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Yahoo! News
April 19, 2008

Pakistan Military Says It Test Fires Long-Range Missile

By Associated Press

Pakistan's military says it has successfully test fired a long-range ballistic missile.

The military says the nuclear-capable Shaheen-2 missile was launched from an undisclosed location Saturday. It has a range of 1,245 miles.

Pakistan routinely tests various versions of missiles in its arsenal. They are designed to match those of neighboring archrival India.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080419/ap_on_re_as/pakistan_missile_test_1

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New York Times
April 20, 2008
Pg. 12

Bush Still Waits For North Korean Nuclear Report

By Steven Lee Myers

CAMP DAVID, Md. — President Bush on Saturday dismissed assertions that his administration had softened demands that North Korea fully declare all of its nuclear activities, including secret efforts to enrich uranium and sell nuclear technology abroad.

Appearing here at the presidential retreat with South Korea's new president, Lee Myung-bak, Mr. Bush said that any judgment about North Korea's willingness to dismantle its nuclear program — the core of an agreement negotiated last year — would only come once North Korea completed a declaration of its nuclear activities.

The deadline for that declaration passed at the end of last year, and no new deadline has been set. That has left the agreement signed 14 months ago by North and South Korea, the United States, China, Japan and Russia increasingly in doubt.

Mr. Bush, facing criticism from some conservatives, distanced himself from statements by administration officials that the United States and other countries were prepared to accept something less than a full admission about North Korea's secret nuclear programs.

"Look, we're going to make a judgment as to whether North Korea has met its obligations to account for its nuclear program and activities, as well as meet its obligations to disable its reactor," Mr. Bush said, referring to North Korea's known plutonium reactor in Yongbyon. "In other words, we'll see. The burden of proof is theirs."

In recent weeks, American and Asian officials have said that the United States was prepared to postpone a demand that North Korea account for a fledging uranium program operated in addition to the plutonium enrichment it has acknowledged and has begun to dismantle. The officials said the United States would also relax a demand that North Korea admit that it supplied technology to Syria, including components for a nuclear reactor that Israeli jets destroyed last September.

The senior director for Asian Affairs on the National Security Council, Dennis Wilder, said on Thursday that the declarations regarding proliferation and uranium would be negotiated separately with the United States and would not be part of the main declaration called for in last year's agreement.

Mr. Lee, a conservative who was elected in December, echoed Mr. Bush's position. He insisted that "under no circumstances" would North Korea be allowed to retain possession of nuclear weapons.

He also urged patience, though, saying that a negotiated settlement remained the best option to dismantle the North Korean nuclear arsenal. North Korea tested a nuclear bomb in 2006 and is estimated to have enough material to assemble several more weapons.

Neither Mr. Lee nor Mr. Bush indicated how long they would be willing to give North Korea to make its declaration.

"It's difficult to convince North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons," Mr. Lee said, speaking through a translator, "but it is not impossible."

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/20/washington/20prexy.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=Bush+Still+Waits+For+North+Korean+Nuclear+Report&st=nyt&oref=slogin

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New York Times

April 20, 2008

Pg. 14

Russians To Shut Reactor That Produces Bomb Fuel

By C.J. Chivers

MOSCOW — Russia's state nuclear energy corporation is expected to switch off a nuclear reactor on Sunday in a closed city in Siberia. The reactor has been producing weapons-grade plutonium for four decades, a senior American nonproliferation official said Saturday.

The reactor, ADE-4, is one of two in the city of Seversk that have been extraneous remnants of the Soviet Union's nuclear weapons program since the cold war. For 15 years, they produced plutonium that the Kremlin neither needed nor wanted.

Opened in secret in the 1960s to feed the arms race, the reactors have continued to operate because of their peculiar construction as defense-industry suppliers.

The Defense Ministry stopped purchasing plutonium in 1993, rendering the reactors' primary purpose obsolete. But the reactors could not be closed, and plutonium was still produced, because the reactors were also a primary source of heat and power to the bitterly cold regions along the Tomsk River, where no equivalent utility sources had been built.

