



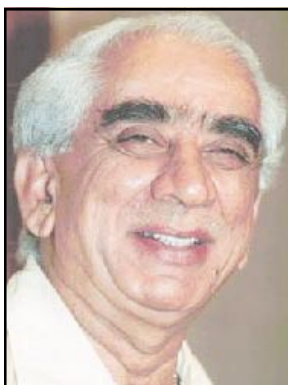
INDIA NEWS

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India not to engage in a nuclear arms race: Jaswant Singh, external affairs minister



Jaswant Singh

You have been engaged in extended talks with the U.S. since the nuclear tests last year. How would you assess the results so far?

First, by restating the objectives from our side. They are two-fold: in the first place, to reconcile the stated U.S. non-proliferation concerns with India's national security objectives; secondly, and, in a broader context, to develop

greater mutual understanding so that both countries are enabled to work together in tapping the real potential of a qualitatively new relationship, essential in this post-Cold War environment.

The results of my discussions with Mr. Strobe Talbott are encouraging. There is recognition that India shall maintain a minimum nuclear deterrent as determined by us. There is now no longer any talk of a 'roll-back'. The U.S. also accepts that India's security concerns are not geographically limited. Foreign policy tasks and challenges are a continuing process, therefore, we need to consolidate these understandings across all sections that make up the U.S. foreign policy establishment.

Do you have a timeframe for concluding this dialogue?

In the management of foreign policy, deadlines are both impractical and unrealistic. But if we manage through the objectives, then the first part is the restoration of our relationship to the pre-May 1998 position. As for the next, I would consider it attained when both India and the U.S. engage in regular dialogue on a range of issues covering bilateral, regional and global political and economic issues.

Can you define these issues?

Of course, I cannot draw up a total list. But, self-

evidently, these would range from discussing cooperation in the field of energy, science and technology, environment, trade, taxation and economic development, to global concerns such as terrorism, narcotics, non-proliferation, disarmament, reform of multilateral institutions, expansion of the U.N. Security Council and regional developments in Asia-Pacific etc. Obviously, a multifaceted dialogue of this nature can simply not imply an agreement on all; it is the density and depth of engagement that is the criteria.

A principal item on the agenda is the CTBT and there seems to be considerable confusion about India's stand on this issue. Where exactly are we?

Our stand on the CTBT has been clear. In 1996, we decided that we could not accept the CTBT because it was not consistent with India's national security interest. Over the decades, successive Governments took necessary steps to safeguard India's nuclear option. In 1996, it was clear to all that subscription to the CTBT at that time would have limited India's nuclear potential at an unacceptably low level. After conducting the nuclear tests of May 1998, to validate and update our technology, we have ensured the credibility of our nuclear deterrent into the foreseeable future; our scientists are now confident of conducting sub-critical tests, as also other non-explosive R&D activity necessary for the purpose. That is why, we declared a voluntary moratorium. This, in essence, meets the basic obligations of the CTBT. We also announced a willingness to convert this undertaking into a de jure obligation. Clearly, this could not be done in a political vacuum. A positive environment had to be created. In reaction, a number of countries decided to impose restrictive economic measures on India. We have conveyed our disappointment at these actions. That, however, does not mean that we do not value our bilateral relationships with these countries. Our endeavour has been

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JASWANT SINGH INTERVIEW

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to generate a better appreciation of India's security concerns. Obviously, this is possible only through a sustained, bilateral dialogue process. An understanding in this regard will restore our relationship to the pre-May 1998 position. I am also optimistic that this process of restoration will result in an acceptance of a secure, self-confident India, thus imparting a new momentum to these ties.

At the same time, there is no denying that the manner in which the CTBT was negotiated, particularly during the last stages, left a great deal to be desired. This led to resentment against the proposed treaty. Many in India see it as part of a discriminatory, nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The Government's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation remains unchanged. The priority of our meeting the country's national security concerns having been addressed, the Government believes that we now need to convey reassurance to the international community and, in this regard, desires to develop a national consensus. The need for a consensus in any democratic society is self-evident. I have explained this in the past to the U.S. administration, and they better understand this approach after their own difficulties on this issue in their Senate.

