

A catalytic year for Indo-U.S. ties

By Aziz Haniffa

WASHINGTON: The year 2000 was undeniably a catalytic year of unprecedented proportions for U.S.-India relations that ironed out many of the wrinkles that had plagued bilateral ties for years.

The amazing turnaround in relations bordered on the miraculous considering the comatose condition of their ties less than two years ago when the U.S. was so chagrined by India's Pokhran nuclear tests that a planned strategic dialogue was put into a deep freeze and the massive punitive sanctions imposed against New Delhi made prospects of an early thaw remote.

There is no doubt that what catapulted the relationship to levels never seen before and ironed out the persistent wrinkles were the cathartic heavy-duty starch provided by the highly successful visit to India in March by President Bill Clinton and the return visit here in September by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.

Not that the relationship was now free of all the cobwebs, many of them part of the residual hangover from the Cold War days, but an environment had been created and momentum set to keep bilateral ties smooth to the extent possible. In interviews with IANS, senior Clinton administration officials, leading lawmakers, South Asia watchers and Indian Ambassador Naresh Chandra were unanimous that 2000 was most certainly a "defining moment" in the history of the relations between the two countries.

No one could disagree with the phrase Mr Vajpayee had used during his visit here and Mr Clinton's remarks when he received the Prime Minister at the Oval Office that he believed he was leaving Indo-U.S. relations "in the best possible shape for my successor, so that he can pick up the ball and run with it."

Former American diplomat Dennis Kux, author of *India and the United States: Estranged Democracies*, said the year that had gone by had propelled the two nations to the exalted level of "engaged democracies" and they were no longer estranged democracies.

Mr Kux said the relations had now "become a two-way street" which even exceeded the ties during the Kennedy administration, that some had described as the golden era in U.S.-India relations unlikely to be replicated.

Karl Inderfurth, assistant secretary of state for South Asian Affairs, said the die has been cast during the year for future Indo-U.S. ties and the only way for it to go was up.

"It is fair to say in the year 2000, the U.S. and India successfully re-introduced each other," he said. "After years of not really understanding each other, or taking into account the views of each other nation, this year we have found ourselves converging on a number of important issues in ways that we have never done in the past."

Robert Hathaway, director of the Asia Program at the Woodrow Wilson

International Center for Scholars, said that many years from now, historians looking back at the year 2000 with the high-level visits that took place, would view it as the period that "solidified the momentum behind this relationship," and was now "clearly poised to carry on independent of the hold on power of any particular president or prime minister."

Other noted specialists such as Stephen Cohen, senior fellow at Brookings Institution, who heads its South Asia Program, and Richard Haass, vice president and director, foreign policy studies, at Brookings, also said the year 2000 could certainly be designated as the year when U.S.-India relations were "institutionalised."

Rep. Benjamin Gilman, New York Republican, who chairs the powerful House International Relations Committee, said: "We can look back over the past 12 months with a profound sense of accomplishment by pointing to a new chapter in our relationship."

Mr Gilman's sentiments were echoed by Rep. Jim McDermott of Washington state, the newly elected Democratic co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans, who said that "getting the president after the Cold War to finally go over there and re-open the door for reciprocal relations" is what 2000 will be remembered for.

Indian Ambassador Chandra said that the year 2000 was "a great time. Definitely a catalytic year. Two visits in one year. Quite exceptional!" (IANS)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

25 DEC 2000

India should be recognised as a strategic ally for US: Powell

Aziz Haniffa

WASHINGTON 17 DECEMBER

THE US secretary of state-designate Colin Powell strongly believes that his country should recognise India as a major regional power and strategic ally.

"I think India is a land with enormous potential," Powell had said in an interview with IANS two years ago, adding that it was imperative that Washington embraced New Delhi as a regional power and a strategic ally.

Powell (63), a former chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff but who is still considered popular enough to be President, said even though he had spent only a few days in India in 1997, he "was totally impressed with the vitality of the country."

"I think from the US perspective, now that the Cold War is over, we should increasingly see India as a regional partner and a major power in that part of the world," Powell said.

The confirmation of Powell, the son of immigrant Jamaican parents and the architect of the 1991 Gulf War victory against Iraq, as the next US secretary of



President elect George Bush introduces Retd General Colin Powell as his nominee for the post of secretary of state during a ceremony in Crawford, Texas, on Saturday. — AP

state is expected to sail through. Some senators, particularly Republican lawmakers, who believe Powell will give the George W. Bush administration much credibility on foreign affairs, say his nomination should be approved by acclamation.

If he is confirmed, Powell will become the first African American in US history to be the nation's top diplomat.

Also, as expected, if Condoleezza Rice is appointed as the country's next national security adviser, there will be two African Americans serving in a Republican Cabinet, an unprecedented event in US history.

Bush's decision to nominate Powell is also a tangible manifestation of the importance he attaches to giving this American icon exclusive top billing, while being mindful of the mileage he can derive from this first Cabinet appointment.

It is no secret that even at the last minute, before he named former defence secretary Richard Cheney, now the vice president-elect, to be his running mate, Bush had implored Powell to take that slot. — IANS

The Economic Times

18 DEC 2000

Indo-US ties will get better: Chandra

By AZIZ HANIFFA

9606 17/12

Washington, Dec. 16: India's ambassador to the US, Naresh Chandra, is supremely confident that relations between New Delhi and Washington will retain momentum and continuity under the administration of new American President-elect George W. Bush.

"I think the momentum we generated in 2000, the new administration will certainly keep it going. I don't think they will allow it to retard in any way," Mr Chandra said on Thursday, apparently referring to the positives coming out of outgoing US President Bill Clinton's visit to India in March and Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's reciprocal visit to Washington D.C. in September. Mr Chandra, who forwarded congratulatory messages to Mr Bush from Indian President K.R. Narayanan, Mr Vajpayee and his own "personal felicitations and every good wish for a glorious tenure in office", noted that besides himself, India's external affairs minister Jaswant Singh and national security adviser Brajesh Mishra had all met key members of Bush's foreign policy team, known as the "Vulcans."

"We have met most of the people who would be coming in and he is getting together a very good team. From their speeches and writings, the key officials, whatever they have written, have underscored the importance of South Asia, and assigned India a proper role, both in terms of a regional player as well as a very useful partner in a bilateral context," Mr Chandra said.

"So I think they will give full attention and push things as before. I am sure it will be very challenging to work with them the next four years," he added. (IANS)

INDIAN EXPRESS

17 DEC 2000

India hopes U.S. will lift sanctions soon

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, DEC. 15. With the U.S. president-elect, Mr. George W. Bush, getting ready to take charge of American foreign policy next month, the question of India joining signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty may no longer dominate Indo-U.S. relations, diplomatic observers here suggest.

As the CTBT begins to lose some of its recent weight in American arms control priorities as well as the extraordinary salience in Indo-U.S. relations, there is some hope here that the prospective Bush administration will move quickly to lift all the sanctions that were imposed by the U.S. after India's nuclear tests in May 1998.

The proclaimed opposition of Mr. Bush and the Republican party to the CTBT, and its preoccupation with the question of building a controversial defence system against missiles are likely to make the treaty a "tertiary issue" for the new administration, the sources add.

The American focus under Mr. Bush is expected to be on acceleration of the programmes to build national and theatre missile defence systems. This would involve a renegotiation of the arms control equations between U.S. and the Russian federation as well as the management of nuclear tensions between Washington and Beijing.

The CTBT was at the top of the President, M. Bill Clinton's arm

control agenda and dogged Indo-U.S. ties throughout the 1990s. Since India's nuclear tests, Mr. Clinton has made India's signature on the treaty a key benchmark for the improvement of bilateral relations.

The Clinton administration has insisted that Indo-U.S. relations will not realise their "full potential" until India meets the non-proliferation criteria, in particular, the CTBT.

While opposing the CTBT, the Bush team hopes India will continue with its unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing. In many of its recent statements, the Indian Government has affirmed its commitment to the moratorium and indicated that it was not time-bound.

Although Mr. Clinton has removed or relaxed some of the sanctions imposed on India, many relating to lending by international financial institutions, military cooperation and high-technology transfers remain.

The U.S. Congress had given Mr. Clinton the authority to remove the sanctions at his political discretion. But the administration had sought to use sanctions law to leverage India's signature on the CTBT.

An early decision by the Bush team on lifting the sanctions should wipe the slate clean and create the right atmosphere to boost Indo-U.S. relations. Mr. Bush has promised a more substantive engagement between the two countries and deal with India as an emerging power.

THE HINDU

15 DEC 2000

The Bush Presidency & India

By Anupam Srivastava & Seema Gahlaut

149-12 167-12
ON JANUARY 20, 2001, Mr. George W. Bush will assume office as President of the United States of America. But it will be a while before the afterglow of victory will be able to erase the bittersweet memory of the political and constitutional wrangling that followed the November 7 elections. Further, the razor-thin majority of the Republican Party in the U.S. House of Representatives will necessitate building centrist coalitions across party lines to avoid gridlock in order to pass important legislations, both that seek to continue but particularly those that seek to recalibrate U.S. foreign and security policy.

Given these inescapable domestic electoral compulsions within the U.S. how much decisional latitude will the new Republican administration have for taking bold steps to reorient foreign policy goals and objectives? And of particular concern for India, how will this administration prioritise its goals, and where will India figure into the resultant U.S. calculus? While it is premature to speculate too far into the future for credible answers, there are some enduring and some new factors that permit a reasonably educated conjecture into the likely contours of U.S.-India relations under a Republican dispensation.

The most significant starting point would be to look at the tenuous but almost embryonic relationship between non-proliferation, arms control, and disarmament insofar as weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) are concerned. For India and much of the international security community, non-proliferation and arms control would appear to be credible pathways or a "journey" if the "destination" was comprehensive, time-bound and universal disarmament. For a variety of reasons, the Clinton-led Democratic administration had treated non-proliferation as the litmus test for calibrating U.S. relations with India. To be sure, India's nuclear tests, subsequent testing of the extended-range Agni IRBM, and the decision to develop and deploy a "credible minimum nuclear deterrent" almost necessitated a strong U.S. response. The reasons included sending a clear signal to the domestic and the international community that the U.S. would not sit idly by and acquiesce or in-

U.S.-India relations are poised to traverse an upward trajectory regardless of what political affiliations and ideologies dominate the U.S. Presidency.

deed reward Indian actions and ambitions. However, the eventual ambit of the Talbott-Singh bilateral dialogue did embrace a much wider canvas of bilateral relations, and the reciprocal visits of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, augmented this process of deepening and widening the so-called "dialogue of the world's largest democracies."

A Republican administration has traditionally tended to accord to arms control at least as much importance as non-proliferation, while serious consideration of disarmament remains firmly outside the scope of discussion for both parties. Thus, where appropriate, pursuit of non-proliferation goals has been tempered or subordinated where such action would be consistent with pursuing larger U.S. national security and foreign policy goals. This was especially true during the Cold War, when the Republican administrations permitted or tolerated "selective proliferation", particularly of advanced conventional arms, if such transfers would bolster key U.S. allies or restore and maintain a credible balance of power in potentially volatile regions.

The above realpolitik reasoning animates Republican thinking on the CTBT and the NMD. Thus, notwithstanding the on-going research on non-explosive triggers for nuclear weapons at the U.S. National Ignition Facility, the Republicans remain unconvinced that they should submit to a CTBT unto perpetuity, nor are they convinced that the CTBT in its current form is verifiable and comprehensively enforceable. Similarly, they believe that a limited National Missile Defence should be fielded as soon as technologically viable, to defend against unauthorised or accidental launches from the nuclear-possessor states, as well as from "rogue states" that are now euphemistically designated "states of concern". This is considered prudent and appropriate even if it means an amendment to the 1972

ABM Treaty, with or without the explicit consent of the Russian Federation.

The central implication of the above discussion on U.S.-India relations is two-fold. One, the temperature on the non-proliferation dialogue from Washington to New Delhi is likely to be turned down if the latter is able to present a credible case for India to be elevated into a more central position on the strategic radar of Washington. This will require skilful diplomacy and grit, but an important opportunity presents itself to our policy makers. And two, intrinsically related to the first point, is that India needs to make a technical, not political, assessment of threats to its national security and clearly enunciate the steps that it intends to take to meet those threats in the near to intermediate term. This does not imply reneging on sovereignty or giving away state secrets. It simply implies that as India aspires to play an important role on the Asian and global stage, different rules for engagement and transparency and accountability apply. In other words, the same pragmatic assessment of costs and benefits that now animate the successful economic programme must increasingly animate our security policy and discourse. It implies enunciating the "irreducible" components of national security more clearly, but also searching for a *modus vivendi* to "manage" the difference between India and multilateral security regimes.

A final and equally significant factor in U.S.-India relations during a Bush administration relates to China. Both the Democrats and the Republicans agree that it is important to engage China and make it an increasingly important stakeholder in the stability of the international system. But where they diverge is the manner and extent of engagement, and more importantly, the pre-emptive steps to take should the "benign China" outcome fail to materialise.

It is precisely in this context that a Bush administration is likely to engage India on

the avenues for improving U.S.-India ties. One must be clear that this does not imply a "containment" strategy against China, not a military partnership or alliance, nor indeed would such a thing be good for Indian security interests in the long run. It simply means that as the U.S. improves its bilateral ties with Russia, Japan, South Korea and India, such a bolstering would eventually serve to circumscribe the latitude and propensity for unilateral policy activism by China in Asia. Greater naval coordination regarding maritime security in the Indian Ocean, joint peacekeeping operations, securing maritime trade and oil routes from the Persian Gulf past the South China Sea toward Japan, maritime interdiction force against drug-trafficking in the region etc., are possible avenues for U.S.-India engagement.

The above areas are by no means an exhaustive list of U.S.-India engagement in the security arena, but merely represent some distinctions with the previous administration. Other areas could include intensified dialogue and intelligence sharing and coordination on counter-terrorism and drug trafficking, export controls including on intangibles or so-called "knowledge exports", and eventual revisiting of military-technological cooperation within the auspices of the Defence Policy Group and Joint Technology Group. But it is far too premature to discuss them meaningfully at this stage.

In sum, U.S.-India relations are poised to traverse an upward trajectory regardless of what political affiliations and ideologies dominate the U.S. Presidency and the nominated executive assignments. But the bandwidth and amplitude of vibration of U.S.-India dialogue should, and can, be calibrated to make it a more gentle cycle — with more harmony than static. And with greater acumen in portraying itself as a nation not just desirous of but also able to play at the international high table, India can steer its relations with the world's most powerful state to one with significantly greater domain of bilateral convergence of interests and priorities.

(The writers are, respectively, Director and Associate Director of the South Asia Program, Center for International Trade and Security, University of Georgia.)-

THE HINDU

16 DEC 2001

PM congratulates Bush

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, DEC. 14. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today congratulated Mr. George W. Bush on his "election" as the 43rd President of the United States and hoped that relations between New Delhi and Washington would be further strengthened in the "new millennium".

In a letter to the U.S. president-elect, Mr. Vajpayee hoped that the two countries would work together for promoting "international peace and stability".

The Prime Minister pointed out that the "new warmth and vibrancy" in the relationship enjoyed popular support across the political spectrum in both countries. He recalled a telephone conversation during his visit to the U.S. earlier and appreciated the sentiments expressed then by Mr. Bush for building a close and strong partnership with India.

Sources here said the U.S. presidential elections presented a "win-win" situation for India as both political parties there had expressed keenness for closer ties with New Delhi. While the election of the Vice-President, Mr. Al Gore, would have manifested a continuity with the groundbreaking effort by Mr. Bill Clinton, the elevation of Mr. Bush offers its own advantages.

Mr. Bush's assumption to the highest office in the U.S. is likely

to present spin-off benefits to India in both the security and economic arenas. Unlike the Democrats, the Republican party headed by Mr. Bush is less enthusiastic about the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. India, under the new dispensation is therefore unlikely to be pressed for its signature and ratification of the CTBT with the same zeal as witnessed in the recent past.

The Republicans also appear to have adopted a tougher line on international terrorism. It would be not be surprising if the Indian side during its dialogue on counter-terrorism in the future seeks to nudge the new U.S. administration to look beyond the apprehension of the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden and broaden its concerns on the issue. In fact, the Heritage Foundation — a think-tank close to the Republicans — has been particularly severe on countering extremism, especially in Afghanistan. It has sought closer ties with the anti-Taliban alliance and proposed the transfer of U.S. military equipment to the Northern Alliance headed by Commander Ahmad Shah Massood.

The Bush administration is also expected to less obsessive about tying trade issues to environment and labour standards.

The President, Mr. K.R. Narayanan, congratulated Mr. George W.

Bush on his election as U.S. President and expressed confidence that relations between the two countries would acquire a new depth and vigour under his leadership.

We will seek to defuse Kashmir tensions: Bush

NEW DELHI, DEC. 14. The U.S. President-elect, Mr. George W. Bush, described India as a "proud democracy" and "commercial power" and said his administration would seek to defuse tension in Kashmir.

"We would pursue good relations in the subcontinent. We will work together to defuse the tensions in Kashmir," he told Doordarshan in an interview, recorded during the presidential election campaign and telecast today.

Asked whether India could expect the development of Indo-U.S. relations in the light of the vision statement signed by the American President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, Mr. Bush said, "India is a proud democracy. An amazing thing happening in the globalisation of the world is that India is now one of the commercial powers because of its ability to capture the hi-tech."
— PTI

THE HINDU

15 DEC 2000

Celeste to meet Advani over Kashmir

Anil Anand
New Delhi, December 7

9/12 HG-11

US AMBASSADOR to India Richard Celeste is slated to meet Home Minister L.K. Advani early next week to discuss the Kashmir issue. The proposed meeting has assumed significance as it will take place in the backdrop of New Delhi's refusal to hold tripartite talks involving Pakistan.

The Advani-Celeste meeting has an added significance as it is taking place at a time when modalities are being chalked out for a possi-

ble dialogue with the All-Party Hurriyat Conference and other Kashmir-based militant groups.

In a related development, the Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan, V. K. Nambiar today met Mr. Advani and is understood to have briefed him on the Pak approach to the Kashmir peace process initiated by New Delhi.

Talking to reporters after his 45-minute meeting with the Home Minister, Mr Nambiar said Pakistan's "maximum restraint" along the Line of Control was being monitored. Islamabad's

statement, he observed, has to be substantiated by positive developments on the ground.

Even as the APHC leadership has expressed its readiness to start a dialogue with the Centre, the Government on its part, is reportedly working on a more comprehensive approach entailing simultaneous talks with militant groups such as the Hizbul Mujahidden.

While admitting that the Hurriyat has a significant in any peace effort, sources justified the need to rope in the Hizb for a dialogue to resolve the tangle. The

9/12 HG-11

Kashmir-based top functionaries of the Hizb are in contact with Government and unofficial intermediaries, sources said.

While claiming that the peace process was moving in the "right direction", the sources maintained that reactions of Pakistan and the Hurriyat, to the Government's refusal to tripartite talks, were on expected lines. On whether the dialogue would be held with the Hurriyat and the Hizb at the same time or separately, they said modalities for the proposed dialogue were in the process of being finalised.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

8 DEC 2000

Growing Indo-U.S. ties reflect new American policy

By K. Subrahmanyam

NEW DELHI: U.S. assistant secretary of state Karl Inderfurth has attempted to clarify that Washington's expanding ties with Delhi did not mean a "tilt" towards India and away from other countries of South Asia. He says the new American policy is a tilt towards the entire South Asian region. This clarification is welcome, though in India the new American policy has correctly been interpreted as "untilting," the Cold War tilt towards Pakistan. Though Mr Inderfurth argues that there has been no "tilt" in their Asia policy since the end of the Cold War, India is not likely to forget his predecessor Robin Raphel's term as one of an uninhibited tilt towards Islamabad.

Mr Inderfurth's clarification may be aimed at a number of countries. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, had just completed her visit to Washington. U.S. companies are keen on exploiting the potentially rich gas reserves of Bangladesh and there is a ready market for it in India. However, both Sheikh Hasina and the Americans have to get over the resistance of the opposition parties in Bangladesh to the sale of natural gas to India.

In Pakistan, the U.S. would prefer to have General Musharraf instead of any of his more "mullah-ist" corps commanders. Therefore, he has to reassure them that the U.S. has not totally abandoned Pakistan, especially after the setting up of joint working groups with India on terrorism and Afghanistan. Further, the recent reports of Osama Bin Laden being

linked up with the attack on USS Cole make it necessary to woo Gen. Musharraf away from Mr Bin Laden.

Lastly, a message is also sent to China and India's neighbours that the U.S. untilting its past pro-Pakistan and anti-India tilt does not mean that it would treat India as an ally as it did Pakistan and even China informally during the Cold War, when some described the latter as the eastern NATO. In other words, Mr Inderfurth is echoing what President K.R. Narayanan told President Clinton during the banquet speech in Delhi that non-alignment continues to be valid. One hopes this clarification should help to make the current international political realities clearer to Delhi.

CHANGING FOCUS

- Inderfurth allays fears of tilt towards India
- Tries to send the right signals to Pakistan, Bangladesh and China

Naxals likely to be the main problem for Chhattisgarh

By Sudhir K Singh
The Times of India News Service

RAIPUR: Tackling the Naxalite menace may be the biggest challenge for Chhattisgarh after its formal birth on November 1. Interestingly, the general impression is that the extremists have been "doing a good job" in this backward, tribal populated region.

Speaking to this newspaper, Surendra Panicker, a senior lecturer of anthropology at Ravi Shankar Shukla University, feels that the mortal fear of Naxals has made the bureaucracy more sensitive to tribal needs. "Their work has sensitised the officials who were otherwise inclined to ignore their demands," Mr Panicker said. He, however, feels that, though the Naxals have been highlighting the people's problems, they don't necessarily speak the same language. "There is too much of Marxist jargon in their speech which has not endeared them to the tribals to the extent it should have," he said. In fact, they would have gladly thrown their lot behind a more "humane" political formation if one such existed. "So to that extent even the Naxals are out of sync with the times," Mr Panicker said.

Goldie George of the Chhattisgarh Mazdoor Sangh agrees. He says, the state oppression alone helped the growth of Naxalite activity. So much so that many of the "dalam" commanders today are tribals.

Both Mr Panicker and George, who have lived and worked extensively among tribals, admit that integrating Bastar into Chhattisgarh would be a major hurdle in view of its markedly different history. The Naxalites, in fact, have called a bandh in the district on November 1.

Though Mr Panicker believes that the separatist streak is confined to south Bastar, especially Dantewada, which has a strong Telugu influence, George feels that Bastar's disposition toward statehood has, by and large, stood the test of time since the first people's rebellion in 1910. They also admit that any reference to Chhattisgarh as a "tribal state" is necessarily a misnomer since tribals comprise just 30-35 per cent of the population.

Double Indo-U.S. trade: Maran

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, OCT. 20. The Commerce and Industry Minister, Mr. Murali Maran, has said that India and the United States should target a trade of at least \$25 billion annually in the next five years — nearly double the current level of \$13 billion.

Addressing the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (IACC) on the future of Indo-American business relations here today, Mr. Maran urged the early restoration of Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) benefits on Indian exports to the U.S. on a wide range of products. He also underlined the need for a speedy resolution of the issue of anti-dumping levies on exports to boost business confidence.

Though the U.S. was India's largest trading partner with an expanding volume of trade, India accounted for only 0.7 per cent of U.S. imports. "While the business

on both the sides has to shift into higher gears for greater momentum, the Governments need to work on issues of market access and building of appropriate institutional framework," he said.

The two countries needed to work out concrete strategies to achieve a quantum leap in U.S. investments by assessing where the current investment process might be going awry. In this context, Mr. Maran disclosed that the FDI inflow- approval ratio was only 17.8 per cent for the U.S. despite the fact that it was the largest investor in India. "We want to make every American investment story a success story," he said.

During 1991-2000, approvals for U.S. investment were of the order of \$14.4 billion but the actual inflow was a meagre \$2.54 billion. An important development in the direction of achieving a quantum increase in the U.S. investment was the setting up of the Strategic Management Group in

Prime Minister's Office in India, on October 10, under the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister with the Cabinet Secretary, RBI Governor and Secretaries of important economic Ministries as members. This group would undertake inter-Ministerial coordination for speedier implementation of large projects and consultations to accelerate inward capital flows. Among other policy initiatives for stepping up investment flows were the issue of notifications for providing a hassle-free customs framework for the proposed Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and the decision to bring FDI in the insurance sector under the automatic route.

Referring to the Indo-U.S. Commercial Dialogue, Mr. Maran said it had made a good beginning. India would encourage participation of small and medium enterprises in the dialogue for ensuring more beneficial and enduring business relations.

THE HINDU

21 OCT 2000

Rangarajan for better data collection

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Oct. 26. — The National Statistical Commission chairman, Dr C Rangarajan, emphasised the need to improve the data collection and analysis by the Statistics Department.

His comments assumes significance in the wake of the recent controversy about the alleged inaccuracy in the mid-term appraisal of the Ninth Plan about the number of people below the poverty line.

Dr Rangarajan made his comments at the opening day of the two-day meeting on 'Issues before the Indian Statistical System' held in the capital.

He called for reforms in administration and upgrading infrastructure.

He also emphasised on regular process of consultations among data producers and users to ensure that statistics related adhered to uniform and internationally accepted standards and definitions.

On the crucial area of agricultural statistics, he said there was need to reduce the burden on the primary reporters, 'patwaries' since the decline in the quality of crop statistics had its roots in the overburdening of this section.

Indo-US trade set at \$25 billion

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Oct. 26. — The Centre has targeted \$25 billion as the level of annual trade it would like to achieve within the next five years with the USA, up from its current level of \$13 billion, Commerce Minister Mr Murasoli Maran told a meeting of the India-American Chambers of Commerce recently.

Mr Maran wanted Indo-US trade to shift into higher gears, saying that although the USA was India's largest trading partner, India's share in American imports was a measly 0.7 per cent. He urged the early restoration of the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) benefits to Indian exports to that country and a swift resolution of the anti-dumping levies imposed on Indian exports to revive business confidence.

The USA annually reviews the items it would favour for the GSPs and this was not a fallout of the Pokhran explosions, officials clarified. GSPs were withdrawn from the chemicals and pharmaceuticals sectors, among others, way back in 1992.

Regarding anti-dumping levies, these are primarily concerned with steel exports, offi-

cial said, adding that India has actually imposed many more of these levies on US products.

There was need to work out concrete strategies especially to streamline the flow of investments to achieve the much needed leap in Indo-US trade, Mr Maran said, because the (foreign direct investment) FDI inflow approval rate for the USA was only 17.8 per cent, though the US was ranked as the largest investor in India.

"We want to make every American investment story a successful one," Mr Maran said, despite approvals for US investments totalling \$14.4 billion between 1991 and 2000, the actual inflows during this period stand at \$2.54 billion.

He referred to the recent notifications permitting FDI in the insurance sector under the automatic route and the 'hassle-free' Customs framework for Special Economic Zones as measures that indicated government's sincerity to move ahead.

To further streamline the process of Indo-US trade, a Strategic Management Group was set up in the Prime Minister's Office on 10 October this year, headed by the PM's principal secretary.

THE STATESMAN

27 OCT 2000

India Forum will review afresh Indo-U.S. relations

By Ramesh Chandran
The Times of India News Service

WASHINGTON: A group of scholars and officials gathered at a Virginia retreat last weekend and discussed Indo-U.S. relations under the aegis of the Georgetown India Forum.

In its second such meeting at Airlie House, the 30 participants analysed three notable subjects: Info Tech; India's Energy Policy and India-China relations.

The group will submit a report to the next administration that will, in essence, scrutinise bilateral ties from a fresh perspective.

The Georgetown India Forum is spearheaded by James Clad, a professor of Asian Studies at Georgetown University. Famous in the sub-continental circles for his knowledgeable reporting on the *Far Eastern Economic Review* from New Delhi, Mr Clad takes a

new approach to the future of bilateral relations.

He wants to take India out of the traditional "sub-continental box"—to steer clear of the usual themes that routinely crop up such as Kashmir and India-Pakistan rivalry, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and non-proliferation—and look at India as an emerging Asian power.

The group that gathered in Virginia on October 6 included Prakash Ambegaonkar, (CEO-E-Lock technologies), Geoffrey Kemp (Nixon Centre), Robert Galluci (dean, School of foreign service, Georgetown University), Claudio Lilienfeld (Department of Defence), Robert

Manning (Council on Foreign Relations), Howard Schaffer (Georgetown University), Teresita Schaffer (CSIS), George Tanham (Rand), Ming Zhang (Carnegie), Walter Andersen (office of Analysis, State Department), Stephen Cohen (Brookings), Michael Clark (US-India Business Council), Shekhar Tiwari (CEO, International Ventures Inc), David Sloan (The Scowcroft Group), Peter Brooks (from the House International Relations Committee), Shakti Sinha (World Bank) and Sir John Thomson, (former British ambassador to India and the UN) among others.

Principal speakers included Amit Gupta (Stonehill College)

and Prakash Ambegaonkar on Information Technology, Kanti Bajpai and John Garver (Georgia Institute of Technology) on India-China relations and Dennis Eklof

(Cambridge Energy Research Associates) and David Jhirad (U.S. Department of Energy) on India's Energy situation.

While the main sessions were off the record, the Georgetown India Forum's initiative is the second in the series since its formation by James Clad in May this year.

In the inaugural session, speakers included Sir John Thomson and ambassador Frank Wisner who spoke on "India in Asia"—from a western perspective, where does India stand in Asia and how does India view this role; reach and limitations to the Indian American community by Michael Clark as well as a detailed look at the BJP by Walter Andersen.

VIRGINIA RETREAT

- Georgetown India Forum aims at making India an emerging Asian power
- The forum is the second in the series since its formation in May

THE TIMES OF INDIA

T 3 001 2000

US KASHMIR POLICY

SV 8 4/10 The Nuances We Miss

By AG NOORANI

THERE was in the closing days of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit to the United States an air of suppressed surprise and disgust rather like the one that surrounds a dinner table after someone has committed a grave breach of table manners or uttered a forbidden word. President William Jefferson Clinton gave offence by uttering the K - word. That it was uttered on the lawns of the White House, on 14 September, just the day before he was to receive the PM so aggravated the offence as to drive his principal secretary Brajesh Mishra to snap, at a press conference on 15 September: "We have not come here to discuss the Kashmir issue."

He could not but admit that the subject "might come up" at the meeting in the context of "the Indo-Pak relationship or in a discussion on South Asia". The context in which the President mentioned it was precisely that and very much covered India's concerns too: "The United States is strongly opposed to terrorism in any form and I still hope that, if not while I'm here, then in the future, because of the groundwork we have laid, the United States can play a positive role in a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute, which has been at the core of the difficulties between India and Pakistan for more than half a century now."

CONTINUITY

The text reveals three other aggravating factors. Clinton envisaged that whoever succeeds him will follow the same policy on Kashmir; he accepted the view that it is this problem which lies at "the core" of Indo-Pak estrangement, and none of the escapist pretexts commonly trotted out to avoid tackling it; (conflicting ideologies and the like); and he used horror of horrors, the dirty D-word (dispute) with the K.

The very next day, US spokesmen offered the soothing assurance that there was no change in the US stand on Kashmir. They were absolutely right. Anyone who cares to read its pronouncements on Kashmir since the eruption of militancy in the state in 1989 will be struck by a remarkable continuity in the policies pursued by the Bush and Clinton administrations; respectively, from 1989-92 and 1993-2000. The US has been in the fray since 1949 when it took over from Britain a more active role in the region.

The Prime Minister made a meaningful remark at his press conference in Frankfurt on 18 September: "There was no need to say from where the proposal for the ceasefire was given as well as withdrawn." This, of course, raises important questions about the form and conduct of the parleys with Hizbul Mujahideen following its declaration of cease-fire on 24 July. Vajpayee was right. But, if it enjoyed Pakistan's support, could the US have been too far behind in the affair? Chief Executive General Pervez Musharraf tacitly admitted both to *Time* magazine (27 July). He praised the US for its role in providing "ideas (sic) and support towards the goal of peace in Kashmir" which he added, had been brought one step closer by "this week's declaration of a cease-fire by one of the leading militant Muslim groups fighting in Kashmir".

The author is a lawyer and commentator on current affairs.

The cease-fire announcement entailed cooperation between the intelligence agencies of both governments, a fact fully reported in the press, and, more likely than not, American prodding and good offices, as well.

Jane's Intelligence Review, sister of Jane's Defence Weekly, reported in the first week of June that the US was sponsoring "intensive secret diplomacy" to bring India, Pakistan and Kashmiris to the negotiating table.

We need to grasp the nuances

solution."

Dialogue between India and the Hizb fits neatly in this framework. The US criticised the Hizb, on 10 August, for terminating it. Clinton himself voiced his disappointment in an interview to Shobhana Bhartia, published in *The Hindustan Times* on 3 September; significantly on the eve of Vajpayee's visit. His carefully prepared remarks are noteworthy for reasons more than one: "I am troubled by the threat to peace posed by the Kashmir dispute". He urged "direct discussions between India and Pakistan ... sincere efforts to end violence ...

And, of course, the wishes of the Kashmiri people must be taken into account". The last formulation was repeated when the interviewer sought his views about a settlement "within the existing territorial framework of the two countries". What has gone unnoticed is his reply to her pointed question: "When in the subcontinent, you had suggested that this century does not reward those who seek to redraw borders in blood. Are you, therefore, saying that the Kashmir

issue can be solved within the existing territorial framework of the two countries?"

The point was well taken. In India, Pakistan and the US, Clinton's famous remark was construed to mean endorsement of the LOC as international border in a future accord. He dispelled the impression: "My belief that nobody's goals will be achieved through violence does not preordain any particular type of settlement for the dispute. What a solution looks like will be determined by the participants in the process of dialogue that brings peace to Kashmir."

CONCESSION

Surely, if the accord must respect the wishes of the people of the State, their participation is necessary at some stage. Nehru made a point of reporting to Sheikh Abdullah and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed after every Indo-Pak parley over Kashmir. Therein lies the importance of a concession which Salahuddin made last month: "Let India and Pakistan start. They can involve Kashmiris later. Alternatively, Kashmiris and Delhi can start the dialogue. It does not matter. But there must be an assurance that the three parties will meet during the decisive phase of the dialogue." He had called off the talks with Delhi on 8 August and insisted on Pakistan's participation. He is prepared to proceed without it provided "assurance" of its eventual participation "at the second or third stage of the dialogue" is given by Delhi, backed however by "guarantees from the US". The latter stipulation is a bargaining chip.

Last month Kashmiri papers published an article by the influential Ghulam Nabi Fai of the Kashmiri-American Council which bore the impress of hands more than one in its craftsmanship. What is noteworthy are its moderation, reference to "the people of all zones of Kashmir" and the basic fact that each party to the dispute will have to be ready to make some concessions and compromises. Clinton had met Fai in a Hurriyat delegation in Chicago on 13 March before leaving for India.

The present impasse cannot last. There are hints and openings enough to explore for a durable cease-fire, preliminary to a comprehensive dialogue.



in US policy and read in proper context recent and very promising statements by the Hizb chief, Syed Salahuddin. They point a way out. His offers have been ignored. American statements are read selectively with the result that euphoria over a "favourable" remark swiftly changes to depression and anger over one that does not conform to India's stand.

A Clinton who could say on 29 December 1999 that "the Kashmir issue is perhaps the most dangerous one in the world today" and repeats, on 13 March 2000 on the eve of his visit to India, that "the most dangerous place in the world today ... is the Indian sub-continent and the LOC in Kashmir" must have a genuine concern for peace in South Asia. No other American President has spoken so sharply and consistently to Pakistan about its violations of the LOC as Clinton has.

On 7 May, the US moved closer to India's position when it asked Pakistan to take "concrete steps" for resumption of a "productive dialogue" with India. Similar hints were given by Clinton himself during his visit to both countries. This was closer to India's position, but not identical with it. For, the US has made no secret of its disagreement with India's rigid policy, substantively and procedurally. In this it enjoys the support of all the major powers as well as the UN's Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

DIALOGUE

Clinton outlined his framework for an accord to the ABC News on 21 March in Delhi. "Our policy is, first, respect the LOC. Second, do not promote violence by third parties in Kashmir. Third negotiate. And, fourth, with respect to India, that there's not a military solution to Kashmir's problems by India either; that the Kashmiris deserve to have their own concerns addressed on the merits ... I support some process by which the Kashmiris' legitimate grievances are addressed and I support respecting the LOC. And I think the Pakistanis and the Indians have to have some way of talking about it. And the Indians have to have some way of talking to their own Kashmiris about it that recognises there's not a military

India won't act as supplicant on sanctions issue: Naresh Chandra

S. Rajagopalan
Washington, August 31

THE HEALTHY turnaround in the Indo-US relations notwithstanding, New Delhi will not act as a "supplicant" to get Washington to lift the post-Pokhran II sanctions. While the country remains opposed to the sanctions regime, Indian and American companies have been making due representations against it, Ambassador Naresh Chandra said today.

In a *Washington Post* online interview in the context of the Prime Minister's upcoming visit, Mr Chandra said that President Clinton, under the authority vested in him by the US Congress, had already ordered a waiver on some sanctions. Within the Congress itself, there have been moves aimed at lifting some more sanctions.

Mr Chandra referred to the positive indicators flowing from the 'Vision Statement' unveiled during Mr Bill Clinton's Indian visit last March, particularly in the areas of information technology, biotechnology and health sciences.

The Science Technology Forum, comprising

senior scientists and officials from both the countries, has been registered and will start functioning soon.

Mr Naresh Chandra, answering a wide range of questions, also expressed the view that, be it a Democratic or Republican dispensation after the November elections, Indo-US relations would stay on course. The reason behind this, in his view, is that support for India on various issues in the United States has been of "a bipartisan nature for quite some time now".

"Any change in Administration will have only a marginal impact, specially because the US Congress has been very supportive of India in its various debates and resolutions," Mr Chandra said.

In reply to a question on the Reagan Administration looking the other way when Pakistan was supporting the Khalistanis, the Ambassador pointed out that it had been during the Republican Administration that the Pressler Amendment was applied and military aid and supplies to Islamabad were discontinued.

As for George W. Bush, he felt that the Republican nominee had, in a policy speech on South Asia, adequately recognised India's

growing importance and the need to strengthen Indo-US relations.

Dwelling on follow-up action on the 'Vision Statement', Mr Chandra said a number of steps had been taken through meetings and discussions at senior levels in the fields of energy, environment, commerce, science and technology and counter-terrorism.

Strategic issues, where differences persist, will be reviewed in order to reach more common ground.

The Jammu and Kashmir issue would not be ignored in any such discussion, the Indian Ambassador stated, but pointedly mentioned that both India and the US agreed that any outside interference would only complicate the bilateral spirit of the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration.

At the meeting between Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee and US President Bill Clinton, the working of the Indo-US joint group against terrorism is also expected to be reviewed. Mr Naresh Chandra confined himself to this observation when asked if Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee would take up with Mr Clinton the issue of decisive action against Pakistan-supported mercenaries.

SEP 2000

Vajpayee hopes to meet Jiang in US Straw, Advani to discuss terrorism

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI 1 SEPTEMBER

THE PRIME Minister's severely truncated schedule in New York has also spelt disaster for the numerous bilateral meetings with other heads of state and governments.

As of now, a tiny window of opportunity exists between his speech to the UN millennium summit on the morning of the 8th and dinner that evening by the PR official, Kamlesh Sharma. One of the most crucial bilaterals planned for that afternoon therefore, is with the Chinese president Jiang Zemin.

