

Hindustan Times, 2 November 2004

Osama may sneak into India: FBI official

New Delhi, Nov.1. A senior official of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) quietly visited India last week to alert intelligence agencies about the possibility of Osama bin Laden sneaking into India, official sources said on Monday. The Pakistan-based official also sought Indian assistance for joint operations by Indian and US forces to nab the world's most wanted fugitive if he crossed over from northeastern Pakistan, the sources said. The official's visit followed reported spotting of Bin Laden in northeastern Pakistan, close to the Pakistan-China-India border tri-junction, they added. The sources said the FBI official met senior officials of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), Intelligence Bureau (IB), Border Security Force (BSF) and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).

Daily Times, 2 November 2004

US needs Pakistan's support, says Kasuri

ISLAMABAD: The US will need Pakistani support whether President George W Bush or his Democrat rival Senator John Kerry wins the presidential elections on November 2, Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri said on Monday. "Pakistan has an important position in the world because of its foreign policy and the US will continue to require Islamabad's support," Kasuri told reporters in Islamabad. "Pakistan enjoys bi-partisan support in the US because President Pervez Musharraf has steered the country towards success over the last five years," he said. The foreign minister said the international community now recognised Pakistan as a responsible nuclear power that had acted maturely. "We are continuing our cooperation with IAEA, the US and other countries".

The Daily Times, 3 November 2004

Armitage to visit South Asia

WASHINGTON: US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage will visit South Asia for talks on Iraq's reconstruction, counter-terrorism and improving India-Pakistan ties, officials said on Monday. The State Department said in a statement on Monday that he would "travel to South Asia and the Near East" from November 4 to November 12, but did not name the countries or give specific dates.

The Daily Times, 3 November 2004

F16 issue is alive: Nancy

LAHORE: Outgoing US Ambassador to Pakistan Nancy Powell on Tuesday said the F-16 fighter aircraft issue with Pakistan was still alive and a matter for debate in the US administration. Ms Powell hoped that the US and Pakistan would continue cooperating in cracking down on terrorists. Referring to a large number of Al Qaeda terrorists Pakistan had arrested since 9/11, Ms Powell said the world had become a safer place after Pakistan's action against terrorists.

The Tribune, 4 November 2004

Cabinet ratifies US legal treaty

New Delhi, Nov.3. The Union Cabinet today ratified the mutual legal assistance treaty in criminal matters with the USA. As per the treaty, the assistance provided under it by India shall not be transferred to any international court or tribunal without the consent of the other country. According to an official spokesperson, no action under the treaty could be taken in the contravention of the Constitution of the two countries. The Cabinet also approved a proposal for signing an agreement to establish a joint commission of cooperation between India and Norway. The spokesperson said the agreement would not be a detriment of other cooperation agreements and would lead to a closer cooperation between India and Norway.

The Nation, 4 November 2004

Pak-American ties to improve further: Rashid (SAJID ZIA)

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Information Sheikh Rashid Ahmad has expressed the hope that Pakistan-American ties in the US post election period will improve further to the benefit of Islamabad particularly for the settlement of Kashmir and other issues confronting it since long. Pakistan-American relations would present an interesting scenario in which the latter would hopefully benefit for the settlement of long-standing issues, particularly the core issue of Kashmir, said the Federal Minister while addressing mediemen at an Iftar dinner he hosted in honour of the editors, columnists and senior journalists of the City Wednesday.

The Daily Times, 4 November 2004

EDITORIAL: George W Bush wins - advantage Pakistan?

George W Bush has clinched the 2004 election. This will be his second term in office unlike his father who lost it after winning the 1991 war against Saddam Hussein. In Pakistan, as elsewhere in the Islamic world, the gulf between a "pro-America" government and the masses will widen although it is difficult to ascertain the strata of society most alienated by this development. The ruling government under the tutelage of President Pervez Musharraf will continue to benefit from the presidency of George Bush. In a perverse way, as the sense of 'victimhood' among the Muslims of the world increases under George Bush, the graph of Pakistan's economy will continue to improve and the government's firm resolve to stand up to radical Islam will be further stiffened.

The Hindu, 4 November 2004

Bush's second coming (Siddharth Varadarajan)

GEORGE W. BUSH may have won the popular vote in the United States but the world at large is sure to look upon the

prospect of a second Bush presidential term with bewilderment, concern and a fair amount of trepidation. The question on everyone's mind is whether Mr. Bush in his second innings will be emboldened by his domestic mandate - and march steadfastly down the path of confrontation with those who are judged to be "not with us" - or chastened by the deep, visceral divisions he has engendered among his own people. In South Asia, New Delhi has been so used to looking at Washington through the limiting prism of Pakistan and terrorism that it seldom realises the very real ways in which the Bush doctrine of pre-emption is degrading the security environment in the wider Asian region.

The Nation, 5 November 2004

Pak-US relations likely to remain same(UMER FAROOQ)

ISLAMABAD - In the wake of President Bush's re-election for next four years the US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage will be the first senior US official to visit Pakistan next week (November 8) giving Pakistani authorities an opportunity to understand the impending changes. Armitage will be meeting all the top Pakistani leaders, including the President, prime minister and foreign minister, and will hold talks with the Foreign Ministry officials on regional and bilateral relations. The last visit of Armitage to Pakistan was specifically focused on terrorism-related issues and latest happenings in Afghanistan and Kashmir. The talks during the last visit were in connections with the US concerns in the region, especially terrorism. As with the last visit the forthcoming visit is unlikely to be any different in its focus of the issues. At that time Armitage comment on cross-border terrorism in New Delhi were quite discomfoting for Pakistani decision-makers. The diplomats in Islamabad expect very little change in the Pak-US relations as they say that basics of the relations would remain the same even under the second Bush Administration. However, there are chances of changes in the US foreign policy team at the top level.

The Daily Times, 5 November 2004

Comment: The election of George W Bush and Pakistan (Dr Mubashir Hasan)

The election of George W Bush as president of the United States is neither good nor bad for Pakistan. The aims of the foreign policy of the United States will continue to be what they have been. The time is right for Pakistan to review its policies and try to emerge as a nation with humanity, self respect and dignity, to restore its izzat and viqar among the comity of nations. The image of a lackey of the United States must be shed. It will be good for Pakistan as well as the US. The elections in the United States offer an opportunity to Pakistan to wake up and take a fresh view of its policies.

