

# Mush bid for permanent berth fails

## Including Pak Would Make It Difficult If India Is Not Given Same Status In SCO

By Saibal Dasgupta | TNN

**Beijing:** Pakistan president Pervez Musharraf appeared to have failed in lobbying China to get his country accepted as a permanent member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, which met in Shanghai on Thursday.

Representing India at the meeting of this club of oil-rich nations is petroleum and natural gas minister Murlidhar Deora. He is expected to use the opportunity to develop linkages with heads of states from the oil rich central Asian countries at a time when India and China have rolled out plans to jointly bid for oil deposits in central Asia. The SCO issued a declaration calling for closer cooperation among member countries in the area of energy security.

The meeting was significant for several reasons, one of which was the noticeable absence of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. One reason why Singh kept away from the SCO meet is that it is fast emerging as an anti-US lobby, informed sources said. Leaders from Russia and central Asian states have openly expressed themselves against the increasing presence of the United States in Asia under the guise of fighting terrorism.

The SCO's ideological colour could be one reason why the Indian prime minister preferred to keep away from it. Singh's presence might have given Pakistan and Iran an opportunity to discuss, even if informally, the recent nuclear deal between India and the United States. The meeting is being attend-

permanent membership is accepted. Both India and Pakistan are observers in the SCO. Its permanent members are China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Deora seemed to be countering Musharraf's lobbying when he said India was keen to know what opportunities would be made available to observer countries to have "meaningful and substantive collaboration within the SCO framework".

He told the meeting that India was a "victim of terrorism" and eager to join member countries in the SCO to combat this scourge as well as other challenges to peace and stability.

"We share the main SCO objectives of combating all forms of intolerance and fundamentalism in our region," he said.

The SCO passed a resolution proposing that the next UN Secretary General come from Asia. "The SCO holds that the next Secretary-General of the United Nations should come from Asia," the declaration said.

Chinese President Hu Jintao, Russia's Vladimir Putin, Pakistan's Pervez Musharraf and Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai and leaders of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan attended Thursday's meeting.

Russian Federation Council speaker Sergei Mironov said SCO was not likely to become another NATO. "The Shanghai Co-operation Organisation will by no means be an alternative to NATO because it is primarily an economic organisation," he told a Russian news agency.



Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf (left) greets China's President Hu Jintao in Shanghai on Friday

ed, among others, by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Musharraf has been lobbying for including Pakistan as a permanent member of the SCO ahead of the other observer countries including India. But Thursday's meeting of the SCO avoided discussing the subject, partly because it is difficult for the organisation to exclude India if Pakistan's request for

17 JAN 2006

The SCO meet is...

# Shanghai Organisation holds fifth summit meeting

Seen as an opportunity for the regional grouping to project its power

R. Ahmed  
SCO  
10-13  
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Pallavi Aiyar

**BEIJING:** On Thursday, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) held its fifth summit meeting in China's financial capital — Shanghai. The gala event featuring red carpets and televised handshakes was an opportunity for the regional grouping to project power and congratulate itself on the achievements of the past five years.

The SCO, which was founded in 2001, is one of China's first concerted forays into international diplomacy. In his speech at the summit meeting, Chinese President Hu Jintao proposed the formation of a convention to consolidate "the foundations of political trust, unity and coordination among SCO member states."

## 10 documents signed

The heads of the SCO countries signed ten documents during the summit on a broad range of issues including information security, anti-terrorism measures and economic and financial cooperation.

An agreement on joint anti-terrorism actions among member countries was also signed. The SCO has been holding joint military drills — which it claims are aimed at enhancing counter-terrorism cooperation — since 2003. However, many western analysts have taken these activities as a sign that the group is emerging as a military consortium aimed at squeezing American influence in the region.

## Mistrust

In an allusion to the mistrust with which some countries reportedly view the SCO, Mr. Hu said: "We hope the international community would respect the social system and road to development independently chosen by SCO member and observer countries, respect their internal and external policies of peace,



**SHOW OF SOLIDARITY:** Chinese President Hu Jintao (centre) at a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in Shanghai on Thursday. The other leaders (from left to right) are Mongolian President Nambaryn Enkhbayar, Uzbekistan President Islam Karimov, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev, Kyrgyzstan President Kurmanbek Bakiyev, Tajikistan President Imomali Rakhmonov, Iran President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai. — PHOTO: REUTERS

friendship and cooperation."

## 'Victim of terrorism'

India was represented at the summit by Petroleum Minister Murli Deora, who described India as a "victim of terrorism" and promised to cooperate with other member countries in their attempts to combat terrorism.

He said that India was keen to associate itself fully with the SCO and identified energy security as a key area for mutual cooperation. For India, it is increasingly crucial to partner with oil-rich Central Asian states along with Russia as it is

seeking to diversify its energy suppliers.

The presence of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at the summit has been much in the spotlight. Iran, along with India, Pakistan and Mongolia has observer status at the SCO. Iran has been lobbying for permanent membership of the organisation which if granted would be a blow to U.S. attempts to brand the country as a pariah state.

## Iran offer

In his televised speech at the meeting, Mr. Ahmadinejad of-

fered energy cooperation to SCO member countries which according to analysts is an attempt on its part to win friends in what are troubled times.

The Iranian President said that Iran — the world's fourth largest oil producer — was ready to host a meeting of Energy Ministers from SCO countries to explore more effective cooperation in the exploration, exploitation, transport and processing of oil and gas. Iran is China's third-biggest supplier of crude oil.

## Musharraf's call

Mr. Ahmadinejad made no

reference to the nuclear situation in his speech.

Pakistan's President Mr. Pervez Musharraf also used the summit as an opportunity to argue for greater energy cooperation. He said that Pakistan would like to emerge as a hub for trade and economic cooperation for SCO nations. Mr. Musharraf also urged the organisation to accept Pakistan as a permanent member.

The SCO is a six-member organisation comprising Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan in addition to China and Russia.

# A regional grouping spreads its wings

Pallavi Aiyar

**I**N THE five years since its founding in 2001, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) has metamorphosed from a somewhat obscure regional grouping into a major vehicle for the promotion of Chinese and Russian geopolitical interests. The SCO, which will hold its summit meeting on June 15 in Shanghai, has benefited from an increasing confluence of interests among the major regional power centres of Central Asia, China, and Russia. Its emergence as a counterweight to American influence in the area, combined with the possibility that it may admit Iran as a permanent member, has cast it into the global geo-strategic spotlight.

Regardless of whether one sees it as a forum for regional cooperation and stability, as the SCO itself holds, or as a new military alliance along the lines of NATO, as claimed by some U.S. analysts, the SCO today is an international organisation of considerable weight. It covers an area of over 30 million square kilometres or about three-fifths of Eurasia and a population of some 1.4 billion. It also controls a large part of the world's oil and gas reserves and includes two of the world's five declared nuclear powers.

The SCO evolved out of a grouping known as the "Shanghai Five," which was set up in 1996 by China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. It was expanded to include Uzbekistan in 2001 and rechristened the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. In 2004 and 2005, it admitted Mongolia, Pakistan, India, and Iran as observers.

The organisation has a mandate to combat terrorism, extremism, and separatism throughout the region in addition to promoting deeper economic integration between member states. The SCO maintains that it is not aimed against any other country or grouping and remains an "open organisation."

The group is currently looking into the possibility of accepting new permanent members from among the observer countries. At the June

Whether one sees it as a forum for regional cooperation and stability or as a new military alliance along the lines of NATO, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation today is an international body of considerable weight.

15 summit meeting, observers will not have any voting rights but may make speeches in accordance with the guidelines for observer countries.

The Presidents of Mongolia, Pakistan, and Iran will be attending the summit, whereas India will be represented by Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Murli Deora. Significantly, Afghan President Hamid Karzai will also attend. Afghanistan is not an observer of the SCO and instead sought and received membership of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation last year.

The heads of SCO member states are expected to sign a series of agreements at the summit. The drafts of the deals and the agenda for the summit meeting were agreed upon by the Foreign Ministers who met in Shanghai in late May. Efforts to integrate the economies of the organisation's members will also be on the agenda. According to Zhang Deguang, the SCO's secretary general, the group hopes to "realise the free flow of commodities, capital, technologies, and services in the region within 20 years."

SCO countries have already agreed on more than 125 joint projects related to trade and investment and have set up seven specialist panels to coordinate cooperation in fields such as customs, transportation, investment promotion, energy, and telecommunications.

In keeping with its strategy of aggressive economic diplomacy, Beijing recently announced \$900 million worth of loans for other SCO countries. The loans are in the form of preferential buyer's credit for SCO member states that buy Chinese exports.

Chinese President Hu Jintao will be holding bilateral meetings with the heads of state attending the summit on the sidelines of the meeting, including one with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. However, Mr. Zhang Deguang has said the Iranian nuclear issue will not be a major topic up for discussion during the summit.

Iran has been lobbying for permanent membership of the SCO, claiming that its inclusion would "make the world more fair." Media reports in China and Russia have indicated that the request is being considered seriously.

SCO membership could be a lifeline to Iran. This would end efforts to isolate it internationally and would enable it to partake in various SCO projects giving it access to technology and investment. Moreover its inclusion would also have major implications for global energy security.

