

Daily Times, 1 January 2005

### **Pakistan and India exchange lists of nuclear installations today**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and India will exchange lists of their nuclear installations on Saturday under an agreement that prohibits the two countries attacking each other's nuclear installations, Foreign Office sources said on Friday. The lists will be exchanged by diplomats in New Delhi and Islamabad simultaneously. According to the agreement signed on December 31, 1988 and enforced on January 27, 1991, Pakistan and India have to inform each other on January 1 every year about the nuclear installations and facilities mentioned in the accord.

Dawn, 1 January 2005

### **ARD, MMA to launch joint movement**

ISLAMABAD, Dec 31: The Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD) chairman, Makhdoom Amin Fahim, on Friday said the ARD and Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA) had decided in principle to launch a movement on the uniform issue. Talking to reporters at the PPP media centre, Mr Fahim said an ARD meeting had been called at Sukkur on January 2 where this issue would be raised and a final approval would be sought to chalk out a joint strategy to launch a combined struggle with the MMA for upholding the Constitution and restoration of democracy.

Dawn, 1 January 2005

### **US endorses Musharraf's policies ( Anwar Iqbal)**

WASHINGTON, Dec 31: US Secretary of State Colin Powell has not only endorsed President Pervez Musharraf's decision to retain his uniform (briefly reported in Dawn's Friday issue) but has also backed his policies even on issues that are considered sensitive in America, such as granting of amnesty to Dr A.Q.Khan and his handling of the military campaign in Waziristan. Mr Powell, in an interview to a group of French journalists in Washington late Thursday afternoon, rejected a suggestion that Gen Musharraf breached any law in wanting to retain his position as the chief of his country's powerful army. President Musharraf, he said, had only exercised the option the Pakistani parliament had given him.

The News, 3 January 2005

### **FC man killed in clash with Afghan soldiers**

PESHAWAR: At least one Pakistani paramilitary soldier was killed in an exchange of fire with Afghan militiamen near the border town of Saidgai in North Waziristan on Sunday morning. The firing followed crashing of a US drone in the area, when the soldiers approached the wreckage. Requesting anonymity, a military official in Peshawar said one member of the Frontier Corps was killed in the exchange of fire. However, there were reports that three soldiers had been killed. The military officer didn't confirm reports that US and Afghan National Army soldiers had fired at the Pakistani paramilitary personnel, when they tried to get near the wreckage of a US Predator drone that had crashed there during the night.

Dawn, 3 January 2005

### **Bomb blast in Turbat**

QUETTA, Jan 2: An explosive device went off in the early hours of Sunday damaging the boundary wall of the headquarters of Makran Scouts in Turbat town. No casualty was reported. Sources said that the locally-made device exploded at 2am. Meanwhile, a man identifying himself as Col Doda made phone calls to newsmen at the Quetta Press Club saying that the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) was responsible for the Turbat blast. "The BLA accepts responsibility for this blast," he said and added that such acts would continue till the acceptance of their demands.

Dawn, 3 January 2005

### **MMA ready to re-open debate on amendment**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 2: The Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal is ready to negotiate with the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy to work out a plan for struggle for restoration of 1973 Constitution and to reopen debate on the 17th Amendment in order to launch a joint movement against President Gen Pervez Musharraf. Talking to Dawn by telephone on Sunday, MMA President Qazi Hussain Ahmed said: "We have decided to negotiate with the ARD on all issues, including the 17th amendment, in order to remove all the misunderstandings on constitutional issues."

The News, 3 January 2005

### **Pakistan to get Iranian gas ( Mariana Baabar)**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Iran have agreed that if India does not come on board and continues to create obstacles, Tehran is ready to extend the proposed gas pipeline only into Pakistan. Recent meetings between Iran-Pakistan, Iran-India and Pakistan-India appear to reflect this view, as both Iran and Pakistan are engaged in expert-level consultations to ensure that this project kicks off as quickly as possible. After the recent visit of the Iranian foreign minister where detailed discussions on the subject were held, now the Iranian minister for petroleum would be visiting Pakistan to move forward this joint project, the final announcement of which would be taken at a political level either in Islamabad or Tehran.

Daily Times, 4 January 2005

### **ARD will support MMA in repealing 17th Amendment (Qamar Jabbar)**

LAHORE: The Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (ARD) will support the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) if it cooperates with the ARD in moving a bill to repeal the 17th Amendment, MMA sources told Daily Times on Monday. Sources said that the ARD had formulated a four-point agenda to make a grand alliance with the MMA. The four points are: removing the president, mid-term polls in 2005, appointment of an independent election and ending negotiations with the ruling party.

They said that the agenda would be discussed during the ARD meeting to be held on January 11 in Lahore.

The Frontier Post, 4 January 2005

**Provincial autonomy under consideration, says Shujaat** (Nasir Kazmi)

ISLAMABAD: President of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain Monday said the federal government was seriously considering to grant autonomy to all provinces. "Decision in this regard will be taken soon after consultation with parliamentary sub-committees", he told journalists after meeting of parliamentary committee on Balochistan. He hoped that senator Sanaullah Baloch and his party would join the committee soon. Two special sub committees set up under Wasim Sajjad and Mushahid Hussain Sayed were giving final shape to their recommendations in this regard, he disclosed.

Dawn, 4 January 2005

**Probe into soldier's death sought**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 3: Pakistan has asked US-led coalition forces in Afghanistan to investigate a border skirmish in which one of its soldiers died and three others were wounded, a military spokesman said on Monday. Mortar rounds were fired from Afghanistan into Pakistani's rugged North Waziristan region on Sunday, injuring four soldiers, one of whom later died, Major General Shaukat Sultan told AFP. "Since the fire came from Afghan side, an area under the control of coalition authorities, that is why we have asked them to investigate and find out who fired from their side," he added.

Dawn, 4 January 2005

**Three blasts rock Quetta, Kalat**

QUETTA, Jan 3: Three bomb blasts rocked Quetta and Kalat townships on Monday night. However, police reported no loss of life or damage to property. A bomb was planted near the boundary wall of the Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education in Jinnah Town in Quetta. Two powerful explosions also occurred in Kalat separated by brief intervals breaking the windowpanes of the Mess of the Frontier Corps and many nearby houses. The first explosion occurred near the FC Mess.

Dawn, 5 January 2005

**Border clash leaves 15 Afghans dead: Pakistani killed in 'unprovoked firing'** (Pazeer Gul)

MIRAMSHAH, Jan 4: Fifteen Afghan troops and one Pakistani soldier were killed on Monday when Afghan militia forces started firing from across the border and Pakistani security forces responded it with their mortar guns, officials said on Tuesday. Talking to this correspondent, a paramilitary officer said that about 15 Afghan soldiers were killed in the clash. Sources said the Afghan troops started unprovoked firing on the Pakistani paramilitary forces in which one soldier was killed and three others were wounded. They said that soon after the paramilitary troops had come under fire from the Afghan side, Pakistani security forces returned the fire.

The Frontier Post, 5 January 2005

**Plan to revoke FATA status**

ISLAMABAD (inp): The government has started working on a strategy to assimilate the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) into the mainstream national territory by converting these into settled areas, official said here on Tuesday. The sources said that the decision was taken on the consent of President Pervez Musharraf who also issued instructions to annul Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) law immediately administering the region since 1947. The Labor laws of central government have already been enforced in FATA and the rest of the laws are being imposed periodically during the last year.

Dawn, 5 January 2005

**Karo-kari law signed by president**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 4: President Gen Pervez Musharraf has signed the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2004, which was passed by the National Assembly on Oct 26, 2004, and by the Senate on Dec 7, 2004. The law provides for the enhancement of punishment of honour-related crimes committed in the name of Karo Kari, Siyah Kari and similar other customs or practices. The law will also help stop the misuse of Blasphemy Law and Hudood Ordinance as the level of investigation is being raised to that of the Superintendent of Police.

The News, 5 January 2005

**Two LJ men held for killing Aga Khan workers in Chitral**

CHITRAL: Police on Tuesday claimed to have arrested two activists of the banned Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militant outfit for their involvement in an attack on the offices of Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS) and killing two of its workers a few days back. Addressing a press conference, District Police Officer Chitral Muhammad Saeed Khan said the accused had admitted their involvement in the attack on the AKHS offices. The killers belonged to a banned militant organisation, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and acquired training in Afghanistan, the DPO said.