If it goes through, it will be the first time Mr Vajpayee will be meeting Mr Jiang after the 1998 Pokhara tests. India and China have been gradually moving closer together over the past couple of years and a bilateral meeting with Mr Jiang will carry the speech forward.

Meanwhile the foreign minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, left for Switzerland on Friday night to conduct a bilateral visit en-route to New York.

Unaccompanied by media hype, nevertheless, it is the first visit by an Indian foreign minister in 20 years, although the Swiss president was one of the first heads of state to visit India after the 1998 nuclear tests.

Mr Singh's interactions will be mainly with his counterpart Mr Joseph Deff, the Swiss federal councillor for foreign affairs.

Although Switzerland is not a member of the UN or the EU, it is an important trading partner of India, constituting the fourth largest import centre for India. Foreign office consultations were first started in February 2000, when the secretary (west) from MEA visited Berne.

India will therefore be responding to a Swiss initiative for foreign office dialogue, though the only contacts hitherto had been confined to getting letters rogatory and other important documents in the Bofors case.

Mr Singh's day-long parleys with the Swiss leadership will have an important economic content, coming as it does as a prelude to an important investment summit planned in Switzerland. The preparations for that will be made by the commerce and industry minister, Mr Murasoli Maran.

Our Political Bureau
NEW DELHI 1 SEPTEMBER

CORE ISSUES of international terrorism, crime, drug trafficking and policing of borders will form the substance of a visit by the British home secretary, Mr Jack Straw. Mr Straw will have extensive interactions on these subjects with his counterpart Mr L.K. Advani.

Following up on Mr Advani's June visit to the UK, Mr Advani and Mr Straw will also attempt to give shape to a formal joint working group (JWG) between the two countries. Briefing reporters here on Friday, the British high commissioner, Sir Rob Young said, "Both countries have a very strong shared commitment and bilateral co-operation to fight terrorism. The two sides will explore new ways of deepening and intensifying the existing co-operation."

However, scotching speculation about Mr Straw actively seeking the release of Peter Bleach, prime

accused in the Purulia arms drop case, Mr Young ruled out any British intervention until after the Indian judicial process was completed. This was also said by Mr Straw in London who said the only thing he would ask Mr Advani was on the possibilities of an early hearing of the appeal. "India has a functional judiciary. Certainly I will not interfere in the judicial process."

A British move to renew arms supply to Pakistan had raised hackles in India. But Sir Rob insisted there will be no 'business as usual' with Pakistan until democracy was restored. Britain, he said was instrumental in shaping Commonwealth opinion on Pakistan, calling for an expeditious return to democracy and restraint on the LOC.

Most of the arms licences that had been renewed, he said, pertained to non-lethal systems like radars, naval and demining equipment. The rest had been rejected by the British government. "No arms licences that could relate to external aggression or internal oppression," have been issued to Pakistan, he said.

During his six-day visit, Mr Straw will be visiting Amritsar, Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Calcutta. His meetings will include the finance minister, Justice J.S. Verma, chairman of the NHRC and the leader of the opposition, Ms Sonia Gandhi.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CII sets \$15 bn. FDI target

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 3. In the backdrop of the Prime Minister's visit to the United States, the Confederation of Indian industry (CII) has finalised a report identifying 13 sectors with potential of increasing Indo-US economic cooperation. Apart from information technology, these include the financial sector, energy, environment, pharmaceuticals and even the social sector.

The CII has set a target of \$ 15 billion of Foreign Direct Investment from the U.S. over the next five years with the identified sectors becoming a major draw for industry and investors. As for bilateral trade, it expects exports to the U.S. to jump to \$ 15 billion by 2005.

The report says one of the important areas of cooperation is at the multilateral level of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). It feels the greatest success of Mr. Vajpayee's will be to find synergies that exist in the agendas of the two nations and find ways and means to accommodate the needs of both nations in each others' agenda.

On the multilateral level, the CII notes India has been pointing out that issues concerning envi-

ronment and labour have to be kept out of the WTO. There will be no change in this position and the U.S. will have to accept this fact before coming to the negotiating table.

The report notes that the composition of India's exports has already undergone a change over the recent past. Exports to the U.S. have been rising mainly on account of increase in the exports of diamonds, textiles and ready-made garments, machinery, carpets, footwear and leather products, dyes, iron and steel products, chemicals, edible fruit and nuts and spices, coffee and tea.

Six items — textiles and clothing, cut and polished non-industrial diamonds, carpets, shrimps and prawns, footwear, leather goods and cashew nuts — account for about 75 per cent of total Indian exports to the U.S. at present.

What is of concern to India is that the volume of Indo-U.S. bilateral trade remains a small fraction of U.S.'s global trade. While U.S. exports to India account for nearly 12 per cent of India's non-oil imports and U.S. is the destination of 18.9 per cent of India's exports, U.S. trade turnover with India constitutes less than 1 per

cent of its global trade.

However, India's share in U.S. imports has been rising gradually and increased from 0.84 per cent in 1997 to 0.90 per cent in 1998. The U.S. is India's largest trading partner and export destination. The two-way trade at over \$ 12.5 billion reflects an increase of nearly 100 per cent since 1992.

However, compared to the U.S. overall trade of over \$ 1,750 billion for merchandise trade and \$ 435 billion of service trade in 1999, the Indian performance is dismal. Even if the country aims at 10 per cent share of the U.S. market in the next 10 years, it will achieve a total export of \$ 120 billion of merchandise and service exports. Which will translate into over \$ 80 billion increase in exports to just one large market.

India, the CII is of the opinion, should at least export products worth \$ 15 billion to the U.S. within the next five years and \$ 25 billion within the next 10 years time. Meeting these targets will require a big push from both the industry and the Government. The biggest thrust has to be in the services sector, it is felt, since in merchandise goods the U.S. may not be completely open to a sudden surge in exports from one particular country.

Ties to get better with Atal's visit: Clinton

Shobhana Bhartia
September 2

US President Bill Clinton says that he is looking forward to building permanent institutions to reflect the depth of India and America's new relationship. In his first-ever interview to an Indian publication, the President responded at length to a series of important questions compiled by *The Hindustan Times* and posed to him in Washington.

Mr Clinton also praised the "commendable initiatives by the Indian government (including) the regrettably short-lived Hizbul Mujahideen ceasefire" towards resolving the Kashmir problem. As for Pakistan, he was blunt: "While Pakistan has been a long-time friend of the United States, we have serious differences and our relationship is constrained by those differences".

The following is the text of the interview:

● How do you assess the US relationship with India after your visit to the subcontinent and before the impending visit of the Indian Prime Minister to Washington DC?

I was touched by the warmth of the welcome I received from the people and the leaders of India. During and since my visit, we have seen a qualitatively new relationship bloom between the United States and India. Since March, there have been many positive developments as our two countries have implemented the Vision Statement Prime Minister Vajpayee and I signed, and have begun building permanent institutions to reflect the depth of our new relationship. We have closer cooperation in the fight against terrorism; we have begun a regular series of senior-level political consultations; we have worked together for a successful first meeting of the Community of Democracies; we have reached agreement on a

wide range of steps to improve our commercial, energy and scientific relationships, and inaugurated a Science and Technology Forum. I look forward to welcoming Prime Minister Vajpayee to Washington for a visit that will further strengthen these growing ties.

● When you visited the subcontinent, you focused on the Kashmir issue. How do you see the developments since then? More specifically, what is your view of the peace process initiated by India in Kashmir? Do you think that by continuing to support trans-border terrorism Pakistan is acting as a spoiler in the peace process?

I am troubled by the threat to peace posed by the Kashmir dispute. In recent months, there have been some steps toward addressing the dispute, including the commendable initiatives by the Indian Government and the regrettably short-lived Hizbul Mujahideen cease-fire. For the Kashmir dispute to be resolved, there needs to be restraint, respect for the line of control in Kashmir, renunciation of violence and renewal of dialogue. I continue to believe that there cannot be a solution to the Kashmir issue without direct discussions between India and Pakistan. In order for such discussions to take place, however, a climate of trust must be created through sincere efforts to end violence. And, of course, the wishes of the Kashmiri people must be taken into account.

● In your telephone conversation with Prime Minister Vajpayee after the massacre of innocent pilgrims in Kashmir, you had promised that you would take up the issue of terrorism with Pakistan. Have you done that and what assurance, if any, has Pakistan given you?

Terrorism is a threat to all the countries of South Asia. I expressed my concerns directly to



An HT Exclusive

General Musharraf when I visited Pakistan, as I have in communications since then, including after the August 1 massacre. He has made it clear to me that he is aware of the danger terrorism poses. We are continuing to work with Pakistan to reduce the threat of terrorism in the region.

● What in your view could be the possible principles along which the Kashmir issue can be solved within the existing territorial framework of the two countries?

The structure of a Kashmir settlement must be worked out by the parties involved. It is not for the United States to determine what a resolution should look like. What we can do is to encourage a peace process. We will continue to encourage resumption of a dialogue that will lead to a settlement that takes into account the wishes of the people of Kashmir, and to assist in that dialogue, if that is the desire of the parties.

● When in the subcontinent, you had suggested that this century does not reward those who seek to redraw borders in blood. Are you therefore saying that the Kashmir issue can be solved within the existing territorial framework of the two countries?

A belief that nobody's goals in Kashmir will be achieved through violence does not pre-ordain any particular type of settlement for the dispute. What a solution looks like will be determined by the participants in the process of dialogue that brings peace to Kashmir.

● What role is the United States playing, or is it willing to play — even if informally — to help resolve the Kashmir tangle?

Our role is a simple one — to work with India and Pakistan for a resumption of a dialogue that will lead to a resolution of the dispute. We will continue to do this. We are willing to offer further assistance if both countries request it, but we are not mediators.

● You had delivered a tough message to Pakistan about giving up the path of confrontation and to look at the internal problems that plague it. Has Pakistan heeded your advice?

The people of Pakistan deserve to have a stable, prosperous and democratic nation. A number of serious problems stand between them and that goal, including regional tensions, weakened democratic institutions, communal strife, extrem-

ism and economic weakness. General Musharraf has acknowledged this and made a series of proposals for reform in Pakistan's economic and political structure and publicly announced steps to reduce violence. Obviously, there is still a long way to go. The United States wants to work with Pakistan to overcome its difficulties. I believe that Pakistan's success is very much in India's interest too.

● Isn't there a tendency in the United States to accept whatever happens in Pakistan and accommodate the rulers, including military dictators?

I think it is quite clear from events of the past decade that the United States has not just accepted events in Pakistan, nor have we automatically accommodated the country's rulers. While Pakistan has been a long-time friend of the United States, we have serious differences and our relationship is constrained by those differences. Like India, Pakistan is a sovereign state. It will resist being forced to take actions it believes are against its interests. Nevertheless, my country will continue its efforts to help restore democracy and economic health in Pakistan, reduce tensions in the region and combat terrorism and narcotics production.

● India says that it will not talk to Pakistan unless there is an end to cross-border terrorism. What is the United States doing in this regard?

India's leaders have the right to decide how they will deal with Pakistan. It is our view that a resumption of dialogue with Pakistan is in India's interest. You cannot change geography. We are encouraging all involved to work to create an atmosphere that will allow this to happen. This includes taking steps to bring about an end to violence.

(See Page 9 for the rest of the interview)

India finds US favour on China

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 2. — The USA has pledged support of G-8 nations to India's proposal for a UN convention on terrorism and appeared to have accepted in a roundabout manner New Delhi's argument for a nuclear deterrent against China.

Unlike the earlier practice of trying to limit India's concerns to Pakistan, President Bill Clinton yesterday acknowledged that if China built more nuclear weapons, India might feel compelled to follow suit, provoking Pakistan to do the same. The media voiced the same concern.

India, on its part, may prefer to highlight cooperation with the USA on trade and technology during Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit, and downplay the Kashmir issue.

Nor is the Prime Minister likely to ask for lifting of economic sanctions, slapped by the USA after Pokhran II. The foreign secretary, Mr Lalit Mansingh, hinted at this at the end of his two-day talks with US officials on the agenda of Mr Vajpayee's meeting with Mr Clinton on 15 September. The under-secretary of state for political affairs, Mr Thomas

Pickering, led the US side.

Mr Mansingh told reporters after the meeting that Pakistan had no role in Kashmir, in the current situation marked by Hizbul Mujahideen's ceasefire, or in India's talks with any Kashmiri group. "Our Prime Minister has said we remain open to talks with Pakistan when the conditions are ripe. At the moment, they are not."

Mr Pickering agreed with Mr Mansingh that Indo-US cooperation against terrorism should be elevated to a higher plane. At yesterday's meeting, Mr Pickering shared India's concerns on the growth of narcotics traffic "in our (India's) neighbourhood, especially in Afghanistan."

Mr Mansingh said Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's Washington schedule might be expanded to enable those he was to have met on the West Coast to interact with him. But in New York, "we will have to provide some period of rest after the hectic programme" before his Washington visit.

The foreign secretary ruled out any meeting between Mr Vajpayee and General Pervez Musharraf in New York.

■ Another report on page 10

THE STATESMAN

Growing friendship

IT CAN perhaps be said with a fair degree of certainty that Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit to the US will be taking place in circumstances that are more propitious than ever before. Only on two occasions earlier — Nehru's second visit in 1956 and Rajiv Gandhi's first in 1985 — were the relations somewhat warmer than they normally were. Otherwise, India's position in the non-aligned camp and the American reluctance to annoy its Cold War ally, Pakistan, ensured that the India-US relations remained not far above freezing point. In this respect, the Nixon-Indira Gandhi meetings just before the Bangladesh war possibly marked the lowest point in mutual ties. Now the situation is markedly different.

As President Bill Clinton pointed out in his interview with *The Hindustan Times*, the two countries are seeing a 'qualitatively new relationship bloom' between them. It hasn't happened by chance. While the end of the Cold War has diminished the US need for Pakistan as a frontline State against communism, Pakistan's degeneration as a result of 'regional tensions, weakened democratic institutions, communal strife, extremism and economic weakness', as noted by Mr Clinton, has undermined its value as an ally. In contrast, India is beginning to emerge in American eyes, as a 'truly great' democracy with which it is desirable to build 'permanent institutions' of friendship and cooperation. A measure of how close the two have moved towards each other is evident from the fact that India's views on the nuclear question, including the CTBT, is now better appreciated in Washington than before.

Kashmir, of course, remains a sticking point despite India's 'commendable initiatives' which attracted Mr Clinton's approval. As before, he linked respect for the LoC and renunciation of violence with the renewal of a dialogue. India's position is no different. As long as the LoC is not violated, as during Kargil, and there is abjuration of violence by the Pakistan-backed terrorist groups, the negotiations can start. Indeed, they did when the Hizbul Mujahideen offered a cease-fire which proved to be 'regrettably shortlived', as Mr Clinton said in the interview. Indeed, its abrupt withdrawal showed how peace is almost dreaded by the other side. It is in this context where the gun plays such a crucial role in the terrorist campaign that India will anxiously await the results of Mr Clinton's 'efforts to help restore democracy and economic health in Pakistan, reduce tensions in the region and combat terrorism and narcotics production'. A stable Pakistan, cured of its paranoia, will be in a better position to respond to the Indian initiatives for peace.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 SEP 2000

Clinton straight talk to Pak pleases India

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, September 4

ON THE eve of the Prime Minister's departure for the US, India today expressed satisfaction at President Clinton's statement that he had conveyed his concern over terrorism in Kashmir directly to General Pervez Musharraf.

Commenting on the President Clinton's interview to *The Hindustan Times*, the Ministry of External Affairs official spokesman said: "This is the first formulation linking Pakistan with terrorism. Undoubtedly, it is more direct than anything he had said during his visit here in March."

The MEA noted that the President said that he had raised the subject with General Musharraf not once, but twice. The first time was during his stopover in Islamabad in March and the second was after the August massacres in J&K.

The spokesman said that Mr Clinton's remark "reflected the depth of understanding between the two countries on key issues and also spelt out specific areas for

development of relations."

Senior MEA officials went through the HT interview with a fine-tooth comb today for signs of the US President's latest position on the sub-continent. Consistency emerged between the present position and the one he held in March. He categorically said that it was his belief that "nobody's goals in Kashmir will be achieved through violence".

Pakistani newspapers put their own spin on Mr Clinton's statements while reporting the interview, undoubtedly a big media event considering it was the US President's first to an Indian newspaper.

The Dawn and *The Nation*, two leading Pakistani dailies, made much about Mr Clinton's statement on the need for resumption of dialogue between the two nuclear neighbours. *The Nation's* India correspondent interpreted Mr Clinton's remarks as meaning that the US "will push India and Pakistan to resume dialogue, leading to a settlement of the Kashmir issue".

Mr K. Natwar Singh, former Minister of State for External

Affairs and senior Congress leader, said Mr Clinton's use of the phrase "Kashmir dispute" was objectionable. He used the same words in the Central Hall of Parliament during his visit, but the government did not raise any objection, he said.

Mr Singh recalled that "all hell had broken loose when South African president Nelson Mandela had used the identical phrase during the Congress regime."

"I hope the Prime Minister will bring this to the notice of the US President when he visits Washington," Mr Singh said. He was also pessimistic about the forthcoming visit achieving anything substantial. "Except perhaps goodwill, which, to use an Americanism, is no big deal".

In the MEA's assessment, however, Mr Clinton has snuffed Pakistan's hopes that he would admonish India for not reviving talks. "India's leaders have the right to decide how they will deal with Pakistan. We are encouraging all involved to work to create an atmosphere that will allow this to happen (including) taking steps to bring about an end to violence".

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 SEP 2000

Indo-U.S. understanding will not affect others, says Vajpayee

HD-13
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 4. The Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, has said that India and the U.S. have the potential for being "natural allies" but maintained that the "new understanding" between the two countries is not at the cost of relations with other countries, including China.

"Both countries have the potential for being natural allies," Mr. Vajpayee said in an interview to the *International Herald Tribune*.

Reflecting the marked upswing in bilateral ties in the backdrop of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to India in March this year, he said "both are democracies, believing in plural societies, committed to human rights. After our frank and friendly talks with Mr. Clinton, whatever doubts

were there, they are there no more".

Responding to questions on whether closer Indo-U.S. ties would have an adverse fallout on Sino-Indian relations, Mr. Vajpayee, who leaves on a fortnight-long visit to the U.S. later this week, said "our coming together with the U.S. doesn't mean that our relations with other countries would be adversely affected". "The relationships (India's with the U.S. and China) stand on separate footing," he added.

"Our relations with China are improving. We are having satisfactory border talks to solve the boundary question," he said.

To a question, Mr. Vajpayee said India deserved a permanent seat on an expanded U.N. Security Council. "There is growing

support for the country's candidature." On Indo-Pakistan relations, he reiterated New Delhi's stand that Pakistan had to create a "conducive atmosphere" for having any "meaningful dialogue".

India has been repeatedly stating that Islamabad had to stop sponsoring cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country and cease hostile propaganda against it.

"We have made our position clear," he said adding that "we are ready to discuss all subjects with Pakistan, including Kashmir". He said "it is for Pakistan to restore the trust which has been severely violated in Kargil".

The Prime Minister also categorically ruled out any role for the

U.S. as a mediator in talks between New Delhi and Islamabad. "No third-party intervention is required."

On the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty issue, Mr. Vajpayee said his Government was "making efforts to build a consensus within the country."

Asked about the problem of brain drain faced in this country, he said "there was a time when it was thought that Indians who are going abroad, particularly to the U.S., were causing a brain drain. That has proved to be wrong. Indian professionals have made a mark for themselves in the U.S. and are contributing to the progress of the U.S. as well as India".

— PTI

THE HINDU

SEP 2001

LONG WAY TO GO

5/8
5/9 India not yet a global player 9/20/00

IT doesn't really matter whether Vajpayee is going to meet a lame-duck President of the United States or not because, Republican or Democrat, the basic contours of America's India policy are determined by a number of geostrategic considerations, primary among them being the CTBT, non-proliferation and terrorism. Many have spoken of an improvement in Indo-US ties. There has been some, but it is not remarkable. It is true that the Americans want the Line of Control to be respected and have begun frowning upon militancy in Kashmir, but that is only because of the emphasis being laid, these days, on the preservation of legalities in the conduct of international relations and the problems the Americans have been having with radical Islamic activity worldwide. However, there has been no shift in the American perspective on Kashmir: it remains disputed, Pakistan remains a party to the dispute. The declaration of ceasefire by the Hizbul and its subsequent withdrawal, under Pakistani hardline pressure, may have provided the Government of India with an opportunity to substantiate its contention that militancy in Kashmir is entirely of Pakistani promotion. The Americans will have no problems in rejecting that contention, one because it is not realistic, two, because Pakistan is needed for a number of strategic reasons, having as much to do with Central Asia and the Middle East as with the subcontinent. Which is why it is not easy to have Pakistan declared a rogue state. It is not certain that the Americans are reconciled to the idea of another pole of geopolitical importance emerging in South Asia, primarily because, from their point of view, India is yet to qualify as a global player. That may be the principal difficulty in Indo-US ties: the Americans still see Pakistan as a useful counterbalance to a country whose interests may clash with those of the rest of the big powers. They follow our domestic politics, they know there are forces violently opposed to globalisation and liberalisation and others that want to do away with all nuclear restraint. And we still trundle around with baggage left over from the non-aligned era.

The only thing that can produce a dramatic shift is signature on the CTBT. The Americans can afford to ignore the fact that the document has not been ratified by the US Congress, they continue to see it as an article of global politics. To put it bluntly, America wants India to fall in line. On the economy, some movement can be expected, but nothing spectacular, because our policy regime coupled with our socio-economic indices are still considered discouraging in comparison with what other investment destinations can offer. On military purchases, our capacity is limited by the fact that we rarely pay cash down and the Americans rarely sell on credit and there are no transfers of technology. We have a long way to go.

THE STATESMAN

5 SEP 2000

Will Vajpayee's visit to the US turn out to be a non-event?

Hullabaloo about nothing

BY K. NATWAR SINGH

... I AM wildly and emphatically rejecting any and all messianic concepts of America's role in the world: rejecting, that is, the image of ourselves as teachers and redeemers to the rest of humanity, rejecting the illusions of unique and superior virtue on our part, the prattle about Manifest Destiny or the 'American Century'... And if there were any qualities that lie within our ability to cultivate that might set us off from the rest of the world, these would be the virtues of modesty and humility; and of these we have never exhibited any exceptional abundance.

George F. Kennan (1993)

I HAVE quoted Kennan (the greatest American foreign policy pariah of the last hundred years) in order to bring down to earth the starry-eyed cheer leaders for America, who are busy counting their dollars rather than their blessings. This collective and blind enthusiasm for all things American is neither wise, nor mature nor necessary nor seemly. These cheer leaders would do well to remember that India-US relations elude prediction and defy determinism.

Every Indian desires close, cordial and friendly relations with the US. I want these relations to be further intensified and widened in all areas to our mutual benefit. That is why I wish Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee both luck and success during his American Safari. Vajpayee is a fine human being whose *Hindustani* embraces his *Jasaniat*. However, can he be the voice of India in the manner of Jawaharlal Nehru or Indira Gandhi? He is a prisoner of the coalition he presides over and the arithmetic in the Lok Sabha imposes constraints on him that were alien to Nehru and Indira Gandhi. An incoherent domestic situation cannot produce a coherent, meaningful or influential foreign policy.

Anyone with even a minimal knowledge of the United States will know that the Indian Prime Minister could not have chosen a more inappropriate time to go to Washington. He arrives in New York on September 7. Two months later, the Americans will elect a new President and one-third of the Senate and House of Representatives. Just about everyone of any consequence in the US establishment will be deeply involved

with the election campaign to give serious thought to this visit.

The US media completely ignored Narasimha Rao in 1994. And he went in May not September. Vajpayee, I fear, is likely to meet the same kind of benign neglect. This benign neglect will not be a calculated or deliberate decision. It will be linked to the timing of the visit.

Vajpayee also bears a heavy cross on his ageing shoulders. His Minister for External Affairs has tried to sell the idea that there has been a qualitative change in US attitude towards India. He gets so carried away with his verbosity as to claim that India-US relations are now on an escalator. Did I hear someone say — treadmill!

Yes, there has been a qualitative change, but not in the way what Jaswant Singh would have us believe. The striking change is that for the first time since 1947, a visiting Head of State has talked of 'the Kashmir dispute' on the soil of India and in the Central Hall of Parliament House. And he got away with it.

And he did so again in his interview to *The Hindustan Times* on September 3. The qualitative change theory would have carried greater conviction if Clinton had not used the unacceptable words, "the Kashmir dispute". That would have indicated that the 42nd President of the USA was acquainted with Indian sensitivities. Remember how these people jumped on Nelson Mandela, who had not used the words "the Kashmir dispute" in

his speech at the NAM summit in Durban in 1998. The net result is that the Americans will be entirely justified in telling us that we accepted what William Jefferson Clinton said on Jammu and Kashmir in our Parliament House. The Americans would have greater respect for us if we stood up to them on matters concerning our territorial integrity and our vital national interests.

Recently, the Democratic Party held its convention in Los Angeles to anoint Al Gore, who, as far as I know, said not a word about India. Neither did Clinton mention his visit to India, nor the forthcoming visit of Vajpayee to the US.

The External Affairs Minister (I would like to see him go to the White House in a bush shirt with sleeves rolled up as he did while calling on the Sri Lankan President) does not have it in him to be a powerful or self-respecting advocate of our cause in Washington. If he were, then he would be parleying with Madeleine Albright, his American counterpart, and not with Strobe Talbott who is a Minister of State. Why has the Prime Minister allowed this grotesque and sycophantic asymmetry to become a feature of our negotiating procedure?

On CTBT, there have been 12 rounds of talks and the country is no wiser. Vajpayee, while in Portugal two months ago, announced that during the monsoon session of Parliament, he would attempt to build a national consensus on the CTBT. Nothing was done. So even on the CTBT,

Vajpayee goes empty handed and empty handed he will return.

On J&K, India and the US do not see eye to eye. Clinton wants India and Pakistan to engage in a dialogue. Vajpayee says no. His reasons are bizarre. No talks with the military dictatorship. No talks till Pakistan stops cross-border terrorism. He did talk to Nawaz Sharif when cross-border terrorism was at its peak. We have in the past talked to military leaders of Pakistan.

We cannot choose the Government of Pakistan. We have to deal with whoever is in power in Islamabad. I am not suggesting that we should talk to General Pervez Musharraf right away but we should not close the diplomatic door. Cross-border terrorism flourishes because Hizbul Mujahideen is supported and financed by Pakistan. So why not go to the source?

We welcome closer cooperation with the US on terrorism. It is, however, doubtful if the US will declare Pakistan a terrorist State. I wish that they would. But let us not confuse hopes with facts. The Americans have their own rules and criteria for declaring a State a terrorist one.

In Clinton's interview to this paper, he has not made any concession on J&K, no concession on Indo-Pak dialogue and given no indication that he will declare Pakistan a terrorist State. He has said nothing about lifting economic sanctions. He has expressed hope for better relations in certain areas: "We have closer cooperation in the fight against terrorism; we have begun a regular series of senior-level political consultations, we have worked together for a successful first meeting of the Community of Democracies; we have reached agreement on a wide range of steps to improve our commercial, energy and scientific relationships, and inaugurated a Science and Technology Forum. I look forward to welcoming Prime Minister Vajpayee to Washington for a visit that will further strengthen these growing ties."

We too welcome this statement. But this is not very substantial. He has not even hinted that America would support India's permanent membership of the Security Council. So what will the Prime Minister achieve? Goodwill. Fair enough. But to use an Americanism, this is no big deal. (The author is a senior Congress leader. The views expressed here are his own)



In Clinton's interview to this paper, he has not made any concession on J&K or on Indo-Pak dialogue and given no indication that he will declare Pakistan a terrorist State

Economics thrust of Vajpayee's US trip

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept. 5. — The presence of Union Finance and Commerce Ministers Mr Yashwant Sinha and Mr Murasoli Maran in the Prime Minister's delegation to the USA along with the secretaries in charge of power and telecom suggests that economic issues will take precedence, though terrorism will also be discussed at length.

Other members in the delegation include External Affairs Minister Mr Jaswant Singh, PM's Principal Secretary Mr Brajesh Mishra and Foreign Secretary Mr Lalit Mansingh. Information Technology Minister Mr Pramod Mahajan, while not part of the official delegation, is also likely to be in the USA at the time.

Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee will

have no official engagements from September 10-13, between his trips to New York and Washington DC, where he will meet President Bill Clinton for talks and attend the official banquet. It is learnt that he will receive medical attention in New York during the period for his knees.

He will also meet Vice-President Mr Al Gore for lunch. A meeting with Mr George Bush Jr is yet to be finalised.

The main economic issues to be discussed are likely to be IT, energy, second-generation reforms in labour and finance and US private investment in India in areas like telecom, infrastructure, energy and power.

There is also the important National Association of Manufacturers meeting in Washington DC where the PM will address about 300 top business

executives. Though his visit to San Francisco to meet IT professionals has been cancelled, efforts to "compensate" that in Washington DC are on.

Terrorism will be discussed at length. The spokesman said it was "one of the issues India and the USA have serious concerns about". Other issues will be UN reforms and international security. There appears to be little on sanctions or CTBT.

Mr Vajpayee will also speak at the UN Millennium Summit and the Asia Society, sign the convention for suppressing financing of terrorism and meet Sheikh Hasina and Mr GP Koirala.

PM-President meeting: Mr Vajpayee is likely to meet the President tomorrow. It is customary for the Prime Minister to brief the President before embarking on a foreign trip.

THE STATESMAN

6 SEP 2000

Meet in U.S. on trade expansion with India

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 5. Representatives of U.S. companies will meet with Indian Government officials in Cleveland, Ohio, for a two-day conference today and tomorrow on expanding export sales to India. The focus of the business meeting, sponsored by the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (TDA), will be to outline projects totalling more than \$1 billion in potential sales for American companies to modernise the Indian railway system.

U.S. Ambassador to India, Mr. Celeste, and the Federal Administration head, John... will address the... and

The...
Mr. Richard...
eral Rail Adm...
lene Molitoris...
Indian Railways Ro...

Business Briefing on September 6. Mr. Celeste said in Cleveland that this conference will enable corporate executives to establish valuable Indian Government contacts and that "the vast Indian market presents unprecedented business opportunities for U.S. companies".

49-19
Mr. J. Joseph Grandmaison, TDA Director, who will address the opening session on September 6, urged U.S. companies to be aggressive in pursuing business opportunities in this country. "Financing for billions of dollars of Indian projects is nearing completion," he noted, adding, "if the American companies don't get these contracts, foreign competitors will."

Among the U.S. companies expected to attend the Indian trade conference are: ALK Associates, Vinceton, N.J.; GE Harris Railway

Electronics, Melbourne, Fla.; Transportation Technology Center, Pueblo, Colo.; Intergraph Corp., Huntsville Ala.; Kryopak, Inc., Minneapolis, Minn.; Ensco, Inc., Springfield, Va.; Johnstown America Industries, Chicago, Ill; GE Transportation, Erie, Pa.; Bechtel Corp., San Francisco, Calif.; Union Switch and Signal, Pittsburgh, Pa.; and The Timken Company, Canton, Ohio.

The TDA organised orientation visits for the visiting Indian telecommunication and rail officials to brief interested U.S. companies in several American cities from late August to early September 2000.

Earlier, the Indian officials discussed opportunities in telecommunications in Washington DC and San Jose, California, on August 22 and 29, according to a USIS release.

THE HINDU

- 6 SEP 2000

India, US may sign pact to counter terrorism

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, September 6

INDIA AND the United States may sign a new treaty designed for effective combating of terrorism and drug smuggling during Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's back-to-back visit beginning later this week, Prime Minister's principal secretary Brajesh Mishra told a private news channel tonight.

The new treaty, which is expected to have scope of exchange of legal assistance, would constitute a third line of Indo-US joint campaign against terrorism in South Asia, which according to the US State Department's latest annual report, is a region surpassing West Asia as a focus of international terrorism. The other aspects of bilateral co-operation in this regard are an Extradition Treaty signed earlier and a Joint Working Group (JWG) constituted between the two sides. The first meeting of the JWG was held in February in Washington and the second will be held later this month in New Delhi after Mr Vajpayee's return.

India expects the US to come out with a strong indictment on official Pakistani sup-

port to terrorism in the region in general and Jammu and Kashmir in particular.

Sources told *The Hindustan Times* that Washington's formulation in recent months carry the stiff message to Islamabad that its tolerance has been stretched quite thin by the recent massacres in the Kashmir valley and the collapse of the peace talks with Hizbul Mujahideen because of Pakistan's

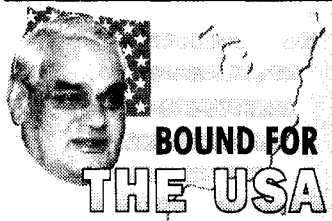
attempt at trying to trilateralise it.

As far as US' outlook on Pakistan goes, there are two platforms of concern. Firstly, Pakistan has what Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Karl F. Inderfurth describes as "reservoirs of support" in official circles towards terrorist organisa-

tions including the banned Harkat ul Ansar, now operating under the new name of Harkat ul Mujahideen.

The second, and more important, is General Pervez Musharraf's failure to put his heart into keeping the "alliance" with the US alive. The implications of this "alliance" go beyond Kashmir.

It has to do with Pakistan's overt support to the Taliban, which harbours Saudi billionaire Osama Bin Laden.



'BJP has links with Hindu extremist groups'

USA raps India

over attacks

on minorities

9/20-198
517
2/9

DESIKAN THIRUNARAYANAPURAM
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 6. — The USA has pointed a disapproving finger at India's "ineffective investigation and prosecution of attacks on religious minorities" in its second annual report on religious freedom, released yesterday.

Noting the recent attacks on missionaries and Christian priests in India and violence against Muslims and Sikhs, it says "ineffective investigation .. is interpreted by some extremist elements as a signal that such violence is likely to go unpunished".

It says human rights groups and others had suggested that several state authorities' response to violence against minorities by Hindu extremist groups was ineffective, at least in part because of the links between these groups and the ruling BJP.

Describing BJP as a "Hindu nationalist political party with links to Hindu extremist groups that have been implicated in violent acts against Christians and Muslims", it says the party "officially agrees" that the caste system should be eradicated, but many party members are "ambivalent" on this.

The report, which is mandated

by Congress to be released every September, also lists the worst-offender countries in restricting religious freedom. Pakistan has been pulled up for its blasphemy laws that are used to intimidate minorities and China, for the curbs on the Falun Gong sect and harassment of Tibetan Buddhists. Others include Myanmar, Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Cuba and North Korea.

The secretary of state, Ms Madeleine K Albright, released the report in New York, provoking an immediate reaction among the heads of states attending the UN Millennium Summit.

The report says state and local-level governments in India "only partially" respect religious freedom. "Several such governments considered legislation during the period covered by this report that would limit religious freedom."

As an example of the discrimination against minorities, especially Christians seeking to proselytise, the report cites Father Anthony Raymond Ceresko, who, it says, was asked to leave the country. Several Christian relief organisations had also been "hampered by bureaucratic obstacles in getting visas renewed for foreign relief work".

The report says the degree to which the BJP's "nationalist

Hindu agenda" is felt throughout the country varies from region to region. The South is the most moderate, it says, but religious groups there "still allege that since the BJP's rise to power in the national government, some bureaucrats have begun to enforce laws selectively to the detriment of minorities".

The report credits the DMK, TDP, Communist and Congress governments in the four southern states with secular and pro-minority policies.

The East presents a "varied picture", with political leanings of state governments not appearing to correlate with the level of religious freedom. It points to the Staineses' case.

The report says in West Bengal, "Marxist rulers could not prevent reconversions of minorities by Hindus in some districts". Bihar, it said, "was peaceful with regard to religious minorities with the exception of two seemingly unrelated events in 1999".

BJP fumes: The BJP today said the report linking the party with "Hindu extremist groups" was released under "pressure" from certain private and Christian organisations to defame India on the eve of Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's US visit, adds PTI from New Delhi.

THE STATESMAN

27 SEP 2000

Vajpayee to address summit today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW YORK, Sept. 7. — "I am feeling fine," Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee told reporters as his special Air India flight *Harshvardhan* landed at JFK International Airport today after a long and strenuous journey, dismissing recent speculation about his health.

The Prime Minister will address the Millennium UN Summit tomorrow. Asked if he would address the summit standing in view of his knee problem, he said: "Certainly. I will deliver my speech standing."

Just before his departure from New Delhi, Mr Vajpayee said: "A new turn has come in the Indo-US relations."

As he flew over Pakistan, Mr Vajpayee sent the customary message of greeting to the country's military ruler from his aircraft, conveying his best wishes for the progress and well-being of the people of Pakistan.

The message was simply addressed to Pervez Musharraf, Islamabad, without mentioning the title that the military ruler has given himself — Chief Executive.

His messages to leaders of other countries he flew over mentioned the offices they held.

Gen Musharraf is already in New York, but a meeting between the two is unlikely.

Rising prices of crude oil in

BILL & FIDEL SHAKE HANDS, OR DID THEY?

UNHQ, Sept. 7. — There were conflicting reports on a meeting between Mr Bill Clinton and Mr Fidel Castro today. While AFP reported that the two leaders shook hands and spoke briefly on the sidelines of the UN Millennium Summit, AP maintained "there was no handshake", quoting White House press secretary Mr Joe Lockhart.

Both reports, however, mentioned the two spoke briefly and that the conversation was "initiated" by Mr Castro. The Cuban President was not on the invitation list for Mr Clinton's reception for world leaders today.

the international market, briefed by the minister for affecting India's economy, will be among the major issues figuring in the parleys between Mr Vajpayee and Mr Bill Clinton.

Prior to his departure for the USA, the Prime Minister was

Several heads of state of the Opec will be in the USA for the UN Millennium Summit. Mr Vajpayee is also expected to take up the matter with them.

If the price spiral goes unchecked, India's import bill for crude oil is expected to go up to Rs 80,000 crore during the current fiscal, compared to Rs 57,000 crore in the previous year, Mr Naik said.

On whether the government would revise the price of petroleum products with Assembly polls due in Assam, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry early next year, Mr Naik said the government would not hesitate to do so.

TV coverage

Doordarshan has made elaborate arrangements for coverage of Mr Vajpayee's visit to the USA. His address to Millennium Summit tomorrow will be telecast live from 9.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. on DD-1 and DD News, an official release said here today.

The PM's address to the joint session of the US Congress will be telecast live on DD-1 and DD News on 14 September between 7.15 p.m. and 8.15 p.m. His welcome at White House on 15 September will be telecast live from 7.15 p.m.

■ More reports on pages 8 and 9

THE STATESMAN

8 SEP 2000

The US should recognise India as a major countervailing force against the Taliban and jihadis

Reflections on a relationship

BY PREM SHANKAR JHA

TAL BEHARI Vajpayee's visit to Washington is intended to cement a growing relationship, and not to break fresh ground. The latter would in any case have been impossible during the last eight weeks of Bill Clinton's second term in office. When the dust settles down after the Presidential and Congressional elections, there could be around 5,000 new faces in Washington and the Government will set about re-inventing itself. Most of the new actors will be mustard-keen professors from the major universities, think tankers, and ambitious young aides fresh out of graduate school in a hurry to make their mark on history. This is, after all, the American century.

But despite the bustle, there will be continuity in the main strands of US foreign policy, indeed a surprising amount of it. This is not only because in many important areas, such as the growth of international terrorism and the narcotics trade, the US does not set the agenda but only reacts to developments elsewhere; also because the underlying imperatives of globalisation and Pax Americana, (often interchangeable) are understood by and subscribed to by both the major parties. Vajpayee's visit will therefore serve a useful purpose if he uses it to remind his hosts of the need to keep cementing it no matter who comes to power in the White House, and which party gains the majority in the two Houses of Congress.