## U.S. unease

At a regional security conference in Singapore in early June, the U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld criticised the SCO for considering membership for Iran. "It strikes me as strange that one would want to bring into an organisation the leading terrorist nation of the world, Iran," he said.

The United States is increasingly coming to see the SCO as a military confederacy that is being used by Beijing and Moscow to squeeze it out of the region. At last year's summit meeting, the SCO issued a declaration calling for the U.S. to set a deadline for withdrawing air bases in

Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, established earlier to support the American war on terrorism in Afghanistan. Uzbekistan subsequently evicted the U.S. and Kyrgyzstan demanded a 100-fold increase in the rent on its base when the lease expired on May 31. Negotiations are ongoing.

The U.S. has also been denied observer status at the SCO.

Until recently, the SCO's effectiveness as a strategic alliance was limited by the Central Asian states' attempt to have a multi-directional foreign policy that would play off the U.S. against a developing Sino-Russian *détente*. However, successful regime changes in 2004 and 2005 in Kyrgyzstan as well as other former Soviet republics like Ukraine and Georgia have alerted these States to their vulnerability and the fact that Western powers would prefer market-oriented pro-Western regimes rather than the authoritarian, crony systems currently in place.

Russia and China, on the other hand, both believe in the "non-interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign country" approach, which suits the Central Asian nations well. Moreover, in addition to support against opposition movements, the SCO provides Central Asian states with economic development aid and increased opportunities for trade and investment.

For Beijing and Moscow, the SCO enables the creation of a significant sphere of influence and provides a vehicle for the pursuance of their geo-political objectives. That the SCO became the first regional grouping to oppose the bid by India, Japan, Brazil, and Germany to seek permanent membership of the United Nation's Security Council is an example of the manner in which the SCO is furthering China's interests.

The SCO's growing influence has been made possible by the dramatic improvement of Sino-Russian ties. For decades, bilateral ties between the neighbours were characterised by hostility as they competed for supremacy of the communist world. Relations began warming up in the late 1980s. In October 2004, the two countries made a final and comprehensive settlement of their border dispute. Bilateral trade is soaring, having reached almost \$30 billion last year, a 37 per cent increase from 2004. Russia is also China's chief arms suppliers. Recently China's President said Sino-Russian relations had reached an "unprecedented high" and were embedded with an "obvious strategic ingredient."

Last August, the countries engaged in their first-ever bilateral war games, consisting of land, air and sea manoeuvres. SCO member state countries were invited as observers.

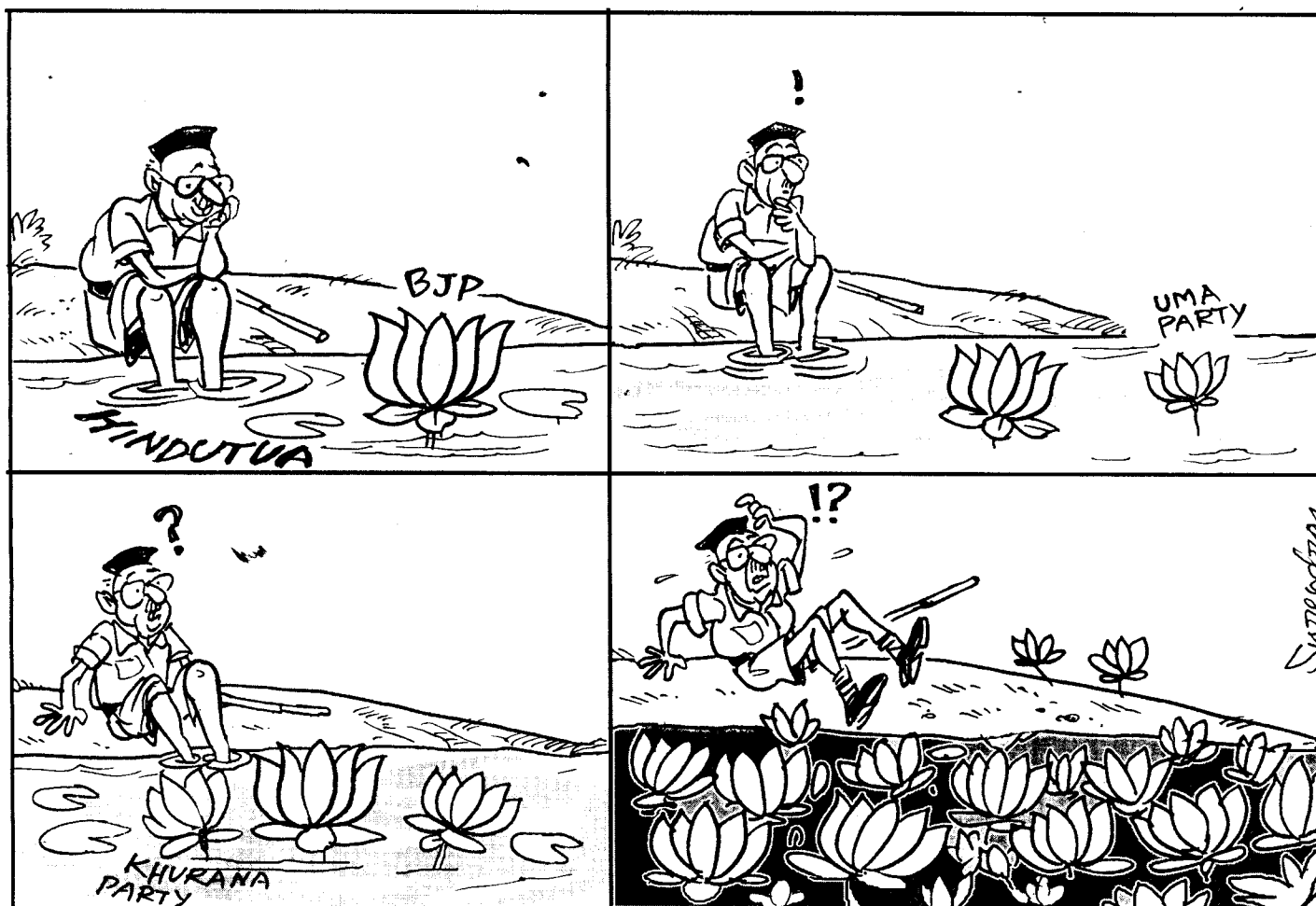
Despite claims that it is not a military alliance, the SCO has conducted joint military exercises as well. The first of these were in 2003, when joint military drills were held in Kazakhstan and China's northwestern Xinjiang province. The six nations are also planning another series of military exercises for next year.

There have been reports that the U.S. is trying to create its own "Greater Central Asia" initiative a grouping of countries friendly to American policy that will serve as a counterweight to the SCO. At a meeting of SCO parliamentary leaders in Moscow last month, Russian President Vladimir Putin made an allusion to this when he said, "We see in the international arena there are attempts to create competition to our organisation, I think it would be right if we did not engage in this."

So far, however, the Central Asian states have not shown much interest in the U.S. attempt to wean them away from China and Russia and reorientate towards South Asia. Moreover, South Asian countries like India and Pakistan are themselves keen to associate with the SCO. Pakistan is known to actively be lobbying for permanent membership. India too, given its large appetite for oil, will only benefit from further integration with the group.

The upcoming summit meeting is a commemorative one and the main business of the day will be a review of the past achievements of the organisation. For member states there is much to celebrate.

## CARTOONSCAPE



# EU warns Iran not to 'play for time' on N-offer

AGENCIES

MOSCOW, JUNE 28

THE European Union warned Iran today against delaying a response to a proposal on resolving the international standoff over the country's controversial nuclear programme.

"Iran should not play for time and we expect Iran to come back soon to the Vienna package," the EU's External Relations Commissioner, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, said during a visit to Moscow. "Iran has to show it is serious about it."

The package drawn up by the five permanent UN Security Council members — Britain, China, France, Russia and the US — plus Germany promises incentives and multilateral talks if Iran agrees temporarily to halt uranium enrichment.

Diplomats say Iran was asked to reply by tomorrow, but Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

has said he will not answer before August 22.

Meanwhile a meeting between EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana and Iran's top nuclear negotiator has been postponed until after Group of Eight foreign ministers meet on Thursday, an EU diplomat said today.

Solana will meet Ali Larijani somewhere in Europe next week to clarify a US-backed package of incentives for Tehran, the diplomat said.

No reason was given for the delay. Both Solana and Larijani had said publicly they would meet this week and diplomats said Western governments were concerned Tehran was trying to string out its response to divide the major powers.

Diplomats said the G8 countries were debating the wording of a statement on Iran for Thursday's foreign ministers' session in Moscow, which might give some indication of a desired timetable.

