

Experts divided on the fate of Indo-US nuke deal
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New Delhi: A day after India and U.S. signed an MoU on energy cooperation, experts here said that the intent behind it appears progressive, but its future depends on the mutual agreement on the nitty-gritty.

Establishing a correlation with the nuke deal, one expert said that "in the beginning the July 18 Indo-US civilian nuke deal seemed momentous but the details now emerging suggested a reduction in significance."

P.R.Chari, former Director and Research Professor of the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, told ANI that he is optimistic about the present agreement and described it as "a good thing." Commenting on the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) he said, "It would reduce nuclear proliferation."

Defence analyst C. Rajamohan also called the GNEP as "a great opportunity for India to contribute to the world."

He also said, "Unlike in the past 30 years, the Bush administration for the first time has accepted India's potential in the field of harnessing nuclear energy from Thorium and enlisted India in the list of the nations with secure, advanced nuclear capabilities."

On the controversies surrounding the Indo-US nuke deal Chari said that "rather than US, it is Anil Kakodkar, the Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) who is changing the goal posts."

"The civilian nuke deal has not made enough progress and there is all-round confusion surrounding the deal," he added

The nuke deal, he emphasized initially focussed on providing uranium supplies to fuel the Tarapore Atomic power plant, but the present situation suggests a deviation from that issue to one relating to the separating civilian and military nuclear facilities, a bone of contention between the two countries.

He suggested that the Indian government could be more transparent in dealing with the U.S. on the civilian nuclear deal.

The Indian Government could be come out clean on the issue of the list, which it has submitted to Washington.

Kakodkar's statement, he said gives the impression that the consultation mechanism adopted for the nuclear deal between the government and the different departments is unsatisfactory. Therefore the Prime Minister should now inform the Parliament rather than the press about the progress in the negotiations as on date.

Chari described the July 18 agreement as a 50-50 deal, but when asked to comment the materialisation of the final deal, he said that would show whether India has conceded than it got.

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