

CRS Report for Congress

Received through the CRS Web

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. Sources include, but are not limited to, the U.S. Department of State, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Dawn* (Karachi), *Daily Times* (Lahore), *News* (Karachi), and major newswires. For a substantive review, see CRS Issue Brief IB94041, *Pakistan-U.S. Relations*. This report will be updated regularly.

Acronyms

CBMs: Confidence-building measures
LOC: Line of Control (Kashmir)

- 01/25/05** — An unnamed senior Pakistani intelligence official said that Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, a Tanzanian national wanted in connection with the 1998 Al Qaeda bombings of two U.S. embassies in East Africa, had been handed over to U.S. authorities days after his July 2004 arrest in the eastern city of Gujrat.
- 01/24/05** — The Targeting Terrorists More Effectively Act of 2005 (**S. 12**) **was introduced in the Senate**. The bill identifies “a number of critical issues that threaten to disrupt” U.S.-Pakistan relations, calls for “dramatically increasing” USAID funding for Pakistan-related projects, would require the President to report to Congress a long-term strategy for U.S. engagement with Pakistan, would set nuclear proliferation-related conditions on assistance to Pakistan, and would earmark \$797 million in economic and military assistance to Pakistan for FY2006. On the same day, a Pakistan government spokesman said that on 1/21 **Indian troops had broken a 14-month-old cease-fire agreement with small arms fire across the LOC**. India denied the claim. Also, **two bombs exploded in Quetta**, injuring five people.
- 01/23/05** — A recently retired Pakistani general reportedly said that the hunt for Osama bin Laden on Pakistani territory was “pointless,” as he had seen “not a single indication” that the Al Qaeda founder was in Pakistan.
- 01/18/05** — **The World Bank received a request from the Pakistani government that a “neutral expert” be appointed** to help settle the Baglihar dam dispute under the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty. The Indian government said

the request was “unjustified” and that dam construction would continue. On the same day, **the Indian army said that Pakistani troops had fired a dozen mortar shells over the Kashmiri LOC** in violation of a 14-month-old cease-fire agreement. Pakistan denied the claim. Also, police announced the arrest of three brothers suspected of having Al Qaeda links involvement in a lethal July 2004 attempt to assassinate PM Aziz.

- 01/17/05** — A *New Yorker* article claimed that U.S. Special Forces units have undertaken reconnaissance missions in Iran using intelligence provided by Pakistan. Islamabad denied the claim. On the same day, the Paris-based International Federation for Human Rights released a report critical of the government of President Musharraf for using Pakistan’s role in the “war on terrorism” to maintain its oppressive, nondemocratic grip on power.
- 01/16/05** — **A five-day battle ended an attempt by Baluchi tribesmen to take control of the Sui gas facility.** The tribesmen fired some 430 rockets and 60 mortar rounds in the attack, which left 8 people dead, including 3 Pakistani soldiers, and another 35 injured.
- 01/15/05** — **India’s army chief said that the number of infiltration attempts at the Kashmiri LOC were down 90% in 2004.** On the same day, President Musharraf said that his country would offer no more confidence-building initiatives until Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service is launched. Also, Pakistani security forces reported having arrested 18 tribal militants and two Afghans in a raid in North Waziristan.
- 01/14/05** — The Baluchistan government requested that federal troops be deployed in the Sui area. On the same day, Bangladesh announced that it will host the Thirteenth SAARC summit, postponed due to the recent tsunami, in Dhaka on February 6-7. Also, an Indian military official announced that a contingent of ten Indian helicopters and 285 personnel would serve with Pakistani peacekeeping troops in Congo.
- 01/13/05** — New York-based Human Rights Watch released its annual report, which noted “rampant” gender-based violence and discrimination and increased sectarian violence in Pakistan, where the military-dominated government is seen to be protecting its “grip” on the country’s resources.
- 01/12/05** — **Tribesmen kidnaped 12 employees of Pakistan’s main utility** near the Sui gas facility in Baluchistan. Thousands of army troops were dispatched to the region and, two days later, freed the hostages.
- 01/11/05** — **Tribesmen attacked the Sui gas facility in Baluchistan** with rockets, mortars, and small arms after local police accused an army officer of raping a female doctor working there. On the same day, police seized nearly two tons of morphine in southwestern Pakistan.
- 01/10/05** — A government spokesman said that Pakistan might seek World Bank arbitration on the Baglihar dam dispute under the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, adding that the recent failure to resolve the dispute will have a negative impact on the India-Pakistan dialogue process.
- 01/08/05** — **Unidentified gunmen injured a prominent Shiite cleric in the northern Gilgit district, sparking sectarian violence and rioting that left 15 people dead,** including a family of six burned to death in their home. Angry Shia protestors demonstrated for several days after. On the same day, Japan agreed to resume a \$500 million annual assistance program for Pakistan, ending sanctions imposed after 1998 nuclear tests.