INDIAN EXPRESS  
MOSCOW

19.12  
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## Choosing the second best option

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**T**he endeavours of the European Union (EU) and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to clinch a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) represent a watershed in the pattern of bilateral trade deals being negotiated the world over as a response to the slow progress under the multilateral framework in the World Trade Organisation. The joint report finalised recently, which is expected to pave the way for talks to commence in 2008, is also evidence of the shift in the EU's own thinking on entering into an FTA, its first in Asia, with ASEAN. At the moment, its engagement with ASEAN is governed by the 1980 cooperation agreement and a more recent trans-regional trade initiative. The significance of the prospective trade pact lies in that it involves the world's single biggest trading bloc, the EU, and the world's emerging largest exporter, ASEAN. Moreover, the common vision that the two already share in the form of their respective experiments in regional integration could give their mutual engagement greater momentum. The EU originated as an economic union after the Second World War and is now experiencing an ever-increasing quest for political integration, and the ASEAN, essentially a regional political bloc, is seeking to expand into a single economically united zone. While the EU boasts a common currency, ASEAN took a major step in regional integration in 2003 when it set up its Free Trade Area.

The geographical contiguity of ASEAN to the rapidly emerging economies, China and India, and the industrial might of South Korea and Japan are major factors that influenced the EU's approach to FTAs, which until recently were viewed as the second best alternative to the global multilateral trading agreements represented by the WTO. It is likely that this newfound pragmatism will inform the EU's stance in its negotiations with ASEAN, not in the least on the question of insistence on respect for human rights in Myanmar under the military regime and more generally on issues of democratic governance. The process of regional integration over the past few decades has equipped the EU and ASEAN to face up to the tortuous process of identifying mutual interests and give-and-take possibilities.

THE HINDU

19.12.07

# Minorities programme revamp okayed

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Focus on economic uplift of people

Special Correspondent

**NEW DELHI:** The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved the revision of the Prime Minister's 15-point programme for minorities as was promised by Manmohan Singh in his Independence Day speech last year. It has also been decided that 15 per cent of the funds be earmarked wherever possible under schemes/programmes for the nationally declared minorities.

Formulated in May 1983 by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the programme has been recast to focus action on issues "intimately" linked to the social, educational and economic uplift of the minorities. Broadly divided into four components, the new programme seeks to enhance opportunities for education, ensure them an equitable share in economic activities and employment, improve living conditions, and prevent and control communal riots.

## Six areas

Six areas will get focussed attention in education. Besides improving access to school education, the programme will ensure equitable availability of Integrated Child Development Services to the minorities. More resources will be made available for teaching Urdu and madrasa

• 15% funds for nationally declared minorities

• Opportunities for employment

• Equitable share in rural housing

education modernised. Scholarships will be provided to meritorious students and educational infrastructure improved through the Maulana Azad Education Foundation.

The programme will provide opportunities to the poor in self-employment and wage employment.

Skills will be upgraded through technical training, credit support enhanced for economic activities, and special efforts made to recruit the minorities to State and Central services.

To improve living conditions, the Government will ensure them an equitable share in rural housing schemes and improve their slums.

Steps will be taken to prevent communal incidents, communal offences will be prosecuted and riot victims rehabilitated.

In his Independence Day address, Dr. Singh said the Government would revive and revamp the 15-point programme to set definite and time-bound goals.

# EU leader to work on Iran

**Tehran, June 3 (Reuters):** European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana will soon present Iran with the incentives agreed by major powers to try to persuade Tehran to end nuclear fuel development, his spokeswoman said today.

Iran said the plan might offer a way forward, but insisted it would not give up uranium enrichment — which the West is demanding as proof that it is not developing nuclear weapons.

The incentives were agreed on Thursday by the permanent members of the UN Security Council — the US, Russia, Britain, France, China — plus Germany.

Solana's spokeswoman, Cristina Gallach, and Iranian foreign minister Manouchehr Mottaki said no date had been set for the trip. However, Solana plans to be in West Asia tomorrow and on Monday.

The incentives being offered by the six powers were still unknown, but their diplomats have been working on themes ranging from offering nuclear reactors to giving security guarantees.

"We believe if... there's goodwill then there's a possibility that our ideas may complete the proposal and give them (westerners) a way out of the situation they have created for themselves," Mottaki said on state television. However, he added: "The main pillar of the talks is that they should be free from preconditions."

Iranian politicians habitually use the word "precondi-

tion" for demands that Iran end its fuel work. Mottaki and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad have said there is no question of this, insisting on a right to make fuel for power generation.

Ahmadinejad last night told UN secretary-general Kofi Annan that Iran was willing to negotiate on nuclear issues as long as talks had no "preconditions of threats".

Washington says this must not be seen as a final rejection, and that Iran could be staking out a negotiating position.

Iran has a labyrinthine command structure and the President and the foreign minister may not have the last word on political matters.



Solana: Presenter

Iran's main authority is supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and the Supreme National Security Council, headed by chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani, is directly charged with handling the nuclear dispute.

# 'U.S. giving impetus to India's n-programme'

Also accused of "doling out orders" to Pakistan

PARIS: Al-Qaeda number two Ayman al-Zawahiri has lashed out at U.S. President George W Bush accusing him of giving a "strong impetus" to India's nuclear programme while "doling out orders" to Pakistan.

In a video released on a Jihadist website, Zawahiri pointed to a visit by Mr. Bush in March to New Delhi during which he signed a nuclear cooperation agreement with India.

"He gives a strong impetus to the Indian nuclear programme, while doling out orders to Pakistan," the Al-Qaeda leader said on Friday.

He also lashed out at Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf for his support to the U.S.-led war on terror. "Musharraf is fighting Islam in Pakistan ... threatens national security in Pakistan... has placed Pakistan's nuclear programme under American, therefore Jewish and Indian control."

"I call on the people of Pakistan to work to remove this traitor from power...and I call on every officer and soldier in the Pakistani army to disobey their commanders' orders to kill Muslims in Pakistan and Afghanistan," Zawahiri said.

• Releases video on Jihadist website

• Lashes out at Musharraf

In the third message from the organisation in a week, Zawahiri said "Musharraf was prepared to flee abroad where he had bank accounts when the popular revolution breaks out."

According to the video, the "message to the people of Pakistan" was recorded after the third anniversary of the fall of the regime of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein on April 9, 2003.

The video followed an audiotape broadcast on Al-Jazeera television last Sunday in which Al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden

called on Muslim fighters to go to Sudan to wage war against "crusader thieves" and slammed the international isolation of the Hamas-led Palestinian government.

The tape was the first from bin Laden since January 19.

Zawahiri also lashed out in his message at the United States, Britain, and the governments of Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

"Three years after the invasion of Iraq by the crusaders, America, Britain and their allies have only registered losses, catastrophes and misfortunes," Zawahiri said.

"Al-Qaeda in (Iraq) alone has carried out 800 suicide operations in three years," Zawahiri said.

In a separate video broadcast on the internet today, an Al-Qaeda member called on "Afghan Arabs" who had fought Soviet forces in Afghanistan to join up with bin Laden to take on the U.S. forces there. —AFP

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20 APR 2003

THE NEWS



# Tapes bring alive the terror of 9/11

Al Baker and James Glanz

**NEW YORK:** The calls had come in without pause, minute after minute. The emergency operators had no time to do anything but give advice and appeal for calm.

Then, about 9:50 a.m., the 911 emergency phone line seemed to have gone dead. It was a rare moment for people near the centre of the tragedy to reflect on what was happening, their thoughts recorded as they spoke quietly to each other on the same phones that connected them to the World Trade Centre.

"I don't know what they're doing," an Emergency Medical Service operator said. She was referring to a group of perhaps five persons she had been talking with on the south tower's 83rd floor before they had gone silent. "And it's an awful thing. It's an awful, awful, awful thing to call somebody and tell them you're going to die."

"That's an awful thing. I hope — I hope they're all alive because they sound like they went — they passed out because they were breathing hard, like snoring, like they're unconscious."

Nine minutes later, the south tower fell, and 29 minutes after that, the north tower went down. The moment for reflection soon passed and the calls began coming



**DAY OF DISASTER:** A person falls from the north tower of the burning World Trade Center in New York as another clings to the outside (left centre), in this file photo of September 11, 2001. — PHOTO: AP

again as the final chapters in the tragedy unfolded.

## Overwhelmed

So it went that morning for the people handling the 911 system.

Overworked, overwhelmed, they were thrust into situations for which no training could prepare them. Yet they kept picking up the phones, improvising answers even when they were exasperated, even when they were in the dark about evacuation orders that had been issued by fire and police commanders.

Helplessness increasingly de-

fining their predicament, and it showed in some of their conversations.

On Friday, as the tapes of these calls were released, Patrick J. Limage (30), a dispatcher for the Emergency Medical Service who took 10 or 15 calls from the towers that day, found his thoughts wandering back. In transcripts and tapes released, the operators were not identified by name.

On a day when all New York seemed under siege, few felt the pressure more than the 911 operators into whose headsets poured the shouts for help. In moments,

they were transformed from anonymous voices in the gears of Government to something like priests as they were a last human voice for the dying.

## Final calls

But to listen to their voices is to revisit the stark dilemmas of that day, to touch the contrary themes that defined it — dedication and ignorance, professionalism and mistakes — as well as some fleeting moments of humanity that arose as they sought graceful ways to end conversations that were often the final calls of the doomed.

"Take care," they said. "Bless you." "Bye-bye." "Were you able to call your family?" "Hold on."

Inside the towers, flames seared. Smoke thickened. Questions tumbled, one after another.

As the seconds ticked away and the end came near, sympathy for those near death shone through again and again.

