

The News, 1 July 2005

**Madrassa reforms?** (Arif Jamal)

Despite repeated public pledges to reform the madrassa education notwithstanding, little has been done to end the culture of hate that many madrassas tend to inculcate in their students. The government had promised to end its culture of extremism and hate towards the nation and the international community, but has failed to bring about even cosmetic changes. Thus, many madrassas continue to spread negative thoughts in society without any challenge from the state. With even the occasional official outbursts against madrassas having become less frequent, madrassas are likely to continue proliferating and pushing the society towards more extremism in years to come. Resistance from this sector resulted in the government quietly abandoning its much-publicised package of reforms, the Deeni Madaris (Voluntary Registration and Regulation) Ordinance, 2002. It even backtracked from the single most important clause of the ordinance that required madrassas to register themselves under this ordinance; in June 2004, Islamabad asked the provinces to continue registering the madrassas under the colonial law known as the Societies Act no XXI of 1860.

Dawn, 1 July 2005

**Tripartite talks only way out: Aziz** (Tariq Naqash)

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Thursday reiterated Pakistan's support for tripartite talks on Kashmir, saying the festering dispute could only be resolved when Pakistan, India and the Kashmiris would jointly talked to find a solution. Speaking at the budget session of the AJK Council and later to a mixed gathering at the PM Office, he also underscored the centrality of Kashmir issue and its peaceful settlement in keeping with the aspirations and priorities of the people of the disputed region. "There could not be any other solution. There is no other solution," he said. Earlier, the premier, who was on his first visit to the AJK capital after assuming this office in August last year, distributed compensation cheques among dependants of the people killed by avalanches in the Neelum Valley early this year. Officials told Dawn that the federal government had announced Rs10 million for such people, of which Rs3.5 million were provided to the AJK government only two days ago. "Pakistan firmly believes that the Kashmiris are the real stakeholders and therefore must be the principal beneficiaries of its dialogue with India for a just and durable settlement of the Kashmir issue based on their aspirations and wishes," Mr Aziz said.

Daily Times, 2 July 2005

**Indo-US defence pact bothers Pakistan**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has expressed its concern over the defence pact between the United States and India, calling it an attempt to destabilise the region's strategic balance. Foreign Office's acting spokesman M Naeem said on Thursday that Islamabad was receiving details of the pact and was concerned about the advancement of weapons system in the region because it could harm the region's strategic balance. He said, "While Pakistan is opposed to an arms race, it is committed to maintaining a credible minimum deterrence in both conventional and non-conventional areas," adding, "Pakistan will always ensure its defensive capability and will respond appropriately to rectify any imbalance." Naeem said.

Daily Times, 2 July 2005

**Pakistan will act per IWT if talks on Kishanganga fail** (Khalid Mustafa)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will act according to Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) provisions if talks between Pakistan and India over the Kishanganga hydropower project fail by July 15, Foreign Office spokesman Jalil Abbas Jilani told Daily Times. Jilani said both countries would try to resolve the issue at the Permanent Commission of Indus Waters level and if no result was reached by July 15, the Government of Pakistan would move a neutral expert according to the treaty. About the Wullar Barrage issue, the spokesman said the two countries would discuss the issue again during the third round of talks on confidence building measure (CBMs). He said that talks on the barrage were part of the ongoing composite dialogue, adding that the two sides had discussed five of the eight issues with the remaining three (terrorism, illegal drugs trafficking and trade) to be discussed in the coming months.

Daily Times, 2 July 2005

**17 more NWFP villages flooded** (Javed Afridi)

PESHAWAR: At least 17 more villages in three NWFP districts were flooded on Thursday, as the government declared a state of high alert in Dera Ismail Khan after authorities at Tarbela said they would release water after the recent rains. "The situation has worsened after authorities at Tarbela Dam said they would release 500,000 cusec feet of water during the next 24 hours," Irrigation Department official Abdul Wali Yousafzai told Daily Times. He said Kabul River's water level had reached a record high with 108,000 cusec feet of water and Tarbela's outflow would affect Dera Ismail Khan as well as Nowshera and Chashma where 82 spurs were already endangered by flash floods. He said the water level at Attock was above 300,000 cusec feet and its back flow had

endangered Nowshera, which was four feet above the water level and was not in a position to accommodate more water.

Daily Times, 2 July 2005

#### **Five Pakistani 'militants' held in Afghanistan**

KABUL: Five Pakistanis suspected of planning attacks in Afghanistan's south have been arrested, said Afghan police on Thursday. Provincial police chief Alah Yar said the men had crossed from Pakistan into Zabul and were arrested on Wednesday while travelling by bus to Kandahar. They were seized on a tip-off from US-led forces who had them under surveillance, said Shahr-e-Safa police chief Ghulam Mohammed Aka. "The five have confessed that they were commissioned and given money for bombing in Afghanistan by a Pakistani, Mullah Tahir," he said, adding that the Pakistanis had been handed over to coalition forces for further interrogation.

The News, 2 July 2005

#### **Suicide attack on PM: case hearing adjourned**

RAWALPINDI: Judge Anti-Terrorist Court II Safdar Malik adjourned the hearing of a case of suicide attack on Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz till July 4. The judge held the hearing inside the Central Jail Adiala, here on Friday. Seven accused arrested in connection with the suicide attack on the prime minister on July 30 last year include Suleman Ahmed alias Zohair, Qari Abdul Basit, Qari Abdul Munim, Muhammad Nisar, Qari Ahmed, Maulvi Siddiq and Noor Badshah. Six people were killed while another 48 were injured when a suicide bomber blew himself up near the prime minister when he was about to leave a public gathering after addressing an election rally at Jaffar Mor near Fateh Jhang.

The News, 2 July 2005

#### **Afghan refugees get another week to leave N Waziristan**

MIR ALI: Authorities have extended by a week the time given to Afghan refugees to leave North Waziristan tribal agency and the new deadline now is July 7. North Waziristan's political agent Tariq Hayat said during an interview on Radio Pakistan Miranshah on Friday that the extension was given to give more time to the Afghan refugees to wind up their business operations and prepare for their journey home to Afghanistan.

Daily Times, 2 July 2005

#### **Seeking honour in backwardness** (Khaled Ahmed)

The apology by the Washington cartoonist is actually more insulting than the cartoon. It is a condescending gesture towards a stupid nation who flies off the handle, damages its own public property, and hurts its own innocent citizens. Backward societies prize honour. Small states with inside trouble seek honour-based foreign policies. Big states are opportunists. They seek self-interest and care nothing for honour. Mahathir Muhammad could insult Britain and Australia as long as Malaysia awarded them big-money contracts. Poverty has no honour therefore the poor seek it above all. Reported in Nawa-e-Waqt (10 May 2005) Imran Khan declared that a cartoon published in America had exposed the PML government as slaves of the United States. He appealed to the nation to rise up and attack the cowardly (buzdil) government and bring it down. The paper reported that great lawyer MD Tahir of Lahore had sent a legal notice to the offending paper in Washington asking it to pay Rs 50 crore as fine for printing the offending cartoon.

The News, 3 July 2005

#### **Sindh braces for floods, heavy rains**

KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Irrigation and Power Sardar Nadir Akmal Leghari has asked the people of the Katcha area of the river Indus to evacuate to safer places as a medium flood of up to 400,000 cusecs was expected to hit Guddu barrage on July 9 and there were 137 vulnerable points at both banks of the river. Addressing a press briefing here on Saturday at the new Sindh Secretariat, the minister said a medium flood was expected on July 9 at Guddu barrage where downstream discharge would be 400,000 cusecs and upstream 450,000 cusecs. The minister warned that there were 137 vulnerable points in the area, of these 78 lie on the right bank of the river and 59 on the left. "Some 48 points on both sides are more vulnerable where special attention is being paid as per requirement of individual site. Bund (bank) staff is also stationed round-the-clock to monitor the behaviour of the mighty Indus," he said.

The News, 3 July 2005

#### **We'll ensure credible defence, says Shaukat** (Muhammad Anis)

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Saturday said Pakistan did not want an arms race in the region but at the same time it would maintain credible defence. Talking to newsmen at inauguration of a filtration plant installed by the CDA at sector G-8/1, he said Pakistan wanted peace and not arms race in the region. The prime

minister was asked to comment on a military pact between India and the United States. He maintained that Pakistan had been maintaining a strong defence and would continue to do so in future also. "Defence is achieved through strength and not weakness," he said. He categorically said it had been endeavour of the government to ensure credible defence for the country. However, he said there was need to spend resources for education, health and infrastructure development in South Asia.

The News, 3 July 2005

#### **New criteria for Indians seeking Pakistani visa**

ISLAMABAD: The government has adopted a new criteria for granting visa to Indian nationals, considering the problems faced by the individuals and groups intending to visit Pakistan. According to a Interior Ministry press release here on Saturday, the recent thaw in Pak-India relations have invited a large number of requests for obtaining Pakistani visa, but the authorities failed to process the requests as the applicants did not follow the laid down procedure. The visa request on prescribed form must be delivered to the Interior Division at least eight weeks in advance, which must be accompanied by photocopies of the valid passport. The requests at short notice will not be entertained, the press release added.

The News, 3 July 2005

#### **A code of honour**

The dates are set, and there seems to be an air of nervous apprehension as the Local Bodies elections draw near. The apprehension is particularly strong in Karachi - and with good reason. The city, plagued by socio-political violence for over a decade now, is expected to be the stage for a political clash between parties vying for power. The MMA has announced that it will form a five-member committee to meet various political parties to discuss the issue of law and order during the forthcoming elections. The aim of the committee is to formulate a "joint election policy" to ensure a peaceful procedure in order to give the people a chance to voice their opinions about who they want representing them. On the other end of the political spectrum, the MQM is convening an All Parties Conference. Much like the MMA committee, this conference is also targeted at ensuring that the elections are held in a cordial atmosphere.

Daily Times, 3 July 2005

#### **Madrasa reforms on hold as provinces want revisions (Ali Waqar)**

LAHORE: The federal government's madrasa reforms plan has been temporarily suspended after the provinces expressed reservations about the plan and suggested revisions in the policy. Senior government officials told Daily Times that the four provinces had reported their reservations and suggestions to the federal government many weeks ago, but there had been no deliberations on these. The four provinces, on the other hand, had not submitted reports on their implementation of the previous phase of madrasa reforms and expenditures, for which they received Rs 490 million from the federal government in fiscal 2004-05.

Daily Times, 3 July 2005

#### **PM's visit to United States: Kashmir will top Aziz's agenda**

ISLAMABAD: President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz agreed on Saturday that the Kashmir issue would be at the top of the agenda during the prime minister's first US visit likely to take place by the end of July, sources said. At a meeting, the president and the prime minister decided that the US government would be asked to persuade India to accept the inclusion of Kashmiri leaders in the Pakistan-India dialogue. The president and prime minister were of the view that the dispute could not be resolved without the Kashmiris' involvement. The prime minister's visit has assumed more importance because his Indian counterpart, Dr Manmohan Singh, is also expected to visit the US on July 17.

Daily Times, 3 July 2005

#### **2 tribals arrested in Waziristan**

PESHAWAR: A military search and cordon operation in North Waziristan on Saturday led to the arrest of two locals, a military official said. Rocket propelled grenades, rockets and hand-grenades were also seized from them, said the official, who asked not to be named. The operation was launched in the Madakhel tribe area near the border with Afghanistan, said a senior government official in Miranshah, the agency headquarters of North Waziristan.

Daily Times, 3 July 2005

#### **Pakistan-India fibre optic link project delayed**

LAHORE: Pakistan Telecommunication authorities postponed a project to lay down fibre optic cables between Pakistan and India because of heavy rain on Saturday. The project was scheduled to start on Saturday morning.

The new date for the start of the project will be announced shortly. The city has experienced heavy downpour for the last two days.

Daily Times, 3 July 2005

**Camel jockeys: Parents repent, blame agents for sending children abroad** (Ali Waqar)

LAHORE: The parents of nine of the 22 child camel jockeys who recently returned from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) took their children back home from the Child Protection and Welfare Bureau (CPWB) on Saturday after completing legal formalities. The parents were happy to see their children again and said they regretted letting them go, but also attacked the local agents and human traffickers who took their kids to the UAE to race camels, saying these agents had not even paid them what they promised.

Daily Times, 7 July 2005

**Visitors from held Kashmir free to travel in AJK, Pakistan: Hayat**

MUZAFFARABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan has said that people coming from held Kashmir could travel in Azad Kashmir and Pakistan without any restraint. Talking to a private TV channel on Saturday, AJK prime minister said that their Kashmiri kin were free to visit any place they chose in AJK and they would be treated as welcome-guests. He regretted that Kashmiris from AJK had to face restrictions during their visit to held Kashmir. He said that an air link between Muzaffarabad and Srinagar would be more convenient to the governments and travellers of both Kashmirs than the present bus service, which now cost Rs 3.5 million a month to the AJK government. He thanked Islamabad for allotting ample developmental funds for AJK and said that AJK territories were far more developed than the held Kashmir.

Dawn, 3 July 2005

**Attracting Arab investment** (Sultan Ahmed)

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has appealed to Muslim entrepreneurs to invest in Pakistan. He issued the appeal when he met a delegation of the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which responded very favourably. In fact, this has been happening in recent years to a considerable extent. Much of the foreign investment which came to Pakistan in this period, particularly through the process of privatization, has been from the oil-rich states of the UAE and Saudi Arabia. They are also showing increasing interest in banking in Pakistan, and are now taking the lead in Islamic banking.

Dawn, 3 July 2005

**Chinese furniture making inroads** (Aamir Shafaat Khan)

KARACHI: The influx of cheap Chinese goods has driven various local-made products out of the market, and led to the closure of some of the industries including toys, stationery, garments etc., and many are on the verge of collapse finding it difficult to compete with Chinese products. Now Chinese furniture has started making inroads in Pakistan, which according to some market observers a potential threat to this industry, but others rule out any serious threat in near future. The share of Chinese furniture in the local market is not that significant because it is not as cheap like other goods from China, however, sending a ripple in the market.

Dawn, 5 July 2005

**India urged to scrap Wullar barrage plan**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Monday asked India to abandon the Wullar barrage project on Jhelum river, saying it would cause interference in the flow of water, which was against the terms of the Indus Water Treaty. Foreign Office spokesman Jalil Abbas Jilani said at his weekly media briefing that the Pakistani delegation which visited India last week held detailed discussions on the project. "Extensive discussions were held over two days, which covered all the technical aspects related to the project," he said. He said that under the Indus Water Treaty, only 10,000 acre-feet of water storage was allowed while the project envisaged storage of 324,000 acre-feet, which was 32 times what the treaty allowed. He said the Indian design contemplated construction over the Jhelum river, while the treaty stated that no man-made structure was allowed over it.

Dawn, 5 July 2005

**Flood highlights need for big dams: Aziz**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said on Monday had the big dams and reservoirs constructed in time, Pakistan could have saved millions of gallons of water which was now being wasted. This could be utilized for irrigation and other purposes. Talking to newsmen on the occasion of sending six truckloads of food items, medicines and other relief goods to the NWFP, he said medium and long-term plans were necessary to save water being wasted due to lack of reservoirs. He said there was a need to think about the construction of dams and big reservoirs to store water so that the chances of floods wreaking havoc could be minimized and the stored

water could be utilized in a better way. He assured the people of NWFP that the federal government will not leave the flood victims alone in this critical hour and ensure their rehabilitation.

Daily Times, 5 July 2005

### **Trade with India linked to Kashmir solution, says FO**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Monday stressed the need to resolve the core dispute of Kashmir with India for enhanced trade and other bilateral relations between the two countries. Briefing journalists, Foreign Office Spokesman Jalil Abbas Jilani said enhanced trust through resolving issues would pave way for increasing trade and economic ties between the two countries and in the region in general. "Pakistan wants to move forward on all issues together including Kashmir, trade, economic ties and enhancing people-to-people contact," he said adding, that Kashmir had been pending for the last fifty-seven years and its resolution, acceptable to both India and Pakistan in accordance with the aspirations of the Kashmiri people, would pave way for normalising relations between the two countries. The spokesman said Pakistan and India held extensive talks last week to resolve the Wullar Barrage issue and reviewed all technical aspects of the issue threadbare. "Pakistan has taken the position that Wullar Barrage violates the Indus Water Treaty," he said, adding that under the treaty India could only build a power station on the run of water basis and could not store water beyond .01 million-acre feet.

Dawn, 5 July 2005

### **Nawaz may get passport tomorrow** (Amir Wasim)

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif is likely to get his new passport on Wednesday and two federal ministers said on Monday it was Mr Sharif's right to get his passport renewed. Talking to Dawn, federal minister for Information Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said that hopefully Mr Sharif would get his passport soon. The minister also said that Mr Sharif was a Pakistani and it was his right to get the passport. Also, Interior Minister Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao told media that Mr Sharif's application for renewal of his passport had been received at the Pakistani Consulate in Jeddah and it would be processed in a couple of days.

Dawn, 5 July 2005

### **Project launched with China to build frigates**

BEIJING: Pakistan and China here on Monday launched a joint project to build four F22-P frigates. The launching ceremony was attended by the Chief of Pakistan Navy Admiral Shahid Karimullah and senior officials of China's People's Liberation Army. Defence sources told APP that the project was part of the on-going cooperation between the two countries in the defence sector. The project will be implemented under an agreement already signed by the two sides that includes technology transfer to Pakistan for building frigates.

Dawn, 5 July 2005

### **Osama might be in southern Afghanistan**

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Aftab Sherpao ruling out Osama's presence in Pakistan, said on Monday that he might be in the southern parts of Afghanistan, since the area was not under effective control of Afghan government. In an interview with APP, the minister said there were indications that Taliban were re-emerging in south and southeast parts of Afghanistan since the summer started.