The salient feature of the emerging relationship is the US grudging acceptance of India as a *de facto*, but not *de jure* nuclear power. This is not just the acceptance of a *fait accompli*. Behind it lies an acknowledgement of the validity of India's concern over the intensifying Sino-Pak nuclear and missile cooperation, and of the fact that the NPT regime has no antidote to it.

There is also a growing awareness of the need to work together in areas of common concern, particularly to combat terrorism, and the trade in narcotics. Underlying both is a mounting concern over the fate of Pakistan and what its slide into Talibanisation could mean for the whole world. Lastly, there is an awareness that India's slow but steady economic progress, its growing middle class domestic market, and its progressively more open

economy is likely to make it an important player in global markets. It is already one in the infotech industry. Given the right domestic policies, others could follow.

But behind these shifts lies a profound change in perception that is still in its infancy. This is from viewing India as an adversary in the Cold War, to seeing it as a confrontationist, often obstreperous, smaller power, to gradually accepting it as a potential partner in building a stable and peaceful 21st century international order. For this change one needs to thank not just the disquieting developments in Asia that have been referred to above, but more directly Clinton himself.

For eight years, Clinton put the propagation of democracy at the very top of his international agenda. Where he broke new ground was in publicly acclaiming not just India's democracy but the challenge of nation-building in the largest and most ethnically heterogeneous country in the world. There is also an awareness in America of the contribution that NRIs and Americans of Indian origin are making to the future of their country. For not only is the community, with an average family income of over \$90,000 per annum, the richest in the country, but a disproportionate number of its income earners are to be found in cutting edge technologies and at the universities that will be the foundation of future American prosperity and dominance. The award of the Pulitzer prize for literature to Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies* was not just a recognition of merit but an expression of gratitude for the enrichment of American society.

Clinton first voiced some of these sentiments during Narasimha Rao's visit to Washington in 1994. The nuclear test in 1998 was a severe setback, but it is a tribute to his resolve and Jaswant Singh's

diplomacy, that it survived. Clinton's visit to India in March put the capstone on the change. Both Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's address at the Asia society in Washington before the visit, and Clinton's speeches during the visit made it plain that India could become a full-fledged partner in the building of the new global order if it did a minimum to reassure the world that it subscribed to the goal of non-proliferation.

Many in Delhi failed at first to perceive the change that had taken place, but in the last six months the message has sunk in and most of the embedded wariness of the US, a product of the half-century of Cold War, has melted away.

Vajpayee's main purpose during his visit should be to make it clear to his hosts, from both political parties, that India recognises the change that has taken place, and understands that in order to play a constructive part in the making of the 21st century world order it must accept some constraints on its absolute freedom of action. (Indeed this is true of all nations working within an increasingly interdependent State system). He needs to remind them of the many ways in which India's actions during its dealings with the US and other countries make this acceptance clear — ways that the press and television do not get to know of, or report.

He needs to make it clear that signing the CTBT is no longer an issue in India; that behind the posturing of the various political parties the consensus on signing it is almost complete, and only the optimum moment for doing so remains to be decided. He needs to ask them to judge India's conduct and sense of responsibility, not by what it might or might not profess but what it actually does. And he needs to remind them that India's record on the control of nuclear and missile technologies is second to none.

Above all, Vajpayee needs to remind his listeners

gently that if the partnership is to grow, the US too needs to iron out the inconsistencies that bedevil its relationship with India. It is not possible for the US to invite India into a working partnership based on nuclear restraint and continue to punish it by keeping the threat of economic sanctions alive and denying it access to technology in the most draconian of ways.

This is not just a bilateral issue. The US needs to face squarely the consequences of continued curbs on India in the face of an acceleration of Chinese nuclear and missile technology transfers to Pakistan during the last one year.

These technologies are being passed on to one of the most dangerously unstable countries in the world. According to Ahmed Rashid, in 1998 Pakistan contained 80,000 Pakistani Taliban who had fought with the Afghan Taliban and returned to their country. According to journalist Arif Jamal, up to 300,000 *jihadis* have been trained in around 29 camps in Pakistan and Afghanistan. This silent, ominous presence on the political scene has paralysed the Pervez Musharraf Government, and forced it to backtrack on just about every modern reform that it set out to accomplish — whether the amendment of the blasphemy laws, the taxation of traders, or the imposition of import duties on the so-called Bara or smugglers' markets.

Nor is this impotence surprising, for behind the Bara markets is the same ATM (Asian Transport Mafia) that funded the Taliban during the first phase of its rise to power in Afghanistan. Today the phalanx formed by the Pakistani religious parties, the trade and transport mafias, the Taliban and up to 300,000 Pakistani *jihadis*, is unstoppable. It is this phalanx that was caught by surprise by the cease-fire in Kashmir, but took only 15 days to tear it down.

Today the US needs to face the possibility that Pakistan may be beyond the point of no return, and that for reasons of their own the Chinese will not admit this. And it needs to decide whether it will help India to safeguard itself against the emerging threat, or continue to oppose its attempts to do so by denying it access to technology. In the latter case the much vaunted partnership could meet an early death.



HD-1

ASIA SOCIETY SPEECH / 'PAK. MISREAD INDIAN GENEROSITY'

9/9

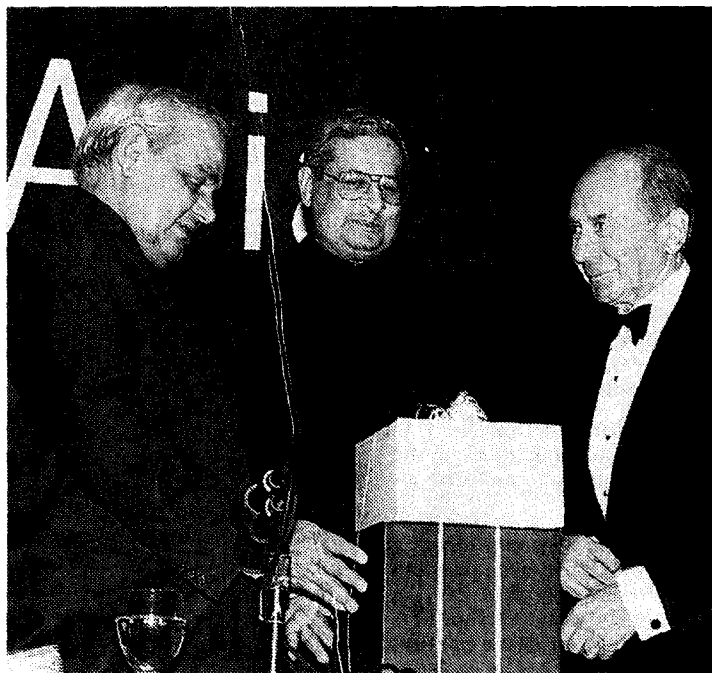
India, U.S. natural allies: Vajpayee

By Malini Parthasarathy

NEW YORK, SEPT. 8. Describing India and the United States as "natural allies", the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, set the context and tenor of his forthcoming parleys with the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, next week, asserting that an Indo- U.S. partnership was "important, above all, for Asia". Addressing an influential gathering of opinion makers, soon after his arrival here, Mr. Vajpayee also said an Indo-U.S. partnership was necessitated by "our many common interests in the region" which "demand it from us".

In a detailed address which reaffirmed and highlighted afresh the specific policy contours of the Government's approach to international strategic and regional issues, Mr. Vajpayee told the Asia Society, which he was addressing for the second time since he became Prime Minister, that it was his belief that when the history of the Indo-U.S. partnership was written, the six-month period between March and September 2000, beginning with Mr. Clinton's visit to India and culminating with his present return visit would be "seen as the defining moment".

While the Prime Minister took care to reaffirm his Government's commitment to forging a new partnership with the U.S., he also highlighted once again the underpinnings of his Government's policy approach to the nuclear question. In an obvious reference to the U.S. and other nuclear weapons powers, he said: "Hence, our resolve to build a multipolar world where we have strategic space and autonomy in decision-making, instead of being subjected to the hypocrisy and hegemony of those who refuse to dismantle their nuclear stock-



The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, receiving the Asia Society Leadership Award from Mr. Maurice R. Greenberg and Mr. Victor J. Menezes in New York on Thursday. — PTI

...piles." While defending the decision to "acquire a credible minimum nuclear deterrent" as not having taken away from India's belief that peace was better guaranteed by disarmament than deterrence, the Prime Minister said there was "little inclination on part of nations that have acquired huge stockpiles and delivery systems to turn their swords into ploughshares." Until then, India would maintain a credible minimum nuclear deterrent.

On the signing of the CTBT, Mr. Vajpayee said that pending the evolution of a national consensus on this issue, his Government would not prevent the treaty's entry into force and that his Government had agreed to participate in negotiations on a Fissile Materials

Cut-off Treaty in Geneva.

The Prime Minister's address at the Asia Society dinner dwelt at length on the Government's current policy approach to Pakistan, arguing that Pakistan has "misread" India's "generosity of spirit and desire for friendly relations as weakness" and had consciously opted to pursue hostility with India by "promoting terrorism in different parts of India." In what was evidently designed to dovetail with the United States' own problems with terrorism, Mr. Vajpayee said that "the protagonists of this terror campaign are known to the world. The proliferation of practitioners of medieval religious extremism in our neighbourhood is only one of the factors that have contributed to

cross-border terrorism. But they have provided a convenient cloak to disguise the aggression on our civil society — the cloak of jihad." He appealed to the international community to "reject attempts to cloak cross-border terrorism as jihad."

Maintaining that as the largest country in the region, India had "displayed a generosity of spirit" which was reflected in his initiative culminating in the Lahore declaration but Pakistan had responded with Kargil and further removed "the last vestiges of democracy" and embarked "on a more adventurous course of stepping up its terrorist campaign", one result of which was the hijacking of an Indian Airlines plane to Kandahar last winter. Besides, Pakistan was continuing to repudiate the Shimla and Lahore pacts.

The thrust and tenor of the Prime Minister's address which laid considerable store by the emerging relationship with the U.S. even as it indicated it saw little scope at this time for a change in its bilateral dynamics with Pakistan, offered a clear idea of the direction and context in which the talks with Mr. Clinton in Washington next week, will take shape.

After his address to the large gathering in the ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria hotel, which he read out while he was seated, because of his knee problem, the Prime Minister did not stay on for the dinner. Meanwhile, senior members of the Prime Minister's delegation and senior U.S. officials who are here on account of the U.N. Millennium Summit were working during the day on preparing a draft of the joint statement to be released after the talks at the White House, next week.

THE HINDU

9 SEP 2000

Ind. us

Bush, Vajpayee talk over phone

By Malini Parthasarathy

10-1

NEW YORK, SEPT. 9. In a signal intended to emphasise the Vajpayee administration's strong interest in maintaining the current strategic course of developing closer ties with the administration in the United States, regardless of its party affiliation, the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B Vajpayee, told the Republican presidential candidate, Mr. George W. Bush, who had telephoned him on Friday afternoon that in his view, India and the U.S. were "natural allies".

Mr. Vajpayee was to have met Mr. Bush on September 6 in New York but because of the postponement of his visit by two days, the meeting was cancelled and hence Mr. Bush had called Mr. Vajpayee on the telephone, out of courtesy. The telephone conversation between Mr. Bush and the Prime Minister was more in the nature of an exchange of pleasantries. For his part, the Prime Minister offered his good wishes to the Texas Governor in his election campaign.

Indian officials, beginning with the Union External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, who

briefed reporters about the Bush phone call at a news conference later in the evening, were at pains to say that the current Prime Ministerial visit ought not to be viewed merely in the context of a "return visit" for President Clinton's, last March. It was pointed out that the Government was anxious to sustain the momentum and the forward movement that had been achieved as a result of the current high-level activity, beginning with Mr. Clinton's visit, reflecting in the Vision Statement and the creation of an Institutional Architecture for dialogue between the two countries.

Earlier this year, the Principal Secretary and National Security Adviser, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, had meetings with leading members of the Bush team, Ms. Condoleezza Rice, thought to be a prospec-

tive Bush administration National Security Adviser, Gen. Colin Powell, seen as a future Bush Secretary of State and Mr. Paul Wolfowitz, seen as another likely significant foreign policy voice in a Bush administration. It was also pointed out with some satisfaction that out of the hundred or so heads of state and Government visiting New York for the summit, Mr. Vajpayee had been more or less singled out by the Republican presidential candidate.

Yet, much as Indian officials sought to play upon the fact of the Bush telephone call, how much of that gesture from the Texas Governor represented substantive interest in India or South Asia is another matter. It must not be forgotten that it was the same Mr. George Bush whose major foreign policy gaffe evoked

considerable amusement in the early stages of the election campaign when, confronted on television with the question as to whether he could name the Prime Minister of India, shook his head and said "no".

But this is apparently not a matter worrying the Vajpayee team right now which is more at pains to ensure that the substance of the Prime Minister's visit is not impugned by the fact of its parleys with a lame-duck administration in its last days. It was equally emphatically underlined by senior officials in the Indian delegation that the Vajpayee administration would have a similar opportunity of contact with the Democratic presidential candidate, the Vice-President, Mr. Al Gore, who is hosting a lunch for Mr. Vajpayee on September 15.

THE HINDU

10 SEP 2000

Vajpayee builds bridge beyond Clinton

FROM K.P. NAYAR

New York, Sept. 9: With the UN Millennium Summit out of the way, Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee quickly turned his attention last night to the main objective of his visit to the US: to build on President Bill Clinton's India trip in March and give an institutional foundation to Indo-US relations.

Giving the lie to criticism that Vajpayee was wasting his time with a lame duck White House in visiting the US just weeks before the presidential election here, Republican presidential hopeful George W. Bush yesterday telephoned Vajpayee and exchanged views on Indo-US relations.

Apart from courtesy talk, fuelled by reports in the US media about the Prime Minister's ill health, Bush expressed appreciation for the way Indo-US relations have developed recently. Bush, who is governor of Texas, also praised the role being played by Americans of Indian origin in this country.

Vajpayee, on his part, referred with satisfaction to references made by Bush on the campaign trail and in media interactions to Indo-US ties. Vajpayee appreciated the Republican manifesto in which India and South Asia figure in the section on Asia Pacific. This is a significant departure from the past when South Asia was ignored in the manifesto.

The telephone talk between the Prime Minister and the presidential aspirant apparently compensates for the aborted meeting between the two which was to have taken place here on Wednesday had Vajpayee stuck to his original plans of arriving in New York on Tuesday.

In view of Bush's campaign schedule, fresh dates for a meeting could not be fixed. The cancellation of Tuesday's meeting had disappointed Indian Americans, but the phone talk is a partial consolation for them and for Indian diplomats who have been trying to be even-handed in the election campaign here.

Addressing a news conference yesterday, foreign minister Jaswant Singh dispelled the idea that India's links were only with the Democratic Party in the US.

Singh said this was a "wrong assumption" and that India's approach to future US politics was bipartisan.

He said Indo-US ties were not personality oriented or dependent on an individual. The statement was obviously prompted by criticism that the present Indo-US initiatives were because of Clinton and that it could fade away with a new occupant in the White House.

Next week, when Vajpayee goes to Washington, he will interact with the Democratic presidential aspirant, Vice-President Al Gore. Gore will host a lunch for Vajpayee on Friday.

Later, after Vajpayee flies home from Washington, Jaswant Singh will go to the West Coast where he will have more talks with foreign policy advisers of Bush.

THE TELEGRAPH

10 SEP 2000

Unable to meet, Atal and Bush Jr catch up on phone

HT Correspondent
New York, September 9

REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL candidate George W. Bush has assured Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee that he regards Indo-US relations as a top foreign policy priority. "I hope that our two countries can come even closer in the years ahead," the Governor told Mr Vajpayee.

Governor Bush's remarks came in the course of a telephone conversation with the Prime Minister at 5 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) on Friday. Mr Bush was originally scheduled to meet Mr Vajpayee but the potential meetings were cancelled because of the rescheduling of the PM's visit.

The Governor told Mr Vajpayee how disappointed he was that their meeting had been cancelled, but spoke at length about the goodwill he felt for India and the contributions made by people of Indian origin to the United States.

In turn, Mr Vajpayee reminded him of the affection with which his father, former President George Bush, is regarded in India and listed many of the senior Bush's initiatives in the field of Indo-

US relations.

The Prime Minister's aides say that the conversation is significant because they have faced criticism about their ties to the Clinton administration.

Not only do Mr Vajpayee and President Clinton get on at a personal level but Vice-President Al Gore, Governor Bush's Democratic rival in the forthcoming election, is scheduled to host a lunch for Mr Vajpayee in Washington DC.

In fact, say aides, the Indian Government has established contacts with the Bush campaign and the Republican hierarchy at various levels. It was these contacts that led Governor Bush to ask if he could call on Mr Vajpayee.

The Governor had originally suggested that he could fly down to New York to meet Mr Vajpayee on September 6. The Indian side had preferred to schedule the meeting during the San Francisco leg of Mr Vajpayee's visit. The Governor, who was due to campaign in San Diego, had offered to stop by in San Francisco for a one-on-one encounter. Both meetings were rendered impossible because of the rescheduling of Mr Vajpayee's visit.

Even so, the call, when it came, took Indian officials by surprise. The Prime Minister was at the

embassy in Washington. The Governor's staff had called the embassy to ask when the candidate could speak to the Prime Minister. After consultations with Mr Vajpayee, the Indian side agreed to 4.30 p.m. (EST) for the conversation.

But this schedule was thrown awry when Bangladesh's Sheikh Hasina turned up 15 minutes late for her meeting with Mr Vajpayee. Anxious Indian officials phoned the Bush campaign headquarters to ask if the call could be pushed back by 15 minutes. In the event, Governor Bush's aides said that he would call at 5 p.m.

Predictably, the Indian side regards the contact as a major foreign policy achievement. "There are 130 Heads of State in New York," Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh told the Press. "But as far as I know, the Governor only called the Prime Minister." The implication was that the Governor had not called General Musharraf who has been parked in New York while his aides embark on a major goodwill blitz.

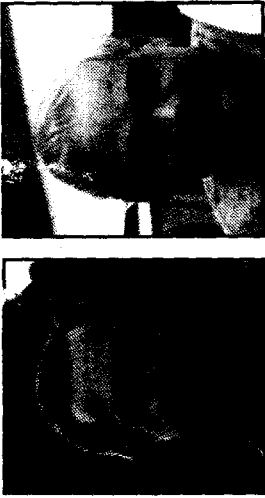
Former Republican Secretary of State George Schultz will host a lunch for Mr Jaswant Singh when he visits the West Coast later this month. Meanwhile, both Mr Naresh Chandra and

National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra have already developed extensive contacts with the Republican hierarchy. Mr Mishra spent an hour with Condoleezza Rice, Mr Bush's national security advisor, on his last visit to the US.

Earlier this year, Mr Mishra was also a guest at the exclusive Bohemian Grove gathering. This is a haunt of the right wing establishment which rigidly restricts membership and access. At the Grove, Mr Mishra met such prominent Republicans as former President Bush, General Colin Powell and Henry Kissinger.

The Indian Government believes that were Al Gore to win, he would continue with President Clinton's foreign policy but would increase pressure on India in the key areas of labour, human rights and environment. At the same time, Governor Bush would not bother as much with human rights and the rest but would try and use India as a counter to China.

Says one of Mr Vajpayee's aides, "The important thing to note is the irrelevance of Pakistan, regardless of who wins. Either way, India will continue to remain one of America's top foreign policy priorities."



UN Summit Declaration

- To take concerted action against international terrorism and small arms trafficking.
- To keep all options open including convening a conference on eliminating nuclear weapons.
- To combat all forms of violence and discrimination against women.
- To ensure equality of all States and the principle of territorial integrity. **Details on page 10**

end of his address to the UN when Ambassador Naresh Chandra received an urgent call from the

HINDUSTAN TI

HINDUSTAN TI

10 SEP 2000

HO-13
12/9

Taliban to figure in Indo-U.S. talks

✓

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 11. The surging forces of jihad in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and their destabilising impact on the region are expected to figure in the talks between the United States President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, in Washington later this week.

Informed sources here say that Indo-U.S. talks on the regional situation over the last few months "have broadened" to focus on the inextricable linkages between the forces of extremism in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Kashmir.

In the past, discussions between India and the U.S. on regional issues focussed narrowly on nuclear proliferation, Indo-Pakistani relations and the Kashmir dispute. But now a broader template that includes the developments in Afghanistan has begun to shape the Indo-U.S. dialogue.

The American perception that the centre of international terrorism has shifted from West Asia to Pakistan and Afghanistan, and the challenge India faces in combating the forces of extremism being sponsored from its neighbours to the west have created a new con-

vergence of interests between Washington and New Delhi. The Indo-U.S. Joint Working Group on counter-terrorism has become the main forum for the exchange of views and exploration of security cooperation between the two nations.

Reflecting on the forces of extremism in Afghanistan, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Mr. Karl Inderfurth, recently said the Taliban was "supplying jihadists, those who believe they will wage a holy war against the infidels, whether it be in Central Asia, in Chechnya, or in Kashmir."

The Clinton administration has been putting pressure on Pakistan to use its influence with the Taliban to modify its policies and hand over Mr. Osama bin Laden, Saudi dissident accused in the U.S. of masterminding the bombing of American embassies in East Africa two years ago.

The U.S. is also urging Pakistan to reduce the cross-border terrorism in Kashmir and create an appropriate atmosphere for resumption of the Indo-Pak dialogue, which Washington is so keen on seeing. Until now, the American pressure has had little impact on Islamabad's approach

towards either India or Afghanistan. New Delhi says there is no evidence of the reduction of Pakistan's support to cross-border terrorism in Kashmir.

Instead of working for a negotiated peace settlement, the Taliban has launched a new military offensive in northern Afghanistan. Militant groups backed by the Taliban have stepped up attacks in Central Asia, particularly in the Fergana Valley shared by Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

Last week, Mr. Vajpayee reaffirmed in New York the Indian refusal to engage Pakistan until it put an end to cross-border terrorism. Mr. Vajpayee will try and convince Mr. Clinton that without confronting the forces of extremism that have gripped Pakistan, there can be no real peace and security in the region.

Mr. Vajpayee would also want to see more decisive action by the Clinton administration in pressing Pakistan to see reason. His strong references against Pakistan's proclaimed policy of jihad, in that sense, appear to be part of a calculated strategy in New Delhi.

Giving up golf, US plays ball with India

FROM K. PNAYAR

New York, Sept. 12: As Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee gets set for a whirlwind four-day visit to the US capital, India is in the diplomatic big league in Washington, at least for the time being.

Officials of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the ministry of external affairs persuaded the Clinton administration during the weekend to do what few foreign governments could achieve. They managed to get Washington bureaucrats to give up their weekend and golf to work on Indo-US relations.

The under-secretary of state for political affairs, Thomas Pickering, travelled to New York from Washington on Sunday for day-long parleys with Indian foreign

secretary Lalit Mansingh. At the same time, Indian government secretaries for telecommunications, textiles and power engaged their American counterparts on the economic agenda for Vajpayee's visit.

Karl Inderfurth, the assistant secretary of state for South Asia, was constantly on the phone from his Virginia residence to Alok Prasad, the joint secretary in the foreign ministry dealing with the Americas, to finalise documents to be released at the end of Vajpayee's talks with Clinton.

Diplomats in Washington recalled that not since the hectic days of Soviet-US arms limitation talks had the American bureaucracy sacrificed their privileged holidays to work on a visit from abroad. The only exception, of course, was the West Asia peace

talks in July when Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat were forced into a room by President Bill Clinton for days under his mediation to work out a deal.

Already, the Americans have made the rarest of rare exceptions in asking Vajpayee to go over to Washington from New York. As a rule, they discourage dignitaries visiting the UN from extending their trip to include official engagements in Washington.

In finalising the details of Vajpayee's Washington itinerary, the Indians are putting to full use America's proficiency in technology.

Yesterday, they were on teleconferences from the Waldorf Astoria hotel involving officials in Washington and Indian community leaders elsewhere in the US. The economic agenda for Vaj-

payee's Washington trip is now in its final stages. N.K. Singh, secretary in the PMO, said progress was expected in resolving India's textile disputes with US.

American officials are heaving a sigh of relief that Yasser Arafat has put off his unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state. The declaration was to take effect on September 13, the day Vajpayee reaches Washington. Had Arafat gone ahead, Vajpayee's US itinerary would have been jeopardised.

Sevak of India

The Prime Minister has clarified that he described himself as a "swayamsevak" last week in the context of his being a volunteer in the service of India and its people. He also ruled out any change in the government's position on the Ayodhya issue.



Vajpayee at the UN. (AFP)

Surgery on Vajpayee at home

FROM OUR DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

New York, Sept. 12: After doctors here examined his troubled left knee, it was decided today that the Prime Minister will be operated upon in India.

Before resuming his engagements in the US, Atal Behari Vajpayee went to hospital on Tuesday to be examined. Yesterday, too, there was one round of checking at his hotel.

Vajpayee was attended to at Lennox hospital by C. Ranawat, a world famous orthopaedic surgeon. The same doctor will fly down to India to carry out the operation which involves knee replacement.

Before the Prime Minister went to the hospital, Vajpayee's aides were tightlipped about the possibility of having the surgery in the US itself. But there were enough indications that the surgery would not be performed here to avoid complications during the Washington leg of the trip, to which the government is attaching great importance.

Medical sources said the only logical course of action for the doctors was to recommend knee replacement. But that would require the Prime Minister's admission to hospital, which is why the decision to have the operation done in India. No date has been fixed for it yet.

THE TELEGRAPH

13 SEP 2000

from the front page

US feels Kashmir issue can be solved within Indian Union

The changing dynamics of the Kashmir debate follows the precipitous decline in Pakistan's fortunes as a nation-state and the fears in Washington and other western capitals of an internal collapse and its consequences thereof.

U.S. thinkers and strategists are now projecting that Pakistan will not exist too far into the 21st century. Robert Kaplan, an influential analyst, suggested in a recent article in the Atlantic Monthly that Pakistan could split along a natural faultline on the Indus River with the areas to the west under Iranian influence and the Punjabi areas to the east reclaiming their Indian heritage. But Kaplan also feels Pakistan will not go quietly into the night.

Other similar theses about the inevitable breakup of Pakistan are beginning to make the rounds.

Clinton administration officials described some of the reports as apocalyptic journalism, but agreed the Pakistani state was facing a grave crisis. Under the circumstances, the wisdom of Pakistan making Kashmir a central theme of its existence when its survival even without Kashmir was in such grave doubt is questionable, they said.

Some analysts have also questioned the viability of Kashmir as an independent country even if one dismisses the prospect of the Indian side of the state merging with Pakistan. The reasonable solution they are bandying around is to settle the dispute along the current Line of Control with India addressing the

Kashmiri demands of autonomy while Pakistan attends to its survival. The changing tone of the debate has not in the least fazed Pakistan's military dispensation, which has actually upped the ante on Kashmir in recent weeks.

Despite the country's parlous state, the military ruler Gen. Musharraf canvassed for and invested effort heavily on the Kashmir issue at during his weeklong stay in New York.

That effort has only served to further disappoint the international diplomatic community which was hoping for a cooling of temperatures on Kashmir through a Pakistani commitment to the existing peace treaties and abjuring violence of the two Indian conditions for resuming dialogue. At least one former diplomat berated Musharraf in a harsh commentary on the Washington Post editorial page today. The economy of Pakistan is sinking, yet the focus of the military leadership remains stronger than ever on Kashmir. Pakistan's junta continues to concentrate all its resources on funding and fueling terrorism in Kashmir on the one hand, while on the other dashing domestic hopes for a return to a democratic and secular society," former US Ambassador Robert Davis wrote.

Davis said the "Pakistani military regime is exhibiting an almost pathological determination to keep South Asia in turmoil, doing little to curb Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism breeding within its borders, while scuttling others' steps to-

ward peace." He also argued that Pakistan's intended destruction of the nascent Kashmir peace process requires a firmer response from the U.S. administration.

"Declaring Pakistan a terrorist state, and thus putting it on par with the terrorist groups it harbors and supports, would encourage the people of Pakistan to remove the military warmongers who have deprived them of sustainable development," Davis said. US officials say privately that declaring Pakistan a terrorist country is simply not on the cards simply because it would dismay and undermine the more reasonable elements in that society. But indications are that more and more militant organisations like the Lashkar e-Toiba will be branded if the Musharraf government does not act.

While there appears to be a subtle change of heart in the Clinton administration on the eve of the Vajpayee visit, whether it will be carried over to the next administration depends on the kind of spadework the Indians do over the next few weeks. The general feeling is that a Bush administration will be lay store on realpolitik go by strategic weight rather than history or sentiment or U.N. resolutions.

Al Gore administration, which looks more likely at this moment, will by and large follow the Clinton line. Significantly, Gore's lunch for Vajpayee on September 15 will be at the State Department and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright will presumably be at the event too.

US feels Kashmir issue can be solved within Indian Union

CHIDANAND RAJGHATTA
WASHINGTON, SEPT 12

INFLUENTIAL sections of the US administration and policy makers are veering around to the view that the Kashmir issue can and must be resolved within the broad framework of the Indian Union and any solution outside this is fraught with even graver dangers than current situation. Recent interviews and conversations with senior Clinton administration officials suggest the idea of Indian Kashmir acceding to Pakistan by plebiscite or otherwise, or even an independent Kashmir, is not seen as a viable proposition.

On the other hand, the Indian government will also have to show a lot of courage, foresight, and generosity in addressing the genuine concerns of the suffering Kashmiris, they say.

There is a growing feeling here that left to their own devices, New Delhi and the Kashmiri separatists can resolve most of the problems between themselves. Pakistan should also show enough foresight to allow this to happen. Most recent evidence of the kind of sentiment emerging between the two sides came in the form of the regrets expressed by the Hizbul Muja-

hedin for the killing of Indian soldiers in Kashmir and a reciprocal expression of repentance by the army authorities for the death of militants.

Senior officials monitoring South Asia say they are encouraged by the contacts between the two sides. They regretted the breakdown of talks on the previous occasion when Pakistan's ISI is said to have prevailed upon the negotiating Hizbul Mujaheddin to put conditions making Pakistan a party to the talks. "We don't

have an insight into how things broke down, but it was unfortunate," one official said. The feeling in the administration is the separatists and the Indian government should talk now, and Pakistan could be involved at a later stage if necessary.

The evolving U.S view signals a gradual shift in the position of the Clinton Administration which originally opened a can of worms during its first term by publicly airing its doubts about Kashmir's accession to India. That statement, made by the controversial then assistant secretary of state Robin Raphel, is seen as having emboldened Islamabad to embark on a more adventurous course to settle the Kashmir issue in its favour, by force if need.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

**SPECIAL
REPORT**

12/9 Opportunity to cement ties with India: U.S. HD-13

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 13. With the end of the Cold War the United States has the opportunity for a "new and strengthened" relationship with India; and Washington has taken some very specific steps with India since the President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit, continuing high-level political consultations, the National Security Council spokesman, Mr. P. J. Crowley, has said.

On the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee's visit, Mr. Crowley, during the course of a regular briefing at the White House, said, "... as the President noted in his trip to India this spring... we are the world's oldest democracy, India is the world's largest democracy; and you know with the end of the Cold War we have the opportunity for a new and strengthened relationship with India."

"We've taken some very specific steps with India since the President's trip, continuing high-level political consultations. They were part of the Community of Democracies meeting that we held in Poland earlier this year. We are trying to improve our commercial, energy and scientific base."

"... we are already both the largest foreign investor in India and its largest trading partner and I think during the course of Mr. Vajpayee's time here we'll have the opportunity to deepen our economic relationship as well," Mr. Crowley said.

The Prime Minister will meet the President, Mr. Bill Clinton, for official talks on September 15 followed by the delegation-level meeting. Mr. Clinton will host a banquet for the Prime Minister on September 17 after which the latter will leave for India via Frankfurt.

Mr. Vajpayee's official programme begins on Thursday with an address to a joint session of the U.S. Congress. For the first time in the history of the American Congress, a Hindu priest will perform the daily invocation of the House of Representatives on September 14 before Mr. Vajpayee's speech. The Ohio Democrat, Mr. Sherrod Brown, had written to the House Chaplain to invite the priest, Mr. Venkatchalapathi Samudrala, from the Shiva Vishnu Temple in Parma, Ohio, for performing the invocation. Under the rules, the Chaplain can invite any religious leader to deliver the invocation.

Vajpayee-Clinton dialogue

By C. Raja Mohan

At his meeting with Mr. Clinton, Mr. Vajpayee must address the Pakistan question directly and unambiguously. There is no country better placed than the U.S. to influence Pakistan's political evolution.

HERE IS no way India can avoid talking about Pakistan. That much has come out clearly from the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee's sharp attacks last week on Pakistan at the Asia Society and the United Nations millennium summit.

Could Mr. Vajpayee have ignored Pakistan? Not really. The decision to take on Pakistan is a welcome departure from the two great pretensions which have often marked New Delhi's policy towards Islamabad. One is to behave on international fora as if Pakistan does not exist. The other is a belief that the enduring problems with it can be resolved in a purely bilateral framework. Both these assumptions no longer stand scrutiny.

First, it does not take a rocket scientist to figure out that Pakistan remains the principal national security challenge to India for the foreseeable future. Most of its security problems — the danger of a nuclear exchange, the prospect of a conventional war, unending cross-border terrorism, the threat to territorial integrity and pervasive political destabilisation — arise from the hostile relationship with Pakistan.

India needs to face up to this reality squarely and find ways to deal with it. It must seek a lasting solution to its Pakistan problem. New Delhi can no longer afford to live with the profuse bleeding that Islamabad is inflicting on it.

Many metaphors can describe India's Pakistan problem. Islamabad is the chain and ball which ties India down to the subcontinent and prevents it from playing a larger role in the international arena. Pakistan can be seen as India's monkey on the back which New Delhi finds it so hard to shake off. Or you can visualise Pakistan as a stinging bee which forever bothers the lumbering elephant that India is.

Whatever the preferred metaphor, the fact is that Pakistan has hit upon a very effective and low-cost sponsorship of terrorism and political destabilisation to keep India off balance.

The Indian option to punish Pakistan militarily for its many transgressions is severely constrained by the nuclear parity it has successfully established. Nuclear equivalence has prevented India from contemplating a conventional war. And

But there is a big difference between getting the major powers to see a problem and acting upon it. Mr. Vajpayee must use his Washington visit to encourage the U.S. to move decisively to contain the forces of destabilisation radiating out of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

When he meets the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, tomorrow for a second time in just about six months, it must be the objective of the Prime Minister to address the Pakistan question directly and unambiguously. There is no country better placed than the U.S. to significantly influence the political evolution of Pakistan.

An international coalition can work only on common interests. It cannot work on the basis of favours from one state to another. As the last few years have shown, there is a growing convergence of interests between India and the U.S. in the subcontinent. Both New Delhi and Washington are interested in preserving nuclear stability, promoting democracy and the rule of law, countering the forces of extremism and international terrorism, peaceful resolution of the outstanding Indo-Pakistan disputes, integrating the market in the subcontinent and establishing trans-regional energy cooperation.

But none of these common objectives can be realised until Pakistan is persuaded to give up its self-destructive obsession with external military adventure and focus on internal economic development. There is an agreement between New Delhi and Washington on what kind of Pakistan they want to see. Both India and the U.S. believe that a stable Pakistan wedded to political moderation and economic modernisation at home and regional cooperation abroad will be in their best interests. New Delhi and Washington also agree that a falling state in Pakistan will pose a grave threat to regional peace and

evolution of Pakistan. An international coalition can work only on common interests. It cannot work on the basis of favours from one state to another. As the last few years have shown, there is a growing convergence of interests between India and the U.S. in the subcontinent. Both New Delhi and Washington are interested in preserving nuclear stability, promoting democracy and the rule of law, countering the forces of extremism and international terrorism, peaceful resolution of the outstanding Indo-Pakistan disputes, integrating the market in the subcontinent and establishing trans-regional energy cooperation.

But none of these common objectives can be realised until Pakistan is persuaded to give up its self-destructive obsession with external military adventure and focus on internal economic development. There is an agreement between New Delhi and Washington on what kind of Pakistan they want to see. Both India and the U.S. believe that a stable Pakistan wedded to political moderation and economic modernisation at home and regional cooperation abroad will be in their best interests. New Delhi and Washington also agree that a falling state in Pakistan will pose a grave threat to regional peace and

evolution of Pakistan. An international coalition can work only on common interests. It cannot work on the basis of favours from one state to another. As the last few years have shown, there is a growing convergence of interests between India and the U.S. in the subcontinent. Both New Delhi and Washington are interested in preserving nuclear stability, promoting democracy and the rule of law, countering the forces of extremism and international terrorism, peaceful resolution of the outstanding Indo-Pakistan disputes, integrating the market in the subcontinent and establishing trans-regional energy cooperation.

But none of these common objectives can be realised until Pakistan is persuaded to give up its self-destructive obsession with external military adventure and focus on internal economic development. There is an agreement between New Delhi and Washington on what kind of Pakistan they want to see. Both India and the U.S. believe that a stable Pakistan wedded to political moderation and economic modernisation at home and regional cooperation abroad will be in their best interests. New Delhi and Washington also agree that a falling state in Pakistan will pose a grave threat to regional peace and

security. While they agree on a set of common strategic objectives towards Pakistan, India and the U.S. differ deeply on the immediate tactics of dealing with it. The Clinton administration would like to see an early resumption of the dialogue between India and Pakistan. New Delhi argues that "talks and cross-border terrorism" cannot go together.

India and the U.S. deeply disagree on the nature of the current military regime. Washington believes India could cut Gen. Pervez Musharraf some slack, by engaging him. New Delhi believes that the General is part of the problem and not the solution.

India wants the U.S. to use all its levers in hand to press Gen. Musharraf to see the reason and walk Pakistan back from the disastrous course it is headed for. The Clinton administration says it is worried that pressing Pakistan too hard would result in pushing it deeper into the clutches of the extremist forces.

India believes that the American reluctance to demand that the Pakistani rulers take responsibility for their actions only encourages the belief in Islamabad that come what may, Uncle Sam will always bail it out. New Delhi also believes that in hesitating to turn the screw on Pakistan, Washington is only inviting blackmail from Islamabad.

On the rise of fundamentalism and extremism, the Clinton administration suggests that it is important to engage the "shorter beards" to prevent the "longer ones" from taking over. India points out that all beards in Pakistan are growing longer, and insists that the time has come to draw the line.

Instead of skirting the issue of Pakistan, Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Clinton need to have a frank discussion on where the state and society in that country are headed and on the best possible means to deal with the situation there.

The Indo-U.S. differences on Pakistan are unlikely to be resolved in one meeting between the Indian Prime Minister and the American President. But an honest conversation on Pakistan can be the first step towards greater cooperation between the two nations in promoting peace and stability in the subcontinent and beyond.

ENTHUSIASM TEMPERED BY CONCERN

U.S. to urge moderation by India, restraint by Pakistan

Sept 13
1-10-78

By Malini Parthasarathy

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 13. The Clinton administration has been exuding warmth about the Prime Minister, Mr. Vajpayee's visit to Washington, particularly as the visit is seen as a significant step towards "institutionalising" the high-profile dialogue between India and the United States, that had begun with the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to India in March. But tempering that enthusiasm is some real concern that the combative and in fact bellicose tenor of the rhetoric that Mr. Vajpayee has been using against Pakistan, as in his speeches at various forums in New York last week, could cast a pall on the emerging bonhomie.

