

Pakistan Chemical Chronology

Last update: May 2010

**As of May 2010, this chronology is no longer being updated.
For current developments, please see the Pakistan Chemical Overview.**

This annotated chronology is based on the data sources that follow each entry. Public sources often provide conflicting information on classified military programs. In some cases we are unable to resolve these discrepancies, in others we have deliberately refrained from doing so to highlight the potential influence of false or misleading information as it appeared over time. In many cases, we are unable to independently verify claims. Hence in reviewing this chronology, readers should take into account the credibility of the sources employed here.

Inclusion in this chronology does not necessarily indicate that a particular development is of direct or indirect proliferation significance. Some entries provide international or domestic context for technological development and national policymaking. Moreover, some entries may refer to developments with positive consequences for nonproliferation.

2008-1980

29 July 2008

A U.S. missile strike on a compound in northwestern Pakistan is believed to have killed Egyptian-born chemical engineer Abu Khabab al-Masri. According to an unnamed U.S. government official, al-Masri had been in charge of al-Qaeda's rudimentary biological and chemical weapons programs before being driven from Afghanistan in 2001. —Joby Warrick and Dan Eggen, "U.S. Strike May Have Killed Al-Qaeda Aide; Pakistani Premier Meets With Bush," *The Washington Post*, 29 July 2008.

3 April 2008

Pakistani Foreign Secretary Riaz Mohammad Khan launches the Wide Area Network (WAN) of the Chemical Weapons Convention implementation mechanism of Pakistan at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The WAN automates collection of import/export data from Pakistan's chemical industries and preparation of declarations for submission to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

—*Dawn* website, 4 April 2008; in "Pakistan's chemical weapons convention implementation mechanism launched," BBC Monitoring, 4 April 2008; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>. "Inaugural Ceremony of the Wide Area Network of the chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) Implementation Mechanism of Pakistan," Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 3 April 2008, www.mofa.gov.pk.

1 December 2004

A Pakistani official is elected vice chairman of the Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. The conference unanimously endorses the candidature of Mustafa Kamal Kazi, Pakistan's envoy to the Netherlands and permanent representative to the OPCW (Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons). Kazi is also vice-chairman of the Executive Council of the Organization for the OPCW.

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—"Anti-Chemical Weapons Body Elects Pakistan Envoy as Vice-Chairman," BBC Monitoring, 1 December 2004; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

14 December 2003

Indian police discover bullets coated with "lethal chemicals" at an Islamic militant camp in the Kashmir region. K. Rajendra, an Indian Regional Police Inspector General reports that Indian forces "recovered a pen-pistol and 25 cartridges. When one of our men tried to remove the cartridge inside, it emitted fumes and he felt dizzy and became unconscious." While the militants are assumed to be of Pakistani-origin, the Pakistan government denies allegations of any assistance to Islamic fighters in the Kashmir region.

—"Chemical Bullets Found," Reuters, 14 December 2003; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 14 December 2003, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

24 October 2003

Pakistan is re-elected to the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the governing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). A Pakistani government statement issued in the wake of this development emphasizes Pakistan's commitment to the CWC and its intentions in playing an instrumental role in the fulfillment of its objectives.

—"Pakistan Re-elected to Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Council," Pakistan Press International Services Limited, 24 October 2003; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

20 June 2003

According to Pakistani sources, inspectors from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons gave an "all clear" report of their recent inspection of the Jordan fertilizer plant. Pakistani officials are quoted as saying the inspection was "purely an industrial inspection aimed at providing help to the member country in chemical industry (sic)," and that "no such chemical was used at the FJIC (Jordan fertilizer plant), which was could be used in making chemical weapons (sic)."

—"UN Chemical Weapons Inspectors End Tour of Pakistani Fertilizer Plant, BBC, 20 June 2003; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 20 June 2003, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

1 June 2003

An Indian newspaper reports that foreign mercenaries, assumed to be of Pakistani origin, operating in Jammu and Kashmir, are in possession of chemical weapons. Sources state that "over the past few months, the army (Indian) has been consistently receiving information that foreign terrorists in the state have been moving with suspicious looking containers." Lt Col S.P.K. Singh of the army's Northern Command Headquarters states that "recent intelligence inputs have suggested that terrorists have been talking about use of poisonous gas."

—"Indian Army Officer: Terrorists in Kashmir Reportedly Possess Chemical Weapons," *Times of India*, 1 May 2003; in FBIS Document: SAP20030501000001.