The Nation, 5 November 2004

Future of US-Pak ties

WITH Mr Bush retaining the US presidency, some observers would be prompted to say that the US-Pak relations would remain on an even keel and, if anything, Islamabad should expect to draw greater benefit, especially in areas where negotiations have led Washington to make tentative commitments, yet balking at actually delivering. Another equally vital area of help to its 'long-term ally' would be for the US to grant genuine economic concessions in the form of greater access to its market for Pakistani products, particularly textile manufactures. But for all its protestations that this time around it would not abandon Islamabad, as in post-Soviet exit from Afghanistan, Washington has been leaning towards New Delhi more pronouncedly, declaring it a strategic partner, granting access to dual-use technology and succumbing to its pressure in matters of the sale of defence equipment to Pakistan.

The Hindu, 5 November 2004

Manmohan congratulates Bush

New Delhi, Nov.4. The Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, has congratulated George W. Bush on his re-election as President of the United States of America. He conveyed to Mr. Bush the good wishes of the people and the Government on India "as you prepare to lead your great nation, drawing on a strong mandate, in the years ahead." He assured Mr. Bush that "as partners against terrorism and weapons of mass destruction proliferation, we will stand by the United States in strengthening international peace and stability." In his message, Dr. Singh noted: "One major goal of our policies must be to continue to deny any comfort or encouragement to religious extremism or terrorism, and resolve to ensure their complete elimination as an acceptable instrument of State policy. We are confident that the United States and India are on the same side in this effort."

The Hindustan Times, 6 November 2004

Indo-Pak talks on agenda during Armitage's visit: US

Progress in the India-Pakistan dialogue, the Kashmir issue are among other topics on agenda when Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage visits the sub-continent later this month, a senior US official has said. The Armitage visit will also deal with important bilateral relationships US has individually with each country in that region.

The Indian Express, 6 November 2004

Indian autumn on Capitol Hill (K. SUBRAHMANYAM)

Now that Bush has been elected by the largest number of votes ever polled for a president in US history, New Delhi has to carry out a cold-blooded assessment on the likely US policy towards India, considerations that would influence their formulation and international factors that would have a bearing on them... long term calculations have led the Americans to think of India as a natural ally and strategic partner. But that does not mean that US policies developed over 40 years of Cold War and 50 years of nuclear theology will be scrapped overnight. From India's point of view, except for those who have an ideological hang-up about the US, improvement in the Indo-US relationship is in our national interest: adjustment to inevitable globalisation, gaining increased FDI and technology to the extent available, and damage limitation in respect of Pakistan and China harming our interests or security.

The Tribune, 6 November 2004

Indo-US ties will be strengthened, says envoy (T.V.Parasuram)

Washington, Nov.5.Indian Ambassador to the USA Ronen Sen has expressed confidence that Indo-US strategic relations will strengthen further during President George W. Bush's second term. "With President Bush's re-election, we can look forward with confidence to further strengthening of the Indo-US relations, which has gained further importance because it enjoys in both countries bipartisan support reflected in the composition of the India Caucus in the House of Representatives- the largest for any country - and also the first and only, Caucus on India in the Senate." "We look forward to the relationship gaining new strength" and momentum in this process which has been set in motion in developing the strategic relationship between the two countries", Mr Sen said.

The Hindustan Times, 8 November 2004

Armitage to hold talks in Pakistan on terrorism

Islamabad: US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage will hold talks with Pakistani leaders on terrorism, developments in Afghanistan and peace efforts by regional rivals Pakistan and India, officials said on Monday. The talks will focus mainly on Afghanistan, Iraq and other areas of the Middle East, but will also include ongoing moves by Pakistan and India to build friendly relations...Armitage was to arrive later on Monday and meet with the officials on Tuesday, a ministry official said on condition of anonymity. US officials hold regular consultations with leaders of Pakistan, designated by the United States as a major "non-NATO ally" for its cooperation in the US fight against terrorism. Armitage's visit to Pakistan, his second this year, was scheduled before recent elections in the United States, Khan said. It comes a day after Ryan Crocker, the new US ambassador to Pakistan, arrived to take up his post.

The Nation, 9 November 2004

Armitage says US to work more closely with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (AFP)-US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage vowed that Washington would work more closely with Pakistan as he made his first trip to the key anti-terror ally since President George W. Bush won a second term, officials said Tuesday. Armitage, accompanied by US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christina Rocca, held talks with senior Pakistani officials on topics including Afghanistan, Iraq and peace moves between Islamabad and New Delhi.Armitage earlier held talks with a delegation led by Foreign Secretary Riaz Khokhar. Khokhar conveyed Pakistan's desire to promote "a solid, broad-based and long term relationship with the US encompassing cooperation in areas of investment, trade and defence."

The Nation, 9 November 2004

Editorial: Armitage visit

US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage has arrived in Islamabad accompanied by three Assistant Secretaries, including Ms Christina Rocca. This is the first high level American delegation to visit Pakistan after President Bush's re-election. Mr Ryan Crocker, US ambassador-designate, also reached Pakistan on Sunday. The agenda for talks includes important bilateral, regional and international issues. President Bush has meanwhile reaffirmed his resolve to continue the policies of his first tenure. That a key figure in his administration is visiting Islamabad within a week of the re-election underlines the importance of the Musharraf government for Washington in the realisation of some of its vital goals. The US side is expected to take up issues including the ongoing insurgency in Iraq, Iran-IAEA differences, non-proliferation, post election scenario in Afghanistan, UN Security Council reforms. Keeping in mind Mr Kasuri's remarks, Pakistan would take up issues like Kashmir where it wants the US to be more proactive, and economic and military cooperation.

