

# Suicide blasts rattle U.S.-Pakistan ties

## 80 PARAMILITARY RECRUITS KILLED

### Pakistanis wonder if U.S. relations worth it

BY ALEX RODRIGUEZ  
Los Angeles Times

PESHAWAR, Pakistan — Twin suicide-bomb blasts that killed at least 80 paramilitary force recruits in northwest Pakistan on Friday — an attack that Taliban militants said was meant to avenge the killing of Osama bin Laden by U.S. commandos — could trigger new doubts among Pakistanis about the value of Islamabad's already rocky relationship with Washington.

The bombers targeted scores of Frontier Constabulary paramilitary recruits who had just completed six

months of training and were boarding vans outside the center's main gate before going on a 10-day leave, police and survivors said. The base is in Shabqadar, a town near the edge of Mohmand, a tribal area where Pakistani troops have struggled for years to rein in Pakistani Taliban militants.

The attack was Pakistan's deadliest this year, and the first major terror strike in the country since bin Laden's killing.

Pakistanis have grown increasingly worried that they will bear the brunt of retaliatory attacks by militants angered by the May 2 killing of the al-Qaida leader by U.S. Navy SEALs at the compound in the military city of Abbottabad, which he used as sanctuary for five years.

Washington's decision to

carry out the mission without Islamabad's knowledge or authorization angered many in Pakistan who saw the effort as a gross violation of their country's sovereignty.

Reacting to news of the blasts, Bashir Bilour, a senior minister for Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, questioned whether, despite the billions of dollars that Pakistan receives from Washington in aid, the country was paying too heavy a price for its role as an ally in the war on terror.

"I don't care if someone is giving us money; we are not a purchasable commodity," Bilour told reporters in Peshawar. "We cannot be bought. We can live in hunger, but we won't compromise our national interests."

The Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility for the

## In other developments

**Offer to resign:** Pakistan's spy chief lashed out at the United States on Friday as letting his country down "at every difficult moment in our history" and offered to resign. Lt. Gen. Ahmad Shuja Pasha's offer appeared to be an effort by Pakistan's powerful military-intelligence agency to absorb the strong criticism it has received from opposition lawmakers over its reported failure to detect bin Laden's presence in a garrison town 35 miles from Islamabad, the capital.

**Bin Laden porn:** The massive cache of computer files taken from Osama bin Laden's compound contained a considerable quantity of pornographic videos, U.S. officials said Friday, adding a discordant note to the public image of the Islamist militant who long denounced the West for its lax sexual mores. In a 2002 "letter to the American people," bin Laden denounced U.S. culture for its exploitation of women's bodies in dress, advertising and popular culture.

Seattle Times news services

attack, explaining it was the first of a wave of planned strikes meant to avenge bin Laden's killing, according to

news agencies and Pakistani media.

The Pakistani Taliban, the country's homegrown insur-

gency, is closely allied with al-Qaida and is one of several militant groups that have provided the terrorist network sanctuary in the volatile tribal region along the Afghan border.

The bombers struck at a time when recruits appeared to be particularly vulnerable — just as they were leaving the training center in large groups. As the recruits loaded their luggage onto the vans, a bomber on a motorcycle drove up and detonated his explosives near the main gate.

Moments later, a second bomber on foot detonated a larger blast as onlookers rushed to help recruits wounded in the first explosion. Most of the dead were recruits, police said. More than 100 people were injured.