Spring 2003

Indian police officials in the state of Jammu and Kashmir state that militants are targeting "innocent civilians" with "poisonous injectables" resulting in "instant death." The perpetrators of these enigmatic poisonings are allegedly

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Islamic militants believed to be of Pakistani origin. The occurrences of "poisonous injectables" followed the March 24, 2003 massacre in the central Kashmiri village of Nadi Marg. According to a police spokesman, an investigation of local pharmacies has established that the syringes and chemicals used in the attacks were imported into Surankot, India, a staging point for Islamic fighters, located near the Pakistan border. Pakistan denies allegations of these incidents.

—"Islamic Fighters Swap Guns for Syringes," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 June 2004, www.smh.com; "Militants Swap Guns for Poison in Kashmir," *SIFY Indian News Headlines*, 24 June 2004, <http://headlines.sify.com>.

29 April 2003

Three inspectors from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) conduct inspections of the joint-venture Fauji Jordan fertilizer plant on the outskirts of Karachi. Pakistani Prime Minister Jamali says that OPCW inspectors conducted inspections in Pakistan during 2001 and 2002 as well.

—B. Muralidhar Reddy, "Chemical Weapons Inspectors Visit Plant in Pak," *Hindu*, 1 May 2003; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 1 May 2003, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>; "Report Says UN Team Arriving For Chemical Weapons Inspection," BBC, 22 April 2003; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 22 April 2003, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

22 April 2003

Amid reports that that inspectors from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons are to visit Pakistan for inspections, a Pakistani foreign office spokesman states, "Pakistan is neither a chemical weapon[s] state nor is any inspection for chemical weapons being carried out in the country."

—"Pakistan Denies Reports of Inspection for Chemical Weapons in Country," PTV, 22 April 2003; in FBIS Document, SAP20030422000094.

20 November 2002

Dr. Amer Aziz, who was detained in October 2002 on suspicion that he might have helped Al-Qaida in the development of chemical, biological, and radiological weapons, is freed after one month in detention in Islamabad. During his detention period, Dr. Aziz was reportedly interviewed by US security agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Aziz is released after a Pakistani judge found his detention to be illegal.

—"Pakistani Surgeon Quizzed on Helping Al-Qaeda Make Chemical Weapons," Agence France Presse, 19 November 2002; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 19 November 2002, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>; "Surgeon Accused of Al-Qa'ida 'Dirty Bomb' Plot is Freed," *Independent*, 20 November 2002; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 20 November 2002, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

21 October 2002

The US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Pakistani security forces arrest Dr. Amer Aziz, a British-trained orthopedic surgeon, in Lahore, for allegedly assisting Al-Qaida in the development of chemical, biological, and radiological weapons. Details concerning his involvement are vague.

—"Doctor Accused of Helping Taliban," *New York Times*, 28 October 2002, www.nytimes.com.

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September 2002

Pakistani law enforcement agencies raid three Karachi chemical weapons laboratories, allegedly belonging to Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militants, and recover a "huge cache" of chemicals and lab equipment. According to the Pakistani magazine *Herald*, the investigations showed that "...the seized chemicals and equipment were earmarked for preparing poisonous vapors." However, it is unclear if the terrorists had achieved the capability to launch a chemical attack.

—"Karachi labs hint at terrorists trying to acquire chem weapons," PTI, 19 September 2002; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 19 September 2002, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

23 February 2002

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) uncovers a suspicious yellow powder thought to be a "pesticide or some other agricultural chemical" in a house in Kabul, Afghanistan, which was said to have been occupied by Pakistanis until the Taliban regime was ousted in November 2001. Alongside the powder, the search recovered a tank shell and several respirator canisters.

—ISAF Chemical, Biological Experts Search Afghan House," Agence France Presse, 23 February, 2002; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 23 February 2002, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

November 2001

Two retired Pakistani nuclear scientists are detained by Pakistani authorities upon the discovery of documents in Kabul, Afghanistan, outlining their alleged technical assistance to Al-Qaida. The recovered documents contain diagrams of balloons and rockets allegedly designed to deliver and disperse chemical and biological weapons. One of the diagrams appeared to include the word "cyanide." Found along with the documents are gas masks, Islamist paraphernalia, metal tubes, and a helium canister. However, Pakistani government officials deny that Pakistani scientists are complicit in terrorist activities. Pakistani government spokesperson Major General Rashid Quershi states that "responsible channels and newspapers have carried false news stories...they have been trying for the last two and a half months to implicate us some way or the other that Pakistan supplied arms, ammunition, and personnel to Afghanistan." He adds that it is not Pakistan that has been providing assistance, but Indian military advisors instead.

