The spokesman said that when Indian organisations were included in the Entity List placing them under restrictions in the aftermath of the May 1998 nuclear tests, India characterised the move as unjustified and counter-productive.

The US administration had explained its decision to waive the sanctions against the 51 Indian research institutes by claiming that the sanctions would thus be more focused on "those Indian entities most directly involved in proliferation activities."

Reports suggest that Washington's inexplicable failure to take the relevant follow-up action, after the 51 research institutes were declared to be out of the Entity List three months ago, has held up important projects, such as the installation of a new Super Computer at the Indian Meteorological Department.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

10 MAR 2000

US may focus on Indo-Pak tension

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, March 10

AS US President Bill Clinton's South Asia visit draws closer, Washington is skillfully guiding global attention on the Kashmir issue and India-Pakistan relations.

President Clinton's latest characterisation of the Kashmir valley as the "most dangerous place in the world today", which he did yesterday while addressing leaders of all faiths, is certain to send the adrenaline up here.

But there seems to be little leeway left for New Delhi to shift the focus elsewhere.

"The most dangerous place in the world today," he said, "I think you could argue, is the Indian sub-continent and the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir." He followed this up by an ingenious argument in support of his obvious keenness to play a role in what he terms "minimising" the threat to peace and stability that the situation presents.

"One of the reasons I want to try to minimise, if people are mad at us, at least I want them to have an accurate perception," he said. "If they think we have a certain policy or a certain attitude, I want them to have accurate view of what that policy or attitude is."

His return to the subject of the

NEWS/ITB
proper US

THE US Government has said that the trial of Mr Nawaz Sharif was "proceeding properly under due process" but the overall performance of the Musharraf Government was 'mixed'. "Their record so far is mixed. We believe it's too early to judge the record of the new government," two senior administration officials said.

ANI, Washington

high-risk security environment in the sub-continent makes clear two things: first, the White House has taken little cognizance of New Delhi's stiff opposition to any US or third party involvement in any form in India-Pakistan bilateral relations; and, second, it sticks to its determination that India-Pakistan tensions are at an extraor-

dinarily high level meriting international attention.

Irked by a spate of US statements conjuring up a doomsday scenario in South Asia, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee had issued a stern admonition in his Feb 12 address to the Conference on The Contribution of Persons of Indian Origin.

On that occasion, he said, "While we will not brook interference in our internal affairs or allow others to meddle in our bilateral relations or problems, we are ready to engage with any country in a cooperative framework."

New Delhi thereafter detected a certain circumspection in the subsequent statements from Washington and was clearly satisfied that Prime Minister Vajpayee's call to stay clear of India-Pakistan issues had been heeded.

President Clinton's words yesterday have however shattered that sense of satisfaction.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

11 MAR 2000

US thinking on India enters a new phase

Washington, March 10

PRESIDENT BILL Clinton and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee will join together in launching a new era in India-US relations which will not be hostage to the United States ties with any other country, assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Karl Inderfurth said.

At a briefing at the US Institute of Peace on Mr Clinton's upcoming trip to Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, he said the President "looks forward to discussing a wide range of issues and to learning more about the aspirations of the Indian people, just as he carries with him the conviction of the American people, including the dynamic Indian American community in the US, that our two countries must work more closely together in the future."

He said one of the best accounts of the history of US-India relations was Dennis Kux's book *Estranged Democracies*. On this trip, President Clinton wants to transform that to "Engaged Democracies".

"The fact is that US thinking about and policies toward India have entered a new phase. We seek a broad, constructive engagement with India based on broadly conceived US interests," he added.

He said the US saw India as a key player in global affairs in the 21st century, and as a vital contributor to overall Asian regional peace. US and Indian interests were converging in a number of areas on the 21st century agenda.

Mr Inderfurth said, India and the

US have areas where they do not see eye to eye. We want to narrow differences where we can and address areas of disagreement in a candid and constructive manner."

'Kashmir most dangerous place in the world'

Washington, March 10



US PRESIDENT Bill Clinton has described the Indian sub-continent and the Line of Control in Kashmir as "the most dangerous"

place in the world today troubled by various conflicts based on religious and ethnic causes.

"The most dangerous place in the world today, I think you could argue, is the Indian sub-continent and the LoC in Kashmir," he told a group of followers of all faiths yesterday. Suggesting that those who perceived the US as arrogant or high-handed did so out of misperceptions, he said that one of the reasons of his visiting the sub-continent was that he wanted the people there to have an accurate perception of the US policies. (PTI)

He specifically mentioned non-proliferation and India-Pakistan relations.

He said Talbott-Jaswant Singh talks on non-proliferation had made some progress toward greater understanding on the non-proliferation issues, but much work remained to be done. The United States and India shared an ultimate concern about how to make the world safer in a nuclear age, and promoting further progress on non-proliferation would be one of the key issues on the President's agenda in India.

As a friend of both India and Pakistan, he pointed out, the US was concerned and in touch with both countries regularly about the tensions that exist between these two neighbours.

"Our concerns have been heightened by the fact that both possess nuclear weapons and by the very intense fighting last summer along the Line of Control in Kashmir. We continue to encourage both countries to look for ways to establish dialogue with each other and will continue to do so."

He recalled the President's statement that had clearly stated that "he wants to help promote that dialogue, but we do not see ourselves as mediators on this issue."

Mr Inderfurth said President Clinton would go to Pakistan because the Pakistani nation is a friend, not because he approves of, or acquiesces in, the government of Gen. Pervez Musharraf. Mr Inderfurth also added that the President will not go to mediate the Kashmir dispute.

(UNI)

'Engage India like a strategic partner'

11/13
11/13
By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MARCH 10. At a time when the U.S. administration has been saying that the President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to India is going to be a turning point in bilateral relations, it is being reminded that its engagement with India is not aggressive enough.

Mr. Sam Brownback, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on the Near East and South Asia of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said at a seminar on South Asia at U.S. Institute of Peace he was worried over Washington's attitude. "It seems to me that the cards are in place for a very accomplished trip to occur. Cards are also in place that may not be played for an accomplished trip. I am very worried that the administration will not step forward with aggressive engagement strategy towards India".

"I truly hope and would urge the President to lift as many of these sanctions as possible and show a very aggressive and positive opening sign towards India of a burgeoning relationship that is critically important to the United States, not just economically but also geo-politically, strategically... and in the long term, in virtually all fields".

Mr. Brownback said he had originally preferred a suspension of sanctions against India but had

to go along with the waiver authority requested for by the administration as there were not sufficient votes to override a Presidential veto. The lifting of some sanctions were "very timid".

The Senator felt that the Clinton administration "rushes" to reward China while choosing to punish India. Mr. Clinton's trip should serve to redress this inequity. "We should be engaging India like the strategic partner it can become". Supporting the President's stopover in Pakistan, he argued that the problems faced by the U.S. in Pakistan were a result of inconsistent and flawed policies. Allowing Pakistan to self-destruct was not in the interests of the U.S., the West in general and of South Asia.

Meanwhile officials of the Pakistan Embassy here have been quoted as saying that Mr. Clinton will be meeting Gen. Pervez Musharraf "briefly" at an airport in Islamabad.

At the State Department, its spokesman, Mr. James Rubin, brushed aside the notion that the July 4 meeting in Washington between Mr. Clinton and the then Pakistan Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, led to the military coup. The coup, according to Mr. Rubin, happened because of a number of factors including Mr. Sharif's approach to domestic issues.

Joint science forum to boost Indo-US ties

■ Also being readied before Clinton's visit are agreements on health and space research

NIRMALA GEORGE
NEW DELHI, MARCH 12

AWAY from the hype and hoopla surrounding the Clinton visit, scientists from India and the United States have been busy readying a slew of agreements which will give a thrust to co-operation between the two countries.

Final touches are being given to an agreement to set up an Indo-US Science and Technology Forum, an agreement on AIDS research and a joint statement on reproductive health research, all of which are to be initiated when US President Bill Clinton comes to town this month.

Setting aside the controversies that have dogged the setting up of the Forum, the scientific establish-

ments from both sides have worked out the details for the mechanism which would permit exchanges and bilateral workshops as well as joint fund research projects in cutting edge technologies. "With globalisation of R and D, India and the US have realised the enormous potential in using scientific research as a means of wealth creation," says one official. "India has the scientific expertise in certain key areas. These strengths and core competence can push India to the top in the global R and D business," he adds. The Forum will have an initial corpus of Rs 30 crore, money left over from the US-India Fund (USIF).

India is also likely to make a contribution to the corpus funds to help the Forum take off, Indian officials said. India and the US have

had a long tradition of scientific co-operation, with the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, and the Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, as the highly-successful testimonials of this collaboration.

An Indo-US science and technology agreement was first mooted in 1993, but it ran into trouble over difference relating to the provisions of the intellectual property rights.

Then in 1997, the Indo-US Science and Technology Forum was proposed, but even as the terms of the mechanism were being negotiated, the efforts were overtaken by the Pokharan nuclear tests, pushing all talk of Indo-US scientific cooperation into cold storage.

"The forum would act as an platform for all kinds of scientific research. It would have a body of ex-

perts from both countries who would meet periodically to examine and facilitate scientific research," said V.S. Ramamurthy, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology (DST). The forum would help identify sources of funding for major projects from governmental and non-governmental sources like the multilateral agencies or from the private sector. Two health-related agreements are also being readied. An Indo-US agreement on sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and HIV research is awaiting final approval. Although US Secretary of Health Donna Shalala is understood to have dropped out of the Clinton entourage, the agreement facilitating research on behavioural issues relating to HIV/AIDS would be signed during the visit.

Shalala's absence is also not expected to hold up a joint statement on research into reproductive health to be signed by the Union Health Ministry and the US Department of Health. There would also be some forward movement in space research, one area where India and the US have had a very profitable interaction in the last decade. The Department of Space (DOS) and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and their US counterparts, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) would also be exploring cooperation in sharing meteorological and atmospheric science data, with agreements likely to be finalised during the visit.

Army unveils strategy to counter Pak on LoC

Shishir Gupta
New Delhi, March 12

THE INDIAN Army has unveiled "vigilance in force" strategy to counter Pakistani moves to heighten tensions in the coming days through activation of the 740-kilometer Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir.

This strategy, worked out by Northern Army Command, takes into account the recent aggressive posture adopted by Pakistan's military ruler General Pervez Musharraf on infiltration across the LoC and statements made by pan-Islamic terrorist outfit Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT).

While Gen. Musharraf has expressed his Army's "inability" to stop infiltration across the LoC, the LeT has warned of "Kargil-type intrusions in the future".

The Indian counter-move has also factored details such as the purchase of six million francs worth of top-of-the-line snow clothing and snowmobiles by Pakistan from Belgium.

Intelligence inputs suggest that

Islamabad has purchased around 970 pairs of snowshoes, 450 snow parkas and 26 snow scooters.

Senior Army officials point out that this equipment is enough to clothe, provide transport to a battalion (around 800 men) strong contingent in snowbound mountainous areas like those facing Kargil.

This input appears extremely relevant, as prior to Kargil intrusions Pakistan had procured 500 pairs of military boots for use in extreme

The Bottomline

cold conditions from Finland in January 1999.

This input from the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) was shared with the military intelligence, Defence Ministry and the Joint Intelligence Committee, but to no avail.

The basic aim of the "vigilance in force" strategy is to step up vigil along the LoC in order to prevent infiltration of Pak-sponsored militant groups into Kashmir Valley

and employ effective retaliatory measures to deter any misadventure such as cross-LoC raids from the other side.

This plan, in military parlance, is graded above "vigilance in reconnaissance" or stepped up surveillance on the LoC but stops well short of the pro-active strategy.

Highly placed sources say this plan has been formulated by taking into account the fact that it is not possible to man every square kilometer of the LoC.

The plan is supposed to provide the Indian Army with effective retaliatory capability in "unheld" gaps, to deter any cross-border raids by Pakistani troops or infiltration by militant groups. Deterrence and not pre-emption seems to be the criterion.

Vigilance in force also calls for not allowing the Pakistani troops to dominate the LoC through "extension of forward zone". Essentially, it means that the Indian forces will use effective measures so that Pakistani troops do not occupy dominating heights or positions along the LoC.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

13 MAR 2000

Clinton will be told to rein in Pak, says PM

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, March 13. — The Prime Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, has said India would ask the USA to exert greater pressure on Pakistan to stop its cross-border terrorism during the visit of President Bill Clinton here. Mr Vajpayee said India had been consistently raising the issue with the USA, and the question would come up during the visit.

Speaking to journalists on his way back from the three-day state visit to Mauritius, the Prime Minister, however, refused to go into specific issues on the agenda of the visit or confirm whether the CTBT and Kashmir would be taken up, saying "all issues" would be discussed.

Stating that there had been no change in the situation because of the US President's visit to Pakistan, the Prime Minister said when Mr Clinton had called to inform him of his decision to visit Pakistan, he, Mr Vajpayee, had informed him that the visit would encourage Pakistan to claim recognition for the military regime — a matter of concern.

The Prime Minister, however, did not comment on the report-

ed remarks by the Pakistan Chief Executive, General Pervez Musharraf, suggesting that the Army could not control infiltration into India, saying the remarks seemed to have been made in the context of the difficulty of manning the long border.

Responding to a question on whether the dialogue with the USA had resulted in US recognition of Kashmir as part of



Mr Clinton

Mr Vajpayee

India, the Prime Minister said the US stand was well-known. It continued to see Kashmir as a disputed territory, a position that India rejected. There was no change "as yet" in the US stand, he said.

The Prime Minister was non-committal on questions related to domestic political developments and on the possibility of a roll-back in the price of fertilisers and food grains. "Wait

for the finance Bill", he said.

He denied the NDA's failure to prove its majority in Bihar was a setback, saying "it is not exactly a setback". The Governor had invited Mr Nitish Kumar to form the government. Since he could not prove majority the government decided to resign, the Prime Minister said, adding "democracy has triumphed in Bihar".

Mr Vajpayee, however, said it would be difficult to comment on whether the government now formed would be stable. He defended the decision taken by the Bihar Governor, saying he had taken it in his wisdom and conscience.

The Prime Minister recalled that there had been criticism even when he was called by the former President, Mr Shankar Dayal Sharma, as the leader of the single largest party in 1996.

He dismissed the suggestion that the withdrawal of the Gujarat government order on RSS membership was a setback, saying this was a matter of opinion. He denied that the government was compelled to withdraw it and said while the friendly parties felt strongly about it they would not do anything to destabilise the government.

THE STATESMAN
14 MAR 2000

Clinton-Vajpayee talks on March 21

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, March 14

US PRESIDENT Bill Clinton and Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee will hold one-on-one talks here on March 21 before they lead their governmental delegations into structured discussions, US Ambassador Richard F. Celeste said today.

A "very" high-level Science and Technology Forum to be formed by "very senior" scientists not only from the two governments but also from industry and academic circles to address policy issues, identify funding sources and discuss measures to best utilise skilled manpower was now being discussed by the two governments, he said.

While the first US presidential visit in over 22 years is being perceived to be inaugurating a "new day" in India-US relations, both

sides seem to have taken in their stride the inevitability of their continuing differences over crucial contentious issues like the Kashmir dispute, nuclear non-proliferation and the checkmated India-Pakistan dialogue. This was well-reflected in Ambassador Celeste's remarks and the Indian responses.

While the US wants the Lahore process to be "re-energised" and the Kashmir issue addressed by India and Pakistan "at the highest level", New Delhi plays cool and sticks to its position on a conditional resumption of the dialogue with its neighbour.

Ambassador Celeste said that President Clinton favoured the Lahore process to be "re-energised" and the Kashmir issue addressed by the Indian and Pak leadership at the highest level.

Responding, an External Affairs

Ministry spokesman said, "Our position on the matter remains absolutely unchanged," in a signal to the US that President Clinton would be welcome to state his views but those would not be of any account to India as long as New Delhi's demand that Pakistan stop forthwith promoting cross-border terrorism is not honoured.

Interestingly, the US Ambassador would not go beyond acknowledging that the Lahore process, brought about through an Indian initiative, was a positive step towards bringing the traditional foes together.

He pointed out that the US "certainly" strongly supported Mr Vajpayee's initiative in the Lahore process, which was a movement forward in resolving the differences between the two countries. It was quite "hopeful" at the time of the Lahore declaration that the

process of reconciliation had begun.

But he stopped short of sharing the Indian perception that the Lahore process was derailed by the Kargil episode destroying the trust built up between the two countries and that until that trust was restored, possible only through terminating cross-border terrorism, a resumption of the dialogue could only be wished for but not achieved.

Asked if the Clinton administration was thinking of appointing a coordinator for Kashmir, he said, "I don't know how these reports have come now. This was discussed sometime back."

The Ministry spokesman was however emphatic in saying that "Nothing of that kind has been communicated to us and our position on the Kashmir issue is well-known."

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

15 MAR 2000

Differences no hurdle to better ties: Celeste

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, MARCH 14. India and the United States will not allow their differences on Indo-Pakistani tensions and nuclear non-proliferation to come in the way of the efforts to give a new direction to their bilateral relations during the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to the region next week.

Mr. Clinton is concerned about the rising tensions between India and Pakistan and is keen on seeing a resumption of the dialogue between the two countries.

But the Indian Government is determined to reject any engagement with Pakistan until the military regime there puts an end to cross-border terrorism.

On the question of American sanctions imposed on India following the nuclear tests of May 1998, the U.S. argues that these coercive measures will be lifted only after progress is made in the nuclear dialogue between the two nations. India, on the other hand, believes that these sanctions are "unjustified" and should be lifted forthwith.

Despite these differences, the

two sides are determined to use Mr. Clinton's visit to build a "qualitatively different and better" relationship.

Briefing the press here on the eve of Mr. Clinton's visit, the U.S. Ambassador to India, Mr. Richard Celeste, expressed the hope that India and Pakistan would be able "re-energise" the peace process initiated in February 1999 when Mr. Vajpayee travelled to Lahore.

Recalling the strong American support to the Lahore process, Mr. Celeste said the U.S. believed that it "provides a solid basis" to deal with all issues that divide India and Pakistan, including the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. Celeste expressed the hope that the Indian and Pakistani leaderships would be able to address the Kashmir issue by taking into account the interests of the Kashmir people.

On the speculation that the U.S. might appoint a special coordinator for Kashmir affairs, Mr. Celeste pointed to the earlier official sentiment in Washington against the proposal.

Insisting that no single issue will dominate Mr. Clinton's visit, Mr. Celeste said Mr. Clinton's objectives are to make a new beginning in bilateral relations and "spell out in some detail" the modalities of a sustained engagement.

Expressing a similar sentiment, a spokesman of the Foreign Office said India looked forward to Mr. Clinton's visit as a "direction-setting one", and that linking it to any specific issue would be "misleading".

According to Mr. Celeste, Mr. Clinton would pick up the proposition that India and the United States could be "natural allies".

During his visit to New York in September 1998, Mr. Vajpayee had expressed the hope that India and the U.S. would soon realise the potential of being "natural allies in the 21st century".

Mr. Clinton, according to Mr. Celeste, has the opportunity now to explore together with the Indian leadership on how best to translate this idea into concrete partnerships in a variety of fields.

THE HINDU
15 MAR 2000

'Don't corner India on n-issue'

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MARCH 14. In setting forth goals for the President in his visit to South Asia, an Independent Task Force has warned Mr. Bill Clinton to resist the temptation of placing the ambitious nuclear weapons-related goals at the centre of American aims with respect to India.

"It is essential to resist the temptation to place ambitious, nuclear weapons-related goals at the centre of U.S. aims. Any attempt to persuade India to eliminate its nuclear arsenal will fail (and poison the atmosphere of constructive discussion of other issues) given Indian concerns of both China and Pakistan and the inclination of many Indians to associate nuclear weapons with great power status," the Task Force has argued.

Instead, an argument has been made that Mr. Clinton would be "wise to adopt more modest but still significant goals in the nuclear realm" such as supporting and encouraging India's formal and informal policies on export control; to avoid any new nuclear weapons tests; to talk directly with Pakistan and "where appropriate" with China about ways to increase stability and transparency of nuclear and missile arsenals through Confidence Building Measures, hot lines, and avoiding the flight testing of missiles in the direction of one another's country.

There is the expectation here that Mr. Clinton will talk about Kashmir in his meetings with Indian leaders. The Task Force has reminded the President that Kashmir is a subject "better left mostly for private conversation" and that Mr. Clinton should note American concerns that Kashmir

remains the most likely trigger of a costly and dangerous war between India and Pakistan; and, among other things, that India would be wise to adopt measures that would provide the inhabitants of the region greater autonomy and civil rights.

Terrorism: 'Put Pak. on notice'

The Task Force has said that Mr. Clinton was "correct" in visiting Pakistan but recommended to the President that he should privately let Pakistan's leaders know that the United States will have little option but to designate that country as a State sponsor of terrorism "if they do not act more decisively" against this threat. "You should voice strong criticism of their provocative posture toward the Kashmir insurgency, making clear that they and their country would not be better off if Pakistan foments a war with India over Kashmir or anything else," the members have said.

The suggestions and recommendations of the Task Force come by way of a letter to the President on the eve of what is seen as a historic visit to the South Asian region, India in particular. The letter was signed by Mr. Richard Haass of the Brookings Institution and 21 others, including former American Ambassadors to India and Pakistan and experts dealing with the region and non-proliferation.

Arguing that South Asia is a far more dangerous place to live today than it was one or two years ago, the Task Force traces the events that led to this rapidly deteriorating situation that included Kargil, the October coup in Pakistan and the hijacking of the Indian Airlines flight last December. "The net result of these events is

that relations between India and Pakistan have sunk to a dangerous level, one that all too easily could lead to conflict," the Task Force members have said.

"Pakistan's leaders appear to be emboldened by the possession of nuclear weapons, believing that India is now limited in what it can do in retaliation lest it risk a nuclear conflict... There is a widely held view in Pakistan that if it can provoke enough of a crisis, the United States will be forced to step in and resolve the Kashmir matter in some manner that Pakistan would view as preferable to the status quo," the letter reads.

One encounters mounting Indian despair over apparently diminished potential to reach some accommodation with Pakistan and, as a result, increasing talk of retaliating with military force and teaching Pakistan a lesson," the Task Force has observed.

The President has been reminded that the challenge for the United States policy in South Asia is to address the current tensions but without losing sight of the longer term interests in forging closer ties to the region, especially with India.

To this effect four goals have been identified: building a post-cold war relationship with India that expanded economic and other forms of interaction; stemming the drift toward conflict between India and Pakistan and urging both countries to take steps to stabilise or even reduce their growing nuclear and missile competition; persuading Pakistan on economic reform, the rule of law and more "responsible behaviour in the realm of terrorism"; and to highlight the potential success of Bangladesh.

THE HINDU
15 MAR 2000

India, U.S. to sign energy, environment pact

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, MARCH 14. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, has chosen the majestic setting of the Taj Mahal, now threatened by pollution, to explore the growing tension between economic progress and environmental security.

During his trip to Agra Mr. Clinton would go beyond the mandatory visit to the Taj and use the endangered monument of love as a prop to highlight the opportunities for Indo-U.S. cooperation in the development of clean energy technologies.

Mr. Clinton is also expected to highlight the importance of cooperation between the developed and developing countries in meeting the threats to global environment.

Meanwhile Indian and American officials are believed to be giving final touches to an agreement on energy and environment that would set terms for future cooperation in these areas between the two nations.

The understanding on energy and environment would be one of the many specific bilateral agreements that New Delhi and Washington would sign during Mr. Clinton's visit.

The agreement is expected to provide an institutional framework for exploring collab-

orative projects on energy research and development.

It would also identify the opportunities for Indo-U.S. cooperation in the production of clean energy and for greater consultation in the multilateral fora on managing the threats to environment.

For years, India and the United States have been on the opposite sides of the international debate on how to cope with growing environmental pollution.

The battle ground has been the negotiations on the international convention on climate change and the Kyoto protocol to it.

Leading the developing world, India pins the historic responsibility for global pollution on the developed world and emphasises the responsibility of the advanced industrial nations in repairing the damage.

The United States, on the other hand, has insisted that the developing countries, too, must do their bit to reduce global environmental pollution. It argues that levels of pollution in some key developing countries like China, India and Brazil are rising rapidly.

In the recent past, India and the United States have, however, sought to develop a common approach to the questions of climate change and find innovative ways of dealing

with the problem.

Neither side is expected to give up its basic ideological positions on how to manage climate change. But there have been some signs of pragmatism on both sides as they sought to address the grave problem at hand.

India wants access to clean energy technologies that would improve the environmental condition at home without hampering economic progress.

The Clinton Administration, facing intense domestic opposition to new environmental restrictions on economic activity, wants to use the so-called "clean development mechanism" as a means to immediately reduce the pollution in the developing world in order to ease some of its own obligations on the environmental front.

During the visit of the U.S. Energy Secretary, Mr. Bill Richardson, last October, India and the United States issued a joint statement on energy and environment.

The latest agreement is expected to help move India and the United States from the intent to cooperate to a concrete framework under which such cooperation could take place.

THE HINDU

15 MAR 2000

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Address 'restraint' call to Musharraf

Clinton can't avoid Kashmir

BILL CLINTON'S visit to India is to be welcomed as a step towards constructing a new and meaningful Indo-US relationship. Nothing is diminished by his decision to stop over in Islamabad en route home. An American spokesman said on March 8 that, since no one can predict when the next flare-up between India and Pakistan will occur, "the President believes that it is crucial that he carry a message of restraint and dialogue to both capitals".

Rising tensions in Jammu and Kashmir signal General Musharraf's compulsions to up the ante and catch Clinton's ear. There is, however, little prospect of war, "limited" or nuclear. India does not want one and Pakistan cannot afford another disaster. Gen Musharraf needs a face-saver as well as some firm advice. Both ways, if Clinton can pass on an appropriate message to Islamabad, his stopover may serve a useful purpose.

Clinton has wisely disclaimed any mediatory role in Kashmir. In most Indian eyes, the US (and the West generally) is part of the problem rather than the solution in Kashmir. India did invite international mediation between 1947 and 1967 but, all through the Cold War years, what mattered was not merit or principle but whose side you were on.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Pakistan was again recruited as a frontline state in respect of Afghanistan. The price: tacit US complicity in nuclear proliferation, the growth of Islamic fundamentalism, the spread of drugs and an uncontrolled flow of small arms despite known leakages. These have played havoc in Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere in India through cross-border terrorism and proxy war. Earlier, the US gratuitously invented a new extension of the CFL/LOC in Jammu and Kashmir from grid reference NJ 9842 to the Karakoram Pass.

This gave comfort to Pakistan in its endeavour to grab Siachen, which the Indian Army foiled in 1984.

All this is history. The purpose of any fresh American engagement of Pakistan must not once again be artificially to balance it against India. This will only result in more adventurism and 'jehadi' fanaticism premised on nuclear blackmail. Indian responses to cross-border aggression, open or sub rosa, cannot be regarded as escalatory and greeted with discredited appeals for "restraint on both sides". It is for Pakistan to refrain from cross-border terrorism and aggression by Pakistani regulars and foreign mercenaries. So this call must be addressed to Islamabad. Should wanton violations persist, then Pakistan and the world must know that India will be free to re-

spond at a time, place and manner of its choosing. This is not to seek a "limited war" but to prevent the one Pakistan has been waging with impunity.

There is a burden of responsibility on India as well. Any show of bravado, sabre-rattling or civil belligerence is to play Pakistan's game. India has no quarrel with the people of Pakistan, barring the fundamentalist fringe. It must deal with the government of the day and not seek to quarantine Gen Musharraf in international fora, SAARC and, most important, bilaterally.

Atal Behari Vajpayee has held out no nuclear threat. What he said

in Jalandhar recently was that, should Pakistan use its "nuclear deterrent", it must expect a credible Indian response. The Prime Minister was not resiling from the declared no-first-use doctrine despite Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar's reported February-end statement that Islamabad had exploited its nuclear deterrent against India on at least three occasions.

It would be mistaken to make talks with Pakistan conditional on its vacation of "Azad" Kashmir and the Northern Areas. It is one thing for India to claim continuing sovereignty over these areas until a final settlement. Quite another to give away one's cards before the game commences.

If Pakistan desires to return to the La-



B.G. VERGHESE

Kashmir, 'disputed' and 'internationalised' since 1947, can most certainly not be kept out of talks. At stake is not the fact of the 'dispute' but only its nature

shmiri", rewrite the facts and sequence of events, treat "Azad" Kashmir and the Northern Areas as a closed chapter and trade on long-dead UN resolutions which it aborted at the threshold by total non-implementation. After Kargil, the world too has at last begun to accept that a settlement has to be built around the LoC and the construction of a new intra-Jammu- and-Kashmir and Indo-Pakistan relationship across that international border-in-the-making.

Apart from talking to Pakistan, India must dialogue with people of all political hues and from all regions in Jammu and Kashmir. If there is fatigue over proxy war and disenchantment with Pakistan, there is also alienation against the Indian state. This must be addressed. The autonomy issue, Centre-state and intra-regional, cannot be wished away. The twin reports presented on these subjects offer a starting point for discussion. There can be no reneging on what has been a repeated and solemn commitment by successive governments.

Finally, the government must talk to the rest of India on the question so that issues are focussed and a consensus forged. Such a triad of initiatives will fashion a new and creative Jammu and Kashmir policy in place of the reactive/proactive law and order approach generally canvassed. Pakistan will find its bluff called, people in the state will respond and the world will applaud. Nobody in Pakistan is ready to self-destruct. Gen Musharraf is in a bind. Lead him to meaningful talks — preferably quiet and through a high-level plenipotentiary — and he may find the exit he seeks. This could help Pakistan to resolve its political, economic and core identity problems and put it on the path of becoming a stable and prosperous partner in a friendly (SAARC) neighbourhood which is what the Partition was meant to achieve.

Not talking has left India's Kashmir diplomacy in tatters. For years, Pakistan has been enabled to set the agenda, define "Kashmir" and "Ka-

INDIAN EXPRESS

15 MAR 2000

Only realism will work

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THE COMMENCEMENT of President Bill Clinton's official visit to India is a week away. Most of the comments and analyses on the subject have focused on the immediate context of his visit to Pakistan. It would be more pertinent to assess the likely impact of the visit in terms of its timing and in the broader context of the US foreign policy agenda as it has evolved during the Clinton years. That a US President has decided to visit this country after a gap of 22 years implies that India is emerging to some extent as a factor of significance in the American scheme of things and within its framework of economic interests. This is also the first visit by a US President after the end of the Cold War and the disappearance of the Soviet Union as a major factor influencing Indian foreign policy and Indian strategic thinking.

Mr Clinton's coming is an acknowledgement of the validity of India reaching out to new centres of power in the world to structure new equations responsive to India's interests. The visit also takes place after the nuclear and missile weaponisation of India and Pakistan. That Mr Clinton is visiting India despite differences on non-proliferation and arms control issues remaining unresolved, with the unlikelihood of India signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in the foreseeable future, proves that the US remains interested in sustaining a dialogue with India to find a "modus vivendi". His coming also implies America's incremental inclination to deal with the realities of India's nuclear power, though this would be a gradual and very slow process.

This is the first visit of the US President after India's embarking on its economic liberalisation and reforms programmes. He comes in the background of the US being the largest trading partner and the largest single source of foreign investment in India. His bringing members of his Cabinet, dealing with economic matters and American businessmen visiting India during the period of his visit, signal US perceptions that there are positive prospects and mutual complementarities for Indo-US economic cooperation. His visit will be a catalyst in projecting information about India, importantly, the US public opinion. The US media covering his visit will serve this purpose of focusing the attention of the people of the US on India.

Given the limited knowledge about and interest in India in the US, this could redress the imbalances of US interests in the Far East and South East Asia on the one hand, and the Indian subcon-

J. N. Dixit on the new possibilities of Indo-US ties

continent on the other. Having mentioned the contextual factors of significance of his visit, it must be underlined that the differences and distances between India and the US on important issues cannot and should not be wished away. Despite eleven rounds of talks between Jaswant Singh and Strobe Talbott, Indo-US differences on the CTBT, about non-proliferation and arms control issues have not been resolved. The orientations to sustain exercises in constructive engagement is encouraging. A drifting continuation of this dialogue would, however, become counter-productive.

The US must think about ways of adjusting to the existential realities of India's nuclear weaponisation and missile capacities and the rational underpinning of these realities. India should explore adopting policy postures which would respond to the US' regional security and strategic concerns and to rejoin the mainstream of the non-proliferation debates. This is not beyond possibilities, because one does not see any conflict of interests between the US and India in substance on these issues.

It is for the US to carefully assess the implications of the sanctions that it has imposed on India. India is not likely to succumb to the pressure of these sanctions. Nor should India plead too much for the removal of these sanctions. Political and economic realism would ultimately resolve this problem. This approach should govern both multilateral and bilateral dimensions of US sanctions, covering important issues like restrictions on scientific contacts, transfer of dual use of technologies and conditionalities related to some aspects of US investment in India.

There are inevitable differences on how India wishes the US to treat Pakistan and how the US itself wants to deal with Pakistan. There is no point in making this a governing factor on Indo-US relations. The high blood pressure that we have shown

about Mr Clinton going to Islamabad, is irrelevant, impractical and smacks of an unnecessary inferiority complex. It is for the US to assess the impact of the Islamabad visit on Indian public opinion. President Clinton's decision to go to Islamabad is rooted in considered assessment of US interests vis-a-vis Pakistan, and the US foreign policy and strategic establishment. It is axiomatic that each country decides on such high level diplomatic exercises within the framework of its interests. External cogitations from other countries have no relevance in the matter, particularly when the situation involves a Super Power.

The opportunity of Mr Clinton's and his Cabinet's discussions with our Prime Minister and other ministers should be utilised to clearly and firmly convey our concerns about issues related to the WTO, the transfer of dual use technologies and the continuation of sanctions, both bilaterally and through multilateral financial institutions. The message should be that unilateral punitive policies are a contradiction to the approach of reasoning together.

Before coming to how this visit could contribute to a stable and positive relationship between India and the US, it is worthwhile placing Indo-US relations in the framework of the general US foreign policy agenda. The US Department of State and the *Electronic Journal* published a series of articles written by Cabinet members, senior army and civilian officers dealing with defence and foreign policy, under the title: *US Foreign Policy Agenda* in October, 1999.

The central message in this collection of documents was that the US aims to sustain its position as the most important power in the international community, politically, economically and materially. Economic, technical and cultural dimensions of the US foreign policy would be fashioned and adjusted to meet this objective; engineering region-

al stability through developing and consolidating single regional power acquires influence and capacities which would give it a hegemonistic role in any given region. Where necessary military force will be used to counter trends of conflicts and confrontation which may disturb regional stability one way or the other.

Secretary of Defence William S. Cohen articulated this last point with precision. "America's military engagement promotes regional stability and deters aggression and coercion on a daily basis in virtually every region of the world. Our wisest and most cost-effective actions are those that create an environment that encourages peace, discourages violence and instability and builds confidence. At the same time, we also use resources to help diminish threats, counteract factors that lead to instability and lessen the potential severity of conflicts that may arise." Engaging India, therefore, is part of the exercise of establishing links with important powers or potential powers in different regions. Operationalising this link at the highest political level is a conflict prevention exercise between India and Pakistan. Generating impulses of expanded economic cooperation with a large country like India, while benefitting India, also serves the US' economic interests.

Mr Clinton will certainly talk about Kashmir and non-proliferation issues with our Prime Minister. One anticipates that our response would be matter of fact, non-polemical and indicating a desire to work out reasonable solutions which would not compromise our basic interests. What the President could do is of importance. We should not expect him to take a completely pro-India stance on various issues.

One hesitates to be prescriptive. One ventures forth because there are possibilities. If Mr Clinton in his public pronouncements could state that the United States is firmly supportive of the territorial integrity and unity of India, and that it is opposed to all forms of overt and covert threats to this unity, from any source, then it would be an important message.

If he could follow this up with acknowledging the potentialities of Indo-US economic and technological cooperation, as a long-term factor for peace and stability in the Indian sub-continent, he would have articulated the terms of reference of Indo-US relations, which would find a responsive chord in India. Neither of these suggestions contradicts American interests or its foreign policy agenda in any manner.



USA's proposal on Pak talks rejected

SFI 15/3 Indo-US
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, March 14. — The USA today expressed desire to see the "energisation" of the Indo-Pak dialogue, but was rebuffed by India, which ruled out possibility of mediation of any kind, including "facilitation".

Briefing the Press today, the US Ambassador in India, Mr Richard F Celeste, said the USA had strongly supported the Lahore process and that the Lahore Declaration had provided a solid basis for dealing with outstanding issues, including Kashmir.

Stressing on the need to energise the process, the ambassador said the USA would like to see the Kashmir issue addressed by dialogue between the leadership of the two countries, taking into account the interests of the Kashmiri people. This should be taken up at the highest level, he said, adding that the USA was hopeful of a solution at the time of the Lahore Declaration.

An external affairs spokesman, however, said the Indian position was very clear. "We have said there is no role for a third party of any kind, which includes mediation, facilitation or anything else."

While India has repeatedly ruled out mediation, this is the first time it has made clear its stand on US efforts to "encour-

age" the dialogue process. This is also a rebuff to Gen Pervez Musharraf, who has been emphasising on a US role in resuming the dialogue, saying that despite President Clinton's refusal to play mediator, he

One-to-one meeting likely

NEW DELHI, March 14. — Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee and Mr Bill Clinton are expected to have a one-to-one meeting at Hyderabad House on the first day of the US President's two-day stay in Delhi.