The Nation, 10 November 2004

US pledges strong defence ties (SHAIQ HUSSAIN)

ISLAMABAD: The United States on Tuesday said it would maintain continuity of its policy towards Pakistan by expanding relations in various sectors, particularly in defence and economy. The visiting US Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage extended this assurance to Pakistan...The senior official of Bush administration expressed his satisfaction over the pace of peace process between Islamabad and New Delhi. He urged the two sides to resolve all outstanding issues, including Kashmir, through meaningful dialogue. In his meeting with President Musharraf, Armitage reaffirmed America's commitment to building strong ties with Pakistan. Both the sides also discussed various aspects of defence ties between Islamabad and Washington, a source said. Pakistani authorities asked the US side to review its decision of suspending the supply of F-16 fighter aircraft to Pakistan. In response, to this request, Mr Armitage said his country will review the matter in sympathetic manner, he added.

The China Daily, 10th November 2004

Pakistan wins US praise over Afghan vote

A senior US official commended Pakistan on Tuesday for its help in ensuring the success of last month's Afghan election and said the United States wanted to accelerate and broaden its cooperation with Pakistan. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, visiting a week after President Bush was re-elected..."What we all witnessed in the election on October 9 was a tribute to the men and women of Afghanistan and, frankly, a tribute to Pakistan who was so helpful in bringing about that election," Armitage told Pakistani state television. Armitage was due to fly to Kabul later on Tuesday, where he was to have dinner with President Karzai. He will be the most senior U.S. official to visit Afghanistan since Karzai's election win.

The Nation, 10 November 2004

America must broaden its policy on Pakistan (KARL INDERFURTH AND TERESITA SCHAFFER)

Bush administration to adopt a largely one-dimensional policy toward Pakistan, focusing its high-level attention overwhelmingly

on the operational aspects of the fight against al-Qaeda and the Taliban, in the hopes that the other issues will not erupt. The Bush administration has similarly stressed its personal relationship with Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's president, on the argument that only he has real authority and that the alternatives are worse. This policy has led the US into a trap. Pakistani leaders have drawn the wrong conclusion from the counter-terrorism focus of US policy. Many appear to believe that as long as they still kill or capture suspected al-Qaeda operatives, the US will largely ignore Pakistani actions in other areas - even those that conflict with US objectives. Perhaps the most chilling illustration of this phenomenon is in the nuclear arena. Foremost is the case of A.Q. Khan, Pakistan's most famous nuclear scientist, who for years ran an illicit nuclear secrets bazaar with dangerous customers such as North Korea, Libya and Iran. How can America deliver the message that future transfers of nuclear weapons technology will be harshly dealt with, with any credibility? What would a more effective US policy look like?

The Hindu, 10 November 2004

Armitage lauds Musharraf proposals on Kashmir (B. Muralidhar Reddy)

ISLAMABAD, NOV. 9: THE visiting U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, has termed the recent Kashmir proposals unveiled by the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, as 'very interesting' and said Gen. Musharraf was being 'very forward-thinking.' Mr. Armitage in an interview on the Pakistan Television (PTV) said that Gen. Musharraf's proposals have triggered a great deal of thinking in India and Pakistan 'as a way forward.'

The Nation, 11 November 2004

Editorial: Promises galore

ALTHOUGH US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage termed Pakistan's cooperation with the US in the war on terrorism as one of the key foreign policy successes of Bush administration's first term and gave assurances of an enhanced and expanded relationship in the coming days, it appears doubtful whether the promised ties would have the substance that would put the country on the road to economic prosperity and acquire security against foreign aggression. The record since 9/11 would reinforce the hunch. Islamabad did not hesitate to carry the cross on US behalf that led it to face certain crippling problems like, the enmity of not only anti-US militants but also peaceful tribesmen, opposition from within resulting in disturbance of peace in society that has put off potential investors. Washington's acknowledgement of our commitment and sacrifices has been either the cryptic 'do more' or denial of our legitimate demands in key areas.

The Jang, 11 November 2004

Editorial: Expectations from Armitage visit

The assurance by the US government that it would not only maintain continuity in its policy towards Islamabad but also strive to enhance bilateral relations in economic, commercial, defence and security matters is certainly encouraging. At this point of high-level contact with the American administration, the visit of a six-member delegation of US Congress, and its meetings with Pakistani leadership are a clear indication that both the parties in America give extraordinary importance to Pak-American relations, and are interested in the establishment of peace and stability in the region.

The Jang, 11 November 2004

Kudos from Washington? (Farhan Bokhari)

In public, the underlying theme of Mr Armitage's message is essentially that Pak-US relations are bound to continue unperturbed by adversity in the next four years when US president George Bush is due to remain in charge in Washington. Yet, it would be naive for Pakistani decision makers to ignore the pitfalls in relations with the US, both driven by lessons from the history of relations between the two countries as well as the potentially unresolved issues dominating mutual ties. Much was said at the time about the 'tilt' of the US towards Pakistan in the midst of the greatest tragedy in the country's history. To this day, the tangible benefit of the 'tilt' remains an untold story. However, the history of relations with Washington only underlines the essential point that Pakistan's best interests can only be secured through policy choices in Islamabad, where the country's vulnerability must only expose it to mounting external pressure, even if the going is good with the Bush administration today.

The Hindustan Times, 12 November 2004

No F-16 fighter planes for Pakistan: Blackwill

Washington, November 11: The United States has said that it has no plans to sell F-16 fighter planes to Pakistan. "There's nothing that we are aware of and at any level a decision has been made to supply F-16 to Pakistan," Deputy National Security Advisor Robert Blackwill was quoted as saying at the White House Diwali celebrations by the Indian American Republican Council (IARC). Several Indian community leaders were invited to attend the Diwali celebrations at the White House on Wednesday. Blackwill also assured the Indian community that President George W Bush plans to visit India next year. Diwali was celebrated in the White House for the first time last year after Bush agreed to a long-standing demand of the Indian community.

The Daily Times, 13 November 2004

US ready to improve ties with Bangladesh

DHAKA: With the re-election of President George W Bush, the United States is keen to improve ties with "important" countries such as Bangladesh, a senior US official said here Friday. "The president wants us to look at things that we can do to improve relationships with countries in the world and one of the important countries is Bangladesh," US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Torkel Patterson told a press conference here. Patterson, visiting for the third time in eight months, said he was in the country to map out Washington's approach to Bangladesh in the next four years. Bangladesh, the world's third

largest Muslim-majority nation, opposed the US-led invasion of Iraq and polls suggest the majority of Bangladeshis oppose the war and view Washington with suspicion. Since Bangladesh's independence in 1971, the US has been its biggest foreign investor, pumping in assistance of around 4.5 billion dollars. The United States is also Dhaka's largest bilateral trading partner.

