

ACTION INR-00

INFO	LOG-00	EEB-00	AF-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	A-00	<span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 80px; height: 15px;"></span>
	INL-00	DNI-00	DOTI-00	PDI-00	DS-00	EAP-00	DHSE-00
	EUR-00	OIGO-00	FAAE-00	UTED-00	VCI-00	DIAS-00	H-00
	TEDE-00	IO-00	L-00	ARMY-00	MOFM-00	MOF-00	M-00
	VCIE-00	NEA-00	DCP-00	NSAE-00	ISN-00	OIC-00	OIG-00
	NIMA-00	EPAU-00	PM-00	GIWI-00	ISNE-00	DOHS-00	IRM-00
	NCTC-00	FMP-00	BBG-00	R-00	EPAE-00	ECA-00	IIP-00
	SCRS-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-00	G-00	SCA-00
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 JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
 TAGS: KMDR, KPAO, OIIP, OPRC, PGOV, PREL, PK  
 SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: MARCH 17, 2010

Summary: "Dawn," reported on its front-page that Army Chief General Kayani chaired a meeting of key federal secretaries to finalize the agenda for the upcoming strategic dialogue with the U.S. administration. National Intelligence Director Blair's Islamabad visit received extensive coverage in newspapers on Wednesday morning including highlighted reports that President Zardari during his meeting with him sought U.S. civilian nuclear cooperation, and predator drone technology for Pakistan. Secretary Clinton's remarks reaffirming U.S. policy to assist Pakistan in ensuring stability and constitutional civilian rule were reported. Both electronic and print media reported that the United States handed over a squadron of AH-1 Cobra helicopters to Pak Army. All dailies highlighted

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reports that a U.S. drone strike killed ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ including three foreigners in North Waziristan. The video-phone conversation between President Obama and his Afghan counterpart President Karzai to discuss prospects of peace with Taliban garnered prominent coverage. Several major Urdu newspapers reported that the U.S. has donated road-building equipment worth \$2 million to the FATA administration. Ambassador Patterson's letter to the Foreign Office, expressing concerns over the publication of addresses of some American diplomats, continued to garner media attention on second consecutive day. "Daily Times," reported that the Foreign Office responded to Ambassador Patterson's letter, and assured her that the Interior Ministry would take all steps for ensuring their safety." Commenting on the subject, Urdu daily "Pakistan," observed that these concerns are not "unjustified," and that "competition for breaking news should not overwhelm journalists' civic responsibilities." Media also reported that Pakistan and Iran signed a deal in Istanbul paving the way for constructing a much-delayed gas pipeline. End Summary.

#### TOP STORIES

First Secretaries' Meeting Chaired By Army Chief - "Dawn" (03/17)

"Chief of the Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani presided over on Tuesday a meeting of key federal secretaries at the General Headquarters (GHQ) to finalize agenda for the upcoming strategic dialogue with the U.S. administration. According to sources, Federal Secretaries for Finance, Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Agriculture, along with the Secretary in charge of Information Technology and Petroleum, attended the meeting."

Zardari Seeks Civilian Nuclear Technology From U.S. - "Daily Times" (03/17)

"President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday called on the U.S. administration to assist Pakistan with civilian nuclear technology, and sought the early transfer of drone technology. 'Civilian nuclear technology will help Pakistan meet its growing energy demand ... the [transfer of] drone technology will... [lead to] wider public acceptability [of strikes],' said Zardari at a meeting with Director of U.S. National Intelligence Dennis C Blair, who had called on him at the Presidency. The president said the two technologies could also facilitate the bridging of a trust deficit between the two countries."

Gilani Seeks World Help In Developing Tribal Areas - "Dawn" (03/17)

"Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani urged the international community on Tuesday to help Pakistan develop the areas cleared of militants.

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'This is crucial to retain national consensus and public support in sustaining the campaign against terrorism,' he said during a meeting with Admiral Dennis C. Blair, U.S. Director of National Intelligence, at the Prime Minister's House.... He said there was need for concrete and visible signs of fulfillment of commitments in sectors already identified. He said the success of the forthcoming Pakistan-U.S. strategic dialogue would bridge the trust deficit and address misperceptions about Pakistan-U.S. relations. Mr. Gilani expressed the hope that the U.S. would soon start work on projects in the energy sector to ease power shortage in the country."