When the terrible circumstances began to slip beyond human control, the operators reached further.

"Just hold on one second, Sir," a police operator said to a man on the 105th floor. "Hold on. I hear the fire alarm. They're coming. My God, this — don't worry. God is there. God is there. God is — don't worry." — **New York Times News Service**

# Ban on LTTE no surprise: EU

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## “Warnings had been provided”

Diplomatic Correspondent

**NEW DELHI:** The European Union's decision to list the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam as a terrorist organisation should come as a surprise to nobody, the Austrian Presidency of the EU said in a statement on Wednesday. “Several warnings have already been provided to the LTTE, which the LTTE has systematically ignored.”

In a September 27, 2005, statement, the EU had said it was “actively considering the formal listing of the LTTE as a terrorist organisation.” It then called upon all parties to show commitment and responsibility towards the peace process and to refrain from actions that could endanger a peaceful resolution and political settlement of the conflict.

### Appeal unheeded

“Unfortunately, this appeal has gone unheeded. The decision of the EU to list the LTTE is based on the actions of that organisation,” it said.

The statement said this list contained the names of persons, groups and entities against whom, for reasons of their involvement in terrorist acts, specific restrictive measures have to be taken, including the freezing of funds and other financial assets or economic resources, a ban on the provision of funds, financial assets and economic resources, and a ban on the provision of financial or other related services, directly or indirectly, for the benefit of these persons, groups and entities, police and judicial cooperation between EU member States.

### Curb violence

“The EU still sees a need for the LTTE to amend its violent course and return to peace talks, and will maintain its dialogue with the LTTE where such contacts, in the pursuit of the peace process, may help to bring about a return to negotiations and an end to violence. Listing the LTTE will not diminish the EU's determination to play its role as one of the Tokyo co-chairs,” the

• **European Union's decision based on LTTE's actions**

• **Listing not to diminish EU's determination to facilitate talks**

• **EU firmly committed to assisting Norwegian facilitator**

Austrian Presidency said.

Stressing that its decision was directed at the LTTE, and not at the Tamil people, the EU called upon the Sri Lankan authorities to curb violence in Government-controlled areas.

“The EU urges the Government of Sri Lanka to act effectively on the commitment of President [Mahinda] Rajapakse to put a stop to the culture of impunity and to clamp down on all acts of violence in areas controlled by the Government. The EU further urges the Government to ensure law and order for all citizens of Sri Lanka, and to investigate and prosecute all cases of violence that have so far not resulted in arrests or convictions.”

“The upsurge in violence is not caused by the LTTE alone. The EU strongly urges the Sri Lankan authorities to curb violence in Government-controlled areas. The EU notes with concern the growing number of reports of extra-judicial killings. The EU views the activities of the Karuna group in the gravest possible light. These are clearly contributing to increased instability in Sri Lanka, and further endanger the peace process.”

The Union remained firmly committed to assisting the Norwegian facilitator in its work and to helping the two parties to the ceasefire agreement to resolve their conflict and find a long-term, peaceful settlement.

“This, however, requires real commitment to the peace process from both the Government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE. The EU clearly expects all parties to respect the role and physical safety of the SLMM [Sri Lanka Military Mission] monitors.”

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## Solana to submit Iran proposals package

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**Teheran:** European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana was expected in Teheran late on



Javier Solana

Monday to submit an international nuclear proposal to Iran's leadership, official and diplomatic sources said.

The package, agreed on last week by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany, offers Iran incentives and fresh multilateral talks—involving the US—on the condition that Iran first suspend

uranium enrichment.

"Solana will arrive in Teheran tonight," a source close to the visit said. Official sources indicated he was likely to hand the proposal to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Tuesday. "Very, very soon I will be going to Teheran," Solana said at a press meet in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

Iran's uranium enrichment programme is at the centre of fears the country could make nuclear weapons. Iran has so far refused to suspend enrichment, arguing such fuel cycle work is for peaceful purposes only and is therefore a right enshrined by the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

But the Islamic republic's hardline leadership has nevertheless agreed to study the offer of trade, security and technology benefits. The offer from the six world powers is accompanied by a threat of robust UN Security Council action—including possible sanctions—if Iran fails to halt enrichment. AFP

06 JUN 2003

THE TIMES OF INDIA

# China visit a crucial test for Deora

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## SCO participation comes at a critical time

Pallavi Aiyar

**BEIJING:** Petroleum Minister Murli Deora on Wednesday arrived in Shanghai, where he will represent India at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit to be held on Thursday. The SCO is a six-member regional grouping of several major oil producing nations in addition to the world's second largest consumer — China. India, Pakistan, Iran and Mongolia have the observer status.

Apart from attending the summit proceedings, Mr. Deora will hold several bilateral meetings. On arrival, he said, "India looks forward to associating closely with SCO members" on a variety of initiatives to promote economic cooperation. He expressed the hope that the organisation would soon announce its policies on the opportunities for observer-countries to have "meaningful and substantive collaboration within the SCO framework."

Flagging the point that his visit comes in the "Year of India-China Friendship," Mr. Deora said the rapidly growing trade and economic ties were pointers to the fact that the two countries were now steadily engaged in mutually rewarding pursuits as friends and partners. "India-China relations have now acquired a long-term, global and strategic character."

• **India looks forward to close ties with SCO to promote economic ties**

• **India, China planning joint bids for Kazakh oilfields**

### First visit

This is Mr. Deora's first visit to China after he took over the petroleum portfolio from Mani Shankar Aiyar in late January. A few weeks before the change of portfolio Mr. Aiyar signed a memorandum of understanding with China aimed at boosting energy cooperation, pooling resources and bidding jointly for assets and investments in oilfields.

Mr. Deora's visit comes amid reports that the Himalayan neighbours are planning to make a joint bid of \$2 billion for oilfields in Kazakhstan. The official *China Daily* recently ran a story, according to which the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation and the Citic Group, China's largest investment company, will jointly bid for more than 400 million barrels of Kazakh deposits owned by the Calgary-based Nations Energy. Kazakhstan is an SCO member.

### Bidding wars

The attempts at cooperation in the energy sector follow a pe-

riod of intense rivalry in which bidding wars between Indian and Chinese firms shopping in the same neck of the woods have pushed up the price of energy assets. Given the voracious appetite of their fast growing economies, the neighbours together account for some 35 per cent of the world's energy demand.

Mr. Deora's participation in the SCO meeting comes at a critical time, as India is trying to diversify its energy suppliers, seeking hydrocarbons in Central Asia. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad will also attend the summit. India is looking to build an oil pipeline from Iran via Pakistan.

### Energy corridor

Pakistan will be represented by President Pervez Musharraf, who has recently gone on record saying he would like China to consider creating an energy corridor through the Gwadar port in his country. He is expected to ask for Chinese assistance in constructing two nuclear plants in addition to the two already built with Chinese help at Chashma.

Mr. Deora's visit will thus be a crucial test for him. He will need to build on the foundations for cooperation with Beijing that Mr. Aiyar laid in January, in addition to courting the oil-rich Central Asian States and Russia, amidst the background of some aggressive energy diplomacy by Pakistan.

15 JUN 76

washingtonpost.com

## Six-Nation Bloc Plans Anti-Terror Maneuvers

By Edward Cody  
Washington Post Foreign Service  
Thursday, April 27, 2006; A20

BEIJING, April 26 -- China, Russia and four Central Asian nations announced Wednesday that they will hold joint anti-terrorism exercises next year, emphasizing a desire to balance U.S. military influence in Asia with stepped-up preparations of their own.

The regional security grouping, known as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Its activities have centered mainly on guarding against cross-border threats to internal stability, particularly from militant Islamic groups.

Guo Boxiong, vice chairman of the Chinese Communist Party's Central Military Commission, said the plans for joint drills demonstrate the group's growing role in maintaining security in the region, the official New China News Agency said. He vowed that defense ministers from the six nations will work together to combat what China calls the "three forces" -- separatism, terrorism and extremism -- that threaten to provoke unrest in the area.

In a communique, the six nations said next year's exercises will be held in Russia. They did not detail what activities were planned. But the Russian defense minister, Sergei Ivanov, told reporters here that the exercises will be designed by a group of military and anti-terrorism experts to enhance regional security coordination and are not aimed at any third country.

In China's case, the threat has mainly come from Uighur separatists in the heavily Muslim Xinjiang autonomous region of western China. Through common Turkic languages and history, the estimated 8 million Uighur people have maintained ties to their Central Asian neighbors even as the region increasingly is populated by China's Han majority. As a result, Beijing is eager to cultivate influence with the governments of those nations, lest Uighur militants find support and encouragement from across the borders.

China also has a growing stake in maintaining a stable environment in Central Asia, which is a source of oil and gas for the energy-hungry Chinese economy. Although Russia traditionally has played a leading role in the region -- the nations of Central Asia were Soviet satellites -- Chinese diplomacy and trade have established a significant presence in recent years. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was formally organized in 2001 under Chinese leadership.

The first joint anti-terrorism maneuvers by the group were held in 2003, although Uzbekistan did not participate. They included some exercises in the Xinjiang region.

