

CRS Report for Congress

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Pakistan: Chronology of Recent Events

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Summary

This report provides a reverse chronology of recent events involving Pakistan and Pakistan-U.S. relations.¹ For a substantive review, see CRS Issue Brief IB94041, *Pakistan-U.S. Relations*. This report will be updated monthly.

02/05/04 — President **Musharraf granted a full pardon to Abdul Qadeer Khan**, the founder of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program and national hero, for all activities related to his sharing of nuclear technology with other countries. Musharraf cited Khan's contributions to the nation as grounds for the pardon, which had been recommended by his cabinet, and he identified "money" as the motivator for the illicit activities of Pakistani scientists. Musharraf also said that he will not hand over any relevant documents to International Atomic Energy Agency investigators, nor allow them to inspect Pakistan's nuclear sites. The United States responded by saying that the decision to pardon is an internal Pakistani matter, and expressed a belief that Pakistan "is taking serious efforts to end the activities of a dangerous [proliferation] network." **The United States also "expects that Pakistan will share information that they're unearthing ... with the international community."** On the same day, Director of Central Intelligence Tenet said that **the U.S. had identified and penetrated Khan's hidden proliferation network years ago.**

Acronyms

LOC:	Line of Control (Kashmir)
MMA:	Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, a coalition of six Islamist political parties
NWFP:	North West Frontier Province
SAARC:	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

¹ Sources include, but are not limited to, the U.S. Department of State Washington File, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, BBC News, Associated Press, Reuters News, Agence France-Presse, *Dawn* (Karachi), *Daily Times* (Lahore), and *The News* (Karachi).

- 02/04/04** — **A.Q. Khan confessed on Pakistan state television** to “atone” for his role in the sales of Pakistani nuclear weapons technologies and materials abroad. He took full responsibility for his actions and the actions of his subordinates, gave assurances that such activities would not take place in the future, and emphasized that “there was never ever any kind of authorization for these activities by the government.” On the same day, press reports indicated that Libyan officials paid more than \$50 million for nuclear warhead blueprints believed to have been provided by Khan, and that Pakistan had formally charged four of its nuclear scientists with transferring nuclear technology to other countries.
- 02/03/04** — A White House spokesman said, “President Musharraf has assured us that [the government of Pakistan] was not involved in any kind of proliferation.” On the same day, in the course of a policy speech, Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Rocca said that the United States is making a long-term commitment to improving the lives of the Pakistani people and “helping Pakistan improve education, expand economic opportunities, and restore a fully functioning democracy.”
- 02/02/04** — Pakistani opposition parties, independent experts, and relatives of detained nuclear scientists expressed doubt that Pakistan’s nuclear technologies could have been shared with Iran, Libya, and North Korea without the knowledge of top government officials. (Press reports indicated that A.Q. Khan had told investigators that former Army Chief (1988-1991) Gen. Mirza Aslam Beg had been aware of transfers to Iran and that Army Chief Gen. Musharraf had been aware of transfers to North Korea.) On the same day, **the United States welcomed the investigation of nuclear scientists** as a “sign of how seriously the [Pakistani] government takes the commitments that President Musharraf has made to make sure that his nation is not a source of prohibited technologies for other countries.”
- 02/01/04** — The Tripartite Commission of U.S., Afghan, and Pakistani officials met in Kabul to sign an agreement on increasing their intelligence sharing.
- 01/31/04** — **A.Q. Khan was fired from his post** as science advisor to the prime minister after investigators concluded that he made millions of dollars from the illicit sales of blueprints and other nuclear technical materials to both Iran and Libya.
- 01/30/04** — Speaking on the floor of the House, Rep. Frank Pallone claimed that “Musharraf is in denial about his country’s participation in aiding such countries as North Korea, Iran, and Libya” with nuclear weapons technology. On the same day, a press report indicated that one Pakistani shepherd was killed and two others seriously wounded when U.S. forces fired on them after they mistakenly crossed into Afghan territory.
- 01/29/04** — U.S. Central Commander Gen. Abizaid said “Pakistan has done more for the United States in the direct fight against Al Qaeda than any other country” he knew of. On the same day, Pakistani officials reported seizing more than 3,500 pounds of heroin at a deserted mountain site in Baluchistan near the Afghan border, their largest seizure ever.
- 01/28/04** — During a **Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on Pakistan and India** rapprochement, committee Chairman Senator Richard Lugar said “it is most important that the United States sustain active engagement in South Asia” to encourage recent momentum. He also insisted that “Pakistan must demonstrate, through deed, not just words, that it is serious

