INTERNÂTIONAL



Italian Prime minister Silvio Berlusconi (r) welcomes French President Jacques Chirac (C) and Foreign minister Dominique de Villepin upon arrival vesterday at the Palazzo dei Congressi in Rome for the sixth Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) since the EU was founded in 1957. European leaders opened a final round of talks yesterday on the European Union's first-

EU pledges to boost its world role

France urges not to open Pandora's box over constitution blueprint

European leaders launching talks on the European Union's first ever constitution pledged yesterday to boost its role on the world stage, a draft joint statement said.

They also underlined that further integration of the bloc, which expands from 15 to 25 members next year, was Europe's "essential calling," according to the draft obtained by AFP.

"The imminent enlargement constitutes a historical moment which .. extends the possibility of promoting shared values and of conferring weight and authority to

Europe's role in the world," it said. "European integration is our continent's essential calling as the instrument for a more efficacious international role for the Union,

added the two-page draft. The "Declaration of Rome" was

IANS, PTI, Washington/Islamabad

Pakistan's testing of a ballistic

missile that can carry nuclear weap-

ons prompted the US to urge

restraint on the part of India and

Department briefing, spokesman

Richard Boucher ruled out any

escalation in regional tensions

because of the test by Pakistan on

He. however, said India and

Pakistan should exercise restraint in

their weapons and missiles

programmes and resist deploying

Ghaznavi missile -- rocket with a

Pakistan's test of the Hatf-III

nuclear-armed ballistic missiles

Speaking at the State

Pakistan in their nuclear activities.

set to be agreed by leaders of the 25 current and incoming EU member states, as they launched a twomonth intergovernmental conference (IGC) aimed at finalizing the first ever constitution. The current Italian EU presi-

dency hopes that the talks will result in a new Treaty of Rome, echoing the 1957 text which founded the European Economic Community, the EU's forerunner. But differences remain on a

wide number of points, from voting rights to mentioning God, and analysts forecast that the IGC may stretch on into early next year. The current Italian EU presi-

dency wants to complete negotiations by December, to pave the way for the new treaty to be signed before European parliament elections next June.

The EU draft statement reaffirmed the EU leaders' "expecta-

US urges India, Pakistan

to show nuclear restraint

Islamabad rejects Delhi's offer of joint war on terror

range of up to 290 km capable of

hitting targets in India -- came as

Deputy Secretary of State Richard

Armitage left Washington on a visit

the US considered the test a

"slightly provocative action" ahead

of Armitage's talks with Pakistan

President Pervez Musharraf,

Boucher said: "The missile that was

tested, which was a Hatf-III short-

range ballistic missile, it was the

latest in a series of tests of this

tions are such that it doesn't seem to

have heightened tensions in the

"I have to say initial public reac-

"But we have continued to urge

To a specific question on whether

to Pakistan and Afghanistan.

tion of a conclusion of the constitutional negotiations in advance of the (European elections) in order to allow European citizens to cast their vote in full awareness of the future architecture of the Union." Meanwhile, French President

Jacques Chirac urged his fellow EU leaders Saturday not to open a "Pandora's box" by seeking substantial changes to a draft EU constitution, as they launched talks to finalize the text.

Chirac said every country had "reasons for dissatisfaction" with the draft constitution, drawn up over 16 months by a convention chaired by former French president, he said.

"But to contest this or that element of the compromise would inevitably open a Pandora's box and could lead to the failure of the intergovernmental conference," he

both Pakistan and India to take

steps to restrain their nuclear

weapon and their missile

programmes, including no opera-

tional deployment of nuclear-

dismissed as "ridiculous" India's

offer that Islamabad join it in the fight

against terrorism and accused New

Delhi of unleashing an "apparatus of

Foreign Ministry spokesman

Masood Khan told reporters here

that Indian External Affairs Minister

Yashwant Sinha's remarks made at

India-Pak business forum in New

Delhi on Friday suggesting Pakistan

join fight against terrorism is "ridicu-

PTI adds: Pakistan on Saturday

armed ballistic missiles.

repression" in Kashmir.