Tirade against Pakistan

At the Asia Society last Thursday, which marked Mr. Vajpayee's first major engagement in the United States and where the anticipation among a largely intellectual and policy-maker audience was that the Prime Minister would spell out his conceptual vision of India's role in Asia and the world, the Prime Minister instead seemed to launch into a tirade against Pakistan. The tone of the address had made many in his audience including several policy-makers and officials distinctly uncomfortable. The indications from Mr. Vajpayee's other speeches during his New York sojourn, which reflected similar bellicosity in respect of Pakistan, has caused some "disappointment" among senior officials in the Clinton administration. These sources say that this is because the United States looks to India to play a "leadership role" in the region and such that would be "a creative one that would try to move towards reconciliation with Pakistan."

It is evident that Mr. Vajpayee's hosts would not like the newfound friendliness between Washington and New Delhi to be reduced to a matter of scoring points against an estranged neighbour — Pakistan. While there is no longer any ambivalence at the highest policy-making levels that Washington wants a closer relationship with New Delhi to develop and in fact regards India as the major power in the South Asian region, it is also clear that it is not about to embark on an isolation or marginalisation of Pakistan. Administration officials said that the U.S. would not like its message of support for India's position on terrorism and ending the violence in Kashmir to be misconstrued as an endorsement of a hardline policy position taken by New Delhi against resuming an engagement of Islamabad. But at the same time, administration sources stressed that this issue would not be allowed to cloud the cordial atmosphere and would only figure in private official discussions.

Of greater significance however is the fact that even as the Prime Minister's visit is being paid due homage to by the official establishment in Washington with all the steps being pulled out to give him an elaborate welcome, the Clinton administration is also quietly keeping alive its relationship with Pakistan and even taking steps in this period of visible engagement with India to ensure that Islamabad stays within reach. The U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, is to meet the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdus Sattar, in New York on Thursday. The U.S. Under-Secretary of State, Mr. Thomas Pickering, has already met Mr. Sattar in New York, laying the ground for Ms. Albright's meeting.

The Clinton administration appears to

be working behind the scenes to create political space for the attempts to build a peace process in Kashmir. Mr. Pickering's discussions with Pakistani and Indian officials have been to the effect that the specific steps taken by India to ease the political context in Kashmir ought to be supported by all the parties in the picture, including Pakistan. Interestingly, the American effort has been to persuade Pakistan to give up its insistence that it be involved in the initial stages of negotiations between India and the Kashmiri militant groups. With Pakistan agreeing to vacate space for India to have its own negotiations with the militants, India in turn would be expected to acknowledge at some stage that Pakistan would have a necessary role in the eventual resolution of the Kashmir issue.

'India should strive for dialogue'

Contrary to what Indian officials have been maintaining, the Clinton administration does not appear to be endorsing India's position that a dialogue with Pakistan is not possible until cross-border terrorism completely ends. Administration sources said that while the United States Government agrees that specific steps were required of Pakistan after the traumatic experience of Kargil, such as reducing the level of infiltration and helping to lower the violence in Kashmir by exerting influence on the militant groups active in the Valley, certain steps were also required of India. For instance, India would have to persevere with its current efforts at dialogue with the militant groups and the Indian Army would have to reciprocate as it did in the case of the Hizb, by ceasing operations when the militant groups offer ceasefires. But more significantly, India's insistence that it would not talk to Pakistan until

cross-border terrorism ended, is not seen as realistic by Washington. India could expect tangible steps from Pakistan towards reducing the level of violence but could not place the onus of ending terrorism in Kashmir entirely on Pakistan, which could not be linked to every act of violence in Kashmir, administration sources pointed out. Thereby, at some stage and at some point in time, it would be incumbent on India to engage Pakistan in the peace process, in order to achieve a lasting solution.

Four key principles

The Clinton administration continues to lay emphasis on the four principles enunciated by Mr. Clinton last March in respect of Kashmir — the need to respect the LoC, to show restraint, to reject violence and to restore the dialogue. In the context of these enunciated principles, it was said here that just as the United States had put pressure on Pakistan earlier to withdraw from Kargil on the basis of the idea that the LoC ought to be respected, in Washington's view, India would be perceived as failing in its obligation if it did not see the need to "return to dialogue" and the path of reconciliation with Pakistan.

However, administration officials are anxious to add the caveat that while there is definite concern that the Indian Government appears to be losing a valuable opportunity to build space for itself in its dealings with Washington and Islamabad, none of this concern would be allowed to mar the substance of its engagement with New Delhi, which would primarily consist of consolidating the gains of the Clinton visit and deepening the engagement of the two countries on a long-term basis.

'Opportunity to cement ties': Page 13

Joint statement to focus on implementation of goals

By Malini Parthasarathy
WASHINGTON, SEPT. 13. With the administrations of both the United States and India being very clear that the conceptual framework and the parameters of the emerging relationship between the two countries as spelt out in the Vision Statement signed last March would be retained, the focus of the official delegation-level discussions is expected to be on a review of the implementation of the goals of the Statement. There would also be a review of the effort to institutionalise the dialogue between New Delhi and Washington.

Mr. Vajpayee, and then between the two official delegations, a joint statement is to be issued. The joint statement is likely to "reaffirm the vision articulated" by Mr. Clinton and Mr. Vajpayee last March and will discuss the steps taken to implement the institutional dialogue that was envisaged in the Vision Statement.

Clinton administration sources said that U.S. concerns about nuclear non-proliferation would be raised during the official talks, including the fact that the Clinton administration was disappointed that India would not agree to the proposal for a multilateral voluntary moratorium on the production of fissile material, pending negotiations in Geneva on a fissile material ban treaty. Yet, this disagreement would be finessed in the final joint statement which is likely to merely record the fact of the differences between the two countries in regard to non-proliferation and security issues. The statement is likely to indicate the intention of both sides to continue the dialogue on non-proliferation issues with a view to further narrowing the differences on these

points. The joint statement would echo the language of the Vision Statement in regard to the Kashmir issue with the formulation that the tensions in South Asia are to be resolved by the countries in South Asia themselves.

Cooperation on terrorism

The joint statement would also speak of cooperation on international terrorism without any specific reference to the South Asian region. The phrasing on terrorism would most likely allude to the problem of drug trafficking and also make reference to the fact that the two countries had set up a working group on counter-terrorism. A more detailed statement on terrorism is likely to come only later after a scheduled meeting of the working group takes place in New Delhi on September 25 and 26.

The joint statement is also likely to speak of cooperation on trade, on which another separate statement could emerge, after the discussions here in the next few days, sources here said. Cooperation on health issues including the prevention of the spread of

HIV/AIDS is likely to find mention in this statement. Sources in the Clinton administration say that the idea is for the joint statement to demonstrate in its totality how far the two countries had come in their efforts to build a new relationship.

An interesting indication of the new political premium being placed on the support of the Indian-American community for the election campaign of the Vice-President, Mr. Al Gore, is that the joint statement is expected to make a special mention of the contribution made by Indian-Americans to forging links between the two countries and their respective societies. The statement will emphasise that the Prime Minister's visit in fact marks a celebration of this important link — the Indian American community.

Indian-American factor

Another sign of the importance being given to the Indian-American factor that is cited here is that prominent Indian-Americans are being invited to the banquet that the U.S. President, Mr. Bill

Clinton, is hosting on Sunday evening in the Prime Minister's honour. The Vice-President, Mr. Al Gore, is likewise expected to invite leading representatives of the Indian-American community to the lunch that he is hosting for Mr. Vajpayee on Friday afternoon.

Interestingly, the banquet that Mr. Clinton will host and for which his wife, Ms. Hillary Clinton, has specially taken time off from her own Senate election race to play hostess, is said to be the last State banquet that the Clintons will host, before they bid farewell to eight years in the White House. "There is therefore an added poignancy about this event," a Clinton administration official pointed out.

THE HINDU

14 SEP 2000

PM sets target of \$5 bn US investments

To set up strategic group in PMO to resolve hurdles in mega projects

HT Correspondent
New York, September 13

VOICING HIS government's determination to "broaden, deepen and accelerate the process of reforms", Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee today urged the United States corporates to respond enthusiastically to the new investment climate in India. He set a target of \$5 billion for US investment flows next year. Vajpayee, who addressed an Indo-American business meet here, announced that he would be creating a strategic management group in the prime minister's office (PMO) to speedily resolve difficulties encountered by large investment projects. An interministerial team will assist the group, which will directly report to him once a month. The United States is India's largest trading partner and American companies are the

largest investors. Yet, the prime minister pointed out, US investment approvals for India have been a mere \$15 billion over the last 10 years and actual flows even smaller. "Let us accept a target of \$5 billion of annual flow beginning next year and raise it to \$15 billion over the next three years," he said adding this ambitious target was achievable. While on the much-talked about "hassles of doing business in India", Vajpayee said this was due in part to "an image problem". "The success stories do not circulate fast enough. One failure proves infectious," he commented. He, however, agreed on the need for more changes to end the burdensome procedures. He made a pointed

reference to the massive deregulation undertaken lately, particularly in the telecom sector, to create investment opportunities in infrastructure areas. "We now have a world class information technology policy," he said and identified IT as

a key area for a mutually beneficial partnership between Indian and American industry. The number of IT professionals passing out of Indian educational institutions is

proposed to be doubled in one year and trebled in three years. Listing the sweeping changes made in the telecom sector, an area where India expects a major investment flow from the US, Vajpayee said that there is now a total deregulation on national long distance and

basic telephony. One also enjoys the freedom to choose one's own under-the-sea optical fiber cables. While the department of telecommunications is being corporatized by October 1, the VSNL's monopoly is also being done away with. On power, the prime minister said he expected several important commercial agreements during his current visit.

According to him, the depoliticization of tariff fixation and its acceptance by many state governments have created new opportunities for private and foreign investment.

The power tariff issue used to be one of the sticking points with Enron and Cogentrix in the past. The government is hopeful that with the new tariff regime, problems of the type would not be encountered. The PM also outlined the financial sector reforms and the ongoing disinvestment program.



THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

14 SEP 2000

14 SEP 2000

Vajpayee crack force to break business shackles

FROM K.P. NAYAR

New York, Sept. 13: Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee today announced the setting up of a Strategic Management Group in the Prime Minister's Office to speedily resolve difficulties in the way of implementing large investment projects.

Addressing a US-India Business Summit shortly before leaving for Washington to begin his "official" visit to the US, Vajpayee said an inter-ministerial team would assist this group. The group itself will report directly to the Prime Minister once a month.

Candidly speaking before a large group of American and Indian-American businessmen who braved unseasonal rains lashing the Big Apple, Vajpayee said: "I realise that apart from motivating you, we also need to change. I am not unmindful that you often find our rules, regulations and procedures burdensome."

He said there is an image problem, often described as the "hassles of doing business in India". He described this as a communication gap, in part. "The success sto-

ries do not circulate fast enough. One failure proves infectious."

Vajpayee conceded that many approved projects were languishing and that assistance in project implementation was an area which needed to be strengthened.

Reiterating his government's commitment to reforms, Vajpayee said often, the project-related problems concern state governments. He promised to urge chief ministers to follow the PMO's initiative in setting up the Strategic Management Group. "I am sure that this will impart some momentum and seriousness to address implementational concerns," he said.

Urging American businessmen not to be overly influenced by the size of the present Indo-US bilateral economic engagement, he hoped they would take a long-term view by looking at the magnitude of the opportunities and rewards in future.

He regretted that approvals for US investment in India in the last 10 years were a mere \$15 billion. "Actual flows are even smaller," he said. He called for a target of \$5 billion inflow annually beginning

next year, rising to \$15 billion in three years. Similarly, bilateral trade should double over the next three years, he said, adding: "there is enough scope for that".

The Prime Minister said: "The interests of India and the US are complementary. Let us harness this complementarity to the fullest." He dismissed differences among political parties on economic reforms by saying that these are natural in a democracy. "Open public discussion fortifies national consensus. It mobilises social support and protects reforms from uncertainties of political change." He claimed that reforms were now being perceived as less and less "elitist driven".

The Business Summit, organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry, had been cancelled earlier on account of changes in Vajpayee's programme in New York because of ill-health.

The response to a rescheduled summit in a city where such events are fixed up months ahead showed the tremendous interest among American businessmen in opportunities in India.

■ Another report on Page 8

THE TELEGRAPH

14 SEP 2000

Target \$15 b. in ⁹⁰⁰⁰ annual investments ⁹⁰⁰⁰ over three years, PM tells U.S. ⁹⁰⁰⁰ investors

By Ramesh Chandran
The Times of India News Service

WASHINGTON: Given the unlimited opportunities now available to the Indo-U.S. business partnership, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee told a select audience of American and Indian CEOs to "dramatically alter the arithmetic" and offered U.S. investors a challenge: Accept a target of \$5 billion of annual flow beginning next year and raise it to \$15 billion over the next three years.

In the past ten years, total approval for U.S. investments to India has been a mere \$15 billion, with actual flows being even smaller. In a lucid speech shorn of rhetorical flourishes, Mr Vajpayee spoke of the many problems that had scuppered ambitious projects for lack of effective follow-up. He announced the setting up of a Strategic Management Group in the Prime Minister's Office where difficulties encountered by large investment projects would be speedily resolved.

The Prime Minister was speaking at a U.S.-India Business Summit arranged by the Confederation of Indian Industry at New York's Waldorf-Astoria hotel which had to be hastily restructured after the PM's arrival was postponed. Despite the rapid re-working of the 'summit', the CII managed to put up an efficient show, with a large attendance representing both American and Indian corporate interests.

Among those who attended were finance minister Yashwant Sinha and N.K. Singh, secretary at the PMO. While the focus of the PM's visit so far has been centred on medical prognosis about his knee and his unusual 'clarification' of his comments at the Staten Island function in which he had emphasised that he was India's *pratham sevak*, some CEOs attending the business conference felt his speech at the CII-business summit would help re-establish attention on the "real substance" of the bilateral visit, which begins Thursday: the future of the economic partnership between India and the U.S.

In his address, Mr Vajpayee

frankly admitted that there were many problems that had contributed to the "languishing problems", lethargic bilateral trade flows and, above all, the "image problem"—the "hassle of doing business in India".

The PM felt this image of the Indian bureaucracy was partly a "communication problem" since the success stories did not circulate fast enough and failures often proved to be infectious. If some major projects had been languishing,

they would now be grappled with head-on by the new SMG at the PMO which would be assisted by an inter-ministerial cell and would report directly to him. He also hoped state governments in India would take a similar initiative to cut through bottle-

necks and added, "Distinguished American businessmen, when you look at India, I urge you not to be overly influenced by the size of the present bilateral economic engagement between our two countries."

Rather, he asked them to take a long-term view of the magnitude of opportunities and rewards on offer. He reminded his audience that India, with its six per cent annual growth rate during the nineties, was among the ten fastest growing economies in the world and his government had pledged on Independence Day to double the per capita income over the next decade. This implied an annual GDP growth of nine per cent and more — a daunting target but one, Mr Vajpayee promised, which India would achieve.

He also spoke at some length about the irreversible course of economic reforms in India—mostly music to American ears—and why they were being perceived less and less as "elitist-driven". Given the persistent debate in India over economic reforms and their impact on the poorer sections of society, Mr Vajpayee assured his audience that although the trickle-down effect was slow, his government was trying hard to harmonise faster economic growth with equitable development.



'ECO'-FRIENDLY MOVES

- PM announces setting up of a strategic management group
- Says India's most important resource is its human capital
- Admits that government expenditure needs pruning

PM paints vision of cooperation in historic address

VAJPAYEE:

Vajpayee urges Indo-US concert against terror

(Continued from page 1)

DESIKAN THIRUNARAYANAPURAM STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14. — Pakistan is doomed to fail in its attempt to use terror to split India, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee told a joint sitting of the US Congress this morning.

Without naming Pakistan, the Prime Minister said: "There are forces outside our country that believe that they can use terror to unravel the territorial integrity of India. They wish to show that a multi-religious society cannot exist. They pursue a task in which they are doomed to fail."

No region is a greater source of terrorism than India's neighbourhood, he said, and repeated the point he made in New York last week: "Indeed, in our neighbourhood — in this 21st century — religious war has not just been fashioned into, it has been proclaimed to be, an instrument of state policy."

In this respect, he recalled the cooperation between India and the USA in fighting terrorism. "We must redouble these efforts."

At the start of his address, Mr Vajpayee thanked the US Congress for adopting a bipartisan resolution congratulating India and his government on the successful elections of November 1999, and also a resolution passed on Tuesday welcoming his visit.

"It is a source of encouragement to both President Clinton and to me, as we work together to infuse a new quality in our ties," he said, and thanked the lawmakers "for the near-unique approach" they have adopted towards India.

Mr Vajpayee arrived on Capitol Hill shortly after 9 a.m. A small group of Christians had gathered outside to protest attacks on priests and nuns in India. Mr Vajpayee was

USA tells Pak to stop violence

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14. — The Clinton administration today asked Gen. Pervez Musharraf to show restraint, renounce violence and use his influence over militants operating in J&K to create a conducive situation for resumption of the stalled dialogue with India.

"We do believe Pakistan has a role to play in lowering the level of activity along the Line of Control and clearly across the border," senior US officials said a day ahead of Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's meeting with Mr Bill Clinton here.

The officials said violence in Kashmir was "something that we have raised directly with the authorities in Pakistan. Clearly there are groups operating in Kashmir that are certainly beyond the control of any single government or entity, but again, Pakistan has an important role to play here."

They said the USA had urged Pakistan in virtually every way — through public statements as well as through confidential channels — to use its influence on militants operating in J&K. — PTI

■ More reports on page 8

received by the sergeants at arms of the House and Senate, and led into House Speaker Mr J Dennis Hastert's chambers. After a short chat and a few minutes of a private break, he was escorted into the Great Hall of Representatives at 10.10 a.m. for the address.

At 9 a.m., the session was opened with a religious invoca-

tion by Venkatachalapathi Samuldrala, a priest from Shiva Vishnu temple at Parma, Ohio — the first time a Hindu invocation has been performed in Congress. Ohio Representative, Mr Sherrod Brown, a Democrat and leading member of the India Caucus, requested the House Chaplain to invite the Hindu priest.

"To more than a million-and-a-half from my country America is now home. In turn their industry, enterprise and skills are contributing to the advancement of American society," Mr Vajpayee said. "I see in the outstanding success of the Indian community in America a metaphor of the vast potential that exists in Indo-US relations, of what we can achieve together."

The speech was interrupted several times by applause as Mr Vajpayee spoke about India's plans to fight poverty and institute more economic reforms.

Referring to the differences with Washington over the CTBT, the Prime Minister said: "Our cooperation for peace and stability requires us to also define the principles of our engagement. We must be prepared to accommodate our respective concerns."

Security issues, he added "have cast a shadow on our relationship. I believe this is unnecessary. We have much in common and no clash of interest." India and the USA "share a commitment to ultimately eliminating nuclear weapons. We have both declared a voluntary moratorium on testing".

Mr Vajpayee was helped up the podium by an Indian aide, as the lawmakers and guests stood up and applauded. Dressed in a gray suit, the Prime

Minister joined in the hand-clapping for a moment before turning his attention to his address.

He spoke in a loud voice and a steady, clear tone, reading from a text typed in big letters, though his hand shook a little as he turned the short pages. The foreign minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, sporting a black faux fur cap, was seated in the front row on the Prime Minister's left.

"India and the USA have taken a decisive step away from the past. The dawn of a new century has marked a new beginning in our relations. Let us work to fulfill the promise and the hope of today. Let us remove the shadow of hesitation that lies between us and our joint vision."

Only a little more than a quarter of Senators and Congressmen were present for Mr Vajpayee's address. The visitors' gallery was packed with Indian-Americans, and quite a few leaders of the Indian community were seated in the chamber.

Republican Representative from Indiana, Mr Edward A Pease, agreed with the spirit and tone of Mr Vajpayee's speech. He, however, said most Congressmen were busy wrapping up various committee agendas before the close of the current session of Congress, and that's why many of them were not able to attend the address. The speech will help improve relations between the two countries, he added, before rushing himself to a committee meeting.

It was not clear if Mr Pease's fellow Indiana Republican and India critic, Representative Dan Burton, was present at the joint session. His spokesman was unavailable, and a spokesman at the House Government Reform Committee, of which he is the chairman, said no committee hearing was scheduled for Thursday morning.

THE STATESMAN

15 SEP 2000

■ See VAJPAYEE: page 8

Vajpayee visit

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14. — Mr AB Vajpayee's current US visit "ends a 22-year drought" in US-India relations, senior White House and State Department officials said on Wednesday. "Now the drought is thoroughly soaked," a White House official said. It is not a mere goodwill visit but has much more substance to it, the officials said during a background briefing on the visit for Washington-based South Asian correspondents.

Mr Bill Clinton, during his India visit, aimed to "change the reference of the relationship" between the two countries and Mr Vajpayee's visit will advance that aim, the state department official said. The USA is "delighted" by the visit, which Washington expects will help re-define post-Cold War relations between the two countries, he added.

Points of difference, especially over US sanctions after the 1998 nuclear tests and India's hesitation to sign the nuclear test-ban treaty, however, are bound to persist for a while. "Our relationship has reached such a matured level that the two countries now agree to disagree," the White House official said.

Washington is "not fixated on the CTBT issue, but it remains part of the US administration's larger agenda," the official said. "We had hoped there would be progress" on the CTBT debate during the last session of the Indian Parliament, he said. "Unless we make progress on non-proliferation, the relations will not reach full potential," he said. The USA doesn't want the sanctions any more than India wants, he said. "It is in India's interest that there's no further nuclear tests by any country."

On the Kashmir dispute, the official iterated the US position that "Pakistan has a role to play in controlling the level" of terrorist activity in the "disputed" territory. There can only be a political solution to the issue and both countries must work to create a situation for dialogue resumption, he added.

The joint statement by Mr Clinton and Mr Vajpayee to be released at the end of the visit will reflect these concerns, the officials said.

The state department official noted that it may be the first time reciprocal high-level visits between the USA and India country has occurred in the same year.

Mr Clinton, who will leave office in January, wants to "catch the momentum" of his India visit to build up on the improving relations, he said. "These things could not wait for another year."

Mr Vajpayee's visit will mark the last official dinner hosted by the President and Mrs Clinton, he said. But there will still be more official-level exchanges between the two countries before he is out of office. The US President sees Mr Vajpayee's visit as "the culmination of long efforts, right from his first term in office," the White House official said. Mr Clinton "will bequeath to the next administration a solid foundation for better relations with India" and expects his successor to build upon it, he said.

The officials stressed that the momentum will not be lost whether Mr Al Gore or Mr George W Bush, wins the 7 November presidential election. "There's a bipartisan consensus on the relations with India," he said. Mr Gore will host a luncheon for Mr Vajpayee at the state department on Friday.

While in New York, Mr Bush spoke to Mr Vajpayee. The Indian caucus in Congress is a growing bipartisan group, which ensures that relations with India cannot easily become a casualty to partisan politics in the USA.

15/9

WHITE HOUSE GOODWILL FOR SPECIAL FRIEND

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14. — In a special gesture of goodwill towards India, the US House of Representatives passed a resolution welcoming Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit on the eve of his arrival in Washington.

The resolution, co-sponsored by Republican representative, Mr Benjamin A Gilman, chairman of the House International Relations Committee, and Democratic representative, Mr Sam Gejdenson, was passed on Tuesday, shortly interrupting House business.

The short resolution expresses "the sense of the House of Representatives that it is in the interest of both the USA and the Republic of India to expand and strengthen US-India relations, intensify bilat-

eral cooperation in the fight against terrorism, and broaden the ongoing dialogue between the USA and India, of which the upcoming visit to the USA of the Prime Minister of India, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, is a significant step".

During a House debate on the Clinton administration's policies, Mr Gejdenson said the Vajpayee visit "will take us to the next level, bringing America's attention squarely focussed on India and the shared values we have in democracy, fighting terrorism, confronting infectious diseases, and helping develop democracy around the globe".

Calling India "truly a marvelous example of people", he said: "Consider about a billion people, half of them very poor, still they sustain a civil society

that most countries in the world have not yet attained."

Commending Mr Clinton and Mr Vajpayee for their reciprocal visits in the same year, Mr Gejdenson said: "I can assure (Mr Vajpayee) and the Indian people that there will be no head of state that gets a warmer and friendlier greeting from the American people and from this Congress than the Prime Minister of India will get."

In a statement for the House record, Mr Gejdenson said: "The million-strong Indian-American community in the USA provides a strong bond between India and the US Indian-Americans have made immeasurable contributions to our country and are a vital part of communities from San Francisco to Miami and everywhere in between."

Warm welcome for PM

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14. — Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, arrived in Washington on a five-day state visit on Wednesday.

The Prime Minister was received at the Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland by Under-secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, Mr Karl F Inderfurth, the US ambassador to India, Mr Richard Celeste, and a few other White House and State Department officials.

Mr Vajpayee landed at the base from New York at 3.20 p.m. local time. He was driven in a motorcade to the Blair House, a presidential guest house next to the White House. There, he was ceremonially received by a White House protocol official. He was presented a military honour cordon by the Presidential Guard comprising members of the army, navy, air force, marine and the coast guard.

As the band played the Indian and US national anthems, Mr Vajpayee, dressed in a Indian-styled suit with sunglasses, and Indian ambassador Mr Nareish Chandra, stood erect, facing large Indian American flags mounted on the facade of the Old Administrative Building in front.

Mr Vajpayee, who will undergo surgery for a bad knee after returning home, appeared to make an extra effort to show the knee was no impediment.

A small group of Indians who waited in the hot sun for over an hour waved miniature Indian flags enthusiastically as the Prime Minister's black limousine pulled in. They greeted him with a loud chorus of "Jai Hind". An elderly American couple also waved the Indian flag.

An Indian employee of the World Bank, who was taking his lunchtime walk, was drawn to the cordoned section of Pennsylvania Avenue by the Indian flags put up on lamp posts on streets around the White House.

History house: The Blair House, where Mr Vajpayee will stay during his US visit, is a half-block-wide combined town house with a long history. Abraham Lincoln stayed there once and his Civil War opponent, Confederate Gen Robert E Lee conferred with his generals there.

The guest house for the President's official guests has all modern amenities, including a library and a gym.

Few Indian Prime Ministers in the past have stayed there.

9nd
23
10/1

Lift remaining sanctions: U.S. House

15/9

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 14. On the eve of the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee's Washington visit, the U.S. House of Representatives adopted a resolution calling on the Clinton administration to lift the remaining sanctions against India, but senior administration officials are persistent in linking this gesture to a significant movement on the non-proliferation/

security agenda including its signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Lawmakers in the House asked the administration to consider removing the "existing unilateral legislation and administrative measures imposed against India which prevent normalisation of bilateral economic and trade relations".

In remarks leading to voice

vote, the lawmakers touched on different aspects of U.S-India relations. "The visit by the Prime Minister is a visit that will take us to the next level, bringing America's attention squarely focussed on India and the shared values we have in democracy fighting terrorism, confronting infectious diseases and helping develop democracy around the globe," said Mr. Sam Gejdenson, Democrat

from Connecticut. The House expressed a desire to expand and intensify U.S.-India cooperation on a range of issues.

The resolution was sponsored by Mr. Benjamin Gilman, Republican from New York, and co-sponsored by Mr. Gejdenson, ranking member on the House International Relations Committee, and 24 colleagues.

THE HINDU

15 SEP 2000

VEILED BUT SCORCHING CRITIQUE OF PAKISTAN

India, U.S. must redouble efforts to combat terrorism: PM

By Malini Parthasarathy

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 14. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, reached out to American law makers today in an address to a joint session of the U.S. Congress in which he painted a glowing picture of a robust Indian economy undergoing substantive reforms. Equally emphatically, and reflecting what has become the campaign theme of this Prime Ministerial visit, Mr. Vajpayee continued his scorching critique of Pakistan, urging the members of the U.S. Congress to recognise that the South Asian region had become one of the greatest sources of terrorism in the world.

While the Prime Minister did not refer to Pakistan or mention the word "jihad", he argued that "in our neighbourhood — in this, the 21st century — religious war has not just been fashioned into, it has been proclaimed to be an instrument of State policy." He said that there were "forces outside our country that believe they can use terror to unravel the territorial integrity of India...they wish to show that a multireligious society cannot exist...they pursue a task in which they are doomed to fail". No country, he said, had faced as "ferocious an attack of terrorist violence, as India has over the past two decades: 21,000 were killed by foreign-sponsored terrorists in Punjab alone, 16,000 in Jammu and Kashmir."

In an unprecedented direct pitch to the assembled legislators, the Prime Minister said "Distance offers no insulation. It should not cause complacency...you know and I know: such evil cannot succeed. But even in failing, it could inflict untold suffering...that is why the United States and India have begun to deepen their cooperation for combating terrorism...we must redouble these efforts."

References to India's dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir surfaced again when he reminded the members of the U.S. Congress of their oft-repeated expressions of concern over the "future contours of Asia." He asked pointedly: "Will it be an Asia that will be at peace with itself? Or will it be a continent where countries seem



The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, acknowledging the applause of the members of U.S. Congress after his address on Thursday. — Reuters

to redraw boundaries and settle claims — historical or imaginary — through force?" The Prime Minister also obviously had the boundary dispute with China in mind, as he did when he appeared to make another overture of sorts to the Sino-phobes or the anti-China lobby within the U.S. Congress in his argument that "we seek an Asia where power does not threaten stability and security...we do not want the domination of some to crowd out the space for others."

Having drawn a stark picture of India's predicament, the Prime Minister sought to address the

differences with the U.S. over the security and non-proliferation issues. "Our cooperation for peace and stability requires us to also define the principles of our own engagement. We must be pre-

India's conscious strategy: Page 13

pared to accommodate our respective concerns...security issues have cast a shadow on our relationship. I believe this is unnecessary. We have much in common and no clash of interests...India understands your concerns. We do not wish to un-

ravel your non-proliferation efforts. We wish you to understand our security concerns."

'We will sustain economic momentum'

Even as he argued the case for supporting India's political claims in terms that were obviously designed to appeal to the sensibilities of the members of the U.S. Congress, he also offered an inviting depiction of the Indian economic reform process and its growth pattern. "Two years ago while much of Asia was convulsed by economic crises, India held its course," he pointed out. Noting that in the last ten years, India had grown at 6.5 per cent every year, placing India among the ten fastest growing economies of the world, he said that India was "determined to sustain the momentum" and that the aim was to "double" the "per capita income in ten years" which meant that the Indian economy would have to sustain a growth rate of 9 per cent a year.

To achieve this growth rate, comprehensive reforms had been put in place as India was "committed to releasing the creative genius of our people, the entrepreneurial skills" of its people. Noting that important sectors of the country's infrastructure — power, insurance, banking and telecommunications — have been opened to private initiative, domestic and foreign, Mr. Vajpayee also pointed out that "trade barriers are lowered." He also referred to the emerging cooperation between India and the U.S. on information technology. "India and the United States have taken the lead in shaping the Information Age...there was a time when we were on the other side of each other's globe...today on every digital map, India and the United States are neighbours and partners," Mr. Vajpayee said.

'Global Dialogue on Development needed'

In the context of his advocacy of cooperation between India and the United States on information technology, the Prime Minister said that the cooperation should

be made a "partnership that uses the possibilities of the new technologies for defining new ways of fighting poverty, illiteracy, hunger, disease and pollution." Noting that poverty was an "unacceptable legacy of the past", Mr. Vajpayee proposed a "comprehensive Global Dialogue on Development" and said that his Government would be happy to offer New Delhi as a venue for this proposed Dialogue.

Paying tribute to the Indian-American community in the U.S., Mr. Vajpayee said that he saw "in the outstanding success of the Indian community in America, a metaphor of the vast potential that exists in Indo-US relations of what we can achieve together."

Thanking the members of the U.S. Congress for their "display of a broad bipartisan support for strengthening relations with India", Mr. Vajpayee made positive references to the role of the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton in deepening ties with India. He noted that the "warm response" to Mr. Clinton's address in Parliament during his visit to India in March indicated that "similar cross-party support exists in India as well for deeper engagement with the United States." He praised "President Clinton for his leadership and vision in steering this dialogue," even as he suggested "let us remove the shadow of hesitation that lies between us and our joint vision."

Standing ovation, applause

A unique flavour of the Indian Prime Minister's address to the joint session of the U.S. Congress reflected in the fact that a Hindu priest was called in to offer the customary morning prayer, which he did, including a Vedic invocation, all in English. Mr. Vajpayee came into the Chamber sharply at 10 a.m. and received standing ovation from the assembled members of Congress at the start and the end of his address. He delivered his address as he was seated, reflecting an unprecedented gesture from the U.S. Congress, in view of his knee problem. Mr. Vajpayee's address, including his pointed references to terrorism in the South Asian neighbourhood, particularly his call upon the U.S. and India to "redouble the efforts" to combat this, was punctuated several times by applause from the assembled members of Congress.

We've not marginalised Pak.: Inderfurth

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 14. As the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, began his U.S. tour, the Clinton Administration has sought to send out clear signals to the military government here that the Indian Prime Minister's visit would not harm the interests of Pakistan.

In an interview to the Urdu daily, *Jang*, the Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Karl Inderfurth, has said it is not correct to suggest there is a tilt in the U.S. policy towards India.

While Mr. Vajpayee's visit would receive a great deal of attention, it should not be seen as a loss for Pakistan.

"In fact, one thing we would say to the Prime Minister when he is here, and it is something President Clinton said in New Delhi, that a stable, democratic and prosperous Pakistan is not only in Pakistan's interest but in India's and world's interest", Mr. Inderfurth told the daily.

Mr. Inderfurth has been quoted as saying that while Pakistan has been a long time friend of the U.S., the relationship has been

constrained by serious differences.

The US would try to work through the differences and would continue to work with Pakistan.

"An IMF team is currently in Pakistan and we will look forward to hear the recommendation in IMF when they come before the executive board. We do want to see Pakistan move ahead economically, we do want to see Pakistan move ahead on addressing regional tensions including Kashmir and including a dialogue with India on the subject."

Mr. Inderfurth referred to comments made by Gen. Musharraf in the course of his visit to New York that the U.S. priorities in South Asia had changed and said the Clinton administration placed high priority in the region.

However Gen. Musharraf said the U.S.' close ties with India absolutely "did not mean that the U.S. has marginalised Pakistan in any way. I absolutely support the view of Gen. Musharraf. The U.S. has not marginalised or downgraded. We are remaining engaged with Pakistan", Mr. Inderfurth said.

THE HINDU

15 SEP 2000

Conscious strategy to influence U.S. policy-makers

By Malini Parthasarathy

1579
WASHINGTON, SEPT. 14. With the Prime Minister's address to the joint session of the U.S. Congress categorically re-emphasising the argument that the United States should recognise the threat faced by India from Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, it appears that the Prime Minister's repeated stress on the theme of a "jihad" being waged by Pakistan on India reflects a strategic purpose.

The Prime Minister's address to the U.S. Congress had strong echoes of the arguments used in his speech to the Asia Society last week and at the U.N. Millennium Summit. All these speeches have dwelt at length on the problem of terrorism in Kashmir and its high toll, directly linking it to Pakistan's sponsorship and charging that Pakistan had in fact made "jihad" an instrument of its state policy. That these observations are being made with a clear view to influencing policy-making in the U.S. establishment is becoming clear. Even as senior officials of the Clinton administration have conveyed a sense of discomfort at the strident tenor of the Prime Ministerial remarks directed at Pakistan, sources in the Prime Ministerial official delegation say that this will not affect the decision to assertively highlight India's charges against Pakistan.

While it is argued by Indian officials that it was Pakistan's CEO, General Musharraf who started this mutual mud-slinging with his diatribe against India's actions in Kashmir during his address to the U.N. Millennium Summit and his interview to the *New York Times*, it is also made clear that it is a conscious strategy on the Government's part to campaign actively in the United States for India's views in terms that are also designed to appeal to traditional American diplomatic sensibilities.

Significantly underlining the continued

use of the tactical approach that has been deployed in interlocations with the United States and the European Community since the nuclear tests of 1998, the scenario of India's so-called competition for strategic status with China is being subtly invoked in discussions here on non-proliferation and security issues. Mr. Vajpayee's address to Congress and his remarks on Asia subtly reminded the American legislators of their traditional fears of a dominant China when speaking of Asia, he said: "We do not want the domination of some to crowd out the space for others."

By playing upon traditional American legislator phobia of China's dominant presence on the world stage and assertively rekindling American apprehensions about global terrorism by highlighting images such as of the Taliban and suggesting the Talibanisation of Pakistan and that these trends were exclusively at work in destabilising the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian official strategic design appears to be to get Washington to place New Delhi on its calculus as a potential ally against all these trends. Thus the tone of the Vajpayee administration in regard to its stance on the CTBT and the latest disagreement over whether India should sign a multilateral voluntary moratorium on fissile material production has been more pleading than assertive. The Prime Minister assured the U.S. Congress today that India has no intention of unravelling American non-proliferation efforts but the U.S. should understand India's own security concerns. In other words, the grim scenario being painted of India being hemmed in by a dominance-seeking China and the deadly threat of a "jihad" by Pakistan next door, provides in the official view a highly effective rationale for India's stance on the nuclear weapons issue.

Interestingly, the official Indian

HD-13
campaign against the "Pakistani jihad" found resonance today in a fullpage advertisement taken out in today's issue of *The Washington Post*. The advertisement features dramatically the picture of a weeping four-year-old girl, described as the child of a man gunned down by terrorists in Anantnag, Kashmir. Also prominently displayed in the advertisement is a quote of Pakistan's General Musharraf praising the Mujahideen — "These people are not terrorists, they are fighting a jihad," and this is followed by a slogan in large print: "Jihad for Pakistan, Agony for India!" And finally, "How much — how much will be too much for India?" is a solicitation for monetary contributions to expand this advertising campaign against terrorism in Kashmir.

It is evident that the Government has decided that the scope and reach of the campaign that it has launched should be extended into the public arena. The Prime Minister's informal interactions with the Indian-American community last week in New York at several functions included echoes of this theme.

Typically, while the Prime Ministerial visit with all its nuances and details is being covered exhaustively in the Indian press, as was President Clinton's visit to India last March, where no detail including his every culinary exploration escaped recording, there is virtually nothing so far about Mr. Vajpayee's visit being reported in American newspapers or on television. Not one of the major dailies has had a line about the Prime Minister's arrival in Washington and except for C-Span which in any case regularly records all Congressional proceedings and hence carried the Prime Minister's address live, there was no television coverage or even mention in the newspapers about the Prime Minister's address to Congress.

'India, Pak. have to move ahead on Kashmir'

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 14. The Clinton administration is aware of India's concerns over the level of violence in Kashmir, an issue which it has raised directly with Pakistan authorities, with the purpose of pointing out that for the dialogue between New Delhi and Islamabad to begin, more positive conditions must be created on the ground. This is what senior officials said briefing the South Asian media on the eve of the start of the official visit of the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, to Washington.

"Now, one would have to be realistic in assessing that situation on the ground, but if there is movement in the right direction, if it is creating that favourable environment which would indicate seriousness and sincerity on what the sides are doing then we would hope that would lead to a resumption of dialogue," a senior official commented pointing out that it was not for the U.S. to determine whether enough had been done by the parties to create a proper atmosphere but that both India and Pakistan could take steps to create the proper environment.