Separately, China and Russia held bilateral military exercises last August. They were billed as a drill against ethnic unrest but also were interpreted as a demonstration that Beijing and Moscow want the

United States to understand it is not the only guarantor of security in the region despite its dominant role since World War II.

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# How long should Asean wait?

*f. Alimena*  
*AS. R. M.*  
*5/9*

If the regional grouping is to be valued by the international community, it must adapt to changing times

**W**HEN the foreign ministers of the 10-member Association of South-east Asian Nations open their two-day meeting on 20 April in Ubud, Bali, they should consider that like a living organism, the organisation will cease to exist if it fails to adapt to its environment and implement the fundamental principles of democracy.

Asean risks becoming irrelevant if it does not respond to the challenges it faces today, nearly 40 years after it was established. The foreign ministers have the task of convincing the global community that the regional grouping continues to be relevant by taking strong action against any member who threatens the existence of the association.

Asean is increasingly seen as ineffectual. Apart from becoming a never-ending talking circuit - it seems not a day passes without a meeting linked to Asean - it has done very little by way of practical action.

In the glory days of Asean, the association helped bring about the necessary peace for unimpeded economic growth in the region. Now the grouping must focus on developing strong roots among the populace. This will not be an easy task. As an organisation created by those in power, Asean is largely viewed as an elitist grouping. Much work needs to be done to remedy this perception.

Although the association's leaders insist they have adapted to the rapid growth of democracy in South-east Asia, they still find it impossible to turn away from the obsolete principle of noninterference in the domestic affairs of the grouping's members.

One of the most embarrassing issues for the association since it accepted Myanmar as a member in 1997 has been its failure to deal with the brutal junta which rules that country. Try as it might, the association has been unable to convince the public about Myanmar's contributions to peace, democratisation and stability in the region.

It would be much easier to recite the damage Myanmar has caused to the region than its contributions. Asean has become the target of criticism from the international community, particularly the USA and the European Union, for its reluctance to take on Myanmar's military leaders. The grouping continues to shield

Myanmar not because the country is so rich and powerful it cannot be ignored, but simply because the association continues to cling to the belief that outsiders have no right to interfere in Myanmar's domestic affairs.

In recent years Asean has become a virtual hostage to Myanmar, which has figuratively hijacked the association for its own advantage. When Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono visited the country last month, he failed to take advantage of the window of opportunity opened to him. Yudhoyono instead presented the image of an outdated Indonesia, talking up Myanmar while failing to comment on the obvious issue of the country's repressive government. This from the leader of a country that recently threw off its own repressive regime and is now in the process of democratisation. Why should Myanmar be expected to respect Asean if the leader of one its founding members, a country of 230 million people, fails to impress on it the need to change and respect the principles of the association? Yudhoyono failed to embarrass a host badly in need of embarrassment.

Worse, Asean's special envoy to Myanmar, Malaysian foreign minister Syed Hamid Albar, also returned empty-handed from a recent visit to Yangon. The junta basically told him everything in the country was fine, they did not need help and they did not want to be bothered by outsiders.

The Asean foreign ministers will only further embarrass the association if they fail to punish Myanmar by suspending its Asean membership. The generals there have cheated Asean for too many years with empty promises to restore democracy and to stop suppressing the voice of the people.

It would be nothing short of shameful if Asean simply sings the same old song that Myanmar should be give more time to change, while again refusing to take tough action against the country.

If member countries want to see Asean flourish, they will have to work a lot harder in a world where globalisation and terrorism have become two of the most pressing issues.

■ The Jakarta Post/ANN.

## E.U. cuts off aid to Hamas Government

*8/11*  
*R. AL-*  
*E.U.*  
*14.9.14*

**BRUSSELS:** The European Union has cut off direct aid payments to the Hamas-led Palestinian Government because of its refusal to renounce violence and recognise Israel, the E.U.'s executive office said on Friday.

A top Hamas legislator condemned the move, which came at a time of intensive manoeuvring among Palestinian leaders to find a way out of the new Government's isolation. One senior Hamas leader said on Friday the group is ready for a "two-state" solution with Israel, a softening in Hamas' position that would imply recognition of the Jewish state for the first time.

The official said Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, of Hamas, would discuss the idea with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, a moderate, in a meeting in Gaza City later on Friday. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the proposal has not yet been submitted.

It was not clear how developments in the Palestinian Authority might affect the E.U.'s decision, which was to be announced formally at a meeting of E.U. Foreign Ministers on Monday. On Friday, European Commission spokeswoman Emma Udwin said that, "for the time being there are no payments to or through the Palestinian authority."

"The E.U. will need to develop some new strategy, some new measures, some new decisions," Ms. Udwin added. — AP



# Chirac leaves E.U. summit over English

Nicholas Watt and David Gow

**BRUSSELS:** French President Jacques Chirac led a French walkout from the opening session of the E.U.'s annual spring summit on Thursday night when a fellow Frenchman committed the grave offence of speaking English.

Highlighting France's acute sensitivity towards the decline of the language which once dominated the E.U., Mr. Chirac led three Senior Ministers out of the talks when Ernest-Antoine Seilliere, French head of the European employers' group Unice, abandoned his mother tongue on the ground that English is "the language of business."

Mr. Chirac picked up his papers and left, with Philippe Douste-Blazy, Foreign Minister and Thierry Breton, Finance Minister, in tow. Gallic pride was soon restored when Jean-Claude Trichet, French head of the European Central Bank, addressed the meeting in his mother tongue -- and Mr. Chirac led his Ministers back.

France and Germany are at loggerheads over the economic future of Europe after (German Chancellor) Angela Merkel criticised French attempts to limit foreign investment. In the most serious Franco-German disagreement since her election as Chancellor in November, Ms. Merkel dismissed a French initiative to promote "economic patriotism". "We can only have an internal market when electricity flows freely and when we accept European champions and not just think nationally," she said as she arrived at the summit in Brussels on Thursday.

Ms. Merkel, who has made clear that she wants to open up the Franco-German alliance after the closed years of Mr. Chirac and Gerhard Schroeder, was aiming at the French on two fronts. Dominique de Villepin, French Prime Minister, has pledged to champion "economic patriotism" by naming 11 French business sectors which should be shielded from foreign bidders. — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2006

# E.U. for joint energy plan

Resurgent protectionism casts shadow over talks at Brussels

**BRUSSELS:** European Union leaders gathered for an economic summit on Thursday aimed at giving a shot in the arm to Europe's long-flagging economy, but resurgent protectionism cast a long shadow over the talks.

Plans to forge a joint energy strategy for the 25-nation European Union will also be high on the agenda of the two-day gathering in Brussels.

While the United States and Japan are enjoying an economic resurgence, much of Europe is still struggling to stimulate growth, with latest figures for last year putting economic expansion in the eurozone at a paltry 1.3 per cent.

## Reforms agenda

E.U. leaders hope to use the Brussels summit to galvanise efforts to push through reforms such as flexible jobs rules and ever-greater cross-border competition.

"We need to create more job opportunities, particularly for young people trying to enter the market," said European Commission chief Jose Manuel Barroso on the eve of the summit.

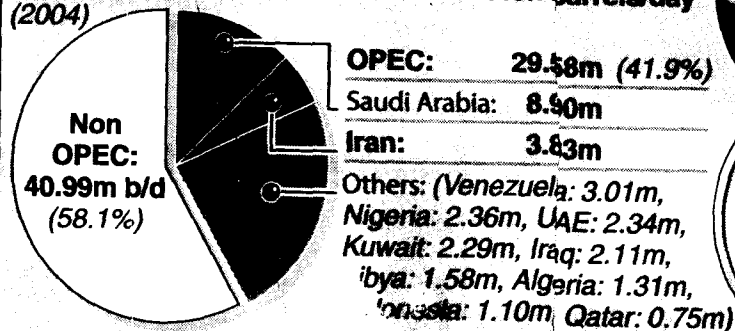
But europhiles, already depressed by last year's French and Dutch rejections of the E.U.'s first-ever Constitution, now lament that the bloc is drifting towards greater protectionism in national economic policy-making.