about its commitment to preventing weapons proliferation and its ability to secure nuclear weapons.” Committee member Senator Lincoln Chafee added that “a sustained commitment of friendship and alliance” with Pakistan is important. On the same day, the Pakistani cabinet approved draft legislation to establish a National Security Council that would formalize a permanent governance role for the military.

- 01/27/04** — Pakistan and India announced that bilateral “composite dialogue” talks agreed to earlier in January will commence for three days from February 16. On the same day, **Indian Deputy PM Advani stated that, “There has been an ebb in violent incidents [in Kashmir] and infiltration [of cross-borders militants] is down.”** Also, a press report indicated that **the U.S. Central Command is planning to launch a “spring offensive”** that would “go into Pakistan with Musharraf’s help” to neutralize Al Qaeda forces. President Musharraf stated that, “This is not a possibility at all.” Two days later, U.S. Central Commander Gen. Abizaid said that he had no plans to put U.S. troops in Pakistan against Pakistani wishes.
- 01/26/04** — Pakistan’s Information Minister said that, “One or two people acted in an irresponsible manner for personal profit” in proliferating nuclear technologies abroad. On the same day, U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Nancy Powell expressed concerns regarding the treatment of two detained Pakistani journalists and urged Islamabad to continue to support freedom of the press in Pakistan. Also, an editorial article by Senator Richard Lugar, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, called on the United States to promote nuclear confidence-building measures in South Asia, including “assistance on export controls, border security, and the protection, control, and accounting of nuclear stockpiles and arsenals.”
- 01/25/04** — At an MMA rally in Rawalpindi, top Pakistani Islamist political leader Qazi Hussain Ahmed criticized the Islamabad government’s alleged “caving in” to external pressure and said his party would “never accept the blame being leveled against [Pakistan’s] nuclear scientists.”
- 01/24/04** — New York-based Human Rights Watch called on the Pakistani government to end the “illegal detention” of a veteran journalist.
- 01/23/04** — President **Musharraf acknowledged that scientists from his country appeared to have sold nuclear technology abroad.**
- 01/20/04** — **Pakistan barred all scientists working on its nuclear weapons program from leaving the country,** and an unnamed senior intelligence official reportedly claimed that former Army Chief (1988-1991) Gen. Beg had approved the transfer of nuclear technology to Iran. Beg denied the charge. On the same day, Secretary of State Powell indicated that the United States is “fully supportive of President Musharraf” and believes he is “making the right decisions for his nation.” Also, during Musharraf’s visit to Ankara, Pakistan and Turkey signed agreements on expanding business ties and anti-terrorism cooperation. Finally, during a visit to Washington, **the Indian External Affairs Minister said that militant infiltration along the Kashmiri LOC is “far less” than it was a year ago.**
- 01/18/04** — Pakistan’s Information Minister confirmed that up to seven top nuclear scientists had been detained in an expansion of Islamabad’s investigation into possible nuclear proliferation activities.

