

US-INDIA NUCLEAR DEAL

A Valentine gift or assault on India's sovereignty?

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THE United States is in a position to consolidate a long-term relationship with India, edge Pakistan away from chaos, prevent another regional war, and address such important issues as the spread of nuclear weapons, terrorism and China's regional role. United States looks at enormous economic profits. India has a population of more than 1 billion, which means a big market. India has already become the third largest economy in Asia after Japan and China. Then, the "China factor" is a strong boost to US-India relations. A US think-tank Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, recently issued a report on the US agenda with regard to the rising power of India namely India as a New Global Power: An Action Agenda for the United States. Similarly, the opening of the Indian economy has also encouraged India's civil society to expand its interactions especially exports with the United States.

India and US-from estranged to engaged democracies

It is worth noting that the 'transformation' in India - US relations emerged after a fairly long process. India's turn towards Washington increased dramatically after the events of September 11, 2001. In Atal Bihari Vajpayee, India's Prime Minister at that time, Bush found a perfect partner-statesman, who equally weary of a history of US-Indian antagonism and strongly inclined to regard the United States and India as "natural allies" ("India, USA and the World", Remarks by Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the Asia Society, New York, September 28, 1998). From 2001-2003, the courtship between the United States and India grew in ardour and expectations.

Since 2001, the Indian government has pressed the

United States to ease restrictions on the export to India of dual-use-high technology goods, as well as to increase in civilian nuclear and space cooperation. In June, 2005 US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and visiting Indian Defense Minister Pranab Mukherjee signed a ten year India-US military cooperation agreement namely New Framework for the US-India Defense Relationship. Some of the important frameworks was capacity building which include:

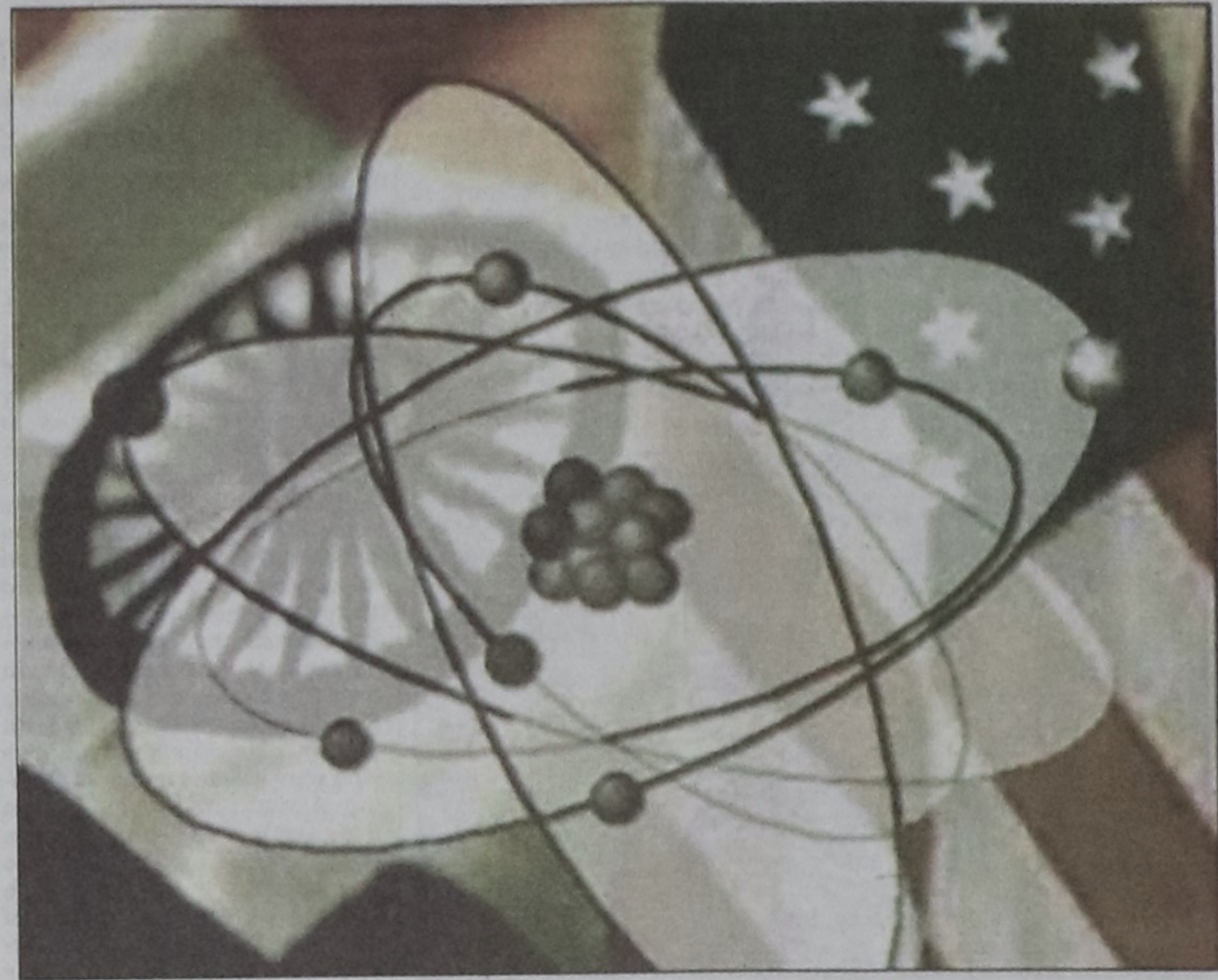
- Expand defense trade between India and the US.
- Expand missile defense collaboration.