—Douglas Franz and David Rohde, "A Nation Challenged: Biological Terror; 2 Pakistanis Linked to Papers on Anthrax Weapons," *The New York Times*, 28 November 2001, www.nytimes.com; B. Muralidhar Reddy, "Pakistan Denies Link Between Scientists, Al'Qaeda," *The Hindu*, 29 November 2001, www.hinduonnet.com; Tom Walker, Stephen Grey, and Nick Fielding, "Bin Laden's Camps Reveal Chemical Weapon Ambition," *Sunday Times*, 25 November 2001, www.timesonline.co.uk.

11 October 2000

Pakistani President, Rafiq Tarar promulgates a law prohibiting the development, production, and use of chemical weapons. The law states that "no person shall assist, encourage, induce, in any way, any other person to engage in any activity prohibited to a state party under the Convention [Chemical Weapons Convention]." The law also prohibits riot control agents as a method of warfare; as well as the production, use, acquisition, possession, transfer, import or export of toxic chemicals and precursors. Violation of the law is punishable with up to 25 years imprisonment.

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—"Pakistan Promulgates Law against Chemical Weapons," Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 11 October 2000; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 11 October 2000, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

20 July 1999.

The Indian Army claims it has found evidence that Pakistani forces deployed in the Kaksar area of the Kargil sector along the Indo-Pakistani line of control (LOC) were in possession of chemical weapons. According to army sources, the evidence was found in documents recovered during fighting in the area. Subsequent to the discovery, the Army launches a search operation to try and find the chemical weapons.

—"Indian army says Pakistanis possessed chemical weapons in Kashmir," All India Radio, 18 July 1999; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 20 July 1999, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

29 June 1999

Indian officials fighting militants in Kashmir claim that the militants have begun using syringes to inject their victims with poisonous substances to induce death. According to these sources, an Indian boy has been forcibly injected with a syringe, and subsequently died. Other reports cite the poisoning of an Indian man by syringe and an Indian woman by forced drinking of poison. While not explicitly implicated, sources suggest that Pakistani militants may have been involved in the events.

—"Ultra's Kill 17 in Poonch," *Tribune*, 30 June 1999, www.tribuneindia.com.

31 May 1999

A statement by the Hizb-ul-Mojahedin, a banned Kashmiri separatist group fighting Indian security forces in Kashmir, claims that it possesses chemical weapons and napalm-like devices. The group threatens chemical weapons use in the event of the use of similar weapons by Indian security forces.

—"Pro-Pakistan militants in Kashmir claim to have chemical weapons," PTI, 31 May 1999; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 31 May 1999, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

27 February 1999

The government of Pakistan makes it mandatory for Pakistan's domestic industry to provide details of all chemicals used domestically and imported from abroad. It also proposes to pass a law to this effect in parliament at a later stage. According to Muhammad Hayat Khan of the Pakistani foreign ministry, "the decision was taken to ensure fulfilling the government's responsibilities under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) that Pakistan had signed and ratified."

—"Government to Monitor Toxic Chemical Use in Pakistan," Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 27 February 1999; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 27 February 1999, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

6 September 1998

Indian police officials in Punjab state confiscate two tons of German-manufactured cyanide and a bottle of "flouthere" from Sikh separatist militants. The Indian officials allege that the arrested militants were backed by the Pakistan military's Inter-Services Directorate (ISI); and that the militants had intended to use the chemicals for mass killings by poisoning water supplies or alternatively by attacking military or paramilitary targets.

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—"ISI planned mass killing with cyanide," *Tribune*, 6 September 1998; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 6 September 1998, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

18 February 1998

Pakistan begins framing laws to comply with the CWC. As part of the process, Brigadier Muhammad Hayat Khan, the head of the government agency tasked with implementing the CWC, directs the Karachi Chamber of Commerce to document all chemicals imported by the chemical industry. Khan also threatens that the government will impose heavy penalties on all importers and users who do not comply with the directive.

—"Pakistan frames law to implement Chemical Weapons Convention," Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 18 February 1998; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 18 February 1998, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

28 October 1997

Pakistan ratifies the Chemical Weapons Convention, which it signed in 1993.

—Press Release - "Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, and H.E. Riaz Khokhar, Visits OPCW," 20 May 2003, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, www.opcw.org.

