

Dawn, 1 November 2004

Abdullah claims responsibility for blast

ISLAMABAD, Oct 31: Abdullah Mehsud, an Al Qaeda-linked commander, on Sunday claimed responsibility for the Friday explosion at an Islamabad hotel. Former Guantanamo Bay prisoner Abdullah Mehsud, 29, also threatened that his group would carry out violent attacks in other parts of the country. "Now we will spread out and carry out similar attacks wherever possible," he told Deutsche Presse-Agentur by telephone. At the time of blast, sources told dpa that US and Japanese defence and intelligence officials were staying in the hotel, but most of them had left the hotel by Friday evening. Mehsud claimed that one US intelligence official had been killed in the blast. The US embassy has advised its nationals to avoid visiting the hotel.

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'Pakistanis held in Spain funded Al Qaeda'

MADRID, Oct 31: Ten Pakistanis arrested in mid-September in Barcelona were allegedly funding the Al Qaeda network by transferring ill-gotten money to Pakistan from Spain, a newspaper report claimed on Sunday. The men wired money earlier this year to three collaborators of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who is suspected of having planned the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington, El Pais reported citing sources close to the investigation. The paper did not say who had received the money, but said they had been arrested in a swoop earlier in 2004 in Pakistan during which one of them was killed. When police arrested the Pakistanis on Sept 15 in the Mediterranean port city, they also seized several kilos of cocaine and 18,000 euros in cash, as well as videos in which some of the suspects were reportedly shown calling for a holy war. Mohammed, believed to be one of Osama bin Laden's top lieutenants, was detained in March of 2003 near Islamabad and subsequently turned over to the US authorities.

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Pakistan's support important: Kerry - ME stability vital to US security (Masood Haider)

NEW YORK, Oct 31: Senator John Kerry has said bilateral engagement between India and Pakistan is important for resolving the dispute in Kashmir, and to combating terrorism. "Pakistan's support is important to operations in Afghanistan," said Mr Kerry, in an interview with the Association of Pakistani Professionals (AOPP) magazine Vibes on the eve of the elections. Senator Kerry said: "It is my hope that Pakistan will always remember that our goal is to have free nations with open societies in which there is no place for terror or the support of terror." "Pakistan has much to gain from internal reform, and I stand eager to foster and support this process," he added.

Jang, 1 November 2004

Majority of US soldiers leave Shahbaz Airbase

SUKKUR: Majority of the US soldiers deployed at the Shahbaz Airbase in Jacobabad, returned in the midnight of Saturday and Sunday. The airbase was being used by the US soldiers to take care of their injured soldiers and send food supplies to them. Now only a few soldiers have been left there. Sources said the some 250 soldiers were deployed at the airbase, since it was handed over to the US three years ago. A majority of the soldiers left for the US last night and only a few soldiers have been left at the airbase.

Jang, 1 November 2004

Sino-Pak strategic partnership leads to regional peace: Amir

BEIJING: Sino-Pak strategic partnership contributes towards peace and development in the region and meets the aspirations of their people. Speaker National Assembly Chaudhry Amir Husain said in an interview with Peoples Daily during his stay in Beijing. He said the two countries hold similar position on various regional and international issues. Replying to a question about Sino-Pak cooperation to fight terrorism, Husain said they are maintaining close contacts with each other to combat terrorist activities. "Our security agencies have agreements for exchange of information in counter-terrorism," he said, adding: "Our two armed forces also conducted joint exercise to strengthen anti-terrorism operation." Responding to another question, he said the socio-economic policies of President Pervez Musharraf and had put the country on the road of progress and prosperity.

Dawn, 1 November 2004

Baloch nationalists discuss strategy (Amanullah Kasi)

QUETTA, Oct 31: An alliance of four Baloch parties discussed its strategy on Sunday to oppose establishment of cantonments in the province and projects it deems anti-Baloch. Senator Amanullah Kanrani, provincial president of the JWP, told Dawn that the meeting discussed various aspects of the projects launched by the federal government in the province, including Gwadar port. The meeting also took note of exploitation of provincial resources by the federal government without the consent of the local people. He said National Party chief Dr Hayee Baloch presided over the meeting held in his (Mr Kanrani's) chamber and attended by Habib Baloch, Rauf Mengal MNA and Sajid Tareen of BNP-Mengal, Kachkol Baloch, Dr Malik Baloch and Dr Yasin Baloch (NP) and Senator Amanullah (JWP).

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Tribesmen call for cautious approach

PESHAWAR, Oct 31: Elders of the Mehsud tribe have said that the military should adopt a cautious approach for moving troops to forward positions in the troubled South Waziristan Agency against the backdrop of the killing of tribal volunteers during a search operation on Oct 26. The killing of the volunteers, the elders told Dawn, adversely affected the military's

ongoing operation in the South Waziristan Agency in general and in the Mehsud tribesmen's area in particular. "It affected the credibility of Pakistan army in the eyes of the Mehsud tribesmen," said Maulana Saleh Shah, an elder of the Mehsud tribe belonging to the Tiarza area of the troubled region. Fifteen people were killed and several injured when a group of tribal volunteers helping the administration in the search operation in the Sheikh Ziarat village near Spinkay Raghzay came under artillery fire. Similar views were expressed by another member of the peace committee, Masood Khan, from the Makin area of the South Waziristan agency.

Dawn, 2 November 2004

Senate passes twin-office bill amid protests (Raja Asghar)

ISLAMABAD, Nov 1: The government majority had the last word in the Senate on Monday as it passed the controversial bill allowing President Pervez Musharraf to remain army chief beyond Dec 31 amid opposition protests and after a surprise snub from a senior ruling party figure. The passage of 'The President to Hold Another Office Bill' by a voice vote after a comprehensive debate contrasted with the haste in which it was rushed through the National Assembly 18 days ago. "No, no", "go Musharraf go" and "down with permanent martial law", opposition members chanted as Senate Chairman Mohammed Mian Soomro put the bill to vote at the end of a five-day debate that was dominated by their denunciation of the move that the government said was necessary to give the president enough powers to safeguard national interest and combat terrorism and subversion.

Dawn, 2 November 2004

Balochistan must get its rights: JWP

QUETTA, Nov 1: Jamhoori Watan Party (JWP) secretary-general Agha Shahid Bugti has said that Islamabad has no option but to give Balochistan its constitutional rights. He was speaking at a ceremony held here on Monday to launch the 'Bugti Dossier'. He criticized the role of Islamabad and Punjab rulers and said that they had been plundering the resources of the Baloch people for the last 56 years and now they wanted to deprive the people of Balochistan of the coastal area. He said the JWP leadership had serious reservations about the role of the parliamentary committee. However, he said, the JWP and its leadership were participating in the dialogue process for the sake of the Baloch people. The JWP leader said the centre had never honoured its commitments in the past nor was there any hope that it would do so in future. "We will not allow Balochistan to become another Palestine. We will continue our constitutional and political struggle for the rights of the province," he added.

Daily Times, 2 November 2004

Two-nation theory died with Pakistan's break-up, says Altaf

KARACHI: Pakistan's ideological basis was weak from the beginning and the two-nation theory died with the break-up of Pakistan in 1971, MQM leader Altaf Hussain said on Monday. "The two-nation theory died with the break-up of the country in 1971," Mr Altaf Hussain said. Mr Hussain went on to declare that "the statement of the Quaid-e-Azam that the Muslims in India should be loyal to their own country was like a damper on the ideological basis of the newly founded country." He was making a telephone address at an Iftar hosted by the MQM for more than 900 ulema and Mashaikh at the party's headquarters in 90 Azizabad in Karachi. If Pakistan was to be an ideological state, why were its doors shut on Muslims of the Subcontinent. Mr Hussain said: "Pakistan was created in 1947 for the then-100 million Muslims of the Subcontinent, but soon after creation of the new state, Muslims of the Subcontinent were banned from coming to their new homes. It could therefore be argued that Pakistan was not an ideological state."

Jang, 2 November 2004

Pakistan, China agree to develop Xinjiang as economic partnership hub

URUMQI, China: Speaker National Assembly Chaudhry Amir Husain and Governor Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region Ismail Tiliwaldi held talks here and discussed various proposals to strengthen socio-economic ties. Official sources said the two sides agreed in a meeting late on Sunday night that Xinjiang, a Muslim-majority area bordering the two countries, should be developed as the hub of their economic partnership. Chaudhry Amir Husain, who is on a 10-day visit to China at the head of a 20-member parliamentary delegation, said Pakistan attached special importance to its relations with China and wished to translate their exemplary diplomatic ties for the economic benefit of their people. He noted that China's western region carried rich potential to give a big boost to Sino-Pak trade ties and further strengthen people-to-people contacts.