The Khaleej Times, 16 November 2004

The India factor in US-Pak ties (A. MASROOR)

THE recent visit of the US Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage to Pakistan is being viewed by the official circles here as an emphatic reiteration of Washington's willingness to establish, over the next four years, a long standing relationship with Islamabad in a much deeper and considerably wider sense...the US (has)... linked progress on democracy in Pakistan to progress in its fight against Al Qaeda and Taleban, in the Indo-Pak peace process, in the stabilisation process in Afghanistan and success on the non-proliferation front. The reluctance of the US to sell F-16s to one of its MNNA appears to have been dictated by its desire not to annoy New Delhi...

The Japan Times, 16 November 2004

Last gasp of U.S. hegemony (KEVIN RAFFERTY)

The reality is that Bush will be forced to make hard choices, and the American people will have to face pain for their profligacy. For the rest of the world, U.S. difficulties will bring hardships. But while the rest of the world has the potential to recover, this is the beginning of the end of U.S. hegemony. It will be a tougher new world that emerges, but as with the British Empire or Ancient Rome, there is nothing God-given or eternal that says Washington must rule the world forever.

The Hindustan Times, 17 November 2004

Rice is positive on India: Experts

Washington, November 16: US National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice was tipped to be President George W Bush's new secretary of state, a move that augurs well for further intensification of US-India ties. Rice, whose naming follows Colin Powell's resignation on Monday, is currently considered the original architect of an expanded relationship with India and giving it a high priority in the Bush administration.

The Hindu, 17 November 2004

No change in policy regarding India, says U.S. (Sridhar Krishnaswami)

WASHINGTON, NOV.16: The White House has said there will be no change in policy with respect to India as a result of the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, quitting the Cabinet. "The agenda is set by the President of the United States, and he's the one who sets the policy, and the Cabinet is there to help the President implement the agenda and the policy decisions that he makes," the White House Press Secretary, Scott McClellan, said on Monday.

The Japan Times, 17 November 2004

Bush's win doesn't mean Musharraf can rest easy (FARHAN BOKHARI)

ISLAMABAD: Many observers still believe that Bush's re-election will offer smooth sailing for Pakistan. Indeed, in the short term, it is possible to argue that matters such as the state of Pakistani democracy or allegations surrounding Pakistan's nuclear program would have been more closely scrutinized under a Democratic administration than they will be under the Bush-led Republicans. It is also possible to argue that such a conclusion is too simplistic. In many U.S. circles, Pakistan's long-term stability is questionable due to its lack of a civilian-led government and the state of its economy, which, despite an upturn in certain areas, has not improved the lives of the country's poorest. For these reasons it is naive to assume that Pakistan's relationship with the United States will continue in the same direction for the next four years as it has for the past four. Although Pakistan remains an important ally in a part of the world where the U.S. faces formidable challenges, the seeds of potential discord with the U.S. exist.

The Nation, 17 November 2004

Powell's exit not to affect ties: Kasuri

LAHORE: Whoever replaces Colin Powell, Pak-US relations will not be affected since they are based on sovereign equality and both Pakistan and US need each other, however, 'we will miss him (Colin Powell)'. This was stated by Pakistan's Foreign Minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri while addressing a crowded Press conference at the State Guest House on Tuesday. Paying tributes to Colin Powell, Khurshid Kasuri added that the secretary of state was aware of a number of issues and also played his role in preventing Indo-Pak war when tensions rose recently between the two neighbouring countries. He said that Pakistan and the US would remain important to each other and this phenomenon had also been mentioned in the 9/11 Commission's report, which is to serve as a guiding principle.

The Daily Times, 18 November 2004

Pentagon unveils \$1.2b proposed weapons deals with Pakistan

WASHINGTON: The Pentagon notified Congress on Tuesday about three proposed arms deals with Pakistan worth up to \$1.2 billion. The Defence Security Cooperation Agency, which handles foreign arms sales for the Pentagon, said it planned to sell Pakistan eight P-3C Orion surveillance aircraft, valued at up to \$970 million, and 2,000 TOW-2A missiles and 14 TOW-2A Fly-to-Buy missiles in a deal valued at \$82 million. Pakistan had also requested the sale of six PHALANX rapid-fire 20-millimeter guns for surface ships, and the upgrade of six additional gun systems, a contract worth up to \$155 million, the agency said. Lawmakers now have 30 days to block the proposed arms sales, but defence officials and congressional sources said that was considered extremely unlikely.

The Dawn, 18 November 2004

No change in policy towards S. Asia: US (Anwar Iqbal)

WASHINGTON, Nov 17: The United States has assured India and Pakistan that Secretary of State Colin Powell's departure will not affect Washington's efforts for promoting peace between South Asia's two nuclear neighbours. White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan told a Tuesday afternoon briefing in Washington he does not expect any policy change towards South Asia after Mr Powell's exit but he acknowledged that the outgoing secretary of state was "instrumental" in helping to address the situation between India and Pakistan. Mr Powell, who plans to visit Pakistan either on Dec. 6 or Dec. 8, for a farewell meeting with President Pervez Musharraf also had developed a close personal relationship with the Pakistani ruler over the years, a State Department official told Dawn. He also plans to visit Kabul on Dec 7 to attend the inauguration of Afghan President Hamid Karzai. He is visiting the Middle East next week.

