

# Pakistan objects to Rice's remarks

**We do not require advice from outside, says Ministry spokesperson**

Nirupama Subramanian

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan has expressed strong objections to U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's statements on the world's expectations that President Pervez Musharraf will hold free and fair elections in 2007.

The Foreign Office spokesperson said the subject did not come up during Ms. Rice's talks with Gen. Musharraf.

The Foreign Office was reacting to Ms. Rice's comments to journalists on board the special aircraft that brought her to Islamabad, and later at a press briefing here, where she

gave a detailed reply to a question on free and fair elections in Pakistan.

"I have had discussions with the President, with the Foreign Minister... But we are very clear that the expectation is that Pakistan is going to take that step on the road to democracy, that it is not just a matter of election day, it is a matter of access to press, it is a matter of access to be able to assemble and to campaign. We've been very clear about all of that. And I have heard the commitment of the Foreign Minister and of the President and of the Prime Minister and others to that process," Ms. Rice said in remarks at a joint press

briefing with Pakistan Foreign Minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri.

In a statement after Ms. Rice's departure from Islamabad, the Foreign Office said "there should be no doubt in anyone's mind that the elections will be free and fair".

"This is the commitment of the leadership and Government of Pakistan. On the democratic processes in Pakistan, we do not require advice from outside," the spokesperson said.

Deputy Minister for Information Tariq Azeem said Pakistan would not take "dictation" from anyone on its internal affairs.

5.0 JUN 2003

# More arms for Pak from US

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: Pakistan is poised to receive yet another large consignment of American arms, including Harpoon anti-ship missiles, despite mounting criticism in the US about its dubious role in the war on terrorism.

The Bush administration has okayed sale of a \$370-million package to its client state at a time when US and coalition forces in Afghanistan are said to be under increasing attack from Pakistan-



backed Taliban and Al Qaida elements with growing casualties.

The Pentagon's Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) notified the Congress this week about the sale as required by law. Congress has to clear the package, but with the administration's backing, ostensibly to counteract the nuclear concessions to India, that is not expected to be a problem.

The 130 Harpoon II missiles lined up for sale would provide "a significant upgrade to Pakistan's existing systems and allow for improved tar-

get acquisition," the DSCA said in its notice to Congress.

"This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a friendly country that continues to be a key ally in the global war on terrorism," the agency added.

How it will improve Pakistan's security at a time when the country has had to seek billions in aid following last year's earthquake is a mystery. But the deal is evidently part of the Bush administration's effort to shore up a favoured military dictatorship that claims to be fighting the war on terrorism. Many commentators are starting to doubt this claim.

It's also part of the global arms trade that keeps US military-industrial complex in good fettle. The Harpoon missiles are made by Boeing, a company which is also bidding to sell billions of dollars worth of fighter aircraft and other arms to India.

Boeing has sold more than 7000 Harpoon missiles to 25 countries since it was introduced in 1971. While US arms supply to Pakistan is often premised on its role as a FAT-WAT (Frontline Ally in War Against Terrorism), Harpoons are not exactly meant to take out Al Qaida.

The Bush administration's largesse to Pakistan, some of which will be subsidised by American military aid, comes at a time when some critics are questioning its kid glove policy towards the military dictatorship.

02 JUN 2006

THE TIMES OF INDIA

# Pakistan and U.S.: two together, two apart

Nirupama Subramanian

**U**NITED STATES Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld recently lavished praise on Pervez Musharraf for his role in the war on terror. But there is no hiding that relations between the Pakistan President and the U.S. have come under considerable strain in recent weeks, particularly after President George W. Bush's March visit to India and Pakistan.

Inevitably, Pakistan compared the Bush visit to the two countries. A civilian nuclear deal with India; in Pakistan, a statement that the two sub-continental neighbours are "different countries with different needs and different histories." An overnight stay in Islamabad under tight security; a three-day sojourn in India. For Pakistan, a Bush comment that the purpose of his visit was to determine whether President Musharraf was "as committed as he has been in the past to bringing these terrorists to justice," and another that democracy in Pakistan was "definitely a part of our agenda"; to India, an invitation to join the U.S. and its Western allies in nation-building in Afghanistan.

With severe anti-U.S. and anti-West sentiments prevailing among all sections of Pakistanis, expressed vociferously in the media and by the country's political elite, the visit caused a massive loss of face for President Musharraf. It was bad enough being told in public that the U.S. viewed its relationship with India through a different prism from that of its ties with Pakistan. Worse was the injunction to do "more" to bring in Osama bin Laden, and the worst, the suggested role for India in Afghanistan.

For 30 years, the Pakistan military has viewed Afghanistan as falling within its sphere of influence. Starting with the time of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan has leveraged its geographical location to further relations with the U.S. After 9/11, Pakistan, one of the three countries that recognised the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, recovered quickly enough to land on the right side of the U.S., after more than a decade in the American doghouse. In its role as a

13-Pak 10/10/06  
 Their dependence on each other by no means makes it an equal partnership. And this is the main cause of the strain in their relations.

frontline ally of the U.S., it has committed 80,000 troops on the ground along the Durand Line, launching "co-ordinated operations" with the U.S. forces in Waziristan in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) at considerable political cost, and has suffered more casualties in the "war on terror" than the U.S. or any of its western allies in Afghanistan.

As a country that continues to see Afghanistan as providing "strategic depth" against India, Pakistan is deeply resentful of any Indian involvement in that country. President Bush's invitation to India to involve itself more in Afghanistan came at a time when the Pakistan establishment had begun to put out the allegation that India was backing subversive activity in Balochistan. For both critics and supporters of the Pakistani establishment, it was clear after the Bush visit that the country's most important ally did not buy that allegation.

In the months since, President Musharraf has been attempting to regain some of his credibility through methods that seem to border on defiance. For instance, in April, when the U.S. put the Jamaat-ud-dawa — it is linked to the banned Lashkar-e-Taiba — on its Specially Designated Global Terrorist list, the Pakistan foreign office said it was not obliged to follow suit. Other militant and extreme religious outfits banned by the Musharraf Government have made a comeback, especially after the 2005 earthquake. *The Herald*, a monthly, reported recently that the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, which was banned in 2002 and now goes by the name Millat-e-Islamia Pakistan, was allowed to organise a large public gathering in Islamabad on April 6.

The Pakistan Government has also hit out indirectly against the U.S. by dismissing accusations by the Government in Kabul that it was assisting the Taliban to launch attacks in south-

ern Afghanistan. This is also a U.S. allegation. In strong words, Islamabad has accused the Karzai Government of blaming Pakistan for its own failure to end the conflict in Afghanistan.

President Musharraf has also lost no opportunity to show that unbothered by U.S. opposition to the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline, he is determined to go ahead with the project. Another development that seems opposed to what Washington wants from Islamabad is the political changes that President Musharraf has signalled in FATA, the frontline region in the U.S.-led 'war against terror.' The U.S. believes that Osama bin Laden is hiding somewhere in FATA, and it is here that it wants Pakistan to do "more," meaning hunt him out by breaking the Taliban and foreign militant networks in the area. The recent appointment of a retired lieutenant-general who is a tribal as the Governor of the North West Frontier Province is being seen as an attempt by the Musharraf Government to begin a reconciliation process with the local people in Waziristan who are upset at the military operations. Pakistan says it wants to find a political solution to terrorism, but some believe that in the current charged atmosphere in the area, this could end up strengthening Taliban supporters.

It is almost as if the man who declared (in a recent interview to *The Guardian*) that he is not a poodle of the U.S. is desperate to prove as much to his people. Analysts say the ties between the two countries are at their lowest ebb since 9/11. But does this mean that President Musharraf and the U.S. are gradually drifting apart? -

Not yet, is the short answer to that. The ties that bind the two are built on the strongly felt basic and immediate needs of both. In simple terms, President Bush needs Pakistan for his 'war on terror.' Pakistan, which received more

than \$3 billion from 2001 to 2005 from the U.S., needs the cash and the international standing. But their dependence on each other by no means makes it an equal partnership. And this is the main cause of the strain in their relations, as it has always been throughout the chequered history of the engagement between the two countries. While the U.S. only wants Pakistan to meet its present military objective, Pakistan, the lesser partner, has always built into the relationship, through what the former Foreign Secretary, Tanvir Ahmed Khan, describes as "auto-hypnosis," expectations that were never agreed upon. Frustration, both in the establishment and on the street, mounts when those expectations are not met. The leadership, which bought public support for the partnership by touting these expectations, has to then address the frustration.

## Key to the future

But the key to understanding the future of the relations between President Musharraf and the Bush administration may lie more in U.S. reactions to its ally's apparent defiance. On the one hand, Washington is determined to keep the heat turned up on the Pakistan leader to ensure he delivers on vital issues in the partnership. On the other, the U.S. is also worried that President Musharraf's sliding popularity — on account of his demanding American alliance — may affect his ability to deliver, and has allowed him plenty of slack to recoup political losses.

Perhaps nothing exemplifies this complex *pas de deux* better than *l'affaire* A.Q. Khan. After naming him a nuclear proliferator, the U.S. allowed President Musharraf to draw red lines all around the scientist, and the investigation. Dr. Khan was placed under house arrest but got a presidential pardon after a few months. He continues to remain under house arrest, but Pakistan has made it clear it will not give American investigators direct access to its national hero. The U.S. has so far not pushed this issue. All others arrested in the case have been released, and the Government declared the case "closed" a few weeks ago. But the U.S. then indirectly ratcheted up the noise again. Recently, a congressional committee heard a lengthy testimony from a nuclear scientist about the Bush administration not having done enough to get information from the Pakistani scientist. *The Daily Times* said in an editorial that when the U.S. knew that Pakistan would never surrender the top scientist, the only reason it could be bringing up the A.Q. Khan factor once again was to pressure the Musharraf Government into making other "concessions," perhaps on Afghanistan.

Looking away while President Musharraf indulges extremist religious or militant outfits, and throwing carrots, such as lifting the ban on F16 sales to Pakistan last year, and allowing sales of Harpoon anti-ship missiles last month, all the while saying Pakistan has to do "more," is part of the same deal — ensure the Pakistan leader does not take his eye off the ball and, at the same time, soothe ruffled feathers. No one knows what General Musharraf's plans are for the next elections — he has hinted at another term for himself — but it does seem the Bush administration wants him in the saddle, at least for now.

So where does that leave President Bush's democracy agenda in Pakistan? Seasoned observers like Mr. Tanvir Ahmed Khan point out that given the deep military cooperation between the two, the U.S. may not push the issue. Instead, there may be suggestions to President Musharraf to broaden his political base so that he is in a stronger position to deliver on his commitments to the U.S. While the Bush administration wants its military objectives met at the earliest, President Musharraf is fighting for time until the next elections. Will he in a better position to do what the Americans want after the elections? It may cease to matter. By then, the Bush presidency will be clocking its final year, and President Musharraf, if re-elected, may well decide to wait and see what his options are after the U.S. elections.

## CARTOONSCAPE



12 JUN 2006

THE TIMES OF INDIA

# US Congress cuts aid to Pak

## Cites Poor Human Rights Record, Absence of Democracy As Reasons

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: The US Congress and Bush administration may be parting ways over how to treat America's client state, Pakistan.

While the administration continues to lavish financial rewards and praise for services ostensibly rendered by Islamabad, the US House on Friday sharply cut economic and military aid to Pakistan for its poor human rights record, lack of democracy, and its nuclear shenanigans.

In the foreign operations appropriations bill for financial year 2007, economic support for Pakistan was cut by \$250 million (to \$300 million) and military aid

was reduced by \$100 million (to \$200 million) from the current fiscal year.

The bill cited increasing lack of respect for human rights, especially women's rights, and lack of progress in improving democratic governance and rule of law, as chief reasons for the cuts.

But there is speculation in Congressional circles that the cuts are aimed at punishing Pakistan for its dubious role in the war on terror and for not allowing full access to the nuclear smuggler A Q Khan to enable Washington bring Iran to account.

