

We to come,  
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likely



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

We were advised to divert our resources to the building of an infrastructure for the economic development of the country, rather than waste precious resources on grandiose schemes. The country has to continue emphasis on the development of nuclear energy for the following reasons: (i) India is poor today mainly because we missed the industrial revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries. We are lagging behind the West by almost a century. Our economic progress has not kept pace, with the changing needs because of lack of advanced technology. In the years to come, increasing use is likely to be made of nuclear power for developmental projects. If we do not keep up with the world in the field of nuclear technology, we will never be able to catch up with the developed world. Late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had repeatedly reminded the nation of the need to leap-forward into the twenty-first century.

It is possible only if we catch up with the technology and scientific developments of the industrialised world. (ii) Possession of nuclear power is synonymous with the big power status. India sooner or later has to play a more dominant role in the world politics keeping in view our size, resources and population. Explosion of a nuclear weapon by China in 1964 provided a big boost to her prestige. Likewise, India's explosion did raise our prestige in the third world. (iii) Subsequent events have proved that the nuclear powers are very reluctant to part with their nuclear technology. The utility of nuclear research for peaceful uses is too well known, and unless India develops expertise of its own through experiments, we will not be able to exploit our resources fully. Apart from its use in defence, nuclear experiments can help the country in a variety of ways.

(iv) It has been argued that India would have safeguarded her security better by signing the Non- Proliferation Treaty. We are not in a position to defend ourselves in the event of nuclear attack by another country, and by not signing the Treaty we forfeit the nuclear umbrella obligatory for such signatories in the treaty. Past experience shows that no nuclear power would be willing to incur retaliation by another nuclear power, unless her own interests were directly threatened. In the event of an emergency, we may be left high and dry by our so-called friends and benefactors. (v) It was the boast of Z. A.

Bhutto, the former Pakistani Prime Minister that in its 1000 years war with India, Pakistan was willing to eat grass but determined to make nuclear bombs. Benazir Bhutto repeated this boast and threat of her late father during her speech on Dec. 27, 2007 prior to her assassination. The Pakistani quest for the atomic bombs at all costs moral or immoral was known to all. Its research and expertise, though clouded in secrecy, was common knowledge. The Pak scientists must be fairly advanced in their technology; otherwise they could not have squared the series with India within fifteen days of the former exploding a device on May 11, 1998. Their nuclear scientist A.

Q. Khan is suspected by the U. S. to have probably sold the nuclear technology to Libya and Iran. This was presumably done to fill his and the army officers coffers. He was released by the Court in early 2009. It was disclosed by Dr.

Khan that during the Kargil conflict he was sent by Gen. Musharraf to N. Korea to acquire missiles apparently in exchange of nuclear technology. (vi) India will have enough weapon-grade plutonium stock to produce about 50 nuclear bombs according to a report by a strategic think-tank funded by the Ministry of Defence. The report, however, points out that in the absence of tests after 1998; India could only make bombs similar to the ones developed by the Americans over 50 years ago.

Dr. Ramanna, the eminent nuclear scientist, is of the opinion that India's present nuclear capability is sufficient to act as "deterrence" and there is no need to conduct further nuclear tests. According to him, if India wants to go for a weapon at some stage, it is possible in a reasonable period of time.