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

- 11/13/05** — During an interview on American television, President Musharraf claimed that Pakistan was “winning” its battle with terrorism and said that Pakistani and U.S. agencies are “totally coordinated in all their intelligence work.” He expressed being “very optimistic” about future efforts to locate top Al Qaeda fugitives and also defended his recent dealings with Israel and American Jews as being in Pakistan’s interests.
- 11/12/05** — **Prime Minister Aziz held talks with his Indian counterpart** on the sidelines of a South Asia summit in Bangladesh, but no new steps were announced for improving bilateral relations. The Indian Prime Minister reportedly warned that terrorist incidents could disrupt the peace process. Aziz later expressed satisfaction with the ongoing dialogue. On the same day, an Asian Development Bank and World Bank preliminary assessment found that **Pakistan needs \$5.2 billion for earthquake relief and reconstruction**. Also, a mob of more than 1,000 people torched three churches and two other structures in central Punjab after allegations that a Christian had desecrated a copy of the Koran.
- 11/11/05** — A pro-government tribal elder was shot and killed near Wana in South Waziristan, reportedly the 74th such targeted killing since 2003. On the same day, meetings between Pakistani and Indian officials on the controversial Kishanganga dam project in Kashmir ended without progress.

Acronyms:

LOC:	Line of Control (Kashmir)
MMA:	Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal
PML:	Pakistan Muslim League
PPP:	Pakistan People’s Party

- 11/09/05 — President Bush called on American citizens and businesses to contribute more funds to earthquake relief efforts in Pakistan. On the same day, a second crossing point was opened on the Kashmiri LOC.
- 11/08/05 — The U.S. Department of State's *International Religious Freedom Report 2005* found that in practice the Islamabad government imposes limits on the freedom of religion in Pakistan. The report noted "some steps to improve the treatment of religious minorities," but indicated that "serious problems remained." However, the State Department rejected the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom's recommendation that Pakistan be designated a Country of Particular Concern. On the same day, the Pentagon awarded Lockheed Martin an \$89 million contract to supply Pakistan with six air defense radars.
- 11/07/05 — The opening of a single crossing point on the Kashmiri LOC turned violent when Pakistani police fired tear gas at persons attempting to cross into Indian-controlled territory without official authorization.
- 11/05/05 — Six "foreigners" allegedly planning terrorist acts were reported killed in North Waziristan when explosives they were handling detonated.
- 11/04/05 — **President Musharraf said he would postpone a planned purchase of F-16 fighters** from the United States so as to focus on earthquake relief and reconstruction efforts. Pakistan later reportedly asked the State Department to withhold congressional notification "for the time being."
- 11/03/05 — The Pentagon awarded Boeing a \$62.5 million contract to supply Pakistan with 50 Harpoon anti-ship missiles. On the same day, Pakistani security forces reportedly killed a suspected Al Qaeda member and arrested two others after a shootout in Quetta. Also, Asma Jehangir, chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, visited Washington, D.C., where she issued strong criticisms of Islamabad's military government and continued U.S. support for it.
- 11/02/05 — The Islamabad government sharply increased its **official earthquake death toll to more than 73,000 people**. On the same day, congressional conference managers making foreign operations appropriations directed the Secretary of State to report to Congress on Islamabad's steps to protect the rights and safety of Pakistan's human rights lawyers and journalists. Also, Pakistan issued a passport to deposed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif so that he can travel to London to get medical aid for his son.
- 11/01/05 — Pakistani gang rape victim Mukhtaran Mai, noted for her campaign for women's rights, visited Washington, D.C., and issued a statement to Congress. She later received a *Glamour* magazine Woman of the Year award in New York.
- 10/31/05 — **President Musharraf telephoned Indian Prime Minister Singh** to extend condolences for the loss of life in 10/29 terrorist bombings in New Delhi and offer to assist in the criminal investigation. Singh reportedly told Musharraf that there were "indications" of "external linkages" in the investigation and reminded the Pakistan president of past commitments to end "cross-border terrorism." On the same day, a diluted version of the controversial Hasba (or accountability) bill was introduced by Islamist parties in the NWFP provincial assembly. Also, police in Rawalpindi reported arresting four members of the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi terrorist group in connection with the January murder of a prominent Shiite cleric.