Russian energy officials said switching off the bomb-fuel reactors, which are powered by uranium and produce plutonium as a byproduct, would have meant cutting off a large fraction of the utilities for the cities of Seversk and Tomsk. The cities have a combined population of about 600,000.

"That is obviously critical when you are facing temperatures of 40 below," said William H. Tobey, deputy administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration, a semiautonomous agency in the Department of Energy that coordinates nonproliferation programs.

Under a cooperative program between the Russians and the Americans, the United States has provided \$285 million to underwrite the refurbishment of a coal plant to provide an alternate utility service to the region, Mr. Tobey said. The plant has been refurbished enough to switch off the first reactor this week. It is expected to be completed and in full service by June, allowing the second reactor, ADE-5, to be turned off as well.

Although an agreement on the program was reached in 1997 and work on the coal plant began in 2005, Russia notified the United States of its plans to turn off the reactor only on Friday, two American officials said. It had been expected to close later this year.

Officials at Rosatom, the Russian state nuclear energy corporation, could not be reached Saturday.

Mr. Tobey declined to say how much plutonium the reactors had produced, saying that Russia had opposed the public release of data related to its nuclear programs.

But closing the reactors, he said, would prevent "tons of plutonium" from being produced, he said, enough to make hundreds of nuclear weapons.

Britain, Canada, the Netherlands and New Zealand have also donated money, about \$30 million, to replace Russia's remaining plutonium-producing reactors with fossil-fuel plants, Mr. Tobey said.

The country's only other plutonium-producing reactor, in Zheleznogorsk, is scheduled to be switched off and replaced with a fossil-fuel plant in 2010.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/20/world/europe/20russia.html?scp=1&sq=Russians+To+Shut+Reactor+That+Produces+Bomb+Fuel&st=nyt>

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Washington Post

April 21, 2008

Pg. 11

N. Korea Says It Produced 30 Kilograms Of Plutonium, Japanese Daily Reports

By Reuters

TOKYO, April 21 - North Korea told the United States in December it has produced a total of around 30 kilograms of plutonium, about 20 kilograms less than what the United States estimates, a Japanese newspaper reported on Monday.

The daily Tokyo Shimbun reported that North Korea's chief envoy to the talks, Kim Kye-Gwan, told his U.S. counterpart, Christopher R. Hill, that his country had used about 18 kilograms of its plutonium stockpile for nuclear development and around 6 kilograms for its underground nuclear test in October 2006.

The newspaper, citing a source involved in the six-way talks on North Korea's nuclear program for the report, did not elaborate on what the remaining 6 kilograms were used for.

The United States estimates that North Korea has produced more than 50 kilograms of plutonium and has demanded Pyongyang submit a "complete and correct" declaration of its past and present nuclear activities.

Japan and South Korea joined in that demand Monday after Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda and South Korean President Lee Myung-bak met in Tokyo. "On the nuclear issue, we confirmed the need for North Korea to swiftly make a correct and full declaration," Fukuda said at a joint news conference.

North Korea has said it has accounted for its past and current activities as required. But the United States says that the North has not discussed any transfer of nuclear technology to other countries, notably Syria, nor has it accounted for its suspected pursuit of uranium enrichment.

Uranium enrichment could provide North Korea with a second way to produce fissile material for nuclear weapons, in addition to the its plutonium-based programme.

Under the second phase of the six-party deal, once North Korea has produced its nuclear declaration, the United States is expected to relieve it of sanctions under the U.S. state sponsors of terrorism list and Trading With the Enemy Act.

In the third phase, North Korea is expected to dismantle its nuclear facilities at Yongbyon and abandon all nuclear weapons in exchange for further economic and diplomatic benefits.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/04/21/AR2008042100590.html>

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Washington Post

North Korean Nuclear Program

U.S. Team Headed to Pyongyang in Search of 'Significant Progress'

By Blaine Harden

Washington Post Foreign Service

Tuesday, April 22, 2008; Page A11

SEOUL, April 21 -- For the first time since the United States eased demands on North Korea for nuclear disclosure, a U.S. delegation is headed to the communist state to try to verify the extent of its nuclear program.

Led by Sung Kim, a senior State Department expert on Korea, the interagency delegation arrived here late Monday and was scheduled to drive north to Pyongyang on Tuesday across the heavily fortified border.