U.S. Chief Spy Calls on COAS - "The News" (03/17)

"U.S. National Intelligence Director Admiral (R) Dennis Cutler Blair called on Chief of Army Staff Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani here on Tuesday. The visiting dignitary remained with the COAS for some time, according to ISPR."

Clinton Pledges Help For Pak Stability, Economic Uplift "Pakistan Observer" (03/17)

"U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has reaffirmed the Obama administration's policy to assist Pakistan in ensuring stability and constitutional civilian rule and expressed the confidence that its multi-layered approach to curb Al Qaeda and Taliban terrorist threat in the region will help bring peace and security to Pakistan and Afghanistan. She also stated in an interview that Washington is increasing and broadening its economic assistance for Pakistan."

U.S. Delivers Cobra Copters To Pakistan "Pakistan Observer" (03/17)

"The United States has delivered a squadron of Cobra advanced helicopter gunships to Pakistan, sources reported Tuesday. According to details, the Cobra helicopter gunships, equipped for night flying, has been supplied by the U.S. from its Jordan Air Base stock. The helicopters were handed over to Pakistan Army Aviation."

U.S. Drone Kills 10 Militants - "Dawn" (03/17)

"Ten militants, three foreigners among them, were killed and a number of others injured when a U.S. drone fired three missiles on a compound used by militants in North Waziristan tribal region on Tuesday."

Obama, Karzai Discuss Prospects For Taliban Talks - "Dawn" (03/17)

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"Afghan President Hamid Karzai discussed peace with the Taliban in a video phone conversation with U.S. President Barack Obama, Karzai's office said on Tuesday. Obama speaks to Karzai less frequently than his predecessor, George W. Bush, and has not visited Afghanistan since being elected U.S. President in 2008. 'During the video call, Karzai put Obama in the picture about Afghanistan's efforts towards the acceleration of peace and national reconciliation, which America's president welcomed,' the statement said."

U.S. Donates Road-Building Equipment to FATA - "Nawa-i-Waqt,"  
"Ausaf," "Pakistan," "Aaj-Kal" (03/17)

"The U.S. on Wednesday donated road-building equipment valued at Rs. 168 million (\$2 million) to the FATA Secretariat. In a handover ceremony held in Hayatabad, U.S. Consul General Candace Putnam presented the equipment to FATA Additional Chief Secretary Habibullah Khan, including 25 road rollers, 15 stone crushers, 15 asphalt mixers, 16 air compressors and 16 jack hammers."

FO Responds To Patterson's Letter About U.S. Diplomats' Safety -  
"Daily Times" (03/17)

"Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has responded to the letter written by the U.S. ambassador to Pakistan, stating that the relevant authorities are taking all possible steps to ensure the safety of all foreign diplomats in the country. According to diplomatic sources, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi wrote back to Anne W. Patterson, assuring her that Pakistan is aware of its responsibilities towards the staff of foreign missions residing in the country, and the Interior Ministry would take all steps for ensuring their safety."

Pakistan And Iran Sign Gas Pipeline Agreements - "Dawn" (03/17)

"In a major breakthrough on the gas pipeline project, Pakistan and Iran signed the heads of agreement and an operational accord in Istanbul on Tuesday. The inter-state gas systems, a semi-autonomous body which will take care of Pakistan's interests in the import of gas through the pipeline, and the National Iranian Oil Company finalized the agreements."

#### TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

Obama Gets Credit For Pak Anti-Terror Gains: Report - "The News"  
(03/17)

"Pakistan's effective fight and vastly improved cooperation against Taliban and Al Qaeda-linked militancy in the region is being seen as an important foreign policy achievement for President Barack Obama,

Fareed Zakaria wrote in 'The Washington Post' the other day."

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U.S. Promoting National Govt. In Kabul: Hillary - "Dawn" (03/17)

"U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said on Tuesday that Washington was promoting a more effective national government in Afghanistan as a means to defeating Al Qaeda. Her statement - in an interview to Russia's New Times newspaper - comes amid widespread speculations in Washington that the United States would encourage the formation of a new, broad-based government in Kabul."