- 01/17/04 — During his **first-ever speech before the National Assembly** that was seated in November 2002, President Musharraf urged lawmakers to “wage a jihad against extremism” in Pakistani society. Islamist MMA parliamentarians staged a walkout shortly after Musharraf began speaking; members of secular opposition parties chanted rejectionist slogans throughout the speech.
- 01/15/04 — The Samjhauta Express rail service between Lahore and Delhi was restarted after a two-year suspension.
- 01/14/04 — Top Pakistani Islamist political leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman criticized the Islamabad government for undertaking military operations in Pakistan’s tribal areas “at the behest of the United States.”
- 01/12/04 — Some 10,000 Pakistani activists gathered in Lahore for a convention and peace rally organized by the private Pakistan Social Forum. The meeting came ahead of a much larger mid-January gathering of anti-globalization activists in Bombay, India.
- 01/07/04 — Pakistan-based militant groups said they would continue fighting against Indian forces in Kashmir despite recent Pakistan-India agreements.
- 01/06/04 — **Pakistan and India agreed to launch a “composite dialogue”** in February 2004 to bring about “peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, to the satisfaction of both sides.” A SAARC protocol on increased multilateral counterterrorism efforts was issued, and President Musharraf reassured the Indian PM that he would not permit any territory under Pakistan’s control to be used to support terrorism. Musharraf declared that “history has been made” with the dialogue agreement, a characterization echoed by the United States, which lauded Pakistan’s and India’s “concrete and practical steps” and “determination to move forward.” On the same day, a *New York Times* report identified **Pakistan as the source of Libya’s uranium enrichment capabilities**. Islamabad denied the report as “absolutely false.” The United States expressed confidence that Musharraf remains committed to preventing any Pakistani proliferation activities.
- 01/05/04 — **President Musharraf and Indian PM Vajpayee met** informally for more than one hour, their first meeting since July 2001. A Pakistani Islamist leader accused Indian and Pakistani leaders of trying to “sideline the main issue of Kashmir,” while a top Kashmiri separatist militant accused them of “not respecting the wishes of the Kashmiris.”
- 01/04/04 — On the opening day of a SAARC summit meeting in Islamabad, PM Jamali received Indian PM Vajpayee for a 30-minute “courtesy call,” **the first bilateral meeting between Pakistani and Indian leaders since July 2001**.
- 01/02/04 — SAARC foreign ministers reported agreeing on a framework for a regional free trade zone by 2006.
- 01/01/04 — **President Musharraf won a vote of confidence** allowing him to legally remain president until 2007. On the same day, **Pakistan and India restored bilateral air links** after a two-year suspension. President Bush commended the leaders of Pakistan and India for “taking steps toward a peaceful reconciliation of major issues that have divided them.” He called President Musharraf a “friend of the United States” and expressed confidence in the security of Pakistan’s nuclear arsenal. Also, and for the

13th consecutive year, Pakistan and India exchanged upgraded lists of their nuclear facilities. Finally, Islamabad formally sold Habib Bank, the nation's second-largest, for about \$400 million in Pakistan's largest privatization move.

- 12/29/03 — **Pakistan's National Assembly passed the 17th Amendment** to the country's constitution, including a clause retroactively validating all legal actions taken by Musharraf after October 1999.
- 12/26/03 — About 1,000 members of the Jamaat-e-Islami party gathered in Pakistani Kashmir to protest against President Musharraf's expressed willingness to negotiate with India to resolve the Kashmir dispute.
- 12/25/03 — **President Musharraf narrowly survived an assassination attempt**, the second in 11 days, when his motorcade was rammed by two suicide car bombers less than a quarter-mile from the site of the previous attempt. Investigators believed the culprits were Afghans and Kashmiris linked to Islamic militant groups. The location and timing of the attempt again suggested insider knowledge of Musharraf's itinerary. The United States strongly condemned the attack, which killed 15, including the bombers.
- 12/24/03 — President Musharraf and the MMA Islamist coalition reached a **surprise deal ending a 14-month-long political deadlock**. Under the arrangement, Musharraf agreed to resign from the military by the end of 2004 and submit to a vote of confidence to retain his position as President. In return, the MMA agreed to not oppose Musharraf's controversial package of constitutional changes.
- 12/23/03 — Pakistan's foreign minister said that confidence-building measures with India "are in themselves not good enough" and that what is needed is a "composite dialogue" that includes the issue of Kashmir. On the same day, the United States re-designated the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba as Foreign Terrorist Organizations.
- 12/22/03 — Islamabad for the first time conceded that it was investigating whether three Pakistani scientists may have independently spread sensitive nuclear technology to third parties abroad.
- 12/21/03 — Press reports indicated that "evidence discovered in a probe of Iran's secret nuclear program points overwhelmingly to Pakistan as the source of crucial technology" related to Iran's uranium enrichment efforts, and also that the so-called father of Pakistan's atomic bomb, A.Q. Khan, and/or his aides at the Khan Research Laboratories may have been the source of such transfers. The United States noted that Secretary of State Powell has been assured by President Musharraf that "Pakistan was not participating in any kind of activity of that nature."
- 12/20/03 — U.S. Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Michael Hagee met with President Musharraf in Islamabad to discuss regional security issues. On the same day, Pakistani and Indian border security forces agreed to jointly patrol the Punjabi frontier. Also, the Islamist-run provincial government of the NWFP announced that no one would be allowed to "arrange a dance or musical parties" on New Year's Eve, and also ordered the removal of all mannequins from store windows, calling them "un-Islamic."
- 12/19/03 — Technical-level discussions between Pakistani and Indian officials resulted in a decision to resume the Samjhauta Express rail service between Lahore and Delhi as of January 15, 2004, after a two-year suspension. On the same day, the Pakistani Supreme Court ruled that adult Muslim women