The document outlines the institutional architecture within which they will cooperate more intensively.

Mitt Romney, a former candidate for Republican presidential nomination, views India as potentially profitable for U.S. market and investment, due to its flourishing economy and huge population. Romney said in 2005 that although outsourcing to countries like India is a problem, "we'll see new opportunities created selling products there. We'll have a net increase in economic activity, just as we did with free trade." Sam Brownback, another Republican Senator, calls India "one of our most important strategic partners in Asia." Like Bill Richardson, he has stressed India's potential role as a "counterweight" to China's economy. In 1999, he called for an end to economic sanctions intended to force India to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Brownback voted for the United States-India Energy Security Cooperation Act of 2006 in part, he said, because "India has protected its nuclear program for thirty years and has not proliferated."

Future scenario

In March 2006 George W. Bush visited New Delhi and signed a controversial deal to provide



India with the technology to develop its nuclear power programme, at the same time giving the green light to expand its nuclear weapons technology. The Indo-US nuclear deal is a remarkable progress in India-US relationship. As part of the nuclear deal with the US, India has agreed to identify and separate all civilian and military nuclear facilities under the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) safeguard regime (Joint Statement between President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, office of the President, see the Whitehouse, July 18, 2005). This means, to accomplish the goals mentioned in the deal, India needs to place all its nuclear facilities not directly associated with nuclear weapons

production or deployment, under safeguards, in return for nuclear technology and fuel supplies. India has many civil nuclear facilities in this category which they would not like to bring under the scope of US oversight. In dealing with the nuclear issue, India and USA refers to Section 123 of the U.S. Atomic Energy Act, which is known as 123 Agreement. Under this Act, there is a ban on transfer of nuclear technology to other countries. The Hyde Act was passed by U.S. to make an exception for India, to allow transfer of technology for civil nuclear energy. The next step is to enter into agreement with the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) for safeguards of the civil nuclear reactors to be set up, and to enter into an agreement with the NSG (nuclear suppliers

group) for supply of nuclear fuel i.e. uranium for the civil nuclear reactors. Once India accomplishes the agreements with IAEA and NSG, then the U.S. Congress will vote on the 123 agreement. Once it is approved by the U.S. Congress, then the deal is complete and India and U.S.A can enter into nuclear commerce i.e. supply of nuclear reactors, transfer of technology, supply of nuclear fuel etc. In July 2007 the two countries announced finalisation of the deal after months of hard-hitting negotiations on a bilateral pact. India had objected to what it said were new conditions in the agreement unacceptable to it. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was "unable to accept" the 123 agreement on Indo-United States civil nuclear cooperation as

finalised and would "definitely seek a review of the agreement when it comes to power" as it was of the view that it constituted an "assault on our nuclear sovereignty and foreign policy." BJP had consistently opposed the deal since the July 18, 2005 joint statement of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President George Bush issued in Washington.

The controversy against the Congress was that it did not publish the full text of the agreement. "It was the CPI-M which procured the document from Washington and published the full text." On the current political scenario, Mr. Karat of BJP said, the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government has "lost legitimacy" after withdrawal of support by the Left. "Our stand, irrespective of what others do, is that the Left will vote against the Government for their betrayal of national interests," he said. Regarding withdrawal support of the left, Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed, Professor of Dept of International Relations, University of Dhaka said, "we know that the Left do not want the government to involve in the controversial nuclear deal with the US." Besides, he thinks that this may be the time for the Left to stand autonomously and to prove its efficiency as an independent strong party who has a large vote bank in India.

