

Musharraf's own part in the story, we believe that Musharraf's government represents the best hope for stability in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

KERRY – LUGAR PAKISTAN AID BILL

Ever -- since President Asif Ali Zardari ascended the Presidency he has been voicing Pakistan's concerns about various issues. These included militancy /terrorism and economic pressures amid efforts to declare Pakistan a failed state. Zardari on several occasions pointed out if Pakistan is destabilized, it would have far-reaching repercussions for world peace and tranquility. He, therefore asked the world leaders to appreciate Pakistan's endeavors to combat militancy.

Two influential US senators introduced long-awaited legislation to over-haul and expand US assistance to Pakistan amid deep concerns about the nuclear-armed country's stability.

Democratic Senator John Kerry, the chairman of the Senate foreign Relations Committee, and Republican Richard Lugar, the panel's rankin member, held a joint press session after presenting the bill.

The measure aims to triple US non-military aid to Pakistan, bringing it to 1.5billion dollars per year over the next five years, and advocates for extending the increase over the following five years.

It also calls for conditions on US military aid, saying Pakistani security forces must show they are "making concerted efforts to prevent al-Qaeda and associated terrorist groups from operating in the territory of Pakistan. "They must also show they are "making concerted efforts to prevent the Taliban from using the territory of Pakistan as a sanctuary from which to launch attacks within Afghanistan; and are not materially interfering in the political or judicial processes of Pakistan."

The legislation calls for "benchmarks for measuring the effectiveness of US assistance" at a time when many in the US Congress are openly skeptical of the effectiveness and desirability of boosting US aid to Islamabad.

The legislation requires US President Barack Obama to give US lawmakers a detailed report on US strategy and semi-annual reports thereafter on the effectiveness of the assistance as well as any waste, fraud or abuse.

It also requires US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, in cooperation with Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair, to craft annual reports on Pakistani security forces.

Clinton was also directed to work up a comprehensive strategy with Gates and Blair for coping with violence along Pakistan and Afghanistan's shared border.

The non-military assistance aims to bolster Pakistan's democratic institutions, including through police reform, anti-corruption efforts, battling the illegal drug trade and promoting an independent judiciary.

And it seeks to boost access to public primary and secondary education and vocational training, food security and agricultural development, quality public health, and higher education.

"The Kerry-Lugar approach towards Pakistan emphasizes a long-term relationship built on mutual trust and cooperation: only then will the people of Pakistan see the United States as an ally with shared interests and goals, such as defeating militant extremists that threaten the national security of both countries."

The announcement came two days before US President Barack Obama hosted Presidents Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan and Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan amid concerns about efforts to fight the Islamist threat in the region.

The Pakistan officials lauded the US intentions and termed it as highly positive step. "The reason that we say it positive is because it talks about consolidating democracy in Pakistan, help transform the relationship between the US and Pakistan into a deeper, broader, long-term strategic engagement with the people of Pakistan amongst other things. We have also noted that the US chimes with Pakistan's views of a strategic and holistic view to ensure peace in the region."

He added that Kerry-Lugar Pakistan Enduring Assistance and Cooperation Enhancement Bill (PEACE Act of 2009) was still in the form of a bill, and one had to wait for the legislation from the House of Representatives to see what final shape the bill takes. Spokesman said it was essentially a non-military assistance bill and so far there were no harsh conditions that Pakistan could fault.

The Government also appears to be at ease with the fact that certification will be needed to ensure that the assistance provided to that date is making substantial progress toward the principal objectives contained in the Administration's strategy report.

"Pakistan would like to explain how the sum, to be received, will be spent and we welcome accountability and frown on squandering," the spokesman added. Republican Richard Lugar had on Monday remarked, "We should make clear to the people of Pakistan that our interests are focused on democracy, pluralism, stability, and the fight against terrorism." Observing that these are values supported by a large majority of the Pakistani people, he said: "If Pakistan is to break its debilitating cycle of instability, it will need to achieve delivering government services, and promoting broad-based economic growth."

However some analysts have expressed their doubts on the Kerry-Lugar Bill as being another attempt to seek control over Pakistan under the garb of economic assistance. They believe that the Kerry-Lugar (KLB) is itself problematic even though it may appear angelic in view of the massive amount i.e \$1.5 billion per year authorized for five year. The KLB delinks security or military assistance from non-military assistance but has conditionalities attached to both.

In terms of security, the assistance is on year-by-year basis and the US President has to certify that Pakistan's Security forces—that is the military which means army—are making concerted efforts to prevent Al-Qaeda and other terrorists groups from operating in Pakistani territory. Despite the fact that our security forces have been doing their be-

under the trying circumstances, "the US continues to put forward the mantra of "do more". Such certification would put our security forces under US pressure for a decade at least."¹

The US President will have to certify that the military is taking the necessary steps to prevent Taliban from hiding and taking refuge in Pakistan. The US Secretary of State will have to submit to Congress an annual report on the "progress" of Pakistan's security forces.