Dawn, 6 January 2005

**Pakistan proposes separate project: Gas pipeline**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 5: Islamabad has told Tehran that Iran-to-Pakistan gas pipeline should be pursued as a stand-alone and independent project in case India is not ready to join it, it is learnt. Iran has agreed to the proposal but has expressed its desire to give India a chance to join the project to ensure a bigger market and reduce overall cost of the project, sources said. These

options were discussed here on Wednesday at a meeting between oil and gas ministers of Iran and Pakistan. "During the meeting, both the sides agreed to take steps to initiate (the project) without further delay as Iran wants a market for its gas and Pakistan needs to meet its shortfall in the coming years," said the official statement.

Dawn, 6 January 2005

#### **Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997: President signs bill**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 5: President Gen Pervez Musharraf accorded assent on Wednesday to the bill amending the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997. The amendments were introduced to take cognizance of terrorist acts such as bomb blasts, firing and use of explosives in mosques, Imambargahs, churches and other places of worship and court premises. It enhances both minimum and maximum punishment for acts of terrorism, limits the adjournment of cases and provides for appeals to be decided by special benches in high courts. The federal government is provided the power to transfer cases from a court in one province to another.

Dawn, 6 January 2005

#### **US forces not to be deployed in Wana** (Syed Irfan Raza)

ISLAMABAD, Jan 5: Interior Minister Aftab Ahmed Sherpao on Wednesday ruled out any possibility of deployment of US forces in Wana, an area considered to be the hub of terrorists and foreign militants. Talking to reporters at a function organized by the Pakistan People's Party in Rawalpindi the interior minister said neither the US force had launched any operation in Wana nor there was any plan for their deployment in that area in future. He termed a report from Washington published in local newspapers on Tuesday "untrue" which hinted that President Gen Pervez Musharraf was trying to strike a deal with Benazir Bhutto to counter any opposition on the deployment of US forces in tribal areas in near future.

The News, 6 January 2005

#### **Fresh checks on AQ Khan aides** (Naveed Ahmad)

ISLAMABAD: While the movement of Dr AQ Khan stands restricted over the past one year, now the government has also barred over a dozen other under-investigation KRL employees from travelling to other cities without appropriate permission. The interior ministry has directed through an order to all the under-investigation KRL officials not to travel to any other city without prior permission from the director-general of security at the Khan Research Laboratory. Moreover, the same order issued in late December directs them not to meet or exchange any information with any foreigner. The 'suspects' of alleged illicit transfer of nuclear technology have also been asked by the interior ministry to remain prepared for appearing before the investigation teams.

Daily Times, 7 January 2004

#### **Aziz and Shujaat to discuss reconciliation with opposition**

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Pakistan Muslim League (PML) President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain will soon hold meetings with opposition parties including the Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) and the PML-N to discuss national issues, it is learnt. Well-placed Muslim Leaguers cited the release of PPP leader Asif Ali Zardari and removal of the names of Mr Zardari and Hamza Shahbaz, the son of PML-N President Mian Shahbaz Sharif, from the Exit Control List as confidence-building measures by the government and said there would be more such moves in the first quarter of the new year. They said Prime Minister Aziz and Chaudhry Shujaat would tell the opposition that they should protest government policies peacefully.

The News, 7 January 2004

#### **Baglihar dam talks break down**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and India failed to reach agreement during the final round of talks on Thursday aimed at resolving their dispute over a dam New Delhi is building in the occupied Kashmir, Pakistani officials said. "The gulf in the differing perceptions and interpretations could not be bridged," Foreign Ministry spokesman Masood Khan said here after Thursday's negotiations. "The most desirable course for India now is to suspend work on the dam." There was no immediate reaction from India. An official statement about the outcome was expected to be issued on Friday in New Delhi, where the meeting was held. Khan said Pakistan would likely take the dispute to the World Bank for arbitration. He did not specify a date.

Dawn, 7 January 2004

#### **New weapons and equipment for Creeks Battalion**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 6: The Creeks Battalion of the Pakistan Navy has been reinforced with new weapons and equipment for combat patrolling, anti-aircraft defence, anti-terrorism and anti-smuggling operations, officials told Dawn. The battalion had been raised in 1999 for the defence of Sir Creek Area on the south-eastern border. "The battalion's capability to undertake anti-terrorism operations, stop smuggling and check illegal activities on Pakistan's coastal belt, has been enhanced with the induction of a Military Assault Boat (MAB) and a Hovercraft," said an official. Answering a question, the official said three more Hovercrafts and MABs were in the pipeline. Pakistan negotiated the deal for four Hovercrafts with the UK.

The News, 7 January 2004

#### **Security beefed up for Chinese engineers after tribal protests in DG Khan**

MULTAN: Authorities have deployed additional police and paramilitary troops to increase security for Chinese engineers at an oil field and a refinery in a tribal region near Dera Ghazi Khan after local tribesmen staged protests to demand jobs, an official said on Thursday. No threats have been made against the Chinese at the oil field, said Suleman Chaudhry, the Dera police

chief. As a precautionary measure, security for Chinese engineers at the oil field and a nearby refinery and their residences has been stepped up and more police and paramilitary troops now accompany them when they travel to and from work.

The News, 8 January 2005

**Pakistan to move WB in two weeks** (Mariana Baabar)

ISLAMABAD: After waiting for five years and exhausting every bilateral effort over "dilatory tactics" by India, Pakistan is expected to write to the World Bank in about two weeks to intervene between Islamabad and New Delhi in the Baglihar dam issue. "In the next 15 days there will be a lot of pressure on the government and since it has done its homework, it will be formally requesting the World Bank for intervention. Ambassador Gen (retd) Jehangir Karamat will then follow up Pakistan's case in Washington," sources in the Law Ministry told The News.

Dawn, 8 January 2005

**MMA holds protest rallies in Karachi: Govt policies slammed**

KARACHI, Jan 7: The Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal on Friday observed a protest day during which demonstrations were held at more than 500 places, including mosques, as part of its countrywide campaign against President Gen Pervez Musharraf. In its campaign, the MMA is now demanding that Gen Musharraf resign from both the offices of president and chief of army staff. Its drive is also aimed at defending the country's ideological 'frontiers', defending the blasphemy and Hudood laws, restoration of the religion column in passports, defending the non-secular character of the syllabuses, and ensuring non-interference in seminaries.

Daily Times, 8 January 2005

**MMA and ARD likely to sign protest agreement by end of January**

ISLAMABAD: The Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) and the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (ARD) may sign a written agreement in the third week of this month to start a unified campaign against President Pervez Musharraf. Zafar Iqbal Jhagra, the ARD secretary general, told Daily Times that there would be a complete code of conduct between the ARD and the MMA for further cooperation. "The key point of the agreement would be that no political party would make deals with the military establishment in future," he explained. Liaqat Baloch, MMA deputy secretary general told Daily Times that it was possible that under that agreement a constitutional committee would be formed to review all the constitutional amendments including the 17th amendment.

The News, 8 January 2005

**Cabinet body backs religion column** (Shakil Shaikh)

ISLAMABAD: A five-member cabinet committee Friday unanimously recommended to Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz for insertion of religion column in the machine-readable passport (MRP). The committee led by Defence Minister Rao Sikander Iqbal held a meeting here. It was constituted following a division in the cabinet on religion column issue. A member of the cabinet committee said the prime minister can implement the recommendations of the committee without referring these to the cabinet, if he wishes so.

Dawn, 8 January 2005

**ADB offers assistance for new projects**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 7: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has agreed to offer \$400 million new assistance to Pakistan to help undertake bigger infrastructure development projects including 'the Karachi Mega City Renewal Project'. Talking to Dawn here on Friday, the Resident Representative of the ADB, Marshuk Ali Shah said that an ADB mission was arriving in February to sign the agreement with the government for providing new infrastructure funding to Pakistan. He said that his Bank had decided to facilitate public-private financing facility for Pakistan to help resolve major problems relating to infrastructure development across the country.