Leak probe White House faces Oct 7 deadline

REUTERS, Washington

White House employees faced an October 7 deadline to turn over documents as the investigation into the leak of an undercover CIA officer's name expanded to the State and Defence departments, administration officials said on

White House Counsel Alberto Gonzales said all employees have until 5 p.m. EDT on Oct. 7 to hand deliver to his office documents for the investigation into who disclosed the identity of a CIA officer whose husband had challenged President Bush's claims about Iraq's weapons

Meanwhile, the State Department and the Pentagon confirmed they had received requests to preserve all records in the Justice Department's expanding criminal investigation.

Pak enemy lies within: Musharraf

IANS, AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan does not face an externa threat but one from within in the form of religious extremism, President Pervez Musharraf has said.

"There is no external threat to Pakistan. The enemy lies within," he said at the annual dinner of the All Pakistan Textile Mills Association here Friday night

Hours before he spoke, gunmen in the southern port city of Karachi sprayed fire on a bus carrying Shiite Muslims on their way to a mosque, killing six and wounding as many. It was the third major attack on

Shiite Muslims this year. Some 60 people have been killed in the Musharraf did not directly refer to

the Karachi attack during his

Contending that sectarian and religious extremism could harm Pakistan internally and externally, he reiterated his government's resolve to "fight the unenlightened exponents of our great religion".

Israel seals off Palestinian areas for holiday

US slams Tel Aviv's fencing move

Palestinians woke yesterday to a total closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip ahead of the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, while the United States criticized Israel's decision to erect a controversial security barrier and boost settlement activity.

"Based on a decision by the political authorities and the assessment of the situation, a complete closure of Judea and Samaria (West Bank) and the Gaza Strip will start on Friday ... through to the Yom Kippur," which ends on Monday night, Israel's army said in a state-

The holiday -- during which airports, ports and borders are closed -- is the holiest in Judaism. Israel also appeared determined

to extend the separation barrier which will cut deep into the West

Bank and expand three settlements, aggravating its US ally which warned the moves would stand in the way of the already waning peace process.

which is aimed at preventing infiltrations by Palestinians militants, was completed in July and the Israeli cabinet has just approved the phased construction of the next

US President George W. Bush has repeatedly called the separation fence "a problem" and urged the Israeli government to review its In an attempt to appease

Washington, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced last week that large settlement blocs would not be included inside the main

But the separate horseshoeshaped fences built around the communities will be later linked to

the barrier, meaning a de facto annexation of large stretches of Palestinian land.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell told the Washington Post he was not fooled by the plan in an interview published Saturday.

"The gaps in and of themselves, do not satisfy me... The question is, what becomes of the gaps in due course?

"The more you intrude into Palestinian areas, and the more it looks like it could be a contiguous intrusion around large sections of Palestinian land that would prejudge subsequent negotiations as to what a Palestinian state may look like, that's a problem," he said.

Palestinians charge the Israeli fence aims to grab more West Bank land so as to push their future state's borders eastwards and substantially reduce its size.

"The Israeli government decision

to continue building this wall shows it is not serious in its quest for a peaceful settlement and intends to unilaterally determine borders and prevent the establishment of a viable Palestinian state, nate Ahmed Qorei said Friday.

Meanwhile, two Palestinians including an 18-month-old baby boy, died of critical head injuries Saturday, Palestinian medics said.

The child was named as Abdelgader al-Badrasawi. He had been wounded by Israeli tank fire last Thursday in Khan Yunis, in the southern Gaza Strip.

Said Qassem, 42, died of injuries he had sustained six months ago when Jewish settlers opened fire in his direction near the northern West

Indian troops kill 14 rebels in Kashmir

AFP, Srinagar

The Indian army killed 14 Kashmiri rebels in stepped-up counterinsurgency operations in Kashmir. military officials said yesterday.

Indian troops killed four militants Saturday after intercepting guerrillas trying to cross from Pakistani Kashmir at Balnoi in the southern Poonch district, defence spokesman Lieutenant Colonel B.S. Rathore said.

Another four rebels were killed late Friday in northwestern Gurez, another sector near the Line of Control, the de facto border with Pakistan, defence sources said in the summer capital Srinagar.

