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U. S. to Assist India's Nuclear Weapons Program

On March 2, George Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh signed an agreement under which the U.S. government endorses and assists India's nuclear weapons program.

Under the accord, the U.S. will supply India with nuclear fuel for electrical generation, thereby freeing India to use its limited uranium reserves for nuclear weapons. Arms control specialists estimate that this will enable India to increase its production of nuclear bombs from 6-10/year to several dozen.

In addition, the U.S. endorses India's demand to keep 1/3 of its current and future nuclear reactors, including breeder reactors used to make fuel for nuclear bombs, free from any inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The deal blatantly violates several international and U.S. laws. The nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty forbids any country from helping another's nuclear weapons program. Several U.S. laws, including the Nonproliferation Act, also prohibit such export of U.S. nuclear fuel.

The U.S.-India nuclear deal again shows the utter hypocrisy and absolute lawlessness of U.S. imperialism. On the one hand, the U.S. government rants and raves about the "danger of nuclear proliferation" to exert pressure against Iran, North Korea and other countries. On the other hand, it helps strengthen the nuclear arsenals of its allies, such as Israel and India.

The constant goal of U.S. imperialism is to maintain and strengthen its nuclear superiority and use this as a threat against any and every country outside its "orbit." Commenting on the nuclear pact with India, the Defense Department said it opened the path for more U. S.-Indian military cooperation, saying "the prospects are promising, whether in the realm of combat aircraft, helicopters, maritime patrol aircraft or naval vessels" (quoted in the NYT 3/3/06).

Huge Protests Against Bush's Visit to India



Hundreds of thousands of people in Bombay, India protest against President Bush's visit, on Thursday, March 2, 2006.

On March 1-3, George Bush visited India and was greeted with protests by hundreds of thousands of people.

On March 2, over 700,000 people demonstrated in the city of Bombay, and over 50,000 turned out for a protest in Calcutta. Speakers denounced Bush and condemned the Iraq war. On March 1, over 300,000 people staged an anti-Bush and anti-war demonstration at the sprawling Ram Lila grounds near the main commercial area of New Delhi.

Plans for Bush to address the Indian parliament and to speak publicly before huge crowds were shelved due to widespread opposition from elected lawmakers as well as the Indian masses. Many mosques throughout the country unfurled banners protesting his arrival.

In all the protests, a sea of banners reading "Killer Bush Go Home" could be seen, and chants of "Bush -- World's Biggest Terrorist" were heard everywhere. March organizers in New Delhi stated "We will protest against the U.S. policies, especially the inhuman atrocities in Afghanistan and Iraq, a likely invasion of Iran and its continuing support to Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine."

Over 71,000 police, armed with rifles, were put on high alert and deployed throughout New Delhi during the visit, and Bush's ho-

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Death and Torture in U.S. Prisons In Iraq and Afghanistan

A group of human rights lawyers released a report on February 22 showing that nearly 100 people died while in U.S. custody in prisons in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The report, issued by the New York-based group "Human Rights First," analyzed military documents and press accounts of 98 deaths and concluded that torture by U.S. military personnel caused eight deaths and may have been responsible for four others.

According to the report, 34 detainee deaths fell under the military's definition of a homicide and the facts in another 11 cases suggested death resulted from physical abuse or harsh conditions of detention. The report also criticized military investigations of the deaths, including failure to interview key witnesses or collect and preserve evidence usable by prosecutors, poor military record-keeping and failures by some commanders to report deaths in a timely way. It said civilian policymakers have given unlawful guidance on detainee treatment.

"It's my opinion that torture became a common Army practice in Iraq because generals and colonels and majors allowed it to occur, even at times encouraged it. "Soldiers became torturers because their chain of command chose to look the other way," said retired Army Brig. Gen. David Irvine, an adviser to Human Rights First.

The report condemns the Bush administration, saying "only 12 detainee deaths have resulted in punishment of any kind for any U.S. official" and "no civilian official or officer above the rank of major responsible for interrogation and detention practices has been charged in connection with the torture or abuse-related death of a detainee in U. S. custody."

An Italian news agency reports that on February 27, more than 1,000 prisoners in a jail in Kabul, Afghanistan rebelled in protest over maltreatment and overcrowding. The prisoners, being held without trial, demanded to be released or taken to court.

The prison was surrounded by hundreds of national police and U.S. troops. At least 4 inmates are reported killed and 38 injured.

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tel was sealed off. Police were also placed on high alert throughout Indian Kashmir, and in villages throughout the Kashmir valley.

Iranian President Defends Right to Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy

On March 2, speaking in Kuala Lumpur, the Iranian President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, reiterated Iran's right to peaceful nuclear development and vowed to continue with such activity.

Speaking to a large gathering, he said: "They say that Iran should not have access to such activities and this is a logic of intimidation.... "If a nuclear program is bad, why do some countries have it" he asked. "When they do not have answers, they voice concern over Iran and this is not logic any more, it is intimidation," he said.

"Some have tried to prevent Iran to tread the path of progress and development in the past 27 years," he added.

He further added that the activity of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was politically motivated. "Regrettably most international organizations have turned into political organizations and the influence of great powers prevents them from taking fair and legally sound decisions," Ahmadinejad said. "The IAEA's treatment of the Islamic Republic of Iran is politically motivated."

Ahmadinejad said he wanted talks, but Iran would not give in to big power dictate. "We never seek a fight, we believe in dialogue," the Iranian president said.

More "Anti-Personnel" Gunships Deployed in Iraq

On March 3, the Associated Press reported that the U.S. Air Force has begun moving heavily armed AC-130 airplanes -- the lethal "flying gunships" -- to a base in Iraq to provide commanders with new tools to counter the Iraqi resistance.

Four of these four-engine gunships are expected to be deployed in the next few days.

The AC-130s, 98-foot-long planes that can slowly circle over a target for long periods, contain a potent arsenal -- 40 mm cannon that can fire 120 rounds per minute, and big 105 mm cannon, normally a field artillery weapon. The plane's latest version, the AC-130U, known as "Spooky," also carries Gatling gun-type 20 mm cannon.

The AC-130 gunship was designed to unleash saturation firepower on massed troops. The U.S. army has also repeatedly used these weapons to target heavily populated civilians areas -- in Vietnam entire villages and towns were wiped out by these gunships. In Iraq, they were used in the November 2004 destruction of Fallujah. Ever since the war against Vietnam, these gunships have been known as "anti-personnel" weapons -- weapons explicitly used to target civilian populations.