Successful New Delhi governments dominated by Singh's Congress party called themselves non-aligned, but gravitated towards the Soviet Union and nursed a haughty disdain for America. Mr. Singh seemed prepared to dump the nuclear deal, and even U.S. officials last week pronounced it dead. But Congress has not been the natural party of power in modern India without learning many tricks of political manipulation. Singh and his operatives let the communists blow off steam to the point of

national boredom and then did a deal with the small Samajwadi party, which represents low castes and Muslims in the state of Uttar Pradesh where it is under pressure and needs support. So the communists have deserted, Samajwadi will save the Singh government, and the IAEA and the Nuclear Suppliers Group are ready to sign off on the deal by the end of the Bush presidency (Manthorphe: 2008).

Strategic advantages

We cannot deny that India will create a countervailing force to China. The role for India's armed forces would, in essence, be to support America. India's UPA government has embraced the accord for two reasons. Because it constitutes de facto recognition of India as a nuclear weapons state, opening the door, or so goes the reasoning, to India obtaining other elements of the world-power status its elites so covet. And because the import of advanced civilian nuclear technology will enable India to reduce its dependence on energy imports and devote a greater portion of the resources of its nuclear programme to nuclear-weapons development (Nilofar Suhrawardy: 2006). According to Brig Gen Shahedul Anam Khan ndc, psc (Retd), "The UPA government's term is ending in the next six months. Its attempt to frame a new relationship with the US - an important adjunct of its foreign policy - to gain strategic dividends - may be a compulsion for the Congress led UPA government to finalise the deal immediately. Some critiques are also of the opinion that the major motivating factor of the UPA government may not only be for enhancement of its geopolitical status but also for a seat in the UNSC - which may not come without a heavy cost to India's sovereignty."

Under the deal, Washington will produce an economic

bonanza in nuclear exports to India and can monitor the nuclear program of India.

Global opinion

China was less positive, urging India to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and also dismantle its nuclear weapons. China was swift to stress that nuclear cooperation between India and the US "must conform with provisions of the international non-proliferation regime". China decided to attack the U.S.-India nuclear agreement, albeit indirectly. India's traditional rival, Pakistan, indicated that it sought a similar agreement.

Meanwhile, however, other vital nuclear players seem to have come on board with regard to the U.S.-India nuclear deal. Britain, Canada, France, and Russia are eager to play major roles in upcoming civil nuclear energy projects in India. All of these states expect to get aligned with the global economic benefits in mitigating competitive demand in international oil markets; it will fabricate an economic bonanza in nuclear exports to India; it will increase the risk of seeing nuclear weapons proliferate and fall into new hands; it might trigger a nuclear arms race in south Asia; it could heighten world tensions by alarming the Chinese leadership with fears that Washington is trying to encircle and "contain" China's emergence.

All these arguments some supporting the deal, others opposing it should recalibrated by the opinion-makers who are using them and minimizing the risk of allowing USA to monopolise the strategic advantage with India to work towards the implementation of the U.S.-India nuclear accord. From the realist perspective it is indeed a valentine gift for India. If India ever turned aggressive this could be the kind of deal future generation will rue.

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Difficult time for Pakistan

BRIG GEN (RETD) JAHANGIR KABIR, ndc, psc

HOPE for peace and progress under emerging democracy in Pakistan is being increasingly mired in violence and uncertainty. The Afghan inferno is sucking the neighbourhood. Fighting terrorism continues to be the top agenda of the PPP government. The latest bombing in Karachi, Islamabad and the offensive in Khyber area to evade insurgent pressure on Peshawar, the capital city of the frontier province, are the signs that containing terrorists through war and ceasefire is far from achieved. That Americans have advised Pakistan to concentrate on antiterrorist operations and not to waste energy on the removal of president Musharraf is the strongest indicator of the ground reality. The continuation of President Musharraf and failing to allow the judges to get back to the courts within 100 days are signs that corrections of the military regime may have to wait longer.

The Durand Line, along both sides of the Durand Line that draws a porous border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, is by nomenclature a lawless area with their own set of customs and traditions fiercely enforced by tribal sardars. I met a tribal man, while undergoing my part of rigorous imprisonment in 1971 in Peshawar Central Jail, condemned to life imprisonment by tribal jirga for shooting his wife to death but missed her alleged lover. If he could kill both he would not have been condemned prisoner but a hero for honoring the tradition of killing the lover and the loved. The tribal law and culture along Pak-Afghan borders is least understood by the outside world. It is perhaps the 'life before guest' culture that allows Bin Laden and his followers to remain elusive in spite of the best efforts of the Americans for so many years.