The Dawn, 18 November 2004

India should not expect much from Powell's exit (Siddharth Srivastava)

NEW DELHI: Outgoing US Secretary of State Colin Powell might not have had much say in Washington's critical policy decisions in Iraq, North Korea and Iran, but he managed to jar India on several issues that resulted in a less than happy relationship with New Delhi. Powell's tenure was marked by several utterances and steps, which never went down well with the Indian establishment. The US state secretary had a penchant for public diplomacy on India-Pakistan issues that have not been appreciated by foreign policy mandarins here. Powell, a former four-star general, assiduously promoted US ties with the military regime of Pakistan, while trying to keep a public profile of a balanced relationship between the two countries. Vice President Dick Cheney and Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld did not consider it politically or financially prudent to spend too much time on subjects concerning this region, and so Powell was relatively free to lay down policy decisions. But there were differences in the treatment of China though, with Cheney and Rumsfeld, of the view that India and Japan be co-opted to rein the Asian giant in contrast with Powell's pro-China thoughts

The Tribune, 18 November 2004

The Bush second term : What will India do if US gives F-16s to Pakistan? (G. Parthasarathy)

Few countries are as cautious and pragmatic in their conduct of foreign policy as the People's Republic of China. There is much that India and particularly our Communists can learn from their Chinese comrades about pragmatism and realism in the conduct of foreign policy... no effort will be spared by George Bush Jr. to "get" Osama bin Laden, irrespective of whether he is in Afghanistan or Pakistan. Carrots and sticks will be used to persuade General Musharraf to cooperate. But how will New Delhi react if the "carrots" for Pakistan include nuclear capable F 16 aircraft? We could well be then faced with a situation in which Pakistan has nuclear weapons carrying aircraft supplied by the USA and nuclear tipped missiles supplied by China and North Korea.

The Hindustan Times, 18 November 2004

Ackerman elected Co-Chairman of India caucus

Washington, November 18: US Congressman Gary Ackerman, a Democrat from New York was on Thursday unanimously elected as Co-Chairman of the India caucus. Ackerman, whose election witnessed an unprecedented turnout, is the first member from the House Caucus on India and Indian Americans to return to that position since the caucus adopted a rotating chairmanship

The Tribune, 18 November 2004

US urging India, Pak towards conciliation, says Powell

Washington, Nov.17.The US has been urging both India and Pakistan towards conciliation by peaceful means on Kashmir, says Secretary of State Colin Powell."India and Pakistan still dispute who should control Kashmir. During 2002, a major war between them - perhaps involving nuclear weapons - seemed distinctly possible. So, working with partners in Europe and Asia, we mobilised to help end the crisis. We have since been trying to turn our parallel improvement of relations with India and Pakistan into a triangle of conflict resolution," Powell says in Jan-Feb issue of 'Foreign Affairs'. "We do not impose ourselves as a mediator. But we try to use the trust we have established with both sides to urge them toward conciliation by peaceful means."

The Nation, 19 November 2004

US General praises Pak role in terror war

WASHINGTON : Lt. Gen. Lance L. Smith, Deputy Commander, U.S. Central Command, Thursday commended the role being played by Pakistan in the fight of global war against terrorism. "The operation launched by General Musharraf in the tribal areas of the western Pakistan on Pakistan-Afghan border is commendably effective."He made these remarks at a briefing held at the Foreign Press Center on 'Central Command and the Global War on Terrorism.' General Smith is second-in-command to General John Abizaid, commanding general of U.S. Central Command. Central Command's area of responsibility stretches from the Horn of Africa to Central Asia and includes Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Jang, 19 November 2004

Editorial US arms package for Pakistan

It is a matter of some satisfaction that the US Department of Defence has notified the Congress about three proposed arms deals with Pakistan worth \$1.2 billion. These proposals from the Pentagon clearly indicate that the Bush administration is becoming aware of Pakistan's mounting security needs as a result of Pakistan's role as a frontline state in the international war on terrorism and the dangers inherent in India's huge arms build up which has disturbed the balance of conventional arms in

the region. Pentagon's stance is that the proposed arms agreements would help improve the security of a friendly country that has been and continues to be an important force for economic progress in South Asia and the global war on terrorism.

The Dawn, 19 November 2004

India cancels US lobbyist's contract

WASHINGTON, Nov 18: The Indian Embassy here confirmed on Thursday that it was not renewing the contract of a Washington law firm that lobbies for New Delhi in the US capital. An embassy spokesman told reporters that the contract for the firm, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, was renewed every month. "Since it made no sense to renew the contract before the election, the November contract was not renewed," the spokesman said. He denied media reports that the contract had been cancelled because the firm failed to stop the expected sale of sophisticated weapons worth one billion dollars to Pakistan.

The Hindustan Times, 19 November 2004

Rice says she wants even more solid relationship with India

New Delhi, November 19: Condoleezza Rice, chosen to replace US Secretary of State Colin Powell, has told her Indian counterpart that she wants to expand the already "great relationship" between the two nations in the next four years, the government said on Friday. India's External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh telephoned Rice on Thursday night and told her that India was committed to further strengthening India-US relations, a ministry statement said. Weeks before US President George Bush won a second term, Washington announced greater access to India in the field of advanced technologies, including nuclear know-how that must be used for non-military purposes.

The Hindu, 19 November 2004

India conveys concern to U.S. on 'arms sale' to Pakistan

New Delhi, Nov.19. India has expressed "strong concern" to the United States following reports of an impending American arms sale to Pakistan. The Foreign Secretary, Shyam Saran, who is in the U.S., conveyed this concern to senior U.S. officials, including the National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, in Washington. "He [Mr. Saran] has pointed out the repercussions of such sales on the India-Pakistan dialogue, which is currently poised at a sensitive juncture. During the first term of President Bush's administration, India-U.S relations saw a significant transformation and the U.S. is perceived in India as a strategic partner, particularly in terms of shared democratic values. "In this context the decision to supply sophisticated weapons to Pakistan will inevitably [have an] impact on positive sentiments and goodwill that have come to characterise India-U.S. relations," the External Affairs Ministry spokesman said today.

The Hindu, 19 November 2004

Ackerman to co-chair caucus on India (Sridhar Krishnaswami)

Washington, Nov.19. Gary Ackerman, the Democratic Congressman from New York, has been unanimously elected co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans. Mr. Ackerman is the first member to return to that position since the caucus adopted a rotating Chair. The law-maker from the fifth Congressional District of New York that encompasses the north shore of Queens and the Long Island was elected to a 12th term in the House of Representatives with 71 per cent of the vote. A member of the House's International Relations Committee, he is a strong supporter of India and was instrumental in lifting of the nuclear-related sanctions against India. On several occasions, Mr. Ackerman has taken on the India "bashers" in the House.