The News, 5 July 2005

### **Pakistan condemns Ayodhya terror incident**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has strongly condemned firing incident at the Babri Mosque site in Ayodhya declaring the incident an act of blatant terrorism. Pakistan foreign office spokesman Jalil Abbas Jilani talking with Geo said that such acts at anywhere in the world, are deplorable. "It is an internal matter of India and will not affect the India, Pakistan peace process", the spokesman added.

Dawn, 5 July 2005

### **Water outflows at Kalabagh, Chashma Barrage drop**

KALABAGH: Water outflows in Indus at Kalabagh and Chashma Barrage have decreased, while at Kot Addu and Taunsa Barrage it further swelled to 4,41,683 cusecs foot. Flooded Indus has wreaked havoc in kachcha areas inundating Mor Jhangi, Baitmalana, Mir Khar, Junpur, Langah including 20 outskirt areas where hundreds of houses have been demolished leaving over 10,000 people marooned. A bypass near Larkanwala was swept away by flood waves damaging the road as well. Water outflows this morning at Kalabagh was at 3,93,000 cusecs foot and at Chashma Barrage 4,46,716 cusecs foot registering medium-level flood, while at Kot Addu water outflow rose to 4,41,683 cusecs foot this morning from 4,17,000 cusecs foot.

The News, 6 July 2005

### **Pakistan backs Kazakhstan for WTO membership**

ASTANA: Pakistan on Tuesday signed a protocol to help Kazakhstan get membership of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) after talks between Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and President Nursultan Nazarbayev held on the margins of a regional security summit. The two leaders discussed bilateral issues with focus on increasing trade and economic ties and regional issues, including the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan-India peace process. The prime minister was here to represent Pakistan at the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), which granted it the Observer Status on the six-nation regional grouping. The two leaders agreed to increase trade as Prime Minister Shaukat observed the two countries could be linked through the Karakoram Highway that would also enable the Central Asian state to use Gwadar and Karachi ports for its trade with the world.

The News, 6 July 2005

### **Shujaat to remain PML chief till May 2006: Jamali (Mukesh Ropeta)**

JACOBABAD: Former prime minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali has said that Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain will remain president of the Pakistan Muslim League till May 2006 and there is no possibility of change in party leadership before this date. Talking to reporters at the residence of Syed Abdullah Shah, a JWP leader, on Tuesday, Jamali said differences between Shujaat Hussain and Humayun Akhtar had been reconciled. Jamali claimed that he was not a candidate for the slot of PML president. Replying to a question, the ex-prime minister said no responsibility had been assigned to him regarding the forthcoming local bodies elections by his party directly. These elections, he said, are being held on a non-party basis in which local communities are participating and there is no interference of the political parties.

The News, 6 July 2005

### **Another 'Mukhtaran Mai' suffers in Chiniot (Aurangzeb Malik)**

CHINIOT: Eleven persons kidnapped a married woman from a village, gang-raped, humiliated and tortured her for three consecutive days, suspecting that her auntie had played a role in the elopement of the daughter of the main accused. Fauzia Bibi, a 25-year-old woman of Adda Burjian, was living a happy life with her husband Altaf Hussain and had three children till last month when she was kidnapped.

Dawn, 6 July 2005

### **Pakistan's envoy attacked in Iraq**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is to withdraw its ambassador from Iraq after the envoy said he had a "very narrow escape" from an attack on his convoy in Baghdad on Tuesday. Envoy Younis Khan will be shifted to the Jordanian capital Amman following the assassination attempt, the third attack in four days on a foreign diplomat in Iraq's main city, Pakistan's foreign ministry said. Iraq's interior ministry said the attack happened at an intersection in the upmarket Mansur district, not far from where Bahrain's envoy was wounded just hours earlier in an apparent kidnap attempt. "I am safe but it was a very narrow escape," Mr Khan said by telephone from Baghdad. Mr Khan, who was only posted to Baghdad around two months ago, said gunmen in two cars opened fire on his vehicle when he was around a kilometre from the Pakistani embassy.

Dawn, 6 July 2005

### **Islamabad, New Delhi committed to talks: PM**

ASTANA: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said on Tuesday that both Pakistan and India were committed to the composite dialogue process for resolving peacefully all outstanding issues, including the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir. "We want the peace process to move forward. We want various issues between the two countries to be resolved," he told journalists after meeting Indian External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh, who had called on him on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit. Foreign Minister Khurshid M. Kasuri was present during the meeting. The prime minister described the discussion as good and said it was held in a very 'open' and 'informal' atmosphere.

Dawn, 6 July 2005

### **Terrorists can't cross border, says Sherpao**

ISLAMABAD: The government has deployed 75,000 troops along the Afghan border and it is not possible for terrorists to move across it, Interior Minister Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao said on Tuesday. Talking to journalists during a surprise visit to the passport office at Abpara, the minister said the troops had been deployed in three layers, making it impossible for terrorists to move across the border. Responding to a question, he said Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz's forthcoming visit to Afghanistan "is a part of the consultative process between the two governments to discuss the settlement of Afghan refugees and other issues." Pakistan wants peace in

Afghanistan which is imperative for peace in states in the region. "Pakistan never wants its soil to be used for terrorist activities," he said.

Dawn, 6 July 2005

#### **Accord to be signed with UK on illegal immigrants**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has decided to immediately sign an agreement with United Kingdom on re-admission of managed Pakistani immigrants following threats from British government to deport all the illegal Pakistani immigrants in the UK and stop PIA flights. However, Pakistan has sought a re-assurance from the British government that it would not disturb or apply the new law to Pakistanis who were in UK, though illegally, before the date of signing of the agreement, official documents made available to Dawn suggest. The agreement is aimed at controlling the increasing number of illegal immigrants to the UK through strong networks of human smugglers who use various illegal means to transport poor Pakistanis to UK at huge costs.

Dawn, 6 July 2005

#### **Nawaz issue not discussed with Saudi prince**

ISLAMABAD: The government on Tuesday contradicted a news report that matters relating to former prime minister Nawaz Sharif came under discussion with Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz during President Pervez Musharraf's recent visit to Saudi Arabia. A government spokesman said the report published in a section of press was totally false and misleading. He also denied a news item that the Saudi leadership was facilitating a 'deal' between the government of Pakistan and Nawaz Sharif. There was no mention of the Nawaz Sharif case by any of the government officials on either Saudi or Pakistani side during the president's visit, the spokesman added.

Dawn, 7 July 2005

#### **Aziz, Hu pledge to deepen ties**

ASTANA: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Chinese President Hu Jintao on Wednesday reaffirmed their pledge to widen and deepen their multifaceted cooperation as the two countries prepare to enter into a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) from next year. Meeting on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit, the two leaders discussed a host of issues ranging from fostering bilateral trade and economic ties to UN reforms and the composite dialogue process between Pakistan and India. Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri, Minister for Culture, Sports and Youth Affairs Muhammad Ajmal Khan and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Omar Ayub were also present in the meeting. The Chinese president noted that the two countries had already concluded an Early Harvest Programme and said the FTA would go into effect next year.

Dawn, 7 July 2005

#### **Soldier killed in clash, six militants held: 4,000 more troops being sent to Afghan border**

PESHAWAR: Six militants, including a foreigner, were arrested after an armed clash that left one soldier dead and four others injured in the Meeradeen area of Shawal valley in the North Waziristan agency on Wednesday, Corps Commander Lt-Gen Safdar Hussain said. He said at a press conference here that 4,000 troops were being sent to the Afghan border to "stop alleged infiltration of militants from the tribal areas into Afghanistan". He, however, advised the Afghan government to improve its internal security and cordon off the border to end infiltration, if there was any, from Pakistan. Giving details of the clash, he said that security forces chased a speeding vehicle after its driver tried to flee when signaled to stop at a checkpoint. "The troops launched a massive search operation in the whole Meeradeen area after the vehicle sped away towards the border between the two countries," said the commander.

Dawn, 7 July 2005

#### **Pipeline negotiations to be trilateral**

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad and Tehran agreed on Wednesday that all future talks on the \$4.2 billion Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project would be held on a trilateral basis. The two sides decided that India would be involved in all ministerial or secretary level talks on the project. Pakistan and Iran will sign a memorandum of understanding on the issue on Thursday. The decision was taken in a preliminary meeting of the oil and gas ministers of the two countries here on Wednesday. Iranian Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh arrived here in the afternoon and held a brief discussions with his counterpart Amanullah Khan Jadoon.

Dawn, 7 July 2005

#### **Qaeda leaders in Fata: Kabul**

KABUL: Afghanistan said on Wednesday that senior Al Qaeda and Taliban leaders were hiding in Pakistan's tribal areas, the latest salvo in a row between the two neighbours over their success in the so-called "war on terror".

The comments by Interior Ministry spokesman Lutfullah Mashal came a day after Pakistan's interior minister was quoted as saying that Osama bin Laden and other key militants may be in southern Afghanistan. "We believe that the senior Taliban and Al Qaeda leaders are still hiding in the tribal belt of Pakistan's federally controlled tribal area," Mr Mashal said. US and Afghan officials have long said they think Osama and other Al Qaeda kingpins have been hiding out in the mountains on the frontier between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The News, 7 July 2005

**Musharraf in Murree to address rally today** (Raja Abdul Rahman)

MURREE: Long awaited provision of natural gas to Murree finally came to an end, as President Pervez Musharraf arrived here on Wednesday to inaugurate the project and address a public meeting here today (Thursday). The people of Murree have been demanding gas facility since long but their demand was not met despite the fact that it was necessary for protection of environment at the hill resort and promotion of tourism.

The News, 7 July 2005

**Hundereds protest power outage, water scarcity in Sanghar**

SANGHAR: Hundreds of small growers and villagers held a sit-in against Hesco and the Irrigation department at the Qaiser Goth bus stop between Tando Adam and Tando Allahyar, some 65km from here, against prolonged power outage and continuous denial of irrigation water to the tail-enders. The protesters belonged to villages Muhammad Bux Brohi, Abdullah Hingoro, Qaiser Goth, Haji Alam and Pir Bux Hingoro along with 20 other small villages. They blocked the main road of Tando Adam and Tando Allahyar for five hours by placing trees on it and torching tyres.

The News, 7 July 2005

**PM to open Saarc health ministers' moot**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz will inaugurate the first two-day Saarc health ministers' conference here on July 15. The participants from Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives would finalise a plan for the betterment of the health sector in the South Asian countries. The participating ministers would highlight the efforts made by their ministries for the improvement of people's health in their respective countries in the working session of the conference.

Dawn, 8 July 2005

**Indian water release causes high flood: Emergency declared for five areas of Punjab** (Khaleeq Kiani)

ISLAMABAD: India on Thursday suddenly released about 566,200 cusecs of water in the river Chenab causing "very high flood situation" in areas adjoining five cities in Pakistan's Punjab province. Director-general of Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) Dr Qamar-uz-Zaman Chaudhry confirmed this here on Thursday and said India had cited unspecified technical reasons for such releases. The situation was immediately conveyed by the Pakistan Indus Waters Commissioner to the National Flood Forecasting Centre in Lahore, federal minister for water and power and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Engineering Chief of Pakistan Army. An emergency has been declared in areas adjoining Sialkot, Gujrat, Mandi Bahauddin, Jhang and Chiniot and district coordination officers concerned and the Pakistan Army have been asked to evacuate people from affected areas. Armed forces and civil defence organizations have already started evacuation of civil population from hinterlands, riverbanks and other sites vulnerable to floods. The Indian Permanent Indus Commission informed his Pakistani counterpart at 2.30pm that India had released 178,000 cusecs in the river Chenab at Akhnoor and another 388,500 cusecs in Jammu-Tavi tributary due to technical reasons.

Dawn, 8 July 2005

**Pipeline work from April next year**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Iran agreed on Thursday to start construction of \$4.16 billion Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline by April 2006 and decided to invite India for trilateral talks. At the conclusion of two-day Pakistan-Iran talks on gas pipeline, Iranian oil minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said all the paperwork about the project would be completed by all the parties concerned before April next. Pakistan's secretary petroleum and natural resources Ahmad Waqar said the two sides also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU). Under the MoU, Iran would provide to Pakistan a comprehensive data sheet about the price, and quality and quantity of the gas it would reserve for the pipeline. They were talking to reporters after the signing of the MoU. Petroleum Minister Amanullah Khan Jadoon and his visiting Iranian counterpart signed the document. Mr Zanganeh said the paperwork about the project would be completed by April 2006. He said that after a 10-year period, the dream of exporting gas to Pakistan and India through pipeline would become a reality.

Daily Times, 8 July 2005

### **Aziz asks EU for market access and technological help**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Thursday urged the European Union (EU) to provide market access and technological and financial assistance to Pakistan to help it reduce poverty and create jobs. Talking to a EU ambassadors' delegation at Prime Minister's House, Aziz said it was very important for Pakistan to have market access for its goods in the EU, which could help the country create new jobs, making it sustainable over a long time. Similarly, he said technical assistance in people's vocational training and skill improvement was "extremely valuable," adding that technical and financial assistance in social sectors such as health, education, gender development and population planning would improve people's lives.

Daily Times, 8 July 2005

### **US alive to Pakistani concerns, says Rice**

ISLAMABAD: US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said on Thursday that the US would remain alive to Pakistan's security concerns. Talking to Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri on the phone, Ms Rice said the US was mindful of the fact that Pakistan was both a "key strategic ally" and a major Non-NATO ally, according to a Foreign Ministry press statement. The statement said Mr Kasuri and Ms Rice had an extensive discussion on matters of mutual interest. About a new US-India defence agreement, Kasuri recalled his past discussion with Ms Rice on the issue and called for maintaining a military balance in South Asia. Matters relating to the ongoing Pakistan-India peace process were also discussed in Thursday's talks.

Daily Times, 8 July 2005

### **Mukhtar Mai calls to support gang-rape victim**

MULTAN: Pakistan's latest gang rape victim received a call of support on Thursday from Mukhtar Mai, whose similar case shone an international spotlight on the plight of women in the country's rural areas. The latest attack is reminiscent of that of Mukhtar's, who was gang-raped in 2002 on orders of a village council, and will increase concern that President General Pervez Musharraf has not succeeded in his pledge to end "honour" attacks in which hundreds of women are killed, raped or maimed each year. Both cases involve a woman targeted for punishment for the actions of a male relative.

Daily Times, 8 July 2005

### **Everyone will get water and electricity by 2007: Musharraf**

MURREE: President Pervez Musharraf said on Thursday that clean drinking water would be provided to every citizen and electricity to every house in Pakistan by 2007. Inaugurating the Murree gas project at Lawrence College Ghora Gali, President Musharraf said the government was focusing on the provision of potable water, electricity and gas to people. "Not only have funds been increased but work has also been started on these projects on priority," the president added.

Daily Times, 9 July 2005

### **'White revolution' on its way: Aziz**

KARACHI: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said on Friday Pakistan was on the track to a 'white revolution' under which new development schemes in education, health and agriculture would be launched. White Revolution was a large-scale reform programme introduced by the Shah of Iran in 1963. The prime minister said that a decision to build a new dam would be made soon. Inaugurating the second plant for Universal Tractors at the Karachi Port Trust, the prime minister said that Pakistan lacked a big dam due to differences among provinces. "Had we built either the Kalabagh or Bhasha dam we could have saved millions of cusecs of water," he added.

Dawn, 9 July 2005

### **London bombings condemned**

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Benazir Bhutto has condemned the terror bombings in London on Thursday which left 40 people dead and hundreds more injured. She said the PPP strongly condemned the indiscriminate acts of terror perpetrated in London in which innocent civilians became victims of terrorism. She said the PPP stood firm alongside the people of London who reacted calmly and courageously in the face of these acts of barbarism, demonstrating that the values of freedom, tolerance and humanity shared by citizens from London to Islamabad and all other cities of the world, could not be destroyed, contrary to the designs of those behind these attacks.

Dawn, 9 July 2005

### **Russia, Pakistan to consolidate ties**

ISLAMABAD: Russia has welcomed Pakistan's inclusion in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as an observer member and said that it will help in further strengthening relations between the two countries, a foreign

office statement said on Friday. "Mutual Cooperation between Pakistan and Russia was of great significance in the efforts to eliminate threats to humanity," said a statement issued following a meeting between Pakistan's Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri and his Russian counterpart Igor Ivanov. The meeting was held on the sidelines of recent SCO summit in Kazakhstan's capital Astana which granted Pakistan, India and Iran 'observer status' on the six-nation grouping.

The News, 9 July 2005

**Gastro-enteritis kills 12 in Muzaffarabad**

MUZAFFARABAD: At least 12 people died and 33 hospitalised after suffering from gastro-enteritis in different areas. Report said the epidemic has spread in the areas of Doorsitma, Chakar Miran Baru, Rahimkot, Kot Komi and Gohal. Eleven people affected by gastro-enteritis were admitted to the Al-Abbas Institute of Medical Science while 22 other were rushed to the CMH, Muzaffarabad. Additional district magistrate Muzaffarabad imposed Section 144 and banned selling of substandard beverages and rotten fruit and vegetables.

Dawn, 9 July 2005

**Azerbaijan, Pakistan discuss counter-terror cooperation**

BAKU: A delegation of Pakistan's law-enforcement agencies led by Interior Minister Aftab Ahmad Sherpao, during an official visit to Azerbaijan, held a meeting with Interior Minister Ramil Usubov. Both focused on the present state and prospects of cooperation between the Azerbaijani and Pakistani law-enforcement bodies, AZERTAC, official news agency of Azerbaijan reported on Friday. Speaking of the crime situation in Azerbaijan at the beginning of the last century, Usubov noted the real stabilisation in the country and effectiveness of the law-enforcement bodies, including the Interior Ministry. The policy still continuing. Sherpao said Pakistan had always supported Azerbaijan and developing of bilateral relations and cooperation in the framework of international organisations were in the interest of the countries and peoples. In his opinion, there were identical problems over Kashmir and Nagorno-Karabakh that both would be decided on the international legal norms.