The House action was welcomed by critics of the administration's Pakistan policy, many of whom feel

### KEY CHARGES



● Gen. Musharraf has been stringing President Bush along by pretending to fight terror while running a government aided by sympathisers of Osama bin Laden

● Cuts are aimed at punishing Pakistan for its dubious role in the war on terror and for not allowing full access to the nuclear smuggler A Q Khan to enable the US bring Iran to account

Gen. Musharraf has been stringing President Bush along by pretending to fight against terrorism while running a government supported by sympathisers of Osama bin Laden and Taliban.

"From the full pardon that President Musharraf granted Abdul Qadeer Khan, who admitted to spreading nuclear weapons technology to Iran and North Korea, to frequent reports of human rights abuses, Pakistan cannot expect full support from the US without providing answers to some serious questions,"

New York Congressman Joseph Crowley said in a statement.

"By reducing this aid to

Pakistan, we are sending a message that democracy must eventually be restored and that human rights must be upheld. Even with our allies, the United States is firmly committed to seeing that all people are treated with the respect and dignity of the rule of law," he added.

But any celebration by constituencies opposed to Pakistan's militarisation and military regime would be premature. The administration still has various ways of restoring and funneling money to Pakistan, although some conspiracy theorists say administration itself has set up Congress to rap Islamabad on the knuckles.

► Pak bloated on aid, P 17

# Washington still needs Islamabad

Despite its concerns, the U.S.' plans still centre on Gen. Musharraf.

Simon Tisdall

WHEN AMERICA'S world changed after 9/11, President Pervez Musharraf adapted faster than most. He severed Pakistan's official links with the Taliban, backed the U.S. war on terror, and set about taming lawless tribal areas abutting the Afghan border. Gen. Musharraf became George W. Bush's favourite Muslim.

But Washington's memories are short and, five years on, the relationship grows rocky. The U.S. has echoed Afghan claims that Pakistan lacks zeal in combating cross-border operations by "Talibanised" extremists in Waziristan and elsewhere. Officials mutter about "inconsistent performance" and "poor execution" in catching Al-Qaeda militants.

An unannounced U.S. air strike inside Pakistan in January left Gen. Musharraf looking weak (and 18 people dead). Differences have developed over neighbouring Iran's nuclear activities and a gas pipeline venture with Teheran.

Pakistani officials have, in turn, accused India and, by implication, the U.S., of stirring up Balochi separatists. They complain Washington does not fully appreciate the risks Gen. Musharraf is running and the army's losses in Waziristan. Last week, Foreign Secretary Riaz Khan said "changing the mindset" of extremists was a long-term task. "It doesn't help making Pakistan the whipping boy."

Mr. Bush's recent visit to Islamabad, following his nuclear deal with arch-ri-

val India, made matters worse. His clumsy call for free elections next year added insult to injury. "Was there blow-back after the Bush visit? Yes, no question," an informed Western official said. But there was no rupture, he added. Washington's regional game plan still centred on Gen. Musharraf and no replacement was yet in sight. Pakistan's leader, lacking a strong political base and beset by intractable problems, needed U.S. support at almost any price.

"From the Americans' perspective, this is a highly unstable country. The situation in Waziristan is tipping in favour of the Taliban. There's trouble in Balochistan, in Kashmir, in Karachi. There's the religious parties ... Half the population of this country is virulently anti-American and it's growing," the official said. "And then there is Musharraf, sitting on top of this volcano. He's pretty indispensable. We're only a bullet away from significant instability. But I'm not sure we have anyone else."

Despite public U.S. pressure for free elections, Western diplomats in Islamabad predict wider U.S. strategic and security considerations will privately trump concerns about Pakistan's dysfunctional democracy. "We're not abandoning the democratic agenda," a diplomat said.

"But drugs, terrorism, instability, these are the issues that have a direct international impact." It would be left to Britain and the EU to worry about ballot-rigging. — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2006

05 MAY 2006

THE HINDU

# US strike amid Pak row

US Pak (1.2)

**Islamabad, May 8 (Reuters):** US aircraft wounded at least three Pakistani labourers in a missile strike against suspected Taliban fighters in the South Waziristan tribal region today, according to security officials.

The three were brought to the Pakistani border town of Angoor Adda from a nearby mountain where they had been mining for minerals, but another eight men were unaccounted for, said the officials, who requested anonymity.

The attack came on the heels of criticism by a senior US official of Pakistan's ef-

orts to stop Taliban fighters crossing into Afghanistan to attack US and Afghan forces.

Security officials said the attack was launched during the early afternoon on the slopes of a mountain called Khawaja Khizer. Initially, officials had said helicopter gunships had carried out the attack, but others later said it had been aircraft.

Military and government spokesmen could not be immediately contacted, and it was not known whether the US side had consulted Pakistani forces before carrying out the

attack inside Pakistani territory.

Pakistan has deployed close to 80,000 troops in the border areas and they have killed over 300 militants in neighbouring North Waziristan since mid-2005, and lost more than 50 soldiers in the fight against foreign al Qaida militants and their supporters among the local tribes.

Henry Crumpton, the US state department's coordinator for counterterrorism, said in Kabul on Saturday: "Has Pakistan done enough? I think the answer is 'no'.

"Not only al Qaida, but Tal-

iban leadership are primarily in Pakistan, and the Pakistanis know that," Crumpton said, adding that eliminating militant safe havens in Pakistan's tribal lands was crucial.

Crumpton's comments were a rare public admonishment of Pakistan by a member of the US administration, and were a sign of growing frustration with the Taliban's resurgence since late last year.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai had also implored Pakistan to do more, shortly before President George W. Bush visited both countries along

with India in early March. Bush called for the security forces on both sides of the border to enhance their intelligence sharing and coordination.

Pakistani foreign minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri today expressed regret over the statement of his Afghan counterpart that Islamabad could do more to crack down on Taliban insurgents.

Referring to Afghan foreign minister Ranganee Dadfar Spanta's comments that his country wants Pakistan to do more to prevent Taliban incursions.

09 MAY 2006

## Pakistan's N-proliferation network broken, says US

Islamabad: The US claims to have "broken up" the nuclear proliferation network of Pakistani nuclear scientist **Abdul Qader Khan**, terming this a "great success story," a media report on Friday said. The report quoted a White House spokesman as saying in Washington that the US worked "very closely" with Pakistan and would "continue to do so when it comes to intelligence issues." Addressing the White House weekly press briefing, Scott McClellan stressed that the black market nuclear proliferation network run by the disgraced Khan had been "broken up."

"We worked with the international community and made some significant progress in stopping the proliferation of nuclear programmes and weapons of mass destruction," Daily Times quoted Mc-

Clellan as saying.

"That was a great success story of the intelligence community that we're talking about now—working with others," the spokesman said. There was no immediate comment from the Pakistan government. Security experts here, however, point out the US had all along known of Khan's activities while he was working with a Dutch laboratory and that the CIA told the Dutch government to lay off.



The US, they say, took a dim view of Khan only after 9/11, when it suspected that the know-how could have reached Al Qaida. This was long after Khan had completed his nuclear transfers to North Korea, Libya and Iran. Confronted by the US, the Pakistan government claimed that it was unaware of Khan's activities. IANS

16 APR 2006

THE TIMES OF INDIA

# What is it about Pakistan?

The need for military bases explains Washington's immense tolerance for Islamabad's doublespeak, says **K. Subrahmanyam**

IT SPEAKS of the enormous self-confidence of Pakistani diplomats that they were willing to disclose to their Public Accounts Committee that they bribed members of the 9/11 Commission, to get drastic changes made in its final report. Not only that. The story was leaked to the *Friday Times* to be published on the day President Bush was in Islamabad. They were throwing a challenge to the US. Bush proclaimed in the wake of 9/11 that he would punish any country that harboured terrorists. Five years later, Osama bin Laden and Ayman Zawahiri are still safe in Pakistan.

It is claimed that they may be in the tribal areas. But every senior Al-Qaeda leader captured in Pakistan happened to be in a major city. The IAEA has established that the Pakistan-Iran proliferation went back to 1987. It is obvious that proliferation over such a long period could not have happened without the knowledge of the Pakistani state and army. Yet the US is compelled to accept the Pakistani fable that Pakistani leaders was unaware of Dr A.Q. Khan's proliferation.

Musharraf promised the US president that the murderer of *Wall Street Journal* correspondent Daniel Pearl would be brought to justice and punished. Though Omar Saeed Shaikh, the man who transmitted \$100,000 to Mohammed Atta, leader of the 9/11 hijackers, was convicted and sentenced to death four years ago for the murder, he is still comfortably enjoying what would amount to house arrest conditions.

In spite of the US administration

and legislators thundering about the vote against Iran on the nuclear issue, Pakistan, which is in receipt of US economic and military aid and is more intimately aware of Iranian proliferation, chooses to abstain with no adverse consequences.

The Taliban operate against the US and NATO forces in Afghanistan using Pakistani territory as a base. When the Afghan president complains about it, Musharraf ad-

**If the US is to have such capabilities in Pakistan to deal with the contingency of Islamabad losing control over its nuclear weapons, its air force must have bases**

monishes him to improve vigilance.

The US has put up with Pakistan's brazen defiance until now. For the first time, following Bush's Islamabad visit, there are signs that American tolerance of Pakistani double-dealing may be coming to an end. Bush said in Islamabad: "Part of my mission today was to determine whether or not the president is as committed as he has been in the past in bringing these terrorists to justice, and he is." The implication: Washington was developing doubts about Musharraf's commitment and he came to check on that.

On the civilian nuclear programme, the US president was categori-

cal. He explained that "Pakistan and India are different countries with different needs and different histories". In other words, Pakistan will not get the civilian nuclear deal.

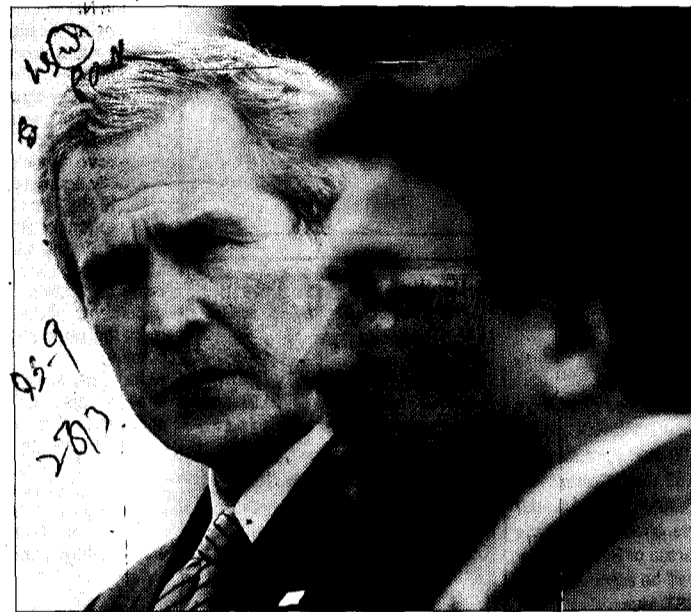
One possible explanation why the US has been so tolerant of Pakistan's double dealings is its need to have bases and troops in Pakistan. This need is related to Pakistan being a nuclear weapon state. The recently released *Quadrennial Defence Review Report* (February 6) states: "The prospect that a nuclear capable state may lose control of some of its weapons to terrorists is one of the greatest dangers the US and its allies face." This possibility fits only one nation in the world: Pakistan.

Explaining the US strategy, the *QDR* outlines, "To address such threats, the US must be prepared to deter attacks, locate, tag and track WMD materials, act in cases where a state that possesses WMD loses control of its weapons, especially nuclear devices; detect WMD across all domains, sustain operations even while under WMD attack; help mitigate the consequences of WMD attacks at home or overseas; and eliminate WMD materials in peacetime, during combat and after conflicts."

