



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Issue No. 1018, 03 August 2012

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FARS News Agency – Iran
Sunday, July 29, 2012

Official: Iran to Accelerate N. Activities If Faced with Increased Sanctions

TEHRAN (FNA) - An Iranian official warned on Sunday that if the western states intensify their sanctions against the Islamic Republic, Tehran will accelerate its nuclear activities.

"It is not at all acceptable that Americans allege that they keep the window of diplomacy open on one hand and impose sanctions and try to disrupt (Iran's) enrichment on the other hand," General Manager of Iran's Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution for International Affairs Javad Mohammadi told FNA.

"Yet, if they deepen and accelerate the sanctions, we will deepen our nuclear activities and will increase their speed," he added.

Despite the rules enshrined in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) entitling every member state, including Iran, to the right of uranium enrichment, Tehran is now under four rounds of UN Security Council sanctions and the western states' unilateral embargos for turning down West's calls to give up its right of uranium enrichment.

Tehran has dismissed West's demands as politically tainted and illogical, stressing that sanctions and pressures merely consolidate Iranians' national resolve to continue the path.

Political observers believe that the United States has remained at loggerheads with Iran mainly over the independent and home-grown nature of Tehran's nuclear technology, which gives the Islamic Republic the potential to turn into a world power and a role model for the other third-world countries.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=9104251909>

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Xinhua News Agency – China

Panetta: U.S. Prepared to Implement "Other Options" to Prevent Nuclear Iran

August 1, 2012

JERUSALEM, Aug. 1 (Xinhua) -- Visiting U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta hinted on Wednesday that the United States is prepared to implement "other options" if Iran continues to work toward attaining nuclear weapons.

"If they (Iran) continue and if they proceed with a nuclear weapon, ... we have options that we are prepared to implement to ensure that does not happen." Panetta said during a visit to an army "Iron Dome" anti-missile battery deployed near coastal Ashkelon, just north of Gaza together with Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak.

"Iran must either negotiate acceptable limits on its nuclear program or face the possibility of U.S. military action to stop it from getting the bomb," Haaretz quoted Panetta as saying.

Barak alluded to "disagreements and differences of opinion," possibly over what stage of Iranian nuclear fuel enrichment towards a bomb would constitute a "tripwire" for a separate or combined Israeli or American military strike, according to a Defense Ministry's statement sent to Xinhua.

Panetta, in his remarks, echoed U.S. President Barack Obama's call for allowing tougher sanctions to coerce Teheran to halt its nuclear drive, before considering an attack.

Barak said that Israel "has something to lose," however, if the sanctions do not succeed, and Teheran continues building up its stock of enriched uranium.

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"Like with every true friendship these disagreements can never alter the fundamental depth and special nature of the United States-Israel relationship," Barak said, adding "We are determined to keep it this way."

The visit comes amid a two-day high-level visit by the American official, whose talks with Barak and, later Wednesday, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Shimon Peres are reportedly centering on fast-rising tensions with Iran.

Terming the defense-level ties between the countries "extraordinary," Barak noted increased cooperation "in a range of areas including intelligence, hi-tech and securing the qualitative military edge of Israel."

The U.S. administration recently allocated additional 70 million U.S. dollars to equip Israel with more Iron Dome batteries, Barak pointed out, in addition to the four already deployed in the south and center of the country.

"In the last year, the 'Iron Dome' system has been proven to be an extremely successful technological and operational project, extremely effective in intercepting more than 80 percent of the incoming missiles, while neglecting those which are not real threats. It has already intercepted more than 100 real missiles, rockets and grads," Barak said, and thanked the U.S. administration for the funds.

Palestinian militants in the coastal enclave, about five kilometers to the south, have fired hundreds of Grad and shorter-range Kassam rockets into the city over the last few years, including at hospitals and other civilian areas.

The radar-guided Iron Dome, developed in conjunction with the United States, automatically fires an interceptor rocket at the incoming missile if its trajectory is aimed at populated areas. The Israeli system has successfully foiled dozens of such attacks.

Panetta is scheduled to head for his last regional stop in Jordan on Thursday.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-08/01/c_131754339.htm

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San Francisco Chronicle

Iran Complete Clean-Up of Suspect Nuclear Site, Group Says

By Terry Atlas, Bloomberg News

Wednesday, August 1, 2012

Aug. 1 (Bloomberg) -- Satellite images show that Iran has completed cleanup activity at a suspected nuclear weapons-related site, a Washington-based research group said today.

The Parchin military complex attracted international attention early this year when the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, sought to inspect the site because of suspected undeclared nuclear activities.

The Institute for Science and International Security, a Washington-based non-profit research group, reported in May that satellite images taken in April indicated that Iran had begun substantial earth removal and other activities at the site to eliminate evidence of nuclear weapons work.

"Over the subsequent four months there was considerable activity with the razing of two buildings within the site, notable earth removal and displacement, the likely cleanup of the inside of the suspect building and possibly its exterior surfaces, the removal of the security perimeter, and the removal of all roadways," according to the report today by David Albright, president of the non-profit research group, and Robert Avagyan.

"The degree of the site's modification and the fact that this apparent cleanup work started soon after the IAEA's request for access cast further doubt on Iran's claims that its nuclear program does not or has never had any military aspects," they wrote.

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The report comes as U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said today in Israel that all possible means must be tried before a military strike against Iran and that the U.S. is prepared to use force to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

'Credible' Evidence

In November, the IAEA reported that it had "credible" evidence that Iran built a container inside of which scientists studied blast patterns useful for triggering a nuclear weapon.

After the IAEA sought permission to send inspectors to the site, Iran in early June denied a visit to the military base 18 miles (30 kilometers) southwest of Tehran.

As recently as June 21, IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano said access to Parchin remained a "matter of priority" for inspectors.

Iran has said its nuclear program is peaceful and charged that the allegations are based on fabricated intelligence provided to IAEA inspectors by Western nations.

Albright and Avagyan wrote that the IAEA may not be able to make further progress at the site, and the issue should be sent to the UN Security Council to impose additional sanctions on Iran.

With assistance from Jonathan Tirone in Vienna. Editors: John Walcott, Robin Meszoly.

<http://www.sfgate.com/business/bloomberg/article/Iran-Complete-Clean-Up-of-Suspect-Nuclear-Site-3754926.php>

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RT (Formerly "Russia Today") – Russia

Iran Set to Launch Space Ape into Orbit

02 August 2012

Iran plans to send a monkey into space following the holy month of Ramadan. Despite economic sanctions and a technological blockade imposed by a US-Israeli-led coalition, the Islamic Republic is making progress in its space ambitions.

The Iranian Space Agency (ISA) plans to blast a test monkey into orbit inside its Kavoshgar-5 (Explorer) rocket later this month. "All stages of launching the Explorer with living creatures have been accomplished," ISA director Hamid Fazeli announced on Wednesday, as cited by Fars news agency.

The primate plan was first announced in March, but Tehran had to delay the launch to conduct "complementary tests."

Earlier, Fazeli had called the launch of a large animal into space "a prelude to preparing Iran for sending a human astronaut into space before 2021."

In 2010, Iran launched smaller animals like a rat, turtles and worms into space aboard a Kavoshgar-3. The country had hoped to launch a monkey into space in 2011, but postponed the project for unknown reasons. At the time, the project hoped to launch a monkey-manned life support capsule to an altitude of 120 kilometers for a 20-minute sub-orbital flight.

Iran successfully launched its first satellite into orbit in 2009 as a part of its ambitious space program.

Western countries expressed concerns, however, that the rocket technology will be used to develop ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear warheads. Tehran maintains that both its space and nuclear programs are completely peaceful, and are not being used for military purposes.

The US recently imposed a fresh round of sanctions against Iran's banking and oil sectors, as well as its overseas financial holdings. The sanctions are aimed at forcing Iran to abandon its alleged nuclear weapons program.

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<http://www.rt.com/news/iran-monkey-space-launch-653/>

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Yonhap News Agency – South Korea
July 31, 2012

N. Korea Says Will Build Up Nuclear Arsenal Against U.S.

SEOUL, July 31 (Yonhap) -- North Korea vowed on Tuesday to further build up its nuclear capabilities, accusing the United States of attempting to topple its communist regime.

In a statement carried by the North's Korean Central News Agency, a spokesperson of the North Korean foreign ministry said the country will counter any U.S. hostility with the utmost resoluteness.

"While talking about the livelihood of people in other countries, the U.S. is blocking our economic development and improvement of our people's livelihood with its most vicious and persistent anti-republic sanctions," the statement said.

"And for such a country to say we will be better off once we give up our nuclear weapons only reminds us of a coyote who tells a ram that it will not be eaten if it gives up its horns."

The statement said the North did not need the U.S.'s support to develop its economy now that it has nuclear capabilities and the means to further build up its stockpile.

"With a rifle in one hand and a banner of industrial revolution in the other, we will surely build a powerful socialist nation while facing the U.S.'s anti-DPRK policies with the utmost resoluteness," it said. DPRK stands for the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The statement comes shortly after U.S. President Barack Obama last week said North Korea, along with Iran, "cannot be allowed to threaten the world with nuclear weapons."

"It is our firm decision to counter U.S. hostility with stronger nuclear deterrence," the statement said.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2012/07/31/34/0301000000AEN20120731011800320F.HTML>

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Minneapolis Star Tribune

Japan's Muted Pro-Bomb Voices Become Louder as Nation Debates Phasing Out Nuclear Power

By YURI KAGEYAMA , Associated Press
July 31, 2012

TOKYO — A contentious debate over nuclear power in Japan is bringing another question out of the shadows: Should Japan keep open the possibility of making nuclear weapons — even if only as an option?

It may seem surprising in the only country devastated by atomic bombs, particularly as it marks the 67th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima on Aug. 6 and Nagasaki three days later. The Japanese government officially renounces nuclear weapons, and the vast majority of citizens oppose them.

But as Japan weighs whether to phase out nuclear power, some conservatives, including some influential politicians and thinkers, are becoming more vocal about their belief that Japan should have at least the ability to make nuclear weapons.

