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## Top u.s. general replaced

By: Jim Mannion on: 09.06.2007 [19:56 ] (338 reads)

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Top u.s. general replaced

By Jim Mannion

Washington, June 9: US defence secretary Robert Gates said on Friday he was replacing General Peter Pace as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to avoid a divisive showdown in Congress focusing on the Iraq war. The surprise shakeup removes a general who has been at the centre of US military decision-making for the past six years, from the war in Afghanistan to the US-led invasion of Iraq.

"I am disappointed that circumstances make this kind of a decision necessary," Mr Gates said of the loss of Gen. Pace, who has held the country's top military post since September 2005.

The moves comes amid persistent difficulties in Iraq and sharpening political tensions at home with the Congress already gearing up to receive a key progress report from US military commanders on the Iraq war in September.

He said he had intended to name Gen. pace to a second two-year term as chairman in September, but changed his mind after consulting members of Congress, who also already have an eye on the 2008 presidential polls.

"I have decided that at this moment in our history, the nation, our men and women in uniform and Gen. Pace himself would not be well served by a divisive ordeal in selecting the next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," he said. Gen. Pace as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the chief military adviser to US President George W. Bush and the most senior US military officer. "I'm told the president reluctantly agreed because he has the highest regard for Gen. Pace," said White House spokesperson Dana Perino.

**In deciding to replace Gen. Pace with Admiral Michael Mullen, who is at present the Chief of Naval operations, Mr Gates also had to replace Admiral Edmund Giambastiani as vice-chairman so that the top two military positions would not both be held by naval officers.**

**Admiral Giambastiani will be replaced by Marine General James Cartwright, currently the head of the US Strategic Command, which is responsible for US strategic nuclear forces.** (AFP)

<http://www.asianage.com/presentation/leftnavigation/news/international/top-us-general-replaced.aspx>