The *QDR* details the capabilities that need to be developed for preventive action. These are: (i) special operations force to locate, characterise and secure WMD; (ii) capabilities to locate, tag and track WMD, their delivery system and related materials including means to move such items; (iii) capabilities to detect fissile materials such as nu-

clear devices at stand off ranges; (iv) interdiction capabilities to stop air, maritime and ground shipments of WMD, their delivery systems and related materials; (v) persistent surveillance over wide areas to locate WMD capabilities or hostile forces; (vi) human intelligence, language skills and cultural awareness to understand better the intentions and motivations of potential adversaries and to speed recovery efforts; (vii) capabilities and specialised teams

ties in Pakistan to deal with the contingency of Islamabad losing control over its weapons, US forces must be deployed in Pakistan and US air force must have bases and US navy proximate forces at sea. The portions which are alleged to have been deleted from 9/11 Commission Report are said to have dealt with the ISI's direct involvement in the 9/11 attack. Since then Musharraf has been useful in eliminating progressively a number of top fundamen-



Look who came to Islamabad for an inspection

to render safe and secure WMD; (viii) non-lethal weapons to secure WMD sites so that materials cannot be removed; (ix) joint command and control tailored for the WMD elimination mission; (x) capability to deploy, sustain, protect, support and redeploy special operations forces in hostile environments; (xi) capability to shield critical and vulnerable systems and technologies from the catastrophic effects of electromagnetic pulse.

If the US is to have such capabili-

ties, the US needs to keep its forces in Pakistan so that it can sustain and develop the 11-fold capabilities which the *QDR* lays down. This compulsion may explain largely the extraordinary tolerance the US has displayed towards Pakistani duplicity and their need to use General Musharraf to the maximum possible extent.

Meanwhile, the US needs to keep its forces in Pakistan so that it can sustain and develop the 11-fold capabilities which the *QDR* lays down. This compulsion may explain largely the extraordinary tolerance the US has displayed towards Pakistani duplicity and their need to use General Musharraf to the maximum possible extent.

23 MAR 2006

INDIAN EXPRESS

US/Pak



# পরমাণু প্রশ্নে মার্কিন বৈষম্য নিয়ে সোচ্চার থাকছেন বঞ্চিত মুশারফ

ইসলামাবাদ, ১৮ মার্চ: এক জন পেয়েছে, এক জন পায়নি। এই বৈষম্যটা যে আখেরে কত ক্ষতিকর হতে পারে, এটাই এখন প্রাণপণে বোঝানোর চেষ্টা চলছে।

ভারত-মার্কিন পরমাণু চুক্তিকে প্রথম থেকেই সন্দেহের চোখে দেখে আসছে পাকিস্তান। বৃহস্পতিবার পাক বিদেশমন্ত্রী খুরশিদ মহম্মদ কাসুরির বিবৃতির পরপরই গত কাল ফের মুখ খুলেছেন স্বয়ং পাক প্রেসিডেন্ট। ভাওয়ালপুরে পাক সেনাবাহিনীর এক অনুষ্ঠানে মুশারফ স্পষ্টই বলেছেন, ভারত-মার্কিন চুক্তি পাকিস্তানের কাছে অত্যন্ত 'অস্বস্তিকর'। এই চুক্তি উপমহাদেশীয় অঞ্চলের শক্তিসাম্যে বিঘ্ন ঘটাবে বলে তাঁর আশঙ্কা।

মুশারফ অবশ্যই জানেন, মার্কিন প্রেসিডেন্ট বুশ নিজে এই চুক্তির ব্যাপারে কতটা উদ্যোগী ছিলেন। এ মাসের গোড়ায় ভারত যুরে পাকিস্তানে যাওয়ার পরে পাক প্রশাসন বুশের কাছে পাকিস্তানকেও অনুরূপ পরমাণু-সাহায্য দেওয়ার জন্য অনুরোধ জানায়। ভারত-পাকিস্তান দুটি দেশের চাহিদা আলাদা, ইতিহাস আলাদা— এই সংক্ষিপ্ত অথচ তাৎপর্যপূর্ণ উত্তর দিয়ে বিষয়টি এড়িয়ে যান বুশ। যে মুশারফ সন্ত্রাস-দমন অভিযানে বুশের সহযোগী, যে মুশারফের প্রশংসায় ইতিপূর্বে কখনও কার্ণাণ্য করেনি হোয়াইট হাউস, পরমাণু-প্রশ্নে সেই মুশারফকেই নিরাশ করেছেন বুশ। এরই জবাবে পাকিস্তানকে এক দিকে ভারতের পরমাণু-সহায়তা পাওয়ার বৈধতা নিয়ে প্রশ্ন তুলতে হচ্ছে। অন্য দিকে, সে দেখাতে চাইছে, পরমাণু বা প্রতিরক্ষা সহায়তার জন্য সর্বদা আমেরিকার মুখাপেক্ষী হওয়ার দরকার মোটেই নেই। চিনের নাম তাই উঠছে বারবার।

মুশারফ কাল ফের বলেছেন, পাকিস্তান তার প্রতিরক্ষার চাহিদা পূরণে চিনের সহায়তা পাচ্ছে। আগের দিনই কাসুরি আরও তীক্ষ্ণ ভাবে

বলেছিলেন, “জনমত সাদা-কালো চেনে। আমেরিকা আর চিনের তুলনা করলে তারা স্পষ্ট দেখতে পায়, চিন যে ভাবে লাগাতার পাকিস্তানের পাশে থেকেছে, আমেরিকা তা করেনি।” পাকিস্তান যে এখন চিনের সঙ্গে



ঘনিষ্ঠতার ফায়দা তোলার চেষ্টা করছে, সে কথা কালই ভারতের জাতীয় নিরাপত্তা উপদেষ্টা এম কে নারায়ণন উল্লেখ করেন। আজ আমেরিকায় ভারতের রাষ্ট্রদূত রশেন সেন সরাসরি বলেছেন, ভারত-মার্কিন সম্পর্ক বর্তমানে সহযোগিতার এক নতুন পর্বে উন্নীত হয়েছে। এর মধ্যে চিনকে প্রতিহত করার কোনও বিষয় জড়িত নেই। তবে, ভারতে প্রাক্তন মার্কিন রাষ্ট্রদূত রবার্ট ব্ল্যাকউইল সম্প্রতি ভারত-মার্কিন কৌশলগত সম্পর্কের আলোচনায় যে ক্ষেত্রগুলি আলাদা করে চিহ্নিত করেছিলেন, চিন-প্রসঙ্গ ছিল তার অন্যতম।

পাকিস্তান আপাতত একই সঙ্গে চিনের তাস খেলছে এবং তার পাশাপাশি মার্কিন কংগ্রেস ও পরমাণু প্রযুক্তি সরবরাহকারী গোষ্ঠী (এনএসজি)-কে প্রভাবিত করার চেষ্টা চালাচ্ছে। পাক বিদেশ মন্ত্রকের মুখপাত্র বলে রাখছেন, “ভারতকে আলাদা করে দেখে মার্কিন কংগ্রেস যদি এই চুক্তি অনুমোদন করে, তা হলে দক্ষিণ এশিয়া তো বটেই, পরমাণু অস্ত্র প্রসার রোধের

(এনপিটি) আন্তর্জাতিক প্রয়াসই বাধাপ্রাপ্ত হবে।” আবার ভারতের তরফে রশেন সেনের দাবি, “ভারত এনপিটিতে সই করেনি, করবেও না। ফলে এনপিটি লঙ্ঘনের প্রশ্নই নেই।”

প্রশ্নটা আসলে এখানেই। ভারত-পাকিস্তান উভয়েই পরমাণু অস্ত্র পরীক্ষা চালিয়েছে। দুজনের কেউই এনপিটিতে সই করেনি। তা সত্ত্বেও ভারতকে আলাদা করে দেখাটাই অনৈতিক বলে মনে করছে পাকিস্তান। যে ভাবে ফাস্ট ব্রিডার-সহ ভারতের বহু পরমাণু চুল্লিকে ছাড় দেওয়া হল, তা ভারতের সামরিক উচ্চকাত্তাকে অবাধ গতি দেবে বলেই তাঁদের ধারণা। মুখপাত্রটি বলেই ফেলেন, “বুশের উচিত ছিল, দক্ষিণ এশিয়ার শান্তির স্বার্থে ভারত-পাকিস্তানকে একত্রে একটি পরমাণু-প্যাকেজ উপহার দেওয়া।” তা যখন ঘটেনি, তখন পাকিস্তান বৈষম্যমূলক আচরণের প্রতিবাদ করে চলবেই।

কাসুরি তথা পাক বিদেশ মন্ত্রক তথা মুশারফ প্রশাসনের এটাই এখন ঘোষিত নীতি।

# Pervez gives Kashmir cue, Bush silent

OUR SPECIAL  
CORRESPONDENT  
AND REUTERS

Islamabad, March 4: Hours after flying into Pakistan under cover of darkness, window shades drawn, President George W. Bush today ruled out a nuclear pact with Islamabad similar to the one with Delhi.

"Pakistan and India are different countries with different needs and history," he told a joint news conference, with President Pervez Musharraf at his side.

Later, a joint statement — unusually for Islamabad — made no reference to Kashmir, though Musharraf had told reporters he had sought Bush's involvement in "facilitating" a resolution of the issue. The statement, however, backed the India-Pakistan dialogue process to resolve bilateral "disputes".

"I referred to Kashmir and requested him (Bush) to remain involved for facilitating for resolution of all issues, including Kashmir," Musharraf had told the joint news conference.

But Bush said the role of the US was to continue to encourage the parties to come together to resolve the dispute.

The best way for Kashmir to be resolved is for leaders of India and Pakistan to step up and lead.

On a trip that may have brought him to within several hundred miles of Osama bin Laden, believed to be hiding in the mountains along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, Bush's formal talks with Musharraf focused on the war against terror.

Bush, who had insisted on visiting Pakistan despite a blast killing four persons — including an American diplomat — before the US consulate in Karachi was blown almost sur-



**OUT OF STEP?** Bush and Musharraf on their way to the news conference in Islamabad on Saturday. (Reuters)

reptitiously to the Pakistan military's Chaklala airbase outside Islamabad last night.

Scores of US security personnel waited on the runway, with barbed wire and parked buses strategically placed to stop any would-be attacker breaking through.

As a further precaution, the media was kept confused on whether Bush would travel from the airbase to the heavily fortified US embassy, where he stayed last night, by motorcade or by helicopter.

The President left Pakistan late tonight, from an airbase in Rawalpindi.

"Thursday's bombing in Karachi showed that the war on terror goes on," Bush said. "My mission in Pakistan was also to determine whether or not President Musharraf is as committed to the anti-terror war as he has been earlier."

The joint statement later said the two leaders "reaffirm their condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. President Bush is grateful for President Musharraf's strong and vital support in the war on terror."

Bush stressed his country's full support to Pakistan in its efforts to lay strong founda-

tions for democracy, and added that Musharraf understood that the October 2007 parliamentary election needs to be "open and fair".

He said the issue of democracy has been part of the US agenda of engagement with Pakistan.

Bush also visited Afghanistan. He said he had wanted to go there ever since the Taliban were toppled in late 2001, and finally got his chance.

The White House kept the trip secret until just a few hours before Bush was due to land.

After flying over the barr-

en mountains of Afghanistan, Air Force One dropped quickly, banked hard and landed at high speed at Bagram airbase. Helicopters flying unusually low to avoid chances of any militant getting lucky with a rocket-propelled grenade then took Bush and his entourage to Kabul.

On board one of the choppers, reporters were jarred when door gunners sprayed machine-gun fire out at the barren countryside. Who they were firing at was unclear.

It might have been a test fire. But it was a clear sign Bush had entered hostile territory.

# Widespread disappointment in Pakistan over Bush's visit

Political parties, religious leaders, media say he had nothing to offer

B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD: In Pakistan, most political parties and the media have expressed disappointment over the outcome of the visit of United States President George W. Bush.

While the religious parties dubbed it "a visit in pursuit the U.S. strategic goals on the war against terrorism," the mainstream Opposition parties are agitated that Mr. Bush did not have anything substantial to offer to Pakistan.

Most political commentators and editorials in the media characterised the visit as 'Clinton II,' a reference to the five-hour visit of Bill Clinton in March 2000 and his stern message over Pakistan Television (PTV) on a variety of American concerns vis-à-vis Pakistan.

## Taken for a ride

An editorial in the Peshawar English daily, *Statesman*, titled 'Pakistan taken for a ride, again' best illustrates the dominant view in the country on the outcome of the visit.

