

NRI PULSE

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N-Deal Unlikely Now: Yashwant Sinha

“Deal will not pass during
the tenure of the present
Indian government & the
Bush administration...”

BY MUBASHRA SIDDIQUI

Atlanta: The India-US nuclear deal is not likely to go through under the current governing administrations of both countries, according to a leading Indian politician and Member of Parliament.

In an exclusive interview with *NRI Pulse*, Former External Affairs Minister and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Yashwant Sinha said that despite the US urging India to act fast on the deal, it would not happen any time soon.

“In my opinion, the nuclear deal will not go through during the tenure of the present Indian government and the Bush administration in the US,” Sinha said.

He pointed out that while the current government could disregard the opposition it faces from his party and still go ahead with the deal, it seemed unlikely that this would occur as it is also being opposed by major factions within it.

“The new [Indian] government which takes office in May 2009 and the new US administration that comes to power in January will have to look at the deal,” Sinha said.

Sinha, who remained positive about his party's return to power, also added, “If we are the government at that point of time, we would talk to the US administration and persuade them to confine the whole deal to civil nuclear energy cooperation...”



Photo by Mubashra Siddiqui

The BJP leader was in Atlanta recently and spoke at a dinner reception held in honor of him by the Georgia-Indo American Chamber of Commerce (GIACC). Sinha - who has served as the Finance Minister of India - also talked briefly about the Indian economy and stated that its outlook remained positive despite a general global slowdown.

While he acknowledged the US economy as currently being in a contraction mode and agreed that it would have some adverse effects on India, he stated these would be relatively less “because of domestic growth.”

Sinha said, “Unless there is a catastrophe that cannot be predicted...the basic paradigm [to] higher growth will stay.”

Full event report on Pg 3...

Rice Shortage Hits US Indian Stores



New York: (IANS) After big retail chains like WalMart, some Indian grocery stores too have begun rationing the sale of rice following shortages caused by export bans by countries including India.

A spokesperson for Patel Brothers in Jackson Heights, New York, confirmed that customers now cannot buy more than two bags of rice.

“All the rice we stock comes from India,” the spokesperson told IANS. “But with India banning export, we will have problem replenishing our stock.”

In the process, prices have doubled over the past few months, he added.

Narinder Singh, who owns Hicksville Subzi Mandi, said there were queues of people at his grocery store in Long Island, New York, buying 3-4 bags of rice and wheat each.

Last month, Wal-Mart's cash and carry division, Sam's Club, announced a cap of four bags of rice per person to prevent supplies from running short. Rival Costco did the same in parts of California.

India's restriction on export of all rice, except basmati, is being blamed in part for the rice stampede. Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer sought to calm the frayed nerves of consumers, saying there was no shortage of rice in the US.

Atlantans React to Rice Shortage- Pg 3

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