

# Osama still alive, says Musharraf

## Pakistan Prez admits that Bin Laden trail has gone cold ■ Calls for Afghan army's participation

Agencies  
Islamabad, December 5

PAKISTAN PRESIDENT General Pervez Musharraf has said that terror mastermind Osama bin Laden is alive.

According to the *Dawn*, Musharraf, while on a visit to Argentina said, that interrogation of terror suspects and al-Qaida activists mopped up during military operations launched by Pakistan army in the tribal and mountainous region bordering Afghanistan had revealed that Osama was alive.

"Based on interrogations of other members of al-Qaida, I know he is alive," the paper quoted him as saying.

He, however, added that neither he nor Pakistani intelligence had any idea of Osama's whereabouts.

More than three years after al-Qaida's attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon killed almost 3,000 people, Musharraf insisted in an interview to *The Washington Post* that Pakistani forces are still aggressively pursuing the world's most notorious terrorist.

Pressed on whether the trail had gone cold, he said, "Yes, if you mean we don't know, from that point of view, we don't know where he is."

The US shares major responsibility, Musharraf suggested, because the US-led coalition does not have enough troops in Afghanistan, which has left "voids". The US and its allies need to expedite training and expansion of the new Afghan army as the only viable alternative, he said.

Challenges in Afghanistan would be better dealt with "if the Afghan national army is raised faster, in more strength, so that they can reach out to fill these voids that I am talking about, where US forces or coalition forces are not there," he said.

The hunt for al-Qaida members, including top lieutenants of Osama, is also foundering



AP  
Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf arrives at London's Heathrow Airport with wife Shehba (left) on Sunday. A range of issues like tackling terrorism and strengthening bilateral 'strategic ties' are expected to figure in talks between Musharraf and British PM Tony Blair on Monday.

because of the diffuse array of groups under its umbrella. Pakistani forces are usually not even certain who or what factions they are pursuing in the treacherous tribal regions along its border with Afghanistan, Musharraf said.

"Now, when we operate in many areas, we don't know who we are operating against and suddenly we find out that, okay, we've got (or) we've killed so-and-so," Musharraf said. Sometimes Pakistani forces just "bump into them", he added.

In a raid, Pakistani forces captured the mastermind be-

hind the month-long seizure of three UN workers in Afghanistan, "but we didn't know we were operating against him", he said.

In another recent raid on an unidentified target, Pakistani troops killed a member of a Chinese East Turkistan Islamic Movement, a group of Uighur Muslims challenging Chinese control over an area around Xinjiang, he said.

The Pakistani leader also denied reports that his troops were withdrawing from south Waziristan, a tense tribal area along the mountainous border

that was considered a possible hiding place for bin Laden and his deputy, Ayman Zawahri.

Pakistan, he said, has ordered a "relocation" and tactical shift of its forces now that extremists have been flushed out of five valleys in south Waziristan and forced into remote mountains where they will be pursued by Pakistan's helicopter-borne Special Operations Task Force. As many as 8,000 troops have been deployed there in recent operations to nab extremists who cross from Afghanistan or use the border.

Pakistan's military opera-

tion, combined with a political push to win cooperation from the local population, Musharraf said, has been a recent victory. "They're on the run now," he claimed. The Bush administration, the *Post* noted, has played down any tension over continuing efforts by US investigators to learn more about the black market nuclear technology network run by Pakistan's top scientist, A. Q. Khan.

US officials believe Khan has not been fully candid in disclosing the scope of his help to nations such as Libya seeking to develop nuclear bombs.

### Ignore reporters, Bush tells Pervez

US PRESIDENT George W. Bush, not known for his fondness for reporters, jokingly told Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf on Sunday that he could safely ignore some of their questions. The exchange occurred when Musharraf misunderstood a cue from Bush and proceeded to answer a reporter's question about the safety of the US food supply instead of calling on a Pakistani journalist. "I know that you're trying your best to address the issue of terrorism all over the world, and obviously, the most important part is to protect your own, the US from terrorism," Musharraf said. "Actually, I wasn't asking you necessarily to answer the question; I was asking you to call on somebody from the Pakistani press. I'm sorry," Bush said as a smile crept over his face. "You don't have to answer every question they ask me. I would advise you not answering those questions."

AFP, Washington

But Pakistan has refused to allow US or International Atomic Energy Agency investigators to interrogate Khan, who was pardoned by Musharraf and remains in Pakistan under what officials call house arrest.

### Gen may retain both posts

Gen Musharraf, whose country in his absence enacted a law allowing him to continue as both the President and Army Chief beyond this year, has said that he may retain his dual roles to guarantee "the sustainability of our policies.

# Kashmir ripe for resolution, says Musharraf

Press Trust of India



**'I think the Palestine  
and Kashmir disputes  
are ripe for resolution.  
We have to resolve them'**

ISLAMABAD, Nov. 26. — Observing that the issues of Kashmir and Palestine were "ripe" for resolution, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf today said he would take them up during his forthcoming talks with the US, British and French leaders.

"I think Palestine and Kashmir disputes are ripe for resolution. We have to resolve them. That will bring considerable stability into the world," Gen. Musharraf told reporters before leaving for a tour of Latin American countries covering Brazil, Argentina and Mexico, following which he would make stop-overs in USA, France and Britain.

Gen. Musharraf said he would focus his talks with President George W Bush, French President Jacques Chirac and British Prime Minister Tony Blair on implementation of the second prong of his theory on enlightened moderation, in which he advocates the Muslim world taking steps to fight forces of extremism and the West helping to resolve the disputes involving Muslim world.

Gen. Musharraf, who would be

the first Pakistani leader to visit the Latin American countries, said he looked forward to consolidating Pakistan's relations with the three countries.

The Pakistani President accompanied by a small delegation of businessmen was seen off at the airport by Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and top military officers.

Gen. Musharraf later made a brief stop-over at Istanbul on his way to Brazil on the first leg of his visit to the Latin American countries. Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer had specially flown from Ankara to Istanbul to receive Musharraf and his wife Begum Sehba, APP news agency said.

Later, the two Presidents exchanged views on matters of mutual interests and regional and international issues. The Turkish President also hosted a lunch in honour of Gen. Musharraf.

## Indo-Pak dialogue helpful: Aziz

The Pakistani Prime Minister, Mr Shaukat Aziz, today said he believed that the composite dialogue with India would lead to resolution of all issues including Kashmir and gave broad hints that his country would go ahead with the trans-national gas pipeline even if New Delhi dithered due to reservations.

"Pakistan believes that the composite dialogue with India will lead to resolution of all issues including Kashmir according to aspirations of Kashmiris," he told the Federal Cabinet while briefing about his visit to India on talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and other Indian leaders.

Mr Aziz said Pakistan would go ahead with plans to lay gas pipeline from Iran, Qatar and Turkmenistan to meet its energy requirements for an expanding economy.

# PoK government backs Musharraf formula

By M Saleem Pandit/TNN

**Muzaffarabad (PoK):** Unlike the disagreement on President Pervez Musharraf's seven-region Kashmir formula in Pakistan and across the Line of Control, the Pak-occupied-Kashmir (PoK) government here has guardedly supported it.

But at the same time it wants the involvement of people's representatives of Kashmir, both mainstream politicians and separatists, in the dialogue process. Musharraf had at a Iftaar party last month suggested identification of seven regions across Jammu and Kashmir, demilitarising them and thereafter granting them status. PoK prime minister Sardar Sikandar Khan told a delega-



tion of Indian journalists on Thursday that there was some progress in the dialogue process between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir issue. Khan claimed that the Pakistan government had been taking the PoK government into confidence before any talks process with India over the Kashmir problem.

Khan, according to reports, is scheduled to meet leaders of the moderate Hurriyat group at Kathmandu in December. The Hurriyat leaders have also been asking the Indian government to allow them to visit Pak-

istan and PoK to discuss the Kashmir situation with their leaders.

Khan claimed the PoK enjoyed political autonomy and the Pakistan military had no role to play in running the government. "Only defence, communication and currency are in the hands of Pakistan," he claimed.

He claimed PoK was more peaceful than many parts of Pakistan. Khan, who migrated to Muzaffarabad from Poonch in Jammu, said many families had been divided because of partition and there was a need to do something for such families.

Hailing the move to re-open the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad road, the PoK prime minister said the bus service across the LoC would end the sufferings of the divided families.

# Putin signs Bill to ratify <sup>Russia</sup> Kyoto Protocol <sup>HC-17</sup>

Associated Press  
Moscow, November 5

611  
PRESIDENT VLADIMIR Putin has signed a bill confirming Russia's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, the Kremlin said on Friday, clearing the way for the global climate pact to come into force early next year.

Both houses of parliament last month ratified the protocol, which aims to stem global warming by reducing greenhouse-gas emissions. Putin signed the bill on Thursday, the Kremlin said. Without Russia's support, the pact — which has been rejected by the US and Australia — could not have come into effect. It needed endorsement by 55 industrialised nations accounting for at least 55 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions in 1990.

The US alone accounted for 36 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions in 1990, while Russia accounted for 17 per cent. After years of hesitation, Putin pledged in May to speed up approval in return for the European Union's support of Russia's bid to join the WTO. The 1997 pact would take effect 90 days after Russia notified the United Nations of its ratification.

The pact's approval followed fierce debates among Russian officials. Russia's foes of Kyoto, led by Putin's economic adviser Andrei Illarionov, warned that the pact would stymie the nation's economic growth. Kyoto backers rejected that claim, saying even after a five-year recovery, the post-Soviet economic meltdown has left emissions some 30 per cent below the baseline.

6 NOV 2004

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

# Pak grapples with Iraq dilemma

**Islamabad, July 29 (Reuters):** Pakistan has discussed sending troops to Iraq as part of an Islamic force but has not made any decision, officials said today, as outrage welled up in the country over the killing of two citizens held hostage in Iraq.

President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain issued a joint statement condemning the execution of the two migrant workers employed by an Arab firm doing contract work for a US company in Iraq.

"Those who have committed this crime have caused the greatest harm both to humanity and

Islam," the leaders said in the statement after Al Jazeera television said it had received a videotape of the executions that was too gruesome to broadcast.

The killings came as Islamabad grappled with a Saudi proposal for Arab and Muslim nations other than Iraq's immediate neighbours to provide troops to help secure the country.

US secretary of state Colin Powell, in Saudi Arabia on a tour of West Asia, telephoned Pakistani foreign minister Khurshed Mehmood Kasuri to express sorrow over the deaths.

A foreign ministry statement said they also talked on Pak-

istan's peace talks with India and the situation in Iraq.

Officials also confirmed Prime Minister Hussain discussed a possible joint Muslim force when he met Saudi leaders in Jeddah at the weekend.

"The Prime Minister was briefed about the idea of an Islamic force which had been earlier mooted in the conference of Iraq's neighbouring countries held in Cairo just prior to the visit," foreign ministry spokesman Mansoor Khan said.

Speculation that Pakistan would commit troops mounted this month after the appointment of Pakistan's former envoy to Washington, Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, as UN special envoy for Iraq.

Such a move would be hugely unpopular at home and observers say the killings of the hostages will make any decision more difficult for Musharraf, who already faces stiff opposition from hardline groups for his role in supporting the US war on terror.

parliament's lower house, that a decision on sending troops to Iraq was still in the balance.

"We had repeatedly told the kidnappers that we have not yet taken a decision on sending troops to Iraq but despite that they have killed both," Kasuri told parliament today.

Pakistan has long resisted US entreaties to send troops to help restore security in Iraq, saying it would only do so under a UN mandate and so long as other Muslim nations were involved and provided they were welcomed by the Iraqi government.

Today, Iraqi Prime Minister

Iyad Allawi, speaking in Saudi Arabia where he met Powell, said troops from Arab and other Islamic states would be welcome.

The conservative Islamist opposition believes Pakistan should stay out of Iraq.