"Bush's visit to Pakistan, it seems, was not a well thought-out affair. And then may be it was! It did more harm the relations between the two nations than his not visiting Pakistan would have had. Even before the U.S. President stepped on Pakistan's soil, there was a feeling that it was the kind of visit when one is passing by so near in the neighbourhood and stops by at a poor relative's place for the sake of decorum," it read.

## Democracy in Pakistan

However, the former Prime Minister and chairperson of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Benazir Bhutto, agreed with Mr. Bush's remarks on democracy in Pakistan. Mr. Bush, referring to the general elections planned for 2007, said they needed to be "open and honest."

Leaders of the Opposition and public opinion leaders said expectations of solid assurances on Kashmir, a nuclear energy package or a defence deal remained unfulfilled.

Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD) chairman

Makhdoom Amin Fahim termed Mr. Bush's visit an informal one and said the U.S. president was originally scheduled to visit India to sign historic agreements. "Pakistan came on his itinerary by chance."

The basic purpose of President Bush's visit, he said, was to hunt down Al-Qaeda operatives and to urge Pakistan to expedite the arrest of Osama bin Laden. He said the U.S. President was still dissatisfied with whatever services Pakistan had rendered in its war on terrorism.

He ridiculed General Musharraf for insisting at his joint press conference with Mr. Bush that he was abiding by the Constitution while keeping the post of Army chief and said the General may not hold any of the two offices beyond 2007.

## Bush's "duplicity"

Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA) president Qazi Hussain Ahmed said the duplicity of the U.S. President had become evident when he offered nuclear cooperation to India. In a statement issued from Lahore he

said, on the one hand the U.S. was opposing Iran's peaceful nuclear programme while on the other it was offering concessions to India despite its not being a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and in violation of its own laws.

He said Gen. Musharraf's request to Mr. Bush to help resolve the Kashmir issue was a mistake as the U.S. president would never play a neutral role.

## Musharraf must quit

Deputy secretary-general of the MMA Liaquat Baloch said the Opposition's stance had been vindicated by Mr. Bush's visit and called upon Gen. Musharraf to step down after what he termed total failure as far as the country's foreign and defence policies were concerned.

Aitzaz Ahsan, veteran PPP leader, said Mr. Bush's visit had illustrated the urgent need for reshaping Pakistan's foreign policy by removing the extraordinary dependence on American aid and concessions and a rejection to succumb to its dictation.

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March 5, 2006

## Bush Rules Out a Nuclear Deal With Pakistanis

By ELISABETH BUMILLER and CARLOTTA GALL

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan, March 4 — President Bush made clear on Saturday that Pakistan should not expect a civilian nuclear agreement like the one with India soon, and he bluntly said the two rivals on the subcontinent could not be compared to each other.

Mr. Bush said he and Pakistan's president, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, had discussed a civilian nuclear program for Pakistan during talks on Saturday morning.

"I explained that Pakistan and India are different countries with different needs and different histories," Mr. Bush said at a joint outdoor news conference with Mr. Musharraf on the grounds of the presidential palace, Aiwan-e-Sadr. "So as we proceed forward, our strategy will take in effect those well-known differences."

Before Mr. Bush's remarks, administration officials said General Musharraf had no chance of making such a deal when proliferation and terrorism remained concerns in Pakistan. But it was striking that the president spoke so directly as his host stood at his side.

Mr. Bush showed strong support for Mr. Musharraf's efforts in combating militants, even though Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of the Sept. 11 attacks, and Mullah Muhammad Omar, the Taliban leader, are believed to still be hiding in Pakistan. Without being specific, General Musharraf himself made reference to "slippages" in the past.

Mr. Bush said, "Part of my mission today was to determine whether or not the president is as committed as he has been in the past to bringing these terrorists to justice, and he is."

The Pakistani foreign minister, Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri, made clear that the two leaders had had a frank discussion, saying General Musharraf had made a "comprehensive and telling response" to American concerns about Pakistan's commitment to fighting terrorism.

"They had a level of discussion I had not seen before," he said, adding that General Musharraf shared intelligence and documentary evidence with Mr. Bush.

Pakistan had had to deal with 30,000 foreign fighters passing through from Afghanistan over the years, Mr. Kasuri said, had more troops in the border areas than foreign and Afghan forces together on the other side, and had lost 600 soldiers in fighting in Waziristan. That was more casualties than forces had taken across the border, he said.

Mr. Kasuri struggled to answer local journalists who asked if Pakistan had not been left empty-handed after the visit.

Speaking at a news briefing Saturday afternoon to release the joint statement issued by both presidents, he said General Musharraf had pressed the case for civil nuclear cooperation, since Pakistan had urgent energy needs, too. "These things take a long time," he said. Mr. Bush had hinted at something, he said, but he declined to explain further.

Critics of Mr. Bush's nuclear agreement with India say it will only encourage other nations to demand similar arrangements. Under the terms of the Indian pact, the United States will end a moratorium of decades on sales of nuclear fuel and reactor components and India will separate its civilian and military nuclear programs, and open the civilian facilities to international inspections.

General Musharraf is facing rising pressure from opposition parties, including Islamic ones, in large part over his support of American policies to root out militants in Pakistan.

While Mr. Bush offered support for Mr. Musharraf, the public remarks on both sides could not disguise evident tensions, particularly after the nuclear deal that Mr. Bush announced this week with India.

Mr. Bush was not expected to endorse a similar nuclear agreement with Pakistan — the country of A. Q. Khan, the founder of Pakistan's nuclear program, who confessed to having run an illegal nuclear proliferation network.

But neither was it expected that Mr. Bush would so obviously place Pakistan on a separate footing from India, as Washington has long taken pains to balance American relations between the rivals.

Mr. Bush, who said only last week in Washington that Pakistan "still has some distance to travel on the road to democracy," made a gentle reference to the need for democratic advances in the country, saying that elections scheduled next year "need to be open and honest."

General Musharraf seized power in 1999 in a bloodless coup. He had since promised to give up his military uniform in 2004, but changed the Constitution so he could hold both his army post and the presidency until 2007.

His opponents in Pakistan charge that the Bush administration has given him wide latitude as it has enlisted Pakistan in the fight against terrorism, while at the same time saying it wants to promote democracy in the Muslim world.

Mr. Bush and Mr. Musharraf made their public remarks on the serene lawn of Aiwan-e-Sadr, with ducks splashing in a flower-filled pool in the background, as the capital around them remained in an effective 24-hour lockdown.

Security was intense for the first visit of an American president in six years, and the first by Mr. Bush, who was in essence traveling to Mr. bin Laden's backyard two days after a suicide bombing attack in Karachi left four people dead, including an American Embassy employee.

General Musharraf said he had expressed Pakistan's "deepest regrets" in his talks with Mr. Bush about the bombing, which he said was "very viciously timed" to spoil Mr. Bush's visit. Mr. Bush said he had sent his condolences to the family of David Foy, the embassy employee killed in the attack, as well as to the families of the Pakistanis who died.

"We're not going to back down in the face of these killers," Mr. Bush said. "We'll fight this war and we will win this war together."

Throughout the day, the streets of Islamabad were peaceful, with the main rally planned for the adjoining city of Rawalpindi curtailed after the political leader Imran Khan was placed under house arrest.

But people in Islamabad showed a lack of excitement over the visit and did not glance at the live coverage of the news conference by the two presidents on TV in a shopping mall.

"I do not think the visit will make much difference," said Naser Abbasy, 37, who runs a clothes store here.

His brother, Rashid Mehmud Abbasy, 35, was wearing a black armband on Saturday in protest of Mr. Bush's visit. "It is a protest, because of all the atrocities against Muslims in Iraq and elsewhere," he said. "It is not about the president, but his policies," he said. The Muslim leaders had called on supporters to wear black armbands, he said.

But Mr. Abbasy said the visit was good if it gave Mr. Bush a better understanding of the views of Pakistanis. "He gave a lot to India, despite knowing that we do not get on well," he said. "So he should support us equally."

#### Pakistan Attacks a Militant Force

By The New York Times

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, March 4 — Pakistan sent in helicopter gunships Saturday against militants who have virtually taken control of the town of Miramshah, in the North Waziristan tribal areas bordering Afghanistan, following a government raid on Wednesday on a suspected terrorist training camp in the area.

Nearly 50 militants were killed, Pakistani officials said, wire services reported.

The militants on Saturday used rockets to attack government buildings in Miramshah.

Residents fled the town after gun and missile fire that a government official said had caused "very, very high" casualties.

washingtonpost.com

## Pakistan Braces as Bush Starts Visit

President Brushes Aside Security Concerns to Pay Tribute to Key Ally on Home Turf

By Jim VandeHei and Bradley Graham  
Washington Post Staff Writers  
Saturday, March 4, 2006; A10

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan, March 3 -- President Bush arrived here from New Delhi on Friday night to pay tribute to President Pervez Musharraf, an army general who is a key ally in the administration's global war on terrorism but who has resisted both democratic reforms and aggressive moves against hard-line Islamic groups at home.

In a visit that exemplifies the contradictory impulses of U.S. foreign policy in the region, Bush brushed aside serious security concerns to make an overnight stop in Pakistan.

Authorities were bracing for possible unrest in connection with the visit, which follows several weeks of sometimes violent protests sparked by the publication in European newspapers of Danish cartoons of the prophet Muhammad.

[Early Saturday morning, police detained Imran Khan, a former international cricket star and member of parliament, and placed him under house arrest just hours before he was to lead a protest march against Bush and Musharraf near Islamabad. In a telephone interview from his home in the capital, Khan accused the Pakistani leader of having him detained because he is "scared of the public."

Khan said the protest would still go forward and was aimed at highlighting "Bush's double standard, claiming that his foreign policy goal is to promote freedom and democracy in the Muslim world and here's he come to support a military dictator. A serving general running the country and calling it democracy, it's just making fools out of us."]

Streets throughout the country were only lightly traveled Friday, and most businesses remained shuttered, as Pakistanis generally heeded a call by hard-line religious parties for a nationwide strike to protest the cartoons. In addition, there were scattered protests against Bush and Musharraf, including a rally in the city of Multan in central Punjab province that drew a crowd estimated at 10,000, according to the Reuters news agency.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman, a pro-Taliban cleric and the leader of the opposition in the National Assembly, told the crowd that Bush's visit was aimed at "enslaving the Pakistani nation and rewarding General Musharraf for his patriotism to America."

In the port city of Karachi, police used tear gas to disperse hundreds of protesters trying to march on the U.S. Consulate, where a suicide bomber killed four people, including a U.S. diplomat, on Thursday.

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Aides said Bush planned to use his first visit here to praise Musharraf as an important partner in fighting terrorism. Under his military-led government, Pakistan has killed or captured hundreds of al-Qaeda members -- more than any other country -- and has deployed more than 70,000 troops to the traditionally autonomous tribal region that borders Afghanistan.

Yet some U.S. officials have expressed frustration that Musharraf has not done more to root out Taliban fighters and track down Osama bin Laden and other senior al-Qaeda figures, all widely believed to enjoy havens in the rugged areas along the Afghan border.

There are also concerns about Musharraf's stated commitment to democracy, a goal Bush has called essential to defeating terrorism throughout the Muslim world. The Pakistani president, who took power in a bloodless coup in 1999, espouses a moderate version of Islam. He has installed a civilian prime minister and allowed parliamentary elections. But he retains ultimate power and has reneged on a pledge to step down as army chief.

"Over time, the level of cooperation between the United States and Pakistan has increased," Stephen J. Hadley, Bush's national security adviser, said this week. But, he added, "there are still more steps that can be taken to further our cooperation."

The Pakistani leader is still seen, in the words of one senior Pentagon official, as "a force for moderation" in a part of the world where "politics is played by rough rules."

As next year's general elections in Pakistan approach, the administration will have to start weighing its support for Musharraf against the commitment to ensure the restoration of democracy, according to U.S. officials. Bush said in a speech last week that the election would "be an important test of Pakistan's commitment to democratic reform."