2010 Will Be A Difficult Year In Afghanistan - "The News" (03/17)

"U.S.-led forces will face a 'difficult' year in 2010 as they fight to push back Taliban militants from key areas, a top U.S. General said on Tuesday. The head of U.S. forces in the Middle East and Central Asia, General David Petraeus, told lawmakers 'the going is likely to get harder before it gets easier' in the Afghan war."

Iran's N-Bomb Effort Has Slowed: U.S. General - "Dawn" (03/17)

"U.S. General David Petraeus said on Tuesday Iranian efforts to develop a nuclear weapon appear to have been delayed 'a bit' and voiced confidence it would not have a bomb this year. The comments by the head of the U.S. Central Command, which oversees wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, underscored the Obama administration's message to Israel and Gulf allies - that there is time to pressure Iran to abandon its nuclear weapons program by imposing more economic sanctions."

Many U.S. Weapons End Up With Taliban: U.S. - "The News" (03/17)

"U.S. military officials say they've recovered thousands of American-made weapons that found their way to the Taliban in Afghanistan. 'Most of it comes off of dead bodies,' Army Lt. Col. Michael Rayburn told USA Today in a story reported on Tuesday."

PM Gilani, Shahbaz Condemn Taliban - "Dawn" (03/17)

"Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif joined Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani on Tuesday in condemning the recent terrorist attacks in the country in an apparent move to offset pressures on the PML-N leader over his controversial statement in which he urged Taliban to spare Punjab from attacks. The joint condemnation came during a meeting between the prime minister and a PML-N delegation at the Prime Minister's House a day after Mr. Sharif had met Chief of the Army Staff Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani amid widespread protests over the statement made at a seminar in Lahore on Sunday."

3,000kg Of Explosives, Arms, Suicide Vests Seized In Lahore -

"Dawn" (03/17)

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"Police recovered 3,000kg of high-grade explosives (ammonium nitrate), sophisticated weapons and two suicide vests from another shop in Iqbal Town for the second day running on Tuesday and arrested 15 suspects. On Monday, police seized 1,500kg of explosives, hand-grenades, suicide vests and a number of bullets from the same area, sources told 'Dawn.'"

NATO Tanker Attacked Near Kalat - "Dawn" (03/17)

"Two people were injured when a tanker carrying fuel for NATO forces in Afghanistan was attacked near Kalat (Quetta) on Tuesday. The tanker was part of a convoy of Afghanistan-bound oil tankers coming from Karachi. Other tankers remained safe in the firing."

38 Taliban Surrender In Bajaur - "Dawn" (03/17)

"A senior Taliban Commander Khalifa was among 38 terrorists who voluntarily surrendered to the government in Bajaur Agency, officials said on Tuesday. Security forces seized a huge cache of arms and ammunitions."

### POLITICAL ISSUES

President Signs NFC Award - "Dawn" (03/17)

"President Asif Ali Zardari signed on Tuesday the 7th National Finance Commission (NFC) Award for distribution of resources among the centre and the provinces for five years with effect from July 1 this year. The award was due for the past 13 years, but could not be announced because of a lack of consensus between the centre and provinces. The four provinces had approved the award in Gwadar on December 30."

U.S. Dependent On Pakistan: Mushahid - "The Nation" (03/17)

"Pakistan Muslim League (Q) Secretary General, Mushahid Hussain Sayed on Tuesday said that Pakistan should not repeat its mistakes and must not have any favorite in Afghanistan. The U.S. needs Pakistan more than Pakistan needs the U.S.; therefore, Pakistan should play its cards intelligently, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed stated this while speaking at a seminar on 'Pakistan's Geo-Strategic Challenges and Response,' which was organized by the NUST Business School of the National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST), Islamabad."

### ECONOMY/ENVIRONMENT

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"Islamabad has cut by more than half a visa backlog affecting US officials and contractors needed to run American aid programs aimed at combating extremism in Pakistan, a State Department official said on Tuesday. The United States and Pakistan were developing a 'more cooperative, constructive relationship' in the first year of a \$7.5 billion, five-year civilian aid plan for Pakistan passed recently by Congress, said the official, Dan Feldman. 'But it's going to take time,' Feldman, the Deputy Special U.S. Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, told a House of Representatives subcommittee."