The Daily Times, 20 November 2004

Arms sales to Pakistan: India conveys concern to US

NEW DELHI: India has conveyed its concern to the United States over newspaper reports that Washington was planning to sell a range of sophisticated weapons to Pakistan, a foreign ministry spokesman said on Friday. India's Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran, who is touring the United States, "has conveyed strong concerns over reports of arms sales by the US to Pakistan," he added. Newspaper reports said the US was planning to sell up to eight Orion surveillance aircraft, anti-tank missiles and rapid-fire guns to Pakistan, a deal estimated to be worth more than one billion dollars.

The Daily Times, 20 November 2004

Bush admin ambivalent on F-16 issue (Khalid Hasan)

WASHINGTON: The Bush administration is sending ambivalent signals as to whether it will sell F-16 aircraft to Pakistan or not. The reply most frequently given is that no decision has so far been taken. According to a congressional source who spoke to India Abroad, "We still cannot get a straight answer from the administration whether such a sale is on or off."...Rep. Frank Pallone, the founder and co-chairman of the India Caucus...expressed his "deep concern" and "extreme" disappointment about Pakistan being granted the major Non-NATO ally status since it allowed Islamabad to purchase military equipment not sold to a country with an undemocratic government. He had also asked for "democracy sanctions" to be imposed on Pakistan. He urged the President to take a "strong position" on the F-16 issue. With the arrival of the new Pakistani ambassador Jehangir Karamat, the bid to obtain F-16s is likely to receive a fillip, given the new envoy's "good contacts" at the Pentagon.

The Nation, 21 November 2004

Pak-US coalition against terrorism: a critical appraisal (ISRAR-UL-HAQ)

It has been rightly said by an American weekly that Pak-American relations have been "going through a cycle of boom and bust". The reason being that the relationship has been almost always based on expediency rather than on principles. At the

relevant time President Musharraf was internationally isolated and domestically vulnerable and, therefore, like a drowning man he clutched at the straw of the American offer, whatever it might have been. The United States, too, at that time was in desperate need of military collaboration by Pakistan, the most crucial and strategic neighbour of Afghanistan. Besides, Pakistan was then the closest ally of the Taliban and, as such, held the key to all their strategic and logistic secrets. This coalition, like previous pacts, is completely bereft of any sustainable commonality of interest and objective between Pakistan and the US, without even so much as the common perception of terrorism and the common objective of fighting the war on terror.

The Nation, 21 November 2004

US Congress passes 388-billion budget with aid to Pakistan, others

WASHINGTON: Missing the deadline by about seven weeks, the US Congress late Saturday gave final approval to a 388-billion-dollar budget that contains massive military aid programs for Pakistan and Afghanistan, both key US allies in the war on terror. The Senate voted 65-30 for the so-called omnibus spending bill that combines nine of the traditional 13 appropriations measures, after the House of Representatives passed it 344-51.

The Hindu, 21 November 2004

No decision yet on arms sales to Pakistan: U.S. (Sridhar Krishnaswami)

WASHINGTON, NOV. 20. Although a transition is taking place in the United States, India is "very satisfied" that there continues to be "a very strong commitment" to strengthening and expanding bilateral relations, according to the Foreign Secretary, Shyam Saran. Mr. Saran is here for the meeting of the U.S.-India High Technology Cooperation Group. He met senior officials of the Bush administration, including the Secretary of State-designate, Condoleezza Rice, the Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, the Deputy Defence Secretary, Paul Wolfowitz, and the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Marc Grossman. He stressed that in his meetings he had raised India's concerns over the implications of the U.S. selling sophisticated weaponry to Pakistan. There is talk here on potential sale of F-16s to Pakistan as part of a larger military package but the Bush administration has said that "no decision has been made." The Bush administration has pointed out that while it did have an arms relationship with Pakistan, the U.S. was and remained supportive of the India-Pakistan dialogue. It had assured India that it would continue to take up with Islamabad New Delhi's concerns on cross-border terrorism, he said.

Indian Express, 21 November 2004

India warns US on arms sales to Pak

Washington, Nov.20. India warned on Friday that new American arms sales to Pakistan could harm improving New Delhi-Washington ties as well as a promising dialogue between the South Asia's two nuclear rivals. During talks, top Bush administration officials raised US concerns about Iran's nuclear activities but Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said his government was "not really in a position to pass judgment." Saran met Secretary of State-designate Condoleezza Rice before she went in for minor surgery and also had meetings with Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz. Saran said he was told that the US administration had not decided whether to go forward with the F-16 sale to Pakistan. Meanwhile, US officials are learnt to have assured Saran that Bush is committed to advancing relations with India, and that Washington supports the India-Pakistan dialogue, and will continue to press Pakistan to end cross-border attacks.

The Hindu, 21 November 2004

India, U.S. discuss opportunities in defence, IT (Sridhar Krishnaswami)

Washington, Nov.20. Senior representatives from India and the United States from the official and private sectors have met here to discuss the expanding business opportunities in defence and information technology. 'Dialogue on defence technology, data privacy and export licensing,' hosted on Friday at the Commerce Department, saw participation from Official India, the U.S.-India Business Council and other industry groups. "The dialogue generated many practical recommendations that will help the United States and India continue to develop a robust level of high-technology trade," the Under Secretary of Commerce for Industry and Security, Kenneth I. Juster, said in a press release. It is the fourth under the auspices of the United States-India High Technology Cooperation Group. The Indian delegation was led by the Foreign Secretary, Shyam Saran.

The People's Daily, 22 November 2004

Bush, new int'l order and China's choice

What does Bush's reelection mean to the international community and China? This is what many people are most concerned about. There are a variety of views about this, but they fail to grasp the essence of the matter. . According to Lianhe Zaobao of Singapore, the problem can be approached from three aspects. First of all, the most important structural element is the fact that the United States is the only hegemon...structural element indicates that the top item of the US international strategy on the agenda (no matter who serves as its president) is how to maintain such a hegemonic position and curb any challenger. Second, after the "9.11" event, global terrorism has constituted a direct threat to US security. Third, it should be pointed out that the threat of terrorism to US national security is not in the traditional sense.