Mr Clinton, it is learnt, will be accompanied by daughter Chelsea and mother-in-law Mrs Dorothy Rodham.

The officials will include Secretary of State Ms Madeleine Albright, Deputy Secretary of State Mr Strobe Talbott and National Security Adviser Mr Sandy Berger. The President will also be accompanied by members of Congress, businessmen and Indian Americans. — SNS

could facilitate dialogue between India and Pakistan.

In his briefing, the US ambassador was at pains to emphasise that no single issue would determine the success or failure of the visit, and said the US

President was keen to listen to both India and Pakistan on sensitive issues and engage with them on that basis.

Mr Celeste said Mr Clinton's visit to Pakistan was not to ratify the coup but to encourage an early return to democracy, and because the USA had important interests there. He denied the visit was a quid pro quo with Pakistan agreeing to announce its return to democracy.

The ambassador confirmed that the All-Party Hurriyat Conference had requested a meeting with Mr Clinton, but said it was not on.

He refused to comment whether there was a possibility of lifting economic sanctions during the visit, saying the sanctions had already been modified appropriately along with the progress in the dialogue on non-proliferation.

While the USA felt it was in India's interests to sign the CTBT, it was not a bilateral issue and all of India's friends, including Japan and the EU, were also interested in how India would conclude the discussions. The issue was one among many for the USA, which respects that India would deal with it in the political process, the ambassador said. It was a decision for India to make when it wanted to, he added.

■ More reports on page 6

'It's a trip to India and not to South Asia'

Apratim Mukarji
New Delhi, March 14

FFIFTY-EIGHT years ago, there was genuine concern in London and the British-ruled New Delhi that Washington was planning to intervene in favour of the Indian freedom movement as part of its design "to control the world, especially in an economic sense".

Paradoxically, in March 2000, when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's present-day successor Bill Clinton, also a Democrat, comes calling in New Delhi, a similar concern is shared around the world. Even more strikingly, the Indian-ruled New Delhi is a leading member of a global campaign for multipolarity as opposed to the unipolarity represented by today's Washington.

Despite this recurrence of a 58-

year-old concern, the twin are still meeting to chalk out a programme for a "qualitatively new" relationship during a "direction setting" visit, to quote Indian diplomatase. As for the Americans, they see the visit as "a trip to India and not to South Asia".

A clear call to treat the India visit as a visit unto itself and not to be linked to the visit to the other two South Asian countries, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

In the making for nearly three-and-a-half years and in President Clinton's last year in office, the "trip to India" is in recognition of India's assumption of the role of a global player "with considerable influence on every issue that matters to the American people", to quote Special Assistant to the President

and senior Director for Near East and South Asian Affairs at the National Security Council Bruce Riedel.

In Washington's perception, India today plays a role in the "balance of power" throughout Asia,

which would be "specially important" for the US.

India has been attracted to the Clinton initiative because there is a promise of continuity in future administrations. There is talk of institutionalising the India-US dialogue at ministerial level, possibly with a periodic exchange of views at the highest level.

Washington has picked up Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee's description of the two "estranged democracies" as "natural allies" and describes the impending visit as a chapter that should spell out how we translate 'natural allies' into mutual action".

In a sense, the visit also records Washington's acceptance of the inviolability of the options that India has spelled out for itself,

including the overt nuclearisation. This is why it wisely removed the precondition of the Indian accession to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty before the visit could materialise.

The visit is premised on the mutually shared perception that it is not to be held hostage to any single issue, thus reducing the debilitating impact of the areas of disagreement, such as, nuclear proliferation and elevating it to a wider canvas.

The initiative for the visit is so much in the American hands that the Vajpayee Government continues to be in the dark about the "State of Vision" address that is expected to mark the Presidential banquet to be hosted at Rashtrapati Bhavan. There is some expectation here that India will be a co-sponsor of the speech but uncertainty persists.

(To be concluded)



Clinton's Visit

Central Asia, Persian Gulf and South East Asia. But in another 20-25 years, to go by US perceptions, India should be "one of the power centres" (four or five countries altogether) in a world where power would be diffused and

PAKISTAN ASKED TO RESPECT LOC

Delhi must address n-issues: Albright

By Sridhar Krishnamoorti

WASHINGTON, MARCH 15. Providing an indication of the context in which the U.S. regards the forthcoming visit to India of its President, Mr. Bill Clinton, the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, has said that while the U.S. goal was a qualitatively different and better relationship with India and not a simple return to the status quo before the Pokhran nuclear tests, the ability to attain this would largely depend on India.

"The limits on our ability to cooperate with India are a matter of U.S. law as well as our international obligations. And our approach to non-proliferation is global. We cannot abandon it simply because we desire an improved relationship," Ms. Albright told a luncheon meeting of the Asia Society here on Tuesday.

In a blunt message to Pakistan, the Secretary of State stressed the reality of the respect for the Line of Control. "Tangible steps must be taken to respect the Line of Control. For so long as this simple principle is violated, the people of Kashmir have no real hope for peace," she said.

Ms. Albright spent a good part of her speech on the various issues before the U.S. and India; and on some of the aspects the President would discuss with Indian leaders in New Delhi. Reading from a prepared text, she devoted a fair amount of space to non-proliferation and security issues, expected to figure in Mr. Clinton's talks in India.

The Secretary of State reiterated what had been said on earlier occasions by senior U.S. officials — that significant progress was required in the realm of the non-proliferation agenda if the two countries were to realise the

"vast" potential of the relationship. "The U.S. continues to seek universal adherence to the NPT. We believe the South Asian nuclear tests of May 1998 were a historic mistake. And the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1172 makes it plain that the international community agrees with us."

"We recognise fully that only the Indian Government has the sovereign right to make decisions about what is necessary for the defence of India and its interests. The United States does not regard India's missiles or nuclear weapons as a direct threat to us. But we do regard proliferation — anywhere — as our

Focus on missile systems: Page 13
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number one security concern. For this reason, we must accept that significant progress in this area is necessary before India and the United States can realise fully the vast potential of our relationship," Ms. Albright said.

The Secretary of State who will be joining Mr. Clinton in India said the U.S. and India had not yet found a way to create sufficient common ground on nuclear issues despite the Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott, and India's External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, going to "unprecedented lengths" to put the dialogue on a more productive footing. "But I am convinced that our relationship today has the strength and breadth to keep working through our differences and find a way forward," she said.

Ms. Albright stressed that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty would advance India's security interests as it would that of the U.S.;

and likewise Washington believed that steps to further strengthen India's already effective export controls would be in its common interests as well; and the same went as far as a ban on the production of fissile materials.

"India has emphasised that its decisions are not taken with a narrow regional focus and we accept that point. But India's decisions also have consequences beyond South Asia. Here prudence and clarity in India's plans and doctrines could yield great benefits. For, a pattern of steeply rising defence budgets in Asia would serve neither the continent's security interests nor its development needs," Ms. Albright remarked.

Earlier, she said the existing mindset of mutual distrust was beginning to change; and that despite all the imperfections, the U.S. and India were the world's most visible messengers of the truth that secular, pluralist democracy "not only can work, it does work".

On the Indian economy and the need to hone up bilateral economic cooperation for mutual benefit, she said, "India's economic reforms are a work in progress. The remaining hurdles include growth-choking deficiencies in transportation and infrastructure, remnants of the old licence Raj, too much public borrowing and poorly targeted subsidies. Changing all this will not be easy. But overall trends are plainly in the right direction."

Mr. Clinton's visit to Pakistan, Ms. Albright said, did not mean an endorsement of the military coup or the government of General Pervez Musharraf. "We are going to Pakistan because the United States has interests there which are important and urgent," she said.

Cautious welcome to U.S. stand on Kashmir

By C. Raja Mohan 110-1

NEW DELHI, MARCH 15. India is closely scrutinising the latest American formulations on Kashmir outlined by the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, and the first reaction is one of cautious welcome.

The American opposition to changing the territorial status quo in Kashmir by use of force, the emphasis on respect for the Line of Control and a direct call to Pakistan to stop its campaign of terror against India are being seen here as a movement in the right direction.

On the eve of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit, there had been some expectation here that Washington would make explicit the subtle shift in its approach towards the Kashmir dispute since the Kargil confrontation.

Arguing that "the conflict over Kashmir has been fundamentally transformed", Ms. Albright declared that nations must not attempt to change borders or zones of occupation through armed force.

"And now that they have exploded nuclear devices, India and Pakistan have all the more reason to avoid an armed conflict," she added.

The principle that there should be no forcible change in borders is one that the U.S. strongly supported during the East-West con-

frontation in Europe during the Cold War. But this is probably the first time the U.S. has applied it to the conflict in Kashmir.

The principle was also noted in the Indo-Pak Shimla Agreement of 1972. But the nuclearisation of the sub-continent has made it essential that the status quo is not changed by use of force.

Diplomatic observers here say the new American formulation is a clear message to Pakistan that the rules of the game in Kashmir have changed after the advent of nuclear weapons.

They suggest that the U.S. is signalling to Pakistan that it is time Islamabad got real on the Kashmir question and ended its risky enterprise of using force to change the status quo.

It is also believed here that Mr. Clinton would, in all probability, further expand on this theme during his visit.

Referring to another "practical

sis of avoiding such a confrontation.

Ms. Albright is calling on India and Pakistan to "find some way to move forward" and resume the peace process. India, of course, says it will not talk until Pakistan stops support for cross-border terrorism.

New Delhi also points to the dichotomy in Pakistan's position of asking for peace talks and promoting a Jihad against India.

In demanding that Islamabad must take "steps to address the effects of terror on Pakistan's neighbours, notably India", Ms. Albright has begun to address the central contradiction in Pakistan's position.

If Mr. Clinton could persuade Pakistan to stop its support for terrorism against India, New Delhi should have little difficulty in resuming the peace process with Islamabad.

reality", Ms. Albright said, "tangible steps must be taken to respect the Line of Control. For so long as this simple principle is violated, the people of Kashmir have no real hope of peace".

In connecting respect for the LoC with peace in Kashmir, the Clinton Administration is recognising "the post-Kargil realities in the sub-continent", sources in the Government say.

Mr. Clinton in a joint statement with the then Pakistan Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, declared that the "sanctity of the Line of Control" must be respected in accordance with the Shimla Agreement.

The Kargil war has turned the thesis of "a nuclear flashpoint in Kashmir" on its head. The U.S. is indeed concerned about the danger of a nuclear war in the sub-continent over Kashmir.

It is now suggesting that the respect for the LoC could be the ba-

Indo-U.S. ties: a new spring?

By C. Raja Mohan

The long winter of the Cold War that divided India and the U.S. has certainly ended... Mr. Clinton has the opportunity to set at rest the lingering suspicions in India about American intentions.

THE STAGE is set for the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, to arrive in India this Sunday on the eve of the spring festival, Holi. But can he end the long winter of estrangement between the world's largest and oldest democracies? Mr. Clinton for reasons known best to himself has chosen to skip India's festival of colours and go to Bangladesh on March 20. But he could nevertheless use his extended travels in India to herald a new spring in Indo-U.S. relations. The question is, will he?

It has been a long wait for India and the United States for the hopeful spring in their bilateral relations. The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, has often talked about 50 wasted years in Indo-U.S. relations. The U.S. secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, in her speech on Tuesday to the Asia Society in Washington has referred to the "pattern of misunderstanding, miscalculations and missed opportunities" in Indo-U.S. relations. Wistful sighs about "missed opportunities" have long been the dominant reaction among those in both countries who made repeated, but mostly unsuccessful, efforts to move Indo-U.S. relations in a positive direction.

But this time around, on the eve of the first American Presidential visit to India in 22 years, there is certainly more determination in both the capitals that India and the U.S. put behind the past and turn a new page in their bilateral relations. There is also an awareness in both the capitals about the obstacles to building a new relationship. Ms. Albright has talked about the bitter inheritance of the past. Referring to the political hesitations in both the nations on building a new relationship in the post-Cold War world, Ms. Albright points to India's "lingering suspicion of U.S. intentions in world affairs" and America's inability to "understand India's compulsions and aspirations".

This inertia from the accumulated mistrust of the last 50 years continues to cast a shadow over the visit. Spring can bring bursts of treacherous weather. The balmy sun is often marred by an unexpected squall or a cold breeze. Carrying on with the metaphor, there is no question that a

the dangers of an early spring and its potential to unleash a new chill in bilateral relations by his comments on Kashmir and Indo-Pakistan relations that could be misconstrued in India. The popular perceptions here about the success or failure of the visit will depend entirely on the ability of Mr. Clinton to put behind the past mistrust between the two nations.

As a skillful communicator and as someone who would surely have read up all the briefs on the history of misperceptions between the two nations, Mr. Clinton has the opportunity to set at rest the lingering suspicions in India about American intentions. It is important for Mr. Clinton to come out clearly and unambiguously that a strong, united and democratic India is in the interest of peace and stability in Asia and beyond. The doubts are deep in India that the U.S. does not want to see a strong India that can play a larger role in the world. Mr. Clinton has the chance to set those lingering suspicions to rest, when he addresses the Indian Parliament.

Mr. Clinton has never made a secret of his desire to make peace in the sub-continent between India and Pakistan and to resolve the Kashmir dispute. But there should be enough awareness in Washington that it would be prudent for Mr. Clinton to walk this minefield rather gingerly. Mr. Clinton has a big opportunity in India to outline the principles of peace that will be just and could end Indian perceptions of the American tilt towards Pakistan on Kashmir.

In her latest speech, Ms. Albright has taken the first step towards that goal. She has insisted that there should be no change of borders or occupied zones through the use of armed force, particularly in the current nuclear context of the sub-continent. She has also called for respect of the line of control between India and Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir.

If Mr. Clinton can build on these principles and proclaim that the U.S. is opposed to further partition of the sub-continent, he will not only bring about a new spring in relations between the two countries but also lay the basis for a new, unprecedented warmth in Indo-U.S. relations.

get the House of Representatives to unambiguously proclaim support for a strategic partnership between the two nations. There is an even deeper change in Indo-U.S. relations engendered by the Indian-American community. Indian professionals in the U.S. are no longer just seen as immigrants who are good members of the community. As Indian information technology professionals in Silicon Valley begin to lead the efforts to build the "new economy" in the U.S., Indians are seen as contributing to the generation of wealth in America.

As India itself begins to seize, for the first time in centuries, a niche at the cutting edge of the global economic transformation, the Silicon Valley Indians have become a new bridge for Indo-U.S. cooperation. As a consequence, India and the U.S. now have huge opportunities in front of them to intensify cooperation in information technology and expand the frontiers of the knowledge-based industries.

When he confers with Indian political and business leaders next week, Mr. Clinton will certainly build on all these new positive elements in Indo-U.S. relations. He will also want to debate with the Indian leaders some of his exciting new ideas on how the new technologies could be used to accelerate the development of the sub-continent and end the new digital divide between the rich and poor in the world. The "vision statement" that he will sign with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, will lay out the contours of a new relationship between India and the U.S. in the 21st century. A separate document will talk about institutionalising the current engagement between the two nations.

All these will symbolise the prospects for a new spring in Indo-U.S. relations. But Mr. Clinton will have to guard against

WORLD VIEW

Proliferation is US' prime security concern: Albright

'Tangible measures to respect LoC needed' India, US likely to sign MoU on infotech

N C Menon
Washington, March 15

SECRETARY OF State Madeleine Albright acknowledged here yesterday that the US did not regard India's missiles or nuclear weapons as a direct threat to America. "But we do regard proliferation, anywhere, as our number one security concern," she added.

Secretary Albright was addressing the Asia Society in a programme set up prior to the Presidential visit to South Asia.

Mrs Albright spoke of another practical reality: "Tangible steps must be taken to respect the Line of Control. For so long as this simple principle is violated, the people of Kashmir have no real hope of peace."

Albright also made it clear that it had to be accepted that significant progress in the nuclear and missile area was necessary before India and the United States could fully realise the vast potential of bilateral relations.

Leaving no doubts about her meaning, the Secretary explained: "Our ability to attain this goal will depend largely on what India does. The limits on our ability to cooperate with India are a matter of US law as well as our international obligations. And our approach to non-proliferation is global. We cannot abandon it simply because we desire an improved relationship."

The Secretary also did some plain-speaking with regard to Pakistan. Referring to the President's decision to visit Islamabad, Mrs Madeleine Albright said: "In no way is this a decision to endorse the military coup or government led by General Musharraf. And no one should interpret it as such. We are going to Pakistan because the United States has interests there which are important, and urgent."

Apart from the caveats on non-proliferation, Secretary Albright had high praise for India. "I can think of few greater gifts to the future than a strong and co-operative strategic relationship between India and the United States," she said.

She was glad that the mindset of mutual distrust was beginning to change. "In fact, I believe that both the US and India are coming to realise that there was always something unnatural and regrettable about the estrangement of our two democracies."

Shishir Gupta
New Delhi, March 15

INDIA AND United States are expected to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on information technology that allows both the countries to cooperate in the fields of information security, e-commerce and e-governance.

Highly placed sources said that Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) was in the process of finalising the MoU with its American counterpart. Both the countries are expected to initial the MoU during President Bill Clinton's visit next week.

Besides, both the countries are also expected to sign a "totalisation agreement" to avoid double taxation and thus help the Indian software professional. This agreement will ensure that the Indian professionals, who are working in the US for short periods, are not taxed both in the US and in India.

The Indian side is also keen on an increased number of US HB-1 visas that allow software professionals to visit and work in the US for periods up to three years. It is understood that the US may agree to this proposal as it has the approval of its Senate.

However, it is the MoU on IT that should usher in a new era of bilateral cooperation. India, for instance, is keen to share the American

experience of defending its infrastructure and protecting its e-commerce while maintaining an open society. It also wishes to profit from the US initiatives in the field of electronic governance, given the scope for its application in a country as vast as India.

India is already facing cyber-attacks from Kashmiri militant groups, who have managed to hack official government web pages and posted anti-government propaganda and pictures. Officials say: "Given the availability of sophisticated technology and the seemingly limitless investment required, potential attackers can include national intelligence and military organisations, terrorists, criminals, industrial competitors, hackers and disgruntled insiders."

By signing an MoU with the US, India is seeking to share technology that can ensure secured information highways and defend the country's infrastructure against anti-national elements and hackers. The US President recently chaired a meeting in Washington to discuss methods and tools to make communication secure from hackers and cyber-warriors.



Clinton's Visit

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

16 MAR 2000

Clinton's India visit to mark a turning point

N.C. Menon
Washington, March 15

DR JAGDISH Bhagwati, well-known economist and political scientist, expressed confidence here yesterday that President Clinton's visit would mark a turning point in relations with India.

Dr. Bhagwati was speaking at a function organised by the Asia Society prior to the Clinton visit. Other panelists were Ambassador Frank G. Wisner, former US envoy to India and currently vice-chairman of American International group, Inc.; Dr Marshall M. Bouton, Executive Vice-President of the Asia Society; and Dr

Michael T. Clark, Executive Director of the US-India Business Council.

Dr. Bhagwati pointed out that India had always resented the US viewing India in terms of Pakistan and maintaining parity between the two. The many differences between the two that India pointed out had failed to register on Washington, and "it drove India up the wall."

Similarly, earlier, India through its policy of nonalignment had tended to show parity between the US and the Soviet Union, and that, in turn, would "drive the US up the wall."

India had failed to take advantage of its size and open up its economy to the world.

That had brought India into parity with such nations as Pakistan. India is now opening up and the US has a vested interest in entering the huge market. But some friction remains, and the President's visit could contribute to improving the situation.

Dr Bhagwati agreed with a participant that the US had not given enough consideration to the evidence India had presented about Pakistani involvement in the Indian Airlines hijacking. He noted that the US had bombed Somalia on much less evidence. But accepting Pak complicity would have necessitated placing it on the terrorist list, and that was a direction in

which the US did not wish to travel at that time.

The President's visit will be the starting gun and not the finishing tape in emerging relations with South Asia, according to Ambassador Wisner. Apart from strategic and economic issues, none of the other important global subjects such as the environment, health, population, etc. could be addressed without the participation of South Asian nations and their governments. "Precise and articulated exchange with India will be set up during the President's visit in such areas as defence, terrorism, Asian security (where India can play a role), and global democratic initia-

tives," Mr Wisner said. Mr Wisner cautioned, however, that deteriorating conditions in the area, with increasing violence between India and Pakistan had constituted a gathering shadow over the trip. He pointed out that the enmity between India and Pakistan was not just about Kashmir, but ran much deeper.

The problem with American diplomacy was that its influence was limited. The US had, over the years, failed to develop a level of confidence and trust with India. And its influence over Pakistan had been diminished by the steps it took to distance itself from Pakistan's efforts to develop nuclear weapons.

Chicago meeting with US President

Hurriyat leaders seek Clinton's intervention

AUNOHITA MOJUMDAR
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq

NEW DELHI, March 15. — A delegation of the All Party Hurriyat Conference met Mr Bill Clinton in Chicago on Monday, days ahead of his visit to South Asia, to explain the organisation's viewpoint on the Kashmir issue.

The emphasis within India was, however, that Mr Clinton would not grant an audience to the organisation during his visit here.

Seeking the US President's intervention, the Hurriyat has said it would not be averse to any settlement formula that would be acceptable to the people of Kashmir as a whole.

The decision to grant the separatist organisation an audience on the eve of his visit to India is of significance in view of Mr Clinton's special interest in Kashmir which has been iterated several times.

The US President recently described Kashmir as a flash-point.

Of equal significance is the fact that the Hurriyat, eschewing any pre-conditions, has expressed its willingness to accept "any settlement formula" that will be acceptable to the people of "undivided" Jammu and Kashmir and also stated that it did not wish to foist the preference of any one region on another.

The APHC delegation, led by Dr Ghulam Nabi Fai, executive director of the Kashmir American Council, the representative organisation of the Hurriyat in the USA, handed over the President a letter from the acting APHC chairman, Mr

In its memorandum, the Hurriyat has called on Mr Clinton to exert moral authority on India and Pakistan to include the APHC in all negotiations or talks over Kashmir's future.

The Hurriyat has said it is open to any settlement that can command the consent of the people of the whole of Jammu and Kashmir as it existed on 15 August 1947.

Stating that it does not have the desire to foist the preference of any one region over another, the Hurriyat says it is ready to cooperate with all concerned parties to work out a negotiated settlement based on justice.

The Hurriyat has also said while it does not envision "a final outcome which will be complete defeat or victory for either India or Pakistan", it does not "foreclose any settlement" that will be deemed to be desired by the people of Kashmir.

The Hurriyat has urged the US President to appoint an official envoy to South Asia to recommend a Kashmir solution to the interested parties.

The organisation has argued that the human rights violations in Kashmir dwarf the violations in Kosovo that provoked intervention by the USA.

It has also criticised the division of the state saying the misery and suffering of the people is due to the LoC which has turned into a line of terror and inequity and deserves to be wiped out.

■ Photograph on page 3
■ More reports on page 6

BILL Clinton is scheduled to visit India from 21 March. This first US presidential visit since Jimmy Carter's in the late '70s is therefore an historic, even euphoric one. But what's the purpose? Is there a hidden agenda? What can it achieve? The apparent purpose of all such visits is to promote better relations between two countries. There will be, as has always been, a toast to the two largest democracies. Like a prayer to a deity, lip service to democracy will be duly paid. However, there are, and will be, other purposes well concealed in very broad language and innocent looking communique. In other words, there are hidden agendas.

The USA calls itself a democracy because governments are chosen by the electorate, even if less than half the voting population does the needful so that governments are elected by a minority. Democracy, then, is the word used to define procedure. Currently, democratic procedures are being followed in the USA in the form of primaries. Senator John McCain, who just lost, has argued that the election processes are flawed because of the money influence and lobbyists. It is no more a government of and for the people. It is, instead, of and for the special moneyed interests.

The rules need to be changed fundamentally. He has focused on "campaign finance reform". Al Gore has picked up McCain's reform agenda. Ralph Nader, campaigning through a much smaller Green Party, calls the system legalised bribery, echoing Governor Brown in his 1990 campaign. Namely, the US system is "thoroughly corrupt". All these leaders are asserting that the US government represents specifically moneyed or multinational interests.

Donald Bartlett and James Steele document in a major cover story how the US government provides advantages to corporations in exchange for campaign money, even though such policies hurt other Americans. (Big Money and Politics: Who Gets Hurt. *Time*. 7 February 2000.) It can therefore be assumed that part reason for the Clinton visit is to promote these corporate interests.

What are these interests? Corporations are interested in obtaining the largest possible profits. Profits follow from sales minus costs. Corporate interests are manifest in terms of sales and costs; increasing the scope for sales and opportunities to reduce costs. Sales are best assured either by cornering the market or by an increase in the market size. Costs are reduced if the resources, labour, environment, are cheap. The hidden agenda for Clinton's visit, therefore, is to make India safe for American products as well as provide Indian resources cheaply to American producers.

This agenda is much easier to achieve if the Indian government follows a policy of subservience to American interests. "Legitimacy" and "subservience" are disguised through a sophisticated promotion of market ideology, trade relations, IMF and World Bank conditionalities. Therefore, the agenda for the Clinton visit is to seek the Indian government's acceptance of the paramountly of market ideology, world trade and economic orthodoxy which in turn legitimises the World Trade Organisation, World Bank and International Monetary Fund policies.

The agenda translates further to (a) keeping India weak by buttressing Pakistan, and (b) strengthening Resident Non-Indians or Macaulayites who already subscribe to the idea that Indian interests are subservient to those of the USA. As I have argued in a number of articles, this has been the characteristics of the RNI/Macaulayites.

Hidden agendas

The timings of US presidential visits suggest that country has intentions of undermining nationalist sentiments and weakening India. On the other hand, says ROMESH DIWAN, Bill Clinton's visit could serve a very useful purpose ~ of strengthening relations



To understand the Macaulayites, let's go back to 1835 when a Mr Macaulay, a member of the Council of India, wrote a Minute (reproduced in Ansar Hussain Khan's *The Rediscovery of India*, 1995) to transform India's educational base. There were two objectives: (a) to create a class of subservient Indians to "be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern" (subservience required that these Indians fully accept British — now Western — interests as legitimate and supreme) and (b) that these subservient Indians form "a class of persons, Indians in blood and colour, but English (now Western) in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect". They are thus alienated from their own, specially Hindu, culture. The combination of "servitude" and "alienation" ensure legitimising Western interests by delegitimising nationalist interests. These two hidden agendas give the USA far greater bargaining power to pursue its interests.

India also has its interests which are very different and hitherto unarticulated. The most important being security. The Vajpayee government last year expressed this through strong actions both on the nuclear explosion and Kargil affair. India's other major interest is international recognition of its perspectives. Time and again, India and Indians have found that even the most legitimate interests and perspectives haven't been appreciated, much less accepted by other governments, agencies and opinion makers.

Francois Gautier has pointed out, perceptively, that India has always been presented by both international media and Western governments as being folksy, macabre and irrelevant. US policies towards India are still based on

such distorted perception. India's major interest therefore is to change this distorted image. Clinton's visit offers a useful opportunity. Correcting this distorted image coincides with Indo-US relations and concerns about (a) Non-Resident Indians settled in the USA and (b) India's ancient wisdom being articulated forcefully by white American Hindus.

Around 1.4 million NRI/Indian-Americans have emerged as the most dynamic ethnic community in the USA. According to the 1990 census, they have the highest average household income of about \$61,000; much higher than the average White American, even higher than any Asian-Pacific ethnic group. They present a major success story; a story which has not yet been written, even by the Indian media. Most of them came to the USA with degrees from Indian universities and eight dollars in their pockets. Within a few decades they have established themselves in all professions. Three of them won a Nobel Prize. Recently a new NRI breed of software experts has emerged.

KL Chugh and BK Modi estimate that NRIs in America are generating wealth to the tune of \$250 billion a year. In spite of this success, the community feels ignored by both the US government and media. They suffer from negative images about India and Indians continuously paraded in official policies, school history text books and newspaper articles. These NRIs feel discriminated against. The recent abuse of 40-plus highly skilled and legitimately employed Indian software engineers by the US immigration office provides ample evidence of this discrimination.

A community of such a large number of professional and distinguished people

should normally be well represented at the highest offices in the government, corporations and educational institutions. One would expect at least 10,000 Indian-Americans in high positions and yet one can literally count them on the fingers. The Indian government and spokespersons need to articulate these interests forcefully by including a statement in the communique that the US leadership should make every possible attempt to right the wrongs.

Not only have the NRI/Indian-Americans contributed to US economic growth, many of them have also raised questions about the falsification of India's ancient culture and wisdom. Just as an astronomer can't search for stars without a good telescope, to search for truth about India's history and Hinduism, there is a similar necessary condition — a deep understanding and proficiency in Sanskrit.

All Hindu and ancient Indian literature is in Sanskrit, the language of the *Vedas*, of *mantras* and of spirituality. Orientalists of the past didn't nor do hundreds of scholars of today who populate Asian studies departments have the means or incentive to search for the truth. Not only are they incapable of understanding this literature they comment on, they don't have the incentive to gain the desired qualifications. Indian history and Hinduism have been so falsified that the writers' contributions are judged not on the basis of research but instead by an animated imagination. The more imaginative one is in elaborating false myths, the greater the reward in terms of professorial appointments, research grants, lecture tours and book deals.

For example, it is now abundantly clear that the theory of the Aryan invasion, which has caused so much harm to India over the past 100 years, was pure, and sheer falsehood. About two million self-converted white American Hindus are now providing the truth about Hinduism and India's ancient wisdom. It is in India's interest to support and promote these attempts. In fact, as MM Joshi rightly pointed out in his recent Nehru Memorial Lecture, these ideas are necessary. Clinton's visit offers a useful opportunity of bringing this issue into the open.

The key to better Indo-US relations lies in the respect and esteem accorded to the NRI/Indian-Americans. After all, the relationship between Europe and the USA is very good basically because European-Americans are respected in the USA.

The timings of US presidential visits suggest that country has two hidden agendas as defined above: to undermine nationalist sentiments and weaken India. The reasons aren't difficult to guess. US multinational interests are always threatened by nationalist governments and it needs reminding that no US President found it worthwhile to visit India during the period when Macaulayites ran the government. After all, if junior US government functionaries can achieve the objective of keeping India safe for American multinationals, where is the need for a President to waste his time and energy.

Hence, Jimmy Carter visited India when Morarji Desai, a strong nationalist, was Prime Minister. It is not purely accidental that Clinton comes calling when a Hindu nationalist party is leading the government.

Though hidden, the US agenda is well focused. But it can also serve a very useful purpose: to strengthen Indo-US relations.

(The author is Professor of Economics, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York.)

HD-15

'No pre-conditions for Clinton visit'

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NEW DELHI, MARCH 16. The United States has conveyed no pre-conditions for the visit of the President, Mr. Bill Clinton, to India, the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Ajit Kumar Panja, told the Rajya Sabha today. The U.S. trade sanctions against India were counter-productive and should be lifted in totality, Mr. Panja said in a written reply to another question.

The U.S. was well informed that India's decisions on security matters will be guided only by its national strategic needs, he said. He said India and China were discussing the boundary question and had reiterated their objective of seeking of fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement through dialogue. The two countries, have agreed on measures to expand and diversify bilateral trade, he said.

Mr. Panja also said that the Government is pursuing with the U.N. the question of early settlement of reimbursement for peacekeeping forces. The U.N. authorities have so far certified that \$26.06 million are to be paid to India and additional claims are being processed.

The Minister said France has supported India's candidature for a permanent seat in the U.N. Security Council. The two countries were considering increased cooperation in the field of information technology, agriculture and food processing.

The Government was considering preparing a white paper on Pakistan's involvement in subversive activities in India, he said.

The Government was aware that training camps for extremist groups operating in Jammu and Kashmir have been established in Pakistan, Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Afghanistan, he told the Rajya Sabha in a written reply. — PTI

THE HINDU

17 MAR 2000

'U.S. policy on Kashmir unchanged'

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MARCH 16. The United States' policy on Kashmir remains the same but the nature of the conflict has transformed both in terms of the violence and in the presence of nuclear weapons, says the Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Mr. Karl Inderfurth.

"It is in this context that the U.S. and the Secretary of State have argued that nations must not attempt to change borders or zones of occupation through armed force and that tangible steps must be taken between India and Pakistan to restart a dialogue so as to build confidence and prevent escalation," Mr. Inderfurth told *The Hindu* during the course of a conversation.

The U.S., Mr. Inderfurth main-

tained, wanted to see the reduction of terrorism or terror against all of Pakistan's neighbours "notably against India".

Terrorism would be one of the issues on the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's agenda in South Asia and the expectation was that he and his delegation would address this quite forcefully in Pakistan.

Calling Mr. Clinton's agenda in India a "broad-based one" where a number of issues would be addressed, Mr. Inderfurth remarked that the President was "very energised" about his coming visit.

Apart from the scheduled media briefings, Mr. Clinton would meet a group of experts on South Asia this evening; and on Friday he would meet his own administration officials dealing with the region. Apart from nuclear

and security issues, which would include India-Pakistan and Kashmir, the agenda would cover issues ranging from democracy and governance, business and commerce, science and technology to energy and environment.

The discussions would also focus on educational and cultural exchanges. "Why would any item be off the agenda among friends?" remarked Mr. Inderfurth.

He stressed that Mr. Clinton was not travelling to South Asia "to tell" India to start the political dialogue with Pakistan. "That is not for him (the President) to do so," the senior official remarked adding that the President, among other things, would share his concern with Indian leaders and would listen to what they have to say.

THE HINDU
17 MAR 2000

India, U.S. to promote democracy in Asia

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, MARCH 16. After decades of being "estranged democracies", India and the United States will now try and build on their common commitment to political pluralism during the visit of the American President, Mr. Bill Clinton.

In jointly launching the Asian Centre for Democratic Governance next week, and working together to create "a community of democracies" worldwide, the two countries will for the first time impart some operational substance to their shared political values.

In her speech to the Asia Society in Washington on Tuesday, the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, declared that "strengthening democracy is a

goal that we share with India".

Despite being two of the world's most important democracies, India and the U.S. were ranged on the opposite sides of the Cold War. Since the end of the Cold War, too, it has not been easy for India and the United States to develop a convergence on the theme of democracy. The narrow American focus on human rights, workers rights and child labour brought in new tensions between the two democracies. While those issues remain in contention, India and the U.S. are now beginning to work together on the larger imperative of global democratisation.

The Asian Centre for Democratic Governance to be based in New Delhi will be inaugurated by

the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, and Ms. Albright here next week.

India, as one of the world's leading democracies, has also been invited by the U.S. to become a member of the core-group that will co-sponsor the Community of Democracies initiative in Warsaw, Poland in June.

The Indo-U.S. move to promote democracy, however limited in scope, could have a political resonance in the region and beyond.

India has a strong interest in deepening political freedom in the sub-continent; and promotion of democracy will be on the top of Mr. Clinton's agenda in both Bangladesh and in Pakistan.

During his visit to Dhaka, Mr. Clinton will praise Bangladesh for

being a "moderate Muslim democracy". Ms. Albright in her speech to the Asia Society argued that "Bangladeshi democracy deserves recognition as a source of hope and inspiration to others". And in Pakistan, Mr. Clinton will be expected to put some pressure on the military regime to restore the civilian government.

Beyond the sub-continent, Asia continues to grapple with the difficult challenge of matching the growing levels of prosperity with the increasing popular aspirations for political participation.

In that context, enhanced cooperation between New Delhi and Washington to promote democracy in the region could acquire, over the long term, a political dynamic of its own.

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THE FIRST US presidential visit in 22 years is raising high expectations in India. It is, however, clear that the visit will be richer in photo opportunities, speeches and sightseeing tours than in concrete agreements or results. Yet, Bill Clinton's visit is likely to set in motion a process for closer engagement between the world's largest and most powerful democracies. The blunt-speaking Madeleine Albright has injected a note of harsh realism by pointing to the continuing Indo-US differences on fundamental issues, even as she has stated that there can be "few greater gifts to the future than a strong and cooperative strategic relationship between India and the United States". The Secretary of State's speech, reflecting the lingering cold-war pairing of India and Pakistan, contains elements that will both please and displease the two neighbours. While being satisfied with her emphasis on the more positive aspects of the Indo-US equation, Indian policy-makers will do well to take note of her more plain-speaking observations. Albright has bemoaned the failure of the Jaswant Singh-Strobe Talbott talks so far to "create sufficient common ground" on issues dividing India and the US. More importantly, she has cautioned that "significant progress" by New Delhi on nuclear and missile restraints "is necessary before India and the US can realise fully the vast potential of our relationship".