They said around 24 militants have been killed in Gurez in the past week as they infiltrate the frontier known as the Line of Control. Six more rebels were killed in

overnight operations in the northern Kupwara and Baramulla districts and the southern Udhampur district army officials said.

US forces in combat stress

from over 300 mass graves throughout the country, most of them of Muslims, according to forensic experts.

Extended tours of duty in Iraq and by forces resisting the US-led occupation have sharpened the US military's focus on combat stress in the ranks.

"It's not something we'd even look at in the first six months," said Maior Blain Reeves. Commanding Officer for the 1st Battalion 101st Airborne Division based here in the northern deserts of Iraq.

But he said a decision in Washington to extend tours of duty in Iraq from six months to a year had led to programmes being established to reduce fatigue over the longer term.

This includes R and R (rest and recuperation) with two-week trips home and more down time at base camp, as well as building-up facilities with modern conveniences such as television, Internet, movies, clubs and, where possible, a swimming pool

we've looked clearly at," Reeves

Forensic experts recover Friday the remains of some of 629 people from Bosnia's largest known mass grave near Zvornik in

the east. The victims were believed to be Muslim civilians who were executed when Bosnian Serb forces captured the area

at the outset of the war. Eight years since the end of Bosnia's 1992-95 war, more than 18,000 bodies have been exhumed

combat stress is looming as a major factor if Washington and senior brass are to maintain morale. Staff Sergeant Jon Thibodeau

said every soldier in Iraq will endure a mild case of combat stress at some point, and this had been compounded by the style of warfare being waged by anti-US forces. He said the invasion of Iraq was

involved set tasks, which married with the troops' expectations in the But now soldiers are faced with ambushes and the dreaded "impro-

easier to deal with because it

vised explosive devices" or roadside bombs and booby-traps which Thibodeau, a medic, said was unnerving for the troops. "And if they decided to extend

our tours by another six months then that will really put everyone on

Symptoms of mild combat stress include being startled by sudden sounds, irritability, vomiting and

"It's the thousand yard stare you

see in some men." Thibodeau said. He said mild cases were common with only handful of moderate to severe cases being reported in

Mild combat stress is brought about more by fear of what might happen, such as dying, of not doing a job that could lead to someone's

death or fear of killing an opponent.

Reeves said this plus a routine of 24 hours a day, seven days a week demanded by the military where "your living on top of each other," and time out to relax becomes

However, extreme cases can prove tragic and are often brought on by a severe experience where a soldier endures a pain that could be delivered by killing, or witnessing a scene he could never cope with

Saddam gave N Korea \$10m for missile tech

AFP, Washington

Few people hoodwinked Saddam Hussein, but North Korea fleeced the former Iraqi strongman out of 10 million dollars, a leading US weapons expert said Friday.

David Kay, who heads the Iraqi Survey Group (ISG) hunting for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, said Saddam's regime handed over 10 million dollars to North Korea for missile technology that was never delivered. "The Iraqis actually advanced

the North Koreans 10 million dollars. In late 2002, the North Koreans came to the Iragis as a result of the Iraqis' inquiry: 'Where is the stuff we

The North Koreans said "Sorry, there's so much US attention on us, that we cannot deliver it," Kay

"The Iragis said 'well, we don't like this, but give us our 10 million dollars back.

When the US-led invasion of Iraq started on March 19, the North Koreans were still refusing to give back the 10 million dollars, Kay said.

"It's a lesson of negotiating with the North Koreans," Kay joked on a telephone conference call with

US-led bases

attacked in Afghanistan

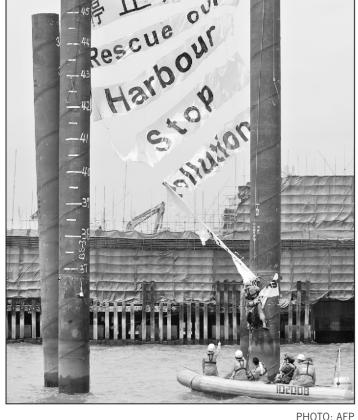
AFP, Bagram Air Base

Two US-led military bases came under rocket attack in southeastern Afghanistan, but there were no coalition casualties, a US military spokesman said yesterday. "A rocket landed in the vicinity of

the coalition fire base at Zormat yesterday (Friday)," Colonel Rodney Davis told reporters at the coalition's Bagram Air Base headquarters 50 km north of Kabul. Zormat base, some 100 km

south of Kabul, has been attacked several times since it was set up following a major Afghan-coalition oint anti-Taliban operation aunched in July.

