

CRS Report for Congress

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India: Chronology of Events

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Summary

This report provides a reverse chronology of major events involving India and India-U.S. relations from September 2001.¹ For a substantive review of India-U.S. relations, see CRS Issue Brief IB93097, *India-U.S. Relations*. This report will be updated regularly.

- 10/06/03** — India's Chief of Air Staff announced that a new aerospace command had begun work to develop weapons platforms for space. On the same day, India's Election Commission announced that elections will be held December 1 in four key states currently governed by the opposition Congress Party: Rajasthan, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Delhi.
- 10/05/03** — U.S. and Indian naval forces began their largest-ever joint exercises off India's southern coast. The five-day "Malabar 2003" includes an American nuclear submarine, among other vessels.
- 10/03/03** — Secretary of State Powell stated that the United States has "really restructured a new ... quite strong and satisfactory relationship" with India, and that **progress is being made on the "glide path" toward agreement on the "Trinity" issues** of high-technology trade, and space and civilian nuclear cooperation. On the same day, India's benchmark Sensex stock index rose above the 4,500 mark and the rupee appreciated to a more than three-year high against the U.S. dollar, adding to economic optimism.

Acronyms

BJP:	Bharatiya Janata Party
LOC:	Line of Control (Kashmir)
SAARC:	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

¹ Entries are on a day-to-day basis going back 60-90 days, then include periodic high-profile events. Sources include, but are not limited to, USIS Washington File, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, Associated Press; BBC News, Reuters News, Agence France-Presse, *Hindu* (Madras); *Hindustan Times* (Delhi); *Indian Express* (Mumbai); *Dawn* (Karachi), and *Daily Times* (Lahore).

- 10/02/03** — Secretary of State Powell stated that “even as we fight terrorism of the kind manifested by cross-border activity, there is still room for [India and Pakistan] to engage in dialogue and find ways to go forward.”
- 10/01/03** — Apparent leftist rebels attempted to assassinate the chief minister of India’s southern Andhra Pradesh state in a landmine attack that left the target with serious but nonfatal injuries.
- 09/30/03** — An Indian court deferred criminal proceedings against Human Resources Minister Joshi for conspiracy charges related to the 1992 destruction of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya and ensuing riots. On the same day, police in the northeastern Assam state killed 7 tea plantation workers who had been part of a violent protest over wages.
- 09/29/03** — Indian security officials reported having killed 15 Muslims guerrillas in a nighttime gun battle as they attempted to infiltrate into Indian Kashmir.
- 09/28/03** — Secretary of State Powell stated that for “a variety of reasons,” including domestic politics, **India would not be in a position to provide troops for service in Iraq.** On the same day, the newly-elected head of the Hurriyat Conference of Kashmiri separatists, hardliner Syed Ali Shah Geelani, reportedly claimed that the Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist groups are “friends” and “benefactors” of his organization.
- 09/26/03** — **Indian PM Vajpayee ruled out any bilateral talks with Pakistan** during the January 2004 SAARC summit in Islamabad.
- 09/25/03** — While speaking to the U.N. General Assembly, Indian PM **Vajpayee contended that Pakistan had “let terrorism become a tool of blackmail.”** He also told President Bush that continued cross-border terrorism from Pakistan was making it difficult for India to maintain its peace initiative.
- 09/24/03** — While speaking to the U.N. General Assembly, Pakistani President **Musharraf criticized the “brutal suppression of the Kashmiris” under “Indian occupation.”** On the same day, Indian Deputy PM Advani expressed disappointment that President Bush’s speech at the United Nations had omitted India from a list of countries that recently had been victims of terrorism.
- 09/23/03** — Indian Defense Minister Fernandes said that a U.S.-Israel-India axis against terrorism “does not seem feasible” due to continued U.S. links with Pakistan.
- 09/22/03** — Leading Hindu activist Dara Singh was sentenced to death for the 1999 murder of an Australian missionary and his two children.
- 09/20/03** — Pakistan formally invited the Indian prime minister to attend a January 2004 SAARC summit meeting in Islamabad.
- 09/19/03** — An Indian court ruled that Deputy PM Advani would not be tried for conspiracy charges related to the 1992 destruction of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya and ensuing riots. On the same day, one week after being criticized by the Indian Supreme Court, prosecutors in the western Gujarat state agreed to seek a retrial of 21 Hindus acquitted of murder during communal riots there in February and March 2002.
- 09/18/03** — An Indian Army spokesman claimed that security forces had shot dead 8 suspected militants in continuing gun battles near the LOC, bringing to 60 the number of infiltrators killed since the beginning of September.