What should particularly alarm India is that she has put the onus on it, saying, "How India addresses all these issues will, of course, influence the decisions we make". As if to ensure her message is not lost, she re-emphasised that a qualitatively better bilateral relationship "will depend largely on what India does". This kind of hectoring by the most powerful state armed with an overkill nuclear and missile capacity shows that the Indo-US relationship is between unequals. Instead of paying heed to Albright's blunt message to India, the Ministry of External Affairs has taken comfort in her sharply expressed concerns about Pakistan's recourse to terrorism, conflict and military rule. Albright made two important statements on Pakistan: "Tangible steps must be taken to respect the Line of Control"; and "we want to see steps to address the effects of terror on Pakistan's neighbours, notably India." The first seeks to uphold the July 4, 1999, US-Pakistan agreement on the LoC, while the second signals a better US appreciation of India's concerns over the Pakistan-Taliban terrorism nexus. Nonetheless, Mr Clinton is expected to press Mr Vajpayee to resume dialogue with Islamabad, with Albright stating that India and Pakistan "must" find a way to move forward. Time will reveal whether Mr Vajpayee falls in line on that.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

17 MAR 2000

Jaswant against looking at ties with U.S. through Pak prism

Albright's statement on LoC cheers Indian govt.

By Seema Guha

NEW DELHI: The Vajpayee government is clearly upbeat about U.S. President Bill Clinton's visit. Secretary of state Madeleine Albright's speech at the Asia Society, where she laid down the broad contours of U.S. policy towards India, has given ground for optimism.

Her remarks on the Line of Control (LoC) have been interpreted here as a change in the U.S. stand on the Kashmir issue. Ms Albright had said that tangible steps must be taken to respect the LoC. "So long as this principle is violated, the people of Kashmir have no real hope for peace," she was quoted as saying.

Ms Albright's view tallies with what many in the government and outside it say is the only pragmatic solution to the Kashmir issue. New Delhi has repeatedly said that international acceptance of this theory—converting the LoC into a permanent international boundary between India and Pakistan—is the only way the issue can be solved.

Keeping this in mind, external affairs minister Jaswant Singh said, "We see a much greater realism on Kashmir on the part of the U.S." He is aware that in diplomacy, things move slowly, but the turn now is certainly positive. However, Mr Singh maintained that Kashmir was neither a territorial dispute nor a core issue in Indo-Pak ties, but the core of India's nationhood. India has expressed the hope that Mr Clinton's trip will "set the direction of Indo-U.S. relations". In his inimitable style, Mr Singh said, "The government views this as a directional rather than a destinational visit." In plain language, it means that it will set the course for ties after the sterility of the last 50 years.

Remarking that there was a marked difference in India's approach to the U.S., the foreign minister said, "Earlier, we were looking at what the U.S. could give us. Today, the emphasis is on what we can do together, how we can complement each other's strengths despite differences on certain issues."

Stating that India and the U.S. deal with each other on an equal footing, the minister spoke of the partnership between the two nations in the new knowledge-based industry and the contribution of Indians to the U.S.'s hi-tech industries. "Differences persist in key areas like the CTBT and lifting the remaining sanctions which were imposed after the nuclear tests. Our views have been conveyed time and again and we believe sanctions are self-defeating," Mr Singh said. Making it clear that India would not ask for the sanctions to be lifted, he said, "We will leave it to their judgment."

Reiterating that India would not make a noise about Mr Clinton's stopover in Pakistan, he said, "India's relations with the U.S. should not be looked at through the prism of Pakistan." He stated that India was on the move and must move out of its preoccupation with Pakistan, although terrorist attacks from across the border continued to be a major concern.

Clinton will take up J&K, terrorism with Pakistan

By Ramesh Chandran

The Times of India News Service

WASHINGTON: U.S. President Bill Clinton, mindful that his landmark visit to India presents a tremendous opportunity to reshape, over time, the very nature of the Indo-U.S. relationship, is likely to speak up passionately, both in private and to the Indian parliament, on the issue of nuclear proliferation.

National security adviser Sandy Berger said as much at the final White House briefing before the President, along with a large entourage, heads for South Asia. The view in Washington is that it would be unreasonable to expect Mr Clinton, for all his growing enthusiasm and fascination for India, to jettison one of his most ardent causes—non-proliferation—all of a sudden.

Hence, it comes as no surprise that Mr Clinton delivered particularly waspish remarks on videotape to the Carnegie non-proliferation conference. He said that stemming the spread of weapons of mass destruction had been a critical priority for him during his seven years as President and it would continue to be so in his final year.

He told conference delegates that there were those in South Asia who hoped that the U.S. would simply accept the nuclear status quo and move on. "I will not do that," Mr Clinton said, and admitted that India and Pakistan had legitimate security concerns. "But," he added, "I will make clear our view that a nuclear future is a dangerous future for them and for the world."

His national security advisor, when asked what India needed to do to get the sanctions imposed on it following the Pokhran blasts lifted, returned to the well-trodden theme of the three "benchmarks"—signing the CTBT, negotiating the fissile material cut-off treaty and ensuring adhesive export controls. However, it is widely expected that the sanctions will be eased and that except for those firms directly involved in weapons programmes, the despised "entities list" will be further shorn. Mr Berger confirmed that during his Pakistan stopover, Mr Clinton would address the Pakistani people live on television and extol the long relationship that the U.S. has had with them, as well as express his concerns about "the things that are happening in Pakistan". Among the topics the U.S. leader is likely to address are Pakistan's nuclear programme, the rising tensions along the Line of Control (LoC), Kashmir and terrorism. He is also likely to seek a path back to democracy.

"I think the President will talk about all those things to the people of Pakistan and with great respect," Mr Berger said and emphasised that Mr Clinton would urge both India and Pakistan to exercise restraint and create an environment for a dialogue.

When asked if Mr Clinton would help deposed premier Nawaz Sharif, Mr Berger said the President would raise the issue and emphasise that in case Mr Sharif was convicted, he should not be executed.



NAMASTE BILL



M. Albright



Jaswant Singh

Test ban sign-up listed among conditions

US raises hope of sanctions lift

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, March 17: The US is prepared to withdraw sanctions against India if New Delhi adheres to CTBT, strengthens export controls, negotiates a fissile material cut-off treaty and demonstrates restraint in the use of its nuclear programme.

Briefing reporters on President Bill Clinton's South Asia visit starting in New Delhi on Sunday, the White House national security adviser, Samuel (Sandy) R. Berger, said America's "ultimate goal" remains persuading India and Pakistan to give up their nuclear programmes.

He expressed satisfaction that neither India nor Pakistan had deployed nuclear weapons. "There are obviously further steps that could be taken to de-escalate the level of tension and put these weapons farther out of reach, so to speak, which we would like to see."

Nuclear differences notwithstanding, Berger said Clinton's trip is "fundamentally about trying to establish a new partnership with India — not to see India as a function of China or a function of the Soviet Union, but to see it as the world's largest perhaps most vibrant ... certainly one of the

most promising democracies."

Clinton said he is going to India and Pakistan on a peace mission. "We are working on the peace processes, from Northern Ireland to the Middle East, and I am going to the Indian sub-continent at the end of this week, he said at a Democratic Party national committee dinner in Baltimore.

Berger's views were echoed by Indian foreign minister Jaswant Singh, who asserted that Delhi is not looking to Clinton to offer

Plan for Pak

In Islamabad, Bill Clinton would stay put at the official residence of President Rafiq Tarar. "He is the elected President of Pakistan. We would like to do our events from there, our meetings there," Sandy Berger said.

Berger revealed that Clinton will tell Pervez Musharraf that even if Nawaz Sharif is convicted, he should not be executed.

The highlight of the stopover will be a live TV telecast addressing the people, "our long-time friends." The address could be disconcerting for Musharraf as Clinton would talk about "our concerns for things that are happening in Pakistan".

handouts, but instead wants to develop a new relationship with the US. "The PL-480 phase in Indo-US relations is over," Singh said in Delhi, referring to the controversy in the sixties when India accused the US of blocking American wheat to India because of its involvement in Vietnam.

But Singh made it clear that India continued to oppose the post-Pokhran sanctions. Berger held out the possibility that some of the sanctions could be repealed during the visit. It all depended, he said, on progress made in areas of US concern. Besides, if sanctions came in the way of mutual interest, they would go.

He hinted that on environment and energy, where cooperation is inhibited by the sanctions, the US would be flexible. "But to get at the heart of the sanctions that relate to anything that has any military application..... we would like to see progress" in CTBT, fissile material cut-off etc.

Berger said India should not be too concerned about Clinton's stopover in Islamabad. "The President of the US and all of his people are saying clearly we do not endorse this government (of Musharraf) actually is exactly what Indians would like to see."

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THE TELEGRAPH

18 MAR 2000

Change in US stance on Kashmir: India

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, March 17. — India today said there was a significant change in the US position on Kashmir.

Briefing reporters, the external affairs minister said there was now greater realism in the US stand on Kashmir, with yesterday's inflexible position having been junked. There was international recognition that India was on the move, Mr Jaswant Singh said.

(Quoting MEA sources, PTI reported tonight that India had rejected Mr Clinton's assertion that the nuclear status quo in South Asia was unacceptable to Washington. "It is not anything new that US President has given voice to. We do not share this view point," Mr Singh said when asked to comment on the US President's remarks at a non-proliferation conference in Washington yesterday.)

Referring to the Kashmir issue Mr Singh said it was necessary to move away from the preoccupation with Kashmir and when a Pakistani move adversely affected the bilateral relations, it was India that had to resolve the problems, not any other country. However, Kargil, the military coup, the hijacking and the repeated calls for *jehad* had made talks difficult.

Though the alarmist theory of Kashmir as a flashpoint had resulted in the international community intruding, it was now moving away from that. The USA had also expressed concern over terrorism and the need for freezing the border.

Mr Singh said it was not a territorial dispute, nor the core issue as Pakistan claimed it was, but the core of the Indian nation.

■ See KASHMIR: page 8

KASHMIR:

(Continued from page 1)

No one, he said, had been disturbed about the photographs put out by Federation of American Scientists (FASS). India had known all along about the deployment of the Pakistani missiles since the 1980s and the USA and the international community were also aware of this.

Mr Singh said the Clinton visit should not be seen in the perspective of what the USA could dole out to India since India had come a long way from the days of PL 480. The visit was a directional one and signified the end of a period of estrangement.

There were differences in the perceptions of both countries, but this was inevitable in any family, he said — describing India and the USA as a family of democracies.

He identified the areas of differences as environment, energy and the WTO. India viewed the sanctions as inequitable, unjustified and self-defeating.

It was necessary, he said, to deepen the strategic political dialogue between the two countries.

The visit would institutionalise the relationship and lay the groundwork for future relations.

There was increasing US recognition of the great economic potential of India and there was reciprocal recognition in India. Science and technology and knowledge-based industries were key areas of cooperation.

THE STATESMAN

18 MAR 2000

'LET US PUT BEHIND THE WASTED DECADES'

H-1
1873

India, U.S. should look ahead: Jaswant

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, MARCH 17. Although Pakistan will continue to impinge on Indo-U.S. relations, India and the United States have a larger agenda going beyond the confines of the subcontinent, according to the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh.

Talking to a small group of journalists here, Mr. Singh said the ties between New Delhi and the Washington "should not be viewed through the limiting prism of Pakistan".

Mr. Singh argued that the politics of the cold war pushed the United States closer to Pakistan; but the U.S. approach to the region is going through a major readjustment since the end of the cold war.

India and the United States must put behind them the "wasted decades" of the cold war and look for a new relationship in the 21st century, Mr. Singh said. The visit of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, will help set the "direction" of the new relationship, he added.

Instead of "looking back", Mr. Singh said India and the U.S. "should look ahead" to deepen their strategic dialogue and political cooperation.

Declaring that New Delhi has gone beyond the phase of seeking favours from other nations, Mr. Singh said the question before India and the United States is "what can the two nations do together" despite the many differences that divide them.

Mr. Singh said India is "on the move" and should not be overly preoccupied with Pakistan in its deal-

ings with the major powers. Questioned on the fact that Pakistan is looming large again over the Indo-U.S. relations after the Kargil confrontation, Mr. Singh conceded, "there is an overhang of the past" in the relations.

Responding to the latest American formulations over Kashmir and Indo-Pak relations, Mr. Singh said the U.S. emphasis on the sanctity of the Line of Control reflects a "shift towards realism" in Washington.

Mr. Singh said, "some of the fixed approaches of the past" in Washington are now being abandoned. But he cautioned that in the world of diplomacy long-held positions of nations "change only incrementally and step-by-step".

On the American concerns about a "nuclear flash-point" in the subcontinent, Mr. Singh said the thesis has "come full circle".

He said the Pakistani efforts to generate fears of a nuclear confrontation and draw in the United States into the Kashmir dispute have failed.

"The international community has seen through this game and are now calling for a standstill between India and Pakistan and urging stability", Mr. Singh said.

On the question of talks with Pakistan, Mr. Singh pointed to what he called a "fundamental contradiction" in Pakistan's position of asking for talks while promoting a Jihad against India.

Asked how India proposes to resolve its problems with Pakistan, the External Affairs Minister counselled "patience".

More reports on Pages 13, 14

THE HINDU
18 MAR 2000

U.S. may ease some curbs

WASHINGTON, MARCH 17. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, may ease some U.S. economic sanctions against India during his coming visit in a move that could help mend trade relations, administration officials said.

Mr. Clinton, who leaves tomorrow for a week-long trip to India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, could waive sanctions that have limited development assistance and U.S. agency aid for international development programmes in India.

Restrictions on U.S. military programmes would, however, remain in place, the officials said on Thursday. In a related develop-

THE HINDU

THE HINDU

18 MAR 2000

The Clinton visit & disarmament

By Arjun Makhijani

NUCLEAR WEAPONS are likely to be the elephant in the room that no one wants to talk about publicly when the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, visits India. Mr. Clinton, for one, will probably be too embarrassed to bring it up publicly because the U.S. Senate defeated the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) last October. If the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, follows Mr. Clinton in maintaining public silence about nuclear weapons, he will miss a major opportunity to assert India's leadership in the field of nuclear disarmament. When India tested nuclear weapons after decades of trying to persuade nuclear weapon states to disarm, Mr. Clinton noted that India's restraint had been "under-appreciated". His visit provides a perfect opportunity for India to take the initiative on disarmament outside of the framework of the discriminatory Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The failure of the nuclear weapon states that are parties to the NPT to fulfill their disarmament commitments under that treaty is causing widespread discontent among the world's Governments and people. There is strong worldwide support for substantial new action that would move all eight nuclear weapon states towards disarmament. India is already on record in the United Nations as favouring de-alerting of nuclear weapons. It also has a policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons. It is observing a moratorium on nuclear testing, though it has so far refused to rule out further weaponisation. India can give substance to its declaratory no-first-use policy by unilaterally de-alerting all its nuclear weapons by detaching all assembled warheads from delivery vehicles and storing them in separate locations and by declaring a moratorium on further weaponisation.

On the basis of this unilateral action, Mr. Vajpayee can invite the U.S., as well as all the other nuclear weapon states, including Israel and Pakistan, to New Delhi for a conference at which all would agree to immediately and verifiably de-alert all their nuclear weapons. Such an invitation would have moral and political credibility because India would have already taken unilateral action. A part of the strength of such action by India would derive from the fact that the U.S. still insists on retaining

the prerogative of first use. It has refused to provide unequivocal and legally-binding guarantees to non-nuclear signatories of the NPT that it will never threaten them with or use nuclear weapons against them. On the contrary, it has made many nuclear threats against non-nuclear weapon states, including one against India during the 1971 war, when the nuclear-armed aircraft carrier "USS Enterprise" was ordered into the Bay of Bengal as part of the U.S. Government's "tilt" towards Pakistan.

The U.S.' technical goals for its nuclear arsenal include the capability for a surprise first strike (known as "counterforce" capability, that is the ability to destroy the nuclear forces of the adversary on the

of strategic warheads to be de-alerted. A few days later the Russian President then, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, followed this bold, historic action by taking reciprocal steps.

The five-yearly review of the NPT is set to begin at the U.N. just four weeks after Mr. Clinton's return to the U.S. By unilaterally de-alerting and by extending an invitation to the other nuclear weapon states to do the same, India can occupy centre stage in that review without acceding to the NPT. Its action will put the five nuclear weapon states that are NPT signatories, notably the U.S. and Russia, in a difficult diplomatic position if they refuse to accept India's invitation to de-alert all nuclear weapons. Since May 11, 1998, the

The Clinton visit provides a perfect opportunity for India to take the initiative on disarmament outside of the framework of the discriminatory NPT.

ground before they are launched). The U.S. and Russia keep thousands of nuclear warheads on hair-trigger alert, ready to fire within minutes, creating grave dangers of all-out nuclear war by miscalculation or accident. Such a global catastrophe would minutes away from occurring in 1995. Russia's President then, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, was told that a nuclear missile was speeding towards Moscow. Russian missile operators were ready for his order to launch before the U.S. missile hit. Fortunately, he waited. The "missile" turned out to be a U.S.-Norwegian weather-research rocket, whose trajectory soon veered away from Russia. There have been many other false alerts. Such dangers have given rise to widespread demands for de-alerting in the U.S. and elsewhere. De-alerting has the support of the New Agenda Coalition of Governments, the Canberra Commission, and many military authorities in a number of countries.

There is precedent for unilateral de-alerting of a large number of weapons. In 1991, the attempted coup in the Soviet Union made nuclear command authority there uncertain. The U.S. President then, Mr. George Bush, unilaterally ordered thousands of tactical nuclear weapons removed from the U.S. arsenal and hundreds

nology was established prior to and independently of its nuclear weapons tests. Some in the West claim primacy for western ideas and methods based partly on military might. *The New York Times* columnist, Mr. Thomas Freidman, has written "The hidden hand of the market will never work without a hidden fist—McDonnell's cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas, the builder of the F-15". He further quotes historian Robert Kagan: "Good ideas and technologies need a strong power that promotes those ideas by example and protects those ideas by winning on the battlefield".

Evidently, there are also Indians who share this short-sighted view. While empires have been founded on it, they have also disappeared, often accompanied by terrible wars. Unless we change this thinking, as Einstein advocated at the dawn of the nuclear age, the next chapter in this tale may end in nuclear catastrophe. Moreover, the finest American political idea, democracy ensured by the rule of law and equality under it, has not needed the use of force to inspire people the world over, from Alexis de Tocqueville to Ho Chi Minh. The moral foundation for the kind of thinking that is needed is inherent in the world two-and-a-half-thousand years ago, which it vigorously renewed during its independence struggle. For this, India has been admired and emulated the world over, not least by the movements led by Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King, Jr. As a result, India was already a great power in the minds of the majority of the world's people, a status that its nuclear weapons tests have gravely diminished.

The events at Kargil and the increased fighting in Kashmir since show that the Pokhran tests and the predictable Pakistani response have resulted in severely increased nuclear dangers in South Asia and reduced security for both countries. If there is a silver lining to those tests, it is that the world is now paying far more attention, setting the stage for India to reclaim its historic leadership in disarmament. A propitious moment is at hand. Will Mr. Vajpayee seize it by taking decisive action?

(The writer is president, Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, Maryland, U.S.)

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Left to defy ban on anti-Clinton protests

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By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 17. The Left parties would stay away from the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's address to a joint sitting of Parliament on March 22. They would also defy the ban on holding demonstrations against his visit. However, they are not terming it a boycott, and saying their MPs would be busy that day organising street protests.

The CPI(M), the CPI, the Forward Bloc and the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP) today wrote a joint letter to the Home Minister Mr. L. K. Advani protesting the "blanket ban" on demonstrations, particularly the decision not to allow the Left parties to take out a march from the Mandi House to the American Centre on March 21.

Demanding that permission be

granted, the four parties said if the Government failed to adopt a democratic attitude they would go ahead with their planned march and demonstrations against the U.S. Government's "hostile" policies.

"We would go ahead, we would not be cowed", said the CPI(M) general secretary, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet.

He released copies of the letter signed by him, Mr. D. Raja (CPI), Mr. Debabrata Biswas (Forward Bloc) and Mr. Abani Roy (RSP). Addressing a joint press conference here, the leaders took objection to Mr. Clinton bringing in his own security men. They said this showed a lack of faith in the Indian Government's ability to protect him and amounted to an insult.

About the ban on demonstra-

tions, they said it seemed the Delhi police which was directly under the Home Ministry was following in the footsteps of Pakistan's military regime, which had announced a ban on all political meetings and rallies. "There is a military regime in our neighbouring country. Are we following in their footsteps?"

The CPI(M) politburo member, Mr. Prakash Karat, said the protestors would pursue Mr. Clinton throughout his visit — in Delhi on March 21, Agra on March 22, Jaipur on March 23, Hyderabad on March 24 and Mumbai on March 25. They would resist attempts to prevent peaceful demonstrations.

The CPI(M-L), in a separate statement, said it would organise a "march to Parliament" on March 22 to coincide with President Clinton's address.

THE HINDU

18 MAR 2000

51 entities removed from U.S. list

By Manoj Joshi

NEW DELHI: Just two days before President Bill Clinton arrives in India, his administration has got around to easing the economic sanctions on more than 250 Indian institutions.

More than three months ago, the U.S. had announced its intention of removing 51 entities from the black list drawn up in 1998 in the wake of the Pokhran II tests. On Friday, the last working day before Mr Clinton begins his official visit to India, the changed rules were finally notified in the Federal Register. A close look at the changed rules indicates that there will be a symbolic rather than substantive change in the sanctions regime against India.

Indian analysts, who spoke on condi-

tion of anonymity, say this is a signal that while the U.S. is willing to do business with India, it is not yet ready to make the kind of dramatic gestures Richard Nixon made when he visited Beijing in 1971. In this context, they point to the cleverly worded statements and speeches emanating from Washington which New Delhi and Islamabad are citing as endorsements of their respective points of view.

An announcement on the U.S. Bureau of Export Administration's (BXA) website on Saturday notes that not only have the 51 entities been removed from the list, but that the BXA has begun to process licence applications for some items to the still-listed entities "with a presumption of approval". This is a development that has been hyped by the

Indian government as a major achievement of the Jaswant Singh-Strobe Talbott dialogue.

But a closer look at the rules notified on Saturday reveals that the move makes only a slight dent in the sanctions regime imposed on India in the wake of the nuclear tests.

U.S. exporters have been cautioned that the addition or deletion of entities does not relieve them of their obligations under the export administration regulations which prohibit the export of any items that will strengthen India's strategic weapons complex.

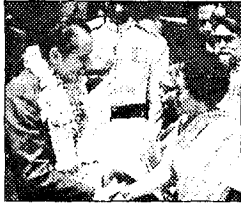
Among the institutions that continue to remain under tough restrictions are the aerospace divisions of the IITs at Chennai and Mumbai and the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

19 MAR 2000

INDO-US RELATIONS: HIGHS & LOWS

- **1949-50:** Pro Pak attitude of US on Kashmir disappoints India
- **Oct-Nov, 1949:** Kashmir figures prominently in official talks during PM Nehru's three week visit to US during President Truman's tenure
- **June 15, 1950:** President Truman signs Bill to furnish emergency food aid to India
- **May 1953:** Secretary of State John Foster Dulles visits New Delhi. Expresses US dislike for Nehru's non-alignment and supports US defence relations with Pakistan
- **1954:** US military supply relationship with Pakistan becomes major irritant in Indo-US relations
- **December 18, 1956:** Nehru pays second visit to USA; talks with President Eisenhower successful. Relations improve
- **December 10, 1959:** Eisenhower is the first US President to visit India. Receives warm reception
- **May 4, 1960:** Eisenhower signs PL 480 food agreement
- **September 1960:** Nehru again meets Eisenhower in New York during UN session
- **1961:** US condemns Indian use of force to liberate Goa from Portuguese rule
- **November 16, 1961:** Nehru's fourth and last visit to US.
- **May 1963:** US announces to build Tarapur nuclear power plant in Maharashtra
- **June 3, 1963:** President S. Radhakrishnan visits US
- **1964:** US agrees to supply military hardware to India but reverses decision in 1965
- **1965:** India protests use of US arms by Pakistan in 1965 Indo-Pak war
- **March 30, 1966:** PM Indira Gandhi meets President Johnson in Washington; New warmth in Indo-US relations. US sanctions heavy food aid to India. Short era of food-aid diplomacy ends in bitterness following India's pro-Soviet policy on Vietnam
- **1967:** India rejects NPT. US announces new arms sales policy to Pakistan. Indo-US relations decline
- **August 1969:** President Nixon's India visit is a low key affair
- **July 1971:** Secretary of State Henry Kissinger visits India and then Pakistan and China. Relations further deteriorate
- **August 9, 1971:** New Delhi and Moscow sign Indo-Soviet friendship treaty, further cementing suspicions in Indo-US relations
- **November 4, 1971:** PM Indira Gandhi visits US, meets President Nixon
- **December 3, 1971:** Indo-Pak war; President Nixon orders US aircraft carrier Enterprise to Bay of Bengal. Relations at lowest ebb
- **May 18, 1974:** India's first nuclear test. US reacts strongly
- **October 1974:** Kissinger visits India again, saying US recognises India as a major power
- **January 1-3, 1978:** President Carter visits New Delhi, but not Pakistan. US financial assistance resumed but US stops supplies of Nuclear fuel to Tarapur power plant
- **October 1978:** Foreign Minister A.B. Vajpayee visits Washington. Fresh warmth in Indo-US relations
- **December 1979:** USSR intervention in Afghanistan starts new round of cold war. US adopts Pakistan as a frontline state; India supports USSR actions. Relations deteriorate
- **July 30, 1982:** PM Indira Gandhi again visits Washington. Gradual warming of relations in Regan era
- **June 12, 1985:** PM Rajiv Gandhi visits Washington
- **October 1987:** Rajiv Gandhi pays second official visit to Washington. Discusses defence cooperation and sale of super computers
- **1991:** India-US agree to start military to military cooperation, hold joint army, air and naval exercises. But US objects to India's missile programme
- **May 1994:** PM Narasimha Rao visits US.
- **Sept. 1996:** India declines to sign CTBT
- **May 1998:** India's second round of Nuclear tests leads to US economic and technological sanctions on India
- **March 2000:** President Clinton's five-day visit to India — 22 years after the Carter visit



KBK Infographics

51 institutions formally off sanctions list

USA accepts our N-deterrence rights: Jaswant

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, March 18. — Denying that the US President had rejected the possibility of nuclear weapon status for India, Mr Jaswant Singh today said the USA "recognises that India will have a minimum nuclear deterrent programme".

The external affairs minister said Indo-US differences on nuclear proliferation have been narrowed down. The USA has acknowledged that it's India who will decide what its minimum deterrent should be, and has accepted India's missile programme.

Replying to questions on Mr Bill Clinton's remarks that he would not accept the region's nuclear status quo, Mr Singh said the US President had spoken of the need to narrow down differences on non-proliferation which is what the two countries have been attempting.

He said the US stand on India relating to nuclear proliferation is a departure from the earlier one spelt out in the UN Security Council resolution 1172, which called for India to roll back its nuclear programme and to dismantle it.

He denied there would be any pressure on India on the CTBT or other issues during the Clinton visit, but said the US President has a right to express his opinion.

Sanctions: (The USA today officially announced removal of 51 Indian institutions from its sanctions list, brought out after Pokhran II, adds PTI from Washington. These include the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research and the Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics.

(The USA had taken the decision sometime back, but it will become effective only when the list is published in the Federal Register, expected any day now. The USA said the "minor concession" doesn't affect the thrust of post-nuclear test sanctions against India. The action "is based on a consensus decision ... to more tightly focus the sanctions on those Indian entities most directly involved in proliferation activities of

internal issues.

Is the USA using its influence with Pakistan to seek curbs on its support to cross-border terrorism? Mr Singh said: "A great deal more can be done in that regard."

He described the joint working group on terrorism as a big departure for the USA and said India was only the third country with which the USA had such a relationship.

India has to tackle the problems with Pakistan on its own, he said. Greater international recognition of the problems is only part of this process. India doesn't need advice, help or mediation. He said he agreed with the remarks of the US Secretary of State, Ms Madeleine Albright, that India would decide what steps it must take for its security.

CPM slams Jaswant: The CPI-M has criticised a statement by Mr Singh on the Clinton visit where the minister "has shown the audacity to slander India's non-aligned policy". Mr HS Surjeet today blamed the BJP for stooping low to woo the USA. Mr Singh's statement on leaving behind the wasted decades of the Cold War days for a new Indo-US relationship by deepening strategic dialogue and political cooperation are in keeping with the BJP's pro-imperialist stance, Mr Surjeet said.

Indo-Pak firing: Indian and Pakistani troops today exchanged heavy fire in several sectors along the LoC and the international border in Jammu division for the second day today, without any casualties on the Indian side, officials said, says PTI from Jammu.



The Indian and US flags on a Rajpath street lamp in Delhi on Saturday. Traffic signals have been switched off and the road sealed for Mr Bill Clinton's visit. — The Statesman

concern". Over 160 institutions are still on the sanctions list.)

Mr Singh acknowledged gaps in the two countries' perceptions, especially on Kashmir. He said India doesn't share the US perception that Kashmir is a flashpoint, but cautioned that Mr Clinton's visit should not be seen through the prism of Indo-Pak relations. Mr Clinton isn't coming to talk about India's

'Vision' to showcase future Indo-US ties

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, March 18

A "VISION" document, a joint statement to be signed and issued by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and US President Bill Clinton here on March 21, will be the highlight of the visit, spelling out the direction in which Indo-US relations will travel henceforth.

An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said that the "Vision" statement would "set the direction

for future Indo-US relations." India has already described the impending

visit as directional and initiating a "qualitatively new" relationship. The spokesman said that two other documents would be signed.

One of these would be an agreement, to be signed at the Ministerial level, for setting up a high-level Science and Technology Forum to facilitate cooperation in research and development and transfer of technology.

The Forum would be inclusive of government, corporate and academic scientists from both countries.

The Governing Body of the Forum would consist of seven "eminent persons" from each country with the Department of Science and Technology providing the official interface from the Indian side. The Forum would receive matching grants from both governments, facilitate the exchange and dissemination of information on science and technology and commission studies.

The third, the spokesman said, would be a statement on cooperation

in energy and environment focusing on promotion of energy and protection of

environment. It would be signed at the Ministerial level at Agra on March 22.

In Agra the President was scheduled to address an environmental meeting and would highlight the pivotal role of energy in economic development and the risks to environment concomitant on unsustainable energy use.

The statement would envisage the setting up of a joint consultative group on clean energy and environment, the spokesman said.

Three documents to be signed

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

19 MAR 2000



Will Clinton's visit further Indo-US ties?

Illusions on the American agenda may lead Indian policy makers to make unwise concessions

The visit will serve to provide the political impetus at the highest level to clear the cobwebs



Kamal Mitra Chenoy

THE media hype over President Bill Clinton's visit is simply amazing. From exaggerated expectations of the visit: "a new stage in Indo-US relations" to trivia on which bed the President will sleep, and whether he'll smoke and inhale Cuban cigars, the Clinton visit has created more enthusiasm than any other visit this decade including the Pope's. This is unwarranted and unwise.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has stressed the centrality of the nuclear non-proliferation issue to the Indo-US relationship. The US remains committed to the UN Security Council resolution 1172 calling for a rollback to the Indian nuclear and missile programme. Thus the Clinton administration's stress on the CTBT. Clinton's visit to Pakistan despite Indian lobbying, highlights the continuity in US strategic interests and the motivated nature of its commitment to human rights and democracy. When it suited US interests, it deliberately proliferated nuclear weapons technology to Israel and apartheid South Africa. It turns a blind eye to the absence of human rights and democracy in allies like Saudi Arabia, while waxing eloquent on such shortcomings in Tibet and Kashmir. So there will be no gains here, especially since the national consensus on signing the CTBT has proved elusive.

But Indian policymakers and opinion makers must take note of US policy imperatives before heightening expectations or making policy departures. The proposed US-India axis which led to PM Vajpayee's letter to Clinton suggesting a US-India alliance against China was promptly leaked, compromising Sino-Indian relations. However, it appears, India has persisted with such formulations in the Talbott-Jaswant Singh talks. The US continues to oppose the restructuring and democratisation of the UN advocated by India.

Even on Kashmir, despite the US call to Pakistan to respect the LOC, differences prevail. No amount of evidence of cross border terrorism, or of Pakistani support to the Taliban, will change this. Pakistan, and China, are for the US useful counterweights to a nuclear India, rhetoric about the two democracies notwithstanding. So no breakthroughs here either.

Much has been made of the prospects of US-India economic ties. Here too there are basic contradictions. The US represents the North's more extreme elements in the WTO negotiations. Other Northern countries blamed the US for the breakdown of the Seattle talks. Though the EU had agreed to give India till 2003 to remove Quantitative Restrictions, the US

insisted on reducing the period to 2001. The USA opposes the opening up of textile exports under the MFA to the South. The US heads the pressure group for the inclusion of the Multilateral Agreement on Investments, and the social clause in the WTO, which India and the South oppose. Likewise, US pressure determines the policies of the multilateral financial institutions like the IMF and World Bank, whose conditions, though increasingly accepted by the Indian elite, have not been in Indian interest, as the RSS has belatedly stated.

Though the Clinton visit may lead to some more visas for Indian computer experts, which will help the US IT industry more than India, nothing substantial should be expected. In fact, the media hype may prove doubly counterproductive. Not only will there be no ma-



Uday Bhaskar

The Clinton visit has a symbolism that goes beyond the persona of Mr Bill Clinton and his desire to visit India before he leaves the White House. The establishment in the US, as in any other nation has a continuity that goes beyond the individual preferences of the Chief Executive and what is said and done during this visit will not be merely ephemeral. It is the first visit by a US President to Delhi in 22 years and comes in less than two years after India's nuclear tests of May 1998. To that extent, the symbolism itself is substantive.

Despite their many affinities to

in abetting terrorism and the Sino-Pak strategic axis are cases in point.

A realistic appreciation of the many complexities that envelop a tangled sub-continent in terms of its anxieties, aspirations and potentialities is a first step that will lay the foundation for an improvement in India-US ties. The dominant discourse about India in US perception is undergoing a transmutation and the Clinton visit may help rewrite the narrative.

For sure there are areas of difference that will remain — as for instance in the nuclear and missile field. But there is an earnest desire on both sides to broaden the base of the relationship and not predicate it — and hence hold it hostage to a single needle point — nuclear non-proliferation. The deterrence circle has to be subsumed by the disarmament square but that will take time and patience and in the interim, India and the US are moving — a bit gingerly, like two porcupines trying to be friends — to embed their differences in a flexible basket of areas of mutual benefit.

The post Cold War period is rich in such mutuality and the starting point is the consensus that security for a state is no longer an exclusive evaluation of its military capability. Today security is seen as being comprehensive in nature — inherently inclusive — in that it must harmonise the political, economic and military strands with the social, technological and environmental.

India and the US bring many asymmetrical complementarities to the table in a new global free-market likely to be dominated by the IT sector and dot-com is the new mantra whose power is waiting to be unleashed even as the "uccharan" is being mastered by both sides.

Economic and military capabilities will be the perennial lode stars of the national interest on both sides. India's current profile in both sectors is in dire need of capital investment and technological access. The US embodies both and is in turn seeking a low wage, IT empathetic, English-speaking gene-pool and fresh markets to boot. It helps enormously that both India and the US are liberal, plural democracies who skid on banana peels in their own way.

But as any realistic assessment suggests, to further a bi-lateral relationship, invoking a correspondence about the world's oldest and largest democracy as reason enough for a lively tango is not enough. Tangibles have to be infused and sustained and here the economic and military sectors hold promise.

Inshaallah, the Clinton visit and the entourage that accompanies him will be able to realise the potential between natural but currently wary allies.

(Commodore Bhaskar is Deputy Director, Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi)

IN BLACK AND WHITE



major breakthroughs in the political or economic fronts, but illusions on the American agenda may lead Indian policy makers to make unwise concessions.

When sanctions are discussed, India should not balk at stressing the discrimination in the US attitude towards Israel on the one hand, and India on the other. While our strategic experts talk of the US silence on Sino-Pakistani nuclear collaboration, they are silent on US-Israeli and earlier US-South African nuclear collaboration. They should ask: was West Asia in any way less tense than Kashmir, when the US collaborated in the Israeli nuclear project?

As Bill Clinton winds up his presidency, he is welcome in India. But we should have no great expectations from his visit.

(Kamal Mitra Chenoy teaches at JNU, New Delhi)

be "natural allies" India and the USA have dealt with each other so far as "estranged democracies". This was true during the Cold War when their core security perceptions were sharply divergent. However the Cold War has been interred with the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the former USSR, but the mind-set is still at work in the collective psyche on both sides.

The Clinton visit will serve to provide the political impetus at the highest level to clear the cobwebs and this will have a cascade effect on the many interlocutors and institutions that contribute to the bi-lateral relationship.

For instance, the global media spotlight will be on the sub-continent for about ten days and many realities about the region that were glossed over till now and which soured the relationship have come to the fore. Pakistan's involvement

SUPPORT FOR RESTORING DEMOCRACY IN PAK.

Clinton unveils plan to rekindle ties with India

FR-1
19/3

WASHINGTON, MARCH 18. On the eve of his departure for South Asia, the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, has said he would use the five-day trip to rekindle the relationship with India and to reduce tensions between New Delhi and Islamabad.

Mr. Clinton said he also ^{planned to} minimise the likelihood of weapons proliferation and would support the restoration of democracy in Pakistan, adding that Washington would continue to cooperate with Islamabad in the fight against terrorism.

Speaking to reporters in the Oval Office on Friday night, he said that despite India being the world's largest democracy, no American President had been there in 22 years. "We have a lot of things we can do together. A lot of mutual interests. Obviously, what I hope to do first is to rekindle the relationship between the us and India," he said.