The Durand Line is increasingly becoming crossover convenience for the terrorists. With the recent increase of the Taliban activities in Afghanistan and more American forces joining the fight, the end game is not in sight. But terrorist and insurgency movements always run on the myth of the legendary leaders. The leaders, however, remain perpetually vulnerable. Three coincidental factors had destroyed Shanti Bahini in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and forced them to come to the negotiation table. Without getting Bin Laden peace process cannot start in that region. He cannot hide from the American anger. Eventually, it will be unearthed that he was hiding in the most unsuspecting of places. Nobody can predict when that earth-shaking moment comes. Meanwhile, Muslims in general and Pakistan in particular will have to bear the burden of branding worldly pursuits as religious dictums. Who is first- Bin Laden or independent Palestine, is hovering on the Western mind. Taliban less Al Qaeda, I suppose, is a manageable nuisance.

Pakistan has been a staunch ally and frontline state to prevent the Soviets to reach the warm waters. It is a different ballgame now. Many energy-rich Central Asian Republics need port facilities in Pakistan. But immediate priority is Bin Laden. If he is hiding in the mountains, the proposed pipelines the lifeline of the central Asian business cannot pass through hostile Afghanistan. Pakistan will be a beneficiary to the grand business strategy of the region. And with the extension of the pipeline, energy hungry India will be a larger beneficiary. But the pain refuses to relive for the time being.

After Turkey, Pakistan is the staunchest ally of America. The ups and downs of strategic shift have not unhinged Pakistan from American camps. From creating Taliban monster to destroying Mullah Omar's regime, Pakistan has been an active

agent of American strategic pursuit. She is now at the receiving end of the hostility of the terrorists and fundamentalists. It is difficult to suggest a way out of the mess. With India's growing presence as the strategic partner of America, Karzai's propensity to blame for everything wrong in Afghanistan, Pakistan has little choice but to glide through the discomfot.

Pakistan has a capacity to live in crisis, some say she has a capacity to create one if there is none; many however agree, it has a huge vested interest thriving in crisis. Historically speaking, Pakistan is on the gateway of Khyber Pass that paved the way for Central Asian adventurism in the subcontinent since time immemorial. Siding with the victors must have been the way of surviving and thriving for the locals under adverse conditions. When Pakistan switched sides from being Taliban backer to destroyer, how much choice they really had? Recent missile attacks on border posts inside Pakistan speak two things - irrespective of the international boundaries, terrorist suspects are targeted by the war machine, from Afghanistan, and as the border is manned mostly by the locals, it is possible that some staunchly religious tribesmen sympathise with the terrorists.

Muslim League of Newaz Sharif has pulled out of the Central government on the issue of the reinstatement of the dismissed judges. PM Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani, known to be a man of character and independence, is forced to focus on the spreading terrorist activities. The support of Muslim League (NS) to PPP government cannot be taken for granted after the ministers of ML walked out of the cabinet. Newaz Sharif is held back due to the fact that destabilisation of the PPP government will tip the balance in favor of the archenemy President Musharraf. Prices of essentials and energy are hurting the average man, plight of the dismissed judges hurt the upper crust of society; with American backing President Musharraf appears well saddled for a time. The best bet for democracy in Pakistan at this juncture appears a workable compromise among odd allies.

India instantly stokes emotion in Pakistan; she was ready to eat grass for atomic capability. Ever since, the legitimacy and security of the bombs is the major concern of Pakistan. It is difficult to assess, whether bombs are protecting Pakistan or Pakistan is protecting the bombs. No matter real or artificial, a nation cannot live under security vacuum. Many strategists agree that the bombs hurt but meet the security needs of Pakistan. We had observed Anglo-French rivalry within the NATO alliance. India may have their fingers towards China, with the bitterness of war and hostility, Pakistan went for bombs after India went nuclear in 1974. The bombs became an international concern when it was dubbed as Islamic bomb. War has failed to resolve the contending issues; peace needs time to give a healthy start. Meanwhile, Pakistan carries the heavy load of bombs and missiles.