Daily Times, 2 November 2004

US needs Pakistan's support, says Kasuri

ISLAMABAD: The US will need Pakistani support whether President George W Bush or his Democrat rival Senator John Kerry wins the presidential elections on November 2, Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri said on Monday. "Pakistan has an important position in the world because of its foreign policy and the US will continue to require Islamabad's support," Kasuri told reporters in Islamabad. "Pakistan enjoys bi-partisan support in the US because President Pervez Musharraf has steered the country towards success over the last five years," he said. The foreign minister said the international community now recognised Pakistan as a responsible nuclear power that had acted maturely. "We are continuing our cooperation with IAEA, the US and other countries".

Dawn, 3 November 2004

Opposition vows to keep up protest (Raja Asghar)

ISLAMABAD, Nov 2: Opposition parties in the Senate on Tuesday vowed to keep up their protest against the military

presidency that they said negated the constitution and the parliamentary system of government. Opposition senators also staged a walkout as a mark of their anger against the passage of the double-office bill which allowed President Pervez Musharraf to remain army chief as well beyond a constitutional deadline of Dec 31. Before the walkout, several opposition senators spoke on points of order to criticize the controversial 'The President to Hold Another Office Bill', and a major opposition alliance asked the president not to give his assent to the new law to keep his earlier promise to give up his uniform before Dec 31. The bill was passed by the National Assembly last month and now needs only the presidential assent to become a law, or an act of parliament.

Dawn, 3 November 2004

'Musharraf's assent to be violation of Constitution': Two offices bill (Arshad Sharif)

ISLAMABAD, Nov 2: President Gen Pervez Musharraf would violate the Constitution by giving assent to the two offices bill passed by both houses of Parliament as it was related to his personal interests, the combined opposition claimed here on Tuesday. Talking to reporters after staging a walkout at the Senate, leaders of People's Party Parliamentarians (PPP), Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) also threatened to try Gen Musharraf under Article 6 of the Constitution which specified the act of high treason for subversion and abrogation of the Constitution by use of force, show of force or any other means. Senator Raza Rabbani said by giving assent to the bill, Gen Musharraf would be violating the oath of his office which specifically underlined that the president would not take any decision involving his personal interests. He said the two offices bill specified that it was for Gen Musharraf and by giving assent to it, he would be violating the Constitution.

Dawn, 3 November 2004

Qazi says only a few madaris involved in terrorism (Khawar Ghumman)

ISLAMABAD, Nov 2: Education Minister Lt Gen (retired) Javed Ashraf Qazi on Tuesday said only a few Madressahs located near the boarder areas of the country were involved in terrorist activities. He was talking to mediapersons at Kanwal Community School, Nirola, here. The minister accompanied the outgoing US ambassador Nancy Powell where they painted the classrooms of the school. Director National Education Foundation Dr Afzal Haque was also present on the occasion. The government is keeping a close watch on seminars which are suspected of involvement in terrorist activities and the government would soon curb them, Mr Qazi said. "Streamlining of madaris is going on at a good pace and the ministry in collaboration with Wafaqul Madaris is taking every possible measure for timely Madressah reforms," he said.

Daily Times, 3 November 2004

F16 issue is alive: Nancy

LAHORE: Outgoing US Ambassador to Pakistan Nancy Powell on Tuesday said the F-16 fighter aircraft issue with Pakistan was still alive and a matter for debate in the US administration. "We are well aware of Pakistan's desire to have F-16 fighter jets. The debate is not ended in the US and we will continue looking into the matter," Ms Powell said in an interview with PTV. Ms Powell hoped that the US and Pakistan would continue cooperating in cracking down on terrorists. Referring to a large number of Al Qaeda terrorists Pakistan had arrested since 9/11, Ms Powell said the world had become a safer place after Pakistan's action against terrorists. She lamented that Al Qaeda chief Osama Bin Laden could not be arrested during her stay in Pakistan but pledged that the US would not end the hunt for him. "We will continue to search for those who are working to disrupt the lives of Americans and Pakistanis and others around the world," she said.

Jang, 3 November 2004

Jirga not a parallel judiciary system: minister

ARKANA: Sindh Minister for Revenue Imtiaz Ahmed Shaikh has said the Jirga system is a tradition of Sindh through which notables settle disputes. He was talking to newsmen during an Iftar dinner hosted in his honour by PML leader Perviaz Ahmed Pechuho here on Tuesday. Responding to a question, Imtiaz, who is also secretary-general of the PML, Sindh chapter, said the Jirga system was not a parallel judiciary system rather it was an old practice, adding that people wanted to get their disputes settled through Jirga because of delay in courts judgments. About a proposed bill regarding the Jirga system, the minister said it was in preparatory stages and had not been produced before the cabinet.

Daily Times, 4 November 2004

AJK political crisis: Sikandar meets MC splinter group today

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) prime minister, and the ruling Muslim Conference's (MC) splinter group will hold a dialogue on Thursday to resolve political crisis continued in the AJK for the last five months. Mr Qadir, heading the splinter group, was among the cabinet members who resigned in protest against Sikandar Hayat's policies and demanded he leave. Mr Qadir hoped that the meeting would have a positive impact on AJK politics and delineated a five-point agenda to resolve the AJK political crisis. "We want to associate party workers with the government, set a formula for the next general elections of the AJK Legislation Assembly and parameters of working relations among the party leadership and the government."

The News, 4 November 2004

SC moved for AQ Khan's production (Naveed Ahmad)

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan was moved Wednesday seeking constitution of medical board and production of Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan in court and immediate hearing of the case. The petitioner, Maj (ret'd) Hassamul Haq prayed for immediate constitution of a medical board, including two doctors, recommended by Dr AQ Khan for his medical examination

and taking necessary actions regarding his health. Hassam feared that Dr AQ Khan is being interviewed and interrogated by the CIA and other American officials. "Due to his constant mental and physical assault upon him, his health is fast declining and he is reported to have suffered a minor heart attack as well."

The News, 4 November 2004

New govt in Northern Areas by Nov-end: Memon

ISLAMABAD: Additional Secretary-General of the PML, Senator Nisar A Memon stated that the process of formation of new government in the Northern Areas would be completed by the end of November and the leadership of the Pakistan Muslim League, in consultation with the elected representatives of the area, would decide the allocation of portfolios purely on merit basis. The PML elected members of Northern Areas Legislative Council (NALC) meeting discussed various matters regarding the formation of the PML government and the implementation of the package announced by President Musharraf for the Northern Areas. Memon said a parliamentary party meeting of the Northern Areas Legislative Council (NALC) would also be held in Gilgit on November 17, in which a final decision regarding the formation of government would be announced.

Daily Times, 4 November 2004

Secret Benazir-govt talks underway

ISLAMABAD: A secret dialogue between the Musharraf-government and Benazir Bhutto, chairperson of the Pakistan Peoples Party, is underway, say inside sources. It is learnt that the government wants Ms Bhutto's support for General Musharraf's decision to remain army chief. In exchange it has offered a package to Ms Bhutto that includes the release of Asif Zardari from prison, her safe return to Pakistan and elevation to the chairmanship of the senate, sources said. Apparently, the hurdle relates to the status of the cases against Ms Bhutto and her spouse. Ms Bhutto wants a complete and unequivocal withdrawal of the cases while the government is insisting that she should fight them out in the courts without undue interference from Islamabad.

Daily Times, 4 November 2004

Police told to 'cover up' GOR operation?(Shahnawaz Khan)

LAHORE: The three terrorists arrested late on Tuesday from Government Officers Residences III (GOR III) by security forces were identified as activists of and weapon suppliers to banned militant organisation Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LJ), sources told Daily Times on Wednesday. The LJ is allegedly a subordinate wing of Al Qaeda. Sources claimed that the three men were arrested while transferring weapons including rocket launchers and hand grenades in front of the GOR III mosque. Witnesses said security forces had already reached the scene and had already sealed the area. Aftab Ahmed Cheema, Senior Superintendent of Police (Operation Wing) told Daily Times, "Police had not launched any operation in the area and neither have we arrested any terrorists. We know nothing about the operation."

Dawn, 5 November 2004

New force to replace levies in Balochistan (Ihtashamul Haque)

ISLAMABAD, Nov 4: The government has decided to do away with the levies force in Balochistan and give full powers to police to control law and order in the province which has witnessed an upsurge in sabotage activities in recent days. Official sources said the interior ministry had finalized a Rs9.6 billion security plan under which the so-called 'B' areas in the province would be converted into 'A' areas; Separately, 6,000 men will be hired and trained to be inducted into a new force - Balochistan Constabulary - which would assist police as a 'reserve force' for ensuring effective maintenance of law and order in the province. The sources said that deteriorating law and order had necessitated the creation of a well-trained and well-equipped reserve force in sufficient numbers which could operate throughout the province.