The News, 10 January 2005

**Rules being changed to check unruly MNAs** (Rauf Klasra)

ISLAMABAD: The president and the speaker National Assembly are being given unprecedented powers to suspend and stop salaries and allowances of unruly members of the National Assembly. Massive changes in at least 292 rules of procedures and conduct of the National Assembly will be finalised by an 18-member special committee today. According to changes, the president can now use these sweeping powers to suspend the rowdy MNAs particularly during his address to the joint sitting. He can also stop their salaries if he identifies MPs creating trouble during his speech to the joint sitting and can give their names to the speaker to suspend them.

Dawn, 10 January 2005

**Baglihar issue to indirectly affect CBMs: FO**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 9: Foreign Office Spokesman Masood Ahmed Khan has said Pakistan did its best to resolve the Baglihar issue with India through talks but could not succeed. Talking to the BBC he said India-Pakistan talks on the Baglihar project ended without yielding any result. To a question about the impact of the Baglihar issue on the ongoing talks process between the two countries he said not directly but 'it can put indirect impact on it because efforts are being continued to create atmosphere of confidence between the two countries'.

Dawn, 10 January 2005

**Fresh troops for S. Waziristan** (Dilawar Khan Wazir)

WANA, Jan 9: Military authorities have sent fresh troops to the Sara Rogha area to the South Waziristan Agency where wanted militant Abdullah Mehsud is believed to be hiding. According to witnesses, some 30 vehicles, backed by armoured personnel carriers and artillery, were seen leaving Wana Scout camps at around mid-day. Sources said that fresh contingents has been sent to Sara Rogha in the remote Laddah sub-division, about 80 kilometres east of Wana.

Daily Times, 10 January 2005

**2 FC personnel among 6 killed in Sui attack**

LARKANA: Unidentified people blew up a gas pipeline again at Sui gas field on Sunday, killing six people including two Frontier Constabulary (FC) personnel and seriously injuring 11 others, Online reported. Several men attacked the gas field with mortars, rockets and machine guns, which lasted for more than six hours. A 36-inch diameter pipe supplying gas to the Punjab and Sindh was destroyed in the attack and gas supply to Multan, Faisalabad, Muzaffarabad and other cities of both provinces was suspended.

Dawn, 9 January 2005

**11 killed in Gilgit violence**

GILGIT, Jan 8: Eleven people were killed, including six members of a family, after riots broke out in Gilgit on Saturday following an armed attack on a Shia leader, officials said. A curfew was imposed in the town after the unrest. Armed men opened fire on Agha Ziauddin, the leader of Millat-i-Islamia, when he was travelling in his car to a mosque. He was wounded, but his two guards were killed, Gilgit Deputy Commissioner Sajid Baloch said. Mr Ziauddin's supporters took to the streets after the ambush, going on a shooting and burning spree that forced the government to deploy troops and enforce a curfew in the city with orders to shoot on sight anyone caught outside. No one claimed responsibility for the attack on Mr Ziauddin.

The News, 9 January 2005

**FC personnel killed, 9 hurt in Quetta attack** (Muhammad Ejaz Khan)

QUETTA: A personnel of the Frontiers Corps (FC) was killed and another nine injured in exchange of heavy fire between paramilitary troops and unknown armed men at Sui, an official of the Sui administration told The News on Saturday. "The exchange of fire late on Friday also damaged a gas pipeline," said Assistant Commission Sui Dr Akbar Haripal. However, he said that the damaged pipeline was later repaired. The Sui gas field came under another attack on Saturday night when unknown armed men fired dozens of rockets, disrupting the supply of gas and electricity to Sui Tehsil of Dera Bugti district.

The News, 9 January 2005

**Islamabad, Kabul rush more troops to border** (Behroz Khan)

PESHAWAR: Uneasy calm prevail on the Pak-Afghan border, as Islamabad and Kabul have increased the number of troops on both sides of the porous border amid reports that coalition forces have come under fresh attack in Khost province of Afghanistan on Saturday. Reports reaching from eastern Khost province of Afghanistan suggest that a military jeep of the coalition forces was destroyed in a remote-controlled mine causing damage to the vehicle and inflicting casualties on the US and its allies. Sources close to Khial Baz, chief of security of the 25th Division, said that more than 150 troops have been sent to the Pak-Afghan border on Saturday, where the two sides clashed this week.

Dawn, 9 January 2005

**Govt aims at all-party code of conduct: Polls to be held in 2007 - Shujaat** (Ashraf Mumtaz)

LAHORE, Jan 8: Ruling PML president Chaudhry Shujaat Husain says Gen Pervez Musharraf wants all political parties to sign a code of conduct so that the 2007 general elections are held peacefully and in a democratic way. Talking to Dawn at his Gulberg residence on Saturday, he said the president also wanted the ruling party and the opposition to have identical views on Kashmir, Iraq, Afghanistan and other important issues. But he made it clear that for the sake of national reconciliation the general elections would 'not' be advanced nor opposition parties given representation in the government.

Dawn, 9 January 2005

**Japan to resume \$500m assistance** (Sher Baz Khan)

ISLAMABAD, Jan 8: Japan has agreed to resume Pakistan's \$500 million annual assistance under the Yen Loan Package and Official Development Assistance (ODA) from March. The resumption of the loan package and the ODA grant will bring to an end the economic sanctions Tokyo had imposed against Islamabad in May 1998 for conducting nuclear tests. The announcement in this regard was made by Mr Nishiyana, Director Trade, Japanese Ministry of Commerce. The resumption of financial assistance was conditional and attached to nuclear non-proliferation, peace, Pakistan's commitment to fight against extremism and modification of various regulations by it in view of the opening up of its various sectors to foreign investment, Mr Nishiyana said.

The News, 11 January 2005

**Pakistan, China to hold defence talks in Beijing**

BEIJING: Pakistan and China will hold ministerial level talks here this week to discuss their ongoing cooperation in the defence field. In this connection, Defence Minister Rao Sikandar Iqbal arrived here on Monday on a five-day visit on the invitation of his Chinese counterpart General Cao Gungehuan. Official sources told APP the visit is a part of regular exchanges between the

two countries to develop comprehensive partnership in all fields of bilateral interest, including the defence sector.

Daily Times, 11 January 2005

**Musharraf urges US to sell arms to Pakistan**

ISLAMABAD: President General Pervez Musharraf has urged the United States to help fulfil Pakistan's defence requirements in order to ensure a conventional weapons balance in the region. Speaking to General John Abizaid, US commander in chief of central command, Musharraf said that in the hunt for Al Qaeda and Taliban militants in parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan, the sovereignty of each country's borders must be respected. Musharraf told Abizaid that he hoped the excellent ties between the Pakistani and American militaries would grow.

Daily Times, 11 January 2005

**Manmohan likely to visit in March** (Mohammad Imran)

ISLAMABAD: Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is likely to visit Pakistan in March but the dates for the visit will be finalised during the visit by Indian Foreign Minister Natwar Singh. Sources told Daily Times that the Indian foreign minister would visit Pakistan in the third week of next month but the date of his visit had also not been finalised. Sources said that before the visit by the Indian prime minister and foreign minister, Khurshid Kasuri, the Pakistani foreign minister, was likely to visit India and the dates for his visit would be finalised this month.

Dawn, 11 January 2005

**More nuclear power plants to be set up: PAEC chief**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 10: The Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) plans more nuclear power plants as the country needs to end its dependence on oil, gas and other means of energy sources that produce 1.8 million tons of carbon dioxide per year damaging environment. He said nuclear power being a promoter of hi-technology augured well for overall development of the country and, "we look forward to its increasing contribution to the national grid."

The News, 12 January 2005

**Gas supply suspended as four die in Sui attacks** (Muhammad Ejaz Khan)

QUETTA: At least four people, including two personnel of the defence security guard (DSG), were killed and five others wounded during a heavy exchange of fire between security forces and unknown armed men in Sui on Tuesday, officials said. Due to attack on Sui gas complex, the Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) suspended gas supply to various industrial units in the country. Talking to The News, Sui administration officials said seven personnel of the DSG sustained multiple injuries when unknown armed men attacked their positions with rockets from different directions.

