

Witness Biography: *International Court of Justice*

A.K. Antony

Indian Defense Minister



Background:

A.K. Antony was born in 1941 to Arackaparambil Kurian Pillai and Aleyamma. He received his primary education at the Government High School in Cherthala. He went on to graduate from Maharajas College and later receive his Bachelor of Literature degree from the Law College at Eranakulam. Early in his schooling Antony became a leader in student organizations, and as the Union Secretary at Maharajas College, he was a prominent student leader on the state level. In 1970 Antony was elected to the Legislative Assembly of Kerala, a small region in southwestern India, and from 1977-1978 and 1995-1996 he served as Chief Minister of Kerala. Antony was elected to the Upper House of the Indian Parliament or Rajya Sabha in 1985 and served as Minister of Civil Supplies under Prime Minister Narasimha Rao. In 2004 Antony resigned from the Assembly, and on October 24th 2006 was appointed defense minister of India.

What he adds to the case:

As the head of the Ministry of Defense it is A.K. Antony's job to oversee the communication and relationship that exists between the Government and other institutions such as Inter-Services Organizations and Research and Development Organizations, as well as to provide a policy outline of India's armed forces. Thus Antony serves in a vital position for directing the actions of India's military in its conflicts in the Kashmir region.

View on the Issue:

Although A.K. Antony took his position as Defense Minister only this past year, he has voiced his concern about major terrorist groups having foreign terrorists amongst their ranks. Antony backs a counter infiltration strategy which would include deployments of troops, up to date surveillance devices, a "Line of Control" fence, and a second deployment of troops in union with the fence. In addition Antony believes that the army's mission in Kashmir should be not only to defend but to also be a part in the socioeconomic development of the region.

Quote(s):

On his first visit to the Kashmir region Antony said, "This is my first visit and I see that jawans are working in a very, very difficult situation. They should be provided with more facilities and financial assistance as they are protecting the nation's integrity."

"These are his suggestions, but we will have our own discussions on the subject before we decide." –Antony referring to the Pakistani President's proposal to resolve the conflict in Kashmir.

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