

Indo-pak relations

31 January 2006

India and Pakistan are to sign an agreement on 31 January for commencement of the Khokhrapar-Monabao rail route linking Sindh with Rajasthan. The two sides of Kashmir will have the second link when the route passing through Chakan da Bagh will open on 31 March, officials said on 30 January.

30 January 2006

Opposition leader in Indian Rajiya Sabha and India's former minister for external affairs Jaswant Singh is arriving in Pakistan on 30 January by train through Khokhrapar-Munabao border along with an 80-member delegation for a week long visit to Pakistan.

29 January 2006

Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on 28 January expressed his country's willingness to further the peace process with India for finding a peaceful solution to the Kashmir issue.

28 January 2006

A successful trial run of the Lahore-Nankana bus service was held on 27 January.

27 January 2006

Calling on the Indian and Pakistani political leadership to grasp the fleeting moment and think "out of the box" to arrive at a solution to the Kashmir problem, President Pervez Musharraf warned that failure to do so could have serious consequences for lasting peace in the region. Asked to spell out the contours of his "out of the box" solution, he said, it is something he has already communicated to India through diplomatic channels and is now speaking to the media. The broad contours, as he spelt it out at the annual meet of the World Economic Forum, was this: Identify Kashmir i.e., all the parts of Kashmir that make up the entity called Kashmir. Two, demilitarise the entire area. Stating that the people of Kashmir are sick of the endless violence, he said it is time we demilitarised the area. And three, give self-governance to the people of Kashmir. This, he said, would offer a via media that is in between independence and autonomy to Kashmir, neither of which is acceptable to India.

26 January 2006

India's cabinet has approved reopening the country's consulate in Karachi, 10 years after its closure, a government statement said.

25 January 2006

Riding on the wave of new found interest and enthusiasm which now fills the air on both sides of the Indo-Pak border, "Punj-Aab" bus 24 January rolled into the Gulberg terminus in Pakistan with a galaxy of VIPs aboard the bus.

24 January 2006

Notwithstanding the Pakistan commerce ministry's objections to signing Safta, which would entail free trade with India, the ministry of industries has recommended granting of the MFN status to New Delhi, saying that liberalisation of trade would benefit Islamabad.

Pakistan, Iran and India are likely to adopt a segmented approach on the construction of over \$7 billion trans-Pakistan gas pipeline to ward off effects of possible US sanctions against Iran over nuclear issue,

sources say. Petroleum ministry officials are, however, not clear if such an approach could help parry similar UN sanctions. The segmented approach means construction of the pipeline by the three countries within their respective territories. The 2,670-km pipeline would have about 1,115-km length in Iran, 705kms in Pakistan and 850kms in India.

23 January 2006

King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia has expressed the hope that Pakistan would sponsor India's membership as an observer of the OIC even as he called on the two countries to resolve their differences.

22 January 2006

Last April's agreement between Pakistani and Indian leaders to open their countries' consulates in Mumbai and Karachi in January has been set back by several months, officials said on 21 January.

21 January 2006

Amidst spats on terrorism and Balochistan at the recently concluded foreign secretary-level talks, Pakistan has offered India help in investigations if India provides "concrete evidence" of the involvement of any group based in Pakistan in terrorist activities in India. India, on the other hand, wants Pakistan to sign an extradition treaty and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) to ensure that action is taken against criminals and drug smugglers.

20 January 2006

The first Lahore-Amritsar bus with 10 passengers and 14 officials on board will cross over to India on 20 January morning.

19 January 2006

India and Pakistan on 18 January began their second day of talks to discuss Kashmir and explore ways to further boost confidence building along the Line of Control (LoC) to resolve the decades-old issue that continues to be a source of friction between them. India and Pakistan have agreed to start a second bus service linking divided Kashmir. A joint statement after two days of talks between the foreign secretaries of both countries said on Wednesday that both sides were committed to starting a bus service between Poonch and Rawalakot and a truck service on the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar route for trade as soon as infrastructure damaged by the October earthquake was restored.

18 January 2006

India on 17 January said it made a statement on Balochistan last month as New Delhi was "concerned" over the situation in the Pakistani province. Earlier, Pakistan protested saying the remarks amounted to interference in its internal affairs. India also raised the issue of Pakistani support to terrorism on the first day of the third round of composite dialogue between Foreign Secretaries Shyam Saran and Riaz Muhammad Khan.

17 January 2006

Pakistan Foreign Secretary Riaz Muhammad Khan arrived on 16 January for the third round of composite dialogue with his Indian counterpart Shyam Saran.

16 January 2006

A Pakistani delegation headed by Foreign Secretary Riaz Mohammad Khan is leaving for New Delhi on Monday for talks with India. The two-day talks that begin on Tuesday will discuss the key issue of Jammu and Kashmir and other aspects of peace and security.

15 January 2006

President General Pervez Musharraf has said he communicated his ideas on self-governance and demilitarisation in Kashmir to the Indian leadership long ago, but their reluctance to respond compelled him to go public. "I have been passing these ideas on to the Indian government, to the Indian leadership directly and indirectly, through back channels, though all kinds of channels," Gen Musharraf said in an interview on Indian channel CNN-IBN. India and Pakistan will discuss "new ideas" on promoting bilateral ties when Foreign Secretaries of the two countries meet in New Delhi on Tuesday to kick off the third round of Composite Dialogue amid New Delhi's serious concerns over continued cross-border terrorism. During the two-day talks between Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran and his Pakistani counterpart Riaz Mohammad Khan, the two sides will review the progress of ongoing peace initiatives and confidence-building measures (CBMs) with an aim to ensure their early implementation. India's petroleum minister denied a report that New Delhi may pull out of a seven-billion-dollar joint project to build a gas pipeline from Iran via Pakistan. Mani Shankar Aiyar told the Press Trust of India that its earlier report quoting unnamed officials in the petroleum ministry, was "completely wrong". "It is completely wrong to suggest that either I or any one in authority in India has advocated withdrawing from the Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline," he said before leaving Beijing, where he has been holding talks with Chinese officials. PTI had said that India, fearing a hostile reaction from the United States, might instead opt to buy gas from Iran at the Indian border.

14 January 2006

The Indian Army on Friday said the situation was not conducive to troops reduction in Jammu and Kashmir because the terror infrastructure across the border is intact and infiltration continues. With the international community turning the heat on Iran, Indian Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar is proposing that the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline be individually built by each of the three nations in their own territory. This option would not only help New Delhi avoid a face-off with the United States but also protect the project from international sanctions. Pakistan Foreign Secretary Riaz Muhammad Khan will leave for India on January 16 to hold talks with his Indian counterpart, Shyam Sharan, on peace, security and Kashmir. The talks will be held in New Delhi on 17-18 January.

13 January 2006

Confidence-building measures with Pakistan at the highest level notwithstanding, terrorists continue to enjoy infrastructural support across the border from Jammu and Kashmir.

12 January 2006

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf's disenchantment over the so-called 'lack of progress' in peace process is showing up and this explains the reason for his recent demilitarisation proposal.

11 January 2006

Foreign Secretary Riaz Mohammad Khan will be leading a 10-member delegation to New Delhi next week to discuss with his Indian counterpart the vital issues of peace and security as well as Jammu and Kashmir. The two-day talks that begin on Jan 17 will mark the start of the third round of the composite dialogue between the two countries. The dialogue is considered an integral part of the ongoing Indo-Pakistan peace process. The team will leave for New Delhi from Lahore on Monday (Jan16), a day before the meeting.

10 January 2006

Pakistan on Monday said though the pace of the peace process with India was "disappointing," the forecast was certainly not "bleak." Foreign Office spokesperson Tasneem Aslam told reporters that Islamabad hoped to see greater flexibility from New Delhi and better progress on contentious issues during the third round of Foreign Secretary-level talks, scheduled for January 17 and 18 in New Delhi. Islamabad today ruled out any unilateral withdrawal of troops from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, even as it denied that the future of the Indo-Pak dialogue process was "bleak" despite India's rejection of its suggestion to pull out troops from three cities in Jammu and Kashmir. As a result of India's rejection of Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf's suggestion to pull out the army from Srinagar, Kupwara and Baramulla, Pakistan, too, will not unilaterally withdraw troops from PoK.

President Gen Pervez Musharraf has proposed a joint management by India and Pakistan for the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir, a move that would leave both countries with reduced sovereignty over the territories they now control. Pakistan has evidence of Indian involvement in the insurgency in Balochistan, the Foreign Office has said. Pakistan is processing information about Indian involvement in Balochistan and a decision to share the information with India and other countries will be made later, Foreign Office spokeswoman Tasnim Aslam told a weekly press briefing on Monday.

9 January 2006

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has no plans to visit Pakistan to see any of the cricket matches to be played between January 13 and February 19. However, Pakistan maintained that Manmohan Singh had accepted an invitation to visit the country and that the dates of travel were to be "worked out." Foreign Office spokesperson Tasneem Aslam said Dr. Singh accepted the invitation long ago, and it had nothing to do with the ongoing India-Pakistan cricket series. President Pervez Musharraf accused India of arming and financing militants in Balochistan, charges that could push back a peace process between the two countries.

8 January 2006

Pakistan will present details about the route, cost and security of the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline at the first trilateral meeting next month, a senior government official has said. Although all the three countries have been talking to each other almost at every level, the February meeting in Tehran will be the first such meeting. The three countries will discuss the "technical and monetary" details of the ambitious \$7.2 billion pipeline project, the official said. Musharraf has said that if India agreed to withdraw troops from Srinagar, Kupwara and Baramulla to the "outskirts," there would be no militancy in the Kashmir valley. President Musharraf has told that his army completely supports the peace initiative with India but he also said he was disappointed by the tardy pace of responses to his proposals from New

Delhi.

7 January 2006

All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leader Mirwaiz Omar Farooq said here on Friday that any solution within the framework of the Indian Constitution on Kashmir, including the proposal on "self-governance," would not be acceptable to the conglomerate. As fighting continued between nationalist rebels and security forces in Balochistan, Pakistan has accused India of supporting violence in the southwestern province. "India is supporting the miscreants" in Balochistan, Interior Minister Aftab Ahmed Sherpao told a press conference. Pakistan and India agreed to revive the Khokhrapar-Munabao train service from Feb 1, it was officially announced.

6 January 2006

Pakistan said in case the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh expressed desire to watch any of the cricket matches between India and Pakistan beginning on January 13, an official invitation would be extended. Musharraf said he hoped India would respond positively to Pakistan's proposals of demilitarisation and self-governance in Kashmir to facilitate a "lasting solution to the lingering Jammu and Kashmir dispute." Talking to the visiting Hurriyat leaders, Musharraf said Pakistan and India had moved forward on confidence building measures (CBMs) but called for substantive progress on "conflict resolution." Asserting that it would not "entertain outsiders' views" on military operation in Balochistan, Pakistan has asked India not to worry about the provincial situation and instead "settle its own conflicts."

5 January 2006

Asserting that it would not 'entertain outsiders' views' on military operation in Balochistan, Pakistan has asked India not to worry about the provincial situation and instead 'settle its own conflicts'. It made it clear that the action against tribals and nationalists who are agitating for autonomy in the province would continue till the 'writ' of the government is established there. Officials of the Indian and Pakistani railways are meeting to discuss modalities for resuming the rail link between Munabao and Khokhrapar, which would connect Rajasthan and Sindh.

3 January 2006

India and Pakistan have missed deadlines for reopening the Karachi and Mumbai consulates by the end of 2005 and restoring the Munabao-Khokhrapar rail link between Rajasthan and Sindh by January 1, 2006. These deadlines were set in the April 18, 2005 joint statement issued by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Pervez Musharraf in New Delhi. Reacting strongly to India's remarks on the spiralling violence in Balochistan, Pakistan today said it "betrayed the psyche of a bully" and tended to vitiate the atmosphere created by the two sides for sustaining the composite dialogue process. The recent war of words between India and Pakistan will not affect their peace process and both sides will push efforts to resolve dragging disputes through the next round of the composite dialogue talks, say Pakistani officials and experts at the beginning of the year. Amid strong suspicion of involvement of Pakistan-based Lashker-e-Taiba (LeT) in the Bangalore attack, India today said Islamabad was not doing enough to stop cross-border terrorism, that puts a "big question mark" on the ongoing peace process. India is unwilling to consider proposals coming through the media and argues it would prefer back-channel contacts, both official and unofficial, to resolve the decades-old Kashmir problem. Informed sources told Dawn here on

Monday that the ruling Congress government wanted the foreign secretaries of both the countries to begin gradual discussion afresh on various options on Kashmir during their forthcoming round of talks. Collaboration links between Pakistani and Indian Punjab should be broadened, said participants of a South Asian Free Media Association (SAFMA) meeting at Avari Hotel on Monday. It was the last preparatory meeting of experts and people leaving for Indian Punjab to discuss various issues with their Indian counterparts. The delegation is scheduled to leave for Indian Punjab via Wagah Border on January 5 and return on January 10.

2 January 2006

India and Pakistan on Sunday exchanged lists of their respective nuclear facilities on the first day of the New Year as per an accord in place since 1988. An official statement issued by Pakistan Foreign Office said here that the swap took place under an agreement signed in 1988 on the prohibition of attacks on each other's nuclear installations in the event of war. Pakistan, India and Iran will finalise a tripartite framework agreement and the project structure of the proposed Rs 7 billion gas pipeline next month, said an official here. "The IPI gas pipeline project is progressing satisfactorily and petroleum secretaries of the three countries will meet in Tehran in February," said Pakistan's Petroleum Secretary Ahmad Waqar. The long-awaited South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), paving way for free trade of goods among countries of the region, came into being today but Pakistan was yet to complete the formality of ratifying it. "The ratification process is underway. It is just that it was not completed yesterday (the deadline). We hope to do it very soon," Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson Tasneem Aslam said in Islamabad.

The much-expected reopening of Indian and Pakistani consulates in Karachi and Mumbai respectively in the New Year was delayed today, as Islamabad was yet to get its temporary office ready, while India completed renovation work of its buildings and awaited the nod from the government here to open it. India on Sunday insisted there was nothing wrong in reacting to the "serious situation" in the neighbouring country, particularly when it waves "red rags" at India virtually on daily basis.

1 January 2006

A three-member delegation of the moderate faction of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, led by its chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, left for New Delhi on Saturday en route to Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK) to express solidarity with the victims of the October 8 earthquake and study the progress of the peace talks. Terming the visit politically significant, the former chairman of the amalgam, Abdul Gani Bhat, said that it was a "healthy" development at this stage. The Munabao-Khokrapar rail route linking Sindh to Rajasthan would open by the middle of January. Pakistan Railways Minister Mian Shamim Haider told the upper house of Parliament on Saturday that preparations were in full swing to make the second rail link between Pakistan and India operational. Pakistan, Iran and India will finalize in February a tripartite framework agreement and consider project structure and detailed feasibility study of the \$7 billion Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline plan, a senior government official said. Petroleum Secretary Ahmad Waqar told reporters here on Saturday that the IPI gas pipeline project was progressing satisfactorily and petroleum secretaries of the three countries would meet in Tehran to take up three issues.

30 December 2005

Pakistan Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources, Amanullah Khan Jadoon told the Senate on

Thursday that the work on Pak-Iran-India gas pipeline (IPI) project is likely to commence during 2007. President Pervez Musharraf on Thursday claimed that India and Pakistan were currently discussing through back channel diplomacy "ideas" like self-governance and demilitarisation to resolve the Kashmir issue and they would be brought to the front channel if concrete progress was made.

29 December 2005

Pakistan has said the observations by the Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesman on the law and order situation in Balochistan are "unwarranted and baseless." Pakistan has once again linked the extension of MFN status to India with the progress on political issues, particularly Kashmir.

28 December 2005

India today voiced concern at spiralling violence in Pakistan's Balochistan province and advised Islamabad to "exercise restraint". It underlined the need for the Pakistan government to concentrate on addressing the grievances of the people in the region through peaceful discussions. Pakistan will not be able to submit answers to technical questions about the controversial 4,50 MW Baglihar hydropower project to World Bank-appointed neutral expert Prof Raymond Lafitte by December 31 following a delay in the provision of certain data about the project by India.

27 December 2005

Pakistan announced on Monday that the third round of the composite dialogue with India at the Foreign Secretary-level would be held in New Delhi on January 17 and 18. Foreign Office spokesperson Tasneem Aslam said at the weekly news briefing that the Foreign Secretaries would discuss the Kashmir issue and security-related confidence-building measures (CBMs). Pakistan and India are discussing a proposal to demilitarise Kashmir and introduce self-governance in the region whose ownership is disputed by the two countries, an official said here on Monday. "The proposal was originally moved by President Pervez Musharraf and later this proposal was widely discussed and hailed by Kashmiri leaders," foreign office spokesperson Tasneem Aslam told a press briefing. Pakistan linked the extension of (most favoured nation) MFN status to India with the progress on political issues particularly on long-standing and thorny issue of Kashmir.

26 December 2005

Pakistan has sought the support of the UN nuclear watchdog IAEA in its quest for being treated at par with India by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), which controls developing countries' access to nuclear technology. Indian and Pakistani diplomats are discussing the idea of self-governance for divided Kashmir as proposed by President Gen Pervez Musharraf, a top Indian official disclosed on Saturday. Indian National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan told a private TV channel that the discussions were being held in the back channels by senior Indian diplomats and their Pakistani counterparts.

25 December 2005

Hundreds of people, including women, representatives of NGOs, journalists, doctors, advocates, retired judges and notables, from different parts of the country took a peace caravan to the Pakistan-India Khokhrapar-Monabao border on Friday evening. The caravan was organized under banner of the Pakistan-India Peoples' Forum for Peace and Democracy (PIPFDP).

24 December 2005

Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmud Kasuri on Thursday expressed the hope that the third round of Pakistan-India dialogue, to be held in New Delhi in January 2006, would take the process of normalisation forward and bring about a breakthrough on the core issue of Kashmir.

23 December 2005

Islamabad has offered two formulae to New Delhi for determining the annual transit fee to be collected by Pakistan from India for gas pipeline that would pass through its territory under the proposed \$7.2 billion Iran-India-Pakistan (IPI) gas pipeline.

22 December 2005

The foreign secretaries of Pakistan and India will meet in New Delhi on January 17-18 to initiate the third round of the composite dialogue between the two countries. Foreign Secretary Riaz Muhammad Khan will head Pakistan's delegation and hold two-day talks with Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran. Taking yet another step to enhance people-to-people contact, India and Pakistan today decided to launch the long-awaited Amritsar-Lahore bus service from January 20 and Amritsar-Nankana Sahib bus link by February 27.

21 December 2005

The Pak-India Technical Experts meeting for the joint survey of the Sir Creek - one of the eight areas covered by Composite Dialogue Process - began on Tuesday here. Surveyor-General of Pakistan Maj-Gen Jamilur Rahman Afridi heads the 12-member team representing Islamabad while Brig Girish Kumar, Deputy Surveyor-General of India, leads the New Delhi side. Pakistan's Deputy High Commissioner to India Munawar Saeed and Naval Advisor at the Pakistan High Commission Capt Mateenur Rehman are also attending the talks.

19 December 2005

In an unusual development in the Volcker report where at least the former Indian external minister Natwar Singh has been compelled to say goodbye to politics, a story published by Jang on January 24, 2004 has shaken the Indian bureaucracy. The Indian media has gone to town about the contents of the Jang story, which was quoted in a letter the then Indian ambassador in Baghdad wrote in January 2004 just two months before the general elections and over a year before the Volcker report rocked the country.