The President, who earlier described the sub-continent and the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir as the most dangerous place in the world, said, "I want to do what I can to reduce tensions in the Indian sub-continent, to reduce the likelihood of weapons proliferation and the likelihood of conflict."

During his South Asia tour, he said he would make clear the U.S. view that a nuclear future was dangerous for India, Pakistan and the world. "And I want to do what I can to support the restoration of democratic rule in Pakistan, and to continue our cooperation with them against terrorism."

The President, who would first visit Bangladesh, said, "I have seen a lot of the initiatives taken in Bangladesh, particularly for the empowerment of poor people, that I think are important there and throughout the world." "If you look at the size and potential of the Indian sub-continent, if they could find a way to manage their difficulties," he said, "there's probably no other place in the world with the capacity for growth and modernisation over

the next two decades that you find there." Mr. Clinton would spend five days in India and make a brief stop in Pakistan where he would be the first U.S. President in 30 years.

Several U.S. Congressmen have urged the President to strengthen relations with India and not to fall into the trap of attempting any mediation in Kashmir.

The President's delegation to India includes his daughter, Ms. Chelsea Clinton, mother-in-law, Ms. Dorothy Rodham, the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, and the Commerce Secretary, Mr. William Daley.

While Mr. Clinton's daughter and mother-in-law will not accompany him to Bangladesh, the delegation to Pakistan, which includes Ms. Albright, would be without Ms. Chelsea, Ms. Dorothy and members of Congress.

Plan to bring India, Pak. into NPT

Later in a video address to the Carnegie non-proliferation conference, the President said he would try to bring India, Pakistan, Israel and Cuba into the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, which would give a monopoly of nuclear weapons to the big five. Besides Washington, Britain, France, Russia and China comprise the big five.

"We will increase momentum for universal adherence to the NPT," Mr. Clinton said.

The U.S. effort is expected at next month's NPT review conference. India has said it would sign the NPT if, by a fixed date, the five powers are prepared to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.

The President also referred to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty which was rejected by the U.S. Senate, saying that under the leadership of General Shalikhvili, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "we will work hard this year to build bipartisan support for ratification".

Gen. Shalikhvili is expected to prepare the

ground for ratification in the next administration as the issue is unlikely to come up before the Senate during the remainder of Mr. Clinton's term.

"I will continue to call the other nations to ban testing and join the treaty. We must not lose the chance to end nuclear testing forever. We must also take the next essential step — a treaty to cut off production of fissile material," the President added.

Welcoming the convening of the conference to focus on curbing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, Mr. Clinton said "all of you know how serious this challenge is".

Referring to the national missile defence programme which he is expected to approve, Mr. Clinton said any decision on a limited missile defence would take into account not only the threat, feasibility and cost, but also the overall impact on Washington's security and arms control.

"The anti-ballistic missile treaty remains important to our security. (But) today, dealing with dangerous new missile threats is also vital to global security," he said. — PTI

Mechanism likely on economic dialogue

Our Special Correspondent writes from New Delhi:

India and the U.S. are likely to set up an institutional mechanism for an economic dialogue on the line of the security dialogue being conducted for some time now.

This was indicated here today by the U.S. Ambassador, Mr. Richard Celeste, who said a mechanism could be put in place for a sustained relationship in diverse areas. Replying to a question on the prospects for such a mechanism on the economic front, he said it had to be seen whether this could be devised in the same way as the security dialogue. Mr. Clinton was addressing a press conference on the eve of Mr. Clinton's district.

Clinton's effigies burnt in Calcutta

Calcutta, March 19

WEST BENGAL'S ruling Left Front today staged demonstration against the visit of US President Bill Clinton, burnt his effigies and castigated the NDA Government for what it described as "the Centre's shameful surrender to US imperialism".

The protestors, led by prominent Left Front leaders like CPI (M) politburo member Anil Biswas, State Environment Minister Manab Mukherjee and city mayor

Prashanta Chatterjee, shouted slogans like 'Go back Clinton' and 'down with US imperialism'.

Addressing the rally, Mr Biswas, also State secretary of the CPI (M), said: "Clinton is the symbol of imperialism. The way the Centre is behaving, pains me to say, that they have shamefully surrendered to imperialist forces."

"They have imposed restrictions on public movement in Delhi. The offices of different trade unions and mass organisations have been put under surveillance and their activities are being constantly monitored".

He alleged that Clinton was trying to create a "hostile atmosphere" in which India and Pakistan would be permanently at "loggerheads" on the Kashmir issue.

Another Leftist outfit, the Socialist Unity Centre of India, in a statement said that they would hold a similar protest on Tuesday against Clinton's visit.

VARANASI: In Varanasi, hundreds of Forward Bloc activists took out a procession here today and burnt the effigy of US President Bill Clinton to protest against his visit to India. They shouted slogans like "Bill Clinton go back" and "neocolonialism *murdabad*" and held a meeting in which speakers assailed

the Central Government for inviting Clinton. The WTO, IMF and World Bank are working under US pressure, they said and criticised Washington for 'patenting items like brinjal, basmati rice and *karela*."

THANE: Extreme Left wingers and their supporters today staged a protest against the Clinton visit and burnt his effigies here today. The protestors, under the banner of *azadi bachao andolan*, and took out a rally.



Indo-US defence ties to get a boost

Revival of executive steering groups is on the cards

Shishir Gupta

New Delhi, March 19

INDIA AND the United States are expected to initiate steps towards revival of the executive steering groups to chart the course for service-to-service cooperation between the armed forces of the two countries.

While improvement of defence ties may not be a high-priority issue for President Bill Clinton and the high-powered delegation accompanying him to New Delhi today, the issue is expected to be broached during the meeting of the national security advisors of the two countries.

However, the warming of military ties will fall well short of resurrection of the Indo-US defence policy group, that lies frozen since 1998 Pokhran nuclear tests.

Highly-placed sources said first indications that the US was interested in revival of the executive steering groups came during the recent visit of Admiral Dennis Blair, Commander-in-Chief of US Pacific Fleet, to India. In his interactions with the three Service

Chiefs and top Indian bureaucrats, the powerful military commander expressed the desire that both the countries should resume service-to-service cooperation and not wait for the resuscitation of the DPG.

The Indo-US defence cooperation is governed by the DPG, which defines and shapes the overall policy framework, and also decides on the future agenda.

The Indian Defence Secretary and his US counterpart head the DPG. Next in the line are the executive steering groups, which chalk out a three-year-plan for service-to-service cooperation under DPG's policy guidance.

The Vice-Chiefs of the Indian Army and the Air Force and their counterparts in the Seventh US Fleet head the respective steering committees. The Indian Navy is represented by its Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Operations).

The steering groups decide on joint military programs such as exercises, training, high-level visits and other exchanges. The last Indo-US exercise was held in 1995, in which two US nuclear submarines and an Indian Kilo-class submarine participated.

While the Army and the Air Force steering groups were stalled post-Pokhran-II, the Navy steering group has not met after differences over an agreement that envisaged sharing of military information (GSOMIA) between the two navies. The Indian side was against a clause in the pact which called for verification procedures.

Defence analysts say that revival of the steering groups is a forward step after resumption of the military training programs (IMET) by the US. After an initial hitch, the US is now offering advance military training courses to the Indian Armed Forces.

These even include specialised courses such as underwater warfare and high altitude para-jumping. There are indications that Indo-US defence ties may warm up in time to come. India's latest Delhi-class guided missile destroyer "Mysore" is visiting New York harbour in July this year to participate in the "Tall Ships Review". Four senior officers, representing the three services and the Defence Ministry, have been invited to attend a symposium, organised by the US Pacific Fleet.

HPD
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PM for ties with U.S. on equal terms

NEW DELHI, MARCH 19. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today asserted that India would not take any decision with regard to its security "under pressure" and said Indo-U.S. relations should be based on "equal terms".

Hours before the arrival of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, the Prime Minister, addressing a gathering on the eve of Holi at his residence, said "we will not take any decision under pressure as far as our security is concerned. The decisions will be ours."

Expressing confidence that the U.S. presidential visit, coming after a gap of 22 years, would help improve bilateral ties, Mr. Vajpayee said "our relations should be based on equal terms".

Recalling that Washington had resented the 1998 Pokhran nuclear tests and imposed sanctions against India, Mr. Vajpayee said he had then stated that the people were prepared to face all difficulties for the sake of the country's security.

"The sanctions are yet to be lifted. We will have talks and we are hopeful that the relations between us will improve now," he added.

Lauding the farmers' contribution in making the country self-sufficient in food production, Mr. Vajpayee said India was no more dependent on foodgrains from abroad.

Assuring farmers that the Government would protect their interests, he said efforts were being made to promote export of farm products.

THE STATESMAN
20 MAR 2000

Indo-U.S. defence steering groups may be revived

By Atul Aneja

ND-13
20/3
NEW DELHI, MARCH 19. India and the United States are likely to agree on expanding interaction between their defence personnel during the visit of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, to New Delhi.

Highly-placed official sources here said the two sides might revive their "executive steering groups" which give direction to inter-services contacts. Specifically, the three steering groups — one each for the Army, Navy and the Air Force — have in the past identified the "menu" of future inter-services activities.

In the past, they have charted a medium-term road map for service-to-service cooperation. These lists of planned activities included joint military exercises, exchange of military personnel and participation in international seminars related to security.

The steering groups used to chart out their activities within the framework of policy guidelines provided by the apex Indo-U.S. Defence Policy Group (DPG). A decision on the revival of DPG meetings is unlikely to be finalised during this visit. Meetings of the DPG had been stalled even prior to the Pokhran nuclear tests.

Mr. Clinton visits India at a time when the two sides have done some groundwork to put their defence relationship back on track. Both sides recently discussed the need for reviving Indo-U.S. ties incrementally. For instance, the U.S. Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet, Gen. Dennis Blair, who was here recently, proposed that the two sides should reconsider reviving the executive steering groups.

The Indian side had then also raised the subject of easing sanctions on the transfer of those U.S.-made parts which go into the manufacture of equipment

in Third World countries. Specifically, India is keen that the U.S. ease its restrictions on the transfer of some components which are procured by the U.K. for the Jaguar fighter jets.

While the institutional dialogue is now beginning to show positive signs of revival, the defence relationship between India and the U.S. has progressed in other spheres. Sources point out that India's premier indigenous destroyer, INS Mysore, will visit the New York harbour in July to participate in the "tall ships" review there.

A composite team, with personnel from the Defence Ministry and the services, is set to participate in a symposium in Hawaii, the headquarters of the U.S. Pacific Command, in May.

The U.S. side has also eased informal restrictions on the content of the training capsule for Indian defence personnel. Indian service personnel train in U.S. military institutions under the IMET programme. IMET exchanges had been scrapped following the Pokhran tests. They have been revived subsequently, but Indian officers are now being offered advanced courses under this scheme.

Cricket upstages Clinton

NEW DELHI, MARCH 19. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit took a backseat today as the cricket-crazy citizens of Delhi remained glued to their television sets for most of the day watching the final one-day tie between India and South Africa and spent the evening celebrating Holi.

It was cricket everywhere — from blueline buses to dhabas. — PTI

THE HINDU
20 MAR 2000

India and America

By Malini Parthasarathy

It is for the Congress and the Left parties to make clear that the BJP does not speak for the Indian people when it proceeds to define the scope and potential for cooperation between India and the U.S. in its own strategic idiom.

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THE VISIT of Mr. Bill Clinton, the first by a U.S. President to India and the subcontinent in two decades, is evoking strong and sharply opposite political reactions. On the one side is hype of the most extravagant kind, generated in large measure by the BJP Government in New Delhi and the market-oriented peddlers of the "hi-tech India" dream. Bollywood-type posters of Mr. Clinton in Mumbai, frenzied scrubbing and cleaning of time-honoured monuments in Agra and Jaipur, beggars being driven off the streets in self-proclaimed Cyberabad testify to a "Clinton-mania" phenomenon being not-so-subtly promoted by the ruling establishment with no compunctions about such an unabashed display of servility to the head of a foreign state.

On the other hand, is the bizarre spectacle of the resurrection by the Left parties, of the '60s spectre of Uncle Sam, the caricature that symbolised for years, the post-colonial apprehensions about U.S. imperialism and which held potent sway over popular imagination in Central America and Asia. The Left parties have pulled out all the stops in their plan to hold demonstrations against Mr. Clinton, in protest against the BJP Government's "subservience to the U.S. imperialist agenda". But the angry Left-inspired protests are unlikely to have much resonance in a public arena increasingly dominated by the new and expanding constituency of the middle class and its business, educational and cultural ties to the United States. That there is now a growing number of Indians, not necessarily in the higher income brackets, who look to the U.S. for their educational and business aspirations and unlike the youth of two decades ago, do not fight shy of professing an admiring interest in America and things American, is a reality that cannot be wished away. The lengthening queues outside U.S. consulates in Indian cities for American visas, particularly of the H-1 variety, year after year, vividly epitomise the entry of new interest groups with crucial stakes in better ties with the United States.

It might therefore be a tactical mistake to appear to admonish ordinary middle class Indians for betraying a curiosity or a fascination with the fact of an American presidential visit. Therefore while the Left

parties perceive this event as an opportune moment to re-articulate anxieties over the agenda of economic reforms and its implications for India's sovereignty, this approach is unlikely to fire popular imagination, as it might have in the Sixties. While nobody would suggest that the fears over the impact of the current economic policies on poverty and inequalities, are unfounded or need to be put aside, it does seem that to utilise the Clinton visit as a symbol of India's skewed governing priorities might not be an effective instrument of political mobilisation at this particular moment. Rather than sound irrelevant and isolated in adopting a completely rejectionist stance in relation to the debate on Indo-U.S. ties, the Left might do better to ignite a public discussion on the manner in which the BJP appears to have appropriated the entire terrain of the U.S.-India equation. The danger implicit in this misappropriation needs to be urgently highlighted. It is becoming increasingly evident that the BJP's extremely partisan and chauvinist strategic aims in the subcontinent are being portrayed as "national interests" and India's necessarily nuanced and complex approach to the United States has been reduced and held hostage to the BJP's jingoistic strategic vision.

What is so regrettable about the fact that the public space has been captured by these two opposite political reactions to the Clinton visit, is that the middle ground, crucial territory for the articulation of the sentiments of countless ordinary Indians who do not share the BJP's chauvinist vision of the subcontinent's future, but are not comfortable either with the old Cold War stereotype of the dangers of moving closer to the United States, is not adequately represented in the larger picture. A healthy and robust relationship between India and the United States would require honest and rigorous introspection of what really is the common ground on which the two coun-

tries can work together and what is the territory that must be resolutely excluded from the scope of this relationship, as for instance, India's own national security priorities and policies in the region.

If indeed the relationship with the U.S. is to be envisaged as a long-term equation of considerable value, it is essential that a distinction be made between the interests of the people of India and the BJP's self-serving approximations of the "national interest." The BJP's worldview eschews a realistic acceptance of the necessity of engaging Pakistan, prefers to rely on inauthentic and highly coloured portrayals of China as menacing India's security and consequently requires a strategic dependence on the United States to be an arbiter in its favour, in the region. Yet, judging by the nature of the consensus that has underpinned five decades of an independent foreign policy and has emerged as a result of India's healthy parliamentary democratic system, it might not really be possible for the BJP to thrust this narrow vision upon this country. It would also be a disservice to the full potential of the multi-faceted India-U.S. equation, to attempt to reduce it to its strategic dimension. It is crucial that the Opposition parties, particularly the Congress and the Left parties take it upon themselves not to allow the BJP administration to hold Mr. Clinton's visit hostage to its own strategic design in the subcontinent. It is for these parties to make clear that the BJP does not speak for the Indian people when it proceeds to define the scope and potential for cooperation between India and the U.S. in its own strategic idiom.

The real index of the Vajpayee administration's tendency to endow the United States with the role of an arbiter in the region, especially in relation to Pakistan is the manner in which the various formulations of Clinton administration officials have been seized upon as articulations reinforcing the Indian view of the dispute.

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Thus there was great satisfaction in New Delhi with the recent statement of the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright that "nations must not attempt to change borders or zones of occupation through armed force" and with the statement of the U.S. National Security Advisor, Mr. Sandy Berger that Pakistan "bore responsibility" for the Kargil tensions.

It is evident that the post-Kargil and post-Musharraf approach of the Vajpayee administration to Pakistan remains anchored to a policy of containment, with not even the slightest pretence of moving towards a more realistic attitude of engagement in order to address mutual tensions. In this context, the current obsessive reliance on the Clinton administration and the U.S. to endorse the Indian strategic view of events, to the extent of scrutinising its every utterance, places India in a position with virtually no diplomatic manoeuvrability and robs it of the potential to be an autonomous and sovereign player in the region. While such a position might not undermine the BJP's own strategic interests externally and political interests, internally, it is in the ultimate analysis damaging to democratic India's pursuit of a sovereign and autonomous foreign policy.

Mr. Clinton and his delegation have made it clear that their visit of India is not only to address the political and strategic components of what they envisage as an emerging equation with considerable promise. But while the BJP Government is certainly sponsoring the showcasing of a "hitech India", there is little doubt that the visit of the American President is being viewed in the context of its own strategic gameplan in the subcontinent and its substance will be filtered through the prism of the perennial zero-sum game with Pakistan. The first visit of an American President in two decades which can rightfully be regarded as symbolising many things on many levels to the people of India must indeed be treated as a fresh chapter in India's history. It is for the Indian people to explore the potential and scope of the India-America relationship and to imbue it with the significance that accrues naturally to such a multifaceted interaction, reflecting in the educational, cultural and business links that draw the two countries closer.

THE HINDU
20 MAR 2000

Bill Clinton arrives to a warm welcome

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, MARCH 19. Amid rising expectations of a new political relationship with India, the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, arrived here tonight to a warm welcome. As the capital gears up for the spring festival of Holi, Mr. Clinton brings with him the promise to end the long winter in Indo-U.S. relations.

The first American presidential visit to India in over two decades kicked off when Air Force One, the specially equipped plane that ferries Mr. Clinton around the U.S. and the world, touched down at the Palam airport at 8.20 p.m. Ten minutes later, the President and his daughter, Ms. Chelsea Clinton, emerged from the aircraft, walking down the steps side by side and on to the tarmac. Ms. Dorothy Rodham, mother-in-law of Mr. Clinton, walked down just behind them.

As a special gesture to the U.S. President, the Indian Government broke protocol and deputed the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, to receive Mr. Clinton at the airport.

According to the initial plan, the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. Ajit Panja, was to have received the American President. Over the years, India has cut down airport reception ceremonies to a minimal level.

The Foreign Secretary, Mr. Lalit Mansingh, and India's Ambassador to the U.S., Mr. Naresh Chandra, were also present at the airport, as were the U.S. Ambassador to India, Mr. Richard Celeste, and his wife.

Mr. Clinton exchanged greetings and a few words with Mr. Jaswant Singh and Mr. Chandra during the brief but warm welcome at the airport. Mr. Panja presented him with a bouquet of flowers before he was driven in his special limousine, a Cadillac, to the Maurya Sheraton hotel, where he will spend a quiet night after a gruelling flight.

The preparations for the festival of colours tomorrow in Delhi have been overshadowed by the unprecedented media hype about the Clinton visit and the huge se-

A new chapter: Page 13
Hotel decked up: Page 14
A date with big cats: Page 15

curity blanket that will cover the city for the next few days.

The President's large entourage included the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of Commerce, Mr. William Daley, the National Security Adviser, Mr. Samuel R. Berger, and the Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott.

Mr. Clinton's state visit to India will not begin until Tuesday

morning when he will be formally welcomed in the forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhavan by the President, Mr. K.R. Narayanan, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee. Early on Monday, Mr. Clinton will take off from Palam to Dhaka where he will spend the entire day.

Ms. Chelsea Clinton and her grandmother will not be travell-

ing with the President to Bangladesh. They will instead play Holi with the royal family of Jodhpur at the Umed Bhawan Palace.

After Mr. Clinton returns from Dhaka tomorrow night, he will spend a day and a half with political leaders in New Delhi before travelling to Agra, Jaipur, Hyderabad and Mumbai over the next week.

THE HINDU
20 MAR 2000

India will gain nothing: Left

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 19. The Left parties see the visit of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, as the start of "kowtowing" to the Americans even as India "loses some dignity and independence" as a sovereign nation without gaining anything in concrete terms.

The party leaders today justified their decision not to attend the joint meeting of MPs to be addressed by Mr. Clinton on March 22, even as they warned the country not to expect the U.S. to move closer to India while distancing itself from Pakistan as a result of the visit.

"The United States would never leave behind its friendship with Pakistan. That relationship is important to it for strategic reasons and also because the Islamic

world is rich in oil resources," the CPI(M) general secretary, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet, said today.

Both Mr. Surjeet and the CPI general secretary, Mr. A. B. Bardhan, were critical of the statement of the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, where he talked about the "wasted decades" of India's foreign policy. Both felt that he had shown complete ignorance of the leading role played by India when it was a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Left leaders were also very critical that "300 U. S. marines and 2,000 American police personnel" were being allowed to land here as part of the security setup for the U.S. President. "Are we incapable of protecting a foreign dignitary? It is an insult to us," they said. "Half of Delhi has

been handed over to the Americans for five days beginning today."

Mr. Surjeet felt that the Vajpayee Government had exposed itself by bending over backwards to accommodate the Americans. And it was a shift in policy that would not pay any dividends. His view was that if India and the U.S. moved closer, it would not be able to take an independent stand on many issues as it would be looking over its shoulders to see whether anything it says or does would irritate the Americans. "This would denigrate our position in the world," and "naturally, the relationship that Indian enjoys with Russia could also suffer".

Mr. Bardhan said there were six U.N. resolutions on sanctions against Cuba. "Has the U.S. cared

to implement these U.N. resolutions?" Countries must maintain their dignity even while welcoming the head of the only Super Power in the world. China did. India is a big country too.

In an ironic twist to political stances, it was the Left which was today lauding the role played by India under the leadership of Congress leaders like Nehru and Indira Gandhi during the decades when the country was a leader of NAM while the Congress Party chose to be critical of the Left for registering its protest against a "visiting guest."

Mr. Jitendra Prasada, senior Congress leader described the Left parties "irresponsible political entities" for their decision to stay away from the joint meeting of Parliament to be addressed by President Clinton.

THE HINDU
20 MAR 2000

PoK PM for Clinton mediation

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ISLAMABAD, March 19. — The Prime Minister of Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir, Mr Sultan Mahmood, today asked Mr Bill Clinton to mediate between Pakistan and India to resolve the Kashmir problem and prevent a possible nuclear war in the region.

"History shows that Pakistan and India have never solved disputes through bilateral talks," he said.

"Mr Clinton should mediate as he had done in the other disputed regions of the world."

Pak shelling: Pakistani troops shelled Keran, Karnah and Teetwal sectors in the past 24 hours, adds UNI.

Exchange of fire also took place at Palanwalla, Budhwal, Jogwan, Garkhal, Peer Gharana, Rajpur Chak Pachwari and Siderwan camp of the same sector.

Shabir Shah held: People's Democratic Freedom Party

chief, Mr Shabir Ahmad Shah, and 30 leaders were arrested in Srinagar since last evening. Mr Shah was scheduled to leave for Delhi with his supporters to organise demonstrations during Mr Clinton's visit.

Pak LoC build-up: Heavily armed Afghan mercenaries backed by Pakistani troops have been spotted at certain points along the LoC opposite

Hands behind DD attack, Agra blast

AGRA, March 19. — Two youths in Pathan suits, who had travelled by a Agra-bound bus from Delhi, were suspected to be behind last night's bomb blast in a bus that killed one person and injured 16 near here.

Meanwhile, the Hizbul Mujahideen has claimed responsibility for yesterday's attack on the Doordarshan Kendra here, police said. — PTI

Kaksar and Batalik in northern Jammu and Kashmir, reports PTI. Home ministry officials said officers of Pak-controlled Gilgit scouts have been to some forward posts.

There were also reports that Pakistan had placed orders for winter stockings in European countries.

Electric fencing: The Centre has given the go-ahead for electric fencing of 195 km of international border between Jammu and Sialkot in Pakistan on a "crash basis," identifying it as "most vulnerable" to infiltration.

THE STATESMAN
20 MAR 2000

Vajpayee's plain-speaking welcomes Clinton to India

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, March 19. — The US President, Mr Bill Clinton, arrived here tonight on a week-long South Asia visit even as India struck an assertive note with the Prime Minister, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, saying New Delhi alone would take its security decisions.

Air Force One touched down at Palam airport at 8.09 p.m. tonight, bridging the 22-year gap since the last visit by a US President. It also marked new realities — the first visit by the head of the lone superpower in a unipolar world to a nuclear India.

In an unusual, though not unprecedented gesture, the US President was received at the airport by the Union Minister of External Affairs, Mr Jaswant Singh, going beyond the protocol requirements of the presence of a Minister of State. The Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr Ajit Panja, India's ambassador to the USA, Mr Naresh Chandra, foreign secretary, Mr Lalit Mansingh, and the Chief of Protocol were also present at the airport from where the President left straight for the Maurya Sheraton.

Hours before Mr Clinton arrived on a visit being described as unprecedented in its importance in setting a direction for Indo-US ties, the Prime Minister took the opportunity of a 'holi milan' meeting at home to state that India would take its own decisions about its security, and would not come under pressure from anybody.

The Prime Minister expressed the hope that President Clinton's visit would help improve bilateral ties between the two countries, but added that the relations should be on equal terms. Underlining the fact that India was no longer seeking favours from the USA,

the Prime Minister made an oblique reference to the food-grain assistance that India had received from the USA in the past — saying the country was now self-sufficient in food-grains, not dependent on foreign countries.

Mr Vajpayee also said that

while many sanctions and conditions were imposed on India after it carried out the Pokhran nuclear tests, India would suffer any difficulty that is necessary to strengthen its security.

Mr Vajpayee's statement may set the undertone of the Presidential visit that has otherwise

been publicly projected as a goodwill engagement by India.

Welcoming the Prime Minister's statement, the BJP said it would clear all doubts about India changing its position on the Kashmir issue.

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CLINTON:

(Continued from page 1)

The Prime Minister's statement, which took diplomatic and political observers by surprise in terms of its timing and blunt content, also marked the first direct high-level response from India to recent US statements on the issue of nuclear proliferation, as also the US President's declared agenda of taking steps to bring peace to the subcontinent.

Shortly before leaving from Washington, Mr Clinton had said he wanted to reduce tensions in the Indian subcontinent, to reduce the likelihood of weapons proliferation, and the likelihood of conflict.

The comments had made it clear that despite the professed desire to have a broad engagement, some tough talking could be expected from the President and his team of officials, who have a separate and well-defined agenda to pursue.

President Clinton is accompanied by a high-level delegation of the US State Department that includes the secretary of state, Mrs Madeleine Albright, commerce secretary, Mr William Daley, deputy secretary of state, Mr Strobel Talbott, and National Security Adviser, Mr Sandy Berger.

Restraint, Respect, Dialogue

What I Hope to Accomplish in South Asia

By BILL CLINTON

(R) 2003 Johnson
This week, I am travelling to South Asia, to visit Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. In this article I want to discuss the reasons for my visit and what I hope to accomplish.

With one-fifth of the world's people, with its traditions of democracy, with its embrace of economic openness and scientific progress, South Asia has the potential to be one of the world's biggest success stories in the next half century. But it still faces enormous challenges – and dangers. In no other region do so many critical issues converge so dramatically: promoting economic growth, expanding trade and easing poverty; averting regional conflict and preventing nuclear proliferation; defeating terrorism and fighting drugs; averting climate change and conquering infectious disease. I am convinced that strengthening peace, prosperity and freedom in the 21st century will depend in good measure on America's ability to forge partnerships with the South Asian nations, by advancing the interests we share and resolving the differences that remain.

America has learned in recent years, especially from Russia's troubles and Japan's economic difficulties, that it is the weakness of great nations, not their strength, that threatens our vision for the future. We are safer when other great nations are at peace with their neighbors and with themselves. We do better when other countries rise from poverty to become our partners in trade and investment. Our freedom is more secure when others have a chance to shape their destiny.

That will be my message in all three countries, particularly in India. We want India to be strong, secure, united – a force for a safer, more prosperous, more democratic world.

In its 52 years since independence, India has brought about a remarkable political, social and economic transformation. With 17 officially recognized languages and 22,000 dialects, it is a place of extraordinary diversity, that is teaching the world how to live with difference. Hundreds of millions of Indians choose their leaders in free elections and determine their affairs through local governing councils. India's economy is one of the ten fastest growing in the world, its thriving high-technology sector one of the brightest spots in the new global economy, expanding 25-fold in the past decade. There now are more television channels available in Mumbai than in most US cities.

Meanwhile, Indians are pioneering innovative new sources of clean energy and new ways to combat epidemics of disease. The United States and India share common values and common goals. More than 1.5 million of our

citizens were born in or trace their ancestry to India, and they are an extraordinary success, ranking at the top in education and income among all of America's ethnic groups. After 50 years of missed opportunities, it is time that America and India became better friends and stronger partners.

America and India should work more closely together to advance political freedoms and protections against persecution. We should find common ground in opening the global trading system in a way that lifts the lives of rich and poor alike. And we should be able to agree that prosperity and growth in the new economy depend on keeping children in school and protecting the environment. As the largest emitter and one of the fastest-growing emitters of the greenhouse gases that propel global warming, we can improve cooperation

other Indian leaders, I will address directly our serious concerns. The 1998 nuclear tests by India and then Pakistan shook the world, intensifying global worries about the spread and potential use of nuclear weapons. Only India and Pakistan can decide how to protect their security. As they do, I hope they will ask themselves: Are they safer today than before they tested nuclear weapons? Will they benefit from expanding their nuclear and missile capabilities, if that spurs their neighbors to do the same? Can they achieve their goals for economic development while making a sustained investment in both nuclear and conventional military forces? Will they be better off at the end of what could be a long, unpredictable and expensive journey?

I am determined that the United States ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty,

because it will strengthen our national security. India and Pakistan should sign the Treaty, as they have committed to do, for the same reason. As the United States and Russia move toward deeper cuts in our nuclear arsenals, South Asia should not be headed in the opposite direction. Narrowing our differences on nonproliferation is important to realizing the full potential of our relationships.

I also believe that India and Pakistan will not achieve real security until they resume dialogue to resolve their tensions. I am not going to mediate the dispute between India and Pakistan. America cannot play that role unless both sides want it. But I will urge restraint,

respect for the Line of Control in Kashmir, and renewed lines of communication. Both India and Pakistan have legitimate security concerns. But neither can achieve its aims in an escalating contest of inflicting and absorbing pain.

Finally, I will speak directly to General Musharraf and to the Pakistani people about the steps we believe are important to building a hopeful future for Pakistan: an early return to democracy, a crackdown on terrorist groups, restraint on nuclear and missile programs, and a real effort to create the conditions for dialogue with India. If Pakistan takes these steps, we can get back on the path of partnership.

I can imagine a future for South Asia where the people of each nation choose their own democratic destinies, where tolerance is embraced, the threat of regional war is a thing of the past, and countries cooperate for better education and health and prosperity. The region is not there yet. But I know most South Asians share this vision. The United States wants very much to help make it a reality. (Los Angeles Times Syndicate)



● Only India and Pakistan can decide how to protect their security. As they do, I hope they will ask themselves: Are they safer today than before they tested nuclear weapons?

● I am determined that the United States ratify the CTBT, because it will strengthen our national security. India and Pakistan should sign the Treaty, as they have committed to do, for the same reason.

● I am not going to mediate the dispute between India and Pakistan. America cannot play that role unless both sides want it. But I will urge restraint, respect for the Line of Control in Kashmir, and renewed lines of communication.

for clean energy, so we do not leave a planet in peril. We also can intensify together the struggle against deadly diseases like tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS.

I also seek a deeper partnership between the United States and Bangladesh, a Muslim nation of 120 million. It, too, is making great strides, lifting citizens out of poverty, raising the status of women, strengthening democracy, standing against terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

Pakistan is also important to the United States. The Pakistani people are our long-time friends. We want them to enjoy the benefits of democracy, to build a strong economy, to be free of terrorism and live in peace. Some say I should not go to Pakistan, because of the military coup that overthrew the democratically-elected Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif. But engagement with Pakistan does not represent endorsement. Staying away only would strengthen hard-liners in Pakistan who want their country to turn away from the world.

In my meetings with Pakistani leaders, as well as with Prime Minister Vajpayee and

THE TIMES OF INDIA

20 MAR 2000

'Kashmir issue' not on the agenda

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, MARCH 20. The United States is unlikely to focus on the Kashmir issue per se, but is likely to steer discussions on the border State to influence Indian thinking to achieve its other high priority objectives.

According to highly-placed sources in the Government, the U.S. side, during the President, Mr. Bill Clinton's stay is likely to discuss Kashmir mainly to push forward its non-proliferation goals. Specifically, the U.S. side is expected to talk about Jammu and Kashmir as a possible nuclear flashpoint, so that official discussions can be directed towards nuclear non-proliferation issues. Mr. Clinton, according to sources, is personally committed to fulfilling the U.S. non-proliferation agenda which includes India's subscription to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Sources said that the "Kashmir issue" including the much talked about appointment of a special coordinator on Kashmir was not on the cards. The U.S. side is not inclined to the appointment a special coordinator on Kashmir, despite enormous pressure being mounted to the contrary by Kashmiri expatriate groups.

The U.S. side, as is already evident, is committed to discouraging a future Indo-Pak. conflict. The U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, has declared that Washington stands opposed to any alteration of the Line of Control by force.

On the defence side, Mr. Clinton's trip is unlikely to revive the Indo-U.S. military relationship in its entirety. However, "incremental progress" on the defence track is expected. Specifically, interaction between the defence personnel of the two countries is expected to be stepped up. The executive steering groups, which

chalk out the future plan of activities of the two sides for each of the three services, including the conduct of joint military exercises, is likely to be revived. These discussions are expected to take place during the meeting between the National Security Adviser, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, and his American counterpart, Mr. Samuel R. Berger. The two officials are expected to hold talks over breakfast on Monday.

No separate meeting between the three service chiefs and Mr. Clinton is expected. They are, however, likely to interact with the President, either during the Prime Minister's lunch on Monday, or subsequently at the reception being hosted by the U.S. Ambassador to India, Mr. Richard Celeste.

Sources pointed out that the prime focus of Mr. Clinton's trip is economic. According to some estimates, the power sector of the Indian economy can absorb investment to the tune of \$ 250 billions over the next several years. Telecommunications offers business opportunities of around \$ 100 billions. Information Technology holds bright prospects as well as an estimated 30 per cent of the world's software engineers are either India or of India origin.

The U.S. side, is also aware that seeking Indian cooperation is necessary for achieving international consensus for forging an acceptable global trading regime. India can play a crucial role in building common ground on issues such as labour standards and environmental protection. American officials also acknowledge that the discussions over the next few days would take place in the backdrop of the fact that some of the major global challenges of the new century, including population and new diseases are unlikely to be met without India's active participation.

THE HINDU
21 MAR 2000

Final touches to vision statement

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, MARCH 20. Hoping to make a new beginning in Indo-U.S. relations, the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the visiting U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, will meet tomorrow morning at Hyderabad House here for substantive political consultations.

Despite the continuing differences over nuclear weapons and Pakistan, Mr. Clinton and Mr. Vajpayee will announce their determination to initiate a qualitatively different engagement between India and the United States.

The two leaders will meet first with a few top aides and later joined by full delegations. From the Indian side the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, and the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Brajesh Misra, are likely to assist Mr. Vajpayee.

Mr. Clinton will have at hand the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, and the National Security Advisor, Mr. Samuel R. Berger.

Earlier in the day, a breakfast meeting with Mr. Misra and Mr. Berger is likely to set the stage for the talks at the highest level.

Another meeting between Mr. Jaswant Singh and Ms. Albright on Wednesday morning will wrap up the Indo-U.S. political dialogue.

At the end of their talks, Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Clinton are expected to sign a vision statement that will look to the future and define the direction of future engagement between the two nations. Informed sources here indicate that the last remaining wrinkles in the document are being ironed out today.

On the nuclear question, no new developments are expected. Mr. Clinton and his team will insist that the full potential of bilateral relations cannot be realised until India takes concrete steps, such as signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Mr. Vajpayee will convey India's readiness to join the global nuclear order on the basis of a national consensus and reciprocal gestures from the international community.

India and the United States have similar assessments on the dangers of a failing state in Pakistan. But their policy prescriptions are entirely different.

Mr. Clinton wants to prevent total isolation of Pakistan and engage the military rulers there. A skeptical Vajpayee will warn against an appeasement of the Pakistan army.

On Kashmir and regional tensions between India and Pakistan, the U.S. President is likely to amplify on the latest American position. This includes three elements. One, the U.S. has no desire to mediate in the dispute. Two, it is opposed to any use of force to change the territorial status quo in Jammu and Kashmir. Three, it wants both sides to show restraint and respect the sanctity of the Line of Control.

India will reiterate that there can be no talks with Pakistan until Islamabad stops cross-border terrorism. The United States, however, has begun to publicly call on Pakistan to take steps to end terrorism.

The revival of Indo-Pak talks, so keenly desired by Mr. Clinton, will depend then on his ability to nudge Pakistan into taking specific actions that will create appropriate conditions for such a dialogue.