Daily Times, 5 November 2004

Benazir Bhutto rules out deal with 'dictators'

LAHORE: The government is propagating that an underhand deal is being struck with the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) so as to demoralise the people and divert their attention from its (government's) "ugly" actions and injustices against Asif Ali Zardari, said Benazir Bhutto, a former prime minister and PPP chairperson, in a statement on Thursday. She said any underhand deal with the dictators was out of question. Ms Bhutto criticised the government's political vendetta, paid glowing tributes to Mr Zardari and demanded his immediate release on the completion of his eight-year imprisonment on November 5.

The Statesman, 5 November 2004

9 troops killed, 11 hurt in Wana mine explosion (Yousaf Ali & Javed Noor)

PESHAWAR/WANA: At least nine security personnel were killed and eleven others sustained injuries after the vehicle carrying them struck a landmine in Chalwashti area of South Waziristan Agency Thursday morning. According to sources, a truck in a military convoy was carrying security personnel from Wana to Ladha sub-division when it struck hit a land mine planted at the roadside on Kanigram and Tiarza road at Sholama. Six soldiers died on the spot while six sustained injuries. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack but the authorities usually blame the militants for such attacks.

The News, 5 November 2004

ARD set to claim opposition leader's slot in Senate(Tariq Butt)

ISLAMABAD: The Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD) and its allied parties have secured a numerical edge over the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) to claim the office of the leader of the opposition in the Senate. They have nominated Mian Raza Rabbani as its representative for the opposition leader's slot. The ARD and its allies have 22 senators while the MMA has the support of 20 senators. The Senate chief is to take a decision on appointing the first-ever leader of opposition in the present Upper House. He has already inordinately delayed the nomination and as a result, the Senate has remained without

such office holder for the past 18 months.

The News, 5 November 2004

'Pak militants plot to kidnap Westerners in Afghanistan'

WASHINGTON: The United States unveiled on Thursday a plot by Pakistani militants to infiltrate western non-governmental organisations in Afghanistan in a bid to stage kidnappings, and stage suicide bombings. The US embassy in Kabul received information about the plot since September but did not have details on the timing or location of potential attacks, the State Department said. It warned US citizens, living and travelling in Afghanistan, that attacks could be "particularly in the form of suicide bombings and kidnappings, against US citizens and interests in Afghanistan". The embassy was particularly concerned about "kidnapping threats against non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and US companies in Kabul and throughout Afghanistan".

The News, 5 November 2004

128,000 Afghan DPs repatriated this year (Muhammad Ejaz Khan)

QUETTA: Over 128,000 Afghan refugees have left Pakistan for their homeland in 2004 under the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) facilitated voluntary repatriation programme, UNHCR officials told The News. Since March 2004 over 375,000 Afghans have voluntarily returned to Afghanistan from all over the country under the UNHCR facilitated voluntary repatriation programme. Federal Minister for the States and Frontier Regions (Safron) Sardar Yar Mohammad Rind said that the return of more than 2.3 million Afghan refugees from Pakistan in three years time since the start of the programme in 2002 also showed the level of the confidence that Afghans had in the current set-up.

Dawn, 6 November 2004

World asked to monitor process: India-Pakistan dialogue

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 5: Pakistan on Thursday called on the international community to monitor the peace process between India and Pakistan in the backdrop of UN Security Council resolutions as the two nations explore "practical possibilities and modalities" for a final settlement of the Kashmir dispute. Addressing the UN General Assembly's social committee on the question of "Universal Realization of the Right of Peoples to Self-determination," Pakistan's delegate and MNA Malik Mohammad Saifullah Tiwana warned that the continued violation of Kashmiri people's rights was incompatible with objectives of ending violence and terrorism in the region.

Daily Times, 6 November 2004

5 soldiers and 2 civilians hurt as fighting continues in Wana (Iqbal Khattak)

PESHAWAR: The army pounded militant positions with artillery and heavy weapons on Friday, two improvised explosives went off near army convoys and militants fired rockets at military installations in South Waziristan. Five soldiers and two civilians were injured in the attacks. The attack followed another in Sarwakai on Thursday in which nine soldiers were killed. In another incident, four security forces soldiers were seriously injured in a bomb blast in Rustam Bazar in Wana on Friday. Reports said that a military convoy was on its way from Wana to Mehsood tribal areas. As it reached Rustam Bazar at 1.45pm, a bomb went off injuring four soldiers of the security forces. The bomb was remotely triggered.

The News, 6 November 2004

Rejecting Musharraf's suggestions may be disastrous: Sardar Attique (Shahab Ansari)

LAHORE: President All Jammu & Kashmir Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan has said that President Musharraf's suggestions on Kashmir issue should be studied with an open heart and rejecting them outrightly may be disastrous for all the stakeholders. He said perhaps it was the most appropriate time for a permanent solution to Kashmir issue and that the Line of Control might be made a permanent fixture. He expressed the belief that President Musharraf's suggestions had a lot of attraction for the Kashmiris and the international community. He warned if this process was subverted, the entire area would go in the hands of militants.

Daily Times, 6 November 2004

Political reconciliation necessary in Balochistan, says Shaukat Sultan

QUETTA: Major General Shaukat Sultan, director general of Inter Services Public Relations, said during an Iftar dinner he hosted for local journalists on Friday that elements engaging in terrorist activities in Balochistan were working against the interests of Pakistan and the province. He added that the security forces, working alongside local levies, had destroyed the hideouts of the militants to ensure peace and security for the people. Maj Gen Sultan denied reports that a national liberation army had established itself in the province, saying that local criminals from other parts of the country had found shelter in Mekran's refugee camps. He stressed that they were neither foreign elements, nor had they links to Al Qaeda.

Daily Times, 6 November 2004

Musharraf to discuss LG system with nazims after Eid

PESHAWAR: President Pervez Musharraf will summon a meeting of nazims and naib nazims soon after Eid and discuss proposals to make the local government (LG) system more effective, Minister for Local Government and Rural Development Justice (r) Abdur Razzaq Thaheem said on Friday. Mr Thaheem said the decision on whether to hold the next LG elections on a party or non-party basis had not yet been taken and the matter would be settled in the upcoming conference. The minister denied making any comment on the decision of district nazims to move court against the NWFP government for its alleged interference in their affairs.

The News, 8 November 2004

APHC leaders' Pakistan visit to facilitate dialogue: FO

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Sunday welcomed India's offer to allow the Kashmiris to visit Pakistan. Commenting on a statement by Indian Home Minister Shivraj Patel on Saturday that he had no objection if APHC leaders wanted to visit Pakistan before talks with them were held, spokesman for the Foreign Ministry Masood Khan told Reuters the offer could help restart a stalled dialogue process. "This is a step in the right direction," he said. "It will enhance interaction between the Kashmiris and should ultimately facilitate their dialogue with Pakistan and India," he added.

The News, 8 November 2004

Musharraf can retain both offices: Pervaiz

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi has said that Gen Pervez Musharraf could retain the two offices of president and the chief of Army staff as parliament had passed the bill; opposition to his uniform was meaningless. He was addressing a large public gathering at an Iftar party hosted by District Nazim Lahore Mian Aamer Mahmood. He opined that Musharraf had strengthened the democratic system while remaining in uniform and that the assemblies would complete their five-year tenure.

Daily Times, 8 November 2004

Talks with tribal leaders resume(Dilawar Khan Wazir)

WANA, Nov 7: Political authorities in South Waziristan have resumed talks with elders of the Yargulkhel tribe to persuade them to sign an agreement for guaranteeing safety to security forces in the troubled areas, sources said. They said local officials wanted the tribe to provide protection to the army and paramilitary forces in the area and deny sanctuary to foreign militants and their tribal supporters. Under the proposed agreement, the tribe will have to furnish cash guarantees and will pledge not to allow foreign elements to use Pakistani territory against any foreign country. In the event of any hostile action against security forces in the Yargulkhel area the guarantee money would be forfeited.

Daily Times, 8 November 2004

MMA won't accept uniformed Musharraf as president: Fazl

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: The Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) will not accept General Pervez Musharraf as president if he does not step down as army chief by December 31, said Maulana Fazlur Rehman, the opposition leader in the National Assembly. Talking to reporters at the local press club, Fazl criticised Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz for saying democracy had been fully restored and for his refusal to apologise on the uniform issue. Meanwhile, MMA President Qazi Hussain Ahmed said the MMA would start a "mass mobilisation campaign" against the government's pro-US policies and the president's uniform at a public meeting in Karachi on November 28.

