

CRS Report for Congress

Received through the CRS Web

Pakistan: Chronology of Recent Events

K. Alan Kronstadt
Analyst in Asian Affairs
Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division

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.

Acronyms

FATA:	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
MMA:	Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal or United Action Front, a coalition of six Islamist parties
NWFP:	North West Frontier Province

- 08/09/04** — Pakistan issued a protest to the United States over what it says was an FBI sting operation involving a fake plot to kill Pakistan’s U.N. envoy. On the same day, Pakistan and India engaged in a rare prisoner exchange when three soldiers — veterans of the 1999 Kargil war — were returned home.
- 08/08/04** — The Interior Minister confirmed **the arrest of longtime Pakistani terrorist chief Fazlur Rehman Khalil**, the leader of Harakat ul-Mujahideen who co-signed Osama bin Laden’s 1998 edict declaring it a Muslim’s duty to kill Americans and Jews. On the same day, twin bomb attacks in Karachi, including one at a religious school, killed eight people and injured 42 others. Also, U.S. National Security Advisor Rice strongly denied that any U.S. government officials had leaked the name of an Al Qaeda suspect arrested in Pakistan on 7/13.
- 08/07/04** — **The United Arab Emirates remanded to Pakistani custody “senior Al Qaeda operative” Qari Saifullah Akhtar**, who had been arrested the previous day in Dubai. Akhtar, who is alleged to have run a terrorist training camp in Afghanistan until October 2001, reportedly was traced using intelligence gleaned from captured Al Qaeda suspects Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani and Mohammed Naem Noor Khan. Khan also

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).

- reportedly provided information on Al Qaeda operatives who plan to carry out terrorist attacks intended to disrupt the upcoming U.S. elections.
- 08/06/04** — Pakistan and India concluded two-day talks on their territorial dispute over the Siachen glacier in northern Kashmir. A joint statement said that “frank and candid discussions were held in a cordial and constructive atmosphere,” and the two sides agreed to continue their dialogue.
- 08/05/04** — President Musharraf said Pakistan and India should “move fast” on resolving the Kashmir issue, but insisted that he is not setting any deadlines. On the same day, up to 11 combatants were reported killed in heavy fighting between Pakistani security forces and tribal militants in South Waziristan. Also, CNN reported that satellite imagery indicated that some Al Qaeda training camps have been reactivated near Pakistan’s border with southeastern Afghanistan.
- 08/04/04** — Pakistan and India concluded two-day talks on people-to-people contacts with reports that both countries will relax their visa requirements.
- 08/03/04** — **British police arrested 12 Al Qaeda suspects** using intelligence gleaned from captured Al Qaeda suspects Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani and Mohammed Naeem Noor Khan. Among those taken was **Issa al-Hindi**, said to be one of the most important Al Qaeda figures captured in the past year. On the same day, **Pakistan and China began their first-ever joint military exercises**, a four-day counterterrorism drill. Also, Afghan soldiers supported by U.S. warplanes reportedly killed up to 70 militants in a daylong battle in Khost province near the Pakistani border. Finally, Finance Minister and Prime Minister-designate Aziz stated that there would be no rollback of Pakistan’s nuclear program.
- 08/02/04** — An Al Qaeda suspect captured on 7/13 was publically named as **Mohammed Naeem Noor Khan, said to be an Al Qaeda computer and communications expert** whose interrogation was revealing extensive intelligence on the Al Qaeda network. Numerous intelligence experts later criticized the United States for releasing Khan’s name to the press even as Khan was said to be covertly cooperating with investigators.
- 08/02/04** — Gunmen killed a police officer southwest of Quetta in a **failed attempt to assassinate the Baluchistan Chief Minister**. On the same day, a Pakistani government spokesman reaffirmed Pakistan’s position that it would not send troops to Iraq under present circumstances.
- 08/01/04** — The Department of Homeland Security raised the terrorist threat level on several U.S.-based financial institutions after reports of new intelligence from an Al Qaeda suspect captured in Pakistan on 7/13.
- 07/31/04** — A leading pro-Taliban militant in the tribal areas accused Islamabad of “conniving” with the U.S. government to kill Nek Mohammed, and warned that military operations in South Waziristan would lead to further violence across Pakistan.
- 07/30/04** — **A suicide bomber killed eight people in a failed attempt to assassinate the Prime Minister-designate, Shaukat Aziz**, who was unharmed. An Al Qaeda-link group claimed responsibility. On the same day, Pakistan announced that one of the suspects **captured on 7/25 was Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani**, a Tanzanian national who had appeared on the FBI’s most-wanted list after his indictment for murder in connection with the 1998 Al Qaeda bombings of two American Embassies in East Africa.