Daily Times, 9 July 2005

**25,000 affected, 55 villages flooded in Sialkot district**

SIALKOT: Floodwater has affected 25,000 people and inundated 55 villages because of River Chenab, River Jammu Tavi and Naullah Dek Drain overflowing on Friday, said officials. They said the threat of very high flood in cities located near River Chenab had been averted as the flow of floodwater from India had slowed. River Chenab's floodwater also submerged dozens of villages in Narowal, Wazirabad and Gujrat, and officials in Chiniot declared an emergency with people around the banks being evacuated to safer places.

Dawn, 9 July 2005

**Gujranwala flood emergency: TMA staff leave cancelled**

GUJRANWALA: The leaves of all the TMA officials and staff were cancelled on Friday. The leaves cancellation was ordered by TMO Zubair Hussain Nat at a meeting of TMA officials and staff. He said the action was taken to cope with any eventuality arising from the expected floods. He also ordered them to stay alert round-the-clock in this regard. Meanwhile, the TMO has also launched an inquiry against TMA official Arshad Ali Pasha for tampering with the official record and going on a long leave without permission. The accused was also asked to appear before the inquiry officer immediately otherwise he would be dismissed from the service.

Daily Times, 10 July 2005

**320,000 people flooded out, nine more die**

MULTAN: Floods have displaced about 320,000 villagers in the past 10 days and nine people were killed on Saturday, but the worst appears over with water levels in main rivers falling, a relief official said on Saturday. The death toll in the flooding was low because of early warnings and smooth evacuations, said Mohammad Irfan Illahi, director general of the Punjab Relief Commission. "Most of the damage has been done to villages and crops on the river banks, but since this morning, the floods have been falling," he added. About 660 villages had been evacuated and about 100,000 acres of farmland damaged, most of it sugar cane but including some cotton. Illahi also said the surge of water had mostly passed downstream in Indus River and water levels were also falling in Chenab River.

Daily Times, 10 July 2005

**Osama and Omar more likely in Pakistan: Afghan minister**

KABUL: Al Qaeda chief Osama Bin Laden, his deputy Ayman al-Zawahri and Taliban leader Mulla Mohammad Omar are more likely to be in Pakistan than Afghanistan, the Afghan defence minister said on Saturday. On Friday, Afghan President Hamid Karzai said he had no idea where Osama was, but he was not in Afghanistan.

Defence Minister Abdul Rahim Wardak told reporters that he thought Osama, al-Zawahri and Omar were "continuously on the run".

Daily Times, 10 July 2005

#### **Pakistani team will visit India for gas talks**

ISLAMABAD: A seven-member delegation of Pakistani petroleum experts will leave for New Delhi on July 11 to attend the first meeting of the Pakistan-India Joint Working Group (JWG) on the proposed Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project. Petroleum Secretary Ahmad Waqar will lead the delegation. Sources told Online that the delegation would consist of Foreign Office spokesman Jalil Abbas Jilani, the director general for gas, Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) Managing Director Rashid Lone and senior officials of the Petroleum Ministry.

Daily Times, 10 July 2005

#### **Aziz leaves for Germany and Italy visit today**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz will leave for a five-day official visit to Italy and Germany today (Sunday). On the first leg, the prime minister with a delegation of investors will visit Germany where he will meet German Chancellor Gerard Schroeder and discuss bilateral, regional and international matters. Dr Ashfaq Hassan Khan, adviser to the Finance Ministry, will also accompany the prime minister. Aziz will also discuss Pakistan-Germany cooperation in trade and commerce. The emphasis of his tour is to increase the volume of trade between Pakistan and Germany. He will also address the Pakistani community in Germany. On the second leg, the prime minister will leave for Italy on July 13 where he will meet Italian leaders. During his visit to the two European countries, the prime minister will raise the issue of access of Pakistani products to European markets. Aziz will return on July 15.

The News, July 10 2005

#### **One killed, three injured in Karachi firing** (Khurshid Abbasi)

KARACHI: A security guard was killed and three others injured in Model Colon Share Faisal by unidentified persons here on Sunday. The security guard, Alam Khan son of Habib Khan, 30, was performing duty at a petrol pump in Malir Halt, and was killed in firing by unidentified attackers, while three other guards including Pir Zaman son of Aza Khan, 33 and Sarwar Khan son of Jan Gul, 32. They were referred to Jinnah Hospital.

The News, 10 July 2005

#### **Media playing vital role in moulding public opinion: Fazl**

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Leader of the opposition in the National Assembly and MMA Secretary-General Maulana Fazlur Rehman has said the media can play vital role in the guidance of society towards right direction. He was addressing after oath-taking ceremony of the office-bearers of Dera Press Club here on Saturday. The Maulana said journalists have the power to mould public opinion on particular issues. He urged journalists to strictly adhere to the principles of honesty and impartiality and always write for rights of downtrodden segments of society. The MMA leader said the media being the Fourth Pillar of the state could play crucial role of promoting better working relations between the government and opposition.

The News, 10 July 2005

#### **Govt committed to develop Balochistan, says Hasni**

NOSHKI: The government is making all-out efforts to develop Balochistan and ensure provision of maximum living amenities to its people. Addressing tribal notables here on Saturday, Central leader of the Pakistan Muslim League Sardar Fateh Muhammad Hasni, MNA, said the mega projects, including Gwadar port, Coastal Highway and Mirani dam had been launched in the province with the same purpose. Hasni lauded the sincerity and dedication of President Pervez Musharraf to develop Balochistan and said the president was committed to bring the province at par with other provinces. "The completion of mega projects would not transform Balochistan into hub of trade and economic activities, but also create a number of employment opportunities for the local people to improve their living style," he observed.

The News, 11 July 2005

#### **Indus flood: Irrigation dept concerned about four Bunds** (Anwer Kama)

HYDERABAD: Although the Sindh government and the provincial Irrigation department are not worried about Kotri barrage in terms of flood situation, they are not fully satisfied with four key flood points of the province. The chief engineer, Kotri barrage, Manzoor Sheikh, said he was not worried about the expected flood, as the barrage had sustained 0.9 million cusecs of water in 1956 and "this time the water is much less than that". Sheikh said water reached the barrage from Sukkur barrage in five days. "Gates have already been replaced and everything is okay," he added. Irrigation department sources said although the department had declared various flood points

sensitive in various districts of Sindh, but the officials were paying much attention to four key points which were being considered as "vulnerable". These points are Bhanote Bachao Bund, Mud Bund, Sagyo Matyari Bund and Dadu Moro bridge.

The Dawn, 11 July 2005

**Karamat justifies not sending troops to guard SC**

NEW YORK: Former Chief of Pakistan Army, Gen (Rtd) Jehangir Karamat told a meeting of Pakistanis on Saturday that he refused to send troops to dispel mob attack on Pakistan's Supreme Court in 1997 despite pleas from the Chief Justice of Supreme Court since he was obliged to uphold the constitution of Pakistan. Asked as to why he declined to respond to former Chief Justice Sajjad Ali Shah's request for help against the imminent attack Gen Karamat said he upheld the supremacy of the constitution of Pakistan. The question was asked following his address to the delegates attending a Convention of Overseas Pakistanis held at the Pakistan Consulate-General in New York. Gen Karamat pointed out that there was an established chain of command and any instructions of that sort should have come from the elected prime minister and the president, who is also the supreme commander.

The Dawn, 11 July 2005

**Technology transfer on agenda of talks: Aziz (Ismail Khan)**

FRANKFURT: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, who arrived here on Sunday on the first leg of his visit to Germany, said trade, commerce, transfer of technology, particularly in the field of alternative technology, would top the agenda during his talks with the German leadership. War on terrorism, Pakistan's relations with India, Afghanistan, Iran, China and other regional countries and Pakistan's endeavour to promote enlightened moderation would also come up for discussions during his meetings with German leaders, Mr Aziz said. In an informal chat with reporters on board his plane, the prime minister said he would strive to encourage German bankers and investors to come to Pakistan.

Daily Times, 11 July 2005

**65 villages flooded in Sialkot, Narowal**

SIALKOT: Sixty-five more villages and the hundreds of the acres of cultivable lands in several parts of Sialkot and Narowal district were inundated due to flooding in Chenab and Tavi Rivers and in the seasonal Nullah Dek on Sunday. Crops were washed away and hundreds of cattle and livestock were reported missing. It was reported that dozens of homes caved in villages in the Bajwat area due to heavy rain and flood in Tavi River. Villagers had been cut off and were left stranded on their rooftops in the inundated areas.

Daily Times, 11 July 2005

**Nawaz passport issue: Jeddah consulate seeks two more days for decision (Shahzad Raza)**

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has realised that the government will not renew the passports of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and his wife Kulsoom Nawaz, party sources said. "I don't think the government will renew his (Nawaz Sharif) passport before the local bodies election," Muhammad Siddiqui Farooq, PML-N information secretary, told Daily Times on Sunday. He said the passport renewal followed by Nawaz Sharif's journey to London would stir the domestic political situation. But, he added, every citizen was entitled to a passport. He said the government would not risk renewing his passport before the local government elections because it feared that Nawaz's political activity would weaken the government's position.

Dawn, 12 July 2005

**A lot being done to rebuild image: PM (Ismail Khan)**

FRANKFURT: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has acknowledged that Pakistan has an image problem, but assured that the country has a promising future. "We have an image problem," Mr Aziz said at a meeting with German corporate sector here on Monday. "And we are conscious of that. We are not perfect. But we are on the right path. We are going in the right direction." "We are doing a lot to build our image. The Pakistan of today and tomorrow is not the Pakistan of yesteryears. It is on the path of growth," he told the moot sponsored by Deutsche Bank. Earlier, Mr Jurgen Fitschen, member of the executive committee of the German Bank, described Mr Aziz, a former banker, "an old face in a new role" and praised Pakistan's achievement in the economic field.

Jang, 12 July 2005

**Depletion of Balochistan water resources is alarming (Muhammad Ejaz Khan)**

QUETTA: The depletion of water resources of Balochistan has assumed alarming proportions and there is a dire need to adopt holistic and integrated approach to address the issue, as it is the collective responsibility of the society to make sincere efforts to address this serious issue. There is also need to take drastic measures for the

development of water sector with equal emphasis on water management and the implementation part is equally important when it comes to the policies formulated and also in the case of the incumbent Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Policy for Balochistan. These views were expressed by noted media expert and former federal minister Javed Jabbar while summing up debate on the Water Issues and the Policy held in the context of the IWRM Policy for Balochistan, here on Monday.

Daily Times, 12 July 2005

**Hasba Bill moved in NWFP PA amid opposition uproar** (Iqbal Khattak)

PESHAWAR: The Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) called the Hasba Bill the "start of the Islamisation process" while opposition parties called it a "black law" after Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Malik Zafar Azam introduced the draft law in the NWFP Assembly on Monday. "Today is a day for celebration," MMA Secretary General Maulana Fazlur Rehman said moments after NWFP Assembly Speaker Bakht Jehan Khan remarked, "The bill stands introduced." Fazl said, "It's a victory against secular forces." He also warned the federal government against taking any step that would be "in violation of provincial autonomy".

Daily Times, 12 July 2005

**FO condemns mosque attacks**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Monday condemned the attacks on Islamic centres and other religious places in New Zealand and Britain, apparently in the wake of last week's bomb blasts in London. "The attacks on Islamic centres and religious places are most unfortunate and regrettable," Foreign Office Spokesman Jalil Abbas Jilani said. These attacks occurred following the bomb blasts in London. "Terrorism has no religion. Those engaged in terrorism are the enemies of humanity and their actions are against the spirit of Islam," Jilani said. He said those attacking the religious places of Muslims or any other faith "would only serve the cause of terrorists".

Dawn, 12 July 2005

**PAEC allowed to upgrade labs**

ISLAMABAD: The government has allowed the Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) to upgrade its laboratories at a cost of Rs2.5 billion. Sources told Dawn on Monday that the upgrading of laboratories of the Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology (Pinstech) would be completed in five years and the Planning Commission had approved the projects. The government would provide the funding but the annual recurring expenditures would be met from the non-development budget of Pinstech. Under the programme, laboratories and facilities of Pinstech will be established and upgraded for economical study of irradiated assemblies of the Pakistan Atomic Research Reactors I and II, the Chashma Nuclear Power Plant and the Karachi Nuclear Power Project to determine their performances at different burn-ups.

Daily Times, 13 July 2005

**Kashmir be resolved bilaterally: Germany** (Shoaib Ahmed)

BERLIN: German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder has said that Pakistan and India need to resolve their dispute over Kashmir bilaterally because he does not see a third party's role in resolving the contentious issue. The German chancellor was addressing a press conference after talks with Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz at the Chancellery in Berlin on Tuesday. Their talks included economic relations, United Nations reform, Iraq, Afghanistan and the war on terror. Schroeder praised Pakistan and India's ongoing peace efforts, saying the South Asian states were moving on the right track. He said Pakistan and Germany agreed on the need to restructure the United Nations and differed only on timing. He said it was good that Pakistan's stance on UN Security Council expansion was not country specific.

Daily Times, 13 July 2005

**Al Zawahiri behind assassination attempts on Musharraf** (Khalid Hasan)

WASHINGTON: The attempts on President Pervez Musharraf's life were made under the personal directions of Ayman Al Zawahiri, it was revealed here. Alexis Debat, a noted terrorism expert, who once worked for the French defence ministry, told a meeting at the Nixon Centre here last week that this information was provided by the captured Al Qaeda figure, Abu Farraj Al Libbi. According to the terrorism expert, who recently spent time in Pakistan and claims to have received extensive briefings from the Pakistan army, the US carried out precision strikes on certain compounds in both North and South Waziristan, but the "Pakistani military doesn't like to acknowledge that fact."

Daily Times, 13 July 2005

**India and Pakistan report progress on gas pipeline project** (Iftikhar Gilani)

NEW DELHI: Despite threats of US sanctions, India and Pakistan on Tuesday reported progress on the Iran-

Pakistan-India gas pipeline, with both countries agreeing to set a timetable for the project's implementation. It was stated that Iranian gas would fire the Indian and Pakistani economies by 2010. At the end of the first round of technical talks, Pakistani Oil Secretary Ahmed Waqar said both delegations mainly discussed four important elements related to the project's technical, commercial, financial and legal aspects. "We have laid down the principles for the project and we concluded early today to refine our understanding to allow us to issue a joint statement on Wednesday," he added. Though there were discussions on the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TAP) pipeline also, the issue of the Qatar-Pakistan pipeline did not figure in Tuesday's meeting, he said, adding that India had also expressed its willingness to join the TAP project.

Daily Times, 13 July 2005

**\$6.213b trade deficit in 12 months recorded** (Sajid Chaudhry)

ISLAMABAD: The country has suffered a trade deficit of US \$6.213 billion during 12 months - July-June period of the last fiscal, 2004-05 - against a trade deficit of US \$3.278 billion during the same period of the year before last, 2003-04, according to official trade figures released on Tuesday. The historic increase in the oil prices during the last fiscal continued in the month of June that had led to major increase in trade deficit during the July-June period of the year before last, an official said. The other reasons that contributed in the increase of trade deficit include the increased imports of machinery, industrial raw materials, cars and other dutiable imports. The exports during July-June period of the last fiscal stood at US \$14.410 billion against the exports of US \$12.313 billion during the same period of the year before last, showing an increase of 17 percent. The imports during the July-June period of the last fiscal stood at US \$20.623 billion against the imports of US \$15.592 billion during the same period of the year before last fiscal, showing an increase of 32.3 percent.

The News, 13 July 2005

**Chaudary Shujaat, Qazi Hussain Ahmed condole Ghotki incident**

LAHORE: President of the Pakistan Muslim League Chaudary Shujaat Hussain and leader of the Muthaida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) have expressed deep sorrow and grief over the loss of precious lives in the Ghotki accident. Chaudary Shujaat Hussain in his condolence message has said that the government must initiate high-level investigations to find out those responsible for this incident and should take such steps, which will prevent such incidents in the future. Qazi Hussain Ahmed in his condolence message said that this accident is a proof of the rampant mismanagement and disorganization. He demanded that a high level enquiry is should be started and the perpetrators behind the incident be given exemplary punishment. Qazi Hussain Ahmed also prayed for the deceased and for the safe recovery of those injured in the accident.

The News, 13 July 2005

**Benazir directs PPP not to consider MPs for dist Nazim slots** (Imtiaz Hussain)

KHAIRPUR: Pakistan People's Party chairperson Benazir Bhutto has directed the PPP provincial chiefs not to consider applications of party MNAs and MPAs for the slots of district Nazim, The News has learnt. Benazir had asked the MNAs and MPAs to struggle for restoration of democracy in the assemblies, besides taking up the issues related to the masses, the sources said.

Dawn, 14 July 2005

**130 die in Ghotki train disaster** (Shamim Shamsi)

GHOTKI: At least 130 people were killed and about 170 injured when three passenger trains collided at the Sarhad Railway Station, about 49km from Sukkur, in the early hours of Wednesday. However, hospital sources here said that the crash had left at least 164 people dead and hundreds injured, many of them seriously. According to railway authorities, the driver of the Karachi Express misread the signal and ploughed into the stationary Quetta Express full of passengers, then the Karachi Express slammed head-on into the wreckage of the two trains. The collision was so intense that people in far away areas heard the sound of the crash. At least 17 coaches of the three trains were completely damaged, while some carriages of the Karachi Express were reduced to scrap.