"Everything is subject to verification," Kim told reporters after arriving here. He said that he hoped the visit would bring "significant progress" and that he expected detailed discussion of a much-delayed declaration North Korea has promised about its nuclear program.

That declaration, under a disclosure-for-aid deal negotiated last fall and due last Dec. 31, was to have been a "complete and correct" listing of the North's nuclear activities, from the manufacture of plutonium to details of uranium enrichment and involvement in a Syrian facility bombed last year by Israel.

Both plutonium and highly enriched uranium can be used in building nuclear weapons.

But North Korea has consistently refused to talk publicly about uranium enrichment and nuclear proliferation.

To salvage the negotiations, the United States said this month that it would be satisfied if the North would "acknowledge" evidence and concern about these matters, without a precise public admission.

In the meantime, the North -- in return for the lifting of sanctions -- would finish dismantling its principal nuclear plant and account for all the plutonium it has produced.

North Korea has said it has produced about 66 pounds of plutonium, but the U.S. government estimates it has made more. Both sides agree that significant parts of the Yongbyon reactor have already been disabled.

The delegation heading to Pyongyang on Tuesday plans to stay in North Korea for several days, a U.S. Embassy spokesman said.

Over the weekend, President Bush and South Korean President Lee Myung-bak said U.S. concessions to the North could unlock delicate negotiations.

Bush has been criticized by some Republicans for yielding too much to the Stalinist government of Kim Jong Il.

"Why don't we just wait and see what they say before people go out there and start giving their opinions about whether this is a good deal or a bad deal?" Bush said Saturday at Camp David, Md., where he met with Lee.

The recently elected South Korean president added that talks with North Korea require "persistent patience."

"It's difficult to convince North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons programs, but it is not impossible," Lee said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/04/21/AR2008042100128.html>

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Los Angeles Times

April 23, 2008

CIA To Describe North Korea-Syria Nuclear Ties

Officials will tell Congress members this week that North Korea was helping Syria build a reactor last year when it was destroyed by an Israeli airstrike, a U.S. official says.

By Paul Richter and Greg Miller, Los Angeles Times Staff Writers

WASHINGTON — CIA officials will tell Congress on Thursday that North Korea had been helping Syria build a plutonium-based nuclear reactor, a U.S. official said, a disclosure that could touch off new resistance to the administration's plan to ease sanctions on Pyongyang.

The CIA officials will tell lawmakers that they believe the reactor would have been capable of producing plutonium for nuclear weapons but was destroyed before it could do so, the U.S. official said, apparently referring to a suspicious installation in Syria that was bombed last year by Israeli warplanes.

The CIA officials also will say that though U.S. officials have had concerns for years about ties between North Korea and Syria, it was not until last year that new intelligence convinced them that the suspicious facility under construction in a remote area of Syria was a nuclear reactor, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity when discussing plans for the briefing.

By holding closed, classified briefings for members of several congressional committees, the administration will break a long silence on North Korean-Syrian nuclear cooperation and on what it knows about last year's destruction

of the Syrian facility. Nonetheless, it has been widely assumed for months that many in the administration considered the site a nuclear installation.

It was not clear Tuesday how recently North Korea may have been aiding Syria. But disclosure of the relationship to the committees is likely to bring criticism from conservative lawmakers who already believe that U.S. overtures to North Korea have offered the government in Pyongyang too many benefits without assurances that it will disclose the extent of its nuclear arms effort or ultimately surrender its weapons.

U.S. officials provided little explanation of why they want to brief lawmakers on the North Korean-Syrian links after declining to do so for months.

A senior Senate aide said the timing appears driven by a Bush administration desire to apprise committee members of the latest intelligence on the reactor before releasing some of the information.

"I have this strong impression the reason they want to brief the committee is they want to say something publicly," said the aide, who discussed contacts with the administration only on condition of anonymity.

The administration has briefed senior members of the House and Senate intelligence committees, a senior Senate aide said. But other lawmakers have remained in the dark. The administration has been under pressure to extend briefings to a larger circle of lawmakers.