"Pakistan's overall foreign policy is very unpopular," said Ameerul Azeem, secretary information of the Jamaat-e-Islami, a key component of the Islamic opposition alliance — the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA).

"The threat to Pakistanis working in the Gulf and the Middle East has increased after the government hinted at sending troops to Iraq," he said.



**Musharraf**

# Osama ally now a special US friend

S. Rajagopalan

Washington, June 17

PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH has formally designated Pakistan a "major non-Nato ally", qualitatively upgrading relations with Islamabad in line with the promise made to President Pervez Musharraf three months ago.

Ironically, Bush's proclamation came on a day when the commission probing the 9/11 terrorist attacks castigated Islamabad for helping the Taliban regime in Afghanistan to provide a haven to al-Qaida. Soon after the presidential notification on Wednesday, officials of the Bush administration sought to re-



**STRANGE BEDFELLOWS** George Bush conferred on Pakistan the status of a major non-Nato ally on Thursday.

assure India that the move would in no way detract from the strong Indo-US ties. They also said that regardless of the new access to American defence hardware, Pakistan would still be subject to the US's strict licensing procedures, inter-agency clearances and con-

gressional approvals.

In a clear bid to give the message that it is earnest about a quick movement on high-tech cooperation with India, Washington is sending Undersecretary of Commerce Kenneth Juster to New Delhi next week for talks with the new government on the "glide path" issues. A senior official said US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick will also visit next month to give a push to trade ties.

With Bush's announcement conferring "major non-Nato ally" status, Pakistan has entered an exclusive club of 13 nations that enjoy a special access to the US's foreign aid and defence cooperation.

# Pak blitz on al-Qaida hub

Agencies

Islamabad, June 11

AT LEAST 15 Pakistani soldiers and more than 35 al-Qaida militants were killed as the army, backed by heavy artillery and helicopters, attacked militant hideouts in the south Waziristan region near the Afghanistan border today. Security for President Musharraf has been beefed up to "an unprecedented level" following the attack.

The early-morning strike triggered a fierce gunbattle between the government forces and al Qaida-backed fighters. "Today we responded appropriately to the latest unprovoked attacks by the terrorists," Pakistan army spokesman General Shaukat Sultan said.

Interior Minister Faisal Saleh Hayat told Pakistan's

parliament that the military would continue its assault in the Shakai area until it had been cleared of militants. Hayat said the government suspected a link between the fighting and an attempt to kill the military commander in Karachi on Thursday.

The Karachi corps commander, Lt-Gen Ahsan Saleem Hayat, survived but 10 people were killed in Thursday's ambush on his motorcade. More than 53 people have been killed in three days of fighting.

Pakistan has said up to 600 foreign militants, including Arabs, Chechens and Uzbeks linked to the al Qaida network, have been hiding in tribal areas close to the Afghan border, protected by Pakistani tribesmen.

At least two aircraft



**Pervez Musharraf**

*Under threat*

bombed two houses where militants were thought to be holed up in the Shakai area, 17 km west of the regional capital, Wana, witnesses said.

Many people, including women and children, walked for miles to safety after authorities ordered residents of Shakai to evacuate the battle zone.

"The foreign elements, along with their accomplices, had not only taken the local population hostage but were also a nuisance for the entire area... They forcibly occupied a civilian compound and used women and children as human shields and the security forces had to respond in self defence," a military statement said.

This is the first time the forces bombed with aircraft. A Pashtun tribesman who has rallied support among his clan for foreign militants in South Waziristan said on Thursday that the attack in Karachi was a response to the military's operation on tribal territory. Tribesman Nek Mohamed said more militant attacks were planned in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

# 'No more terms for C'wealth'

Press Trust of India  
Islamabad, May 24

PAKISTAN PRESIDENT Pervez Musharraf on Monday took strong exception to the Commonwealth's decision to keep a watch on the implementation of his decision to quit as Army Chief by the year-end, saying he would not accept any such "conditionalities".

"We're very happy to be admitted into the Commonwealth. But I take very strong exception to the Commonwealth Secretary-General (Don Mckinnon's) comments that it will keep an eye on Pakistan", he said and asserted he would take decisions on internal issues keeping in mind the interests of Pakistan and not that of the Commonwealth.

"All actions we take here are in the interests of Pakistan and not in the interests of the Commonwealth. We don't care about that. Let that be clear. Let it not be said that we're being kept under watch.

"If we're happy to be in the Commonwealth, the Commonwealth should be proud of a having a country like Pakistan joining it. Therefore, we don't accept such conditionalities", he



REUTERS  
President Pervez Musharraf speaks at a youth meet in Islamabad on Monday.

said while addressing a students' convention on extremism here.

McKinnon said the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group would review Pakistan's case again in September, especially in the light of Musharraf's commitment to quit the post of Army Chief by year-end.

On criticism from some member-nations of CMAG — which readmitted Pakistan two days ago at a meeting in London — Musharraf lambasted the African countries which had expressed doubts that democracy would ever return to Pakistan under the General's rule.



# Commonwealth furore in Pak

Islamabad, May 23 (AP): Denouncing as "unjustified" the Commonwealth's decision to re-admit Pakistan on the ground that democracy has returned to the country, opposition parties here said it is "wrong" to reward dictatorships.

Reacting angrily to the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) decision yesterday to revoke suspension of Pakistan, leader of the 15-party Alliance for Restoration of Democracy Mukdhum Amin Fahim said it was not justified.

"If the Commonwealth was to restore Pakistan's membership despite whatever was happening in the country, then there was no need for suspending the same after the military takeover in October 1999," Fahim, who recently wrote a letter to the Commonwealth opposing lifting of suspension, said.

Strongly defending his letter, Fahim, who is also senior leader of Pakistan People's Party led by former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, said his desire for

restoration of genuine and full democracy manifested the depth of his love for the country.

In a separate reaction, the PPP said the suspension was lifted for reasons other than restoration of democracy in Pakistan.

"The decision is not surprising as western countries, taking General (President Pervez) Musharraf's promise to fight against terror on its face value, wanted to reward his government," party spokesman Faratullah Babar said.

"We wanted to place on record that it is wrong to reward dictatorships. We did it not only for Pakistan but also to stop dictators waiting in the wings in other countries from striking," he said in a statement.

However, Islamic alliance Muttahida Majlis-e Amal welcomed the CMAG decision to re-admit Pakistan.

Its leader Qazi Husain Ahmed, whose alliance has helped Musharraf to get his con-

cause of the "grudge" of certain countries rather than any principle.

The fight for restoration of democracy was an internal problem of Pakistan and its political system, he said. Although the MMA was opposed to a military system, it was equally averse to foreign pressures on the subject, he was quoted as saying by the local daily *Dawn*.

He alleged that western countries had double standards on various issues which they kept changing according to their vested interests.

PPP's Babar said his party has, however, taken note that the CMAG has emphasised that Musharraf should shed his military uniform as agreed to by him.

The Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) of deposed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said despite the revocation, the Commonwealth and the EU should play their role in helping to restore democracy in Pakistan.

PML-N chairman Raja Zafarul Haq said his party was

grateful to various international organisations for bringing pressure on the military regime to restore constitutional rule.

"We did not want the Commonwealth (to) close its doors on Pakistan. But we still want the Commonwealth and the European Union (to) play their role for full restoration of the 1973 Constitution," Haq said.

He pointed out that the office of the President was with a serving general, unheard of in democratic societies.

Haq said the ARD, of which his party is also a member, would not change its opinion that the country lacked a democratic system, no matter how international organisations viewed the prevailing system.

Complaining that these organisations kept changing their yardsticks, Haq said at times they cooperated with various governments ignoring their democratic credentials and then they treated them like outcasts on the pretext that their record of human rights was not good.



Musharraf: Trouble within

troversial constitutional amendments ratified by parliament, said the President would take off his military uniform by the end of the year, after which powers would stand transferred to parliament.

He alleged that Pakistan's membership of the Commonwealth had been suspended be-

# Pak readmitted to C'wealth after 5-year break

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Agence France-Presse  
London, May 22

PAKISTAN WAS readmitted to the 53-member Commonwealth on Saturday, five years after its membership was suspended following a military coup that brought General Pervez Musharraf to power.

The move seals the reintegration of the world's second-largest Muslim nation into the international community.

The decision was announced by Commonwealth secretary-general Don McKinnon after a two-day meeting in London of the nine-nation Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG).

CMAG noted ongoing concerns "in regard to the strengthening of the democratic process in Pakistan", however,



AFP  
Pakistan president Pervez Musharraf at a foreign ministry briefing in Rawalpindi on Saturday. Prime Minister Zafarullah Jamali looks on.

that Pakistan should no longer remain suspended from the councils of the Commonwealth. However, CMAG noted continuing concern in regard to the strengthening of the democratic process in Pakistan", he said.

"The group further hoped that the process of democratisation would be consolidated in such a way as to encourage a broader embrace of the Harare principles", he said, referring to the 2001 Commonwealth democracy credo. "CMAG agreed to remain seized of the situation by retaining Pakistan on its agenda", McKinnon said.

The Commonwealth also said it expected President Pervez Musharraf to fulfil his pledge to stand down as chief of the army by the end of this

year, and it would monitor progress on that move. Secretary-General Don McKinnon said Pakistan had to fully implement amendments to its constitution "in letter and in spirit", including "the issue of the separation of the offices of President and chief of the army staff".

Pakistan has already been embraced by the US as a major non-Nato ally, widely seen as a reward for its support in the "war against terror". Most notably, Britain and the US have embraced the nuclear power as a strategic ally in the "war against terror".

The foreign ministers of Nigeria, India, Canada, Tanzania, Lesotho, the Bahamas, Malta, Samoa and Sri Lanka made the decision in the name of the Commonwealth.

# Khan sold nuclear parts to Syria, claims report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
JERUSALEM, MAY 11

SENIOR US officials believe that Syria was a possible client of disgraced Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan, a media report said. "There is growing concern among senior US State Department officials that Damascus has been pursuing a clandestine nuclear weapons development programme, and may already have procured centrifuges from Pakistan that can purify uranium for use in bombs," Ma'ariv online reported.

However, the intelligence reports are said to be somewhat ambiguous, and the US intelligence community remains somewhat divided on the issue, it added.

In early May, US Undersecretary of State for Arms Control, John Bolton said Khan had several "other customers" besides Iran, Libya and North Korea. Western diplomats in Vienna said Bolton was

## Showdown looms as Shahbaz set to reach Lahore today

LAHORE: The Pakistani government deployed crack police units in Lahore to stop Opposition rallies in support of the planned return from exile on Tuesday of former PM Nawaz Sharif's younger brother Shahbaz Sharif. Clashes between police and Sharif supporters appeared almost inevitable, with a rally planned near one of Lahore's main thoroughfares and some party leaders vowing to go to the Allama Iqbal International Airport to greet Shahbaz. —Reuters

"clearly referring to Syria", the report said.

"Syria certainly had contact with Khan," a non-US western diplomat is quoted to have said, adding suspicions of Syrian research in atomic weapons has existed for decades.

INDIAN EXPRESS

12 MAY 2004

# Musharraf sought Osama's expulsion: report

Press Trust of India

WASHINGTON, March 28. — General Pervez Musharraf met Taliban supreme Mullah Omar in April 2000 to convince him to expel Osama bin Laden but failed, according to a report released by a commission investigating the 9/11 attacks.

It said the meeting took place at the request of former US President Mr Bill Clinton after he raised the issue during his visit to Pakistan on 25 March 2000. "The Pakistanis asked for evidence that Osama had really ordered the US embassy bomb-

## Rumsfeld's clean chit to Pervez

WASHINGTON, March 28. — US Defence Secretary Mr Donald Rumsfeld today said he had seen no evidence that General Pervez Musharraf was involved in leaking nuclear secrets, but he could not say if Pakistan's military was involved. "I do not believe that there's any evidence or any suggestion that President Musharraf was involved," Mr Rumsfeld told ABC TV. He added that Gen. Musharraf is a "person with a lot of courage" who has been "tremendously cooperative" in the US "war on terror". — AFP

ings (in East Africa) a year and a half earlier. In a follow-up meeting the next day with under secretary of state Mr Thomas Pickering, President Musharraf argued that Pakistan had only limited influence over the Taliban," the commission report

quoted by media said. "But the

Taliban seemed immune to such pleas... Pakistan did not threaten to cut off its help to the Taliban regime."