- 09/16/03 — India's Supreme Court stalled the government's attempts to privatize two major oil companies by ruling that only parliament — and not the cabinet — can approve their sale.
- 09/15/03 — **The Hurriyat Conference of Kashmiri separatists formally split** after a dispute between hardliners allied with Islamabad and those favoring negotiation with New Delhi. On the same day, Indian Foreign Minister Sinha lowered expectations by saying that a SAARC summit set for January 2004 would not necessarily lead to summit-level discussions with Pakistan, and he reiterated New Delhi's position that "sustained dialogue [with Pakistan] over a period of time is possible only when cross-border terrorism comes to an end."
- 09/14/03 — **Surging separatist violence in Kashmir** reportedly killed as many as 437 civilians, Islamic militants, and Indian security men during the first two weeks of September. An Indian military official said infiltration rates at the LOC were up after dropping in the spring and early summer months.
- 09/12/03 — India's Supreme Court strongly admonished authorities in the western Gujarat state for their handling of attempts to prosecute those involved in deadly communal rioting there in February and March 2002. On the same day, Indian police claimed to have shot dead the "mastermind" of an August terrorist bombing in Bombay that left 52 people dead.
- 09/11/03 — **Assistant Secretary of State Rocca addressed the Confederation of Indian Industry** in New Delhi where she stated that the "outlook is bright for a vigorous global partnership" between the United States and India, while also noting that differences remain "over the development of India's nuclear and missile programs, and the pace of India's economic reforms." She reportedly assured the Indian government that the issue of cross-border infiltration in Kashmir remains very important to the United States.
- 09/10/03 — Indian Foreign Secretary Sibal stated that India "firmly" believes that "the key role in restoration of Iraq should belong to the UN."
- 09/09/03 — A high-level U.S. Navy delegation arrived in New Delhi for negotiations on the sale to India of 8 P3 Orion maritime patrol aircraft.
- 09/08/03 — **Israeli PM Sharon arrived in India** to discuss the strengthening of political and military ties between Israel and India. Indian Muslim groups and leftist political parties denounced the diplomacy. On the same day, a landmine explosion killed 12, including 10 policeman, in the northeastern Bihar state.
- 09/07/03 — A potentially decisive **split in the Kashmiri separatist Hurriyat Conference** came when thirteen constituent members expelled the group's new chairman, who two weeks earlier had suggested that Pakistan need not be included in talks between Kashmiri separatists and New Delhi.
- 09/06/03 — A car bomb killed 7 and wounded about 30 more at a fruit market in Srinagar. The separatist militant Hizbul Mujahideen claimed responsibility for the blast.
- 09/05/03 — US and Indian special forces soldiers began a two-week joint exercise in Ladakh near the India-China border.
- 09/04/03 — USAID awarded a \$4million grant for UN Development Program disaster planning in India. On the same day, Indian and British military experts reportedly warned that Israel's sale of the Phalcon airborne early warning system to India will create a "strategic imbalance" in the region.

