

NORTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR TESTS

JAYADEVA RANADE

The second nuclear test by North Korea, officially called the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), on May 25, 2009, has far-reaching implications. With this test, North Korea brazenly challenged the US-led Six-Party Talks begun in 2003 and introduced a new dimension into the talks. While the DPRK's first test, conducted on October 9, 2006, had stunned the world, this latest test has changed the geo-political structure in Northeast Asia. By the end of June and once North Korea tests its long range Taepodong-II missile, it would have enlarged the arc of countries directly threatened by its capabilities to include parts of the USA. The two nuclear tests have together additionally graphically highlighted the dangers of the uncontrolled spread of nuclear weapons technology and programmes to unstable regimes and exposed the vulnerabilities of the nuclear non-proliferation regime ushered in by the USA in 1968.

North Korea has kept the world on tenterhooks for many years now, using its nuclear weapons technology and programme as a bargaining chip. Its reputation as an unpredictable regime with a dubious track record has ensured that it would receive world attention. North Korea's main objectives included getting formal recognition of the US and benefits

* Shri **Jayadeva Ranade** is a former Additional Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India and Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

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from the consequential inflows of investment and aid. The framework of the Six-Party Talks comprising all the concerned parties, namely, the USA, Russia, Japan, South Korea, China and, of course, the DPRK, was set up in 2003 to negotiate a mutually acceptable formula and one which would get the DPRK to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme. The talks, which lurched over five years, were complicated from

the start by the competing interests of each of the six participants. The main objectives of each of the participants are briefly enumerated in the succeeding paragraphs.

For the US, the Six-Party Talks were begun to make North Korea's nuclear programme and weapons capability a multinational problem instead of only a bilateral issue between the US and North Korea. The USA's primary concern is North Korea's nuclear weapons programme and to prevent the possible sale of nuclear materials and technology to hostile states and terrorist groups. It is insistent that the DPRK accepts International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) monitors as part of any agreement. An additional concern is the safety of the approximately 25,000 US military personnel stationed in South Korea and who would be in the direct line of fire. Once North Korea tests its long range Taepodong-II missile by the end of June, US concerns will mount as portions of the US too will be vulnerable to a DPRK missile strike. An unstated beneficial spin-off of the successful conclusion of talks would be the extension of US influence right across the Korean Peninsula, bringing the US up to the doorstep of China and Russia.

North Korea, or the DPRK, is the key player in the talks. It is economically the worst off and has a regime which is dependent on one individual. It has the least to lose in the event of failure of the talks or a clash with South Korea. It is these fears that Pyongyang is playing upon. Pyongyang's demands are for normalised and formal relations with the USA and a pledge of non-aggression from the US, which has over 25,000 troops stationed in South Korea.

In addition, it wants to be dropped from the USA's "sponsors of terrorism" list and wants unfettered aid from all the participant countries in the talks. It also hopes for completion of the two light water reactors promised under the Agreed Framework to meet its energy requirements. The scope of its demands would have changed now after the second nuclear test.

South Korea or the Republic of Korea (ROK) has a different set of objectives. It prefers a cautious and 'softer' approach which takes into account the discomfiting reality of physical proximity. Seoul also wants to avoid straining people-to-people relations. This approach is dictated by the emotional feeling among South Koreans, who view the North Koreans as their poorer cousins. Seoul has carefully studied the economic fallout of the collapse of the Berlin Wall and wants to stave off any possibility of a huge economic burden occasioned by either a sudden regime change in the North or emergency influx of refugees from the North. Taking into account these considerations, ROK President Kim Dae Jung in 1998 articulated and adopted the "Sunshine Policy," intended to effect a gradual warming of relations between the two halves and usher in a "state of peaceful coexistence." His successor, Roh Moo Hyun carried on this policy, which has now been cast aside by the current ROK President.

Japan has serious concerns about North Korea's growing nuclear weapons and missile capability. The testing of increasingly longer range missiles by North Korea, pointedly aimed into the Sea of Japan, has alarmed Japan as its mass population centres are within missile strike range as are the US troops deployed there. The North Korean missile tests have triggered occasional debate about whether Japan should acquire deterrent capability. Tokyo feels it can also use the platform afforded by the Six-Party Talks to get North Korea to admit its guilt in the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korean 'spies'

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in the 1970s and 1980s. The relationship between the Japanese and Koreans is steeped in deep dislike, which is a complication and has prompted Pyongyang to, at times, demand the exclusion of Japan from the talks.