A string of cases has underlined this in recent weeks, including Spanish efforts to block a German energy giant's takeover bid and French machinations to protect Suez from Italian group Enel. — AFP

## Iran plans to launch euro-based oil bourse

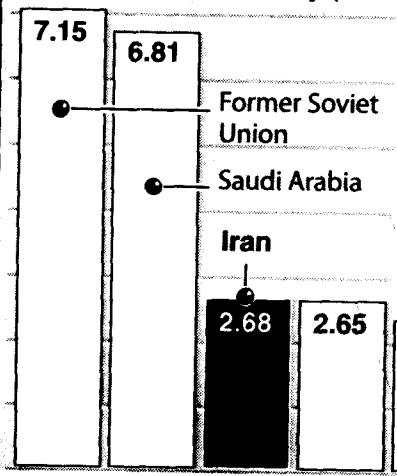
The Iranian Oil Bourse — an oil-trading market using the euro rather than the U.S. dollar as its base currency — is set to go head to head with the New York Mercantile Exchange and London's International Petroleum Exchange. Countries will no longer have to buy and hold depreciating dollars in order to secure their payment for oil

**WORLD OIL PRODUCTION 70.57 million barrels/day (2004)**



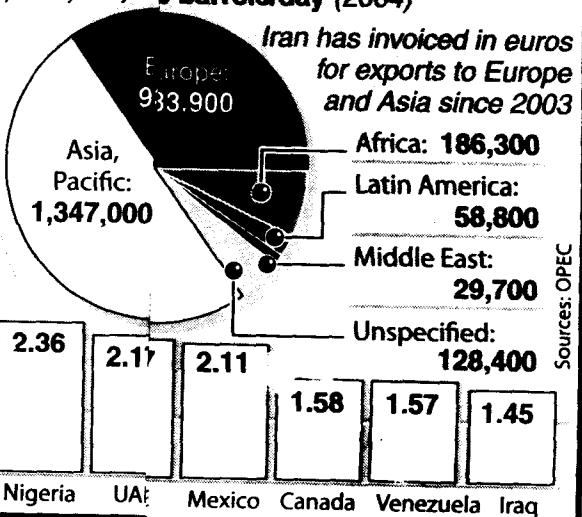
## TOP 10 OIL EXPORTERS

Total: 42.69m barrels/day (2004)



## IRAN'S OIL EXPORTS

2,684,100 barrels/day (2004)



Iran has invoiced in euros for exports to Europe and Asia since 2003

© GRAPHIC NEWS

Sources: OPEC

24 MAR 2006

THE HINDU

NUCLEAR PROGRAMME ■ Calls for full suspension, even low-scale centrifugal research ruled out

# EU wants Iran to stop research or face UNSC

REUTERS  
VIENNA, MARCH 8

**I**N remarks prepared for the UN nuclear watchdog board meeting today, the European Union said Iran must halt all nuclear research shortly or face UN Security Council pressure to do so.

The EU statement ruled out even low-scale research with centrifuges, machines which convert uranium UF6 gas into fuel suitable for nuclear power reactors or, if enriched to high levels, the fissile core of nuclear warheads.

"The EU therefore reiterates its call on Iran to return to a full suspension of all enrichment and enrichment-related activities including research and development", said the statement, to be delivered by Austria, the current EU president.

Earlier, Iran had denounced as "politicised" an IAEA report on its nuclear drive ahead of a de-



Iran's ambassador to the IAEA AH Aaghar Soltanleh (right), talks to IAEA's chairman Yukiya Amano in Vienna on Wednesday. AP

bate by the agency's board on Wednesday opening the way to Security Council action over suspicions that Tehran wants atom bombs. But the report by IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei given to this week's board session said Tehran had flouted the February 4 appeal by expanding a pilot en-

richment drive, inviting council intervention that could lead to consideration of sanctions.

"The purely technical nuclear issue of the Islamic Republic of Iran is politicised," the Iranian government said in a statement on ElBaradei's report released just before Wednesday's debate.

## World has to allow enrichment: Ahmadinejad

TEHRAN: Iran President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Wednesday warned that the world must give in to what he said was Iran's right to enrich uranium. "Our nation has made its decision to fully use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and all have to give in to this decision made by the Iranian nation," he said. "If anybody seeks to violate our rights, the Iranian nation will place the sign of disgrace on their forehead," he said in Khorramabad in western Iran. —Associated Press

"Bias, exaggerated and unjustified informational community," the statement said.

It added that Iran had bent over backwards to cooperate with IAEA inquiries over the past three years, providing "voluminous information", granting access to military sites and arranging interviews even though such steps were not required by the NPT.

ElBaradei said Iran's compliance with probes remained selective. He gave examples where it withheld documents, denied access to people the IAEA wanted to query and failed to

clarify allegations of military links to nuclear research.

US Vice President Dick Cheney had said on Tuesday that Iran would be stopped from getting atomic bombs and faced "meaningful consequences" if it persists in defying calls to stop nuclear work that could endow it with know-how to make weapons.

In defying calls to halt all enrichment-related work, Iran seems to be counting on divisions in the Council over whether to resort to sanctions mooted by the US.

While Moscow and Beijing also do not want Iran to acquire

atom bomb technology, they want to protect big trade stakes with Tehran and could use their vetoes to block sanctions.

Russia and China have urged the West not to give up efforts at a diplomatic compromise short of Security Council action. Iran reacted coolly to reports of the Russian offer as well, with one diplomat saying Tehran could accept a two-year moratorium on industrial atomic fuel production, but not longer, in exchange assurances it could do centrifuge research.

He said Iran's idea of research entailed running nearly 3,000 enrichment centrifuges, which the West would deem industrial-scale and could yield enough highly enriched uranium for one bomb in a year if operating at full capacity.

Meanwhile the Council is expected to meet as early as next week, a senior EU diplomat said on Wednesday.

## EU grants Iran talks before IAEA meet

REUTERS

Vienna, March 2

EU POWERS said on Thursday they had agreed to last-minute talks with Iran on Friday before a UN nuclear watchdog meeting that could spawn UN Security Council steps against Tehran over concerns it seeks atom bombs. But "EU3" diplomats held out scant hope of a

breakthrough in their first direct contact with Iran since December, noting Tehran was defiantly accelerating uranium enrichment work and declining to embrace a Russian proposal to defuse the crisis.

Iran's top nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani, fresh from inconclusive talks in Moscow on an offer to enrich uranium for Iran in Russia to pre-empt di-

versions into bombmaking, announced he would see British, French and German envoys before March 6. That is the date when the International Atomic Energy Agency's board of governors will meet to weigh a report by the IAEA chief saying essentially that Iran had ignored a February 4 board call to re-suspend enrichment work to regain world trust.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

The European Union as a superpower is a distant prospect

# New kids on the block

CHANDRASHEKHAR DASGUPTA

Most analysts of world politics would agree that the prevailing unipolar global order will give way to a multipolar, or a polycentric order by mid-century. The first challenge to the United States of America's current primacy is expected to come from an ascendant China; while Russia, the European Union, Japan and India are seen as other potential superpowers.

Among these possible superpowers, only the European Union already possesses an economic base equal to that of the US. The total population of the 25 countries constituting the European Union (EU-25) is 450 million, compared to the US's 300 million. The total gross domestic product of the EU-25 (calculated on the basis of purchasing power parity) amounted to \$11,720 billion in 2004, slightly larger than the US's \$11,190 billion. The EU's foreign trade is roughly equal in volume to that of the US. In global finance, the US dollar is still the world's preferred reserve currency but the euro is steadily gaining ground. In the World Trade Organization the EU plays as important a role as the US, and in the International Monetary Fund it is a close second.

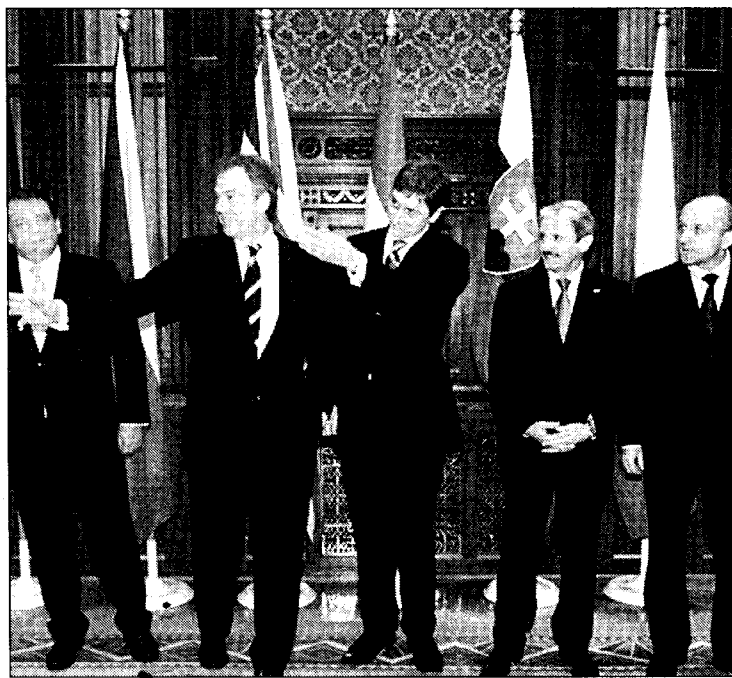
Yet, the political and military role of the EU today is not even remotely comparable to that of the US. The explanation lies in the unique character of the EU. Alone among the potential superpowers, it is not a sovereign state. Sovereignty continues to reside in its member states; these have pooled their sovereignty — as it were — only in certain specified spheres. Thus, in trade matters, the EU adopts decisions on the basis of a weighted majority vote, functioning rather like a federal state. In contrast, on political and security issues, its decisions require a consensus among the member states. In these areas, it functions like a regional organization, not a sovereign state. It seeks to identify common elements in the national, foreign and security policies of its member states and to blend these into a policy acceptable to all its constituent members.

In EU parlance, the union has a "single" policy in the sphere of trade and a "common" policy in respect of foreign affairs and defence. There is a world of difference between the two. "Single policy" decisions, adopted by a weighted majority vote, cover all issues of international trade and are binding upon all EU members, including those

casting a negative vote. On the other hand, "common foreign and security policy" decisions can only cover issues on which a consensus exists among EU members. Quite frequently, a consensus can be found only by couching decisions in general or non-specific terms. As we noted earlier, the EU functions rather like a federal state in trade-related issues and like a regional organization in political and security issues.