THE HINDU

21 MAR 2000

Needed, a dose of realism

By K. K. Katyal

To ignore or even de-emphasise the differences between India and the U.S. — as is regrettably evident in New Delhi — will not do any good.

TO SAY the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to India would give a big push to bilateral relationship is to stress the obvious. That the two sides would not let their differences come in the way of building a "strong and cooperative strategic relationship", to quote the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, is clear too. The mutual ties promise to be free from misperceptions and miscalculations — and that is a matter of satisfaction. India and the U.S. intend fashioning their relationship with an eye on the future in the context of their commonalities on fundamentals. But to ignore or even de-emphasise the differences — as is regrettably evident in New Delhi — will not do any good and, on the contrary, may lead to disenchantment on the sudden "discovery" of gaps in the positions of the two sides on nuclear non-proliferation and India-Pakistan relations. Drawing attention to these problems is not to strike a negative note but is a plea for a balanced appraisal of the relationship with Washington. There are good reasons to be upbeat but there is an equally strong justification to be realistic.

The plan for the presidential visit has undergone many a change since it was first mooted in 1996 on the return of Mrs. Hillary Clinton from a trip to India. The visit got delayed for various reasons — the U.S. presidential election and Mr. Clinton's bid for the second term, followed by the collapse of the Gujral Government here, the general election, the change of guard in New Delhi, Pokhran-II, last year's political crisis and another general election. As a result, new key factors kept altering the politico-diplomatic context. For instance, the issue of nuclear tests in South Asia would not have been there had the visit taken place in 1997. Kargil and the military coup in Pakistan would not have been there had Mr. Clinton come to the region in the second half of 1998 or the first quarter of the following year. The agenda, not a formal one though, has now fallen into place.

The visit to India will be the centrepiece of Mr. Clinton's trip, first after the end of the cold war. There will be a close focus, as is evident by now, on enhancement of bilateral ties — that is what the "vision doc-

ument" to be signed during the visit is about. In the U.S. eyes today, India has a great attraction as an economic power — its potential for growth, vastness of opportunities for trade and investment, scope for cooperation in energy and environment and the strides in information technology — and as the largest democracy with its 600 million voters. All this is certain to be reflected in Mr. Clinton's talks with his hosts and in the documents taking shape. However, the Indian side would be deluding itself if does not take into account or underestimates the strength of the sentiments against India's "historic mistake" — Washington's description of the 1998 nuclear tests — or America's passion for conflict prevention in the subcontinent. Through repeated references to the "nuclear flash-point" or the "nuclear trigger", the U.S. made known its stand on the negative potential of the Kashmir problem and India-Pakistan adversarial relations. It is not anyone's case that the foreign policy establishment here is not sufficiently aware of all this but what is intriguing is the tendency to play down, perhaps for domestic consumption, the importance the Americans propose to give to these matters in their discussions. Then there is the uneasy feeling that the Indian side may not go beyond the mechanical reiteration of its known — and, no doubt, valid — stand on the resumption of dialogue with Pakistan and related matters.

New Delhi's position on terrorist violence in Kashmir and Pakistan's role in it is clearly understood and appreciated by the world community but that is not the case with the rest of India-Pakistan problem. New Delhi could make use of the advantage in the first case for substantive moves on other aspects. There is a scope for creative diplomacy within the framework of the Indian policy — favouring bilateralism and opposing a third-party role (be it intervention, facilitation or good offices) — but there is no evidence of it in

the foreign office. Take the present international attention on the sanctity of the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir. This could be turned into an opportunity for substantive moves to address the problem in its entirety. The other day, Ms. Albright was emphatic that "tangible steps must be taken to respect the Line of Control" for, "so long as this simple principle is violated, the people of Kashmir have no real hope for peace". The exhortation was, obviously, directed at Pakistan which was responsible for its violation through a systematic, well-organised proxy war. Islamabad's pretence that it was an indigenous uprising was torn asunder during the Kargil conflict which ended when the Pakistan Prime Minister of the day, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, chose to withdraw from the intruders — regular troops, apart from trained mercenaries — at the U.S. instance.

That the July 4, 1999, agreement to that effect led to political turmoil in Pakistan was a different story — though quite relevant to the current posturing of the military regime. Equally notable was the restraint shown by India in not crossing the LoC, though there was a good case, militarily speaking, for it, in order to overcome the handicaps experienced by its troops. In the post-Kargil spurt in militancy, there were even stronger reasons for limited strikes by India on the other side of the Line but once again political and diplomatic discretion had the better of military compulsions. All this did not go unnoticed in major world capitals.

Now we have China's emphasis on the sanctity of the LoC, publicly affirmed through its Ambassador in New Delhi, Mr. Zhou Gang. China makes no secret of its special relationship with Pakistan, "an all-weather friend", and as such its call for peace and tranquillity on the Line was doubly significant. Beijing was specially qualified to speak on the subject because its agreement with New Delhi had kept the Sino-Indian border area calm, even

though the boundary dispute remained unresolved and bilateral ties were subjected to strong pressures after Pokhran-II. It is, however, not clear whether China still sticks to the view, expressed by its President, Mr. Jiang Zemin, during his trip to Pakistan (after the visit to India) some years ago, urging the two countries to put the Kashmir issue on the back burner so as to be able to address the less intractable problems.

The current stress on the sanctity of the LoC could well be the starting point of a Kashmir-related Indian initiative, with the immediate aim of maintaining peace and tranquillity in a sensitive area (the "most dangerous place on the globe", according to Washington) on the one hand, and the medium-term objective of providing for an interim period a solution of the Kashmir problem, on the other. This could be part of a structured response by India when Mr. Clinton raises — which he is certain to do — the question of forestalling a possible armed conflict on Kashmir. The Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, would need to give a positive, credible reply.

In its opposition to third-party intervention, India need not go to the extent of discouraging others from offering useful suggestions for a longer-term solution which may well involve raising the LoC profile. True, such a solution may not square with the parliamentary resolution, affirming India's claim to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, just as it will not be acceptable to Pakistan, fed on an anti-India rhetoric. But an arrangement, equally unacceptable to the rival sides, has a merit. As for the internal situation in the State, the Indian side will need to be prepared for an appropriate response to a possible U.S. plea for a political rather than military solution.

On the nuclear issue, the present tough talk by Washington proves wrong the assumptions made on the basis of the Jaswant Singh-Strobe Talbott dialogue. In the run-up to the Clinton visit, the Indian side tended to gloss over the matter. New Delhi has a strong case which needs to be put across categorically — in full public gaze. There is no warrant for sugar-coating a bitter reality.

Respect LoC, says Clinton; PM rules out war with Pak

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, March 21. — President Bill Clinton today called for restraint, respect for the Line of Control and renewed communication lines between India and Pakistan.

The US President was reacting to yesterday's massacre of 36 Sikhs in the Kashmir valley. There was no military solution to Kashmir's problems, he said. A message which, Mr Clinton said, he would take to Islamabad as well.

Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, in his statement, assured Mr Clinton that there was no threat of war. There were differences, clashes, and cross-border terrorism, "but no threat of any war". India was prepared to discuss all problems across the table. "We do not think in terms of war and nobody should think in those terms in this subcontinent," he said.

The US President did not blame Pakistan for terrorism in the Valley — emphasising instead the importance of restarting dialogue. But he appeared to have taken cognisance of India's stand when he said: "you cannot expect a dialogue to go forward unless there is an absence of violence and a respect for the Line of Control".

India saw in the statement a favourable change of stance. The principal secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr Brajesh Mishra, claimed the USA had

Clinton on Web

about normalcy in this part of the world. "This policy is not going to pay. And I hope this question will be discussed by the President in Islamabad," the Prime Minister said. Mr Vajpayee said the attempt to cloak ethnic terrorism in the guise of jihad carried no conviction, and India and the

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CLINTON:

(Continued from page 1)

international community had rejected the notion that jihad could be a part of any civilised country's foreign policy. "None should doubt the determination of the people of India to safeguard the secular unity of our society. Together we have defeated all challenges in the past, and we shall do so again. We have the means and the will to eliminate this menace."

The Prime Minister said both India and the USA had expressed their opposition to any form of violence whether as an instrument of terror against democratic society or as a means of realising territorial ambition. Stressing India's commitment to building good relations with its neighbours, Mr Vajpayee said this was predicated on respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Mr Clinton, taking cognisance of India's security concerns, said the USA shared

India's outrage and heartbreak over the brutal massacre. The targeting of innocent civilians had to be resisted at every turn, and if somebody wanted to fight they should leave the civilians alone, he said.

Though Mr Clinton's remarks appeared devoid of the stridency of the recent weeks on issues related to Indo-Pak tension, Kashmir, the CTBT and nuclear proliferation, the US delegation claimed there was no change in policy.

Briefing the White House press corps, the Secretary of State, Mrs Madeleine Albright, said the US policy on Kashmir was what it was earlier. Nations cannot and must not attempt to change borders or zones of occupation through armed force, she said. Now that India and Pakistan had exploded nuclear devices they had all the more reason to avoid armed conflict and to restart discussions, Mrs Albright added.

She virtually denied that the President's remarks showed an acceptance of the fact that there was no threat of war, saying everyone was still concerned about the continued tension in South Asia.

The differences in interpretations of the two sides extended to the issue of nuclear proliferation. There was no evidence today of Mr Jaswant Singh's recent claims of US acceptance of India's policy of minimum

India, USA agree on security issues

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, March 21. — India and the USA today agreed to disagree on nuclear non-proliferation but concurred on regional and international security issues as they fixed the parameters of their future relationship.

The "vision statement" was signed by Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee and Mr Bill Clinton after more than two hours of intensive talks at Hyderabad House. It emphasised seeking a natural partnership in shared endeavours, spelling out the areas of differences but agreeing to talk about them.

In the morning, the US President was accorded a ceremonial reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan but had his substantive official engagement at Hyderabad House.

The President and the Prime Minister were accompanied by their aides during 45 minutes of their talks with Mr Clinton. But broke off for a one-to-one dialogue for 10 minutes. A 45-minute delegation-level talks followed.

Coming out of the talks a little after 1.00 p.m., Mr Clinton and Mr Vajpayee signed the statement before answering a limited number of questions from the media.

The two countries, in the document, have taken cognisance of their "responsibility for ensuring regional and international security" and agreed to hold regular talks and to work with others for "strategic stability in Asia and beyond". They agreed to bolster joint efforts to counter terrorism and meet "other challenges to regional peace".

Marking a shift in the US stand on Indo-Pak tensions on Kashmir, the document said both sides acknowledged that

ISSUES:

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(Continued from page 1)

"tensions in South Asia can only be resolved by the nations of South Asia". Earlier, the USA had offered to mediate over Kashmir if India and Pakistan agreed.

Expressing a shared commitment to reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons, the document took cognisance of the differences in perception. "We have not always agreed on how to reach this common goal. The USA believes India should forego nuclear weapons. India believes that it needs to maintain a credible minimum nuclear deterrent in keeping with its own assessment of its security needs," it said.

The two sides, however, stressed that notwithstanding their differences, they were "prepared to work together to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery and to this end would persist with and build upon the productive bilateral dialogue already underway".

The areas of commonality were spelt out, with the two countries iterating their voluntary commitment to forego further nuclear tests, to work together and with others for early negotiations on FMCT, to export controls and to strengthen them and to prevent the spread of dangerous technologies.

The document took note of the commitment to build confidence and reduce the chances of miscalculation, to pursue security needs in a restrained and responsible manner and not engage in nuclear and missile arms races.

The two countries would seek to narrow their differences and increase mutual understanding on non-proliferation and security issues, the document said, for this would help them realise the full potential of Indo-US relations and contribute significantly to regional and global security.

The document took cognisance of the shared ideals of democracy and said the two countries would share experience in nurturing and strengthening democratic institutions and fighting terrorism.

India's success in opening its economy, its achievements in science and technology and its commitment to a new wave of economic expansion and reform was applauded by the USA.

Expressing the determination to preserve stability and growth in the global economy, the two countries promised to fight poverty. They said opening trade and resisting protectionism were the best means to do it. The developed countries should embrace policies that offer developing countries opportunities to grow.

The document says that there have been times "in our past when our relationship" drifted without a steady course but now "We are convinced that it is time to chart a new and purposeful direction in our relationship."

Stressing the importance of the bilateral relationship, the document says: "In many ways the character of the 21st Century will depend on the success of our co-operation for peace, prosperity, democracy and freedom."

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THE STATESMAN
22 MAR 2000

Clinton shares India's outrage over massacre in Kashmir

*Vision statement
all set to boost
bilateral ties*

By Seema Guha

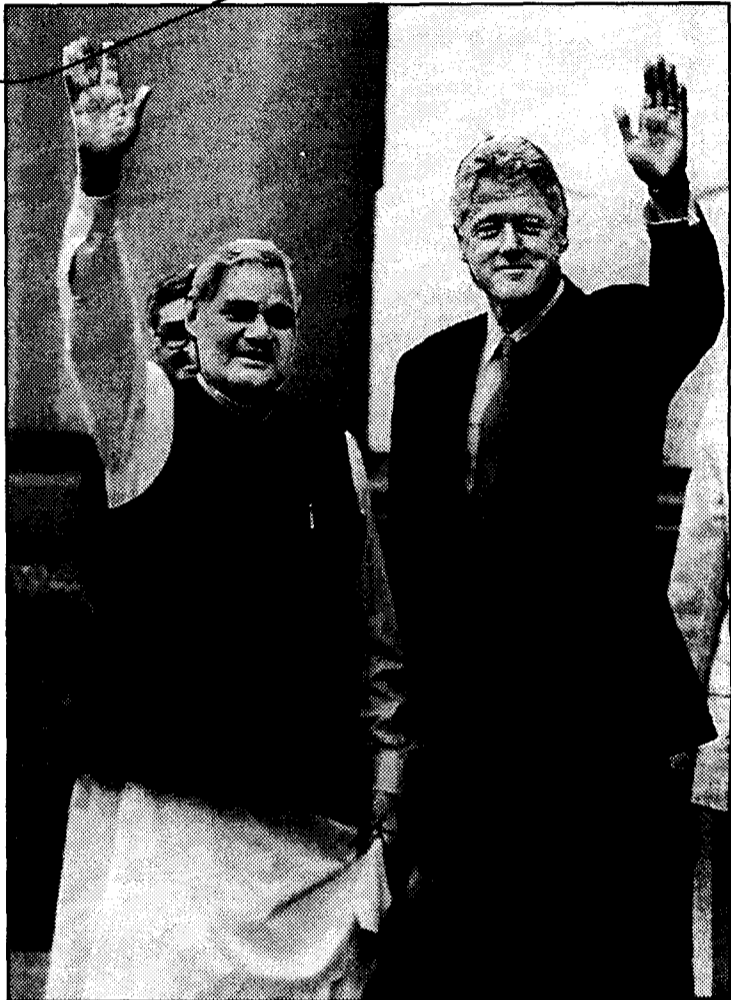
NEW DELHI: The massacre of 85 Sikhs early Tuesday morning brought home to visiting U.S. President Bill Clinton, more starkly than words, the ugly face of terrorism in Kashmir. Mr Clinton said as much in his opening remarks before his brief interaction with journalists at Hyderabad House. "I recognise that India has real security concerns. We certainly share your outrage and heartbreak over last night's brutal attack in Kashmir...it reminds us of what tremendous suffering this conflict has caused India."

Mr Clinton laid down the parameters for reducing tension in the region. "The violence must end. This should be a time of restraint, of respect for the Line of Control, of renewed lines of communication." He later elaborated that there was no military solution to the problems between India and Pakistan. He emphasised the importance of renewing the dialogue.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, who was also on the podium, said he hoped the President would repeat what he had said in New Delhi in Islamabad. Mr Clinton quickly added that he would. "I can't say something here and something else in Pakistan. You (pointing to the press) would catch me out."

It was left to national security adviser Brajesh Mishra to explain later what the Prime Minister actually meant when he indicated Mr Clinton should repeat his statement in Pakistan. "Violence is not on our side. Pakistan has been responsible, so President Clinton should tell them to stop."

Both Mr Vajpayee and Mr Clinton looked relaxed, their body language said it all. Mr Clinton was dressed in a black business suit and white shirt and wore a mustard tie bearing a gold tinge. Mr Vajpayee wore a spotless white dhoti-kurta and a black jacket. They walked down from Hyderabad House together to the lawns where newsmen were waiting. Before joining the delegation-level talks, there was a closed-door meeting between the two leaders and their aides which stretched to 45 minutes. External affairs minister Jaswant Singh and Brajesh Mishra from the Indian side, and secretary of state Madeleine Albright and national security adviser Sandy Berger were with Mr Clinton. The two met without aides for ten minutes.



20-20: U.S. President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee emerge from Hyderabad House in New Delhi on Tuesday after signing a 'vision document' on the future of Indo-U.S. relations.

After talking to the press, while the presidential party was walking back to the waiting limousine, Mr Clinton put one arm casually around U.S. ambassador Richard Celeste. In the run-up to the Clinton visit, the Indian side, both at the ministerial and official levels, had taken care to say that nothing spectacular should be expected from the visit. However, the 'Vision Statement' signed by Mr Clinton and Mr Vajpayee does appear to give a new, upbeat direction to bilateral ties.

The emphasis is on a partnership for peace, a commitment to the shared values of democracy, a partnership reinforced by ties of scholarship, science and technology and the combined exploration of the new frontiers of knowledge and commerce that are open to the peoples of both countries.

The President of the U.S. and the Prime Minister of India will hold regular summits, which the U.S. leader already does with close allies like the U.K., France, Japan and Is-

rael. They will also be in regular touch on the telephone and through letters on regional and international developments. There will be an annual foreign policy dialogue between the external affairs minister and the U.S. secretary of state.

The current security and non-proliferation dialogue will also continue between Strobe Talbott and Jaswant Singh. Expert groups will be established to take up various non-proliferation and security issues. Foreign office consultations will also become a regular feature, headed by the foreign secretary on the Indian side and the under-secretary for political affairs of the U.S.

The two leaders believe that constant co-operation between India and the U.S. will be a "factor of stability" in a politically and culturally diverse and rapidly changing Asia. Significantly, a dialogue on Asian security will also be part of the consultations. This could, in future, be a balancing act to counter the growing clout of China in the long-term.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

22 MAR 2000

Agro-chemicals, pharmaceuticals imports issue to be resolved in June

Sanctions to be eased soon

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, March. 21. — The US Commerce Secretary, Mr William Daley, today assured his Indian counterpart, Mr Murasoli Maran, that the denial of 'general system of preferences' (GSP) benefits to the import of agro-chemical and pharmaceutical items for the alleged non-compliance of the intellectual property rights agreement would be resolved soon.

At a closed-door meeting with the minister and senior officials of the Commerce Ministry here today, Mr Daley said the issue would be resolved at the annual review meeting in June this year.

On sanctions, Mr Daley clarified that the sanctions were imposed because there was a problem — the Pokharan blasts. "We have already reduced the list that are under sanctions and we will reduce the list further in the near future."

Moreover, in order to strengthen trade ties between the Indian and American business communities, the two countries have decided to set up the 'Indo-US Commercial Dialogue' and 'Indo-US Working Group on Trade' as part of the Vision Statement, apart from the existing

Indo-US Commercial Alliances.

These organisations will also strengthen the institutional framework of trade between the two countries by allowing regular government-to-government meetings to facilitate trade and maximise investment opportunities across a broad range of economic sectors such as information technology, infrastructure, biotechnology and services.

Emphasising that problems should not deter either side from realising the full potential for bilateral trade co-operation, the US Commerce Secretary said: "There will be problems only if there is more trade."

Mr Daley also raised the issue relating to high tariff on certain items and specifically raked up the issue of the ban on the export of soda ash to India.

However, the issue was resolved when the Indian side explained that there was no ban on imports of soda ash from any country and in fact, the item was permitted for import under the Open General Licence (OGL).

Exports of soda ash to India was allowed, although not by cartels.

Mr Maran also took the opportunity to stress India's concern on certain bilateral matters, particularly those relating

to anti-dumping action against Indian steel items in the US market; the adverse impact of recent changes in the Rules of Origin on India's textile exports and misconceptions relating to child labour.

On multilateral trade, Mr Maran reiterated the need to build a consensus before launching a new round — a manageable round as he termed it — so that all members could participate meaningfully in the negotiations and benefit equally from the multilateral trading system.

Mr Daley, however, said that the US favoured a more focussed round with a limited agenda.

Later answering queries from reporters, Mr Daley said that it would not be correct to say that non-tariff barriers had been a big hindrance to the trade between the two countries since India had a positive balance of \$300 billion as far as the balance of payments position vis-a-vis the partner country was concerned.

The US Commerce Secretary said there was little he could do regarding the reduced number of H1B visas, since it was being handled by a Senate Committee.

THE STATESMAN
22 MAR 2000

'Dialogue leaves many questions unanswered'

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, March 21

THE LEFT parties maintained that the Vajpayee-Clinton dialogue today only reinforced their apprehensions that US President Bill Clinton's visit was aimed at furthering the imperialist interests in the region.

A formal reaction is, however, expected tomorrow after these parties, in separate meetings, assess the ramifications of the statements made and documents exchanged by US President Clinton and Prime Minister Vajpayee.

But, as CPI-M Polit Bureau member Prakash Karat pointed out, the dialogue has raised a number of queries. The US President, he noted, had not talked about universal disarmament, which India has systematically advocated. Instead, he had reiterated the American position in focussing on

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nuclear non-proliferation, which is seen as a stepping stone towards ensuring that India signs the CTBT.

"There is not a word about withdrawal of sanctions," Mr Karat said, while referring to the US's keen interest in the vast untapped Indian market.

His party was also uncomfortable about the proposed creation of an international community of democracies and the organisation of the Asian Centre for Democratic Governance, which would be backed by the CII, the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and the US State Department-backed National Endowment for Democracy.

Sharply critical of the Indo-US "Vision" document, CPI's Atul Anjan countered by querying "Where is the vision in it?" According to him, the Vajpayee-Clinton meet bids "goodbye to India's non-aligned movement".

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

22 MAR 2000

India, US sign pact on science, tech

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, March 21

INDIA AND the United States today signed an agreement to establish an Indo-US Science and Technology Forum to facilitate and promote interaction of government, academia and industry in science, technology and other related areas.

The agreement was signed by Minister for Science and Technology Murli Manohar Joshi and US Secretary of State Mad-eleine Albright on the first day of US President Bill Clinton's official visit to India, an External Affairs Ministry spokesman said.

The Forum will focus on issues of common concern and activities of mutual benefit while exploring trends in science and technology and on research and development, transfer of technology and creation of a Comprehensive Electronic Reference Source for Indo-

US Science and Technology Co-operation.

The Forum will also commission studies and papers and assist in facilitating and promoting joint collaboration of projects.

To be registered as a non-profit society under the India Society Act, the forum will be able to receive funds from public and private sources to carry out its activities, the spokesman said.

Invitation accepted

PRIME MINISTER A.B. Vajpayee accepted President Clinton's invitation to visit the US later this year. "The Prime Minister has accepted my invitation to visit the US later this year," Mr Clinton said.

HTC, New Delhi

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES
22 MAR 2000

Clinton's visit should yield trade dividend for India

A HIGH-level business delegation is accompanying President Clinton on his visit to South Asia. The expectation is that India, as one of the top ten big emerging markets (BEMs) on the globe, will provide new opportunities to US business in trade and investment. India has done a lot to accommodate US interests in recent months.

The expectation is that the US will, finally, take a friendly view on the interests of Indian trade interests. As

of now, Indian goods are low priority in the US market access system. Nafta, Caribbean Basin, Israel, Africa come before India in terms of special preferences. The generalised system of preferences (GSP) which allows duty free entry for developing countries and LDC goods coverage for India has all but disappeared, thanks to US actions under the trade sanctions law.

In the recent Budget, the Indian government has bent backwards to make the import system compliant with US interests and pressures. The IT agreement at WTO was conceived, born and developed on US soil. India has implemented it fully.

The country is well on its way to a zero tariff regime in IT hardware. The finance minister has brushed aside all protests from the local industry. The textile agreement between the two countries at the end of 1994, before the formation of the new WTO, has been implemented fully in year 2000. Successive finance and commerce ministers, which include stalwarts like Manmohan Singh, have given in to pressures of California almond growers. In

major share in the cake to the right holders in other countries.

The government has given a public commitment on removal of QRs (quantitative restrictions) on 1427 product lines in the next one year or so. The list is posted on the commerce ministry server on the internet.

India has also supported the US position on removal of agriculture subsidies in world trade at the WTO. It has taken the middle ground in the matter eschewing the hawkish positions of the Cairns group on the one side and European Union and Japan on the other.

It even went to the extent of agreeing to the inclusion of market access in the Seattle agenda and joined the "Friend of the Seattle Round" group formed at Budapest in mid-1999.

The other side of the deal:

The perception in India is that in spite of accommodating US interests at the cost of substantial distortion in the tariff structure, the country does not get priority in the US. Newly wed couples are separated immediately after tying the knot as the girl waits for her turn at the visa counter in Chanakyapuri.

■ Academy of Business Studies

EXPORT-IMPORT NOTES/ARUN GOYAL

the recent Budget, the almond duty is down to just Rs 35 per kg from the previous rate of Rs 55 per kg.

As of now, there are two distinct sectors in the customs tariff, those which have a low duty rate on account of commitments under a US inspired agreement and others which have a high duty rate because of no direct US interest involvement.

The commitments under the intellectual property regime have been more than met with a substantial amendment of the patent system which substitutes a consumer welfare oriented process patent system by a product patents which gives the

The Economic Times

22 MAR 2000

US to be softer on lifting of sanctions

Our Political Bureau

NEW DELHI 21 MARCH

IT'S BEEN 22 years and numerous sanctions against India that has marked US policy to this country. However, sources said US reassured India on Tuesday that while some sanctions have already been lifted, some more will go soon.

It is in the field of economic cooperation that the vision statement sees an "enormous potential for enhancement of economic and business relations between the two countries in the Knowledge Age."

Therefore, a bilateral economic dialogue will be institutionalised at a high level between the PMO in India and the White House in the US to follow developments in bilateral

economic dialogue closely.

The coordinating group will use inter-agency and inter-ministerial representations to converge and complement economic and foreign policy objectives, "including deepening of bilateral cooperation on high technology and information technology issues. Both our nations now

BILATERAL BOOST

enjoy strong economic growth. Both are pioneering the information revolution. Today we've reached agreement to bring more jobs and opportunities to our people, to accelerate trade between us, to help India's financial markets and assist its small businesses, to institute a regular economic dialogue between our governments."

The finance minister and the US secretary of treasury will host a forum on finance and investment issues, macro-economic policy and international economic developments. This will have participation by the Securities and Exchange Commission, Federal Reserve, Council of Economic Advisers and other officials of the US government and Sebi, RBI and other senior officials.

The Indo-US commercial dialogue set in motion on Tuesday will be an interaction at the highest levels between the commerce minister and the US commerce secretary to deepen ties between business communities. It will be a forum for the government and the

private sector to discuss trade facilitation and investment issues. It will aim to maximise investment opportunities in IT, infrastructure, biotechnology and the services sectors.

In addition to this a Working Group on Trade will work together on formulation of trade policies by receiving inputs from the private sector to achieve coherent positions on WTO issues.

A joint consultative group on clean energy and environment is an acknowledgement of the maxim that a 1 per cent growth in GDP requires a 3 per cent growth in energy production. The MEA and state department will emphasise collaborative projects, developing and deploying clean energy technologies.

SUCI, police clash over Clinton visit

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

CALCUTTA, March 21. — Several SUCI supporters and policemen were injured in a clash at the crossing of Ho Chi Minh Sarani and J.L. Nehru Road this afternoon. Police had to use teargas to disperse the supporters.

Mr Probhas Ghosh, SUCI state secretary, has called for a students strike on 23 March to protest against police atrocities on SUCI activists while they demonstrated against President Clinton's visit before the American Center.

He said schools holding examinations will, however, be exempted from the strike.

More than 3,500 SUCI supporters took out a procession from Raja Subodh Mullick Square and led it through SN Banerjee Road to J.L. Nehru Road.

They initially demonstrated before the library. Later, they burnt four effigies of Mr Clinton.

The supporters then headed for the Consulate on Ho Chi Minh Sarani by breaking the police cordon at the crossing of J.L. Nehru Road and Ho Chi Minh Sarani. Policemen on

duty chased the supporters, who in turn, hurled bricks and stones at the policemen, injuring 15 of them, including six policewomen.

The supporters then hurled bricks at police jeeps. Police finally burst teargas shells to disperse the supporters.

The supporters rushed back to the American Center and this time they tried to break the cordon and enter the library.

They said they would submit their memorandum to the Consulate authorities.

When police tried to chase them, they hurled bricks and stones at the policemen once again, Mr Nazrul Islam, Deputy Commissioner (headquarters), alleged. Here too, police used teargas shells and resorted to lathicharge to disperse the supporters.

CPI(ML) supporters arrived at the spot later to protest against the issue. Some SUCI and CPI(ML) supporters have been arrested.

The DSO supporters will hold a protest demonstration on 22 March before the Calcutta University building on College Street to protest against Mr Clinton's visit.



Torn cut-outs of President Clinton that were snatched from SUCI demonstrators lie in front of the American Center on Tuesday. — The Statesman

Indo-US relations

The ghastly massacre of innocent Sikhs in Kashmir has again trained the spotlight on the disturbed Valley. As it was meant to do. Innocent male members of the Sikh dominated village in Anantnag district were dragged out of their houses and killed in a brutal act of violence designed to send shock waves through the entire country. There has been no respite in the suffering of the innocent people in the Valley who have been the target of relentless violence for over a decade now. This is the first incident, however, of Sikhs being attacked by the terrorists which gives an altogether new dimension to the violence. India has had no hesitation in blaming Pakistan for the massacre with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee declaring, at a joint press conference with US President Bill Clinton, that "we have the will and means to eliminate this menace." President Clinton, however, was reluctant to pin the blame on Pakistan saying that it was difficult to reach a conclusion as there was no information as to who was responsible for the massacre. This apart, the focus has shifted to the Valley and what the President had described on the eve of his visit to the region as the hottest trouble spot in the world. He did not repeat these words during the brief interaction with the press but made it clear that he expected restraint from both the countries involved, a respect for the Line of Control and a resumption of dialogue. He said that there could be no military solution to the problem. A response that has basically reiterated the US line as spelt out by Washington over the last few days on Kashmir and peace in the region. There has been no significant departure from the stated position with the President outlining the short-term US formula for peace in the region. Insofar as non proliferation is concerned both sides have agreed to work for a common consensus, even as they have agreed to respect their present differences on the issue. The press briefing by the two leaders placed Kashmir firmly on the agenda although the President kept drawing a distinction between his private talks with Prime Minister Vajpayee and the public position articulated by both sides. The coming days and weeks will unfold the true picture with President Clinton being free of diplomatic shackles once he returns to Washington after presumably some plain speaking in Islamabad. On the plus side President Clinton has said that he will take up the issue of terrorism with Pakistan Chief Executive General Pervez Musharraf which should give the government here some heart. He has also invited Prime Minister Vajpayee to Washington with both countries deciding to hold regular summits between heads of state and officials. Washington and Delhi are presently favourably inclined towards firming up a new relationship, but much will depend on how matters proceed on Kashmir and non-proliferation. President Clinton, publicly at least, has decided to keep a check on rhetoric and will wait to make a full assessment of the situation in the region upon his return to Washington. And on this really will depend the future on India-US relations.

THE ASIAN AGE

? 2 MAR 2000

Clinton links growth of ties with N-issue

Vinod Sharma
New Delhi, March 22

IN A masterly display of oratorical skill that floored his select audience in Parliament's Central Hall this morning, President William Jefferson Clinton was able to appeal to Indian sensitivities while reaffirming, through a combination of subtle hints and plain-speaking, his position on contentious issues on which the two sides have, for the present, agreed to disagree.

The tapestry of words that Mr Clinton wove combined lavish praise -- for India's tradition of democratic tolerance -- with a somewhat blunt articulation of Washington's expectations of New Delhi on the WTO negotiations, the CTBT question, resumption of the stalled Indo-Pak dialogue and the fight against terrorism.

If the visiting President offered to work with India to strengthen co-operation against terror, in the context Kandahar and the recent killings in Kashmir, he firmly linked full realisation of Indo-US ties with a "genuine partnership" against proliferation.

Mr Clinton's pointed reference to the "role" of American diplomacy in prevailing upon the Pakistanis to return to their side of the LoC during the Kargil war, was another straw in the wind for his Indian interlocutors, opposed as New Delhi is to any kind of third party mediation in Kashmir.

Making a strong case for accession by India, as also the US, to the CTBT, the President remarked: "If India's nuclear test shook the world, India's leadership for non-proliferation can certainly move the world...."

In his view, not only should New Delhi and Washington (where the US Senate has refused to ratify the Treaty) join CTBT but strengthen export controls and

work to launch negotiations on a treaty to end production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons.

"Only India can know if it truly is safer today than before the tests... Only India knows if its can afford sustained investment in conventional and nuclear forces while meeting its goals for human development," the President meaningfully observed.

'No shift in stance'

US SECRETARY of State Madeleine Albright has discounted reports of a shift in Washington's stance on the Indo-Pak issue.

Be it the question of peace and security in South Asia or the nuclear non-proliferation issue, the US's position continues to remain unalloyed, she has held.

Ms Albright is reported to have made these observations while interacting with the American media accompanying President Bill Clinton.

The Indian side declined to join issue. A spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry, responding to a volley of questions on Ms Albright's comments, confined himself to the remark that while interpretation may be free, facts are there for all to see in their "entirety".

Detailed report on Page 12

He recalled the US' own Cold War experience with the erstwhile USSR to warn a disagreeing New Delhi against the dangers of a nuclearised South Asia: "In a nuclear stand-off, there is nothing more dangerous than the belief that there is no danger."

India's nuclear policies, Mr Clinton maintained, had consequences beyond its

borders -- eroding barriers against the spread of nuclear weapons; discouraging nations that have chosen to forswear these weapons (and) encouraging others to keep their options open.

On Kashmir, the visiting leader shared the Vajpayee Government's concern and outrage over the continuing violence. But he insisted that India, as a democracy, had a special opportunity to demonstrate to its neighbours that democracy was about dialogue.

"It does not have to be about friendship, but it is about building working relationships among people who differ," Mr Clinton argued, quoting the late Israeli Premier, Yitzhak Rabin, who had told him, before signing the Oslo Accords with the Palestinians, that "you don't make peace with your friends."

The US' mediatory role in the Middle East Peace Process is well known. Against this backdrop, Mr Clinton's recollection of his dialogue with Mr Rabin and the American intervention in Kargil, aren't happy signals for the Indian establishment and its abiding trust in bilateralism.

Regardless of the President's claim that his tour of South Asia wasn't aimed at mediating in the Kashmir dispute, his formulation, when read in its entirety, left enough scope for third party influence in Indo-Pak affairs.

While agreeing that only India and Pakistan can work out the problems between them, he promised to convey the same to Gen Musharraf in Islamabad: "But if outsiders cannot resolve this problem, I hope you will create the opportunity to do it yourself, calling on the support of others who can help where possible, as American diplomacy did in urging the Pakistanis to go back behind the LoC in the Kargil crisis."

More reports on Pages 8, 12 and 14.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

23 MAR 2000

Parliamentary Bill

Parliament is traditionally a talking shop where the stock-in-trade is rhetoric; the real business of the day is often done in closed-door sessions. This being the case, it is not surprising that when the leader of the world's oldest democracy formally addressed the representatives of the biggest democracy, the candour of the views expressed should be tempered with politic doublespeak. After Jimmy Carter undertook a similar exercise 22 years ago, Bill Clinton is the next US president to give our legislators a view from the White House. Since this is largely a ceremonial event, style of presentation is equally if not more important than content. By this criterion, Mr Clinton managed to score over his hosts. Prime Minister Vajpayee and other Indian speakers read out from prepared texts and only too often tended to miss the trees of practical details for the wood of poetic metaphor. The US president who is known for his lawyerly skills of discourse proved once again that he is a communicator par excellence, compelling attention even amongst those who may vehemently disagree with him. While Mr Vajpayee quoted American poet Walt Whitman about visionary passages to India, Mr Clinton managed to navigate the potentially dangerous waters of non-proliferation, cross-border terrorism, Kashmir and WTO's globalisation agendas without unduly rocking the boat or committing himself to any definite course of action.