18 December 2005

India and Pakistan agreed on Saturday to give a final shape to the project structure and framework of the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline by April 2006, a joint statement issued after two days of talks said. A tripartite meeting of three Joint (IPI) Working Groups "may be held" early next year in Teheran to discuss issues such as an integrated feasibility study, project structure and a tripartite framework agreement. It was decided to form a technical sub-group that would meet "at least once a month" to discuss issues such as the quantum of gas, pipeline route, transportation tariff and system configuration. India and Pakistan on Saturday agreed to begin construction of over \$7 billion Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline by mid-2007 despite objections from the United States, according to top officials from both countries.

17 December 2005

The Union Cabinet has cleared the way for an agreement with Pakistan for starting a bus service between Amritsar and Nankana Sahib and a trial run for the Amritsar-Lahore bus sometime this month. India and Pakistan on Friday began discussing brass tacks of the 7 billion dollar Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline in order to evolve a project structure for its implementation and operation. Pakistan is expected to give its views on the project structure suggested by India, at the third meeting of the Indo-Pak Joint Working Group on the pipeline that began in the capital on Friday morning. After a lull of months Pakistan's economic managers have restarted discussion on the most favoured nation (MFN) status for India with officials here saying New Delhi is most likely to get this status in near future.

16 December 2005

India and Pakistan opened five crossing points along the Line of Control following the October 8 temblor to facilitate movement of relief material and people on either side, the Indian Parliament was told on Thursday. Following the earthquake, the two countries opened crossing points at Nauseri-Tithwal (checkpost-Tithwal), Chakoti-Uri (checkpost-Kaman), Hajipir-Uri (checkpost-Silikot), Rawalakot-Poonch (checkpost-Chakan da Bagh), and Tattapani- Mendhar (checkpost-Balnoi). Twenty-six passengers aboard the Karavan-e-Aman or peace bus between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad crossed Kamaan Bridge today, first time after the October 8 earthquake. There were no passengers on board the peace bus on its last run from here to the Kamaan bridge two weeks ago. Pakistan and India will formally sign an agreement to effect restoration of the Khokhrapar-Munabao train link during a ministerial level meeting in New Delhi on December 22.

15 December 2005

The third meeting of the India-Pakistan joint working group on the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project is starting on Friday. Pakistan and Iran favour early implementation of the proposed multi-billion gas pipeline, to carry gas from Iran to Pakistan and India. The project opposed by the United States came up for review here on Wednesday at a meeting between the visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki and his Pakistani counterpart, Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri. After talks with the Iranian Minister, Mr. Kasuri said officials from Pakistan and India would discuss the project at talks later this week in New Delhi.

14 December 2005

A dry run from Lahore to Amritsar was conducted by Pakistan on Tuesday with a bus carrying eight officials crossing into India through the Atari-Wagah joint check post. Pakistan and India hope to start third round of the composite dialogue at the foreign secretary level in the third week of next month in New Delhi. At a time when the Congress government has still not nominated a new minister for external affairs, Pakistan hopes that a moderate new face will emerge so that "the year 2006 could be one of great promises between the two countries."

13 December 2005

Iran is open to Russian involvement in an ambitious multibillion dollar plan to supply India and Pakistan with piped natural gas, the foreign ministry was quoted as saying on Monday. Pakistan said on Monday

that it was committed to the peace process with India, but that the latter needed to be flexible for the composite dialogue to succeed. The UN Secretary General has appointed Maj Gen Dragutin Repinc of Croatia as the head of the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), it was announced Monday. Gen Repinc, 46, will replace Maj Gen Guido Dante Palmieri of Italy who left the mission in September.

12 December 2005

History was made along the Radcliffe line, when the much-awaited trial run of the first Amritsar-Lahore bus service began on Sunday morning. The bus carrying nine passengers crossed over to Pakistan through the Wagah route. Pakistan and India have finalised a draft agreement which will pave the way to restart a ferry service between Karachi and Mumbai that was broken off 30 years ago, officials said Sunday.

11 December 2005

The First Amritsar-Lahore bus, on a trial run, crossed over to Pakistan through the land route at the Indo-Pak Wagah border on Sunday. The bus started from the youth hostel, which has been made the international terminal for the bus service, at 9 am. Pakistan and India have agreed to allow each others' ships to carry third country cargo from ports in the two countries. The two sides agreed to a revised Protocol on Shipping after three days of technical talks in Karachi that ended on December 10, said Susheel Kumar, India's joint secretary for shipping, and SM Hasan Zaidi, Pakistan's joint secretary for ports and shipping, at a joint press conference here on Saturday.

10 December 2005

Toeing Pakistan's line, the 57-member Organisation of Islamic Countries has "extended" its support to the "inalienable right" of people of Jammu and Kashmir for "self-determination" in accordance with the UN resolutions. All Parties' Hurriyat Conference leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said on Friday that President Gen Pervez Musharraf had assured him of Islamabad's support for the idea of 'united states of Kashmir' as part of efforts to resolve the dispute with India. The Mirwaiz told Dawn on phone from Makkah that he had held a detailed meeting with Gen Musharraf on Thursday on the margins of the OIC summit, where the Kashmiri representative was a special invitee. Dr Salman Shah, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs and Statistics, held a meeting with senior officials of the ministries of foreign affairs, food and agriculture, interior, statistics, Revenue Divisions, Pakistan Rangers and custom authorities to discuss ways to facilitate import of food items from India through Wagah border land route.

9 December 2005

Asserting that the October 8 earthquake in the Kashmir province on both sides of the LoC did help create opportunities to resolve Kashmir issue, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf said today that India's response to Pakistani proposal for self-governance in Jammu and Kashmir was not positive so far. About the proposal of de-militarisation in Kashmir, he said "the (Indian) response has not been positive so far but we need to take it forward." Addressing a press conference at the end of the summit of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in Makkah, Musharraf said the Kashmir issue was being addressed by both India and Pakistan.

The trial run of the Amritsar-Lahore bus service will take place on Sunday by the Indian operator and on

Tuesday by the Pakistani operator. The trial run had earlier been scheduled for last October but was postponed due to the earthquake, official spokesperson said here on Thursday during a media briefing. Shipping experts from Pakistan and India have agreed to allow shipping companies under flags of these two countries to transport cargo to any third country using each other's port facilities. They also endorsed that seafarers from either side should be employed in each other's shipping lines. This is expected to mainly benefit Pakistan, which has more than 20,000 seafarers searching for jobs.

8 December 2005

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement on Wednesday discussed Pakistan-India relations and other issues with the Indian High Commissioner here on Wednesday. According to a party press release, the MQM coordination committee hosted a luncheon meeting with Indian High Commissioner Shiv Shankar Mennon at a local hotel. Mr Mennon attended the luncheon with his wife and discussed matters of mutual interest and bilateral relations. India has requested Pakistan to exclude 271 tradable items from its negative list and allow tariff concession on such items under the SAFTA agreement to be effective from Jan 1, an official told the Daily Times on Wednesday.

7 December 2005

Officials of India and Pakistan will hold technical talks in the port city of Karachi from Thursday to review the India-Pakistan Shipping protocol of 1975 to enable ships of both countries to pick up cargo for a third country party. The two-day talks are a follow up to the decision by the Joint Study Group, to enhance economic and commercial cooperation, of the two countries at its meeting in New Delhi in the second week of August.

6 December 2005

The much awaited Amritsar-Lahore bus service is finally scheduled to start from December 23 with the first bus coming in from Lahore on that day while the first bus from Amritsar will depart on December 27. Even as India and Pakistan immerse themselves in unending bouts of CBMs, an official Pakistani Punjabi radio programme is still out doing what it has since ages - promote a Khalistani agenda that is 25 years old.

5 December 2005

Pakistan has proposed technical-level talks on the Khokrapar-Munnabao rail route, linking Sindh with Rajasthan, from December 11 to 15. The talks are scheduled to be held in New Delhi. Both sides have agreed, in principle, to begin the rail link by January 1.

4 December 2005

Pakistan has proposed technical-level talks on the Khokrapar-Munnabao rail route, linking Sindh with Rajasthan, from December 11 to 15. The talks are scheduled to be held in New Delhi. Both sides have agreed, in principle, to begin the rail link by January 1. Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf has urged the United States to lend its support to efforts aimed at resolving the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, "which is at the root of tension in South Asia."

3 December 2005

Pakistan and India agreed on Friday to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on cooperation between their counter-narcotics agencies in fighting drug trafficking in the region. The agreement came after a two-day meeting between anti-narcotics officials of the two countries in Rawalpindi. Major General Syed Khalid Amir Jaffery, the Anti Narcotics Force director general, headed the Pakistani delegation while the Indian side was led by Narcotics Control Bureau Director General KC Verma.

visit to Afghanistan by an Indian prime minister in nearly 30 years.

The Home Secretaries of India and Pakistan today discussed at length the first-ever Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between them on prevention of drug trafficking, but failed to reach an agreement on it.

28 August 2005

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Saturday said "appropriate messages" had been sent to Pakistan on the issue of Sarabjit Singh, on death row for his alleged involvement in bomb blasts in Lahore and Multan in 1990. India and Pakistan are expected to stick to their stated positions and go through the motions when the two countries' Home Secretaries begin their two day talks on August 29 on terrorism and drug trafficking under the composite dialogue framework. Moving beyond terrorism and drug-trafficking, India and Pakistan will discuss the prisoners' issue during the August 29-30 talks between the Home Secretaries. "Usually the agenda [of the Home Secretary-level talks] is terrorism and drug-trafficking but this time we requested that we would like to discuss the issue of prisoners," Pakistan Home Secretary Syed Kamal Shah said here on Saturday.

27 August 2005

India claimed on Friday that its efforts to help rebuild Afghanistan were being hampered by Pakistan, which had refused to allow transit facilities to Indian goods. Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said India was having to make huge investments to seek alternative routes to Afghanistan and Central Asia through Iran. Pakistan on Friday allowed Indian diplomats to meet a convicted Indian spy on death row amid heightened moves to save the life of the man who, Islamabad says, was behind deadly bomb blasts but is called innocent by his family. A foreign ministry spokesman said the government had granted approval to an Indian High Commission request for consular access to convict Sarabjit Singh, now lodged in Lahore's Kot Lakhpat Jail.

In a major development, the Indian government said on Friday it was ready to release all 177 Pakistani prisoners whose nationality has so far been confirmed by its Ministry of Interior. Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan Shivshankar Menon told The News on Friday that his country was ready to free Pakistani prisoners on a reciprocal basis and if Islamabad agrees, it could all be done by the end of this month.

26 August 2005

External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh today discussed the issue of Sarabjit Singh with the Pakistan's High Commissioner here, Mr Aziz Ahmed Khan. He told him that it was a humanitarian matter and there was a strong public sentiment in India for sparing the convict's life who was on death row in a Lahore jail. Mr Singh once again raised the matter of consular access to Sarabjit Singh. The Indian government on

Thursday approved the holding of a two-day India-Pakistan seminar on terrorism and drug trafficking here on Aug 29-30.

Pakistan would grant India consular access to a man Sarabjit Singh sentenced to death for spying. Indian officials had sought access to Sarabjit Singh few days back, Pakistan foreign office spokesman Naeem Khan told. The issue of prisoners languishing in Pakistani and Indian jails has finally, been made part of the ongoing composite dialogue between Islamabad and New Delhi and high officials of both the countries will meet soon to discuss their release.

25 August 2005

Pakistan today informed India that its request for consular access to Sarabjit Singh, sentenced to death for his alleged involvement in bomb blasts in this country, was being examined as senior Ministers here were locked in a debate whether President Pervez Musharraf was authorised to pardon him. India today once again raised the Sarabjit Singh issue with Pakistan but there was no response yet from Islamabad on the issue of consular access to the Indian national who has been convicted and sentenced to death on charges of espionage. Cross-border infiltration in Kashmir is once again on the increase with logistic infrastructure of terrorist training camps inside Pakistan and in Pak-occupied Kashmir remaining intact, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee informed the Rajya Sabha today. Though there was a reduction in the number of infiltration attempts from across the border in the initial five months of the current year, such incidents showed an increase during June and July - and this fact has been repeatedly conveyed by the Army to the Pakistan Director-General of Military Operations, Mr Mukherjee said. The foreign secretaries of Indian and Pakistan would be on a hotline from September to help avert mutual misunderstandings that could otherwise trigger nuclear tensions between the two, Indian Minister of State for External Affairs Rao Inderjit Singh told the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. He said an understanding on the proposed agreement on a pre-notification of flight testing of ballistic missiles was reached during the third round of India-Pakistan expert level dialogue on nuclear confidence building measures held in Delhi earlier this month. Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf has said Kashmir will be the "central point" of his meeting with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly session next month. Pakistan has firmly tied improvement in economic relations with India to the resolution of core disputes including Kashmir as three leading Indian companies.

24 August 2005

New Delhi is still to ascertain whether Sarabjit Singh, sentenced to death in Pakistan, is an Indian. "Confirmation of identity always follows consular access," the External Affairs Ministry spokesman said on Tuesday when asked whether Mr. Singh was, indeed, an Indian citizen. The comments came on a day when a group of Members of Parliament met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh on the issue. The Deputy High Commissioner in the Indian High Commission here, T.C.A. Raghavan, said a request for information on Sarabjit Singh's case was made to Pakistan on Monday along with a renewed request for consular access to enable the Indian mission officials to establish contact with him.

New Delhi requested Islamabad on Tuesday to immediately release its 445 nationals rotting in Pakistani jails and admitted that issue of prisoners on both the sides was more of a humanitarian nature and needed immediate attention of both the countries. Pakistan will take up the transit fee of the proposed US \$7.2 billion Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline with India once the pipeline's diameter and entry points

in Pakistan and India and the passage of the quanta of gas to the two countries are resolved. Pakistan High Commissioner Aziz Ahmed Khan on Tuesday told a delegation of Janata Dal (U) leaders that Sarabjit Singh, sentenced to death by Pakistani courts, could file a review petition in the country's Supreme Court and present a mercy plea to President Pervez Musharraf.

23 August 2005

The India-Pakistan peace process under the Composite Dialogue Framework gets into top gear after next week's Home Secretary level talks on Terrorism and Drug Trafficking as Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran would travel to Islamabad on August 31 for the wrap-up meeting of the second round of talks. Top Pakistani and Indian diplomats will meet in Islamabad on Sept 1 to review how the two countries have progressed on their peace process in one year before a planned bilateral summit at the United Nations, the two sides announced on Monday. Indian External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh on Monday informed the Lok Sabha that New Delhi and Islamabad have discussed the possibilities of enhancing air, rail and road communications. Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has given one year extension in service to Aziz Ahmad Khan, Pakistan's High Commissioner to India, on the completion of his existing contractual tenure in New Delhi next month.

22 August 2005

Pakistan has submitted its case on the controversial 450 MW Baglihar hydropower project in Jammu and Kashmir to the neutral expert appointed by the World Bank. President General Pervez Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh will discuss the whole gamut of bilateral relations in their third meeting in New York in September in a span of sixteen months since the Indian leader assumed the top office. The deliberations will be held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session. Pakistan and India will formally sign the recently agreed pact on advance notification of missile tests early next month when the two foreign secretaries will meet to review progress on the second round of peace talks. Besides, the top officials of two foreign ministries, in their talks likely to be held on 1st and 2nd September, would also announce the establishment of hotline between them to avert accidental or illegal use of nuclear weapons.

Pakistan, Iran and India are expected to start trilateral negotiations for the proposed \$7.2 billion Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline by October-November this year. Informed sources told Dawn that the three countries had agreed to enter into trilateral discussions on the project to minimize negotiation time so that work on the project could start by April 2006.

21 August 2005

Pakistan has formally submitted its case over the controversial 450MW Baglihar hydropower project with the coordination office of the neutral expert in Washington DC three days ago. Downplaying Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's allegation about the existence of terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan, Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmud Kasuri has said his country is committed to the ongoing composite dialogue process with India. "These are just allegations," the Foreign Minister said of Dr Manmohan Singh's recent assertions about the presence of a terrorist infrastructure in an interview.

20 August 2005

India has ordered slashing import duty on textile from two neighbours - Pakistan and Bangladesh. As

many as 200 tariff lines in textile products will be identified to cut the basic import duty as well as ad valorem duty.

19 August 2005

ONE of the several unilateral decisions taken by India for promoting greater people-to-people contacts with Pakistan has failed to evoke the expected enthusiasm across the border. Or is it because the people on the other side of the border are not aware of the facility? This pertains to Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran's announcement early this year that India would grant visa on arrival at the Wagah border to Pakistani citizens above 65 years and children under 12 years of age. This facility is the first of its kind that New Delhi has with any country.

18 August 2005

Peace can only be achieved through strength and therefore we need to maintain a credible defence, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said at a meeting with Air Chief Marshal Kaleem Saadat on Wednesday. The prime minister said that the Pakistan Air Force had a vital role to play in making defence credible.

17 August 2005

Work on the controversial Baglihar hydroelectric power project hit another snag when one of its diversion tunnels collapsed due to a landslide late on Sunday. This is the second tunnel that has collapsed within the past two months. Reports stated that a landslide hit the dam's site, which blocked the flow of Chenab River for more than an hour, causing the dam to overflow. The leadership of Pakistan and India is determined to move the peace process forward and resolve all disputes including the Kashmir issue, Foreign Office Spokesman Naeem Khan has said.

16 August 2005

Pakistan will continue to improve its missile technology, said Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Sunday while referring to the successful test fire of a cruise missile. "The Pakistani scientists who helped manufacture the missile deserve appreciation." Addressing a flag-hoisting ceremony at Convention Centre in connection with Pakistan's 58th Independence Day celebrations, the prime minister said that the defence of the country was "very strong" and Pakistan would increase its strength to maintain a balance of power in South Asia.

Firmly identifying his Government with the aam aadmi (common man), Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort on Independence Day that India's future was "extremely bright" but the focus would need to be on economic growth and social justice. Using the nation's grandest pulpit, the Prime Minister invoked the Mahatma's definition of swaraj and said his Government's National Common Minimum Programme had the same goal. Pakistan's and India's nuclear forces remain on hair-trigger alert. Both nations fear a surprise, decapitating first strike by the other could destroy their nuclear forces and the command units that control them. The flight times of India's and Pakistan's nuclear-armed ballistic missiles are in minutes.

15 August 2005

Marking its 59th independence day, Pakistan today vowed to improve its nuclear and missile capabilities while asserting that the resolution of the Kashmir issue was "a must for durable peace" in South Asia.

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz hoisted the national flag at an indoor auditorium here due to security concerns. Without directly referring to India, he said in his speech that Pakistan would continue the process of improving its nuclear and missile capabilities to keep pace with the changing scenario in the neighbourhood.

14 August 2005

Pointing out that there was a sharp increase in infiltration from across the border, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee today said greater vigil would be kept along the 742 km stretch of fencing to foil such attempts. In his customary address to the Indian troops on the eve of the Independence Day, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee said in spite of the fencing along the 742 km stretch along the Line of Control (LoC), there was a sharp increase in infiltration from across the border in the last two months. Acknowledging India's sincerity in resolving the Kashmir problem, President Pervez Musharraf has said the process should be expedited to enable him to firmly deal with extremism.

13 August 2005

Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) chief Maj Gen Shaukat Sultan said on Friday that Pakistan had proposed including cruise missile tests in the memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the pre-notification of missile tests, but the Indians had rejected it. Pakistan tested its first cruise missile on Thursday, joining a small group of countries capable of producing such projectiles.

12 August 2005

Pakistan on Thursday conducted a successful test flight of its first-ever Ground Launched Cruise Missile (GLCM) - Hatf VII Babur - that can carry nuclear and conventional warheads to a range of 500 km.