Dawn, 14 July 2005

**Deadline set for final pact on gas pipeline: Pakistan, India pledge commitment** (Jawed Naqvi)

NEW DELHI: The first meeting of India-Pakistan Joint Working Group on the Iran gas pipeline project ended here on Wednesday with a commitment from both the sides to push forward the project despite US objections, officials said. The prime ministers of both the countries will be in Washington this month, where they are expected to explain their respective point of view on the issue. To keep the other options open for their mutual quest for piped gas, India has been formally invited to a Steering Committee meeting of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TAP) gas pipeline project due to be held later this month. The venue has not been named. Besides having

substantial delegation level discussions, the Pakistani side led by Petroleum Secretary Ahmad Waqar called on Indian petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar.

Daily Times, 14 July 2005

**Pakistan, UK to share information**

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao on Wednesday said Pakistan would share with the UK all possible information that could help investigations into the recent London blasts. Speaking at a press conference, the minister said: "We have a Memorandum of Understanding with 48 countries for cooperation in fighting terrorism and we will extend whatever cooperation the UK is seeking in terms of eliminating global terrorism." Asked whether there had been any arrests in Pakistan in connection with the London blasts, the minister said he could not share such information with the press at this stage. But Mr Sherpao disclosed that Pakistan had provided "intelligence information" to the British authorities and had helped them to avert a major disaster before the UK elections.

Daily Times, 14 July 2005

**Durrani threatens to 'wreak havoc' if MMA govt ousted (Khalid Hasan)**

WASHINGTON: NWFP chief minister Akram Durrani said here on Wednesday that if any attempt was made to bring down his democratically elected government, "we would wreak havoc." The phrase the chief minister used - he was answering questions in Urdu which were being translated for him by one of his aides - was "*hum eent se eent baja dai'n gaye*." This was translated for the luncheon audience at the Brookings Institution as "tit for tat," a rendering that a number of Pakistanis present pointed out was inaccurate. Durrani, who is here at the invitation of a Christian interfaith group called Group for Global Engagement, made a long defence of the Hasba bill that he described as legislation that would deal with such social evils as honour killings, instant divorce, denial of women's rights in matters of inheritance and property etc. He claimed that the MMA government had brought "real democracy" to the province.

Daily Times, 14 July 2005

**Ministers vow to get trade talks back on schedule**

DALIAN: Ministers from around the world accepted blame on Wednesday for the snail's pace of global trade talks and pledged to raise their game in time for a make-or-break meeting in Hong Kong in December. The ministers, from more than 30 rich and poor countries, took comfort from progress toward a compromise formula on how to cut farm tariffs, a major obstacle to a trade deal that the World Bank says would lift tens of millions out of poverty. "We will work to further increase momentum towards our goal of a successful conclusion of the Doha negotiations by the end of 2006, our highest common priority in trade policy for the year ahead," a statement issued by the chairmen of the meeting said.

The News, 14 July 2005

**NWFP governor vows to stop Hasba enforcement (Rahimullah Yusufzai)**

PESHAWAR: In an ominous development, the NWFP Governor Khalil-ur-Rahman made it clear here Wednesday that the federal government would take every step allowed by the Constitution to stop the enforcement of the Hasba laws in the province. "This is my own province. I cannot allow anarchy here," he sternly declared while reading from a strong-worded written statement at the Governor's House. The Governor didn't divulge much when pressed by reporters as to what action the Centre was contemplating to prevent the MMA-led government in the NWFP from implementing the Hasba laws. He avoided a question regarding the possibility of bringing the NWFP under Governor's Rule. He did say that one option was to approach the Supreme Court to challenge the Hasba Bill and seek verdict on it being unconstitutional.

The News, 14 July 2005

**Pakistan, Italy concur on UN reforms (Asim Yasin)**

ROME: Pakistan and Italy on Wednesday confirmed that they have consensus on the issue of reforms in the United Nations. "Pakistan and Italy have the consensus on the issue of reforms in the United Nations and we both believe that it should be based on equality and justice," said Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz. He was talking to newsmen after holding meeting with Italian President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi here on Wednesday. The prime minister reached here on a three-day visit and was accorded warm welcome at the airport. The meeting between the two leaders lasted more than one hour with a focus on bilateral relations and global situation. Prime Minister Shaukat cautioned against the hasty reforms in the United Nations Security Council, saying it would lead to polarisation at the global level while impacting the efforts aimed at the consensus based on UN expansion. He said Pakistan and Italy were engaged in consultations over the reforms issue and "we were in contact with a number of states, which favoured our position that was based on principles". The prime minister said he briefed

the Italian president on the latest developments in Afghanistan.

Dawn, 15 July 2005

**NWFP PA passes Hasba bill** (Mohammed Riaz)

PESHAWAR: The NWFP Assembly on Thursday passed the controversial Hasba bill with a majority vote amid mild protest by the opposition. The PML-N abstained from the afternoon proceedings of the assembly. Opposition MPAs, wearing black armbands inscribed with slogans against the bill, stayed in the house till its passage. Against all expectations Abdul Akbar Khan of the People's Party Parliamentarians did not put up much resistance to the bill. In his speech he said the bill would remain invalid if it was not signed by the president under Article 151 (4) of the constitution. Speaker Bakht Jehan Khan, who presided over the session, overruled the point of order raised by Akbar Khan and allowed the law minister to table his motion for the passage of the bill. Pir Mohammad Khan, a dissident of the Jamaat-i-Islami, suggested an amendment to Article II of the bill, seeking the provincial assembly's exemption from the authority of Mohtasib. The house approved the amendment with majority votes.

Dawn, 15 July 2005

**AEC told to set up 13 N-power plants** (Ihtasham ul Haque)

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) has been assigned a special task by the government to set up 13 new nuclear power plants to generate 8800 MW of power in the next 25 years with a view to meet growing requirements of the industrial sector. Informed sources told Dawn here on Thursday that when work on the 300-MW Chashma Nuclear Power Plant-2 had started in May last, the PAEC authorities were directed to accelerate their efforts to install 13 more nuclear power plants both with local and foreign financial and technical support. Each plant would roughly have a capacity of 600-700 MW. Chashma-2 will be completed in 2011 at a revised cost of \$850 million for which Chinese were mainly providing financial and technical support. Chashma-1 was also built with Chinese assistance and was currently producing about 1400 MW of electricity at 95 per cent plus capacity, which sources claimed, was one of the highest in the world.

Dawn, 15 July 2005

**Musharraf assures Blair of cooperation**

ISLAMABAD: In a telephonic conversation with the British Prime Minister Tony Blair on Thursday evening, President Gen Pervez Musharraf assured the British prime minister of Pakistan's fullest support and assistance in the investigation of July 7 terrorist acts in London. Gen Musharraf expressed his shock and offered heartfelt condolences on behalf of the people and government over last bombings, which had resulted in the death of over 50 innocent people. Prime Minister Blair thanked the president and the government for their unequivocal support. He appreciated the crucial role Pakistan has played in the international fight against terror.

Daily Times, 15 July 2005

**Prime minister woos Italian businessmen** (Shoaib Ahmed)

ROME: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said on Thursday that Pakistan's environment was conducive for investment in various sectors. Addressing a round table conference attended by top Italian businessmen of Rome and heads of over 50 companies dealing in leather, machinery, construction equipment, food and other products, Aziz said investments could be made in IT, power generation, alternative energy, textile, industry and construction. He said there was no restriction on investment on any company in Pakistan and that a level playing field had been provided to local and international investors. About economic reforms in Pakistan, the prime minister said Pakistan was concentrating on two sides in this connection - the economy at the macro-level and structural reforms. Deregulation, privatisation and liberalisation were the major emphasis when it came to structural reforms, he added. Pakistan had made considerable progress in the last six years and the country's growth rate last year was 8.4 percent, he said.

Daily Times, 15 July 2005

**3 bombs rock Quetta, no loss of life reported**

LAHORE: Three homemade bombs exploded in Quetta on Thursday, shattering windows of buildings, but killing or injuring no one, Geo news channel reported. The first bomb went off in a street near the Health director general's office on Suriab Road, shattering windows of the building and breaking its walls, the channel reported. The second bomb exploded near the Excise and Taxation office, damaging the building, the report added. The third bomb went off in the grounds on Suriab Road. There were no reports of human loss as a result of these bomb blasts, the channel quoted police sources as saying. There was also a report about a fourth bomb explosion, but official sources did not confirm it, the channel said.

Daily Times, 15 July 2005

### **Pakistan and NZ to sign pact with ASEAN**

BANGKOK: New Zealand, South Korea and Pakistan will sign agreements this month with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to cooperate against terrorism, a Thai Foreign Ministry official said on Thursday. The signing will take place during a series of high-level ASEAN meetings in the Lao capital, Vientiane, from July 24 to 29, said Kitti Wasinond, the head of the ministry's Asia Division. Laos, ASEAN's current chairman, will host an annual meeting of ASEAN foreign ministers, followed by talks with the group's major diplomatic partners and a meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum, the region's main security forum.

The News, 16 July 2005

### **Musharraf orders nationwide drive against extremism**

RAWALPINDI: Declaring Pakistan's firm commitment to combating extremism and terrorism, President Gen Pervez Musharraf on Friday directed the law-enforcement agencies to launch a countrywide campaign against collection of donations, display of arms, holding of gatherings by banned outfits and remove all hate material from markets by December this year. Addressing top police officers from around the country, the president made it clear that the government would not tolerate extremism and would continue to combat terrorism with unflinching determination and force, as it was in the interest of Pakistan's continued socio-economic progress. He also reiterated the government's resolve not to allow banned militant organisations to re-surface using any other name. "You must enforce an end to publication and distribution of hate material, including pamphlets, booklets, CDs etc, and writers, publishers and distributors of all such literature must be held accountable in accordance with the law. You must ensure that such material is not available in markets latest by December, this year," the President said.

The News, 16 July 2005

### **Pakistan, Italy for consensus on UN reforms** (Asim Yasin)

ROME: Pakistan and Italy on Friday reiterated their opposition to any reform proposal entailing increase in number of the permanent UN Security Council (UNSC) seats for any individual states, and said it would seriously affect functioning of the council and the perspective of strengthening its role. This has been stated in a joint declaration issued after meeting of Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz with his Italian counterpart Silvio Berlusconi held on Thursday. The declaration was issued on Friday just minutes before departure of Prime Minister Aziz from Rome to Milan. The declaration said the two sides, belonging to 'Uniting for Consensus' movement, reiterated their belief that the Security Council reforms must be perused on the basis of solutions that enjoy the general consensus of all the UN member states and are inspired by the need to preserve and increase the representative character and operative efficiency of the council.

Daily Times, 16 July 2005

### **State Dept avoids word on Aziz visit** (Khalid Hasan)

WASHINGTON: The State Department, when asked to comment on the cancellation of PM Shaukat Aziz's visit to Washington later this month, replied that it had no comment. A senior State Department official told Daily Times on Friday morning that he was unable to say why the visit has been called off by Islamabad. The White House was equally silent. The popular theory going the rounds here is that following on the heels of Indian Prime Minister Dr Mahmohan Singh's red carpet welcome and high-level interaction with the Bush administration, the Pakistani prime minister, by contrast, would have looked like a "poor relation admitted through the back door." A Pakistan embassy official dismissed the suggestion, stating that when Pakistan proposed the Prime Minister's visit to Washington, it already knew about the Indian Prime Minister's visit.

Daily Times, 16 July 2005

### **NWFP observes Thanksgiving Day on passing Hasba**

PESHAWAR: People in the province were observing Friday as "thanksgiving day" to welcome the Hasba Bill passed by the Frontier Assembly, said NWFP Senior Minister Sirajul Haq. "United States, Britain and their allies are raising concern over the Hasba Bill because they cannot see the implementation of Sharia in any Muslim country," Siraj told a crowd in the Mohabat Khan Mosque during his Friday sermon. He said people were celebrating the passing of the bill and bowed before Allah to thank Him for giving the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal courage to take steps for implementing Islamic laws in the province.

Dawn, 16 July 2005

### **UK blast suspect met Islamabad church bomber**

ISLAMABAD: One of the alleged London suicide bombers met in 2003 with a man later arrested for a church bombing in Pakistan, an intelligence official said on Friday. Security agencies are investigating possible links between militant groups and Shehzad Tanweer, a Briton of Pakistani origin who is believed to be one of four bombers in the July 7 attack that killed at least 54 people. One of the groups being checked is Jaish-i-

Muhammad, linked to Al Qaeda and banned in 2002. The other group is Lashkar-i-Taiba, which unlike the Jaish is not known to have any operational ties with Al Qaeda.

Dawn, 16 July 2005

#### **Sharifs not to seek Saudi help on passport**

LAHORE: Former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's son-in-law Capt Muhammad Safdar has been asked by Pakistan's consulate in Jeddah to turn up on Saturday (today) to know if the government had conveyed any instructions about issuing passports to his father-in-law and mother-in-law. An application for passports had been submitted on July 2, but the government did not send any instructions either to the embassy in Riyadh or the consulate in Jeddah. Capt Safdar visited the consulate several times only to be told that he should come again. Fed up with the repeated fruitless visits, Mr Safdar wrote a letter to the consul-general complaining that no clear answer was being offered despite his visits. He also threatened that the applicants might go for a legal action against people who were failing in their duties.

Daily Times, 17 July 2005

#### **10 held in drive against militant outfits in Punjab** (Mubasher Bukhari)

LAHORE: The Punjab government has arrested 10 people from Faisalabad, Gujranwala and Lahore in the past 24 hours during a crackdown against militant outfits, official sources told Daily Times on Saturday. Sources said the crackdown was launched after the media reported that some London bombing suspects had stayed at various seminaries to forge links with militant outfits. Reportedly, four men were arrested from Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh and Kamalia. Two were identified as Nazir and Shahzad. Four men were also arrested from Lahore but three were later set free. "Two Jaish-e-Muhammad activists were arrested from Gujranwala on Saturday and are being interrogated," said sources, adding that another major operation was expected on Sunday.

Daily Times, 17 July 2005

#### **Supreme Court does not have jurisdiction to hear Hasba case: Qazi**

LAHORE: The Supreme Court does not have jurisdiction to hear the reference against the Hasba Bill, Qasi Hussain Ahmed, Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) president and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) chief, told reporters on Saturday. Nevertheless, he said, the MMA would fulfil legal requirements and plead its case in the apex court. "The dissolution of the NWFP Assembly will lead to an uncontrollable situation in the province, for which the entire responsibility will rest on the federal government," he said. He said that dissolving the NWFP Assembly under the pretext of the Hasba Bill would amount to hostility against the state. He said the people of the NWFP had a deep commitment to Islam and believed in the leadership of clerics.

Daily Times, 17 July 2005

#### **MMA in contact with legal team to defend Hasba Bill** (Iqbal Khattak and Mohammad Imran)

PESHAWAR/ISLAMABAD: Sirajul Haq, NWFP senior minister and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) provincial chief, on Saturday held consultations with legal experts and discussed formation of a lawyers' panel to effectively defend the Hasba Bill in the Supreme Court. A spokesman for the minister said in a handout that Siraj was holding consultations with senior lawyers in Lahore to form a team to defend the controversial bill the NWFP Assembly passed on Thursday. The NWFP government is likely to hire the services of Dr Farooq Hassan, Senator SM Zafar, Ghulam Qadir Jattoi, Abdul Hakim Kundi, Akram Sheikh and a former chief justice of the Peshawar High Court. The names of the lawyers will be finalised by Sunday or Monday.

Dawn, 17 July 2005

#### **Premier's US visit to be rescheduled**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz's visit to the US and Canada has been postponed and will be rescheduled. A foreign office statement said on Saturday that the visit had been postponed for the time being. "Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz is looking forward to his meetings with US President George W. Bush and Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin and has expressed his deep appreciation to the two leaders for their understanding for the request to reschedule the visit for a later date," the statement said. Convenient dates will be worked out mutually through diplomatic channels. The FO statement said Pakistan attached importance to its multi-faceted and cooperative relations with the United States and Canada.

Dawn, 18 July 2005

#### **Fazl says Islamisation process unstoppable**

SWABI: Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly and Secretary-General of JUI, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, said on Sunday that after the passage of the Hasba bill nobody could stop the Islamisation process in the Frontier province. Addressing a public meeting here, he said getting the Hasba bill passed through the NWFP

Assembly was the democratic right of the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal government.

Daily Times, 18 July 2005

**Jihadi madrassas alive and well** (Khalid Hasan)

WASHINGTON: A World Bank study that found the number of "jihadi" madrassas in Pakistan much smaller than popularly believed has been questioned by the International Crisis Group, a Brussels-based humanitarian outfit. In an article in the Sunday edition of Washington Post, Samina Ahmed, the Group's South Asia project director and Andrew Strohlein, its media director, claim that "Jihadi extremism is still propagated at radical madrassas in Pakistan" and that "these religious schools still preach an insidious doctrine that foments the sectarian violence that is increasingly a threat to the stability of Pakistan." In a reference to the London bombings, they observe, "And now, it seems, the hatred these madrassas breed is spilling blood in Western cities as well."

Daily Times, 18 July 2005

**Seminaries won't be searched for militants: Brig Cheema** (Shahzad Raza)

ISLAMABAD: The government does not plan to search religious seminaries to arrest people linked to militant organisations. Brig Javed Iqbal Cheema, National Crises Management Cell director general, told Daily Times on Sunday that no search and arrest operations would be carried out in response to last week's London bombings. There are more than 11,000 seminaries registered with the Wafaqul Madaris in Pakistan. Religious Ministry sources said about 24,000 more seminaries had applied to the Wafaqul Madaris for registration. Brig Cheema said the government could not start such an operation without setting specified targets. President Pervez Musharraf told senior law enforcement officials after the London bombings to eradicate terrorism in the country by December 2005.