The Tribune, 22 November 2004

Toys for the Generals: Arming Pakistan can set off arms race

THE US has a long history of rewarding its allies for services rendered, unmindful of the blatant misuse that the beneficiaries may make of these gifts. When these gifts happen to be in the form of lethal weaponry, the exchange is bound to evoke apprehensions. That is what is currently happening in India and many other countries of the world. The recipient of the largesse is old faithful Pakistan which is set to get sophisticated weapons, including F-16 aircraft, apparently for taking a policy

U-turn on Taliban and hounding the fundamentalist mercenaries along with the US. Indeed, Pakistan has served as a perfect lackey, but the carrot that the US has chosen to present it is too dangerous not only for the region but the US itself. The repercussions can be destabilising to the extreme. The first and foremost result will be that an arms race will be revived, which the sub-continent cannot afford.

The Nation, 23 November 2004

Just a sop!

One wonders what really new there is in the \$300 million military aid to Pakistan approved by US Congress for Islamabad to welcome it as 'a good development'. It is, after all, part of the same measly package of economic and military assistance that Mr Bush announced last year in lieu of our full commitment to fight the menace of terrorism on his country's behalf. In any case, it is not something that could even modestly redress the imbalance in conventional weapons that India's acquisition of sophisticated equipment has created in the region or even enhance Pakistan's defence capability as such. The aid would only equip its armed forces with tools to enable them to hunt down more effectively the anti-US militants along the Pak-Afghan border. In the process, the government has earned the enmity of people living in the tribal belt and created a serious security situation in the country.

The Tribune, 23 November 2004

US House clears military aid for Pak, Afghanistan

Washington, November 22: Missing the deadline by about seven weeks, the US House of Representatives has passed a \$ 388 billion budget that contains massive military aid programmes for Pakistan and Afghanistan. Reflecting USA's new strategic priorities, the bill for the first time contains \$ 300 million in military assistance for Pakistan designed to bolster capabilities of the country's armed forces that help the USA to hunt down suspected Al-Qaida members along the Afghan-Pakistani border. The programme is seen as a reward to Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, who is risking domestic tensions by siding with the administration of President George W. Bush in its worldwide campaign against the Islamic militants. It will be the largest USA foreign military sale to Pakistan since sanctions against Islamabad were lifted in late 2001 as a reward for supporting US forces fighting Taliban and Al-Qaida forces in neighbouring Afghanistan. Besides the Orion surveillance planes, Pakistan also has requested 2,000 TOW-2A anti-armour guided missiles and six Phalanx Close-in Weapons Systems for its warships.

The Hindu, 23 November 2004

U.S. to increase skilled worker visas by 20,000 (Sridhar Krishnaswami)

Washington, Nov.22. The United States Congress has passed a bill that will increase skilled worker visas by 20,000, including those under the H-1B category. This measure, which will benefit Indian nationals, is part of the U.S.\$ 388-billion spending bill for 2005 that lawmakers passed over the weekend covering 13 government departments and domestic agencies. The bill came up after employers have stressed that the requests for the H-1B visas are much higher than the full quota allocation. And two Republican sponsors of the bill, Senator Saxby Chambliss of Georgia and Representative Lamar Smith of Texas, put forth their proposal, but with a proviso that these skilled workers must have a Master's or Doctoral degree from educational institutions in the United States. The current cap on the H-1B visa is 65,000 a year and Indian nationals are said to account for the highest numbers in this category.

The Daily Times, 24 November 2004

India never accepted Pakistan: Cohen

WASHINGTON: One reason for Pakistan's difficulties lies in the fact that India never accepted Pakistan, and vice versa. Another factor was the early death of the country's founder, according to Stephen Cohen, who has often been described as the "doyen" of America's South Asia experts. In an interview published this week in India Abroad, a New York-based paper, Cohen, who is head of the South Asia programme at the Brookings Institution, says, "The idea (of Pakistan) was contentious, but it does not mean Pakistan cannot evolve, and even by going back to its original idea, as a lot of it is compatible with a secular, democratic India and even with Afghanistan," he argues. He fears that a major war with India will go nuclear and in the event of a defeat, Pakistan in keeping with its history, could change dramatically. However, he does not foresee a war with India on a major scale that could turn nuclear.

Indian Express, 24 November 2004

Alert shuts US Consulate

Mumbai, Nov.23. The United States shuttered its Consular section and the Information Resource Centre at the American Center on Tuesday, following intelligence reports that American interests in Mumbai and New Delhi could be targeted by targets. The deep brown wooden gates of the palatial Lincoln House on Warden Road in South Mumbai remained firmly shut through a 'tense' Tuesday. "All the staff members who reported for duty were asked to go home," a Consulate spokesperson in Mumbai said, but did not elaborate on the security threat. The US Embassy in New Delhi however, functioned normally.

The Nation, 25 November 2004

US defends arms sales to Pakistan (IFTIKHAR ALI)

NEW YORK: In the face of India's objections to the planned sale of U.S. military hardware to Pakistan, the State Department Tuesday defended Washington's arms policy, saying it is governed by American interests. "There is no contradiction between having strong, good relations with India and meeting the defence needs of other countries through the sale of U.S. arms," Adam Erel, the department's deputy spokesman told a news briefing in Washington. "Our arms sales policy, I think, is clear, governed by U.S. interests and congressional legislation, it's transparent, it's publicly notified, and we've done that in the case

of the recent transactions in question," spokesman Ereli responded. "So I think there should be no question that you can have good relations Orion naval reconnaissance planes possibly with anti-ship and anti-submarine missiles, 2,000 TOW-2A heavy anti-armour guided missiles and the PHALANX Close-In Weapon Systems for ships.