The News, 12 January 2005

**Peace with India still possible, hopes Musharraf**

ISLAMABAD: President Gen Pervez Musharraf has said that he is still optimistic about peace with India despite the failure of Baglihar dam talks as a lot of things are going on behind the scene. He, however, made it clear that "we will not accept any solution to Kashmir issue with the stamp of 'made in India' because this dispute could not be resolved without the involvement of Kashmiris and Pakistan." About recent rocket attacks on the gas fields of Balochistan, President Musharraf warned the trouble-makers and said that these elements were getting money and weapons from across the border.

Daily Times, 12 January 2005

**Benazir returning in Feb: Kharal**

TOBA TEK SINGH: Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) leader Khalid Ahmed Kharal claimed on Tuesday that party chairperson Benazir Bhutto would return to Pakistan by the end of February. "Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto will be coming back to Pakistan to lead her party workers, activists and supporters by the end of February this year," he told reporters.

The News, 12 January 2005

**Rs 1bn allocated for modernisation of Madaris: Qazi**

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Education Javed Ashraf Qazi has said the government has allocated Rs 1 billion for the modernisation of Madaris. Addressing an inter-provincial education ministers conference here on Tuesday the minister said the fund would be spent on the Madaris that wanted to introduce technical education in their institutions. Qazi said the government was laying special emphasis on promotion of technical education to meet the future challenges and reducing unemployment in the country.

Dawn, 12 January 2005

**UK likely to invest in Gwadar** (Saleem Shahid)

QUETTA, Jan 11: The British Minister of State for External Affairs and Commonwealth, Mr Douglas Alexander has said that more investors from UK would visit Gwadar and other areas of Balochistan to explore investment prospects. He said this during formal talks with Balochistan Chief Minister Jam Mir Mohammad Yousuf here on Tuesday in which they discussed various issues relating to the development of the province and matter of common interest. "We will arrange more visits of investors from UK to see the possibilities of the investment in Gwadar and other areas of Balochistan," Mr Douglas Alexander said and added that these visits would definitely increase British investment in the province.

The News, 12 January 2005

**UNHCR, govt agree on census of Afghans in Pakistan**

ISLAMABAD: The government and the United Nations refugee agency have agreed to conduct a census of all Afghans in the country during February 2005 which will provide the first detailed information on their number and background. The census, in which all Afghans who arrived in Pakistan after December 1, 1979 must participate, will assist the government and the UNHCR in developing policies for those Afghans who do not return home before the end of the UNHCR voluntary assisted repatriation programme in March 2006.

Daily Times, 13 January 2005

**Govt mulls military action in Balochistan: Sherpao** (Shehzad Malik)

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Aftab Sherpao said on Wednesday the federal government would take necessary punitive action, including military action, against the renegade tribesmen who attacked gas plants at Sui in Balochistan. The Balochistan government has been asked to review the situation and recommend to the federal government the action required to normalise the situation in the province, Sherpao said at a press conference. He said three officials of the Frontier Constabulary and four civilians had been killed and nine injured in shooting between security personnel and miscreants.

Dawn, 13 January 2005

**More talks linked to stoppage of work: Baglihar dam issue** (Qudssia Akhlaque)

ISLAMABAD, Jan 12: Islamabad will not hold further talks with New Delhi on the contentious Baglihar dam issue unless the latter suspends all construction work on the project site. This was stated by senior Pakistan government officials when their reaction was sought on India's latest offer for further discussions on technical aspects of the Baglihar hydro-power project. The officials told Dawn on Wednesday that Islamabad was absolutely clear that it would only attend another round of talks with New Delhi on the Baglihar when the latter stopped the construction work on the project. A foreign ministry official pointed out that this was the position Pakistan took also at the talks in New Delhi last week when India proposed the same. Not completely ruling out the possibility of further talks, a senior official said: "We are prepared for more talks if India agrees to stop construction on the project site."

The News, 13 January 2005

**ARD still indecisive about joint movement with MMA** (Asim Hussain)

LAHORE: The ARD leadership failed to chalk out a consensus modus operandi for cooperation with the MMA to launch joint movement against General Musharraf-led regime and delayed the final action in this regard. The ARD meeting held at Tehmina Daultana's residence here on Wednesday asked its coordination committee to sort out matters with MMA leadership and identify common goals for joint struggle against the rulers. "The coordination committee will first identify the common objectives of the possible cooperation between the two alliances before the joint movement is launched," ARD Central Information Secretary Zafar Ali Shah MNA said while briefing the newsmen. He said that ARD welcomed the anti-Musharraf movement by the MMA, but said the ARD reservations on some core issues still existed.

Dawn, 13 January 2005

**Germany, Japan seek support for UNSC seats** (Ihtasham ul Haque)

ISLAMABAD, Jan 12: Japan and Germany have sought Pakistan's active support to become permanent members of the United Nations' Security Council. Informed sources told Dawn said Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri, who is scheduled to visit Tokyo in February, would be briefed by the Japanese government to drum up Islamabad's support on the matter. When contacted Foreign Office Spokesman Masood Khan told Dawn that Pakistan had, in principle, decided not to support any country to become the permanent member of the Security Council. "In fact we are calling for doing away with the system of permanent seats and are urging for semi-permanent seats on rotational basis," he said. Moreover, he pointed out, ever since five new aspirants had made a bloc, there was no question of supporting them on the issue.

Daily Times, 14 January 2005

**Balochistan crisis deepens: Army action if situation deteriorates: Jam** (Mansoor Butt and Azizullah Khan)

GUJRAT/QUETTA: The government will send in the army if the situation in Balochistan worsens, the chief minister of the province said, as the prospects of more violence beckoned despite an uneasy calm on Thursday. "We cannot say regarding the involvement of a foreign hand in the worsening situation," Chief Minister Jam Yousaf told reporters in Gujrat. He said the weapons used by the attackers had been smuggled in from Afghanistan. Balochistan Governor Awais Ghani said the army was already in the province and would be sent into action if needed. More paramilitary troops were sent to Sui as helicopter gunships hovered over Dera Bugti and Sui on Thursday.

Dawn, 14 January 2005

**Opposition demands joint session for Balochistan debate** (Amir Wasim)

ISLAMABAD, Jan 13: The opposition has demanded a joint session of parliament to discuss the situation in Balochistan and help resolve the problem politically. Speaking at a press conference in his chamber at the Parliament House here on Thursday, Leader of Opposition in the Senate Mian Raza Rabbani asked the government to find a solution to the problem through a political dialogue instead of using military force. Mr Rabbani said if the government could not convene a joint session, it should summon separate sessions of the two houses. He said opposition parties were also considering an option to requisition the Senate session if the government continued to show its reluctance.

The News, 15 January 2005

### **Troops take up positions in South Waziristan**

TANK: Pakistan Army troops have for the first time entered the territory inhabited by the Shabikhel Mahsud tribe in the Srarogha area in South Waziristan and set up positions and a checkpoint to check the movement of suspected foreign and local militants. Tribal sources said the troops came from North Waziristan and took up positions in Janata area and erected a checkpoint on a bridge at Amadwam. The troops had started searching vehicles at the checkpoint in a bid to intercept militants, including tribals and foreigners. The Frontier Corps militia was already operating in some of these places. But it was the first time that regular troops had reached thus far in the unadministered Mahsud tribal territory in South Waziristan.

Daily Times, 15 January 2005

### **Balochistan govt rejects military action: Troops begin searching houses in Sui area**

SUI: Paramilitary troops on Friday launched a house-to-house search for weapons in Sui, as the Balochistan cabinet meeting in Quetta asked the federal government not to send in the military against the tribesmen, a majority of whom are Bugtis, AFP reported. Hundreds of troops were involved in the operation focussed on villages in the vicinity of the Sui gas fields to flush out weapons and secure the facility, official Abdul Samad said. Meanwhile, Balochistan Home Minister Shoaib Nausherwani said on Friday that the provincial cabinet was of the view that there was no need for a military operation and the dispute with the Bugti tribe should be solved through political dialogue.