## '9/11 rerun plot'

Soon after the 9/11 attacks, Osama bin Laden instructed the Al-Qaida's operations chief Khaled Sheikh Mohammed to prepare a devastating strike on London's Heathrow airport, PTI adds from London.

Osama had ordered an attack on Heathrow to punish Prime Minister Mr Tony Blair, calling him his "principal enemy", the *Sunday Times* newspaper reported today.

# Pak tunnel escape theory crops up

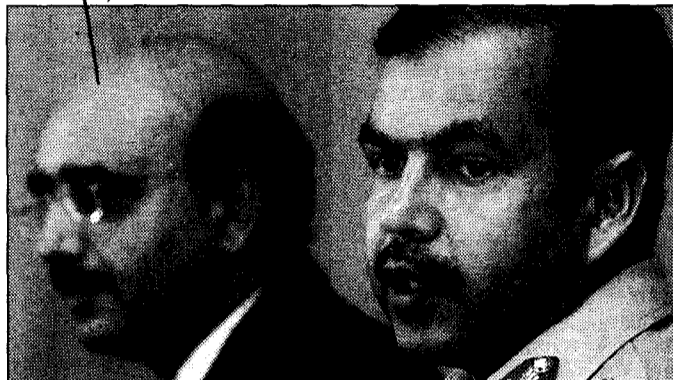
9-3 28/3  
Wana, March 22: Top al Qaida terrorists may have escaped a siege involving thousands of Pakistani soldiers through several secret tunnels leading from mud fortresses to a dry mountain stream near the border with Afghanistan, a security chief said today.

The longest tunnel found so far was more than 2 km long and led from the homes of two local men — Nek Mohammed and Sharif Khan — to a stream near the frontier, said Brigadier Mahmood Shah, head of security for Pakistan's tribal regions.

"There is a possibility that the tunnel may have been used at the start of the operation," Shah told journalists in Peshawar. He said the tunnels began at homes in the village of Kaloosha and led in the direction of a mountain range that straddles the border.

Three senior officials have said that they believe Ayman al-Zawahri may be at the site, though the government has repeatedly said it does not know who is inside. President Pervez Musharraf said on Thursday that a "high-value" target was probably involved. The militants may have used the tunnel to escape during the disastrous first day of the operation on March 16, when at least 15 soldiers were killed in fierce fighting.

Still, Lieutenant General Safdar Hussain, the commander of the operation, said over the weekend that authorities believe an important terrorist remains



Military spokesman Major General Shaukat Sultan (right) and foreign office spokesman Masood Khan at a briefing in Islamabad. (AFP)

inside, based on the level of resistance of the holdouts. Pakistan's military said it was conducting DNA tests to identify six suspected foreign terrorists killed in the fighting, but would not elaborate on whether they included any important terror figure.

Five bodies of what appeared to be 25- to 30-year-old men were displayed to journalists at a military mortuary in Rawalpindi late yesterday. Al-Zawahri, an Egyptian surgeon, is 52-years-old. The bodies were laid out on stretchers and in open coffins in bloodied clothes.

In a separate incident, attackers ambushed an army convoy today, killing 12 soldiers and wounding 22 more, as tribal elders tried to persuade encircled al Qaida fighters to surrender. The army held fire today to let a dele-

gation of elders talk peace.

However, a convoy heading for Wana to support the operation against the militants was ambushed by fighters with rockets.

## Abizaid arrives

Days after US secretary of state Colin Powell's visit to Pakistan, top US commander Lieutenant General John Abizaid arrived in Islamabad today for follow-up talks on the war on terror with reference to the military operation in South Waziristan.

While Sultan downplayed the tour as a "visit scheduled a couple of weeks ago and having no link with the ongoing operation" in the rugged mountainous region, observers believe it is aimed at fostering coordination in the fight against terrorism.

IMTIAZ GULAND/AP

# Militants execute 8 Pak soldiers

## Pervez: Terror war to continue

Wana, March 27 (Reuters): Pakistan condemned today the "cold-blooded murder" of eight soldiers executed after being ambushed while battling militants near the Afghan border.

The soldiers, their hands tied behind their backs and shot in the head at point-blank range, were found in a ditch yesterday near Wana, the capital of the South Waziristan area in Pakistan's semi-autonomous tribal territories.

"It was a cold-blooded murder," said Major-General Shaukat Sultan, the army's spokesman. "We have identified the local and foreign militants and now we are chasing them."

"It was the worst kind of terrorism," he said.

More than 100 people have been killed since March 16 when paramilitary forces hunting militants linked to al Qaida leader Osama bin Laden ran into a hail of bullets as they approached a suspect's house in the rugged South Waziristan region.

The battle, involving 5,000 troops, is Pakistan's biggest in the region and comes after Musharraf narrowly escaped two assassination attempts in December.



**Uzbek militant**  
Tahir Yuldashev. (AFP)

Pakistan, while supporting the US war on terror, had come under pressure for not doing enough to root out militants from its remote border mountains. The military said the operation in South Waziristan was in its final stages and its objectives had been largely achieved.

"A hardened den of miscreants has been completely dismantled," the military said in a statement, adding that more than 160 suspected militants had been detained and a large quan-

tity of arms and other equipment seized.

"Intelligence sources and other information gathered from those apprehended during the operation indicate that over 60 miscreants have been killed, while scores of them have been injured since March 16."

### Uzbek leader hurt

The military said sources have confirmed that among those injured was Tahir Yuldashev, who it identified as "one of the top al Qaida leaders".

Yuldashev is the leader of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and was accused of a series of bomb blasts in the Uzbek capital, Tashkent, in 1999. He was known to have taken refuge in the semi-autonomous Pakistani tribal areas.

Earlier, interior minister Faisal Saleh Hayat said four wanted Pakistani tribesmen, accused of giving shelter to the foreign militants in South Waziristan, had been arrested.

The eight soldiers were likely killed shortly after their convoy was ambushed on Monday, an army official said. Twelve other soldiers were killed in the ambush.

Islamabad, March 27: President Pervez Musharraf today said Pakistan would continue to "act strongly" against terrorists in South Waziristan and they would not be allowed to damage the country.

Speaking at a ceremony at the country's premier cadet college in Hassan Abdal, 40 km from Islamabad, Musharraf said: "We will not allow them (the terrorists) to cause harm to Pakistan's interests by using its soil for operations against any other country."

"The Wana operation has nothing to do with Islam nor is it something concerning Muslims or non-Muslims. It is simply a war against terrorism, which will continue," he said. Musharraf added that the al Qaida network has been involved in terrorism all over Pakistan and it has masterminded two attempts on his life in December last year in Rawalpindi.

Musharraf's remarks came after reports of an agreement between a delegation of tribal elders and pro-al Qaida Yargulkhel tribe on the release of 12 soldiers and two local officials captured during the military operation. "Yargulkhels have agreed to release 15 officials and 12 paramilitary troops will be released by tomorrow afternoon while the two officials will be released by Monday," Mir Nawab, a local tribesman said. The elders had travelled to a remote mountainous region for talks this morning after an unsuccessful round of talks yesterday. Earlier, the Yargulkhel tribe refused any assistance in securing the freedom of at least 12 troops until Pakistan's military ends its siege of suspected terrorist hideouts.

IMTIAZ GUL

# Bush lifts sanctions on Pakistan

Part (1)  
11-1

26/3

By Chidanand Rajghatta  
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Washington:** US President George Bush on Wednesday ordered waiving of the so-called "democracy sanctions" imposed on Pakistan after Gen Musharraf's coup in 1999.

The waiver, which comes a week after Washington decided to bestow a "major non-Nato ally" status on Pakistan, will pave way for the Bush administration to line up hundreds of millions of dollars in direct economic aid as compensation and reward for Islamabad's help in taming the terrorism monster.

In a statement, Bush said lifting of sanctions was important to fight international terrorism. He asserted that it will also "facilitate the transition to democratic rule" in Pakistan. By most accounts, the US cares diddly-squat about democracy in Pakistan. The sanctions waiver is aimed at facilitating Washington's 'rent-a-country' policy as it chases down the terrorists it once celebrated as the 'Mujaheddin'.

The waiver comes amid reports of



## ISI agents killed in '98 attack on Laden

**Washington:** A US air attack on terror camps in Afghanistan in 1998 killed a number of Pakistani intelligence agents, an inquiry commission was told. A top former Clinton official said the administration withheld information from Pakistan.

Pakistan opening up several air and naval bases for US forces in the region and taking on its own tribal people said to be sheltering the Taliban and al Qaida. Washington is said to be paying as much as \$100 million a month towards rentals for Pakistan's services.

Meanwhile, senior officials of both the Clinton and Bush administration argued before a commission inquiring into the 9/11 tragedy that the US policy of sanctions against Pakistan may have prevented Washington from taking action against the Taliban and al Qaida before the 9/11 incidents.

HD 16

**AFGHAN BORDER / 'HIGH-VALUE TARGET'**

# Pakistani troops face fierce resistance

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD, MARCH 19.** For the second day today, Pakistani troops were engaged in fierce battles with foreign militants presumably protecting a 'high-value target' in the Waziristan Tribal Agency bordering Afghanistan.

Speculation about the possible presence of the No. 2 in Al-Qaeda, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, was rife on Thursday after the Pakistani President, Pervez Musharraf, told CNN that the stiff resistance could be on account of the presence of the Al-Qaeda leadership.

Till this evening, Pakistani paramilitary troops have not been successful in breaking the resistance and details of the operation were very few.

The Pakistani Inter-Services Public Relations Director-General, Shaukat Sultan, conceded that two members of the paramilitary forces died in the offensive.

He said the mission would continue till the area was cleared of the suspected militants "dead or alive".

Maj. Gen. Sultan said all escape routes in the region had been closed and there was little chance of any of the militants escaping. He said the operation

was part of the drive launched by Pakistan to cleanse the country of all militant elements.

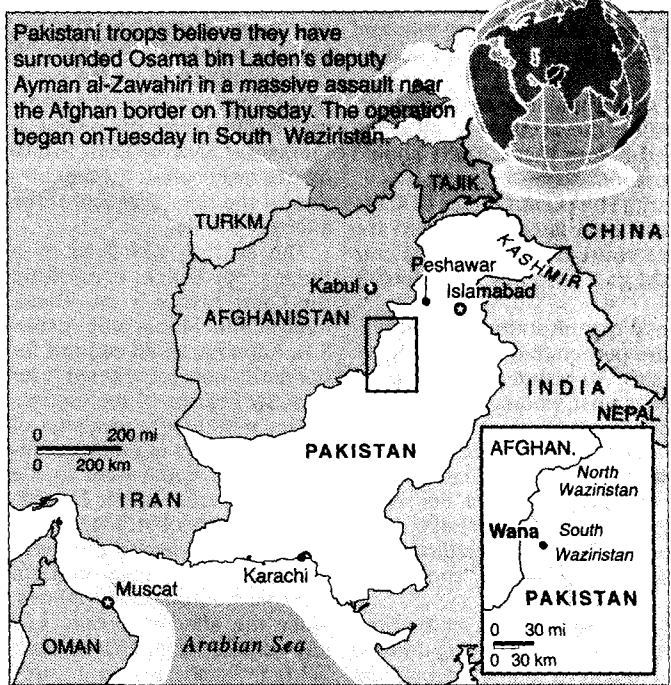
Gen. Musharraf said in his interview on Thursday night that Pakistani forces had not anticipated the kind of resistance witnessed in the last two days. He attributed it to the presence of motivated militants. "We feel that there may be a high-value target. I cannot say who," he said.