"We do believe that Pakistan has a role to play in lowering the level of activity along the Line of Control. Clearly, cross-border shelling is an example of that... And we believe that Pakistan has influence which it can use. There are groups that are operating in Kashmir that are clearly beyond the control of almost any single government or entity, but again we believe that Pakistan has the important role to play here and we have urged it in virtually every way... to use that influence. We think that both sides have steps they could take to create that more positive environment..." the official said.

"We remain concerned about the situation in Kashmir itself and indeed we remained

concerned about the tragedy of the Kashmiri people. At some point, that will have to be addressed. We hope that it could be sooner than later."

The senior administration officials are saying Kashmir will be a subject of discussion between the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and Mr. Vajpayee. The U.S. has been encouraged by some of the steps taken by India but there is still "quite a distance to go". Mr. Clinton, officials say, will want to hear Mr. Vajpayee's assessment of the issue. He will encourage Mr. Vajpayee on what he has done, at the same time sharing his thoughts on the subject, it is said.

On sanctions, the argument was made that while the U.S. was searching for a broadbased relationship with India, this did not mean that all issues had been resolved with the two sides continuing to address non-proliferation and sanctions, but as part of a larger agenda. It was reiterated that unless there was more progress on the non-proliferation agenda, the bilateral cooperation would not realise its full potential. Arguing that "we are making progress," senior officials said the remaining sanctions linked to the signing of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty included not only a ban on direct military sales and licences for export of ammunition but also restrictions on multilateral institutional loans pertaining to "non-basic human needs".

"... we do believe it is important to make progress on the non-proliferation agenda... We do want to emphasise that on the issue of CTBT, what we most want to see is a decision taken by India (meaning to sign) because it is in India's interest to see no further testing by any nation in the world. That is the key issue," the official argued, going on to say that the differences between the administration and some senior law-makers were not over the

principle of removing sanctions but on how this was done. Mr. Clinton, a senior official maintained, was very excited about the visit of Mr. Vajpayee which is seen as the culmination of a process that the U.S. President had been working on for eight years. Pointing out that Mr. Clinton had been keen on finding a whole new paradigm for U.S.-India relations, the official said Mr. Clinton had already stressed that on virtually every issue India was already an important player, and it would be more so in the 21st century.

The focus of the discussions between Mr. Clinton and Mr. Vajpayee will at least be on three major levels: the review of the global trends, and a discussion of the common concerns of fighting terrorism and the political dynamics of the South Asian sub-continent. All of this within the main focus of how to keep the bilateral relations moving to a higher level.

Maintaining that there would be the continuity on what had been achieved by way of the Vision Statement and institutionalisation of the dialogue, officials briefing the media pointed to all the things that had taken place since Mr. Clinton visited India this March. "We are proceeding at a very important phase of putting the institutional dialogue in place," a senior official noted.

Aside from the telephone conversations between the President and the Prime Minister, this includes the foreign policy dialogue involving the Secretary of State and India's Minister for External Affairs, the Foreign Office Consultations, the Working Group on Counter Terrorism, the Coordinating Group on Economic Dialogue, and the Joint Consultative Group on Clean Energy.

"We bequeath to the next administration a solid enough foundation which will endure," an official remarked.

THE HINDU

15 SEP 2000

US Congress for lifting sanctions against India

S Rajagopalan
Washington, September 14

PRIME MINISTER Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit here was marked by a heart-warming curtain-raiser when the US Congress on Wednesday passed a resolution urging lifting of all the remaining sanctions against India.

However, the Clinton Administration, for all the dramatic turnaround it has brought about in the US's relations with India, remains firm that New Delhi sign the CTBT before it can possibly lift the punitive measures.

The broad bipartisan support that India now enjoys in the US was demonstrated by the resolution that was adopted by a voice vote. Senior Congressmen Benjamin Gilman (Republican) and Sam Gejdenson (Democrat) were among the host of sponsors.

The resolution wanted the sanctions hiccup out of the way in order to strengthen the ties between the two largest democracies of the world. It noted that the unilateral US measures were standing in the way of normalisation of economic and trade relations.

But the Clinton Administration, now in its lame duck phase, let it be known almost immediately that it does not contemplate any such dramatic announcement during the Prime Minister's visit. Indo-US relations may have entered a new orbit, but it does not mean that areas of disagreement are all over, said senior officials.

"We had hoped for greater progress on CTBT in the last ses-

sion of Parliament," they said, expressing the optimism that New Delhi would still address the issue at the earliest. "It is in India's own interest to see that there is no more testing by any nation."

President Clinton has, over a period of time, waived some of the sanctions, but the major ones in the area of military aid and sales are very much in place. The US also continues to oppose non-humanitarian aid to India at the multilateral forums.

In contrast to this rigidity over the CTBT, the Clinton Administration has kept up its strong support for India on its terms for dialogue with Pakistan on the Kashmir issue, namely the ending of terrorist violence.

The officials noted that Prime Minister Vajpayee had taken "significant political risks" from the time of undertaking the Lahore visit, including the release of prisoners and the talks with Hizbul Mujahideen, the militant outfit. They also acknowledged the restraint that he had shown on a number of occasions, including the August 1 massacre in Pahalgam.

In response to a query, an official pointedly stated that Pakistan does have a role in "lowering the level of activity" on the border, including the level of shelling, to set the stage for a dialogue.

If President Clinton's visit to India last March "changed the terms of reference" of Indo-US relationship, Mr Vajpayee's current visit will institutionalise the dialogue and take the ties to newer heights, it was said.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

15 SEP 2000

Atal ties 'natural allies' in IT bond

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Sept. 14: Having said two years ago that India and the US are "natural allies", and buoyed by the success of President Bill Clinton's visit to India since then, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee today took one more step forward in telling the US Congress that India and America "are together defining the partnerships of the future".

Addressing a joint meeting of the US Congress, the Prime Minister significantly expanded the canvass of Indo-US relations by outlining joint efforts "for defining new ways of fighting poverty, illiteracy, hunger, disease and pollution".

As a special gesture taking into account Vajpayee's ill health, House of Representatives Speaker Denis Hastert allowed him to deliver the address seated.

Vajpayee did not leave out items from the old agenda. But by holding out assurances that appeared reasonable to Congressmen and Senators, Vajpayee made contentious issues look less so. Referring to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, he said: "India understands your concerns. We do not wish to unravel your non-proliferation efforts."

But he significantly added: "We wish you to understand our security concerns."

The Prime Minister reminded Congressmen and Senators that India and the US had both declared a voluntary moratorium on further nuclear testing. "We both share a commitment to ultimately eliminating nuclear weapons."

Sensing the mood on Capitol Hill, where fear of Chinese domination of Asia is a frequent and

dominant theme, the Prime Minister said India wanted an Asia where power does not threaten stability and security.

"We do not want the domination of some to crowd out the space for others. We must create an Asia where cooperative rather than aggressive assertion of national self-interests defines behaviour among nations."

China was, however, not mentioned by name. Again, without naming Pakistan, Vajpayee warned Americans not to be complacent about the direction in which Pakistan was headed. "In our neighbourhood — in this the 21st century — religious war has not just been fashioned into, it has been proclaimed to be, an instrument of state policy."

Reminding Americans of their own recent assumptions that no region is a greater source of terrorism than south Asia, Vajpayee warned that distance could not insulate the US from this threat.

"It should not cause complacency," he said. The Prime Minister urged Americans who believed in an Asia fashioned on such ideals as democracy, prosperity, tolerance, pluralism and stability that "if we want an Asia where our vital interests are secure, then it is necessary for us to re-examine old assumptions".

He called upon India and the US to work closely in pursuit of these goals. A strong, democratic and prosperous India, standing at the crossroads of Asia, will be an indispensable factor of stability in the region, the Prime Minister predicted. "We have much in common, and no clash of interests."

The Prime Minister described India and the US as "two nations blessed with extraordinary resources and talent". India and the

US, he said, have taken a decisive step away from the past. "The dawn of the new century has marked a new beginning in our relations."

He called upon the two countries to march hand-in-hand towards a world in which economic conditions improve for all. As part

of this effort, the Prime Minister proposed a comprehensive global dialogue on development with New Delhi as its venue.

Vajpayee thanked Congressmen for an extraordinary resolution passed by the House of Representatives two days ago welcoming his visit and the prospect of

closer Indo-US understanding. He also referred to a recurring theme in Indo-US interaction — cooperation in information technology.

"Today, on every digital map, India and the US are neighbours and partners. India and the US have taken the lead in shaping the information age."

THE TELEGRAPH

15 SEP 2000

Vajpayee becomes darling of the American media

HT Correspondent

TRADITIONAL criticism of any prime ministerial visit to the US is that while we in India treat it as a major event, the US media completely ignore our Prime Minister. The Vajpayee visit will probably be remembered as the one that turned this criticism around.

Mr Vajpayee is big news in the United States. His speech to Congress yesterday was page one (with picture) in *The Washington Times*, rated a full page in *The Washington Post* and was a subject of a huge picture in *The New York Times*.

All the papers treated the speech as a major foreign policy event, mentioned the remarkable improvement in Indo-US ties and noted the frequent applause that Mr Vajpayee received.

Nobody made the point that only 53 Congressmen attended.

Apparently, the speech is treated as a TV event, and the number of legislators who bother to turn up for the actual function is not regarded as important.

At any rate, Mr Vajpayee's speech attracted three times as many Congressmen as Narasimha Rao managed six years ago.

EVERY ARTICLE in the American media makes the point that the improvement of relations with India is largely a consequence of the influence of Indian-Americans. Certainly, the statistics about the success of the community are impressive. The median family income in the US is \$ 38,885.

The Indian median income is \$ 60,093. Of the 1.5 million Indian-Americans, 77 per cent have white collar jobs or are entrepreneurs or professionals. Only 23 per cent have jobs that can be described as working class.

The figures for Silicon Valley are even more impressive. The average income of an Indian who works in that region is \$ 2,00,000. And 15 per cent of all start-ups are now owned by Indians.

It is estimated that the buying power of Indians is a staggering \$ 20 billion. And, of course, much of this money goes into buying politicians: Indians are now among the most sought-after campaign contributors.

THE US Press also makes the point that Pakistan has fallen out of favour. General Pervez Musharraf launched a huge publicity blitz during his stay in New York but seems to have got nowhere.

According to *The Washington Post*, the General was desperate to meet the President but all his requests were turned down by the White House. "It doesn't

look good for the President to meet a military dictator. It looks as though we are endorsing the regime," a State Department spokesman is quoted as saying.

All of Pakistan's attempts to make Kashmir the centrepiece of this trip seem to have failed—at least so far. Not one Congressman asked Mr Vajpayee to embark on a dialogue with Pakistan during his meetings at the House. It is only the Indian Press that seems to believe that Mr Vajpayee should have met the General in New York.

INDIAN AMERICANS are still loyal to the mother country and express this in unusual ways when you least expect it. At a party hosted for the media by Raminder Singh Jassal, the foreign office spokesman at New York's famous Tavern on the Green restaurant, three Indian waiters took Jassal aside.

"We saw you on TV during the Kargil conflict," they said. "You made us feel very proud of our country. Could you please pose for a photograph with us."

A nonplussed and visibly embarrassed spokesman duly posed for the pictures.

Though the media party has concentrated

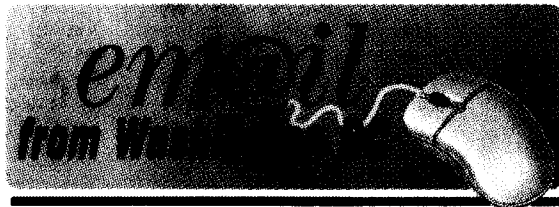
on the Prime Minister's programme, a valuable and important side-show has been the schedule of Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha. For all of Thursday, Mr Sinha was ensconced at the US Commerce Department along with US officials, and businessmen from both countries. According to the Indian business community, the US Commerce Secretary made an upbeat speech about India and the mood was optimistic.

Given the old cliché—the business of America is business—this could prove to be as important for Indo-US relations as all the political confabulations.

THE INDIAN delegation is bemused by the easy informality—if not the show-biz nature—of American politics. Yesterday, delegates watched goggle-eyed as Vice-President Al Gore appeared on the David Letterman show, told jokes and even acted in a skit.

This was nothing compared to the performance of his running mate Joseph Lieberman, who has been going from talk show to talk show performing a stand-up comedy routine. Last night, he was on Conan O'Brien's show singing his version of the Frank Sinatra standard, My Way.

As TV grows in importance in India, could this be the way ahead? Could Mr Vajpayee tell jokes on *Movers and Shakers*? Could Mr L.K. Advani sing *Mast Kalandar* with Runa Laila? And could Mrs Sonia Gandhi turn in a knock-out performance of *O Sole Mio* on *BPL Oye*?



THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

16 SEP 2000

'Indian democracy always inspires us'

US and India sign \$ 6 billion projects covering e-commerce, banking, power

S. Rajagopalan

Washington DC, September 15

PRESIDENT BILL Clinton today welcomed India's commitment to forego further nuclear tests until the treaty banning all testing comes into force and expressed the hope that India and the US would be able to find common ground and achieve common aims.

Mr Clinton, welcoming Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee at a formal ceremony on the White House lawn, paid rich tributes to India's thriving democracy and buoyant economy, and said the challenge before the two countries was to turn their common bond into common achievements.

Echoing the sentiments, ahead of the formal talks, Mr Vajpayee said: "This is a time of new hope and new opportunities in Indo-American ties." The dia-

logue, a follow-up on the Vision Statement signed during Mr Clinton's India visit last March, would focus on economic cooperation, science and technology and regional and global issues.

Alongside, India and the US have signed five commercial deals worth \$ 6 billion relating to some major projects in power, e-commerce and banking sectors. The agreements include a \$ 900 million loan by the Export-Import Bank of the US for the purchase of US goods and services.

In his welcome address, at the colourful White House ceremony, Mr Clinton identified the battle against poverty, opening of the global economy and protection of the environment among the major areas where the two countries can cooperate for the common good.

The US, he said, had always had a

great fascination with India, for its rich history, culture, great religions. "And, increasingly, we are fascinated by India when we think in terms of the future," he said.

India, as he put it, is now "a rising economic leader". It has made breathtaking strides in information technology and is emerging as an environmental leader, promoting ambitious goals for energy efficiency. He also complimented the massive immunisation drive under which 140 million children have been protected against polio.

Singling out the success of Indian democracy, he said India has reminded the world that freedom is not a western value, but a universal longing. "Mr. Prime Minister, it is not only India's democracy, but India's manner of achieving democracy that will forever inspire America," he said.

While on South Asia, he said the talks would focus on "our common desire to seek peace through dialogue. We will talk about our common interests in slowing the spread of nuclear weapons, and the broader consequences of proliferation in South Asia."

"No matter our differences - and two such large and diverse countries will always have some differences - as long as we are thinking, if we speak with care, and listen with respect, we will find common ground and achieve common aims," he said.

Mr Vajpayee was optimistic that his current visit would carry forward the talks that began in New Delhi in March during Mr Clinton's "landmark visit". The Vision Statement, signed at the time, embodies the aspirations and responsibilities of the two countries for the 21st century, he said.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

16 SEP 2000

\$6 bn US investment agreements in power, banking, infotech signed

HT Correspondent
Washington, D.C., September 15

INVESTMENT AGREEMENTS worth US \$ 6 billion were concluded at Washington on Thursday during the ongoing visit of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to the US. These investments committed by the US companies in India mostly relate to power, banking and software technologies.

At the Indo-US commercial dialogue, top notch US power companies have reaffirmed their faith in India by committing themselves to proposed investments in various projects which were already on the drawing board.

All the corporate deals were signed in the presence of Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha and the US Commerce Secretary Norman Y Mineta.

The largest investment committed is that of Southern Energy Inc of US which signed a joint venture with Reliance Power Ltd to develop the prestigious Hirma power project in Orissa with an installed

capacity of 3690 MW. The state-owned Power Trading Corporation (PTC) will sell power from Hirma mega power project to Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Another major agreement signed involves US-based CMS Energy Corporation which seeks to sell the entire power to PTC for onward trading in different states from its 1850 MW power project in Tamil Nadu. CMS will also set up a liq-

uefied natural gas terminal at Ennore in the state.

Synergics Energy Development Inc of US has also entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Infrastructure

Development Finance Corporation (IDFC) for part-financing the development of Shrinagar Hydroelectric Power Project in Uttar Pradesh. This project was earlier abandoned by

Uttar Pradesh State Electricity Board following withdrawal of funding by World Bank due to time and cost overruns. G.P. Goenka-led Duncan group is a co-promoter with a minority stake in the project.

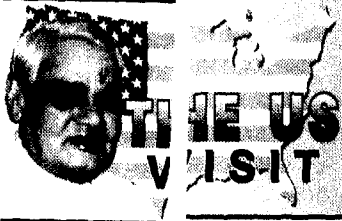
Satyam Infoway has also entered

into a pack with US Business Network Inc to establish business to Business e-commerce joint venture for cross border trade.

Apart from these deals, the Exim Bank has pledged assistance worth \$ 900 million to support purchase of US goods and services by Indian companies. US Agency for International Development (USAID) has also pledged support to urban development and energy training.

Further, Exim bank of US has entered into an agreement with the State Bank of India (SBI) and the Industrial development Bank of India (IDBI).

The US and Indian Exim Banks have also signed master guarantee agreements. Under these pacts, Indian Exim Bank would be able to issue loans with support guarantees from its counterpart in the US.



THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

16 SEP 2000

Indo-U.S. talks touch 'core' of the matter

The Times of India News Service
WASHINGTON: Verbal semantics over the word "core", allied to the Kashmir dispute, briefly threatened to create a major kerfuffle during Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit here, but were swiftly scotched by administration officials.

When asked by a reporter at the White House lawns about the Indian PM's call to combat terrorism, U.S. President Bill Clinton said that while Washington sought closer ties with India, it was prepared to play a role to resolve the Kashmir dispute. He then added, "This has been at the core of difficulties between India and Pakistan for more than half a century now."

The major issue in Indo-Pakistan talks has often revolved around Islamabad's contention that Kashmir "is the core issue", while New Delhi has maintained that it is one among a raft of issues. Now it seemed that President Clinton too was suggesting that the festering dispute was at the core of 50 years of discord between the South Asian foes.

As expected, on inquiries from the White House, it was made clear that it was a non-issue. Officials explained that while "core is a perfectly legitimate English word", it was not meant as a buzzword in the South Asian context—at least not in the way Pakistan interprets it (Kashmir is

paramount to all other bilateral issues).

The U.S. has always acknowledged that terrorism is a problem and that the region's conflict has dangerous implications. But it has maintained that it would play a role in Kashmir only if both parties sought its help.

Meanwhile, Mr Vajpayee, who was welcomed ceremonially at the Rose Garden with a 19-gun salute, began talks with Mr Clinton, initially without aides and later backed by their respective delegations. Kashmir is bound to figure in the bilateral discussions as will non-proliferation and regional security concerns and terrorism.

A much-anticipated joint press conference with Mr Clinton and



VAJPAYEE
YATRA

Mr Vajpayee was cancelled here on Friday amidst two conflicting ver-

VERBAL SEMANTICS

- Kashmir dispute has been at the core of difficulties between India and Pakistan for more than half a century, says Clinton
- Kashmir bound to figure in bilateral discussions
- Joint press conference by Clinton, Vajpayee cancelled

sions. White House spokesman Joe Lockhart told reporters that it was nixed at the Indian government's request, given the

PM's frail health and the tiring trip he has had so far.

Indian sources maintained that the joint press conference would have clashed with the time allotted for a one-on-one meeting between Mr Vajpayee and vice-president Al Gore. Given the opportunity to hold discussions with the next probable President of the United States, the priority was the meeting rather than facing a bunch of clamorous correspondents.

Warm Vibes & Cold War

Prime Minister Vajpayee's address to the joint session of the US Congress has to be seen in perspective. Certainly, the timing was bad. With just 53 days to go before the polls, most Congressmen were out campaigning. The attendance was therefore thin. That doesn't, however, take away from the importance of the event, which was held at the initiative of Congressmen and Senators belonging to the India Caucus. It is also of some significance that it happened within six months of President Clinton's address to the joint session of the Indian Parliament. Such reciprocity in courtesies, though largely symbolic, sends out a clear message to the world that the US and India are moving away from the legacy of the Cold War which shaped the US approach to India, a fellow democracy, at a time the former was professing to fight authoritarianism and rigid ideologies. The prime minister dwelt on bonds forged by the Indo-American community and their contributions to US technology and economy, even as he spoke of areas of cooperation between India and the US — their common fight against international terrorism, security issues in Asia, cooperation for global development and the imperatives of Indo-US partnership. Mr Vajpayee's focus on international terrorism was deliberate, especially his call to the US not to take comfort in its location — distance guaranteed no immunity against terrorism.

The US cannot but be sensitive to this aspect. Yusuf Ramsey, who was convicted in the World Trade Center bombing, and Mir Aimal Kansi, now awaiting execution in the US for killing the CIA operatives at Langley, are both from Pakistan. Six other US citizens, belonging to the CIA and an oil multinational, were killed in Pakistan. More than all this, there is Pakistan's association with Osama Bin Laden. However, while Mr Vajpayee may have had some success in persuading President Clinton to oppose terrorism in all its manifestations, he has not been able to convince him that Kashmir is not the core dispute between India and Pakistan and is only a symptom of a deeper malaise — the two-nation theory. It is clear from some recently disclosed US documentation that the US Secretary of State, George Marshall, had accepted the validity of Kashmir's accession to India. However, the British successfully indoctrinated Marshall's successors on the 'Great Game' — the Cold War logic on which they engineered India's Partition. That led to Pakistan becoming the most allied ally of the US in the Cold War, and in return, the US favouring Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. President Clinton's claim to have done enough groundwork to be in a position to play a mediatory role obviously does not extend to the US understanding of its Cold War bias against India, engendered by the British manipulation in the earlier years. For that the Indian government must bear full responsibility. Indian politicians and bureaucracy did no homework, and consequently, were unable to project the correct history based on US documentation. India has a lot more work to do before it can hope to wean the American president and people away from the lingering Cold War legacy and perspective.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

15 SEP 2000

India, U.S. sign deals worth \$6 bn

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 15. In a bid to boost bilateral economic ties, India and the U.S. have signed five commercial deals worth \$ 6 billion for projects in power, e-commerce and banking sectors during the visit of the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, here. The agreements, including a \$ 900-million loan by the U.S. Exim Bank for purchase of U.S. goods and services, were signed on Thursday night in the presence of the Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, and the U.S. Commerce Secretary, Mr. Norman Y. Mineta.

Three agreements were signed

for setting up three private sector mega-power plants in India. The U.S.'s Southern Energy Inc. will collaborate with Reliance and Power Trading Corporation of India for the 3800-MW Hirma Independent Power Project in Orissa.

The project, one of largest in the world, will supply power to Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan.

The CMS Energy Corp signed a joint development agreement with the Power Trading Corporation of India Ltd. for the Ennore Liquefied Natural Gas (Lng) terminal and 1850-MW power plant in Tamil Nadu. The CMS will over-

see the construction of the plant while Unocal, a co-investor, will coordinate the construction of the LNG terminal and the Power Trading Corp. will purchase the plant's output and sell it to Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka.

Synergies Energy Department signed a memorandum of understanding with Infrastructure Development Finance Corp for funding the Shrinagar Hydroelectric Power Plant in Uttar Pradesh. Indian Internet Access and Internet service provider, Satyam Infoway Ltd, signed an MOU with the U.S. Business Network Inc. to establish a business-to-business

e-commerce joint venture for cross-border trade.

An Exim Bank India press release said that the guarantee facility is unique in several respects. It marks the first ever guarantee provided by the U.S. Exim for rupee loans to finance imports of goods and services from us into India.

The Exim Bank India would provide rupee term loans to Indian companies up to equivalent of \$ 100 million to import goods and services from the U.S. and the U.S. Exim would provide 100 per cent guarantee cover for principal and interest. — PTI

THE HINDU

16 SEP 2000

'INDIA A RISING ECONOMIC LEADER'

110-1

9/15/99

Let's resolve our differences in an open way: Clinton

169

By Malini Parthasarathy

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 15. With the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, calling for a "regular, sustained partnership" between America and India in which the two sides should "identify our common interests" and "be forthright about the places where we still have differences" to be resolved "in a matter-of fact, open and honest way", the Prime Minister, Mr. Vajpayee, and his delegation had talks with their American counterparts today at the White House.

Mr. Vajpayee was earlier given a ceremonial welcome on the South Lawns of the White House where he was given a 19-gun salute and the national anthems of both countries played. The President's welcoming remarks referred glowingly to his trip to India and America's "fascination with India" for "its rich history, culture, great religions" but also because it saw India as a "rising economic leader, making breathtaking strides in information technology." He paid tribute to India's democracy which he said reminded the world that "freedom is not a Western value but a universal longing." Praising Gandhi and indicating that he would join Mr. Vajpayee in the dedication of a Gandhi memorial in Washington on Saturday morning, Mr. Clinton recalled the inspiration that Gandhi's teachings provided to Martin Luther King Jr's own struggle against inequality in America. "And we have been changing for the better ever since," he said.

Amid his warm remarks, Mr. Clinton also took care to re-emphasise the American interest in furthering nonproliferation in South Asia. "At the same time, we welcome India's commitment to forgo nuclear testing until the treaty banning all nuclear testing comes into force," he said, referring to the CTBT. Indicating that



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, welcomes the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, on the south lawn of the White House on Friday. — Reuters

the differences between the Indian and U.S positions remained, he said "no matter our differences — and two such large and diverse countries will always have

find some common ground and achieve common aims."

'American commitment'

Speaking later at a photo opportunity when the two leaders sat together before moving to the Oval Office for one-on-one talks, before meeting again with their entire delegations, Mr. Clinton said that the two sides had "worked hard together to move our relationship from one of too little contact and too much suspi-

cion to one of genuine efforts to build a long-term partnership." He also said that he hoped that the new relationship with India would become "an American commitment" that went beyond political parties. If the Vice-President, Mr. Al Gore, won the election, since he was part of this administration and "an intimate part of all our foreign policy decisions", Mr. Clinton said that he knew that Mr. Gore would support it. Mr. Gore was in fact hosting a lunch for the Prime Minister the same afternoon after the talks concluded.

The Prime Minister, who has been showing visible fatigue and had evident difficulty in walking because of his knees, and seemed in discomfort even during the welcoming ceremony when he had to stand on the podium, expressed the hope that as the discussions proceeded, "differences will be reduced and common ground will emerge". He said that this was "a time of new hope and new opportunities in Indo-American ties" and that his visit marked a part of "a continuing dialogue between the world's two largest democracies."

Press conference off

Curiously, a joint press conference that the two leaders were to address together later in the afternoon after Mr Gore's lunch was called off suddenly on the ground that Mr. Gore had suggested that he spend more time with Mr. Vajpayee in discussions. Since the time slotted for the luncheon meeting with Mr. Gore was known well in advance and the joint press appearance had been scheduled taking this into account, the abrupt cancellation of the event took mediapersons by surprise and triggered fresh speculation about the state of Mr. Vajpayee's health and of course, the inevitable musings on the health of Indo-American relations.

PM's address well received: Page 13

some differences as long as we are thinking — if we speak with care and listen with respect we will

THE HINDU

16 SEP 2000

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2000

ENLARGING A 'VISION'

169a

THE 'VISION' STATEMENT which the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, propounded in March this year was, in essence, an article of faith concerning the complementary aspirations of the two countries. It was spelt out in a spirit accommodative of the perceptual differences between two gigantic democracies over some strategic considerations. Mr. Vajpayee has now sought to widen this 'vision' by outlining India's ideas on how to lay down the "principles" of its progressive "engagement" with the U.S. Capturing the imagination of the U.S. Congress and setting the mood for his current discussions with Mr. Clinton, Mr. Vajpayee said on Thursday that the two countries "have much in common and no clash of interests". He was right in expanding this theme in a nuanced fashion by calling on the U.S. to "understand" India's security concerns and by holding out a solemn assurance that New Delhi would not seek to "unravel" Washington's nuclear "non-proliferation efforts". This, in his view, would help dispel the "shadow" cast by various "security issues" over the immense new promise in other areas of cooperation. The commonsensical wisdom inherent in this approach, bordering on a frank appeal to the pan-American conscience of democracy, is quite unexceptionable on both sides of the bilateral equation. However, the enormity of the strategic ground to be covered to bring about a reciprocity of this magnitude cannot be exaggerated. The questions to be addressed include the long-term limits, if any, to India's strategic space and decision-making autonomy in regard to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and other relevant matters such as the proposed international treaty on aspects of the production and stockpiling of fissile material. The U.S., on its part, may have to explore more fully the China factor in India's security calculus.

Mr. Vajpayee left the U.S. Congress in no doubt about India's desire to avoid distorting the

9/12/00 10-12

matrix of Asia's stability and security. Frowned upon was the idea of domination by some at the expense of the other state-actors. While the subtle reference to China in this context as New Delhi's strategic neighbour could hardly be missed, the Prime Minister diversified the discourse by portraying India as a democracy under siege from specific external sources of terrorism. Observing the elementary diplomatic courtesy, if not also a necessary precaution, of not naming Pakistan directly before a knowing audience, Mr. Vajpayee openly courted American support for rolling back a rising tide of terrorism in South Asia. The appreciative response to the idea of an anti-terror partnership clearly pleased the Prime Minister, the fourth Indian leader to have addressed the American law-makers. For raising the stakes in India's fight against a terrorist onslaught on its core values as a democratic polity and a multi-religious society, Mr. Vajpayee thought it necessary to caution that the U.S. too was not insulated from the extremist violence emanating from pockets of South Asia.

It was in all a move to add a new dimension to the imagery of a so-called clash of civilisations, a theme familiar to the American policy-planners. But, in seeking to draw the U.S. into a common cause against an obscurantist "religious war" as an "instrument of state policy" in South Asia, Mr. Vajpayee began articulating a maximalist agenda for cooperation with the U.S. The emerging opportunities in bilateral economic interaction were kept in equal focus, too, as part of this ambitious context. In one sense, though, the Prime Minister's graphic description of India and the U.S. as proximate neighbours on the new international "digital map" and his offer to host a global dialogue on development were in tune with the spirit of the times. It is now up to the U.S., which revels in not only seizing economic opportunities around the world but also playing a 'leadership' role in this sphere as well, to respond.

9/15/00
W

U.S. can play a positive role on Kashmir issue: Clinton

HD-6

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 15. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, has said that even as the United States can play a positive role to a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir "dispute", which has been at the core of difficulties between India and Pakistan, "we will have to oppose terrorism in all its manifestations."

Speaking to a local correspondent at a function on the lawns of the White House yesterday, Mr. Clinton said the U.S. was strongly opposed to terrorism in any form and hoped that because of the groundwork his administration had laid "the United States can play a positive role to a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute, which has been at the core of difficulties between India and Pakistan for more than a half century now."

Asked what he expected from the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee's official visit, the U.S. President said India was the world's largest democracy. "We need to have a better and closer and more constructive relationship with them, and I hope that this will be the next step in that, and I think we will make some specific agreements."

The Principal Secretary to Prime Minister, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, did not react to Mr. Clinton's remark that Kashmir was at the core of the difficulties between India and Pakistan. However, he said, "we have not come here to discuss the Kashmir issue."

Mr. Mishra, who was briefing the media, said Mr. Vajpayee's speech at the joint meeting of the Congress had been very well received by Congressmen, some of whom he met at the meetings of the House International Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

He said the focus at these discussions was on Indo- U.S. relations and what more could

be done to bring two countries closer and deepen the relationship. Mr. Mishra said Mr. Vajpayee's proposal for global conference on development was not discussed.

He said the discussions were held in an amicable and friendly manner. Asked about U.S. sanctions against India, Mr. Mishra said "we

did not plead for lifting of sanctions." He said terrorism did figure during the discussions but Pakistan did not come up. Mr. Vajpayee had raised the issue of terrorism at the U.N.

He did not raise it during discussions with Congressmen nor was it raised by anyone. — UNI

THE HINDU

15 SEP 2000

BASKING IN THE CHEERS

The official leg of the Indian prime minister's visit to the United States has started with the address to the US congress. What the visit was meant to accomplish is anyone's guess. With US presidential elections coming up, nothing substantial was expected to materialize. However, since he had to address the United Nations millennium summit to neutralize Mr Pervez Musharraf, there was some sense in converting the visit into an official one, so as to extend the euphoria following Mr Bill Clinton's visit. Arguably, the present government's foreign policy is extremely US-centric and the prime minister's office and ministry of external affairs were not going to let the opportunity pass. The Silicon Valley leg was dropped because of health reasons. So one has the millennium summit, addresses to business gatherings, the Asia Society speech and now, a speech to the US congress.

The refrain is a familiar one that cuts across all these. Don't equate India with Pakistan. Since India is committed to nuclear disarmament, there is no reason to presume that south Asia is a cauldron. Two of the world's largest democracies have a lot in common, including the desire to combat cross-border terrorism. But the refrain that transcends these is about India's potential as an economic powerhouse. On an average, India has grown at 6.5 percent in the last 10 years, one of the highest rates of growth in the world. In the next 10 years, the intention is to double per capita income, implying an annual average growth rate of nine per cent. This also represents an opportunity for US business. Nonresident enterprise has contributed to growth of the American economy, including information technology. IT is a sector where there is enormous scope for cooperation, since India is in the process of opening up. But large sections of the world are deprived and the development/developing dichotomy shouldn't increase. There needs to be a global dialogue on development and New Delhi can be the venue for the first summit.

There are thus implicit references to reminding the International Monetary Fund,

the World Bank and most important, the UN and the security council. There are also implicit references to removing constraints on access to dual use technology, in place since 1974 and not since 1998, as is commonly perceived to be the case. It is no coincidence that the US congress has passed a resolution urging that the remaining 1998 sanctions be lifted. These are minor ones. The major ones are the 1974 embargoes and these cannot be lifted until some progress has been made on the comprehensive test ban treaty. The overall message is that although there might be disagreements on nuclear disarmament and Kashmir, economic relationships can prosper.

Mr Vajpayee's representation of India in the US as a potential economic powerhouse must be backed up by concrete reforms at home

This message is no different from what India's foreign policy *vis-à-vis* the US has argued over the last two years. To drive this message home, there has to be a credible package of domestic economic reforms, so as to attract US business. Despite internal problems with the Swadeshi Jagaran Manch and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Mr

Atal Behari Vajpayee has tried to push the commitment to reform. This remains a vague promise unless something concrete is brandished. Mr Vajpayee has harped on infrastructure sectors like power and telecommunications and insurance and banking, apart from mentioning disinvestment in the oil sector. Given the withdrawal of some high profile foreign investors, power sector reforms will not be that easy to sell. Hence several announcements on opening up of telecom before the visit. Banking and insurance are old hats.

Perhaps a new selling point will be disinvestment in the oil sector. This has a new catalyst because of hikes in global oil prices and a resultant increase in the oil pool deficit. The inevitable hike in oil prices, which await the prime minister's return, can naturally be linked with broader issues of oil sector reform. The visit on its own is not that important, despite the 21 cheers the congress gave the prime minister. What is important is the economic thrust and this is a success of Indian foreign policy that can't be denied.

do-Pak troubles: Clinton

M.K. Razdan

WASHINGTON 15 SEPTEMBER

PRESIDENT BILL Clinton has expressed the view that the Kashmir dispute was at the core of the difficulties between India and Pakistan and hoped that the US can play a positive role in its peaceful resolution.

Clinton's surprise remark that Kashmir was at the core of Indo-Pak difficulties came on Thursday when a reporter asked him about his upcoming talks with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.

Mr Vajpayee's principal secretary and national security adviser Brajesh Mishra reacted with obvious surprise when, at a briefing for Indian journalists, his comment was sought on Mr Clinton's remark.

He confined himself to saying that he had heard it only from the reporter.

Clinton's attention had been drawn by a reporter to Mr Vajpayee's visit and was asked what outcome he expected from it.

The President responded by stating that he was delighted that the Indian leader was in Washington after his own trip to India.

"They are the world's largest democracy. We need to have a better, closer and more constructive relationship with them, and I hope that this will be the next step in that (direction), and I think we will make some specific agreements," Mr Clinton said.

Voicing US opposition to terrorism in any form, he hoped if

not during his presidency, then in future "the United States can play a positive role to a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute, which has been at the core of the difficulties between India and Pakistan for more than half a century now."

Pointing out that Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have done well in the United States, Mr Clinton said it was "tragic to think what this conflict has done to hold back the people," in the Indian sub-continent.

"So, I hope they can lay this burden down and I hope we can help them. In the meanwhile, of course, we will have to oppose terrorism in all its manifestations," Mr Clinton said.

— PTI

The Economic Times

15 SEP 2000

Clinton's Kashmir remarks perturb Indian officials

Aziz Haniffa

WASHINGTON 15 SEPTEMBER

A REMARK by US President Bill Clinton that Kashmir has been "at the core of the difficulties between India and Pakistan" has caused some heartburn among senior Indian officials accompanying Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee on his US visit.

Mr Vajpayee's principal secretary and national security advisor Brajesh Mishra, when informed of Mr Clinton's remark, asked disbelievingly: "Did President Clinton say that? Say that Kashmir is the core issue?"

And then, when provided with the transcript of the President's remarks, pored over it. He then asserted: "We have not come here to discuss the Kashmir issue. But certainly Kashmir will come up in the context of Indo-Pak relationship and in the context of South Asia."

Mr Clinton made the remarks while responding to a question thrown at him by a reporter about his summit meeting with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee on Thursday. Mr Clinton, who was departing from the White House's South Portico after commenting on the Patient's Bill of Rights, turned around and said he is "delighted" that Prime Minister Vajpayee had taken him up on his invitation to visit the US "after my trip there, and I was honoured to be the first President in over 20 years to go."

India is "the world's largest democracy. We need to have a better and closer and more constructive relationship with them." He said he hoped Mr Vajpayee's visit "will be the next step in that, and I think we'll make some specific agreements."

On the question of cross-border terrorism and India's accusation against Pakistan of fomenting in terrorism,

Mr Clinton asserted that "the United States is strongly opposed to terrorism in any form, and I still hope that, if not while I'm here, then in the future, because of the ground-

work we've laid, the United States can play a positive role to a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute, which has been at the core of the difficulties between India and Pakistan for more than half a century now."

"If you look at how well — I will say this again — if you look at how well the Indians, the Pakistanis and the Bangladeshis who have come to America have done, the extraordinary percentage of them involved in the hi-tech economy, the professions, building our country across a broad range of areas, it is tragic to think of what this conflict has done to hold back the people who live on the Indian subcontinent...and who have proven by their stunning success in this country, that they have the ability to be at the cutting edge of the 21st century."

"So I hope they can lay this burden down, and I hope we can help them, and in the meanwhile, of course, we'll have to oppose terrorism in all its manifestations."

At a time, when it seems Washington has come around to India's contention that a dialogue with Pakistan is not on the cards till Islamabad eschews violence and stops fuelling the insurgency and terrorist movements in Kashmir, his use of the phrase "core of the difficulties", which can be perceived as analogous to Pakistan's assertions that Kashmir is the "core issue," gave the officials acute heartburn.

On Wednesday, a key adviser to Mr Clinton on South Asian affairs predicted the Kashmir will certainly be on the agenda of the summit between Mr Clinton and Mr Vajpayee when they meet on Friday.

The official, in a meeting with Washington-based South Asian journalists, said both India and Pakistan should use the "presence and experience" of Mr Clinton to help alleviate the situation.

— IANS

Vajpayee health forces press meet call-off

REUTERS, PTI & UNI

WASHINGTON, Sept. 15. — The White House cancelled today Mr Bill Clinton and Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's scheduled joint press conference after the Indian side pleaded the Prime Minister was too tired to take the strain.