Dawn, 15 January 2005

### **'US urged China not to help Pakistan'**

WASHINGTON, Jan 14: Over the course of three presidential administrations, US governmental officials repeatedly pressed the Chinese government to explain whether it was providing any assistance to Pakistan in the nuclear weapons field, but Chinese officials responded with denials and equivocation, says a new set of secret documents posted on the official website of the US National Archives. The documents say that recent evidence from Libya of Chinese-language material among the nuclear weapons-design supplied by the Khan network raises new questions about Chinese contribution to Pakistan's nuclear proliferation activities.

Daily Times, 16 January 2005

### **No new CBM before launch of bus service: Musharraf ( Mohammad Imran)**

ISLAMABAD: No more confidence-building measures (CBMs) with India will be introduced until the Muzaffarabad-Sirinagar bus service begins, President General Pervez Musharraf told Kashmiri leaders on Saturday. The president made clear to the Kashmiri delegation that Pakistan would not initiate any new CBMs until the Indian government started a Muzaffarabad-Sirinagar bus service which would allow Kashmiris to move across the Line of Control without a passport or a visa.

The News, 16 January 2005

### **20 suspects held in N Waziristan raid**

MIRALI: Troops raided a compound near the border town of Lowara Mandi in North Waziristan tribal agency on Saturday morning and arrested 18 Pakistani tribesmen and two Afghans suspects, tribal sources said. In another incident around the same time on the Pak-Afghan border near Lowara Mandi, personnel of the paramilitary Frontier Corps fired at a vehicle which failed to stop for checking and seriously wounded an Afghan national and a Pakistani tribesman. The raid on the compound was a big operation involving Pakistan Army troops and paramilitary soldiers from Frontier Corps' Tochi Scouts.

Dawn, 17 January 2005

### **Cabinet to discuss Sui situation today (Ahmed Hassan and Syed Irfan Raza)**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 16: A special meeting of the federal cabinet will be held on Monday to discuss the Balochistan situation in the wake of the provincial cabinet's request for help to maintain security in Sui and the Dera Bugti area. The meeting is likely to be presided over by Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, sources said. They said that the federal government might decide against launching a military operation, but resolve to take firm steps to beef up security in and around gas and oil installations in the province. The Balochistan cabinet had decided on Friday to formally request the federal government to deploy federal forces to restore order in the Dera Bugti and Sui areas.

Daily Times, 17 January 2005

### **Govt may convene NA session to discuss Balochistan, Wana: Rashid**

LAHORE: The government may convene a National Assembly session to discuss the situation in Wana and Balochistan, Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said on Sunday. Ahmed told reporters after attending a polo match in Lahore the ruling Pakistan Muslim League and its allied parties will also meet on Monday under the chairmanship of Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain to discuss the latest developments in Balochistan, he said.

The News, 18 January 2005

### **Pakistan denies providing Iran N-sites data to US (Mariana Baabar)**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan categorically denied on Monday that it had provided any data to the United States regarding Iran's nuclear programme. "There is no such collaboration though Pakistan is cooperating with the international community. We do not have much information on Iran's nuclear programme," Foreign Office spokesman Masood Khan told the weekly press briefing. When asked if the US planes operating from inside Pakistan, according to a bilateral agreement, could have used the situation for espionage duties inside Iran, since many of these allegedly flying over Iran were drones, the spokesman replied

agreement was related to use of Pakistan's airspace for logistic support and intelligence sharing. "We cannot be passing on information to the US because we are not privy to information inside Iran," he said.

The News, 18 January 2005

**Govt resolves to protect Sui gas field** (Shakil Shaikh)

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet on Monday endorsed the provincial request of safeguarding Sui gasfields and decided to utilise all its resources for the protection of vital installations in Balochistan with uninterrupted gas supply from Sui. A similar resolve was expressed in an extraordinary meeting of the ruling coalition parties, chaired by President Pervez Musharraf, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and PML President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain. Aziz, who chaired the cabinet meeting, assured that the federal government would use all its resources to protect the national assets, as the government could not afford to expose these vital installations to danger.

Daily Times, 18 January 2005

**Constitution can be amended for Balochis: Shujaat**

ISLAMABAD: The government is prepared even to amend the Constitution to satisfy the Baloch people, said Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, the president of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML), on Monday, Online reported. Talking to Voice of America, Shujaat said the government had no plans to start a military offensive in Balochistan and would sort out all problems with the Baloch through dialogue. Tribesmen angered by the gang rape of a woman doctor at a hospital in Sui attacked gas installations in the area from January 7 to 11, resulting in the deaths of at least eight people.

The News, 18 January 2005

**Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan to improve communication link**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan on Monday decided to give a new impetus to the bilateral trade relations by improving communication links between them. President Gen Pervez Musharraf and visiting Kyrgyz leader Askar Akaev, told newsmen after formal talks that the two countries would translate the vast mutual trade prospects into concrete cooperation through better communication links. "We have decided to strengthen the existing bonds of friendship by improving the communication links through Kashgar in China and onto Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan and also through improving the Karakoram Highway in Pakistan so that trade activities between the two countries gets enhanced," said President Musharraf.

Daily Times, 18 January 2005

**India and Pakistan to make report on Creek**

ISLAMABAD: India and Pakistan have completed surveying the horizontal section of Sir Creek to verify existing boundary pillars, the Defence Ministry said in a statement on Monday. The survey began on January 5, 2005 with India and Pakistan providing eight teams each, the statement said, adding, "The teams cooperated with each other and completed the task successfully and expeditiously." The statement said the surveyors were now busy preparing a joint statement to be studied by experts from both countries and deliberated further in the next round of talks on Sir Creek.

The News, 19 January 2005

**Balochistan package after Eid** (Shakil Shaikh)

ISLAMABAD: A substantial socio-economic package for Balochistan will be ready after Eid-ul-Azha following marathon talks between major central and provincial political players. "Nawab Akbar Bugti and others will also agree to this package," former prime minister and President Pakistan Muslim League Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain told The News on Tuesday. The package will contain blanket reforms including projects of national interest like linking Balochistan through construction of new highways from Zhob to DI Khan and Loralai to DG Khan etc. "At least 10,000 jobs with relaxation of employment criteria would be offered to the Baloch in Frontier Corps alone, what to talk about other departments in the Centre and provinces," said one of the participants of the Punjab House meeting.

The News, 19 January 2005

**Military operations to aggravate crisis: APC** (Muhammad Ejaz Khan)

QUETTA: An all parties conference (APC) here on Tuesday demanded of the government to seek a political solution to the Balochistan crisis as repeated military operations would aggravate the situation. The alliance of the four Baloch nationalist parties-Jamhoori Watan Party (JWP), National Party (NP), Balochistan National Party (BNP) and Baloch Haq Tawar discussed the situation prevailing in Sui, Dera Bugti besides other matters relating to the province. BNP secretary-general Habib Jalib Baloch said the deployment of security forces in Sui area was not meant for the security of sensitive installations, it, instead, showed that the control of the installations was being shifted to the Centre from Balochistan. The conference reviewed the Sui and Dera Bugti situation and demanded of the government to withdraw the forces from Dera Bugti area immediately and send them back to barracks.

The News, 19 January 2005

**Pakistan formally seeks WB arbitration over Baglihar issue**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday announced to formally approach the World Bank for appointment of a "neutral expert" on the Baglihar dam issue, being constructed by India in violation of the Indus Waters Treaty. The decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, where he reviewed the reports on the status of construction of the dam and directed that the matter be formally taken up with the World Bank. The meeting noted that Pakistan's persistent efforts to settle the issue within the mechanism of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty and to persuade India to stop work at the dam being

built in violation of the Indus Waters Treaty, did not achieve the desired results.

The News, 20 January 2005

**Baglihar issue not to affect composite dialogue: PM**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz will meet his Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh on the sidelines of the 13th Saarc summit in Dhaka to discuss the peace process despite the deadlock between the two countries over the Baglihar dam project. "We want to progress on all issues, including that of Jammu and Kashmir...it (Baglihar) in no way interferes in the composite dialogue process," he told the Xinhua news agency of China in an interview.