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The two issues are intertwined because nuclear plants can develop the technology and produce the fuel needed for weaponry, as highlighted by concerns that Iran is advancing a nuclear power program to mask bomb development.

“Having nuclear plants shows to other nations that Japan can make nuclear weapons,” former Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba, now an opposition lawmaker, told The Associated Press.

Ishiba stressed that Japan isn’t about to make nuclear weapons. But, he said, with nearby North Korea working on a weapons program, Japan needs to assert itself and say it can also make them — but is choosing not to do so.

Such views make opponents of nuclear weapons nervous.

“A group is starting to take a stand to assert the significance of nuclear plants as military technology, a view that had been submerged below the surface until now,” says “Fukushima Project,” a book by several experts with anti-nuclear leanings.

Adding to their jitters, parliament amended the 1955 Atomic Energy Basic Law in June, adding “national security” to people’s health and wealth as reasons for Japan’s use of the technology.

“The recognition that both nuclear issues must be addressed is heightening in Japan,” said Hitoshi Yoshioka, professor of social and cultural studies at Kyushu University. The link between the two is “becoming increasingly clear.”

Yoshioka sits on a government panel investigating the nuclear disaster caused by the March 11 tsunami last year. The subsequent meltdowns at the Fukushima Dai-ichi plant have called into question the future of nuclear power in Japan, in turn raising concern among some bomb advocates.

Most proponents don’t say, at least not publicly, that Japan should have nuclear weapons. Rather, they argue that just the ability to make them acts as a deterrent and gives Japan more diplomatic clout.

The issue dates to the 1960s. Historical documents released in the past two years show that the idea of a nuclear-armed Japan was long talked about behind-the-scenes, despite repeated denials by the government.

The papers were obtained by Japanese public broadcaster NHK in 2010 and more recently by The Associated Press under a public records request.

In a once-classified 1966 document, the government outlined how the threat of China going nuclear made it necessary for Japan to consider it too, though it concluded that the U.S. nuclear umbrella made doing so unnecessary at the time.

In meeting minutes from 1964, 1966 and 1967, Japanese officials weigh the pros and cons of signing the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, which would mean foregoing the nuclear option. Japan signed the treaty in 1970.

The government denials continued, even after former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone wrote in his 2004 memoirs that, as defense chief, he had ordered a secret study of Japan’s nuclear arms capability in 1970. The study concluded it would take five years to develop nuclear weapons, but Nakasone said he decided they weren’t needed, again because of U.S. protection.

In 2010, the Democratic Party of Japan, after breaking the Liberal Democratic Party’s half-century grip on power, reversed past denials and acknowledged the discussions had taken place.

Given the secretive past, former diplomat Tetsuya Endo and others are suspicious about the June amendment adding “national security” to the atomic energy law.

Backers of the amendment say it refers to protecting nuclear plants from terrorists. Opponents ask why the words aren’t then “nuclear security,” instead of “national security.”

Japan has 45 tons of separated plutonium, enough for several Nagasaki-type bombs. Its overall plutonium stockpile of more than 150 tons is one of the world’s largest, although much smaller than those of the U.S., Russia or Great Britain.



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Tokyo Gov. Shintaro Ishihara, an outspoken conservative, has repeatedly said Japan should flaunt the bomb option to gain diplomatic clout. Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has expressed similar sentiments, although in more subdued terms.

The Yomiuri, the nation's largest newspaper, made a rare mention of the link between nuclear energy and the bomb in an editorial defending nuclear power last year, saying that Japan's plutonium stockpile "works diplomatically as a nuclear deterrent."

That kind of talk worries Tatsujiro Suzuki, vice chairman at the Japan Atomic Energy Commission, a government panel that shapes nuclear policy. Himself an opponent of proliferation, he said that having the bomb is a decades-old ambition for some politicians and bureaucrats.

"If people keep saying (nuclear energy) is for having nuclear weapons capability, that is not good," Suzuki said. "It's not wise. Technically it may be true, but it sends a very bad message to the international community."

<http://www.startribune.com/world/164442916.html?refer=y>

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SpaceWar.com

S. Korea Close to Expanding Missile Range: Report

By Staff Writers

Seoul, Agence France-Presse (AFP)

August 2, 2012

South Korea and the United States are close to agreement on expanding the range of Seoul's ballistic missiles to better guard against threats from North Korea, a report said Thursday.

Defence Minister Kim Kwan-Jin, in an interview with the Segye Times, said he would try to agree an increase by the end of this year on the current 300-kilometre (186-mile) limit.

"The US has agreed on the need for us to strengthen ballistic missile capability in order to better respond to North Korea's ballistic missile threat," the paper quoted Kim as saying.

"One thing I can say for sure is that the range will be improved compared to now."

The US stations 28,500 troops in South Korea, a close ally, and guarantees a nuclear "umbrella" in case of any atomic attack. In return, Seoul accepts limits on its missile capabilities.

President Lee Myung-Bak said in March the North's missiles could reach the southern island of Jeju, more than 400 kilometres south of the border, and stressed that Seoul needed a "realistic adjustment" to its own missile range.

The need to strengthen Seoul's missile capability took on new urgency after the North's latest long-range rocket launch in April.

Pyongyang claimed its aim was only to put a satellite into orbit but the US and allies saw it as a disguised long-range missile test banned under UN resolutions.

The South believes the North has 1,000 missiles of various types, many of them targeted at Seoul or other locations in the South.

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/S_Korea_close_to_expanding_missile_range_report_999.html

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London Daily Telegraph – U.K.

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Kim Jong-un Meets with Senior Chinese Officials

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un met with a senior Chinese official late Thursday to discuss closer ties with its main ally Beijing, state media said.

03 August 2012

Mr Kim received a Chinese delegation led by Wang Jiarui, head of the Communist Party's international department, in Pyongyang, China's Xinhua agency and the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported.

The young leader, who took power after the death of his father Kim Jong-Il in December, asked Mr Wang to convey his regards to Chinese President Hu Jintao.

The North aims to work with Beijing to bring "their friendship, established and nurtured by the older generations of leaders on both sides, to a higher level", Mr Kim was reported as saying by Xinhua.

It was the North's "unswerving will" to carry on a friendship between the countries nurtured under his father's reign and to "deepen" their alliance, said Mr Kim, according to the Chinese news agency.

Mr Wang in return said Beijing was "ready to work jointly with the DPRK side to maintain high-level contacts, strengthen party-to-party exchanges, and boost practical cooperation".

China, Pyongyang's sole major ally and biggest trade partner, is actively exploring investment opportunities in North Korea.

The North's dependence on Beijing has grown as international sanctions over its missile and nuclear programmes have restricted access to international credit.

In his final years, Kim Jong-Il - diminished by a stroke in August 2008 - regularly visited China, the biggest provider of humanitarian aid to the impoverished country.

He travelled to the Asian giant four times in just over a year, until his last visit in the summer of 2011.

Observers have expected the younger Mr Kim, who last month reshuffled the country's powerful military to tighten his grip on the communist state, to make his first foreign visit as leader to China.

In the meeting Thursday, Xinhua reported Mr Kim as saying his government's domestic aim was "developing the economy and improving the people's livelihoods to let the Korean people lead a happy and civilized life".

The meeting did not appear to touch on humanitarian aid to respond to recent deadly storms suffered in the North, which have caused major crop damage.

Pyongyang reported 31 people killed by landslides and lightning during storms on Sunday and Monday, in addition to 88 earlier reported dead in floods and storms last month.

The flooding represents a challenge for Kim, leading a nation that has grappled with severe food shortages since a famine in the 1990s killed hundreds of thousands.

UN agencies estimated last autumn that three million people would need food aid this year even before current problems.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/northkorea/9448404/Kim-Jong-un-meets-with-senior-Chinese-officials.html>

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Deccan Herald – India

In Himalayan Arms Race, China One-Ups India

By Reuters



Monday, July 30, 2012

Asia's two great powers are facing off here in the eastern Himalayan mountains. China has vastly improved roads and is building or extending airports on its side of the border in Tibet. It has placed nuclear-capable intermediate missiles in the area and deployed around 300,000 troops across the Tibetan plateau, according to a 2010 Pentagon report.

India is in the midst of a 10-year plan to scale up its side. In the state of Arunachal Pradesh, new infantry patrols started on the frontier in May, as part of a surge to add some 60,000 men to the 120,000 already in the region. It has stationed two Sukhoi 30 fighter squadrons and will deploy the Brahmos cruise missile.

"If they can increase their military strength there, then we can increase our military strength in our own land," Defence Minister A.K. Anthony told parliament recently.

Reuters journalists on a rare journey through the state discovered, however, that India is lagging well behind China in building infrastructure in the area.

The main military supply route through sparsely populated Arunachal is largely dirt track. Along the roadside, work gangs of local women chip boulders into gravel with hammers to repair the road, many with babies strapped to their backs. Together with a few creaky bulldozers, this is the extent of the army's effort to carve a modern highway from the liquid hillside, one that would carry troops and weaponry to the disputed ceasefire line in any conflict with China.

India and China fought a brief frontier war here in 1962, and Chinese maps still show all of Arunachal Pradesh within China's borders. The continuing standoff will test whether these two Asian titans - each with more than a billion people, blossoming trade ties and ambitions as global powers - can rise peacefully together. With the United States courting India in its "pivot" to Asia, the stakes are all the higher.

FIGHT AN INSURGENCY

"With the kind of developments that are taking place in the Tibet Autonomous Region, and infrastructure that is going up, it gives a certain capability to China," India's army chief, Gen. V.K. Singh, told Reuters the day before he left office on May 31. "And you say at some point, if the issue does not get settled, there could be some problem."

Indian analysts and policymakers went further in their "Non-Alignment 2.0" report released this year. It argues India cannot "entirely dismiss the possibility of a major military offensive in Arunachal Pradesh," and suggests New Delhi should prepare to fight an insurgency war if attacked.