- 07/29/04** — Pakistani and Indian officials met for two-day talks on their disagreements over the Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Navigation project in Kashmir. Talks were held in a “cordial and constructive atmosphere,” with the two sides agreeing to continue dialogue.
- 07/28/04** — A press report said that **former Pakistani Army Chief (1996-1998) Gen. Jehangir Karamat will be named as Pakistan’s new Ambassador to the United States.** On the same day, a suicide bomber killed a senior Pakistani intelligence officer in Kohat, near the tribal areas. Also, 70 police officers in the city of Gujrat were suspended and faced interrogation for their failure to discover that several foreign terrorism suspects were living in the area near their stations.
- 07/26/04** — The NWFP government reportedly offered to resolve the Wana issue on the basis of the 4/24 “Shakai agreement,” saying it would lift economic sanctions if tribesmen accede to government conditions. On the same day, top MMA leader Qazi Hussein Ahmed promised a nation-wide “reaction” against any decision to send Pakistani troops to Iraq.
- 07/25/04** — After a 14-hour gunbattle in the eastern city of Gujrat, **Pakistani security forces arrested 13 people suspected of ties to Al Qaeda, including four foreigners.** On the same day, nine Bell 412 helicopters were delivered to Pakistan to assist Islamabad in combating terrorism.
- 07/24/04** — Pakistani authorities released a former nuclear scientist and two retired military officers who had been held since December 2003 on suspicion of participation in A.Q. Khan’s proliferation network. On the same day, the Minister of Information said that Pakistan would consider sending troops to Iraq if Baghdad made a formal request, if other Islamic countries also contribute, and if the Pakistani Parliament approves of the policy.
- 07/23/04** — **President Musharraf met with Indian External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh** in Rawalpindi, where Musharraf “emphasized the need for simultaneous progress” on all issues, especially Kashmir, which he said needed to be resolved within “a reasonable time frame.” Singh reportedly responded by saying that, “Flexibility also means flexibility on time.”
- 07/22/04** — **The 9/11 Commission Report was released.** The report emphasized the importance of eliminating terrorist sanctuaries in western Pakistan, and called for provision of long-term and comprehensive support to the government of President Musharraf so long as that government remains committed to combating terrorism and to a policy of “enlightened moderation.” On the same day, **H.R. 4965 (the Nuclear Black-Market Elimination Act)** was introduced in the House. The Act would authorize the President to impose three-year-minimum sanctions on any “foreign person or entity” that is determined to have been involved in the illicit transfer of nuclear enrichment or reprocessing materials or technologies, or designs or equipment for nuclear explosive devices. Title III of the Act would require the President to determine that Pakistan has verifiably halted all proliferation activities and is fully sharing with the United States all information relevant to the A.Q. Khan proliferation network.
- 07/21/04** — Foreign Affairs Minister Khurshid Kasuri met with his Indian counterpart Natwar Singh in Islamabad for “frank and friendly” talks on efforts to continue their bilateral peace process. On the same day, New York-based Human Rights Watch issued a report that accused the Pakistan Army of using brutal tactics, including torture, to repress a farmers’ movement in

the Okara district of Punjab. A Pakistan military spokesman called the accusations “ludicrous.” Also, Pakistan’s Naval Chief met with officials from the U.S. Departments of State and Defense in Washington to discuss the possible sale to Pakistan of new weapons systems.