This asymmetry in the nature of the EU is reflected in the global balance of power. If one looks only at the economic dimension of the glob-

al power balance, the EU is an equal of the US. In the exclusively economic domain, where the EU increasingly acts like a federal union, the world is not unipolar. But when we look at the political and military dimension of power, where the EU functions not as a single entity but as a regional association of sovereign states, the picture is very different. On a comprehensive view, the US is today the only superpower.



The EU can become a superpower only if it evolves into some sort of a federal union. Europeans are deeply divided, however, on the question of pooling sovereignty in the core political areas of foreign affairs and defence. The great debate in the continent is between the champions of a Federal Europe and the defenders of a Europe of Nations.

The former see a united Europe emerging either as a rival of the US in a 'multipolar' world, or as an equal partner in the Atlantic Alliance. The latter prefer to preserve

the distinct national identities and historical sovereignties of their own countries. Moreover, many Europeans are apprehensive that France and Germany might dominate a Federal Europe. Europe has overcome old animosities but has not yet forgotten old rivalries. Many Europeans are prepared to accept American primacy in the continent as the price for insuring against possible domination by a Franco-German axis. In the words of a leading Polish journalist: "We can't put up with a EU in which France and Germany have the last say. And we don't want an anti-

**‘ The EU can become a superpower only if it evolves into some sort of a federal union ’**

American EU." The advocates of a Europe of Nations are prepared to take measured steps towards further integration but they reject the goal of federation.

In the event, Europe has followed a one-step-at-a-time approach towards greater integration, without attempting to define its final goal. In 1992, when the European Community evolved into the European Union, it decided to formulate a common foreign and security policy, "including the eventual framing of a common defence policy which might in time lead to a common defence". In 1997, the EU took another step forward by creating the post of an EU high representative for CFSP.

It also decided to bring peacekeeping and peace-making tasks under the purview of the CFSP, thus opening the door to a limited military role for the EU. Two years later, the EU decided to develop an "autonomous" military capability, in order to respond to international crises.

This step was, however, less ambitious than might appear at first sight. It did not contemplate the creation of an EU army. The EU military capability is composed of national contingents earmarked for the EU by member states. Second, only limited military tasks — related mainly to peacekeeping and peace-making — were envisaged. The core area of territorial defence remains a Nato responsibility. Finally, at the insistence of the US, the "autonomous" EU military capability has been effectively brought within the Nato framework. An EU military initiative must first be discussed in Nato and may be undertaken only with the approval of the alliance. The EU is, moreover, dependent on the use of certain vital Nato planning and military assets, which it has undertaken not to "duplicate". In short, the EU can exercise its so-called "autonomous" military capability only with Nato — and, therefore, US — approval. Since 1992, the EU has gradually developed a CFSP covering such fields as international terrorism, organized crime, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and human rights. It holds regular summit meetings with the US, Canada, Russia, Japan, China and India. It is currently playing a leading role in the Iran issue at the IAEA. EU peacekeeping forces have successfully taken on challenging roles in the Balkans and Africa.

Yet, the EU's political role is subject to many limitations. The EU can act only on issues in which its members have identical, or very similar, positions. This limits both the range and depth of its CFSP. Its so-called "autonomous" defence capability is, in effect, subject to an American veto. Territorial defence is, in any case, reserved for Nato. Not surprisingly, leading member states — France, Germany and Britain — play a bigger role in international political and security issues than the EU itself. It might be said of the EU that the whole is smaller than some of its parts.

The EU is "work in progress". It is possible, though not certain, that its continued evolution may eventually lead to a Federal Europe capable of playing the role of a superpower. Many Europeans hope for such an outcome; many others oppose it. The emergence of the EU as a superpower is at best a distant prospect.

The author is a retired ambassador

# EU's talks with Iran end in stalemate

Brussels: EU talks with Iran's foreign minister failed to make progress in resolving the West's standoff with the Islamic republic over its nuclear programme, the bloc's foreign policy chief said.

Javier Solana said Iran's "substantive position has not changed." Speaking after a 90-minute meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki on Monday, Solana said, "They have to be much more constructive."

Solana told reporters that he told Mottaki the EU would wait to see any progress made by Teheran in its talks with Russia over its nuclear enrichment programme before a meeting of the UN's atomic energy agency in Vienna on March 6.

In Moscow, Russian and Iranian negotiators ended a day of talks with an agreement to continue negotiations, and Russia's foreign minister voiced cautious hope that the Iranian nuclear is-

sue could remain in the hands of the UN nuclear watchdog.

No details were available on when, where or at what level the talks would be continued. The Iranian delegation was expected to head home on Tuesday.

"We hope very much from the Iranian side some movement takes place before that date (March 6)," said Solana, adding that Mottaki and his delegation, which included nuclear negotiators, repeated existing arguments.

"The number of reports of the (UN) agency show very clearly... a number of doubts that have undermined a peaceful programme and therefore what is fundamental now is the confidence building measures," said Solana.

Mottaki acknowledged in a sep-

arate briefing to reporters that his visit to Solana had failed to make headway, adding Iran had expected the European Union to make fresh diplomatic overtures to solve the dispute.

"I said we are ready for any new ideas to reach some compromise on this issue," Mottaki said. "They are supporting some kind of nuclear apartheid which is not acceptable to us," he added.

Iranian and European officials said, however, that despite the continued deadlock they were eager to find a diplomatic solution to resolve the standoff.

Mottaki told reporters that moves by European Union governments and the United States to take the dispute to the UN Security Council were unjustified and unfair.

"Nuclear weapons are not in Iran's defence doctrine," Mottaki said.

He told the European Parliament's foreign affairs committee that "nuclear weapons are not in Iran's interest."

EU lawmakers chided Mottaki over Iran's human rights record and on its nuclear intentions.

"We have not seen an opening for new negotiations," said German Conservative Elmar Brok, chair of the committee. "We have a long way to go to understand each other."

"Our guest here today has a biography full of killings and kidnappings," said the parliament's vice-president, Alejo Vidal Quadras Roca. "The Iranian regime is one of the most dangerous threats for world peace and security."

Both the EU and Washington fear Teheran is using its nuclear energy programme to develop and build nuclear warheads. AP

**"They are supporting some kind of nuclear apartheid not acceptable to us"**

—Iranian Foreign Minister

THE TIMES OF INDIA

# IAEA delays vote as EU lobbies for Iran referral

REUTERS

Vienna, February 3

THE UN nuclear watchdog deferred until Saturday a vote to report Iran to the UN Security Council over fears it is seeking atomic bombs, as the European Union lobbied developing nations to back the measure.

Diplomats said a clear majority on the International Atomic Energy Agency's 35-nation board favored notifying the council on Iran, but EU diplomats needed more time to persuade as many developing states as possible to vote yes rather than abstain.

Iran warned it would curb IAEA checks on its atomic sites if sent to the council, a threat that seemed to influence efforts by developing states to soften the EU-sponsored resolution.

EU diplomats said the threat would not deter their efforts to induce Iran to change course.

The IAEA board held an emergency session on Thursday and had planned to reconvene on Friday, before the delay was announced. The board is now due to reconvene on Saturday morning.

"We are trying as best we can to secure as broad as possible consensus on the board for reporting Iran," said a diplomat with one of the sponsoring powers, Britain, France and Germany.

"The resolution is being revised," a senior diplomat close to the IAEA said earlier.

"Once this is on the agenda of the Security Council we foresee a graduated approach to bring additional pressure on the leadership in Tehran to achieve a negotiated settlement," US Ambassador Gregory Schulte said.

Asked about the haggling, a Western diplomat said, "The threat (to restrict inspections) is on everyone's minds but we con-

## Tehran offered 10-yr nuke freeze



Mohamed ElBaradei has called on Iran to freeze nuclear fuel production for up to 10 years as a way of defusing the confrontation between Iran and the West.

ElBaradei, the IAEA chief, said on Friday that there was "no urgency" for Iran to embark on enriching uranium. Tehran, he said, had a "window of opportunity" over the next few weeks for stepping back from a showdown with the West.

sider it blackmail and if we give in to that, there's no end to it."

He said the consultations focused on clarifying clauses in the resolution that developing states argued could be construed as ending IAEA oversight of Iran and opening the way to sanctions before the IAEA ends its probe of Iran's atomic project.

IAEA Director-General Mohamed ElBaradei is due to deliver a sweeping report on Iran's nuclear energy programme, which Washington suspects is a disguised bomb project, at a regular March 6 meeting of the agency's board.

US and EU leaders, aware that Russia, China and developing states on the IAEA board want to avoid a showdown with Iran, the world's No. 4 oil exporter, said that reporting Tehran would not finish off diplomacy or trigger early sanctions.

15 4 FEB 2006

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

# Asean calling

By Surin Pitsuwan

(The following article is drawn from keynote addresses that the former Thai foreign minister had made during a tour of North-east India in January with a delegation of scholars from South-east Asia and Japan under the umbrella of the Asian Dialogue Society. Mr Surin addressed workshops at Kohima, Guwahati and Shillong and the visit was facilitated by the Centre for North East Studies and Policy Research.)