- 10/29/05** — After a meeting of officials in Islamabad, **Pakistan and India issued a joint statement agreeing to open five crossing points on the Kashmiri LOC** on 11/7 for earthquake relief efforts.
- 10/28/05** — **Pakistan extradited 14 Taliban rebels to Afghanistan**, the first such move since 2001. On the same day, the Pentagon invited three U.N. special rapporteurs, including Pakistani human rights leader Asma Jehangir, to visit U.S. detention facilities in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.
- 10/26/05** — USAID Administrator Natsios announced **a second U.S. government pledge of \$50 million for Pakistani earthquake relief** and reconstruction, bringing the total U.S. commitment to \$156 million. On the same day, India offered Pakistan \$25 million for earthquake relief.
- 10/25/05** — The World Bank announced a \$470 million earthquake reconstruction package for Pakistan.
- 10/24/05** — A bomb blast in South Waziristan near the Afghan border killed a Pakistani soldier and injured 11 others.
- 10/23/05** — The Commander of the U.S. Central Command, Gen. Abizaid, visited Pakistani Kashmir to review earthquake relief efforts.
- 10/22/05** — The Islamabad government reportedly committed itself to spending 4% of GDP on education in the next fiscal year. On the same day, London-based Amnesty International criticized the Pakistan military for its alleged failure to distribute stored tents and other relief supplies to homeless earthquake victims.
- 10/21/05** — President Musharraf said that banned Islamist groups would not be allowed to conduct earthquake relief efforts. On the same day, Paris-based Reporters Without Borders placed Pakistan 150th out of 167 countries in its annual ranking of world press freedoms.
- 10/20/05** — The House International Relations Committee Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific held a hearing on the impact and humanitarian response to the South Asia earthquake.
- 10/19/05** — Saab announced that a deal to provide Pakistan with six airborne surveillance aircraft was worth more than \$1 billion. Pakistani opposition figures later urged deferral of the deal until earthquake relief and reconstruction efforts were completed.
- 10/18/05** — The House passed **H.Res. 492**, mourning the loss of life in Pakistan and India caused by the 10/8 earthquake and expressing the condolences of the American people. On the same day, **H.R. 4073**, to permit Pakistani nationals to be eligible for temporary protected status under Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, was introduced in the House. Also, Berlin-based Transparency International placed Pakistan 144th out of 158 countries in its annual ranking of world corruption levels.
- 10/17/05** — The Senate passed **S.Res. 274**, expressing sympathy and pledging support of the Senate and the American people to victims of the 10/8 earthquake.
- 10/15/05** — An top Indian army officer said that the 10/8 earthquake had not affected rates of infiltration of separatist militants along the Kashmiri LOC.
- 10/12/05** — **Secretary of State Rice paid a visit to Pakistan** to express directly the “great sympathies of the American people with the people of Pakistan.” On the same day, the Pakistan Army came under criticism for slow and inadequate disaster response as thousands of earthquake victims entered their fourth day without food and shelter.