- 01/07/05** — **Three days of talks between Pakistani and Indian officials failed to resolve an ongoing dispute over a dam that India is constructing in Baglihar, Kashmir.** On the same day, the U.S. embassy in Pakistan advertised in a mass-circulation Urdu-language newspaper, offering rewards of up to \$25 million for information leading to the arrest of 14 top Al Qaeda suspects. Also, Pakistan released to India 266 Indian fishermen who had been arrested the previous year for allegedly entering Pakistani waters in the Arabian Sea.
- 01/05/05** — A dispute over the insertion of religious identification on new Pakistani passports reached President Musharraf's cabinet. Machine-readable passports issued in October 2004 followed international standards by omitting the religion column; Islamist parties and their supporters viewed the move as "an attempt to secularize Pakistan." On the same day, five family members were killed in an "honor killing" in central Pakistan.
- 01/03/05** — An apparent border dispute led to an exchange of mortar and machine gun fire between Pakistani troops and Afghan militiamen in North Waziristan.
- 01/02/05** — A U.S. Predator drone reportedly crashed in North Waziristan near the Afghan border. On the same day, a national politician and three others were killed by unknown gunmen while driving in northern Pakistan.
- 01/01/05** — Opposition parties staged modestly sized rallies against President Musharraf in several major cities. Turnout likely was reduced by poor weather. On the same day, Pakistan's state television network reported that Indian troops had "martyred 1,675 innocent Kashmiris."
- 12/30/04** — **President Musharraf formally announced to the Pakistani people his intention to retain the position as Army Chief** in the interest of national harmony and with the approval of "the majority." Opposition parties, which Musharraf called "a threat to democracy," decried the widely expected decision as unconstitutional and nondemocratic, and vowed to launch a national "agitation" in protest.
- 12/28/04** — **Pakistan and India concluded two-day, foreign secretary-level talks** in Islamabad. The talks, which were "held in a frank, cordial, and constructive atmosphere," produced no major agreements, but reviewed overall progress in the "Composite Dialogue" and made plans for its continuation in 2005. On the same day, New York-based Human Rights Watch criticized the Pakistani government's "violent repression" of a rally by members of the opposition Pakistan People's Party.
- 12/20/04** — Pakistani authorities claimed to have foiled a terrorist plot with the arrest in Lahore of four suspected Islamic militants linked to the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi terrorist group and fugitive Faraj al-Liby, wanted in connection with December 2003 attempts to assassinate President Musharraf.
- 12/19/04** — Several thousand people braved torrential rain in Rawalpindi to protest against President Musharraf's continued rule.
- 12/17/04** — **The National Intelligence Reform Act of 2004 was signed into law as P.L. 108-458.** The act calls for U.S. aid to Pakistan sustained at a minimum of FY2005 levels, with particular attention given to improving Pakistan's education system, and extends the President's authority to waive coup-related sanctions through FY2006. It further requires the President to report to Congress within 180 days of enactment a description of a long-term U.S. strategy to engage with and support Pakistan. On the same day, **President Musharraf declared his intention to retain his position as Army Chief** beyond the 2004 deadline he had set for himself in December 2003. A U.S.

State Department spokesman declined to directly criticize the move, but reiterated a U.S. expectation that Pakistan continue to make progress toward the goal of a “fully functioning and stable democracy.”