Daily Times, 8 November 2004

Committee meeting with Bugti 'fruitful' (Saleem Shahid)

QUETTA, Nov 7: Chairman of the parliamentary sub-committee on Balochistan issues, Senator Mushahid Hussain, in a meeting with Baloch leader Nawab Akbar Bugti assured him that past attitude with Balochistan would not be repeated. Senator Mushahid said that for the first time in the history of the country serious efforts were being made for solving the problems of Balochistan. There is a realization that Balochistan's problems cannot not be resolved by using force and nobody can impose decisions against the will of the people of the province.

The Frontier Post, 8 November 2004

4 killed in tribal clash

QUETTA: A tribal clash in Dera Murad Jamali, ex-premier Zafarullah Khan Jamali's hometown, left four people dead and two injured on Sunday. Details pouring in here revealed the clash erupted between two rivals groups at Jhal Magsi Bazaar. The rivals traded fire with lethal weapons, killing four people whereas a passerby received serious injuries.

The Frontier Post, 8 November 2004

66 Pakistanis held on border

TAFTAN: The Iranian Security Forces have arrested 66 Pakistanis from Pak-Iran border for illegally crossing the border in view to travel to European countries. It has been told that the Pakistanis arrested belonged from different areas of Punjab and were having fake documents. Afterwards, Iranian Security Forces handed them over to FIA.

Daily Times, 8 November 2004

New US envoy Crocker arrives

ISLAMABAD: The new US ambassador-designate to Pakistan, Ryan C Crocker, arrived here on Sunday to replace Nancy Powell, who has already left for Washington. The US deputy secretary of state, Richard Armitage, arrives on Monday to discuss bilateral relations, the situation in Afghanistan, Iraq and the ongoing peace process between Pakistan and India. He will hold talks with Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri and meet President Musharraf and Primer Shaukat Aziz on Tuesday.

Daily Times, 9 November 2004

President sits on 'two offices bill' for seven days (Rana Qaisar)

ISLAMABAD: The 'President to Hold Another Office Bill', though passed by both houses of parliament, still awaits the assent of General Pervez Musharraf to become law and authorise his remaining army chief and president beyond December 31.

Sources told Daily Times that the president would keep his options open and would not sign the bill until he finally made up his mind and formally announces his decision on his uniform. The bill cannot become a law until the president signs it, but if he does not sign this bill within 30 days after it is passed by parliament, it lapses. Though the president has repeatedly stated that his keeping the two offices is in the national interest, he has so far not categorically said he will do so.

Daily Times, 9 November 2004

'Four including Pakistani tried to sell missiles to Iraqi group'

KIEV: Four foreign citizens including a Pakistani arrested in Ukraine earlier this year on suspicion of illegal weapons trade intended to procure sophisticated weaponry worth more than \$800 million for an unspecified force fighting in Iraq, a news agency reported on Monday. Serhiy Rudenko, a spokesman for the Ukrainian prosecutor general's office said that the four foreign citizens — from Greece, Iraq and Pakistan — were trying to purchase aircraft and surface-to-air missiles for an Iraqi customer. The four had engaged a Kenya-based company to deliver the shipment which also included long-range multiple rocket launchers, anti-tank missiles, radars and machine-guns and "to avoid Ukrainian customs".

Daily Times, 9 November 2004

Foreigners' security cell to be formed in Interior Ministry (Shaukat Piracha)

ISLAMABAD: The government decided on Monday to establish a special security cell at the Ministry of Interior to ensure the security of foreigners working on development projects in Pakistan. The decision was taken at an inter-provincial meeting convened by Interior Minister Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao. Sherpao later told journalists at an Iftar dinner that foreign companies would be asked to set up residential camps for their workers. "Setting up residential camps near their sites will ensure minimum movement of foreign workers. Regular movements cause security problems for foreigners," he added. He said a new standard operating procedure for the security of the foreigners would be put in place. The provincial governments will be asked to put forward their requirements in this regard, he added.

Daily Times, 9 November 2004

'RAW behind Quetta bomb'

QUETTA: Balochistan's Interior Minister Shoaib Noshervani said on Monday that Indian Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) agents were trying to derail the talks between Islamabad and the province's nationalists leaders. On the same day, Pakistani intelligence sources reported that RAW agents were carrying out operations throughout the province. Officials said that RAW operatives had established terrorist camps in the province to fuel the activities of Baloch nationalists, and were aimed at provoking a full-blown insurgency leading to the eventual break-up of Pakistan. They said that RAW operatives had been behind the car bomb blast near the Chief Minister's House, which had injured four people.

Dawn, 9 November 2004

NWFP to establish anti-kidnapping force

PESHAWAR: The NWFP government has decided to set up an anti-kidnapping force, said an official handout issued here on Monday. The decision to this effect was taken at a high level meeting with the NWFP Governor Iftikhar Hussain Shah in the chair. The meeting also took a number of decision to curb the incidences of kidnapping; identification of kidnapers and their arrests as well as to eliminate their hide-outs, especially to further streamline security measures on Peshawar-Kohat section of Indus Highway. In this connection it was also decided not only to further increase the mobile inspection and strengthen the law enforcing agencies. Besides all the entrances towards tribal areas would be fully manned and proper checking would be ensured on them.

Daily Times, 9 November 2004

India ready to help Pakistan complete Khokhropar train track

KARACHI: The Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) claimed on Monday that India was willing to help Pakistan complete the unfinished portion of the Munabao-Khokhropar railway track to facilitate traffic between the two countries. According to an MQM press release, Indian foreign minister K Natwar Singh has told MQM chief Altaf Husain that India is serious about re-opening Khokhropar border. "There are perhaps some difficulties on the Pakistani side. If it relates to completion of the unfinished portion of the railway track up to Indian border, Delhi is ready to complete that portion of the railway track to facilitate the resumption of traffic up to Munabao."

Dawn, 9 November 2004

\$14m released for border security (Shafiq Ahmad)

PESHAWAR, Nov 8: The federal government has released \$14.75 million to the Governor's Fata secretariat for the border security project in Kurram and Khyber agencies. While a tranche of \$8.8m would be released for the same project in Mohmand and Bajaur agencies within a couple of days, official sources said. Official sources told Dawn here on Monday that the US administration had provided \$23.55m grant for the purpose of strengthening security and improving vigilance to curb the narcotics smuggling from Afghanistan through these four tribal regions. The amount was a part of the US assistance extended to Pakistan as being frontline state in the "war on terror". The amount would be spent on establishing several checkpoints for levies at important and strategic locations in Kurram, Khyber, Mohmand and Bajaur agencies.

Daily Times, 9 November 2004

Oman departs 602 illegal Pakistani immigrants

MUSCAT: Pakistan's Charge d'Affaires Khayyam Akbar in Oman said on Monday that the sultanate was deporting 602

Pakistanis who had entered the country illegally. Mr Akbar told AFP that one group had left on Sunday night, having boarded a boat for the three-day journey to Karachi. He added that two more groups would follow in the next few days. This brought the number of Pakistanis deported from the sultanate over the last four years to a total of 33,000. The number of illegal Pakistani immigrants to Oman was the biggest source of tension between the two maritime neighbours.

Daily Times, 10 November 2004

US pledges better ties with Pakistan (Shaukat Piracha)

ISLAMABAD: Richard Armitage, the US deputy secretary of state, pledged on Tuesday that there would be continuity in American policies towards Pakistan and consistent efforts towards better economic and commercial relations. Both sides underlined that Pakistan and the US would continue to cooperate in the war against terrorism. Mr. Armitage described the relationship Washington and Islamabad have established over the last four years as one of the key areas of success of US foreign policy. He added that in President George W Bush's second term, Washington wanted to work more closely with Islamabad. Referring to proposals made by Gen Musharraf last month on Kashmir, Armitage described it as being "forward looking".

Daily Times, 10 November 2004

11 jihadi groups banned from making public statements

LAHORE: The government has banned 11 jihadi groups that were active in Kashmir from holding public gatherings and issuing public statements, Daily Times learnt on Thursday. The government has directed the Muttahida Mahaaz Council (MMC), an alliance of the 11 groups, not to attend or hold public gatherings, meetings, rallies or congregations. They have also been restrained from issuing statements on the Kashmir issue. The MMC consists of Hizbul Mujahideen, Hizbullah, Jamiatul Mujahideen, Muslim Janbaz Force, Hizbul Momenin, Al Fatah, Al Umer, Tehreekul Mujahiden, Tehreekul Jihad, Al Jihad and Al Barq.

The Frontier Post, 10 November 2004

8 killed as fresh Wana drive begins

WANA: Eight people including six miscreants and two security personnel were killed in fierce fighting in the volatile South Waziristan Agency, close to the Pak-Afghan border, on Tuesday. Security forces launched a fresh operation in the area in a bid to flush out suspected miscreants, touching off the heaviest fighting in recent weeks. The latest bout of violence ratcheted up tension in the restive region. The pre-dawn operation in Manza, Karran and Dhela saw troops storm into the areas amid stiff resistance from the fighters, who retaliated with heavy gunfire. Backed by helicopter gunships, Security forces targeted hideouts of the suspects. Military spokesman Major General Shaukat Sultan said two soldiers were killed in the operation. The security personnel faced stout resistance and both sides traded fire intermittently until Tuesday morning.

