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	H-00	TEDE-00	IO-00	LAB-01	ARMY-00	MOFM-00	MOF-00
	M-00	VCIE-00	DCP-00	NSAE-00	ISN-00	OIC-00	OIG-00
	OMB-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
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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: FEBRUARY 16, 2010

Summary: Coverage of the ongoing row between the government and judiciary over the appointment of judges dominated front-pages on Tuesday morning. Prime Minister Gilani's statement, warning that "judges restored by his executive order still needed Parliament's ratification" made headlines in all newspapers. Nearly all papers also highlighted countrywide rallies of PPP, opposition parties, and legal fraternity on this issue. Reports and photographs of the CODELs including Senator McCaskill, and Senator Kerry, and Undersecretary Flournoy's meetings with senior Pakistani civilian and military officials received extensive coverage both in print as well as electronic media. Media also highlighted Ambassador Patterson's speech at the National Defense University (NDU),

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underlining that U.S. and Pakistan enjoy closer military ties than ever. Several major dailies covered Secretary Clinton's remarks that Iran (is) moving towards dictatorship and its Revolutionary Guard Corps is supplanting its government. Also reported were remarks by Interior Minister Malik's remarks that Dr. Aafia was sent illegally to the United States. Newspapers covered killing of four people in a drone attack in North Waziristan; and the "stiff resistance" that U.S. Marines are facing at Marjah, in Afghanistan's province Helmand. Weekend editions of the several major dailies reported that the United States delivered 48 howitzers to Pak Army, four water trucks to its Special Services Group (SSG), and five patrol boats to Pakistan's Maritime Security Agency. Likewise, Deputy Secretary Wolin's discourse with a select group of journalist, maintaining that "PM Gilani agreed to issue visas to more U.S. auditors" also received prominent display. End Summary.

TOP STORIES

News Story: Parliament Still To Validate Judges Restoration: PM -
"The News" (02/16)

"Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Monday unleashed a new controversy and possibly a fresh round of acrimonious legal nit-picking when, addressing the National Assembly, he said that his executive order restoring Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry and other judges had yet to be ratified by Parliament."

News Story: Countrywide Strike Observed - "The News" (02/16)

"The legal fraternity on Monday observed a complete countrywide strike and boycotted court proceedings against the presidential order regarding judges' appointment and expressed solidarity with the judiciary."

News Story: Zardari For Greater Pak-U.S. Cooperation - "Daily Times," "Business Recorder," "Dawn," "The Nation" (02/16)

"President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday called for greater cooperation and enhanced level of trust between Pakistan and the United States. Talking to a U.S. delegation comprising Senator Claire Conner McCaskill, Senator Jeff Merkley, Congressmen Barron Hill, Michael Turner and U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Anne W Patterson, at the Presidency, Zardari said that Pakistan had suffered a huge loss of more than \$35 billion during the last eight years as a result of the fight against militancy, in addition to the colossal and un-quantifiable cost in terms of social and human losses, which he said had almost crippled the nation's economy."

News Story: U.S., Allies Assistance To Pakistan Does Not Commensurate With Sacrifices In War Against Terror: PM - "The News"

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(02/16)

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"Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani on Monday said the support and assistance pledged to Pakistan by the U.S. and major allies does not commensurate with the sacrifices, commitment and contribution made by Pakistan in the war against terror, to make the world a safer place. The Prime Minister regretted that even the pledges made by the allies at the Donors Conference in Tokyo last year are yet to be fulfilled, which has resulted in serious implications for his country's economy. He urged the U.S. to take the lead in fast tracking the reimbursement of long delayed Coalition Support Fund and expedite the release of the assistance already appropriated under the Kerry Lugar Bill, for Pakistan. The Prime Minister was talking to U.S. Congressional delegation led by Senator Claire McCaskill, also comprising Senator Jeff Merkley and Congressman Barron Hill, who called on him here at his Parliament's Chamber on Monday evening."

News Story: U.S. Sen. Kerry Calls On COAS Kayani - "The News"

(02/16)

"U.S. lawmaker John Kerry has arrived here in Pakistan on two-day official visit on Monday night, Geo news reported. According to ISPR sources, following his arrival, Kerry called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Ashfaq Pervez Kayani."

News Story: Pune Blast Must Not Derail Delhi Talks: Kerry - "Dawn," "The News" (02/16)

"The weekend bomb blast in Pune shouldn't derail the resumption of diplomatic talks between India and Pakistan, says John Kerry, chairman of the powerful Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate. In an interview to Wall Street Journal published on Monday, Senator Kerry also suggested that the Pune blast should be the first item on the agenda if India found a Pakistani link to the attack."