On non-proliferation, while appreciating India's perception of its security interests, he nevertheless urged both India and Pakistan to sign the CTBT, citing the Cold War example regarding the adverse effects of proliferation. This skilfully obfuscated the issue that the US remains the only country in the world to have used nuclear weapons against another nation and its own senate is yet to ratify the CTBT adducing precisely the same reasons of national security. Similarly, while admitting that "it is difficult to be a democracy bordered by nations whose governments reject democracy", Mr Clinton put the onus on India as a democracy to demonstrate to its neighbours the democratic virtue of dialogue. Such an exhortation is fine except that it totally bypasses the question as to who violated the Line of Control in Kargil; the US administration's views on this continue to remain ambivalent even while the president has joined Indian leaders in expressing anguish over the recent massacre in Kashmir. Mr Clinton was equally nimble verbally on matters of trade and commerce. Resorting to the Indian lexicon to describe globalisation as an advance from "licence raj" to "panchayati raj", the US president sought to put a sub-continental complexion on a WTO agenda which is, in fact, dictated largely by western, specifically US, interests. When Silicon Valley corporates threaten to relocate to Bangalore if US visas for Indian computer scientists remain difficult to get, is it an example of "licence raj" or "panchayati raj"? Like goods and services, labour too must be freed from the shackles of geo-political boundaries. Only then will there be a truly global panchayati raj. In Hyderabad, Mr Clinton is scheduled to meet a galaxy of India businessmen and entrepreneurs who, it is to be hoped, will be more successful than our politicians in getting the US president to spell out the real bottomline for India as distinct from Bill's line of sweet sales-talk.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

23 MAR 2000

US to remove trade, investment snags

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, March 22

15 29 7
NA bid to facilitate greater access to Indian goods and services, US will lift all impediments to trade and investments. The focus of bilateral trade and investments would include information technology, biotechnology, clean energy and services. Private sector would be involved in a big way in this push for larger Indo-US trade.

This was stated by US President William J Clinton while addressing a joint sitting of Members from both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha held at central hall of Parliament today.

According to indications, trade impediments mostly relating to child labor and environmental standards may eventually be eased in a phased manner thereby granting General System of Preferences (GSPs) to Indian products especially in pharmaceuticals and agro-chemicals. The GSPs are expected to come up for review before Clinton administration in June this year. The nontariff barriers having an

adverse impact on Indian goods are sought to be lifted despite the fact that trade balance is in favor of India with an annual surplus of \$2.5 billion.

Clinton also gave subtle hint about easing norms that will allow Indian professionals



greater access to US markets for providing their services. This would also mean that US administration may ease its policy of providing H1-B visas to Indian software professionals seeking employment in US.

Over 30 per cent of annual H1-B visas are already being given to Indians. But the other

argument is that "in virtual economy driven by e-commerce", the services could be offered by Indian professionals without actually migrating to US.

Sticking to the earlier position taken by US, Clinton sought India's support for WTO's efforts to more open trade regime. In an apparent reference to the protests on streets of Geneva during last round of WTO talks, US President maintained that WTO has been "a bigger voice in global trade policy, developing countries have used that voice to urge richer nations to open their markets further so that all can have a chance to grow".

In this context, he maintained that US has given maximum access to products and services being exported from other countries despite the fact that it has largest trade deficit. President Clinton sought India's support to bring about an open market regime world wide via WTO. He referred to India, Brazil and Indonesia seeking "open trade". He complimented India for opening up its markets which has put the country amongst ten fastest growing economies.

THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2000

UPSWING IN INDO-U.S. RELATIONS

THE U.S. PRESIDENT, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to India has inaugurated what could be a brighter and more promising chapter in the history of the relationship between India and the United States which has for long been a troubled and difficult one. The first American President to visit India in two decades, Mr. Clinton's interactions with the political leadership in New Delhi resulted in a decision to upgrade and intensify the diplomatic contacts between both sides — regular summit meetings between the Indian Prime Minister and the U.S. President, an annual foreign policy dialogue at the level of the Minister for External Affairs and the U.S. Secretary of State and other regular foreign policy consultations. The decision to institutionalise the Indo-U.S. dialogue and to create an "architecture" of high-level consultations, marks an acknowledgment on both sides, particularly the U.S., of the strategic utility of deepening the engagement between the two countries that were clearly until now conforming to the description of "estranged democracies."

However it is undeniable that the sharp gap remains on crucial policy issues, such as India's nuclear weapons and the manner of engaging or not engaging Pakistan. No diplomatic "spin" or attempt to finesse these differences, as for instance suggesting a greater convergence between the Indian and American official views on terrorism, will camouflage the actual fact that beneath the veneer of cordiality and bonhomie, the American strategic view of the subcontinent has not changed in essence. Yet the more frequent diplomatic exchanges between India and the U.S. that have now been envisaged should certainly make it easier for both sides to place their differences in a context that is far less strained.

Mr. Clinton proved to be a charming interlocutor and seemed to be at his persuasive best. The third American President to address the Indian Parliament after Dwight Eisenhower in 1959 and Mr. Jimmy Carter in 1978, his address to Parliament got an unusually warm welcome from the gathering of MPs, many of whom unabashedly scrambled and jostled to get to shake his hand. But while Mr. Clinton took care to say that he was not attempting to tell India what to do, it was evident that his policy prescriptions for the South Asian region remained unchanged for the most part. It was also very clear, even as Mr. Clinton urged India to sign the CTBT, expressed his disapproval of India's possession of nuclear weapons and repeatedly stressed that India must have a dialogue with Pakistan, that if at all the gap between the positions of both sides on the sensitive

strategic issues had been narrowed, it was because of Indian compromises.

Those compromises, which reflect the consequence of the logic that flowed from the May 1998 nuclear tests and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee's subsequent enunciation of India's nuclear policy, are visible in the language of the "vision" document that emanated from the meeting of Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Clinton on Tuesday. Jettisoning the traditional Indian diplomatic emphasis on disarmament and indicating an acceptance of the American emphasis on non-proliferation, the document affirms India's willingness to "work together" with the U.S. to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery.

There was much in Mr. Clinton's remarks and interactions to suggest that he was receptive to India's concerns on terrorism, as for instance, his expression of outrage at the massacre of Sikhs in the Kashmir Valley and the pointed fact of his meeting with the relatives of Rupin Katyal, murdered by the hijackers of the Indian Airlines plane last December. Mr. Clinton's references to the shared democratic values even as he expressed his empathy for India's difficulties as "a democracy bordered by nations whose Governments reject democracy," indicated a new and welcome awareness of India's situation. But it must be noted that Mr. Clinton and his officials were careful not to point a finger at Pakistan in the context of their denunciations of terrorism. There were in fact several exhortations to India to resume a dialogue with Pakistan and not to believe that a military solution could work in Kashmir.

The conclusions that emerge at the end of the political part of Mr. Clinton's sojourn in India are unmistakable. While the upswing and the greater momentum in Indo-U.S. relations is welcome and indeed necessary, its best expression would be found in deepening and expanding economic and cultural exchanges. India which has been insisting that there ought not to be any external mediation in its problems with Pakistan must resist the temptation to use the U.S. as an interlocutor, however well disposed it seems at the moment. The only course forward is to delink Indo-U.S. relations from India-Pakistan ties. The imperative is to deal with Pakistan directly, especially since India would require such dealings to be on India's own terms. The relationship with the United States, which is a promising and potentially multifaceted one, should not be held hostage to India's regional stakes.

THE HINDU

23 MAR 2000

President's remarks raise eyebrows

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, MARCH 22. The President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan's sharp criticism of the United States Tuesday night at a banquet he hosted for the visiting American President, Mr. Bill Clinton, is raising eye-brows here and abroad.

Mr. Narayanan's thinly veiled references to American dominance and his strongly worded rejection of the U.S. concerns about nuclear tensions in the Subcontinent in his banquet speech are being seen here as needlessly harsh.

Reports in the U.S. media highlighted Mr. Narayanan's comments and expressed surprise at the bitter tone in the banquet.

Informed sources here say that the Government did not clear the speech of Mr. Narayanan and the remarks were his own.

The practice in the last few years has been that the President makes his own banquet speeches

and does not seek prior Government clearance.

According to the sources the Government may not have any quarrel with the basic proposition of the President that India is committed to building a pluralistic and democratic world order. But the manner in which the ideas were presented might have introduced a sourness into the celebrations about a new Indo-U.S. relationship.

If diplomacy is mostly about finding the right words for the occasion, observers here say, Mr. Narayanan's speech turned out to be too prickly.

The sources say that no one from either the visiting U.S. delegation or the local U.S. embassy have lodged any formal or informal objections to Mr. Narayanan's remarks.

Mr. Clinton himself chose to ignore Mr. Narayanan's critical comments.

THE HINDU

23 MAR 2000

'HELPING IS NO MEDIATION'

Clinton lauds India, calls for nuclear restraint

40-1
28/3

By Neena Vyas

NEW DELHI, MARCH 22. The United States President, Mr. Bill Clinton, today went all out to win over the elected representatives of the Indian people, lavishing praise on India and its achievements, emphasising the important political and social lessons it offered the world. But he also did some tough talking, making a powerful, even emotional, plea for nuclear restraint and the resumption of an Indo-Pak dialogue to settle the dispute over Kashmir.

"For the sake of innocents who always suffer the most, someone

you to succeed," he said.

Lavish in his praise, Mr. Clinton expressed gratitude to Mahatma Gandhi for his life, work and thought, "without which the great civil rights revolution in the U.S. would never have succeeded on a peaceful plane."

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Praise for Kerala

He extolled the Kerala model of women's empowerment, and enumerated the many lessons the world had learnt from India, especially the important one of keeping together in peace people of different ethnicity and faiths. He saw India as a kaleidoscope of competing images — atomic weapons with 'ahimsa', poverty with a large middle class, there were communal tensions and yet India was the most successful melting pot in history.

When it all ended, MPs created a near chaotic situation, literally scrambling to reach out and shake hands with him, and he obliged, mixing with the "backbenchers" disarmingly.

He listed four challenges before India and the U.S. that would define the partnership in the years ahead — the need to get the economic relationship right, to sustain global economic growth while lifting the lives of the rich and poor alike, to achieve growth in the information age while protecting the environment and reversing global climate change, and finally the need to protect the gains of democracy.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, responded by talking about India and the U.S. as "natural allies" and quoted American poet Walt Whitman, "Sail forth — steer for the deep water only ... For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go."

Earlier, Mr. Krishan Kant, Vice-President and Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, welcomed Mr. Clinton and his delegation, and the event was wound up by the Speaker, Mr. G. M. C. Balayogi, who said the American President's address would mark a "significant milestone" in the history of Indo-U.S. relations.

Jostling in Parliament: Page 14

themselves, "calling on the support of others who can help where possible."

He did make the point, not so subtly, that, after all, American diplomacy had recently been successful in "urging the Pakistanis to retreat behind the Line of Control in the Kargil crisis." It was almost as if Mr. Clinton was reminding India that "helping" need not be seen as "mediation" and this need not always be a dirty word.

Standing ovation:

His 35-minute speech in the Central Hall of Parliament today was marked by a standing ovation



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, addressing the joint session of Parliament on Wednesday. — Photo: V. V. Krishnan

must end the contest of inflicting and absorbing pain," he gently emphasised. "You don't make peace with your friends," he said, quoting the late Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin. "Engagement with adversaries is not the same thing as endorsement." His message was: time to leave behind old suspicions and take fresh initiatives. While Mr. Clinton made it clear that he had not come to South Asia "to mediate the dispute over Kashmir," he did not hesitate to point out "if outsiders cannot resolve this problem" the two countries should "create the opportunity" to do it

and punctuated by the thumping of desks in thunderous applause.

The entire range of issues was covered — he believed that both India and the U.S. should join the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, that the dialogue on nuclear issues must go on towards resolving of differences, that in the economic and other spheres a working partnership must be established.

Above all, he sought to dispel Indian suspicion built over decades of the Cold War that the U.S. was not interested in seeing the emergence of a strong and secure India. "America very much wants

Clinton's soft words carry hard message

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, March 22. — Differences may have narrowed somewhat, but accord on critical issues is still a long way off.

That was the message the US President sent out today in Parliament's Central Hall as he renewed his call for India to sign the CTBT, to resume dialogue with Pakistan, and recalled how US diplomacy had worked during Kargil. He, however, declared that he had not come to "mediate" on Kashmir.

Everything Mr Bill Clinton said during his final joint appearance (on this trip) with the Prime Minister were sugar-coated. He appealed to use areas of commonality for building piers upon which the bridges of accord would stand.

But the indications were clear: the building process was still on, notwithstanding the odd convergence on concerns over what obtains across the western border, or the stress on India's right to take its own decisions.

In an equally non-strident fashion, Mr AB Vajpayee reasserted that a realistic assessment of security compulsions underlay the establishing of a credible minimum nuclear deterrence. While India was committed to peaceful resolu-



Mr Bill Clinton and daughter Chelsea walk in the Taj Mahal gardens on Wednesday. — AP/PTI

Pak schedule

Mr Bill Clinton till tonight lacked a firm schedule for his Pakistan trip amid speculation the delay was over whether he would address Pakistanis over TV, says Reuters from Islamabad.

tion of differences, recent events had eroded the trust upon which a relationship could be built with Pakistan.

After dealing at considerable length on the common bond of democracy, eradication of poverty and disease, economic transformation with social justice, Mr Clinton squarely addressed the issues which the USA deems critical to an up-gradation of bilateral links. Prime among them: the danger

from weapons of mass destruction.

Mr Clinton cited how the USA has been dismantling its nuclear arms in conjunction with Russia. "Most of the world is moving toward the elimination of nuclear weapons. That goal is not advanced if any country, if any region, moves in the other direction."

He said India alone could answer questions about its security being enhanced after weaponisation, the impact of its neighbours following suit, and so on. He could only speak "as a friend" from his country's Cold War experience. "We learnt that deterrence alone cannot be relied upon to prevent accident or miscalculation."

Without actually questioning

the Indian contention that the region is not a nuclear flash-point, Mr Clinton observed that "in a nuclear stand-off there is nothing more dangerous than believing there is no danger". Appreciating India's voluntary moratorium on further N-testing, he said the USA and India should, in self-interest, sign the CTBT, and work together on the FMCT and export controls.

Just how much importance the USA attaches to the CTBT was evident when the President called for continuing dialogue on proliferation, elevating it to a genuine partnership. "If we make progress in narrowing our differences, we will be both more secure and our relationship can reach its full potential."

He offered some music to

Indian ears when he said that he "shared concerns about the course Pakistan is taking" and that he knew "it is difficult to be a democracy bordered by nations whose governments reject democracy". Yet, he advocated a revival of dialogue.

India has a special responsibility to show its neighbours that "democracy is about dialogue. It does not have to be about friendship, but is about building working relationships among people who differ."

Then he recalled Yitzhak Rabin's words: "You don't make peace with friends." He said engagement with adversaries is not the same thing as endorsement, and that he could

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CLINTON:

(Continued from page 1)

see no other way of ensuring an enduring solution.

Only India and Pakistan can work out their problems, he said, but also asserted that the USA could have a role. "If outsiders cannot resolve this problem, I hope you'll create the opportunity to do it yourselves, calling on the support of others who can help where possible, as American diplomacy did in urging the Pakistanis to go back behind the Line of Control in the Kargil crisis."

That Mr Clinton's condemnation of terrorism was not seen in the context of India linking it to cross-border sponsorship was also evident. For there was no reference to Pakistan in his sharing of the outrage at the IC-814 hijack and the J&K massacre. "We will work with you to build a system of justice, to strengthen our cooperation against terror," he said, carefully avoiding any pointers to the origin of the terrorist outfits.

Mr Vajpayee too spoke highly of democratic traditions, pluralism and opposition to regimes that perpetuate discrimination and inequality. But Mr Vajpayee also re-emphasised why India took the nuclear plunge despite staying committed to universal disarmament.

"Our decision to maintain a minimum credible nuclear deterrent is prompted by a realistic assessment of our security compulsions even as we continue our traditional policies of acting with restraint and responsibility. Our defence posture has always been defensive in nature," he said. "We are aware of the importance that you attach, Mr President, to the subject of non-proliferation. We believe that as democracies we have to take all steps on the basis of wide consensus and cooperation."

Without naming Pakistan, Mr Vajpayee said: "India has always tried to develop its relations with neighbours in an atmosphere of mutual trust and on the basis of mutually advantageous initiatives. Recent developments have unfortunately eroded that relationship of trust with one of them."

"Our approach is realistic. We believe that mature nation states must seek durable and pragmatic solutions only through peaceful bilateral dialogue. Aggressive use of force is no longer an acceptable language in international relations."

THE STATESMAN

23 MAR 2000

Jaswant, Albright

hold talks H.D.B.

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 22. India and the U.S. today discussed the nitty-gritty of their Annual Foreign Policy dialogue and ways to add substance to their wideranging institutional contacts.

According to the Foreign Office spokesman, the 50-minute meeting between the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh and the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, focussed on the nuts and bolts of the foreign policy dialogue and related themes which were spelt out during the meeting between the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee.

Bill's gift to Balayogi

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 22. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, has presented a golden-framed copy of the Charter of Declaration of Independence of the U.S.A. on July 4, 1776 to the Lok Sabha Speaker, Mr. G.M.C. Balayogi.

A press release by the Lok Sabha Secretariat said that Mr. Clinton has presented the copy to the people of India to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Indian Republic. Later in the day, a nine-member German Parliamentary delegation, led by Dr. Gregor Gysi, MP, Head of the PDS Parliamentary Groups and Chairman of the Party of Democratic Socialism, called on the Lok Sabha.

Welcoming the delegation, Mr. Balayogi said India and Germany are traditionally close and parliamentary and other bilateral relations between the two countries could be strengthened by frequent exchange of visits.

THE HINDU

23 MAR 2000

Sonia, Clinton discuss n-issues

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 22. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, this morning heard an Opposition point of view on India's strategic and regional concerns. In a brief but "substantive" interaction with the Congress(I) president, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, and her senior advisors, Mr. Clinton sought to impress upon the Opposition the importance of American non-proliferation priorities.

The U.S. delegation included the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, the National Security Advisor, Mr. Sandy Berger, Mr. Strobe Talbott, Mr. Karl Inderfurth and the American Ambassador to India, Mr. Dick Celeste. The Congress(I) delegation included Dr. Manmohan Singh, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, Mr. Madhavrao Scindia and Mr. Natwar Singh.

Mrs. Gandhi, who spoke for about eight minutes, outlined her party's perception on the CTBT and supported the idea of a minimum credible nuclear deterrent; she pointed out that while the Congress(I) had an "open mind" on signing the CTBT, there was no national consensus on the issue. She also sought to establish a linkage between non-proliferation and disarmament and referred to the Rajiv Gandhi Plan.

Mr. Clinton said that while it was for India to decide whether or not to ratify the CTBT, it was more secure without nuclear weapons. He also acknowledged the Rajiv Gandhi Plan, without in any way endorsing the point. He ex-



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, with the Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, at a dinner party hosted by the President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan, at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Tuesday

pressed his country's apprehension about the spread of nuclear weapons among non-State international players.

On India-Pakistan relationship, Mrs. Gandhi said that the Congress(I) favoured a bilateral dialogue but various incidents of cross-border terrorism had vitiated the atmosphere. But, there had to be a dialogue between the two countries at some stage.

The Congress(I) sources described the meeting as a "serious exercise." It was not just a "courtesy call", noted a CWC member.

In a lighter vein, Mr. Clinton expressed his puzzlement at the dif-

ference between the high percentage of vote and the number of seats won by the Congress(I) in the general election. He was told about the merits and demerits of the "first-past-the-post" principle.

As the meeting was breaking up, Mr. Celeste appeared to be wondering whether Mr. Vajpayee would oblige his critics by making his remarks in Hindi before the joint session of Parliament. The Congress(I) delegation pointed out that should the Prime Minister address the joint session in Hindi he would invite some reaction from the MPs from the south.

THE HINDU
23 MAR 2000

U.S. downplays Clinton statement on J&K

By Sridhar Krishnaswami H0-13

NEW DELHI, MARCH 22. Senior Clinton Administration officials are downplaying the President's statements on Kashmir which New Delhi had interpreted as having endorsed its stand on the issue. On Tuesday, Mr. Bill Clinton, in a joint appearance with the Indian Prime Minister said that talks between India and Pakistan could not be expected "unless there is an absence of violence", a theme he did not repeat in subsequent comments.

The New York Times has quoted unnamed White House officials as moving quickly to clarify the President's remarks saying that as the U.S. was not a party to any talks between India and Pakistan, it could not set any pre-conditions. A senior U.S. official, however, said India should take heart from the "message of support" that Mr. Clinton delivered against the violence in Kashmir.

American officials were quoted in *The Washington Post* as saying that Mr. Clinton had not intended to create the impression that his statements on Kashmir gave Islamic insurgents a "green light" to keep India and Pakistan from seeking an accord by fomenting further violence.

Over and beyond the reports in the American media, the Secretary of State, Ms. Made-

leine Albright, had herself brushed aside the notion that a "significant shift" had taken place on the U.S. stand on Kashmir. Briefing White House mediapersons travelling with the President, she said, "I would not interpret it that way. I think our policy is what it was when we came here and what the President has said many times."

It is being pointed out that the latest violence in Kashmir further underscored the need for a dialogue between India and Pakistan. Ms. Albright clarified this point saying it had also been emphasised by Mr. Clinton in his discussions. "The President has made quite clear...that it is very important to respect the Line of Control, show restraint, renew the dialogue and try not to solve this militarily," Ms. Albright said.

Senior Clinton Administration officials do not wish to amplify the President's remarks on Kashmir. In fact the reason why there had been very few briefings was because the U.S. did not wish to be in a more difficult position than it is already before Saturday's talks in Islamabad.

In pointing out that the President was not carrying any specific messages from Indian leaders to General Pervez Musharraf, the impression is that Mr. Clinton would be firm in conveying what he has in mind on Kashmir. In

India, Mr. Clinton repeatedly stressed the need for a dialogue; and in Pakistan will stress the phenomenon of escalating violence and in the need for Islamabad to rein in the militant outfits. It is to be seen how much of all this Mr. Clinton will convey to Gen. Musharraf.

Despite the talk of a "new era", leading American newspapers spoke of a series of encounters that would include no concrete movement on nuclear issues and a "sharp rebuke" of the President by his Indian counterpart at a banquet on Tuesday. These "... showed that the opening chapter was spiced with surprises," said *The New York Times* report.

The Indian President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan, dismissed the notion of the sub-continent being the "most dangerous place" in the world. Mr. Clinton took no notice of this in his remarks and *The Washington Post* says U.S. officials shrugged them off "as a minor venting of frustration".

There has been some expression of surprise of the tone and content of what Mr. Narayanan had to say in his speech. If there was no response from Mr. Clinton, it was because American Presidents rarely use an occasion such as a banquet to talk about substantive issues.

THE HINDU
23 MAR 2000

Clinton's visit unlikely to avert nuclear war

5/9 18/3
SHE came to the world's attention three years ago with her prize-winning novel, *The God of Small Things*. Now Indian novelist Arundhati Roy dares to lecture the government of her country on nuclear weapons, a rather lonely voice in a sub-continent consumed with an almost fatal overdose of self-destructing hatred.

"It is such supreme folly to believe that nuclear weapons are deadly only if used. The fact that they exist at all, their very presence in our lives, will wreak more havoc than we can begin to fathom. Nuclear weapons pervade our thinking. Control our behaviour. Administer our societies. Inform our dreams. They bury themselves like meat hooks deep into the base of our brains. They are purveyors of madness. They are the ultimate coloniser. Whiter than any white man that ever lived. The very heart of whiteness."

We have already seen her forebodings come true. In Pakistan, the world's first military coup in a nuclear weapons state. In India, a budget in which defence spending is increased by a phenomenal 28 per cent. (It's far easier to make a bomb than educate 400 million people, continues Miss Roy.) Sabre-rattling that makes Khrushchev's shoe-banging look tame. "We are being threatened with nuclear weapons," says Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee. "Do the Pakistanis understand what this means? If they think we will wait for them to drop a bomb and face destruction, they are mistaken." To which adds Lieutenant-General Kamal Matinuddin of Pakistan, a widely read defence commentator, "If there's a war, we are likely to respond earlier rather than later in the use of nuclear weapons. With Pakistan's economy as it is, what else can we do?"

And a quite ridiculous, irresponsible way of playing with nuclear matches — the decision by Pakistan last summer in which the soon-to-be military ruler, General Pervez Musharraf, played a major, if not dominant, role to infiltrate

guerrillas into the Indian side of divided and disputed Kashmir in a futile attempt to dislodge the Indian army.

Only some extraordinary naive, if not perverse, misreading of nuclear deterrence theory as it evolved during the Cold War could lead a country's leadership to believe it could solve a long-standing duel over territory in a positive and productive manner by such a ploy.

"Though we are separate countries, we share skies, we share winds, we share water. Any nuclear war will be a war against ourselves," Miss Roy's soliloquy continues. But even she underestimates the dan-



gers. The Soviet Union and the USA, bitter though their Cold War feud became, never lost a soldier to the other side in anger, had no territorial dispute and, never in their centuries of history, had been to war with each other. India and Pakistan are at the opposite pole. In the short 53 years of their independent existence they have fought three full-scale wars. Hardly a day goes by without one of their soldiers losing his life to the other side.

How and why President Bill Clinton thinks he can contribute anything useful to this situation on his visit next week is almost beyond words, simply extraordinary. American policy has connived since Nixon, with a brief respite under Carter (his was the last visit by a US President, 22 years ago), to relegate India to some remote corner of the geopolitical map. Nixon in the early days of his opening-to-China policy made it unambiguously clear that a reason for taking China so seriously was its possession of the nuclear bomb. India

regarded this as the worst possible snub. Even under Carter, the tendency was to lecture and punish India for keeping its nuclear option open.

Yet at that time India had as Prime Minister the near pacifist Moraji Desai. If the USA had used more carrot and less stick it could have won from Desai a formal renunciation of nuclear weapons. Under Nixon, under Ford, under Carter and under Reagan, the USA steadily dug itself into the Pakistani pit. Irritated by India's Fabian tendencies and closeness to Moscow, it appreciated Pakistan's close relationship with anti-Soviet China. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan pushed Washington over the edge. It gave a license to the Pakistani military and intelligence services to help the Afghan resistance by any means necessary.

That this led to the Taliban, the extremist Islamist militia that now rules most of Afghanistan, harbours Osama bin Laden, Washington's number one bete noir, controls three quarters of all heroin reaching the West and, to boot, has provided the Islamist fighters who now set Pakistan's agenda over Kashmir, is barely acknowledged. Belatedly, the USA has woken up to the allure of democratic India. The big bang of its nuclear test penetrated where all the good journalism, books and diplomatic missives failed to reach. It now sees that if war does not intervene the Indian tortoise is likely to overtake the Chinese hare and become the leading economic colossus of Asia.

But war is likely to intervene. Everyone has woken up too late. India should have honoured Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's promise shortly after independence was won from Britain to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir and none of this would have come to pass.

Whichever way you look, it is a story of missed opportunities. "It could end in an afternoon," writes Arundhati Roy. There's nothing much that Bill Clinton can now do. Yes, he is right to try. We have to believe it's never too late, even when we think it is.

Sign CTBT, curbs will go: US

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, March 23

9.30 AM HFI 24/3

UNITED STATES Commerce Secretary William Daley today bluntly told Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha that the complete lifting of the economic sanctions against India is linked to New Delhi signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

During his hour-long meeting with Mr Sinha, Mr Daley also pressed for further reduction of tariff to facilitate heavier flow of US investments into India. He was equally categorical in pointing out that the Indian side would have to take concrete steps to import larger quantities from the US to balance bilateral trade, which is currently heavily loaded in favour of India.

The US Commerce Secretary reiterated his position to the reporters after the meeting. He said: "India signing the CTBT will not only remove the sanctions but reduce tensions in the world. I hope sanctions become a thing of the past. This will take place. Even the Group of Eight industrialised nations has asked India to sign the CTBT."

Mr Sinha explained his difficulties in resorting to

large-scale tariff cuts. He pointed out that tariff was used only as an instrument of last resort to check imports which could destabilise the Indian economy. The Finance Minister underlined that the government was committed to reduce import tariffs to the levels prevailing in its neighbouring countries and ultimately settle for two to three rates in the next two years.

The Minister also told Mr Daley that India was moving towards a single VAT regime.

A new central VAT of 16 per cent had been proposed in the recent Budget, he informed Mr Daley, adding that the government had by and large done away with the system of approvals in case of foreign direct investment.

He also said that an implementation board had been set up to look into those projects that were non-starters because of technical problems.

Mr Sinha told Mr Daley that liberalisation in India was just one decade old and the country was gradually opening up its economy based on consensus. He indicated that the government would mount road shows at New York, Washington, Chicago and Atlanta in the next few months to project India as an attractive investment destination.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

24 MAR 2000

Sanctions lift tied to test ban

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, March 23: US commerce secretary William Daley today said that lifting of economic sanctions would remain linked to India signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and added that he hoped both would take place soon.

After a two-hour meeting with finance minister Yashwant Sinha, Daley told reporters that "signing the CTBT will not only remove sanctions but reduce tension in the world".

The statement belies the general perception that the sanctions — imposed after the Pokhran 1998 nuclear tests — would be lifted

during the visit of President Bill Clinton.

At the meeting, attended by top ministry officials, Daley's team discussed ticklish issues, including demands on India to lower tariff walls and a proposed totalisation tax pact which would eliminate the need for Indian professionals in the US to pay social security taxes in both countries.

The Americans were initially reluctant to sign the treaty with India where social security contributions are far minimal. In the US, social security taxes often exceed actual tax contributions. Sources said the pact, which would benefit mostly Indian doctors and IT professionals in the

US, is expected to be finalised within this week.

The US team also tried to get the finance ministry to agree to lower tariff walls further to attract foreign investments. But Sinha said it was difficult to slash the tariff rates as the country needed to raise more revenue to meet its growing expense budget.

Sinha also defended the Indian position saying that, in most cases, Indian tariff rates were far below WTO prescribed levels. The only promise that the Americans could extract on this count was that India would compress import duties to just 2-3 slabs within two years.

Daley's team also stressed the need to step up imports from the

US to "correct" the tilt in Indo-US balance of trade, currently in India's favour. According to sources, the move to get India to lower tariff and to agree to buy more American products stems from the huge trade deficit the US economy has been saddled with in recent years.

The commerce secretary also said that the number of H1B visas for IT professionals — currently capped at 1,15,000 — could go up to 1,90,000 a year for the next three years if the proposal was passed by the Senate.

Both sides agreed to hold three Cabinet-level talks on finance and investment, cooperation on trade and investment and commerce, Daley said.

Indian, US firms clinch \$1.4 bn deals in IT, power, tourism & environment

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, March 23

COINCIDING WITH the visit of President Bill Clinton, Indian and American companies have clinched business deals worth US \$1.4 billion in information technology, power, tourism and environment.

Joint venture agreements and investment deals in these areas were signed by promoters of US and Indian companies in the presence of US Commerce Secretary William Daley, Information Technology Minister Pramod Mahajan and Power Minister Rangarajan Kumaramangalam.

Indian software major DSQ Software clinched three major deals with Bank of America, IBM and NeuVIs Inc of US for two sep-

arate joint ventures. In the power sector, no new power projects have been announced. But, the state-owned Power Finance Corporation (PFC) has committed Rs 900 crore worth loans for three projects i.e. Balaji Power, Shree Maheshwar and Srinagar ventures.

While S. Kumars and Ogden Energy of New York signed an escrow cover agreement with Madhya Pradesh State Electricity Board, the banks and FIs are yet to approve this agreement for concluding a loan agreement. The IDBI, IFCI, State Bank of India and PFC boards will shortly meet to approve the escrow cover and loan agreements for the 400 MW, Rs 2200 crore Maheshwar Hydro power project.

The US-based Ogden Energy

have entered into a partnership with Balaji Power Corporation for setting up a 106 MW greenfield power project. Another US-major Synergics Energy Development Inc has signed an agreement with PFC for arranging 25 per cent of project cost towards loans.

In the environment field, Global Market Resources Inc of US has tied up with Healing Medicais Pvt Ltd for supply of hydroclave medical systems to relace the traditional incineration technology, reduce air pollutants and water run off effects, reduce wastes.

Another United States power major, Light Stream Technologies has entered into business agreement with Subhash Projects to introduce its chemical-free, high powered pulsed ultraviolet light water disinfection technology.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

24 MAR 2000

India and USA sign 11 pacts worth \$1.4 billion

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, March 23. — Indian and US companies today signed agreements worth over \$1.4 billion in the fields of power, information and technology and environment.

The 11 agreements — four in the IT sector, three each in power and environment and one on tourism — were signed here in the presence of the US Commerce Secretary, Mr William M Daley, the Union Power Minister, Mr P R Kumara-mangalam, and the Union Information and Technology Minister, Mr Pramod Mahajan.

“President Clinton’s visit to India provides a rich opportunity to promote US commercial interests here,” Mr Daley said, pointing out that the US was India’s largest trading partner.

The new bilateral commercial dialogue was meant to further enhance existing relations and spur on greater interaction and economic cooperation, he said just before the agreements were signed.

According to Mr Kumarmangalam, 60 per cent of the private investment in the power sector was from the USA. He pointed out that India proposed to achieve power on demand by 2012, an effort which would require an additional

capacity of 1,50,000 MW.

In the IT sector, the global computer giant IBM signed an agreement with DSC World.com Limited to supply a range of computer products and services while InfoDream, another US multinational, signed a business agreement with ModiCorp to create an innovative web portal for automating the entire process of resource management in a service enterprise.

DSQ Software signed two agreements, one with BancAmerica to form a global IT services company specialising in the financial services sector and another with Neu Vis Inc. on e-business.

In the energy sector, Duncans North, a subsidiary of the US power company Synergics Energy Development Inc signed an agreement with Power Finance Corporation for the development of the 330-MW Shrinagar Hydroelectric Project in Uttar Pradesh.

Ogden Energy of New York signed two agreements with Indian counterparts for development of regional power projects.

The first was with the Balaji group for the 106-MW Samayanallur project in Tamil Nadu while the second was with Madhya Pradesh State Electricity Board and the S Kumars group for the 400-MW Maheshwar hydro power project in the state.

THE STATESMAN

24 MAR 2000

India, U.S. accord on Commercial Dialogue

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 23. India and the United States today agreed to work together to achieve a global consensus on crucial issues facing the World Trade Organisation. The Commerce and Industry Minister, Mr. Murasoli Maran said, "we don't want another Seattle and for this we must have a consensus". The U.S. Commerce Secretary, Mr. William Daley, also stressed that ways must be found to strengthen the global trade system. "We do not want the WTO standing still," he said.

Mr. Maran said he had held "a long discussion" with Mr. Daley on this issue. In this context, he said one had to be very careful while seeking to strengthen the WTO. Replying to questions at a conference on Indo-U.S. trade and investment organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry, he said India was eager to maintain a multilateral ruled-based trading system. But he felt that a new round of trade negotiations should not be launched until a consensus was reached between member countries.

In his address, Mr. Daley pointed out that India, the U.S. and other trading partners need to work together to make sure the international trading system served everyone's interests. "Obviously we were disappointed with what happened in Seattle," he said. The WTO needed to find ways to increase trade because nobody wins and everyone loses if that does happen, he said.

Asked about the huge U.S. investments flowing to China, Mr. Maran said Indo-U.S. relations had been volatile and generally estranged in the past. This situation had changed with the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit opening a new chapter in bilateral relations. At the same time, the private sector would have to collaborate in the effort to boost trade and investment.

Earlier, Mr. Maran and Mr. Daley signed the terms of reference for the Indo-U.S. commercial dialogue, creating an institutional mechanism for cooperation in the trade and investment sector. The dialogue is intended to act as a forum to facilitate trade and maximise investment opportunities across the broad range of economic sectors including information technology, infrastructure, bio-technology and services. It will be a cooperative undertaking to facilitate regular discussions between Indian and the U.S. businesses as well as regular government-to-government meetings.

The dialogue will act as a forum where emerging issues affecting bilateral trade will be discussed and provide for sub-committees to pursue specific projects. In general, the commercial dialogue will take place through government-to-government meetings at the ministerial level followed by joint government-private sector meetings.

THE HINDU

24 MAR 2000

Democracy has knit India well: Clinton

By Our Staff Correspondent ^{29/3}

JAIPUR, MARCH 23. The Pink City accorded a warm welcome to the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, today on his "leisure trip" to Rajasthan. During his brief visit to Naila village, Mr. Clinton had a glimpse of Indian rural life and later saw the historic Amber Fort in its full splendour.

The visiting President, who is staying at the Rajvilas Hotel on the outskirts of Jaipur, witnessed the functioning of Panchayati Raj institutions and the success of the movement for empowerment of women through self-help groups at Naila, 22 km from here.

On arrival at the Rural Health Training Centre in Naila's Fatehgarh mansion amid tight security, Mr. Clinton was garlanded and showered with rose petals by women in traditional Rajasthani attire. The President sprang a surprise by dancing with the women and later shook hands.

A green carpet was laid out in the building to greet the visiting U.S. dignitary, who looked relaxed in a grey striped shirt and black trousers. He later met several women elected to panchayats and those who launched small organisations to gain strength in social life.

Mr. Clinton listened to their experiences in rapt attention and posed a number of questions on the expectation for men's support to them and the education prospects of their children. He was keen that more villages be provided with computers saying they should be used as an aid for spread of education and awareness.

The President sat on a blue couch with the women activists and "Sathins" — the village-level workers of Women's Development Programme (WDP) of the State Government — and appreciated their role in rural development.

Ms. Batto Devi, a Sathin from Dangarwara village, narrated her experience during the struggle to get equal wages for work, while Ms. Murali Devi Meena, sarpanch of a neighbouring village, related the story of her ascendancy in public life despite the hurdles posed by fellow villagers.

The President was keen to know whether the children educated in the village would migrate to the cities after growing up or look for employment in the village itself. The women said there were fewer job opportunities in the village but hoped the societies established by them would generate employment in the future.