"We feel very clearly that we need to develop the border infrastructure, engage with our border communities, do that entire development and leave our options open on how to respond to any border incursion, in case tensions ratchet up," Rajiv Kumar, one of the report's authors, said in an interview.

Indian media frequently run warnings of alleged Chinese plots, and both militaries drill near the border. In March, while China's foreign minister was visiting Delhi, the Indian air force and army held an exercise dubbed "Destruction" in Arunachal's mountains. Three weeks later, China said its J-10 fighters dropped laser-guided bombs on the Tibetan plateau in high-altitude ground-attack training.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Some policymakers play down the Arunachal face-off. Nuclear weapons on both sides would deter all-out war, and the forbidding terrain makes even conventional warfare difficult. A defence hotline and frequent meetings between top Chinese and Indian officials, including regular gatherings at the border, help ease the pressure. Bilateral trade, which soared to \$74 billion in 2011 from a few billion dollars a decade ago, is also knitting ties.

From China's perspective, the border dispute with India doesn't rank with Beijing's other border or military concerns, such as Taiwan. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Weimin struck an optimistic tone.



"China and India are in consensus on the border issue, will work together to protect peace and calm in the border region, and also believe that by jointly working toward the same goal, negotiations on the border will yield results," Liu said.

Hu Shisheng, a Sino-India expert at the government-backed China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations, said the border dispute casts an oversized shadow in the Indian media - where the China threat is perceived to be strong. But any voices within the Chinese military that advocate seizing the region are weak, he said.

"China's military could take the territory by force, but maintaining the gains in the long term would be exceptionally difficult," Hu said, noting the tough terrain.

Yet with both nations undertaking massive naval modernisations and brushing up against each other's interests across South Asia and in the South China Sea, the festering dispute risks being the catalyst for a violent flare-up, some security analysts say.

STRING OF PEARLS

For thousands of years, Chinese and Indian empires were kept apart by the Himalayas. After years of fast economic growth, the rivals now have the resources to consolidate and patrol their most distant regions.

India is starting to feel fenced in by Chinese agreements with its neighbours that are not strictly military but could be leveraged in a conflict.

Indians sometimes refer to these as a "string of pearls," which includes China's force deployments in Tibet, access to a Myanmar naval base, and Chinese construction of a deepwater port in Hambantota, Sri Lanka, and another in Gwadar, Pakistan.

Some in the Chinese government worry that India is becoming part of a U.S. strategy to contain China. The United States has sold \$8 billion in weapons to India, which is spending about \$100 billion over 10 years to modernize its military.

The two nations are unlikely to go to war, but have no choice but to add to their military strength on the border as they gain clout, a senior Indian official with direct experience of Sino-Indian relations told Reuters.

"It is the currency of power," he said. In the border negotiations, "we are ready to compromise, but up to a point."

MUDDY COIL

The road to Tawang, a centre of Tibetan Buddhism by the border, is one of India's most strategic military supply routes. Growling convoys of army trucks bring troops, food and fuel through three Himalayan passes on the 320-kilometer (199-mile) muddy coil to camps dotted along the disputed border.

On a road trip in late May and early June, Reuters found much of the 14,000-foot-high road to be a treacherous rutted trail, often blocked by landslides or snow, despite years of promises to widen and resurface it.

At its start in the insurgent-hit tropical plains of Assam state, the Tawang road is guarded by soldiers armed with Israeli rifles and shoulder-mounted rocket launchers who sweep for roadside bombs. Near the end - a tough two-day drive - is the 300-year-old white-walled Tawang monastery.

In the higher reaches, the army convoys struggle along rock-walled valleys to bases near the McMahon Line, the border agreed to by India and Tibet in a 1914 treaty and now the de facto frontier with China. It is the only way in. Supplies are taken to even remoter army posts by 50-mule caravans on three-day treks.

Along the tortuous road, soldiers can be seen shooting at targets on a firing range. Rows of ammunition sheds behind barbed wire dot the landscape on a chilly plateau shared with yaks.

New fuel depots and small bases are springing up. In addition to deploying extra troops, missiles and fighter jets in Arunachal, India plans to buy heavy-lift choppers to carry light artillery to the mountains.



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BUILDING AIRPORTS

China rules restive Tibet with an iron hand, and tightly restricts visits by foreign media, making independent assessments of the military presence in the region hard. But all signs indicate much more sophisticated infrastructure on the Chinese side of the border.

During the last government-organised visit to Tibet, in 2010, a Reuters journalist saw half a dozen Su-27 fighters, some of the most advanced and lethal aircraft China owns, operating from Lhasa's Gonggar airport. China has been building or extending airports across vast and remote Tibet, all of which have a dual military-civilian use.

Meanwhile, residents on the Indian side of the border report the Chinese have built smooth, hard-topped roads stretching to Tibet's capital of Lhasa. Chinese border posts, like India's today, were once only reachable by horse or mule. Now they are connected by asphalt.

Beyond the frontier, the Chinese improvements include laying asphalt on a historic highway across the region of Aksai Chin, which is claimed by India. The construction of the Xinjiang-Tibet national highway 50 years ago shocked India and contributed to the 1962 war.

China's rails are improving, too: Beijing opened a train line from Tibet to the region in 2006, and an extension is planned into a prefecture bordering Arunachal.

For years, India deliberately neglected infrastructure in Arunachal Pradesh, partly so it could act as a natural buffer against any Chinese invasion. That policy was dropped when the extent of development on China's side became clear.

PRAGMATIC APPROACH

In 2008, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh made his first trip to Arunachal and promised \$4 billion to build a 1,700-kilometer (1,055-mile) highway joining the valleys of the state as well as a train line connecting to New Delhi. These would also make troop movements easier.

Around the same time, former army chief Gen. J.J. Singh was appointed governor of the state and is ramping up infrastructure, power and telecom projects.

"Never before in the history of this region has such a massive development programme been conducted here," he said, sipping tea at his residence.

Singh, who spent much of his army career in Arunachal, said India and China both realise "there is enough place and space for both of us to develop. A very mature and pragmatic approach is being taken by both."

But despite 15 rounds of high-level talks, the border issue looks as knotty as ever. Indian media often whip up anger at Chinese border incursions, played down by both governments as a natural result of differing perceptions of where the border lies. India's defence minister told parliament 500 incursions have been reported in the last two years.

Unable to match China's transport network, India's focus is now on maintaining more troops close to the border.

"India struggles to build up infrastructure," said Ashley Tellis of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, who has written extensively on the India-China relationship. "They have been trying to do this for the past six or seven years now, and it is progressing far more slowly than they would like. What they have done in the interim is build up the troop strength."

COURTING THE LAMAS

One of main irritants in India-China relations, and a key part of China's claim to Arunachal, is Tibetan Buddhism. Beijing claims a centuries-old sovereignty over Arunachal and the rest of the Himalayan region.

India hosts the Dalai Lama and his Tibetan government-in-exile. When the Dalai Lama fled Chinese rule in Tibet in 1959, his first stop was the Buddhist monastery in the Arunachal town of Tawang near the border. Three years later, China occupied the fortress-like hilltop monastery in the 1962 war before withdrawing to the current lines.

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USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

In the 17th century, Tawang district was the birthplace of the sixth Dalai Lama. Deified as his latest incarnation, the current Dalai Lama visited the monastery in 2009 and has hinted his next reincarnation will be born in India. Some say in Tawang.

Tibetan Buddhists see the Dalai Lama as a living god; China sees him as a separatist threat. Many in the Indian security community worry that instability in Tibet after his death could endanger India.

So, New Delhi is wooing the locals. The intermingling of the Indian army and the Tawang monks is striking. War memorials on the road are built in the style of Tibetan Buddhist stupas, with prayer wheels and flags. Soldiers frequently visit the temple, and advise the lamas about troop movements and developments on the border.

Lobsang Thapke, a senior lama at the monastery, says India's troop buildup has made the monks feel safe, but that India was far from matching China's road-building prowess.

"From our side, we have to go through a lot of difficulty," he said in a carpeted room above the main hall, where child monks chanted morning prayers. "They (India) have not black-topped. Graveling has not been done."

ANGER AND ANXIETY

The Indian footprint here isn't always welcome. India's new wealth is seen in the multi-storey hotels mushrooming between traditional wood-and-stone houses in town, and new Fords and Hyundais on the hilly streets.

But anger is rising about a lack of jobs and perceptions that government corruption is rampant. Student movements have organised strikes in the state capital.

Hotel worker Dorjee Leto says educated young people like himself feel forgotten by India. There is almost no mobile phone coverage, power cuts that last days, and just that long muddy road to the outside world.

Anxiety over China, however, outweighs the irritation with India, says Leto, who like most in Tawang is a follower of Tibetan Buddhism.

"It's a fear, because already China has annexed Tibet. We feel part of India, we are used to India," he said.

<http://www.deccanchronicle.com/channels/nation/northeast/himalayan-arms-race-china-one-ups-india-962>

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Times of India – India

India Quietly Gate Crashes into Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles Club?

By Rajat Pandit, *Tamil News Network (TNN)*

July 31, 2012

NEW DELHI: India in April yanked open the door of the exclusive ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) club with the first test of Agni-V. Now, if DRDO is to be believed, India has quietly gate-crashed into an even more exclusive club of nuclear-tipped submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs).

The annual awards function of the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) on Tuesday will see PM Manmohan Singh hand over the "technology leadership award" to a scientist, A K Chakrabarti of the Hyderabad-based DRDL lab, for the "successful development" of the country's first SLBM.

"Apart from India, this capability has been acquired only by four nations, the US, Russia, France and China. Now, the SLBM system is ready for induction," says the award citation.

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Long shrouded in secrecy as a "black project", unlike the surface-to-surface nuclear missiles like Agni, the SLBM may now finally come out of the closet. Called different names at different developmental phases, which included "Sagarika" for an extended period, the SLBM in question is the "K-15" missile with a 750-km strike range.

Celebrations, however, may be a little premature. Much like the over 5,000-km Agni-V that will be fully operational only by 2015 after four-to-five "repeatable tests", the K-15 is also still some distance away from being deployed.