- 09/03/03 — British company BAE Systems was awarded a \$1.7 billion contract to supply India with 66 Hawk fighter jets, the majority of which are to be built under license in Bangalore. On the same day, police in Calcutta seized more than 20,000 rounds of AK-47 rifle ammunition that they believe was intended for separatist militants in Kashmir.
- 09/02/03 — A leader of India's *swadeshi* (self-reliance) movement urged India to take the lead in banding together other developing countries to answer the "challenge" represented by the WTO, which he called "essentially an instrument of repression." On the same day, especially lethal separatist violence in Indian Kashmir left 17 people dead.
- 09/01/03 — The **first-ever session of Indian's National Command Authority** met to "consolidate India's nuclear deterrent" and review the readiness of its strategic forces. On the same day, a Pakistani official said that India is withdrawing the "hand of friendship" offered to Pakistan in April 2003.
- 08/31/03 — New Delhi police killed two suspected members of the Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist group who reportedly were planning a "spectacular attack" in the Indian capital.
- 08/29/03 — Indian PM Vajpayee said that New Delhi will have no direct talks with Islamabad until violence ends in the disputed Kashmir region. On the same day, a former head of India's Atomic Energy Commission wrote that the U.S. proliferation policy has "jettisoned many of the basic premises of a fragile nuclear equilibrium existing for the past five decades."
- 08/28/03 — Talks between Pakistan and India on resuming bilateral air links ended with only an agreement to meet again at a later date.
- 08/27/03 — A press report indicated that India will purchase 12 Mirage 2000-5 fighter aircraft from Qatar. Pakistan had also sought the same aircraft.
- 08/26/03 — A report by the Archaeological Society of India suggested that the remains of a Hindu temple may exist beneath the demolished Babri mosque in Ayodhya, though Muslim groups have disputed the findings.
- 08/25/03 — **Two car bombs exploded in Mumbai, India**, killing 52 and spurring New Delhi to suggest a role of Pakistan-based terrorist groups in the attack. Islamabad condemned the "acts of terrorism ... in the strongest possible terms." On the same day, Uttar Pradesh's Chief Minister Mayawati resigned, triggering political disarray in India's most populous state. Also, Indian and French naval forces began a joint exercise in the Arabian Sea.
- 08/23/03 — In a significant policy shift, Kashmiri separatist **Hurriyat Conference Chairman Ansari expressed a willingness to hold talks with the New Delhi government** without stressing the inclusion of Pakistan in the dialogue process.
- 08/20/03 — Jamaat-e-Islami, a leading Kashmiri separatist group, relieved hardliner Syed Ali Geelani as head of the group's political wing after he threatened to launch a new party. On the same day, a State Department spokesman said that the United States is "still concerned" about the level of cross-border terrorist exfiltration from Pakistan.
- 08/19/03 — The Indian government announced that a total of 1,673 people were killed in more than 2,500 incidents of religious violence across the country during the past three years.
- 08/18/03 — A no-confidence vote brought by opposition parties against the coalition government of PM Vajpayee failed by a vote of 312 to 186.

- 08/14/03 — Apparent Independence Day-related **separatist violence left 34 civilians and 6 rebels dead** in India's northeastern Tripura state.
- 08/10/03 — In Lahore, Pakistan, some 100 politicians, activists, and journalists from both India and Pakistan began a two-day conference aimed at reducing bilateral tensions between the two South Asian neighbors.
- 08/09/03 — India claimed to have killed a top Lashkar-e-Taiba figure responsible for planning a March 2003 attack that left 24 Kashmiri Hindus dead.
- 08/07/03 — A two-day meeting of the **U.S.-India Defense Policy Group** ended in Washington. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Feith and Indian Defense Secretary Prasad led their respective delegations. A joint statement reviewed accomplishments since the previous such meeting in May 2002, including numerous joint military exercises and the sale to India of "Firefinder" counterbattery radars. The two sides agreed to hold a missile defense workshop in India, and planned for a U.S. team to travel to New Delhi to discuss the possible sales of P-3 Orion maritime patrol aircraft, among other activities.
- 07/15/03 — **Full diplomatic relations between New Delhi and Islamabad were restored** after an 18-month hiatus when the new Indian ambassador arrived in Pakistan.
- 07/14/03 — **India rejected an American request to send peacekeeping troops to Iraq**, saying it would only consider doing so under an "explicit" UN mandate.
- 07/10/03 — **The United States delivered two "Firefinder" counter-battery radars** to India as part of a \$190 million deal to supply a total of 12 such radars by 2006.
- 07/02/03 — Indian Foreign Secretary Sibal led a delegation to Washington for the first meeting of the **U.S.-India High-Technology Cooperation Group**.
- 06/03 — A major improvement in relations between the world's two most populous countries came when **Indian PM Vajpayee traveled to China**, the first visit by an Indian leader in more than a decade.
- 05/03 — Deputy Secretary of State Armitage and Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Rocca visited South Asia in an effort to assist with further easing tensions and fostering bilateral dialogue between India and Pakistan. Also, Indian National Security Advisor Mishra met with senior U.S. officials in Washington to discuss regional security issues.
- 04/03 — **A significant thaw in India-Pakistan relations** came with the first direct contact between national leaders since the July 2001 summit in Agra, India. The two agreed to restore full diplomatic relations, reopen key transportation links, and pursue further confidence-building measures.
- 03/03 — **The Indian government called the U.S.-led war in Iraq "unjustified" and "avoidable."** Also, apparent Muslim extremists shot and killed 24 Hindu villagers in Indian Kashmir.
- 02/03 — Indian Foreign Secretary Sibal led a delegation to Washington to meet with Under Secretary of Commerce Juster and other U.S. officials for the signing of a **Statement of Principles for U.S.-India High Technology Commerce**. A second meeting of the Global Issues Forum was held in Washington, as well. Also, the incumbent BJP suffered an upset loss to the Congress Party in state elections in the overwhelmingly Hindu northern state of Himachal Pradesh.