During the day, several thousand Pakistani troops backed by helicopter gun ships fought fierce clashes with heavily armed gunmen.

In the National Assembly, the Musharraf-Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali Government came under fire from the Opposition particularly those belonging to the religious parties on the military operations in the tribal areas. The members accused the Government of working on American agenda and warned of serious consequences of antagonising the tribals.

### British forces in Kabul

AFP reports: Britain has sent about 100 special forces to Afghanistan as the hunt for Al-Qaeda leaders, Osama bin Laden, and Ayman Al-Zawahiri heats up, an airport



Pakistani troops believe they have surrounded Osama bin Laden's deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri in a massive assault near the Afghan border on Thursday. The operation began on Tuesday in South Waziristan.

SOURCES: ESRI, CIA

AP

official said today.

The British soldiers arrived at the Kabul International Airport on March 10 and left the same night for an unknown destination, the official, who asked not to be named, said.

Jordan sent a contingent of about 100 special forces to the

southeastern border areas of Afghanistan this week, an Afghan military official said today.

The Arab-speaking soldiers will attempt to infiltrate Arabs working with the Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, the official who requested anonymity said.



# Accept 3 N-powers: Kasuri

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, March 11. —

The world community should



Mr Khurshid Kasuri order to step up efforts to curb nuclear proliferation, foreign minister Mr Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri said.

"Pakistan and India in particular and Israel to some extent, there is a known fact that they are recognised powers," he said at a seminar on foreign policy organised by the ruling Pakistan

Muslim League-Q (PML-Q).

He said this reality should be accepted if the purpose of the international attention was non-proliferation.

Mr Kasuri suggested there should be some multilateral arrangements if the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty was a hindrance in accepting Pakistan, India and Israel as nuclear powers.

"Some method should be found whether it is through the multilateral arrangements or any other method, if NPT cannot be amended," he said. About India's effort to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council, Mr Kasuri said in line with its principled position, Pakistan was opposed to creating any more centres of privileges in UNSC. He, however, said the present UNSC struc-

ture was built upon a situation that prevailed after the World War II, but the ground realities today have now changed.

He said it should now be ensured that UNSC structure represented the current reality. The minister said if there was a need of a regional representation in the UNSC, the regional group should nominate a country. The country would then be aware of the fact it was representing a region, he added.

On Pakistan's nuclear programme, he said it was linked to the national security and, thus, could not be compromised.

Mr Kasuri stressed the resolution of the Kashmir issue, that also take the aspirations of the Kashmiri people into consideration, was must for a durable peace in South Asia.

49-10  
12/22

## SIGNIFICANCE OF SHAHEEN-II

PAK (W)

THE RECENT TEST of Shaheen-II, Pakistan's latest and most modern missile, extends that country's strategic reach to all of India. In 1999, soon after India first flew its all-solid Agni-II missile with a range of over 2,000 km, Pakistan responded by testing Ghauri-II. Although Pakistani officials claimed that Ghauri-II could reach targets more than 2,000 km away, the missile was thought to have a range of about 1,500 km (with one Indian analyst putting it closer to 1,000 km). Shaheen-II appears to be a match for Agni-II — a two-stage solid propellant missile that can be fired quickly (eliminating the delay associated with fuelling a liquid propellant missile) and with a range of over 2,000 km. Meanwhile, India has already announced plans to test Agni-III, which has a range of over 3,000 km, this year.

A sober reading would suggest that the testing of Shaheen-II at this juncture is intended less as a warning to India than as a reassurance to President Pervez Musharraf's hardline critics who worry that, under American pressure, he might sacrifice Pakistan's strategic capabilities. A curious facet of Pakistan's missile development has been the playing out in this field also of the long-standing rivalry between Abdul Qadeer Khan and the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC). Dr. Khan is a hero in Pakistan for creating its uranium enrichment capability and is now under a cloud for operating an illicit and highly profitable international nuclear network. He and his cohorts at Khan Laboratories are thought to have got liquid propellant missile technology from North Korea in exchange for nuclear designs and information. Solid propulsion technology, which is more appropriate for missiles, was championed first by the Space and Upper Atmospheric Research Commission, and later by the National Development Complex under the PAEC. The Ghauri missiles came from the Khan Laboratories, and the Hatf and Shaheen missiles from the

latter. There has been a ding-dong battle between the two camps. With Ghauri-II, the Khan Laboratories could claim to have given Pakistan not only the atomic bomb but also the capability to land it over most of India. After Dr. Khan's disgrace, President Musharraf and the PAEC needed to demonstrate that Pakistan's strategic capability had not been imperilled. The launch of Shaheen-II, a more modern missile than the Ghauri-II and with a significantly greater range, is obviously intended to send a reassuring message to Pakistanis. It is noteworthy that General Musharraf spoke about the forthcoming Shaheen test at the news conference he held last month to announce the pardon for Dr. Khan. Although many Indian and U.S. analysts take the view that Shaheen-I and Shaheen-II are based on similar Chinese missiles, some Indian space experts think that Pakistan could have developed the solid propulsion technology within the country, just as India did for its launch vehicle programme. If there was Chinese help, it would probably have been in the missile's onboard navigation and guidance systems.

India needs to recognise that the Shaheen-II test, while most unfortunate and ill-timed, does not shift the balance of power in favour of Pakistan. Even before Kargil, the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Government had begun massive upgradation of India's conventional and strategic capability. However, as Europe has already discovered, strengthening the bonds of cooperation and friendship is a better guarantee of security than stockpiling lethal military hardware. Nuclear weaponisation has made South Asia a much more dangerous place; mutually acceptable restraints on the induction and deployment of nuclear weapons would be very much in order. India and Pakistan, sundered at birth, are at last slowly but seriously stepping in the direction of *detente*. Nothing must be allowed to hinder that process.

THE HINDU

# Now, most of India in Pak missile sights

ISLAMABAD, March 9. — Pakistan today test-fired its first 2,000 km range surface-to-surface ballistic missile, *Shaheen-II*, apparently to match India's *Agni-II*. *Shaheen-II* is capable of carrying a nuclear warhead and hitting targets deep inside India.

The launching of *Shaheen II*, or *Hataf VI*, reflected "Pakistan's resolve to maintain minimum credible deterrence as the cornerstone of its security policy," an official statement said. The test-firing came in the midst of the Indo-Pak peace process and was apparently

aimed at matching India's *Agni-II* ballistic missile which has a striking range of over 2,000 km. India is also developing *Agni-III*, which is expected to have a range of 3,000 km.

President Gen. Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali congratulated the scientists for the "successful" test. The test followed Gen. Musharraf's assertions that Pakistan's N-programme wouldn't be rolled back despite pressures from the international community. As per the MoU signed with India, Islamabad informed Delhi

about the test-firing in advance. The missile was to be test-fired between 6 and 9 March. Pakistan opted to test-fire the missile today.

## Bus talks

India and Pakistan today began a two-day technical talk on running a bus service between Munabao (Rajasthan) and Khokrapar (Sindh). Part of an Indian initiative to enhance bilateral people-to-people contacts, the meeting focused on the logistics of reviving a land route that has been closed since 1965.

## নাইজিরিয়াকে পরমাণু সাহায্য, এ বার তির পাকিস্তানের দিকে

আবুজা, নাইজিরিয়া, ৪ মার্চ— নাইজিরিয়া দাবি করেছে, তাদের পরমাণু শক্তি সহায়তার আশ্বাস দিয়েছিল পাকিস্তান। পাক সেনাপ্রধান আজিজ খানকে উদ্ধৃত করে নাইজিরিয়ার স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রক সূত্রের একটি বিবৃতিতে গতকাল সন্ধ্যায় এই খবর জানানো হয়েছে। যদিও কোন সফরে খান ঠিক কী ধরনের সহায়তার আশ্বাস দিয়েছেন, তা জানা যায়নি। পাকিস্তানের তরফে এই অভিযোগ অস্বীকার করা হয়েছে।

উল্লেখ্য, মাত্র দু'মাস আগেই উত্তর কোরিয়ার সম্পর্কে একই খবর প্রচার করেছিল নাইজিরিয়া। উত্তর কোরিয়াও সে-কথা অস্বীকার করেছিল। তার পরেই গতমাসে পাক পরমাণু বিজ্ঞানী আব্দুল কাদির খান স্বীকার করে নেন, তিনি উত্তর কোরিয়া, লিবিয়া ও ইরানে পরমাণু প্রযুক্তি পাচারের কাজে জড়িত ছিলেন। উল্লেখ্য, এই তিনটি দেশ সন্ত্রাসবাদে মদত জুগিয়েছে বলে আগেই অভিযোগ করেছিল আমেরিকা। এ বার পাকিস্তানের বিরুদ্ধে আবার সরাসরি একই অভিযোগ উঠল।

বিবৃতিটিতে প্রকাশ, পাক সেনাপ্রধান জেনারেল মহম্মদ আজিজ খান নাইজিরিয়ার স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রী কোয়াকোয়াসোকে জানিয়েছেন, সে দেশের “সামরিক শক্তির উন্নয়ন ও পরমাণু শক্তি অর্জনের লক্ষ্যে” পাক সাহায্য “ঠিক কীভাবে করা হবে তা খতিয়ে দেখা হচ্ছে।” পাকিস্তানের কাছে পরমাণু শক্তির মিসাইল রয়েছে বলে জানা গেলেও সে বিষয়ে নাইজিরিয়ার সঙ্গে কোনও আদানপ্রদানের কথা হয়েছে কিনা তা জানা যায়নি। দু'দেশের মধ্যে সামরিক সহযোগিতা বৃদ্ধির কথা উল্লেখ করে ওই বিবৃতিতে স্বরাষ্ট্রমন্ত্রী জানিয়েছেন, প্রয়োজন হলে নাইজিরিয়া পাক সেনাদের প্রশিক্ষণের ব্যাপারে সাহায্য করবে। আরও জানা গিয়েছে, সফর চলাকালীন খান সে দেশের সেনাপ্রধানদের বলেন, “প্রতিবেশী দেশের ছমকি বন্ধ করার জন্যই পাকিস্তানকে পরমাণু শক্তি অর্জন করতে হয়েছে।” এ দিকে, পাকিস্তান পরমাণু শক্তি অর্জনে নাইজিরিয়াকে সহায়তার খবর সরাসরি অস্বীকার করেছে। খবরটিকে ‘ভিত্তিহীন’ বলে উড়িয়ে দিয়েছেন পাক সেনাবাহিনীর মুখপাত্র মেজর জেনারেল শওকত সুলতান। পাক তথ্যমন্ত্রী শেখ রশিদ আলম বলেছেন, “পাকিস্তানের ভাবমূর্তি ক্ষুণ্ণ করার জন্যই এই ভিত্তিহীন খবর প্রচার করা হয়েছে।”

—এ পি, এ এফ পি

# Nigeria 'nukes' Pak with N-claim

## Revealed & Denied: Top Pak Gen Offered Help To Abuja

By Siddharth Varadarajan/TNN

New Delhi: Islamabad's run of disastrous luck on the nuclear front continued on Thursday with Nigeria first making—and then withdrawing—the stunning claim that a top Pakistani general currently visiting the country had offered its armed forces "military assistance, including nuclear power".

The claim—made in a Nigerian defence ministry statement about the visit of the chairman of Pakistan's joint chiefs of staff Gen Mohammed Aziz Khan—was reversed within 12 hours with the official spokesman, Bellu Nwachukwu, explaining away the original reference to "nuclear power" as a "typographical error".

While its writ lasted, however, the astonishing Nigerian "typo" sent a jittery Pakistani establishment—already reeling under the recent revelations about the clan-

destine links between Dr Aziz Khan and Libya, Iran and North Korea—into a rage. "We are denying it. This is baseless," (Gen Aziz Khan) said nothing of this kind," said a Pakistani military spokesman angrily on Thursday.