While the SLBM may be fully-ready and undergoing production now, as DRDO contends after conducting its test several times from submersible pontoons, its carrier INS Arihant will take at least a year before it's ready for "deterrent patrols".

India's first indigenous nuclear-powered submarine, the 6,000-tonne INS Arihant, is still undergoing "harbor-acceptance trials" with all its pipelines being cleared and tested meticulously on shore-based steam before its miniature 83 MW pressurized light-water reactor goes "critical".

The submarine will then undergo extensive "sea-acceptance trials" and test-fire the 10-tonne K-15, which can carry a one-tonne nuclear payload, from the missile silos on its hump.

Only then will India's missing third leg of the nuclear triad - the ability to fire nukes from land, air and sea - be in place. INS Arihant has four silos on its hump to carry either 12 K-15s or four of the 3,500-km range K-4 missiles undergoing tests at the moment. The first two legs revolve around the Agni missiles and fighters like Sukhoi-30MKIs and Mirage-2000s jury-rigged to deliver nuclear warheads.

The sea-based nuclear leg in the shape of SLBMs is much more effective — as also survivable being relatively immune to pre-emptive strikes — than the air or land ones. Nuclear-powered submarines, which are capable of operating silently underwater for months at end, armed with nuclear-tipped missiles are, therefore, considered the most potent and credible leg of the triad.

With even the US and Russia ensuring that two-thirds of the strategic warheads they eventually retain under arms reduction agreements will be SLBMs, India with a clear "no-first use" nuclear doctrine needs such survivable second-strike capability to achieve credible strategic deterrence.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/India-quietly-gate-crashes-into-submarine-launched-ballistic-missiles-club/articleshow/15286419.cms>

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Times of India – India

India Missile Deployment Plan makes China See Red

By Press Trust of India (PTI)

August 2, 2012

BEIJING: India's plans to deploy BrahMos supersonic missiles in Arunachal Pradesh along the border with China is a matter of "concern", a state-run daily here said on Wednesday.

Referring to the successful testing of 290 km range BrahMos supersonic cruise missile by India on Sunday, a report in the state-run Chinese edition of the Global Times said "the concern is because India has declared the deployment of three groups of these missiles to enhance deterrence" at the Sino-Arunachal Pradesh border.

China refers to Arunachal Pradesh as "Southern Tibet". At the same time, the daily quoted analysts as saying that while China and India have developed military infrastructure at the frontiers, a war between the two nuclear states is not an option and the border posturing is a way to "find a compromise point".

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It also highlighted the Indo-Russian cooperation in developing the BrahMos missile. The new BrahMos regiment is equipped with the Block-III model which has wide angle plunging capacity and is capable of striking behind mountains, the daily said.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/china/India-missile-deployment-plan-makes-China-see-red/articleshow/15322050.cms>

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New Indian Express – India

Nuke Capable Missile Agni-II User Trial Soon

By Hemant Kumar Rout

Thursday, August 2, 2012

BALASORE : After the BrahMos fiasco, the DRDO scientists are flexing their muscles for a successful user trial of 2000-km range nuclear capable Agni-II ballistic missile before the country goes into the celebration mode for the Independence Day.

Sources said a team of defence scientists and the personnel of Indian army are busy integrating the missile components and tracking systems at the Wheeler Island based test facility off the Odisha coast. The missile has been scheduled to be test fired any time in between August 10 and 12.

Though the DRDO had planned a couple of test flights of pilot-less target aircraft (PTA) 'Lakshya' from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) prior to the Agni-II trial, all have reportedly been postponed after the unsuccessful test firing of BrahMos cruise missile.

On Sunday, the Indo-Russian joint venture missile BrahMos crashed mid-air after a vertical lift-up and fell into the Bay of Bengal before covering its pre-coordinated flight path. The trial also failed to validate the performances of some newer systems manufactured by Indian industries and incorporated in the missile system for the first time.

While with the missile components manufactured by the Russian industries earlier the same BrahMos has proved its capability making it the most sophisticated and maneuverable missile in the world, the India made apparatuses have put the missile scientists in a fix.

Sceptical over the performance of Indian inertial navigation system (INS) in the Agni-II missile, the scientists preparing for its launch are however leaving no stone unturned to make the mission successful to mark the 66th Independence Day on August 15. The trial however would be carried out by the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) of the Army, which handles nuclear weapons-delivery systems.

Earlier on a couple of occasions, the missile has reportedly failed to travel the entire flight path with an Indian INS. The DRDO also has been facing problems related to the control system in its missile missions. A planned trial earlier this year was postponed following a technical snag in the missile's first stage.

This test is also significant in the wake of the advisory of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh who on Tuesday at the DRDO Technology Awards function in New Delhi asked the scientists to concentrate on key strategic and military technology areas to ensure weapon systems are developed without huge time and cost overruns.

Agni-II missile has a length of 20 meters, a diameter of one meter and weight 16 tonnes. It can carry a payload of around 1000 kg. It has appropriate on-board thrusters fitted on the second stage of the missile.

The first prototype of an operational variant of the Agni-II was tested on 11 April 1999. The missile can be fitted with 150 or 200 kT yield nuclear warheads, in addition to chemical, high explosive and sub-munitions versions. The range of the missile is significantly greater than that needed to strike targets within all of Pakistan.



"Newer technologies have been incorporated in the missile and the weapon system has also been provided with greater thrust. Lets hope for the better result this time," added the scientist.

<http://newindianexpress.com/states/orissa/article581571.ece>

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Bangkok Post - Thailand

Australia Rules Out US Nuclear Aircraft Carrier Base

By Agence France-Presse (AFP)

02 August 2012

Australian Defence Minister Stephen Smith has rejected a proposal to base a US nuclear aircraft carrier and other warships in the country, a move that would rankle key trade partner China.

The idea of using the Australian navy's western base, HMAS Stirling near Perth, to host an American carrier group, and other fighter jets was reportedly raised in a study of US military posture in the Asia-Pacific.

Media in Australia said the Washington-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) report, commissioned by the US Defence Department, has been submitted to Congress.

Smith said after a speech late Wednesday that while increased US access to HMAS Stirling was possible long-term, American aircraft carriers would not be based in Australia.

"The report is an independent report to the United States government. It's not a United States government document," he said.

"We don't have United States military bases in Australia and we are not proposing to. What we have talked about in terms of either increased aerial access or naval access is precisely that - greater access to our facilities.

"The strategic rationale for that is the growing importance of India and the growing importance of the Indian Ocean rim, particularly in a naval and maritime sense."

In June, Pentagon chief Leon Panetta announced in Singapore that the United States would shift the bulk of its naval fleet to the Pacific by 2020 as part of a new strategic focus on Asia.

It followed a visit to Australia last year by US President Barack Obama who announced an enhanced defence cooperation with Canberra which will see up to 2,500 US Marines deployed in the country.

It is part of Washington's plan to bolster its military presence in the strategically vital Asia-Pacific, amid concerns about China's increasing assertiveness.

The CSIS report considers various options for increasing, decreasing or leaving US military presence in the region at its current level, Australian media said.

Another proposal canvasses expanding the Marines' presence to a full air ground taskforce that would see thousands more troops in Australia's north, according to the Australian Financial Review.

Smith played this down.

"There is no suggestion being made to us that Australia should receive such a large number of Marines transferred from Okinawa or from Guam," he said.

The United States announced in April it would pull 9,000 Marines out of Japan as it seeks to ease a long-running standoff over the future of its huge military presence in one of its top Asian allies.

<http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/305599/australia-rules-out-us-nuclear-aircraft-carrier-base>



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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Putin Attends Nuclear Sub Ceremony

30 July 2012

Russian President Vladimir Putin participated on Monday in a ceremony to launch construction of Russia's fourth Borei-class (Project 955A) ballistic missile submarine.

"By 2020, we should have eight Borei-class submarines," he said. "Two of them - the Alexander Nevsky and one other - are in trials. I am sure the entire project will be implemented."

The ceremony for the boat, the Knyaz Vladimir, was held at Sevmash, Russia's largest shipyard and sole nuclear submarine maker located in the port city of Severodvinsk on the White Sea.

More new-generation warships - both surface ships and submarines - should be built for Russia's "new-look Navy," complete with advanced weapons, command and control, and communication systems, Putin said.

The Borei class is expected to become the mainstay of the Russian Navy's strategic nuclear deterrent, replacing the aging Project 941 (Typhoon class) and Project 667 class (Delta-3 and Delta-4) boats.

Three other Borei class boats are at various stages of development at Sevmash. The Yury Dolgoruky is currently undergoing sea trials, while the Alexander Nevsky and the Vladimir Monomakh are under construction.

The Borei class will be armed with the Bulava ballistic missile, which is also in the final stage of development and due to enter service on the lead vessel in the class, the Yury Dolgoruky, later this year.

SEVERODVINSK, July 30 (RIA Novosti)

http://en.ria.ru/military_news/20120730/174865317.html

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The Moscow News – Russia

Media Report Nerve Gas Leak in Bryansk Region

By Evgeniya Chaykovskaya

31 July 2012

Media outlets reported six tons of VX nerve agent leaked from Bryansk region's Pochep chemical weapons disposal plant. Local military and officials, however, deny it and stress that nothing unusual happened.

Nerve agent leak

The Emergency Situations Ministry insists that there was only a small leak, but journalists accuse the authorities of not informing the population in a timely manner and not using professionals to sort out the consequences.

Novaya Gazeta reported that the leak occurred on July 27, but it was only revealed on Tuesday. About 70 soldiers from a nearby military unit were involved in clearing the agent; they were given filtering gas masks that were intended for 20-minute use, instead of isolating masks. Sergeants, ensigns and officers were not given protective suits, even though the unit had them, the paper reported.

All the soldiers were then examined by doctors, and two army men were hospitalized. They were given antidotes and are in a stable condition.

Officials deny massive leak



Bryansk region Emergency Situation announced that on July 26 “an ammunition device depressurized and a reacted substance partly spilled out into a regular container.” The ministry said no one was injured.