- 10/10/05 — After an initial refusal, Pakistan accepted Indian offers of disaster assistance for earthquake victims.
- 10/08/05 — **A major earthquake centered near the city of Muzaffarabad** (in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir some 70 miles north of Islamabad) left at least 73,000 Pakistanis and Kashmiris dead and millions homeless. The United States pledged disaster relief of up to \$50 million.
- 10/07/05 — Two gunmen opened fire on a minority Ahmadi congregation in Islamabad, killing 8 people and wounded another 20 in an apparent sectarian attack.
- 10/06/05 — **The third and final phase of nominally non-party municipal elections** took place, with President Musharraf's allies in the ruling PML winning sweeping victories in all four Pakistani provinces. The Islamist MMA saw significant reversals in its traditional strongholds. On the same day, a rocket duel between militants and security forces in North Waziristan left three civilians dead.
- 10/05/05 — India's external affairs minister ended his four-day visit to Pakistan with calls for Islamabad to open its economy to facilitate increased bilateral trade with India.
- 10/04/05 — **Pakistan reported arresting Abdul Latif Hakimi, chief spokesman for the Taliban**, in Baluchistan. On the same day, **Pakistan and India issued a joint statement expressing satisfaction with the progress of their bilateral Composite Dialogue** and vowed to find a "framework" for the "mutually acceptable" settlement of the Siachen and Sir Creek territorial disputes. Also, six low-ranking Pakistani soldiers were sentenced for their roles in efforts to assassinate President Musharraf in 2003. Four will be executed and two will serve life in prison.
- 10/03/05 — India's external affairs minister visited Islamabad, where **Pakistan and India finalized an agreement on pre-notification of ballistic missile tests and made plans to establish a hotline between coast guard services**. On the same day, Afghan security forces killed 28 suspected militants in heavy fighting near the Pakistan border. Also, in a *Time* magazine interview, President Musharraf offered that "the man on the street [in Pakistan] does not have a good opinion of the United States" and he claimed that Pakistan was "left high and dry" after serving as a strategic U.S. ally during the 1980s Afghan war. He also said he has not decided whether to resign from his army post in 2007.
- 10/02/05 — A targeted attack on pro-government tribesmen reportedly left one man dead and another seriously injured near Wana, South Waziristan.
- 10/01/05 — A *Washington Post* editorial criticized President Musharraf for insensitive statements and "lies" about women's rights in Pakistan, and for renegeing on promises to restore democracy and to reform religious schools.
- 09/30/05 — Renewed fighting between Pakistani security forces and Islamic militants in North Waziristan apparently ended when militants withdrew from their positions. Some 25 militants and 5 soldiers were reported killed.
- 09/28/05 — Pakistan and India agreed to start a new cross-border bus service between Lahore and Amritsar.
- 09/27/05 — During a visit to Islamabad, U.S. National Security Advisor Hadley urged both Pakistan and Afghanistan to work together more closely in the hunt for renegade Al Qaeda and Taliban fugitives.

- 09/23/05 — An organization of thousands of Pakistani madrassas reversed its position and agreed to register themselves with the government after Pakistani officials reportedly dropped a requirement to reveal funding sources.
- 09/20/05 — The United States announced it would provide an additional \$30 million in FY2005 counternarcotics assistance to Pakistan. On the same day, a \$10 million Food For Progress (P.L. 480) grant agreement was signed to provide Pakistan with some 30,000 tons of U.S. soybeans.
- 09/18/05 — **President Musharraf gave an unprecedented speech to members of the American Jewish Congress** in New York, saying that Pakistan would build ties with Israel as the Middle East peace process progresses.
- 09/16/05 — One suspected militant was killed and 13 tribal elders arrested after they refused to cooperate with security forces in South Waziristan.
- 09/15/05 — Pakistani security forces arrested 28 suspected militants and destroyed an alleged Al Qaeda hideout during **a major operation in North Waziristan**. On the same day, President Bush again determined that Pakistan is among 20 “major drug-transit or major illicit drug-producing countries” worldwide.
- 09/14/05 — **President Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Singh met** on the sidelines of a United Nations session in New York, where they reaffirmed commitment to previous agreements, but announced no new progress in bilateral relations. On the same day, gunmen in Quetta shot and killed a Shia man in an apparent sectarian attack, the city’s second in two days.
- 09/13/05 — The *Washington Post* quoted President Musharraf as saying that rape in Pakistan “has become a moneymaking concern. A lot of people say if you want to go abroad and get a visa for Canadian citizenship and be a millionaire, get yourself raped.” Musharraf later denied making the statement, which can be heard on an audio recording of the interview. Numerous political figures and human rights activists — both in Pakistan and elsewhere — expressed outrage at the “shocking” comments. The U.S. State Department declined to comment on Musharraf’s remarks, but said world leaders should denounce violence against women.
- 09/12/05 — **President Musharraf confirmed that metallurgist A.Q. Khan had illicitly provided uranium enrichment centrifuges to North Korea**. On the same day, militants in North Waziristan killed three people they accused of being U.S. spies. Also, Pakistan and India began repatriation of hundreds of prisoners in an exchange agreement made on 8/30. Finally, an organization of thousands of Pakistani religious schools rejected a governmental order that they register and disclose their funding sources.
- 09/10/05 — Three suspected militants were arrested after a shootout in North Waziristan.
- 09/09/05 — **A nationwide strike called for by Pakistan’s major opposition parties attracted only limited support**, with little noticeable effect in cities other than Quetta. Information Minister Rashid called the strike “a total failure.”
- 09/08/05 — **Pakistan’s Ambassador to the United States requested U.S. cooperation on civil nuclear energy**, saying that any U.S. legislation on the issue “shouldn’t be a specific, one-time affair just for India.” On the same day, during a House hearing on U.S.-India relations, the Bush Administration’s top arms control official said that, on the issue of civil