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, recently called the North-east "a cultural bridge" to South-east Asia. I can assure you that your sentiments toward us are reciprocated by the people of South-east Asia. Do not be discouraged by the concepts and schemes which are being invented one after another: Saarc, BIMS TEC, SAGQ and Asean-India Free Trade Agreement. We are here to bring flesh and reality to these concepts. We are to identify our strengths and weaknesses. That is the experience of South-east Asia. We have to

ries for your younger generation. You can contribute with your mastery of English, which is better than that of many in South-east Asia. That is one of your strengths.

What we have done in South-east Asia is to integrate our economies with each other and with the world economy.

But let me emphasise that while integration does bring strengths, it also brings problems. You cannot have benefits without being exposed to the problems of each other: human trafficking, drugs, refugees, illegal migration to name just a few. We are saddled with these problems too. Yet we realise that we have to be open to each other despite the problems which flow across borders between neighbours.

So you need a Look East Policy but you also need a North-east-North-West South-east Asia corridor, a revived Stillwell Road, a new Silk Route. You need real hands shaking hands on the ground, you need e-mail addresses of people, you need addresses of

## Open Forum

### Firm vision, flexible approach

WE have the ASEAN Free Trade Area and despite our diversity – until I came to the North-east I thought we were the most ethnically diverse place in the world but I've had to since revise that view! – there are a few basic things that must remain that promote change: hold the vision firm but be flexible. We exclude none from the process and accommodate all. And we must incrementally move toward the shared vision, incremental in the speed of the process and in the direction of the process. We work as a group and move as a unit.

Now this does not mean that all member-states have developed or moved at the same pace. They have not and do not. But those who are ready on one issue move first and quickly; the others move when they are ready. We have to depend on the private sector as the driving force for change. That is another key because governments can only do so much: they can frame policies and facilitate processes. The driving force for us has been the private sector. Ten years ago, when His Majesty the King of Thailand was to celebrate his 50th anniversary on the throne, we



Prime Minister Manmohan Singh joins hands with Asean leaders at the Fourth Asean-India summit in Kuala Lumpur in December. — PTI

know our strengths, dilute our weaknesses and attract constructive players in our midst. In the North-east, you have tremendous combined strength if you can promote your ideas. You will have more bargaining power, more attraction as a tourist destination if you present yourselves as a group, as one, and that is also true of investment opportunities.

Of course, there are the underlying conditions of peace, security and stability which are necessary for the travellers and investors to come.

Why stop at the India-Asean car rally (of November 2004)? We have Asean-India meetings at the summit level, at the level of foreign ministers, trade and business negotiating teams – there are all these frameworks. You should think about bringing a senior-level meeting here of the Asean plus India group.

That is the way to attract the media's attention. You need to provide comfort and that is not beyond your capacity.

That is how China has done it in the tourism sector by developing distant towns as destinations and having the facilities of taking people there as well as of top class hotels and entertainment for them.

We can open our classrooms, our laborato-

business groups, you need visits and exchanges, you need the human bond. And you are taking that initial step to cement the two processes: Look East from your side, Look West from our side.

From our experience, let me share that before peace and reconciliation came to our region, people avoided South-east Asia. With peace and reconciliation, human bonds developed, people began travelling there and now we are the darling of international investment and tourism. We are the new vendors, the new markets, the new bazars. That is the key.

We are being practical. We in South-east Asia should not only look east or west but 360 degrees to locate ourselves. In the struggle for change and adaptation, we went through the transformation together. We need a core group, a driving force, a critical mass.

Our experience shows that without achieving that critical mass, without having a core group, you do not change anything.

The Asean approach is not one of consensus: we are 10 nations with differing political systems. Sometimes we are all 10 together on an issue; at other times, it is 10 minus or nine plus.

thought of ways to attract international attention. We hit upon the idea of calling the best photographers in the world, inviting them for 100 days to go anywhere in the kingdom and placed a good award for the winning photographer of five million baht (about the equivalent in rupees) and held an exhibition at the end. The result was a coffee table book but also an international campaign that focused attention on Thailand.

We market Asean as one market: if you come to Bangkok, you can reach Mandalay within a few hours; from Singapore, Bali is in touching distance. Perhaps, the same can be done for the North-east. That from here, within an hour or two, you can reach Bangkok or Mandalay or Kunming – North-west and South-east Asia.

The benefits of a single market are enormous: last year tourism brought in \$371 billion into the region. Travel and tourism are expected to grow six times in 2015. The industry employs 19 million people or 7.5 per cent of the total employment in the region.

We would like to synergise our dynamics with your dynamics. Open the doors, start the dialogue. We want to put flesh into the words with concrete ideas.



# SECURITY COUNCIL | Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki says chance of referral 'weak'

# EU3 draft wants

# Iran reported to UN

AGENCIES

BERLIN/TEHRAN, JAN 18

**A** DRAFT resolution to be submitted to the UN nuclear watchdog asks the agency to report Iran's nuclear programme to the UN Security Council, according to the text dictated by an EU diplomat on Wednesday.

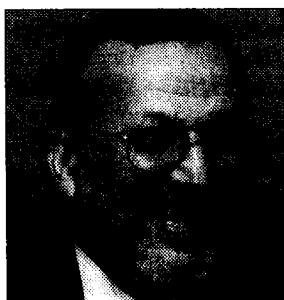
The resolution, drafted by France, Britain and Germany, asks Iran "to help the agency clarify questions regarding possible nuclear weapons activities" and calls on International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Mohamed El-Baradei "to transmit a copy of this resolution to the Council".

Referral of the matter to the 15-nation council opens the door to possible UN sanctions, though diplomats and analysts say such punitive measures would be a long way off.

The text will undergo changes as the wording is discussed by key members of the IAEA's 35-nation board of governors, which holds an emergency meeting on Iran early next month.

Russia and China, which are on the council and the IAEA board, have signalled doubts about the benefits of a referral.

The resolution, if approved, would put the matter into the hands of the Council for the first time since the standoff be-



Manouchehr Mottaki

gan in August 2002.

The resolution "requests the director general (El-Baradei) to continue with his efforts to implement the agency's safeguards agreement with Iran ... With a view to providing credible assurances regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear materials

and activities in Iran".

However, Iran's Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said today there was only a "weak" chance of his country being referred to the UN security council over its disputed nuclear programme.

He said, "I hope the Europeans have understood Iran's very clear and direct message and do not make any hasty decision... Which would complicate the situation for all sides."

Hossein Entezami, National Security spokesman told *Iran*, "If our case goes to the Security Council... to reinforce the head of the IAEA or to decide on sanctions, the government will be obliged to put an end to its suspension of activities."

## Israel warns against acquisition of nuclear weapons

► **JERUSALEM:** Acting Israeli PM Ehud Olmert warned Iran that Israel would not let anyone who threatened its existence obtain weapons of mass destruction as officials headed to Moscow for talks over Tehran's nuclear programme. He also said he believed a diplomatic solution was possible before Iran was able to obtain nuclear weapons.

"Israel cannot allow in any way or at any stage someone who has such hostile intentions against us to obtain weapons that could threaten our existence," Olmert said in talks with President Moshe Katsav on Tuesday.

► **VIENNA:** UN nuclear chief Mohamed el-Baradei held a secret meeting with Iran's chief negotiator, who lobbied for help in avoiding measures against Iran, diplomats said on Wednesday.

El-Baradei and Ali Larjani met in Vienna on Sunday, the day before the five UN Security Council permanent members plus Germany met in London to consider what to do about Iran's controversial nuclear programme. Larjani was "seeking to foil" the emergency meeting of the IAEA's 35-nation board of governors, said a diplomat.

"The talks with El-Baradei revolved, among other issues, around the issue of IAEA inspectors entering nuclear sites without prior coordination," he added.

—Agence France Press

10 JAN 2006

# EU wants to haul Iran to Security Council

S Rajagopalan and AFP  
Washington/Vienna, January 11

EUROPE'S MAJOR powers are likely to haul Iran before the Security Council, Britain warned on Wednesday, as the international community weighed its response to the growing crisis over Tehran's nuclear ambitions.

European Union heavyweights Britain, France and Germany are to meet for emergency talks on Thursday in Berlin.

The US said even though it was working to resolve the crisis peacefully, the possibility of referring Tehran to the Security Council for sanctions was also on the table. "If Iran continues on the current course, we shall have no other choice," White House spokesman Scott McClellan said.

In London, Tony Blair said Iran's move to resume nuclear research, coupled with its threats against Israel, showed "malign intention" on Iran's part. "The first thing to do is to secure agreement for a reference to the Security Council, if that is indeed what the allies jointly decide, as I think seems likely."

Russia, too, voiced its concern, with defence minister Sergei Ivanov calling the resumption "alarming" and foreign minister Sergei Lavrov's office saying he had been in touch with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

But Iran insisted it would press on. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad vowed not to be intimidated by the international "fuss". "I am telling all the powers that Iran, with firmness and wisdom, will continue its path in seeking and utilising peaceful nuclear energy," he said.

Acting Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert too called on Western powers to take Iran to the UN Security Council. "Israel is worried by developments in Iran and the statements made about Israel by its leaders," his office quoted him as saying.