The military unit also denied the information. “Everything is working as normal. I do not have this information, whether it depressurized or not. If it did, where? In the already filled ammunition?” Pohep-2 military unit spokesman told RIA Novosti.

Head of the region Nikolai Drobyshevsky, however, confirmed that there was an agent leak to the Provintsia.ru website. “One person was injured; his gloves were sprayed by the hot agent. The doctors treated him and sent him home.”

He said that when he turned up to the site, no one was walking around in gas masks and he was not given one.

<http://themoscownews.com/russia/20120731/190021832.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russia Could Deploy Unmanned Bomber after 2040 - Air Force

02 August 2012

Russia could deploy a "sixth-generation" pilotless strategic bomber aircraft after 2040, Long-Range Aviation Commander Lt. Gen. Anatoly Zhikharev said on Thursday.

"That could be around 2040-2050," Zhikharev said.

Russia's Tupolev design bureau is currently developing a new-generation strategic bomber aircraft, PAK DA, due to be in service around 2025. The new aircraft will replace the existing fleet of Tu-160, Tu-95MS and Tu-22M3 bombers.

The future development of Russia's long-range aviation in Russia has been the subject of some debate in recent months.

Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin said in June he was in favor of development of the PAK DA bomber project for the air force, just hours after saying the project was unnecessary, in apparent contravention of President Putin's call a week before for domestic aerospace industry to develop just such an aircraft.

Rogozin, who has special responsibility for the military-industrial complex, had previously insisted Russia had no need to develop a new long-range bomber to replace its existing fleet.

"These aircraft will not get anywhere. Not ours, not theirs," Rogozin said in an interview with Izvestia in June.

"I'm ready to insist on my point of view," Rogozin said later in June on his Twitter blog. "With modern air defense systems, these targets will be destroyed on the way," he said.

In May, Rogozin called on Russia's defense industry to develop hypersonic air-breathing weapons as a future strike system. He cited American development work in the X-51, Falcon, HiFire and HyFly programs as examples of what he described as the perspective threat posed by U.S. hypersonic development work.

At present only Russia and the United States operate intercontinental range bombers. Most other nuclear-capable nations rely solely on intercontinental ballistic missiles based on submarines or in land-based silos, or cruise missiles.

Russia's strategic air forces operate a total of 63 Tu-95MS and 13 Tu-160 bombers.

MOSCOW, August 2 (RIA Novosti)

http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20120802/174929681.html

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London Daily Telegraph – U.K.

Private Firm to Look after Trident Nuclear Deterrent

Private contractors are to take over the role of looking after the UK's nuclear weapons in Scotland.

28 July 2012

The MoD has signed a 15-year contract with ABL Alliance to provide support for the Trident weapons system at HM Naval Base Clyde.

Under the new contract 149 MoD civilian posts will transfer to the alliance.

The jobs are in industrial and technical grades, warehousing and logistic support services, while supervisors and managers are also transferring.

Thirty-nine Royal Navy posts will also be seconded to the alliance, which comprises AWE plc, Babcock and Lockheed Martin UK Strategic Systems (LMUKSS).

The MoD said it decided in May 2011 that the most effective way to sustain the workforce in the future was to use an experienced supplier within the private sector.

ABL Alliance will provide support to the Trident Strategic Weapon System at the Royal Naval Armament Depot (RNAD) Coulport and the Strategic Weapon Support Building (SWSB) Faslane.

The MoD said: "HM Naval Base Clyde has an excellent safety record and we are determined to maintain the highest standards of safety.

"The MoD will continue to own the Naval Base sites, including Coulport, and Naval Base Commander Clyde will retain overall responsibility for security and for the activities carried out at Coulport and the SWSB.

"The site will also continue to be a MoD nuclear authorised site, so will be subject to regulation by the Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator, the Office of Nuclear Regulation and other regulatory bodies."

The new arrangement is scheduled to start in January 2013, subject to the successful completion of a protection of employment consultation.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/9435227/Private-firm-to-look-after-Trident-nuclear-deterrent.html>

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Knoxville News Sentinel

Security Stand-Down: Government Contractor Halts All Nuclear Operations at Y-12

By Frank Munger

Thursday, August 2, 2012

OAK RIDGE — In an extraordinary effort to address growing security concerns following Saturday's break-in by protesters at the Y-12 nuclear weapons plant, the government's contractor shut down all plant nuclear operations, placed the stocks of enriched uranium in secure vaults, and set up a schedule for thousands of Y-12 workers to take refresher courses on security do's and don'ts.

B&W Y-12, the managing contractor at the plant, ordered the "security stand-down," and the National Nuclear Security Administration said it fully supports the move. The federal NNSA said it's "necessary to ensure continued confidence in safe and secure operations at Y-12."

The shutdown of operations is expected to last about a week, but officials said that's not been fully determined.

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The furor over security lapses began in Saturday's predawn hours when three peace activists — including an 82-year-old nun — were able to sneak into the nuclear defense installation and maneuver their way into the plant's highest-security area, where work on nuclear warheads takes place and where the nation's primary supply of bomb-grade uranium is housed. The trio, who labeled themselves the "Transform Now Plowshares, reportedly used bolt-cutters to slip through high-security fences.

Once inside the so-called Protected Area, they attached protest banners to the uranium storage site, splashed it with human blood and spray-painted slogans and messages on the walls.

Federal spokesman Steven Wyatt said the trespassing by anti-war activists wasn't the only concern.

A number of security violations were identified in the days that followed when NNSA and contractor officials stepped up their oversight of Y-12's security operations.

Wyatt refused to identify any of the violations but said they were separate from the investigation associated with Saturday's incident. He also would not say if any Y-12 employees had been fired or disciplined because of the security lapses.

"It would be inappropriate for us to discuss disciplinary or employment-related information," he said in an email response to questions.

Security education classes began Wednesday for supervisors, and other employees will attend refresher courses in the days ahead. Thousands of people work at Y-12, and Wyatt said all of them would be involved in the security training.

"This is being done to address additional security training and execution deficiencies identified by the contractor after Saturday's incident," he said.

While acknowledging the plant's security lapses, the National Nuclear Security Administration issued a statement saying it "remains entirely confident in the security of Y-12's facilities." The agency also said the plant's nuclear materials are in safe, secure storage.

Peter Stockton, senior investigator with the Project On Government Oversight, a watchdog group in Washington, D.C., has analyzed security at government nuclear facilities for decades. As embarrassing as Saturday's intrusion was, Stockton said the stand-down order suggests that even more "drastic flaws in security" have been found at Y-12.

"At this point we can only guess what those flaws might be," Stockton said by email.

The protesters who breached Y-12 security — Sister Megan Rice, 82, Las Vegas, Nev.; Michael R. Walli, 63, Washington, D.C.; and Greg Boertje-Obed, 57, of Duluth, Minn., were arraigned Monday on federal trespassing charges. Their preliminary hearing is set for today in U.S. District Court in Knoxville, and U.S. Attorney Bill Killian indicated it's possible additional charges could be placed against the three.

Meanwhile, additional protests are being planned this weekend in connection with the anniversary of the Aug. 6, 1945, atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan. Y-12 enriched the uranium that was used in the "Little Boy" bomb dropped on Hiroshima, and the Oak Ridge plant remains a mainstay in the nation's nuclear weapons capability.

The Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance holds a peace vigil every Sunday evening near the entrance to Y-12, and some peace activists are planning to stay overnight at Y-12 — calling it "Occupy Y-12" — and prepare for the early-morning ceremonies on Monday, when participants will read the names of those who died from the A-bomb blast.

<http://m.knoxnews.com/news/2012/aug/02/security-stand-down-government-contractor-halts/>

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Washington Post

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U.S. Model for a Future War Fans Tensions with China and Inside Pentagon

By Greg Jaffe
August 1, 2012

When President Obama called on the U.S. military to shift its focus to Asia earlier this year, Andrew Marshall, a 91-year-old futurist, had a vision of what to do.

Marshall's small office in the Pentagon has spent the past two decades planning for a war against an angry, aggressive and heavily armed China.

No one had any idea how the war would start. But the American response, laid out in a concept that one of Marshall's longtime proteges dubbed "Air-Sea Battle," was clear.

Stealthy American bombers and submarines would knock out China's long-range surveillance radar and precision missile systems located deep inside the country. The initial "blinding campaign" would be followed by a larger air and naval assault.

The concept, the details of which are classified, has angered the Chinese military and has been pilloried by some Army and Marine Corps officers as excessively expensive. Some Asia analysts worry that conventional strikes aimed at China could spark a nuclear war.

Air-Sea Battle drew little attention when U.S. troops were fighting and dying in large numbers in Iraq and Afghanistan. Now the military's decade of battling insurgencies is ending, defense budgets are being cut, and top military officials, ordered to pivot toward Asia, are looking to Marshall's office for ideas.

In recent months, the Air Force and Navy have come up with more than 200 initiatives they say they need to realize Air-Sea Battle. The list emerged, in part, from war games conducted by Marshall's office and includes new weaponry and proposals to deepen cooperation between the Navy and the Air Force.

A former nuclear strategist, Marshall has spent the past 40 years running the Pentagon's Office of Net Assessment, searching for potential threats to American dominance. In the process, he has built a network of allies in Congress, in the defense industry, at think tanks and at the Pentagon that amounts to a permanent Washington bureaucracy.

While Marshall's backers praise his office as a place where officials take the long view, ignoring passing Pentagon fads, critics see a dangerous tendency toward alarmism that is exaggerating the China threat to drive up defense spending.

"The old joke about the Office of Net Assessment is that it should be called the Office of Threat Inflation," said Barry Posen, director of the MIT Security Studies Program. "They go well beyond exploring the worst cases. . . . They convince others to act as if the worst cases are inevitable."

Marshall dismisses criticism that his office focuses too much on China as a future enemy, saying it is the Pentagon's job to ponder worst-case scenarios.

"We tend to look at not very happy futures," he said in a recent interview.

China tensions

Even as it has embraced Air-Sea Battle, the Pentagon has struggled to explain it without inflaming already tense relations with China. The result has been an information vacuum that has sown confusion and controversy.