Russia is a country which is now directly affected by North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programme as parts of Russia's population centres are within North Korea's strike range.

Russia also faces the prospect of refugee inflows in the event of a sudden regime change in North Korea or a food and energy famine. In the beginning, though, Russia's objective was mainly to try and regain some of its lost influence in North Korea. Russia has anticipatedly opposed tough sanctions against North Korea.

China's role and objectives in the Six-Party Talks are multiple. It is in a unique position to facilitate the talks and is using them to demonstrate that it is a responsible international power and supports nuclear non-proliferation. At the same time, the talks are a useful diplomatic tool for Beijing to improve relations with the USA and highlight that it would be a useful partner in the Asia-Pacific region. Among the entities participating in the Six-Party Talks, China has the maximum influence on North Korea. In addition to the fraternal ties which both sides used to, till some years ago, officially describe "as close as lips to teeth," China has maintained Party-to-Party and leadership ties with North Korea and its leaders. Beijing has hosted Kim Jong Il and impressed upon him the benefits of economic reform and special economic zones. It is North Korea's main supplier of food grain and coal and was responsible for bringing North Korea into the Six-Party Talks. But China has also been slow to move forward in the talks and has had to be often nudged by Washington. It remains opposed to stringent sanctions against North Korea and while there are real fears of a refugee influx in case of a famine or collapse of the regime, these would appear to be exaggerated. An important consideration for Beijing is the strategic need to retain influence over North Korea and prevent the

entire Korean Peninsula from coming under US influence, which would be the case if the US and DPRK reach an agreement. Beijing will delay this eventuality as long as it can, especially as it views the Korean Peninsula as within its sphere of influence, and a buffer with the US.

Some digression is necessary here to illustrate the threat to the South from North Korea's million-strong armed forces. North Korea additionally has reserve units of 7 million. Almost 70 percent of the DPRK's armed forces, most of which are ground forces, are deployed at the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) or within ninety miles of the DMZ. North Korea's military doctrine relies mainly on the use of its infantry and artillery. North Korea's deployment in this sector consists of 700,000 troops, 8,000 artillery systems and 2,000 tanks. These are protected by over 4,000 underground facilities. These troops are stiffened by the Special Operations Forces, of which there are 25 regiments. It is these forces that are expected to be the mainstay of any battle and penetrate into the southern half to wreak havoc in the ROK's cities, including Seoul. North Korea relies a lot on stealth and has constructed more than 11,000 underground facilities across the country to protect its armed forces and equipment from surveillance. In addition, North Korea has built, and continues to build, underground tunnels to destinations in the South. Each year, a number of these tunnels are discovered exiting well inside the South. There has been emphasis on communications and frequency hopping radios allow soldiers to communicate in secure mode. Fibre optics have been installed between fixed facilities and deployments. These indicate a preparedness for sudden quick operations. North Korea's defence budget is, however, estimated at a paltry US\$ 5 billion in contrast to South Korea's defence budget of US\$ 29.5 billion. In addition, South Korea has US troops and equipment for its defence. South Korean and US military commanders both, however, are apprehensive that in case the DPRK launches a sudden swift attack, the South will not have more than a few minutes to

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organise its defence. In case the North decides to launch an offensive with missiles, then the response time will be less and defence of the population centres, including Seoul, would be at high risk.

The recent test is evidence that the DPRK has set a high benchmark for delivery by the Six-Party negotiators and that dismantling of its nuclear weapons programme will, in all probability, henceforth not be on the agenda for discussion. The timing of the test coincides with

the increased strain on North Korea's internal power structure. Food shortages have been acute for the past some years, necessitating widespread rationing. A few years ago, the situation was so acute that the North Korean leadership had to drastically reduce rations distributed to civilians in order to ensure adequate supplies for personnel of the Korean People's Army (KPA). Energy, especially for heating, has similarly been in very short supply and this has enhanced Pyongyang's dependence on Beijing. China is North Korea's main source of food and coal and almost 70 percent of its coal supplies come from China. But North Korea's populace has weathered very difficult conditions earlier too, including almost near-famine conditions a couple of years ago. Kim Jong-Il's regime has been helped in maintaining social order by the consistently vice-like iron grip it has retained over the country's propaganda apparatus, security and armed forces.