Daily Times, 20 January 2005

**Govt-Opp talks held in Dubai** (Mubasher Bukhari)

LAHORE: Government representatives held a detailed meeting with former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, her husband Asif Zardari, and a senior leader of the Muslim League-Nawaz, possibly Shahbaz Sharif, in Dubai on Wednesday to negotiate a "reconciliation formula", government and PPP sources told Daily Times. The sources identified the government representatives as Tariq Aziz, a close aide to President Pervez Musharraf and the secretary of the National Security Council, and the chief of an intelligence agency. "The negotiators gave some assurance on behalf of the government to the leaders of the two largest opposition parties," said the sources.

Dawn, 20 January 2005

**WB denies being treaty guarantor: Baglihar dam issue**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 19: The World Bank on Wednesday confirmed receiving Pakistan's request for appointment of a neutral expert under the Indus Waters Treaty to resolve its differences with India over the construction of Baglihar dam on the river Chenab. The announcement also explained in detail the World Bank's role in the matter but clarified that "it (the bank) is not a guarantor of the treaty". It explained that "the World Bank is a signatory to the treaty for certain specified purposes" and added that many of the purposes for which it had signed the treaty had been fulfilled.

The News, 20 January 2005

**Rs 1.5bn increase in Balochistan gas royalty** (Shakil Shaikh)

ISLAMABAD: Balochistan is expected to get Rs 1.5 billion per annum more than its agreed share as a result of changes proposed in the existing gas royalty formula for the provinces by the Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan, a member of the committee confirmed to The News here on Wednesday. The recommendations of the committee touched upon seven broad-based issues raised by the Baloch leaders. These include employment opportunities for Baloch youth by giving priority to locals, construction of dams and water reservoirs in Balochistan on priority basis to save 60% provincial areas that often face drought, opening up areas for oil and gas exploration by ending force majeure, say of the provincial government in mega projects etc.

Dawn, 21 January 2005

**Greater autonomy for Balochistan proposed**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 20: The parliamentary sub-committee on Balochistan's political issues has recommended 15 to 20 per cent increase in gas royalty, 20 to 30 per cent resource allocation for local development and constitutional changes for giving greater provincial autonomy to the province, sources told Dawn on Thursday. It has recommended that due share of the province in the federal services, the levies, police and other services should be ensured. The report is almost ready and is expected to be submitted to President Gen Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz for consideration before being tabled in parliament.

The News, 21 January 2005

**Pak, Indian DGMOs hold talks on LoC again** (Shakil Shaikh)

ISLAMABAD: Director-General of Military Operations (DGMO) of the Pakistan Army on Thursday made a special hotline contact with his Indian counterpart and discussed the environment created by unfounded Indian allegation of mortar firing from Pakistan side. "Pakistan's DGMO once again strongly reiterated its earlier position that there was no firing from its side," said an ISPR statement. The DGMO also impressed upon his Indian counterpart once again that it would be pertinent if the Indian authorities investigate the incident in the area under their occupation. Both sides agreed that such matters should be resolved at local level through flag meetings as has been happening in the past.

Dawn, 21 January 2005

**Trade talks with India next month**

ISLAMABAD, Jan 20: The Pakistan-India committee of experts, led by the commerce secretaries of the two countries, will meet on Feb 22, sources told Dawn on Thursday. The two-day meeting will be held in New Delhi. This will be the first round of talks between the two countries on trade matters at the experts' level. The key issue at the forthcoming meeting would be the tariff regime. Other talking points for the meeting would include the MFN status, sale of diesel to Pakistan, trade barriers, duty concessions and agricultural imports, the sources said. A joint study currently being conducted on trade issues by specialists of the two countries is also likely to figure in the discussions.

Daily Times, 24 January 2005

### **Kashmir bus service to begin mid-2005**

ISLAMABAD: The Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service is likely to start in the middle of this year and a formal announcement to this effect is expected when Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visits Pakistan, sources told Daily Times. According to the reported agreement, only Kashmiris with relatives on the other side of the Line of Control will be allowed to use the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service. The sources said that the deputy commissioners on both sides of the LoC would issue travel permits, so there would be no visa or passport requirement for passengers. India and Pakistan have reportedly agreed that All Parties Hurriyat Conference leaders will travel to Muzaffarabad on the first bus from Srinagar and will be received by Gen Musharraf.

The News, 24 January 2005

### **Bomb rips through railway track near Quetta** (Muhammad Ejaz Khan)

QUETTA: A Quetta bound passenger train escaped a disaster on Saturday morning when a powerful bomb exploded at the railway track just minutes before the train was to pass near Sariab area here, said Pakistan Railways officials. The passenger train, 301-up carrying 300 passengers, was on its way from Karachi to Quetta. The bomb ripped about one-and-a-half feet long track at a level crossing, the officials said. The explosion also created a crater on the track.

Dawn, 24 January 2005

### **'New Bush policy not to affect ties with Pakistan'** (Anwar Iqbal)

WASHINGTON, Jan 23: Three days after President George Bush warned non-democratic regimes that they cannot continue to hold sway for long, his aides rushed to assure America's allies that his new agenda will not affect US relations with countries like Pakistan. In his inaugural speech delivered on Thursday, President Bush vowed to set the United States on a new course in foreign policy, linking relations with America to practising freedom and democracy. At a series of background briefings for American and foreign journalists, senior Bush officials made it clear that the speech will not lead to "any shift in Washington's strategy for dealing with countries like Pakistan, Egypt, China and Russia". At the State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said: "It doesn't mean we abandon our friends, but many of our friends realize it's time for them to change anyway, and they are, indeed, looking at making change within their own societies."

Dawn, 24 January 2005

### **Heavy Brussels agenda for Aziz** (Shadaba Islam)

BRUSSELS, Jan 23: Relations with Pakistan take centre-stage at the European Union this week as the bloc's top policymakers meet Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz for talks on Islamabad's political, economic and trade priorities. Mr Aziz will be the first Pakistani premier to visit the EU since Nawaz Sharif's trip to Brussels in 1998. Mr Aziz is expected to highlight Pakistan's 5-6 per cent annual growth rates and success in cutting foreign debt. His message will also, however, focus on Islamabad's long-running battle to win better access to the EU market through re-insertion into the 'GSP Plus' duty-free import scheme.

The News, 25 January 2005

### **India accused of violating Kashmir ceasefire**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Monday accused India of violating a ceasefire at the heavily militarised Line of Control (LoC) in disputed Kashmir but maintained that the 14-month truce between the nuclear-armed rivals was still in place. Foreign Office spokesman Masood Khan alleged that on Friday small arms were fired from the Indian side of the LoC at the Mendnar sector in Azad Kashmir between 3pm and 6pm. Khan said "We hope the ceasefire will be observed and will have no impact on the forthcoming talks between the prime ministers of the two countries" and added "there was no incident from our side. We had not violated and are strictly adhering to the ceasefire."

The News, 25 January 2005

### **Two bomb blasts rock Balochistan** (Muhammad Ejaz Khan)

QUETTA: A Karachi-bound passenger train escaped a disaster on Monday night when a powerful bomb went off minutes after the train passed near Sibi railway station. Reports reaching here from Sibi said a powerful bomb went off some 3 kilometres off Sibi railway station just five minutes after the Karachi-bound Balochistan Express passed by. Officials said unknown terrorists planted the powerful device at the railway track which ripped off about two-and-a-half feet piece of the track. A passenger train escaped a similar disaster on Sunday night in Sariab area of Quetta. Separately, a powerful bomb went off in the ministers' block of the Balochistan Civil Secretariat here on Monday, police officials said, adding that the blast caused no casualties. It is a second bomb explosion in the ministers' block in a month. The BLA claimed responsibility for the second blast.

Daily Times, 25 January 2005

### **Pakistan doesn't blame Iran for Balochistan troubles: FO**

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office has denied a British press report that Pakistan blames Iran for fuelling a growing insurgency in Balochistan. The Sunday Telegraph cites senior government officials as saying that Iran is encouraging "intruders" from within its own Baloch community to cross the 550-mile border with the Pakistani province and give support to the rebels. Foreign Office spokesman Masood Khan said the report had "no credibility". He said Pakistan was investigating the disturbances in Balochistan, but did not point a finger at another country.