Senior Chinese military officials warn that the Pentagon's new effort could spark an arms race.

"If the U.S. military develops Air-Sea Battle to deal with the [People's Liberation Army], the PLA will be forced to develop anti-Air-Sea Battle," one officer, Col. Gaoyue Fan, said last year in a debate sponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a defense think tank.

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Pentagon officials counter that the concept is focused solely on defeating precision missile systems.

“It’s not about a specific actor,” a senior defense official told reporters last year. “It is not about a specific regime.”

The heads of the Air Force and Navy, meanwhile, have maintained that Air-Sea Battle has applications even beyond combat. The concept could help the military reach melting ice caps in the Arctic Circle or a melted-down nuclear reactor in Japan, Adm. Jonathan Greenert, the U.S. chief of naval operations, said in May at the Brookings Institution.

At the same event, Gen. Norton Schwartz, the Air Force chief, upbraided a retired Marine colonel who asked how Air-Sea Battle might be employed in a war with China.

“This inclination to narrow down on a particular scenario is unhelpful,” Schwartz said.

Privately, senior Pentagon officials concede that Air-Sea Battle’s goal is to help U.S. forces weather an initial Chinese assault and counterattack to destroy sophisticated radar and missile systems built to keep U.S. ships away from China’s coastline.

Their concern is fueled by the steady growth in China’s defense spending, which has increased to as much as \$180 billion a year, or about one-third of the Pentagon’s budget, and China’s increasingly aggressive behavior in the South China Sea.

“We want to put enough uncertainty in the minds of Chinese military planners that they would not want to take us on,” said a senior Navy official overseeing the service’s modernization efforts. “Air-Sea Battle is all about convincing the Chinese that we will win this competition.”

Like others quoted in this article, the official spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject.

A military tech ‘revolution’

Air-Sea Battle grew out of Marshall’s fervent belief, dating to the 1980s, that technological advancements were on the verge of ushering in a new epoch of war.

New information technology allowed militaries to fire within seconds of finding the enemy. Better precision bombs guaranteed that the Americans could hit their targets almost every time. Together these advances could give conventional bombs almost the same power as small nuclear weapons, Marshall surmised.

Marshall asked his military assistant, a bright officer with a Harvard doctorate, to draft a series of papers on the coming “revolution in military affairs.” The work captured the interest of dozens of generals and several defense secretaries.

Eventually, senior military leaders, consumed by bloody, low-tech wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, seemed to forget about Marshall’s revolution. Marshall, meanwhile, zeroed in on China as the country most likely to exploit the revolution in military affairs and supplant the United States’ position as the world’s sole superpower.

In recent years, as the growth of China’s military has outpaced most U.S. intelligence projections, interest in China as a potential rival to the United States has soared.

“In the blink of an eye, people have come to take very seriously the China threat,” said Andrew Hoehn, a senior vice president at Rand Corp. “They’ve made very rapid progress.”

Most of Marshall’s writings over the past four decades are classified. He almost never speaks in public and even in private meetings is known for his long stretches of silence.

His influence grows largely out of his study budget, which in recent years has floated between \$13 million and \$19 million and is frequently allocated to think tanks, defense consultants and academics with close ties to his office. More than half the money typically goes to six firms.



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Among the largest recipients is the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, a defense think tank run by retired Lt. Col. Andrew Krepinevich, the Harvard graduate who wrote the first papers for Marshall on the revolution in military affairs.

In the past 15 years, CSBA has run more than two dozen China war games for Marshall's office and written dozens of studies. The think tank typically collects about \$2.75 million to \$3 million a year, about 40 percent of its annual revenue, from Marshall's office, according to Pentagon statistics and CSBA's most recent financial filings.

Krepinevich makes about \$865,000 in salary and benefits, or almost double the compensation paid out to the heads of other nonpartisan think tanks such as the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Brookings Institution. CSBA said its board sets executive compensation based on a review of salaries at other organizations doing similar work.

The war games run by CSBA are set 20 years in the future and cast China as a hegemonic and aggressive enemy. Guided anti-ship missiles sink U.S. aircraft carriers and other surface ships. Simultaneous Chinese strikes destroy American air bases, making it impossible for the U.S. military to launch its fighter jets. The outnumbered American force fights back with conventional strikes on China's mainland, knocking out long-range precision missiles and radar.

"The fundamental problem is the same one that the Soviets identified 30 years ago," Krepinevich said in an interview. "If you can see deep and shoot deep with a high degree of accuracy, our large bases are not sanctuaries. They are targets."

Some critics doubt that China, which owns \$1.6 trillion in U.S. debt and depends heavily on the American economy, would strike U.S. forces out of the blue.

"It is absolutely fraudulent," said Jonathan D. Pollack, a senior fellow at Brookings. "What is the imaginable context or scenario for this attack?"

Other defense analysts warn that an assault on the Chinese mainland carries potentially catastrophic risks and could quickly escalate to nuclear armageddon.

The war games elided these concerns. Instead they focused on how U.S. forces would weather the initial Chinese missile salvo and attack.

To survive, allied commanders dispersed their planes to austere airfields on the Pacific islands of Tinian and Palau. They built bomb-resistant aircraft shelters and brought in rapid runway repair kits to fix damaged airstrips.

Stealthy bombers and quiet submarines waged a counterattack. The allied approach became the basis for the Air-Sea Battle.

Think tank's paper

Although the Pentagon has struggled to talk publicly about Air-Sea Battle, CSBA has not been similarly restrained. In 2010, it published a 125-page paper outlining how the concept could be used to fight a war with China.

The paper contains less detail than the classified Pentagon version. Shortly after its publication, U.S. allies in Asia, frustrated by the Pentagon's silence on the subject, began looking to CSBA for answers.

"We started to get a parade of senior people, particularly from Japan, though also Taiwan and to a lesser extent China, saying, 'So, this is what Air-Sea Battle is,'" Krepinevich said this year at an event at another think tank.

Soon, U.S. officials began to hear complaints.

"The PLA went nuts," said a U.S. official who recently returned from Beijing.

Told that Air-Sea Battle was not aimed at China, one PLA general replied that the CSBA report mentioned the PLA 190 times, the official said. (The actual count is closer to 400.)

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Inside the Pentagon, the Army and Marine Corps have mounted offensives against the concept, which could lead to less spending on ground combat.

An internal assessment, prepared for the Marine Corps commandant and obtained by The Washington Post, warns that “an Air-Sea Battle-focused Navy and Air Force would be preposterously expensive to build in peace time” and would result in “incalculable human and economic destruction” if ever used in a major war with China.

The concept, however, aligns with Obama’s broader effort to shift the U.S. military’s focus toward Asia and provides a framework for preserving some of the Pentagon’s most sophisticated weapons programs, many of which have strong backing in Congress.

Sens. Joseph I. Lieberman (I-Conn.) and John Cornyn (R-Tex.) inserted language into the 2012 Defense Authorization bill requiring the Pentagon to issue a report this year detailing its plans for implementing the concept. The legislation orders the Pentagon to explain what weapons systems it will need to carry out Air-Sea Battle, its timeline for implementing the concept and an estimate of the costs associated with it.

Lieberman and Cornyn’s staff turned to an unsurprising source when drafting the questions.

“We asked CSBA for help,” one of the staffers said. “In a lot of ways, they created it.”

Julie Tate contributed to this report.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-model-for-a-future-war-fans-tensions-with-china-and-inside-pentagon/2012/08/01/gJQAC6F8PX_story.html

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Aviation Week

US to Mull More Bombers, Submarines for Pacific

By Reuters

August 2, 2012

Pentagon planners will consider adding bombers and attack submarines as part of a growing U.S. focus on security challenges in the Asia-Pacific, a senior Defense Department official said on Wednesday.

“We will take another look” at sending more such muscle to the strategic hub of Guam in the western Pacific, now that this has been recommended by an independent review of U.S. regional military plans, Robert Scher, deputy assistant secretary of defense for plans, told lawmakers.

U.S. strategy calls for shifting military, diplomatic and economic resources toward the region after a decade of land wars in Iraq and Afghanistan sparked by the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on New York and the Pentagon.

The Defense Department, however, must weigh the issue from a broad global perspective and take into account competing requirements, Scher testified before the U.S. House of Representatives’ Armed Services subcommittee on readiness.

Guam, a U.S. territory about three-quarters of the way from Hawaii to the Philippines, played an active role during the Vietnam War as a way station for U.S. bombers.

The Air Force operates from the island’s Andersen Air Force Base, which hosts a rotational unit of B-52 bombers. The major U.S. Navy presence includes a squadron of three attack submarines.

INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT

The new assessment of the U.S. military force posture in the region was carried out by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, or CSIS, a nonpartisan policy research group, subsequent to a congressional mandate.

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It recommended in a report made public last week stationing one or more additional attack submarines in Guam to provide what it called a critical edge against “anti-access, area denial” - technologies being developed by China to keep the U.S. military at bay.

CSIS listed as another option permanently relocating a B-52 squadron of 12 aircraft to Guam, rather than the current practice of rotating in from bases in the continental United States.

The central geostrategic uncertainty that the United States and its allies and partners face in the region “is how China’s growing power and influence will impact order and stability in the years ahead,” the CSIS review said.

It said U.S. forces can help shape the peacetime environment by standing behind U.S. security commitments - a move the review said would “dissuade Chinese coercion or North Korean aggression.”

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta has announced plans to “rebalance” U.S. naval forces from a nearly 50-50 split between the Atlantic and the Pacific to a 60-40 mix in favor of the Asia-Pacific. The details of this shift have not been spelled out, although officials have said much of the buildup will involve new ships.

Sher, in joint written testimony to the panel with David Helvey, an acting deputy assistant secretary of defense for the region, said the Defense Department agreed with the CSIS assessment that “there are opportunities to move forward with Guam and send an important signal to the region.”

Neither additional bombers nor additional attack submarines are in current U.S. plans for the region but will be considered based on CSIS’s “good work,” Scher told Reuters after the hearing.

