

Non-proliferation regime puts curbs on responsible powers: Manmohan

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CHENNAI, OCT. 23. The Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, today put India on the roadmap to energy security when he inaugurated the construction of the Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) at Kalpakkam, about 60 km from here.

This heralds the beginning of the commercial phase of the country's fast breeder reactor (FBR) programme.

The FBR forms the second phase of the nuclear programme of the Department of Atomic Energy.

The PFBR will be constructed at a cost of Rs. 3,492 crores and it will start generating electricity from 2010.

Dr. Singh also presided over the function to commemorate the DAE golden jubilee.

The Prime Minister, in his inaugural speech, said that India was "a responsible nuclear power" and criticised the "technology denial" in the "important field" of generation of nuclear electricity. He attacked "the limitations of the present non-proliferation regime" and called it an "ineffective non-proliferation regime."

He called upon "other advanced nuclear powers, and all those who have a stake in the future of nuclear energy, to come together for a constructive dialogue to evolve more effective measures that would stem the tide of nuclear proliferation without unduly constraining the peaceful uses of nuclear power."

He said the limitations of the present non-proliferation regime should not be further accentuated by artificial restrictions on genuine peaceful nuclear applications. He added bluntly: "Constraining those who are responsible amounts, in effect, to rewarding those who are irresponsible."

The international community, he said, must face up to the implications of this choice. India was willing to its share of international obligations provided its legitimate interests were met. India had actively embraced globalisation. There was no reason why nuclear energy production should be an exception, he added.

Dr. Singh made it clear that "India will not be the source of proliferation of sensitive technologies."

India would also ensure the safeguarding of those technologies that it already possessed. "We will remain faithful to this approach, as we have been for the last several decades. We have done so despite the well-known and glaring examples of proliferation which have directly affected our security interests," he said.

## Pat for DAE scientists

Despite "externally imposed limitations and constraints," the DAE was able to consolidate on its indigenous capabilities. The Prime Minister said: "The founding principles of 'Atoms for Peace' were subverted by restrictions derived from an ineffective non-proliferation regime." Despite the limitations, the DAE scientists had excelled time and again in demonstrating the country's indigenous capability that measured up to the highest standards in global nuclear industry.

India was a responsible nuclear power and it was conscious of its responsibilities that came with the possession of advanced technologies, both civilian and strategic. "While we are determined to utilise our indigenous resources and capabilities to fulfil our national interests, we are doing so in a manner that is not contrary to larger goals of nuclear non-proliferation," he said.

'Historic occasion'

Anil Kakodkar, chairman, Atomic Energy Commission and Secretary, DAE, described the construction of the PFBR as "a historic occasion." The fast breeder reactor programme had the potential to generate "a few hundred thousand megawatts" of nuclear electricity. The Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research had designed and developed the PFBR.

S.K. Jain, chairman and managing director, Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited, said the DAE's latest public sector undertaking called Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Limited (BHAVINI) would build the PFBR and other breeder reactors on the anvil.

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