There appears to be lack of clarity about signing and ratification. Can you elaborate?

Three separate decisions are required of the Government as part of adherence to any international treaty: signature, ratification and deposition of the instrument of ratification. These decisions are taken by the Cabinet. Each of them is a separate decision. To recall a recent example, in January 1993, the Cabinet decided that India will become a signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention; the decision to ratify was taken in October 1995, followed by another decision to deposit the instrument of ratification in September 1996.

In your view, how far should India go in terms of its adherence to the CTBT at this stage, particularly in light of the uncertainty about the Treaty's future created by the U.S. Senate vote?

As I have already clarified, the process of adherence to an international treaty is a step-by-step process. While India's decisions will be made by the Indian Government, there is no denying that this negative vote by the U.S. Senate does have a bearing on the

future of this treaty. I would, therefore, consider it natural for India to also disaggregate its decision.

Is India ready to join in a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapon purposes?

We have, after the tests last year, announced our readiness to engage in multilateral negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva for a non-discriminatory and verifiable treaty to ban future production of fissile materials for nuclear weapon purposes. This decision was taken after due consideration, which included an assessment of timeframes for negotiations and entry into force of an FMCT. At this stage, India cannot accept a voluntary moratorium on production of fissile materials. Let me add that FMCT negotiations are a complex exercise it will be important, therefore, as we go along to constantly monitor the pace, direction and content of these negotiations.

Export controls is another element of dialogue with the U.S. What are the prospects of an understanding in this area?

India has remained committed to non-proliferation and maintains a highly effective system of export controls on sensitive and dual-use technologies and equipment. We have conveyed our willingness to strengthen this further, where necessary. In this regard, an inter-ministerial expert group has been established. I must add that we do remain greatly concerned about the fact that certain civilian programmes in high technology areas such as space, remain targeted. Our participation in ad hoc export control regimes, such as Nuclear Suppliers Group and MTCR will be on the basis of equality. The U.S. does appreciate that India has a system of laws and an effective institutional mechanism to implement non proliferation-related export controls but we need to make further progress.

There is a perception in the international community that the document prepared by the National Security Advisory Board for the National Security Council is India's official nuclear doctrine. What is the status of this document?

Let me correct this perception. The National Security Advisory Board is a group of non-official strategic experts and analysts. It was tasked by the National Security Council to prepare a number of papers, including one on a possible 'Indian Nuclear Doctrine'. This it prepared and submitted to the National Security Adviser, also releasing it publicly for a larger debate. That debate is now under way. It is

thus not a policy document of the Government of India.

Would you like to elaborate on what then is the essence and thinking on India's doctrine?

The key elements of India's nuclear policy were spelt out by the Prime Minister in Parliament last December. To recapitulate briefly:

- (a) India shall maintain a minimum nuclear deterrent and shall undertake necessary measures to ensure its credibility.
- (b) India has declared a moratorium on undertaking any further underground nuclear test explosions, but R&D activity, including computer simulation and sub-critical tests, will be conducted as necessary.
- (c) Development work on an extended-range Agni missile is under way and a successful flight test was carried out earlier this year. Additional flight testing will be undertaken in a manner that is non-provocative, transparent and consistent with established international norms and practices.
- (d) India has declared a no-first-use doctrine. This has implicit in it the principle that India shall not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States.
- (e) In order that our minimum deterrent be credible, we shall adopt and maintain a deployment posture that ensures survivability of assets. Such a posture, obviously, provides for greater safety and security.
- (f) India will not engage in any arms race. We shall not, therefore, pursue an open-ended programme.
- (g) A civilian command and control system, with necessary safeguards, shall cater for all possible contingencies.
- (h) India's commitment to global nuclear disarmament remains undiluted. We will continue to work with other likeminded countries and take initiatives for moving towards a nuclear weapon-free-world. We will also seek to negotiate CBMs, both in the conventional and nuclear fields, with the aim of reducing lack of trust in the region.

