



PHOTO: AFP

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh gestures as he speaks with Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf prior to a joint press conference Friday at the Rossevelt hotel in New York after their one-to-one talks.

'Long, rough road ahead for Indo-Pak peace'

AFP, New Delhi

The leaders of India and Pakistan have brightened South Asia's peace hopes with a feel-good first meeting but skirted away from tough issues such as their half-century old conflict over Kashmir, analysts said yesterday.

New Delhi.

The joint statement avoided direct mention of sensitive subjects such as India's demands that Pakistan cut off alleged support for "terrorists" fighting Indian rule in Kashmir.

Institute of Strategic Studies at Islamabad's Quaid-e-Azam University, interpreted Singh's statement as meaning the two countries had "turned the corner on the issue of Kashmir and cross-border terrorism".

Top US officials clash over Iraq election

REUTERS, Washington

Iraq's elections should be nationwide, a top Bush administration official said Friday, clashing publicly with Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's suggestion that voting might not take place in the most violent areas.

election that is free and open, and that has to be open to all citizens," Armitage told a House of Representatives committee. "We've got to do our best efforts to get in troubled areas. ... I think we're going to have these elections in all parts of the country," he said.

Allawi, US seek int'l meet on Iraq next month

Baghdad appeals to world leaders to put aside differences on war

AFP, United Nations

The US administration and Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi are trying to organize an international conference in October to boost Iraq's electoral process, Secretary of State Colin Powell said in a report published yesterday.

Iran," the paper said, without giving a possible venue for the meeting. The report came a day after Allawi appealed to world leaders in a speech at the UN General Assembly to put aside their differences over the war and help rebuild his shattered nation.

future for the people of Iraq," he said. He said his nation was facing "a struggle between the Iraqi people and its vision for the future of peace and democracy, and the terrorists and extremists and the remnants of the Saddam regime who are targeting this noble dream."

Taliban step up plans to disrupt Afghan polls: US

REUTERS, AFP, Kabul

The Taliban and their al-Qaeda allies are stepping up plans to disrupt Afghanistan's first direct presidential election on Oct. 9, the head of the US-led coalition said yesterday.

architects of the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States. AFP adds: The German army is planning to build a new military camp south of Kabul to boost security ahead of Afghanistan's general elections set for early 2005, a German defense ministry spokesman said yesterday in Berlin.

Sudan 'foils coup plot'

BBC ONLINE

Sudan says it has foiled a coup plot by backers of detained Islamist opposition leader, Hassan al-Turabi. A statement by the Interior Ministry said members of Mr Turabi's Popular National Congress party had planned to carry out a coup after Friday prayers.



PHOTO: AP

US Secretary of State Colin Powell (R) greets Bangladesh Foreign Minister Morshed Khan at the Waldorf-Astoria hotel in New York on Thursday prior to their talks.

Bush, Kerry launch own war over Iraq

AFP, Janesville

US President George W. Bush on Friday slammed Democratic rival John Kerry for questioning Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi's upbeat forecasts for his country. Kerry in turn said that he would run "a tougher, smarter, more effective" war on terror than the Republican president who he said had rushed to invade Iraq instead of concentrating on catching Osama bin Laden.

your ally in Iraq feels like you question his credibility," Bush said a day after welcoming Allawi to the White House to help spread his optimistic view of the war-torn nation's future. Allawi and Bush downplayed the scope of the insurgency in Iraq and insisted national elections would go ahead as scheduled in January.

Attack on senior Pakistani official: 3 cops killed

AFP, Quetta

At least three policemen were killed in an attack by unidentified gunmen yesterday on a senior Pakistani police officer in this southwestern provincial capital, police said. Deputy police superintendent Nisar Kazmi was critically wounded in the attack that also left two other policemen with bullet injuries.

'Immigrants victims of forced labour in US'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Los Angeles

Modern slavery not only exists but thrives in the US, especially in states where immigrants abound, according to a new study. The study, named "Hidden Slaves: Forced Labour in the US", found that forced labour was prevalent in at least 90 cities across the country, reports Xinhua.

Human Rights Centre and the Washington-based anti-slavery group Free the Slaves conducted the study, which covered the period from 1998 to 2003. Most victims of forced labour were trafficked into the US from at least 38 different countries, with China, Mexico and Vietnam topping the list. Some were born in the US and held captive.

Number of US 'green cards' drops

AFP, Washington

The stringent security measures adopted after the September 11 attacks in 2001 contributed to a 34 percent drop in the number of permanent-resident visas awarded in the United States last year, according to a government report. In fiscal year 2003, nearly 706,000 immigrants were given permanent-resident visas, known as "green cards," compared with nearly 1.1 million immigrants in fiscal 2002, according to a Department of Homeland Security report.

Taiwan vows to retaliate Chinese attacks amid anti-arms deal protest

AFP, Taipei

Taiwan Premier Yu Shyi-kun yesterday vowed to retaliate should China launch missile attacks against the island as thousands of Taiwanese took to the streets to protest against the government's massive arms package. "You (China) have the capability to destroy me and Taiwan should have the capability to counter. You strike me with 100 missiles and I should at least strike back with 50," Yu told a gathering of government officials.

A "love and peace" concert is scheduled to take place outside the Presidential Office in the evening. Organizers expected more than 10,000 people to take part of the rally but police estimated a turnout of about half that. Many protesters also held cups of "bubble milk tea," a popular drink in Taiwan, to mock the defense ministry's "drinking less bubble milk tea for arms procurement" advertisement campaign.

Thousands in Florida asked to flee hurricane

AP, Fort Pierce

Hurricane Jeanne forced the evacuations of more than 800,000 residents yesterday as it bore down on Florida with winds near 105 mph and threatened to strengthen into a major storm. If it hits Florida's Atlantic Coast today as predicted, it would be the fourth hurricane to slam the state this season, a scenario unmatched in more than a century. It would be a Category 3 storm with winds of at least 111 mph if it gains strength as predicted.



PHOTO: AFP

Asif Ali Zardari, husband of exiled former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto, flashes the victory sign following his arrival at the airport in Lahore yesterday. Zardari arrived in Lahore for a hearing on drugs charges against him.