- 07/20/04 — A representative of the Lahore-based Human Rights Commission of Pakistan said that the residents of Azad (Free) Kashmir live under a “general atmosphere of fear and apprehension,” feeling that “Pakistan’s military and bureaucracy totally dominate and control their government.”
- 07/17/04 — Eight representatives of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission reportedly met with a team of Pakistani nuclear scientists in Washington for first-ever bilateral talks on civilian nuclear safety issues.
- 07/16/04 — The United States and Pakistan signed an agreement to use FY2004 Economic Support Funds to cancel \$495 million in Pakistan’s concessional debt to the U.S. government. On the same day, Pakistan’s foreign minister strongly rejected the recent claim of the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State that the infiltration of Islamic militants into Indian Kashmir was continuing. Also, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif told an interviewer that he had been “stabbed in the back” by Army Chief Pervez Musharraf when Musharraf allegedly failed to inform him of the 1999 Kargil operation and the involvement of Pakistan Army troops.
- 07/15/04 — **H.R. 4818** (Foreign Operations Appropriations FY2005) was passed by the House. The bill would establish a new base program of \$300 million for military assistance for Pakistan, but allocates only half of that amount while authorizing the President to transfer the remainder from unobligated balances of funds under previous appropriations Acts. The bill also authorizes Pakistan to use up to \$200 million in Economic Support Funds to further reduce Pakistan’s concessional debt to the United States. On the same day, while on a visit to South Asia, Deputy Secretary of State Armitage told reporters in Islamabad that **“the United States is completely satisfied” with the state of Pakistan-U.S. relations.**
- 07/14/04 — **The Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on Pakistan and counterterrorism.** On the same day, while on a visit to South Asia, Deputy Secretary of State Armitage told reporters in New Delhi that **“the infrastructure [in Pakistan] that supports cross-border activities [in Kashmir] has not been dismantled.”**
- 07/13/04 — Pakistan and India announced scheduling a series of six rounds of bilateral talks over coming weeks ahead of a planned meeting of foreign ministers in early September. On the same day, the Afghan Foreign Minister praised Pakistan for its role in fighting terrorism, but Afghan President Karzai expressed concern that militants trained on Pakistani territory continue to cross into Afghanistan to mount anti-government attacks there.
- 07/12/04 — U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan named the Pakistani Ambassador to the United States, Ashraf Jahngir Qazi, to head the U.N. mission in Iraq.
- 07/08/04 — **H.R. 4754** (the Department of State and Related Agency Appropriations Act, 2005) was passed by the House. Section 405(e) of the Act would require the Secretary of State to report to Congress a plan to maximize awareness of rewards available for the capture or information leading to the capture of a leader of a foreign terrorist organization who may be in Pakistan or Afghanistan.

- 07/05/04 — **Pakistan finalized a deal to purchase a reported 50 Mirage jet fighters** and 150 engines from Libya.
- 07/02/04 — The ASEAN Regional Forum formally accepted Pakistan as a member.
- 06/30/04 — The new Prime Minister, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussein, took office vowing to continue implementing President Musharraf's policies on economic stability, political security, and dialogue with India.
- 06/28/04 — Two days of **bilateral talks between foreign secretaries** ended on a positive note with Pakistan and India agreeing to return their respective embassies to full strength.
- 06/26/04 — **Prime Minister Jamali announced his resignation** at the request of President Musharraf. Opposition parties and independent analysts called his "removal" a setback for democracy.
- 06/24/04 — **Pakistan's new National Security Council met for the first time** to address terrorism in Sindh and military operations in the tribal areas.
- 06/23/04 — **H.R. 4548** (the Intelligence Authorization Act for FY2005) was passed by the House. Section 304 of the Act would require the Director of Central Intelligence to report to the Congress on Pakistani efforts to curb proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to fight terrorism. On the same day, **Pakistan and India agreed to reopen their respective consulates in Bombay and Karachi.**
- 06/20/04 — After two days of talks on nuclear confidence-building measures, **Pakistan and India agreed to establish a hotline** to reduce the threat of accidental nuclear war.
- 06/17/04 — Pakistani troops backed by jets and helicopter gunships reportedly began a new offensive operation in South Waziristan that included **the killing of one of the most defiant militant Pashtun leaders, Nek Mohammed.** Seven others were killed in the attack. Also, the Information Secretary of the Pakistan People's party, Munawar Suharwardy, was murdered in an apparent assassination in Karachi.
- 06/16/04 — **President Bush designated Pakistan as a major non-NATO ally of the United States.**
- 06/14/04 — The **Pakistan Army ended a five-day operation in South Waziristan** that left 72 people dead, including 17 soldiers. On the same day, a State Department report placed Pakistan on the "Tier 2 Watch List" as a "source, transit, and destination country for trafficked persons."
- 06/13/04 — Pakistani security forces arrested nine suspected terrorists, including the nephew of Al Qaeda leader Khalid Sheik Mohammed.
- 06/11/04 — Fixed-wing Pakistani warplanes in South Waziristan reportedly bombed three compounds being used by militants, including one that was described as a terrorist training camp.
- 06/10/04 — **Suspected Islamic militants attacked the motorcade of a top Pakistani Army commander** in Karachi, killing ten, but leaving the general unharmed. On the same day, the Islamabad government rescinded its amnesty offer to five key tribal militants in South Waziristan and issued a "kill or capture" order against them.
- 06/01/04 — A *Washington Post* editorial article by President Musharraf set out his strategy of "enlightened moderation" that seeks to end Islamic militancy and improve the socioeconomic standing of Muslims.