The KLB has also attached conditionalities with respect of rule of law, independent judiciary and democracy which may be lauded but absolutely irrelevant and impertinent. The KLB also provides \$5million to US ambassador in Pakistan to provide "Critical need development or humanitarian assistance"² which is meant to buy loyalties and enable the US ambassador to interfere in Pakistan's domestic affairs.

The US House of Representative's Foreign Affairs Committee endorsed a bipartisan measure to authorize a combined package of \$2billion in Security assistance for Pakistan over next five years.

The Pakistan enduring assistance and Cooperation Enhancement Act, which will be passed by the full House and later reconciled with the Senate version, speaks of enduring relationship with Pakistani people but was mainly meant for security assistance for Pakistan to its anti-terrorism performances. Howard Berman, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee which cleared the legislation said, "we need to forge a true strategic partnership with Pakistan, strengthen its democratic government and do what we can to make Pakistan a force for stability in a volatile region"³

The measure HR 1886 will triple US economic assistance to Pakistan to \$1.5 billion a year with a particular focus on strengthening democratic institutions, promoting economic development and improving public education system with an emphasis on access for women and girls. The bill will also establish a permanent Pakistan Democracy and Prosperity Fund for non-military assistance which demonstrates America's long term commitment to Pakistan's democratic future. The bill will also approve \$400 million annually for Pakistan counter-insurgency Capability Fund for five years.

The legislation emphasizes on rigorous vigilance on the aid to ensure that the people are truly benefiting by the assistance. It asks for constant oversight and auditing. The bill has established a set of principles that would govern US-Pakistan ties including the actions that the two countries should take to maintain a robust, relevant and lasting relationship

Senator John Kerry stressed the need for continued US support to help Pakistan take care of the people displaced from Swat after the military operation launched to

¹ Kerry-Lugar Bill: Still seeking control over Pakistan. Shireen M. Mazari . News International May 6, 2009.

² Kerry-Lugar Bill: Still seeking control over Pakistan. Shireen M Mazari, The News International May 6, 2009

³ The News International Friday May 22, 2009.

eliminate the Taliban from the Malakand region. Kerry said that the current humanitarian crisis in Swat valley is a pressing immediate need. He said it is also an opportunity and appreciated the administration decision to send \$110 million in humanitarian aid. He declared we have a chance to demonstrate America's friendship for Pakistani people.

Americas friendship with Pakistan is entering a new and exciting phase. The Kerry Lugar Bill signals a dramatic shift in how American power seeks to engage with Pakistanis.

The Kerry – Lugar Bill exposes several pleasant realities. Its analysis of Pakistan development challenges is reasonably comprehensive. It indicates genuine American interests in serious Pakistan issues. The Bill represents a very good summary of country's development challenges and other issues. The Kerry – Lugar Bill is a well – crafted document that makes no secrets of its motivation.

The KLB begins by reaffirming that Pakistan is a valuable partner and that its efforts to contain the Taliban and Al-Qaeda militants has resulted in deaths of thousands of Pakistani civilian and military personnel. It recognizes that the recent economic crisis has severely damaged Pakistan's economy while recent military operation in Swat and South Waziristan have displaced millions.

The KLB speaks volumes of the need to consolidate democracy, promote judicial independence and the rule of law, provide modern education, madressah reform, "public – private partnerships" and people to people contact. It also aims at improving Pakistan's anti – nuclear proliferation, counter – terrorism and counter insurgency capabilities.

The Kerry – Lugar Bill which after approval by the cabinet came to be known as Kerry – Lugar law empowers the President of the US to help Pakistan democratize, capacity build spread economic freedom and take care of internally displaced persons. The US will support Pakistan to establish "frameworks that promote government transparency." Also it will provide support to promote professional caliber of police, a free media, strengthening civil society and non governmental organizations and facilitate an independent judiciary.

The KLL will also help Pakistan to strengthen its social and economic sectors. These include rural development, vocational training for youth, microfinance, improving health services, investing in higher education, providing humanitarian assistance to the refugees and "building – capacity" for NGOs and civil society.

One of the important objective of the Kerry – Lugar Bill is to prevent any Pakistani territory from being used as a base or a source for terrorists activity in Pakistan. Annual report will be required to establish that efforts were made to eliminate Al-Qaeda, Taliban and close down Jaish-e-Muhammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba, also Pakistan will be required to prevent neighboring countries and madressahs linked to Taliban will have to be closed.

Another objective of the bill is to help strengthen the institution of democratic governance and promote control of military institutions by a democratically elected civilian government. "The Kerry – Lugar Bill is its proponents say, an attempt by the United States to establish a long term partnership with Pakistan. But given the level of

assistance, its wide dispersal and intrusive conditions, the effects seem likely to be negligible on the ground and politically counter productive." ⁴