The administration is planning to ease sanctions on North Korea as part of talks aimed at removing Pyongyang's nuclear weapons. The six nations involved in the talks, which also include China, Russia, South Korea and Japan, have been negotiating since 2003.

After a breakthrough last year in which North Korea agreed to shut down its only functioning nuclear production facility, it was rewarded with fuel oil and the release of frozen bank funds. But talks stalled after the Bush administration demanded that Pyongyang provide a full description of its past nuclear activities by a December 2007 deadline.

Shifting course, U.S. officials said two weeks ago that it would be sufficient for the North Koreans to acknowledge U.S. concerns about their nuclear activities. In return, administration officials would remove North Korea from the stigmatizing U.S. list of countries that sponsor terrorism and Pyongyang would no longer be subject to U.S. trade sanctions under the Trading with the Enemy Act, a 1917 law.

The administration shift appeared to give ground to North Korea in the negotiations, spurring fierce criticism from U.S. conservatives and debate over the broader plan to ease sanctions as a step toward dismantling Pyongyang's weapons programs.

But under the latest approach, U.S. officials will describe to the North Koreans at least some of their conclusions about Pyongyang's links with Syria. Some analysts speculated that U.S. officials may wish to avoid sharing intelligence with North Korea before they have briefed most members of Congress.

Danielle Pletka, a vice president of the conservative-leaning American Enterprise Institute think tank, said the congressional briefings were simply a step the administration needed to take to move forward. "This is a box-checking exercise," she said.

Gordon Johndroe, a White House spokesman, said, "The administration routinely keeps appropriate members of Congress informed of national security and intelligence matters." He declined to comment on specific sessions, however.

Rep. Peter Hoekstra of Michigan, the ranking Republican on the House Intelligence Committee, complained in an opinion piece in the Wall Street Journal in October that the administration "has thrown an unprecedented veil of secrecy around the Israeli airstrike," and that based on information he had been given "it is critical for every member of Congress to be briefed on this incident, and as soon as possible."

Some administration officials are believed to be unhappy with the latest developments in talks with North Korea. But several analysts were skeptical of speculation that the briefing might have been initiated by internal opponents who hope to set off an outcry that would scuttle any deal with Pyongyang.

"You'll have some outcry, but I doubt there are enough people on Capitol Hill even paying attention to oppose it," said Gordon Flake, who follows the issue as executive director of the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation and is a critic of such a pact.

He speculated that lawmakers would be reluctant to stand in the way of the deal, because that would risk criticism that they had blocked a hopeful avenue of progress on a top national security problem.

Another senior Senate aide said that although the disclosure might bring complaints, Congress would not turn against the negotiations with North Korea. The critics would not be able to come up with any better alternative, he said, speaking on condition of anonymity when discussing senators' views.

Times staff writer Julian E. Barnes contributed to this report.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-norkor23apr23,1,7108082.story>

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New York Times
April 23, 2008
Pg. 9

India: U.S. Advice On Iran Is Rejected

By Somini Sengupta

A day after the Bush administration urged India to step up pressure on Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, on his coming visit to New Delhi, India tartly said it did not need "any guidance on the future conduct of bilateral relations," making it plain that no saber rattling from its friends in Washington would impair its relationship with a vital energy supplier. "India and Iran are ancient civilizations whose relations span centuries," the Indian Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Tuesday. "Both nations are perfectly capable of managing all aspects of their relationship with the appropriate degree of care and attention." Mr. Ahmadinejad is to make a brief stop in New Delhi next Tuesday. India and Iran are in talks over a pipeline that would ferry natural gas through Pakistan to the Indian border. An Indian cabinet member is in Pakistan this week for negotiations over pricing. The United States has not favored the pipeline. On Monday, a State Department spokesman, Tom Casey, said India should use the visit to urge Iran to stop nuclear enrichment.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/23/world/asia/23fbriefs-USADVICEONIR_BRF.html?_r=1&ref=world&oref=slogin

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Washington Post
April 24, 2008
Pg. 1

N. Koreans Taped At Syrian Reactor

Video Played a Role in Israeli Raid

By Robin Wright, Washington Post Staff Writer

A video taken inside a secret Syrian facility last summer convinced the Israeli government and the Bush administration that North Korea was helping to construct a reactor similar to one that produces plutonium for North Korea's nuclear arsenal, according to senior U.S. officials who said it would be shared with lawmakers today. The officials said the video of the remote site, code-named Al Kibar by the Syrians, shows North Koreans inside. It played a pivotal role in Israel's decision to bomb the facility late at night last Sept. 6, a move that was publicly denounced by Damascus but not by Washington.