David Berteau, director of the CSIS International Security Program and a co-director of the review, said Guam could absorb additional submarines without a huge amount of extra military construction costs, for instance for pier space or shore facilities.

The Defense Department also will continue to explore opportunities with the Philippines, a treaty ally, of deploying forces to unspecified “priority areas” to enhance maritime security, the Defense Department officials testified.

http://www.aviationweek.com/Article.aspx?id=/article-xml/awx_08_02_2012_p0-482404.xml

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The Hill

OPINION/Congress Blog

The Call for a Revised Nuclear Strategy

By Mary Kaszynski, policy analyst, American Security Project

July 30, 2012

There may not be agreement on the size and shape of the future force, but there is growing consensus among the nation’s leaders that it’s time to bring U.S. nuclear strategy into the 21st century. This consensus includes two former commanders of U.S. Strategic Command.

General James Cartwright oversaw the nation’s nuclear arsenal for three years as STRATCOM Commander, but he has never shown a bias towards nuclear weapons. In fact, his stance on U.S. nuclear posture is purely strategy-driven, reflecting a practical analysis of today’s security threats and the tools needed to address those threats.

“The current U.S. nuclear force remains sized and organized operationally for fighting the “last war” – the Cold War – even though threats from that era posed by the Soviet Union and China have greatly diminished or disappeared,” reads Gen. Cartwright’s joint testimony with Ambassador Thomas Pickering before the Senate Appropriations Committee last week.

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“The U.S. (and Russian) arsenal is thus over-stocked. Ample latitude exists for further nuclear cuts,” the testimony concludes, reflecting the analysis of a panel Gen. Cartwright chaired, which included former Senator Chuck Hagel and General Jack Shaheen.

Gen. Cartwright is not the only STRATCOM commander to determine that the U.S. nuclear force, which numbers some 8,000 warheads, is unsuited to today’s strategic environment. General Eugene Habiger, STRATCOM commander from 1996 to 1998, also recommends scaling back the massive arsenal.

“In my view, 20 years after the Cold War, we could be at much lower levels. We’ve made good progress, but there’s much progress left to be made,” General Habiger said in an interview last fall.

Gen. Habiger’s recommended force level is even lower than the 900 warheads recommended by the Cartwright Commission. “600 nuclear weapons in our arsenal should be enough to do what we need to do,” Gen. Habiger said.

These two former STRATCOM Commanders are part of a growing consensus of U.S. leaders who recognize that the current nuclear posture is outdated and unaffordable.

Plans to update the massive nuclear arsenal will cost hundreds of billions over the coming years. These plans include buying 12 new nuclear submarines (at a total cost of \$100 billion, potentially crowding conventional ships out of the Navy’s budget), building a \$4 billion facility that can produce new nuclear warhead components, and extending the service life of the B-61 bomb nuclear bomb – current cost estimate: \$10 billion, significantly higher than last year’s estimate of \$4 billion.

This level of spending reflects an arsenal geared towards Cold War threats. U.S. leaders policymakers from LtGen. Dirk Jameson, former deputy commander in chief of STRATCOM, to former Secretary of State Colin Powell agree that maintaining excess nuclear capabilities is not just fiscally irresponsible – it’s bad strategy. Buying more nuclear capabilities that we do not need means buying less of the capabilities that we do need.

An effective national security strategy is having the right amount of the right tools to address real threats. Generals Cartwright and Habiger may have been in charge of the nation’s nuclear weapons, but that has not stopped them from concluding that the arsenal is a relic of the Cold War, unsuited to today’s threats.

What a new nuclear posture should look like unclear. As General Cartwright testified, “The extent of such [nuclear] cuts, the composition of the reduced arsenals, and the number of weapons held in reserve as a geopolitical hedge against a downturn in relations are matters worthy of public debate, and of congressional hearings.”

There may not be agreement on the size or shape of the future force, but there is a growing consensus that revising the outdated nuclear posture will not only save billions of dollars, but also make for a more effective national security strategy.

Mary Kaszynski is a policy analyst at the non-partisan American Security Project.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/241103-the-call-for-a-revised-nuclear-strategy>

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Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS) – India

OPINION/Article #3688

July 31, 2012

India’s Nuclear Doctrine: How Elastic and Transparent should it be?

By D Suba Chandran, Director, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS)

One of the major criticisms on the recently released IPCS Alternative Blueprint to India’s nuclear doctrine was – it should remain elastic, to provide adequate space for future manoeuvring. In particular there was a debate on whether India’s deterrence should be ‘minimum’ or ‘minimal’. The debate focused on how ‘minimal’ would narrow the

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options from being 'minimum'. How elastic should India's nuclear doctrine be? Should it be transparent or blurry, providing different interpretations, depending on the situation? Will elasticity in definition make the concepts more ambiguous?

Elasticity and transparency as a part of nuclear doctrine should be linked to the primary objective of having a doctrine in public. If being specific and transparent in a doctrine hinders the state from having sufficient space to manoeuvre, alter and make modifications, then it would be useful not to have a doctrine in the first place. Not having a doctrine would provide more elasticity to make decisions and amend the objectives of the state depending on the political and security environment, than having a doctrine with less transparency and indeterminate concepts.

Alternatively, there could be a transparent doctrine (transparency will always remain relative, never be an absolute) which if the situation warrants, could be reviewed periodically and modified according to the security environment. This would be more useful than a less transparent doctrine with more ambiguity and elasticity.

There could be few basic premises for the state to use as guiding principles. For example, nuclear weapons as a defence against WMD attacks by other states, non use against non-nuclear weapons states, no first use etc., which forms the bedrock of a nuclear doctrine. However, based on a dynamic security environment the doctrine could be periodically reviewed and updated.

However, after promulgating a doctrine and placing it in the public domain, keeping the tenets elastic to meet any future contingency and without a regular review would be counterproductive. What purpose would a nuclear doctrine serve if it is not reviewed regularly as implicit in the concept of elasticity, especially, if a nuclear doctrine is political in nature?

In India's case, what is the primary objective of having a political doctrine in the public domain? Why should India have a nuclear doctrine in the first place? Mainly it is aimed at sending a 'clear' signal to the intended audience. In India's case, it is a political doctrine aimed at sensitising the international community to India's weaponisation imperatives. It is aimed at convincing the rest that India has no military or aggressive ambitions, for which it has pursued nuclear weapons and would continue to do so.

The second objective of a nuclear doctrine obviously should be aimed at a particular audience, in India's case, Pakistan and China. Perhaps aimed more at Pakistan than China as it stands today, and at a later stage, aimed more at China and covering Pakistan automatically. If the nuclear doctrine is political, then it should be aimed at convincing the adversaries and not create doubt and provide room for misinterpretations, and in the process, defeat the very purpose of a public stance. Also, it should be aimed at signalling adversaries not to engage in a first strike.

If transparency is likely to remove grey areas and address the concerns of adversaries in terms of what India wants and is likely to do, then the nuclear doctrine should ensure it. Can a nuclear doctrine be transparent yet elastic? This is where periodic reviews would help India's nuclear doctrine to remain transparent, yet keep itself updated to the changing security environment. Being a political doctrine, certain principles can remain the bedrock, for example, non-aggression, no first use, no use against non-nuclear states, and massive retaliation in case of a first strike etc. In fact, the bedrock of independent India's foreign policy was founded on the Panchsheel. Perhaps, six decades later, it would be useful to consider a 'nuclear Panchsheel' as the bedrock and guiding principles for the nuclear doctrine.

Keeping the nuclear doctrine elastic and opaque with a view to address any situation that arises in the future, and more importantly, not undertaking a regular review, would not help India's primary objective of having a secure nuclear environment. Any nuclear doctrine should remain transparent and kept updated at regular levels to reflect the existing situation. An opaque doctrine, aimed at addressing any and every threat in the future, would in fact make the state even more vulnerable and the region insecure.

<http://www.ipcs.org/article/india/indias-nuclear-doctrine-how-elastic-and-transparent-should-it-be-3688.html>

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Sydney Morning Herald – Australia
OPINION/Political Opinion

US Eyes Perth Naval Base

August 2, 2012

By Nick O'Malley, John Garnaut and Dylan Welch

THE United States could base a US aircraft carrier and supporting fleet in Perth, under plans to be presented to Congress today.

The proposal is one of four options set out in a report by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies commissioned by the US Defence Department.

The centre was directed to consider how the US military could undertake the so-called “pivot” in the Asia-Pacific region announced by President Barack Obama last year in response to China’s increasing influence.

Chinese analysts immediately identified the plan as likely to antagonise China, saying it would confirm suspicions of an effort to contain it. Such a move would raise the temptation for China to use its huge economic leverage to retaliate, they said.

“It would be interpreted within China as another move to encircle China,” said Sun Zhe, the director of Tsinghua University’s Centre for China-US Relations.

Song Xiaojun, editor of Naval and Merchant Ships magazine, said Australia would be unlikely to proceed with the proposal after it weighed security gains against export losses.

“Do they think China one day will invade Australia and rob its iron ore?” said Song, formerly an analyst with a People’s Liberation Army academy.

The strike group would include a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, a carrier air wing of up to nine squadrons, one or two guided-missile cruisers, two or three guided-missile destroyers, one or two nuclear-powered submarines and a supply ship.

The report also suggests that the US could consider building facilities to support “bombers and other aircraft”.

“Australia’s geography, political stability and existing defence capabilities and infrastructure offer ... significant military advantages to the United States in light of the growing range of Chinese weapons systems,” it says. “HMAS Stirling offers advantages including direct blue water access to the Indian Ocean ... submarine facilities including a heavyweight torpedo maintenance centre and the only submarine escape training facility in the southern hemisphere.”

The report also notes the naval base offers “expanded surface ship facilities, including potentially a dock capable of supporting aircraft carriers”.

The document — which includes advice from Andrew Shearer, foreign policy adviser to former prime minister John Howard — provides the greatest detail yet about exactly how the United States sees its new role in the Asia-Pacific and Australia.

Defence Minister Stephen Smith said in a speech in Canberra last night that Australia would look at an increased US presence at HMAS Stirling.