- can marry anyone of their own free will, thus invalidating a previous ruling that marriage requires the permission of a father or brother.
- 12/18/03** — The U.S. Department of State’s annual report on religious freedom stated that the Pakistani government continues to impose limits on freedom of religion, to fail in many respects to protect the rights of religious minorities, and to fail at times to intervene in cases of sectarian violence.
- 12/17/03** — President Musharraf gave an interview in which he indicated that **Pakistan may be ready to drop its long-standing demands** for the implementation of relevant U.N. resolutions. Opposition parties criticized Musharraf for a “disastrous shift” in policy. The United States welcomed the proposal.
- 12/14/03** — President **Musharraf narrowly survived an assassination attempt** when a large bomb detonated under a Rawalpindi bridge less than one minute after it was crossed by his motorcade. The location and timing of the attempt suggested insider knowledge of Musharraf’s itinerary.
- 12/13/03** — Pakistan informed India that it was “seriously concerned” about New Delhi’s efforts to erect a fence along the Kashmiri LOC. Three days later, Pakistan’s foreign minister was quoted as claiming that India was seeking to take advantage of the cease-fire to “change the character of the LOC.”
- 12/12/03** — More than 500 delegates from Pakistan and India met in Karachi for the sixth convention of the People’s Forum for Peace and Democracy.
- 12/11/03** — **Two senior Pakistani nuclear scientists were reported missing** and were later found to have been detained for questioning amid reports that they had been involved in transferring technology to Iran.
- 12/08/03** — The U.S. military in Afghanistan announced launching a major operation against Taliban and Al Qaeda forces near the Pakistan border.
- 12/01/03** — Pakistan and India agreed to restore airline overflight and landing rights by January 1, 2004. Progress in improved Pakistan-India relations spurred a 4.8% rise in Pakistan’s main stock index, the biggest ever one-day gain.
- 11/26/03** — **Pakistan and India began a formal cease-fire** at their shared international border, as well as along the LOC and Actual Ground Position Line on the Siachen glacier. The United States hailed the move as “steps toward peace [that] offer hope for real progress in the region.”
- 11/23/03** — **PM Jamali announced a unilateral cease-fire** by Pakistani forces at the LOC to begin on the final night of Ramadan.
- 11/15/03** — **President Musharraf announced a ban on three radical Islamic groups** believed to be previously-outlawed organizations operating under new names. Days later, Islamabad announced a ban on three additional Islamic “extremist organizations.”
- 11/06/03** — A supplemental appropriations bill passed by the U.S. Congress became **P.L. 108-106**. The law includes provisions that \$1.15 billion in additional defense spending may be used to reimburse Pakistan (and others) for their support of U.S. military operations; that extend the President’s P.L. 107-57 waiver authority through FY2004; and that up to \$200 million in FY2004 Economic Support Funds may be used for the modification of direct loans and guarantees for Pakistan.