Dawn, 10 November 2004

Militant influx into Wana continues: About 100 terrorists in area: Sherpao (Syed Irfan Raza)

ISLAMABAD, Nov 9: The influx of foreign militants into Wana is continuing from neighbouring countries, making it difficult for Pakistani security forces to combat terrorism, says Interior Minister Aftab Ahmed Sherpao. Talking to Dawn on Tuesday, the minister said that intelligence reports suggested that about 100 wanted terrorists were still present in Wana. "In addition to these terrorists, more are still coming in from neighbouring countries". Mr Sherpao said after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the law and order situation in Pakistan had completely changed because foreign militants from various countries had entered into Pakistan through Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

Dawn, 10 November 2004

India hands over 25 prisoners to Pakistan

LAHORE, Nov 9: India on Tuesday handed over 25 prisoners to Pakistan at the Wagah border crossing. A Punjab prisons official told Dawn that prisoners were handed over to Pakistan Rangers by the Indian Border Security Force, who were later handed over to an intelligence agency. He said six of the prisoners had been charged with overstaying in India, and the rest of them had served jail terms on charges of illegal border crossing.

Daily Times, 10 November 2004

AJK political crisis resolution likely by mid-December

ISLAMABAD: The seven-month-old political crisis in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is likely to be resolved by the middle of December as a second reconciliation meeting between AJK Prime Minister Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan and the ruling Muslim Conference splinter group will be held after Eid and "The power sharing formula and the government will be finalised," sources informed Daily Times. The splinter group has withdrawn its main condition that the AJK prime minister resign and the AKJ prime minister also agreed to accommodate ministers who earlier resigned from the Cabinet.

The Statesman, 10 November 2004

PML-PPPP alliance in the offing: Manzoor

PESHAWAR: Provincial senior vice president of Pakistan Muslim League (PML) Manzoorul Haq Qureshi has said that League's alliance with Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) will strengthen democracy in the country. In a press

release issued here on Tuesday, Qureshi said that their party was seriously considering to join hands with the PPP in the Centre as well as in the provinces. He said the new alliance will help form a stable government in the Centre which will also resolve the problem of quorum in the assemblies and put the economy back on track. About alliance with the MMA, Qureshi said both the parties differ in policies and manifestos there was no chance of their joining hands in the future as well.

Daily Times, 11 November 2004

Musharraf's Kashmir options: MMA wants debate in National Assembly (Mohammad Imran)

ISLAMABAD: The Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) is to submit a privilege motion in the National Assembly Secretariat to discuss President General Pervez Musharraf's articulation of possible solutions to the Kashmir issue. According to the MMA privilege motion submitted in October, these options are against the national view on the Kashmir issue and a U-turn on Pakistan's previous policy. The motion said that the president's "irresponsible and unrealistic statements" breached the privilege of the house.

The News, 11 November 2004

SC dismisses plea against Dr Qadeer's detention

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court Wednesday dismissed the petition filed by Maj (Retd) Hassamul Haq regarding detention of nuclear scientist Dr AQ Khan as withdrawn. The court had deputed Registrar of the Supreme Court of Pakistan to visit the residence of Dr AQ Khan and inquire about the petition from him along with his health; he submitted a report according to which Dr Khan made it very clear in his statement that this petition was filed in the Supreme Court of Pakistan without his consent or knowledge.

The Statesman, 11 November 2004

Sherpao may be made deputy PM (Naveed Miraj)

ISLAMABAD: In the wake of continuous ill health of Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, former prime minister and president of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League, the power brokers in the federal capital are contemplating to bring in Aftab Sherpao as the deputy premier. The proposal is being discussed at top circles as the government feels that it needs to have a person of considerable political skills and experience to handle the political situation arising within the party, parliament or outside. In case the proposal for appointment of a deputy prime minister is accepted then Aftab Sherpao will continue to hold charge as the interior minister and may also be handed over the portfolio of provincial coordination.

The News, 11 November 2004

250 tribesmen to be freed in Wana, Shakai (Sailab Mahsud)

TANK: Five soldiers and two tribesmen were wounded in sporadic exchange of fire between the military and the militants in different parts of South Waziristan on Wednesday. The number of militants killed or injured in the latest fighting was unclear. Meanwhile, the political administration has decided to release about 250 tribesmen and Afghan refugees arrested under 40 Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) over a period of several months in Wana and Shakai areas on suspicion of their involvement in militant activities.

The News, 11 November 2004

ADB to grant \$130m loan to Balochistan

QUETTA: The Asian Development Bank will grant a loan of \$130 million for the Balochistan Resource Management Programme, official sources said here on Wednesday. This is for building capacity for programme implementation in various sectors, including financial management, water resource management, improvement of public service delivery and private sector development and employment generation. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to this effect was signed between ADB authorities and provincial government during the visit of an official delegation of Balochistan led by chief secretary in Manila from October 25 to 30.

Daily Times, 11 November 2004

Spain arrests two Pakistani terror suspects

BARCELONA: Spanish police said on Wednesday they had arrested two Pakistanis overnight in Barcelona for alleged membership of an Islamic terrorist group, which they said they had broken up in a September raid in the northeastern city. Spanish judge Ismael Moreno ordered the operation, which nabbed 10 other Pakistani suspects on September 15. They have been placed in preventive detention pending charging for suspected membership of a terrorist group and drug trafficking.

Daily Times, 11 November 2004

Govt and Nek militants near a deal (Iqbal Khattak & Mujeibur Rehman)

PESHAWAR: The government is just days away from reaching a peace agreement with a group of militants loyal to Nek Muhammad, a former Taliban commander killed by an army missile in June, the chief government negotiator claimed on Wednesday. The sources said the talks had been underway for a month. Waziri cleric Maulana Noor Muhammad, who has influence among the Nek group militants, was facilitating the talks behind the scenes.

Daily Times, 11 November 2004

Govt to include diesel in tradable list with India (Khalid Mustafa)

ISLAMABAD: Humayun Akhtar Khan, the federal commerce minister, said on Wednesday that the Economic Coordination

Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet would give formal approval for the inclusion of 300 more items, including diesel, in the list of tradable items with India. Mr Khan said the commerce ministry is engaged in a consultation process with stakeholders with regard to finalisation of the 300 more items. At present 687 items can be imported from India.

Daily Times, 13 November 2004

"Troop cut could boost talks with India"

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan said on Friday that India's move to reduce its troops in held Kashmir this winter could boost peace talks with Pakistan aimed at ending more than a half-century of enmity between the two countries. The decision by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is "a step in the right direction," Foreign Ministry spokesman Masood Khan said in a statement on Friday. The FO spokesman said that Islamabad would closely monitor the withdrawal in Kashmir, which is divided between the South Asian neighbors but claimed by both in its entirety. He declined to say whether Pakistan would reciprocate.

Daily Times, 13 November 2004

Three Pakistani soldiers killed, 22 hurt in push into militant stronghold (Iqbal Khattak)

PESHAWAR: At least three Pakistan Army personnel have been killed and 22 injured while six militants were killed and one injured during the latest army push into a militant stronghold near the Afghan border, Peshawar Corps Commander Lt Gen Safdar Hussain told reporters on Friday. He said that the army operation begun on November 8 would continue till militant Abdullah Mehsud was arrested and the area was cleared of Al Qaeda-linked militants. But he conceded that he needed more troops to deploy all over South Waziristan Agency to win against the militants.

Dawn, 13 November 2004

New search operation launched in Waziristan

WANA, Nov 12: Army and paramilitary troops on Friday launched a joint search in the Kotakai area of South Waziristan for wanted militants. More than 200 army and Frontier Corps personnel took part in the operation conducted in an area mainly inhabited by the Mehsud tribe. The search parties did not face any resistance. Meanwhile, five wanted militants formally signed an agreement with the government in Wana on Friday, pledging to live peacefully and keep away from terrorist activities.

Dawn, 13 November 2004

Politics trumps rule of law, says ICG

ISLAMABAD, Nov 12: The Musharraf government has deepened the judiciary's subservient position among national institutions, ensured that politics trumps the rule of law, and weakened the foundations for democratic rule, the International Crisis Group says in a report made public on Wednesday. The report said rather than supporting the judiciary, Gen Musharraf's government has sought aggressively to co-opt or disable the judiciary by removing independent judges, placing allies in key chief justice positions and rewarding judges who issue judgments favourable to the executive.

