

India and United States consolidate strategic partnership

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The two countries will address all maritime threats, including piracy and armed robbery at sea; threats to safety of ships, crew, and property as well as safety of navigation; transnational organised crimes in all dimensions; the illicit trafficking in weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems, and related materials; environmental degradation; and natural disasters.

The Framework Maritime Security Cooperation envisages regular discussion by the two countries on maritime security policy and its implementation.

It envisages cooperation in the following areas:

- Prevention of, and response to, acts of transnational crime at sea such as piracy, armed robbery at sea, smuggling, and trafficking in arms and drugs.
- Search and rescue operations at sea.
- Exchange of information and facilitation of technical assistance on combating marine pollution.
- Enhancement of their cooperative capabilities in the maritime domain through technology cooperation and defense trade, as well as an appropriate agreement on logistic support.

Both Prime Minister Singh and President Bush described as "historic" the understanding reached on the separation of India's civilian and military nuclear facilities.

The understanding paves the way for the "full implementation" of their July 18 commitment on civilian nuclear cooperation.

The "nuclear deal", which marked the high point of President Bush's maiden visit to India from March 1 to 3, must now receive the

nod of the United States Congress.

Washington will also have to persuade the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to change its guidelines.

Once these steps are achieved, India, on its part, would go to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to come up with "an appropriate India-specific safeguards agreement" for its nuclear energy programme.

Explaining the import of the deal, President Bush said: "What this agreement says is that things change, times change. I've always said this is going to be a difficult deal for the Prime Minister to sell to his Parliament, but he has shown great courage and leadership. It's (also) difficult for the American President to sell to our Congress. There's some people who just don't want to change with the times... This agreement is in our interests. I am confident I can sell this to our Congress."

President Bush, the first U.S. President to visit India in six years, also travelled to Hyderabad during his three-day trip.

He was hosted for lunch by Prime Minister Singh and at a banquet by President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam at the magnificent Mughal Gardens of Rashtrapati Bhavan, the presidential palace in New Delhi.

President Bush also addressed an elite gathering at the historic Purana Qila in the capital.

Highlights of Joint Statement

- Agreed to intensify efforts to develop a bilateral business climate supportive of trade and investment.
- Sought to expand cooperation in agriculture.
- Agreed on India's participation in FutureGen, an international public-private partnership to develop new, commercially viable technology for a clean coal near-zero emission power project.
- Welcomed the creation of the Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate.
- Welcomed India's interest in the Integrated Ocean Drilling Program.
- Announced the establishment of a Bi-National Science and Technology Commission which the U.S. and India will co-fund.
- Welcomed the U.S. Department of Commerce's plan to create a license exception for items that would otherwise require an export license to end-users in India engaged solely in civilian activities.
- Agreed to expand bilateral efforts and continue cooperation in the area of medical research and strengthen technical capacity in food and drug regulation in India.

President Bush on Afghanistan during his India visit

At Purana Qila, New Delhi on March 3

...The world has benefitted from the example of India's democracy, and now the world needs India's leadership in freedom's cause. As a global power, India has an historic duty to support democracy around the world. In Afghanistan, which I just visited on Wednesday (March 1), the world is beginning to see what India's leadership can accomplish. Since the Taliban was removed from power, India has pledged \$565 million to help the Afghan people to get back on their feet. Your country has trained National Assembly staff, and developing a similar program for the Assembly's elected leaders. You recently announced that you'll provide an additional \$50 million to help the Afghans complete their National Assembly building. After so many years of suffering, the Afghan people are reclaiming a future of hope and freedom, and they will always remember that in their hour of need, India stood with them.

India is also showing its leadership in the cause of democracy by co-founding the Global Democracy Initiative. Prime Minister Singh



President George W. Bush at the Purana Qila in New Delhi on March 3. (White House Photo)

and I were proud to be the first two contributors to this initiative to promote democracy and development across the world. Now India can build on this commitment by working directly with nations where democracy is just beginning to emerge. As the world's young democracies take shape, India offers a compelling example of how to preserve a country's unique culture and history while guaranteeing the universal freedoms that are the foundation of genuine democracies...

At Hyderabad House on March 2

...We are committed to promoting democracy worldwide. We are leaders in the United Nations Democracy Fund, which provides grants to help young democracies develop civil institutions in a free society. I particularly want to thank the Indian people and the Indian

government for supporting the new democracy in the neighbourhood, and that being the democracy in Afghanistan, where you've pledged \$565 million in reconstruction aid, plus \$50 million for the new national assembly building...