- 01/03 — **India and Iran launched a “strategic partnership”** with the signing of the New Delhi Declaration and seven other substantive agreements. India also signed a “landmark” defense cooperation protocol with Russia. Also, India announced that it has set up a Nuclear Command Authority headed by the prime minister.
- 12/02 — Elections in the state of Gujarat, the site of communal violence earlier in 2002, resulted in an unexpectedly decisive victory for the incumbent Hindu-nationalist BJP party, which ran a divisive communal campaign.
- 10/02 — India announced a major redeployment of troops away from border areas, signaling **an end to a tense 10-month-long military face-off** with Pakistan. Also, Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs Dobriansky met in New Delhi with Indian officials for the inaugural session of a new India-U.S. Global Issues Forum.
- 09-10/02 — **State elections in India’s Jammu and Kashmir state**, widely recognized as being free and fair, resulted in the ousting of the long-ruling National Conference and the seating of a new coalition government that vowed to “soften” policy toward separatist militants.
- 09/02 — Gunmen stormed a Hindu temple in Gujarat and killed 23 worshipers. The attackers were suspected to be Islamic militants seeking revenge for February 2002 anti-Muslim rioting in the state.
- 06/02 — Intense international diplomatic pressure — including multiple visits to the region by senior U.S. government officials — apparently was sufficient to persuade New Delhi to refrain from taking military action against Pakistan. Key to the effort were explicit **promises by Pakistani President Musharraf to U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Armitage** that all infiltration of militants across the Line of Control and into Indian-held Kashmir would be halted.
- 05/02 — **A terrorist attack on an Indian army base in Jammu and Kashmir killed 34**, mostly women and children. New Delhi blamed the attack on the “cross-border terrorism” of Pakistan-sponsored Islamic militants and vowed to fight a “decisive war.”
- 02/02 — After Muslims reportedly set fire to a train carrying Hindu activists, killing 58, **India’s worst communal rioting in more than a decade** spread across the Gujarat state and resulted in the deaths of up to 2,000, mostly Muslims, at the hands of vengeful Hindu mobs. Human rights groups accused top state governmental leaders of abetting the violence.
- 12/01 — **A terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament complex in New Delhi killed 14**. India blamed the attack on Pakistan-backed Kashmiri militants and began a massive military mobilization along the Pakistan-India frontier. Also in December, the United States designated two Pakistan-based militant groups — Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed — as Foreign Terrorist Organizations under U.S. law.
- 10/01 — **A terrorist attack on the assembly building in India’s Jammu and Kashmir state killed 34**. New Delhi blamed the attack on Pakistan-backed separatist militants.
- 09/01 — After major terrorist attacks on the United States, **India offered its full support for U.S. counterterrorism efforts** in the region.