

China-Pak all weather friends

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao assured his Pakistani counterpart Yusuf Raza Gilani of China's "all-weather friendship" on Wednesday, at the start of a visit that sharply contrasts with the intense strain at present between Washington and Islamabad.

"I wish to stress here that no matter what changes might take place in the international landscape, China and Pakistan will remain forever good neighbours, good friends, good partners and good brothers," Wen told Gilani, according to a pool report, during a meeting in central Beijing's Great Hall of the People.

Gilani's four-day trip to China began on Tuesday to mark 60 years of diplomatic ties, but has also given the neighbours a chance to display their steadfast friendship, which stands at odds with US anger at Pakistan's inability to catch Osama bin Laden.

Pakistan's brittle relationship with the United States, its major donor, was intensely strained after US forces on 2 May killed bin Laden, the world's most wanted man, in Pakistan. He appears to have hidden there for years, prompting anger and questions in Washington about why he was not found sooner.

Wen said that Pakistan had made "huge sacrifices" in the international war against terrorism and had also made "important contributions", Chinese state television reported.

"Pakistan's independence, sovereignty

and territorial integrity must be respected," it paraphrased Wen as saying. "The international community must understand and support Pakistan's efforts towards maintaining domestic stability and realising economic development."

China was making an all-out effort to support Pakistan "get through its difficulties", Wen added, saying that Beijing was encouraging Chinese companies to invest in Pakistan.

"All-weather Friends"

China and Pakistan praise each other as "all-weather friends" and their close ties reflect long-standing shared wariness of their common neighbour, India, and a desire to hedge against US influence across the region.

On Wednesday, official Chinese media kept up that theme.

"Currently, China and Pakistan both regard each other as diplomatic cornerstones and important backers," said a commentary in the overseas edition of the People's Daily, China's main government newspaper.

Beijing's support for Pakistan reflects its worries about instability spilling into its own western regions, especially heavily Muslim Xinjiang.

But the mutual vows of Sino-Pakistani friendship only go so far in balancing US influence, several analysts told Reuters.

Pakistan's government and military are too reliant on US security and economic aid to risk that alliance.



Nor does Beijing want to risk deep entanglement in volatile Pakistani politics, risking its own interests and alienating India, a big but wary trade partner.

"Pakistan has high hopes for China, because its relations with the United States are so tense," said Hu Shisheng, an expert on South Asia at the China Institutes of

Contemporary International Relations, a think tank in Beijing.

"But nonetheless the US-Pakistani anti-terrorism alliance isn't going to rupture."

CBI not probing national security angle in 2G

Swamy told Special CBI Judge O P Saini that his complaint touches the wider issue of national security which the CBI has not investigated

Janata Party chief Subramanian Swamy on Wednesday told a Delhi court that his private complaint in the 2G spectrum case, touching the issue of national security, should be heard separately as the CBI is not willing to club his complaint with its FIR in the scam.

Swamy told Special CBI Judge O P Saini that his complaint touches the wider issue of national security which the CBI has not investigated.

"I would like my private complaint to be heard separately. I have wider issues (in the complaint) touching the national security aspect, which the CBI is not investigating," Swamy said.

Pressing for his demand for appointment as public prosecutor in the case, Swamy said, "I have every right to be appointed as prosecutor in this case."

He claimed that the CBI's charge sheet puts the entire blame on former telecom minister A Raja, a key accused in the case, whereas all the decisions were taken by Raja and the then finance minister (P. Chidambaram).

The judge later deferred the hearing in the matter to 26 August.

The CBI had earlier opposed Swamy's plea seeking his appointment as prosecutor in the case, saying that his complaint was "not tenable in law" and not "worth accepting".

The agency had told the court that Swamy's submission regarding clubbing of his private complaint with the CBI's case was not in the interest of justice and his complaint may be dealt with separately.

The CBI had said that Swamy's allegation regarding possession of disproportionate assets by Raja and issues relating to the national security aspect are not directly related to the 2G scam.

"In his complaint dated 15 December, 2010, Swamy also alleged commission of offence of possession of disproportionate assets by accused A Raja and issues relating to national security.