The News, 10 November 2004

Pakistan seeks World Bank support

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan is focusing on private sector development and requires huge investments and technical assistance infrastructure development. This was stated by Adviser to Prime Minister on Finance, Dr Salman Shah while talking to a World Bank delegation headed by Joseph Del Mar Pernia, Director Finance and Banking Sector Development at the Ministry of Finance on Friday. The World Bank team hinted at the possibility of increasing International Development Assistance (IDA) facility for Pakistan. The new \$300 million programme to compensate Pakistan for the cost of financial sector restructuring was in the pipeline and on completion of paper work would be released in late December or early January.

Dawn, 13 November 2004

Pakistan, China agree on free trade area

BEIJING, Nov 12: Pakistan and China will sign a protocol during the expected visit to China by Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz next month to give a definite shape to their future trade relations. An understanding to this effect was arrived at a meeting held here between Commerce Secretary Tasneem Noorani and Chinese Assistant Commerce and Trade Minister Yi Xiaozhun. During the meeting, it was decided to deepen their bilateral economic ties by establishing Free Trade Area (FTA), expanding the existing Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) and exploring new investment opportunities in each other country, besides undertaking joint ventures.

The Frontier Post, 14 November 2004

Pak, India to discuss gas pipeline

ISLAMABAD (Online): Petroleum ministers of Pakistan and India Amanullah Khan Jadoon and Mani Shankar Aiyar are likely to meet in New Delhi after Eid-ul-Fitr to discuss a \$ 3 billion pipeline to India through Pakistan. Sources said that it would be the first time that the two oil ministers will have talks on pipeline that is most likely to run from Iran via Pakistan to India. They said that the ADB, which had sponsored a feasibility study on a Turkmenistan-to-India pipeline has now offered its services and financing to any gas pipeline project Pakistan and India agree to.

Dawn, 14 November 2004

Saarc ministers meet on 22nd: Safta (Mubarak Zeb Khan)

ISLAMABAD, Nov 13: The Council of Ministers (CoM) of Saarc member countries will hold a two-day meeting here on Nov 22-23 to review the progress on finalization of the South Asia Free Trade Area (SAFTA) that will come into force on January 1, 2006. The main issue of the CoM meeting will be to review the progress made on the exchange of negative lists - items not to be considered for duty reduction under the treaty by the member countries.

Dawn, 14 November 2004

Two killed in Wana firing, stampede

WANA, Nov 13: Two people were killed and six wounded, including three soldiers, in an explosion and subsequent firing in South Waziristan on Saturday, a day after the government announced it had reached agreement with five most wanted militants to bring peace to the tribal region. Witnesses in Wana said security forces opened fire on people in the Wana bazaar at around noon after three soldiers were injured in a landmine explosion on the Wana bypass road. In the ensuing stampede and hail of bullets, two people were killed and three wounded.

Dawn, 14 November 2004

11 more inducted into AJK cabinet

MUZAFFARABAD, Nov 13: Eleven more ministers are inducted in the AJK cabinet here on Saturday raising its strength to 19 and apparently bringing to an end a year-long crisis in the Muslim Conference's parliamentary party. New cabinet members, who are to take oath after Eidul Fitr holidays, would be allotted portfolios around the same time after reshuffling of the portfolios of the existing eight ministers. Separately, two women legislators were also appointed by the PM as his advisers. The rank and status of the new advisers is not known.

Dawn, 17 November 2004

Dates for secretary-level talks proposed

ISLAMABAD, Nov 16: Islamabad has formally proposed Dec 21 and 22 as the dates for foreign secretary level talks to New Delhi and is awaiting a response for the second round of the composite dialogue meetings scheduled to be held next month, officials sources told Dawn. Mr Khan said the foreign secretaries talks would primarily focus on three broad issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, peace and security and the calendar of meetings for six other subjects under the composite dialogue process. Official sources said: "no subject could be excluded" from the talks, including the proposals floated by President Musharraf, when Prime Minister Aziz meets his Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh.

Dawn, 17 November 2004

Formal proposals after debate on options: Kasuri

LAHORE, Nov 16: Pakistan would formulate its formal proposals for the solution to the Kashmir dispute in the light of a consensus of the ongoing debate on the options outlined by President Musharraf and the opinion of the Kashmiri leaders, Foreign Minister Khurshid M. Kasuri said here on Tuesday. Mr Kasuri said a solution should be to the satisfaction of all three parties to the dispute. He ruled out any U-turn on the Kashmir issue and said parliament was free to debate the matter any time.

Daily Times, 17 November 2004

Progress likely on Kashmir bus (Shaukat Piracha)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and India are likely to make progress during talks on the commencement of a bus service between Muzaffarabad and Srinagar, in New Delhi on December 7 and 8. "We are currently finalising our strategy for the talks. The chance of success in these talks is very bright as Pakistan will be flexible and constructive and will accept almost anything short of passports to identify passengers," official sources told Daily Times.

Daily Times, 17 November 2004

6 suspected militants arrested (Mubasher Bukhari)

LAHORE: Joint police and intelligence teams have arrested six suspected militants from banned organisations and said to have ties to Al Qaeda, sources told Daily Times on Tuesday. Five of them were arrested in Lahore with a cache of explosives and one in Khanewal in raids conducted by the intelligence agencies and Punjab Elite Force. The sources said the five arrested in Lahore were assigned to give logistic support to Al Qaeda terrorists in Punjab and four of them had fled to the provincial capital after fighting the army in its recent operations in Wana. Meanwhile, another security team arrested wanted militant Abu Usman alias Jehanian of the banned Lashkar-e-Jhangvi from Khanewal.

Dawn, 17 November 2004

Tribes to observe cease-fire till 30th

PESHAWAR, Nov 16: Two tribes observed a temporary cease-fire after a clash that left 13 persons dead and dozens injured in the Kurram Agency, officials said on Monday. The Khwaidakhel and Wazir tribes used heavy weapons in the clash over a property dispute in Plaseen area of the Lower Kurram, which started a day before Eidul Fitr. But the two tribes desisted from

firing at each other on the night before Eid after the intervention of the Lower Kurram political administration, they added. The cease-fire will last till Nov 30 and during these two weeks, the political administration would try to patch up the long-standing property dispute through the holding of a jirga, tehsildar Hameed Khan said.

Daily Times, 18 November 2004

LoC a problem, not solution: Musharraf (Mohammad Imran)

ISLAMABAD: The Line of Control is part of the problem and cannot be a solution to the Kashmir dispute, President General Pervez Musharraf told Kashmiri leaders from Azad Jammu and Kashmir and representatives of the AJK chapter of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, in a meeting on Wednesday. Sardar Ijaz Afzal, head of the Jamaat-e-Islami in AJK, told Daily Times that Gen Musharraf had revealed that Pakistan would propose two new routes for cross-border bus services, between Sialkot and Jammu and between Madarpur and Poonch.

Daily Times, 18 November 2004

Pentagon unveils \$1.2b proposed weapons deals with Pakistan

WASHINGTON: The Pentagon notified Congress on Tuesday about three proposed arms deals with Pakistan worth up to \$1.2 billion. The Defence Security Cooperation Agency, which handles foreign arms sales for the Pentagon, said it planned to sell Pakistan eight P-3C Orion surveillance aircraft, valued at up to \$970 million, and 2,000 TOW-2A missiles and 14 TOW-2A Fly-to-Buy missiles in a deal valued at \$82 million. The Pentagon said the proposed arms agreements would help improve the security of a friendly country that has been and continues to be an important force for economic progress in South Asia and the global war on terrorism.

The News, 18 November 2004

Powell to visit Pakistan next month

WASHINGTON: The outgoing Secretary of State Colin Powell will visit Pakistan and attend the inauguration of Afghan President Hamid Karzai, scheduled in the first week of December. "The secretary is likely to attend the inaugural ceremony in Kabul on December 7, and he would also like to make a farewell visit to Pakistan either on December 6 or 8," a senior US official said, adding: "It is, however, not clear if Powell would also visit India."

Dawn, 18 November 2004

Uranium transfer to Iran denied

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Wednesday denied an Iranian opposition claim that its top nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan had transferred highly enriched uranium to Tehran in 2001. Farid Soleimani, head official of National Council for Resistance in Iran, also alleged at a news conference in Vienna that Khan also gave Iran a Chinese-developed warhead design sometime between 1994 and 1996. "This is a highly exaggerated account. Somebody has let his imagination run wild," a senior government official told AFP, commenting on the statement.

