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Pakistan: Chronology of Recent Events

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Summary

This report provides a chronology of recent events involving Pakistan and Pakistan-U.S. relations. Sources include, but are not limited to, major newswires, the U.S. Department of State, and Pakistani news outlets. For a substantive review, see CRS Issue Brief IB94041, *Pakistan-U.S. Relations*. This report will be updated regularly.

- 05/05/06** — Police in Karachi arrested six suspected members of the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Sunni terrorist group.
- 05/04/06** — U.S., Pakistani, and Afghan troops completed two days of joint military exercises west of Islamabad, the first such exercises involving Afghan army units. On the same day, London-based Amnesty International expressed “grave concern” over the incidence of extrajudicial executions by apparent Taliban operatives in Pakistan’s tribal areas.
- 05/03/06** — **The Commander of the U.S. Central Command, Gen. Abizaid, and State Department Counterterrorism Coordinator Crumpton paid separate visits to Islamabad** for meetings with top Pakistani officials. On the same day, **Pakistan and India agreed to launch a second cross-LOC bus service and to allow cross-LOC truck service** to facilitate trade in Kashmir. Also, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom’s annual report claimed that, “Sectarian and religiously motivated violence persists in Pakistan, and the government’s response to this problem, though improved, continues to be insufficient and not fully effective,” and the Commission again recommended that Pakistan be designated a Country of Particular Concern. Finally, three policemen were killed when suspected Taliban militants attacked their checkpoint in the Bajaur tribal agency.
- 05/02/06** — **A Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said Pakistan’s investigation into the illicit nuclear smuggling ring led by metallurgist A.Q. Khan “is closed.”** On the same day, a “top Al Qaeda leader,” a Syrian with Spanish

Acronyms:

CBMs: Confidence-building measures
LOC: Line of Control (Kashmir)
SAARC: South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation

citizenship, was reported captured in Pakistan in 11/05 and may have been transferred to U.S. custody. Also, Uzbek President Karimov visited Islamabad, where Pakistan and Uzbekistan signed a number of agreements meant to bolster bilateral cooperation in such areas as counterterrorism and commerce.

- 05/01/06 — Under Secretary of Defense Edelman hosted a Pakistan delegation in Washington for a **five-day meeting of the U.S.-Pakistan Defense Consultative Group**, the first since February 2005. On the same day, a pro-government tribal elder was found murdered in North Waziristan. Also, *Foreign Policy* magazine named Pakistan a top “failed state” in 2005, ranking it 9th in the world.
- 04/30/06 — Pakistani nuclear scientist Mohammed Farooq, who was implicated as a key participant in A.Q. Khan’s nuclear smuggling ring, was released after two years in detention. On the same day, Pakistani and Iranian officials completed two days of talks on finalizing plans for a proposed gas pipeline that would deliver Iranian gas to India through Pakistan.
- 04/29/06 — Pakistan test-fired a nuclear-capable Hatf VI (Shaheen II) long-range ballistic missile.
- 04/28/06 — **The State Department’s Country Reports on Terrorism 2005** said Islamabad continues to “aggressively” pursue Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and their allies while cooperating closely with the United States. Despite some successes, however, “Al Qaeda and Taliban operations in Pakistan continue to pose a threat to U.S. interests.” The State Department also blacklisted Jamaat-ud-Dawa and Idara Khidmat-e-Khalq as front organizations of the Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist group. On the same day, a Pakistani press report indicated that up to 5,000 pro-Taliban tribesmen had united to combat Pakistani security forces in North Waziristan.
- 04/27/06 — Under Secretary of State Burns and Foreign Secretary Khan ended **two days of U.S.-Pakistan strategic dialogue talks in Washington**, where counterterrorism cooperation and increased trade were leading topics. Under Secretary Burns said the Administration would soon consult with Congress on what Secretary Khan called a “much scaled-down request” for F-16 fighter aircraft sales to Pakistan. On the same day, a third round of **Pakistan-India expert-level talks on conventional CBMs** resulted in several agreements aimed at avoidance of conflict. Also, **India rejected a Pakistani proposal to remove all heavy weapons from Kashmir**. Finally, a three-day **Pakistan-China Energy Forum** ended with the two countries signing an agreement on energy cooperation in a number of areas; a joint statement did not mention nuclear power.
- 04/26/06 — A fourth round of **Pakistan-India expert-level talks on nuclear CBMs** was held in “a cordial and constructive atmosphere,” but produced no new agreements. On the same day, the beheaded body of a man was found in South Waziristan with a note accusing him of being an “American spy,” the fourth such killing in April.
- 04/25/06 — **A California jury convicted a Pakistani-American** of attending an Al Qaeda-linked training camp in Pakistan then returning with the intention of launching terrorist attacks in the United States. On the same day, Pakistani helicopter gunships attacked suspected Islamic militant positions during ongoing battles in North Waziristan. Several soldiers and militants were killed in the fighting.