- 12/16/04** — Pakistan announced a reward of \$83,000 for information leading to the arrest of militant Abdullah Mehsud, a former prisoner at the U.S. facility at Guantanamo Bay, who is wanted in connection with the October 2004 kidnaping of two Chinese engineers, one of whom was later killed.
- 12/15/04** — **Pakistan and India concluded two-day, expert-level talks** on nuclear and conventional arms CBMs, and the territorial dispute over Sir Creek. The talks, all held in Pakistan as part of the “Composite Dialogue” agreed to in September 2004, came in a “cordial and constructive atmosphere,” but produced only agreements to meet again in the future. On the same day, **PM Aziz visited Beijing, where Pakistan and China signed seven accords** meant to boost bilateral economic and anti-terrorism cooperation, and trade. Also, more than 50 separatist leaders from both the Pakistani and Indian regions of Kashmir concluded a three-day meeting in Nepal sponsored by the Pugwash Foundation.
- 12/13/04** — A *New York Times* report claimed that the C.I.A. had established a series of small, covert bases in northwestern Pakistan in late 2003, where U.S. agents work under strict Pakistani supervision in the hunt for Osama bin Laden. Pakistan denied the claim. On the same day, police in Multan arrested five suspected Islamic militants believed to be members of the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi terrorist group.
- 12/12/04** — Pakistan’s information minister said that self-declared terrorist leader Akbar Agha, wanted in connection with the October kidnaping of three UN aid workers in Afghanistan, had been arrested in Karachi earlier in December. Agha’s militant group may have links with Al Qaeda.
- 12/11/04** — About 18,000 U.S. troops began an offensive operation in Afghanistan reportedly aimed at eliminating Taliban and other insurgents who might seek to disrupt parliamentary elections there slated for spring 2005.
- 12/10/04** — **A bomb exploded at a crowded market in Quetta, killing 11 people**, including two soldiers, and injuring at least 27 others. The next day, authorities arrested 14 members of the ethnic nationalist Baluchistan Liberation Army in connection with the bombing.
- 12/08/04** — **The Foreign Operations FY2005 appropriations bill was signed into law as P.L. 108-447 (Division D)**. In addition to approving the President’s aid request for Pakistan, the bill allows that up to \$200 million in FY2005 Economic Support Funds may be used for the modification of direct loans and guarantees for Pakistan and requires the Secretary of State to report to Congress within 90 days of enactment on education reform in Pakistan. Also, **Pakistan test-fired a nuclear-capable Shaheen I medium-range ballistic missile**, the second missile test in ten days.
- 12/07/04** — The dialogue with India on opening bus service between Muzaffarabad and Srinagar in Kashmir apparently remained deadlocked on the issue of travel documents for passengers, with Pakistan calling for locally issued passes for Kashmiris only and India seeking passport requirements allowing all Indians to use the service.
- 12/05/04** — **President Musharraf told an American television interviewer** the invasion of Iraq was a mistake that has brought “more problems” (his spokesman later backpedaled). On the A.Q. Khan proliferation issue, Musharraf said that

requests for non-Pakistani investigators to access Khan showed a “lack of trust” in Pakistan’s capabilities. On counterterrorism operations in western Pakistan, he said there had been no withdrawal of forces from South Waziristan, but that recent successes had led to a “change of tactics” requiring some repositioning. Musharraf conceded that “there are many [madrassas in Pakistan] which are involved in militancy and extremism,” and called his “biggest fear” the extremism, terrorism, and militancy that has “really polluted society in Pakistan.” He also expressed being “very optimistic” about efforts to resolve disputes with India and claimed that “democracy is fully restored” in Pakistan.