Mr Clinton had earlier struck an unanticipated note on the eve of an Indo-US dialogue expected to focus more on trade than on India's problems with Pakistan, when he said Kashmir lay at the core of sub-continental tensions, and hoped Washington could play a role in its resolution.

Caught unawares, National Security Adviser and the Prime Minister's principal secretary, Mr Brajesh Mishra, had refused comment.

But he had stressed that "we have not come here to discuss the Kashmir issue. Kashmir will certainly come up in the official talks, (but only) in the context of Indo-Pakistan relations".

Announcing the cancellation of the customary press meeting today, White House spokesman, Mr Joe Lockhart said: "Yesterday the Indians asked us to look at the schedule and try to find a way to shorten the day. It's been a very long trip, an exhausting trip for the Prime Minister, and they felt the last event today, the press conference, was a little bit too much."

Mr Lockhart said Mr Vajpayee was known to have health problems, and that his team had wanted to give the Prime Minister some time to rest as he still had several days left of his US visit.

Mr Vajpayee had been examined by the renowned specialist, Dr Chittaranjan Ranawat, a couple of days ago, and had



Mr Bill Clinton

been advised surgery to replace his troubled knee. The operation was expected to be carried out by Dr Ranawat in India after Mr Vajpayee returned.

The 73-year-old Prime Minister had earlier trimmed his two-week visit to the USA by two days on the advice of doctors, forcing him to skip a scheduled stopover in San Francisco.

Today, as Mr Vajpayee walked up for the ceremonial welcome at the White House, he looked very tired. President Bill Clinton in fact, had to walk a few extra steps to receive the Prime Minister after he got off his black limousine. The President held on to the Prime Minister's hand as the two walked toward the dais for the guard of honour.

Mr Vajpayee appeared to be walking with some difficulty, but took the salute with ease when the national anthems of the two countries were played.

Mr Clinton's surprise remark on Kashmir came after a reporter asked him yesterday what he expected from his meeting with Mr Vajpayee.

The President replied that he was delighted to have the Indian Prime Minister in Washington. He then voiced the USA's opposition to terrorism in any form, and hoped that "the United States can play a positive role to a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute, which has been at the core of the difficulties between India and Pakistan for more than half a century now".

Mr Mishra, however, clarified to reporters that the focus of discussions was on bilateral Indo-US relations, not Kashmir, and on what more could be done to bring New Delhi and Washington closer.

■ More reports on page 8

THE STATESMAN

16 SEP 2000

'American commitment' on friendship

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA 51-8

WASHINGTON, Sept. 15. — President Bill Clinton today sought to put relations with India beyond individuals, saying that he wanted Indo-US partnership to be an "American commitment".

Mr Clinton, who will lay down office in about four months, told reporters at the White House that it would be his priority to see that there was continuity in bilateral ties.

Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, who was seated with Mr Clinton in the Oval Office after their joint press conference was cancelled due to his poor health, spoke warmly about Indo-US ties. He said as the two countries discussed issues, differences would be reduced and more common ground would be found.

Mr Clinton said Indo-US ties had moved in a new direction after his visit to India. Strengthening of these ties should be seen as a long-term effort going beyond his presidency. "I do not think it should be another 20 years before another US President visits India," he said.

Earlier, in his speech after being welcomed by Mr Clinton on the White House lawns, Mr Vajpayee said his visit to the USA was about "new hopes and new opportunities" in

Indo-American ties. 15/9

"Our dialogue will embrace economic cooperation, science and technology as well as in-depth discussions on regional and global issues ... We will carry forward the talks we began in New Delhi in March this year."

Mr Vajpayee described his interaction with US lawmakers at Capitol Hill yesterday as "historic".

Mr Vajpayee was given a 19-gun salute as the two leaders stood side by side and the Indian and US national anthems were played by a colourfully-attired US army band. An array of dignitaries on both sides lined up on the lawns. Secretary of state, Mrs Madeleine Albright, was seen exchanging pleasantries with the foreign minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, and Dr Najma Heptulla, deputy chairperson of the Rajya Sabha and president of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Last night, India and the USA signed five deals worth \$6 billion in the power, e-commerce and banking sectors. The deals, including a \$900-million loan from the US Exim Bank for purchase of US goods and services, were inked in the presence of the finance minister, Mr Yashwant Sinha, and the US commerce secretary, Mr Norman Y Mineta.

THE STATESMAN

16 SEP 2000

INDO-US TRADE TIES

51-6 The Issues To Be Sorted Out 1679

DURING President Bill Clinton's visit to India in November, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding to promote bilateral economic relations, including technological upgradation. The main feature of the agreement was an effort to institutionalise the exercise without merely expressing intentions towards that end. Accordingly, it was decided to assess the follow-up actions at the highest level — that is, involving the Prime Minister's Office in the case of India and the President's secretariat in the case of USA.

It was also decided to have at least two meetings — one in India and the other in USA — to sort out issues concerning bilateral economic relations. The current visit by Atal Behari Vajpayee is one such follow-up action. In the meeting between the two leaders from the world's giant democracies, no doubt certain major issues are expected to come up for discussion as drawn up by the officials from both the sides. But what are the perceptions of the general public? An attempt is made here to present what an ordinary citizen expects from such bilateral talks.

IRRITANT

The USA is the most important trading partner as India depends on the American market for nearly 19 per cent of its exports — though from the American angle India accounts for not more than one per cent of its total imports. Similarly, America is the major foreign investor in India. Therefore, cordial bilateral economic relations between the two is crucial.

However, that does not mean that we should be a meek observer in the talks. Whatever may be the American position and role in bilateral economic relations, India should be an effective participant in the talks. If India is to be seen as an effective participant without compromising national interests, the following issues should be thrashed out.

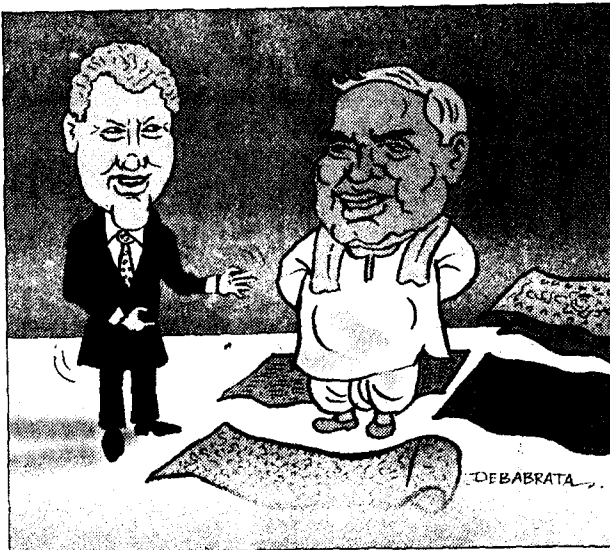
The biggest irritant which needs to be sorted out is the economic sanctions imposed against India after the nuclear explosion in May 1998. No doubt, sanctions failed to deter India's progress in any manner except having a marginal impact such as a little higher cost of commercial borrowing

The author is member, Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council and Convenor, BJP Economic Cell.

By JAGDISH SHETTIGAR

from the international market. Otherwise we have been able to effectively withstand the sanction effects unlike Pakistan.

Against the expected resource gap of less than \$2 billion required to be bridged through external assistance, India was able to raise \$4.16 billion through Resurgent India Bonds for non-resident Indians — that too within ten days. Even the American investor, did not stop or curtail their ongoing



projects in India as a result of stopping of financial back-up as per the sanction rules. In fact, pressure for diluting the sanctions against India was initiated by American businessmen who look at India as a major partner from the point of view of long-term economic relations.

Nevertheless, for an ordinary Indian citizen who may not be aware of what exactly sanctions meant feels disturbed as it amounts to questioning our right to safeguard national security. Therefore, easing of emotional tension at the level of common people is an important step to promote long-term bilateral economic relations.

Similarly, as per the sanctions some of our leading research organisations such as Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Indian Institute of Science and National laboratories have been blacklisted for the purpose of any assistance.

SORTING ISSUES

On the other hand, the memorandum of understanding expresses the intention to strengthen technological base in India. That may be possible through transfer of technology through foreign collaborations. But it is equally important to be self-reliant from the long-term view. In this context, the role of our national laboratories are crucial. How can this be achieved without enabling these institutes to function without any hassles and handicaps. Naturally, the common citizen expects this issue also to be sorted out before any meaningful progress in the

bilateral economic relations.

During the American President's visit to India, Clinton was impressed by the weaving skills of Indian carpets, apart from Taj Mahal, functioning of the panchayat system in a Rajasthan village and tea supplied by a Mumbai dhaba. Clinton was told how many thousands of knots made each meter of carpet — which is basically responsible for fine weaving of the world class carpet. Perhaps what was not told was that such skill would be

possible only with the involvement of child labour. Today, Indian carpets are in great demand in the international market because of the fine weaving quality — which unfortunately or fortunately is linked with child labour. But the US is very determined to integrate labour standards along with environmental issues with the WTO.

Though the USA failed in its attempt at the last Seattle meeting, it still is determined to push the issue. Though the MOU signed at the last meeting between the two countries appreciated India's concern, simultaneously it reiterated American stand. It is pretty clear that the developed countries are not raising the issue of labour standards from the humanitarian angle. On the other hand, these countries are not interested in export promotion of the developing countries.

MARKET HASSLE

From the Indian point of view, carpet is a major export item. Mere appreciation of the skill and, at the same time, the effort to scuttle its export cannot go together. The presence of an Indian carpet at Clinton's residence — which he bought during his visit — no doubt enhances status of this particular Indian product. The Indian carpet weaver should naturally feel thrilled and elated. But that alone will not help the carpet industry to thrive. For that it is crucial to expand market support.

Therefore, it is crucial to recognise the fact that while the carpet at the American President's drawing room enhances its status, for survival of the carpet weaver and his skill, it is important to enter the American market without any hassle. Therefore, it is crucial to sort out issues such as sanctions, extending the scope of WTO to non-trade issues etc. to promote meaningful and effective bilateral economic relations between the two countries.

Indo-US textile trade pact signed

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, SEPT 16

THE United States and India announced a trade agreement on Friday calling for New Delhi to reduce barriers to American textile imports, officials said.

The agreement, hammered out on the sidelines of Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit to Washington, will require New Delhi to cap tariffs on a wide range of textile and apparel products, from yarn to sportswear.

"This agreement paves the way for US producers of textile and apparel products to expand ship-

ments to India, one of the world's largest markets," US trade representative Charlene Barshefsky said in a statement.

Washington has long complained that India remains one of the most heavily protected markets in the world despite promised reforms. India is the United States' 29th largest export market. By contrast, the United States is India's biggest trading partner and foreign investor.

During his Washington visit, Vajpayee has stressed the importance of economic ties between Washington and New Delhi, and US officials said trade relations

were gradually improving.

The textiles agreement establishes legally binding tariff ceilings or caps on key textile and apparel items, ensuring US producers can access the Indian market, one of the world's fastest growing. Under the agreement, Indian tariffs, duties and taxes cannot be raised beyond the agreed ceilings.

It was the second major trade agreement this year between the United States and India. In January, India agreed to eliminate trade barriers to US farm goods and a wide range of other products. But other trade disputes remain.

INDIAN EXPRESS

17 SEP 2000

India, US to step up cooperation against terrorism

HT Correspondent
Washington DC, September 16

INDIA AND the US have agreed to build upon the new momentum in their relationship "to further enhance mutual understanding and deepen cooperation across the full spectrum of political, economic, commercial, scientific, technological, social and international issues".

A joint statement, issued at the end of talks between Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Clinton, expressed satisfaction at the "pace and purposefulness with which the two countries have initiated the consultations envisaged in the dialogue architecture" set out in the Vision Statement signed during Clinton's India visit.

Noting that both India and the US are targets of continuing international terrorism, the two leaders expressed their determination to reinforce bilateral cooperation in this area. They have agreed to hold another round of consultations on counter-terrorism

in New Delhi later this month. They have also urged the international community to intensify the efforts at the current session of the UN.

The two countries agreed to continue their ongoing dialogue on security and non-proliferation issues, including defence posture, which is designed to further narrow difference on these important issues.

On CTBT, the statement said that while India will continue its efforts to evolve a political consensus, the US will work for ratification of the treaty at the earliest possible date. Although the US has signed the CTBT, its ratification has been blocked by

the Senate.

In the economic arena, the statement noted that India's continuing economic reforms and the two countries' complementary strengths and resources provided a strong base for expansion of bilateral economic ties.

The two leaders recognised the need to deepen cooperation on high-tech trade issues. They noted that the present regime on e-commerce would be rolled over until the next ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

They said that India and the US would cooperate in building a wider international consensus on infor-

mation technology. They also pledged their commitment to bridge the digital divide, both within and between countries, so that the benefits of information technology could reach out to all citizens.

India and the US expressed satisfaction with their agreements on textiles. They also agreed to work towards expanding bilateral ties in civil aviation.

It was also decided to strengthen the ongoing vaccine research programme.

On the vexed issue of avoidance of double taxation, it was agreed that the competent authorities of both sides would soon negotiate an arrangement under which collection or recovery of tax will generally be suspended on a reciprocal basis, during pendency of a mutual agreement proceeding.

As part of the efforts to step up collaboration in the fight against AIDS, the two countries agreed to support research programmes and encourage the formation of a business council to spread awareness against the disease at the industrial workplace.

Pact on taxation

INDIA AND the US will soon work out an arrangement to suspend collection and recovery of tax on reciprocal basis pending finalisation of double taxation agreement even as the two countries agreed to step up cooperation in it, bio-technology and civil aviation to attract more private investment.

A joint statement, issued yesterday at the end of talks between Prime Minister Vajpayee and US President Bill Clinton, said the two countries will forge new ties to make capital market more efficient and transparent to facilitate flow of foreign investment.

PTI, Washington

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

17 SEP 2000

U.S. sees India as ally in shaping world affairs

New era begins with end of pro-Pak 'tilt'

By Dileep Padgaonkar

WASHINGTON: Oftentimes, what one has heard and seen here during the past three days induces a sense of utter disbelief. Barely two years ago, India, in American eyes, was in the dog-house. A 'Hindu nationalist' party was in office. Fears about the plight of India's minorities ran high. The 'Hindu nationalist' government had carried out nuclear tests. This had frustrated American efforts to check the proliferation of nuclear weapons. India, in a word, could do nothing right. Now, it would appear, India can do nothing wrong.

The political establishment here, cutting across party lines, has been unrestrained in its praise for Atal Behari Vajpayee's leadership. No words have been spared to hail India's democracy, the manner in which it has nurtured its diversity, its economic reforms, the strides it has taken to promote social development and, not least, the outstanding contribution that the Indian-American community has made to enrich America and to build bridges between the two countries.

From the public remarks of President Bill Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore to the reported remarks of American law-makers in their discussions with Mr Vajpayee, from the official briefings of what transpired during the private discussions between the two sides to the lengthy joint statement issued on Friday, it is all too clear that the U.S. now regards India as one of its key interlocutors to shape the world in the new century.

Both sides have

affirmed that the atmospherics during the Vajpayee visit have been marked by warmth, cordiality and candour. Differences over issues like non-proliferation have been acknowledged. But care has been taken to ensure that they did not detract from the essentials. And the essentials were simply this: India and the U.S. now treat each other as partners, as "natural allies" who will work together in all fields of endeavour for their mutual benefit and, by extension, for the benefit of the world.

What this means, in substance, is that henceforth America will want India to play a critical role not only in South Asia, but in Asia as a whole and indeed at the global level as well. They are now "neighbours on the digital map". Significant in this context

is what Karl Inderfurth, assistant secretary of state for South Asia affairs, had to say at the official briefing on Friday. "We believe that the hyphenated relationship between the two countries (India and Pakistan) together is no longer appropriate."

In other words, the era of a "tilt" towards Pakistan is over. America will deal with New Delhi and Islamabad separately. But there is no question any longer of "parity" between them. Equally significant is the role that the U.S. sees for India in Afghanistan.

American officials went on record on Friday to assert that Washington "fully shares and agrees with" India's concerns about the nature of the Taliban government and its connections with international terrorist organisations.

► U.S. backs India on Kashmir, Page 7



U.S. backs India for Security Council seat

WASHINGTON: The United States now sees India's credentials for permanent membership of the UN security council as strong. "Our position has been and continues to be that India will obviously be a candidate, a strong candidate, for Security Council membership," Bruce Riedel, senior director of the President's national security council, and Karl F. Inderfurth, assistant secretary of state, said at a White House briefing on Friday.

They said that the subject was discussed between President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

However, the expansion of the council still had "some time to go". Not too long ago, U.S. officials had linked Indian membership to the solving of the Kashmir issue. (Agencies)

U.S. backs India on Kashmir

By Dileep Padgaonkar

WASHINGTON: American officials went on record on Friday to assert that Washington "fully shares and agrees with" India's concerns about the nature of the Taliban government and its connections with international terrorist organisations. Both sides have agreed to set up an institutional framework to address these concerns.

New Delhi also has reasons to be pleased with the U.S. endorsement of its stand on resuming the dialogue with Pakistan. American officials have said that the dialogue can start once "conditions are appropriate". They assert that as of now, the conditions are not appropriate. They add for good measure that there has not been sufficient diminution in the level of violence in Kashmir—suggesting indirectly that Pakistan's support for Islamic militants has not declined in any significant measure.

Islamabad will also note with dismay the official American reiteration that the Line of Control must be respected, that violence must be renounced, that restraint must be used in responding to violence. What is more, for Washington, Kashmir is an important issue between India and Pakistan, but it is not a "core" issue.

All this should not give the impression that the discussions focused only on political and strategic matters.

They did not. The two sides have moved forward in a number of other areas—oil prices, trade and finance, clean energy, HIV-AIDS awareness, scientific and technological cooperation, biotechnology, civil aviation, IT, double taxation and so forth. Indeed, high-level meetings to get down to specifics on these issues will begin almost immediately after the Vajpayee visit.

And so it is that Atal Behari Vajpayee concludes his momentous stay in Washington on an unprecedented note of buoyancy. It is President Clinton who captured its essence when he said, "It is inconceivable to me that we can build the kind of world we want over the next ten or 20 years unless there is a very strong partnership between the U.S. and India."

Mr Vajpayee is to unveil a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in front of the Indian embassy here. Mr Clinton's presence at this ceremony underscores the warmth and the high profile the visit has come to acquire.

The key challenge for India now is how not to go overboard over the new status it has acquired in the eyes of the world's only superpower. Euphoria can generate exaggerated expectations. But today, the nation owes a *shabaash* to Mr Vajpayee and his government for the quite extraordinary feat they have accomplished—to change American perceptions about India and its potential within barely two years.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

17 SEP 2000

PARADIGM SHIFT

Vajpayee presses the right buttons

518
17/9

WITH Vajpayee's speech to the US Congress and the reception he received there, Indo-US relations have undergone a sea change since Nixon sent nuclear armed ships from the US Seventh Fleet into the Bay of Bengal. Although Vajpayee looked ill and tired, he made the most of the occasion, looking forward to the kinds of mutual cooperation possible rather than looking back at differences. Positioning India as a bastion of democracy in Asia is an astute reading of the mind of the US Congress, which is rather more exercised about this issue than before, principally because the Cold War is over and the US sees itself in competition with China for strategic influence in Asia — political democracy is its best calling card. The American attitude towards China tends to be schizophrenic, with not all Congressmen happy about Clinton's policy of a soft approach to China and overlooking its atrocious human rights record and muscle flexing in the Pacific. From the American point of view, while China is a source of cheap consumer goods as well as a fast growing market for American business, it regiments its labour, suppresses political and religious freedom, and is belligerent over Tibet and Taiwan. By upholding pluralist traditions, India seems congenial in contrast. Vajpayee was blunt about the threat India faces from across its borders, eschewing anodynes to get to the soul of the matter — India, like the US is a multicultural nation, while a neighbouring nation stood for the supremacy of religion and promoted religious war from its territory.

The Vajpayee strategy has begun to yield results — Congress has passed a resolution urging the lifting of all remaining sanctions against India, while the Clinton administration has told Musharraf the onus is on him to reduce violence before the stalled dialogue with India can be resumed. Vajpayee, of course, knows how to be all things to all men; like his compatriot Bill Clinton, he is a consummate politician. He made several commitments, and it remains to be seen how far he sticks to them. The principal threat, of course, is from the right wing of the BJP and the *sangh parivar*, for whom a lot of elements in Vajpayee's speech must be anathema, from multiculturalism to the promotion of foreign investment. He will need to face them off when he gets back home; semantic contortions as over the "*swayamsevak*" controversy will not always help. He has also set an ambitious goal of 9 per cent annual growth in GDP for India — clearly, the NDA government will need to be more proactive on economic reforms than it has been to get anywhere near this target, including summoning up the will to curb burgeoning fiscal deficits. The Americans will not be impressed by his speech alone, but will be closely watching to see how far he can deliver. So far, this much can be said for Vajpayee's US visit — he has initiated a clear break from the days of Nehruvian diplomacy, and he has the Americans' interest. The rest is up to him and his government.

THE STATESMAN

17 SEP 2001

WORKING GROUP ON U.N. PEACE-KEEPING ANNOUNCED

Indo-U.S. joint statement reflects political, strategic cooperation

By Malini Parthasarathy

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 16. India and the United States have now taken a few steps further towards enhanced political and strategic cooperation with the announcement by both sides of an institutionalised dialogue on the situation in Afghanistan, of a joint working group on U.N. peace-keeping and the adding of a new dimension to the discussions currently under way on counter-terrorism.

With the talks between the Indian and American delegations, led by the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, and the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, respectively, ending on a note of affusive cordiality, the Indo-U.S. dialogue appears to have skillfully steered itself away from the "bumps on the road" that were expected in regard to the sensitive issues of Kashmir, Pakistan and non-proliferation. The Indo-U.S. joint statement reflected an obvious give-and-take by the two sides. The American concession to the Indian position reflected in the absence of any critical reference to India's unwillingness to go along with a proposal for a multilateral ban on fissile material production, ahead of the FMCT negotiations in Geneva. The statement merely said that the U.S. "noted its moratorium" on this and "supports a multilateral moratorium" to this effect. On the CTBT also, India's position was recorded in the statement without comment. The statement indicated absolutely no heat on the differences in the positions of both sides by its noting that "both countries agreed to continue their dialogue on security and non-proliferation, including on defence posture which is designed to further narrow differences on these important issues." The reference to "defence posture" translates in other words to the



The U.S. Vice-President, Mr. Al Gore, the Democratic nominee for Presidency, (right) toasts the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, at a State Department luncheon in Washington on Friday. — AP

issue of missile deployment, a point on which the United States has been seen as placing strong pressure on India to exercise restraint in its missile deployment strategies.

Talks on terrorism

The yielding of space on India's part reflected in the fact that the references to cooperation on terrorism were not as strong and pointed as Indian officials might have desired. The statement says: "Noting that both India and the United States are targets of continuing terrorism, they expressed their determination to further reinforce bilateral cooperation in this area. They have agreed to hold another round of counter-terrorism talks in New Delhi later this month and to pursue work on a mutual legal assistance treaty." Indian officials, including the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, indicated later that more weight had been attached to the ongoing round of talks on counter-terrorism with the addition of the subject of narcotics as

an issue for discussion. Narcotics control officers of both sides would now participate in these discussions, another round of which is to take place on September 25-26 when the US coordinator for counter-terrorism, Mr. Michael Sheehan, arrives in Delhi.

Kashmir issue

On the issue of Kashmir and Pakistan, echoing the phrasing of the Vision Statement, the joint statement "reaffirms" the two countries' "belief that tensions can only be resolved by the nations of South Asia and by peaceful means". Interestingly, "India reiterated its commitment to enhancing cooperation, peace and stability in the region" even as "both sides stressed the unacceptability of continued violence and bloodshed as a basis for a solution of the problems of the region." Asked afterwards by Indian reporters whether the Americans had placed emphasis on the need for India to return to a dialogue with Pakistan, Mr. Jaswant Singh

said that he had not detected "such insistence" and that Prime Minister had pointed out to President Clinton that India had initiated such a dialogue earlier and that the conclusion was that the judgment of what would be an "appropriate climate" and of the timing was to be left to India, in regard to the resumption of such a bilateral dialogue. American officials for the moment appear to be endorsing this perception. At a post-talks briefing by senior administration officials, Mr. Bruce Riedel and Mr. Karl F. Inderfurth, in response to queries on this subject, Mr. Riedel reemphasised the position "laid out by the President" last March which reflected in the now famous "four Rs" but carefully added the caveat to the call for a return to dialogue contained in these four Rs, that it should be "at the appropriate time when the atmosphere is correct."

It is evident that the Indian side is very happy with the institutionalisation of a dialogue with the United States on Afghanistan. With Mr. Jaswant Singh maintaining that this indicated a recognition that Afghanistan is "an important issue for both the United States and India," the Indian official team is pointing out that this meant a sharper focus on the destabilising role of the Taliban, the consequences of their spread in the region, including the connection with Pakistan. At the briefing by the Clinton administration officials, Mr. Riedel said specifically that "the Prime Minister in particular wanted to raise with the President, the situation in Afghanistan, India's concerns about the nature of the Taliban Government and its connection with international terrorist organisations — concerns which of course we fully share and agree with." Mr. Riedel confirmed that the two leaders had decided to "set up a framework for talks between our two countries to deal

with our common concerns about Afghanistan."

It was also decided to have a joint working group on U.N. peace-keeping, to be set up at the level of the Ministry of External Affairs and the US State Department, which is to share the experience acquired, particularly by India, in UN peacekeeping operations such as in Sierra Leone, where Indian troops have had a trying time. Indian officials regard this decision as an important indication of the increasing weight given to India by the United States on issues of global interest.

Indian officials pleased

It was also clear that one major reason for the smooth sailing that the talks have apparently had, reflecting in added momentum for the effort to intensify Indo-US cooperation, was the sense on the Clinton administration's part that it is in its twilight days. It was clear from the utterances of administration officials that the time for active policy-making in this administration was now past. Indian officials who were visibly pleased with the way the lunch for Mr. Vajpayee hosted by the Vice-President, Mr. Al Gore, played out and the Democratic presidential candidate's warm references to India, were careful to stress that during this visit and especially during Mr. Vajpayee's interactions with Congressional leaders on Capitol Hill, there was plenty of evidence of "bipartisan support" for improving relations with India. There were, the Indian officials pointed out, "pledges of continuance" by both the American political parties — the Democrats of course but also the Republicans. Mr. Clinton himself was quoted as telling Mr. Vajpayee that he "wanted to leave this relationship in the best possible shape" for his successor "so that he can pick up the ball and run with it."

THE HINDU

Weapon trial never again, PM tells Clinton

Delhi joins test ban without sign

FROM OUR DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

Washington, Sept. 17: The CTBT deal has been sealed even if it has not been signed. In his talks here, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee told President Bill Clinton that India does not intend to test a nuclear weapon ever again.

He told the President that the voluntary moratorium on further tests announced by India 28 months ago would remain in place until the CTBT went into force. With this, an assurance held out by officials after the Pokhran blasts has been converted into a solemn commitment between two heads of government.

The commitment given by Vajpayee to Clinton is a major step forward from his statement in New York on the first day of his trip that India will not prevent CTBT entering into force.

The US officials immediately welcomed Vajpayee's commitment on CTBT. Karl Inderfurth, the assistant secretary of state for South Asia, said this is the first time the Indian government has spelt out its intention to continue its voluntary moratorium on nuclear tests until CTBT comes into effect.

"This is a new element," Inderfurth said. "They have reaffirmed it. They have said it in other ways in the past. I think that is what you could point to as a new addition."

Inderfurth also welcomed Vajpayee's statement in New York that "my government will not prevent the treaty's (CTBT) entry into force". This statement has been interpreted by experts as a promise by India that should 43 countries sign and ratify CTBT, India would be the 44th state to do so. A total of 44 ratifications by nuclear-capable states is required for CTBT to come into effect.

In his comments on Indo-US discussions on CTBT, Inderfurth added that there were other new elements, including this commitment not to block CTBT's entry into force. "We hope when the winter session (of Parliament) begins in November, it would be possible to bring CTBT to Parliament for debate, and that in the meantime, additional efforts will be made to build a national consensus."

With a promise to link the voluntary moratorium on new tests to CTBT's entry into force, such a debate in Parliament or even the creation of a national consensus has, however, become irrelevant.

In fact, with Vajpayee's commitment to Clinton on CTBT, even India's signature and ratification has been pre-empted. This is because the Prime Minister's promise links India's decision to forego further tests not to New Delhi's signature or ratification of CTBT, but beyond that to a global decision to let CTBT enter into force.

India's major new step forward on CTBT finds a prominent place in the joint statement issued after talks between Clinton and Vajpayee. Although a joint statement does not have the force of a treaty, the hitherto voluntary moratorium on further tests has now become a formal commitment made by India's head of government to another nation. Therefore, whether India signs CTBT or not, it can conduct any further nuclear test only by reneging on this solemn commitment.

The Americans are delighted that the commitment by Vajpayee realising the objectives of CTBT without signing it has been enshrined in the joint statement.

Inderfurth said: "Well, I think this will be the first time we have spelled out in a statement with the Indian government its intention to continue its voluntary moratorium on nuclear tests until CTBT comes into effect."

The Americans, too, promised in the joint statement their redoubled efforts to ratify CTBT, a demand made by Vajpayee in his speeches here. Inderfurth said: "We, too, have had difficulty developing a national consensus on this issue."

Visa quota

Clinton has said that the number of H-1B visas would be increased in the near future. But the size of the hike is yet to be finalised.

THE TELEGRAPH

18 SEP 2000

U.S. cannot mediate on Kashmir: Inderfurth

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 17. The United States will work with India "across-the-board" on a whole range of international issues including Afghanistan as part of its broad-based approach for a qualitatively new relationship, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Karl Inderfurth, said today.

Responding to questions on Indo-U.S. ties, Mr. Inderfurth told Star News' from Washington that the U.S. would like India to join the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in its own interests and as a world leader of disarmament. "However, it is India's decision as to when it should be done."

On Kashmir, he made it clear that the "U.S. cannot be a mediator" and nor did it wish to "impose" its views on New Delhi. The U.S. recognises that this is an issue that had to be resolved "bilaterally" between India and Pakistan.

He said the U.S. was hopeful of resumption of the stalled Indo-Pak dialogue. On the outcome of the visit of the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, he said it had helped "further advance" bilateral ties. This "important" relationship would be continued by the next administration whichever party wins.

He said Washington was concerned that there were tensions in the South Asian region. "We are concerned about India's relations with Pakistan and we want to see those improve and the President made it clear that he will do everything he can to help that."

Asked whether he saw a pro-India tilt in U.S. policies at the end of Mr. Vajpayee's visit, he said, "What we are doing is pursuing a relationship with India that is long overdue... we believe that we have to look at India on its own merits, not tied to one country or another." — PTI

18 SEP 2000

18 SEP 2000

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2000

A ROAD TO RAPPORT

NO-12 18/9

THE DIPLOMATIC FERVOUR displayed by the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the official interpreters of his latest parleys with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, in Washington is symptomatic of an American assessment of India's foreign policy concerns in a friendly spirit sans illusions. Considerable bonhomie is said to have suffused the political atmospherics of the Vajpayee-Clinton talks held as an intense engagement, definable also as a progressive reversal of an earlier estrangement, between two democracies. The tone and tenor of their discussions reveal a new degree of mutual respect and maturity in the bilateral dialogue, which was propelled to a high plane during Mr. Clinton's visit to South Asia in March. At the macro-level, three principles will determine the direction of this ongoing process. First, the Clinton Administration has convinced itself that the U.S. cannot shape up a global political order of its choice in the 21st century without actively interacting with India on an array of issues. Second, Washington is adamant in its calculation, based on a perception of its self-interest as a global 'leader', that the U.S.-India relationship can reach its "full potential" only if New Delhi accommodates more vigorously the American agenda of nuclear non-proliferation. Not the least parameter of this bilateral interaction is the willingness of the White House to expand economic exchanges in a manner consistent with the residual American sanctions on a 'nuclearised' India in the specific areas of military supplies and dual-use knowhow. Overall, this is as good a bargain (in a robust sense of the term) as India can get in the present circumstances.

The Vajpayee Government's transparent hopes for a stabilising role by the U.S. in constraining Pakistan's perceived capacity to escalate the Kashmir crisis in all its manifestations have been addressed by Mr. Clinton, but certainly not in a way that can be seen as a diplomatic breakthrough for New Delhi. To be fair, the Indian delegation has maintained that its current visit to Washington is not aimed at either discussing Kashmir or appealing to the

U.S. for the repeal of unwaived sanctions. However, some authoritative U.S. annotations of Mr. Clinton's various observations on this occasion are indicative of realities that India can take in its stride. Noteworthy is the clarification that Mr. Clinton did not signal a sudden acceptance of Pakistan's position when he voiced its 'core' phraseology in reference to Kashmir and that the use of the word was casual and had nothing to do with the specific significance it has acquired in South Asian diplomacy.

There is nothing amiss in the U.S. opposition to a military solution of the Kashmir dispute. Of equal acceptability to India is Mr. Clinton's view that Islamabad and New Delhi must take progressive steps so that they could resume their direct dialogue "when the atmosphere is correct" (as elucidated on behalf of the U.S. President). Dispelled, too, is the lingering suspicion that Washington may persist in seeing New Delhi and Islamabad as equals in a "hyphenated" totality or in treating South Asia as a theatre for American zero-sum games. Nonetheless, a new strategic poser for India is the current refusal by Mr. Clinton to budge from the position that New Delhi must take incremental and decisive steps on the non-proliferation front. Yet, the U.S. is obviously pleased that India has, for the first time, committed itself in a bilateral statement to observing a voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing, consistent with the rider of supreme national interests as spelt out in the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and to allowing its entry into force. More significantly, Mr. Clinton seems to have separated the complications of China-India ties from the debate on the U.S. plans for a national missile defence system and its implications for non-proliferation efforts globally. But the two sides have reassured each other by pledging efforts for a relevant treaty on fissile materials. On a different plane, the qualitatively new bilateral move to focus attention on Afghanistan, the U.N. peacekeeping and counter-terrorism will certainly deepen ties.

THE HINDU

18 SEP 2000

Indo-U.S. relations will remain steady

1879
By Jal Taraporevala 91-12

MUMBAI: With about four months to go before U.S. President Bill Clinton leaves office, Indian policy framers have no reasons to believe that there will be any substantive change in Washington's approach towards New Delhi after the change of guard in the White House.



Bill Clinton

This is due, in large measure, to the fact that the Indo-American relationship has now acquired a momentum of its own on account of the economic forces at work, which transcend the political decision-making process in both nations.

Among the factors which have brought this about are the growing influence of Indian IT professionals in the U.S. and the increasing investment and trade opportunities for American business as a result of the process of liberalisation in India. It is therefore not surprising that Indian foreign policy formulators

have increasingly sought to emphasise the significance of economic forces and the democratic traditions shared by both nations in an attempt to place the bilateral relationship on a firmer foundation.

Besides, American foreign policy has grown more bipartisan in nature in the recent past. As a result, Al Gore or George Bush—whoever emerges triumphant in the November presi-

NEWS ANALYSIS

dential elections—will essentially pursue the broad thrust of the approach laid out by the political establishment.

The signing of the Joint Vision Statement during Mr Clinton's visit to the subcontinent in March has placed certain aspects of the bilateral relationship on an institutional footing and thereby reduced the role of individual leaders in shaping Indo-American ties.

The arrangements set in place for periodic meetings between the leaders of the two nations and greater cooperation in the economic and intelligence fields should be interpreted in this light.

On the nuclear question, most of the sanctions imposed against New Delhi in the wake of the 1998 tests can be expected to remain in place unless it alters its stance on the CTBT. India's views are unlikely to change in the near future since a domestic political consensus is still to emerge on the subject. Pakistan remains opposed to signing the CTBT and the U.S. Senate has still to ratify the treaty.

Although U.S. officials will not publicly acknowledge it, there has, of late, been a greater emphasis on the principle of proliferation management in South Asia than on the earlier objective of seeking a nuclear rollback in the region.

This is a tacit acceptance of ground realities and a recognition that a policy of flexible engagement will yield more dividends in the long run than a confrontational approach which could unwittingly encourage hardline voices in the region.

On the issue of Kashmir, the U.S. will continue to seek to effect a balance between the realisation that its power to influence events is rather limited, as well as its aim of de-escalating tensions and containing terrorism.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

18 SEP 2000

FRAMEWORK OF DIALOGUE WILL STAND TEST OF TIME: PM

India, U.S. can change the world, says Clinton

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 18. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, hosted for the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, the largest ever banquet of his presidency to a single visiting dignitary saying the Indian leader and he had built "the strongest and most mature partnership" the two countries had known.

Raising a toast for Mr. Vajpayee, the President said "we have built the strongest, the most mature partnership that India and America have ever known. Its success will be our success together. India and America can change the world." Mr. Clinton emphasised the need for closer cooperation between the two countries to fight the menace of terrorism, drug trafficking and poverty.

The lavish banquet was hosted on the lawns of the White House under a special tent equipped to host 700 guests that included film stars, sports stars and leaders of the Internet revolution. Only a NATO summit dinner for 19 heads of state was larger.

Responding to the toast, Mr. Vajpayee said it was a tribute to Mr. Clinton that "the manner in which we approach each other is being fundamentally transformed. This year, our two nations reached out to each other as never before. We have, I believe, created a framework of dialogue and engagement that will stand the test of time."

The two great democracies had come closer, the Prime Minister said adding that the new ties were



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and Ms. Hillary Clinton with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, at the White House in Washington on Sunday. — Reuters

reflected in the close and abiding friendship between the two peoples and in the vision of the new relationship.

"The light that radiates above our two nations is of our respective struggles for freedom, for liberty, for individual excellence and enterprise."

"We are greatly moved, Mr. President, by your joining me in the dedication of the memorial to Mahatma Gandhi in Washington," the Prime Minister said.

"The people of India will al-

ways value this. This memorial in the heart of your capital is a profound symbol of the universality of values of our two societies. The century that we leave behind saw many ideas compete for the soul of this world but we can say today that it is the ideas of Gandhi and (former U.S. President) Woodrow Wilson that will triumph. We know that America and India stand on the right side of history."

Acknowledging the role people from India and the U.S. had played in building a closer part-

nership, he said, "I salute you, Congressmen and Senators, diplomats and officials, scientists and entrepreneurs, thinkers and scholars, academics and artists and this league of Americans of Indian heritage for your goodwill and your efforts."

Mr. Vajpayee thanked the U.S. First Lady, Ms. Hillary Clinton, for taking time off her election campaign to host the banquet.

Emphasising that the two countries were vulnerable to each others problems, Mr. Clinton said if India and the U.S. joined hands they would find a way to steer together problems of terrorism, drug trafficking, economic turmoil, infectious diseases and deadly military technology.

"The two countries have also too painfully seen terrorists, drug traffickers and criminals taking advantage of the openness of their societies and borders. However, a quite simple lesson of all this is that if India and America are together in the same boat, they will find a way to stir together. They had to overcome some fears in both countries, some times for different historical reasons," Mr. Clinton said.

Earlier, the President joked that there were over a million Indians in the U.S. and said he thought more than half of them were in the tent and the rest were disappointed not to be in it. Indian Americans, he noted, ran over 750 companies in the Silicon Valley. — PTI

Stars at banquet: Page 13

THE HINDU

19 SEP 2001

PM denies pressure on CTBT

FRANKFURT, SEPT. 18. On his way back home after talks with the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, declared here tonight that India will not accept any bindings on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) that would limit its independence in strategic matters.