Indian Express, 25 November 2004

US seeks India's help to search for WW II missing

Washington, Nov.24. The United States has sought India's assistance in searching for and recovering the remains of nearly 416 Americans who remained missing in India after World War II. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs Jerry D. Jennings held discussions with the Ministries of External Affairs and Defence and other officials in this connection during his two-day visit to New Delhi, the Pentagon said in a statement yesterday. Outlining the US' commitment to its worldwide efforts in returning missing servicemen to their families, Jennings asked Indian officials to join American efforts in searching for and recovering remains of soldiers missing in India from flying re-supply missions over "the hump" referring to the Himalayan mountain range. Stressing on the safety of US teams operating worldwide, the senior US official noted that more than 500 aircraft and 1,200 crew members were still missing in the China-Burma-India theatre of operations during World War II.

The Pioneer, 26 November 2004

US to outsource India's R&D in hydrogen

The United States will engage India as an outsourcing base for research in hydrogen through a newly-created multilateral platform. The forum, International Partnership on Hydrogen Economy, was launched last week in Washington, with the US leading a group of 14 nations to a joint protocol, intended to make hydrogen a commercially-viable future fuel. India's cost-effective research initiatives, as compared to the US or European Union and their intellectual capital standards, is being made central to New Delhi's role in the partnership. The US will spend \$1.7 billion in next five years to power its cars on hydrogen. Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, K C Pant, who returned here as signatory on Centre's behalf, told reporters: "India awaited a multilateral opportunity and the US-led partnership is the right avenue." With warnings on depleting sources of conventional fuel being inversely proportional to the rising demand globally, the Government has set up a special committee on hydrogen under Planning Commission member N K Singh.

The Dawn, 26 November 2004

Pakistan likely to get F-16s

WASHINGTON, Nov 25: Pakistan hopes to finalize purchase of 18 to 25 F-16 multi-role fighter aircraft from the United States during the first half of next year, a leading defence weekly reported on Thursday. This follows the US Department of Defence's notification to Congress on Nov 15 for selling more than \$1.2 billion of sophisticated weapons to Islamabad, the US edition of the Jane's Defence Weekly reported. The two proposed deals are not related. During a visit to Washington last week, Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran had asked US authorities to assure India that they will not sell F-16 jet fighters to Pakistan. Later, diplomatic sources in Washington told Dawn that instead of giving such an assurance, the Bush administration only informed Mr Saran that so far it had made no decision on this issue. Mr Saran also conveyed India's concerns over the proposed \$1.2 billion US arms package for Pakistan but failed to convince the Bush administration to reconsider its decision. And earlier this week, State Department's deputy spokesman Adam Erel snubbed an Indian journalist who had suggested that the United States cannot hope for good relations with India while selling weapons to Pakistan.

The Dawn, 27 November 2004

US-Pakistan relations in post-poll period (Dr Hasan-Askari Rizvi)

The US presidential elections generated a lot of interest in Pakistan and other states in Asia and Africa. The leaders and the informed public in these countries keenly observed the elections because hardly any state has escaped the fallout of US unilateralism and the use of overwhelming military power to pre-empt perceived terrorist threats to American citizens, territory and interests. The government of Pakistan is delighted with the re-election of George W. Bush because the Pakistani leadership and the Bush administration have been working together in the global war against terrorism since September 2001. The official interaction between Pakistan and the US is smooth and there is a common perspective on stability in Afghanistan and the containment of terrorism. However, the response of the ordinary people and political circles in Pakistan has been somewhat different. Most of them were disappointed that the US had re-elected George Bush.

The Daily Times, 27 November 2004

Pak-US defence moot could be delayed

ISLAMABAD: The high-profile meeting of the US-Pak Defence Consultative Group (DCG) scheduled for early next month in Islamabad is likely to be postponed. Highly placed sources told Daily Times that the meeting was conflicting with the formal inauguration of Afghan President-elect Hamid Karzai and political developments in the United States. Sources said the meeting is being rescheduled for late January or February. Sources denied that there would be any negative consequences because of the delayed DCG meeting. "We welcome the US Congress' decision to sell arms to Pakistan. We are glad that the United States is sensitive to Pakistan's requirements. The next meeting will further enhance our mutual cooperation in the field of defence," sources added.

The Nation, 29 November 2004

US offers India Patriots, F-16s

Although Washington has given no categorical assurances to New Delhi on the supply of F-16 fighters to Pakistan, it has gone a step ahead and offered top-of-the-line military hardware to India including the Patriot anti-missile system, C-130 stretched medium lift transport aircraft, P-3C Orion maritime surveillance planes-and even F-16 fighters...Indian Ambassador to US Ranendra Ronen Sen was in New Delhi last week and discussed the US offer-including the proposed US arms deal to Pakistan-with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee. Government sources said that hardware offer will come up when US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld comes to the Sub-Continent for a visit. Rumsfeld is tentatively scheduled to visit India on December 9-10 and will also travel to Pakistan.

The Jang, 29 November 2004

Pak, US defence talks next month

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the United States will have ministerial level defence talks early next month to expand defence ties of the two countries for this purpose the US defence secretary Ronald Rumsfeld is visiting Islamabad in second week of December and hold talks with the authorities concerned here. Highly placed sources told The News here that the US secretary defence's visit to Islamabad immediately after the meeting between President General Pervez Musharaf with the US President George Bush in Washington late in the first week of December has significant importance. The US secretary defence visit will be preceded by the Defence Consultative Group's (DCG) meeting of the United States and Pakistan in Islamabad that has been postponed twice and now expected to take place in early January next or last week of December this year.

The Times of India, 29 November 2004

Most Unwanted: FBI Should Be Kept Out Of North-east (RAVI VISVESVARAYA PRASAD)

India should be wary of accepting the US offer of help in investigating the explosions in the north-east. Indian and US intelligence agencies began cooperating in a limited way in the early 1950s on issues such as Communist and secessionist activities in and around India. This intensified after the 1962 China war, and a joint working group on counter-terrorism has been operational since January 2000. However, India has had some unfortunate experiences with US intelligence agencies... there is a growing feeling in Indian intelligence circles that India is providing far more information to the US in the war on terror than it is receiving in return. India has provided the US with vast quantities of communications intercepts of terrorists in Pakistan and Afghanistan, as well as detailed photographs of terrorist training camps, but has not received information of commensurate value, although the US has provided some help in decryption and pattern recognition.