Many commentators find these elements inconsistent and believe that India has embarked on a programme that will produce a nuclear arsenal larger than that of the U.K. or France. Do you have any comments?

I am aware of such apprehensions. These are born of the Cold War experiences, ideology, indeed, even

the cliched phrases of those sterile years. The U.S., Russia, the U.K., France and China developed their nuclear weapons as weapons for war. Most nuclear weapon powers follow doctrines of first use, and all of them envisage tactical or sub-strategic roles for their nuclear weapons. The Indian thinking is different, principally, because we have discarded the Cold War reference frame of nuclear war fighting. In our view, the principal role of nuclear weapons is to deter their use by an adversary. For this, India needs only that strategic minimum which is credible. With the policy of "retaliation only," survivability becomes critical to ensure credibility. This "minimum," however, cannot be a fixed physical quantification; it is a dynamic concept but firmly rooted in the strategic environment, technological imperatives and national security needs, and the actual size, components, deployment and employment of nuclear forces will be decided taking into account all these factors.

No other nuclear weapon State has conceptualised its capabilities in such terms. India can, and has done, so, because it does not intend to engage in an arms race. Therefore, the question of an arsenal larger than that of country X or Y becomes a non-question. For India, the question is only one of adequacy that is credible and thus defines our "minimum."

How would you address concerns about India seeking a "triad"?

Let me address the issue of "triad," not because it is part of the NSAB paper, but because there may be genuine misperceptions. It is a known fact that today India has nuclear capable aircraft and mobile land-based nuclear-capable missiles. We have an R&D programme for a naval version of Prithvi that has been a part of the IGMDP launched in 1983. It is also a fact that many analysts, particularly in Western countries, consider nuclear missiles on submarines to be the most survivable nuclear asset in the scenarios that they have thought of – first strike, second strike, war and so on. Our approach is different. It is, therefore, premature to talk of an Indian "triad." R&D programmes will certainly continue, aimed at enhancing survivability and thus, credibility, but decisions on production, deployment and employment will be taken on the basis of factors that I have outlined earlier. In short, just as parity is not essential for deterrence, neither is a triad, a prerequisite for credibility.

Let me suggest that you look at the Indian nuclear deterrent as a "triad" based on a different set of three dimensions – a deterrent that is minimum but

Orissa Cyclones

On the morning of October 29, 1999, a cyclone struck the coast of Orissa, in northeastern India on the Bay of Bengal. Winds of between 155 and 161 miles an hour, heavy rains and waves between 13 and 20 feet high accompanied the storm. Orissa is home to 32 million people. This storm struck just 10 days after another cyclone hit Orissa on the evening of October 17. The first storm ripped across the Gopalpur coast, devastating the district of Ganjam, which was in the eye of the storm.

Prime Minister's Relief Fund

Government of India and Embassy of India continue to receive a number of offers for contributions to the cyclone relief activities in Orissa, India. Those who wish to make voluntary contributions may do so by sending checks in dollars or rupees to the Prime Minister's

Relief Fund. Checks/Money Orders should be drawn in favor of "Prime Minister's Relief Fund" can be sent to any one of the following addresses.

Prime Minister's Relief Fund
Embassy of India
Attn: Head of Chancery
2107 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20008

(OR)

Prime Minister's Relief Fund
Prime Minister's Office
South Block, New Delhi 110011
India

Relief efforts by non-governmental organizations

National Council of Asian Indian Associations (NCAIA)
NCAIA has set up a cyclone relief fund for the victims in Orissa. NCAIA is a registered nonprofit, tax-exempt organization located in Maryland, USA. (<http://www.icharity.org/go/india/cyclone>)

NCAIA
9326 Lanham Severn Rd,
Lanham, MD 20706

India Development and Relief Fund (IDRF)

IDRF has set up an Orissa Cyclone <<http://www.idrf.org>> Relief Fund. Donations to IDRF are tax exempted in United States (Tax exempt ID: 52-1555563), and a receipt will be mailed to donors. Make checks payable to IDRF, and mail it to the following address:

Facts on Orissa

- Orissa is located in the northeast of India. Its northern plateau slopes down to fertile green coastal plains on the Bay of Bengal. To the northeast lies the state of West Bengal, and its capital, Calcutta. About one-third of Orissa is covered with forests.
- Orissa state has a population of nearly 32 million people. Area of the State is just over 62,000 square miles.
- The capital, Bhubaneshwar, is known as the "Temple City of India."
- Orissa's economy is largely based on agriculture, which provides 80 percent of rural employment and more than half of the state's income. One-tenth of India's rice production comes from Orissa. Other major crops include pulses, oil seeds, jute, sugarcane, turmeric and coconut.
- Orissa lies in the tropics. The average rainfall is about 59 inches a year. The temperature ranges from a high of 120 degrees in the summer to a low of 41 degrees in the winter.

IDRF

1580 Hollenbeck Ave., Apt #4
Sunnyvale, CA-94087 USA.

In the memo, please mention
Orissa Cyclone Relief. For more
information contact: Dr. Vinod
Prakash (301) 984-2127

CRY (Child Relief and You, Inc.)

CRY has set up an Orissa Disaster Relief Program for the victims in Orissa. CRY is a registered nonprofit, tax-exempt organization located in New Jersey and is associated with CRY India. Click here to make secure online donation

<<http://www.us.cry.org/orissa/>>
or send checks to CRY with
memo as "Orissa Relief"

CRY Inc.
PO Box 372,
Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922-
0372
Tel: (877) 233-2222

Orissa Cyclone Relief Charity Show

Montgomery Blair High School (new)

51 East University Blvd,
Silver Spring, MD 20901

**Friday, December 10, 1999
at 7:30 pm**

Ellora Patnaik - Odissi Dancer
Bitu Singh - Ghazal Singer

Coordinated by
IPAP, NFIA, ICCS, FIA, IAFPA,
MKK, & OSA

For More Information:

Pratap Das (301) 972-8059;
Renuka Mishra
(301) 330-5098;
Pradeep Ganguly
(410) 715-4457;
Walton Dawson
(301) 434-0482;
Anu Biswal (301) 598-7570

Information on Cyclone damage and relief efforts (as of November 27, 1999)

- Loss of human life - 9615
- Population affected - 12 million
- Cattle deaths - 400,000
- Number of villages affected - 7,921
- Damaged houses - 800,000
- Agricultural area damaged - 1.67 million hectares
- 400 villages are still inaccessible

The relief efforts are now focused on checking the outbreak of epidemics and environmental pollution. To meet this goal, the following steps have been taken:

1. Disease surveillance has been intensified.
2. Synthetic pyrethroid spray may be used in the affected areas to minimize the potential risk of malaria outbreak.
3. Malaria treatment/Drug distribution centers have been setup.
4. Measles vaccination to all children less than 5 years old.
5. Surveillance of enteric fever have been initiated.
6. Guidelines have been issued to State health authorities for management of post trauma stress syndrome.
7. 80% of wells that supply drinking water have been disinfected.

The army has cleared the roads connecting Bhubaneswar, the capital city, to other major cities in Orissa. Food and medical supplies are received from all parts of the country as road and rail traffic have been partially restored. Telecommunications have been partially restored (Puri, Dhenkanal, Balasore and Baripada - 100%, Bhubaneswar - 78.5%, Cuttack-73%, Bhadrak 98%, Khurda 97%, Jajpur -50%, Jagatsinghpur 24%, Kendrapara 34% and Paradip 28%).

The Prime Minister visited the cyclone hit areas twice and assured the State of all possible assistance.