At a press conference, Mr. Vajpayee said some people had expressed apprehension before he went to Washington that he would be pressurised there on the CTBT issue. "But these doubts had no foundation and there is no change in our stand."

Mr. Vajpayee, who is staying here overnight before returning to India tomorrow, said he had discussed the CTBT with Mr. Clinton and each side had explained its stand. There was no question of either side imposing a decision on the other.

"We placed our difficulties before them. We also told them of our efforts to arrive at a consensus. I am hopeful that difficulties in the path of a consensus will be removed."

Mr. Vajpayee answered questions on a variety of issues discussed by him with Mr. Clinton including nuclear non-proliferation, continuing U.S. sanctions and prospects of talks with Pakistan.

He was repeatedly pressed to clarify whether his Government favoured a consensus on signing the CTBT. He parried the question stating that the Government would go by the national consensus. However, he added meaningfully, "I do not think the consensus will be against signing of the treaty."

On holding a dialogue with Islamabad, he said he had made it clear to Mr. Clinton that India was ready to talk to Pakistan on all issues. "We want the talks to start but they should be useful." He reiterated the conditions for dialogue — violence and terrorism should stop in Kashmir and Pakistan should show readiness to implement previous agreements.

The Prime Minister recalled that the Pakistan-based militant outfit, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, had declared a ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir but sub-

sequently withdrew it. "There is no need to say from where the proposal for the ceasefire was given as well as withdrawn." Other countries agreed that this was a setback and a stumbling block in the path to talks, Mr. Vajpayee said, adding, "We tell our friends to tell Pakistan to make the atmosphere conducive for talks."

Asked if he had pressed Mr. Clinton to declare Pakistan a terrorist state, he replied that Washington knew India's views.

Describing his visit to Washington as successful, he said it had given a new turn to the bilateral relationship. There was a detailed discussion on the CTBT. "We talked on this in detail and they understood our difficulties."

Reiterating that there was no change in India's stand, he said New Delhi wanted a world without nuclear weapons. Indo-U.S. talks on the issue would continue, he said, adding that the effort was to understand and convince each other and not to impose anything.

He drew attention to the joint statement issued after his talks with Mr. Clinton, in which it had been stated that each side would take decisions on nuclear non-proliferation in the supreme national interest. This means that India was free to take decisions in its national interests, he said.

"They spoke of their law and their difficulties. I hope the new administration will continue to talk on this and find a satisfactory way out," he said.

Mr. Vajpayee said he talked to Mr. Clinton at length on the issue of terrorism and it was decided that the two countries would step up cooperation to deal with the menace. "Some steps will be taken soon."

He said he would discuss terrorism with the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, who is visiting New Delhi next month. — PTI

'India and USA together can change the world'

9/18/99
517
19/19

Clinton hosts mother of all banquets for PM

DESIKAN THIRUNARAYANAPURAM
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 18. — Mr Bill Clinton last night served up a king's feast for Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee in what is believed to be the largest and possibly the last state banquet of the US President's term. The two vowed to build a new and enduring partnership, declaring that together, they could change the world.

With over 700 guests, including Hollywood stars, the who's-who of the Indian community, academic and business leaders, this was the largest dinner of the Clinton presidency to honour a single visiting dignitary. Only a Nato summit dinner for 19 heads of state was larger.

The event was held outdoors on the South Lawn of the White House, under a champagne-coloured tent illuminated by chandeliers and gold candles. About a block away, several hundred Khalistani and Kashmiri demonstrators were protesting against India's policies in Punjab and Kashmir.

The menu included wild Copper River salmon with red kuri squash and rice bean ragout for main course, litchis and raspberry juice, honey almond squares and tiger-shaped chocolate coconut bars for dessert.

Among the celebrities who lit up the banquet were Goldie Hawn, Chevy Chase and M Knight Shyamalan, the Oscar-nominated director of *Sixth Sense*, singer Melissa Etheridge, spiritual writer Deepak Chopra, Pulitzer winner Jhumpa Lahiri, writer Ved Mehta, Kalpana Chawla, the first Indian-born woman astronaut, Zakir Husain and Vijay Amritraj.

Among Indian-American hi-tech entrepreneurs were Hot-mail founder Sabeer Bhatia

and Clarence Chandran, chief operating officer of Nortel Networks. The friends of India from Congress were Frank Pallone, Gary Ackerman, Benjamin Gilman, Sam Gejdenson, Jim McDermott, and former Congressman Larry Pressler. The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in New York was also invited.

The grand banquet decisively signalled the US tilt toward India in the South Asian equation. Pakistan military ruler Gen Pervez Musharraf received

BILL'S FAVOURITE

JAIPUR, Sept. 18. — Ms Shakuntala, who impressed Mr Bill Clinton the most during his visit to Naila village in Jaipur, will represent India in a New York workshop on women empowerment and their role in strengthening village economy. Ms Shakuntala leaves tomorrow for the USA.

The US President was so impressed with her that he had said: "Ms Shakuntala can win any election from anywhere." She was elected unanimously as secretary of the federation of 400-plus village Kisan Vikas Samitis. — SNS

■ Details on page 8

a cold shoulder from the US administration when he was in New York for the Millennium Summit last week. Except for a casual meeting with Mr Clinton at a group photo session, no US official met him.

Mr Vajpayee travelled in a motorcade to the White House dinner after a formal departure from Blair House, directly across Pennsylvania Avenue from the President's residence. His entourage flew back to India from Andrews Air Force

Base in Maryland soon after the dinner.

Raising a toast for Mr Vajpayee, the President said: "We have built the strongest, the most mature partnership that India and America have ever known. Its success will be our success together. India and America can change the world."

In a sign of just how close the two countries have travelled to each other in the past few months, he said: "It is more than a slogan for Americans to say that India's success will be our success, and that together India and America can change the world," hailing "the enduring partnership between our two great democracies".

Mr Clinton emphasised the need for closer cooperation between the two countries to fight terrorism, drug trafficking and poverty. Responding to the toast, Mr Vajpayee said it was a tribute to Mr Clinton that "the manner in which we approach each other is being fundamentally transformed... this year, our two nations reached out to each other as never before".

The two leaders shared some light moments in the course of the banquet. Sharing a toast, Mr Vajpayee said: "Christopher Columbus set sail for India and landed in America. I sometimes wonder where you'd be and where we'd be if he had actually reached India." Mr Clinton responded: "We're glad Columbus didn't find India. We're, however, glad we did find India and that India found us."

Mr Vajpayee presented the first couple with a glass sculpture of Ganesha by Anjolie Ela Menon. Mr and Mrs Clinton gifted the Prime Minister a Tiffany's hand-crafted sterling silver cache pot with an engraved inscription.

THE STATESMAN

'Indo-US ties at historic high'

HT Correspondent

Washington DC, September 18

IT WAS the last state dinner of the Clinton administration and President Bill Clinton and his wife Hillary ensured that it was one of the most memorable that they had thrown in their eight years in the White House.

The recipient of this hospitality was Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee who seemed visibly moved by the warmth of his hosts.

President Clinton set the tone for the evening with his opening remarks. Describing Indo-US relations as being at a historic high, the President noted that the relationship was both mature and stable. His brief speech was filled with praise for India and Indians. He recalled his visit to the country and spoke about how impressed he was with what he had seen.

He referred also to the vast advances made by India in information technology. "If you call a Microsoft service centre," he said, "your call may well be redirected

to Bangalore or Hyderabad." Noting the contribution of Indian Americans to the US, he said, "We have over a million Indians in the US and half of them seem to be in this room tonight."

Making his own toast, Mr Vajpayee also relied on wit. He said that his presence in the United States was the consequence of the actions of two individuals: Christopher Columbus and William Jefferson Clinton. He reminded the audience that Columbus had set out to look for India when he discovered America. Mr Vajpayee also praised Mr Clinton for his initiative in improving Indo-US relations.

At the end of the evening, when he rose to bid goodbye to the Prime Minister who left directly for Andrews Air Force base, Mr Clinton responded to the Columbus joke by saying that he wondered what history would have been like if the explorer had, in fact, reached India.

The state dinner was the largest in the history of the White House.

Over 700 guests were invited and even then, an invitation remained the hottest ticket in town. Never before, said Mr Clinton, had there been such a huge demand for invitations.

Because of the large number of guests, the dinner was shifted from the dining rooms to the lawns of the White House where a large tent was put up to accommodate the diners.

Though the Indian delegation had to leave early, other guests shifted back into the White House after dessert for coffee and dancing.

The banquet was a fitting end to what has been, by common consent, the most successful visit by an Indian Prime Minister to the United States.

It was also appropriate that so many of the guests — though perhaps not as many as half a million — were Indian Americans, given the large role played by the community in the success of the visit and the improvement in Indo-American relations.

Estrangement to Empathy

Enhance India's Role in US Strategy

By C UDAY BHASKAR

PRIME Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's just-concluded trip to the US during which he visited both New York and Washington DC has turned out to be more successful than anticipated — particularly in the context of India-US relations. A sea change in the overall ambience is palpable and the contrast with the freeze in bilateral relations that set in after the May 1998 nuclear tests is evident from the extensive media coverage — both print and audio-visual that the visit generated. However, the fall-out of the visit needs to be contextualised against the larger backdrop of prevailing post-Cold War international relations that goes beyond the immediacy of the Clinton-Vajpayee personal chemistry.

The Cold War relationship (1941-1991) between India and the US was aptly summed up as one of 'estranged democracies' — the title of a comprehensive book on the subject by Dennis Kux. This estrangement was born of the Cold War and the divergent perceptions of the national interest on either side. The collapse of the Berlin Wall offered a new opportunity and it has taken a decade for the India-US relationship to adjust itself to the new reality — albeit tentatively — as the Clinton visit to India in March this year and the current Vajpayee visit have demonstrated. The estrangement of the past is gradually dissolving and today there is much greater understanding of each other's aspirations and anxieties in the uneasy and uncertain post-Cold War years. To that extent, the Vajpayee visit may have ushered in a transmutation in the bilateral relationship from estranged to empathetic democracies.

If bilateral relations between major powers are an astute mix of both form and content, there can be no denying that the Vajpayee visit was an unqualified success in terms of the reception accorded by the Washington Beltway that includes the White House, the US Congress and the normally sceptical mainstream US media. Mr Vajpayee was received in a warm and handsome manner and due credit must go to the perspicacity of Indian diplomacy that stabilised India-US relations within two years of the Pokhran tests. If diplomatic form and the packaging of the visit alone were to be critiqued, perhaps this is the first time in the annals of the US Congress that the leader of a country against whom US sanctions

are in place was invited to address that house.

It is the content of the Vajpayee visit as reflected in the fine print of the various statements and related articulation that will have an abiding fall-out on the future of the India-US relationship. Will the vision and the empathy generated during the visit be realised? For this, the onus to a large extent will lie on this side of the Atlantic. However unpalatable it may sound, the truth is that till recently India had little or no relevance in the larger US schema. A variety of unrelated issues have helped to accord India a higher degree of relevance to Washington and these range from the nature of the contradictory streams of the post-Cold War priorities — it is the economy, stupid — to the Pokhran tests and the seductive flavour of information technology and the centrality of the Indian gene pool in this regard.

IN BRIEF

- Indo-US relations have warmed considerably
- However, till recently, India had little relevance in the larger US schema
- Washington's response to India's concern about terrorism in the neighbourhood has been encouraging
- India still accounts for less than one per cent of US foreign trade

Many of India's concerns and aspirations were reflected in the prime minister's address at the UN Millennium Summit and it needs little reiteration that the linkage between New York and Washington cannot be ignored if these objectives are to be realised — from international terrorism and the abolition of nuclear weapons to the need for an equitable global economic order. However, India's relevance in the US schema is still modest as is the case with weapons of mass destruction and what the visit served was to embed the difference in a robust foundation of correspondences that were earlier mooted in the Clinton visit.

The nuclear-missile issue that bedevilled the relationship was deftly handled with both sides revealing much greater flexibility than before. It is significant that Mr Vajpayee even while explaining the rationale for India's initiatives in this regard assuaged his hosts by noting that there was no clash of interests

and that "we do not wish to unravel our non-proliferation efforts." Simultaneously, the Indian concern about terrorism and the religious fervour being stoked in the neighbourhood was spelt out in no uncertain terms. While there is no denying that India will have to deal with this scourge on its own, obtaining support and empathy from the major powers will help considerably and Washington's response has been encouraging.

It is the economic dimension that is at the core of the future of the relationship and here reality cannot be ignored. India that accounted for a quarter of global trade prior to the colonial experience is a recent player in this arena. Yes, IT provides an opportunity and the human resource potential of the burgeoning Indian middle-class is colossal. Yet this potential now hovers at the lower end of the value-scale and the visit to India of Bill Gates and Jack Welch — CEOs of Microsoft and General Electric respectively — when Mr Vajpayee was in the US are indicative of the chasm between the challenges that need to be met if India is to see tangible benefits.

Currently, despite all the hype, India still accounts for less than a percentage point of total US foreign trade. This asymmetry has to be redressed if the India-US relationship is to have a firm foundation and this, in turn, relates to Mr Vajpayee's assertion that India's per capita income will double in the next decade. These objectives are in the realm of the feasible but only if there is a much greater demonstration of national and societal resolve to convert existing and imagined challenges into viable opportunities.

Whether it is the security dimension or the economic arena, the nurturing of national objectives and interests can only emanate from a judicious mix of ethical clarity, consistency and confidence in India's potential in the global comity. These were outlined in the Vajpayee visit but if they are to be realised, perhaps the unveiling of the Gandhi statue in Washington DC has a silent message — honesty of purpose across the board from the individual to the institutional and more productivity or *shramdaan* in India's tempestuous voyage in the dawn of the 21st century. Or else the optimism generated by the Vajpayee yatra will remain symbolic.

4/ (11-10) Behind the U-turn 19/9

There has been a lot of understandable media, bureaucratic and political hype at the success of Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to the US and the friendly and effusive language used by the American interlocutors on different occasions. There is no doubt that the US has decided to untill its Cold War tilt against India. This is to be welcomed and built upon further to improve Indo-US relations to India's advantage. Not long ago, during President Clinton's first term in office, there was a distinct pro-Pakistan tilt. However, our satisfaction at the positive turn in the only superpower's policy towards India should not blind us to reality. The need of the hour is to carry out an objective assessment of this change in policy. While the Indo-American community's role as a bridge is an important factor, that alone cannot explain why the US has made this U-turn. Such major changes in US policies are invariably the result of significant effort in future-oriented long-term assessments in the US security establishment. This decision is comparable to the containment policy the US pursued towards the Soviet Union and Henry Kissinger's trip to China to befriend that country to join an anti-Soviet alliance. Significantly, the American change in attitude towards India comes at a time when the US has decided to reinforce its policy of engagement of China through the proposed permanent normal trade relations treaty.

The US global strategic policy is aimed at sustaining its primacy as the sole superpower, ensuring that its citizens will enjoy one of the highest per capita incomes in the world and its position as the leader of technology in the international community. There are two options open to the US in regard to the strategy it needs to adopt for this purpose. The first would require a policy of engagement and containment vis-a-vis the US's nearest challenger, namely China. The second would mean developing a Eurasian balance of power comprising China, Russia, Japan, the European Union and India, manipulated from the outside by the US. This model, which the British practised during the 19th century, would involve the US having friendlier relations with each of the major actors, than they would have among themselves. This strategy will ensure for the US primacy as the only global power, as well as the ability to draw the best talents from the rest of the world to contribute to its technological lead. There is widespread expectation that as the Chinese power grows, and it remains outside the mainstream international value system of democracy, a new bipolar rivalry may develop. On the other hand, the Eurasian balance of power will be a less confrontationalist and more advantageous strategy for the US. India would find it difficult to go along with the first strategy, as the preferred Indian strategy in a bipolar situation would be non-alignment. On the other hand, if the US is attempting to develop the second model then India would have no difficulty. In playing the game India has to ensure that it gets the optimum advantages in economic and security terms.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

19 SEP 2000

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2000

DEEPENING ECONOMIC RELATIONS

EVEN BEFORE HE left for New York, the Prime Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, made it clear that economic cooperation would be the cornerstone of his official visit to the U.S. Though he called off his visit to Silicon Valley, Mr. Vajpayee did the right thing in rescheduling his address to the Indo-American business community in New York instead of in San Francisco. The Confederation of Indian Industry and the Indian-Americans made sure that the Prime Minister's visit could provide a launch pad for an upswing in bilateral economic ties. The Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, was at hand to sign the deals along with the U.S. Commerce Secretary, Mr. Norman Mineta. Five agreements were clinched, totalling \$6 billion, including a \$900 million loan from the U.S. Exim bank to help Indian industry purchase American goods and services. The focus was on the energy sector, which accounted for three of these deals. More than the agreements, it was the 'feel good' factor that counted. The atmosphere seems just about ripe to convert intentions into proposals and approvals into projects. That has always been the hurdle.

In his address to the business summit, Mr. Vajpayee set two very ambitious goals — to work for a 9 per cent rate of growth in GDP to wipe out poverty and raise the per capita income; and to set a minimum target of securing \$5 billion in U.S. investments every year for the next three years. Both these goals can be achieved if this Government has the political will and unity of purpose to reach for them. Against an approval of \$14 billion in investments from the U.S. during the past decade, the actual inflow was estimated at a meagre \$2.5 billion. On the eve of his departure for New York, Mr. Vajpayee managed to get his Communications Minister, Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan, to announce the total opening up of the telecom sector. This could be a major area to attract foreign, particularly American, investments in the immediate future. After the untime-

ly passing of his dynamic Power Minister, Rangarajan Kumaramangalam, the Prime Minister has retained this portfolio for now. On his return, Mr. Vajpayee needs to hand this over to an equally reform-minded colleague who can ensure that the promised investments and projects in the energy sector do materialise in the years to come. Even now, three mega power projects have been tied up — 3800 MW at Hirma in Orissa, a 1850 MW unit in Tamil Nadu and a hydroelectric project in Uttar Pradesh. The Centre and the States must ensure the early commissioning of these plants.

Since the trade balance has remained in favour of India for several years now, the U.S. Exim bank has now offered a unique loan facility, which will provide Indian importers up to \$100 million in rupees to secure goods and services from the U.S. Last year alone, Indian exports touched \$9 billion, while imports from the U.S. stood at only \$3.7 billion. If the restrictions on textile imports are eased by Washington, as envisaged in the Uruguay Round of GATT talks, Indian exports in this sector are bound to surge in the short term, before stabilising in the free market era of the WTO regime. The U.S. is and will remain India's largest trading partner and probably the leading foreign investor, if its cleared projects fructify. It is in this context that the setting up of a Strategic Management Group (SMG) in the Prime Minister's Office must be viewed. Without becoming another power centre, the SMG must play a facilitator's role and be a trouble-shooter for foreign investors coming in with mega projects. Of course, the 'Swadeshi' lobby and the Left parties will be up in arms, contending that multinationals will crush the domestic middle and small enterprise. It is difficult to be too choosy and along with micro chips there will be potato chips coming in. That is why, the focus must be on forging partnerships in all sectors with the emphasis on transfer of technology.

THE HINDU

19 SEP 2000

'COMMITTED TO MORATORIUM ON N-TESTS'

Visit consolidates Indo-U.S. ties: PM

19-1
209
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 19. On his return from an "extremely satisfying" two-week visit to the United States, the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, tonight said there was "increasing convergence" of perception on non-proliferation issues between the two countries and "greater appreciation" of India's mature handling of its internal and external security.

He had projected India's position on the resumption of dialogue with Pakistan making it clear that it would be possible only when Islamabad stops abetting cross-border terrorism and hostile propaganda against India, Mr. Vajpayee said in a statement on arrival. On the CTBT, the Prime Minister said the Government would seek a national consensus. It would not stand in the way of the treaty's entry into force. He said India remains committed to a unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests, but "we will not allow this to stand in the way of our protecting India's supreme national interest".

Describing his visit to the U.S. as "extremely satisfying", Mr. Vajpayee said it had served to consolidate the momentum of Indo-U.S. relations. "The joint initiatives and the understandings reached represent a major step forward." He said "the substantive engagement" between the two countries "marks the beginning of a new era in bilateral global affairs".

This was a period of new hope and new beginnings in the ties between the people of the two countries. The Prime Minister said India and the U.S. had agreed that as their dialogue proceeds they would "listen with respect to each other and seek to accommodate our mutual concerns".

Today, there was better understanding between the two on issues of mutual concern, specifically of the threat posed by international terrorism and India's security perspectives, he said. There is recognition of India's role as a factor of stability in Asia. "We have also projected our willingness to shoulder our responsibilities as a global player."

The Prime Minister expressed confidence that the coming months will witness an upswing in Indo-U.S. trade and economic cooperation apart from increasing collaboration in critical socio-economic and development-related areas such as power, e-commerce, HIV/AIDS and agriculture.

Mr. Vajpayee was received at the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) among others by Union Ministers Mr. L.K. Advani, Mr. George Fernandes,

Intruder held

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 19. The U.S. Secret Service has arrested an Indian-American for unauthorised entry on Saturday into the Blair House where the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, was staying during his four-day visit to Washington. The Secret Service spokesperson, Mr. Marc Connolly, identified the arrested person as Dopal Pandya, and said Mr. Vajpayee was not present at the Blair House when the incident took place.

Stating that Mr. Vajpayee was never in any danger, Mr. Connolly told PTI that the matter is under investigation.

The U.S. Secret Service, under the Treasury Department, is responsible for the protection of the American President and his VIP guests in the U.S. — PTI

Mr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Mr. Pramod Mahajan, Mr. Murasoli Maran, Mr. Sharad Yadav, Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan and Ms. Mamata Banerjee, besides the service chiefs, diplomats and senior officials.

The Prime Minister with his entourage arrived by a special Air India Boeing 747 at the IGIA instead of the Palam technical area to avoid using the ladder on the tarmac, because of his knee problem. — PTI

THE HINDU

SEP 19 1998

What really drives the new entente?

By Malini Parthasarathy

What accounts for the sudden change in the American perception of India?... The emerging clout of the Indian-American community which has very strong ties to the BJP and the Sangh Parivar.

THE PRIME Minister, Mr. A. B. Vajpayee, and his delegation who received an unprecedentedly effusive welcome from the American President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and his Vice-President, Mr. Al Gore, during their visit to Washington must have been more than satisfied if not bowled over by the grand manner of their reception here. The Prime Minister was literally and metaphorically the toast of the high and mighty in Washington, especially at the star-studded banquet hosted in his honour by Mr. Clinton. As the *Washington Post* in its Style section picturesquely described it: "India and America clinked glasses in their new whirlwind friendship at an elaborate and exotic state dinner at the White House..." Indeed the stars who came to pay homage at the altar of the emerging new entente — Hollywood glitterati mingling with the some of the most distinguished names in the Indian-American roll-call — added an unexpected if unintended touch of glamour to the dinner for Mr. Vajpayee.

Looking back at the palpable lack of interest on the part of the White House in prior prime ministerial visits to the United States during the Clinton era — the visit of Mr. Narasimha Rao in 1994, described as a "working visit" and Mr. Gujral's meeting with Mr. Clinton although not in the context of a visit to the U.S. but to the United Nations — this rapturous welcome to Mr. Vajpayee and the lavishing of praise on him by Mr. Clinton and Mr. Gore in unbelievably glowing terms is an index of a remarkable turnaround in the way the American power elite look at India.

What accounts for this sudden change in perception? The Indian official delegation and many journalists close to the establishment maintain that it reflects changed priorities in Washington's strategic calculus, with growing recognition of India's having become "a responsible and stabilising force in Asia" (never mind the nuclear weapons and the constant jingoistic talk!). The Indian official view derives satisfaction that "there is now a repositioning of India in global and regional affairs". It was also evident that the official Indian strategy as it played out in the Prime Minister's addresses to the strategic community in the United States, to the U.S. Congress and to the White House reflected this calculation that Washington was reappraising India's potential favourably in its assessment of global dynamics. Thus the Indian pitch that was reiterated from every

inane of one community appeared not to notice the contradiction between the loud professions of adherence to the values of pluralism, unity and peace for which he was repeatedly hailed during his visit and the BJP's own political strategies.

Given the premium placed by Mr. Clinton and Mr. Gore on the Indian ideal as manifested in terms of its pluralism and its ability to build unity amidst diversity and the fact that they were still uncomfortable with the threat posed by India's new nuclear bombs, and considering that it was the same Mr. Clinton and Mr. Gore who had shown very little interest in Mr. Vajpayee's predecessors when they came calling earlier, why then the sudden romanticisation of Mr. Vajpayee and India? And to return to the original question, what accounts for the sudden change in the American perception of India? The answer appears to lie in more mundane territory — the emerging clout of the Indian-American community which has very strong ties to the BJP and the Sangh Parivar. With prominent Indian-Americans hailing Mr. Vajpayee at every community function as the first Prime Minister to recognise the importance of NRIs, the role of the Indian-American community in building a bridge between the Clinton administration and the BJP Government is of major significance. In an election year, the Indian-American community with its votes and burgeoning dollars matters a good deal to the Democratic party and to the election races of Mr. Gore and Ms. Hillary Clinton. Neither the Congress(I) nor the then United Front had managed to build a constituency among the Indian-Americans as the BJP, the RSS and the VHP have done today. The BJP and the RSS appear to have built a solid network of loyal supporters all over the United States who all appear to have put their shoulders to the wheel to ensure that their Prime Minister's visit to their adopted country is a resounding success. Mr. Vajpayee appears to have returned the favour by adopting a tough-talking and strident stance against reconciliation with Pakistan, something that must have been music to the ears of the Sangh Parivar. But the tragic outcome of the yielding of ground to the hawkish inclinations of the Parivar and its supporters in the Indian-American community is that India's foreign policy has lost more autonomous space and is rendered more vulnerable to the pressure of external interlocutors.

Besides democracy itself, were diversity and the importance of unity. Interestingly, he said: "Prime Minister Vajpayee, in your speeches you talk of India's ability to cherish its own marvellous diversity. In your poetry you write of the importance of unity, saying that people of many faiths can have one dream in every eye... in America too, we have a dream of unity amidst our diversity..." Similarly, the Vice-President and Democratic presidential candidate: "As Prime Minister, you have challenged your people to act on their imagination, to create a shared vision for a united, democratic, prosperous and peaceful India, and then to make that vision a reality... you are truly a leader in both word and deed." The casting of Mr. Vajpayee in the mould of a Jawaharlal Nehru and the ascribing to him of an idiom that was part of a political vision that the BJP has in fact repudiated as unsuited to and inappropriate for Hindu India appeared farcical to observers familiar with the substance of India's current political discourse.

Mr. Clinton's strongly expressed admiration for Gandhi, whose approach he saw as inspirational for the American civil rights movement, indicated an interest in India that went beyond cordiality with the current leadership. Besides, Gandhi is not a particularly favourite BJP political icon. Thus there was an element of incongruity in the fact that as Washington seemed to pull out all the stops for Mr. Vajpayee, the values and symbols that it seemed to laud whilst paying tribute to India — pluralism, peace and unity amidst diversity — are those that the BJP is not seen as having upheld with great conviction or vigour. The contrast could not have been sharper or more painful than between Mr. Clinton's earnestly spoken words and the unspoken dichotomy that was inherent in Mr. Vajpayee's remarks. Mr. Clinton implicitly underscored the contradiction between the African-American predicament and the American democratic ideal when he referred to the final ending of slavery as "bringing some integrity into our national life". Meanwhile, Mr. Vajpayee as a leader of a party which legitimates the dom-

pulpit, be it at the Asia Society, the U.S. Congress or even at Indian community functions, drew upon vivid images of a Pakistani *jihad* menacing India's civil society, of a patient India that could no longer embark on an arduous course of engaging an ill-intentioned adversary and most effectively to the U.S. Congress, where there are still residual traces of Sinophobia among some members, was evoked the image of an India seeking to reclaim strategic space in an Asia dominated by some powers, (read China).

It is partially true that the Indian strategy did work. With the final joint statement making no mention of Kashmir or indicating any serious discomfort on the continued differences on nonproliferation, it did seem that the initial unease that had been expressed by senior administration officials as to the combative tone of Mr. Vajpayee's references to Pakistan had been buried under the layers of euphoric phrasing suggesting a major turnaround in Indo-U.S. relations. But it is also very important to acknowledge the reality as Indian officials are not really inclined to do that the Clinton administration was very conscious of the fact that it was in its final hours and therefore could not really engage in serious policy-making. The mood that suffused the Indo-U.S. exchanges was one dominated by sentimentality, a good deal of it fuelled by Mr. Clinton's own warm memories of his trip in March and the fact that he personally had taken to India as a country and Indians as a people.

What also stood out was the admiration that Mr. Clinton and Mr. Gore had for India's successful 50-year political experiment in democracy and more importantly the attempt to have a pluralist political ethos to govern Indian civil society. In fact the irony was not lost on those watching the fulsome praise being heaped on Mr. Vajpayee whose party — the BJP — is seeking precisely to overturn that ethos and is committed to having the Indian state reflect a majoritarian orientation. For instance, in his welcoming remarks to Mr. Vajpayee on the White House lawns, the values that Mr. Clinton laid emphasis on,

THE HINDU

20 SEP 2000

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2000

SYMBOLISM AND SUBSTANCE

49-12

THE U.S. PRESIDENT, Mr. Bill Clinton, may have mastered summit diplomacy as an art form, but there was much more than a mere political showmanship in his remarks to the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, at a banquet in Washington that brought to a close their latest and second meeting within a span of six months. Mr. Vajpayee, seemingly troubled by a knee problem for most part of his visit to the U.S. at this time, finally began capturing the magic of the spoken word to convey substantive messages and also step up the campaign against Pakistan. If his references to the elusive mystique of India behind the voyage of Columbus as also the enduring humanism of Mahatma Gandhi and the political vision of Woodrow Wilson were meant to show that India and the U.S. are on "the right side of history" at the dawn of the 21st century, Mr. Clinton was no less convinced that the recent bilateral interactions had already contributed to the "most mature partnership India and America have ever known". The inevitable questions about the sustainability of this partnership and about its inherent characteristics are not particularly imponderable, despite the fact that Mr. Clinton will demit office in January. The bilateral exchanges have acquired a definitive forward momentum since Mr. Clinton's visit to India in March. There is also some indication that the current presidential candidates of the Democrats and the Republicans, with whom Mr. Vajpayee interacted with differing degrees of intensity on account of apparently logistical rather than political constraints, may not disregard the present positive trends in India-U.S. ties without due consideration. For the immediate present, therefore, there is as much substantive nuance as symbolism in this vibrant bilateral equation.

Mr. Clinton's explicit "hope" is that India and the U.S. can be "better economic partners, better political partners" in the years ahead. For the moment, the contours of a strategic dimension of this possible partnership will remain a matter for intelligent speculation. Yet, some de-

finite aspects of the emerging bilateral paradigm of perceptions stand out. The prospects of new economic linkages, across and beyond the matrix of information technology, have hit an all-time high, thanks in part to some assiduous work by the Americans of Indian heritage in enabling the two countries to cross the barriers of doubts about each other. This creates space for considerable bilateral diplomacy for promoting the global 'New Economy' of the 21st century. Separately, the U.S. has also begun to recognise the importance of India as a possibly proactive interlocutor on the international stage in facing some major challenges of an evolving post-Cold War era such as globalised terrorism in all its aspects and several essentially non-controversial problems such as environmental degradation. Linked to this aspect of cooperation, albeit in a context of arguments over national sovereignty, is the American move to roll back a "tide of proliferation of dangerous weapons" of all descriptions. The U.S.-India debate has now come to linger on the extent of compatibility between the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the principle relating to the paramount security considerations of a signatory-state in extraordinary circumstances.

Above all, the issue of peace on the South Asian subcontinent is no less on the minds of the U.S. policy planners as a possible theme for "some constructive role" by them as "a partner with India and others" in the future (as in Mr. Clinton's media comments). Overall, the U.S. has demonstrably begun to act with considerable empathy for India's sensitivity. It is of course quite possible that the outgoing Clinton Administration has been less demanding of India by leaving the harder decisions to the next U.S. President. However, the same reality can account, at least in part, for the absence of any decisive indication, one way or other, about the U.S. position on India's quest for a permanent membership of an enlargeable U.N. Security Council.

Vajpayee's TV presence was less important than what his visit achieved

Our man in America

DIPLOMACY

K.P. NAYAR

It was a moment which White House television cameramen caught for posterity, but one which their Indian counterparts missed altogether. At the end of formal welcome ceremonies for the prime minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, on the south lawn of the White House, the American president, Bill Clinton, led his honoured guest to the podium from which they were to speak to the media.

The president made his remarks first, effusive as usual about India, and then invited the prime minister to take his turn. But before Vajpayee took the stand, for a fleeting moment Clinton leaned over to the base of the speaker's stand making White House cameramen wonder what the president was up to. What he did was unusual. He personally pulled out the step at the base of the stand, made for guests who are considerably shorter than the president. Clinton is used to guests at the White House who are no match for him in their height — the late King Hussein, leaders from China, Japan, South Korea and so on.

But never before, according to White House staff, has he leaned over the speaker's stand and pulled out the stand for guests himself. That was what alerted the White House photographers — who are used to presidential motions on ceremonial occasions — to what Clinton was doing. If the Indian cameramen could not capture that rare moment on film, they could not be faulted because almost all of them were in the White House for the first time and could not have known the presidential routine there. But that is beside the point.

White House aides say every action, every move during the welcome ceremony had been worked out in advance. When the president was told in the weeks before Vajpayee's arrival in the United States that the prime minister was unwell, he took it upon himself to go that extra mile in being solicitous to his guest. The president told his staff that he would pull out the step on the speaker's stand himself for Vajpayee to stand on at the end of the ceremonial welcome.

He took the initiative not to have the guard of honour upon Vajpayee's arrival in the White House so that the prime minister's damaged left knee would not be strained by the brisk walk to inspect the guard. Again, it was the president who suggested that there should be no receiving line at the state banquet at the White House on the last day of Vajpayee's visit here. Imagine the strain on the prime minister if he were to stand up and shake hands with the 700-odd guests at the dinner. Yet, Clinton did not want to disappoint those who had come for the banquet. After Vajpayee left for the airport, he along with the first lady stood for hours personally receiving every single guest who had come for dinner.

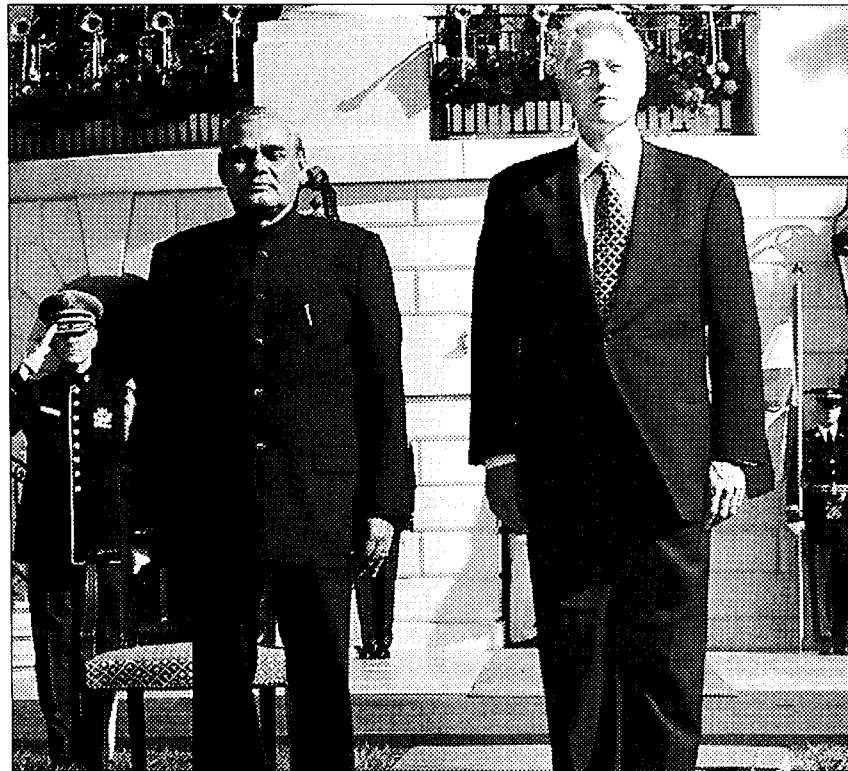
The White House was interested in the substance of Vajpayee's visit, not in ceremony. It was unconcerned with images, it looked for progress in the agenda that Clinton and Vajpayee had drawn up together in New Delhi in March.

With the Indians, especially sections of the media, it was different. They faulted Vajpayee for the slowness of his speech, they said his remarks were tepid

compared to those by Clinton. Had Mao Zedong visited Washington and the White House in his last years to return US president Richard Nixon's historic journey to Beijing, would the Americans have been interested in how the aged Chinese communist leader behaved before TV cameras? Or would they have been more concerned about what Mao could achieve in Washington?

the prime minister had applied their mind to the management of Vajpayee's public persona in Washington.

Officials who conducted the substantive part of Vajpayee's business did a commendable job. They were at their best even in the art of drafting. For instance, whatever assurance Vajpayee may have given Clinton on the comprehensive test ban treaty, the prime minis-



The same yardstick should apply to Vajpayee's visit at a time his health is bad. The Americans are clearly satisfied by what the trip has achieved, even if Vajpayee created a poor impression before TV cameras. They believe he has provided the leadership that India needs to work with the US so that, as Clinton said, "Together we can change the world".

Admittedly, it is easier for the Americans to do this than for the Indians to accept it. It is difficult to imagine any country other than the US would have sent its president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, in a wheelchair to Yalta to meet Josef Stalin and Winston Churchill in 1945 and earlier to meet World War II allies in Casablanca, Teheran and Cairo. At these meetings, a handicapped Roosevelt decisively influenced the course of events.

But that is not all. Had the Americans voted differently four years ago and elected a Republican to the White House, they would have had as president Bob Dole, who cannot use his right hand as the result of an injury during the war. John F. Kennedy had chronic backache resulting from injury in a plane crash, much the same as Vajpayee now suffers from knee pain and is on painkillers and other anti-inflammatory drugs.

Yet the Indians could have managed Vajpayee's visit better if only protocol officials who came from New Delhi with

furth was pointedly asked about the progress on CTBT at the Clinton-Vajpayee summit. He conceded that fresh ground had been broken at the summit and reported progress. But he also dismissed the phrase "subject to its supreme national interests" as virtually meaningless. Because CTBT itself contains a clause which takes into account "supreme national interests" while testing nuclear bombs. But to get back to the protocol officials from New Delhi who were, to say the least, an albatross around Vajpayee's neck in Washington. While the Americans had worked out every step to be taken by the prime minister and the president, protocol officials failed to convey these to Vajpayee.

As a result, Vajpayee appeared lost on several occasions, not knowing what to do, unable to anticipate his host and keep up with him. It added to Vajpayee's discomfiture from the knee pain. At the joint meeting of the congress, for instance, protocol officials hijacked Vajpayee instead of leaving him to Indian officials at the embassy in Washington who knew congressional proceedings and could have told him what to do.

The awkwardness caused when Vajpayee failed to greet the speaker on arrival and had to be nudged to do so could have been avoided had he been in the hands of embassy officials. Equally distressing was his reaction to a chair to seat him in the congress. The lapse is unforgivable because one key protocol official from South Block who travelled with Vajpayee had earlier visited Washington to work out the nittygritty of Vajpayee's trip. Obviously, this protocol official treated this as a junket to the US rather than as a working trip to firm up every aspect of the prime ministerial itinerary. Fortunately for Vajpayee, the official in question will not remain in protocol long enough to inflict any further damage on Vajpayee's foreign trips in future.