For now, the U.S. focus is on obtaining even more help from Musharraf in attacking al-Qaeda and Taliban strongholds, following a year in which terrorist violence in Afghanistan has increased dramatically. A top White House official said that during the two leaders' joint appearances Saturday, Bush planned to stress Musharraf's assistance and play down disputes over democratic reforms.

Despite Bush's tendency to portray policies in black and white, aides said the president was satisfied with the shades of gray in the Musharraf alliance. As in his relationship with Russian President Vladimir Putin, another U.S. ally who has sometimes stifled democracy, they said Bush appreciated Musharraf based in part on a gut instinct about his allegiance.

Although Musharraf at one time accepted the repressive rule of the Taliban in Afghanistan, he was one of the first foreign leaders to side with Bush when confronted with the U.S. president's ultimatum after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks: that governments must stand with or against the United States in the hunt for terrorists. Since then, Bush has expressed admiration for Musharraf's toughness.

"He has had a direct stake in this fight -- four times the terrorists have tried to kill him," Bush said in India, the previous stop on his South Asian trip. Musharraf survived two direct assassination attempts in 2003, as well as a failed car bombing and an alleged assassination plot in 2002. He has also been a target of protests by Islamic groups who distrust the United States and condemn him as an American pawn.

In some ways, Bush's entire trip to the subcontinent this week -- including a brief, heavily guarded, unannounced stop in Afghanistan and the elaborate two-day visit to India -- has highlighted his evolution from an us-against-them unilateralist to a leader more willing to compromise and cut deals.



Although India has long refused to sign the 1968 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Bush announced an agreement there Thursday that will allow India to substantially increase its nuclear arsenal and obtain U.S. assistance to expand its nuclear energy program. In part, the deal was made because U.S. officials see India as a counterweight to China and a potentially lucrative trading partner.

In a speech Friday night in New Delhi, Bush extolled the growing economic ties between the world's two largest democracies.

"Our two great democracies are now united by opportunities that can lift our people, and by threats that can bring down all our progress," he said. "The United States and India, separated by half the globe, are closer than ever before, and the partnership between our free nations has the power to transform the world."

Despite the upbeat visit, anti-American protests were held around India Friday. The demonstrations were mostly small, but one erupted into a deadly fight between Muslims and Hindus in the city of Lucknow, leaving at least three people dead, the Associated Press reported.

In New Delhi, Bush urged India to accept the increasingly close U.S.-Pakistani relationship. India, predominantly Hindu, and Pakistan, a Muslim country, are neighbors and nuclear rivals that have fought several wars, mostly over the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir.

"I believe that a prosperous, democratic Pakistan will be a steadfast partner for America, a peaceful neighbor for India and a force for freedom and moderation in the Arab world," he said. Afterward, Fred Jones, a spokesman for the National Security Council, said Bush had meant to say "Muslim world." Pakistan is not an Arab country.

Unlike India's growing relationship with the United States, Pakistan's has been based almost exclusively on the two nations' military alliance. In exchange for helping hunt down terrorists, Bush has provided direct aid to Pakistan and offered to sell it F-16 fighter jets.

Aides said Bush was calculating that this relationship was worth the risk of visiting the Pakistani capital during a period of violence. Security will be tight, however, and several U.S. officials privately raised concerns about the safety of Bush and his entourage.

Unlike Bill Clinton, who urged Musharraf to make political reforms when he visited here as president in 2000, Bush is expected to focus on strengthening military cooperation.

U.S. authorities have pressed Pakistan for months to accept more U.S. military assistance in counterterrorism operations. Over the past year, the U.S. and Pakistani militaries have made strides in developing a common electronic system for tracking their forces on both sides of the Afghan-Pakistani border. They also have expanded a training program to share information on counterterrorism techniques.

But Pakistan has continued to balk at the idea of combined operations with U.S. forces, a sensitive issue for many Pakistanis. Meanwhile, the Musharraf government has made only limited efforts to hunt down or attack suspected militant hideouts in the volatile, semiautonomous tribal regions.

Even though thousands of Pakistani troops have been sent to the border area, a senior U.S. military officer said, most have tended to stay in garrisons rather than conduct aggressive patrols. Most of the al-Qaeda members caught or killed by Pakistan have been in settled areas of the country, the officer added.

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Up to now, U.S. officials have appeared reluctant to push Musharraf too hard in public, regarding him and the Pakistani military as bulwarks against Islamic radicalism. He is seen as constrained by the fierce independence of border tribesmen and the strength of hard-line Islamic parties that control North-West Frontier province and dominate Baluchistan province.

In 2004, a highly publicized army attack on a suspected al-Qaeda border hideout backfired when villagers and Islamic fighters fought back, killing 46 troops. Earlier this week, military helicopters and troops assaulted another tribal outpost, and Pakistani officials said 45 Islamic militants were killed.

Even so, some outside experts on Pakistan detect an emerging divide in the Bush administration over how hard to lean on Musharraf.

"I think there's more concern at the Pentagon than at the State Department on the huge gap between Musharraf's rhetoric and reality," said Samina Ahmed, of the nonprofit International Crisis Group.

With elections scheduled next year in Pakistan, some experts said U.S. officials should begin working to strengthen the secular political parties that have been weakened under military rule.

"It's in our interest to begin to look to a post-Musharraf period and not to put all our chips on him," said Stephen P. Cohen, of the Brookings Institution. "The senior leadership here in Washington seems to believe that he's our only option."

*Graham reported from Washington. Correspondent John Lancaster in Islamabad contributed to this report.*

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# US rejects Pak plea for N-help

## Also Refuses To Intervene In J&K Imbroglia

**Islamabad:** In a blunt rejection of Pakistan's demand for a civilian nuclear deal on the lines he clinched with India, US President George W Bush on Saturday said the two countries had different needs and different histories.

After discussions with President Pervez Musharraf here, the US leader was asked by reporters if Washington would have with energy-deficient Pakistan a nuclear deal similar to the one he had reached with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi. With Musharraf standing by his side, Bush stated in unambiguous terms, "Pakistan and India are different countries with different needs and different histories."

The US President's reference to "different histories" was an obvious reference to the track record of India and Pakistan in the nuclear field. Washington has maintained that India is a responsible nuclear



**In Islamabad, Bush was game for cricket but not game to fuel Pak's nuclear ambitions**

power in contrast to Pakistan's clandestine help in this sphere to some countries highlighted by the actions of its top scientist A Q Khan, now under house arrest.

On Musharraf seeking US involvement in facilitating the resolution of Kashmir and other issues,

Bush refused to be drawn into it saying the "best way" for doing so was for leaders of the two countries to "step up and lead". "The best way for Kashmir to be resolved is for the leaders of both countries to step up and lead. That's exactly what President Musharraf has done and that's what Prime Minister Singh has assured me he wants to do," he said, making it clear that the role of the US was to continue to encourage the parties concerned to come together to resolve the contentious issue.

"The atmosphere is changing," he said noting that the confidence-building measures taken by the two countries had begun to bear fruit. He also referred to India's prompt help to earthquake victims in Pakistan. Condemning Thursday's suicide attack in Karachi in which an American diplomat was killed, Bush said, "We have to fight the war on terror together."

Addressing the joint press conference, Musharraf said, "I referred to Kashmir and requested him to remain involved for facilitating resolution of all issues to bring peace in the region."

Bush, however, said he did not have any objection to the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline. He said he was only opposed to Iran's nuclear ambitions which was "dangerous for all". "I believe nuclear weapons in the hands of Iranians will be very dangerous for all of us. It will endanger world peace. So we are working very hard to convince the Iranians to get rid of their nuclear ambitions," he said. Agencies

### Imran under house arrest

**C**ricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan was on Saturday put under house arrest and 26 of his Tehreek-e-Insaf associates taken into preventive custody ahead of their planned rally to protest against George W Bush's visit. Imran was detained at his home here as he prepared to take out a march from Rawalpindi to Islamabad, which he had announced a couple of days back. Imran wanted to take out the rally to protest against Bush's backing for President Pervez Musharraf, which he said had "seriously undermined" Pakistani political parties' efforts to restore democracy in the country. Agencies



05 APRIL 2006 THE TIMES OF INDIA

US NO TO PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR DEAL PLEA

# Bush refuses to play Kashmir ball

us - pak  
5/1 5/3

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD, March 4. — Agreeing to a strategic dialogue covering defence, peace, security and non-proliferation, the USA and Pakistan today backed the Indo-Pak dialogue process to resolve bilateral "disputes" but made no reference to Kashmir in their joint statement.

The five-page statement was issued here at the end of talks between visiting US President George W Bush and his Pakistani counterpart Pervez Musharraf. The statement said both leaders supported "the peace process and composite dialogue between Pakistan and India for improvement of relations and resolution of disputes and building a better future for South Asia." Asked why Kashmir has not been directly mentioned, Pakistani foreign minister Mr Khurshid M Kasuri said the statement mentioned "resolution of disputes" which referred to Kashmir. This was the first occasion in many years when a Pakistani statement does not contain any direct reference to Kashmir.

General Musharraf said during a joint Press conference with Mr Bush: "I expressed my gratitude for the efforts towards resolution of disputes to bring peace to the region. I referred to Kashmir and requested him to remain involved for facilitating resolution of all issues, including Kashmir." The issue of terrorism and Pakistan's commitment to fight it also prominently figured in the statement. The two leaders "reaffirm their condemnation of terrorism in all its manifestations." It said "President Bush is grateful for President Musharraf's strong and vital support for the war on terror."

After President Musharraf asked Mr Bush to remain involved and act as a facilitator in resolving the Kashmir "dispute", Mr Bush refused to be drawn into it, saying, "The best way for Kashmir to be resolved is for the leaders of both countries to step up and lead, and that's exactly what President Musharraf has done and that's what Prime Minister Singh has assured me he wants to do."

## Imran under house-arrest

ISLAMABAD March 4. — Cricketer-turned politician Imran Khan was today put under house-arrest by Pakistan police which detained hundreds of Islamist leaders and Opposition activists across the country to thwart protests against Mr Bush's visit. PTI

Details on page 8

"The atmosphere is changing," he said, adding that the confidence-building measures had begun to bear fruit. The statement said the two countries would aim at building a "robust defence relationship that advances shared security goals, promotes regional stability, and contributes to international security". Washington also agreed to continue "robust US security assistance to meet Pakistan's legitimate defence needs and bolster its capabilities in the war on terror" and "deepen bilateral collaboration in defence training, joint exercises, defence procurement, technology transfers, and international peacekeeping," it said.

Mr Kasuri said Mr Bush had reaffirmed his commitment to sell F-16 jet fighters to Pakistan. The two countries decided to "work together to ensure the maintenance of peace, security, and stability in the South Asia region and beyond".