- 04/24/06** — **Former Prime Ministers Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto met** in London and vowed to cooperate in efforts to restore full democracy in Islamabad. On the same day, Energy Secretary Bodman reiterated U.S. opposition to a proposed gas pipeline that would deliver Iranian gas to India through Pakistan. Also, Islamic militants launched a rocket attack on a Pakistan Army convoy in North Waziristan, killing 2 soldiers and injuring 12 others. Finally, a leading Pakistan senator accused India of pursuing a malevolent policy in Afghanistan, including providing military training to 600 Pakistani Baloch rebels.
- 04/23/06** — Three local tribesman and a paramilitary soldier were killed in a gunbattle at an army checkpost in North Waziristan.
- 04/21/06** — **An Arab militant shot dead in the Bajaur tribal agency was said to be a senior Al Qaeda “bag man”** who helped organize attacks on U.S.-led coalition forces in Afghanistan.
- 04/20/06** — Eight paramilitary troopers were killed and 26 injured when their convoy was ambushed by suspected pro-Taliban militants in North Waziristan.
- 04/18/06** — Two men accused of being American spies were killed in Waziristan. On the same day, a well-known Shia scholar and his driver were shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Faisalabad. Also, India decided to alter the design of the controversial Kishanganga dam project in Indian Kashmir in ways that New Delhi hopes will end a long-standing dispute with Islamabad. Finally, India’s Home Secretary claimed that camps training Islamic militants to fight in Kashmir are “flourishing” in Pakistan.
- 04/17/06** — Police commandos arrested three suspected Islamic militants after a gunbattle near Peshawar.
- 04/15/06** — The beheaded body of a man was found in North Waziristan with a note accusing him of being an “American spy.”
- 04/14/06** — A *Los Angeles Times* report claimed computer drives stolen from Bagram air field in Afghanistan indicated that Taliban and Al Qaeda leaders have used southwestern Pakistan as a key planning and training area. A Pakistan Army spokesman called the claims “absolutely absurd.”
- 04/13/06** — Five paramilitary troops were reported kidnaped in North Waziristan. On the same day, London-based Amnesty International strongly condemned the 4/11 Karachi bombing and criticized the Pakistan government for “consistently failing to prevent sectarian violence.”
- 04/12/06** — **Seven suspected militants, reportedly including an Egyptian national said to be a wanted Al Qaeda explosives expert, were killed** when Pakistani helicopter gunships attacked their hideout in North Waziristan.
- 04/11/06** — **An apparent suicide bomber killed 57 people, including three prominent Sunni leaders, and injured at least 100 others in a park in Karachi.** Army troops were mobilized in anticipation of ensuing violence, which did not occur on a large scale. On the same day, Pakistan and France held joint air combat and naval exercises in the Arabian Sea.
- 04/10/06** — Taliban figures in North Waziristan offered peace in return for a full withdrawal of Pakistani troops from the region. On the same day, 2 people were killed and another 24 injured in ongoing violence in Baluchistan. Also, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan claimed that “officially-sanctioned rallies promoting sectarianism” are evidence that the Pakistan government’s “pledges to usher in an era of ‘enlightened

