

We want clean NSG exemption: Kakodkar

Special Correspondent

HYDERABAD: Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Anil Kakodkar said here on Wednesday that India wanted the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to give a clean exemption without any condition to enable it participate in international civil nuclear cooperation.

He was talking to reporters on the sidelines of a national symposium on 'Significant milestones in the growth of geochemistry in India.'

"We are talking about cooperation with all interested partners. But the fact still remains that any one of them will get translated into reality only after the NSG changes its guidelines. We want a clean exemption for India without any condition. When that happens this will be possible and for that to happen, we have to go through all these processes step-by-step," he said.

Rice's remarks

Asked about the recent remarks of U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice that any agreement between India and the NSG would be acceptable to the U.S. only if it was consistent with the Hyde Act, he said: "What we have negotiated is 123 Agreement." India was looking forward to the decision of the U.S. Congress and approaching the issue in a positive manner.

Dr. Kakodkar said India was looking forward to the opening up of the international civil nuclear cooperation, while keeping the country's requirements "intact." New Delhi was talking to several countries for procuring additional uranium and reactors. Everything would depend on the NSG.

With the current uranium reserves adequate to meet the requirement of generating 10,000 MW, he said that if an equal quantity could be explored in the country, then an equal capacity could be added during the first stage itself of the three-stage nuclear power programme.

The new mine in Singbhum district of Jharkhand would start production in a few months. The unit's capacity was being expanded simultaneously by 50 per cent. "It should give us immediate relief."

The Atomic Minerals Division was open to participation of India-based foreign agencies in uranium exploration under the Government of India control.

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