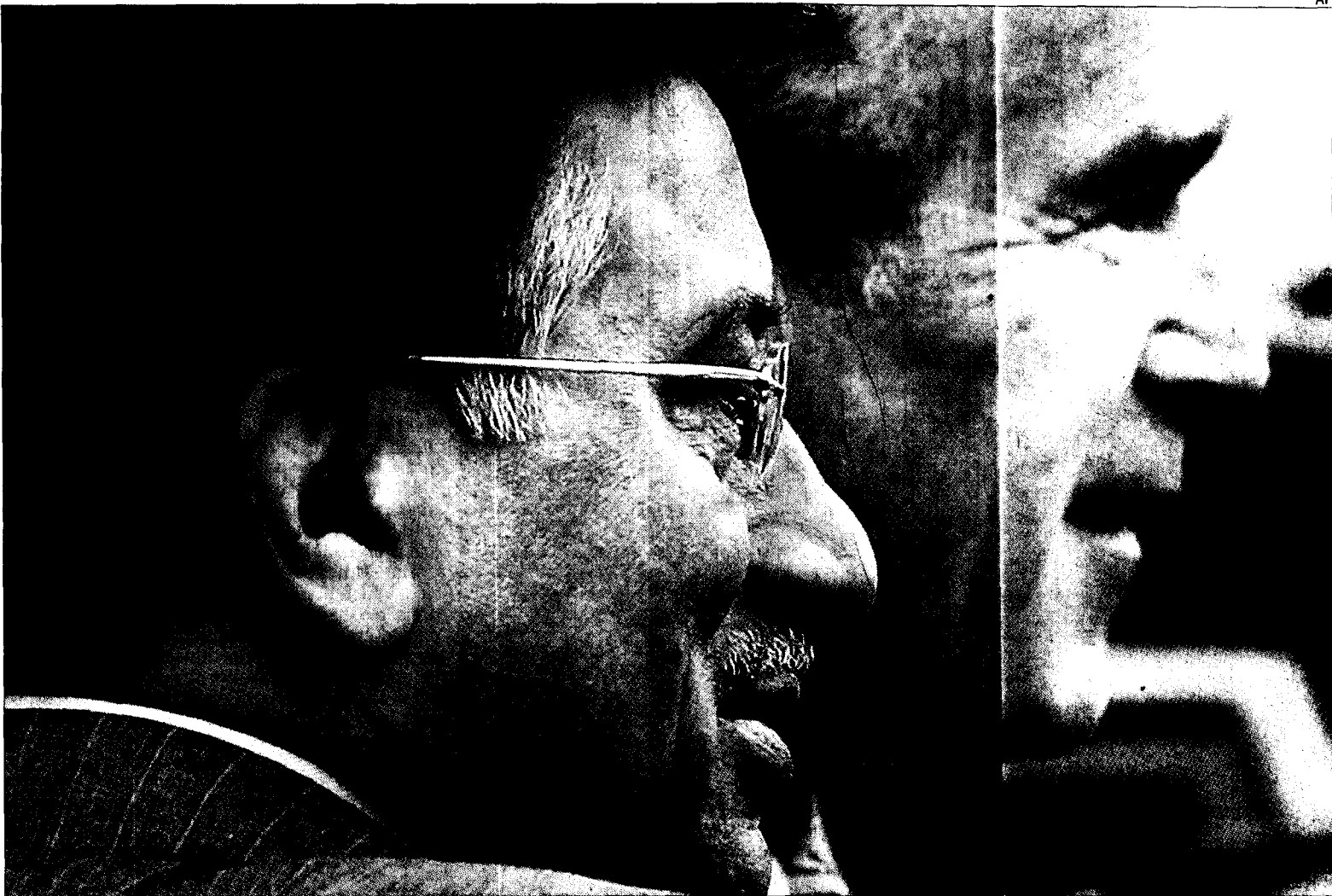
In a blunt rejection of Pakistan's demand for a civilian nuclear deal on the lines of the one he clinched with India, Mr Bush said: "The two countries have different needs and different histories". He, however, agreed to depute the US energy secretary to take care of Pakistan's energy needs.

At a banquet hosted for Mr Bush tonight, Gen Musharraf asked the USA and the world community to encourage all sides to resolve the Kashmir issue. "The conducive international environment and improved relations between Pakistan and India offer an opportunity to find a settlement acceptable to all sides, especially the Kashmiri people," he said. Mr Bush asked the General to take steps to restore democracy. He left Pakistan after the banquet.

05 MAR 2006

05 MAR 2006

# DOUBLE SNUB



## INSIDE

- Imran under house arrest for protests
- US lawmakers await details
- Bush gets some lessons in cricket
- PM's assurance on N-deal

See page 3

US President George Bush with Musharraf at a welcome ceremony in Islamabad on Saturday.

## Bush no to Pak nuclear deal & Kashmir mediation

### AGENCIES

Islamabad, March 4

THE FLIGHT from New Delhi to Rawalpindi wasn't long, but when Air Force One touched down on Pakistani soil on Friday, it was an altogether different political time-zone. This was there for everyone to see.

The smiles and handshakes were all there. Yet something was missing, something that marked the US President's body language whenever he was with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi. In Islamabad he even snubbed President Pervez Musharraf — not once but twice. Once over calls for a US-Pak nuclear deal similar to the one inked in Delhi, and then again when Musharraf wanted the US to play a facilitator's role in resolving the Kashmir tangle.

After his discussions with Musharraf, reporters asked Bush whether Washington would have with energy-deficient Pakistan a nuclear deal similar to the one he had reached with Prime Minister Manmohan

Singh in New Delhi two days ago.

With Musharraf standing by his side, Bush stated in unambiguous terms that, "Pakistan and India are different countries with different needs and different histories". The US President's reference to "different histories" was an obvious pointer to the contrasting proliferation track records of India and Pakistan.

Washington has maintained that India is a responsible nuclear power in contrast to Pakistan's clandestine help in this sphere to some countries, highlighted by the actions of its top scientist A.Q. Khan, now under house arrest.

When Musharraf sought US involvement in facilitating the resolution of Kashmir, Bush refused to be drawn into it, saying, "The best way for Kashmir to be resolved is for the leaders of both countries to step up and lead, and that's exactly what President Musharraf has done and that's what Prime Minister Singh has assured me he wants to do."

In what looked like a concession, Bush said the US role was to continue encour-

aging the parties concerned to come together to resolve the contentious issue.

"The atmosphere is changing," he said noting that the confidence-building measures taken by the two countries had begun to bear fruit. He also referred to India's prompt help to earthquake victims in Pakistan.

But Musharraf placed his accent elsewhere. "I don't think without US assistance we could have met the challenges of the reconstruction after the earthquake." And he expressed extreme gratitude to Bush for the assistance.

Musharraf said Pakistan and the US had decided to institutionalise their strategic relationship. "We laid the foundations of a strong, sustainable, broadbased long-term relationship. This includes, first of all, commencing the US-Pakistan strategic dialogue in an institutionalised manner," he said.

The dialogue would include defence relations, cooperation in the fight against terrorism and resolution of all disputes in the region, including Kashmir, he said.

Bush said his visit to Pakistan had consolidated the (two countries') resolve to fight terrorism. Earlier, Bush and Musharraf held a one-on-one meeting to discuss various issues including Islamabad's role in the war on terror.

Condemning Thursday's suicide attack in Karachi in which an American diplomat was killed, Bush said, "We have to fight the war on terror together." The US president sources said, was expected to call for greater efforts against terrorism.

Bush, who flew in from India to the military airbase in nearby Rawalpindi aboard Air Force One, was received at the airport by foreign minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri and his wife. A three-tier security cordon was laid for the US president and First Lady Laura Bush.

Meanwhile, some opposition parties were planning rallies to protest Bush's visit. Tehreek-e-Insaaf chief Imran Khan had announced that Saturday would be observed as a black day and rallies would be taken out.

**WARNING I Washington Post editorial says President Pervez Musharraf is 'unreliable', has broken pledges Post to Bush: Don't bank on Musharraf**

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA WASHINGTON, MARCH 2**

**I**N A strongly worded editorial ahead of President George W Bush's Pakistan visit, a leading American daily today warned him against banking on "unreliable" President Pervez Musharraf who has "supported secular democratic parties in the country while striking deals with Muslim extremists."

Bush is being "a lot more credulous" than most Pakistanis who have long stopped believing the public pledges of a leader who has broken them on more than one occasion," *The Washington Post* said.

"Despite General Musharraf's many promises, Pakistan remains a deeply unstable country where the threat of Islamic extremism is great and growing. Though the general may be a tactical ally of the US against that threat, his refusal to restore democracy in his country has only made it worse," it said.

Musharraf has been promising to restore democracy since his coup, yet throughout his years in power he has sought to suppress Pakistan's secular democratic pat-

**Major Karachi blasts**  
 Thursday's bomb attack was not the first aimed at American facilities in Karachi. The other major incidents:  
 In 1995, gunmen ambushed a US Consulate vehicle in Karachi and killed two members of staff.  
 In 1997, four Americans, employees of a US oil firm, were killed in an ambush in the city.  
 In June 2002 a car bombing attacked left 14 people dead, all Pakistanis outside the consulate building.  
 In March 2004 police defused a huge bomb less than five minutes before it was timed to explode outside the consulate at Karachi. The bomb was packed in a small van that was parked on a street near the consulate building.

ties while striking deals with Muslim extremists, the editorial said.

"It's time for the US to stop banking on this unreliable General and start planning for the democratic government that should succeed him," it said.

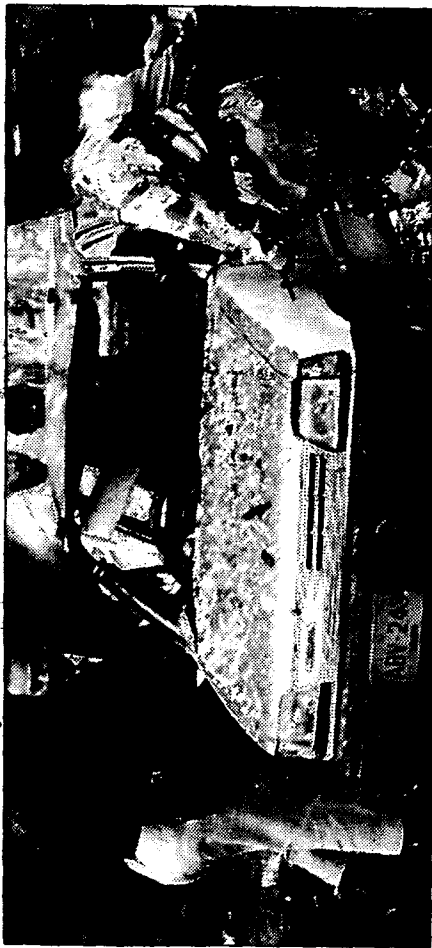
Bush paid a surprise visit to Afghanistan yesterday to show support for its emerging democracy, which he rightly said was being watched by people all over the world," the paper noted.

Then Bush flew to India, where his visit centers on the rapidly growing common interests the US shares with the world's largest democracy. It's hard to ignore the contrast with the third stop on Bush's foreign tour this week.

It makes the point that surrogates of the General have now begun suggesting that Musharraf will not postpone the elections scheduled for next year. "In short, Musharraf clearly hopes to prolong his military regime indefinitely, while continuing to enjoy heavy political and economic support from an American President who has dedicated his administration to advancing democracy in the Muslim world."

However, the *Post* said that Bush appeared to understand the General's game and was making at least a modest effort to head it off.

In a speech to the Asia Society before his tour, Bush said "the US and Pakistan understand that in the long-run the only way to defeat the terrorists is through democracy" that "Pakistan still has distance to travel on the road to democracy" and that "the US and Pakistan both want the elections scheduled for next year to be successful."



Two car bombs exploded outside the US consulate and at Marriott hotel in Karachi. AP

**Bush visit to Pak to be 'Black Day'**

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ISLAMABAD, MARCH 2**

**PROTESTING** against US President George W Bush's visit, Pakistan's Islamist parties announced a strike tomorrow and called for observing March 4 as a 'Black Day' while cricketer-turned-politician Inran Khan said he would lead a protest rally here.

The right wing Islamist al-

liance Muthahida Majlis Amal (MMA) said a strike would be observed tomorrow ahead of Bush's visit against the US polices as well as the recent Danish cartoons depicting Prophet Muhammad. The Pakistan Peoples Party headed by self-called former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, has dissociated with the strike. It said it would hand over a protest note to the US Ambassador in Islamabad.

Inran Khan, heading the Tehrik-e-Insaf, told reporters here yesterday that he would lead a rally on March 4 to condemn the American leader's policies against the Muslims. The rally was, however, not against the American people, he said. He asked everyone to join in to protest against the alleged human rights violations by the US.

washingtonpost.com

## Pakistani PM Plays Down Tension With U.S.

By FOSTER KLUG  
The Associated Press  
Tuesday, January 24, 2006; 2:25 AM

WASHINGTON -- Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz brushed aside tensions with the United States as he prepared for a meeting Tuesday with President Bush.

Aziz's trip to the White House comes at a strained point in U.S.-Pakistani relations, with many in the Islamic nation blasting the U.S. for a Jan. 13 airstrike in a remote area of northern Pakistan that killed at least 13 civilians, including women and children.

During a speech Monday at the Heritage Foundation, Aziz played down 'eteriorating relations, calling America "our friend and ally."

"Whenever our relations have declined, both countries have paid a price," he told an audience at the conservative think tank. "The stability of the region demands a ... constructive, long-term relationship between our two countries."