Nigerian military officials told *The Times of India* that there was no question of any nuclear cooperation with Pakistan and that there had obviously been some "miscommunication". They said Gen Aziz Khan had boasted of Pakistan's nuclear capability in his meetings with Nigerian defence minister Rabiu Kwankaso and

chief of defence staff Gen Alexander Ogunmodia separately, had offered to help Nigeria produce defence equipment. "But somewhere, these two things seem to have got mixed up. All you people from India and Pakistan, speak too fast," said a Nigerian military official. In India, officials of the ministry of external affairs (MEA) said it was evident there had been a misunderstanding. "It's true that General Musharraf has been trying to suck up to Nigeria because of the latter's opposition to lifting Pakistan's suspension from the Commonwealth. They

have been offering all kinds of things but I don't think even Gen Aziz Khan would be mad enough to offer nukes to Nigeria at this time," an MEA official said.

The bearded Gen Aziz Khan, who holds the same rank as Musharraf, is seen in some quarters as anti-US, 'jihadi' general. Once close to Musharraf—he was the officer who effectively staged the 1999 coup which overthrew Nawaz Sharif while his boss was airborne—Gen Khan has since been kicked upstairs in a move seen as having been done at Washington's behest.

As soon as the news of Gen Aziz Khan's alleged nuclear offer broke, Nigerian officials assured the Indian high commission in Lagos that there was no truth in the matter. Nevertheless, the Indian defence attache is set to travel to Abuja on Friday to discuss the matter with the Nigerian defence ministry.



Mohammed Aziz Khan

and that there was no question of any nuclear cooperation with Pakistan and that there had obviously been some "miscommunication". They said Gen Aziz Khan had boasted of Pakistan's nuclear capability in his meetings with Nigerian defence minister Rabiu Kwankaso and

from the Commonwealth. They said it was evident there had been a misunderstanding. "It's true that General Musharraf has been trying to suck up to Nigeria because of the latter's opposition to lifting Pakistan's suspension from the Commonwealth. They

# Enter Nigeria in Pak nuke plot

Agencies  
Abuja (Nigeria), March 4

man of Pakistan's joint chiefs of staff, had made the offer to the Nigerian defence minister, Rabiu Kwankwaso, during a visit to the west African state's capital, Abuja.

PAKISTAN ON Wednesday offered to share military assistance, including "nuclear power", with Nigeria in defiance of President George Bush's new counter-proliferation initiative, the Nigerian defence ministry said on Thursday.

Pakistan denied the claim and even the Nigerian government later said the reference to nuclear power was "a mistake, a typographical error". But the affair is likely to provoke consternation in Washington, coming just a month after the Abdul Qadeer Khan nuclear transfer scandal.

The Nigerian defence ministry had issued a statement saying General Muhammad Aziz Khan, chair-

A week after Khan's confession, President Bush had launched a counter-proliferation initiative based on international cooperation to curb transfers of nuclear technology and materials. General Khan's offer to Nigeria appeared to be in blatant defiance of that initiative.

The general made clear that the snub was intentional, declaring, according to the press release: "Pakistan had to take its destiny into its own hands to become a nuclear state because of the regular threats posed by hostile neighbours with special reference to the Kashmir conflict."

US officials are baffled at Nigeria's intentions, nearly five years after the country restored civilian rule, and at a time when it is under no threat from its neighbours.

"Speaking at the opening of the discussions... (Khan) said that his country is working out the dynamics of how they can assist Nigeria's armed forces to strengthen its military capability and to acquire nuclear power," the release said.

A *New Yorker* report this week suggested Washington had turned a blind eye to the Pakistani government's connivance in the sales of nuclear materials and technology to countries like Iran and Libya in exchange for permission to send US commandos to hunt down Osama bin Laden in Pakistan's Hindu Kush.

# MUSHARRAF'S AGENTS

In its attempt to control terrorism, the Pakistani regime has given a carte blanche to the FBI

AMIR MIR

SLOWLY but surely, the American Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is prying open Pakistan's sensitive national security system. Of the many tools employed, the most important is the Transaction Tracking Server (TTS), installed at Pakistan's two premier airports — the Quaid-e-Azam International Airport at Karachi and Allama Iqbal International Airport at Lahore — to monitor the movement of international passengers. The system was installed in December 2001 but its darker side is only gradually becoming apparent. Says one retired intelligence officer, requesting anonymity: "Like any other country, Pakistan too will be sending its personnel to various countries for intelligence purposes, but now it is almost impossible to keep such missions secret."

The TTS is connected with the FBI databank and the newly upgraded Interpol data store through satellite for instant transmission and retrieval of information. More important, the Server is linked with the National Database Registration Authority (Nadra) through a landline. "Thereby the system, being supervised and monitored by the FBI, is using, storing and updating all available information with Nadra about every Pakistan citizen," sources add.

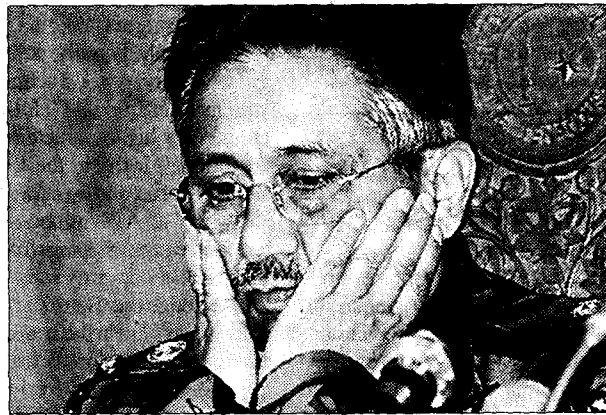
"According to sources, the TTS is being backed by the hi-tech Pisces (Personal Identification Secure, Comparison and Evaluation System), a top of the line computer system with software to identify any US-wanted Pakistani citizen boarding an international flight. The system contains data on worldwide bomb explosions, suspected, wanted and convicted terrorists as well as information regarding car thefts the world over.

The system also has the software to match basic physical features like height, skin colour, prominent identification marks, fingerprints, eye colour and type of hair of a terrorist with any passenger boarding any international flight. All passengers have to go through the Pisces scanning system. To check passports and other identification papers, the Pisces is supported by flex-cam cameras connected to special software,

which can film the subject from any direction.

The system was basically installed to check the large number of fleeing Afghans and Arab volunteers who participated in the war against the US alongside the Taliban. The entire set-up is stationed in the Intelligence Bureau (IB) headquarters in Islamabad and its Karachi offices where the US experts along with the IB officers control its operation.

Sources claim the FBI has already been allowed access to Pakistan's communication network. "The ISI, which has had access to the telecommunication network for purposes of



**'Under US pressure, the Musharraf regime allowed FBI access to our telecom network despite questions on whether the bugging would be confined to tracking down al-Qaeda and Taliban men'**

monitoring and bugging since October 1999 started supplying the transcripts of certain suspicious telephone conversations to the FBI after 9/11," says one source. However, the FBI sleuths were not content with transcripts alone. "Finally, acting under the increasing American pressure, the Musharraf regime allowed the FBI access to our communication network despite questions being raised within the security agencies on whether the bugging of telecommunication network would really remain confined to tracking down al-Qaeda and Taliban operatives only."

At the same time, the FBI has asked the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) offices in all the four provinces to prepare a database of criminals' fingerprints. The provincial police forces would be connected to this database on a nation-wide computer network which will

be regularly updated with the inputs received from the provincial police headquarters. Working in tandem with the FBI, the National Police Bureau, Islamabad, is giving final touches to an Automated Fingerprinting Identification System (AFIS), which would be a component of the overall computerisation of criminal record. The national crime record would be built and placed at FIA whenever required.

Resentment in some quarters comes naturally, especially amongst the religious alliance, Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), which decries the presence of "a large number of

at the centre of almost all the major arrests of al-Qaeda operatives in Pakistan since 9/11. These include the March 2002 arrest of al-Qaeda's No. 3 man, Abu Zubaydah from Faisalabad, the September 2002 arrest of Ramzi Bin al-Shibh from Karachi, Khaled Sheih Mohammad's arrest from Rawalpindi in March 2003 and the arrest of Waleed bin Attash from Karachi in April 2003.

One Interior Ministry source claims the FBI has set up 28 field offices inside Pakistan. After 9/11, the source says, the Bush administration had approached Musharraf for setting up at least 100 such offices, carrying signboards and security. However, permission was granted for only two dozen such offices. This arrangement was made under a bilateral pact signed with the US to fight terrorists under a joint working-group programme. The two countries also signed a letter of agreement in September 2003 to strengthen Pakistan's control over the frontier areas bordering Afghanistan, continue the construction of roads in the tribal areas, support law enforcement reform and provide training and equipment to develop police capacity, including the creation of a border security coordination centre.

A subsequent army operation in the tribal areas was launched in October 2003 in the wake of repeated allegations by the FBI that remnants of al-Qaeda and Taliban were regrouping in the border areas of Pakistan and launching raids against US-led coalition troops in Afghanistan. Earlier in June, FBI Director Robert Mueller visited Islamabad and discussed new plans to get hold of Osama, believed to be hiding in a tribal zone between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Pakistani side bowed to Mueller's demand for setting up a permanent intelligence system in the tribal areas, allowing the FBI to monitor the Pak-Afghan border. The monitoring is being carried out with the help of sophisticated electronic surveillance equipment which include global-positioning trackers. An American communication and intelligence centre has been set up in the tribal area on the Pakistani side to help coordinate the operation against al-Qaeda and Taliban.

Whatever their actual number, the FBI agents have been

—Herald

## THE TARGETS

THE FBI appears to have a lengthy anti-terrorism agenda for Pakistan. As per the US intelligence, the continuing terrorism infrastructure in Pakistan and Afghanistan consists of the following:



OSAMA

**Al-Qaeda:** About 400 survivors of the 500-strong hardcore of al-Qaeda had crossed over into Pakistan from Afghanistan giving the slip to US security forces. Of these, about 75 are reported to have moved over to Yemen and Saudi Arabia while 30 are believed to have crossed over into Iran via Balochistan. Of the remaining 300 fugitives, some 225 scattered out to Punjab, NWFP, Balochistan, FATA etc while 75 sought refuge in Karachi, out of whom 50 are still holed up in various hide-outs there with the assistance of their Pakistani sympathisers.

**The Taliban:** There are about 5000 survivors of the Taliban, including its Ameer Mulla Mohammad Omar and some other senior leaders, out of their pre-October 7, 2001, strength of 20,000. About 5,000 are estimated to have perished during the US air strikes and 10,000 are reported to have dispersed to their respective villages in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The remaining 5,000 who have taken shelter in Pakistan, have been operating against the US and allied troops in Afghanistan from their safe havens in the NWFP and Balochistan, in concert with the Hizb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

**The survivors of International Islamic Front:** Before



AZHAR HAFIZ

October 2001, the five components of the IIF — Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Harkat-ul-Jehad al-Islami and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi — had a total estimated strength of about 35,000 members deployed in Afghanistan to help the Taliban and al-Qaeda. About 30,000 of these survived the US strikes, and crossed over into Pakistan.

The FBI initially kept a low profile and confined itself to assisting the ISI operatives in tracking down the Most Wanted fugitives. However, as things stand today, the FBI works autonomously and has established its own organisation set-up, which includes communications to track mobile and land telephone calls as well as sophisticated bugging devices. The FBI field offices have established direct control over the Pakistan law enforcing agencies such as the police, who take orders from the Bureau agents.

—AM

## THE WEB

HAVING set up a high-tech espionage network in the four provincial capitals as well as the border areas of Pakistan, the US FBI has now decided to launch what it calls the Spider Group — a band of former Pakistan Army and intelligence officers tasked to accelerate the hunt for al-Qaeda and Taliban fugitives. In most cases, their experience of Afghanistan dates back to the US-sponsored war against the Soviet troops while some have been dealing with the Taliban from the mid-1990s right up to 2001. They are entrusted with the task of tracking the activities of the fugitive al-Qaeda and Taliban operatives. The Spider Group has been formed to ensure that the FBI agents who had previously worked under restrictions with the ISI have access to a free flow of information that can help them locate the al-Qaeda and Taliban fugitives allegedly hiding in Pakistan.