Sources familiar with the video say it also shows that the Syrian reactor core's design is the same as that of the North Korean reactor at Yongbyon, including a virtually identical configuration and number of holes for fuel rods. It shows "remarkable resemblances inside and out to Yongbyon," a U.S. intelligence official said. A nuclear weapons specialist called the video "very, very damning."

Nuclear weapons analysts and U.S. officials predicted that CIA Director Michael V. Hayden's planned disclosures to Capitol Hill could complicate U.S. efforts to improve relations with North Korea as a way to stop its nuclear weapons program. They come as factions inside the administration and in Congress have been battling over the merits of a nuclear-related deal with North Korea.

Syrian Ambassador Imad Moustapha yesterday angrily denounced the U.S. and Israeli assertions. "If they show a video, remember that the U.S. went to the U.N. Security Council and displayed evidence and images about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. I hope the American people will not be as gullible this time around," he said.

U.S. officials said that Israel shared the video with the United States before the Sept. 6 bombing, after Bush administration officials expressed skepticism last spring that the facility, visible by satellite since 2001, was a nuclear reactor built with North Korea's assistance. Israel has a nuclear weapons arsenal that it has never declared. But beginning today, intelligence officials will tell members of the House and Senate intelligence, armed services and foreign relations committees that the Syrian facility was not yet fully operational and that there was no uranium for the reactor and no indication of fuel capability, according to U.S. officials and intelligence sources.

David Albright, president of Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) and a former U.N. weapons inspector, said the absence of such evidence warrants skepticism that the reactor was part of an active weapons program.

"The United States and Israel have not identified any Syrian plutonium separation facilities or nuclear weaponization facilities," he said. "The lack of any such facilities gives little confidence that the reactor is part of an

active nuclear weapons program. The apparent lack of fuel, either imported or indigenously produced, also is curious and lowers confidence that Syria has a nuclear weapons program."

U.S. intelligence officials will also tell the lawmakers that Syria is not rebuilding a reactor at the Al Kibar site. "The successful engagement of North Korea in the six-party talks means that it was unlikely to have supplied Syria with such facilities or nuclear materials after the reactor site was destroyed," Albright said. "Indeed, there is little, if any, evidence that cooperation between Syria and North Korea extended beyond the date of the destruction of the reactor."

The timing of the congressional briefing is nonetheless awkward for the Bush administration's diplomatic initiative to persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear program and permanently disable the reactor at Yongbyon. The CIA's hand was forced, officials said, because influential lawmakers had threatened to cut off funding for the U.S. diplomatic effort unless they received a full account of what the administration knew.

Also, the terms of a tentative U.S.-North Korean deal require that North Korean officials acknowledge U.S. evidence about its help with the Syrian program, and so the disclosures to Congress are meant to preempt what North Korea may eventually say.

Following talks with the South Korean president last weekend, President Bush said that it was premature to make a judgment about whether North Korea was willing to follow through with a commitment to publicly declare its nuclear-related programs, materials and facilities.

Washington and Pyongyang still differ over what should be included in that declaration, a State Department official said. Sung Kim, the State Department director of the Office of Korean Affairs, is in Pyongyang for discussions about the contents.

Syria's top envoy to Washington said the CIA briefings were meant to undermine diplomatic efforts with North Korea, not to confront Syria. Why, Moustapha said, are "they repeating the same lies and fabrications when they were planning to attack Iraq? The reason is simple: It's about North Korea, not Syria. The neoconservative elements are having the upper hand."

He added, "We do not want to plan to acquire nuclear technology as we understand the reality of this world and have seen what the U.S. did to Iraq even when it did not have a nuclear program. So we are not going to give them a pretext to attack Syria."