The succession issue, however, looms larger over North Korea and would have been a major consideration for the conduct of the tests at this time. Reports circulating over the past many months claimed that "Dear Leader" Kim Jong-Il had suffered a stroke, was hospitalised and was unable to discharge his official functions. Months later, to dispel doubts that he was incapacitated, the official print and TV media showed visuals of Kim Jong-Il attending official public functions. While this was designed to project that Kim Jong-Il was fit and in charge, the visual images, however, showed an obviously infirm Kim

Jong-Il. These indirectly confirmed that he was unwell. The images signalled that a succession could be likely. There have been no signs of dissension in the KPA, where factions are known to exist, and neither any overt indications of concern at the impending succession in the Korean Workers Party (KWP). Nevertheless, reports emanating from South Korea and elsewhere strongly suggest that the succession process has begun and Kim Jong-Il's younger son, 25-year-old Kim Jong-un, is the likely successor. South Korean intelligence reports that personnel in North Korean Embassies took an oath of allegiance to Kim Jong-un on May 25, 2009.

Kim Jong-un, who attended school incognito in Switzerland, is said to resemble his father, is short and is fond of basketball. There are, however, other relatives in the wings who could, at some stage, complicate matters although that is assessed as very unlikely. They are Kim Jong-Il's eldest son, 37-year-old Kim Jong-nam, and the second son, Kim Jong-chol. Of them, the eldest son, Kim Jong-nam is reputed to haunt the gambling tables at Macau and once earned the ire of his father for trying to visit Disneyland in Japan on a forged passport. The second son, Kim Jong-chol has been described, by Kim Jong-Il's Japanese cook, Fujimoto, who escaped and fled back to Japan, as "effeminate" because of the side effects of a drug he took to bulk up for sports. Despite the absence of signs of factionalism or infighting, there can be little doubt that the situation inside North Korea is quite fragile.

Conscious of the potential for trouble, Kim Jong-Il has taken precautionary steps. Among some recent appointments of his loyalists to key positions is the elevation of his brother-in-law Jang Sung-taek. The appointment has been made to ensure support for Kim Jong-un. Jang Sung-taek has won Kim Jong-Il's trust and has been steadily promoted after his rehabilitation in 2006. Reports, though unconfirmed, indicated that when Kim Jong-Il was incapacitated due to a stroke in August 2008, his brother-in-law Jang Sung-taek officiated. Subsequently, in November 2008, he was promoted and appointed Director of the powerful Organisation and Guidance Department of the Korean Workers Party (KWP) Central Committee (CC) and he now controls the country's and Party's security and administrative apparatus.

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The DPRK's latest nuclear test occurred in this backdrop. It was marginally more powerful than the first and, according to a Russian Defence Ministry spokesman, the force of the blast is estimated at 10-20 kilotons or 0.8 kilotons more than the blast in 2006. The magnitude of the earth tremor on this occasion was measured in the US, Japan and South Korea at between 4.5 to 5.3. The first test caused a 3.6 magnitude tremor. The data seems to corroborate the DPRK's claim that the underground nuclear test was "part of measures to bolster up its nuclear deterrent" and "on a higher level in terms of its explosive power and technology of its control." Experts are still evaluating whether the test was a success. The tests have anticipatedly triggered critical responses from around the world, with unprecedented tough responses from China and Russia. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on May 29, 2009, circulated a draft resolution calling upon member-nations to implement the sanctions approved earlier. South Korea, which had thus far resisted signing the Proliferation Security Initiative, tipped over and joined the initiative. Both these elicited a belligerent response from Pyongyang, which particularly warned that any attempt to stop or search its ships would result in war.

There were indications that the DPRK was preparing to augment its capability and conduct another nuclear test, flouting international opinion. Pyongyang had a year ago blown up the cooling tower at its main nuclear weapons plant and had launched a long-range rocket in April 2009. This prompted the UN Security Council to urge stricter sanctions against North Korea. Earlier, in 1998, North Korea had test-fired a multi-stage rocket over Japan, leaving no doubt that it had the capability to strike Japan. This time again, barely hours after the nuclear test, North Korea test-fired a series of three missiles toward the sea between North Korea and Japan. The missiles had a range of 130 km or 80 miles, sufficient to strike targets in South Korea,

Japan and parts of Russia and China. In the following days, North Korea unleashed another three short-range missiles from a base on the central-eastern coast into the sea opposite Japan. The firing of the missiles was unmistakably intended to demonstrate that North Korea has acquired a nuclear weapon delivery capability.