11 August 2005

Pakistan and India announced important measures on Wednesday to boost bilateral trade and proposed shipping and aviation talks in September with a rare urgency to widen their business links. Indian Commerce Secretary S.N. Menon and Pakistan's acting Commerce Secretary Syed Asif Shah concluded two days of discussions here with a joint statement on economic and commercial cooperation, which now becomes part of their composite dialogue process. The second round of talks on economic and commercial cooperation between India and Pakistan concluded on Wednesday with a decision to expeditiously clear opening of branches of scheduled banks in each other's countries to facilitate bilateral trade. In the second round of talks on economic issues, India and Pakistan have agreed to take steps to review aviation and shipping agreements.

10 August 2005

Shaukat Aziz said on Tuesday that India, Pakistan and Kashmiris would have to resolve the Kashmir issue, which had held regional peace hostage for a long time. "So far all three stakeholders haven't been able to sit at the table together and resolve the issue according to what all three want," he said after talking on 'The situation in and around South Asia and future prospects for the South Asian region' at the Japan Institute of International Affairs. Pakistan and India on Tuesday appeared to have agreed to a slew of measures, including setting up branches of their banks across the border with prospects of more trade routes opening up, to boost largely untapped bilateral trade. India and Pakistan agreed to hold technical-

level talks next month on finding out ways to boost air and shipping links which, if all goes well, may result in the entry of private airlines in the subcontinental skies and emergence of the hitherto-unknown concept of third-country shipping between the two neighbours.

9 August 2005

India rejected Pakistan's proposal of reducing troops in both Kashmirs, along the Line of Control (LoC) and on Siachen, saying that while troops had been redeployed in Kashmir despite the violence last year, there were no reports of Pakistani troops withdrawing from Kashmir. Pakistan-based top militant Sayed Salahuddin has said the conglomerate of Jihadi outfits headed by him was ready to declare a ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir if President Pervez Musharraf or any "major" country assured that India would declare Kashmir as a "disputed" territory and withdraw its troops. Pakistani delegates arrived here on Monday for a two-day discussion with India on bilateral trade amid small concessions and yawning differences on the tariff and non-tariff barriers.

Pakistan firmly believes in non-proliferation of nuclear arms and it had conducted the nuclear tests following the nuclear detonations by India, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz told journalists on the way to Japan. After two days of expert-level talks on nuclear CBMs, the two sides decided on Saturday to set up a hotline between the two foreign secretaries to ensure against a war by accident or by the unauthorized use of nuclear weapons.

8 August 2005

Encouraged by tangible progress at the two-day dialogue on nuclear CBMs, Pakistan and India will hold day-long talks on conventional confidence-building measures (CBMs) here Monday (today) while negotiations on economic cooperation will start on Tuesday. Pakistan may raise India's proposed joint exercises with Britain and United States at the talks on conventional CBMs in New Delhi tomorrow. Pakistan Foreign office spokesman Naeem Khan said his country is trying to verify the genuineness of the reported statement of IAF chief S.P. Tyagi that India would conduct joint exercises with the air forces of US and Britain in Jammu and Kashmir. India and Pakistan will hold two-day talks on economic and commercial cooperation on August 9 and 10 within the framework of the composite dialogue process.

7 August 2005

Pakistan and India will discuss commercial and economic cooperation in New Dehli on August 9 and 10. Commerce Ministry Additional Secretary Syed Asif Shah is likely to lead the Pakistani delegation to India. New Delhi will seek Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status from Islamabad, transit of its goods for export to Afghanistan and Central Asian republics, permission for private Indian airlines and branches of Indian banks to operate in Pakistan and amendment to the Shipping Protocol 1974. India and Pakistan reached an understanding on the proposed Agreement on Pre-Notification of Flight Testing of Ballistic Missiles which commits both sides to pre-notify in a structured format flight testing of ballistic missiles. Trilateral discussions among India, Iran and Pakistan on the proposed Indo-Iranian gas pipeline are expected to begin by the year-end, Mani Shankar Aiyar has said. The process of collecting and sharing information to enable project structuring would be concluded by the end of November, said Mr. Aiyar.

6 August 2005

India and Pakistan today began the third round of expert-level talks on nuclear confidence building

measures (CBMs) wherein the two sides reviewed the progress made in the previous two rounds. The two neighbours have been negotiating the issue of prior notification on missile tests but have not arrived at a mutually acceptable decision. Though both sides refused to disclose details of the discussions to reporters, sources said that pre-notification on missile tests was high on the meeting agenda. Pakistan and India have been negotiating the issue of prior notification on missile tests but have failed to arrive at any decision so far. Sources said that there had been a general agreement on the draft of the pre-notification of missile tests.

5 August 2005

The next round of India-Pakistan nuclear CBMs talks begin tomorrow under the shadow of uncertainties that have erupted on implementation of the eight-point areas of cooperation agreed at the Cultural Secretaries-level talks between the two countries that concluded in Islamabad on July 27. As per the timetable, the second round of the dialogue will be completed by the month-end. A high-level Pakistani delegation left for New Delhi on Thursday for talks with their Indian counterparts on nuclear confidence building measures (CBMs) on August 5 and 6. US Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca has said that America was conscious of Pakistan's energy needs and would begin a dialogue to assist Islamabad meet its growing energy requirements.

4 August 2005

A Pakistan's delegation will arrive here on Friday to hold two-day expert-level talks with Indian counterparts on nuclear Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). The nine-member delegation will be led by Additional Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Iran proposed signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with India on Wednesday for setting a timeframe for implementation of the \$7.4 billion Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project. Tehran proposed the MoU at the beginning of a two-day meeting of special Joint Working Group on the pipeline. It is similar to that signed with Pakistan last month and sets a clear timeframe. Pakistan and India will sign the much awaited agreement on advance notification of missile tests at the end of their two-day talks starting tomorrow in New Delhi whereas the proposed foreign secretaries level hotline is likely to be established. The upcoming talks between the South Asian nuclear states would focus on confidence-building measures (CBMs) on nuclear side with both the sides willing to sign the agreement on advance notification of missile tests.

3 August 2005

Gas pipelines from all possible foreign sources will work as India's lifeline in meeting its energy requirements, as domestic production would not be able to meet even half of the country's demand in 20 years, Indian Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar told the Rajya Sabha or upper house of parliament on Tuesday. With an increase in the number of Pakistani visa seekers the Indian high commission is processing more than 14,000 visa applications and issuing almost 10,000 visas every month. Long queues have also gone down because of the high commission's initiative to receive applications through courier service. Requesting anonymity, a high commission official said if visas were rejected, it was mostly because the applications were incomplete.

2 August 2005

Pakistan will reiterate its demand for reduction of forces in Jammu and Kashmir at the talks in New Delhi

later this week. Talks on confidence-building measures (CBMs) in conventional defence mechanisms are scheduled for August 5 and 6 and those on nuclear CBMs for August 8. They are part of the ongoing composite dialogue between the countries. India has abandoned its plans to pull out troops from Jammu and Kashmir and has decided to reinforce the military deployment along the Line of Control (LoC) with more troops and weapons. Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee said that India had decided not to withdraw its troops from the occupied valley because of the recent surge in militant infiltration from across the LoC.

1 August 2005

Top commerce officials of Pakistan and India meet in New Delhi on August 9 and 10 to discuss 30 Indian proposals for promotion of bilateral trade and commercial and economic cooperation. Six of the Indian proposals that it would make in the forthcoming meeting of the commerce secretaries are new while 24 were submitted by New Delhi at a similar meeting last year. Meanwhile, the final round of talks between Pakistan and India on the Kishanganga dam has been delayed again, with both sides still struggling to find a 'suitable' time for dialogue. According to sources in the Pakistan Commissionerate of the Indus Basin Water Treaty, the delay has been caused by the Indian refusal to entertain Pakistan's request for talks on July 30, as its delegation (already in India to inspect the Baglihar dam) had completed its work and was available for talks on the Kishanganga dam. India maintained that since many departments were involved in the process it was difficult to gather all of them on the date given by Pakistan.

31 July 2005

India will make six new proposals, including permanently opening the Wagah-Atari border for trade, to Pakistan during talks on commercial and economic cooperation in New Delhi from August 9 to 10, media reports said. Pakistani experts and engineers have completed comprehensive inspection of the controversial 450MW Baglihar Hydel Power project being constructed by India Kashmir.

25 July 2005: A high level seven-member Indian delegation will arrive here today as part of the Pakistan-India composite dialogue. Pakistan and India will discuss various steps to ease visa restrictions for cultural activities and exchanges programmes between the two countries. The subject, favourite of Indians, would be taken up during two-day secretary-level talks. The talks will also encompass release of fishermen arrested by the two countries, provision of more facilities for visitors of religious places on both sides and matters pertaining to the archaeological sites.

30 July 2005

Calling for sustained efforts to ensure the success of the India-Pakistan peace process, participants in the first ever intra-Kashmir dialogue here on Friday laid stress on extending confidence-building measures to other areas as well. A focussed peace process would also prepare the ground for resolving the Kashmir issue, they said. Dr Manmohan Singh appeared to assure parliament on Friday that the Iran gas pipeline project was no issue with the George W. Bush and his administration accepted New Delhi's legitimate requirements from 'all sources' of energy. President Musharraf and Indian PM Manmohan Singh in a telephone conversation agreed to avoid statements that could endanger the ongoing peace process between both countries.

24 July 2005: Two months after the World Bank appointed a Swiss mediator to hear its apprehensions, a five-member team of experts from Pakistan arrived here for a three-day inspection tour of the Baglihar hydel project in Doda district. The team and eight Indian experts arrived from New Delhi and left for Baglihar. They will inspect the dam and reservoir of the project on 25 July.

29 July 2005

Pakistan PM Shaukat Aziz has said that recent "negative statements" from India do not deter his country and it will continue to strive for the resolution of all outstanding issues with New Delhi. India on Thursday said that incidents like the recent attack in Ayodhya would disrupt the peace process with Pakistan. Indian Minister of State for External Affairs E Ahmed told Lok Sabha that New Delhi was eager to promote friendly relations and people-to-people contact between the two countries. Despite the stalemate, India will continue the construction work on Baglihar power project. Meanwhile, Iran, Pakistan and India are going ahead pipeline project despite Bush Administration's serious reservations over it. Informed sources told Dawn on Thursday that the US concern had not made the three countries to put brakes on, or even slow down, the project as talks on its various aspects were continuing. The United States is not pressing India on the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project, said Mani Shankar Aiyar on Thursday.

28 July 2005

The Pakistani expert team that visited Baglihar dam's site on the Indian side of the Line of Control has found on the ground that the project was violating the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) and its height and design was contradicting provisions of the treaty. After reaching on fruitful decisions on the opening day, the Indian and Pakistani officials cancelled their second round of talks for promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields. The two countries decided on Tuesday for increasing the number of pilgrims up to 3,000 and the visit of Pakistanis to Muslim holy places in India besides hosting Pakistani film festival in India.

27 July 2005

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. The five-member Pakistani Delegation was headed by Ground Water Commission Commissioner Syed Jamaat Ali Shah. Meanwhile, India said that so far there had been no official discussion with the United States on the India-Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline project. On the US concern over this project, Mani Shankar Aiyar told that it was a matter of record that the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act 1996 continued on the US Statute book. Aiyar denied any differences within the government on the \$7.4-billion Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline and said New Delhi was going ahead with the project as scheduled.

26 July 2005

Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar has done well by reiterating the government's resolve that India will continue its efforts to ensure that the Iranian gas pipeline project reaches the stage of fruition. Mani Shankar Aiyar expressed the confidence on Monday that 'political impediments' in the path of the Iran gas pipeline would be overcome and that the project was very much on. A team of Indian and Pakistani experts on Monday visited the Baglihar hydel project in Doda of Jammu and Kashmir. The step was aimed at finding a bilateral solution to the controversy regarding the waters of the 450-mw project on the Chenab. The team will prepare a report on the present status of the

project on Tuesday and Wednesday. Pakistani officials ruled out joint control of the billion-dollar Baglihar Dam after visiting the project. Islamabad opposed the project saying when completed it would deprive Punjab of vital irrigation water. Officials said the plant also violates the 44-year-old Indus Water Treaty brokered by the World Bank.

22 July 2005: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has expressed concern about the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons should President Pervez Musharraf be removed from office.

21 July 2005: The Centre has decided to keep Vijay Diwas, marking the 1999 Kargil victory, a low-key affair with no central functions being organised in an attempt to keep the peace dialogue with Pakistan on track despite provocations by militant groups.

12 July 2005: India and Pakistan began talks on formulating a timetable for building the \$4.1-billion Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline with Islamabad stating it would proceed on the project keeping its national interest in mind.

7 July 2005: Vast rural areas of major cities near the Chenab river in Pakistan are facing imminent high flood situation after India without any prior warning released 564,000 cusecs water into the river from Baglihar Dam following collapse of one of its tunnels.

4 July 2005: Pakistan and India have decided to hold nuclear talks on August 2 and 3 in New Delhi with official quarters here saying that a vital agreement on advance warning of missile tests is on the cards. Pakistan asked India to abandon the Wullar barrage project on the Jhelum river as it would cause interference in the flow of water, which was against the terms of the 1960 Indus Water Treaty.

27 June 2005: Pakistan's Water Resources Secretary Ashfaq Hussain arrived in New Delhi for talks with his Indian counterpart on the Tulbul navigational project-cum-Wullar Barrage in Jammu and Kashmir, work on which is stalled for the past 17 years.

25 June 2005: India has rejected Pakistan Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed's application to travel by the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus. The External Affairs Ministry spokesman told mediapersons here on Friday: "The Government of India has processed the application and has declined to accord permission taking into account all relevant aspects involved."

24 June 2005: With the 150th anniversary of that event - hailed by many as India's first war of Independence - approaching, three parts of the subcontinent are coming together to celebrate the uprising. The government announced that both Pakistan and Bangladesh would join India to share the big moment in their shared history.

20 June 2005: Pakistan and India have postponed the two-day talks over Wullar Barrage dispute scheduled for June 24-25 upon the latter's request. Now the two sides are likely to hold the crucial parleys by this month end.

18 June 2005: Pakistan and India have put off their nuclear talks till the last week of July to reach consensus on vital issue before formal deliberations. The South Asian nuclear rivals had earlier agreed to hold the talks on nuclear CBMs in the current month of June.

Pakistan has urged India to remove tariff and non-tariff barriers to enhance trade ties between the two countries. A number of tariff and non-tariff barriers, sources said, had been identified between the two countries, with New Delhi making promises to remove major complaints of the Pakistani exporters and importers and other businessmen.

16 June 2005: India has excluded Pakistanis and Bangladeshis while deciding to grant "Overseas Citizenship" to all people of Indian origin, provided their home countries permit the dual citizenship.

15 June 2005: Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front Chief Yasin Malik's reported statement about an alleged support of Pakistan's information minister Shiekh Rashid to the armed Kashmiri separatists has snowballed into a major diplomatic controversy attracting sharp reaction from India and a possibility of the minister's denial of a permission to travel to Srinagar.

13 June 2005: Giving a cold response to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's statement favouring the conversion of the Siachen glacier into a peace mountain, Pakistan today maintained its stand that India vacate its "aggression" and withdraw its troops to positions held at the time of 1972 Simla Agreement.

12 June 2005: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is the first Indian Prime Minister to visit the Siachen and calls that the time had come to convert the world's highest battlefield, Siachen, into a "peace mountain" without redrawing "established borders".

10 June 2005: With more Indians visiting Pakistan, the Interior Ministry issued fresh visa rules asking visitors to file applications at least eight weeks in advance.

4 June 2005: Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar arrived in Lahore on an official visit. Mr. Aiyar will hold discussions with his Pakistani counterpart on energy cooperation between India and Pakistan.

3 June 2005: Talks between India and Pakistan to resolve differences on the 330-MW Kishenganga Hydro-power project being built on the Jhelum in Jammu and Kashmir remained inconclusive.

1 June 2005: India and Pakistan hold an exclusive meeting on the Kishanganga Storage and Power Project after exchanging the draft of the Indus Water Commission's (IWC) report for 2004-05.

29 May 2005: India and Pakistan commenced talks on Sir Creek, the disputed coastal strip off the Gujarat coast, with a review of the joint survey conducted in January this year to identify the boundary pillars installed in 1924 to demarcate the area.

28 May 2005: India and Pakistan have failed to make headway at the Defence Secretary-level talks on the demilitarisation of Siachen as both sides stuck to their stands.

25 May 2005: Ahead of the defence secretary-level talks in Islamabad on May 26-27, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) decides to stick to India's position that there will be no troop withdrawal from Siachen Glacier-Saltoro Ridge till Pakistan agrees to "authenticate" ground positions. An Indian delegation, headed by its secretary defence, is arriving here today on a three-day official visit to hold talks on troops withdrawal from Siachen, the world's highest battlefield. The Indian secretary defence will hold talks, already scheduled for May 26-27.

24 May 2005: A 100-member Indian business delegation arrived in Pakistan to discuss trade opportunities after the recent thaw in relations between the two countries.

22 May 2005: Pakistan rejects media reports suggesting there had been some skirmishes with Indian forces near Sir Creek.

13 May 2005: The Indo-Pak Indus Basin commissions agreed on 12 May to continue dialogue to remove Pakistan's objections to the construction of the Krishanganga hydroelectric power plant on Jhelum River. They also signed a summary of the three-day meeting.

11 May 2005: Pakistan and India failed to strike a breakthrough during a 10-hour marathon session on the last day of the first round of their talks on Kishanganga project.

10 May 2005: The third round of talks between the Indian and Pakistani Indus Basin commissions started today. The two countries discussed Pakistan's objections to the Kishanganga hydroelectric power plant on the Neelum River.

Minister for Railways Mian Shamim Haider will formally inaugurate work on a second rail link between Pakistan and India in Mirpurkhas on May 10.

India and Pakistan on the first day of the technical talks on Amritsar-Lahore bus service agreed to begin the service once in a week. The two sides will hold last round of the two-day talks tomorrow.

Pakistani and Indian maritime officials have started talks at Ministry of Defence in Rawalpindi for setting up a communication link between them.

5 May 2005: Pakistan has identified certain tariff and non-tariff barriers being imposed by India to marginalize its exports that includes higher tariffs, import bans, quotas, import licensing, restrictions through state monopolies, certification requirements, inter-provincial movement of goods, limited ports and inland customs posts.

27 April 2005: The second round of Pakistan-India composite dialogue, which was scheduled for April-June, has been delayed and now it is likely to be held between May and September this year.

26 April 2005: The World Bank announced it was ready to appoint a neutral expert to resolve the Baglihar dam water dispute between India and Pakistan.

23 April 2005: Border forces of Pakistan and India have made 'significant progress' on some 'sensitive and delicate' issues and agreed to complete joint verification, repair and maintenance of boundary pillars

along the international border and to maintain status quo on the disputed land.

18 April 2005: A joint has been issued after the meeting between President Pervaiz Musharraf and Indian Premier Manmohan Singh. India and Pakistan agreed that their peace process was "irreversible" and pledged to increase transport links across divided Kashmir, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said reading from a joint statement.

India and Pakistan vowed decided to pursue the proposed \$4b gas pipeline from Iran to South Asia, shrugging off US concerns over the project.

17 April 2005: The Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf arrives in New Delhi.

13 April 2005: With the fate of Indo-Iran gas pipeline remaining uncertain amidst concerns raised by the USA, Pakistan today invited India to join the TAP (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan) pipeline project.

7 April 2005: Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh flagged off the bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad.

2 April 2005: India and Pakistan have launched 'back-channel diplomacy' to prepare for President Pervez Musharraf's planned visit to New Delhi on April 16.

1 April 2005: Pakistan has denied permission to a number of non-Hurriyat, Kashmiri political leaders, including Mehbooba Mufti, Omar Abdullah and Mohammad Yusuf Tarigami, to travel to Muzaffarabad by bus from Srinagar on April 7.

