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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
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To: H
Subject: Fw: Pakistan let China see "stealth" chopper from bin Laden raid (Financial Times)

From: OpsNewsTicker
Sent: Sunday, August 14, 2011 02:27 PM
To: NEWS-Mahogany; NEWS-Pakistan; NEWS-China
Cc: SES-O
Subject: Pakistan let China see "stealth" chopper from bin Laden raid (Financial Times)

ISLAMABAD, Aug 14 (Reuters) - Pakistan gave China access to the previously unknown "stealth" helicopter that crashed during the commando raid that killed Osama bin Laden in May despite explicit requests from the CIA not to, the Financial Times reported on Sunday.

The revelation, if confirmed, is likely to further shake the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, which has been improving slightly after hitting its lowest point in decades following the May 2 bin Laden raid.

During the raid, one of two modified Blackhawk helicopters, believed to employ unknown stealth capability, malfunctioned and crashed, forcing the commandos to abandon it.

"The US now has information that Pakistan, particularly the ISI, gave access to the Chinese military to the downed helicopter in Abbottabad," the paper quoted a person "in intelligence circles" as saying.

Pakistan, which enjoys a close relationship with China, allowed Chinese intelligence officials to take pictures of the crashed chopper as well as take samples of its special "skin" that allowed the American raid to evade Pakistani radar, the newspaper reported.

No one from the Pakistani army was available for comment, but the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), Pakistan's top spy agency, denied the report. The paper said Pakistan's top general, chief of army staff Ashfaq Kayani, denied that China had been given access.

The surviving tail section, photos of which were widely distributed on the Internet, was returned to the United States following a trip by U.S. Senator John Kerry in May, a spokesman for the U.S. embassy told Reuters.

Shortly after the raid, Pakistan hinted that it might give China access to the downed chopper, given its fury over the raid, which it considers a grievous violation of its sovereignty.

"We had explicitly asked the Pakistanis in the immediate aftermath of the raid not to let anyone have access to the damaged remains of the helicopter," the Financial Times quoted the source as saying.

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