Dawn, 18 July 2005

**Ji not to change stance on NSC** (Amjad Mahmood)

LAHORE: The Jamaat-i-Islami has decided not to change its stance on the National Security Council (NSC) issue as far as its present composition is kept intact, it is learnt. The decision was taken after a discussion by its central Shoorah which met here on Sunday with Qazi Husain Ahmad in the chair. The NSC comprises the president as its head, and the prime minister, the Senate chairman, the opposition leader, the NA speaker, the joint chiefs of staff committee chairman, all three armed services chiefs and chief ministers of all provinces as its members.

Dawn, 18 July 2005

**NGOs urge Pakistan to ratify Rome Statute**

ISLAMABAD: A coalition of human rights organizations on Sunday urged Pakistan to ratify the Rome Statute through which the International Criminal Court (ICC) was created. "There have so far been 99 ratifications of the Rome Statute. There is an urgent need for Pakistan also to sign and ratify the Rome Statute and other significant human rights treaties," said the coalition comprising of SPARC, Amnesty International, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) and other organizations on the occasion of the World Day for International Justice celebrated on July 17.

The News, 19 July 2005

**Serious Pak proposals to India on N-CBMs** (Muhammad Saleh Zaafir)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has decided to put up a number of serious proposals to India when both the countries enter the next round of talks on nuclear CBMs in New Delhi in the first week of August under the composite dialogue process. On top is the proposal to resort to non-aggressive doctrines and pre-notification of missile tests by eliminating differences about the provisions of agreement that is already on the table for deliberations. Highly placed diplomatic sources told The News here on Monday that August would be an eventful month for senior level contacts and talks between Pakistan and India after 10 weeks of slow-paced diplomatic activity.

The News, 19 July 2005

**Maleeha calls for global response to end terrorism**

LONDON: Pakistan's High Commissioner to Britain Dr Maleeha Lodhi said on Monday eliminating terrorism required a global response and it was collective responsibility of the international community to cooperate in rooting out the scourge. She was speaking to reporters after her meeting with two British Muslim MPs of Pakistani origin, Mohammad Sarwar from Glasgow and Khalid Mehmood from Birmingham. Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Ejazul Haq was also present in the meeting who briefed them on various steps being taken by Pakistan to eliminate terrorism. Maleeha categorically said terrorism has no place in Islam, which forbids killing of innocent people and is a religion of peace and tolerance. She urged the community to forge unity and promote inter-racial and inter-faith harmony in the multi-cultural Britain.

Daily Times, 19 July 2005

**Poor media strategy weakened Pakistan's case after 7/7: PML** (Shahzad Raza)

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League (PML) will inform President General Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz about the poor media strategy that weakened Pakistan's position in the post 7/7 situation. The PML will also propose a plan to deal with aftermath of the London bombings. PML Secretary General Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Information Secretary Senator Tariq Azeem and other party leaders attended a meeting on Monday at the PML Secretariat wherein the London attacks and their fallout against the Muslim community there were discussed. The participants expressed reservations over the poor media management by the Pakistan's High Commission.

Daily Times, 19 July 2005

**Law agencies arrest dozens of militants on wanted list** (Mubasher Bukhari)

LAHORE: The federal government has given a list of 136 most wanted militants to law enforcing agencies with strict directions to arrest them "in a few days". Following the directive, agencies in Punjab arrested dozens of people belonging to militant organisations. In Lahore, police arrested two militants of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi from Mozang on Sunday and confiscated weapons from them. They were identified as Qari Ishaq and Aftab, residents of Chunian, District Kasur. "When the police arrested them, they identified themselves as mujahideen. Two pistols were recovered from their possession," said a source.

Dawn, 19 July 2005

**Jihad urged against extremists : Musharraf addresses youths** (Sher Baz Khan)

ISLAMABAD: President Gen Pervez Musharraf on Monday asked the nation to reject religious extremists in the forthcoming local government elections and warned of a bleak future for Pakistan if such elements reached the echelon of power. "From 1999 to 2002 I have selected people, and I believe I have selected the right people for the right jobs by following merit. Now it is your (the nation) responsibility not to elect wrong people and to launch jihad against religious extremists," the president said while inaugurating the National Youth Convention 2005.

Dawn, 19 July 2005

**Separate groups for pipeline likely**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan, India and Iran are likely to firm up separate consortiums to develop 2670-km of gas pipeline in their respective territories for the delivery of Iranian gas to India, it has been learnt. Informed sources told Dawn that Pakistan-India joint working group which met in New Delhi a few days ago held preliminary discussions on the proposal. A final decision, the sources added, would be taken once the transaction structure developed further. Initially, the two countries - Pakistan and India - would appoint their separate consultants to prepare structure for the formulation of consortia and other pros and cons of the pipeline project.

Dawn, 20 July 2005

**Musharraf, Rice discuss war on terror**

ISLAMABAD, July 19: US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called President Gen Pervez Musharraf on Tuesday and exchanged views with him on the ongoing war against terror and international issues. Minister for Information Sheikh Rashid Ahmed confirmed the telephonic conversation but declined to give any details. Ms Rice called President Musharraf after the latter had a meeting with the visiting chief of the US Central Command, General John P. Abizaid. Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement that in his meeting with Gen Abizaid, President Musharraf expressed the hope that his visit and his meetings with the Pakistani military leadership would help enhance cooperation between the armed forces of the two countries.

Dawn, 20 July 2005

**No operation planned in Balochistan border areas**

QUETTA, July 19: General Officer Commanding, Quetta, Maj-Gen Alam Khattak, said on Tuesday that there was no plan to launch an operation in the border areas of Balochistan. All the border areas in Balochistan are peaceful and there is no need for an operation, he told journalists after a jirga attended by Pukhtun tribal elders of the province. "We have achieved a stable environment in these areas," he said in reply to a question. In reply to a question about Afghanistan's allegation regarding presence of Al Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden and Taliban leader Mullah Omar in the border areas, he said the two countries had a long border and there were some places where people could cross into both the countries but Pakistan had taken strict security measure.

Dawn, 20 July 2005

**Navy gets hovercraft, assault boats**

KARACHI, July 19: Pakistan is fully capable of safeguarding its geographical and ideological boundaries and is

determined to meet its defence requirements, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Gen Ehsanul Haq, said on Tuesday. He was speaking at the induction ceremony of three hovercraft and three military assault boats. He said a significant strength in the offensive punch of the navy had been achieved with the induction. He said the navy was now not only capable of operating deep inside the creek areas up to Sir Creek but also around the coastal belt of Balochistan.

Dawn, 20 July 2005

### **Report on new dams finalized**

ISLAMABAD, July 19: Chairman of the Technical Committee on Water Resources A.N.G. Abbasi has finalized a draft report on construction of new dams and overall water availability. Informed sources told Dawn that Mr Abbasi held a meeting with minister for water and power Liaqat Ali Jatoi on Tuesday and discussed the subject. Mr Abbasi when contacted said the president had given him a deadline of Aug 31 to submit the report and hopefully he would positively meet the deadline. He said the preparation of the report was moving in the right direction. He said he had a courtesy call on the minister. He said his report would be in the larger interest of the nation and the country.

Daily Times, 20 July 2005

### **Pakistan opposes India's bid to buy gas directly from Iran**

NEW DELHI: Pakistan has opposed India's plans to buy gas through the proposed \$7.4 billion Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline directly from Iran, saying that Tehran cannot own the gas in Pakistani territory. India wants Iran to own the gas till the delivery point at Rajasthan border in order to underwrite any losses that may occur due to disruptions in the pipeline, PTI said. Pakistan made it clear at the 1st Joint Working Group meeting here on July 12-13 that the involvement of the National Iranian Gas Export Co (the gas exporting firm) in Pakistani territory would be 'difficult', a senior official said.

The News, 20 July 2005

### **FO summons Indian envoy** (Mariana Baabar)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday summoned the Indian Deputy High Commissioner, TCA Raghavan, to the Foreign Office and lodged a strong protest against Indian intrusion across the Line of Control and the "kidnapping" of Qazi Faqir Ahmed from Azad Kashmir on Monday. Director-General South Asia Jalil Abbas Jilani also served the Indian envoy with a demarche over the matter. Pakistan demanded an inquiry into the incident and Raghavan informed Islamabad that he would convey this to New Delhi. Though Pakistani and Indian Directors-General Military Operations spoke on Monday with Pakistan protesting the incident, the demarche was the first formal diplomatic protest.

The News, 20 July 2005

### **Hiraj rules out free trade with India**

LAHORE: Minister of State for Commerce Hamid Yar Hiraj has hinted at offering special incentives to exporters in the forthcoming trade policy. The sole purpose of the trade policy would be to improve exports by offering different incentives, he said while speaking to the newsmen here Tuesday. The trade policy would be rolled out immediately, carrying lots of attractions and incentives for exporters, he added. While the Pakistan government is discussing free trade modalities with the economic managers of other Saarc member countries at Kathmandu to implement South Asia Free Trade Agreement (Safta), the commerce minister for commerce categorically denied opening free trade with India. He reiterated that free trade with India is next to impossible because of the existing ailing issues between both the neighbouring nations.

The News, 20 July 2005

### **Pak opposition to UNSC expansion to continue** (Hanif Khalid)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will not compromise on its principled stand on expansion of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Foreign Secretary Riaz Mohammad Khan has said. He was talking to 'The News' at a reception arranged for outgoing spokesman of the Foreign Office Jalil Abbas Jilani and his successor Naeem Khan. Jilani, director general in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is proceeding for a National Defence College course. Naeem Khan, who possesses a vast diplomatic experience, will also act as director general for Far East & Pacific Region while discharging additional responsibilities.

The News, 20 July 2005

### **Pak-Swiss accord against double taxation signed** (Ikram Hoti)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Switzerland inked an agreement here Tuesday to avoid double taxation on their citizens' incomes and trade. Secretary Revenue Division M Abdullah Yusuf signed the Convention for Avoidance

of Double Taxation on behalf of the Government of Pakistan while Denis Feldmeyer, Ambassador of Swiss Confederation on behalf of the Swiss Confederation at CBR House, Islamabad. The agreement was initialled on 15th October 2002 in Islamabad. Through the Convention, Pakistan would benefit from sharing of tax on income from shipping business, immovable property, income from interest, royalties and fee for technical services and capital gains.

Daily Times, 20 July 2005

**Border violations won't be tolerated, Abizaid told**

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan will not tolerate future violations of its frontiers and will thwart infiltration into areas it controls, said President Pervez Musharraf while meeting United States Central Command Commander in Chief Gen John P Abizaid. Meeting at the President's Secretariat, President Musharraf said Islamabad was offering support and cooperation to the US and the international community for fighting terrorism and extremism, but it would not allow anyone to violate its borders under the pretext of anti-terrorism campaign. He said, "Our forces are vigilant against terrorists and are doing every possible thing to purge Pakistan and the region of them. Their successes against militants are indubitable." He added, "Now, we want our borders to be respected in the war of terrorism and will not put up with future border breaches."

Dawn, 20 July 2005

**Hasba bill criticized by ANP, PPP leaders**

SWABI, July 19: Leaders of various political parties have said the Hasba bill would create anarchy and chaos in the NWFP by leaving the masses at the mercy of religious leaders. At an open discussion forum, Rabita, organized by the Abaseen Union of Journalists here on Tuesday, the leaders said the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal government had political motives behind tabling the bill and getting it passed through the assembly. ANP's district president Haji Rehmanullah said the bill had given absolute powers to the ombudsman who would act in accordance with his own beliefs and no one could challenge him. In such a situation, where would the people go to seek remedy, he questioned.

Daily Times, 20 July 2005

**Members of militant outfits can't contest polls: EC (Mohammad Kamran)**

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission (EC) has said that members and activists of militant organisations will not be eligible to contest the upcoming local council elections. Sources told Daily Times on Tuesday that the commission had sent special directives to all returning officers (ROs) in the 54 districts asking them to abide by the eligibility criteria. "The nomination papers of candidates who are or have been members of sectarian or militant outfits will not be accepted," sources added. Justice Abdul Hameed Dogar, chief election commissioner (CEC), said the restriction was imposed under Section 152 (s) of the Local Government Ordinance.

Dawn, 20 July 2005

**Over 100 held in crackdown (Syed Irfan Raza)**

ISLAMABAD, July 19: Police on Tuesday arrested over 100 clerics and students of seminaries during a country-wide crackdown launched for confiscating hate material and detaining elements sheltering militants, police sources said. The operation against suspected militants in different parts of the country started after sunset and continued till late night. The crackdown was launched 12 days after the London blasts in which three of the four suicide bombers were said to be Britons of Pakistani origin who visited the country recently. Interior Minister Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao told Dawn the action had been taken against people involved in publishing hate material, making provocative speeches and sheltering militants.

The Nation, 21 July 2005

**US unwilling to give Pak N-power plants (SHAIQ HUSSAIN)**

ISLAMABAD - The USA is not willing to provide nuclear power plants to Pakistan despite intense diplomatic efforts by Islamabad in this regard to meet its ever-growing energy requirements. For the last couple of months, Pakistan has been striving to acquire nuclear power plants from the United States, which it believes are vital to meet its dire energy requirements in the coming years. However, according to diplomatic sources, the Bush administration is not willing to accede to Pakistan's request regarding the extension of nuclear plants for peaceful purposes.

Dawn, 21 July 2005

**Hunt intensified; 200 held: Prominent SSP leader arrested in Khairpur**

ISLAMABAD, July 20: More than 200 suspected militants have been arrested in a nationwide crackdown launched on Tuesday. Those detained include a prominent leader of the banned Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan,

Maulana Ali Sher Hyderi who was picked up in Khairpur. The security forces have arrested about 200 people from all over the country," Interior Minister Aftab Sherpao told CNN. He vowed that the arrests under anti-terrorism laws would continue. "They have been arrested because they were spreading hatred ... which was causing unrest in society. We want peace in Pakistan and we want progress," he said.

Daily Times, 21 July 2005

**Musharraf's reaction to Indo-US deal 'constructive'**

WASHINGTON: President Pervez Musharraf's reaction to the US-India nuclear deal has been described by a senior State Department official as "constructive" and "not overly problematic." The call by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to the Pakistani President on Tuesday suggests that Pakistan had not been informed of the US decision beforehand. The Pakistan embassy had no comment to offer and the Foreign Office has refrained from making a statement so far. Pakistan's reticence can only then be interpreted as a sign of acceptance of a decision that is not likely to be popular with the Pakistani public.

Dawn, 21 July 2005

**Arrest denied**

ISLAMABAD, July 20: Pakistani government and intelligence officials on Wednesday denied media reports that a major suspected Al Qaeda figure linked to the July 7 London attacks had been arrested. Information Minister Sheikh Rashid rejected the reports which said Pakistani security agencies had arrested a Briton of Pakistani descent, Haroon Rashid Aswad, during a raid. "We have arrested no one with the name of Haroon Rashid," the minister said. "The reports in this regard are untrue. I deny it." A senior security official said: "We have made no such arrest in Pakistan. We have not yet been able to track down the linkages of the three London bombers here who travelled to Pakistan before the attacks.

Daily Times, 21 July 2005

**Top policemen suspended for mishandling seminary raids (Shahzad Malik and Mohammad Imran)**

ISLAMABAD: The government on Wednesday suspended Senior Superintendent of Capital Police (SSP) Liaqat Ali Khan and SP Headquarters Sultan Azam Taimuri for mishandling the raids on seminaries on Tuesday night. The suspended police officials have been asked to report to the Establishment Division while Inam Ghani, SSP of the Diplomatic Protection Department, has been asked to look after the affairs of SSP Islamabad till further orders. The prime minister took serious note of policemen's intrusion into a women's seminary, Madrassa Hifsa, located near the Lal Mosque without getting permission from the concerned authorities and hitting the students with batons.

Daily Times, 21 July 2005

**MMA to hold protests tomorrow (Mohammad Imran)**

ISLAMABAD: The Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) has condemned the raids being carried out by law enforcement agencies on religious seminaries all over the country. It announced that it would hold protests on Friday. "The MMA condemned the raids on religious schools especially on Jammia Hifsa (religious seminary for female students)," Hafiz Hussain Ahmed, deputy secretary general of the MMA said while addressing a press conference on Wednesday. He said that religious scholars across the country would criticise the government policies in the Friday sermons. "Interior Minister Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao should resign because when contacted he could not even explain the motive behind the recent raids," Maulana Shah Abdul Aziz, an MMA MNA said on the occasion.

Daily Times, 21 July 2005

**Akhori dam feasibility study to be completed in August (Khalid Mustafa)**

ISLAMABAD: The Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) will complete the feasibility study of the Akhori dam by the end of August, an official source told Daily Times on Wednesday. According to the source, the feasibility study would enable the government to decide which dam to construct among the Kalabagh, Basha and Akhori dams. He said the progress on Akhori dam stood at 78 percent and the financial progress at 64.55 percent. He said that the geological mapping of 25,000 acres out of 74,500 acres was complete along with paper work on diversion of water, power channel and spillways. He said that the feasibility stage-1 of the Basha dam would be available by the next month and the design stage-II would be completed by January 2007.

Dawn, 21 July 2005

**Benazir slates Musharraf for allowing fanaticism**

ISLAMABAD, July 20: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairperson Benazir Bhutto has criticized President Gen Pervez Musharraf for allowing religious fanaticism to flourish under his nose. She was speaking at a gathering at Belfry Golf Club in Birmingham, UK, attended by parliament members, intellectuals and people from the business

community. "There are two types of madressahs; in the first type, pupils get schooling according to the Quran and there is nothing wrong with them. The second type was set up by Gen Zia to indoctrinate Afghan refugees and turn them into brainwashed soldiers," she said. After September 11, Gen Musharraf had said he would reform the madressahs but he did not.