In addition, Pakistan has accepted an American offer for a number of Pakistani Army and intelligence officers to be trained in the US. There are media reports that about 100 Army and intelligence officers have been sent to the US for various short courses in the past three months. The officers being trained include those belonging to Army field units as well as the intelligence services. Those being trained will be made a part of a Special Investigation Group (SIG) to track down al-Qaeda members in Pakistan. The SIG, which would gradually be given the status of an investigation agency, will initially comprise 50 persons who are being trained in the US.

—AM

# Pervez riot act to jihadis

## Clerics told to help curb terrorism

Mubashir Zaidi & Agencies  
Islamabad, February 18

STEPPING UP pressure on the radical elements in Pakistani society, President Pervez Musharraf on Wednesday urged the clergy to clamp down on fundamentalism and inflammatory literature.

He asked the ulema to accept the reality that terrorism exists in Pakistan and told them to identify the madrasas that promote militancy.

Musharraf also turned the heat on foreign militants, saying they should leave the country or surrender, and pledged not to allow them to carry out their activities against any other country.

The Pakistani President said the government would not hand over surrendered militants to any other country if they lay down their weapons, "failing which they will be dealt with in full force".

Most foreigners arrested or killed in operation in tribal areas bordering Afghanistan belonged to Uzbekistan, he said. "We will not allow foreign terrorists to act against any other country."

Addressing a gathering of pro-government religious leaders, Musharraf said Pakistan would have to take measures to undo four dangerous perceptions prevailing about the country in the world — cross-border infiltration, nuclear proliferation, extremism and militancy, and infiltration in Afghanistan. Pakistan could suffer economically and face UN sanctions, he warned, if these perceptions are not corrected.

The Pakistani President said the support to the Kashmiri "freedom struggle" would continue but any solution to the dispute would have to be found through dialogue.

Musharraf said Kashmiris would be included in the dialogue process at an appropriate time. "Any solution of the Kashmir issue against the aspirations of Kashmiris will lead to



**CRICKET DIPLOMACY:** Ijaz Ahmed and Saeed Anwar after their arrival at Wagah on Wednesday as part of a Pakistan XI that will take on a Punjab CM's XI at Patiala on Thursday. (Report in HT Sport)

PTI

no solution." Denying any sell-out on Kashmir, Musharraf said he would be the last man to compromise on Kashmir and nuclear capability.

Musharraf also said Pakistan would have to demonstrate to the world that it is a responsible nuclear state and not indulge in proliferation. The government's strategy to deal with the issue of proliferation best suits the interests of the country, he said.

The General declared Pakistan would not only preserve its nuclear and missile capability, but also develop it further. Pakistan would demonstrate this in two months, he said, hinting at the scheduled tests of long-range Shaheen II missiles.

**ON PAGE 4: Venkaiah questions Mufti's healing touch policy**

## PEACE PROGRESS



**Early start** substantive talks begin in March at technical and official levels. The border situation will, in particular, be discussed by the DGMOs

**Up one gear** foreign secretaries will meet after the elections — in May-June — to hold substantive talks on outstanding issues, including Kashmir

**Taking stock** foreign secretaries and ministers will meet in July to assess the progress and take the peace process forward

**Compromise** no deal over Kashmir has been sorted out. The government will be flexible. Pak wanted talks with India. India would a step-by-step approach. (Report on Page 4)



# Neighbours' Pride: Proposals To Be Submitted To Foreign Secys Ahead Of Discussions Today

## India, Pak agree on time frame for fresh talks

Islamabad  
17 FEBRUARY

**S**TRIKING a positive note on the eve of the foreign secretary-level talks, India and Pakistan, on Tuesday, reached a "broad understanding" on the timeframe and modalities required for a resumption of the composite dialogue on resolving all outstanding issues, including Jammu & Kashmir.

The proposed timeframe for the meetings on different issues was decided during the two days of parleys between Indian joint secretary Arun Singh (external affairs ministry) and director general for South Asia (Pakistan foreign office) Jaitil Abbas Jilani, sources said.

The proposals will be submitted to foreign secretary Shashank and his Pakistani counterpart Riaz Khokhar, who will meet here on Wednesday.

Before flying to the Pakistani capital via Karachi, Mr Shashank said in New Delhi: "We are starting the (dialogue) process with sincerity and we hope to continue."

An announcement on the process of carrying forward the composite dialogue is likely to be made on Wednesday evening at the end of the parleys between Mr Shashank and Mr Khokhar.

Sources said a "broad understanding" on the timeframe and modalities of the composite dialogue had been reached.

Both sides kept the eight issues identified in 1997 as the ba-



**COMIC RELIEF:** Pakistan's foreign secretary Riaz Khokhar (left) and Indian joint secretary of external affairs Arun Singh share a light moment during a meeting in Islamabad on Tuesday. — Reuters

sis for discussing the modalities and security. Kashmir, Siachen, Wullar Barrage, Sir Creek, terrorism, drug trafficking and economic cooperation. On the possi-

bility of the two countries agreeing to discuss confidence building measures (CBMs) on the nuclear issue, sources said this could be covered by the existing composite dialogue mechanism, under the subject "peace and security, including confidence-building measures."

It is understood that the two sides have agreed to deal with the issue of peace and security and Jammu & Kashmir at one level and the six other issues at another level.

Under the 1997 agenda, peace & security, including CBMs and Jammu & Kashmir, were to be dealt with at the foreign secretary level, while other issues such as Siachen, Tulbul Navigation Project, Sir Creek, terrorism & drug trafficking, economic and

commercial co-operation and the promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields were to be discussed at the secretary and other levels. Pakistan television, without giving further details, reported that "two other points" had been discussed at the parleys. There was no confirmation of this from the Indian side.

Arun Singh called on Mr Khokhar in the morning before going for the second day of talks with Jilani at Murree hill station, about 50 km from here. The meeting was termed a "courtesy call" ahead of the foreign secretary-level talks. Indian high commissioner Shiv Shankar Menon, Pakistan high commissioner in Delhi Aziz Ahmad Khan and Mr Jilani were also present at the meeting.

—PTI

# Pak pledges help to fight N-leaks

ISLAMABAD, Feb. 13. — Stung by the clandestine nuclear sales by its top scientist Dr AQ Khan, Pakistan has pledged to help the international community to unearth and dismantle illicit proliferation networks and said individuals responsible for it would be dealt with according to the law.

Reacting to Mr George W Bush's statement focussing on Dr Khan's activities, foreign office spokesman Mr Masood Khan said Pakistan would share any findings from its investigation into a ring of nuclear proliferators with the international community.

Observing that Pakistan has "broken a ring of a few traffickers" involved in illegal transfers of sensitive information and technology to other countries, he said Islamabad would continue to help the international community and concerned states to unearth and dismantle illicit proliferation networks. "We are willing to share information and results of our investigations to assist in exposing and eliminating these networks."

While President Pervez Musharraf has pardoned Dr Khan as he was a national hero, investigations were on against his six aides suspected to be involved in his illegal network.

Individuals who were found to be involved in proliferation had been put out of business and they will not be allowed to resume their activities, under any circumstances.

"Security restrictions have been imposed on Dr AQ Khan and his associates. They have been effectively deactivated. At the end of the probe, the individuals responsible for wrongdoing will face the force of our laws," he said.

## IAEA finds nuke designs in Iran

VIENNA, Feb. 13. — IAEA inspectors sifting through Iran's nuclear files have discovered drawings of high-tech equipment that can be used to make weapons-grade uranium — a new link to the black market headed by Dr AQ Khan, diplomats here said. The revelations have cast fresh doubt on Teheran's commitment to dispelling suspicions that it is trying to make atomic arms.

The diplomats yesterday said the designs were of a P-2 centrifuge — more advanced than the P-1 model Iran has acknowledged using to enrich uranium for what it says are peaceful purposes. Preliminary investigations by inspectors working for the International Atomic Energy Agency indicated they matched drawings of equipment found in Libya and supplied by the Khan network. — AP

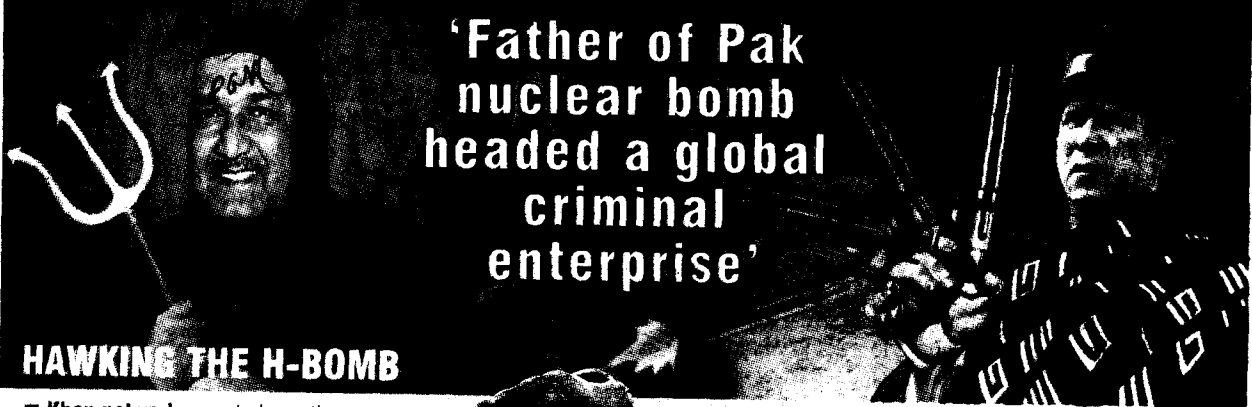
## Pak to sign NPT?

The Pakistan daily *News* quoted local officials as saying that Islamabad may consider signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) if the world community formally recognises it as the sixth declared nuclear power.

Islamabad appeared to reformulate its stand on the NPT as it was expected to face pressure by the international community following disclosure by its top scientist that he had leaked nuclear secrets to Libya, North Korea and Iran.

"There is no such pressure on Pakistan at this point of time," the daily quoted an unnamed official as saying. He, however, added that recognising Pakistan as a sixth world nuclear power may pave the way for the country's entry into the treaty.

# PAK'S PRIDE, WORLD'S ENEMY: BUSH



'Father of Pak nuclear bomb headed a global criminal enterprise'

## HAWKING THE H-BOMB

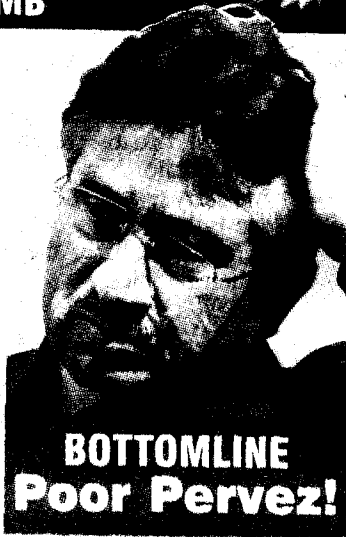
■ Khan network operated mostly out of Pakistan, served as director of the network, its leading scientific mind as well as its primary salesman

■ Sold uranium hexafluoride, the gas that the centrifuge process can transform into enriched uranium for nuclear bombs.

■ Pakistan's centrifuge designs provided to Iran, Libya and North Korea. These included designs of advanced and efficient models.

■ For the first time USA has accused the network of supplying centrifuge technology. Earlier, it had not provided specifics of the proliferated technology.

■ Lavish lifestyles of Khan and his associates, for decades on the rolls of the Pak government on a modest salary, funded through sale of nuclear technologies and equipment.



The Government of Pakistan is interrogating the network's members. President Pervez Musharraf has promised to share all the information he learns and has assured us that his country will never again be a source of proliferation.