There is however a common enemy for India and Pakistan in Afghanistan, menacingly coming down towards the plains of the subcontinent. India should encourage Pakistan to concentrate on Afghan front that would build goodwill for the future negotiations towards a lasting peace. She might have reasons to believe, but blaming Pakistan for the recent bombing in Kabul on the Indian embassy is a shallow bureaucratic way; does not relate to the strategic vision of India. Smaller neighbours live under apprehension real or artificial; India should convert her bulk from fear factor to strategic asset through small sacrifices.

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Obama's trip to Iraq

FARIDA SHAIKH

THE Editor of Newsweek International has categorically spelt out "What Obama Should Say on Iraq." This is necessary as Zakaria prophesies that 'were he elected, the war would be his biggest and most immediate problem....he...will need to implement a serious policy on Iraq...that is...informed by the conditions on the ground-to-day.'

Most immediately, when is the right time for the American troops to return? Not in 2006 amid all time high violence, and not when it is all so well. The way out is "Catch 22," in Arabic, if possible! Catch 22 is a general critique of bureaucratic operation and reasoning, meaning "a no-win situation" or "a double bind" of any type. The book, "Catch-22" 1961 by Joseph Heller, based on his own experiences as a bombardier during World War II and his reading of The Good Soldier Svejk by Jaroslav Hasek. In 1970 it was adapted into a feature film of the same name.

Catch 22 is a military rule, the self-contradictory circular logic that, for example, prevents anyone from avoiding combat missions. The title came to be Catch-22, which, like 11, has a duplicated digit, with the 22 also referring to a number of déjà vu-like events common in the novel.

To embolden the directive and rationale on Iraq it is necessary to take a close look at the lessons contained within the account on 'the staggering incompetence and corruption...of a mission... Iraq reconstruction... that remains unaccomplished.' In "Blood Money", Wasted Billions, Lost Lives, and Corporate Greed in Iraq, investigative reporter of the Los Angeles Times discloses 'how the US administration failed to keep its promises and allowed a nation to tumble into chaos.' This book is 'about the fate of Iraq, and...America's place in the world.' And it is this reality that closely concerns Obama and what he should say on Iraq.

T. Christian Miller makes stunning revelation on 59 key events in Iraq war beginning 9/11/01 to 5/20/06, based on official records, his four trips in more than two years of travel through Iraq, interview with nearly 170 persons, some on multiple occasions, lists the names of those who are guilty of immoral or illegal behaviour, with

Obama promised that on his first day in office he would summon the Joint Chief of Staff and give them a new mission and that is 'to end this war, responsibly, and deliberately but decisively.' He said, 'I will bring our troops out at a pace of one two brigade a month which would mean the United States would be totally out of Iraq in 16 months. That is what I intend to do as president of the United States.'

due respect to the whistleblowers. The book in three parts, with a map with detail on Iraq reconstruction projects as of December 2005.

Destruction is an offence and U.S. was guilty of committing that offence - destruction of Iraq in 2003. To come off that guilt, the U.S. administration hurriedly announced its reconstruction mission to Iraq. Pentagon to oversee the outlay handpicked an inadequate team of men lacking in Middle-east know-how. Also missing were the plan of action, manpower and money. There was the ever present mirage of weapon of mass destruction.

False hope and promises came in the shape of U.S. administration's declaration that tax-payers would not be burdened with reconstruction. In 2006 rebuilding took over reconstruction and U.S. committed \$30 billion towards this end. Supreme hopelessness began to surface as unattainable lofty goals of restoration replaced rebuilding. Economic spark, peace and trust have not returned among the people.

The guilt of destruction, through reconstruction, rebuilding, and restoration, remains.

The singular signal of failure was the limitless violence. American soldiers died fighting Iraqi jobless men. Guerrilla war and sectarian conflict killed thousands of more men. Contractors and aid-workers working on projects and civil servants were killed. Ordinary Iraqis' hearts were filled with hatred. Their bewilderment found expression in the hyperbole statement, 'How could a country that put a man on the moon not manage to make the toilet flush in downtown Baghdad?'

Miller makes an attempt to answer that question in a simplistic way, wondering, 'how it was possible that the most economically and militarily powerful nation on earth could fail at so vital a task as rebuilding a nation.'

It is a chronicle on the money trail between Iraq and Washington,

the spendthrift method of management, the role of spurious entrepreneurs, opportunistic politicians and greedy contractors, pitfall of contracting securities to corrupt private companies. The narrative is not anti-war, it is anti-greed. It is also 'a warning,' that the billions and billions of dollars of American investment in Iraq is at risk. A RAND Corporation study showed that implementation in nation building requires minimum of five years, and staying longer does not guarantee success, and leaving soon may spell failure.