#### EDITORIALS/OPINIONS

Editorial: American Envoy's Apprehensions, an editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (03/17)

"According to a press report, American Ambassador Anne W. Patterson has written a letter to Foreign Minister Shah Mahmud Qureshi stating her grave concern over the publication of addresses of some American diplomats leased residences. The American Envoy described the reports as irresponsible, saying that these stories could be dangerous for the American citizens residing in Lahore.... American Ambassador's warning cannot be ignored. The government of Pakistan and the entire nation should be aware of the elements who aim at creating misunderstandings between Pakistan and America and increase Pakistan's problems.... The situation demands that the security of foreigners, especially that of American diplomats and other Americans should be upgraded. In the circumstances publication of news stories should be avoided which could lead to misgivings between the two countries and cause public provocation. In order to remain safe diplomats should change their routine and minimize their movement. American Ambassador's complaint is not unjustified wherein she said that publicizing of two Americans addresses by the media alarmed her. In view of grave terrorism threats the media should review its policy in accordance with its code of conduct.... The sentiments of competition for breaking news should not overwhelm the journalists' civic responsibilities. In the present scenario, the media should impose restrictions on itself. Keeping in view the present relationship between the U.S. and Pakistan, the Foreign Office and the Punjab government need to take serious note of Ambassador Patterson's statement."

Editorial" Massacre By Mercenaries?," an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (03/17)

"A report published in a U.S. newspaper has disclosed that the

Pentagon is using mercenaries to kill ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ in Pakistan and Afghanistan. It is the modus operandi of the Americans to hire quislings in foreign countries, and use them against their compatriots. This media report can also help in discerning the real motives behind the foreigners' use of vehicles without number plates. These mercenaries may also be involved in the recent killing of religious leaders in Karachi. We think that time has come for the government to clarify its position on this issue."

Editorial: This Is American Mischief, an editorial in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (03/17)

"Pakistan Army Spokesperson Major General Athar Abbas has demanded

that NATO forces should stop the Taliban movement on Pakistan-Afghanistan border because the Taliban fleeing from Afghanistan enter Pakistan and undermine the campaign against terrorism inside Pakistan.... Trucks laden with Indian heavy weapons and explosives from Afghanistan have been seized in Pakistan. Similarly, Indian weapons have been seized in Balochistan province."

Editorial: Annual Development Plan Loses Rs. 121 Billion; What We Gained And Lost In The War Of American Interests?, an editorial in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (03/17)

"The Federal government has reduced the size of the Public Sector Development Plan (PSDP) by Rs. 121 billion and cited war on terrorism expenses and non-fulfillment of assistance promises by the Friends of Pakistan as the reasons.... By becoming the frontline ally of America in the war of American interests our military and civilian rulers caused loss of thousands of precious lives and destruction of our national economy. This war of American interests resulted in terrorism and suicide attacks which stopped national and international investment. However, America did not take any step to compensate our heavy losses.... We have lost \$36 to 38 billion in this war of American interests which cannot be compensated via American Congress approved annual grants and \$6 to 8 billion announced by the Friends of Pakistan.... With this backdrop why do we need to be a part of this war of American interests?"

Editorial: Militancy in Punjab, an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (03/17)

"Everything points to the terrifying reality that Punjab has a home-grown terrorism problem that appears to be growing by the day. And yet some elements have mischievously tried to play down the



Punjab-militancy nexus by pointing ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ the groups involved are not 'Punjabi' because they have members who belong to other provinces too.... It is true that the Punjab government is doing something to fight the threat: despite Mr. Sharif's stomach-churning comments, the provincial administration he oversees has deployed significant law-enforcement and intelligence resources to track down the Taliban. But the authorities appear to be approaching the problem as a narrow counter-terrorism issue. The wider problem is the infrastructure of hate and religious intolerance that is thriving in the province, often under official patronage. No matter how many militants the state captures or kills, there will always be more if the pipeline of hate continues to churn out brainwashed foot soldiers. The Punjab authorities must find a way, and the will, to shut down the pipeline of hate and intolerance."

Editorial: CM And Taliban, an editorial in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (03/17)

"The Punjab Chief Minister's unusual appeal to the Taliban, asking them to spare Punjab has, quite predictably stirred up a storm. Mian Shahbaz Sharif has spoken thoughtlessly and rather insensitively. He needs to ensure the same mistake is not made again as this can cause a great deal of damage. Punjab needs to set the example that all the smaller provinces can follow. It must play a part in developing national unity. All of us, as citizens of one country with common interests and a common future, should have a broad approach that sees the nation and all its territory as a whole."