- George W Bush

WASHINGTON, Feb. 12. — Blaming the "Khan network" for proliferating nuclear centrifuge technology to North Korea, Iran and Libya, President George W Bush has said nations around the world worked with the USA to end the "criminal enterprise" headed by the father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb. The extent and sophistication of (global) proliferation networks can be seen in the case of "a man named Abdul Qadeer Khan," Mr Bush said at the National Defence University here yesterday. Governments around the world "worked closely with us to unravel the Khan network, and to put an end to his criminal enterprise. Khan has confessed his crimes, and his top associates are out of business," Mr Bush said. The US President also unveiled his new campaign to fight nuclear proliferation and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Meanwhile, the Pakistan government told Lahore High Court hearing the petitions for the release of nuclear scientists and officials detained for proliferation of nuclear technology that the case was beyond the jurisdiction of the court as it involves serious charges of breach of national security.

(FULL COVERAGE: Page 3)

# Nuclear arms not with terrorists: Pak

10/2/03  
Rawalpindi, Feb. 9 (Reuters): Groups like al Qaida obtained neither nuclear weapons nor knowhow from Pakistan, despite a proliferation scandal linking a top scientist with Libya, Iran and North Korea, an official said today.

"We exclude the possibility," military spokesman Major-General Shaukat Sultan said, when asked if Abdul Qadeer Khan's leaked nuclear technology and hardware could have reached groups like al Qaida. "It has not come out of our investigations, or any other intelligence agency. There has been no such hint."

Khan, revered as the father of Pakistan's atomic bomb, has admitted to peddling nuclear secrets abroad, saying he acted alone and absolving the government and military of any blame.

A Pakistani investigation launched in November has thrown light on a nuclear black market involving middlemen in countries including Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Germany and the Netherlands. Khan, part of the network, is accused of helping Iran, North Korea and Libya acquire atomic weapons technology and equipment.

The US says it fears al Qaida-type groups might gain access to weapons of mass destruction to use against Americans.

Quoting sources close to al Qaida, a pan-Arab newspaper said yesterday Osama bin Laden's shadowy network bought tactical nuclear weapons

Pakistan from Ukraine in 1998 and is storing them. Ukrainian officials denied the report today, saying the country never controlled the former Soviet arms on its territory which had passed straight into Russian hands.

Pakistan said today last week's presidential pardon of

## Powell tour

Washington, Feb. 9 (Reuters): US secretary of state Colin Powell said today that he had no plans to visit Pakistan soon but would do so this year and that it was up to Pakistan to decide how to treat a scientist who leaked nuclear secrets.

"I have no plans to travel to Pakistan. I'm sure I will before the spring and summer are out, but I read with the same interest that you did over the weekend that someone said I was on my way to Pakistan," Powell said.

A Pakistan official said yesterday that Powell was expected to visit soon.

Khan was conditional on his "cooperation" in the probe. President Pervez Musharraf issued the pardon on Thursday, a day after Khan made a public confession on state television.

"This is not a blanket pardon for the future. There are strict security restrictions on him and he is bound by them," foreign ministry spokesman Masood Khan told a news briefing.

Pakistan says it investigated 11 people, seven of them scientists including Abdul Qadeer Khan, on charges of nuclear proliferation after the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency provided it with names of the Pakistanis involved. Masood Khan said investigations against colleagues and associates of the scientist were continuing and none would be "resuming" their work at nuclear research facilities.

The Pakistani government insists there have been no nuclear leaks from Pakistan since the National Command Authority was established in February 2000 to oversee the arsenal.

# Delhi dossier on Pak bomb daddy

## PROLIFERATION PATH



Abdul Qadeer Khan in a  
Reuters file picture

### VISITS TO NORTH KOREA

- **March 1994:** Talks with front company Changgwang Sinyong Corporation involved in export of weapons
- **October 1997:** Negotiates transfer of *Nodong-1* surface-to-surface missile to Pakistan
- **November 1997:** Completes talks on purchase of *Nodong-1*
- **April 1998:** Briefs North Koreans about the test results of *Ghauri-1*, based on *Nodong-1*
- **June 1999 to June 2000:** Talks on purchase of *Taepodong* surface-to-surface missile

### LINKS TO IRAN

- **1986:** Several trips to assess damage from Iraqi bombs to 1300-mw Bushehr nuclear power plant
- **1987-88:** Iranian nuclear scientists trained in Pakistan in fuel reprocessing and weaponisation
- **Late '80s-early '90s:** Khan visits nuclear research centre being developed 150 km west of Tehran
- **January and May 1995:** Trips to Iranian nuclear facilities at Tehran, Isfahan and Karaj
- **September 1999:** Present at Isfahan ostensibly attending a conference
- **Early 2000:** Pakistan provides technical assistance to a secret nuclear project
- **April 2000:** Pakistanis are working there. Iran reportedly engaged in project related to uranium enrichment
- **February 2003:** Global regulator discovers the facility

### DALIPSINGH

New Delhi, Feb. 8: Not only the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Americans, but India too was quietly tracking Abdul Qadeer Khan, the so-called father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb.

Indian agencies were doing so long before news about his involvement in selling nuclear expertise to Iran, North Korea and Libya broke.

The Indian dossier on Khan claims that the Pakistan-Iran nuclear link dates back to 1984. Gnadi Mohammad Mragh, the then director of Iran's Isfahan-based Nuclear Technology Centre, visited Islamabad, seeking Khan's assistance. Mragh was a nuclear scientist and specialised in reprocessing.

Since then their relationship grew, leading to a stage where not only was Pakistani nuclear expertise shared with Iran but Pakistani scientists started working in Iran.

The controversial Pakistani scientist's assistance was sought by Iran to assess the damage caused to the 1300-mw Bushehr nuclear power plant by Iraqi bombings in 1986. Khan flew several times to Iran in 1986 for this purpose.

India has documentary evidence of Khan's presence in Iran during the eighties and nineties, especially of the times he visited Iranian nuclear facilities in Tehran, Isfahan and Karaj.

Khan's close interaction with North Korea, Indian intelligence reports claim, began in March 1994. He visited Pyongyang to hold discussions with the top brass of Changgwang Sinyong Corporation, a front company exporting weapons. Later, he visited North Korea five times, from October 1997 to June 2000, to dis-

cuss not only nuclear technology transfers, but also purchase of *Nodong* missiles and the possibility of acquiring *Taepodong* missiles.

Khan's assertion that President Pervez Musharraf, former premier Benazir Bhutto and ex-army chiefs Mirza Aslam Beg and Jahangir Karamat were aware of the nuclear proliferation

## Powell trip



US secretary of state Colin Powell is expected to visit Pakistan and meet President Pervez Musharraf soon to discuss

the nuclear proliferation probe, Reuters said.

Powell spoke to Musharraf on Saturday about the Abdul Qadeer Khan scandal.

■ See Page 4

echoes in the secret reports available with the Indian government.

Although Beg and Karamat were questioned by the Pakistani establishment, they denied any involvement in Khan's nuclear proliferation activities.

Indicating that the Pakistan government had all along been party to the nuclear proliferation, information with Indian officials shows that 37 Iranian nuclear scientists were trained in Pakistan in 1987. It followed an understanding reached between the head of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran and the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission chairman.

The official mechanism between the two countries for transferring nuclear technology was set up in 1991. The then Pak-

istan army chief went to Iran in November 1991 to secretly sign an agreement to create a joint military commission with a specific provision for transfer of uranium enrichment technology to Iran.

This took shape after an Iranian delegation, led by their former foreign minister and including the commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps and an army technical team, landed in Islamabad to formalise nuclear cooperation.

Indian officials claim that some Pakistani scientists were working at a nuclear research centre Iran was developing at Qazvin, about 150 km west of Tehran, in the late eighties and early nineties. Khan is said to have visited this centre to oversee the work.

The reports also say the Pakistani scientists working at this plant had faced some problems, which were sorted out after seeking Pakistani assistance. On February 26, 2003, another batch of Pakistani nuclear scientists and engineers reached Tehran to replace their countrymen already working there.

American officials were aware of Pakistan transferring centrifuge designs needed to enrich uranium to Iran as far back as 1992, the reports suggest.

Interestingly, the Iranian foreign minister was the only foreign dignitary who was taken to the site of Pakistan's nuclear tests conducted in May 1998, a day after India did.

According to reports, Khan has confessed to Pakistani investigators that Beg was aware of the assistance provided to Iran's nuclear programme. Two other army chiefs, in addition to Musharraf, had approved of his North Korean efforts, he is said to have told the interrogators.

# 16 A Khan of Worms

## Pakistan's Nuclear Strategy Shaky

By K Subrahmanyam

The most crucial fallout of the exposure of Pakistan's two-decade-old involvement in the international smuggling network related to nuclear proliferation is its impact on Pakistan's ability to sustain itself as a credible nuclear power. The international nuclear smuggling network and Islamabad's own nuclear programme had a symbiotic relationship. If the former is dismantled, it could lead to the progressive degradation of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. Islamabad is now under intense scrutiny and the inflows of missiles and components for nuclear programmes from countries like China and North Korea will be subject to strategic counter-proliferation initiative seizures.

The media focus has mostly been on A Q Khan's proliferation activity. What has been missed out in that is that his two-decade-old engagement in proliferation did not lead to great results in Libya and Iran and even in North Korea. Within Pakistan, A Q Khan's technical contribution to weapon-making has always been a subject of controversy.

There are stories of his being sought to be excluded from the nuclear test of May 1998 since the scientists in the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission resented his presence and did not have a high regard for his technical prowess. His great contribution to the programme is his links with the international smuggling network which helped commander the European industry illegally to set up the uranium centrifuge plant in Pakistan. He was also able to use that technology successfully in exchange for Chinese help in weapon design and for missile purchases both from China and North Korea.

The CIA director, George Tenet, in his speech of February 5, 2004 at Georgetown University has revealed that the CIA and British intelligence had been after A Q Khan's international smuggling network for quite some time and his previous year's reference in his report on the non-official proliferation network was a reference to A Q Khan. There can be no doubt that Washington is aware of the involvement of all Pakistani army chiefs and prime ministers in A Q Khan's smuggling network. Obviously the US asked General Musharraf to remove A Q Khan from Khan laboratories in 2001 and the request was complied with. General Musharraf is reconciled to US intelligence squeezing out all illegal inflow of materials, technology and equipment into Pakistan. In such circumstances it is logical for Washington to have stepped up its vigilance on Pakistan's nuclear and missile activities, especially after the Taliban and Al-Qaida had retreated into that country. The deployment of Pakistani missiles and the nuclear assets and operations of related Pakistani facilities should be under extra sur-

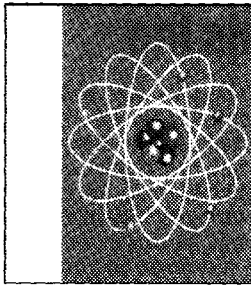
veillance by the US. In turn, this fact should be known to General Musharraf. Mr Tenet spoke about his spies penetrating A Q Khan's network through a series of daring operations over several years. Therefore, appropriate conclusions have to be drawn from the statements of US administration officials when they express their appreciation of General Musharraf's conduct and spirit of cooperation. General Musharraf is aware that the US Congress is still to vote on \$3 billion of aid. One false step could jeopardise this.

The Americans do not mind General Musharraf talking tough on Pakistani sovereignty, its not submitting to any Pak-specific UN safeguards and his determination to testfire the Shaheen II missile. Nor should India mind, as long as he accepts US directions. No doubt all these implications will slowly sink into the Pakistani mind and there is bound to be a backlash from the extremists, from political parties, jihadi organisations and even sections of the armed forces. General Musharraf has perhaps increased his vulnerability.