His speech came a day after he condemned the strike near the Afghan-Pakistani border, saying the United States failed to notify Islamabad beforehand.

Aziz wouldn't comment when asked Monday about his earlier criticism and whether he would seek assurances from Bush to prevent similar problems in the future.

He said he was confident that his U.S. visit this week, and Bush's upcoming trip to South Asia, "will take our relationship to a higher plane." Pakistani 'resident Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who seized power in a bloodless military coup in 1999, is a close ally in Washington's war on terror.

The missile strike, which the Americans say was aimed at Osama bin Laden's second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahri, has infuriated many Pakistanis. It appears to have stoked support in some areas for the al-Qaida terror group, the leaders of which, including bin Laden, are thought to be hunkered down along the Pakistani-Afghan frontier.

Although the attack failed to get al-Zawahri, Pakistani intelligence officials have said they believe four top al-Qaida operatives were killed.

Bin Laden issued a new threat of attacks in the United States in a videotaped message released last week.

Analysts have said the airstrike also undermined the goodwill cultivated in Pakistan by generous U.S.

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24 JAN 2006

relief in the wake of October's earthquake that killed over 80,000 people.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, speaking to reporters Monday after a private meeting with Aziz, declined to provide details of the talks or to answer questions. It seemed certain, however, that they discussed U.S.-Pakistani tensions.

"We have a great many things that we do together, and we have had good success in a number of things we do together," Rumsfeld said. "We wish Pakistan well, and that is all I have to say."

Bush adviser Dan Bartlett defended the way America fights al-Qaida in Pakistan.

"It's a tough part of the world; it's hard to access; it's hard to penetrate," Bartlett told Fox News. "And when we do, it's important that we be able to strike on the offense, and that's something we'll continue to attempt to do."

Anti-American rallies in Pakistan are entering their second week, but Aziz said they reflect a healthy democracy at work.

"If you see a demonstration of 10,000 people or so who are expressing their views, don't get paranoid," he said. "We, frankly, are very proud of the fact that we allow people to express their views."

Pakistan and India agreed last month to begin work by 2007 on a pipeline to bring natural gas from Iran, moving ahead with the project despite U.S. disapproval.

Washington opposes investments that benefit Iran, which it suspects of trying to build atomic weapons.

The pipeline is one of a number of initiatives designed to improve relations between Indian and Pakistan, longtime rivals over the Himalayan region of Kashmir.

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On the Net:

CIA World Factbook on Pakistan: <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/pk.html>

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# Pak raps US over Bajur attack

## Musharraf Moves To Quell Growing Dissent Among Countrymen

**Islamabad:** Pakistan's President told the United States on Saturday that it must not repeat airstrikes like the recent one that killed civilians in a remote mountain village, as officials sought to soothe public outrage over the incident.

President Gen Pervez Musharraf's remarks were his first publicised reaction to the January 13 strike on Damadola village, an attack that has spurred nationwide protests against the US.

The strike apparently targeted—but missed—Al Qaida No 2 Ayman Al Zawahri in the mountainous region of Bajur. Pakistani officials believe the blast wiped out four other top Qaida operatives, but also killed at least 13 civilians, including women and children.

On Saturday, Musharraf told visiting US undersecretary of state Nicholas Burns that "what happened in Bajur must not be repeated", a foreign ministry official said on condition of anonymity. Pakistan's independent GEO television reported that Musharraf also told Burns his country is "fully capable of defending its frontiers" and that repeated attacks could affect cooperation in the war on terror, in which Islamabad is a top US ally.

The foreign ministry official said, however, that Musharraf pledged to continue backing the US in anti-terror efforts. Neither the ministry official nor the news report gave details about Burns' response. US embassy spokesman Rakesh Surampudi said he was unable to comment on whether Burns had discussed the attacks with Musharraf. At a later meeting, foreign minister Khurshed Kasuri told Burns the attacks were "counterproductive" given the "prevailing public sentiment" in Pakistan.



Anti-US protestors in Peshawar

"While reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to counterterrorism, the foreign minister underlined the need for the two countries to work in a manner that precludes recent incidents like Bajur," the ministry said in a statement.

Burns, whose visit was scheduled before the attack, was in Pakistan to talk about security and relief aid for the October 8 earthquake that devastated the country's north.

Pakistani officials say the airstrike had killed four or five Qaida operatives, possibly including Egyptian master bomb maker Midhat Mursi. The Pakistan and US governments have not confirmed the identity or nationality of any slain Qaida suspects. Pakistan only said the dead Qaida men's bodies were taken away by their companions. Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz told reporters in New York on Friday that there was no "tangible evidence" that any extremists had gathered in Damadola.

On Saturday, two Pakistani intelligence officials told AP that the attack targeted one of the homes where Zawahri had met Abu Farraj Al Libbi, then Qaida No 3, last year. The two are believed to have met at the house of a man named Bakhtpur Khan, which was destroyed in the pre-dawn airstrike. Khan is listed among the 13 who died. US and Pakistani intelligence began monitoring Khan's home after the Libbi confession.

Pakistani authorities suspect Qaida operatives had gathered last week in Damadola to plan attacks to be carried out in Afghanistan and Pakistan, another intelligence official said. Zawahri is believed to have skipped the event. AP

to be carried out in Afghanistan and Pakistan, another intelligence official said. Zawahri is believed to have skipped the event. AP

▶ Targeting top leaders may not end terror, Page 17

### Govt to face more oppn protests

**Islamabad:** Pakistan's opposition Islamic alliance said on Sunday it would step up protests against the alleged US missile strike that targeted Al Qaida leaders but killed 13 civilians.

The opposition has already launched demonstrations against the January 13 attack, with thousands burning effigies of US President George W Bush and many vowing to fight a jihad against the US. Pakistan does not allow US forces in Afghanistan to pursue militants across the border, or to launch strikes without permission.

The US has refused to discuss the attack on Damadola, instead saying it would continue pursuing terrorists no matter where they were. A protest was set for Sunday in Inayat Qala town near Damadola. On Monday, a mass march was slated to move from Pakistan's capital, Islamabad, to the radical hotbed of Peshawar and then on to Damadola, said Shahid Shamsi, a spokesman for the opposition Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal alliance. AP

### DAMAGE CONTROL

- Pak also tells US it remains an ally in war on terror
- Says two countries should work together to avoid repeat of Damadola

# 3 top Qaida men died in US strike

## Pak Tones Down Criticism Of Attack That Left 18 Dead

By Chidanand Rajghatta/TNN

Washington: Pakistan is having to choke back its outrage over a American missile strike on its territory following confirmation by its (Pakistan's) intelligence agencies that the attack took out at least three top Al Qaida personnel.

Initially, 18 villagers, including women and children, were reported to have been killed in the January 13 Predator strike by US on a compound in the Bajaur tribal region. The incident led to a national furore and condemnation of US action by the Pakistani government.

Sections of the establishment and the opposition demanded that Islamabad call off Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz's upcoming visit to Washington and even sought a recall of Pakistan's ambassador to the US.

But Pakistani intelligence officials in the region now say that the strike has killed two senior Al Qaida operatives and the son-in-law of its No.2, Ayman al Zawahiri.

One of the men believed by the Pakistani officials to have been killed is an Egyptian named Abu Khabab al-Masri who is on the United States' most-wanted list with a \$5 million reward for help in his capture. Al-Masri, whose real name is Midhat Mursi al-Sayid Umar, was an expert in explosives and poisons, according to the US government web site [rewardsforjustice.net](http://rewardsforjustice.net).

Another Egyptian who was the chief of insurgent operations in the southern Afghanistan province of Kunar adjoining Bajaur, known by the alias Abu



Student wing of the Jamaat-i-Islami party chant anti-US slogans during a demonstration in Peshawar on Thursday to protest against the killing of 18 tribesmen

Ubayda al-Misri, was also believed killed, the US media reported, quoting unnamed Pakistani provincial officials in the region.

Also killed was Abd al-Rahman al-Maghrebi, the Moroccan son-in-law of al-Zawahiri, who was in charge of Qaida propaganda in the region, and may have been responsible for distributing a number of CDs showing the activities of Taliban and Qaida fighters. While Pakistani provincial officials confirmed these deaths to US agencies, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, who began his week-long US visit in New York, began toning down criticism of the US action after Islamabad initially led a national outrage, spurring thundering editorials in the Pakistani media.

After "condemning" the "regrettable" incident that he said claimed innocent lives, Aziz suggested there was a "bit of a communication gap" between the CIA and Pakistani intelligence which needed to be bridged.

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## U.S. Raid Killed Qaeda Leaders, Pakistanis Say

By CARLOTTA GALL and DOUGLAS JEHL

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Jan. 18 - Two senior members of Al Qaeda and the son-in-law of its No. 2 leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, were among those killed in the American airstrikes in remote northeastern Pakistan last week, two Pakistani officials said here on Wednesday.

The bodies of the men have not been recovered, but the two officials said the Pakistani authorities had been able to establish through intelligence sources the names of three of those killed in the strikes, and maybe a fourth. Both of the officials have provided reliable information in the past, but neither would be identified because they were not authorized to speak to the news media.

American counterterrorism officials declined to say whether the four Qaeda members were in fact killed in the raid, or whether the men were among those who were the targets of it. But one American official said, "These are the kinds of people we would have expected to have been there."

If any or all were indeed killed, it would be a stinging blow to Al Qaeda's operations, said the American officials, who were granted anonymity because they were not authorized by their agencies to speak for attribution. They said all four men named by the Pakistani officials were among the top level of Al Qaeda's inner circle of leadership.

The Pakistani officials agreed that the deaths would be a strong setback to Al Qaeda in Pakistan's tribal areas, but acknowledged that hundreds of foreign militants might still be at large in the region.

The airstrikes, which killed 18 civilians, among them women and children, have caused anger across the country, particularly in the autonomous tribal regions, and led the government to condemn the intrusion by United States warplanes. Some officials and opposition politicians have accused the government of inventing the presence of foreign militants in the area to mitigate the political fallout. But Pakistani security officials have been consistent in their comments and appear increasingly confident of their information. American officials, while more cautious, have repeated much of the same information.

At least one of the men believed by the Pakistani officials to have been killed, an Egyptian known here as Abu Khabab al-Masri, is on the United States' most-wanted list with a \$5 million reward for help in his capture. His real name is Midhat Mursi al-Sayid Umar, 52, who according to the United States government Web site [rewardsforjustice.net](http://rewardsforjustice.net), was an expert in explosives and poisons.

Abu Khabab, the Web site says, operated the Qaeda camp at Darrunta, near Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan, and trained hundreds of fighters. He was responsible for putting together a training manual with recipes for crude chemical and biological weapons, the Web site says.

Among those Abu Khabab trained was Abu Zubaydah, Al Qaeda's No. 3 operative, who was captured in 2002 in the Pakistani town of Faisalabad, one of the Pakistani officials said.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/19/international/asia/19pakistan.html?pagewanted=print> 1/19/2006

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Another Egyptian, known by the alias Abu Ubayda al-Misri, was also believed killed, the Pakistani officials said. He was the chief of insurgent operations in the southern Afghan province of Kunar, which borders Bajaur in Pakistan, the area where the airstrikes occurred, according to one of the Pakistani officials. As chief of operations, Abu Ubayda commanded attacks on American forces in his part of southern Afghanistan, and trained the insurgent groups active in the area. He also served as a liaison for senior Qaeda leaders, and provided logistics and security for the top Qaeda people in the region, the official said.

After the fall of the Taliban, Abu Ubayda moved to the Pakistani town of Shakai, in South Waziristan, but left the area when the Pakistani military mounted operations against the foreign militants there in February 2004, the officials said.

The third man believed to have been killed was a Moroccan, Abd al-Rahman al-Maghrebi, who is the son-in-law of Mr. Zawahiri, the officials said. Mr. Maghrebi was in charge of Qaeda propaganda in the region, and may have been responsible for distributing a number of CD's showing the activities of Taliban and Qaeda fighters in southern Afghanistan in recent months.

A fourth man, Mustafa Osman, another Egyptian and an associate of Mr. Zawahiri's, may also have been killed, one Pakistani security official said. But he was less certain of his fate. There may have been one or two more foreign militants killed as well, he said.

