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China behind U.S.-Pakistan Rift

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U.S.-Pakistan relations have deteriorated since U.S. commandos killed al-Qaeda terrorist network leader Osama bin Laden in Pakistan. How the Pakistani government is addressing international terrorism is uncertain, while the U. S. has held suspicions about relations between Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, known as the world's largest intelligence agency, and Afghanistan's Taliban insurgents or al Qaeda. Depending on how China would be involved in the situation, South Asia could become an epicenter of turmoil.

Rift emerged from bin Laden assault

Following the 9.11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the U.S., Washington urged Pakistan to side with either the Taliban or the U.S. This was because Washington knew that the ISI played a role in fostering the Taliban. The U. S. refrained from making an advance notification to Pakistan of its plan to assault bin Laden, fearing that the notification could be leaked to him. Pakistan for its part has growingly criticized the U.S. as having unilaterally violated Pakistani sovereignty. In response, Senator John Kerry, a U.S. Democrat heavyweight, rushed to Pakistan. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will also visit Islamabad soon. But the bilateral rift is serious and seems difficult to bridge.

Pakistan indicated its "double-tongued" diplomacy just before the bin Laden assault operation. Pakistani Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani urged Afghan President Hamid Karzai in Kabul on April 16 to refrain from building a long-term strategic partnership with the United States and instead look to Pakistan and its Chinese ally for help in striking a peace deal with the Taliban and rebuilding the economy, the Wall Street Journal reported on April 27. This report has not been denied officially.

Premier Wen's sarcastic message

The Pakistani prime minister met with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in Beijing on May 18 under a plan that was made before the bin Laden assault. Premier Wen emphasized that Pakistan's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity should be respected as Pakistan had made much sacrifice for and key contributions to the international war against terrorism. This was a sarcastic message sent to the U.S..

The U.S. seems unable to respond to the message. President Barack Obama is about to carry out policies for domestic consumption, thinking that the death of bin Laden made it easier for the U.S. to withdraw troops from Afghanistan. At the U.S. Congress, both Democrats and Republicans have called for the pullout from Afghanistan. Such situation would work to the advantage of the Taliban. Politically unstable Pakistan could be "Talibanized" to give terrorists access to nuclear weapons. We now see a grave situation.

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