10 July 1997

The *Indian Express*, citing "declassified documents of European origin," alleges that Pakistan has a two-decade old chemical weapons program. The newspaper bases its allegations on Pakistan's large-scale imports of dual-use chemicals such as phosphorous compounds and arsenic with no corresponding use in the civilian chemical industry. The newspaper claims that Pakistan's chemical weapons program is centered at the Defense Science and Technology Organization (DESTRO) and HERIJC Research Institute of Chemistry at the University of Karachi; and the program has developed vesicants, nerve, blood, and choking agents.

—Manvendra Singh "Pakistan still building up lethal chemical weapons," *Indian Express*, 10 July 1997, <http://expressindia.com>.

7 October 1996

In an address to the UN General Assembly in New York, Afghan minister Abdul Rahim Ghafoorzai alleges that the Taliban militia who recently seized power in Afghanistan used "some type of internationally forbidden chemical weapons," supplied by Pakistan. According to Ghafoorzai, the victims of the chemical weapon attacks bled from the nose and ears although they suffered no bullet or shrapnel wounds.

—"Afghan Minister says Taliban used Pakistani Chemical Weapons," Deutsche Presse-Agentur, 7 October 1996; in Lexis Nexis Academic Universe, 7 October 1996, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

April 1995

Pakistan organizes its first national seminar on biological and chemical weapons defense. The seminar is sanctioned by the Defense Science and Technology Organization (DESTO). Defense Minister Aftab Shabaan Mirani asserts that the primary goal of the seminar is to facilitate a nation-wide plan to move towards compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

—"Pakistan Favors Elimination of all Types of Chemical Weapons," *Saudi Gazette*, 28 April 1995; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 28 April 1995, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

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13 January 1993

Pakistan signs the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

—Press Release - "Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, and H.E. Riaz Khokhar, Visits OPCW," 20 May 2003, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, www.opcw.org.

19 August 1992

Pakistan and India sign the, "Joint Declaration on the Complete Prohibition of Chemical Weapons," and announce that they will not "develop, produce or otherwise acquire chemical weapons." Both countries also pledge not to "use chemical weapons," and to not "assist, encourage or induce, in any way, anyone to engage in development, production, acquisition, stockpiling or use chemical weapons." The Declaration also outlines Pakistan's and India's plans to join the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and underscores their right to develop chemical industries for peaceful purposes.

—"Joint Declaration on the Complete Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (New Delhi)," archived at Federation of American Scientists, www.fas.org.

March 1989

According to Afghan government officials, Muslim guerillas from Pakistan are responsible for a series of attacks inside Afghanistan, and have "'received chemical and bacterial weapons." Pakistan acknowledges it has been supporting the Muslim insurgency in Afghanistan to overthrow the Marxist regime of President Najib. But the Pakistani government does not address the alleged supply of chemical and biological weapons.

—Earleen Fisher, "Government Says Attack with New Supplies from Pakistan," Associated Press, 30 March 1989; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 30 March 1989, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

17 August 1988

Pakistani President and Chief of Army Staff, General Zia-ul-Haq is killed in a plane crash. *Vanity Fair* speculates that Zia was likely assassinated and his plane probably crashed because the pilots were incapacitated by a nerve agent similar to VX.

—Edward Jay Epstein, "Who Killed Zia?" *Vanity Fair*, September 1989; archived at, <http://edwardjayepstein.com>.

September 1980

Soviet officials allege that Pakistan-based Afghan fighters have been receiving chemical munitions from foreign sources. They further allege that the United States, China and Egypt, and "some other countries" have been training Afghan fighters in Pakistan since 1978; and that the Pakistan-based "terrorists" are being sent into Afghanistan with "cartridges and grenades stuffed with toxic chemicals."

—Vladimir Korotkov, "Two years of 'Undeclared War' against the Afghan People," BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 29 September 1980; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 29 September 1980, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

August 7, 1980

The United States, U.S.S.R., and Pakistan accuse one another of supplying and using chemical weapons in the Afghan war. Pakistan rejects Soviet allegations that it has supplied chemical and other weapons to the Afghan

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insurgents.

—"Around the World," *New York Times*, 8 August 1980; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 8 August 1980, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

June 1980

Afghan armed forces confiscate weapons from subversive operatives. The weapons include "chemical grenades," bearing the marks of a variety of countries of manufacture, including Pakistan. The confiscated weapons are displayed in Kabul, Afghanistan for the international diplomatic and press corps to inspect.

—Ravil Musin, "Kabul Exhibition of Rebel Weapons," *Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union*, 4 June 1980; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 4 June 1980, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>; "Exhibition of captured weapons allegedly supplied to rebels," BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 6 June 1980; in Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe, 6 June 1980, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com>.

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