- 05/31/04 — **A bomb exploded at a Shiite mosque in Karachi**, killing at least 20 people and injuring 38 others.
- 05/30/04 — Unidentified **gunmen shot and killed leading pro-Taliban Sunni cleric Nizamuddin Shamzai** in Karachi. On the same day, authorities in South Waziristan shuttered more than 6,000 merchant shops in an effort to pressure against tribesmen who are providing shelter to militants there.
- 05/29/04 — **Pakistan test-fired its nuclear-capable Ghauri medium-range ballistic missile.**
- 05/27/04 — President Musharraf said that junior Pakistan Army and Air Force officers were among those who tried to assassinate him in December 2003. On the same day, the U.S. and Pakistani governments reportedly agreed to establish communication links that would prevent future incursions of U.S. troops onto Pakistani territory.
- 05/25/04 — Islamist political leader and pro-Taliban cleric **Maulana Fazlur Rehman was named as Leader of the Opposition** in Pakistan's Parliament.
- 05/24/04 — Karachi police arrested six suspected members of the Harakat ul-Mujahideen Al Aalami terrorist group who allegedly were behind a 2002 attempt to assassinate President Musharraf.
- 05/23/04 — The British Commonwealth ended a four-year suspension of Pakistan.
- 05/12/04 — The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom again recommended that the United States designate Pakistan as a "country of particular concern."
- 05/11/04 — **Shabaz Sharif, a former Punjab Chief Minister and brother of deposed PM Nawaz Sharif, attempted to return to Lahore from exile** in London, but was immediately deported to Saudi Arabia.
- 05/07/04 — A suspected suicide bombing at a Karachi mosque killed 14 Shia worshippers and injured at least 200 others.
- 05/03/04 — **The U.S. Trade Representative again named Pakistan to its Special 301 priority watch list.**
- 04/27/04 — Pakistan announced plans to reduce the size of its army by some 50,000 soldiers, or 9% of its total strength.
- 04/24/04 — Five Pashtun tribesmen accused of sheltering Al Qaeda members in western Pakistan surrendered to government authorities and were immediately granted amnesty in return for promises that they would not provide shelter to Al Qaeda members or their supporters.
- 04/21/04 — **H.R. 4183** was introduced in the House. The bill includes a provision seeking to make available \$890 million to reimburse Pakistan and other key cooperating nations for their support of U.S. counterterrorism efforts.
- 04/14/04 — Pakistan's Parliament passed a law establishing a National Security Council that has been harshly criticized by opposition leaders as institutionalizing a permanent governance role for the Pakistani military.
- 04/12/04 — Top opposition figure and **ARD leader Javed Hashmi was sentenced to 23 years in prison** for sedition, mutiny, and forgery.
- 04/04/04 — Suspected Islamic militants stormed a Karachi police station and killed five officers. Officials said they believe the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi terrorist group was responsible.