An unreported tailpiece to the prime minister's presence in Washington: his visit made it possible for owners of several formal apparel shops to laugh all the way to the bank. White House dinners require guests to arrive in tuxedos, not just lounge suits. The 700-plus guest list for Clinton's banquet for Vajpayee created such a demand for tuxedos among the Indian delegation and Indian Americans that shops renting out the formal outfit, complete with lacquered shoes, waistbands, bow ties and black cufflinks were besieged with demands for formal wear. Of course, Indians had the option of going for the banquet in "bandhgalas", but many did not want to miss the opportunity to wear a tuxedo. One member of the Indian delegation spent over \$1200 buying a tuxedo set, which he may not wear ever again.

‘ The White House was interested in the substance of Vajpayee's visit, not in ceremony ;

ter's officials ensured that he will be insulated against criticism back home that he had sold out to the Americans on the issue of future nuclear tests.

In the joint statement in which India has once and for all given up its nuclear option, they have clearly introduced a proviso. "They (Clinton and Vajpayee) reiterated their respective commitments to forgo nuclear explosive tests," said the joint statement. "India reaffirmed that, subject to its supreme national interests, it will continue its voluntary moratorium until CTBT comes into effect." The phrase "subject to its supreme national interests" is an insurance which Indian officials with excellent drafting skills insisted upon in order to protect their prime minister against domestic criticism. Had not Karl Inderfurth, the assistant secretary of state for south Asia, let the cat out of the bag, the significance of this phrase would have gone unnoticed.

At a briefing in Washington, Inder-

The tuxedos were a fitting finale to a high profile visit. Even though officials of Andrews Air Force Base were somewhat bewildered to find some members of the Indian delegation using the base to hurriedly get out of their rented tuxedos, hand them over to Indian embassy officials and dart into the prime minister's plane in their own clothes minutes before taking off for India.

Indo-US ties enter a new phase with Atal's visit

S. Rajagopalan
Washington, September 19

HR 12

If President Clinton's India visit last March opened a new chapter in Indo-US relations, my own visit now has added a footnote to it," a modest Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee commented. In actual terms, it has been a hugely successful visit, Mr Vajpayee's personal agony of a troubling knee notwithstanding.

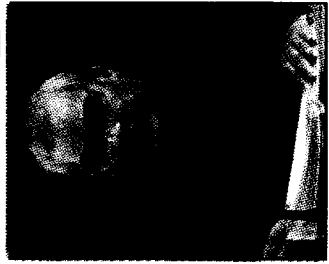
Be it the atmospherics or the results in terms of concrete gains, there can be no denying that the visit has taken the new phase of bilateral relations a few notches higher in qualitative terms. Little wonder that both the Indian and American diplomatic establishments are making a song and dance of it.

On the flip side, however, the post-Pokhran II sanctions are still in place. This anyway is an area where nothing was expected before the visit - and nothing has been achieved at the end of it. That the matter will have to rest until India signs the CTBT was drummed home yet again, to no one's surprise.

But this constant does not unduly detract from the outcome of the back-to-back summit meeting within a space of six months. The visit's added significance is the commitment on continuity that Mr Vajpayee has extracted from both Mr Al Gore and Mr George W. Bush, the two presidential hopefuls.

From New Delhi's standpoint, the signal success on the political side is the confirmation of the pro-Indian switch (after decades of the pro-Pakistani 'tilt') in the US's South Asian paradigm. The significance of the message has not been lost on Pakistan's military ruler Gen Pervez Musharraf, who has almost made a public grievance of the new trend.

The US, modifying its staple of recent months, has for the first time dropped its homily on immediate resumption of the Indo-Pak dialogue on Kashmir. It now says that the talks could be revived "at the appropriate time when the atmosphere is correct". Which



indeed has been the burden of New Delhi's diplomatic brief all these months.

Apart from getting the US to view the Kashmir issue through its prism, India has chalked up another significant success vis-a-vis Afghanistan. New Delhi and Washington will now coordinate positions on the Pakistan-backed Taliban regime in Kabul and its nexus with international terrorist outfits. A separate framework for talks has been agreed upon after Mr Vajpayee brought up the issue. The Indian strategy of focusing on the religious justification given by Pakistan to back the cross-border terrorism appears to have yielded dividends, given the US's bitter experience on this count on a few occasions.

Some of Mr Clinton's public utterances testify to the new dimensions that Indo-US relations have assumed. He has talked of a political partnership, whereby the two countries could take up common positions in the United Nations and other multilateral forums on

issues of world peace. As he has put it, the current relationship is the strongest and most mature partnership that India and America have ever known.

A major contributor to the turnaround has been the US Congress, which set the stage for Mr Vajpayee's visit by adopting a resolution calling for lifting all the post-Pokhran II sanctions. The India Caucus, the largest Congressional lobby with about 120 legislators on board, did its bit to make it a productive visit for Mr Vajpayee.

On the economic plane, the Prime Minister's visit produced commercial deals worth about \$ 7 billion, inclusive of three mega power projects (in Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh) and an Export-Import Bank loan facility against import of US goods and services.

On the vexed double taxation issue, however, an agreement is still to be hammered out. One consolation for trade and industry is that, pending the formal agreement, the two sides have committed to work out an arrangement to suspend collection and recovery of tax on reciprocal basis.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

20 SEP 2000

Fresh impetus to Indo-American business ties

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 20. A major benefit of the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee's trip is the impetus given to foreign investment flows to India by the emerging powerhouse of the Indian-American community. This group is expected to commit at least \$ 1 billion dollars for the development of human capital in educational institutions over the next two years. To facilitate this investment, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) will be working to iron out tax issues and conclude a taxation agreement between India and the U.S.

This was disclosed here today by the FICCI secretary-general, Mr. Amit Mitra, who said a 90-minute closed door meeting of leading Indian-Americans and Indian corporate leaders with the Prime Minister in New York enabled the former to air their views on economic issues freely. Subsequently, FICCI held a roundtable with the Indian-Americans where the need for a taxation treaty to bring about higher investment flows to India was discussed.

On the broad impact of Mr. Vajpayee's visit, Mr. Mitra told newsmen that the strategic importance of India in the global matrix was recognised despite its relatively small role in world trade. This had given FICCI the confidence that it would be possible to achieve a doubling of foreign investment approvals of the U.S. companies over the next five years. This meant an investment of \$ 15 billion from the U.S. over the next five years. Similarly, real FDI inflows could go up to \$ 7.5 billion. As for trade, it could be doubled from the present \$ 12.5 billion to \$ 25 billion over the next five years.

Among the Indian-Americans who attended the meeting with the Prime Minister were Mr. Kanwal Rekhi, Mr. Desh Deshpande, Mr. Sabeer Bhatia, Mr. Pawan Nigam, Mr. P. C. Chatterjee and Mr. Vinod Khosla. The Indian corporate leaders included Mr. G. P. Goenka, FICCI president, Mr. Sunil Mittal, Mr. Shashi Ruia, Mr. Mukul Kasliwal and Mr. Y. K. Mo-

di. Mr. Mitra said an action plan was chalked out by FICCI's Indo-U.S. Joint Business Council and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC) during Mr. Vajpayee's visit. It included setting up business partnering model by USIBC and FICCI in the area of chemicals and petrochemicals as well as telecom and information technology. The Chemicals Ministry and FICCI would also identify investment opportunities for U.S. company participation in the Comprehensive Chemical Estate Project. Industry on both sides would coordinate with professional associates to come together towards mutual recognition of professional services such as for lawyers and chartered accountants. The Indian and U.S. Governments would also organise a group to study the functioning of the debt market.

Giving a time-table for implementing the action plan, Mr. Mitra said the programme should be completed by the next meeting of the Indo-U.S. Commercial Dialogue here in January. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) is also equally upbeat about the effect on FDI flows and higher bilateral trade. According to its Senior Director, Mr. Dilip Chenoy, an effect of the high-profile visit would be rapid development of Indo-U.S. business ties.

There was tremendous support for India, as a place to do business, at the U.S. India Business Summit in New York. The CII was able to organise the support of a host of U.S. chief executives. Among those who addressed the summit on these lines were Mr. Winthrop Smith of Merrill Lynch, Dr. Vance Coffman of Lockheed Martin, Mr. Steven Newhouse of Morgan Stanley and Mr. Pradman Kaulo of Hughes Network.

Mr. Chenoy said the message was reinforced by the Prime Minister's announcement of opening up the Civil Aviation and telecom sectors. The responsiveness of the U.S. Government was evident from the fact that the chairman of the U.S. National Economic Council, Mr. Gene Sperling, disclosed that the H-7B visa quota was being raised from 165,000 to 200,000.

11/9

HD-13
22/9

Growing Indo-U.S. ties causing concern in Pak.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 21 The Pakistan Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has said that growing ties between India and the U.S. are a cause of concern for many Pakistanis who feel that their erstwhile cold war partner is abandoning them.

In an interview to the *Washington Post* Gen. Musharraf has been quoted as saying that "the people of Pakistan are certainly confused or disappointed because we have half-a-century of relations with the U.S. They have a sense of disappointment with the reduction

of feelings toward Pakistan".

In a report from New York a Pakistani news agency, *Online*, quoted the military ruler as appealing to the Clinton Administration to play a more aggressive role in brokering peace with New Delhi over the future of Kashmir.

He has also urged the U.S. to drop its plans to tighten U.N. sanctions against the Taliban for harbouring Osama Bin Laden.

"We need to engage the Taliban and accept them as reality and then try to moderate them from within", he has told the daily.

The reported observations of

Gen. Musharraf on Indo- U.S. relations are interesting as only last week the Chief Executive had maintained that Pakistan was not concerned with the nature of Indo-U.S. ties and Pakistan had a long standing relationship with U.S.

Meanwhile in another development the state-owned Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) in a report from New Delhi has said that an organisation by name, Hindu Sena Rashtriya Sangh Party, had claimed responsibility for the bomb blast in a fruit and vegetable market in Islamabad on Tuesday.

22 SEP 2000

Re-examine S. Asia policy, Jaswant tells U.S.

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 22. India has urged the United States to re-examine its South Asia policy in the wake of a sea change in relations between the two countries following exchange visits by the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee.

"New Indo-U.S. relations call for a re-examination of the U.S. South Asia policy," the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, said at a lunch hosted by the former U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. George Shultz, yesterday.

Heaping praise on Mr. Clinton for his "superior statesmanship and ability and courage to reach out to India and discover a new bond", Mr. Singh pointed to the tremendous potential for bilateral cooperation in the economic field as well as in the human resources and information technology sectors. Enhanced economic ties between the two countries formed an essential component of bilateral relations, he said.

There was also potential for cooperation on combating terrorism, the Minister said adding that given today's global situa-

tion, the two nations had to involve themselves together, he said. "Whether it is global security or cooperation in the field of energy or science and technology, there is a need for continuity, stability and confidence," he said. Healthy Indo-U.S. relations could go a long way in ensuring future global welfare.

The scope of relations between the two countries went beyond bilateral parameters, Mr. Singh said recalling Mr. Clinton's statement that India and the U.S. were not only natural allies but had common enemies as well. The new spirit of cooperation was evident from the number of agreements signed on terrorism, human resources, environment and information technology.

On Kashmir, Mr. Singh said it related to Jammu and Kashmir and not just to the Kashmir Valley adding that the main obstacle was trans-border terrorism. Religion was not the core issue in the State, especially since there were pockets with strong Muslim concentrations in different regions and districts of India. Moreover, India had the second largest Muslim population after Indonesia, the Minister said. — PTI

23 SEP 2000

Summing up a summit

By K. K. Katyal

Mr. Vajpayee's U.S. visit consolidated the process initiated with Mr. Clinton's trip to India and helped to keep up the momentum. To claim more will not be realistic.

HD-12
2579

A SUCCESS yes, but a mixed fare in substantive terms. Now that the phase of euphoria over the Indo-U.S. summit is past, it is possible to have a realistic appraisal of gains and non-gains for New Delhi in the immediate and medium-terms. The gains, no doubt, are significant and officials here are entitled to derive comfort. At the same time, attention needs to be drawn to what has not been possible to achieve — not to do so will mean self-delusion. Two words, “breakthrough” and “tilt”, need to be avoided in comments on the outcome of the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit to Washington and his talks with the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton. Perhaps the most appropriate description was provided by Mr. Clinton himself when he said the “two sides had worked hard together to move our relationship from one of too little contact and too much suspicion to one of genuine effort to build a long-term partnership”. This precisely is what the meeting was about. It consolidated the process initiated with Mr. Clinton's trip to India and helped to keep up the momentum. To claim more will not be realistic. However, some see in it the making of a new balance in Asia.

The vision, outlined first during Mr. Clinton's visit to New Delhi and reaffirmed now during Mr. Vajpayee's presence in Washington, marks a refreshing contrast with the chill of the past — it speaks of a closer and qualitatively new relationship between India and the U.S. There is no ambiguity about this. As regards specifics, requiring immediate attention, one is struck by the understanding of the Indian positions as well as by the keenness to forge new ties, especially in the economic area, but finds it hard to ignore the disagreements. Not insignificant, these are certain to come in the way of a fuller realisation of the potential for mutually-beneficial cooperation. The rediscovery of India's importance as an economic destination for the U.S. and other major powers, and the appreciation of India's position on its problems with Pakistan and on Kashmir, and of its role in Asia are major gains. The courtesies shown to Mr. Vajpayee and the praise lavished on him by Mr. Clinton and Mr. Al Gore, Democratic candidate for President, came as a

pleasant surprise to the Indian side. However, the continued divergence on the issues arising from India's nuclear tests and Washington's reluctance to give up the punitive approach of sanction exerts a restrictive influence and it is not clear how this problem will resolve itself.

There is no warrant for taking a grim view of the timing of Mr. Vajpayee's state visit — at the fag-end of Mr. Clinton's tenure and in the midst of the American leaders' electoral preoccupations. By and large, foreign policy issues in the U.S. enjoy bipartisan support and change of administration means only a change of style. This is confirmed by American politicians and academics. The presidential candidates, Mr. Gore and Mr. Bush Jr., publicly affirmed their desire to enhance U.S. partnership and cooperation with India.

However, a word of caution is necessary for those who may be carried away by the sweet rhetoric, emanating from the two capitals. A recent episode proves the point. We lapped up political partnership, based on the shared ideals of democracy and freedom but this, it turned out, is not as easy to practise as to proclaim. Less than six months ago, India and the U.S., calling themselves allies in the cause of democracy, decided to share their experience in nurturing and strengthening democratic institutions and fighting the challenge to democratic order from forces such as terrorism. They would cooperate with others, they said in the Vision Statement, in launching an International Community of Democracies. This they did at a conference in Poland in June. But, as has been brought out by an exclusive report from Washington in *The Hindu*, India declined the U.S. suggestion to head an informal caucus of democracies. New Delhi may have good reasons for taking this stand but Washington found it baffling and, together, the two reactions pointed to the perils of taking things for granted.

To take up individual issues, the understanding of New Delhi's stand on India-Pakistan affairs and Kashmir, dating back to the days of the Kargil conflict, was reaffirmed, even enhanced. Last year, Washington, seeing through Islamabad's game plan, had no difficulty concluding that Pakistan had sent its regular troops into Kargil with the clear objective of occupying territory and, thus, altering the Line of Control. This year, during his visit to India, Mr. Clinton recognised the force of the Indian argument that the jihadi outfits based in Pakistan were mainly responsible for the terrorist violence in J & K. The U.S. commended a four-R approach — restraint, renunciation of violence, respect for the LoC and resumption of dialogue — with which India had no quarrel. Washington wanted New Delhi to sort out the internal political problem in the State and, at the same time, bluntly told Pakistan to rein in the terrorist organisations. The Vision Statement, however, contained a brief reference — “we acknowledge that tensions in South Asia can be resolved by nations of South Asia. India is committed to enhancing cooperation, peace and stability in the region”.

The U.S. accepted the need for an “appropriate climate” for India and Pakistan to re-start talks and, later when India released Hurriyat Conference leaders, felt that Pakistan needed to make not one but two reciprocal gestures. Islamabad, however, acted differently — going to the extent of scuttling the peace process, of which faint hopes arose in the wake of a ceasefire offer made by one of the militant outfits. This, along with the betrayal of the trust (reposed in Lahore), was the burden of Mr. Vajpayee's points with his interlocutors. The joint statement issued after his talks expanded the earlier formulation, with a pointed stress on “peaceful means” and on “the unacceptability of continued violence and bloodshed as a basis for solution of the problems of the region”. This, no doubt,

vindicates the Indian stand, though officials, given to putting the most favourable interpretations, saw a lot more in terms of U.S. support. They were encouraged into taking this view by the decision to institutionalise dialogue on Afghanistan. As seen by India, a switch from Afghanistan to a Talibanised Pakistan will almost be automatic. Pakistan does not mean the same thing as Afghanistan to the U.S. Then there is the unmistakable evidence of a sentiment in the U.S. administration against isolation of Pakistan. New Delhi will need to take into account the fatigue factor, as a result of India's continued insistence on an “appropriate climate”.

As regards nuclear issues, there was not even the slightest evidence of the Washington talks making a dent in the differences between the two sides. The joint statement merely elaborated the respective positions outlined in the Vision Document. Here are the additional points: “India reaffirmed that, subject to its supreme national interests, it will continue its voluntary moratorium (on nuclear tests) until the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty comes into effect. The U.S. reaffirmed its intention to work for ratification of the Treaty at the earliest possible date. The Indian Government will continue efforts to develop a broad national consensus on the issue of the Treaty with the purpose of bringing these discussions to a successful conclusion”. A meaty formulation but it does not reduce the area of disagreement — with the U.S. believing that India should forgo nuclear weapons and India believing that it needs to maintain a credible minimum deterrent.

As a result, the sanctions remain in place. It will be naive to pretend that this will not affect the task of building the “closer and qualitatively different relationship”. India puts on a brave face, saying the Washington visit was not intended to be an occasion to seek the removal of the sanctions. But could the sanctions be wished away? Similarly, cooperation in science and technology would be more meaningful if curbs on the transfer of high technology were not there. These impediments do not convey a happy feeling but, given the recent momentum, will not prevent the dawn of a new era in India-U.S. relations.

Ensuring quality education

THE HINDU

25 SEP 2000

Classic Indo-US mirage effect

BEFORE President Bill Clinton's India visit and before Atal Behari Vajpayee's US tour, there were post-Pokhran economic sanctions, US pressure to sign the CTBT, US arm-twisting preventing military technology transfer to India from US allies, US refusal to squarely blame Pakistan for sponsoring terrorism, and US refusal to support India's long-overdue permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

After Mr Clinton's India visit and after Mr Vajpayee's US tour, Indo-US relations have hit a new high, we are told. Given some glowing post-visits commentaries, there's warmth, apparently, like amongst two long-lost brothers in a Hindi film reunion.

Yet, after Mr Clinton's visit and Mr Vajpayee's US tour, there are still post-Pokhran economic sanctions, US pressure to sign the CTBT, US arm-twisting preventing military technology transfer to India from US allies, US refusal to squarely blame Pakistan for sponsoring terrorism and US refusal to support India's long-overdue permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

So what gives? Those of us less deft in manoeuvring through masterpieces from the US state department euphemism-specialists and our MEA gloss merchants might be wondering what we missed in between.

If there doesn't seem to be any perceptible change in ground realities before Event A and after Event B, and yet if its declared A and B are very significant events, then obviously there's a serious perception problem somewhere.

So we ask on what grounds does a visit from an almost politically lame President and a visit of an almost physically lame Prime Minister is declared historic successes?

If Mr Clinton and daughter Chelsea's happy travels across India and the size of the banquet Mr Clinton hosted for his former host are served as political relationship indicators, then the perception problem is getting more serious.

In lands where water is scarce and sand is abundant, they call it a mirage.

Likewise, entities with abundant problems and scarce solutions usually suffer the perception disease of seeing what they want to see instead of reality as it is. India and the USA are natural allies of the 21st century, Mr Vajpayee declared last week from a by-lined media article.

Geo-political reality seems to suggest India and the USA are naturally headed for great conflicts of interest in the 21st century.

This century, particularly the second half, promises to be India's century. When the sleeping giant of an Asia stirs to a more pro-active role in global leadership, an existing super power isn't going to like it or lump it.

It will do its best to prevent it, like the USA hating the idea of



Atal Behari Vajpayee with Bill and Hillary Clinton before the banquet hosted in honour of the Indian Prime Minister at the White House recently and right; guests at the banquet.

— AP/PTI

India being a fellow permanent member of the Security Council.

Being the planet's two largest democracies isn't sufficient by itself to enjoy eternal camaraderie in the league of nations. Sharing of mutual interests is obviously more important. That doesn't mean just over-worked lip service to common goals of human freedom, human rights and terrorism combat.

The more concrete interests lie in economic and political influence. That's where successive US governments have consistently compromised the former for the latter, whenever that clash of interests has occurred.

That's why China's human rights record, a favourite bashing point for US politicians, is being dumped for a chunk of China's lucrative economy. And that's why the more glittering exhibits in the gallery of human rogues, like Papa Doc Duvalier, Ferdinand Marcos and Zia-ul-Haq have enjoyed US support.

Give General Pervez Musharraf some more time to swear undying allegiance to the US point of view, he will rule on undisturbed until an assassination or another military coup puts him out of business.

India's current and future leadership can't forget that, historically, US governments have a long hypocrisy trail behind them. It seems embedded in the DNA of the country, from when Thomas Jefferson wrote the Bill of Human Rights while owning slaves in his backyard, from



going to a war to free the world, while still practising undeclared apartheid in their own country, to shamelessly talking about other nations signing nuclear arms control treaties, while still having the largest nuclear arsenal in the world and being the only nation with nuclear blood on its hands.

US officialdom's talent for polished hypocrisy has not changed, not with Mr Clinton and probably not with his most likely successor Al Gore. A closer look behind the new hype of Indo-US *bhai bhai* suggests its more likely the attitude of the Indian leadership that has changed than the USA shifting perceptibly from its anti-Indian stances.

The predominant attitude of the Indian leadership more reflects paying subtle obeisance to the world's only super power than in strongly fighting those anti-Indian stances. We have

519 279
After the Vajpayee visit, RAJA M wonders whether this country's relations with America are really moving to the unprecedented heights about which the foreign-policy brains' trust is raving

Mr Vajpayee loses colour when someone else like former South African President Nelson Mandela uses the same words in a similar situation.

In fact, the US state department could ask for nothing better. After all, it only asks the world for allies who can follow, not friends who can lead. And the kinds of ally that a US President and an Indian Prime Minister have in mind are very different in nature. It better be. And it's better Mr Vajpayee and Co recognise that reality.

In that reality-check department, Mr Vajpayee and Co have a long way to go, if his UN speech and the quintessence of his US visit strategy (or lack of it) seems anything to go by. Perhaps, most disappointing was his clumsy Pakistan-bashing, reducing an emerging global power like India to the same gutter-level of a sectarian nation well on the way to being one of 21st century's more spectacular failures.

Instead of at least declaring Pakistan a terrorist state or demanding that the USA use its influence to stop Pakistan-sponsored mischief, Mr Vajpayee unwittingly only endorsed the *status quo* in Kashmir. Given his failing health, Mr Vajpayee is a brave

man but he is no Solomon.

Yet, it doesn't need a Solomon, only common sense, to see through the current shameful Indian political mindset of grovelling for honours from the sole global super power. It's a mindset better reflected in the fact that only 53 American legislators came to listen to Mr Vajpayee's address to the House of Congress, while Indian legislators shamelessly and literally fell over each other trying to touch Mr Clinton after his address in the Ashoka Hall.

It's a mindset that gloats over having the red carpet rolled out by the same hands trying to pull the rug from under your feet. That's why the current Indo-US relationship reports only makes me wonder if Chanakya was an American.

(The author is a freelance writer)

India, U.S. to step up efforts against terrorism

By Our Special Correspondent ^{HD-1}

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 26. Expressing serious concern over growing international terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking, India and the U.S. have agreed on a range of measures to enhance cooperation in tackling the menace.

After concluding the two-day, ^{27/9} second meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on counter-terrorism here today, both sides decided to further expand their sharing of experience and to coordinate their approaches to and action on tackling international terrorism. While the U.S. delegation was led by Mr. Michael A. Sheehan, Ambassador and U.S. Coordinator for counter-terrorism, the Indian side was represented by Mr. Alok Prasad, Joint Secretary (Americas), in the Ministry of External Affairs. Both the delegations included an inter-agency group of counter-terrorism and narco-terrorism law enforcement officials. Mr. Sheehan also called on the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Lalit Mansingh, the Union Home Secretary, Mr. Kamal Pande and other officials.

The U.S. side is keen on establishing an international coalition of "frontline states" to counter terrorism radiating from South Asia. Washington envisages that such a coalition will confront terrorism in Afghanistan and elsewhere. Members the cooperative venture could include countries of Central Asia as well as India, Russia and China.

In a testimony before the International Relations Committee of Congress, Mr. Sheehan had said there was a geographical shift in terrorist activity towards South Asia. Afghanistan under the Taliban, had become the "primary swamp of terrorism, harbouring terrorists from the region and around the world." The Taliban had given logistics support to the "Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Algerian Armed Islamic group, Kashmiri separatists and a number of militant organisations from Central Asia, including terrorists from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan."

In a joint statement, India and the U.S. agreed

that they had "shared interests in strengthening a regime to counter international terrorism." They also agreed to enhance the effectiveness of bilateral cooperation and international efforts to counter terrorism worldwide.

Welcoming further anti-terrorism assistance (ATA) programmes from the U.S., India also expressed satisfaction over the increased levels of counter-narcotics training and assistance. According to senior officials of the Ministry of External Affairs, the specifics of the ATA programmes would be determined in future. The Central Bureau of Investigation, the National Security Guards and some of the State police forces stand to gain substantially from the programme. The U.S. is keen on training foreign officials in bomb detection, hostage negotiation and crisis management.

At an earlier round of Indo-U.S. talks in February it was decided to establish a legal attache office at the U.S. embassy. According to the U.S. side, this office would help prevent and "deter further the spread of terrorism in South Asia."

The JWG also expressed support for a comprehensive United Nations Convention on Terrorism and hoped that there would soon be an international consensus on the text of the proposed convention in the Sixth Committee of the U.N. Both sides agreed that acts of terrorism could not be justified on any ground. In the joint statement, both sides "unequivocally condemned all acts, methods, and practices of terrorism as criminal and unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious, or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them."

During his recent visit to the U.S., the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, reaffirmed the importance of the JWG for intensifying cooperation to combat international terrorism.

THE HINDU

27 SEP 2000

Proof of the American pudding

HF10 279 BY J. N. DIXIT

THE HYPE is over. Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee has returned after an 11-day trip to the United States and described it as a highly satisfactory visit. It is necessary to examine how much basis there is for this sense of satisfaction.

The best criteria for making this assessment is to recall some fundamental propositions about Indo-US relations articulated by President Bill Clinton and Vajpayee during the latter's visit to Washington. Clinton said he could not visualise a stable, economically prosperous and democratic world order in the 21st century without a substantive Indo-US partnership. He went on to state that the most important global issues of concern to the international community require a positive and creative interaction between India and the US.

Vajpayee, on his part, asserted that in the changed international situation, India and the US are natural allies because of shared political values and societal aspirations between the peoples of the US and India. He went on to imply that his discussions with President Clinton were an important step in the process of India re-positioning itself in global affairs in political, strategic, technological and economic terms. These policy orientations articulated by the two leaders are unexceptionable. What is to be examined is the prospect of these intentions being transmuted into actual policies.

There is no doubt that after the rapturous welcome accorded to President Eisenhower nearly 41 years ago, there has been no other welcome accorded to an Indian Prime Minister or a US President visiting each other's country, which matched the warmth, political chemistry, the glamour and spontaneity, that characterised the welcome accorded to Vajpayee in Washington. The atmosphere also reflected a close personal equation between Clinton and Vajpayee and the senior Cabinet Ministers of both countries.

Vajpayee's address to a joint session of Congress during an election season was a special gesture of attention and respect for India and Vajpayee personally. Discussions between Clinton and Vajpayee and their delegations were substantive, wide-ranging and there was no obfuscation of issues on which fundamental differences exist between India and the US — namely, non-proliferation issues, particularly the CTBT, questions related to transfer of

dual use technologies, the lifting of sanctions against India, the differences on issues related to the WTO, and so on.

The results of the discussions held during Vajpayee's visit can be summed up on the following lines. First and foremost, there is a fundamental change in India's perceptions about the US and the US' perceptions about India. This change in perceptions has made the leaders of the two countries come to the conclusion that there are clear potentialities of tangible cooperation in different spheres of political, developmental and security activities which would be mutually beneficial.

Second, both countries seem to have taken a strategic decision that a close bilateral relationship is not only of mutual benefit, but that it can also become an important factor for regional and global stability and peace.

Third, there is a conscious long-term decision taken by power structures of both countries that despite the basic differences which exist on vital issues they have to be dealt with patience and through a continuing dialogue rather than getting into a confrontational mode.

Fourth, that there should be incremental cooperation between India and the US in developing a broad strategic equation to ensure general stability in the region. Fifth, for the first time, India and the US have agreed to have a continuing institutional dialogue to deal with the situation in Afghanistan and its ramifications. Sixth, the decisions reached during Clinton's visit to Delhi in March — that India and the US will work jointly to counter cross-border terrorism, the menace of drugs, violent religious extremism and other such critical phenomena.

A pertinent question is whether these decisions and orientations would continue when the next American President assumes charge in January 2001. If it is Al Gore who succeeds President Clinton, the prospects of continuity without much change can be presumed. Even if George W. Bush

comes to power, barring some marginal nuances, one can expect a continuation in Indo-US relations on the basis of the impulses generated and the orientations imparted by Clinton's visit to India and Vajpayee's visit to Washington.

This is so because the structure of relations envisaged by both Governments are rooted in interests and political perceptions of both countries. That Vajpayee managed to have a conversation with Bush, despite changes in schedule, indicates that there is some basic bipartisanship in the US' evolving attitude towards India.

India did not make any special request to Clinton to remove the sanctions imposed on India. Nor did

Clinton offer to remove these sanctions — though under the discretion granted to him, some sanctions are being gradually removed. India, on its part, while remaining firm about not signing the CTBT, has given an indication that it has a non-confrontationalist approach towards the treaty.

Vajpayee conveyed that India will adhere to the moratorium on nuclear tests which it had decided on. India also conveyed that it will not stand in the way of the CTBT coming into effect — regardless of whether India signs it or not. Vajpayee did not indulge in any polemics about the US not ratifying the CTBT.

There has been some controversy in the media about the manner in which Kashmir was discussed. President Clinton, describing Kashmir being at the "core" of the critical security environment in South Asia, gave some analysts high blood pressure. There should be no hesitation on our part to acknowledge that the US does not support our views on Kashmir fully and that Kashmir is a core issue in terms of our interests also.

Pakistan has continuously attempted to threaten India's territorial integrity, secular cohesion, political stability and democracy for the last 50 years. India, therefore, has greater reasons to view the issues related to Kashmir as core issues affecting India's unity and security. We should not suffer

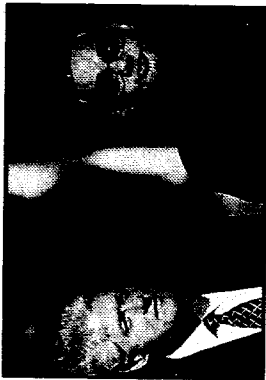
from any apprehensive complexes about the words "core issue". This again is a shibboleth created by the media and rooted in an illogical and narrow political interpretation of these words, presuming that the words are the monopoly of Pakistan.

Prospects of cooperation in economic, technological and information technology have been acknowledged as areas deserving priority. One, however, wishes that we had been a little more reticent in giving assessments about our future economic performance. Vajpayee declared that the Indian economy would achieve a nine per cent per annum growth in the coming five years. He also claimed that the per capita income would be doubled. Given the contrary pulls and pressures which characterise our on-going programmes of economic reforms, it would have been advisable to be a little cautious about these claims.

The economic and technological agreements signed during the visit certainly provide foundations for future Indo-US cooperation. But we must realise that in these particular spheres the ball is entirely in our court. It is our performance that will determine the momentum of this cooperation. During Vajpayee's visit and in its immediate aftermath Bill Gates, Commander-in-Chief, US Pacific Command, Admiral Dennis Blair, and State Department Under Secretary dealing with Counter-terrorism, Michael Shehan, have been in Delhi. These visits indicate the seriousness of positive US intentions towards India.

Our aim should be to build on discussions held by them. For the first time, the NRI community played an extremely important role in contributing to the tangibilities of the visit. I would not describe Vajpayee's visit as a new beginning or as a second coming because this was the culmination of processes started by former Prime Minister Narasimha Rao in 1992 and 1994. But certainly Vajpayee and Clinton have raised Indo-US relations to a higher and more meaningful level of interaction than ever before.

The challenge to Indian foreign policy is to sustain the positive momentum generated by Clinton and Vajpayee during the coming decades. One must add that the clearer indication of prospects of Indo-US relations resulting from the visit can be discerned only around the middle of next year after the new US administration has settled down.



hindunationalist@hotmail.com

WASHINGTON: **Jaswant Singh** represents India's transition. He grew up in colonial India during the British Raj. He was a horseman in newly independent India's first cavalry, following a long family tradition of military men. He resigned to run for office and has served in both the upper and lower houses of India's Parliament. A powerful orator and a staunch advocate of Indian family values, he is a passionate Hindu nationalist. Yet, as foreign minister of the world's most populous democracy, he has a Hotmail address for his private e-mail. During his visit to the US last week, he toured the NASDAQ stock exchange where he'd like to see more Indian companies listed. He read biographies of Walt Whitman and Simon Bolivar over the summer. He loves golf and Western music. The first public school-educated foreign minister, Singh has orchestrated the dramatic diplomatic transition in relations between India and the US. The frequently flying Singh has a reputation for reaching out to countries once shunned by India in the days it headed the non-aligned conference. He has even visited Israel. During his recent visit to the US he spoke to **Robin Wright**:

After decades of cool relations, India and the United States are considered close allies, and you are considered the architect of the change. Why the shift?

I'm not the architect. The architect is the times, the circumstances, the transformed global situation. In the years after World War II... the United States felt its national interests were best served by a variety of alliances that didn't include India. In those early years after its independence, India had to move into a position of balance between the two competing superpowers, hence, non-alignment....

What we need in Indo-US relations is stability and predictability. Also, the ability to engage with each other with candour, in confidence and with the sense of being able to deal with differences of approach on issues.

Despite improved relations, US sanctions, imposed both on India and Pakistan after their 1998 nuclear tests, remain in place. How much impact are they having on India?

We didn't believe sanctions would have the results you expected. India has a continental-size economy that sustains one billion human beings. So far, sanctions

have been counter-productive. Trade has grown by 27 per cent over the last year, and it hasn't reached its true potential because of sanctions. Exports from India are growing, and imports from the US are sluggish. So you're only hurting yourself.

Do you foresee any change in India's position on nuclear tests and signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty? Under what circumstances would India use a nuclear weapon?

I don't see any circumstances. We have announced a no-first-use policy. We've also announced no use against non-nuclear states. Weapons of mass destruction are... meant for the role of deterrent.

India has a voluntary moratorium on any future nuclear explosive testing. We have said we will not stand in the way of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty coming into force and that our moratorium will continue until then... Since the substance of our obligation on banning explosive testing is there, we're only looking at the style as to how you comply with that substance. We've said that until we have a domestic political consensus on this issue, please have patience. We intend to do it. Parliament will meet in November. It's my expectation that we'll have a full-fledged discussion and that the

score points but because India is a responsible nation that believes that, as a nation, we have a responsibility to the international community, not simply to our Western neighbours. We suffered casualties. As a soldier, it saddens me. My son volunteered to be in Kashmir, and we lost over 500 men. But we conducted our policy, under the most testing times, with great restraint.

Various governments dating back to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi have pledged to grant Kashmir greater autonomy. Why won't your government follow through?

As far as management of our internal affairs and autonomy to states and decentralisation is concerned, we had a commission established on it. I just attended an inter-state council 10 days ago, and we discussed the report of that commission on granting greater functional autonomy not simply to Jammu and Kashmir but to other states of the Union... and the government is moving towards it.

But for you to consider Jammu and Kashmir some kind of territorial dispute would really be an error. I'm astonished at times that people don't point out that 38,000 sq km of Jammu and Kashmir is disputed with China and is currently under its occupation. The entire northern areas are occupied. This is the real territorial dispute.

India has increasingly expressed its desire for a larger role in the United Nations and other international institutions commensurate with its numbers and leadership in the developing world. What role would India play, and how might it change the balance of power in the world?

It's ironic that in the early years of the Security Council, a seat was offered to India, and in an act of possibly the most profound historical abnegation, the then prime minister said "No" it shall not take a seat unless China first gets represented... India, more than any other country — as a civilisation and culturally, not just because of its membership in the non-aligned movement or the Group of 77 (developing nations) — has to give voice to those who don't have a voice and those who are deprived and fall into the category of want. This is not just India's duty. This is the UN's obligation, too.

In terms of the balance of power, in India we have always known that the essence of power is to know the limits of power.

(LA Times-Washington Post)



Anil Bhat

"In Indo-US relations we should engage with each other with candour, in confidence and with the sense of being able to deal with differences of approach on issues."

political community will eventually come around to a consensus.

A recent Central Intelligence Agency estimate predicts a 40 to 60 per cent chance of war between India and Pakistan over Kashmir in the next couple of years. What odds would you give the danger of conflict?

Far be it from me to comment on the US intelligence system. But if you were to carry out an analysis of the historical factor of errors by this great institution (CIA), you would be better able to judge.

There are nil chances of conflict. I have something to do with policy formulation. I know what is happening and what we will do. Surely, you should appreciate that, in 1999, we were put to a severe test in Kargil, not because we wished to

Iraq could put Indo-US ties to test

DESIKAN THIRUNARAYANAPURAM
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 27. — A week after Mr Atal Behari



Mr Clinton

Vajpayee's successful visit, the fast-improving relations between India and the USA appear to face their first test over the two countries' divergent stance

on the UN embargo on Iraq.

This week, the deputy external affairs minister, Mr Ajit Kumar Panja, joined France and Russia in a defiant flight to Baghdad to show solidarity with the people of Iraq.

The move has drawn criticism from the US administration. While USA and Britain want President Saddam Hussein's weaponisation efforts be completed halted before the embargo can be lifted, the other three permanent members of the UN Security Council, France, Russia and China, want the

sanctions relaxed to ease the suffering on the Iraqi people.

This week, Russia and France exploited a loophole in the UN sanctions resolution to fly into Baghdad with relief supplies. They were joined by India and Jordan. Iceland and Syria also plan such solidarity flights. The US secretary of state, Mrs Madeleine K Albright, speaking before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Tuesday, expressed the administration's frustration at the increasing number of allies mounting challenges to UN sanctions against Iraq.

"We are concerned that people can't seem to get the facts straight on Iraq," Mrs Albright told the committee. "I know there is a great deal of compassion for the Iraqi people," she said. "We have compassion for them. It is <Iraqi leader> Saddam Hussein who does not have compassion for his own people."

The countries critical of the sanctions argue that the flights do not violate UN rules so long as the panel overseeing the sanctions is notified in advance.

THE STATESMAN

28 SEP 2000