At a computerised milk collec-



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, is showered with petals by the women of Naila village in Rajasthan on Thursday. — Reuters

tion centre operated by women of Dhoblai village, Mr. Clinton saw with interest the equipment provided to Dhoblai Dairy Cooperative Union by the Rajasthan Electronics and Instrumentation Limited and observed the process of testing the fat contents of milk and issuance of computerised dairy receipts.

The president of the Dairy Cooperative Union, Ms. Kanta Goswami, made Mr. Clinton a member of the society by issuing a "Smart Card" to him. In a lighter vein, she invited Mr. Clinton to supply milk to the cooperative. The President promised to display the card prominently at White House so that the entire world could witness the progress achieved by a remote Indian village. At a meeting of the Naila village panchayat in another hall of the mansion, he was informed of the three-tier Panchayati Raj evolved since 1959 in the country and apprised of the basic features of the system.

To a question on his impressions about India, Mr. Clinton said the strong democratic traditions in the country had not only

made it possible for the people of different religions and creeds to stay united but also provided equal opportunities of progress to all the citizens.

Before leaving Naila, the President inaugurated the first Internet facility provided by the State Government's Information Technology Department in the village to be stationed in the Fatehgarh mansion. He later left for Amber Fort by helicopter.

En route, he saw the famous Hawa Mahal, Albert Hall, City Palace, Jantar Mantar, and Nahargarh and Jaigarh forts. He landed at the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) helipad nearby and drove to the fort where he was joined by his daughter, Chelsea.

Mr. Clinton and Chelsea visited Jaleb Chowk, Baradari, Sukh Niwas and the Sheesh Mahal inside the Amber Fort, original capital of the Kachchawa rulers of Jaipur. Both of them watched the Meena Bazaar specially set up for them inside the fort and later flew to the Ranthambore wildlife sanctuary.

Dance with the women: Page 9
Date with the big cats: Page 15

3 cabinet-level Indo-U.S. fora to be set up for trade, investment

Daley seeks to link lifting of sanctions with India's signing CTBT

By Priya Ranjan Dash
The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: An offer by the United States to work with India in opening up markets worldwide in sectors of common interest such as information-technology, services and agriculture, and the readiness of both sides to engage in intensive organised dialogue for better trade and investment flows, marked U.S. President Bill Clinton's India visit on Thursday.

However, there was no immediate positive development with U.S. secretary of commerce William Daley seeking to link total lifting of the U.S. sanctions to India's signing the comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT), and hoping that both will happen.

Although India and the U.S. will talk business in three high-level fora, the core negotiations on trade and investment policy issues will be conducted by the PMO with the White House, or more specifically with the U.S. trade representative.

Indian, U.S. firms sign deals worth \$1.4 b

NEW DELHI: India and the U.S. on Thursday entered into agreements worth over \$1.4 billion on various sectors, including information technology (IT), power and environment.

Companies from the two sides signed 11 business agreements which include four agreements in the IT sector, three in environment, three in power and one in tourism sector. "India is a growing market and U.S. firms are very eager to enter into agreements and do business with Indian companies." (PTI)

Commerce minister Murasoli Maran and Mr Daley, who is his U.S. counterpart, signed an understanding on the terms of reference of the commercial dialogue they will lead. According to these terms, the dialogue will have extensive participation of Indian and U.S. business communities. A detailed plan for holding the dialogue will be worked out in the next 90 days.

Acquisition norms for knowledge firms eased

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Thursday said it had liberalised controls on overseas acquisitions by companies in knowledge-based industries such as software and pharmaceuticals. Budget initiatives laid out special conditions where stock swaps or funds raised from American depository receipts (ADRs) or Europe-based global depository receipts (GDRs) could be used for acquisitions overseas, said an official statement.

► Detailed report on Page 17

This track has been described as the "public-private sector dialogue" and it will be one element of a broader economic and commercial interface between the two governments.

Also in pursuance of the Indo-U.S. Vision Statement issued on Tuesday, another forum will be set up at

the level of finance minister Yashwant Sinha and U.S. treasury secretary Larry Summers to hold a dialogue on finance and investment.

Mr Daley told a business seminar that the third track for dialogue on trade and investment policy will be led by the U.S. trade representative (USTR) and the Prime Minister's Office.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

24 MAR 2000

'FRIENDS DO NOT HAVE TO AGREE ON ALL ISSUES'

Let new ideas proliferate, not weapons: Clinton

40-1
27/3
25/3
By Sridhar Krishnaswami

MUMBAI, MARCH 24. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, made yet another pitch for his non-proliferation theme when he asked India to move away from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and move in the direction of proliferation of "new ideas, new companies and new technologies". If this happened, "then your dreams are well within your grasp", the President said during a course of a speech at the Mumbai Stock Exchange here tonight.

Recalling his visit to Naila in Rajasthan, he said, "I do believe if we can lead the region, or you can, away from the proliferation of dangerous weapons to proliferation of new ideas, new companies and technologies and away from racial and ethnic tensions we now see in the troubled spots in South Asia, we can have the sort of harmony I saw in the little village yesterday."

Mr. Clinton pointed out the fact that his visit had firmed up business agreements totalling \$ 4 billion as well as opening up the possibility of the U.S. Ex-Im Bank providing a \$ 1 billion for investments in India.

Addressing a gathering of top business leaders and captains of the Indian industry organised under the aegis of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the United States-India Business Council (USIBC), he made the point that "friends do not have to agree on all issues" and what was important was to have an honest relationship.

Underlying the importance of the need to accept diversity, Mr. Clinton argued that the "world will never be that way unless South Asia is that way".

Recalling the time he had spent at the Rajasthan village, Mr. Clinton observed that it was truly remarkable how the community there had come together over the years forgetting the fact that at one time they could not have dinner together.

Today, the residents were more concerned about immediate problems, such as lack of water. It is in this context that Mr. Clinton called on India to look at the larger picture, to break down the barriers of caste and ethnicity and in the process making the point that there was "no stopping" the country if it reached that level.

'Use IT to fight poverty'

By Sandeep Dikshit

HYDERABAD, MARCH 24. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, today said it was critical for the U.S. and India to work together in order to



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, along with Mr. Richard Celeste, U.S. Ambassador to India (left) Mr. Vilasrao Deshmukh, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Mr. G.P. Goenka, president, FICCI and Mr. Frank Wisner, chairman-elect of USIBC at a meeting organised by the FICCI in Mumbai on Friday. — Photo: Vivek Bendre

seize the possibilities in the information age and ensure that there is no digital divide between the haves and havenots. "We know our future depends on the right kind of partnership with India, specially in information technology, the world's newest and fastest growing economy," he observed.

Describing information technology (IT) as the best weapon available with humanity to fight poverty, Mr. Clinton felt the two nations should pool their energies to utilise IT for sociological purposes. "There is a lot we can do. We must use science to find solutions for people without regard to their income. We just want to be good partners in this endeavour," he noted while addressing industrialists of the Confederation of

Indian Industry (CII) at Hyderabad's Hitec City.

Acknowledging the role being played by Indian-Americans in the U.S., he pointed out that over 750 American companies are being run by this community in the Silicon Valley alone. This initiative is beginning to spread to India which is fast becoming a software superpower. "India has shown that developing countries can not only succeed but also lead."

Indians had taken the lead in IT only due to values of nationhood laid down by Jawaharlal Nehru, said Mr. Clinton. The IT revolution was being led by graduates from institutions such as the IITs which were set up by Nehru.

Mr. Clinton felt there should be a reality check in the midst of cel-

ebration of tomorrow and the satisfaction of being fortunate. "While it is good that 25-year-olds are becoming millionaires and Indian companies are shooting up the Nasdaq, higher profits cannot be the only criteria. There has to be a higher purpose as well. While Internet connections are growing, more fresh water connections are also required. While India has 30 per cent of software engineers, it also has 25 per cent of the world's poor. There is a lot to do." The situation in the U.S. was just as distressing and challenging, he acknowledged.

Technology had an important role in this regard by ensuring that people earned decently in order to preserve other biological species. Although the theme of the U.S. President's address was IT, Mr. Clinton avoided sounding erudite and was candid enough to confess that he was still on the learning curve. "The terms used by young people had different meanings when I was their age. Chips were something you ate, discs were part of the spinal column and semi-conductors were people wishing they were heading an orchestra," he said amidst laughter. Indirectly urging those who thought they had crossed the age for learning about IT, Mr. Clinton said he had been continuously attempting to learn more about this sector ever since he started his innings as the U.S. President seven years ago. "It is wrong to say that I chose Al Gore as my Vice-President because he knew 5,000 times more than me about IT. But the difference since then has narrowed," he observed.

Earlier, the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr. N. Chandrababu Naidu, said the his Government wanted to use IT as a strategic tool to help the common man.

More reports on Pages 13, 14



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, holds the hand of nine-month old Sandhya Balakrishna after he administered an oral polio vaccine to the baby during his visit to Mahavir hospital in Hyderabad on Friday. — Reuters(Report on Page 13)

India's role in infotech hailed

By Pushpa Iyengar
The Times of India News Service

HYDERABAD: Getting a standing ovation once for a well-delivered speech is usual. But Bill Clinton, the first American President to visit south India, got three within the space of one hour on Friday afternoon: first, as he walked into the foyer of Hyderabad's monument to Information Technology, Cyber Towers at HiTec City, which was brimming with the movers and shakers of India's IT industry and the corporate world; second, as he rose to speak; and third when he finished with his address.

He got several laughs, too, not least because of his self-deprecating humour, saying that at 53, he was "way too old to make any money in information technology" and that when he was a young man in his twenties, "chips were something you ate, windows were something you washed, disks were part of your spinal column, and when you got older, they often slipped out of place, while semiconductors were frustrated musicians who wished they were leading orchestras".

Today, the world is a very different place, he said, adding that he was trying to fit in. For instance, many people believed that he had asked Al Gore to be his vice-president because "he knew roughly 5,000 times more about computer technology than I did". But, he said, "I have learned every day now, for over seven years."

Speaking at the symposium on 'India and the United States: World leaders in Science and Technology', jointly organised by the Andhra Pradesh government, CII and the American Chamber of Commerce here on Friday, Mr Clinton dwelt on IT and the benefits the two countries would get through "the right kind of partnership".

"I am here to say I admire what you are doing to steer the ship of this state into the future. I want to steer with you," was the commitment he gave to chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu whose initiatives in IT came up for special mention during his speech.

However, Mr Clinton emphasised that no matter how much new technology there is, the two things governments must remain committed to are empowerment and community. His known concerns for the environment and health were also woven into his address that had rapt listeners like the President's daughter Chelsea, Tata Group chairman Ratan Tata, the third richest man in the world Azim Premji, Infosys Technology's N.R. Narayana Murthy as well as home-grown industrialists like Dr Reddy Labs' Anji Reddy, Satyam Computers chairman B. Ramalinga Raju, as well as Mr Naidu's new image-maker Alyque Padmamsee, in the 1,200-strong audience.

The American President acknowledged the starring role of India, and in particular Indians, in infotech and said that Indian Americans ran more than 750 companies in Silicon Valley alone. "I'm told that if a person calls Microsoft for help with software, there's a pretty good chance they'll find themselves talking to an expert in India rather than Seattle," he said, adding that India was fast becoming one of the world's software superpowers, proving that in a globalised world, developing nations "not only can succeed, developing nations can lead".

He said that India and the U.S. "have to do more together", adding that the U.S.-India Business Council and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry would launch a dialogue to take the infotech trade to new heights, to create more jobs and more opportunities for both nations.

Adding a note of caution, Mr Clinton said that while it was a good thing the market was creating a lot of 25-year-old multi-millionaires, and it was a good thing that the latest Indian start-ups were shooting up the Nasdaq, "the whole enterprise cannot be just about higher profits, there must also be a higher purpose".

THE TIMES OF INDIA

25 MAR 2000

PMO clarifies on controversy over President's remarks

The Times of India News Service



K.R. Narayanan



A.B. Vajpayee

NEW DELHI: The controversy over differences between Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee and President K.R. Narayanan over the latter's remarks at the March 22 banquet held for United States President Bill Clinton appears to have cooled off after a clarification was issued by the Prime Minister's Office on Friday.

The PM's press advisor denied any policy differences between the PM and the President over Bill Clinton's visit. Newspaper reports in this regard have drawn "unwarranted and indeed tendentious" conclusions on this score, the statement said.

It pointed out that the government's policy on non-alignment had been clearly enunciated in the President's address to the joint session of parliament on February 23 where it was stated that "India's foreign policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence is relevant to the multi-polar world today. This is based on the principles of protecting our vital interests and promoting our national ideals".

Mr Vajpayee had seen several news reports criticising the President's speech at the banquet, the statement said, and cited the PM as urging "the media to desist from publicising controversies where none exist". The statement maintained that "while the articulation may vary, the substance of the statements made by the President and the Prime Minister is the same".

THE TIMES OF INDIA
25 MAR 2000

Clinton slick, Naidu slicker

FROM SANKARSHAN THAKUR
AND G.S. RADHAKRISHNA

Hyderabad, March 24: The star of the show was, of course, the honoured guest but for the honoured guest himself, the real star was his host. President Bill Clinton outdid Andhra chief minister Chandrababu Naidu in praise-mongering at the Hitec City this afternoon, flagging him as a man who has "become very well known in the United States and very much admired".

Indeed, Clinton hinted Naidu may have given him a bit of an inferiority complex when he said: "I wish I too had brought some slides with me because chief minister Naidu's speech was so impressive. If it is true that a picture is worth a thousand words, you will all remember the chief minister's speech and not mine."

Clinton was referring to Cyberbabu Naidu's slick audio-visual presentation on the achievements of his government and his IT-driven blue-print for 2020.

Indeed, during his 45-minute

address, the President incorporated buzz-words like smart government flaunted by Naidu in his presentation. Another phrase he took out of Naidu's speech was brain-gain, something that the Andhra chief minister had used to describe the phenomenon of Indian IT experts settled in the US and other western nations coming back home because new opportunities were opening up.

"I am proud to inform you that 23 per cent of the Indian software professionals in your country are from Andhra Pradesh but now that we are forging new partnerships with majors like Microsoft, Oracle, Motorola, Du Pont, Abbott, Merck and Pfizer, brain drain should be converted to brain gain," Naidu said.

Clinton and Naidu spoke to a packed and attentive gathering of top Indian and American businessmen, IT entrepreneurs and cyber whizkids in a makeshift ground-floor hall at the newly-built Cyber Towers.

They were flanked on stage by the CII president, Rahul Bajaj, the

American Chamber of Commerce chief, Sanjay Bhatnagar, and Satyam Online's young boss Ramalinga Raju.

Underlining the importance of IT in the new century, Clinton said it had changed the world faster than anything in the past. "When I became President of the US for the first time, there were only 50 sites on the world wide web, now there are more than 50 million, that should give you some idea of how things have changed." Then, in lighter vein, the President added: "The world is a very different place today. Even the things we mean by certain words have changed since I was a student. At that time, chips were something you ate, windows were things you cleaned, discs were things that caused problems in your spine when they moved out of place and semi-conductors were failed musicians." The hall burst into laughter and applause.

And as if to compliment Naidu on how fast he had moved along with the new world, Clinton pulled out a driver's licence from

his pocket and flashed it to the audience. "I am told you can get a licence like this on the Internet here instead of having to stand in a long line back in America. I have got one of these and I may come back because this is the only place that is going to give me a driver's licence like this. You may see me back soon driving around in Hyderabad and causing traffic jams." The hall erupted again.

In his presentation, Naidu indulged in some determined hard-selling of his government's achievements and goals and said: "We hope we will get the support we need from you, Mr President."

Though Clinton made no immediate response to that, he did commit himself to a "future together".

But while he extolled the virtues of IT, Clinton also emphasised the need to pay attention to other areas of governance.

"The challenge of our times is to convert our success to find weapons to fight poverty and spread healthcare and education," he said.

Clinton paints rosy picture of partnership

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

MUMBAI, March 24. — Standing in the Stock Exchange's historic, old trading ring, Mr Bill Clinton today painted a bullish picture of an Indo-US partnership, playing down the differences.

South Asia needs to show the world that the "humanity we share is more important than the differences" among nations, the US President told a Ficci meeting.

It's difficult to imagine India as she would like herself to be "10 to 20 years from now" without "a deeper and better partnership with the USA", he asserted. But equally, "it would be difficult to imagine the world that I'd like to leave for my children, without a deeper and better partnership with India".

He said he had come to lay the foundation for such a world before his term ends.

Mr Clinton spoke optimistically of tying up with India on education, environment and commerce, and about fighting terrorism "as partners".

He stressed the need to preserve tigers and the environment and repeated his warning on global warming. There's a "trillion-dollar market" and enormous job opportunities in tapping alternative sources of cleaner energy and finding eco-friendly means of existence.

What Internet has done for the USA, IT will do for India in

WARNING TO PAK

JAIPUR, March 24. — Mr Bill Clinton will warn Gen. Pervez Musharraf when they meet tomorrow in Islamabad that Pakistan could collapse economically if it continues to confront India over Kashmir. The US President will also tell Pakistan's military ruler that if an Indo-Pak war breaks out, Washington will not intervene to help Islamabad. This was stated by US national security adviser Mr Sandy Berger last night as he provided the first authoritative outline of Mr Clinton's scheduled talks with Gen. Musharraf.

Mr Clinton will ask Gen. Musharraf to restore democracy. Mr Berger said Pakistan, ridden with problems, has "terrorist groups operating out of (it)... and I think that in some ways one of the great dangers in this region is the potential failure of Pakistan". — PTI

■ More reports on pages 11 & 12

the next five years, he said.

Then moving away from IT, business and environment, he spoke more eloquently of the slices of rural Indian life he glimpsed yesterday — at Naila in Rajasthan — and affirmed

his faith in Mahatma Gandhi's conviction that India could provide great service to mankind.

"The local experiments in India are something we wish for the world," he said. It is "truly remarkable that people are worried not about caste or tribe but about how to get clean water."

And this is what has moved him most — that India is relatively free of ethnic and racial clashes compared with many other countries he had visited, where families are killed simply because they belong to a certain tribe or religion.

It's been a remarkable week in this country for him, daughter Chelsea and US delegates, Mr Clinton said.

India tight-lipped: India stayed non-committal on Pakistan's announcement of local elections, referring instead to the stand taken by Commonwealth members, adds SNS from New Delhi.

The foreign ministry spokesman said the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting had called for immediate restoration of democracy. "Let us see how developments unfold."

He, however, reacted to the Pakistan President, Mr Rafiq Tarar's comments that Kashmir is essential to Pakistan's survival. "How can a part of another country be central to their survival?" the spokesman said, dubbing the remarks "curious and absurd".

THE STATESMAN

25 MAR 2000

Naidu slides fail to seduce Mr Charm

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD, March 24. — Mr Bill Clinton used his humour to charm the heavyweights of the Indian industry and deployed his wit to sidestep Mr N Chandrababu Naidu's request for cooperation for his latest institute.

The moment he took the mike, the jam-packed gathering decided to give him a standing ovation and he reciprocated by making them laugh every moment for the next five minutes.

Before he came on, Mr Naidu transformed his welcome address into a computer-aided presentation, which was beamed onto the giant television screens in the Hi-Tec City, on what his government is doing and what the future holds for the world in general and the state in particular.

In the course of his aggressive salesmanship, the cyber-savvy leader announced the setting

up of GIGA — Global Institute of Governance in the Information Age.

He sought Mr Clinton's cooperation, saying "You are not an American citizen, you are a global citizen," hoping to extract some assurance right away.

The US President, who begins the day with the White House staff making routine presentations, keenly watched the show.

The avid golfer teed off by thanking the gathering for having turned up on this warm day. "It may be that everyday is a warm day, but for us, it's a new experience," he said, sending the hall into peels of laughter.

The next stroke was at Mr Naidu's presentation. "I wish I had brought some slides"; the crowd laughed and clapped. And they did not know if they could laugh any louder when he said: "If a picture is worth a thousand words, you will

remember much more of what he said than what I am about to say."

Soon after, he asked the six Congressmen who accompanied him to stand up. "Because they come on these trips with me - I get to give the speeches, they have to sit and listen. And then when we go home, they have all the power over the money".

The hall reverberated with laughter again. Mr Naidu's looked like he heard Mr Clinton say: "Sorry no cooperation".

He then introduced each of the Congressmen. "If that does not improve the aid programme for India, I don't know what will." The laughter was deafening.

Mr Clinton said that for the past seven years, he has been learning every day about the developments in computer technology. "And it is very interesting for a man of my age. I am 53, which is way too old to make any money in information technology."

He paused for a while to allow the laughter to die down before detailing how words now had different meanings from what they were in his 20s. "When I was a young man, chips were something you ate, windows were something you washed, disks were part of your spinal column, that when you get older, often slipped out of place, and semi-conductors were frustrated musicians who wished they were leading orchestras."

On his arrival at the Hi-Tec City, he was taken round the I-T exhibition where he was given a driving licence issued by the state government. "I am intrigued that you can get a driver's license on the Internet and you don't have to go wait in line as you do in America. In a few months I may come back, because it may be the only place I will have a license to drive. You may see me fooling around on the streets here, causing traffic jams," he said, raising his brow for effect.

THE STATESMAN

25 MAR 2000

Naidu receives high praise

CEO of Andhra gets a one-on-one with CEO of USA

Ashok Das
Hyderabad, March 24

BILL CLINTON was lavish in his praise for Mr Chandrababu Naidu. "He is becoming very well-known in the United States and very much admired for all of these remarkable achievements. I think Chief Minister Naidu deserves a lot of credit for giving you the right kind of governance," the American President told his elite audience at the Hi-tech City function.

So impressed was Mr Clinton with Mr Naidu, he even agreed to an unscheduled one-on-one meeting with the CEO of Andhra Pradesh Inc. Their talk - without aides -- acquires lot of significance as the state government had been trying through various channels for the last one month to secure for Mr Naidu an exclusive audience with Mr Clinton.

Advance teams of US officials who visited the city earlier had ruled out any such meeting, citing paucity of time.

Soon after the formal ceremony at Mahavir hospital, where Mr Clinton administered medicine to three

tuberculosis patients and announced \$ 5 million aid to combat AIDS and TB, the CEO of USA and the CEO of Andhra Pradesh Inc sat down to discuss matters of mutual interest. No aides from either side were present during the meeting.

The two leaders covered a lot of areas including how best information technology could best be used for the development of the world in general and Andhra Pradesh in particular. Mr Clinton appreciated the efforts of AP government in promoting information technology to better the lot of the people in all walks of life. The issue of e-governance and connectivity to far-flung areas also figured in the discussions.

Mr Naidu informed the president of the concept of SMART (simple, moral, accountable, responsive and transparent) government that he is pursuing in the state and sought the latter's cooperation in the establishment of a Global Institute of Governance in Information Age (GIGA). The president was subsequently shown a four-minute film on the proposed GIGA made by advertising guru Alyque Padamsee.

The two leaders are said to have agreed to work jointly on infotech and other fields.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

25 MAR 2000

Clinton warns against danger of cyber divide

'Bridge gulf between IT haves and have nots'

HT Correspondent
Hyderabad, March 24

US PRESIDENT Bill Clinton today emphasised the need to harness newer technologies like infotech for eradicating poverty in the world.

"Millions of Indians are connected to the Internet, but million more are not yet connected to fresh water. India accounts for 30 per cent of the world's software engineers but also 25 per cent of the world's malnourished. So our challenge is to turn the newest discoveries into the best weapons humanity has ever had to fight poverty," he said.

Mr Clinton was addressing a gathering of about 1,200 Indian and Non Resident Indian entrepreneurs, IT engineers, media barons, politicians and bureaucrats, who had gathered at Hi-tech City on the outskirts of Hyderabad this afternoon.

Mr Clinton said that while it was good that a lot of 25-year-old multi-millionaires were being created and the latest Indian startups

were shooting up the Nasdaq, "this whole enterprise cannot just be about higher profits, there must also be a higher purpose".

Speaking about the strides made by the US in the field of Information Technology, Mr Clinton pointed out that there had been only 50 sites on World Wide Web in January 1993, when he was first elected President. Today, there are more than 50 million. "Here in India, the number of Internet users is expected to grow more than 10 times in just four years," he pointed out.

Ten years ago, India's hi-tech industries generated software and computer-related services worth \$ 150 million. Last year, the turnover grew to \$ 4 billion. Today, this industry employs more than 280,000 Indians, in jobs that pay almost double the national average, he observed, adding, "little wonder, Hyderabad is now known as Cyberabad."

He acknowledged the remarkable success of Indian Americans in this new economy: Suhas Patil (chairman-emeritus of Cyrus

Logic), Vinod Khosla (who helped build Sun Microsystems), Vinod Dahm (who created the Pentium chip), among others. He also had a word of praise for Ramalinga Raju (chairman, Satyam Computers) who shared the dais with him.

"The remarkable fact is that Indian Americans now run more than 750 companies in the Silicon Valley alone. Now, we are moving from brain drain to brain gain in India, because many are coming home," he said.

"India is fast becoming one of the world's software superpowers, providing that in a globalised world, developing nations not only can succeed, developing nations can lead. Today, it is not just IIT graduates who are leading the information revolution. India has the second largest pool of trained scientists in the entire world. The partnership of Americans and Indians proposes to raise a billion dollars for a global institute of science and technology here," he said.

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- Clinton has Cyberabad gushing
- Prez to join Mumbai Wall of Fame

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

25 MAR 2000

Boom time in Indo-U.S.

The stage seems to be all set for breaking out of the past; and it is now basically left to the leaderships of India and the U.S. to chart a course that is qualitatively and substantively different from that of the past. SRIDHAR KRISHNASWAMI sums up

ties

Mr. Clinton's trip.

BOTH BY way of substance and atmosphere, the visit of Mr. William Jefferson Clinton to India could not have gone off better. In fact even in an American context, where the Clinton presidency is being handed over to historians, many, if not all, will take the view that what Mr. Clinton did for five days in India was indeed a serious attempt to not only forge a new chapter in bilateral relations and American foreign policy but also an effort to break out of the existing mindsets of the region and its peoples.

But there is the perception in some quarters — and by no means a misplaced one — that Mr. Clinton did not see the real India.

"Security considerations" meant that the American visitor for the most part witnessed an artificial construct of what India is all about. The consummate politician that he is, the American President would have "loved" to be in the midst of protestors and hecklers; perhaps would have joined issue with them; and maybe even won one or two over to his side. In ways more than one, the "real" Mr. Clinton did not meet the "real" democratic India.

The communicator in Mr. Clinton came through well, especially in his address to the joint session of Parliament. The American leader, who is eloquent in delivery, stuck to the script, making sure the right words were there even while putting across a different point of view. For instance, on the issue of non-proliferation — a difficult subject in bilateral relations — he remarked, "...if India's nuclear tests shook the world, India's leadership for non-proliferation can certainly move the world." And while stressing the need for restarting the dialogue with Pakistan, he said, "I know it is difficult to be a democracy bordered by nations whose Governments reject democracy", a rather blunt message to Islamabad as well.

No doubt there was hype in the Indian media, the Government and among the people. And it was only natural, in more than one sense. After all India is witnessing an American presidential visit after a gap of 22 years; and there is "something" about America that Indians have always been infatuated with. But, in the next few days, the hope is that in the course of settling down, the real challenges in the relationship will be met head on, minus the hoopla and the delusions.

What transpired in private between the leaders of the two democracies will largely remain in that domain, even if bits and pieces may trickle down later. But if what has been said in public is anything to go by, India and the U.S. have indeed opened a new page in the bilateral relationship. And this is not merely confined to the realm of political and security issues, but encompasses the breadth and depth of what the overall relationship ought to be.

To those in India obsessed with the political, what Mr. Clinton had said

on such subjects as terrorism and Kashmir must have indeed been music to the ears. No doubt the American leader toughened his stance in his public posturing on the absolute need to get away from violence if anything meaningful is to be achieved on the dialogue front. In piling the pressure on Pakistan, it would be wrong to assume that India was let off easily.

"Engagement with adversaries is not the same thing as endorsement. It does not require setting aside legitimate grievances," Mr. Clinton remarked, mentioning that one of the wisest things told to him by the late Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, was that peace is not made between friends.

For the record, senior Clinton administration officials have argued that what Mr. Clinton had said — or not said — on such issues as non-proliferation and Kashmir did not amount to any "significant" shift in American policy. The U.S., in the course of its dialogue with friends, likes to "tell it as it is", remarked the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright. "...that is what the President did here. We are able to praise the good things and make a point of saying that certain areas need improvement," she remarked.

Even if there are no shifts in American foreign policy, the U.S. President was quite candid and sharp during his remarks on terrorism; and pointed as well in his assessment that there were certain "elements" in the Pakistan Government that had a hand in the ongoing violence. This must have been delightful to the BJP-led Government in New Delhi which sincerely hoped that Mr. Clinton would say it personally when in Islamabad. Ironically, after putting on a crass show as to why Mr. Clinton should not go to Pakistan, 'Official India' must be happy that he did go there after all.

One of the important things that came out of this presidential visit was on the institutional front, or mechanisms to ensure that the strengthened ties between the two countries were placed in a longer term perspective, politically and economically. Appended to the "Vision Statement" signed by the visiting President and the Indian Prime Minister were the specific

ways this dialogue was going to be continued, both at the leadership and senior official levels. This in part to move away from pegging the achievements to the "personality" factor.

A critical component of Mr. Clinton's visit was in the realm of economics, business and commerce. Even if short in terms of duration, the President's visits to Hyderabad and Mumbai stressed an important aspect that has long been said of bilateral relations — that if only the two nations could forge better ties in the realm of economics, it would go a long way in easing whatever political frictions there were. Speaking in Parliament, Mr. Clinton observed, "The first of these challenges is to get our own economic relationship right... The private sector will drive this progress, but our job as Governments is to create the conditions that will allow them to succeed in doing so, and to reduce the remaining impediments to trade and investment between us."

Mr. Clinton's economic agenda essentially was not only a view of India's strides in high technology, especially information technology, and the kind of cooperation that could be had in this area, but also included the broader policy front where specific steps had to be taken if there was to be a fuller utilisation of the potential.

While praising the progress registered in India in the last nine years or so by way of economic reforms and liberalisation, American business houses have been busy pressing on specifics such as access, the time-frames for clearance and taxation.

In looking at the vast scope of the economic potential that exists between the two countries there has always been the hope that U.S. economic interaction with India will be on the lines of that with China. At the same time, there is also the realisation of problems in doing business with democracies.

The stage seems to be all set for breaking out of the past; and it is now basically left to the leaderships of the two nations to chart a course that is qualitatively and substantively different from that of the past.

If Washington has been making the point that it is keen on moving away from "estranged democracies" to "engaged democracies", the pattern of interaction between India and the U.S. must move away from compulsiveness to one of cool-headed thinking keeping in mind the larger picture. If the two countries are unable to do this, then down the road Mr. Clinton's trip to India will be tagged on to the list of "missed opportunities" of the last five decades.

THE HINDU
26 MAR 2000

A gamble pays off?

IT WAS a visit few in the Indian establishment thought would turn out to be useful. Indian skepticism about the first American presidential visit in 22 years was rooted in a number of questions. Is there any point in dealing with Mr. Bill Clinton, a lame-duck President on his way out in a few months? In insisting on going to Islamabad, isn't Mr. Clinton giving legitimacy to the military coup in Pakistan? Will Mr. Clinton not seek to pressure India into signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and force it to talk with Pakistan over Kashmir?

The cynicism in New Delhi was so deep that Washington had to virtually coax out of India the formal invitation to Mr. Clinton. If the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, gambled with great reluctance on Mr. Clinton's visit, the results appear to have gone way beyond the expectations in New Delhi.

The biggest gain from Mr. Clinton's visit has been his successful start in chipping away at the deep Indian distrust of U.S. intentions accumulated over the last 50 years. Turning on his charm, Mr. Clinton addressed the

premises that have nurtured anti-Americanism in India.

One of New Delhi's big grievances has been that India gets no "respect" from Washington as an ancient civilisation and for its potential to become a great power in the world. India has always felt the U.S. talks down, and repaid the compliment with its own prickliness.

By adopting a respectful tone in articulating American differences with India, Mr. Clinton might have unveiled a style of conversation between India and the U.S. so different from the past. That his approach was successful was evident from the overwhelming response he got from Indian parliamentarians.

By proclaiming the "lessons" from India's democratic experiment to the rest of the world, and by acknowledging India's potential to play a larger role in the region and the world, Mr. Clinton has tried to take the sting out of India's bitterness towards the U.S.

The greatest Indian grouse

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against the U.S. has been that it had shown no awareness, let alone understanding, of India's security problems. The Indo-U.S. wrangling over the last many decades has been centred around the nuclear question and the Kashmir dispute with Pakistan.

Mr. Clinton was determined to find a new way of addressing these issues. On the nuclear question, he demonstrated that the U.S. could disagree with India without being "disagreeable". Arguing that India need not define her greatness in terms of possessing nuclear weapons, Mr. Clinton conveyed the American disapproval of the country's decision to conduct nuclear tests and build an atomic arsenal.

Conceding, however, India's sovereign right to decide its own course, Mr. Clinton said both sides must press ahead with the

dialogue of the last couple of years to narrow their nuclear differences.

It was on Kashmir, however, that Mr. Clinton offered what appeared to be a fundamental shift in the American approach to India's security problems. Ending the historic American tilt

towards Pakistan on Kashmir, Mr. Clinton put across a new American framework for peace in the troubled valley and between New Delhi and Islamabad.

Respect for the Line of Control and an end to violence are at the heart of Mr. Clinton's package and India is pleased with it. Mr. Clinton also insisted that India must find a way to address the grievances of the Kashmiris.

But by proclaiming that this must take place within the parameters of the unity of India's multi-ethnic nationhood, Mr. Clinton may have begun to remove the deepest anxieties in India about American intentions. Mr. Clinton has taken a message to Islamabad that if Pakistan does not end its obsession with Kashmir, stop supporting terrorism and focus on internal development it risks becoming a failed state. Whether Gen. Musharraf heeds the advice or not, the new American approach to the region has created a new political basis for Indo-U.S. cooperation in the coming years.

The biggest gain from Mr. Clinton's visit has been his successful start in chipping away at the deep Indian distrust of U.S. intentions, writes
C. RAJA MOHAN.

'It is the sounding of the starting gun in Indo-U.S. ties'

By S. Balakrishnan
The Times of India News Service
MUMBAI: Although the political benefits of President Bill Clinton's visit to India remain to be assessed, it has helped build confidence and comfort levels in India and the U.S. as well as raised expectations.

Following the visit, **The Times of India** spoke to Frank Wisner (61), who was the U.S. ambassador to India from 1994 to '97, and is known for his proximity to the President. Excerpts from the interview:

How do you view the Indo-U.S. relationship in the immediate aftermath of Mr Clinton's visit?

The visit was a very important one in the sense that it marks the possibility of a new age in Indo-U.S. ties. The President felt it and expressed it. He was received in that manner by the political leadership in India. It is the sounding of the starting gun. One cannot exactly predict the future. He is a harbinger.

It is very clear in both the U.S. and India that one can forge a relationship based on equality. A climate of confidence has been created and it will be a precursor to specific steps.

Mr Clinton has talked of the struggle for empowerment, water, etc. He has opened up a very wide vista for cooperative ventures. Just this morning, I attended a seminar where the talk was about deepening the financial sector. We will now be able to look each other in

the eye and see how things can be improved. Everything depends on the follow-up work.

There are reports that some of the businessmen present at Mr Clinton's meeting at the BSE on Friday were upset that he did not talk money at the headquarters of India Inc, but spoke about issues outside the ambit of economics.

I think he did the right thing. We would make a bad start of a new relationship if he had done otherwise.

Mr Clinton has presented the vision and mood within which economic intercourse can follow.

Mr Clinton is at the tail-end of his presidency. Doubts are being expressed in India about whether the goodwill generated by him will be continued when a new administration takes charge at the White House later this year.

Mr Clinton's visit should not be seen as that of one individual visiting your country. The visit is the re-

sult of a mature reflection of where American interests lie. The President's entourage comprised businessmen, Congressmen and others. I am certain that the same logic and spirit will continue when a new President takes charge in the U.S. this year.

The reality of India and the prospects it holds do not go away.

Is the visit indicative of a correction in the pro-Pakistan tilt in U.S. policy?

Much of the past few decades have been marked by the cold war between the U.S. and the erstwhile Soviet Union. Many of America's actions were dictated by the compulsions of the Cold War and its eagerness to address its national security concerns. The Cold War has shaped the way we look at the world. In the post-Cold War period, the U.S. is reassessing its relationship with the rest of the world, including India.

But Washington cannot dismiss its ties with Islamabad. It is a continuing and important matter. The

Pakistan factor is important in the narrow regional sense, while India is important in the world context. In fact, it is important for India that America retains its ties with Pakistan. It is not an either-India-or-Pakistan situation.

What is the way out of the current stalemate in the Indo-Pakistan relationship? There is no dialogue between the two nations and there is no possibility of third party mediation either.

Frankly, I do not know the way out. We are aware of India's sensitivities on third party mediation. But it is a matter of concern that the continuing stand-off often erupts into violence. The situation has become even more serious, with both nations opting for the nuclear route. The need is for responsible conduct and restraint. I also think that Mr Clinton's statement on the need to respect the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir is significant. It is an important signal to Pakistan. Violence in the region is a threat not only to the region, but to American interests.