During the winter of 2006-07 the \$30 billion, a much bigger commitment than the Marshall Plan, 'There is no price tag on chaos - or salvation', Allen W. Dulles, was all nearly spent without delivering the most urgent needs - lights in the cities, jobs for the people, and the supreme need, the hope of the nation. 'Iraq had become a will-o'-wisp' Restoration now moved to failure in nation building.

Report on the direct input from the people and months of study on Iraq debacle were ignored. The 'New Way Forward' was announced to 'salvage Iraq from barbarity.'

This was a 'mea culpa' situation and to renewed effort for redress, 'to send tens of thousands of additional troops... to diminish violence... and additional billion for reconstruction...' for small projects like schoolrooms or paved ways. 'It was reconstruction with a small.'

The first and second secret contracts worth \$7 billion were made to Halliburton subsidiary called KRB to put out oil fire, and \$680 million to Bechtel Corporation to construct every bridge, road, power plant, and school for the federal government.

Serving as the military's quartermaster, the single largest contractor had earned \$14 billion. The company had flouted long lists of audits for wasting millions and millions of dollars. Pentagon decided to lump the firm and Halliburton decided to make public offer of the firm in 2006. The reconstruction program

lacked accountability and consistent effort was being made to mount similar set-up as the Truman Commission to expose war profiteering and contracting reform legislation, necessary as... 'This is a foggy area where billions and billions of tax payer dollars are being spent, and we have no sense of how or what they are spending or doing,' said the woman representative from Illinois.

Considered most important by Pentagon was the training of Iraqi forces to take over security duties from U.S. troops. Contract of \$79 million was made with a private security company USIS-Virginia. The training officer appointed 'was seeking in the heroic acts of others, what he demanded of himself.' Honor like love, comes in both true and false forms. For the warrior, I will also show that the false forms are particularly bewitching.

In May 2005 the whistle blower was found dead. Was he murdered by a contractor or did he commit suicide was a mystery, for he was forced to serve where 'value, honor, country' - the American value was no longer upheld. Many of the contractors were ex-military men and women who upheld the same values; however, their collective corporate presence turned the war into a profit enterprise, a greedy business. This happened following an anonymous four-page letter by a former USIS employee.

In addition, the wreckage of the U.S. administration's Iraq policy is brilliantly analyzed by Pulitzer Prize-winning Washington Post senior Pentagon correspondent Thomas E. Ricks' "Fiasco"

'The American military is a tightly sealed community... a great many senior officers view the Iraq war with incredulity and dismay... many officers have shared their anger and in Fiasco, Ricks combines these astonishing on-the-record military accounts with his own extraordinary on-the-ground reportage to create a spellbinding account of an epic disaster.'

...the military publicly

acknowledge.... the guerrilla insurgency that exploded several months after Saddam's fall was not foreordained. In fact, to a shocking degree, it was created by the folly of the war's architects.... the officers who did raise their voices against the miscalculations, shortsightedness, and general failure of the war effort were generally crushed, their careers often ended. A willful blindness gripped political and military leaders, and dissent was not tolerated.'

'...heroes in Fiasco-inspiring leaders from the highest levels of the Army and Marine hierarchies to the men and women whose skill and bravery led to battlefield success in towns from Fallujah to Tal Afar-but again and again, tactical incoherence rendered tactical success meaningless. There was never any question that the U.S. military would topple Saddam Hussein, but as Fiasco shows there was also never any real thought about what would come next. This blindness has ensured the Iraq war a place in history as nothing less than a fiasco.'

Iraq suffered double tragedy-the war and failure of reconstruction, and rebuilding a nation.

The purpose of Obama's Trip to Iraq is to refine policy and not remove U.S. troops quickly. Already the war policy has become a subject of debate on the candidate's altering from the core policy.

A mid discussion on nationwide job losses Obama said '...that this war was ill conceived, that it was a strategic blunder and that it needs to come to an end.... I will be deliberate and careful how we get out.'

Obama promised that on his first day in office he would summon the Joint Chief of Staff and give them a new mission and that is 'to end this war, responsibly, and deliberately but decisively.' He referred to how many troops may remain or need to remain in Iraq for purposes of training the local army and police, and not his 16-month timeline but what troop presence might be needed 'to be sure al-Qaeda doesn't re-establish a foothold there.'

He said, 'I will bring our troops out at a pace of one two brigade a month which would mean the United States would be totally out of Iraq in 16 months. That is what I intend to do as president of the United States.'

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