27 March 2005: After a delay of two decades, the US has decided to sell the latest version of F-16 fighter planes to Pakistan. The number of aircraft to be supplied is subject to negotiations, but the State Department spokesman made it clear that these would be new planes and not those manufactured for Pakistan in the 1980s.

23 March 2005: Commemorating the 13th century visit of famous Sufi saint Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya to Multan in Pakistan, a march for peace to the same destination was flagged off from New Delhi by eminent peace activists.

21 March 2005: A 92-member delegation from Pakistan today joined the re-enactment of the Dandi March organised by the All-India Congress Committee to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the historic yatra led by Mahatma Gandhi.

18 March 2005: Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee today sent out a cautious signal to Washington that the supply of weapons including F-16 fighter planes, by the USA to Pakistan could impact the composite dialogue between New Delhi and Islamabad.

16 March 2005: Pakistan Foreign Affairs Minister Khursheed Mahmood Kasuri says there is no need for

third party mediation on Kashmir issue.

15 March 2005: The Pakistan government has issued release orders for 589 Indian prisoners as a gesture of goodwill towards New Delhi, an official statement said.

14 March 2005: Lahore, the capital of Pakistan's Punjab province, accorded an unprecedented reception to the Chief Minister of Indian Punjab, Amarinder Singh, who started his four-day Pakistan visit this morning.

9 March 2005: Pakistan wants India to remove restrictive trade policies, like non-tariff barriers, which inhibit export growth from Pakistan, to allow consideration of other issues, like the Most-Favoured Nation (MFN) status.

A team of doctors of Pakistani origin has offered to adopt an Indian village to take care of all its healthcare needs.

Pakistan has built bunkers and reinforced defence structures in Tanghdar, Batalik, Kargil and Nowshera sectors since the November 2003 ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC), Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee said.

8 March 2005: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said that India had accepted Pakistan's proposal for an 'energy corridor' and the Indian petroleum minister would be invited for talks on the project.

7 March 2005: Pakistan, engaged in improving relations with India, said it was preparing for an early release of 700 Indian prisoners whose nationality had been confirmed by the Indian Government.

6 March 2005: Hordes of Pakistani cricket fans today swooped down on the border checkpost at Wagah for the first Test between India and Pakistan in Mohali.

2 March 2005: The Pakistan Prime Minister, Shaukat Aziz, said that Islamabad was going ahead with the arrangements to begin the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service from April 7.

Over 900 Indian fishermen and civilians who have completed their jail terms are expected to be released soon, the Pakistan Foreign Office said.

1 March 2005: The Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, has ordered the immediate release of 200 Indian civilian prisoners who have completed their term in Pakistan's jails.

28 February 2005: India made it clear that it would go ahead with the controversial Baglihar dam project in Jammu and Kashmir that Pakistan has taken to the World Bank for arbitration.

22-23 February 2005: The two-day meeting of Joint Study Group (JSG) (on economic cooperation), set-up Working/Sub-Groups on Customs Cooperation & Trade Facilitation and Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs).

15-17 February 2005: Indian Foreign Minister Natwar Singh's three-day visit to Pakistan. Agreement on

Srinagar-Muzaffarabad was concluded; an agreement for operationalising the new bus service between Amritsar and Lahore also was reached.

29 January 2005: Pakistan arrests 43 Indian fishermen and seizes their seven boats off the coast of Karachi for allegedly entering its territorial waters.

19 January 2005: Terming the firing from across the border in Jammu and Kashmir as "violation of ceasefire", India take up the issue with Pakistan.

10 January 2005: Pakistan asks India to suspend work on the Baglihar dam, warning that the issue could sour peace process between the two countries.

6 January 2005: Pakistan repatriates 266 Indian fishermen, caught on the charge of illegally entering the Pakistani waters, via the Wagah border crossing.

5 January 2005: India and Pakistan have launched the joint survey of Sir Creek, the disputed coastal strip off Gujarat coast, to identify the boundary pillars installed in 1924.

4-5 January 2005: India and Pakistan hold bilateral talks on Baglihar Dam issue. The talks fail to produce any positive outcome except exchange of technical data.

31 December 2004: India and Pakistan exchange lists of their nuclear installations and facilities covered under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack Against Nuclear Installations and Facilities.

27-28 December 2004: Foreign Secretary level talks to review second round of Composite Dialogue in Islamabad pledge to carry the peace process forward and explore other confidence-building measures.

14-15 December 2004: Talks on nuclear and conventional confidence building measures end with no tangible outcome. The two sides, however, decide to meet again.

14-15 December 2004: India and Pakistan in two day talks on Sir Creek have agreed to begin a joint survey of boundary pillars in the disputed area.

12-13 December 2004: The two-day delegation-level talks on drug-trafficking end with both countries resolving to wage war against the menace of narcotics and psychedelic substances.

7-8 December 2004: Two-day talks on proposed bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad fails on the issue of travel documents to be used by commuters. The two countries decide to talk again.

4 December 2004: Pakistan and India on Saturday agreed to hold next round of talks in Karachi/Islamabad to carry forward discussions on draft proposals for finalising Memorandum of Understanding to establish hotlines between the Maritime Security Agency and Indian Coast Guards.

2 December 2004: Commanders of the Border Security Force (BSF) and Pakistan Rangers reach an

agreement to delegate powers to the area commanders to make a ground assessment and resolve a border dispute.

2-3 December 2004: Indian and Pakistani Railway delegations meet in Islamabad to discuss on the restoration of the Munabao-Khokhrapar rail link.

25 November 2004: India accepts to reopen Khokhrapar-Munabao rail link between Pakistan and India by October next year

23-24 November 2004: Pakistani Prime Minister, ShaikatAziz visits India.

5-6 September 2004: Review the status of the Composite Dialogue by the Foreign Ministers.

29-30 July 2004: Composite Dialogue on Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Navigation Project

3-4 August 2004: Composite Dialogue on Promotion of Friendly Exchanges

5-6 August 2004: Composite Dialogue on Demilitarising the Siachen Glacier

6-7 August 2004: Composite Dialogue on Demarcation of the international boundary between the two countries in the Sir Creek area

10-11 August 2004: Composite Dialogue on Terrorism and Drug Trafficking

11-12 August 2004: Economic and Commercial Cooperation

4 September 2004: Review progress in the Composite Dialogue and report to the Foreign Ministers

27-28 June 2004: Composite Dialogue on Confidence Building Measures and Jammu & Kashmir

6 January 2004: India, Pakistan announce resumption of bilateral talks on all issues, including Kashmir, to begin in February.

5 January 2004: Vajpayee and Pakistan President Gen. Pervez Musharraf meet for the first time since 2001.

2 May 2003: India and Pakistan agree to take steps to restore diplomatic relations and resume travel links.

28 April 2003: Pakistan responds to Vajpayee's offer, proposes a series of peace gestures.

19 April 2003: During visit to Kashmir, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee makes surprise offer to resume dialogue with Pakistan.

December 2001: Suicide attack on Indian parliament leaves 14 dead. India blames Pakistan's spy agency. New Delhi severs diplomatic ties, cuts travel links and moves hundreds of thousands of troops to the frontier, putting military on war alert. Islamabad denies the charge and matches India's moves.

December 1999: Hijacking of Indian Airlines flight IC 814.

May-July 1999: India and Pakistan fight a limited 11-week battle in the Kargil region of Kashmir.

May 1998: India conducts five nuclear tests. Pakistan carries out its first nuclear tests.

November 1989: Islamic insurgency starts in Kashmir.

May 1974: India conducts first nuclear test.

July 1972: India and Pakistan sign bilateral agreement at Shimla.

December 1971: A third war breaks out over Bangladesh. Pakistan loses its eastern part.

January 1966: Both the neighbours sign a Moscow-sponsored peace deal at Tashkent

September 1965: A second war breaks out.

October 1947: War breaks out between India and Pakistan on Kashmir.

14-15 August 1947: India and Pakistan gain independence from Britain and come into being as two

separate entities.

2 December 2005

Indian authorities declined to accept the lists of intending travellers from Azad Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday as 25 Kashmiris from both sides crossed the Line of Control (LoC) on foot from the Chakothe-Uri crossing point. India claimed on Thursday that militant training camps still exist in Pakistan and Kashmir, as well as in Bangladesh along its eastern border. "Pakistan has so far not taken any significant action to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism, such as launching pads, training camps, communications and funding", which the Indian government has "continuously stressed in its interaction with Pakistan at all levels", Minister of State for External Affairs Minister Rao Inderjit Singh told the Rajya Sabha (Upper House).

The Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service resumed on Thursday with 25 people crossing the Line of Control (LoC) at the Kaman Post near Uri. While 20 crossed from the Indian side, five stranded passengers in Pakistan occupied Kashmir returned home after two months. Official sources said the 20 passengers embarked on their journey from the Tourist Reception Centre at Salamabad near Uri as all of them belonged to the same area.

1 December 2005

Pakistan on Wednesday decided to seek setting up of a Court of Arbitration or appointment of a neutral expert to stop India from diverting Neelum waters in violation of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty. Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz presided over a meeting of all stakeholders here on Tuesday and directed to examine the dispute from all legal and technical aspects whether Pakistan should seek appointment of a neutral expert or setting up of a court of arbitration under the aegis of the World Bank.

30 November 2005

Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Tuesday reiterated that his country favoured demilitarisation and self governance on both sides of Kashmir. At the foundation laying ceremony for a 450-megawatt private power station at Baloki, 60 km from Lahore, Mr. Aziz said several options were under consideration for progress towards resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir issue. There has not been any substantive progress on major contentious issues under the composite dialogue on the Kashmir issue, Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri said on Tuesday. Pakistan and India have agreed to run a trial bus on December 11 Lahore and Amritsar, said Foreign Office spokeswoman Tasnim Aslam on Tuesday. Indian officials will travel to Lahore in the trial bus on December 11 and Pakistanis officials will board the bus to Amritsar on December 13, Aslam told private television channels.

29 November 2005

For the first time in five decades, five residents of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir crossed over to this side of the Line of Control to meet their relatives on Monday. They were the first group of people from PoK to cross the LoC after India and Pakistan recently decided to open five points to facilitate meetings between divided families. Pakistan named senior diplomat Jauhar Saleem as consul-general of its Mumbai consulate, paving the way for the re-opening of the consulates in Karachi and Mumbai in January, 2006. A day after National Security Advisor M K Narayanan charged Pakistan with a "conspiracy" in the killing

of BRO driver Raman Kutty Maniyappan, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee not only distanced himself from it, but also disclosed that India had approached Pakistan for help to get him released by the Taliban.

28 November 2005

India's national security advisor accused Pakistan on Sunday of conspiring with the Taliban to abduct and kill a Border Road Organisation (BRO) driver in Afghanistan. MK Narayanan said that Pakistan's aim was to create a rift in the cordial relations between India and Afghanistan, PTI reported. Pakistan denied the Indian National Security Adviser's allegations, implicating Pakistan in the killing of an Indian driver in Afghanistan last week and said Pakistan was opposed to any act of terrorism. "Killing of an innocent civilian is terrorism and Pakistan can not support it," Foreign Office spokesperson Tasneem Aslam said on Sunday.

A three-member Pakistan Railway delegation will leave on December 3 for India to sign an agreement with the Indian Railway authorities for restoration of train service between Pakistan and India via Khokhrapar. To be headed by General Manager Railways Saleem-ur-Rehman Akhund, the delegation will comprise Divisional Superintendent Railways Karachi Junaid Qureshi and A R Memon, Director Track Conversion project. The train service is expected to start from January 1, 2006 after its suspension of 40 years. The train service via Khokhrapar was suspended in September 1965.

27 November 2005

The Pakistani authorities have arrested 17 Indian fishermen for allegedly poaching in Pakistani waters, officials said today. "We arrested 17 fishermen and seized their three boats on Friday for violating our maritime zone," a spokesman for Pakistan's maritime security agency, Lieut-Commander Ateequr Rehman, told AFP. Indian Councilor for Political Affairs Gataish Sharma has said that Indian Consulate would start functioning from next year in Karachi while Pak-India talks to start Karachi-Mumbai ferry service would begin in December.

26 November 2005

Senior IFS officer Navdeep Suri will be India's consul-general in Karachi where the Indian Consulate is likely to be reopened from January next year. The name of Suri, a Joint Secretary (Africa) in the External Affairs Ministry, has been cleared by the government, said a news report by Press Trust of India on Friday quoting official sources here.

25 November 2005

When the devastating earthquake set off a fresh wave of peace and cooperation along the Line of Control, the J-K Police says, foreign militants infiltrated into the Valley in large numbers. Around 125 of them are suspected to have entered Srinagar city which has witnessed a sudden spurt of fidayeen and car bomb attacks. Navdeep Suri, at present Joint Secretary (Africa) in the Ministry of External Affairs, has been appointed India's new Consul-General in Karachi, according to official sources.

24 November 2005

Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh has sought durable and verifiable checks on human rights abuse in held Kashmir ahead of a visit to New Delhi by US Congressmen who have been critical of

violence against civilians there, according to informed sources. Seven people were killed on Wednesday, five of them during an attack by militants on a police camp in Indian Kashmir as militants rejected an offer of assistance if they shun violence, officials said. Serious work is continuing within different centres of the government to fine-tune President Pervez Musharraf's proposal of "self-governance" in Kashmir. "It is not only within the circles responsible for Kashmir that are working on the issue of self-governance but also the back-channel diplomacy meetings are discussing it so as to proceed with and come closer to the ultimate goal of giving the people of Kashmir their right to self-determination," an official source said.

23 November 2005

Pakistan on Tuesday 'regretted' the 'evasive response' of India to the ideas of 'demilitarisation and self-governance' on both sides of Kashmir. "It would be regrettable if the Indian side chooses to be evasive in responding to these ideas which must be considered with an open mind in the interest of finding a solution of the Kashmir dispute and durable peace in the region," the Pakistan Foreign Office said in a statement. India has rejected Pakistan's suggestions regarding "self governance" on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) and reaffirmed that there would be no re-deployment of security forces while terrorism, violence and infiltration continued. An official spokesman said in response to question on Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesman's remarks about self governance on both sides of the LOC that Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz had conveyed to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during the recent SAARC Summit in Dhaka that the two countries could explore ideas like self governance and demilitarisation.

22 November 2005

India said on Monday night that it had received no proposal regarding so-called "self-governance" in Jammu and Kashmir during the November 12 Dhaka meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his Pakistani counterpart Shaukat Aziz. During the meeting between the two leaders, Mr. Aziz said that in seeking a resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir issue the two countries could, among other things, explore ideas such as self-governance and demilitarisation. Pakistan has proposed to India to hold the trial run of the Amritsar-Lahore bus service on December 11 and 13. Militants who give up violence in Jammu and Kashmir will be given government assistance to restart their lives, the Indian Army chief said on Monday.

21 November 2005

India and Pakistan will sort out issues pertaining to the Amritsar-Nankana Sahib bus service at the technical level meeting scheduled in the second week of December. The Pakistan leadership gave this assurance to Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed, who is here for the donors' conference convened by Islamabad to raise money for the victims of the October 8 earthquake. India today offered to undertake specific projects in education and health sectors in quake-hit areas of Pakistan even as it expressed concern over incidents of cross border terrorism in the aftermath of the recent serial blasts in New Delhi.

After President Pervez Musharraf's impassioned 'peace offering' to India at the International Donors' Conference here on Saturday that caught the Indian delegation off-guard foreign minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri explained to his Indian counterpart that it was a sincere call and not a point-scoring gimmick. India is not averse to inviting Pakistan to witness its military exercises, Defence Minister Pranab

Mukherjee said on Sunday. Appreciating India's response to Pakistan's proposal for opening five crossing points on the Line of Control (LoC), Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Sunday suggested that the points should remain open every day of the week instead of only one day.

20 November 2005

Suggesting that a resolution of the Kashmir issue could once and for all be New Delhi's "donation to Kashmir," Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf maintained here on Saturday that the October 8 earthquake presented a 'lifetime opportunity' for India and Pakistan to improve relations. Hours after Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf said that a resolution of the Kashmir issue could be India's 'donation to Kashmir' in the context of the earthquake, Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahamed said here on Saturday that India was ready to resolve all issues including Kashmir through dialogue "in an atmosphere free of terrorism and violence." Addressing the donors' conference organised by Pakistan to raise funds for reconstruction efforts in the earthquake hit zone, Mr. Ahamed said India's position on Kashmir was "well known."

19 November 2005

Twenty-five Pakistanis who had completed jail terms in India for offenses including illegal entry and drug trafficking were repatriated Friday as a goodwill gesture between the two countries, a Pakistani official said. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said on Friday that opening of the Line of Control (LoC) following last month's earthquake provided Pakistan and India a "historic opportunity" to resolve the Kashmir dispute." The Indian air chief has said that Pakistan remains a primary threat to India despite a number of confidence-building measures between the two countries, the Times of India reported on Friday.

18 November 2005

Some 24 stranded residents of Indian-held Kashmir crossed the Line of Control from the Chakothe-Uri crossing on Thursday to reunite with their families. They were among 44 people who had arrived in Azad Kashmir by the trans-LoC bus service which was suspended in the aftermath of last month's devastating earthquake. Both Pakistan and India are moving in the right direction and the peace process appears to be on course, said Major General Javed Zia, who is heading the 16-member delegation of Pakistani rangers which began its three-day bi-annual meeting with the Border Security Force (BSF) in Chandigarh on Thursday. India will release another 26 Pakistani civilian prisoners on Friday as part of the continuing confidence building measures between the two countries.

The ministry of industries and production has strongly advocated trade liberalization with India either based on granting Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to India or trade under the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA).

17 November 2005

India will send by rail another 600 tonnes of relief material, comprising snow tents, snow sleeping bags, blankets, essential medicines and medical equipment, to the quake-affected in Pakistan. A train leaving on Thursday is expected to reach Lahore via the Attari-Wagah border on Friday, an External Affairs Ministry statement said.

Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf today said the solution to the long-standing Jammu and Kashmir issue looks "more possible" in the post-earthquake scenario. "I hope that New Delhi will realise

the opportunity," he told local and foreign mediapersons in the garrison town of Rawalpindi. Gen Musharraf said Pakistan could not do it alone, India also has to realise that the permanent solution to Kashmir issue is possible now, adding this opportunity should be utilized to reach a fair settlement.

16 November 2005

The US has lauded as "wonderful" India's response to send relief to victims in Pakistan after the devastating earthquake and said both New Delhi and Islamabad showed "great statesmanship" in furthering the peace process. Signalling that all is not well on the Pakistan-India front, Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri made it clear to the visiting US Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca that durable peace could not be achieved in the region without the settlement of all outstanding disputes, including Jammu and Kashmir. The foreign minister made this declaration when Ms Rocca called on him at the Foreign Office here on Tuesday afternoon. Notably the Rocca-Kasuri meeting took place on the heels of talks between Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and his Indian counterpart Dr Manmohan Singh on the margins of the 13th Saarc summit.

15 November 2005

India and Pakistan today opened the fourth point on the Line of Control (LoC) for exchanging quake relief material in Mendhar sector in Poonch district. This is the second point in the Poonch district which was opened today. Before exchanging the relief material at the Roshi-Kanna posts, 7 km from Mendhar, authorities representing both India and Pakistan shook hands and greeted each other. Pakistan is likely to move the court of arbitration after the latest round of talks with India over the Kishanganga dam project ended in failure, Syed Jamaat Ali Shah, Pakistan's Commissioner on the Indus Basin Treaty, said here on Monday. Pakistan said on Monday that crossing points on the Line of Control should remain open seven days a week for the convenience of Kashmiris. Responding to the Indian proposal to open the crossing points twice a month, Foreign Office spokeswoman Tasnim Aslam told reporters that Pakistan wanted that the crossing points stay open seven days a week to facilitate Kashmiris, however it was ready to accept the Indian proposal in view of New Delhi's plea of logistical problems and a shortage of staff to man the crossing points.