Mr Tenet, even while strongly defending the CIA's record, has welcomed the appointment of a presidential commission on WMD proliferation. He promises that he is in a position to set the CIA record straight. That would imply that in all probability China's proliferation activities, especially in respect of Pakistan will come out into the open, especially when the NPT review conference is to be convened in mid-2005. Given the increased surveillance on Pakistan, the impending review conference and Islamabad's ignominious proliferation record, it will not be surprising if Beijing reconsiders its nuclear relationship with Pakistan.

While the risks to General Musharraf have grown and the possibilities for increasing tensions within Pakistan in the coming summer months are likely to increase, the current developments may strengthen those voices in Islamabad which have been urging moderation in policies relating to Kashmir and Afghanistan and a more secular approach to politics. It would also bring home to the Pakistani strategic establishment that excessive reliance on nuclear weapons and neglect of economic, social and political factors would only take Pakistan down the route travelled by the Soviet Union.

The Pakistanis felt that their strategic location abutting the three largest nations in the world, their country being in the vicinity of the Persian Gulf, their being the ramparts of wells of power and their willingness to be an instrumentality of the US global strategy gave them unique advantages. These could be converted into their being permitted to become a nuclear weapon power based on technology obtained, to use their own words, by begging, borrowing and stealing. Now they are learning that non-indigenous technology does not take a country very far.



# 'Musharraf privy to n-proliferation'

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, FEB. 3. In what should come as an embarrassment to the Bush administration, the father of Pakistan's nuclear programme, Abdul Qadeer Khan, has apparently told investigators that senior military commanders, including General Pervez Musharraf, were informed about assistance to North Korea to design and equip facilities for making weapons-grade uranium, according to *The Washington Post* and other agency reports.

These reports said Dr. Khan had told investigators that Gen. Musharraf, the former Pakistan Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, and the former Pakistan Army chiefs, Mirza Aslam Beg, and Jehangir Karamat, were involved in this act of proliferation along with scientists. According to the investigators, Dr. Khan has said that he helped North Korea with the full knowledge of senior military commanders.

Apparently, during the questioning, Dr.

Khan had demanded the quizzing of former army commanders stressing that "no debriefing is complete unless you bring every one of them here and debrief us together." Based on this, the investigators questioned Gen. Beg and Gen. Karamat in recent days, but they denied any knowledge of the transactions.

The report draws on a briefing to Pakistani journalists on Sunday in which a senior military officer had said that Mr. Khan had signed a 12-page confession in which he admitted to having provided Iran, Libya and North Korea technical assistance for making high-speed centrifuges to enrich uranium.

Lt. Gen. Khalid Kidwai of Pakistan's Strategic Planning and Development Cell has described Mr. Khan as a mastermind who was involved in an elaborate and wholly unauthorised smuggling network that started in 1989 and was brokered by a network of middlemen. According to Gen. Kidwai, Dr. Khan told investigators that the assist-

ance to the three countries was not meant to make money but to deflect attention from Pakistan's own programme and as a gesture of support to other Muslim countries.

"Dr. Khan is basically contesting the merit of the nuclear proliferation charges. Throughout his debriefing Dr. Khan kept challenging the perception that (the) material found from Libyan or Iranian programmes would allow them to enrich uranium," an investigator is quoted in *The Washington Post* as saying.

The Bush administration has been basically deflecting questions on the issues saying that investigations are ongoing in Pakistan and has praised Gen. Musharraf "for the manner in which he has come to grips with the subject." Washington is aware of where Gen. Musharraf is coming from — that any transfer of technology and materials was the handiwork of individuals by greed and that official Pakistan was not involved in the picture.

XO-11  
4/2

# 'Pak hand in Iran, Libya and N Korea N-programmes'

Press Trust of India

LONDON, Jan. 18. — The clandestine nuclear weapons programmes of Iran, Libya and North Korea were all fuelled by the Khan Research Laboratories in Kahuta in north Pakistan, a leading London weekly reported today.

"Dramatic evidence from Iran and now Libya reveals a clandestine and sophisticated network, stretching from North Korea, Malaysia and China to Russia, Germany and Dubai. Yet one country more than any other stands accused of easing this proliferation. In the network of illegal radioactive trade, all roads point to Pakistan. More precisely, they lead

to the Khan Research Laboratories in Kahuta in north Pakistan," The Observer stated in a special report.

Abdul Qadeer Khan, revered as father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, is implicated in the proliferation of weapons in Iran, according to the report.

During India's first nuclear test, he was working in Holland for an Anglo-Dutch-German nuclear engineering consortium called Urenco. Through his work there, Khan became aware of secret blueprints for two types of uranium enrichment centrifuges: one based on rotors made of aluminium and another based on a highly-strengthened alloy of steel.

19/1 P.S. According to the report, Khan went on to steal the blueprints and a list of Urenco suppliers. With the blessings of the then Pakistani government, he established the Khan Research Laboratories near Islamabad and, with the help of the Chinese, went on to secretly develop the country's bomb.

Khan, who once said that all Western countries are enemies of Islam, had fundamentalist sympathies and is known as the 'godfather of the Islamic bomb'.

Evidence has now emerged from Iran and Libya that Khan's programme may be the source of the greatest level of nuclear weapons proliferation since the Cold War, the report said.



TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2004

## TO CURB PROLIFERATION

HO-10  
1571

PAKISTAN HAS BEEN embarrassed by the disclosures that it was the source of nuclear weapon knowhow for North Korea, Libya and Iran. However, the international community has opted to provide the Pakistani leadership an opportunity further to correct the country's policies instead of putting it in the dock. A few scientists who work at the nuclear research facilities at Kahuta have been interrogated and Abdul Qadir Khan, the person who provided his country with the weapon technology, has been softly questioned. This appears to be part of an effort to create the impression that proliferation activity was conducted by a few rogue technicians without the knowledge or permission of the political leadership. The United States, which is always hyper-sensitive to efforts made by other countries to acquire weapons of mass destruction, has played its part in this attempt at obfuscation. It was not chagrined even when its initial claims, that Pakistan had not exported weapon technology after President Pervez Musharraf took office, became questionable. The U.S. administration has been able to hold the rest of the international community to the view that it would be better to work with General Musharraf as he tries to fulfil promises to plug loopholes at the technical level and to recast his country's world view.

Pakistan's decision to share its nuclear expertise was, in some ways, an offshoot of the mindset it adopted over most of the 1980s and 1990s. It believed that the alliance with the U.S. in the war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan immunised its nuclear programme from international scrutiny and that it could even get away with a degree of clandestine proliferation. Dr. Khan was one among several prominent Pakistanis who propagated the view that the nuclear arsenal had given the country a leading position in the Islamic world and that it was morally obliged to share some of its knowledge.

Pakistan had thought all along that it could forever retain the capacity to deny any role in the weapon programmes pursued by other countries. Recent developments have exposed the fundamental flaw in this thought process. Pakistan might have been able to retain deniability if the three countries to which it allegedly provided knowhow continued to withstand pressure to comply with non-proliferation norms. Once Iran and Libya threw open their nuclear facilities, international inspectors were bound to track down the sources of their weapon programme.

Pakistan might have needed the financial assistance and missile technology that Libya and North Korea respectively could offer in exchange for assistance in the development of the nuclear programme. However, the provision of expertise to Iran was particularly ill-considered given Pakistan's strategic situation. Iran and Pakistan competed fiercely for the leading role in Afghanistan for much of the last decade. Iran was also incensed at the treatment meted out to Pakistani Shias by the Sunni majority. While the Iranian programme is not believed to have advanced to the weapons stage, Islamabad should surely have thought more carefully before helping a potential rival. Official India has wisely declined to comment on these developments. The three countries allegedly assisted by Pakistan do not threaten India in any manner. The reticence to comment on the subject also accords with the current policy of refraining from the practice of trying to portray Pakistan as an irresponsible country at any and every turn. The task before the international community is to ensure that the proliferation — horizontal as well as vertical — of nuclear weapons is curbed. To that end all the countries that possess these weapons must ensure that there are no leakages of sensitive material or knowledge from their nuclear installations.

# Pak ready to probe Libya claim

Islamabad, Jan. 5 (Reuters): Pakistan said today a British newspaper report that said Pakistani scientists sold plans to make nuclear bombs to Libya appeared unsubstantiated, but any official complaint would be investigated.

Pakistan admitted late last year that scientists involved in its atom bomb programme may have been driven by "personal ambition or greed" to export technology to Iran, but insisted the the government had no part in any such deals.

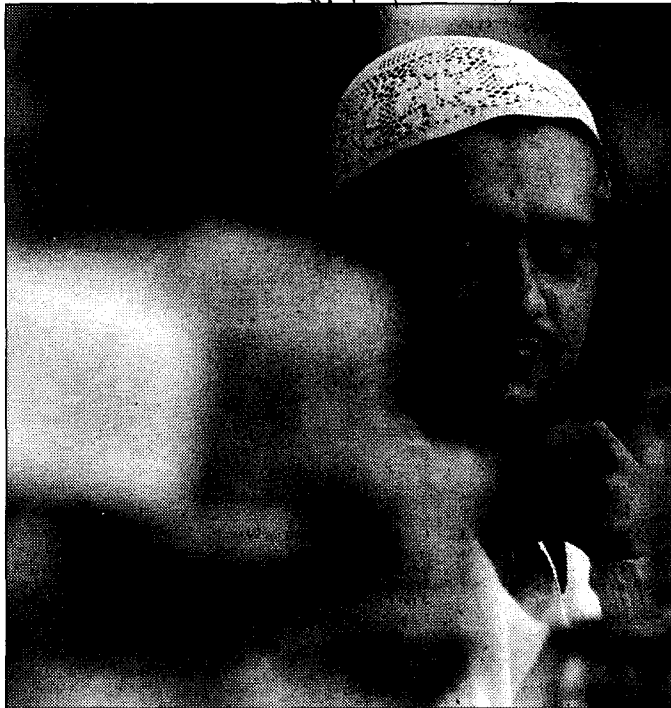
The London *Sunday Times* quoted Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, son of Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, as saying that Libya had spent \$40 million on nuclear components from various black-market dealers, including Pakistani scientists.

A senior Pakistani official, who did not want to be identified, said the government had received information in the past that some scientists had sold nuclear technology to Iran and these charges were being investigated.

"If any such complaint is officially received in relation to Libya, that will be also be examined and investigated. So far they seem more like totally unsubstantiated allegations."

Today, an Arabic newspaper said Saif al-Islam Gaddafi had denied a section of the *Sunday Times* report that said Libya would allow US and British troops to be based there after Tripoli agreed to abandon weapons of mass destruction programmes.

Libya, long on a US list of sponsors of terrorism, said last month it was abandoning plans to build an atomic bomb and



A man sells prayer caps in Islamabad. (Reuters)

other weapons of mass destruction. It now wants trading benefits, including an end to US sanctions. Analysts say Gaddafi senior is grooming Saif al-Islam to succeed him.

Pakistan said last month it was determined to get to the bottom of allegations that nuclear technology may have been transferred to Iran. It said it began questioning scientists from a state-run laboratory set up by the father of its bomb programme, Abdul Qadeer Khan, in November after approaches by the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency and information from the Iran's government pointing "to certain individu-

als". Among those questioned was Khan himself, who is revered as a national hero for developing a nuclear bomb tested in 1998 to match that of India.

No details of the investiga-

tions have been made public.

Late last year Washington said Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf had assured it his government had not — at least "in the present time" — provided any nuclear secrets to countries like Iran and North Korea.

Past allegations of Pakistani technology transfers, not only to Iran but also to North Korea, have been an embarrassment for the White House, which relies on Pakistan as a key ally in its battle against al Qaida and allied Islamic militants.

## Priest shot

Unidentified gunmen shot dead a priest in the central Pakistani city of Khanewal today, police said.

The priest, Mukhtar Masih, was headed to the railway station to catch a train for Lahore when the gunmen opened fire, Khanewal's police chief Jamil Ahmed said. He said the priest was hit by three bullets and died on the spot.

"It is premature to speculate on the motive behind the murder," Jamil said.

Christians and non-Muslim minorities form around three per cent of Pakistan's 145 million population.