- 12/04/04** — **President Bush met with President Musharraf in Washington.** President Bush praised the Pakistani leader for working to improve the Pakistani economy and combat terrorism, saying that the Pakistani army “has been incredibly active and very brave in southern Waziristan.” On the same day, Musharraf told an interviewer that Osama bin Laden’s trail had gone cold. He suggested partial U.S. responsibility because a shortage of U.S.-led forces on the Afghan side of the border had left “voids.”
- 12/03/04** — **The Miscellaneous and Technical Corrections Act of 2004 was signed into law as P.L. 108-429.** The act authorizes the President to designate certain hand-made or hand-woven carpets as eligible articles for duty-free treatment under the Generalized System of Preferences, a move that the Senate Committee on Finance believes would be of particular benefit to Pakistan. On the same day, Pakistani and Indian officials agreed in principle to begin repairs on a badly deteriorated rail line between Pakistan’s Sindh province and India’s Rajasthan state that has been closed since 1965.
- 12/02/04** — Pakistan People’s Party Senator Raza Rabbani was formally recognized by the government as the Leader of the Opposition in the Pakistani Senate.
- 12/01/04** — The United States delivered 68 spotting scopes, 74 hand-held Global Positioning Systems, and 200 protective vests for use by Pakistan’s Frontier Corps. On the same day, a suspected Chechen militant was killed and 11 policemen injured in a gunbattle in the southwestern city of Quetta.
- 11/30/04** — **Acting President Soomro signed into law a bill allowing President Musharraf to remain as Army Chief until 2007.**
- 11/29/04** — A U.S. State Department spokesman said that the United States was assured that Pakistani forces were not withdrawing from Waziristan and that Pakistan “remains fully committed to continuing the campaign against Al Qaeda and Al Qaeda supporters.” On the same day, Pakistan test launched a short-range, nuclear-capable Ghaznavi ballistic missile.
- 11/26/04** — **A Pakistan army corps commander declared that peace had been restored in the Wana area of South Waziristan.**
- 11/25/04** — Pakistan’s National Security Council met for the second time since its April 2004 establishment, with the body’s two Islamist members again abstaining from participation. On the same day, India’s external affairs minister said that India had conveyed to Pakistan a willingness to grant substantial autonomy to Kashmir as part of an effort to resolve the issue, but that India was not willing to redraw its borders.
- 11/24/04** — **PM Shaukat Aziz met with Indian PM Singh and other Indian leaders in New Delhi,** the first visit to India by a Pakistani prime minister in more than ten years. Both sides called the talks “friendly” and “constructive,” but Pakistan offered no new formulations on the Kashmir issue and the Indian PM reiterated that the issue can have no “territorial solutions.”

- 11/23/04** — The C.I.A. released an unclassified version of a report on global WMD acquisitions stating that during the latter half of 2003, “Iran’s nuclear program received significant assistance in the past from the proliferation network headed by Pakistani scientist A.Q. Khan” and that the same network “had provided Libya with designs for Pakistan’s older [uranium enrichment] centrifuges, as well as designs for more advanced and efficient models, and components.”
- 11/22/04** — **Asif Zardari, the husband of former PM Benazir Bhutto who had been imprisoned for eight years without conviction, was released on bail** after a Supreme Court ruling.
- 11/21/04** — The Pakistan army said it had killed 20 Islamic militants in a raid on a religious school and a training camp in South Waziristan.
- 11/19/04** — During a meeting with U.S. National Security Advisor Rice, **India’s foreign secretary conveyed his government’s “strong concern” about proposed U.S. arms sales to Pakistan.** On the same day, the last group of U.S. personnel reportedly departed from the Jacobabad airbase.
- 11/17/04** — Pakistan’s interior minister announced that Asim Ghafoor, wanted in connection with the January 2002 kidnaping and murder of journalist Daniel Pearl, was killed in a shootout with Karachi police, and that Naveed-ul Hasan, believed involved in a deadly June 2002 bombing near the U.S. consulate in Karachi, was arrested east of Lahore.
- 11/16/04** — **The Pentagon notified Congress of three possible Foreign Military Sales to Pakistan** worth up to \$1.2 billion. The deals involve eight P-3C aircraft, six Phalanx guns, and 2,000 TOW missiles.
- 11/12/04** — The five most-wanted Pashtun tribal militant leaders in South Waziristan “surrendered” to government authorities by promising to remain peaceful and provide no shelter to foreign militants. In return, the government reportedly vowed to pay reparations for property damage and to release tribal prisoners. On the same day, the Pakistan army launched a new 2,000-man offensive in South Waziristan.
- 11/11/04** — **India’s prime minister announced a reduction of Indian troop deployments in Kashmir** as a result of “an improvement in the security situation in the state.” He also noted awareness that “infiltration attempts from across the border and the LOC continue and the infrastructure of terrorism in the shape of training camps and launching bases [on Pakistani-controlled territory] remain intact.”
- 11/08/04** — **Deputy Secretary of State Armitage arrived in Islamabad** for talks on Iraq, Afghanistan, and terrorism.
- 11/04/04** — Eight Pakistani soldiers were killed and nine injured in landmine explosions in South Waziristan.
- 11/02/04** — During a visit to Kathmandu, PM Aziz offered to sell defense equipment to Nepal and said that Pakistan is ready to provide enabling financial assistance. On the same day, a car bomb exploded near the office of Baluchistan’s Chief Minister in Quetta, injuring four people.
- 10/28/04** — An explosion at a luxury hotel in Islamabad injured seven people, including a U.S. embassy employee.