14 November 2005

After the opening of Kaman Post, the Army is now gearing up to open the Silikot point in the Uri sector. India and Pakistan fought a hard battle here in 1971 and shelling and bombing were routine before the November 2003 ceasefire. While the roads are being widened and bridges reconstructed, the biggest challenge is to make it mine-free, which the Army says has been done. The process of confidence building between Pakistan and India began last year and they were now exploring ways for "conflict resolution" instead of "conflict management," Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said on Sunday. Speaking at a breakfast meeting with editors and senior journalists here, he said his bilateral talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on the sidelines of the SAARC summit on Saturday were "very fruitful." Despite Afghanistan's entry into SAARC, Pakistan will continue with its policy of denying India overland access to Afghanistan because that policy is linked to the broad matrix of India-Pakistan relations, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz told the media on his return flight from Dhaka. "India can send goods via Karachi; that facility already exists. But the overland route needs progress on certain core issue," he said. Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has said Pakistan and India will have to resolve all their outstanding disputes and

ease tension for helping the Saarc to materialise its objectives. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told his Pakistani counterpart Shaukat Aziz that there could be no demilitarisation or redeployment of forces unless there was an end to cross-border terrorism and infiltration.

13 November 2005

Shaking hands on a Bailey bridge that fleetingly became a bone of contention between the two countries, Indian and Pakistani Army officials on Saturday opened the third border meeting point along the Line of Control (LoC) to ferry relief material across till "all the quake-hit are rehabilitated." Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said on Sunday that peace talks with India were making progress, but core issues such as Kashmir still remain. "We are going step-by-step in confidence-building measures (with India)," Aziz told reporters in the Bangladeshi capital, Dhaka. The World Bank-appointed neutral expert Prof Raymond Lafitte has given technical questionnaires to Pakistan and India with regard to the structure and design of the controversial 450 MW Baglihar Hydropower Project, a senior government official told The News.

12 November 2005

The issue of cross-border terrorism and Kashmir are expected to figure in talks Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will have with his Pakistani counterpart Shaukat Aziz here today when the two leaders will review the progress in Composite Dialogue Process on the sidelines of the SAARC summit. Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has said that in his bilateral meetings with leaders on the sidelines of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit, he would highlight the "concerns and challenges" being faced by Kashmiris.

11 November 2005

Four big tents have been set-up at Chakan-da-Bagh along with preparations for making I-cards of POK residents. A 100-bed surgical ward for the injured from the POK has been established at Kahdi area, a 10-bed emergency hospital at Gulpur forward post along with relief camps at Gulpur and Sant Bahadur Gurdawara Campus at Karma along the LOC in Poonch district. Pakistan has praised India for helping the quake victims and expressed satisfaction over the agreement to open five crossing points at the Line of Control (LoC) for Kashmiris. At a meeting between Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Riaz Mohammad Khan and his Indian counterpart Shyam Saran in Dhaka on Thursday, Khan conveyed Pakistan's appreciation for the relief assistance provided by the government and the people of India after the devastating earthquake.

Notwithstanding the ongoing Indo-Pak talks to resolve all outstanding issues, including Kashmir, Pakistan has once again spoken about the right of self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir under UN supervision. India postponed opening a third crossing between occupied and Azad Kashmir aimed at helping survivors of last month's earthquake. India said the crossing into Neelum Valley, which it earlier said would open on Thursday, had been put off until Saturday because the Pakistani Army had not finished work on a border bridge. However, a Pakistani spokesman said his side was ready and frustration was growing with Indian "rigidity" over the border crossings.

10 November 2005

Opening of the third crossing point on the Line of Control (LoC) for quake relief work, scheduled for

Thursday, has been delayed by two days because of incomplete infrastructural work. India will release 26 Pakistani prisoners on November 18 at the Wagah border post as part of efforts by the two countries to speed up the repatriation of people languishing in jails on both sides. Indian medicines have so far not made it to Pakistani markets though the government has allowed the import of medicines from India. The import of Indian drugs was notified on June 23, 2005 to provide relief to the common people. The importers of pharmaceutical products have urged the government to allow duty-free import of pharmacy products from India immediately to provide relief to the people. They said prices of pharmaceutical products in Pakistan were skyrocketing. Following visits of a number of delegations of Indian drug manufacturers and meeting with top government functionaries, nothing concrete could be achieved, said Hanif Blue, chairman of the Pakistan Chemist and Drugs Association (PCDA), Sindh zone, on Wednesday.

9 November 2005

A distance of five kilometres separates Peer Nissar Hussian Shah from his family living in Abbaspur in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Twenty-one people in the area died in the October 8 earthquake. A month has passed but the two families, separated by the Line of Control, are yet to exchange information and news of the loss of relatives came through their relatives living in the Gulf countries. For the second consecutive day on Tuesday Indian relief material entered PoK. Fifteen trucks of Indian relief material were distributed to the PoK authorities for distribution among the quake victims. Pakistan on Tuesday named the designated authorities from whom application forms could be obtained by people intending to cross the five points along the Line of Control (LoC). On October 29, Pakistan and India agreed on the opening of five posts across the LoC to enable people participate in earthquake relief and reconstruction efforts.

8 November 2005

The Line of Control was opened on Monday as Indian relief material made its way to quake-devastated Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. This is the first time in the history of the sub-continent that the LoC has been opened for the movement of goods as per the recent agreement signed between India and Pakistan. The numbers had swelled to thousands-when trucks carrying relief from India to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir began rolling, they surged towards the Line of Control to try and be with their relatives across the line. Pakistani troops and policemen, who tried to check the march, had to lob teargas shells and fire warning shots in the air to scatter the crowds.

A high-level Pakistani delegation left for New Delhi on Monday to discuss the controversial Kishanganga Dam project with Indian leaders. The three-members Pakistani delegation, headed by Indus Water Commissioner Syed Jammal Ali Shah, will visit the project site in Jammu and Kashmir.

7 November 2005

The much-awaited opening of the Line of Control at five designated points on Monday, to enable people to cross the Kashmir frontier between India and Pakistan is expected to be delayed for at least a week. "It seems unlikely for a few more days. India and Pakistan have not been able to exchange the lists of people wanting to cross due to Diwali and Id holidays," Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson Tasneem Aslam told The Hindu. The victims of the killer earthquake in the Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) will not be allowed to cross the Line of Control (LoC) tomorrow to reach the relief camp established by the Indian

Army at Chakan-da-Bagh in Poonch but the relief material would be handed over to the Pakistani authorities for being distributed to the affected people.

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz will meet his Indian counterpart Dr. Manmohan Singh on the sidelines of the 13th Saarc Summit in Bangladesh's capital Dhaka, it is learnt. According to diplomatic sources, the meeting between the two prime ministers is likely to take place on November 12. They said the two sides were currently in the process of finalising the time and date of the meeting.

6 November 2005

The five points across the Line of Control (LoC) from the Pakistan side to enable people travel on foot to the Indian side would be operational from Monday. Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson Tasneem Aslam said arrangements to open the points to people wishing to cross over have been completed. Last week India and Pakistan agreed to open five designated points along the LoC to let people on both sides to travel across and help in quake relief. Pakistan will open five entry points to J-K on the LoC from Monday onwards as scheduled. It is as per a post-quake agreement reached with India, and aimed at allowing quake-hit Kashmiris from both sides to cross the border. "The five points are ready to be opened on November 7 as scheduled," Pakistan foreign office spokesperson Tasneem Aslam said here. On reports that India may open two or three points on November 7, and not five as planned, due to more time required to clear landslides, she said Pakistan had not yet heard from India on the matter.

5 November 2005

The opening of relief camps along the Line of Control for earthquake victims of Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir have hit a roadblock as the armies on either side are unable to evolve a mechanism for transporting the aid packages. The two armies have also had a communication breakdown of sorts with the gushing river Kishanganga drowning all efforts.

4 November 2005

Ahead of the opening of quake relief centres along the Line of Control (LoC), the Army on Thursday reopened the road connecting Srinagar with Muzaffarabad. However, work is yet to be completed on the other side. Braving rough terrain and landslips, Army and Border Roads Organisation (BRO) workers finished the work in record time. Troop positions on the Siachen Glacier must be demarcated before demilitarising the world's highest battlefield to avoid a repeat of the 1999 Kargil border conflict with Pakistan, said Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee. "We don't want Kargil all over again. We want the records straight. The position, which is occupied by the forces before withdrawal, should be there on the map," Mukherjee told Hard News, an Indian magazine, in an interview. For three months now, Pakistan and India have failed to make any headway with the proposed enhancement in "cultural cooperation" and have not increased the flow of pilgrims and shrine-visitors across the border.

3 November 2005

Pakistan is optimistic that India is willing to consider Islamabad's proposal for the demilitarisation of Kashmir, the Foreign Office said on Wednesday. Pakistan maintained that the claim made by India about the possibility of involvement of Pakistan-based groups in the serial blasts of New Delhi did not amount to evidence. Investigations into the serial blasts in Delhi indicated linkage of Muzaffarabad in PoK to the incident and Pakistan-based Lashker-e-Taiba (LeT) is a strong suspect irrespective of its denial, police

sources said here today. Two of the five centres along the Line of Control (LoC) agreed to by India and Pakistan to coordinate relief efforts to quake victims across the divided Kashmir will be ready on the Indian side in a couple of days, a defence spokesman said on Wednesday.

Demilitarisation on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) will be one step further to deal with the Kashmir problem and in the long run it will be in the interest of both Pakistan and India. Islamabad has noted that New Delhi has not outright rejected this proposal. Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri has said in reference to President Pervez Musharraf's remarks, now named 'Iftar diplomacy'.

2 November 2005

India on Tuesday reacted cautiously to Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf's suggestion of demilitarising both sides of Kashmir, asserting that it can't be done "unilaterally". "It can't be done unilaterally," External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh told reporters at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Only Kashmiris who are members of families divided by the Line of Control will be allowed to cross the de-facto border when five crossing points are opened on November 7, the Kashmir Times reports. Two banned Pakistani militant groups on Tuesday denied involvement in last week's deadly bombings in the Indian capital, a day after Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said foreign terrorist groups seemed to be behind the blasts. India hasn't placed blame for Saturday's bombings in New Delhi that killed 59 people, but suspicion has fallen on Pakistan-based militants fighting the Indian rule in the divided Kashmir region. A spokesman for Jaish-e-Mohammed, a group blamed for numerous terrorist attacks in the past, accused India of using the attacks "for political purposes".

1 November 2005

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Monday minced no words when Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf called him to express his condolences over the deaths in the Delhi blasts. Short of directly accusing Pakistan, Singh said he was "disturbed" at indications of "external linkages" of terrorist groups with the blasts. The PM told Musharraf that India "was outraged at these heinous acts of terrorism". The moderate faction of All-Parties Hurriyat Conference on Monday welcomed the opening of five points along Line of Control (LoC) but said the process should not be made hostage to travel documents. The Hurriyat also came out strongly against the serial blast in Delhi, terming it an "act of terror." Calling the situation created by the earthquake as a "great opportunity" to work towards resolution of Kashmir, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf urged India to think of "demilitarisation" of the zone to provide comfort to the quake-affected. Addressing a press conference at his camp office here on Monday, Gen. Musharraf said after the agreement between India and Pakistan on opening of the Line of Control (LoC) at five separate points, both sides could take a number of "steps" towards a solution to the Kashmir issue. Characterising the serial blasts of New Delhi as "dastardly acts of terrorism," Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf on Monday announced that Islamabad would like to "join" any investigations by India to unearth the culprits. Addressing a news conference at his camp office here, Gen. Musharraf disclosed that he has placed a telephone call to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh later in the evening and in his conversation with Dr. Singh would offer support of Pakistan in any investigation on the blasts that India would undertake. The Foreign Office on Monday rejected Indian allegations of cross-border terrorism and involvement of elements in Pakistan in the New Delhi bomb attacks, saying there was no evidence to support such allegations.

31 October 2005

Although the festival-eve terror came close to breaching India's threshold of tolerance to terrorism, the Government consciously chose last night not to let the Delhi bombings come in the way of the quake diplomacy with Pakistan. Hours before India and Pakistan signed the agreement on opening points along the Line of Control (LoC) for earthquake relief and reconstruction operations, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf said on Sunday that with the decision he was making the LoC "irrelevant." In an interview to Arab News, an English daily,

14 October 2005

An Indian relief train was due to cross the Wagah-Attari border on Thursday night with a consignment of blankets, medicines and tents for the Azad Kashmir earthquake victims, official sources said. The Inter-Services Public Relations on Thursday termed baseless reports about Indian soldiers crossing the Line of Control to help Pakistani troops in relief and rescue operations. The Indian Army on Thursday denied reports that some of its troops crossed the Line of Control (LoC) to help to rescue Pakistani troops and rebuild their bunker destroyed by the October 8 earthquake. On Wednesday, a Srinagar-based army officer suggested that the troops had responded to a plea for assistance by Pakistani soldiers and crossed the LoC.

13 October 2005

Officials have advised the government that the composite dialogue process with India should retain its primacy, and the revival of joint commission should not dilute its importance. Informed sources told Dawn on Monday that the officials held that all out efforts should be made to keep the joint commission and the composite dialogue as stand-alone processes for enhancement of cooperation in various fields particularly in trade between the two countries

12 October 2005

India was ready to rush potentially life-saving aid to the devastated parts of Azad Kashmir since these were more readily accessible from the Line of Control, but New Delhi was equally alive to Pakistan's sensitivities in not signalling its acceptance, Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh said on Tuesday. Following the massive destruction caused by the earthquake in Pakistan on Saturday, the Amritsar-Lahore bus service, scheduled to start from November 9, stands postponed, sources in the Punjab Government said today.

11 October 2005

Pakistan's High Commissioner to New Delhi Aziz Ahmed Khan met Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and indicated that Pakistan would welcome relief goods to help survivors in different parts of the country which have been affected by one of the worst disasters in its history.

10 October 2005

The shared tragedy confronting India and Pakistan in disputed Kashmir could pay dividends for the fragile peace process, experts said on Sunday after a massive earthquake left thousands dead there. "It will certainly help in furthering the peace process," former Indian foreign secretary and ambassador to Washington Lalit Mansingh said. Joint relief efforts could boost confidence, Mansingh said, noting that Indian and Pakistani civilians as well as the troops that face off across the Kashmiri border had lost their

lives in Saturday's massive quake. "This is a common tragedy. There is nothing political about this. It can help bring people together," Mansingh added. The disaster offers a "chance for India, Pakistan to rebuild together," said foreign affairs analyst C Raja Mohan. Despite high-level conjectures of support Pakistan and India cannot possibly seek aid from each other in the devastated regions of disputed Kashmir because of the heavy military component inherent in such help, Indian officials and analysts claimed on Sunday. Asked whether he would seek help from India in view of the offer by Singh to provide whatever assistance to assist people effected by the quake, Musharraf told CNN "we are looking at it."

9 October 2005

A major earthquake shook cities and villages across the South Asian subcontinent today, wiping out several villages in Pakistan and leading to fears that the death toll could run into thousands. About 400 Pakistani school children were killed in northwestern Pakistan when two schools collapsed, the police said. Officials said over 1000 people were killed in the worst-hit Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, while 700 lost their lives in Islamabad and North western Frontier Province.

8 October 2005

India has said that there can be no pullout of troops from Jammu and Kashmir unless violence ends there and a similar disengagement in Siachen Glacier can be undertaken only when delineation on the troop positions is carried out. I don't think there can be a pullout unless violence is stopped, Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee told The Week magazine. The Baglihar dam dispute between India and Pakistan is likely to end peacefully in January when the World Bank-appointed neutral expert is expected to deliver a formal verdict on the issue, official sources said. A major earthquake with a magnitude of at least 7.6 struck Pakistan on Saturday and was felt across the Indian subcontinent, shaking people out of their homes and sending them running into the streets. The quake was felt in the Indian, Pakistani and Afghan capitals, but there were no immediate reports of casualties.

7 October 2005

Pakistan and India are holding crucial meeting on Baglihar dam in New Delhi today (Friday) amid persisting serious differences between the two countries on the design of the dam and no agreement seems to be in sight about the contentious project. The World Bank (WB) neutral expert Dr Raymond Laffitte will chair the meeting that is taking place after the inspection of the dam site and original model of the dam laying in Roorkee near Jammu by the experts of the two countries and the WB neutral expert.

6 October 2005

External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh said here on Wednesday that he hoped the India-Pakistan talks on the Siachen issue would move forward. Talking to reporters before leaving for New Delhi at the end of a four-day visit to the country, he said that "there is no deadline for Siachen, but we hope the talks will move forward."

4 October 2005

Pakistan and India on Monday signed an agreement on pre-notification of flight-testing of ballistic missiles and a memorandum of understanding for the establishment of a communication link between the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency and the Indian Coast Guards. The accord and memorandum were

signed after the 90-minute delegation-level talks between Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri and his Indian counterpart Natwar Singh at the Foreign Office here in the afternoon. Back-channel diplomacy was in full swing as India and Pakistan late tonight appeared to be converging towards having a formal agreement on resolving the Siachen dispute. The final word, however, would come after the visiting External Affairs Minister, Mr K Natwar Singh, calls on Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf.

5 October 2005

India and Pakistan on Tuesday held a meeting of the Joint Economic Commission for years, marking a further thaw between the South Asian countries. Indian External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh is leading the Indian side at the talks with his Pakistani counterpart Khurshid Kasuri, Foreign Office officials said. India and Pakistan failed to achieve a thaw on Siachen issue despite hectic back-room diplomatic efforts that continued well past midnight last night, though the two nuclear neighbours did take a step forward in resolving the Sir Creek maritime boundary dispute.

3 October 2005

On the eve of one of the most crucial talks between India and Pakistan starting on Monday at the Foreign Office between Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri and his Indian counterpart. Pakistan and India opened talks on Monday a day after Indian External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh arrived, saying that the people and governments of both countries were determined to end decades of hostility. Endeavouring to adjudicate the riparian dispute between India and Pakistan, World Bank appointed Swiss neutral expert Raymond Lafitte today began inspecting the dam design and "peripheral setup" of the 450-mw Baglihar hydel project in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir.

2 October 2005

In trying to take the peace process forward after the slight chill in New York, External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh is bringing with him a proposal to revamp the rigid 20-year old visa protocol and remove restrictions peculiar to the two countries. In efforts to iron out differences between India and Pakistan on the Indus river waters issue, a 13-member team led by World Bank neutral expert, Raymond Lafitte arrived in Jammu for a 3-day inspection tour of Baglihar at Patnitop. 1 October 2005

India and Pakistan met to agree details of new bus services between border cities and discuss an increase in flights as a part of a peace process, officials in both countries said. Pakistan and India will ink three treaties next week here in the presence of their foreign ministers. One of the treaties will provide pre-notification of test-flight of missiles, officials said. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) met under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today, two days ahead of External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh's bilateral visit to Pakistan (October 2-5), and set the parameters for Mr Natwar Singh's talks with the Pakistani leadership. The EAM is going to Pakistan armed with a host of proposals for improving bilateral relations with Pakistan in such diverse fields as security, defence, trade and commerce, tourism and culture, consular matters, banking, information and broadcasting and telecommunications.