Editorial: Spy Games, an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (03/17)

"Michael D. Furlong, a military employee, gathered information on insurgent camps and militia whereabouts, which was then sent back to U.S. military units, after which private contractors would take aim and assassinate. This is a grave transgression of the dotted line between diplomatic wrangling in a foreign country and outright abuse of military leverage. The investigation of Mr. Furlong's shenanigans seems like nothing more than a face-saving ploy to project the U.S. as a beacon of justice, lassoing in 'rogue' elements. However, renegade is the last thing these factions are as they are part and parcel of the U.S. arsenal for global advantage. Furlong may be the scapegoat, but things will only change when those within the establishment who supervise, condone and look the other way are also put through the wringer."

Opinion: Soft Anti-Terror Initiatives, an op-ed by Nizamuddin Siddiqui in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (03/17)

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"Pakistan's anti-terrorism policy starts and ends with military means. This needs to change. We must formulate a far more comprehensive policy with several 'soft' counter-terrorism initiatives. The Saudi government has come to understand this well. Over the years it has realized that the war against terrorism is not just about killing or arresting terrorists, but also about defeating the mindset that justifies acts of terror. It involves eliminating ideologues and their followers, as well as killing an ideology - which is a somewhat hardier species. So successful has the Saudi anti-terrorism policy been that only a handful of arrested extremists who completed the government-run reformation program have gone back to their violent ways. The overwhelming majority has chosen to renounce violence. Pakistan should peruse the Saudi policy with a view to replicating what is appropriate in our context."

Opinion: Chasing a Mirage!, an op-ed by Air Cdr Khalid Iqbal (R) in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (03/17)

"Pak-U.S. relations have all along followed a roller coaster profile. Presently, these are enduring a snowballing mistrust. Both sides realize that their bilateral relations as well as associated multilateral interactions are mutually beneficial. It is in this backdrop that droves of American visitors keep landing in Islamabad. When some of them go back and testify before congressional committees, their perception of the problems being faced by Pakistan is remarkably accurate. They virtually sound as if they were hired lobbyists for Pakistan. Despite such wonderful clarity on the issues of vital concern to Pakistan, the solutions that emerge are often hopeless and hence disappointing. Onus surely rests on American policy making process, as indeed on its statesmanship that readily get swayed by the bureaucratic interpretations of otherwise clear cut issues. Despite high sounding words like strategic partnership and strategic dialogue etc, bilateral relations are mired in a cumulative trust deficit, and are unable to go beyond the lowly orbits of routine and tactical matters. Rhetoric exists, the substance is missing. While American policy makers are often repeating the rote script that they made a grave mistake to abandon Pakistan in the eighties, and that such mistake would not be repeated, a common Pakistani feels that U.S. has already abandoned Pakistan amidst multidimensional crises of grave dimensions.... Americans need to be responsive towards the sensitivities of Pakistan and carry it along as a trusted ally. Pakistan alone cannot carry on chasing the mirage, indefinitely. Henry Kissinger once observed that in this world it is often dangerous to be an enemy of the United States, but to be a friend is fatal; or words to that effect. An all out effort should be made by the two sides to prevent these relations from becoming a yet another living example of Kissinger's prophetic utterance about friends of America."

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Opinion: Our Dogmatic Liberals, an op-ed by Humeira Iqtidar in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (03/17)

"What is Blackwater doing in Pakistan precisely? There is no clear answer to this question forthcoming from our interior minister who has denied their presence as a holding tactic, in the face of mounting evidence to the contrary.... Blackwater activities run the gamut of assassinations, bombings, bribery, kidnapping, torture. None of them truly conducive to building a democratic, peaceful society. It is more than irresponsible to assume that they are here doing the job for the democratic, secular citizen of Pakistan. If we are to get rid of the militants within our midst we have to do it in a sustainable way and in a manner that would ensure that a new generation of family-less children bent upon revenge is not being raised.... History moves in dynamic and non-linear ways. By remaining stuck in a static definition of progressive and regressive and allying themselves ever more closely with oppressive power, the liberals may ultimately render their cause irrelevant. For those of us committed to a just and democratic Pakistan, these dogmatic liberals are as great a danger as the militants."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)  
Patterson

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