

INTERNATIONAL

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SCO Defence, Foreign Ministers' meeting begins in Beijing The meetings of the defence and foreign ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), being attended by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, began here. The two meetings are being held around the same time. Sitharaman who arrived here last night attended the defence ministers meeting and Swaraj took part in the foreign ministers meeting. The two meetings were being held as part of the preparations for the SCO summit to be held in the Chinese city of Qingdao in June. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to attend it.

(S.,24/04)

Threat of nuclear weapons use growing, UN warns

A top UN official denounced growing rhetoric claiming that nuclear arms are necessary and warned that the risk of such weapons being used was on the rise. "The threat of the use, intentional or otherwise, of nuclear weapons is growing," the UN's top representative for disarmament affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, told a preliminary review meeting of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The NPT, which was introduced at the height of the Cold War a half century ago, seeks to prevent the spread of atomic weapons but also puts the onus on nuclear states to reduce their stockpiles. But speaking at the opening of the Geneva meeting, Nakamitsu warned that "the world today faces similar challenges to the context that gave birth to the NPT."

(P.,24/04)