30 September 2005

Pakistan is engaged in negotiations with India to reach an early agreement on the withdrawal of troops from the Siachen glacier. In a press statement on Thursday, Foreign Office (FO) spokesman Naeem

Khan, in response to the Indian defence minister's statement that Pakistan and India had reached an agreement on withdrawing troops from Siachen, said that he wasn't sure if the Indian minister was referring to the agreement between the two countries in 1989 which could not be signed at that time. Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee has said India and Pakistan have agreed to withdraw troops from their present position in Siachen glacier but the modalities have to be worked out. "We have agreed. They (Pakistan) have agreed to withdraw troops from the present positions. There is no two opinion about it, both sides have agreed", Mukherjee said in a TV interview.

29 September 2005

Terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir made history in reverse when Mohammad Ayub, a senior commander of the Pakistan-backed Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, crossed the Line of Control (LoC) and laid down arms before the Indian Army. India and Pakistan on Wednesday agreed to start a bus service in October linking two cities on either side of their only border crossing as part of an ongoing peace process, an official here said.

28 September 2005

The Pakistan Supreme Court on Tuesday upheld the death sentence to Sarabjit Singh of Punjab in the fourth case of his alleged role in a series of bomb blasts which occurred in the country in 1990 "at the behest of RAW". Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has said his country is opposed to the use of force against Iran over its nuclear programme and wanted the row to be settled through discussions and dialogue.

Trying to breathe life into a joint commission that has not met for the last 16 years, India will send representatives of six ministries to Islamabad along with External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh to ensure that the October 4 meeting is not reduced to a symbolic affair. Apart from the Ministry of External Affairs, five other ministries - Home, Telecom, Commerce, Information & Broadcasting and Tourism-will send joint secretary level officials as part of the External Affairs Minister's delegation.

27 September 2005

The second round of India-Pakistan technical level talks on the Amritsar-Lahore and Amritsar-Nankana Sahib bus services will be held today (Tuesday). At the two-day technical level parleys, the Pakistani side will be led by Mohammad Abbas, additional secretary to the Ministry of Communication. The Indian delegation will be headed by Dilip Sinha, joint secretary to the Ministry of External Affairs.

26 September 2005

Officials from India and Pakistan would begin hectic rounds of parleys from Tuesday to discuss a host of issues, including bus services and aviation agreement between the two countries ahead of the third round of the Composite Dialogue process scheduled in January next year. In a move to boost bilateral trade between India and Pakistan, Indian Merchants Chamber (IMC) and Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) have decided to set up a joint trade committee soon. The proposed committee will have an equal number of representatives from both chambers, IMC president Rajesh Kapadia, who recently led a 24-member delegation to Pakistan, told reporters here.

25 September 2005

A delegation of Indian aviation officials will arrive in Pakistan this week for talks on increasing civilian passenger flights between the two countries, the Defence Ministry said on Sunday. The four-member Indian delegation will arrive on Monday for two days of talks scheduled to begin on Tuesday, a ministry statement said. The Organization of Islamic Conference on Friday expressed its strong support to the ongoing peace process between Pakistan and India, and urged both countries to make it "irreversible" and result-oriented. Officials of the Pakistan Rangers and Indian Border Security Force on Saturday discussed the day-to-day border security matters at a quarterly held meeting at Khokhrapar. Humayun Akhtar Khan, commerce minister said Pakistan would not extend Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to India without resolution of disputes between two neighbours.

24 September 2005

Permanent Indo-Pak peace is possible only when the Pakistan military accepts that India will not secede any part of Jammu and Kashmir, former US envoy to India, Robert Blackwill has said.

23 September 2005

Intra-Kashmir 'Heart-to-Heart' talks on Thursday urged the governments of India and Pakistan to consider reducing the level of deployment of military and paramilitary forces on both sides of Kashmir. A joint statement, adopted at the conclusion of the two-day Kashmir conference held here, recommended review of detenus cases and declaration of general amnesty to prisoners detained in each country.

22 September 2005

Pakistan's Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources Amanullah Khan Jadoon will visit India next month to finalise issues relating to the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline. "The minister is likely to visit New Delhi on October 2-3 but the dates may be changed," an official from the ministry of petroleum and natural resources said. Pakistan and India will seek independent third party global "certification" of the Iranian hydrocarbon reserve allocated for the South Asian gas pipeline.

21 September 2005

The All-Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) on Tuesday said that contacts between Pakistan and Israel would help in finding a solution in Kashmir. "Pak-Israel links will not harm the Kashmir cause, but they will help to settle the festering issue," APHC chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said while addressing a press conference in New York. He said that if Pakistan could resolve the Palestine issue by creating diplomatic links with Israel, then those links would also pave the way for a Kashmir solution.

20 September 2005

Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman Naeem Khan told presspersons here on Monday that Pakistan expected the same treatment as India from the West in its quest for peaceful use of nuclear technology. The Indian foreign minister will be in Islamabad on Oct 3 for a three-day visit to review with his Pakistan counterpart the outcome of the second round of their composite dialogue, official sources said on Monday.

19 September 2005

Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri met with his Indian counterpart Natwar Singh has met his Pakistani

counterpart Khurshid Kasuri in New York. According to Indian TV channel, Mr. Natwar Singh said that the dialogue process with Pakistan is on track. The Indian foreign minister will also be traveling to Pakistan in the first week of October.

18 September 2005

In their third interaction in five months, Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq met Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf here and extended full support to India-Pakistan dialogue but expressed regret over the "slow" pace of the peace process. During the meeting with Gen. Musharraf lasting over an hour, the Mirwaiz briefed him on the first-ever talks the Hurriyat leaders had with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi on September 5 while discussing the ongoing India-Pakistan dialogue process.

17 September 2005

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Friday said he proposed to remain "engaged" with General Pervez Musharraf and if the Pakistani leader "delivered" on his promise to control terror flow into Jammu and Kashmir then it would be possible to inject a "movement forward" in the relationship between India and Pakistan. A day before Hurriyat president Mirwaiz Umer Farooq meets Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf here, India said today that an end to cross-border violence will make it easier to improve human rights conditions in Jammu and Kashmir and withdraw troops from the state.

16 September 2005

India and Pakistan have expressed their commitment "to ensure a peaceful settlement of all pending issues including Jammu and Kashmir to the satisfaction of both sides." The commitment came in a joint statement issued after a four-hour dinner meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf here on Wednesday. The two leaders also agreed to pursue all possible options for a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir dispute "in a sincere spirit and purposeful manner."

India's reluctance to consider early troop withdrawal from Jammu and Kashmir until there is a consistent decline in cross-border violence cast a shadow over the talks between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Pervez Musharraf here last night. During discussions marked by 'frankness and candour,' Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has made it clear to Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf that reduction of troops in the Kashmir Valley was ruled out till acts of terror and violence, which cast a 'shadow' over the Indo-Pak peace process, continued.

15 September 2005

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf today agreed to carry forward the peace process and resolve all outstanding issues, including Jammu and Kashmir through negotiations and peaceful means. At their meeting here lasting nearly four hours, the two leaders also vowed not to allow terrorism to impede the peace process. In a joint statement read out by Musharraf with Singh standing by his side, the Pakistani leader said: "Both the leaders reviewed the relations since their last meeting in New Delhi. Raising the Kashmir issue once again in the United Nations, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf said on Wednesday the composite dialogue with India should be result-oriented leading to a solution of Kashmir issue acceptable to all sides with the stress on implementation of UN Security Council resolutions. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Pakistani President Pervez

Musharraf today agreed to carry forward the peace process and resolve all outstanding issues, including Jammu and Kashmir through negotiations and peaceful means. At their meeting here lasting nearly four hours, the two leaders also vowed not to allow terrorism to impede the peace process.

14 September 2005

The United States is keenly watching the September 14 meeting between Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. It wants the two neighbours to resolve their differences amicably. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who called on Gen. Musharraf in New York on Monday, conveyed Washington's views to him. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has made it clear to the US that Pakistan still controls the flow of terror to India and that it must be stopped if there has to be any meaningful progress in the peace process between the two countries. Singh's plain speaking came during a meeting he had with US President George W Bush when the two met shortly after Singh's arrival in New York late Tuesday evening. Military de-escalation in the Siachen glacier is likely to get the elusive political clearance in New York on Wednesday at the summit talks between Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and President Gen Pervez Musharraf, official sources said on Tuesday.

12 September 2005

The stage was set for another high in bilateral peace process when India and Pakistan exchange nearly 500 civilian prisoners at the Wagah border near here on Monday. Pakistani prisoners were brought here from different Indian jails in the States to be handed over to Pakistani authorities. India agreed to release 152 Pakistani prisoners while Pakistan agreed to set free 435 jailed Indian prisoners which includes 371 fishermen. Among the 152 Pakistani prisoners, 101 were fishermen who were caught while fishing in Indian waters. So far, 96 prisoners from Rajasthan, Gujarat and various parts of Punjab have reached Central Jail in Amritsar where they would be spending their last night on Indian soil before proceeding to Wagah.

President Pervez Musharraf on Sunday said he would promote the cause of peace and discuss a "way forward" on the Kashmir dispute in his meeting with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. Talking to reporters before his departure for the United States, the president described his visit as multi-faceted and extremely important as besides addressing the UN General Assembly he would also meet many world leaders, including US President George W Bush, and speak to US Jewish Congress and a women convention.

10 September 2005

India will release 152 Pakistani civil prisoners on September 12 at the Wagah border. The civilian prisoners are those who have completed their sentences and whose travel documents have been issued by the Pakistan High Commission here. The prisoners, to be released on Monday, include 51 fishermen, a Home Ministry spokesman said here on Friday. Union Commerce and Industry Minister Kamal Nath on Friday called on Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and pressed for opening of the land route for greater trade between the two countries. Pakistan has announced that it would release 435 Indian nationals, 371 fishermen and 64 civilian prisoners detained in Pakistani jails and repatriate them to India via Wagah border on Monday.

9 September 2005

Pakistan has welcomed the "spirit" behind the first formal talks between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the Hurriyat leaders and said this is the only way the peace process could move forward. "The most important thing is the spirit behind it," Pakistan Foreign Minister Khurshid M Kasuri, told reporters here on Wednesday after inaugurating the South Asia Media Center of the South Asian Free Media Association (SAFMA).

Hoping to get a framework agreement finalised by year-end to begin work on the Indo-Iran gas pipeline through this country, top petroleum officials of India and Pakistan today moved closer to work out a joint pricing structure to be proposed to Teheran. "We discussed a number of subjects, including legal, financial, technical and commercial issues relating to the project, and made good progress and understood each other's positions. Pakistan and India on Thursday made progress in talks on financial, technical, security and legal issues of the 7.4 billion Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline project, agreeing to finalise a framework accord in two months. The petroleum secretaries of the two countries also agreed to adopt international standards for transit fee, security and environmental issues under the Trilateral Framework Agreement.

8 September 2005

Pakistan should have the same access to US civilian nuclear technology that President George W Bush has proposed for India, the Pakistani ambassador to the United States said. Pakistan will on Sep 12 repatriate 371 Indian prisoners who have been in jails either for illegally entering the country or accidentally straying into its waters while fishing.

7 September 2005

With the apparently pre-determined script playing out last night in Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's talks with the Hurriyat leaders, the prospects for the Indo-Pak summit in New York next week have brightened. For all the praises the Hurriyat leaders sang after their first-ever meeting with an Indian Prime Minister, sources suggested last night's deal on ending all forms of violence in Jammu and Kashmir might have been pre-cooked between Delhi and Islamabad. Petroleum Secretaries of India and Pakistan will hold the two-day talks at Islamabad from Thursday to discuss modalities of the multi-billion-dollar Indo-Iran gas pipeline through this country. A five-member delegation of Indian gas experts led by Petroleum Secretary SC Tripathy is arriving in Islamabad on Wednesday to attend the second Pakistan-India Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting on September 8 and 9 to discuss the modalities for the pipeline project.

6 September 2005

Welcoming the first-ever talks between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the moderate Hurriyat faction led by Mirwaiz Umer Farooq, Pakistan on Monday said it would strengthen the peace process with India. "We welcome it. We think it will strengthen the peace process between India and Pakistan. People of Kashmir and Hurriyat association is important for durable peace," Foreign Office spokesman Naeem Khan told a media briefing in Islamabad. Indian Commerce Minister Kamal Nath will travel to the hill resort of Murree, 40 kms from Islamabad, Sep 8-10 for another round of negotiations among the group of 20 developing countries (G20) on global trade talks.

India offered hopes on Monday of a widely sought reduction in its troops in Jammu and Kashmir as Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh assured the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) of his personal commitment to alleviate human suffering in the troubled region. "He is a man of conscience. He has a

human heart," APHC leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said after a landmark meeting between his five-member delegation and the Indian prime minister and his apex team. To give the talks greater legitimacy in India's ruling establishment, the APHC delegation has sought meetings with Congress President Sonia Gandhi, possibly on Wednesday and with leaders of the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party.

5 September 2005

India said on Saturday it would continue with plans to build a US \$7.2 billion gas pipeline from Iran, undaunted by increasing threat of UN sanctions against Tehran. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said on Friday that questions remained about Tehran's atomic activities and confirmed Iran had resumed nuclear fuel work, setting the stage for a possible referral to the UN Security Council.

4 September 2005

Pakistan, India and Iran are expected to sign a pact in December, which will enable them to go ahead with the proposed \$7.4 billion pipeline project to supply natural gas from Iran to Pakistan and India, the Press Trust of India said on Saturday. "If all goes well, there can be a tripartite meeting of the concerned ministers to finalize a framework agreement by Dec 31," Natwar Singh was quoted as saying in Tehran.

3 September 2005

Setting the stage for the meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Pervez Musharraf in New York on September 14, India and Pakistan today announced a slew of measures to promote people-to-people contacts, including starting a truck service for trade on the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad route. The two countries also outlined the roadmap for the third round of the Composite Dialogue process to be launched in January next year in New Delhi with a meeting of their Foreign Secretaries. A day after India and Pakistan announced a slew of measures to carry forward the peace process, Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran on Friday met President Pervez Musharraf and briefed him about the outcome of the talks he had with his counterpart. Saran, who held wide-ranging discussions with Pakistan Foreign Secretary Riaz Mohammad Khan on Thursday, informed the President about the steps taken to give an impetus to the peace process. The All Parties Hurriyat Conference, the main political alliance of held Kashmir, on Friday named a five-member delegation to hold its first-ever talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh next week, an exercise hardliners said would yield "nothing". Mirwaiz Omar Farooq, the head of the moderate faction of APHC, said the team would leave for New Delhi on Sunday ahead of the talks the following day.

1 September 2005

Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran arrived in Lahore on Wednesday for a meeting with his Pakistani counterpart Riaz Mohammad Khan in Islamabad today. The two secretaries will review the progress of the composite dialogue process. Pakistan and India may formalize revival of joint commission of the two countries to remove irritants between them, coming in the way of normalisation. The composite dialogue will also continue side by side that has Kashmir issue on its top. The joint commission will be headed by the respective foreign ministers and had three sittings since its inception in 1983.

31 August 2005

Pakistan and India have agreed to sign the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT), a global arrangement for

security to energy-related trade and investments, as observers to ease import of natural gas through pipelines from Iran, Qatar or Turkmenistan. The federal cabinet, which will meet on Wednesday, is expected to approve a plan to make a request to the Energy Charter Conference to get the 'observer status'. The treaty was signed in 1994 and came into force in 1998. Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran will leave for Islamabad today (Wednesday) to join his Pakistani counterpart Riaz Mohamamad Khan in the review of the two-round composite dialogue process, two weeks ahead of Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and President Pervez Musharraf's meeting in New York. In the first public sign of cooperation between the investigative agencies, experts from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Pakistani Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) will meet "in the near future" to discuss issues of mutual interest. This was announced by senior Indian and Pakistani officials on Tuesday. A joint press statement issued after two days of talks between Union Home Secretary V.K. Duggal and Pakistan's Interior Secretary Syed Kamal Shah said all civilian prisoners in Indian and Pakistani jails - who had completed their sentences and whose nationality had been confirmed - would be released on September 12.

30 August 2005

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today rounded up his first two-day bilateral visit to Afghanistan by targeting the common man or the "aam aadmi of Afghanistan, saying that with India's help, several welfare initiatives for the Afghan would be put in place soon. Indian diplomats will meet Sarabjit Singh, sentenced to death in Pakistan, tomorrow. "We are going to provide consular access to Sarabjit Singh tomorrow," Foreign Ministry spokesman Naeem Khan said at his weekly press briefing.

29 August 2005

Terrorism and drug trafficking would be the main focus of the Secretary-level talks between India and Pakistan which begins here tomorrow in the midst of efforts to release Sarabjit Singh, who is facing death sentence. Pakistan's Interior Secretary Syed Kamal Shah, who is leading an 11-member delegation to the two-day talks with his Indian counterpart V.K. Duggal, has said that he will like to discuss the issue of the prisoners languishing in each other's country. Peace between India and Pakistan is vital for the region, Afghan President Hamid Karzai said on Sunday, as he called for the three countries to work together to defeat terrorism. Mr Karzai discussed regional security and terrorism with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who arrived in Afghanistan earlier on Sunday, the first visit to Afghanistan by an Indian prime minister in nearly 30 years.

The Home Secretaries of India and Pakistan today discussed at length the first-ever Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between them on prevention of drug trafficking, but failed to reach an agreement on it.

28 August 2005

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Saturday said "appropriate messages" had been sent to Pakistan on the issue of Sarabjit Singh, on death row for his alleged involvement in bomb blasts in Lahore and Multan in 1990. India and Pakistan are expected to stick to their stated positions and go through the motions when the two countries' Home Secretaries begin their two day talks on August 29 on terrorism and drug trafficking under the composite dialogue framework. Moving beyond terrorism and drug-trafficking, India and Pakistan will discuss the prisoners' issue during the August 29-30 talks between the Home

Secretaries. "Usually the agenda [of the Home Secretary-level talks] is terrorism and drug-trafficking but this time we requested that we would like to discuss the issue of prisoners," Pakistan Home Secretary Syed Kamal Shah said here on Saturday.

27 August 2005

India claimed on Friday that its efforts to help rebuild Afghanistan were being hampered by Pakistan, which had refused to allow transit facilities to Indian goods. Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said India was having to make huge investments to seek alternative routes to Afghanistan and Central Asia through Iran. Pakistan on Friday allowed Indian diplomats to meet a convicted Indian spy on death row amid heightened moves to save the life of the man who, Islamabad says, was behind deadly bomb blasts but is called innocent by his family. A foreign ministry spokesman said the government had granted approval to an Indian High Commission request for consular access to convict Sarabjit Singh, now lodged in Lahore's Kot Lakhpat Jail.

In a major development, the Indian government said on Friday it was ready to release all 177 Pakistani prisoners whose nationality has so far been confirmed by its Ministry of Interior. Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan Shivshankar Menon told The News on Friday that his country was ready to free Pakistani prisoners on a reciprocal basis and if Islamabad agrees, it could all be done by the end of this month.

26 August 2005

External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh today discussed the issue of Sarabjit Singh with the Pakistan's High Commissioner here, Mr Aziz Ahmed Khan. He told him that it was a humanitarian matter and there was a strong public sentiment in India for sparing the convict's life who was on death row in a Lahore jail. Mr Singh once again raised the matter of consular access to Sarabjit Singh. The Indian government on Thursday approved the holding of a two-day India-Pakistan seminar on terrorism and drug trafficking here on Aug 29-30.

Pakistan would grant India consular access to a man Sarabjit Singh sentenced to death for spying. Indian officials had sought access to Sarabjit Singh few days back, Pakistan foreign office spokesman Naeem Khan told. The issue of prisoners languishing in Pakistani and Indian jails has finally, been made part of the ongoing composite dialogue between Islamabad and New Delhi and high officials of both the countries will meet soon to discuss their release.