- moderation' are ... obviously nothing more than a facade intended for foreign audiences.”
- 04/09/06** — The Islamabad government officially banned the separatist Baluchistan Liberation Army as a terrorist organization.
 - 04/07/06** — The United States earmarked another \$13 million for Pakistan earthquake relief. On the same day, some 10,000 of tribesmen rallied in northwest Pakistan to demand the military's withdrawal from the region.
 - 04/06/06** — A prominent Shiite cleric narrowly escaped assassination when a bomb exploded near his car in Karachi. The Sunni militant Sipah-e-Sahaba terrorist group was suspected of involvement
 - 04/05/06** — During a visit to Islamabad, Assistant Secretary of State Boucher told an interviewer the United States would like to see a more stable, open, democratic, and prosperous Pakistani society. On the same day, up to 44 people, including 4 Pakistani soldiers and 40 Islamic militants, were killed in ongoing fighting in North Waziristan.
 - 04/03/06** — Interior Minister Sherpao visited Washington for meetings with U.S. officials. On the same day, up to 11 people, including 3 women, died in ongoing fighting in North Waziristan.
 - 04/02/06** — Landmine explosions killed up to 13 people, including 7 police officers, in Baluchistan. On the same day, a Pakistani soldier and two civilians were killed in ongoing fighting in North Waziristan.
 - 04/01/06** — Sri Lankan President Rajapakse ended a visit to Islamabad, where Pakistan and Sri Lanka agreed to bolster bilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas.
 - 03/31/06** — Suspected tribal militants blew up four electrical towers in Baluchistan, leaving 80% of the province without power.
 - 03/30/06** — **U.S. soldiers ended their Pakistan earthquake relief mission**, the largest such mission since the 1948 Berlin Airlift. On the same day, stray mortar fire killed a woman and a child in North Waziristan.
 - 03/29/06** — Commerce Minister Khan said that better access to U.S. markets through tariff reduction would help to fight extremism in Pakistan. On the same day, the Pakistani and Indian commerce secretaries held a third round on Composite Dialogue talks on bilateral economic and commercial cooperation. Also, terrorist leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman Khalil was abducted and severely beaten by unidentified gunmen near Islamabad.
 - 03/28/06** — **H.R. 5017**, to insure the implementation of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, was introduced in the House. The bill contains Pakistan-related provisions. On the same day, a bomb blast in Peshawar killed 1 person and injured 15 others just hours after the U.S. Consulate there had closed due to security concerns.
 - 03/27/06** — The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan decried the “total breakdown in the law and order situation across the country.”
 - 03/26/06** — Gunbattles in Dera Bugti, Baluchistan left a Pakistani soldier and two militants dead.
 - 03/24/06** — In a speech marking **the launch of a new bus service** linking India and Pakistan, **Indian Prime Minister Singh said “India sincerely believes that a strong, stable, prosperous, and moderate Pakistan is in the interest of India,”** and he envisioned someday entering into a Treaty of Peace, Security, and Friendship with Islamabad. Pakistan cautiously

- welcomed the comments while insisting that Kashmir remained the “heart of conflict, mistrust, and hostility” between India and Pakistan. On the same day, Pakistani troops backed by helicopter gunships continued battling Islamic militants in North Waziristan, reportedly killing 18.
- 03/23/06** — President Musharraf demanded that all foreign militants leave Pakistan or “be crushed.” On the same day, Pakistan formally protested the killing of at least 14 Pakistanis by Afghan soldiers in southern Afghanistan. Also, a bomb blast in Kohlu, Baluchistan, killed 1 person and injured 13 more.
- 03/22/06** — Top Pakistani law enforcement officials met with their Indian counterparts to discuss increased cooperation in areas of mutual concern. On the same day, a pro-government cleric was assassinated in South Waziristan.
- 03/21/06** — Tests confirmed **Pakistan’s first N5N1 avian flu infections**. On the same day, the Chairman of the U.S. Joint chiefs of Staff, Gen. Pace, visited earthquake-affected areas in Pakistan. Also, Pakistan test-fired a cruise missile for the second time.
- 03/19/06** — Suspected Islamic militants blew up a police vehicle in northwest Pakistan near North Waziristan, killing seven people and injuring another five.
- 03/17/06** — President Musharraf said that the pending U.S.-India civil nuclear cooperation deal would “upset the balance of power” in South Asia and Pakistan’s Ambassador to the United States reportedly requested a “package deal” that would allow for U.S. civil nuclear cooperation with both Pakistan and India.
- 03/16/06** — The House passed an emergency supplemental appropriations bill (**H.R. 4939**), including a provision allowing that up to \$1.2 billion in Pentagon funds may be used to reimburse Pakistan and other key cooperating nations for their support of U.S. military operations. On the same day, President Bush’s 2006 *National Security Strategy of the United States* stated, “We are eager to see Pakistan move along a stable, secure, and democratic path,” adding, “America’s relationship with Pakistan will not be a mirror image of our relationship with India.”
- 03/14/06** — Officials from Pakistan, India, and Iran met in Tehran for talks on a proposed tripartite gas pipeline project.
- 03/13/06** — **Secretary of Energy Bodman visited Islamabad**, where he discussed a wide range of energy-related issues with Pakistani leaders, but declined to discuss civil nuclear cooperation and voiced U.S. opposition to a proposed Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project.
- 03/12/06** — Former Afghan President Mojadidi survived a suicide car bomb attack in Kabul that left four people dead. Mojadidi, who is seeking to encourage Taliban defections, blamed Pakistan’s intelligence agency for the attack.
- 03/10/06** — **At least 30 people, including 21 children and 5 women, were killed when a bus carrying a wedding party hit a landmine** in Dera Bugti, Baluchistan. On the same day, the Pakistan Army reported that artillery barrages had killed 25 Islamic militants in North Waziristan. Locals disputed the claim, saying most of the dead were civilians.
- 03/08/06** — Prime Minister Aziz told an interviewer that “there is no need for further discussion” of the A.Q. Khan-run nuclear smuggling ring, as “all information” has been shared with international investigators.
- 03/07/06** — The Commander of the U.S. Central Command, Gen. Abizaid, visited Islamabad, where President Musharraf reportedly requested his help in defusing Pakistan-Afghanistan tensions.