Doubts exist as to the number of nuclear weapons in North Korea's arsenal. Estimates in 2003 were that North Korea had one or two nuclear weapons, but after it expelled the inspectors, it is believed to have harvested fuel for six or eight nuclear weapons. Whether these latest tests have depleted North Korea's nuclear stockpile is unclear. Pyongyang has announced though, simultaneous with its missile launches, that it plans to resume extracting weapons-grade plutonium at its Yongbyon complex.

The consequences of North Korea acquiring a nuclear weapons capability are alarming and dangerous. The countries affected immediately and directly will be South Korea and Japan. There is long-standing enmity between North Korea and Japan and the present government in Seoul has reversed the earlier "Sunshine Policy" designed to improve relations with the North. Additionally, both countries are allies of the US. Consequent to the DPRK's nuclear tests, there are presently in Northeast Asia no other nuclear powers. China and Russia are the only two nuclear weapon states bordering the DPRK. There is bound to be concern in Seoul and Tokyo and a debate is likely to recommence regarding the desirability of acquiring deterrence capability, especially in Tokyo. Japan is already sufficiently technologically advanced to cross the threshold and become a nuclear weapon state, except for the popular revulsion towards nuclear weapons.

The rest of the world could be affected too. Parts of Russia and China are within the DPRK's strike range. Once North Korea tests its long range Taepodong-II missile, portions of the US will be within its strike range, a prospect that has long worried US military and strategic planners. North Korea's is a fragile regime, dependent on a single individual and without a proven mechanism for stable succession, though on the last occasion, it was peaceful. The regime's track record is not at all encouraging and confirms that

More disturbing is the nexus among the DPRK, China and Pakistan and the manner in which they have ignored missile proliferation concerns. A prime example is the illegal and clandestine collaboration with Pakistan in a Chinese-brokered missiles-for-nuclear technology deal.

it is a renegade regime which has engaged in actions not acceptable in international relations, including planning assassinations of foreign political leaders. In 1983, the DPRK planned the assassination of South Korean President Chun Doo Hwan in Rangoon, Burma, but he escaped as he was delayed in a traffic accident, while 17 South Korean officials were killed in the bomb explosion. In 1987, Pyongyang organised the bombing of Korean Airlines flight 858. The South Korean government suspects that North Korea was responsible for the assassination of its diplomat in Vladivostok in 1996.

More disturbing is the nexus among the DPRK, China and Pakistan and the manner in which they have ignored missile proliferation concerns. A prime example is the illegal and clandestine collaboration with Pakistan in a Chinese-brokered missiles-for-nuclear technology deal. By this arrangement, North Korea shipped ready-to-be-assembled Nodong-I and Nodong-II missiles to Pakistan, which renamed them as the Hatf series of missiles. The DPRK received, in return, technology for building its nuclear weapons programme. Actually, the DPRK-Pakistan military cooperation relationship can be traced back to 1971, when Pakistan assisted the DPRK with secret deliveries of Scud-C missiles to Iran. Direct DPRK-Pakistan military cooperation, however, commenced in the late 1980s. A few years ago, a North Korean freighter carrying voluminous detailed drawings, missiles (M-9) in ready-to-be-assembled condition and spares for the missiles, was intercepted off Kandla port in Gujarat, India. Interestingly, both Pakistan and North Korea have followed a similar approach with regard to acquiring a nuclear weapons capability. They have ensured that the delivery system is ready simultaneous with the nuclear weapon.

North Korea's recent test also resurrects memories of the role played by China and Pakistan in helping the DPRK acquire nuclear weapons capability.