25 August 2005

Pakistan today informed India that its request for consular access to Sarabjit Singh, sentenced to death for his alleged involvement in bomb blasts in this country, was being examined as senior Ministers here were locked in a debate whether President Pervez Musharraf was authorised to pardon him. India today once again raised the Sarabjit Singh issue with Pakistan but there was no response yet from Islamabad on the issue of consular access to the Indian national who has been convicted and sentenced to death on charges of espionage. Cross-border infiltration in Kashmir is once again on the increase with logistic infrastructure of terrorist training camps inside Pakistan and in Pak-occupied Kashmir remaining intact, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee informed the Rajya Sabha today. Though there was a reduction in the number of infiltration attempts from across the border in the initial five months of the current year, such incidents showed an increase during June and July - and this fact has been repeatedly conveyed by

the Army to the Pakistan Director-General of Military Operations, Mr Mukherjee said. The foreign secretaries of Indian and Pakistan would be on a hotline from September to help avert mutual misunderstandings that could otherwise trigger nuclear tensions between the two, Indian Minister of State for External Affairs Rao Inderjit Singh told the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. He said an understanding on the proposed agreement on a pre-notification of flight testing of ballistic missiles was reached during the third round of India-Pakistan expert level dialogue on nuclear confidence building measures held in Delhi earlier this month. Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf has said Kashmir will be the "central point" of his meeting with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly session next month. Pakistan has firmly tied improvement in economic relations with India to the resolution of core disputes including Kashmir as three leading Indian companies.

24 August 2005

New Delhi is still to ascertain whether Sarabjit Singh, sentenced to death in Pakistan, is an Indian. "Confirmation of identity always follows consular access," the External Affairs Ministry spokesman said on Tuesday when asked whether Mr. Singh was, indeed, an Indian citizen. The comments came on a day when a group of Members of Parliament met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh on the issue. The Deputy High Commissioner in the Indian High Commission here, T.C.A. Raghavan, said a request for information on Sarabjit Singh's case was made to Pakistan on Monday along with a renewed request for consular access to enable the Indian mission officials to establish contact with him.

New Delhi requested Islamabad on Tuesday to immediately release its 445 nationals rotting in Pakistani jails and admitted that issue of prisoners on both the sides was more of a humanitarian nature and needed immediate attention of both the countries. Pakistan will take up the transit fee of the proposed US \$7.2 billion Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline with India once the pipeline's diameter and entry points in Pakistan and India and the passage of the quanta of gas to the two countries are resolved. Pakistan High Commissioner Aziz Ahmed Khan on Tuesday told a delegation of Janata Dal (U) leaders that Sarabjit Singh, sentenced to death by Pakistani courts, could file a review petition in the country's Supreme Court and present a mercy plea to President Pervez Musharraf.

23 August 2005

The India-Pakistan peace process under the Composite Dialogue Framework gets into top gear after next week's Home Secretary level talks on Terrorism and Drug Trafficking as Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran would travel to Islamabad on August 31 for the wrap-up meeting of the second round of talks. Top Pakistani and Indian diplomats will meet in Islamabad on Sept 1 to review how the two countries have progressed on their peace process in one year before a planned bilateral summit at the United Nations, the two sides announced on Monday. Indian External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh on Monday informed the Lok Sabha that New Delhi and Islamabad have discussed the possibilities of enhancing air, rail and road communications. Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has given one year extension in service to Aziz Ahmad Khan, Pakistan's High Commissioner to India, on the completion of his existing contractual tenure in New Delhi next month.

22 August 2005

Pakistan has submitted its case on the controversial 450 MW Baglihar hydropower project in Jammu and

Kashmir to the neutral expert appointed by the World Bank. President General Pervez Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh will discuss the whole gamut of bilateral relations in their third meeting in New York in September in a span of sixteen months since the Indian leader assumed the top office. The deliberations will be held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session. Pakistan and India will formally sign the recently agreed pact on advance notification of missile tests early next month when the two foreign secretaries will meet to review progress on the second round of peace talks. Besides, the top officials of two foreign ministries, in their talks likely to be held on 1st and 2nd September, would also announce the establishment of hotline between them to avert accidental or illegal use of nuclear weapons.

Pakistan, Iran and India are expected to start trilateral negotiations for the proposed \$7.2 billion Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline by October-November this year. Informed sources told Dawn that the three countries had agreed to enter into trilateral discussions on the project to minimize negotiation time so that work on the project could start by April 2006.

21 August 2005

Pakistan has formally submitted its case over the controversial 450MW Baglihar hydropower project with the coordination office of the neutral expert in Washington DC three days ago. Downplaying Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's allegation about the existence of terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan, Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmud Kasuri has said his country is committed to the ongoing composite dialogue process with India. "These are just allegations," the Foreign Minister said of Dr Manmohan Singh's recent assertions about the presence of a terrorist infrastructure in an interview.

20 August 2005

India has ordered slashing import duty on textile from two neighbours - Pakistan and Bangladesh. As many as 200 tariff lines in textile products will be identified to cut the basic import duty as well as ad valorem duty.

19 August 2005

ONE of the several unilateral decisions taken by India for promoting greater people-to-people contacts with Pakistan has failed to evoke the expected enthusiasm across the border. Or is it because the people on the other side of the border are not aware of the facility? This pertains to Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran's announcement early this year that India would grant visa on arrival at the Wagah border to Pakistani citizens above 65 years and children under 12 years of age. This facility is the first of its kind that New Delhi has with any country.

18 August 2005

Peace can only be achieved through strength and therefore we need to maintain a credible defence, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said at a meeting with Air Chief Marshal Kaleem Saadat on Wednesday. The prime minister said that the Pakistan Air Force had a vital role to play in making defence credible.

17 August 2005

Work on the controversial Baglihar hydroelectric power project hit another snag when one of its diversion tunnels collapsed due to a landslide late on Sunday. This is the second tunnel that has collapsed within

the past two months. Reports stated that a landslide hit the dam's site, which blocked the flow of Chenab River for more than an hour, causing the dam to overflow. The leadership of Pakistan and India is determined to move the peace process forward and resolve all disputes including the Kashmir issue, Foreign Office Spokesman Naeem Khan has said.

16 August 2005

Pakistan will continue to improve its missile technology, said Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Sunday while referring to the successful test fire of a cruise missile. "The Pakistani scientists who helped manufacture the missile deserve appreciation." Addressing a flag-hoisting ceremony at Convention Centre in connection with Pakistan's 58th Independence Day celebrations, the prime minister said that the defence of the country was "very strong" and Pakistan would increase its strength to maintain a balance of power in South Asia.

Firmly identifying his Government with the aam aadmi (common man), Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort on Independence Day that India's future was "extremely bright" but the focus would need to be on economic growth and social justice. Using the nation's grandest pulpit, the Prime Minister invoked the Mahatma's definition of swaraj and said his Government's National Common Minimum Programme had the same goal. Pakistan's and India's nuclear forces remain on hair-trigger alert. Both nations fear a surprise, decapitating first strike by the other could destroy their nuclear forces and the command units that control them. The flight times of India's and Pakistan's nuclear-armed ballistic missiles are in minutes.

15 August 2005

Marking its 59th independence day, Pakistan today vowed to improve its nuclear and missile capabilities while asserting that the resolution of the Kashmir issue was "a must for durable peace" in South Asia. Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz hoisted the national flag at an indoor auditorium here due to security concerns. Without directly referring to India, he said in his speech that Pakistan would continue the process of improving its nuclear and missile capabilities to keep pace with the changing scenario in the neighbourhood.

14 August 2005

Pointing out that there was a sharp increase in infiltration from across the border, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee today said greater vigil would be kept along the 742 km stretch of fencing to foil such attempts. In his customary address to the Indian troops on the eve of the Independence Day, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee said in spite of the fencing along the 742 km stretch along the Line of Control (LoC), there was a sharp increase in infiltration from across the border in the last two months. Acknowledging India's sincerity in resolving the Kashmir problem, President Pervez Musharraf has said the process should be expedited to enable him to firmly deal with extremism.

13 August 2005

Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) chief Maj Gen Shaukat Sultan said on Friday that Pakistan had proposed including cruise missile tests in the memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the pre-notification of missile tests, but the Indians had rejected it. Pakistan tested its first cruise missile on Thursday, joining a small group of countries capable of producing such projectiles.

12 August 2005

Pakistan on Thursday conducted a successful test flight of its first-ever Ground Launched Cruise Missile (GLCM) - Hatf VII Babur - that can carry nuclear and conventional warheads to a range of 500 km.

11 August 2005

Pakistan and India announced important measures on Wednesday to boost bilateral trade and proposed shipping and aviation talks in September with a rare urgency to widen their business links. Indian Commerce Secretary S.N. Menon and Pakistan's acting Commerce Secretary Syed Asif Shah concluded two days of discussions here with a joint statement on economic and commercial cooperation, which now becomes part of their composite dialogue process. The second round of talks on economic and commercial cooperation between India and Pakistan concluded on Wednesday with a decision to expeditiously clear opening of branches of scheduled banks in each other's countries to facilitate bilateral trade. In the second round of talks on economic issues, India and Pakistan have agreed to take steps to review aviation and shipping agreements.

10 August 2005

Shaukat Aziz said on Tuesday that India, Pakistan and Kashmiris would have to resolve the Kashmir issue, which had held regional peace hostage for a long time. "So far all three stakeholders haven't been able to sit at the table together and resolve the issue according to what all three want," he said after talking on 'The situation in and around South Asia and future prospects for the South Asian region' at the Japan Institute of International Affairs. Pakistan and India on Tuesday appeared to have agreed to a slew of measures, including setting up branches of their banks across the border with prospects of more trade routes opening up, to boost largely untapped bilateral trade. India and Pakistan agreed to hold technical-level talks next month on finding out ways to boost air and shipping links which, if all goes well, may result in the entry of private airlines in the subcontinental skies and emergence of the hitherto-unknown concept of third-country shipping between the two neighbours.

9 August 2005

India rejected Pakistan's proposal of reducing troops in both Kashmirs, along the Line of Control (LoC) and on Siachen, saying that while troops had been redeployed in Kashmir despite the violence last year, there were no reports of Pakistani troops withdrawing from Kashmir. Pakistan-based top militant Sayed Salahuddin has said the conglomerate of Jihadi outfits headed by him was ready to declare a ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir if President Pervez Musharraf or any "major" country assured that India would declare Kashmir as a "disputed" territory and withdraw its troops. Pakistani delegates arrived here on Monday for a two-day discussion with India on bilateral trade amid small concessions and yawning differences on the tariff and non-tariff barriers.

Pakistan firmly believes in non-proliferation of nuclear arms and it had conducted the nuclear tests following the nuclear detonations by India, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz told journalists on the way to Japan. After two days of expert-level talks on nuclear CBMs, the two sides decided on Saturday to set up a hotline between the two foreign secretaries to ensure against a war by accident or by the unauthorized use of nuclear weapons.

8 August 2005

Encouraged by tangible progress at the two-day dialogue on nuclear CBMs, Pakistan and India will hold day-long talks on conventional confidence-building measures (CBMs) here Monday (today) while negotiations on economic cooperation will start on Tuesday. Pakistan may raise India's proposed joint exercises with Britain and United States at the talks on conventional CBMs in New Delhi tomorrow. Pakistan Foreign office spokesman Naeem Khan said his country is trying to verify the genuineness of the reported statement of IAF chief S.P. Tyagi that India would conduct joint exercises with the air forces of US and Britain in Jammu and Kashmir. India and Pakistan will hold two-day talks on economic and commercial cooperation on August 9 and 10 within the framework of the composite dialogue process.

7 August 2005

Pakistan and India will discuss commercial and economic cooperation in New Dehli on August 9 and 10. Commerce Ministry Additional Secretary Syed Asif Shah is likely to lead the Pakistani delegation to India. New Delhi will seek Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status from Islamabad, transit of its goods for export to Afghanistan and Central Asian republics, permission for private Indian airlines and branches of Indian banks to operate in Pakistan and amendment to the Shipping Protocol 1974. India and Pakistan reached an understanding on the proposed Agreement on Pre-Notification of Flight Testing of Ballistic Missiles which commits both sides to pre-notify in a structured format flight testing of ballistic missiles. Trilateral discussions among India, Iran and Pakistan on the proposed Indo-Iranian gas pipeline are expected to begin by the year-end, Mani Shankar Aiyar has said. The process of collecting and sharing information to enable project structuring would be concluded by the end of November, said Mr. Aiyar.

6 August 2005

India and Pakistan today began the third round of expert-level talks on nuclear confidence building measures (CBMs) wherein the two sides reviewed the progress made in the previous two rounds. The two neighbours have been negotiating the issue of prior notification on missile tests but have not arrived at a mutually acceptable decision. Though both sides refused to disclose details of the discussions to reporters, sources said that pre-notification on missile tests was high on the meeting agenda. Pakistan and India have been negotiating the issue of prior notification on missile tests but have failed to arrive at any decision so far. Sources said that there had been a general agreement on the draft of the pre-notification of missile tests.

5 August 2005

The next round of India-Pakistan nuclear CBMs talks begin tomorrow under the shadow of uncertainties that have erupted on implementation of the eight-point areas of cooperation agreed at the Cultural Secretaries-level talks between the two countries that concluded in Islamabad on July 27. As per the timetable, the second round of the dialogue will be completed by the month-end. A high-level Pakistani delegation left for New Delhi on Thursday for talks with their Indian counterparts on nuclear confidence building measures (CBMs) on August 5 and 6. US Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca has said that America was conscious of Pakistan's energy needs and would begin a dialogue to assist Islamabad meet its growing energy requirements.

4 August 2005

A Pakistan's delegation will arrive here on Friday to hold two-day expert-level talks with Indian counterparts on nuclear Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). The nine-member delegation will be led by Additional Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Iran proposed signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with India on Wednesday for setting a timeframe for implementation of the \$7.4 billion Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project. Tehran proposed the MoU at the beginning of a two-day meeting of special Joint Working Group on the pipeline. It is similar to that signed with Pakistan last month and sets a clear timeframe. Pakistan and India will sign the much awaited agreement on advance notification of missile tests at the end of their two-day talks starting tomorrow in New Delhi whereas the proposed foreign secretaries level hotline is likely to be established. The upcoming talks between the South Asian nuclear states would focus on confidence-building measures (CBMs) on nuclear side with both the sides willing to sign the agreement on advance notification of missile tests.

3 August 2005

Gas pipelines from all possible foreign sources will work as India's lifeline in meeting its energy requirements, as domestic production would not be able to meet even half of the country's demand in 20 years, Indian Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar told the Rajya Sabha or upper house of parliament on Tuesday. With an increase in the number of Pakistani visa seekers the Indian high commission is processing more than 14,000 visa applications and issuing almost 10,000 visas every month. Long queues have also gone down because of the high commission's initiative to receive applications through courier service. Requesting anonymity, a high commission official said if visas were rejected, it was mostly because the applications were incomplete.

2 August 2005

Pakistan will reiterate its demand for reduction of forces in Jammu and Kashmir at the talks in New Delhi later this week. Talks on confidence-building measures (CBMs) in conventional defence mechanisms are scheduled for August 5 and 6 and those on nuclear CBMs for August 8. They are part of the ongoing composite dialogue between the countries. India has abandoned its plans to pull out troops from Jammu and Kashmir and has decided to reinforce the military deployment along the Line of Control (LoC) with more troops and weapons. Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee said that India had decided not to withdraw its troops from the occupied valley because of the recent surge in militant infiltration from across the LoC.

1 August 2005

Top commerce officials of Pakistan and India meet in New Delhi on August 9 and 10 to discuss 30 Indian proposals for promotion of bilateral trade and commercial and economic cooperation. Six of the Indian proposals that it would make in the forthcoming meeting of the commerce secretaries are new while 24 were submitted by New Delhi at a similar meeting last year. Meanwhile, the final round of talks between Pakistan and India on the Kishanganga dam has been delayed again, with both sides still struggling to find a 'suitable' time for dialogue. According to sources in the Pakistan Commissionerate of the Indus Basin Water Treaty, the delay has been caused by the Indian refusal to entertain Pakistan's request for talks on July 30, as its delegation (already in India to inspect the Baglihar dam) had completed its work and was available for talks on the Kishanganga dam. India maintained that since many departments were involved in the process it was difficult to gather all of them on the date given by Pakistan.

31 July 2005

India will make six new proposals, including permanently opening the Wagah-Atari border for trade, to Pakistan during talks on commercial and economic cooperation in New Delhi from August 9 to 10, media reports said. Pakistani experts and engineers have completed comprehensive inspection of the controversial 450MW Baglihar Hydel Power project being constructed by India Kashmir.

25 July 2005: A high level seven-member Indian delegation will arrive here today as part of the Pakistan-India composite dialogue. Pakistan and India will discuss various steps to ease visa restrictions for cultural activities and exchanges programmes between the two countries. The subject, favourite of Indians, would be taken up during two-day secretary-level talks. The talks will also encompass release of fishermen arrested by the two countries, provision of more facilities for visitors of religious places on both sides and matters pertaining to the archaeological sites.

30 July 2005

Calling for sustained efforts to ensure the success of the India-Pakistan peace process, participants in the first ever intra-Kashmir dialogue here on Friday laid stress on extending confidence-building measures to other areas as well. A focussed peace process would also prepare the ground for resolving the Kashmir issue, they said. Dr Manmohan Singh appeared to assure parliament on Friday that the Iran gas pipeline project was no issue with the George W. Bush and his administration accepted New Delhi's legitimate requirements from 'all sources' of energy. President Musharraf and Indian PM Manmohan Singh in a telephone conversation agreed to avoid statements that could endanger the ongoing peace process between both countries.

24 July 2005: Two months after the World Bank appointed a Swiss mediator to hear its apprehensions, a five-member team of experts from Pakistan arrived here for a three-day inspection tour of the Baglihar hydel project in Doda district. The team and eight Indian experts arrived from New Delhi and left for Baglihar. They will inspect the dam and reservoir of the project on 25 July.

29 July 2005

Pakistan PM Shaukat Aziz has said that recent "negative statements" from India do not deter his country and it will continue to strive for the resolution of all outstanding issues with New Delhi. India on Thursday said that incidents like the recent attack in Ayodhya would disrupt the peace process with Pakistan. Indian Minister of State for External Affairs E Ahmed told Lok Sabha that New Delhi was eager to promote friendly relations and people-to-people contact between the two countries. Despite the stalemate, India will continue the construction work on Baglihar power project. Meanwhile, Iran, Pakistan and India are going ahead pipeline project despite Bush Administration's serious reservations over it. Informed sources told Dawn on Thursday that the US concern had not made the three countries to put brakes on, or even slow down, the project as talks on its various aspects were continuing. The United States is not pressing India on the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project, said Mani Shankar Aiyar on Thursday.

28 July 2005

The Pakistani expert team that visited Baglihar dam's site on the Indian side of the Line of Control has

found on the ground that the project was violating the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) and its height and design was contradicting provisions of the treaty. After reaching on fruitful decisions on the opening day, the Indian and Pakistani officials cancelled their second round of talks for promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields. The two countries decided on Tuesday for increasing the number of pilgrims up to 3,000 and the visit of Pakistanis to Muslim holy places in India besides hosting Pakistani film festival in India.

27 July 2005

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. The five-member Pakistani Delegation was headed by Ground Water Commission Commissioner Syed Jamaat Ali Shah. Meanwhile, India said that so far there had been no official discussion with the United States on the India-Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline project. On the US concern over this project, Mani Shankar Aiyar told that it was a matter of record that the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act 1996 continued on the US Statute book. Aiyar denied any differences within the government on the \$7.4-billion Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline and said New Delhi was going ahead with the project as scheduled.