Dawn, 18 November 2004

Donors interested in heavy investment in Kashmir (Ihtasham ul Haque)

ISLAMABAD: The international donor community has decided to invest heavily both in occupied Kashmir and the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) following the gradual reduction in tension between India and Pakistan. Sources said that major donors, especially the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), believed that a return of tension was unlikely in the near future that encouraged them to invest in both parts of Kashmir. As a first step, the ADB has decided to offer \$76 million 'special funding' to Pakistan to help undertake a comprehensive programme for rehabilitating and reconstructing essential physical and social infrastructure in AJK. The ADB has sought undertaking from Pakistan that the AJK government would continue to accord priority to interventions aimed at poverty reduction and active community participation in the project.

Dawn, 18 November 2004

Options under study on Baglihar dam: High-level meeting today (Khaleeq Kiani)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will use all diplomatic and legal channels to stop India from completing the controversial Baglihar hydro-electric project which violates Pakistan's rights over the Chenab river waters given under the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, Dawn learnt on Wednesday. The 450mw project is expected to be completed by April 2005. President Gen Pervez Musharraf will take a formal decision on the issue at a meeting to be held here on Thursday, official sources said. At the heart of the dispute is the design of the project which, according to Pakistan, provides for submerged gate spillways which give India control over Pakistani waters in breach of the water treaty.

The News, 18 November 2004

Trans-Afghan gas pipeline talks in January

ASHGABAT: Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan will hold talks in January on constructing a long-delayed \$ 2-2.5 billion pipeline to transport gas from ex-Soviet Turkmenistan, an Afghan official said on Wednesday. "There are three problems to be addressed," Hakim Khan Taniwal, Afghan Labour Minister, told Reuters. "Pakistan should say how much energy it needs. Afghanistan should look into the security of this pipeline. And Turkmenistan should confirm the reserves." He said the talks would take place in Islamabad. Hopes of stability in Afghanistan and signals from India this year that it might agree to import natural gas from nuclear rival Pakistan have revived interest in the project.

Dawn, 19 November 2004

'Mastermind' of attacks on Musharraf arrested (Shamsul Islam Naz)

FAISALABAD, Nov 18: Osama Nazir, one of the alleged masterminds of attempts on the lives of President Gen Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, was picked up from a local madrasah on Wednesday night. Osama Nazir was the second-in-command of Jaish-i-Mohammad and was a close associate of Jaish chief Maulana Masood Azhar. He had direct links with Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar and Al Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden. He was also allegedly involved in attacks on churches in 2002 and 2003 in different parts of Pakistan.

Dawn, 19 November 2004

Pakistan to seek arbitration: Baglihar project (Khaleeq Kiani)

ISLAMABAD, Nov 18: Pakistan on Thursday decided, in principle, to ask the World Bank to appoint a neutral expert to resolve the dispute arising out of the violation of the 1960 Indus Water Treaty by India, it is learnt. A meeting held here with President General Pervez Musharraf in the chair also decided that Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz should avail himself of the opportunity of his meetings with the Indian leadership next week to take up the issue of the controversial Baglihar hydro-power project before the World Bank was approached in accordance with Annexure-F of the treaty. A senior official said that Pakistan had already issued a notice to India in November last year about its intention to seek the neutral expert's appointment, adding there was no need for a fresh notice.

Daily Times, 19 November 2004

Shaukat Aziz's visit to India: Kashmir and pipeline top agenda (Shaukat Piracha and Khalid Mustafa)

ISLAMABAD: The Kashmir dispute, the proposed Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline and the controversial Baglihar Dam top the agenda for Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz's upcoming visit to New Delhi. In his first meeting with Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, Mr Aziz "will further the understanding reached between President Musharraf and Dr Singh in New York in September, when both agreed to explore options for a Kashmir solution" the sources said. However, a senior official told Daily Times that Mr Aziz would not be carrying any formal proposals for a Kashmir solution.

The News, 19 November 2004

Law, order tops NSC meeting agenda on 25th (Shakil Shaikh)

ISLAMABAD: The National Security Council (NSC) will take up law and order as its top agenda item when it meets here on November 25. It would be the second meeting of the high-profile strategic forum to be chaired by President Gen Pervez Musharraf to review all important matters, confronting the nation. As the country is continuously facing law and order crisis in many ways, the NSC would review the situation in the wake of Wana operation, attacks on worship and religious places and the prevalent situation in Balochistan besides other issues of national and international importance. Official sources said that Foreign Minister Khurshid Mahmood Kasuri would brief the participants of the meeting about the ongoing Pak-India dialogue process.

Daily Times, 20 November 2004

Aziz stresses on continuity of economic policies

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Friday unfolded his vision of a prosperous Pakistan and announced reforms to provide the people with speedy justice, employment, basic healthcare facilities, equal opportunities and free education up to the matric level in all educational institutions of the federal government. Defending President Pervez Musharraf's likely decision to continue as army chief, the prime minister asked the nation to respect the parliament's decision on the issue. The prime minister underlined the need for improving law and order in the country and said the reforms in the police and judicial systems would help restore the confidence of local and foreign investors in Pakistan.

Daily Times, 20 November 2004

Musharraf losing sight of 'light at the end of tunnel'

ISLAMABAD: President Pervez Musharraf said he was dismayed by India's response to his efforts to bring peace to Kashmir in an interview with AFP. President Musharraf expressed disappointment that his offers to wind back Pakistan's long-held demands on the divided territory were unmatched by any flexibility from India. "The vibes that are now coming do not encourage a process of normalisation," Musharraf said. The Pakistani president was lukewarm on the retreat of an Indian battalion from a northern Kashmir town on Wednesday.

Dawn, 20 November 2004

Musharraf-Bush meeting likely (Anwar Iqbal)

WASHINGTON, Nov 19: The White House is looking positively at a request from Pakistan for a meeting between President Pervez Musharraf and US President George W. Bush early next month, diplomatic sources told Dawn on Friday. They told Dawn that Mr Bush is also interested in a meeting with the Pakistani leader but it has not yet been finalized. It will be a "purely personal meeting" with no agenda.

Dawn, 20 November 2004

3.6 tons of explosives seized in Waziristan

ISLAMABAD, Nov 19: Authorities have recovered a huge cache of explosives and ammunition from an area near the Afghan border, an official said on Friday. "We have recovered 3,600kg of explosives, hundreds of 82mm mortar shells, 75mm rifle rounds, 18 shells of 107mm rockets and 40,000 rounds of bullets of different calibres," a local administration official told AFP.

The weapons were recovered when security forces raided two compounds in the town of Kanigarram in South Waziristan on Thursday, he said.

Daily Times, 22 November 2004

Congress passes \$388b budget: US giving Pakistan \$300m military aid

WASHINGTON: The US Congress on Saturday approved a \$388 billion budget containing military aid programmes for Pakistan and Afghanistan. It allocated Pakistan \$300 million in military assistance, designed to bolster the capabilities of the country's armed forces that are working to help Washington hunt down suspected Al Qaeda members along the Afghan-Pakistani border. It is seen as a reward to President Pervez Musharraf for his support of America's war on terror, targeting Islamic militants.

Daily Times, 22 November 2004

Islamabad and Colombo agree to improve trade

COLOMBO: Pakistan and Sri Lanka on Sunday agreed to improve economic, political and defence ties and increase contact between their officials. Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz held talks with Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse and President Chandrika Bandranaike Kumaratunga. The talks focused on increasing cooperation in trade, defence, tourism and education. Both countries also discussed regional and international issues.

Daily Times, 22 November 2004

Pakistan and India will discuss Kishanganga project on 27th

ISLAMABAD: A four-member delegation of the Indian Commission of Indus Water headed by its chief Dr DK Mehta is arriving in Pakistan for a four-day official visit on November 26 to discuss Pakistan's concerns on the construction of the controversial Kishanganga hydropower project being built by India in held Kashmir. Syed Jammat Ali Shah, the Pakistan Commission of Indus Water commissioner, would lead Pakistani team in the talks.

The News, 23 November 2004

Pakistan renews stand on MFN status to India (Asim Yasin)

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Monday once again linked granting the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to India for trade with sustainable political dialogue to resolve all issues between Islamabad and New Delhi. Indian Commerce Minister Kamal Nath, who held the meeting with Pakistan's Commerce Minister Humayun Akhtar Khan here on Monday, and raised the issue of granting the MFN status to India as New Delhi granted to Islamabad. Pakistan always has a clear stance that sustainable political dialogue" to resolve all the outstanding issues between the two countries is must for having MFN status under the aegis of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Daily Times, 23 November 2004

Pak-Iranian Balochistans turn twins

QUETTA: The Balochistan and Iranian province of Sistan Balochistan were declared twins as governors of both provinces signed an agreement on Monday. Owais Ahmed Ghani, the Balochistan governor, and Hussain Amini, the governor general, signed the declaration. Mr Ghani addressed a ceremony on this occasion and called the day a historic for both Iranians and Pakistanis. He said the agreement would further cement the friendship between the two countries. "Besides, it will help grow business and cooperation in multiple fields between the two," he added. He underlined the need for developing better cooperation among the Muslim countries in to face challenges confronting them and warned that the Muslim nations would succumb to these crises if they did not get united and shunned their mutual differences.