One of the American officials said another senior Qaeda figure, identified as Khalid Habib, might have been at the site of the attack. His name was circulating among Pakistani officials as someone who might also have been killed, though again they were uncertain.

Mr. Habib is Al Qaeda's overall operational commander in Pakistan and Afghanistan, an important post, and would be the most significant of those who might have been at the site of the attack, which occurred in the village of Damadola, about 3:15 a.m. last Friday. After an initial investigation into the strike, Pakistani provincial authorities said in a statement on Tuesday that 10 to 12 foreign militants were believed to have been invited to a dinner in the village on the night of the Jan. 13 strike.

The target of the raid, American officials have said, was Al Qaeda's No. 2, Mr. Zawahiri, but they have acknowledged that he was not killed in the attack and Pakistani officials say that Mr. Zawahiri failed to show up for the dinner that night.

The statement from Pakistani provincial authorities said that four to five bodies were taken from the wreckage of the bombing quickly after the strikes, and secretly buried somewhere in the mountains.

One of the men who died with his family in the wreckage of his home, Bakhtpur Khan, was named by a Qaeda operative, Faraj al-Libi, as a sympathizer, one of the Pakistani officials said. Mr. Libi, who was captured in Pakistan last summer, told an interrogator that he had met Mr. Zawahiri in Mr. Khan's house in Damadola previously, the official said. It is unlikely that Mr. Zawahiri was in the house at the time of the bombing, because he would have been accompanied by a larger entourage, one of the Pakistani officials said. Villagers, many of whom are sympathetic to Taliban and Qaeda elements, continue to insist there were no foreign militants in the village at the time of the airstrikes.

Al Arabiya television reported that Mr. Zawahiri was alive, quoting a member of Al Qaeda, in the days after the strike. A news agency in Afghanistan, Pajhwok Afghan News, has also reported that a Qaeda member telephoned the agency to say that Mr. Zawahiri was safe.

The news agency identified the caller as Ahmad Solaiman, a Moroccan who serves as a spokesman for the group. In a dispatch Wednesday, the agency quoted him saying that "Mr. Zawahiri is alive. Reports about his death are false." An American counterterrorism official said the claim was being viewed with skepticism, because Al Qaeda usually chooses more mainstream outlets to issue public statements. A Pakistani security official said soon after the strikes that he was confident that Mr. Zawahiri had survived.

Mohammad Khan contributed reporting for this article.

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January 18, 2006

## Pakistani Cites 'Communications Gap' With U.S.

By WARREN HOGE

The prime minister of Pakistan said on Wednesday that the deaths of 18 civilians in American airstrikes on a Pakistani village last week pointed up a need for stricter coordination between his country and the United States, but that it would not set back their joint effort to fight terrorism.

"Our war against terror is based on principles, so if our objectives are similar, I think we can work together," Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said in an interview in Midtown Manhattan. "However the modus operandi and the code of conduct need to be discussed, and while I'm in Washington, we will certainly talk about it."

Mr. Aziz is to see President Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld and other officials in Washington next week. He has kept a distinctly pro-American stance in his roles as prime minister and, previously, as finance minister, a post he took in 1999 after stepping down from his position as a top official of Citicorp in New York.

"The incident over the weekend is regrettable and we have condemned it, and we cannot condone the loss of innocent lives," he said. "At the same time, let me say that we are committed to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and that terrorism knows no borders."

Mr. Aziz said the deaths had caused resentment in parts of Pakistan and had blunted widespread expressions of gratitude to the United States for the extensive American effort to care for victims of the earthquake in October that killed more than 73,000 people and left half a million people homeless.

He said that an investigation was proceeding to see if Pakistan had received prior notice of the strike and to discover what evidence there was that Ayman al-Zawahiri, Al Qaeda's second-in-command, the apparent target of the attack, was in the area.

"This is one of those events which wasn't based on entirely correct intelligence, and it will take a while," he said. "These things are all being looked at, and we know that there are certain areas of the border with Afghanistan where we ourselves are very concerned about the movement of people who are undesirable. We also have some indication of some movement in that area, but our own intelligence couldn't verify it and then this thing suddenly happened."

Speaking of the C.I.A. and counterpart Pakistani services, he said, "The liaison is there between the two agencies but as the exact way of tackling the intelligence, I believe there was a bit of a communications gap."

He said that Pakistan had moved 80,000 troops into border areas in the effort to chase down operatives of Al Qaeda and block Taliban militants and foreign fighters from entering Afghanistan.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/18/international/asia/18cnd-aziz.html?pagewanted=print> 1/19/2006

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But he expressed little hope of the imminent capture or killing of Osama bin Laden or Mr. Zawahiri, saying that they had the resources to move about the tribal areas and beyond without being detected.

"Frankly, nobody knows where they are," he said. "The simple answer is that nobody has a clue."

# Pakistan attack not a mistake, say US officials

By Carlotta Gall & Douglas Jehl

**Peshawar:** Even as thousands of Pakistanis protested the US airstrike on a village that killed 18 civilians, American counter-terrorism officials said they were not ready to rule out the prospect that the No. 2 Al Qaida man, Ayman Al Zawahri, might have been killed in the Friday strike.

Officials in Pakistan, who have examined bodies found at the scene, have said they were confident that Zawahri was not killed in the attack. But the American officials have said they had not seen solid indications of his death or his survival. At a minimum, the officials said they believed that other senior Qaida officials had died in the attack.

The raid is believed to have been carried out by the CIA, using missiles fired by a remotely piloted aircraft, on the basis of information gathered in an effort to track Zawahri. An American counter-terrorism official declined to discuss details of the attack, but said: "My understanding is that it was based on pretty darned good information. A decision to do something like this is not made lightly."

The CIA and the White House have declined to comment on the raid, the third airstrike in recent weeks inside Pakistani territory by American aircraft. The American counter-terror-

## Canadians to stay in Kabul despite diplomat's killing

**Kandahar:** Canada said on Monday it remained committed to rebuilding Afghanistan after a senior Canadian diplomat and two Afghans were killed by a suspected Taliban suicide bomber. Three Canadian soldiers were also among 12 people wounded in the attack and remained in a critical condition with life-threatening injuries early on Monday, the Canadian military said.

Foreign Affairs Political Director Glyn Berry "was killed in a terrorist attack on a PRT (provincial reconstruction team) convoy", said Peter Harder, deputy minister of Canada's foreign affairs.

Berry was on his way to meet with a local Afghan leader, who has not been named, when he was killed. Military officials said Berry was a "significant and key member" of Canada's mission to help stabilise and rebuild the shattered country, but added they have "no information that Canadians were specifically targeted" in the attack by the Taliban. AP

ism officials who agreed to speak about it were granted anonymity because they had not been authorised to speak publicly.

They offered a defence of the attack, saying they did not believe that innocent bystanders in Pakistan had been killed. One counter-terrorism official said that even if Zawahri was not killed in the attacks, "Some very senior Al Qaida types might have been". The official declined to identify other Qaida members thought to have been at the scene.

In the past, failed attacks on senior Qaida officials have been followed by triumphant statements from the group calling attention to the failure, while news about the death of Qaida

members tends to circulate in channels monitored by American intelligence. "If Zawahri was indeed killed, it would be very hard for them to keep that under wraps for a long period of time," one official said.

For more than a year, Zawahri has served as the principal public face of Al Qaida, during a period in which Osama bin Laden has not been seen or heard from. The last audiotapes from bin Laden were made public in December 2004; in the first three years after the 2001 attacks, he was seen and heard from more often.

American intelligence agencies believe Bin Laden is still alive, but has adopted a low profile to avoid giving away clues. NYT News Service

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# US attack in Pak targets Zawahri

## Pakistan Says The Qaida No. 2 Wasn't There When The Fighter Planes Struck

**Damadola:** A US airstrike in Pakistan targeted Al Qaida's second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahri, but it was unclear if he had been killed, US sources knowledgeable about the strike said. CNN quoted sources saying the CIA ordered Friday's strike after receiving intelligence Zawahri was in a village near the border with Afghanistan. ABC News quoted Pakistani military sources as saying five of those killed were "high-level" Qaida figures. The attack killed at least 18 people, including women and children, locals say.

Sources in Washington knowledgeable about the strike, believed to have been conducted by CIA-operated unmanned drones armed with missiles, said it would not be known whether Zawahri was killed until the remains of the dead were examined. Pakistan was investigating the reports, information minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said. "Our investigation is still going on ... I cannot confirm anything," he said.

A Pakistani intelligence source said he had been told by US officials the strike was ordered based on information Zawahri and Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar had been invited to a dinner to celebrate this week's Muslim Eid al-Adha festival. But they had no confirmation either had been there at the time of the attack about 3 am on Friday and senior Taliban commander Mullah Dadullah told Reuters no Taliban com-



Pakistani tribesmen stand by their house which was damaged when the missile was fired in an US air strike at their village Bajur near the Afghan border

mander had been there.

Another intelligence official said four US aircraft had fired four missiles that destroyed three houses in the attack on the village of Damadola in the Bajaur tribal agency opposite Afghanistan's insurgent-troubled Kunar province. 18 villagers were killed.

Another official said the remains of some bodies had "quickly been removed" from Damadola after the strike and DNA tests were being conducted, but would not say by whom. The official added that hours before the strike some unidentified guests had arrived at the home of one tribesman named Shah Zaman. Zaman, whose home was destroyed but survived the attack, de-

nied hosting any terrorists and said no officials had taken bodies away. "I don't know him (Zawahri). He was not at my home. No foreigner was at my home when the planes came and dropped bombs," he said.

Maj. Gen. Shaukat Sulṭān,

the spokesman for President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, a key ally in the U.S.-led war on terrorism, only said the explosions in the village, which lies about 200 kilometers northwest of the capital, Islamabad, were under investigation. Agencies

### Protesters burn US aid office

**Khar:** Tribesmen torched the office of a US-funded aid group on Saturday amid protests against the deaths of 18 people in an alleged US airstrike, witnesses said. An estimated 5,000 people gathered at a stadium near Khar, the main town in the Bajur tribal zone, near Damadola.

Some demonstrators then set fire to the offices of Associated Development Construction, an NGO funded by the US Agency for International Development, an official at the aid group said. The mob had also stolen hundreds of bags of cement, and up to 20 tonnes of steel were damaged by the fire. AFP

THE NEW YORK TIMES

# Pranab first UPA minister to visit Israel

Rajat Pandit | TNN

**New Delhi:** A trip to Israel has been lined up for defence minister Pranab Mukherjee, who will become the topmost dignitary to pay a visit to the country since the UPA government came to power in May 2004.

emerged as the second-largest military supplier to India with sales worth Rs 12,000 crore over the last four years, defence and security issues will predictably top Mukherjee's agenda.

But India is also likely to use the opportunity to reiterate that the long-festering Palestinian problem can be resolved only through peaceful negotiations, with an independent state of Palestine co-existing with Israel.

The Left has blamed the Centre of continuing strong ties that the previous NDA regime forged with Israel and keeping quiet about the "systematic attempts" to cripple the functioning of the Hamas government.

India and Israel, during Mukherjee's visit, will chalk out new areas for defence collaboration, including R&D projects in electronic warfare and missile systems, and long-endurance and combat UAVs. Apart from counter-terrorism and intelligence-sharing, sources say upgraded versions of the Barak anti-missile defence system, which India wants to acquire for its warships, will also figure in the talks. Pitching for more Baraks, the navy had recently demonstrated the system's effectiveness against incoming aerial threats or sea-skimming missiles to PM on board aircraft carrier INS Viraat.

## WESTWARD HO!



- Defence and security issues will predictably top Pranab Mukherjee's agenda in Tel Aviv
- India keen on upgraded versions of the Barak anti-missile system, Heron and Searcher-II unmanned aerial vehicles and Aerostat radars
- Mukherjee will review the progress in the \$1.1-billion deal for three airborne Awacs with the Israeli Phalcon early warning radar systems

Though the exact dates are still being finalised, Mukherjee is likely to reach Tel Aviv in the first week of July. Israel having

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