All three nations would, by definition, be nuclear weapon proliferators. China, keen to overtly demonstrate to the US its willingness to abide by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), ceased directly selling missiles to Pakistan in 1991 after being sanctioned by the USA. China's missile sales were, incidentally, the key to Pakistan's Ghauri series of missiles. While China did not sell missiles directly to Pakistan thereafter and assured the US that it would abide by the MTCR, it did ensure though that Pakistan's missile programme did not stall. It mediated an arrangement between it and the DPRK. North Korean missiles, which are modelled on Chinese missiles, began being transported by air to Pakistan, overflying China. Pakistan expanded its military cooperation with the DPRK during Benazir Bhutto's two terms as Prime Minister (1988-90 and 1993-96) and sent its nuclear scientists to North Korean nuclear facilities for training. North Korean scientists and engineers, in turn, visited Pakistan's uranium enrichment plant at Kahuta. A.Q. Khan was among those who travelled to Pyongyang with designs and parts for the centrifuge. A.Q. Khan travelled to North Korea 13 times during this period. Benazir Bhutto, as Prime Minister, also visited North Korea and has been reported as personally carrying centrifuge designs in a CD to Pyongyang. In indirect confirmation of the Pakistan Army's complicity in the arrangement, Pakistan Army Chief Gen Karamat visited Pyongyang in 1997. Suspicions persist as to whether these old links have actually withered away. With such a track record, there is a high possibility that if North Korea feels isolated or its fiscal situation becomes precarious, it could either sell its nuclear weapons technology or the nuclear weapons. Revenues from its arms sales presently are estimated at between US\$ 200 million to US\$ 1 billion. There would be incentive to increase these earnings and willing buyers would be the terrorist outfits or other countries aspiring to be nuclear weapon states.

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The US Administration is preoccupied with the developments in Afghanistan and Pakistan and Pyongyang has certainly taken advantage of this, as well as the advent of a new US Administration, in timing its nuclear test. The US' options currently appear limited, unless it plans a quick surgical strike to take out North Korea's nuclear weapons related sites. After the nuclear test by North Korea in 2006, this option was actively explored. US spy planes have regularly probed North Korean defences and radar and identified the vulnerabilities. US spy ships regularly trawl off North Korean waters, at times intruding close to the shore. Intelligence relevant to a military strike would, therefore, be available. The hermetically sealed nature of North Korea's actual power structure and decision-making process, however, would inhibit realistic planning of the repercussions of a strike on North Korea's nuclear facilities. Any such action would need to strike multiple targets, be very stealthy, swift and extremely accurate. Military planners would have to ensure that they eliminate or disable the missile launch bases and storage sites, the nuclear facilities and nuclear weapon storage sites in North Korea. The construction over the years by North Korea of a number of underground missile launch sites and bases complicates planning and execution of a sudden strike. A majority of these sites are located on the east coast and target Japan and US military facilities there. A new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) base called Tongchang-ri was detected earlier in 2009 and found to be near completion. It is about 50 miles from the Chinese border. Another new secret site is located on the west coast. There are also at least 22 nuclear facilities at 18 sites across North Korea. Most of them are in the west and concentrated in Pungang-chigu, Yongbyon-kun and North Pyongan Province. Additionally, simultaneous action would be required, with the attendant risk of collateral damage, to frustrate a ground attack by the North Korean Army and North Korean Special Forces. There would be no second chance. The window for such action is rapidly shrinking, however, and it will in all likelihood be

opposed by China and Russia. The US could well acquiesce to Beijing's pressure because it currently seeks China's assistance in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

It is likely that, wanting to avoid entanglement in yet another theatre, US President Obama would opt for tightening the sanctions against North Korea. Demands from military and strategic analysts in the US for tough military action against North Korea are, however, increasing. Tokyo and Seoul would remain averse to escalating tension in the region, especially with a regime as unpredictable and fragile as North Korea's is today. At the same time, the US will increase pressure for sanctions and resumption of talks. The talks, once they start, are likely to be protracted and prospects for their success do not appear to be promising unless the US and other parties are willing to yield bigger concessions on tangibles to the DPRK. With these tests, Pyongyang has signalled that it continues to be willing to negotiate, but that its nuclear weapons programme will not be dismantled. It might be willing, though, to accept some form of safeguards.

China's sincerity in issuing the latest warning and how far it is willing to go along with the US to punish North Korea is questionable. Though China has been assisting the US and other powers to resolve the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula and received kudos from the US for its efforts, Beijing remains reluctant to see a real warming of US-DPRK relations. It does not want to see normalisation of US-DPRK relations and, consequently, have a Korean Peninsula dominated by the US adjacent to it. At the same time, it has been unable to prevent North Korea going nuclear, a development it views as unfavourable. Beijing will, nonetheless, try to ensure that its relationship with North Korea is not damaged and that it continues to exercise some influence over the North Korean regime.