- 03/06/06 — President Musharraf criticized Afghan President Karzai for “bad-mouthing” Pakistan with “baseless” claims about the presence in Pakistan of top Islamic militant leaders, including Mullah Omar. On the same day, Pakistani troops backed by helicopter gunships continued battling Islamic militants in North Waziristan, reportedly killing 19. Security forces regained control of a major town where government buildings had been seized in an audacious attack by hundreds of armed militants.
- 03/05/06 — Fierce fighting in North Waziristan reportedly left up to 100 Islamic militants dead.
- 03/04/06 — President Bush and President Musharraf issued a joint statement on the **U.S.-Pakistan “strategic partnership”** that called for launching a strategic dialogue and for “significant expansion” of bilateral economic ties, including mutual trade and investment, as well as initiatives in the areas of energy, peace and security, social sector development, science and technology, democracy, and nonproliferation. President Bush expressed being “grateful for President Musharraf’s strong and vital support in the war on terror” and later said Musharraf understood that Pakistan’s planned 2007 elections “need to be open and honest.”
- 03/03/06 — **President Bush began a one-day visit to Pakistan** under heavy security.
- 03/02/06 — **A car bomb exploded outside the U.S. Consulate in Karachi**, killing at least five people, including an American diplomat.
- 03/01/06 — Pakistani soldiers and helicopter gunships attacked a suspected Al Qaeda camp in North Waziristan, killing up to 30 militants.
- 02/22/06 — **In a major speech, President Bush lauded close U.S. relations with Pakistan**, identifying it as a “key ally in the war on terror” and saying the United States wants to “build a broad and lasting strategic partnership with the people of Pakistan.” The President called Pakistan’s scheduled 2007 elections “an important test of Pakistan’s commitment to democratic reform, and the Islamabad government must ensure that these elections are open and free and fair.” He later vowed to encourage Pakistani and Indian leaders to address the “important issue” of Kashmir, where the United States supports a resolution that is acceptable to “all sides,” including the Pakistanis, the Indians, and the “citizens of Kashmir.”
- 02/19/06 — President Musharraf began a five-day visit to China to discuss counterterrorism, trade, and technical assistance with top Chinese leaders.
- 02/18/06 — **The “Thar Express” railroad linking Sindh with India’s Rajasthan state was resumed** after more than four decades in suspension.
- 02/15/06 — **Afghan President Karzai arrived in Islamabad** for a three-day visit. On the same day, apparent Baloch **militants shot and killed three Chinese engineers and their Pakistani driver in Baluchistan.**
- 02/14/06 — Anger over the publication in European newspapers of cartoons deemed offensive to Muslims led to **violent protests in Islamabad and Lahore.**
- 02/10/06 — **The State Department’s Bureau of South Asian Affairs was reorganized** to include official responsibility for U.S. diplomatic relations with Afghanistan and the five Central Asian states, and will now be called the Bureau for South and Central Asian Affairs.