Daily Times, 22 July 2005

**Musharraf for seminary registration by December** (Rana Qaisar)

ISLAMABAD: President General Pervez Musharraf on Thursday urged the country to rise for jihad against extremism and terrorism. "Rise for jihad against extremists and those spreading social hatred," said the president in a 45-minute television address. He also asked the nation to strengthen him with their support for a socio-economic change. President Musharraf called upon the Pakistani people to vote out extremists in the upcoming local council elections. He asked them to elect progressive people to promote "truly Islamic values" in the country, who could steer it towards prosperity. He said people should unite against terrorists preaching violence in the name of Islam. He announced administrative measures, adding they would not be compromised.

Daily Times, 22 July 2005

**Arrest banned outfits' leaders: PM** (Shahzad Raza)

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Thursday ordered the authorities to arrest the leaders of banned religious organisations and continue the countrywide operation against extremism. Chairing a federal cabinet meeting, Aziz said the institutions and people spreading hatred, sectarianism and militancy would not be tolerated. Interior Minister Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao reviewed briefly the ongoing anti-militancy operation. "The prime minister ordered the operation be continued till the set targets were achieved," sources told Daily Times. Aziz said the government was not against seminaries imparting religious education to students, said an official press statement. The prime minister added that such seminaries were doing a good job. The interior minister told the meeting that around 200 people had been arrested in the operation so far.

Dawn, 22 July 2005

**Provinces promised more autonomy**

ISLAMABAD, July 21: President General Pervez Musharraf has said that provinces will have increased autonomy and a fair distribution of resources in the new National Finance Commission (NFC) award. "The Concurrent List in the Constitution is being reviewed by parliamentarians and a solution will be found about provincial autonomy," he said in his address to the nation on Thursday. The president said that the government would ensure provincial harmony by removing 'genuine grievances' of smaller provinces. He said most of the development projects were being implemented in smaller provinces with maximum allocations. "All chief ministers have reposed confidence in me for a judicious NFC award which will shortly be decided," he said.

The Nation, 22 July 2005

**Qaeda has key base in Pakistan**

WASHINGTON (Agencies) - Voicing concern over the security of Pakistan's nuclear assets, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Wednesday said there had been 'reckless proliferation' and there was a 'danger' of extremists seizing power and taking control of the weapons. Singh, wrapping up a four-day visit to the United States, said the Al-Qaeda terror network led by Osama bin Laden had a key base in Pakistan and that there was always the risk of Islamic militants seizing power in Pakistan. In separate interviews to The Washington Post and CNN here, Singh, while pointing to the role terrorist elements have played in Pakistan in the last few years, said, "I have to be realistic enough to recognise the role that terrorist elements have played in the last few years in the history of Pakistan.

Daily Times, 22 July 2005

**Crackdown on militants: 300 held so far**

ISLAMABAD: Security forces detained close to 300 people by Thursday, with more raids overnight on private houses and religious seminaries. Despite the denials, security officials say some of those in detention are believed to have links with the London bombers. Security agencies continued their crackdown against activists of banned religious groups including Hizbut Tehrir (HT) and arrested dozens of militants, clerics and activists in various parts of the Punjab. Police raided the Gulberg residence of HT leader Hakim Ehsan Jigranvi and arrested two people. Sources said more than 50 people had been arrested in Lahore, Faisalabad, Multan, Sargodha, Jhelum and other parts of the province. In Sindh, police have arrested 45 people. Deputy Inspector General of

Police Mushtaq Shah said no arrests were made during overnight raids on several madrassas and mosques in Karachi.

Daily Times, 22 July 2005

**Indian PM's remarks unfortunate: FO**

ISLAMABAD: Indian prime Minister Manmohan Singh's recent remarks including those to CNN regarding the security of Pakistan's nuclear programme and strategic assets are unfortunate and misleading, read a Foreign Office press release issued here on Thursday. It said that Pakistan's nuclear capability was defensive and based on minimum credible deterrence. Pakistan's nuclear programme and strategic assets are secure, under strict and multi-layered custodial controls. An elaborate command and control mechanism, institutionalised in the shape of the National Command Authority has been in place since 2000, it added. The issue of terrorism, which is the global phenomenon should not be used to malign Pakistan, which is in the forefront of the international fight against terrorism, the press release read.

Daily Times, 22 July 2005

**Afghans told to leave North Waziristan**

ISLAMABAD: Afghan refugees living in North Waziristan Agency's western tribal belt bordering Afghanistan have been asked to leave the area in six weeks, said an official from the Afghan refugee directorate from Miranshah on Tuesday. For the last two years, Pakistani security forces have been busy in a full-scale offensive against militants in the western belt of the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA). "By September 7, all Afghans living in urban and rural clusters have to leave the North Waziristan Agency. The Afghan population living in the area has been informed about the decision through public announcements by local radio and by drum beating at other prominent places like markets," Akbar Ali Jan Wazir, agency administrator for Afghan refugees said from Miranshah. According to UNHCR, more than 30,000 Afghans, mostly hailing from refugee camps, have been assisted by the agency, under their voluntary repatriation programme. irin

Dawn, 23 July 2005

**Musharraf hopes Osama is held outside Pakistan** (Masood Haider and Anwar Iqbal)

NEW YORK / WASHINGTON, July 22:

President General Pervez Musharraf has said he will prefer that Osama bin Laden is captured by the American forces in Afghanistan and declared that agents from other countries will not be allowed to enter Pakistan to capture the Al Qaeda leader. "We hope he's found in Afghanistan by the Americans," the president told ABC News in an interview on Wednesday, adding later, "I would much prefer that somebody else handled him. "When referred to a recent statement by CIA Chief Porte Goss that the United States had an excellent idea where Osama was, but would have a difficult time bringing him to justice because of sovereignty issues, President Musharraf said that he would not let other countries into Pakistan, if Al Qaeda leader was indeed there.

Dawn, 23 July 2005

**'India plays up pipeline risks to dictate terms'** (Khaleeq Kiani)

ISLAMABAD, July 22: The Indian move to play up risks pertaining to Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline plan is meant to dictate terms for the implementation of the project and seek subsidized prices of gas. A petroleum ministry official told Dawn on Friday that India wanted a three-nation ownership of the 2,670km pipeline and the price at which Iran was providing gas to its citizens. The official said this in a reaction to a statement of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in Washington in which the Indian leader expressed skepticism about the pipeline saying that the project was fraught with risks and that he did not know if any international consortium of bankers would underwrite it.

The News, 23 July 2005

**Humayun sets terms for India MFN** (Nadeem Malik)

Islamabad: Pakistan will grant the most favoured nation (MFN) status to India only after resolution of the political issues, announced Commerce Minister Humayun Akhtar Khan here on Friday. Detailing the salient features of the Trade Policy 2005-06, he said trade would move forward in tandem with political progress. However, he said the South Asian Free Trade Area (Safta) would become operational with effect from January 2006, as agreed under the framework agreement. Indo-Pak trade has gradually picked up during the last fiscal to about \$400 million, but lack of trust has even widened after initiation of so many CBMs. The most pronounced example of the deep-gulf between the two nuclear-armed rivals is the loatheness of New Delhi in allowing export of eatables through the land route of Wagah to food-short Pakistan. India asked Pakistan to submit a formal written request to permit trade through cargo trucks at Wagah. The Indians are apparently reluctant to move forward, demanding transit trade facilities with Afghanistan and the Central Asia, as well as a decision on the MFN status.

Daily Times, 23 July 2005

**Pakistani team will inspect Baglihar tomorrow** (Iftikhar Gilani)

NEW DELHI: A seven-member Pakistani delegation led by Indus Water Commissioner Syed Jamaat Ali Shah will arrive here today (Saturday) and head to Jammu tomorrow (Sunday) to inspect the Baglihar Dam site. The Pakistani team consisting of engineers, hydrographers and geographical experts will inspect the Baglihar power project on Chenab River to verify objections that the project "violates" the Indus Water Treaty. Water And Power Development Authority general manager Dr Azrarul Haq and National Engineering Services Pakistan general manager Bashir Ahmad Qureshi will also accompany the delegation. Pakistan High Commission sources said the visit was Baglihar-specific and the team would not visit other rivers and tributaries.

Daily Times, 23 July 2005

**Afghans want Balochistan refugee camps open**

ISLAMABAD: Afghan refugees have asked the Pakistani authorities to delay the decision to shut down the refugee camps in Balochistan for another year to enable them to make proper arrangements for returning to Afghanistan. The Pakistani authorities in June had decided to close down two refugee camps in Pishin and Chaghi districts of Balochistan in August due to the security risk they pose to the province but most of the refugees believe that returning to Afghanistan is not easy for them due to the poor economic and security situation in the country. Muhammad Ayub, an Afghan elder from one of the camps that are to be closed, said it was unreasonable to expect people to uproot themselves from their places in such a short time.

The Nation, 23 July 2005

**Musharraf calls for OIC restructuring**

ISLAMABAD - President General Pervez Musharraf on Friday asked for the restructuring of the Organisation of Islamic Conference to effectively respond to the current challenges faced by the Muslim world. A Parliamentary delegation from Malaysia, led by Speaker of the House of Representatives, Tan Sri Dato Sri Diraja Ramli bin Ngah Talib, called on the President. National Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Amir Hussain was also present on the occasion, said a Foreign Office statement. Welcoming the Malaysian Speaker, President Musharraf said that Pakistan and Malaysia enjoyed excellent relations and shared similar views on international issues of common interest and on challenges faced by the Muslim Ummah.

The Nation, 23 July 2005

**Pak-led group submits draft on UNSC expansion to GA** (IFTIKHAR ALI)

UNITED NATIONS - A group of countries, including Pakistan, which oppose an increase in permanent members of the Security Council submitted Thursday a draft resolution to the General Assembly calling for adding 10 elected members to the powerful UN organ. The draft will be formally tabled in the 191-member Assembly on Monday, diplomats said. It has 12 co-sponsors, all members of the "Uniting for Consensus" (UfC) group. They are: Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Italy, Malta, Mexico, Pakistan, South Korea, San Marino, Spain and Turkey. The draft, the third to be presented to the General Assembly on the Security Council reform, proposes expanding the council's non-permanent members to 20 from the present 10, with all non-permanent members on the enlarged council entitled for immediate re-election.

Dawn, 23 July 2005

**Gwadar land mafia faces action**

QUETTA, July 22: The board of directors of the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) has decided to act against the 'land mafia' in Gwadar and directed the departments concerned to take effective measures without delay. The decision was taken at a meeting held in Gwadar on Friday under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Jam Mohammad Yousuf who leads the board. The meeting was attended by provincial ministers Syed Ehsan Shah and Sher Jan Baloch, Chief Secretary K.B. Rind and GDA Director-General Ahmed Bakhsh Lehri.

Dawn, 23 July 2005

**'Malaysia and Pakistan believe in moderation'**

KUALA LUMPUR, July 22: Malaysia and Pakistan are on the same wavelength regarding the need to promote a moderate Islam, former Prime Minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain said. Mr Shujat, who is also the president of the Pakistan Muslim League, said: "Just like Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, our president also believes in peace and moderation". He was talking to reporters after calling on PM Abdullah at the end of the first day of the 56th Umno General Assembly at Putra World Trade Centre on Thursday. Umno is leading ruling Barisan Nasional coalition. About the recent bombings in London, Shujat said Pakistan and Malaysia shared the same stand that there was a need to find the root cause of terrorism.

Daily Times, 23 July 2005

**10 tribals killed in Wana** (Iqbal Khattak)

PESHAWAR: Ten tribesmen including chieftain Mir Zalam Khan of Yargulkhel tribe were gunned down in South Waziristan in three different incidents on Friday, announced officials and tribal elders. Mir Zalam, two of his brothers and his son and nephew were sprayed with bullets near their home on their way to Wana bazaar, regional deputy administrator Mir Abbas Khan told Daily Times by phone from Wana. Twenty members of the Ganghikhel tribe were taken into custody under the 'territorial responsibility' clause of Frontier Crimes Regulation law after the killings, the deputy administrator said. No group has claimed responsibility for the killings, nor did the deputy administrator blame any group.

Daily Times, 24 July 2005

**Nobody can speculate on safety of Pakistan's nuclear assets**

RAWALPINDI: President General Pervez Musharraf on Saturday said that no one had a right to speculate on the safety of Pakistan's well-guarded nuclear assets. Musharraf's comments at a meeting of the National Command Authority, a body that controls Pakistan's nuclear programme, came days after Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh expressed concern about the security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. "No one had a right to speculate about the effectiveness and reliability of Pakistan's command and control structures, which are efficient, scientific and transparent," said the president, adding that Pakistan's nuclear deterrence was "fully operational and continues to consolidate and strengthen with time". He said that Pakistan didn't want an arms race in the region, but said Islamabad could not close its eyes to advanced weaponry being deployed elsewhere in the region. He added that Pakistan was aware of the developments taking place in the region and would take all necessary measures to maintain its deterrence capability.

Daily Times, 24 July 2005

**India says Iran pipeline risky**

NEW DELHI: India's oil minister said on Saturday that a proposed gas pipeline from Iran across Pakistan was a risky venture that would be difficult to finance, but talks on the project should continue. "The pipeline proposal is, as the Indian prime minister stated, fraught with terrible risks," Mani Shankar Aiyar told a news conference. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh expressed concerns about the project during his visit to the US this week, when President George Bush recognised India as a responsible nuclear state and promised cooperation with its civilian atomic power programme. Some officials suggested India may abandon plans to import Iranian gas in return of a nuclear energy deal with the US, which has expressed concerns over the Iran-India project because of its opposition to Tehran's nuclear programme. Aiyar said the issues were not related. "I don't think there is any connection between the two," he said, but he added the project faced formidable challenges. "In my view it is going to be extremely difficult to put together an international consortium which should be willing to finance this project," he said.

The Nation, 24 July 2005

**Afghan complaints await Shaukat**

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz will visit Kabul on Sunday (today) amid growing Afghan irritation over Taliban infiltration across its southern border in the run up to the September 18 parliamentary polls, a foreign news agency reported. Aziz will discuss trade, investment and security issues with President Hamid Karzai during the one-day visit, Afghan officials said. There has been a surge in Taliban activity in south and southeast Afghanistan in the past few months, dashing hopes of US commanders that the insurgency was fading. Scores of people have been killed in the violence, including 30 US soldiers since March, and many in Afghanistan blame militants from across the border in Pakistan for the unrest.

The News, 24 July 2005

**President constitutes NFC**

ISLAMABAD: President General Pervez Musharraf has constituted a 10-member National Finance Commission (NFC) to be headed by the finance minister. The commission has been constituted in pursuance of Article 160 (1) of the Constitution, according to a notification dated July 21 and issued here Saturday. The federal minister for finance will be the chairman of the commission with provincial finance ministers and advisor to the prime minister on finance as members. Besides, one member from each province will be notified in consultation with the respective governors, while the federal finance secretary will act as official expert in the commission.

Daily Times, 24 July 2005

**India mulling joint expedition with Pakistan**

KOLKATA: Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee on Saturday said that India was considering a joint

mountaineering expedition with Pakistan. Mukherjee said that besides the joint expedition with Pakistan, India would also offer training to the youth from South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries. Addressing the 27th annual general body meeting of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (HMI), Mukherjee, who is also the institute's president, said that HMI had prepared a programme to train the youth of SAARC member states. He alleged that Pakistan was still supporting militancy in Jammu and Kashmir and militants' infiltration into the valley was increasing every month. online

Daily Times, 24 July 2005

#### **Musharraf and Aziz condemn Egypt bombings**

ISLAMABAD: President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz have condemned the bombings in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, which claimed 83 lives, and condoled with the victims' families. In separate messages to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Saturday, the president and prime minister condemned the terrorist act. President Musharraf said terrorists had no linkage to Islam and that Muslim countries would have to plan a strategy to tackle them. Foreign Office spokesman Muhammad Naeem Khan also condemned the incident, saying, "We express sympathy with the Egyptian government and people and with the victims' families."

The Nation, 24 July 2005

#### **Imam doubts terrorist link to Pak-American men**

NEW YORK: - A Pakistani imam awaiting deportation to his home country says he doubts whether a father and son from Lodi, California, were involved in terror-related activities. But the U.S. attorney was adamant, saying on Friday he remains "confident in the strength of our case." Defence attorneys were scrambling to stop the government from deporting Imam Muhammed Adil Khan, and criticizing prosecutors for waiting a month to disclose his statements. Hamid Hayat, 22, is charged with lying to the FBI last month when he first denied and then allegedly admitted attending a terrorism camp in Pakistan last year and in 2003. His father, Umer Hayat, 47, is charged with lying when he denied his son had attended such camps. The FBI said the elder Hayat later admitted to flying his son to Pakistan and paying for the camp.

The News, 24 July 2005

#### **Stopping women from voting illegal: PML**

Asim Yasin

ISLAMABAD: The ruling Pakistan Muslim League (PML) approached the Election Commission (EC) with a plea to declare the results of all those elections in the forthcoming local government elections null and void where women voters were forcibly restrained from exercising their fundamental rights. There are reports that in some parts of the NWFP such as Dir, religious parties were restraining women from casting their votes in the forthcoming local bodies elections. "Such move on the part of the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal and their allied parties is against the basic human right and against the democratic norms as well as un-Islamic and illegal," said PML Information Secretary and Minister of State for Overseas Pakistanis Senator Tariq Azeem while talking to The News here Saturday.

Dawn, 25 July 2005

#### **Stronger security, trade ties pledged: Aziz meets Karzai**

KABUL, July 24: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Afghan President Hamid Karzai met on Sunday for talks to strengthen security and trade ties against a backdrop of rising violence along their common border. "Terrorism knows no borders," Mr Aziz told a press conference here after the two-hour meeting, echoing Mr Karzai, who said the two countries were like twins and that a blow against one would hurt the other equally. Neither gave details of what security cooperation measures they discussed in their meeting. Both leaders were upbeat about cooperation, papering over cracks in bilateral ties in an escalating war of words about border security as Afghanistan approaches parliamentary polls.