CARE

CARE has set up a Orissa Emergency fund. Donors can make a secure online donation to CARE.
<https://secure5.nmpinc.com/carelink/forms/donate_india.html>

CARE

151 Ellis Street,
Atlanta Georgia 30303-2426
Tel: 800-422-7385
Fax: 404-577-5977

ECONOMIC NEWS UPDATES

Government considering proposal to grant visa on arrival to tourists

The government is considering a proposal to grant visa on arrival to tourists from certain countries according to a top tourism ministry official. "Tourism ministry has sent proposal to home ministry for granting visa to tourists when they arrive at airports," Tourism Secretary M. P. Bezbaruah said. Facility to grant such visa to tourists from certain countries works on a reciprocal basis and we have not specified the countries for which such facility should be extended, he added.

Supreme Court rejects TRAI appeal against High Court stay on CPP regime

The Supreme Court has dismissed a petition by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) challenging the Delhi High Court stay on the implementation of free incoming calls for cellular phone users under Call Party Pays (CPP) regime.

"We do not think it is appropriate to interfere with the order of the High Court or in the proceedings there as the matter is still at a preliminary stage," a division bench comprising Justice B. N. Kirpral and Justice S. Rajendra Babu said while dismissing TRAI's petition.

The TRAI through CPP had announced to provide from November one free incoming calls to cellular users but the same was challenged in the High Court by state-owned Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd and another public interest litigation which alleged that the MTNL was going to lose substantial revenue under the new regime.

Under CPP, while the cellular phone owner on receiving a call from Public Service Telephone Network (PSTN), known as fixed telephone, would pay no money whereas the PSTN user would pay Rs. 3.30 per call. Of the Rs. 3.30, MTNL would get Rs. 0.90 and the Cellular Operators would get

Rs. 2.40. Under the existing arrangements, for each call made from PSTN, MTNL gets Rs. 1.10 and for receiving the call of three minutes, a cellular user would pay around Rs. 12.

The High Court on October 28 had stayed the proposed CPP regime saying the TRAI order "is a hostile discrimination" against Department of Telecom (DoT) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL).

Roadmap for credit information bureau

A Reserve Bank of India (RBI), federal bank working group has suggested that a beginning should be made in setting up a Credit Information Bureau (CIB), even though the existing legal framework prohibited disclosure of information on banks' customers.

The group, set up to explore the possibilities of establishing such a Bureau, has said that pending legislative amendments, CIB could operate with information relating to suit filed accounts and information on transactions on which the constituent has given consent to the bank to disclose.

The group, which submitted its report today, has also suggested the involvement of a foreign technology partner in setting up the Bureau.

"The Bureau could be set up as a company under the Companies Act, 1956 with share capital contributions from its user groups, namely commercial banks, financial institutions and non-banking finance companies," the report has said.

According to the report, the Bureau should collect both negative and positive information relating to credit, trade and financial information. This would include external borrowings on corporate and consumer retail segments such as credit facilities from banks, non-banking finance companies, as also credit cards held and indebtedness to cellular phone companies among others. The setting up of such a Bureau would entail the enactment of a master legislation to

facilitate collection and sharing of information, the report said, adding that it should be technology-driven and professionally managed with minimum manual intervention.

Government rejects state-owned PGCIL's equity expansion proposal

The Indian Government has rejected a proposal of the Power Grid Corporation (PGCIL) to expand its equity by Rs. 12 billion to over Rs. 42 billion and instead advised it to sell a few of its transmission lines to meet fund requirements for new projects.

"We are not going for equity expansion of Power grid as proposed earlier. Instead we propose to generate resources for the corporation through other means," federal Power Minister P R Kumaramangalam said.

The power ministry has identified about four to five transmission lines of Powergrid to be sold to private sector and the company would use the revenue generated from the sale for investments, Kumaramangalam said.

Owing to fund constraints, PGCIL has revised lower by Rs. 20 billion its Ninth Plan Investment programs at Rs. 130 billion. As the corporation is expected to take up transmission work for some of the private power projects, it had sought government support to increase its borrowing capabilities.

When contacted Powergrid Chairman and Managing Director R. P. Singh confirmed that the corporation would now sell some of its existing transmission projects instead of infusing fresh equity. "We will sell some of our lines through the international competitive bidding route," Singh said but declined to give details.