Militants also fired at least one rocket at the coalition base in neighbouring Khost province.



Protesters from the environmental group Greenpeace hang a 10x8 metre banner carrying the message "Rescue Our Harbour" on a reclamation site in Hong Kong Victoria Harbour yesterday. Conservationist here have taken the government to court over the reclamation project forcing the suspension of building until a final judgement on whether the project is legal is handed down.

Speculation heats up ahead of Nobel science prizes

REUTERS, Stockholm

Black holes and cosmic microwave radiation studies, seeking to delve into the afterglow of the universe's creation, were two front-running fields tipped for glory on Friday for the 2003 Nobel science awards. Nobel pundits said the field was

wide open and the speculation intense ahead of next week's prizes. "It's like playing the stockmarket. There's always rumors," said Phil Schewe of the American Institute of

Stockholm's Karolinska Institute announces medicine on Monday while the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences presents the physics award on Tuesday and chemistry on Wednesdav

In physics, leading names nclude Americans George Smoot and John Mather for research on disturbances in cosmic microwave radiation, to peer into the first seconds after the Big Bang. Russian Andrei Linde and MIT's

Alan Guth could be in the running for

developing the so-called Inflation

theory which explains the universe's

early existence and rapid expan Sumio lijima, Cees Dekker,

Phaedon Avouris and Charles M. Lieber, are admired for work on carbon nanotubes, tiny sheets of rolled graphite which can hold electrical currents 100 times higher than metal wires and could shrink electronics radically. Cambridge University's Stephen

Hawking is in contention for his work on black holes. "One Nobel committee member told me Hawking is the biggest name since Einstein," said Karin Bojs, science editor of the Swedish daily Dagens Nyheter

Makoto Kobayashi and Toshihide Maskawa are tipped for work on CP Violation -- a theory which explains the relationship of matter and antimatter and the structure of the universe. In chemistry, pioneers of the mapping the human genetic code

are under focus including Craig Venter of Celera Genomics and Francis Collins of the US National Human Genome Research Institute and Larry Kricka at University of Pennsylvania.



Canadian soldiers stand and salute yesterday during a memorial service for two colleagues killed in a land-mine explosion in Kabul. The two soldiers who were serving with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) were killed on October 2, when the vehicle they were travelling in hit a landmine in the Afghan

US knew Iraq had no WMD, says Mahathir

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad yesterday expressed scepticism over US claims that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction.

"I don't believe that they didn't know. If they suspected that there were (WMD in Iraq), they should have given (former chief United Nations' weapons inspector) Hans Blix a chance to carry out a full investigation," the veteran politician was quoted as saying by the Bernama news agency.

US President George W. Bush's decision to attack Iraq was hasty and made without sufficient proof, particularly since no weapons of mass destruction have been found in that country until today, Mahathir

In the absence of strong proof, Mahathir said it was a lie for the United States to attack Iraq.

It was sad that the Bush administration made the drastic decision to attack Iraq, killing so many people in the process, based merely on grounds that were not fully proven, he said.

Mahathir was asked to comment on the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) report

Iraq had not found any stockpiles of biological or chemical weapons six months after the US launched a war against Baghdad to remove such a threat The Malaysian government fiercely opposed the US-led war on

that a US-led team hunting for weapons of mass destruction in

the country. The 77-year-old Mahathir, due to retire at the end of this month after 22 years in power, is an out-

Iraq and has called for a greater

United Nations role in rebuilding

spoken critic of many US policies. Former chief UN inspector Blix has said the United Nations charter allowed self-defence against an attack, but that the US-led coalition

had failed to prove Iraq posed a

manifest and imminent" threat --

the UN criteria for military action. "The intelligence was not so strong in reality that it could be said to be manifest.

"And the second one would be the imminence of it. If they can develop weapons of mass destruction in five years or 10 years, well that certainly is not imminent.'