26 July 2005

Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar has done well by reiterating the government's resolve that India will continue its efforts to ensure that the Iranian gas pipeline project reaches the stage of fruition. Mani Shankar Aiyar expressed the confidence on Monday that 'political impediments' in the path of the Iran gas pipeline would be overcome and that the project was very much on. A team of Indian and Pakistani experts on Monday visited the Baglihar hydel project in Doda of Jammu and Kashmir. The step was aimed at finding a bilateral solution to the controversy regarding the waters of the 450-mw project on the Chenab. The team will prepare a report on the present status of the project on Tuesday and Wednesday. Pakistani officials ruled out joint control of the billion-dollar Baglihar Dam after visiting the project. Islamabad opposed the project saying when completed it would deprive Punjab of vital irrigation water. Officials said the plant also violates the 44-year-old Indus Water Treaty brokered by the World Bank.

22 July 2005: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has expressed concern about the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons should President Pervez Musharraf be removed from office.

21 July 2005: The Centre has decided to keep Vijay Diwas, marking the 1999 Kargil victory, a low-key affair with no central functions being organised in an attempt to keep the peace dialogue with Pakistan on track despite provocations by militant groups.

12 July 2005: India and Pakistan began talks on formulating a timetable for building the \$4.1-billion Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline with Islamabad stating it would proceed on the project keeping its national interest in mind.

7 July 2005: Vast rural areas of major cities near the Chenab river in Pakistan are facing imminent high flood situation after India without any prior warning released 564,000 cusecs water into the river from Baglihar Dam following collapse of one of its tunnels.

4 July 2005: Pakistan and India have decided to hold nuclear talks on August 2 and 3 in New Delhi with official quarters here saying that a vital agreement on advance warning of missile tests is on the cards. Pakistan asked India to abandon the Wullar barrage project on the Jhelum river as it would cause interference in the flow of water, which was against the terms of the 1960 Indus Water Treaty.

27 June 2005: Pakistan's Water Resources Secretary Ashfaq Hussain arrived in New Delhi for talks with his Indian counterpart on the Tulbul navigational project-cum-Wullar Barrage in Jammu and Kashmir, work on which is stalled for the past 17 years.

25 June 2005: India has rejected Pakistan Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed's application to travel by the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus. The External Affairs Ministry spokesman told mediapersons here on Friday: "The Government of India has processed the application and has declined to accord permission taking into account all relevant aspects involved."

24 June 2005: With the 150th anniversary of that event - hailed by many as India's first war of Independence - approaching, three parts of the subcontinent are coming together to celebrate the uprising. The government announced that both Pakistan and Bangladesh would join India to share the big moment in their shared history.

20 June 2005: Pakistan and India have postponed the two-day talks over Wullar Barrage dispute scheduled for June 24-25 upon the latter's request. Now the two sides are likely to hold the crucial parleys by this month end.

18 June 2005: Pakistan and India have put off their nuclear talks till the last week of July to reach consensus on vital issue before formal deliberations. The South Asian nuclear rivals had earlier agreed to hold the talks on nuclear CBMs in the current month of June.

Pakistan has urged India to remove tariff and non-tariff barriers to enhance trade ties between the two countries. A number of tariff and non-tariff barriers, sources said, had been identified between the two countries, with New Delhi making promises to remove major complaints of the Pakistani exporters and importers and other businessmen.

16 June 2005: India has excluded Pakistanis and Bangladeshis while deciding to grant "Overseas Citizenship" to all people of Indian origin, provided their home countries permit the dual citizenship.

15 June 2005: Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front Chief Yasin Malik's reported statement about an alleged support of Pakistan's information minister Shiekh Rashid to the armed Kashmiri separatists has snowballed into a major diplomatic controversy attracting sharp reaction from India and a possibility of the minister's denial of a permission to travel to Srinagar.

13 June 2005: Giving a cold response to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's statement favouring the conversion of the Siachen glacier into a peace mountain, Pakistan today maintained its stand that India vacate its "aggression" and withdraw its troops to positions held at the time of 1972 Simla Agreement.

12 June 2005: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is the first Indian Prime Minister to visit the Siachen and calls that the time had come to convert the world's highest battlefield, Siachen, into a "peace mountain" without redrawing "established borders".

10 June 2005: With more Indians visiting Pakistan, the Interior Ministry issued fresh visa rules asking visitors to file applications at least eight weeks in advance.

4 June 2005: Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar arrived in Lahore on an official visit. Mr. Aiyar will hold discussions with his Pakistani counterpart on energy cooperation between India and Pakistan.

3 June 2005: Talks between India and Pakistan to resolve differences on the 330-MW Kishenganga Hydro-power project being built on the Jhelum in Jammu and Kashmir remained inconclusive.

1 June 2005: India and Pakistan hold an exclusive meeting on the Kishanganga Storage and Power Project after exchanging the draft of the Indus Water Commission's (IWC) report for 2004-05.

29 May 2005: India and Pakistan commenced talks on Sir Creek, the disputed coastal strip off the Gujarat coast, with a review of the joint survey conducted in January this year to identify the boundary pillars installed in 1924 to demarcate the area.

28 May 2005: India and Pakistan have failed to make headway at the Defence Secretary-level talks on the demilitarisation of Siachen as both sides stuck to their stands.

25 May 2005: Ahead of the defence secretary-level talks in Islamabad on May 26-27, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) decides to stick to India's position that there will be no troop withdrawal from Siachen Glacier-Saltoro Ridge till Pakistan agrees to "authenticate" ground positions.

An Indian delegation, headed by its secretary defence, is arriving here today on a three-day official visit to hold talks on troops withdrawal from Siachen, the world's highest battlefield. The Indian secretary defence will hold talks, already scheduled for May 26-27.

24 May 2005: A 100-member Indian business delegation arrived in Pakistan to discuss trade opportunities after the recent thaw in relations between the two countries.

22 May 2005: Pakistan rejects media reports suggesting there had been some skirmishes with Indian forces near Sir Creek.

13 May 2005: The Indo-Pak Indus Basin commissions agreed on 12 May to continue dialogue to remove Pakistan's objections to the construction of the Krishanganga hydroelectric power plant on Jhelum River. They also signed a summary of the three-day meeting.

11 May 2005: Pakistan and India failed to strike a breakthrough during a 10-hour marathon session on the last day of the first round of their talks on Kishanganga project.

10 May 2005: The third round of talks between the Indian and Pakistani Indus Basin commissions started today. The two countries discussed Pakistan's objections to the Kishanganga hydroelectric power plant on the Neelum River.

Minister for Railways Mian Shamim Haider will formally inaugurate work on a second rail link between Pakistan and India in Mirpurkhas on May 10.

India and Pakistan on the first day of the technical talks on Amritsar-Lahore bus service agreed to begin the service once in a week. The two sides will hold last round of the two-day talks tomorrow.

Pakistani and Indian maritime officials have started talks at Ministry of Defence in Rawalpindi for setting up a communication link between them.

5 May 2005: Pakistan has identified certain tariff and non-tariff barriers being imposed by India to marginalize its exports that includes higher tariffs, import bans, quotas, import licensing, restrictions through state monopolies, certification requirements, inter-provincial movement of goods, limited ports and inland customs posts.

27 April 2005: The second round of Pakistan-India composite dialogue, which was scheduled for April-June, has been delayed and now it is likely to be held between May and September this year.

26 April 2005: The World Bank announced it was ready to appoint a neutral expert to resolve the Baglihar dam water dispute between India and Pakistan.

23 April 2005: Border forces of Pakistan and India have made 'significant progress' on some 'sensitive and delicate' issues and agreed to complete joint verification, repair and maintenance of boundary pillars along the international border and to maintain status quo on the disputed land.

18 April 2005: A joint has been issued after the meeting between President Pervez Musharraf and Indian Premier Manmohan Singh. India and Pakistan agreed that their peace process was "irreversible" and pledged to increase transport links across divided Kashmir, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said reading from a joint statement.

India and Pakistan vowed decided to pursue the proposed \$4b gas pipeline from Iran to South Asia, shrugging off US concerns over the project.

17 April 2005: The Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf arrives in New Delhi.

13 April 2005: With the fate of Indo-Iran gas pipeline remaining uncertain amidst concerns raised by the USA, Pakistan today invited India to join the TAP (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan) pipeline project.

7 April 2005: Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh flagged off the bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad.

2 April 2005: India and Pakistan have launched 'back-channel diplomacy' to prepare for President Pervez

Musharraf's planned visit to New Delhi on April 16.

1 April 2005: Pakistan has denied permission to a number of non-Hurriyat, Kashmiri political leaders, including Mehbooba Mufti, Omar Abdullah and Mohammad Yusuf Tarigami, to travel to Muzaffarabad by bus from Srinagar on April 7.

27 March 2005: After a delay of two decades, the US has decided to sell the latest version of F-16 fighter planes to Pakistan. The number of aircraft to be supplied is subject to negotiations, but the State Department spokesman made it clear that these would be new planes and not those manufactured for Pakistan in the 1980s.

23 March 2005: Commemorating the 13th century visit of famous Sufi saint Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya to Multan in Pakistan, a march for peace to the same destination was flagged off from New Delhi by eminent peace activists.

21 March 2005: A 92-member delegation from Pakistan today joined the re-enactment of the Dandi March organised by the All-India Congress Committee to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the historic yatra led by Mahatma Gandhi.

18 March 2005: Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee today sent out a cautious signal to Washington that the supply of weapons including F-16 fighter planes, by the USA to Pakistan could impact the composite dialogue between New Delhi and Islamabad.

16 March 2005: Pakistan Foreign Affairs Minister Khursheed Mahmood Kasuri says there is no need for third party mediation on Kashmir issue.

15 March 2005: The Pakistan government has issued release orders for 589 Indian prisoners as a gesture of goodwill towards New Delhi, an official statement said.

14 March 2005: Lahore, the capital of Pakistan's Punjab province, accorded an unprecedented reception to the Chief Minister of Indian Punjab, Amarinder Singh, who started his four-day Pakistan visit this morning.

9 March 2005: Pakistan wants India to remove restrictive trade policies, like non-tariff barriers, which inhibit export growth from Pakistan, to allow consideration of other issues, like the Most-Favoured Nation (MFN) status.

A team of doctors of Pakistani origin has offered to adopt an Indian village to take care of all its healthcare needs.

Pakistan has built bunkers and reinforced defence structures in Tanghdar, Batalik, Kargil and Nowshera sectors since the November 2003 ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC), Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee said.

8 March 2005: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said that India had accepted Pakistan's proposal for an 'energy corridor' and the Indian petroleum minister would be invited for talks on the project.

7 March 2005: Pakistan, engaged in improving relations with India, said it was preparing for an early release of 700 Indian prisoners whose nationality had been confirmed by the Indian Government.

6 March 2005: Hordes of Pakistani cricket fans today swooped down on the border checkpost at Wagah for the first Test between India and Pakistan in Mohali.

2 March 2005: The Pakistan Prime Minister, Shaukat Aziz, said that Islamabad was going ahead with the arrangements to begin the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service from April 7.

Over 900 Indian fishermen and civilians who have completed their jail terms are expected to be released soon, the Pakistan Foreign Office said.

1 March 2005: The Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, has ordered the immediate release of 200 Indian civilian prisoners who have completed their term in Pakistan's jails.

28 February 2005: India made it clear that it would go ahead with the controversial Baglihar dam project in Jammu and Kashmir that Pakistan has taken to the World Bank for arbitration.

22-23 February 2005: The two-day meeting of Joint Study Group (JSG) (on economic cooperation), set-up Working/Sub-Groups on Customs Cooperation & Trade Facilitation and Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs).

15-17 February 2005: Indian Foreign Minister Natwar Singh's three-day visit to Pakistan. Agreement on Srinagar-Muzaffarabad was concluded; an agreement for operationalising the new bus service between Amritsar and Lahore also was reached.

29 January 2005: Pakistan arrests 43 Indian fishermen and seizes their seven boats off the coast of Karachi for allegedly entering its territorial waters.

19 January 2005: Terming the firing from across the border in Jammu and Kashmir as "violation of ceasefire", India take up the issue with Pakistan.

10 January 2005: Pakistan asks India to suspend work on the Baglihar dam, warning that the issue could sour peace process between the two countries.

6 January 2005: Pakistan repatriates 266 Indian fishermen, caught on the charge of illegally entering the Pakistani waters, via the Wagah border crossing.

5 January 2005: India and Pakistan have launched the joint survey of Sir Creek, the disputed coastal strip off Gujarat coast, to identify the boundary pillars installed in 1924.

4-5 January 2005: India and Pakistan hold bilateral talks on Baglihar Dam issue. The talks fail to produce

any positive outcome except exchange of technical data.

31 December 2004: India and Pakistan exchange lists of their nuclear installations and facilities covered under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack Against Nuclear Installations and Facilities.

27-28 December 2004: Foreign Secretary level talks to review second round of Composite Dialogue in Islamabad pledge to carry the peace process forward and explore other confidence-building measures.

14-15 December 2004: Talks on nuclear and conventional confidence building measures end with no tangible outcome. The two sides, however, decide to meet again.

14-15 December 2004: India and Pakistan in two day talks on Sir Creek have agreed to begin a joint survey of boundary pillars in the disputed area.

12-13 December 2004: The two-day delegation-level talks on drug-trafficking end with both countries resolving to wage war against the menace of narcotics and psychedelic substances.

7-8 December 2004: Two-day talks on proposed bus service between Srinagar and Muzafarabad fails on the issue of travel documents to be used by commuters. The two countries decide to talk again.

4 December 2004: Pakistan and India on Saturday agreed to hold next round of talks in Karachi/Islamabad to carry forward discussions on draft proposals for finalising Memorandum of Understanding to establish hotlines between the Maritime Security Agency and Indian Coast Guards.

2 December 2004: Commanders of the Border Security Force (BSF) and Pakistan Rangers reach an agreement to delegate powers to the area commanders to make a ground assessment and resolve a border dispute.

2-3 December 2004: Indian and Pakistani Railway delegations meet in Islamabad to discuss on the restoration of the Munabao-Khokhrapar rail link.

25 November 2004: India accepts to reopen Khokhrapar-Munabao rail link between Pakistan and India by October next year

23-24 November 2004: Pakistani Prime Minister, ShaikatAziz visits India.

5-6 September 2004: Review the status of the Composite Dialogue by the Foreign Ministers.

29-30 July 2004: Composite Dialogue on Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Navigation Project

3-4 August 2004: Composite Dialogue on Promotion of Friendly Exchanges

5-6 August 2004: Composite Dialogue on Demilitarising the Siachen Glacier

6-7 August 2004: Composite Dialogue on Demarcation of the international boundary between the two countries in the Sir Creek area

10-11 August 2004: Composite Dialogue on Terrorism and Drug Trafficking

11-12 August 2004: Economic and Commercial Cooperation

4 September 2004: Review progress in the Composite Dialogue and report to the Foreign Ministers

27-28 June 2004: Composite Dialogue on Confidence Building Measures and Jammu & Kashmir
6 January 2004: India, Pakistan announce resumption of bilateral talks on all issues, including Kashmir, to begin in February.
5 January 2004: Vajpayee and Pakistan President Gen. Pervez Musharraf meet for the first time since 2001.
2 May 2003: India and Pakistan agree to take steps to restore diplomatic relations and resume travel links.
28 April 2003: Pakistan responds to Vajpayee's offer, proposes a series of peace gestures.
19 April 2003: During visit to Kashmir, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee makes surprise offer to resume dialogue with Pakistan.
December 2001: Suicide attack on Indian parliament leaves 14 dead. India blames Pakistan's spy agency. New Delhi severs diplomatic ties, cuts travel links and moves hundreds of thousands of troops to the frontier, putting military on war alert. Islamabad denies the charge and matches India's moves.
December 1999: Hijacking of Indian Airlines flight IC 814.
May-July 1999: India and Pakistan fight a limited 11-week battle in the Kargil region of Kashmir.
May 1998: India conducts five nuclear tests. Pakistan carries out its first nuclear tests.
November 1989: Islamic insurgency starts in Kashmir.
May 1974: India conducts first nuclear test.
July 1972: India and Pakistan sign bilateral agreement at Shimla.
December 1971: A third war breaks out over Bangladesh. Pakistan loses its eastern part.
January 1966: Both the neighbours sign a Moscow-sponsored peace deal at Tashkent
September 1965: A second war breaks out.
October 1947: War breaks out between India and Pakistan on Kashmir.
14-15 August 1947: India and Pakistan gain independence from Britain and come into being as two separate entities.

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History of pakistan and india Syllabus

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Marks : 200

PAPER - I (Marks:100)

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712-1857 (Excluding arrival of European nations decline and fall of Muslim Rule)

Arrival of the Muslims in the sub-continent, foundation of Muslim Rule – administrative system and reforms under the Sultans and the Mughals:

Structure of the Muslim society.

Industry, trade and commerce under the Muslim patronage, the Army, Financial administration, Zakat, Ushr, Kharaj etc.

Administration of Justice - Sufis and Ulema – the Madrassahs and Maktabas - Auqaf
Art and architecture. literature, sports, dress - Muslim contribution to scientific knowledge
- Policy of the Muslim rules towards non-Muslims. The spirit and legacy of Muslim civilization.

PAPER – II (Marks-100)

Part A: 1857-1947

Arrival of European nations—decline and fall of Muslim Rule, contributions of Shah Wali Ullah, Syed

Ahmed Shaheed and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan towards regeneration of the Muslim - Hindu reform movements and anti-Muslim role of Hindu leaders.

Constitutional reforms of the British Government and growth of the Political Parties - Indian National Congress. All India Muslim league Partition of Bengal. Simla Deputation. Role of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk. Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk.

Syed Ameer Ali, the Agha Khan and other Muslim leaders Lucknow pact: Khilafat movement Contribution of Maulana Muhammad Ali, Allama Iqbal, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad All Jinnah for Muslim uplift and welfare.

Nehru report, Quaid-i-Azam's Fourteen Points. Allama Iqbal's Allahabad Address 1930, Round Table Conference. The Congress role in the provinces, Lahore Resolution 1940, various missions and plans for the partition of the sub-continent.

Quaid-i-Azam as an organizer of the Muslim League Muslim leader and maker of Pakistan.

PAKISTAN SINCE 1947

Part B

Constitution making in Pakistan—various attempts at constitution making. Difficulties in establishing a parliamentary democracy. imposition of various Martial Laws, nature of Pakistan's economy. development plights. Role of foreign aid.

Separation of East Pakistan, causes and effect: Pakistan and the world - major powers, Islamic world, relations with India.

Social and intellectual trends after 1947. Contribution of Quaid-e-Azam as First Governor General and Liaqat All Khan as first Prime Minister.

Suggested Books

- | | Title | Author |
|----|--|---------------|
| 1. | Constitutional Development in Pakistan | G.W. Choudhry |

2. Constitutional History of India Keith A.B.
3. Early India & Pakistan Wheeler Mortimer
4. Five Thousand Years of Pakistan Wheeler R.E.M.
5. Government and Politics in Pakistan Ahmed Mushtaq
6. Pakistan & India G.W. Choudhry
7. Political System in Pakistan Khalid Bin Saeed
8. Pakistan; The Formative Phase Khalid Bin Saeed
9. Studies in Islamic Culture in Indian Environment Aziz Ahmed
10. The Making of Pakistan Richard Symond
11. Political Parties in Pakistan Vol. I & II Afzal, Rafique
12. The Great Divide; Britain, India and Pakistan Hodson, H.V.
13. The Pakistan Experience - State and Religion Khan, Asghar
14. A History of India Kulke, Hermann & Rothermond, Dietmar
15. Pakistan in Transition Wriggins, W.H. (ed)