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A South Korean academic recently hinted at China's likely stance when he suggested that Pyongyang could be following India's example and will strive to get a similar nuclear deal. In the context of this remark and surrounding circumstances, it is useful to recall China's statements issued at various stages of the Indo-US civilian nuclear agreement. These comments could presage efforts by China to support the case of its clients viz. Pakistan and the DPRK, and secure for them a deal similar to the Indo-US civilian nuclear agreement.

China has opposed the Indo-US civilian nuclear agreement from the time it was proposed. Beijing's opposition to the agreement was enunciated in the official media, including the daily newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party, the *People's Daily* and by military journalists. Chinese arguments were along predictable lines, but they all reflected Beijing's unease at the marked improvement in India's ties with the US that the agreement signalled. The Chinese also realised, as the agreement progressed towards conclusion, that India had been able to effectively leverage its strengths and was driving a hard bargain with the US. A *People's Daily* commentary on August 14, 2007, declared that "the US has made big concessions and met almost all India's requests." It assessed that "a substantial change has taken place in the nature of India-US relations despite possible twists and turns in the future." The commentary accused the US of double standards and sought to buttress the arguments of India's 'Left' by claiming that the US was trying to use "India as a tool" to achieve its strategic aims. This was followed by another *People's Daily* commentary on August 30, 2007, which advanced similar arguments. On September 1, 2008, the *People's Daily* carried another commentary written by Fan Jishe, a member of China's prestigious Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. This commentary was blunt and declared that "whether motivated by geopolitical considerations or commercial interests, the Indo-US agreement has constituted a major blow to the international non-proliferation regime." Fan Jishe asserted that India would "enjoy the benefits of being a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty without being bound to accept the corresponding restraints." He accused the US of "double standards" and urging the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to open a "back door" for India.

On October 26, 2008, Xin Bejian, a military journalist and member of a Chinese military educational facility, said the US had styled itself as a “guard” of non-proliferation, but had this time itself sought to make an “exception.” He said this would lead to “a series of negative consequences” and call into question its status as a “guard.” The article asked how the US could now hope to win the support of the international community in its efforts to get Iran and North Korea to dismantle their nuclear

programmes. Even more significantly, Xin Bejian reiterated a warning issued earlier by China. He stated that “now that the US buys another country in with nuclear technologies in defiance of the international treaty, other nuclear suppliers also have their own partners of interest as well as good reasons to copy what the US did.” He added the warning that the US action would have a domino effect and lead to global proliferation and competition. Xin Bejian’s meaning was clear. The reference was to Pakistan and North Korea, both best described in this context as China’s clients. Beijing was already pushing Pakistan’s case with Washington and urging the Bush Administration to extend to Pakistan the same arrangement as it intended to India. While it did not formally take up North Korea’s case, the slow pace at which the North Korean nuclear issue was proceeding was making it apparent that a stage would soon be reached where North Korea would decline to dismantle its nuclear programme. This has now happened.

China could well receive indirect support from an unexpected quarter. Both the so-called “ayatollahs” of non-proliferation viz. Robert ‘Bob’ Einhorn and Michael Krepon are more influential with the advent of the Obama Administration in the US. Bob Einhorn has, in fact, been appointed an envoy in the US State Department. In his testimony before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee in April 2006, Einhorn asked, “How can the US seek exceptions to the rules for India without opening the door to exceptions in less

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worthy cases—indeed, without weakening the overall fabric of rules the US worked so hard to create?” Asking how other countries would view the US action of “giving India the opportunity to have its cake and eat it too”, Einhorn added that it would be difficult for the US not to “convey the impression to countries contemplating the nuclear option that, if they opted for the nuclear weapons, the world would eventually accept them into the nuclear club.” Now that the Indo-US civilian nuclear agreement has been signed by both parties, there are limits to what Bob Einhorn and others could do. But they and the groups representing their viewpoint could be expected to push for amendments to the India-US civilian nuclear agreement.

The next steps in the resolution of the nuclear issue in the Korean Peninsula are expected to be subject to protracted negotiation. Indications are that US President Obama will push for tougher sanctions and, if the US seeks to closely monitor North Korea's fiscal transactions, then Chinese banks, which are the ones North Korea generally uses, will be under scrutiny. This might compel China to lean harder on Pyongyang. It is likely, however, that China will advocate Pakistan's and North Korea's case with Washington, albeit behind closed doors. The US would then have to decide whether additional exceptions should be made, which would irreparably weaken the international non-proliferation regime and implicitly convey a green signal to other aspirants to nuclear weapon status like Iran, etc.