Whatever role the U.S. may play should be an acquired one. We should be looking for opportunities and trying to take both governments forward.

Will the U.S. at a later stage recommend the conversion of the LoC into an international border?

It is much too early even to think about it. What is needed is a climate for settlement.



SUNDAY INTERVIEW
FRANK WISNER

SO, WHY DID

26/3 9:30 AM 15

THE US WANTED TO ENSURE THAT THE STATUS QUO OF NO NUCLEAR TESTS, AND NON-DEPLOYMENT, IS MAINTAINED, SAYS E SRIDHARAN

CLINTON VISIT US?

THE VISIT of an American president to India after 22 years is a watershed in Indo-US relations. The atmospheres have been positive, and the visit, on the face of it, has resulted in some definite forward movement in the relationship, particularly on an institutionalised, multi-faceted dialogue and a focus on economic cooperation, despite continuing, albeit downplayed, differences on security issues.

Even while the US side made it clear that there was going to be no change in its position on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and non-proliferation, or on agreeing to view Kashmir as purely a case of externally-backed terrorism alone, the very fact of visiting a 'sanctioned' India that declined both the CTBT and US mediation between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, indicates a softening of the American stance.

Which in turn raises the risk, from the American point of view, of the visit being seen as seeming to accept — and therefore, setting a precedent for other countries — India or Pakistan as nuclear powers, which Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott said not long ago that the US would not accept even by implication. This raises the question of the payoff, from the US point of view. There is clearly more than meets the eye. Was it because of India's economic promise? Or cultivating India as a long-run counterweight to China? Or could there be some other agenda?

It is unlikely that the economic factor, though important in the long run, could have been enough to spur the visit. In any case, India has a two-way trade with the US of a likely \$13 billion-odd this fiscal year, which is dwarfed by US trade with China. This disparity is likely to remain of much the same order of magnitude in the near term. And despite the IT hype, India remains fairly low in the international IT pecking order, being essentially a source of low-cost, good quality IT skills that is able to provide round-the-clock IT support to the US due to the time zone difference (Indians in the US IT industry are another story but they are part of the US economy). It has not yet created either intellectual property in software (competitive software products) or competitive, high value-added, hardware-software systems-integrated products (unlike the Israelis), although both have great potential.

Looking at the big picture, India's economic clout and medium-term promise does not bulk large enough in the overall US economic relationships with the world, or in comparison to China with its vastly greater trade, several hundred warheads and few ICBMs, to be able to outweigh the negative impact, from the US point of view, of the tests.

Perhaps the best explanation for the visit is that US interests in the short-term are served by ensuring that the status quo of no further nuclear tests and no Agni

series test (for a year now), and non-deployment, is frozen. From the US point of view, the real issue is not the tests of May 1998 which were only a technology demonstrator, or CTBT or FMCT (Fissile Material Cut Off Treaty) talks, but deployment, which raises risks greatly given the virtually nil reaction time in the subcontinent and lack of sophisticated control systems.

For the status quo would ensure that both India and Pakistan remain effective nuclear powers only vis-à-vis each other,

India should make the best use of the major opportunity offered by the Clinton visit, that of institutionalised high-level dialogues and of economic opportunities

being able to credibly deter only each other, but remaining only token or symbolic nuclear powers vis-à-vis the P-5, including China. In this context, the US probably believes, in line with its own practices, that a credible Indian deterrent vis-à-vis China would require much more nuclear and missile testing for

range, accuracy, yield and yield-to-weight ratios of devices.

To ensure freezing of non-deployment or recessed deployment, forward movement on Indo-Pak dialogue on Kashmir as well as respect for the Line of Control are both necessary. This is the meaning of the emphasis on restraint and respect for the LoC. So are positive incentives for both countries.

As far as Kashmir is concerned, while the US knows that overt pressure or attempts to mediate are counterproductive, it will maintain quiet pressure on both sides to keep talking, including explore positions which deviate from declared positions, perhaps through non-official channels. Developments over the past year have already drawn the US into the Kashmir issue, notably the July 4 deal with Nawaz Sharif on the Kargil withdrawal which not only gave him a face-saver but also indirectly helped the NDA government — think of what the election results may have been like if India had been losing men every day between July 5 and the first round of voting two months later. In addition, India has invited involvement by call-

ing on the US to declare Pakistan a terrorist state, and pressurise it to stop supporting insurgency.

As long as India defines the Kashmir problem as *solely* a case of cross-border terrorism, it will only invite international attention while not convincing anyone except a committed domestic audience. The world will not be convinced that a few thousand militants can sustain an insurgency for 10 years without, at least, tacit support from a large part of the population, which the near-boycott of the 1999 elections would seem to suggest. This may be painful to admit and is glossed over in public debate. There is an urgent need to go beyond *purely* law and order strategies to a two-track policy that gives equal or greater weight to the long-neglected proactive domestic political strategy on Kashmir, of dialogue with all political forces in Kashmir, and offering positive incentives and dealing with grievances.

There must a willingness to confront the larger questions about political actions of the past in Kashmir (especially 1984 and 1987), and questions about the Indian state and society over the past decade; of whether the stance of the state in practice, the idea of the nation as articulated by leading political forces, and the spread of aggressively majoritarian attitudes in society have created fears of marginalisation that give added incentive to secessionist sentiments. In this era of coalition politics and state-based parties, it would be appropriate that our domestic Kashmir policy should be more attentive to needs for autonomy, and take a more, not less, accommodative attitude to regional autonomy and minority rights and safeguards, including for intra-state minorities. This is a difficult and long-haul strategy but vitally necessary alongside counter-terrorism. It is when normalcy through voluntary acceptance by the people is restored that outside criticism will be silenced and scope for intervention eliminated.

In the meantime, India should make the best use of the major opportunity offered by the Clinton visit, that of institutionalised high-level dialogues and of economic opportunities. It is the content and substance of these dialogues, and growing economic, scientific and scholarly relations, along with a pro-active domestic Kashmir policy, that can potentially lead to major improvements in Indo-US relations. It can also brighten the prospects for regional peace, and through that route, the growing voluntary acceptance of India by all its neighbours and the world as a bigger international player.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

26 MAR 2000

ALL ACTIONS MUST BE RECIPROCAL: MUSHARRAF

U.S. will not mediate on Kashmir, says Clinton

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By Amit Baruah

ISLAMABAD, MARCH 25. In a brutally direct message to Pakistan, the visiting U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, called upon Islamabad to create conditions for a dialogue with New Delhi, stop trying to "redraw" borders with blood and stated that the U.S. will not negotiate the Kashmir dispute.

Mr. Clinton's message came on State-run Pakistan Television after two-hour-long talks with the Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, in which the Pakistani leader had nothing new to offer on U.S. concerns relating to terrorism, non-proliferation and a return to democracy.

In his television address to the Pakistani people, Mr. Clinton also put his full weight behind the Lahore process as the vehicle to resolve differences between India and Pakistan. He also called on Pakistan to "intensify efforts to defeat those who inflict terror".

"When I was in New Delhi, I asked India to seize the opportunity for dialogue. Pakistan also must create conditions that will allow dialogue to succeed. For India and Pakistan, this must be a time for restraint, for respect of the Line of Control and renewed lines of communication," the U.S. President said.

"I have listened carefully to Gen. Musharraf and others. I understand your concern about Kashmir. I share your convictions that human rights of all its people must be respected. But a stark truth must also be faced — there is no military solution to Kashmir," he said.

"International sympathy, support and intervention cannot be won by provoking a bigger, bloodier conflict. On the contrary, sympathy and support will be lost and no matter how great the grievance



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright (to his right), at a meeting with the Pakistani Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf (second from left), in Islamabad on Saturday.

it is wrong to support attacks against civilians across the LoC," Mr. Clinton said in what are the sharpest remarks ever by an American leader to Pakistan.

"We cannot and will not mediate... the dispute in Kashmir. Only you and India can do that through dialogue. Last year, the world watched with hope as leaders of India and Pakistan met in Lahore on the road to better relations. This is the right road for peace for Pakistan and India... I will do all I can to help both sides restore the promise and process of Lahore," the U.S. President said in his television address.

In keeping with what the Americans wanted, there was no joint statement issued after the visit — a clear sign that Mr. Clinton did not want to "associate" himself with a military Government.

On the issue of return to democracy, Mr. Clinton was clearly

dissatisfied with the announcement of a schedule for local body elections. A return to civilian, democratic rule required a complete plan — a real road-map — in the President's view.

The U.S. President offered a choice to the people of Pakistan and the military leadership: if the country was able to meet the challenges he listed Pakistan would have opportunities to grow or there was the danger that it could become "even more isolated" in the international arena.

All through the five-hour trip Mr. Clinton looked grim — a clear indication that he had come to deliver a painful message to Pakistan at a critical time in its history. The suggestion was clear: Pakistan had time to straighten up its act as laid down or could face more music in the days to come.

In a press conference after Mr.

Clinton left Pakistan, Gen. Musharraf said there would be no "unilateral steps" from Islamabad like a crackdown on militant groups operating in Indian Kashmir from Pakistani soil. He repeatedly stressed that all action had to be "reciprocal". In reply to a question if he would take the initiative and telephone the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, to resume the bilateral dialogue, the General stated that his Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, would have to prepare the ground first for such an initiative.

He said Mr. Clinton did not raise the issue of a ban on groups such as the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. The U.S. President also did not specify what he meant by measures to be taken by Pakistan to intensify action against terrorism.

'Hard choices before Pak people': Page 11

THE HINDU

26 MAR 2000

Govt. hails Clinton's message to Pak.

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, MARCH 25. As the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, called on Pakistan to abjure violence and terrorism, the Government today hailed the American message of restraint and reiterated its readiness to engage Islamabad if it ceased cross-border terrorism.

In a statement here soon after Mr. Clinton delivered his tough message to Pakistan, the spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry welcomed Mr. Clinton's "call to the people of Pakistan to look to the future and not remain mired in quarrels of the past".

Senior officials in the Government, who were glued to television sets since the afternoon to see Mr. Clinton's address to the

people of Pakistan at the end of his stopover there, said the American articulation on Kashmir, terrorism and Indo-Pak relations had been "consistent". As the U.S. President put Pakistan on notice today, there is satisfaction here that the American message on Indo-Pak tensions had remained the same on both sides of the border.

As the outlines of a new American approach to these issues came into view during Mr. Clinton's meetings in New Delhi earlier this week, the officials here were too cautious to acknowledge it as a historic correction of the American tilt towards Pakistan during the Cold War.

Today the mood was upbeat in the Government. Official sources

said Mr. Clinton had been "very responsive" to India's security concerns, and this could impart a positive momentum to Indo-U.S. relations.

Sources here pointed to the unambiguous advice to Pakistan that it should abjure terrorism, stop trying to alter borders with blood, and seek in its own interest a reconciliation with India. Officials also referred to the fact that Mr. Clinton had repeated the four R's for lowering tensions in the subcontinent — respect for the Line of Control, restraint, rejection of violence and renewal of the dialogue.

While supporting the resumption of the Indo-Pak peace process initiated by New Delhi in February 1999, Mr. Clinton em-

phasised that ending violence was necessary for a successful dialogue.

The spokesman said Mr. Clinton's message of peace and restraint was same as the one the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, had taken to Pakistan when he travelled to Lahore last year.

Reaffirming New Delhi's readiness to renew the peace process if Islamabad stopped its 'jihad' against India, the spokesman said, "We believe the path to a common and bright future for all our peoples lies through an end to hostile propaganda and cross-border terrorism, which Pakistan has been resorting to."

U.S. denies tilt towards India: Page 11

THE HINDU

26 MAR 2000

Departure of nuances in Indo-US ties'

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, March 26

THE VAJPAYEE Government is on a high with the just-concluded Clinton visit not only for the stiff message that the US President has delivered to Pakistan, but also due to the "reassessment" of India's standing that has come about.

According to External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh, there is a "departure of nuances" in Indo-US relations as Washington has realised India's standing in the world.

Mr Singh, speaking to a private TV channel, commented: "There is a departure of nuances. It is significant. There is a reassessment of the whole standing of India, that India is on the move not only in terms of South Asia, but the whole Asia."

In the run-up to Mr Clinton's visit, the Indian Government had voiced its opposition to his stopover in Islamabad. However, it is now mighty happy with Mr Clinton's Pakistan sojourn, delivered as he did the promised homilies and thinly-disguised warnings.

These warnings, according to National Security Adviser and PM's Principal Secretary Brajesh Mishra, represent a diplomatic victory for India.

Mr Jaswant Singh, in his interview, spoke of the movement in Indo-US relations, but declined to compare it with Indo-Russian ties. India has an "extremely good" relationship with Russia even after the collapse of the Soviet Union, he said and referred to the strategic partnership between New Delhi and Moscow.

Asked about the US's post-

Pokhran economic sanctions, which are still in place, the Minister said these were "counter-productive and do not serve any purpose. As for signing CTBT, which has been made a pre-condition by the US for lifting of sanctions, he reaffirmed that the Government's move would depend entirely on the political consensus on the subject.

On the issue of terrorism, he said the US and India have already established a joint working group to fight the menace. At the same time, he conceded that any challenge to India from anywhere would have to be dealt with by the country itself. Transferring of responsibility to other nations would be an error. He, however, added that an international agreement and understanding on India's stand would create a beneficial cli-

mate. Political parties are in the process of assessing the impact of the Clinton visit and are expected to come up with their formulation by tomorrow. While the BJP, in its immediate reaction, has hailed the visit for its understanding of the Indian position, the CPI(M) has been caustic in its references.

The CPI(M), which along with the other Left parties boycotted Mr Clinton's address to Parliament and organised protests wherever the US president went, criticised the BJP-led Government for "over-reacting to Mr Clinton's reported tough talk in Islamabad".

In contrast, BJP president Kushabhau Thakre said in Chennai that the traditionally pro-Pakistan US has now begun to show a better understanding of the Indian position.

Clinton visit helped India, says Thakre

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

CHENNAI, March 26. — The US President has helped the world and his country to understand India and its problems, Mr Khushabhau Thakre said today.

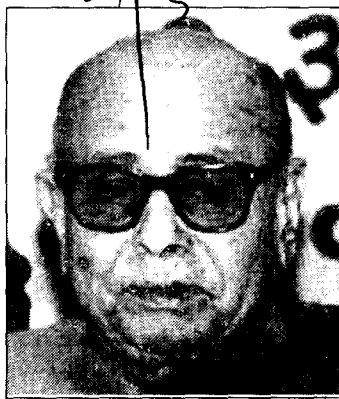
"Two great democracies understand each other better now. With the world understanding our country better we can grow stronger," he said, describing Mr Bill Clinton's visit here as "fruitful".

The BJP president, who is participating in the state office-bearers meeting, ruled out any third party mediation in the Kashmir issue and said: "Mr Clinton is aware of this and has told Pakistan the problem would have to be solved by the two countries. As for the CTBT issue, India should concern itself with its own security concern first. The USA can't thrust anything on us unilaterally."

In fact, "there was no question of India signing the CTBT in its present form," he asserted, UNI adds.

Unless India's security concerns were adequately addressed, there was no question of the country signing the treaty. Even the US Senate had rejected the CTBT, he said. And anyway India had to concentrate on the urgent problems of insurgency and law and order now.

'No Central rule in J&K': Mr Khushabhau Thakre ruled out imposing President's Rule in



Mr Khushabhau Thakre

Jammu and Kashmir, saying invoking Article 356 to tackle insurgency would not serve any purpose.

Since the problem had to be tackled with people's support, an elected government always offered the best option. "You have to take the people into confidence." The Khalistani movement was tackled only with active support of the people because they realised the movement was hampering Punjab's development, he pointed out adding that a similar situation was emerging in Jammu and Kashmir.

Asked whether the government would arm the minorities to resist terrorists, he said village defence teams were already being trained and armed. This would be strengthened further.

RSS chief: On the election of

Mr KS Sudershan as RSS chief, Mr Thakre said the organisation had its own views. Changes in the RSS top brass won't affect policy initiatives of the BJP-led government, he said.

On Tamil Nadu chief minister, Mr M Karunanidhi and other NDA leaders in the state criticising the Prime Minister for his speech in Hindi during Mr Clinton's address to the joint-session of Parliament, he said: "I can understand the situation as they have to consider the (anti-Hindi) constituency in Tamil Nadu."

Speaking on the Bihar situation, Mr Thakre recalled Mrs Sonia Gandhi as having said that Mrs Rabri Devi had no moral right to rule the state.

Today all the 22 Congress MLAs were members in the 82-member jumbo Cabinet of the Bihar chief minister. On an RJD MLA being sworn in without a warrant of appointment, Mr Thakre quipped: "Anything is possible in Bihar." There was no possibility of Mrs Rabri Devi offering a stable government. The Centre would, however, not impose President's Rule there, he said.

On the skirmishes between the NDA constituents, the Pattali Makkal Katchi and the Tamizhaga Rajiv Congress in Tamil Nadu, Mr Thakre just said: "You know the situation better."

THE STATESMAN

27 MAR 2000

BJP, RSS strike discordant notes on Clinton visit

The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: The BJP is pleased as punch that U.S. President Bill Clinton has delivered Pakistan a televised tweak in the ear over issues of transborder terrorism and democracy. But there obviously is a dissonance within the Sangh Parivar over what has officially been hailed as Mr Clinton's "historic and successful" visit to India.

On Monday, even as senior BJP vice-president Jana KrishnaMurthy was gushing over Mr Clinton's trip "opening a new era" in Indo-U.S. relations at a party briefing, as well as Mr Clinton's public endorsement of India's stand on key issues, RSS chief K. Sudershan, at a felicitation in Kanpur, was calling on his cadres to "combat the invasion of the Western economic pattern with swadeshi".

"Spread the swadeshi concept to give a new vision to development. This will check the entry of multinationals into the country," Mr Sudershan exhorted the cadres. He said he resented an "exploitative economic system.. being imposed on us and the market..being intruded into by the developed countries".

Mr Sudershan's reiteration of the RSS view on the economic reforms being pursued by the Vajpayee government came embarrassingly soon after Mr Clinton's much-hyped India visit, and coincided, ironically, with the BJP's self-congratulatory pat on the back.

"The Doubting Thomases have been proved wrong," Mr KrishnaMurthy said, referring to those who had feared that Mr Clinton would bring pressure to bear on India on the CTBT and nuclear issues, or force India to

accede to third-party mediation on Kashmir, and that the Vajpayee government would simply cave in. That did not happen, Mr KrishnaMurthy said. He emphasised that on the contrary, the Prime Minister "not only made Mr Clinton understand, but also appreciate our point of view" on these crucial issues.

Mr Clinton's public utterances in India and the "vision statement" had reflected that "we succeeded in convincing him", Mr KrishnaMurthy said. Indeed, the BJP leader emphasised that Mr Clinton's 'Four Rs' constituted the government's "basic stand". Mr KrishnaMurthy conceded that not all Indo-U.S. problems had been solved, but said a way for continuous dialogue had been opened. Besides, Mr Clinton had "understood our security needs and perceptions".

Asked about Mr Sudershan's blunt opposition to the opening of Indian markets to foreign goods and capital—which Mr Clinton welcomed together with India's democracy—Mr KrishnaMurthy declined to comment. "Mr Sudershan also has congratulated (us) on Mr Clinton's successful visit," he said.

"The RSS has its own views and it has the right to express them. (But) the BJP will take its own decisions," BJP president Kushabhau Thakre said in Chennai on Sunday, perhaps with a touch of prescience. Echoing the government perception, Mr Thakre welcomed Mr Clinton's visit and his blunt warning to Pakistan. The visit had "helped the U.S. to realise that India stands for democratic values and peace", Mr Thakre said, and hoped that it would help in improving bilateral ties.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

28 MAR 2000

INDERFURTH BRIEFS DELHI ON PAK. TALKS

Clinton delivered a tougher message

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, MARCH 27. As part of the new transparency in its relations with India, the United States has briefed the Government on the talks the American President, Mr. Bill Clinton, held with the Pakistani Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf.

The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, Mr. Karl Inderfurth, returned to New Delhi after Mr. Clinton delivered his tough message to Pakistan during his brief stopover there Saturday. On Sunday, Mr. Inderfurth called on Mr. Brajesh Mishra, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, to recapitulate the comeuppance that Mr. Clinton delivered to Gen. Musharraf.

Mr. Inderfurth had a more extensive session with the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Lalit Mansingh, and senior officials in the Ministry of External Affairs. It is understood here that Mr. Clinton was much harder in the official talks than he was in the address to the people of Pakistan.

While India is pleased with the unambiguous and consistent message that was conveyed by Mr. Clinton to Gen. Musharraf, there is no great expectation that Pakistan will quickly fall in line and end its cross-border terrorism.

In response to the U.S. demands to end violence, Gen. Musharraf has apparently insisted that the steps towards that goal be "reciprocal". But the U.S. is believed to have told Gen. Musharraf that after the Kargil aggression, it is up to Pakistan to make the first move in restoring trust between Islamabad and New Delhi.

The assessment of both the Government and the Clinton administration is that it will be a while before the Pakistani establishment begins to digest the bitter medicine administered by Mr. Clinton.

Neither side expects any formal announcements

from Islamabad that it is ready to abjure its use of force across the Line of Control. But if Gen. Musharraf does indeed move seriously in that direction, New Delhi and Washington would want to assess the hard evidence on the ground. India and the U.S. are likely to discuss further steps only after coming to a judgment in the coming weeks on the course Islamabad has chosen to adopt.

Meanwhile, India and the U.S. have agreed to negotiate a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT), that will facilitate bilateral cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of crimes, including terrorism. Announcing the decision, an External Affairs Ministry spokesperson said the treaty, which is likely to be concluded this year, will buttress the Indo-U.S. Extradition Treaty that came into force in July 1999.

Indo-U.S. cooperation in the battle against terrorism and other crimes will also be enhanced by the recent Indian decision to allow the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation to open an office in the U.S. Embassy here. Indian investigating agencies have had their offices in the U.S. for many years.

'Not third party mediation'

PTI reports: Mr. Brajesh Mishra tonight said India asking Mr. Clinton to prod Pakistan to stop cross-border terrorism did not amount to third-party mediation. "It does not amount to mediation and there is no question of mediation," Mr. Mishra told *Aaj Tak* when asked to comment on the Prime Minister asking Mr. Clinton to tell Pakistan to stop terrorism.

"When foreign dignitaries come and tell us to exercise restraint and resume dialogue with Pakistan, we tell them why should you tell us to do that. We had exercised restraint in Kargil... You should go and tell them (Pakistan) to show restraint."

THE HINDU

28 MAR 2000

India has convinced U.S. on major issues: BJP

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 27. The BJP has said that the visit of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, has opened a new chapter in Indo- U.S. relations and that the Vajpayee Government deserves kudos for making him appreciate India's concerns.

At a news conference here, the party vice-president, Mr. Jana Krishnamurthy, said today that during the short trip, India had succeeded in convincing Mr. Clinton on all major issues of concern to New Delhi.

He claimed the U.S. President had endorsed the Indian position that there could be no dialogue with Pakistan unless there was cessation of hostilities from across the border. The senior BJP leader, who had come with a copy of Mr. Clinton's address to the Pakistani people, repeatedly said India had every reason to be happy with the speech.

Mr. Clinton had been convinced on the need for India and the U.S. to come closer and work for mutual betterment. "There is vast scope for India and U.S. to work together".

Mr. Krishnamurthy said the visit had helped remove misunderstandings and misgivings here about the U.S. on several issues such as non-proliferation and third party mediation on Kashmir.

"There is appreciation from the U.S. that India needs minimum deterrent for its security needs. India has always maintained that it is for good neighbourly relations and is opposed to third party mediation on Kashmir. Mr. Clinton made it plain both in India and Pakistan that the U.S. has no intention to mediate on Kashmir," he said. Mr. Clinton's statement that the sanctity of the Line of Control must be maintained was a "big thing".

Now there would be continuous interaction between the U.S.

and India at various levels and both could look forward to improved and mutually beneficial relations, he said.

About the speech of the President, Mr. K.R. Narayanan, at the banquet he hosted in Mr. Clinton's honour, Mr. Krishnamurthy said "the President has not said anything to embarrass either the Government or Mr. Clinton or to invite any criticism".

On the reported move by the U.S. to set up a naval base in Bangladesh, Mr. Krishnamurthy said "I hope that the matter will be discussed between the Defence Ministries of India and the U.S., now that avenues for discussion have been opened."

'Sonia did not talk about n-deterrence'

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 27. The Congress(I) denied today that the party president, Ms. Sonia Gandhi, had told the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, that the party was in favour of India maintaining a minimum credible nuclear deterrent. "She did not use these words," the AICC(I) spokesman, Mr. Ajit Jogi, said. "What she said was that with regard to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), a national consensus had not yet emerged — similar to the situation in the U.S."

He did not comment when asked why the party's media department chairman, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, had quoted Ms. Gandhi as having informed Mr. Clinton that the Congress(I) believed the country should have a minimum credible nuclear deterrent. Outlining the party's position on the nuclear issue, Mr. Jogi said it was felt that the Government should take political parties into confidence so that a national consensus could be evolved on the CTBT. The Congress(I) position, according to Mr. Jogi, was that India's long-term security interests were very important and no final view had yet been taken on the nuclear issue. He pointed out today that even the scientific community was divided over the matter. He referred to the statement of a former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission that the number of nuclear tests conducted so far were not enough. But other scientists thought otherwise.

Ms. Gandhi was said to have told Mr. Clinton that there must be a linkage between the CTBT and the 1988 Rajiv Gandhi action plan which called for total global nuclear disarmament in a phased, time-bound manner.

Meanwhile, in a letter, Ms. Gandhi has asked the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, to immediately take steps to introduce necessary amendments in the Constitution to ensure reservation in promotions for SCs and STs, and undo the dilution of the reservation policy arising out of five Office Memoranda (OMs) issued in 1997.

The 88th Constitutional Amendment Bill introduced by the Government last year was not satisfactory as it did not undo the "grave injustice" done by the five OMs, Ms. Gandhi stated.

Kidwai, Jogi to meet Yadav today

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, MARCH 27. Mrs. Mohsina Kidwai, AICC(I) general secretary in-charge of Bihar and Mr. Ajit Jogi are scheduled to go to Patna tomorrow to hold discussions with the Rashtriya Janata Dal chief, Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav. They will be holding talks on portfolio distribution in the Congress (I)-RJD coalition Government.

BSP reiterates stand on joining Rabri Govt.

By Our Staff Correspondent

PATNA, MARCH 27. The Bahujan Samaj Party today reiterated its decision not to join the Rabri Devi ministry, but continue its outside support. Even the efforts of the RJD chief, Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav, failed to work on the BSP chief, Mr. Kanshi Ram, who consulted his party MLAs and workers. Mr. Kanshi Ram sought to lay emphasis on increasing the party's base in Bihar rather than share power.

THE HINDU

28 MAR 2000

Clinton buys Atal's China talk

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, March 27: Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's letter to Bill Clinton in May 1998 citing China as the main reason for India's nuclear weapons programme helped stave off US pressure on India on the nuclear issue during the President's visit last week.

Indeed, it was this controversial letter which persuaded Clinton to take the public stand in New Delhi that India, and India alone, could determine its security needs.

What is more, it resulted in an agreement between Vajpayee and Clinton that their governments will engage in a continuous dialogue on Asian security as part of the foreign office talks to be held regularly between the Indian foreign secretary and the US under-

secretary of state for political affairs.

Of course, neither India nor the US referred in public at any time during Clinton's visit to Vajpayee's controversial letter, which put back Sino-Indian relations considerably soon after Pokhran-II. But in Clinton's interview in New Delhi to Peter Jennings of ABC World News, which is rapidly becoming the bible for any analyst on the President's trip to South Asia, he candidly referred to the China factor in India's nuclear programme.

Asked about the rationale for India's atom bomb, Clinton had this to say: "I respect what the Indians say. They say, look, it's not just Pakistan — China has nuclear weapons. You know, it wasn't so many decades ago we had a border war with China: we have our problems there."

Of course he prefaced this with the general line of the US administration that "all nations would be more secure if we reduce the overall nuclear threat and reduce the number of people that had access to nuclear weapons."

According to diplomatic sources here, while Clinton accepted in toto the Indian argument about a Chinese threat to its security as reflected in Vajpayee's letter nearly two years ago, he did not concede that Pakistan was a credible enough threat for India to have the bomb.

On the contrary, he turned around India's argument about China to make out a case rationalising Islamabad's decision to test as a defence against India. He told this to Jennings as well.

"I think — they (Pakistanis) probably think they have a better argument, since they know they

couldn't win a conventional war with India, because India is so much bigger. And because Lahore, for example, one of the most important places, is close to the Indian border," Clinton said.

The China factor also found its way into the "Vision Statement" adopted by Vajpayee and Clinton in New Delhi, although it is couched in diplomatese. It said: "The two leaders believe that close cooperation between the two countries is a factor of stability in the politically and culturally diverse and rapidly transforming Asia".

Sources said Clinton was convinced about the Indian arguments on China even before he met Vajpayee. Part of the reason for this was the tremendous pressure brought to bear on the Clinton administration by Beijing just before the President's South Asia trip to be tough with India.

After the euphoria

RESIDENT CLINTON departed from the Indian subcontinent four days ago. The immediate as well as long-term ramifications of this political initiative on India-US relations and regional political equations is being subjected to instantaneous analyses and assessment. This is an unrealistic approach because the impact of the visit should be assessed on the basis of concrete policy decisions which will flow during the remaining part of Clinton's tenure in office, and the manner in which India-US relations would develop after his successor takes over in January 2001. What, however, can be examined are the motivations of the visit and the directional terms of reference for India-US relations which emerged from the Clinton-Vajpayee discussions.

The interests and objectives of the US in relation to India, as discernible from public pronouncements and the high-level discussions held in India are the following: The US wishes to ensure that Indo-Pak tensions on Kashmir and other related issues do not degenerate into a nuclear confrontation. The US is equally interested in preventing the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Asian region which would disturb the military and strategic equilibrium which had come into being after the end of the Cold War.

It is the assessment of the US that expanding economic and technological relations (selectively) with India, which is the second largest economy in Asia and which is also one of the 10 fastest growing economies in the world, would be for benefit to the US and if there is a positive Indian response, it could serve India's developmental interests. The US considers a meaningful engagement with India will strengthen trends of democracy and good governance, consequently generating long-term stability and peace in the Asian region, inductively contributing to international peace and stability.

The criticism voiced against the visit have been on the following grounds: that Mr Clinton did not directly criticise Pakistani subversion against India; that he did not show any inclination to compromise on the non-proliferation issues; that he did not announce any decision to lift any of the substantive sanctions imposed on India after the Pokhran-II nuclear tests; that underlining the US agenda for expansion of economic relations with India is to get a dominating foothold in Indian economy.

Indeed, it would be unrealistic for India to stipulate that a friendly and practical relationship — with the US or any other country — should be subjected to stipulation of the US completely agreeing to Indian views on all issues. It would be equally unrealistic to demand that the US modify its global strategic disarmament and arms control agenda in specific positive response to Indian nuclear policies. It is also unreasonable to expect that the US will or should take a partisan stand in favour of India against Pakistan.

Neither fundamental patterns of inter-State relations, nor considerations of realpolitik, would endorse such a partisan stance by the US.

It would be a case of excessive paranoia to feel that the US or any other country can get a dominating foothold in a large and vibrant economy like that of India. With its natural resources and skilled manpower and most importantly, its sovereignty backed by the democratic processes, should serve as the bulwark in safeguarding India's economic self-interest.

The documents adopted during the visit and Mr Clinton's public pronouncements is the basis on which one assesses the results of the visit. An assessment has also to take into account the public pronouncements of Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee and Mr Clinton on the broad category of security issues. Mr Clinton acknowledged India's security concerns stating that it is for India alone to decide whether nuclear and missile weaponisation enhances India's security. There is the implied admonition that India's nuclear weaponisation does not enhance India's security in the judgement of the US and therefore it remains firm on its

advocacy to sign the CTBT and so on. Mr Clinton however added that he was optimistic about India and the US overcoming their basic differences on these issues and finding a common ground.

Mr Vajpayee on his part stood firm on the rationale of India's acquiring nuclear weapons and missiles to endow India with a minimum credible deterrent. He told Mr Clinton clearly that India participating in the CTBT or the US' non-proliferation agenda will be in accordance with India's assessment of its own interests, and which has to be based on consensus of Indian public opinion. Mr Vajpayee repeated the basic ingredients of India's nuclear doctrine to emphasise that India shall behave as a mature nuclear weapons entity. The four suggestions for stabilising Indo-Pak relations made by Mr Clinton, viz. restraint, rejection of violence, respect for the Line of Control and the resumption of a dialogue, are logical in objective terms. India should not have any problems about these suggestions despite being subjected to extreme provocations by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir.

The point to note is that the differences of opinion between India and the US on the issues detailed above have been accepted by both sides as existential realities which should not come in the way of a long-term broad-based consolidation and expansion of Indo-US relations. The bilateral agreements and memoranda signed on cooperation in the fields of energy, technology and environment, in addition to the "Vision Statement" and the memoranda signed on institutionalising bilateral contacts, affirm this approach.

The generally positive orientations determined by

the Clinton-Vajpayee talks and discussions between members of the Indian and US cabinet, should, however, be tempered by some matter of fact questions. While the positive potentialities of bilateral trade were emphasised, there was a specific segment in Mr Clinton's address to the Indian Parliament where he said that economic relations, if not underpinned by social and human rights considerations, cannot really be beneficial to the international community. Is this a veiled advance message that the US might impose non-tariff barriers against Indian exports on the basis of social and labour clauses?

There are indications of such barriers being imposed later this year, which can affect Indian exports to the value of one to 1.5 billion dollars to the US. Whether the imposition of these restrictions is based on protectionist considerations or genuine considerations of social justice and human rights, is a moot point. If this happens, the Declaratory Intent of expanding commercial relations will be negatively affected.

Similarly, a genuine expansion of technological cooperation cannot happen unless the US removes the sanctions on sophisticated and dual use technologies whatever political rationale may be given about the sanctions. If expansion of technological cooperation is selective, focusing only on certain segments of information technology, the resulting situation would not be mutually beneficial to India and the US. The balance perhaps would be in favour of the US.

Macro-level Indo-US economic cooperation will primarily be driven by the impulses of free market arrangements. And this for the time being will be subject to the competitive approach of the US business community and compulsions of distributing justice which should inevitably govern the pace of our economic liberalisation and reforms. It is in dealing with these contradictions that the institutional mechanisms of bilateral dialogue would play an important role.

As usual, sections of the media have succumbed to the euphoria about instant and positive prospects of Indo-US relations. The visit has resulted in fashioning positive directional terms of reference in structuring Indo-US relations. Now the challenge ahead is to build on the foundations laid by Mr Clinton's visit.



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Clinton savours Chelsea's popularity in India

By Ramesh Chandran
The Times of India News Service

WASHINGTON: Would U.S. President Bill Clinton prefer to have spent more time in Nayla village, spotting the Bengal Tiger or among cyber tycoons in Mumbai? On his return to Washington, Mr Clinton has been promptly seized with legal tangles. Amid a surging groundswell of legal problems over violation of Privacy Act and computer disks involving two women — Kathleen Willey and Monica Lewinsky — Mr Clinton, in his second major press conference, clearly expressed his delight at the level of attention his daughter Chelsea attracted in India.

Mr Clinton was responding to a question about a possible higher profile for his daughter, while his wife Hillary was involved in a frenzied Senate campaign in New York against Rudolph Giuliani. He said, "I think she is like Hillary and me. All three of us want to savour the weeks and months ahead, in this our last year. I think she was kind of taken aback by the attention she got in India, in particular."

In a hour-long press conference

that encompassed a wide range of international and domestic issues ranging from the election of Russia's new leader Putin, his praise for China's Jiang Zemin as a "visionary" and China's trade status, OPEC oil to a clutch of domestic issues to the Oscar-winning film *American Beauty* to the polite marital disagreement between Britain's Blairs, Mr Clinton seemingly conscious of the clock ticking on his presidency held forth.

However, while fielding 22 questions from mostly American correspondents, the issue of the "Most dangerous region the world" — the Line of Control (LoC) and Kashmir — did not figure. Mr Clinton did not regret his praise of Jiang Zemin

is to bring China into the WTO this year.

He did not envision a deployment of U.S. troops or monitors on the Golan Heights to secure an Israeli-Syrian peace accord and termed the decision to increase oil production by OPEC as a positive step. He expected to work closely with President-elect Putin, though like Russia under the stewardship of his predecessor Boris Yeltsin, Moscow and Washington may continue to have differences on some issues.

Mr Clinton also spoke at length over a raft of domestic issues — campaign finance reform, gun control, Al Gore's \$7 billion "democracy endowment" plan to fund House and Senate campaigns, to his own personal problems with an old case involving his nemesis — former White House intern Monica Lewinsky.

He opted not to comment at length on the controversial "computer disks" with Ms Lewinsky's e-mails which the White House didn't allegedly turn-over, by simply saying his counsel would work closely with the Congress.

He described the trade agreement reached in November after tortuous negotiations between Beijing and Washington as a "hundred to nothing deal" for the U.S. since the latter lowers no tariffs and opens no markets while China does both. His avowed goal

President Bill Clinton with daughter Chelsea.