nuclear cooperation, the United States views India as “an exceptional case” and has no plans to seek similar cooperation with Pakistan (or Israel). Also, bombs exploded in two American-style Karachi restaurants injuring at least three people.

- 09/06/05 — Pakistan dispatched an additional 9,500 troops to its border with Afghanistan to prevent militant infiltrations expected before Afghan elections later in the month.
- 09/05/05 — Gunmen killed two Pakistani government officials in North Waziristan.
- 09/04/05 — **Pakistan’s major opposition parties — both secular and Islamist — called for a national strike** to protest President Musharraf’s “military takeover,” “dictatorial behavior,” and the “blatant rigging” of elections.
- 09/02/05 — **Foreign Secretary-level Pakistan-India talks** expressed satisfaction at progress made in the “Composite Dialogue” and set January 2006 dates for the third round of such dialogue.
- 09/01/05 — While on a visit to Turkey, Foreign Minister Kasuri met with his Israeli counterpart in **the first-ever public talks between Pakistan and Israel**. Kasuri said that Pakistan had decided to “engage” Israel, but would not recognize the Jewish state until a Palestinian state was established. The meeting brought waves of protest from Pakistani Islamist groups who viewed the development as a betrayal.
- 08/31/05 — Pakistan reported taking delivery of eight P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft purchased from the United States. Pakistan’s navy chief said the planes would add to the “offensive punch” of his fleet. On the same day, officials in North Waziristan reportedly shuttered 52 merchant shops after tribal leaders in Miramshah refused to hand over 5 wanted suspects to security forces.
- 08/30/05 — **Home Secretary-level Pakistan-India talks on terrorism and drug trafficking** ended with agreements to release hundreds of fishermen and other civilians from each other’s jails, improve consular access to prisoners, notify each other of arrests, and further cooperate on counterterrorism efforts.
- 08/29/05 — President Musharraf vowed to prevent Pakistan’s religious schools from harboring terrorists or teach militancy, and he warned that madrassas not registering with the government by the end of the year would be closed.
- 08/26/05 — **The pro-Musharraf PML claimed that its favored candidates had won widespread victories in municipal elections** in all four provinces, with President Musharraf declaring the outcome “a victory for the moderates and ... a defeat for the extremists.” The Islamist opposition MMA denounced the elections as rigged.
- 08/25/05 — **The second phase of non-party municipal elections** took place, with poll-related violence leaving some 50 people dead and up to 1,000 injured.
- 08/22/05 — Pakistan reported arresting ten suspected terrorists and seizing a large weapons cache in North Waziristan.
- 08/21/05 — **The ruling political coalition said its favored candidates had been victorious in municipal elections in three of Pakistan’s four provinces**. Opposition parties complained of widespread vote rigging and the barring of women from casting ballots.
- 08/18/05 — **Voting began in Pakistan’s two-phase, nominally non-party municipal elections**.