Dawn, 25 July 2005

#### **Experts from Pakistan visit Baglihar**

NEW DELHI, July 24: A team of experts from India and Pakistan inspected the Baglihar dam project in Doda on Sunday, preparing the grounds for a World Bank-sponsored visit there in September by the Swiss mediator, Raymond Lafitte, official sources said. Mr Lafitte, a professor at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne, has been asked by the World Bank to investigate the differences between the two governments concerning the construction of the controversial project on the Chenab river. The Chenab is one of the rivers

comprising the Indus river system. After the partition of the sub-continent, the Indus Waters Treaty was concluded with support from the World Bank in 1960. Headed by Commissioner, Pakistan Ground Water Commission, Syed Jamaatullah Shah, the Pakistani delegation includes Bashir Ahmed, Asif Baig, Peter Joseph and Izharullah Haq while the Indian team is headed by Commissioner, Indus Water Treaty D.K. Mehta.

The Nation, 25 July 2005

### **Pipeline talks to continue despite N-deal: India**

NEW DELHI (AFP) - India will press ahead with talks on a pipeline deal to deliver natural gas from Iran despite an agreement with the US for the sale of civilian nuclear technology, weekend reports said. Oil Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar, who this year secured cabinet approval for the pipeline first mooted in 1994, said the nuclear technology agreement with Washington was not a 'quid pro quo' for abandoning the Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline. "I don't think there's any connection between the two," said Aiyar when asked if India had promised to scrap efforts to import natural gas from Iran in return for Washington providing nuclear technology and fuel for power generation, the Press Trust of India news agency reported. On Monday US President George Bush announced he would ask Congress as well as allied nations to lift sanctions preventing Indian access to civil nuclear technology after talks with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in Washington.

Daily Times, 25 July 2005

### **More prayer leaders detained in crackdown**

ISLAMABAD: Police detained scores more people, mostly prayer leaders, over the weekend as part of a continuing crackdown on extremists following the London bombings, officials said on Sunday. At least 210 were detained in the Punjab after Friday prayers and on Saturday, but 125 were freed on bail after pledging not to violate restrictions, said a Punjab Home Department official requesting anonymity. Among them were 56 people who had been charged with making "provocative speeches" at Friday congregations, while 10 more were being held for selling audio cassettes and CDs of fiery speeches by clerics. Punjab officials said on Sunday the arrests earlier last week had netted 90 suspected militants belonging to banned Sunni and Shia extremist groups, who could be held for three months under anti-terrorism laws.

Dawn, 25 July 2005

### **Bomber dies in Chaman blast** (Saleem Shahid)

QUETTA, July 24: A suspected suicide bomber was killed and four others, including a woman, were injured in a powerful explosion in Chaman near the Afghanistan border on Sunday. "The device the man was carrying on his person went off minutes after he entered the Pakistani area from across the border," Nasibullah Achakzai, a Pakistani security official posted in Chaman, told this correspondent. The Frontier Corps closed the border with Afghanistan after the incident and declared high alert deploying more troops close to the border area.

Daily Times, 25 July 2005

### **North Waziristan tribesmen threaten to withdraw support**

MIR ALI: North Waziristan tribesman on Sunday threatened to stop supporting the Pakistan Army if the army were to undertake any search operation in the agency without informing them. Malik Qadir Khan, a tribal chief, said at a grand jirga that army officers were disrespectful of the sanctity of the tribesmen's homes while conducting search operations. He said tribesmen had agreed to cooperate with the government in its drive against terrorism only after the assurance that elders would be informed against raids in advance. He said innocent people of the area were arrested without proof in the name of "investigation".

The Nation, 25 July 2005

### **Pakistan against arms race: Kasuri**

ISLAMABAD (APP)-Foreign Minister Khurshid Mahmood Kasuri Sunday said Pakistan remained committed to peace process with India and expressed the hope that the recent statements of Indian Prime Minister would not affect the process. Addressing a press conference here today at PID Office, after visiting Afghanistan with Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, the Foreign Minister said the peace process started after the meeting between President Musharraf and former Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee would be continued. He said Pakistan is committed to peace process and would follow the schedule already finalized between the two countries in this regard.

The News. 26 July 2005

### **Pak missiles can meet any threat: Musharraf** (Mayed Ali)

LAHORE: President Pervez Musharraf said on Monday Pakistan has the potential and the missile capability to meet any challenge anywhere from the world. In his second high-profile meeting with the Lahore's media here at

the Governor House on Monday, President Musharraf set aside the general perception among the people vis-a-vis growing Indo-US overall cooperation and its fallout on the balance of power in the subcontinent, saying Pakistan was aware of the potential threat and was taking concrete measures in specific areas where it felt necessary to counter any threat.

The News. 26 July 2005

**Cairo not in touch with Islamabad on blasts issue: FO**

ISLAMABAD: A Foreign Office spokesman on Monday said the Egyptian government has not approached Pakistan over the issue of alleged linkages of Pakistani nationals with the weekend blasts at Sharm el-Sheikh. He was responding to some media reports that claimed Egyptian police was looking for Pakistani nationals in connection with the explosions, which allegedly managed to enter Egypt on July 5. Foreign Office spokesman Mohammad Naeem Khan told weekly press briefing that an Egyptian daily Al-Akbar has quoted Egyptian security officials as denying these reports. The security officials told the newspaper that such reports were aimed at disrupting the investigation efforts and there was no connection between reports of nine Pakistanis entering Egypt and the bomb blasts.

Dawn, 26 July 2005

**Pakistan unlikely to get N-accord similar to US-India deal**

WASHINGTON, July 25: US officials commenting on the Indo-US nuclear deal have indicated that the Bush administration is unlikely to offer a similar deal to Pakistan. A foreign office spokesman told journalists in Islamabad on Monday that Pakistan would seek a similar arrangement with the US. But a senior official of the US State Department — Under Secretary Nicholas Burns — indicated at a recent briefing that the US would not offer a similar nuclear to Pakistan just because it had signed the deal with India. "There is no reason for us to have a hyphenated strategic framework for South Asia ... And certainly in the case of civil nuclear cooperation, we are going to have individual relationships," he said.

Daily Times, 26 July 2005

**Pakistan cleared of Qaeda: Musharraf** (Mubasher Bukhari)

LAHORE: President Pervez Musharraf said on Monday that it was a misconception that Pakistan was the Al Qaeda headquarters. He said Osama Bin Laden 's network did not exist in the country anymore. Talking to a large number of editors, columnists and senior journalists, the president said that terrorism in the US and its allied countries was linked to Al Qaeda and people for some reason started looking at Pakistan. "I say this with clarity that Al Qaeda has no command structure in Pakistan," he added. Pakistan had arrested about 700 Al Qaeda activists from the country, had occupied their sanctuaries in Waziristan, had eliminated their command and control system, had broken their vertical and horizontal links and had devastated their communications system, he said, adding that Al Qaeda operatives could not communicate with each other through electronic devices.

The News. 26 July 2005

**Egypt hunts six Pakistani 'suspects'**

SHARM EL-SHEIKH: Egyptian forces were hunting on Monday for six Pakistani nationals suspected of involvement in the devastating multiple bombings in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh. According to several security sources, Egyptian forces surrounded two villages in the Sinai peninsula where they believed two of the Pakistani suspects were hiding. Pictures of the six Pakistanis believed to have entered Egypt in early July were distributed to police stations in the Sharm el-Sheikh area following the attacks, which followed another bombing spree in Sinai resorts in October. Their passports were found in an unspecified Sharm el-Sheikh hotel, police said, adding that one of them may have died in the deadly bombings but stressed that the Pakistanis were not necessarily the bombers.

The News. 26 July 2005

**Pakistan rules out joint control of Baglihar dam**

HELD JAMMU: Pakistani officials on Monday ruled out joint control of a controversial dam being built by India in disputed Kashmir after visiting the project. Islamabad opposes the billion-dollar Baglihar dam project, saying when completed it will deprive its wheat-bowl state of Punjab of vital irrigation water. It says the plant also violates a 44-year-old treaty brokered by the World Bank for the two nations to share the waters of rivers which criss-cross their territories. The bank is in the process of settling the dispute between the two nuclear rivals with the help of a Swiss professor who has been appointed as a "neutral arbitrator". Leader of the Pakistani delegation, Syed Jamaat Ali Shah, told reporters Islamabad would await the bank's verdict.

The News. 26 July 2005

**280 held for 'links' with banned groups: Sherpao (Muhammad Anis)**

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao says law-enforcing agencies in their latest round of crackdown have so far arrested 280 people for alleged links with banned extremist group of the country. He was talking to newsmen after the launching of Sector I-15 at CDA Headquarters here Monday. The minister said that 16 organisations banned by the government would not be allowed to resurface or carry out activities under any other name. He said material in the form of publication and audio and videocassettes fanning hatred have been confiscated from various places. "The campaign will continue to ensure that no one preaches hatred against any other sect," he said.

The Nation, 26 July 2005

**Islamabad to go ahead with Iran gas line (Shaiq Hussain)**

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan categorically said Monday it would go ahead with the gas pipeline with Iran in any case as the mega project was vital for the country's energy requirements. "We would go ahead with the Iranian gas pipeline in any case and even if India decides not to be associated with the mega project," Foreign Office spokesman Naeem Khan said while addressing the weekly press briefing here. On the Iranian gas pipeline project, he said, Pakistan needed this project to meet its energy requirements and the idea of the pipeline was not new. In fact, it was conceived in 1993 and India later on showed its interest to join the project. He said Pakistan and Iran had also signed an MoU regarding the project to accelerate the negotiations for the funding of the project.

The Nation, 26 July 2005

**Pak political force helping Taliban regroup**

PESHAWAR - Corps Commander Lt Gen Safdar Hussain has said that Taliban are regrouping in different parts of Afghanistan to sabotage parliamentary election process in September. In an interview with a private television channel on Monday, Corps Commander Peshawar Lt Gen. Safdar Hussain said that a political force of Pakistan is facilitating Taliban in regrouping. He, however, did not name the political force, which according to him is a partner of NWFP government. About Osama Bin Laden, the Corps Commander said, "I don't know that whether he is alive or not. He might be some where in Afghanistan if he is alive." He added, "Osama Bin Laden has now become a myth and being followed by people.

"All of us need to unite for eradication of terrorism and militancy with a view to ensure status of Pakistan as dignified country in the global community," he remarked. He was of the view that majority of the people from all over the country are against the terrorism and militancy but a minority group intends to make hostage the majority.

The Nation, 26 July 2005

**High flood wave in Indus threat to Sindh (IQTIDAR GILANI)**

LAHORE - High flood wave is moving in the River Indus-from Guddu to Sukkur, posing a threat to the low-lying areas on both sides of the river. The persistent water pressure in the River Indus has already weakened some protective dykes in Katcha area where concerned departments have started work to strengthen these dykes. The recent flood wave, higher than the previous two has already affected about 700 villages in the Katcha area and it is likely to cause inundation in more areas for a longer period. The recent flood has posed serious threat to low-lying areas of Ghotki, Kashmore, Amar Baro, Qadir Pur, Dadu, Khairpur, Shikarpur, Sukkur and Rohri. River Indus is in high flood at Guddu and Sukkur Barrages, reported Flood Forecasting Division of Pakistan Meteorological Department here Monday.

The Nation, 26 July 2005

**India may go for gas line through Pak shallow waters (AFZAL BAJWA)**

ISLAMABAD - Indians being still averse to the proposed overland pipeline from Iran through Pakistan were now inclined to prefer the route through Pakistani shallow waters for the Iran-Pakistan-India Gas pipeline as proposed by Russian company Gazprom. Officials who recently visited India for meetings of the joint working group on gas pipelines told The Nation on Monday that "Indians despite their willingness to join hands with Pakistan for jointly pursuing the energy demands, are still averse to have a supply source crossing through overland territories of Pakistan." According to the officials requesting anonymity, the Indians do consider Pakistani security guarantee to the pipeline as responsible but they count the sabotage risk factor as very high questioning the feasibility of pipeline on the whole.

Daily Times, 27 July 2005

**Egypt denies Pakistanis had role in attacks**

ISLAMABAD: Egypt on Tuesday formally informed Pakistan that none of its nationals were involved in last Saturday's terrorist attack on the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheik, APP reported. Mohammad Imran adds: Egyptian envoy to Pakistan Hussein Haridy had contacted the Pakistani government on Monday and confirmed the news. However, the Pakistani government asked its embassy in Cairo to keep in touch with the Egyptian government in this regard. "The Pakistan Embassy in Cairo has been asked by Islamabad to get in touch with the Egyptian government to know why the media was trying to link the bombings to the five missing Pakistani nationals," Foreign Office spokesman Muhammad Naeem Khan told Daily Times.

The Nation, 27 July 2005

**Pakistan-sponsored draft on UNSC expansion introduced in General Assembly (Iftikhar Ali)**

UNITED NATIONS: -- Canada Tuesday introduced in the UN General Assembly a draft resolution on behalf of a group of countries, including Pakistan, which oppose an increase in permanent members of the Security Council, seeking 10 additional elected members to the powerful UN organ. The draft, the third to be presented to the 191-member Assembly on the reform of the 15-member Council, led to the intensification of political activity at the U.N. and in the capitals around the world. The move came as the G-4 -- India, Brazil, Germany and Japan -- is struggling to combine their proposal on the Council's enlargement with that of the the 53-member African Group.

Dawn, 27 July 2005

**Islamabad, Kabul to enhance legal trade, curb smuggling (Ihtasham ul Haque)**

ISLAMABAD, July 26: Pakistan and Afghanistan have agreed to curb cross-border smuggling and boost legal trade between the two countries. Official sources told Dawn that Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Afghan President Hamid Karzai had decided during their meeting in Kabul on Sunday to substantially enhance trade between the two countries by effectively discouraging smuggling. The issue was also discussed during the 5th session of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Economic Commission (JEC), held in Kabul from July 23 to July 24. The Afghan side was of the view that the two countries should share information about trade and smuggling.

Daily Times, 27 July 2005

**Pakistan and UK will increase intelligence cooperation (Shahzad Raza)**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the United Kingdom have agreed to increase cooperation between their intelligence agencies against the backdrop of the July 7 London bombings. But Pakistan said that the world should stop blaming it for every terror act. The decision was made in a meeting held between Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao, interior minister, and Mark Lyall Grant, UK high commissioner to Islamabad, on Tuesday. Sources privy to the meeting told Daily Times the two sides observed that owing to the growing activities of terrorists throughout the world, it "was necessary for friendly countries to strengthen their cooperation in the war on terror".

Dawn, 27 July 2005

**Kasuri wants US Congress not to discriminate (Anwar Mansuri)**

ISLAMABAD, July 26: Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri has expressed the hope that the legislation that the US Congress has to pass to make operational the Bush administration's defence and nuclear cooperation agreements with India would be 'non-discriminatory'. According to a foreign office statement, Mr Kasuri was talking to a six-member media delegation from Sri Lanka, which met him in his office here on Tuesday. Pakistan's nuclear capability, the foreign minister said, was defensive and based on the minimum credible nuclear deterrence which would be maintained.

Dawn, 27 July 2005

**Talks on liberal visa regime: Indian, Pakistani officials meet (Qudssia Akhlaque)**

ISLAMABAD, July 26: Pakistan and India on Tuesday began a two-day round of secretary-level talks aimed at promoting 'friendly exchanges' in areas of culture, sports and tourism here. A key talking point was liberalising the visa regime and increasing visits to places of religious interest as well as increasing the number of pilgrims, it is learnt. The need for facilitating visas for the common people was also discussed. "The two sides seem close to reaching an agreement on group tours and on increasing the number of visits to shrines and pilgrims," an informed source told this correspondent. This would be reflected in a joint statement to be issued at the end of talks on Wednesday, the source added. "The talks on the first day went off very well," a delegate told Dawn afterwards. This is the second round of talks on friendly exchanges being held under the composite dialogue framework. The first round was held in Delhi in August 2004.

Dawn, 27 July 2005

### **CEC warns of action over curbs on women**

ISLAMABAD, July 26: Acting Chief Election Commissioner Justice Abdul Hameed Dogar on Tuesday again warned of cancelling elections in areas where women are being discouraged from contesting the upcoming local council elections. In a fresh warning, the CEC drew attention of notables and prominent leaders of Dir and Battagram pressurizing women not to file nomination papers to contest the local body polls that under Section 165 and 168 (a)(ii) of the Local Government Ordinance 2001, punishment up to three years, or a fine of Rs15,000 or both could be awarded to them. Section 165 and 168 (a)(ii) describes a person guilty of exerting undue influence if he threatens, restrains or indulge in violence, inflicts damage, harm or loss to compel a person from voting or to withdraw his candidature from the elections.

Daily Times, 27 July 2005

### **Wagah opens for Indian exports**

NEW DELHI: Traders were exultant on Tuesday after trucks laden with garlic and potatoes from India rolled across the border into Pakistan, marking the resumption of direct trade by road between the rival South Asian neighbours for the first time in more than half a century. The trucks crossed the India-Pakistan border from the Wagah checkpoint on Monday evening, fulfilling a long standing demand of traders on both sides who previously had to transport their goods hundreds of miles away to the nearest port or train station and then across the border. "This is the first time in more than five decades that direct trade has been allowed. We are thrilled and the prospects for trade are immense," exporter Rajdip Uppal said by telephone from the Indian border city of Amritsar.

Daily Times, 27 July 2005

### **Pakistani team studies flow of Chenab river**

JAMMU: A Pakistani team on Tuesday studied the flow of River Chenab in Jammu and Kashmir on which the 450 megawatt Baglihar hydro project is situated, said official sources. Sources said the five-member Pakistani delegation, headed by Ground Water Commission Commissioner Syed Jamaat Ali Shah, went to Ramban, Pul Doda, Thatri, Assar, Ragya Nallah and Khalani in Doda district with the Indian technical team and took some readings and level markings of the river, they said. The team had visited the Baglihar project site on Monday and inspected the dam, and taken some technical details of the project, reported Press Trust of India. The delegation is expected to discuss the dam's technicalities, design and reservoir with JP Industries, Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Corporation and government experts before returning to Delhi, added sources.