Daily Times, 25 January 2005

**Countering Baglihar: Pakistan to build Mangla-Head Marala Canal** (Khalid Mustafa)

ISLAMABAD: As India continues building the Baglihar dam on the Chenab in Kashmir, Pakistan has started working at pace on the construction of Mangla-Head Marala Link Canal to offset the expected water loss due to the Indian project. The link canal will ensure the availability of water in two defence canals, Upper Chenab and Lower Chenab, and provide irrigation water to the wheat fields of central Punjab. According to Daily Times sources, the Engineering Corps of the Armed Forces and National Engineering Services of Pakistan are working on the PC-1 of the Mangla-Head Marala Link Canal project, which will carry water from Mangla reservoir to Head Marala, Sialkot, from where the two defence canals get water. The Upper and Lower Chenab canals were originally made to aid in the defence of any attack from India. The sources said the Punjab government was assisting in the project.

The News, 26 January 2005

**Baloch leaders agree to resolve Balochistan crisis through talks** (Tahir Hasan Khan)

KARACHI: Chief of the Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and Baloch leaders have agreed to resolve the Balochistan crisis through negotiations. The consensus was reached at separate meetings Chaudhry Shujaat held with the Baloch leaders, Sardar Ataullah Mengal and Sher Baz Khan Mazari, at their residences here on Tuesday. Shujaat said he would soon hold talks with Jamhoori Watan Party chief Nawab Akbar Bugti to find a negotiated solution to the Balochistan crisis. Akhtar Mengal, former chief minister of Balochistan said they conveyed to Shujaat that nobody was ready to hold talks at gunpoint. But, he added, Shujaat has been asked to hold talks with Nawab Bugti first as the situation in Sui and Dera Bugti was "very serious".

Daily Times, 26 January 2005

**Balochistan's troubles: CM does not rule out Iranian involvement**

ISLAMABAD: Mir Jam Muhammad Yousaf, the Balochistan chief minister, has said he will not rule out the possibility that Iran or an extremist group is behind the recent disturbances in the province. Talking to a private television, the chief minister said he suspected that either Iran, Al Qaeda or another foreign power or extremist groups opposed to the government's policies could have been involved in the recent attacks by tribesmen on gas installations in Sui.

The News, 26 January 2005

**Pakistan hands over Ahmed Khalfan to US**

ISLAMABAD: Security officials revealed on Tuesday that a Tanzanian al-Qaeda operative arrested in Pakistan last July for his alleged role in the 1998 US Embassy bombings in east Africa that killed more than 200 people has been handed over to US officials and flown out of the country. Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, who was on the FBI list of most wanted terrorists, was shifted out of Pakistan months ago, but the security officials said they don't know where he was taken. The US Embassy in Islamabad declined to comment. Ghailani was captured by Pakistani intelligence agents in July after a shoot-out in Gujrat.

Dawn, 26 January 2005

**S. Lankan president coming on Feb 8** (Qudssia Akhlaque)

ISLAMABAD, Jan 25: Sri Lankan President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga will pay an official visit to Pakistan from February 8-9 during which a number of agreements will be signed to promote bilateral cooperation, particularly in the economic field, it is learnt. Her visit will take place soon after the 13th Saarc Summit in Dhaka, from where she will fly straight to Pakistan, leading a 20-member delegation, sources said. A major agreement to be signed will be the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that was recently negotiated between the two sides, diplomatic sources told Dawn on Tuesday. An agreement on exchange of prisoners is being considered, the sources said, adding that a plan of action on cultural exchanges, aimed at promoting people-to-people contact, is also likely to be signed.

The News, 27 January 2005

**Army sets up garrison in Sui** (Muhammad Ejaz Khan)

QUETTA: The Pakistan Army has set up a new garrison near gas field in Sui Tehsil of Dera Bugti district and the construction work would be completed in four or five years, military officials said on Wednesday. "The new cantonment would be constructed on 400 acres of land which has been purchased from the locals," said Commanding Officer Sui Col Mazhar Masood, while briefing newsmen at the site of the cantonment. Col Mazhar said the main purpose of establishing the cantonment was to provide security to the life and property of the citizens, ensure protection of the Sui gas plant and to check terrorist activities. "The headquarters would start the construction work soon," he added.

The News, 27 January 2005

**Pakistan may approach WB chief on Baglihar** (Mariana Baabar)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan hopes to present its case on Baglihar dam to the World Bank President, James D Wolfensohn, who will be visiting Islamabad in the coming weeks before his retirement next month. "The very fact that Wolfensohn has Pakistan on his itinerary as he starts his global farewell calls, speaks for itself. We will try our best to meet him and inform him of our case in the Baglihar dam dispute", an official monitoring the case told The News Wednesday. A Pakistan delegation comprising attorney general, secretary water and power, commissioner Indus Waters Commission and a senior Foreign Office official will be heading next week for Washington to meet Wolfensohn.

Dawn, 27 January 2005

### **Pakistan, Belgium sign accord to enhance ties**

BRUSSELS, Jan 26: Pakistan and Belgium signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Wednesday to enhance economic and political ties. The MoU was signed by Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and his Belgian counterpart Guy Verhofstadt following a luncheon meeting that focused on wide-ranging regional and global issues. The MoU, on bilateral consultations between the foreign ministries of Pakistan and Belgium, called for increased interaction for the mutual benefit of the two countries. The Belgian prime minister said the MoU would assist Belgian companies to further invest in Pakistan. Mr Verhofstadt expressed satisfaction over his talks with Mr Aziz.

Daily Times, 27 January 2005

### **Pakistan and Malaysia discuss defence collaboration**

RAWALPINDI: The fifth meeting of the Pakistan-Malaysia Joint Committee on Defence Cooperation (JCDC) was held on Wednesday to review the progress in the area of defence cooperation between the two countries. The Malaysian side highlighted the need for substantive cooperation in defence industry and science. It was also agreed that both sides would explore additional avenues to avail the training facilities for the mutual benefit of both nations. The JCDC also approved the recommendations of both the sub committees on Military cooperation and defence science and technology and industry cooperation.

The News, 28 January 2005

### **Rail track blown up in Bolan**

QUETTA: A powerful bomb exploded near a railway track in Mushkaf area in district Bolan, some 110-km off here on Thursday, suspending the rail traffic for four hours. Talking to The News, officials of Pakistan railways said that unknown terrorists planted a powerful bomb near the railway track which blew up three feet long railway track and created four feet deep crater. The train service from Quetta to other parts of the country remained suspended for sometime due to the blast. Meanwhile, A rocket landed near an electrical grid station in Sibbi late on Wednesday, but there was no damage. A bomb also exploded in a public park here, but caused no casualties or damage.

Daily Times, 28 January 2005

### **Militants and soldiers clash near Wana**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani soldiers on Thursday traded fire with suspected Al Qaeda-linked militants in a restive tribal region near the Afghan border, officials said. The shootout took place in Asman Manza, some 30 kilometres north of South Waziristan's main town of Wana, a military official who asked not to be named, said. The exchange of fire continued for about 30 minutes late Thursday in mountainous snow-covered Asman Manza, the official said but gave no details of casualties.

The News, 28 January 2005

### **US links aid to non-proliferation** (Nadeem Malik)

ISLAMABAD: The US Congress has proposed to provide \$ 800 million assistance to Pakistan next year, provided the continuation of democracy, moderation and further tightening of the nuclear export controls. According to the findings, stated in the law, the Congress finds that Pakistan's maintenance of a global missile and nuclear proliferation network would be inconsistent with Pakistan being considered an ally of the United States. The proposed law suggests that the US government should dramatically increase funding if the government of Pakistan demonstrates a commitment to building a moderate, democratic state.

Dawn, 28 January 2005

### **Pakistan's new profile being accepted: Aziz - EU seeks help in bridging gulf with Iran** (Shadaba Islam)

BRUSSELS, Jan 27: Pakistan is successfully projecting a new image in Europe as a modern and moderate Islamic nation working for global peace and good relations with its neighbours, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said on Thursday. One sign of Pakistan's improved profile in Europe was that senior EU officials had asked Pakistan to "help bridge any gaps which may exist" in contacts on nuclear issues between the EU and Iran. The visit also focused on Pakistan's efforts to secure better access to EU markets, especially for its textiles. EU efforts to reduce current anti-dumping duties on Pakistani bed linen were continuing, Aziz said, adding that Islamabad's main concern was to join the bloc's so-called "GSP Plus" scheme of duty-free access.