"These issues are separate and not directly related to the 2G spectrum case, for which this exclusive



court has been constituted," the CBI had said.

Opposing Swamy's prayer that he be appointed as a prosecutor in the case, CBI had said that it is the prerogative of the Centre to appoint a public prosecutor and as directed by the Supreme Court, the government has already appointed senior advocate U U Lalit as special public prosecutor in the case.

"The said prayer of Swamy to appoint him as special public prosecutor and direct the CBI, the Enforcement Directorate and other prosecuting agencies of the government to assist him in conducting the case is, therefore, not tenable in law and is not worth acceptable," CBI had said.

The agency had further opposed clubbing of Swamy's private complaint with the agency's FIR, saying that "all the offences discussed in the complaint case are not included in the police (CBI) case."

Swamy had told the court that he does not have any problem if his complaint is tagged with the CBI's FIR, but wanted to be appointed prosecutor in the case.

Swamy had asserted that the 2G spectrum scam impinges upon national security as Swam Telecom and Unitech Wireless, against whom the CBI had filed charge sheet in the case, had sold their major stakes to two foreign companies Etisalat DB and Telenor, which, he said, is considered by the home ministry "a major threat" to the national security.

"The first two licensees, Swan Telecom and Unitech Wireless, soon after sold their controlling shares to Etisalat DB and Telenor respectively. The national security risk from these companies are highlighted by the Union Home Ministry as their connections go right into Pakistan," Swamy had alleged.

Chinese teen sells kidney to buy iPad 2

A teenager in China's Anhui province has sold his right kidney to buy an iPad 2. His mother, who knew nothing of his plans, now hopes to hunt down the criminals who disabled him, a media report said.

Seventeen-year-old Xiao Zheng had been dreaming of a new iPad 2 for a while, but the price was beyond his means. Zheng found an agent ready to buy his kidney and travelled to Hunan province in central China to undergo surgery in a local hospital. With the 22,000 yen (\$3,900) he was paid, Zheng bought a new iPad 2 and iPhone and then returned home, according to a report on the Dongfang TV channel Thursday.

Xiao Zheng returned home with a computer and a new Apple phone. We do not have the money for

such expensive gadgets. At first, he did not want to tell me where he got that much money from. Later he confessed he had sold his right kidney to buy these things,' his mother told the channel.

After she learned the truth, Zheng's mother travelled with her son back to the hospital, only to discover that the operating theater had been rented out for commercial use to a businessman from Fujian province. Several attempts to reach the agents failed, as their phones were switched off.

Zheng's health is deteriorating day by day, and his mother said she hopes she will be able to find the criminals who disabled her son.

IAN/S/RIA Novosti

Malaysia police slammed for cattle-branding women



Malaysian lawyers, politicians and activists lambasted the police Saturday, accusing them of abusing their power in chaining up and marking the bodies of 30 foreign women detained for alleged prostitution.

Police raided a high-end nightclub in northern Penang state late Thursday and arrested 29 women from China and one from Vietnam, along with eight Malaysian men. Local media reported police officers went undercover at the club for a week before the raid.

It triggered an outcry after local newspapers carried photos of the women bound up with a long chain and marked with either a tick or an X on their chest and forehead.

"The police branded the detained women as though they are cattle," opposition lawmaker Teresa Koksaid in a statement. "It is sickening that the police would employ such dehumanizing tactics as a show of power and moral superiority over their

detainees."

Women's rights group Tenaganita said the detainees had been victimized and called for an investigation into the police conduct.

Another rights group, Lawyers for Liberty, said the police action was "very unusual and inhumane" as the women were merely suspects and not convicted of any crime.

Police have defended their action, saying the markings served as a way to identify the women.

Penang police chief Ayub Yaakob told the New Straits Times that the situation was chaotic, with the suspects trying to escape. He said police were forced to mark the women after some donned new clothes to try and blend in with other female patrons of the club.

He also said the women had wrecked many marriages and that police had received numerous complaints from wives of men who sought their services.

AP