Daily Times, 27 July 2005

### **80 foreign terrorists in North Waziristan**

PESHAWAR: Peshawar Corps Commander Lt Gen Safdar Hussain said on Tuesday that about 70 to 80 foreign terrorists were still in North Waziristan Agency. Gen Safdar told a private television channel that unfortunately some elements were still busy breeding terrorist tendencies among the local population in North Waziristan Agency. "Anti-Pakistan elements are indoctrinating young tribesmen in order to advance their ulterior motives. That is concerning and we won't allow such elements to succeed," he said. The war on terrorism would be taken to its logical end, as the Pakistan Army was seriously and aggressively taking counter-terrorism steps, he added.

Daily Times, 27 July 2005

### **OIC unanimously votes Pakistan chairman**

GENEVA: The Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Group in Geneva on Tuesday unanimously endorsed Pakistan as its chairman for one year. Turkish Ambassador Turkekul Kurttekin, the OIC Group's outgoing chairman, handed over chairmanship to Ambassador Masood Khan, Pakistan's permanent representative in Geneva, at a meeting of OIC ambassadors on Tuesday. Ambassador Masood Khan thanked the OIC ambassadors for their confidence in him and for entrusting Pakistan with the group's chairmanship. He said, "It is a matter of great pride and honour for me and Pakistan to assume this responsibility. "He said the Organisation of Islamic Conference would have a dynamic presence, would engage all organisations and reach out to all regional groups. app

Daily Times, 27 July 2005

### **Crackdown on militants: Police raid publishers, seminaries (Mubasher Bukhari)**

LAHORE: No arrests were made in the continued crackdown on extremists and militants on Tuesday. However, Punjab Home Secretary Hasan Waseem Afzal said that the government would continue the crackdown till it rid the province of terrorists. Police raided offices of various publishers in Lahore, Jhang, Faisalabad, Multan and other cities and seized several books containing text fanning sectarian hate and registered cases against the publishers. However no arrests were made. Security agencies also raided a couple of religious seminaries in search of wanted clerics but could not find them.

The Nation, 27 July 2005

**Missile hits madrassa in Waziristan (HAJI MUJTABA)**

MIRANSHAH - Unknown saboteurs on Tuesday continued their subversive activities in North and South Waziristan agencies for the third day running. In NWA, terrorists launched a missile attack while in South Waziristan President of Peace Committee, Makeen, survived an attempt on his life. However, unlike previous two days of heavy firing at the military installations in North Waziristan Agency a sole missile attack was reported on Tuesday in which a boundary wall of local madrassa (seminary) was damaged. The missile landed around 500 yards from the military camp and damaged a portion of the madrassa boundary wall, said the officials. However, it caused no loss of life.

Daily Times, 28 July 2005

**Musharraf and Aziz vow to fight terror**

ISLAMABAD: President General Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Wednesday vowed to weed out extremism and terrorism from the country and to promote a softer image of Pakistan. The president and the prime minister held a detailed meeting at Army House in Rawalpindi to discuss the internal security situation, the bombings in London and Egypt, legislation for seminaries and the upcoming local government elections. Sources privy to the meeting told Daily Times that both leaders expressed concern that the international media was deliberately trying to implicate Pakistan in the recent terrorist acts in London and Egypt. They agreed to plan a strategy to deal with anti-Pakistan individuals in the international media and observed that this could be achieved by promoting a soft image for the country by following the concept of enlightened moderation.

Daily Times, 28 July 2005

**G-4's UNSC expansion proposal spells disaster, says Pakistan**

NEW YORK: Pakistan and Italy on Tuesday warned that a vote on a proposal by India, Brazil, Germany and Japan, known as the Group of Four, for expansion of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) would divide the UN members and lead to a "dead-end". "Such a vote will be a recipe for disaster – disaster for the UNSC reform, for UN reform and for international peace and cooperation," Pakistan's Ambassador Munir Akram said while addressing the UN General Assembly.

Daily Times, 28 July 2005

**SAARC experts meeting in Nepal: Pakistan, India fail to reach consensus (Khalid Mustafa)**

ISLAMABAD: South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries' Committee of Experts (CoEs) meeting from July 10 to 21 in Nepal made no progress because of a deadlock between Pakistan and India on two major issues, a senior government official told Daily Times on Wednesday. The two countries disagreed on the No-Concession Items List and Rules of Origin. Under the provision of sensitive items' lists (no-concession items lists), every SAARC country will be able to protect its local industry's trade under the South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA). The official said SAFTA would come into force on January 1, 2006, and would be fully materialised by December 31, 2015. He added that the CoEs were assigned to develop a consensus on various issues regarding SAFTA by December 2004.

Daily Times, 28 July 2005

**Indian consulates inciting FATA residents: Senator (Shahzad Raza)**

ISLAMABAD: Thirteen Indian consulates are stirring Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) residents, through their agents, to opt for guerrilla warfare training in Afghanistan, alleged FATA representative Senator Hameedullah Jan Afridi on Wednesday. Afridi also accused the consulates of bribing residents to work for them. Talking to Daily Times, he said that several residents had complained to him that "certain" people were asking them to visit Afghanistan for combat training. He added, "Indian agents tell residents that they will be recruited in the Afghan army or police."

Daily Times, 28 July 2005

**Qatar refuses to supply 2b cubic feet gas per day to Pakistan (Khalid Mustafa)**

ISLAMABAD: Qatar has declined to increase the gas supply to over two billion cubic feet per day from the current 1.6 billion, under the proposed \$1.88 billion Gulf-South Asia Pipeline (GUSA) project from Qatar to Pakistan. Qatar said that it supplied gas to several other countries and would continue to supply only 1.6 billion cubic feet to Pakistan, a senior government official told Daily Times. He said, "Doha authorities doubted Pakistan's seriousness in buying gas from Qatar through the proposed gas pipeline, saying that Doha will respond if Pakistan was serious about getting gas."

Dawn, 28 July 2005

**Islamabad, Delhi agree to expand protocol on visits** (Qudssia Akhlaque)

ISLAMABAD, July 27: Pakistan and India on Wednesday agreed in principle to expand the 1974 Bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines to increase the number of shrines to visit and pilgrims in both countries. A joint statement announced this, which was issued by the two sides at the conclusion of the second round of talks on "Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in Various Fields" here. However, the statement did not specify the number of shrines and pilgrims increased. However, the head of Indian delegation, Mrs Nina Ranjan, said on record after talks on Tuesday that India would increase the number of centres for Pakistani pilgrims from five to 13 and double the number of pilgrims from 1,500 to 3,000.

Dawn, 28 July 2005

**Indian fruit, vegetables imported by road**

NEW DELHI, July 27: India and Pakistan embarked on a rare journey this week when porters at the Wagah border distributed sweets because a consignment of 400 bags of garlic was transported to Lahore, officials and witnesses said on Wednesday. "The Wagah Joint Check-post was thrown open for Indo-Pakistan trade after a long gap of five decades on Tuesday. Earlier, Indo-Pakistan trade was continuing through the stalled Samjhauta Express railway link."

Dawn, 28 July 2005

**Pakistan to lead OIC group in Geneva**

ISLAMABAD, July 27: Pakistan has been chosen to lead the OIC group at the United Nations offices in Geneva for one year, a message received here from Geneva on Wednesday said. After taking over the position from Ambassador Turkekul Kurttekin of Turkey Ambassador Masood Khan said that the Islamic world was facing internal and external challenges and it would be his endeavour to engage all UN organizations and reach out to all regional groups. "Internally we have to contain extremism and move towards moderation. Externally we have to close our ranks, develop a credible metaphor for the image of Islam and bridge gaps of misunderstanding through dialogue with other nations and civilizations," he said.

The Nation, 28 July 2005

**Secret diplomacy reactivates to save peace process** (SHAIQ HUSSAIN)

ISLAMABAD - After a lull of couple of months, the channels of secret diplomacy between Pakistan and India have become active again, mainly to offset the negative impact of unprovoked statements by top Indian leadership on the composite dialogue, which the diplomatic circles here believe could derail the peace process. After nearly two-year long bonhomie, Pakistan and India seem to be moving away from the track of peace process due to what the diplomats here think is the recurrence of intransigence in the Indian attitude. A diplomat privy to the Indo-Pak talks, told The Nation that Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's statements on Islamabad's nuclear programme, extremism and terrorism and enhanced United States and India defence, energy cooperation, in particular, have all upset the Pakistani leadership.

Daily Times, 29 July 2005

**Madrasahs failing to register will be closed: minister** (Irfan Ghauri)

ISLAMABAD: All the religious seminaries that fail to register by December this year will be shut down, Lt Gen (r) Javed Ashraf Qazi, the education minister, warned on Thursday. "The Interior Ministry has sent a summary to the cabinet division and a law in this regard would be enacted soon," Ashraf said while talking to reporters. To a query about seminaries' reservations about him being the chairman of the Madrasa Reforms Board, Ashraf said that he had accepted the office unwillingly and was ready to leave it. "This office should have rested with the religious affairs minister," he remarked. He said the government was revising the curricula to minimise disparity in education systems and would introduce a uniform curriculum throughout the country.

Daily Times, 29 July 2005

**Army starts operation in Miranshah**

LAHORE: The Pakistan Army has launched a search operation against foreign nationals in Miranshah, North Waziristan Agency. A report that a foreign citizen had been arrested was relayed over wireless on Thursday, ARY news channel reported. The foreign militants resisted with heavy gunfire and rockets when security forces reached Dargai Mandi near Miranshah on Thursday evening, the channel said. Security forces shot back, arrested one foreign national and took away a wireless set from him, it reported. However, the nationality of the arrested foreigner was not known. Foreigners hiding in the suburban areas of North Waziristan Agency have repeatedly targeted government buildings and national assets in the area, provoking the army to launch a search operation, the channel reported.

Daily Times, 29 July 2005

### **Indo-US pact not Pakistan specific: Bush**

ISLAMABAD: The United States-India defence pact is not directed against Pakistan and Washington will not allow the South Asian balance of power to be disturbed, American President George W Bush assured President Pervez Musharraf in a 30-minute telephone talk on Thursday. The two leaders discussed various matters including regional peace and security and the war on terrorism. Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed confirmed the conversation, adding that the leaders discussed regional and global issues. Sources said that Bush praised Pakistan's security agencies capture of Hashim Qadeer, an accused in the Daniel Pearl case. He said the US was Pakistan's strategic partner and the whole world highly appreciated Islamabad's cardinal role to root out terrorism.

Daily Times, 29 July 2005

### **Police swoop on suspected militants in Balochistan**

QUETTA: Mass detentions overnight in the capital of Balochistan took the number of suspected militants and Islamists arrested nationwide to over 700 during the past week, police said on Thursday. President Pervez Musharraf ordered the crackdown in the wake of the July 7 London bombings, but the main targets for police have been militant Sunni Muslim groups waging a campaign against Shia Muslims, and preachers of sectarian hatred. Police arrested members of the outlawed Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan in Quetta. "We have rounded up around 114 people from all over the city," said Pervez Zahoor, Quetta's senior superintendent of police.

Daily Times, 29 July 2005

### **Egypt praises Pakistan's role in combating terrorism**

ISLAMABAD: Egyptian Ambassador to Pakistan Hussein Haridy said on Thursday that Pakistan was playing an excellent role in the international fight against terrorism and was truly representing the Muslims' aspirations at global forums. "We believe that Pakistan has paid a heavy price in the fight against terrorism, we are following with great admiration the precedence and the determination of the Pakistani government particularly of President General Pervez Musharraf," the ambassador told PTV in a telephonic interview. He said the government and the people of Egypt praised Pakistani government's efforts to project a positive image of Islam. He added that the message coming from Pakistan was that "let us not link Islam with terrorism".

Dawn, 29 July 2005

### **Bombings shouldn't be used to malign Muslims, says envoy**

ISLAMABAD, July 28: Pakistan has cautioned the world community that recent spate of terrorist attacks in London and other places can be used as ammunition by peddlers of hatred against Islam and Muslims to further fan flames of terrorism, says a message received here from Geneva on Thursday. In a statement at the 57th session of the Sub-Commission on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Geneva, Ambassador Masood Khan, Pakistan's permanent representative to the United Nations, said that terrorists were criminals who spoke for no religion or ideology. "Do not treat them as ideologues," he warned. Condemning recent terrorist attacks in London and Sharm- el Sheikh, Mr Khan cautioned against the tendency to tar nations and civilizations with the terrorist's brush.

The Nation , 29 July 2005

### **India to go ahead with Baglihar**

JAMMU (Agencies) - Despite the stalemate, India will continue the construction work on the 450-mw Baglihar power project. The construction of the Baglihar dam is aimed to be completed by June 2006. "We will continue work as per our previous programme. We have not violated the Indus Water Treaty as Pakistan is claiming," said Held Kashmir Power Development Corporation General Manager GH Rather. There has also been political pressure within the state to scrap the Indus Water Treaty. "This water should be used for the people of J&K. The Indus Water treaty has not only spelt losses for our state, but also for the neighbouring Himachal and Haryana," said state BJP President Nirmal Singh. Sources said the five-member Pakistani team which inspected Baglihar project in its three-day visit has left many speculating about the report it would submit to the Pakistan government. The Pakistani experts will submit their report to the government and later a list of objections will be sent to the World Bank.

The News, 29 July 2005

### **Threats by tribal commanders fuels concern in S Waziristan** (Rahimullah Yusufzai)

PESHAWAR: Concern was growing in South Waziristan about renewal of hostilities following threats by two former tribal commanders to resume attacks against the government if peace agreements reached with them weren't honoured. Baitullah Mahsud, who abandoned his more well-known colleague Abdullah Mahsud to cut a peace deal with the government some months ago in return for amnesty, has warned of "terrible attacks" against

the government if he and his men continued to face insulting attitude of troops at military checkpoints in South Waziristan. He spoke to the BBC Urdu service to voice his grievances and accuse the government of going back on its promises to him. He said he had asked the 21-member reconciliation jirga that mediated between him and the Pakistan Army to find out from the military authorities whether they were sticking by the agreement or were no longer bound by it.

The News, 29 July 2005

**Peace process with India to continue (Asim Yasin)**

ISLAMABAD: Expressing disappointment over the recent statements from the Indian leadership with regard to Pakistan, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Thursday reiterated Pakistan's resolve to continue its efforts for peaceful solution of the core Kashmir issue. "The Indo-Pak peace process should move ahead because it is imperative for the masses of two countries," he said, while talking to newsmen at the PM house after giving away compensation cheques for Rs 500,000 each to heirs of Allah Noor and Mir Nawab, the two journalists from South Waziristan who were killed early this year while returning after covering proceedings of a local Jirga. Another reporter Muhammad Anwar Shakir was critically wounded. Information Minister Shaikh Rashid Ahmad, Minister of State for Information Anisa Zeb Thairkhelli, Information Secretary Shahid Rafi and other senior officials of the Information Ministry were also present on the occasion.

The News, 30 July 2005

**Crackdown on seminaries: Foreign students to be expelled: Musharraf**

ISLAMABAD: President Pervez Musharraf on Friday said all the estimated 1,400 foreign nationals studying in the country's Madaris would have to leave the seminaries. "All foreigners are to be removed" from seminaries, said Musharraf, and no new visas would be issued to non-Pakistanis wishing to study in the seminaries. The ban would also apply to holders of dual nationality. The number of foreign students attending Madaris in Pakistan has already fallen sharply since the government imposed tougher visa restrictions after the Sept 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. There are around 12,000 Madaris in the country, often providing education, shelter and food to boys from poor families.

The News, 30 July 2005

**One killed, 6 captured in Miranshah clash**

MIR ALI: The encounter between the Pakistan Army troops and militants in Dirga Mandi in North Waziristan finally ended on Friday morning with the death of one man and the arrest of at least six persons. The military authorities said one foreign militant was killed and three others, including foreigners, were captured. The troops recovered heavy weapons, including rocket-launchers, from the scene of occurrence. It was claimed some of the arms were recovered from the Madrasa Shoaib-ul-Uloom. However, villagers refuted the claim and said the weapons were found in houses near the Madrasa. They said keeping such weapons was not abnormal in the tribal areas, particularly North Waziristan and South Waziristan.

Daily Times, 30 July 2005

**Musharraf and Singh agree to avoid 'damaging' statements**

ISLAMABAD: President Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in a telephone conversation late on Friday agreed to avoid statements that could endanger the ongoing peace process between both countries. Musharraf phoned Manmohan to condole with him over the loss of life and property due to torrential rains in India. "Both leaders have agreed to eschew statements that can damage the ongoing peace process," Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed told reporters. The president said that he was saddened to hear about the loss and life and property due to heavy rains in India, Sheikh Rashid said, adding that Musharraf had offered to help India with relief efforts. Asked about the Musharraf-Singh scheduled meeting in November, Rashid said that that they did not discuss the matter. The president also condoled the loss of lives in rains in the Indian state of Maharashtra in a message to Indian President Abdul Kalam late on Thursday. agencies

Dawn, 30 July 2005

**Ministry told to expedite madressah reforms**

ISLAMABAD, July 29: The Senate Standing Committee on Education has stressed upon the Ministry of Education to expedite the work on Madressah Reforms project and collect data on the registration of religious institutions. The committee, in a meeting presided over by Senator Razina Alam Khan here on Friday, made this observation while having a briefing on the teaching of formal subjects in seminaries. The members of the committee were of the view that it was the need of the hour to introduce modern education along with religious teaching in

seminaries to enable the students to face all challenges of life and protect a soft image of Pakistan.