The News, 29 January 2005

### **Main gas pipeline blown up near Pattoki** (Sajjad Shafiq Butt)

LAHORE: The 18-inch diameter main gas pipeline passing over the Balloki-Sulemanki Canal (BS-Canal) near Chakoke Village in Okara district ruptured on Friday night, as a result of "sabotage". Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Managing Director Rashid Ahmad Lone confirmed that the pipeline was blown up by saboteurs causing suspension of gas supply to a considerable area of Lahore and other adjoining areas and towns. Besides, the supply of gas to the industrial units in Raiwind areas has also been suspended. The gas supply from Sui has been stopped and heavy police contingents have been deployed in the affected areas of Okara.

The News, 29 January 2005

### **Two bomb blasts, rockets hit Quetta**

QUETTA: Despite strict security measures, terrorist activities continue in the provincial capital on Friday when two bombs went

off and as many rockets were fired in different part of the city. However, no casualties were reported. Soon after the explosion, police and officials of the Bomb Disposal Squad rushed to the spot and started investigation. When the police teams were inspecting the site of the blast, another explosion occurred near the Officers Club of Pakistan Railways next to Quetta railway station. Separately, unknown miscreants fired two rockets at the Quetta cantonment. The rockets were fired when police teams were investigating the Zarghoon road and Officers Club bomb blasts.

The News, 29 January 2005

16 al-Qaeda suspects held

QUETTA: Police have arrested 16 al-Qaeda suspects, including a former deputy governor of Helmand province of Afghanistan, in various raids conducted in different localities of the provincial capital, officials said on Friday. "Yes, we have arrested 16 suspects in different raids conducted in Pashtoonabad and Kharotabad areas of the city," DIG Quetta Police Rafi Pervez Bhatti told The News. The suspects belong to different parts of Afghanistan where they had served on important posts during the Taliban regime, he added. Another senior police official said the suspects included a former deputy governor of Helmand province of Afghanistan. It has been learnt that after investigations the suspects would be handed over to the Afghan government.

Daily Times, 29 January 2005

Pakistan and China start talks on Gomal Zam dam

LAHORE: Pakistan and China on Friday began talks on security issues related to the Gomal Zam Dam project, according to ARY TV. The TV channel quoted Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) Chairman Tariq Hameed as saying to journalists that the Chinese government had submitted its reservations about security issues. Work on the project was halted when Chinese staff left the site following the abduction of two Chinese engineers.

The News, 30 January 2005

**WB not to discuss Baglihar dam issue** (Nadeem Malik)

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank has an obligation under the treaty to appoint a neutral expert if the differences are not resolved bilaterally, but it will not participate in any discussion or exchange on the subject. The Bank announced this in a statement here on Saturday after receiving a set of documents from the government of Pakistan to support its request for the appointment of a "neutral expert" to consider a difference that has arisen in the application of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty. The government also confirmed that the issue of Baglihar Dam would not be raised during the visit of James D Wolfensohn, President of the Bank, or with the executive directors, who are arriving here on January 31, 2005.

The News, 30 January 2005

**Four power supply poles blown up in Naseerabad**

QUETTA: Almost the whole of Balochistan, including the provincial capital, plunged into darkness on Saturday evening for over one-and-a-half hour when four power supply poles of 220 KV lines were blown up near Naseerabad district, sources said. Reports reaching here from Naseerabad said that unknown terrorists planted heavy explosive material near the power supply poles in the Chahtar area of Naseerabad which exploded with a big bang, blowing up the poles.

Dawn, 30 January 2005

**CARs keen to use Gwadar port: minister**

QUETTA, Jan 29: Federal Minister for Shipping and Ports Babar Ghori has stated that the Central Asian States (CARs) are interested in using Gwadar seaport for transportation as it locates nearest to those countries and would be cheaper and time-saving harbour for them. Talking to newsmen in the press club here on Saturday, he said big international companies would also use the port after expansion in its width.

The News, 31 January 2005

**Pakistan pressing Iran to compromise on N-dispute**

DAVOS: Pakistan is exerting behind the scenes pressure on Iran to compromise in its acrimonious dispute with Europe and the United States over its nuclear programme, Pakistani diplomatic sources say. Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri passed on their concerns during a meeting at the weekend with Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi. The sources said that the ministers "tried to convey the European position" to Kharazi during Friday's meeting. Pakistani officials say that Tehran has been warned "bluntly, bordering on rudeness", of their concerns and urged "not to make the mistake" of ignoring the Europeans.

Dawn, 31 January 2005

**Positive signals from India received: Gas pipeline project** ( Qudssia Akhlaque)

ISLAMABAD, Jan 30: Islamabad has received positive signals from New Delhi on the proposed trans-Pakistan gas pipeline, a venture that appeared to be going sour because of recent Indian resistance to it. Indications are that the stalled project may be revived soon. Serious negotiations on the project are expected to take place during the next few weeks between top Pakistani and Indian leadership, it is learnt. Positive signals have been received from New Delhi., particularly the Indian petroleum minister, who has suggested that India is reviewing its policy of linking the gas pipeline project with MFN status and sale of diesel.

The News, 31 January 2005

**Tribesmen warned of military operation in North Waziristan** ( Mushtaq Yusufzai)

PESHAWAR: Secretary Security of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) Brig (retd) Mahmud Shah on Sunday visited North Waziristan tribal agency and warned of likely military operation there, following failure of the tribesmen and religious people to expel "foreign terrorists" who according to him had taken shelter on their soil. The visit was kept secret. Even local religious leaders and tribal chieftains who were supposed to meet Brig Shah were unaware as to whom they were going to meet. It also generated speculations about another round of military operation in the tribal region.

Dawn, 31 January 2005

**Clash leaves Afghan soldier dead** ( Dilawar Khan Wazir)

WANA, Jan 30: One Afghan soldier was killed and another wounded during an exchange of fire between Pakistani security forces and Afghan National Army near Angor Adda, South Waziristan Agency, on Saturday night, officials and residents said. Sources said that clashes started between the security forces of the two countries at about 3am. An official told Dawn that Afghan soldiers, in hot pursuit of some militants, intruded into Pakistani area in Angor Adda, about 35km west of Wana. He said that Pakistani regular and paramilitary troops fired a few shots to halt movement of the Afghan troops that led to a two-hour battle.

Daily Times, 31 January 2005

**Pak-US defence group meets tomorrow**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani officials will ask for additional weapons from US officials when the Pakistan-United States Defence Consultative Group (DCG) meets in the Defence Ministry tomorrow (Tuesday) to review military cooperation and regional security. "We will present a list of defence equipment Pakistan needs to maintain a military balance in the region," the sources said. Their discussions will cover Pakistan's military operations in the tribal areas, US security assistance in the NWFP, tension along the Pakistan-Afghan border and Pakistan's additional defence requirements.

Daily Times, 31 January 2005

**Pakistan to join Bangkok Agreement**

LAHORE: Pakistan is to be accepted as a member of the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), a grouping of five regional countries, a UN official said on Sunday. Dr Kim Huk Su, under secretary general of the United Nations and executive secretary for the economic and social commission of the Asia and Pacific region, told Geo News on his arrival here that Pakistan had wanted to be included in the APTA, also known as the Bangkok Agreement, which consists of India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Korea and China.

The News, 31 January 2005

**Bomb blast rocks Quetta**

QUETTA: A powerful bomb went off in Askari Park at Quetta-Chaman road, while police defused another bomb in the wee hours of Sunday. No casualties were reported. DIG Police Quetta Rafi Pervez Bhatti told The News that unknown terrorists planted a powerful bomb near the boundary wall of Askari Park, which exploded around 4.30am. "Nobody was in the park when the blast occurred. "The Bomb Disposal Squad discovered another bomb while scanning the area," Bhatti said. Nobody claimed responsibility for the blast till our going to the press.