New civil aviation policy soon

The Indian Government will soon come out with a new comprehensive Civil Aviation policy and is considering setting up more international airports in the country. "A Civil Avia-

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tion policy is being formulated and will be brought to the Cabinet soon," federal Civil Aviation Minister Sharad Yadav has said.

However, the minister refused to give details of the new policy saying that it was a "sensitive" issue. He said the government would set up more international airports, especially in the northern part of the country.

On the Y2K preparedness of the civil aviation sector in the country, the minister said the sector has already achieved 95 per cent Y2K compliance. "We have solved the problem to a great extent. Our engineers are working on it and I'm quite sure that we will be fully prepared to meet it before the deadline," he said.

Government to reduce stake in banks below 51%

Indian Government will soon amend the banking laws to allow privatization of public sector banks to reduce its equity below 51 per cent. It would also put in place a policy on voluntary retirement scheme (VRS) in nationalized banks.

"The Nationalized Banks Act and Banking Regulation Act will be amended soon to bring down the government stake in public sector banks below 51 per cent," Devi Dayal, banking secretary in the finance ministry has said.

The amendments are likely to come in the next session of Parliament, he said. Dayal said by bringing down the stake below 51 per cent, government role in banks would be reduced in the future. He said the government was also formulating a policy of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) to bring down the staff costs in public sector banks.

Currently, other PSU companies have a policy on VRS and the policy currently being framed would be along similar lines, he said. "The cost of staff in public sector banks is very high. By having a comprehensive policy on VRS, the costs can be brought down significantly," Dayal said, adding that this could help the banks to lend money at a lower rate of interest in future.

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credible because it is survivable and backed by effective civilian command and control to ensure retaliation.

You appear to be emphasising survivability but will this not affect retaliation?

No. Retaliation does not have to be instantaneous; it has to be effective and assured. I emphasise this because effective and assured retaliation enhance the credibility of deterrence. Mobility and dispersal improve survivability. Operating procedures will ensure the transition from peace-time deployment modes to a higher state of readiness when required. Our nuclear assets are limited and consistent with no-first-use; we have ensured that these procedures do not tempt an adversary to preemption but strengthen deterrence by underlining the political resolve for effective retaliation.

Would it be correct to deduce that India will follow different peace-time and war-time deployment/postures?

This would be a correct assessment. You know that we would like to convey a sense of assurance in our region, also beyond so that our deployment posture is not perceived as de-stabilising. We have rejected notions of "launch on warning postures" that lead to maintaining hair trigger alerts, thus increasing the risks of an unauthorised launch. In fact, we have taken an initiative in the U.N. General Assembly last year, calling on all nuclear weapon States to review such postures, and move to de-alert, thus reducing global nuclear danger.

How does this posture relate to tactical nuclear weapons?

Regarding tactical nuclear weapons, let me remind you that we do not see nuclear weapons as weapons of war fighting. In fact, India sees them only as strategic weapons, whose role is to deter their use by an adversary. Civilian command and control over decisions relating to deployment and alert levels are logical.

Is there any change in India's position on elimination of nuclear weapons or, let me say, in India's approach towards this objective?

I would like to emphasise that there is no dilution of India's commitment to the objective of achieving a nuclear weapon-free world. We continue to call for negotiations for a Nuclear Weapons Convention that would prohibit the production, development, deployment and use of all nuclear weapons and also provide for elimination of present stockpiles under international verification. India is the only nuclear weapon State to do so. At the same time, we also understand that nuclear disarmament cannot be achieved overnight; it will be a step-by-step process. We approach this process in a practical sense from two directions. On one side, we need to strengthen the norm against nuclear weapons by multilaterally negotiated non-use and no-first-use agreements. From a technical standpoint, we need to move away from the present hair-trigger postures to a progressively de-alerted state that will reduce the risks of accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons. It will also act as a global CBM. In both these areas, India continues to take initiatives and our resolutions in the U.N. General Assembly have been adopted with widespread support.

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