The News, 23 November 2004

20 militants killed in South Waziristan

ISLAMABAD: Troops have killed 20 militants in raids on a seminary and a camp in South Waziristan as part of ongoing operations against al-Qaeda-linked fighters, the military said on Monday. Eight people were killed at the seminary in Lalejai area, while 12 were killed in "hand-to-hand" fight in a separate raid on a camp in the Karam Manzai Chund Khel area, a military spokesman said in a statement. Following a swift operation the terrorists were flushed out of Khon Khela and Draz Langer Khel area, which they were using as a second layer of their defences.

Daily Times, 25 November 2004

Muslim disputes at top in Bush-Musharraf meeting (Shaukat Piracha)

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri said on Wednesday that President Pervez Musharraf, would emphasise during his upcoming meeting with US President George Bush, the need for continuity in Pak-US relations and the resolution of political issues concerning Muslims across the world. "The war against terrorism cannot simply be fought by

military means as it concerns hearts and minds. Therefore, as a US ally in the war against terrorism, President Musharraf will call upon President Bush to help solve issues affecting Muslims across the world, and particularly the issue of Palestine" said Mr Kasuri.

Daily Times, 25 November 2004

Iran to give electricity for Gwadar Port (Khalid Mustafa)

ISLAMABAD: Iran has agreed to export electricity to Pakistan for the Gwadar Port and both countries will soon sign an agreement after the price of electricity is decided by them, a Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) source told Daily Times on Wednesday. Iran said it was ready to export electricity for Gwadar Port and would also finance the infrastructure required to transport the electricity, he added. Pakistan is already importing electricity for several areas in Balochistan that border Iran.

Dawn, 25 November 2004

Qadeer gave N-bomb designs to Iran: CIA (Anwar Iqbal)

WASHINGTON, Nov 24: The US Central Intelligence Agency has now officially accused Dr A. Q. Khan of providing Iran with technology and equipment for making a nuclear bomb, indicating a major shift in US approach to the dispute. In the past, US officials had reported that the network supplied complete bomb-making plans to Libya and perhaps North Korea. But the CIA now believes that the bomb-making designs the Khan network gave to Iran in the 1990's were more significant than the US government had previously disclosed.

The News, 26 November 2004

NSC resolves to root out terrorism (Shakil Shaikh)

ISLAMABAD: The National Security Council hoped on Thursday that India would positively reciprocate the goodwill gestures Pakistan had shown for peaceful settlement of the Kashmir problem, said Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad while briefing newsmen about the NSC meeting. The NSC, which met for the second time since it came into existence, resolved to root out extremism, sectarianism and terrorism from the country. The NSC reviewed overall law and order situation in the country, peace process and composite dialogue with India and progress on mega developmental projects in Balochistan.

Dawn, 26 November 2004

Accession clause to be abolished: Sikandar (Raja Asghar)

MUZAFFARABAD, Nov 25: Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Sikandar Hayat said on Thursday his ruling All-Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference (AJKMC) party would amend the territory's constitution to abolish a clause requiring would-be legislators to pledge their belief in accession to Pakistan before contesting elections. "We will abolish this restriction in the future," he said about the clause in the territory's Act 1974, or the interim constitution, that barred such candidates from election to the 48-seat Legislative Assembly who refused to make a pledge in their nomination papers about their belief in the accession of the Jammu and Kashmir state to Pakistan. Mr. Hayat said the amendment would be made after a decision by the AJKMC, which stands for the state's accession to Pakistan, but that he was sure because of his position in the party that it would be done.

Dawn, 26 November 2004

Al Qaeda suspect killed in Lahore (Asif Shahzad)

LAHORE, Nov 25: A suspected Al Qaeda operative was killed and his two accomplices were captured in an operation at the Bhatti Colony in Kot Lakhpat on Thursday. One suspect is reported to have escaped. An intelligence official said the suspects belonged to Al Qaeda. "Hand-grenades, assault rifles, hundreds of bullets, fuse and batteries used for bomb making, a computer, CDs, religious literature and plastic sleeping bags used in guerilla warfare were seized from the two houses which were raided."

Dawn, 27 November 2004

No U-turn on Kashmir issue: AJK PM (Tariq Naqash)

MUZAFFARABAD, Nov 26: AJK President Sardar Mohammad Anwar Khan on Friday categorically ruled out any U-turn on the Kashmir issue and political, moral and said that diplomatic support would continue uninterrupted to the freedom-seeking people of occupied Kashmir. He said Gen Pervez Musharraf had provided an opportunity to India to amicably settle the Kashmir issue and that opportunity might "not be there tomorrow". He was responding to questions by journalists from India and occupied Kashmir at a dinner he hosted at the President House here.

Daily Times, 27 November 2004

Army checkpoints to be removed from Wana (Iqbal Khattak)

PESHAWAR: Lieutenant General Safdar Hussain, the Peshawar corps commander, announced the removal of army check posts from the Wana region on Friday, in recognition of the Ahmedzai Wazir tribe's promise to support the military to take 'complete control' of militants in the Wazir areas of South Waziristan. Lt Gen Safdar, who in March was appointed top

commander of military operations in Waziristan, said that the army would not use force against anyone and expressed hope that the Wazir tribes would ensure peace in their areas.

The News, 27 November 2004

Pak, Chinese presidents to open Gwadar Port (Tahir Rathore)

ISLAMABAD: President of People's Republic of China Hu Jintao and President Pervez Musharraf are expected to inaugurate the first phase of the Gwadar Port before the end of this year, according to a senior official. The Chinese president was expected to arrive in Islamabad during the last week of December this year. The first phase has been completed three months before its schedule and awaits inauguration. The government plans to establish a special economic zone to make Gwadar a hub of economic and industrial activities.

Daily Times, 29 November 2004

MMA kicks off anti-uniform campaign in Karachi: We're not against the army, just Musharraf: Qazi (Hasan Mansoor)

KARACHI: The Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal is not against the army "as is being propagated, but it is against Musharraf and his misuse of the military uniform," Qazi Hussain Ahmed said on Sunday as the six-party religious alliance kicked off its anti-government campaign. The stated purpose of the religious alliance's mass contact campaign is to force President Musharraf to step down as army chief by the end of this year, as he promised in his televised address to the nation last year. Thousands of people from various parts of the city and elsewhere from the province attended the meeting. The MMA plans other rallies in Lahore, Peshawar and Rawalpindi.

Dawn, 29 November 2004

Nuclear CBMs talks on Dec 14-15 (Arshad Sharif)

ISLAMABAD, Nov 28: Islamabad would host the second round of Pakistan-India talks on nuclear and conventional confidence-building measures on December 14 and 15, officials told Dawn. During the December talks, said an official, the two sides were expected to sign an agreement with technical parameters on pre-notification of missile tests. A draft of the agreement was handed over by the Indian side during the June talks. New proposals relating to conventional and nuclear weapon CBMs would be taken up at the forthcoming talks.

The Frontier Post, 29 November 2004

Ghaznavi missile test

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will test-fire a nuclear-capable missile within the next few days despite a thaw in relations with neighboring India, a senior government official and a scientist said Sunday. "Yes, everything is in place for Ghaznavi's test," the official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said of the new medium-range missile. A scientist confirmed the planned test, but refused to say when it would take place. It would be Pakistan's second major missile test in the past six weeks, following the Oct. 12 launch of a Ghauri-V missile. The official said Islamabad has informed neighboring countries, including India, about the planned test.

Dawn, 30 November 2004

Tariq, Dixit likely to meet in Amritsar (Qudssia Akhlaque)

ISLAMABAD, Nov 29: Indian National Security Adviser J. N Dixit and his Pakistani counterpart Tariq Aziz who have been actively involved in back-channel diplomacy to take forward the dialogue process will meet in Amritsar this week to discuss the latest developments on this front, it is reliably learnt. It is believed that Mr Dixit, a close confidant of Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and Mr Tariq Aziz, will look at ways of enabling the two countries to move ahead on substantive issues including Jammu and Kashmir.

Dawn, 30 November 2004

Pakistan test-fires Hatf-III missile

KARACHI, Nov 29: Pakistan on Monday successfully test-fired indigenously developed short-range surface-to-surface ballistic missile Hatf-III, Ghaznavi, an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) issued here on Monday said. This was the third test of Ghaznavi missile which like other available Pakistan's missiles, is capable of carrying nuclear and other types of warheads to a range of 290 kilometres. The test was a part of a series of tests planned to be conducted in order to verify certain parameters and to further refine different sub-systems of the missile, the ISPR press release said.