“For Australia, this presence will support our long-held strategic interests in maintaining and expanding US engagement in our region.”

He reasserted the need for a strong alliance with the US, as it had underwritten stability in the region for the past half-century “and will continue to be the single most important strategic actor in our region for the foreseeable future”.

Responding to a question, the minister said: “The US does not have a base in Australia and this will not change”.

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Mr Smith insists that the Northern Territory military base through which up to 2500 US marines rotate for training each year is not a US base. The report is believed to moot the possibility of increasing that number.

West Australian Premier Colin Barnett dismissed the notion of such extensive US forces at Stirling.

“I don’t think there’s any possibility of that happening,” he said.

“I don’t think you could squeeze a nuclear aircraft carrier into Cockburn Sound.”

The Greens reacted negatively. “The risks of routinely floating nuclear reactors in and out of Cockburn Sound shouldn’t be underestimated,” West Australian Greens senator Scott Ludlam said.

“Western Australian police and emergency services personnel are completely under-resourced to cope with even a minor reactor leak.”

The head of a Canberra think tank also rejected the idea, though for different and multiple reasons.

Peter Jennings, a former deputy defence secretary and now the executive director of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, said the idea was unrealistic, citing the cost — anywhere between \$US1 billion and \$US6.7 billion — as prohibitive in the context of deep US defence budget cuts.

What was likely, however, was more US naval ship visits to Stirling, he said.

Authors of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies report were scheduled to give testimony before the US Congress Armed Services Committee overnight, Melbourne time.

The report notes: “Australia is unique among America’s allies in having fought alongside the United States in every major conflict since the start of the 20th century.”

While Perth was a long way away from some strategically important areas, the report says the West Australian capital’s location could also be a benefit because it was beyond the increasing range of China’s defences.

A spokesman for the centre said the think-tank was unable to comment on the report until after some of its authors had testified before the Senate committee.

The Armed Services Committee’s chairman, Senator Carl Levin, said he agreed with comments made by Secretary of Defence Leon Panetta that “efforts to strengthen alliances and partnerships in the Asia-Pacific to advance a common security vision for the future are essential to the US strategy to rebalance toward the region”.

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/us-eyes-perth-naval-base-20120801-23fy9.html>

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Council on Foreign Relations

OPINION/ Politics, Power, and Preventive Action Blog

Would We Know if Iran Decides to Build a Bomb?

By Micah Zenko

August 2, 2012

The most important unanswered question about the heightened U.S.-Israel confrontation with Iran over its nuclear program is whether Iran’s political leadership will decide to pursue a nuclear weapon. The key judgments in the last declassified National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on the Iranian nuclear program found with “high confidence” that “Tehran halted its nuclear weapons program” in the fall of 2003, and this conviction remained with “moderate confidence” through mid-2007.

U.S. officials believe that only one person holds the power to decide whether or not to pursue a bomb—meaning to enrich enough uranium to bomb-grade level that can be formed into a sphere that could be compressed into a critical mass—the Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Testifying before the Senate Select Intelligence Committee

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in late January, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper stated: “Iran’s technical advances, particularly in uranium enrichment, strengthen our assessment that Iran is well-capable of producing enough highly-enriched uranium for a weapon if its political leaders, **specifically the supreme leader himself**, choose to do so.”

Shortly thereafter, Clapper echoed this statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee:

That is the intelligence community’s assessment, that that is an option that is still held out by the Iranians. And **we believe the decision would be made by the supreme leader himself**, and he would base that on a cost-benefit analysis in terms of — I don’t think you want a nuclear weapon at any price.

One month later, James Risen reported in the *New York Times*: “American intelligence analysts still believe that the Iranians have not gotten the go-ahead from Ayatollah Khamenei to revive the program. ‘That assessment,’ said one American official, ‘holds up really well.’”

On Monday, however, Israeli defense minister Ehud Barak introduced a new observation that upends the previous understanding of this particular redline: “[Israel and the U.S.] **both know that Khamenei did not yet order, actually, to give a weapon**, but that he is determined to deceit and defy the whole world.” When asked, “What does that mean, that the ayatollah has not given the order to build a nuclear bomb?” Barak replied:

“It’s something technical. He did not tell his people start and build it—a weapon—an explodable device. We think that we understand why he does not give this order. He believes that he is penetrated through our intelligence and he strongly feels that **if he tries to order, we will know it, we and you and some other intelligence services will know about it and it might end up with a physical action against it.**

So he prefers to, first of all, make sure that through redundancy, through an accumulation of more lowly enriched uranium, more medium level enriched uranium and more centrifuges and more sites, better protection, that he can reach a point, which I call the zone of immunity, beyond which Israel might not be technically capable of launching a surgical operation.”

If the United States accepts this logic—that the Supreme Leader would never issue the formal order to pursue a nuclear weapon for fear of foreign detection—then what was once a distinct and identifiable redline for U.S. intelligence no longer exists. In other words, any U.S. or Israeli attack on the Iranian nuclear program will target a latent capability that might eventually lead to a weapon protected by Barak’s ill-defined zone of immunity, but not an actual nuclear weapons program.

This is a tremendous shift by Israel over how we would know if Iran decides to pursue the bomb. Before the Obama administration decides to go to war, Congress, journalists, and U.S. citizens should demand answers to the following questions:

1. Are violations of the NPT, UN Security Council resolutions, and ongoing inadequate cooperation with the IAEA sufficient grounds for suspecting that Iran will soon achieve nuclear weapons capability?
2. Does the Obama administration accept Barak’s new principle, contradicting Clapper’s earlier assessment that the supreme leader’s decision is paramount?
3. It is unlikely that Iran would needlessly test a nuclear weapon, since it would not be required to verify that it worked. What sort of credible information will the Obama administration declassify and make public that would justify a preventive attack on Iran?

Micah Zenko is a Council on Foreign Relations Douglas Dillon Fellow in the Center for Preventive Action. His professional areas of expertise include conflict prevention; U.S. national security policy; military planning and operations; and nuclear weapons policy.

<http://blogs.cfr.org/zenko/2012/08/02/would-we-know-if-iran-decides-to-build-a-bomb/>

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Khaleej Times – U.A.E.
OPINION/Commentator

Of Chemical Armoury...

By Jonathan Power (POWER'S WORLD)
3 August 2012

The Syrian government says that, unlike Saddam Hussein, it won't use its sizeable stocks of chemical weapons on its own population, only on would-be attackers.

That's a comfort of sorts since nobody is going to attack it. Chemical weapons are regarded as weapons of mass destruction along with nuclear and biological weapons. Chemical agents like sarin that destroys the nervous system, VX and mustard gas can kill thousands of people in one blow.

If the UN were mandated to send in troops or the US did so unilaterally their forces could be devastated by a chemical attack. The main worry- as such an invasion is highly improbable unless a dying regime or a new regime asks for help is that the chemical stockpiles could fall into the wrong hands — the hot-headed thorn in Israel's flesh, Hezbollah in southern Libya or Al Qaeda, which the regime say are part of the opposition.

The Syrian weapons have been developed despite the UN's Chemical Weapons Convention, which all the countries of the world have signed up to bar six or eight. Syria has argued that it has to deter the nuclear and (probably) chemically armed Israel.

According to the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament chaired by the late Swedish prime minister, Olof Palme, "The suffering can be extraordinary and the deaths or associated illnesses terrifying. A single tactical aircraft, shell or missile armed with nerve gas could threaten 50 per cent casualties over an area of about two square kilometres."

Chemical weapons haven't been used by Western countries, except Italy, since World War 1. There were hundreds of thousands of casualties. Italy used them against Ethiopia in 1935. A few years ago the US supplied 2,000 gas masks to Chad because of its fear of a Libyan attack by the forces of Muammar Gaddafi.

A few years ago Israel did seriously consider a pre-emptive attack on a Syrian chemical weapons' factory. President Bill Clinton ordered the bombing of a factory in Sudan where he suspected, wrongly, that Al Qaeda was manufacturing chemical weapons.

Unsurprisingly the American and European military brass decided a long time ago that they were against their use. The Geneva protocol of 1925, signed by 100 countries, banned first-use of chemical weapons- then mustard gas and chlorine. But forbidding first-use did not prohibit stockpiling or responsive use. And after all chemical weapons were so much cheaper to manufacture than conventional weapons.

It took over twenty years of plodding negotiations in the 1970s, 80s and 90s to formulate a treaty that would outlaw the weapons altogether. The main East-West stumbling block was disagreement over "adequate verification", in particular the need for on site inspection. But in 1986 the Soviet Union dramatically changed its approach to verification and accepted it. Then the US followed a couple of years' later when it revealed the exact location of America's plants manufacturing chemical weapons.

Another obstacle that was only slowly overcome was the chemical industry, which professed to be worried about "house secrets". But too many companies exported large quantities of "fertilizer ingredients" to Iran, Israel, Libya, Syria and Iraq and had a good idea that the quantities purchased were out of proportion to the amount of grain and vegetables produced.

Richard Nixon, the much maligned and disgraced American president, was the man who surprisingly set the ball rolling towards the Chemical Weapons Treaty. In 1969 he announced his unilateral decision to destroy US stockpiles of

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biological weapons, bombs filled with infectious diseases far more potent than chemical weapons. Nixon was prompted by their unpredictability — the fact they could destroy people but not tanks, planes and artillery and, not least, that they blur the line, as chemical weapons do also, between conventional and nuclear war. Nixon's decision brought the long stalled biological arms' negotiations for a treaty outlawing them to a speedy conclusion. Spurred on by the biological weapons treaty, the treaty outlawing chemical weapons was gradually negotiated and opened for signatures in 1993 and came into effect in 1997.

The six or eight countries, which still retain them, of which Syria is one, are truly outlaws. They should now be publicly named and shamed by the UN's secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon. And the Western and Middle Eastern countries and Russia should put their heads together on a common policy to get hold of and neutralise Syria's chemical weapons when the moment of necessary action arrives.

Jonathan Power is a veteran foreign affairs commentator.

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