Before the site was bombed, the facility included a tall, boxy structure like those used to house gas-graphite reactors and was located seven miles north of the desert village of At Tibnah in the Dayr az Zawr region, 90 miles from the Iraqi border, according to photographs released by the ISIS, a nonprofit research group.

The White House and the CIA declined to comment on the briefings.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/04/23/AR2008042302906.html>

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Los Angeles Times

April 24, 2008

Iran Agrees To Talk With Nuclear Arms Inspectors

The head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog calls the accord to discuss alleged evidence of a weapons program a milestone.

By Borzou Daragahi, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

BEIRUT — International arms inspectors have reached an agreement with Tehran to discuss alleged evidence of nuclear weapons experiments, officials said Wednesday, signaling a potential breakthrough in negotiations over Iran's controversial research program.

Arms control experts call the purported evidence "the alleged studies of weaponization." The material was discovered on a laptop computer purportedly smuggled out of Iran and given to U.S. officials. Its authenticity has long been a bone of contention between Tehran and international inspectors.

Insisting that its nuclear program is peaceful, Iran has previously refused to discuss the evidence. Mohamed ElBaradei, director-general of the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency, or IAEA, told reporters in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, that the agreement to talk was a "certain milestone," news agencies said.

But other arms control experts cautioned that merely addressing the material on the laptop did not amount to explaining away past patterns of behavior and forensic evidence Western officials consider consistent with a clandestine nuclear arms program.

"These accusations have been around for some time," said James Acton, a nuclear arms expert in the department of war studies at King's College London. "The fact that Iran is willing to discuss them doesn't mean they're going to discuss them constructively or usefully."

The alleged studies came to light in 2005 after U.S. officials obtained a laptop computer that purportedly contained files with schematics for warhead designs, uranium enrichment experiments and explosives testing consistent with a nuclear weapons program. Much of the purported evidence also places an Iranian physicist and Revolutionary Guard official, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh-Mahabadi, at the center of the alleged weapons efforts. Iranian officials have so far rebuffed arms inspectors' requests to interview him.

Tehran agreed with the IAEA last summer to address the laptop findings as part of a plan to clear up questions about the Iranian nuclear program, but did not carry through with the promise. In February, U.S. officials allowed inspectors from the United Nations nuclear watchdog agency to see some of the evidence and present it to Iranian officials, who decried it as a forgery.

U.S. and European diplomats pressured the U.N. Security Council to impose a third round of sanctions on Iran in March for Tehran's refusal to halt its nuclear program and are pushing for a fourth.

IAEA official Olli Heinonen secured a commitment from Iran to discuss the laptop material after meeting this week with Iranian officials in Tehran.

Iran insists that its nuclear program is meant only to produce electrical power for its growing population of 70 million. And Tehran says a Feb. 22 IAEA report cleared up lingering questions about its nuclear program and should allow it to continue producing enriched uranium, which can be used for fueling a power plant or building a bomb. It has rejected conclusions in a December 2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate that stated that Iran probably had a clandestine nuclear weapons program but shuttered it in 2003.

U.S., European and Israeli officials suspect that Iran is trying to master the tricky process of highly enriching uranium to at least have the option of beginning to build nuclear weapons. Experts say teasing out rare and volatile U-235 isotopes from uranium ore is the toughest step in creating a homegrown nuclear bomb program. Raw uranium contains less than 1% of the fissionable isotope, whereas an effective nuclear bomb needs concentrations of 90%. At its facility in Natanz, Iran already produces uranium enriched to less than 4%, the level needed for fueling a nuclear power reactor.

On Tuesday, presidential candidate Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.) told ABC's "Good Morning America" program that she would order the U.S. military to "totally obliterate" Iran if it launched a nuclear strike against its nemesis, Israel, which is believed to have an undeclared nuclear weapons arsenal.

On Wednesday, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad responded defiantly.

"As long as the Iranian nation shows a decisive resistance, there is nothing any world power can do about breaking this resistance," he said at a rally in western Iran, according to state-controlled media. "The Iranian nation is in favor of talks to resolve the [nuclear] issue with any of you [countries]. We will slap on the mouth those who want Iran to abandon its rights."

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-iran24apr24,1,375135.story>

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