News Story: U.S. Aid To Pak Linked To 'Do More' Mantra - "The Nation" (02/16)

"Pakistan has to do more to combat terrorists on its soil if it wants to continue to receive substantial U.S. aid, a key U.S. senator reaffirmed Monday in New Delhi. 'Pakistan has got to make clear its willingness to take on internal enemies,' Sen. Kerry, who is the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said in an interview with The Wall Street Journal."

News Story: U.S. Committed To Partnership With Pakistan, Says Patterson - "Daily Times," "The News," (02/16)

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"The U.S. is committed to a partnership with Pakistan that is built on a foundation of mutual interest, respect and trust, U.S. Ambassador Anne Patterson said on Monday. Addressing participants of the National Defence Course at the National Defence University, she said, 'The U.S. and Pakistan enjoy close bilateral military cooperation today than we have had in many years.' She said the cooperation is a result of a consultative process that has brought many U.S. military and civilian leaders to Pakistan over the past few months."

News Story: U.S. Used Influence To Ensure Pakistan's SBA With IMF: Patterson - "Business Recorder" (02/16)

"U.S. Ambassador to Pakistani Anne W. Patterson has reiterated U.S. resolve to support Pakistan, saying that her country is committed to help Pakistan address the urgent economic needs and it has used its influence at the international level to ensure that Pakistan's Stand-by Arrangement (SBA) with the International Monetary Fund continue to move forward. 'We maintain a close watch on the dialogue with the IMF and have intervened repeatedly to ensure that Pakistan's concerns are being addressed adequately,' the U.S. envoy said while addressing the participants of the National Defence Course at National Defence University (NDU), Islamabad here on Monday."

News Story: Iran Moving Toward 'Military Dictatorship' - "Daily Times" (02/16)

"New UN sanctions on Iran would target enterprises controlled by the Revolutionary Guards which is driving the Islamic Republic toward a military dictatorship, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said on Monday. Speaking in Qatar before flying to Riyadh, Hillary denied the United States planned to attack Iran and said Washington wanted dialogue with Tehran but could not 'stand idly by' while Iran pursued a suspected nuclear weapons program."

News Story: U.S. Delegation Calls On Rehman Malik; Aafia Illegally Sent To U.S. - "The News" (02/16)

"A seven-member delegation led by Senator McCaskill called on Minister for Interior Senator Rahman A Malik on Monday and discussed matters of mutual interest. They discussed matters relating to security issues. Rehman Malik briefed the delegation on the overall security situation in the country, said a statement issued in Islamabad. The Minister also stressed on the delegation to repatriate Dr. Aafia Siddiqi to Pakistan. He said that Dr. Aafia was sent illegally to the U.S."

News Story: U.S. Drone Kills 4 More In NWA - "The Nation" (02/16)

"Four persons were killed when a U.S. ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ a vehicle in

Tabi Ghudai Kalay area of North Waziristan Agency on Monday, sources informed."

News Story: U.S. Marines Face Fierce Resistance In Helmand - "Dawn" (02/16)

"U.S. Marines leading one of NATO's biggest offensives against the Taliban in the eight-year war are facing fierce resistance in some areas, including heavy gunfire, snipers and booby traps, U.S. officials said on Monday. Marine units have tried twice since Sunday to reach a bazaar in Marjah, the last militant stronghold in the country's most violent province, Helmand, only to be pushed back."

News Story: U.S. Hands Over Howitzer Guns To Pakistan Army - "The News," "Dawn," "The Statesman," "Jang," "Express," "Jinnah" (02/14)

"The U.S. Army handed over Howitzer guns to the Pakistan Army in a simple but impressive ceremony held in Karachi on Saturday, says a press release issued by the ISPR. It said that Brig. Michael K. Nagata, Deputy Chief ODRP, handed over 115 Howitzer guns to Brig. Farrukh Saeed, Commander Artillery Mechanized Division. The U.S.-made M109A5 Howitzer is an indirect fire support weapon of armored and mechanized infantry divisions."

News Story: U.S. Donated Five Patrol Boats to Pakistan's Maritime Security Agency - "Nawa-i-Waqt" (02/14)

"The United States government donated five maritime interdiction patrol boats to Pakistan's Maritime Security Agency (SMA) at the Karachi shipyard on Saturday, significantly enhancing the agency's coastal interdiction and patrol capabilities. U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Michael Nagata, U.S. Office of the Defense Representative-Pakistan Deputy Commander, officially donated the 13-meter (42-foot) Fast Patrol Boats to Rear Admiral Tahseen Ullah Khan, MSA Director General, during a hand-over ceremony in Karachi."

News Story: U.S. Donates Water Trucks To Pakistan's Army to Aid Displaced Persons - "Khabrain," "Jinnah," "Pakistan" - (02/13)

"The United States government donated four water trucks to the Pakistan Army's Special Services Group (SSG) in Rawalpindi on Friday. U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Michael Nagata, U.S. Office of the Defense Representative-Pakistan deputy commander, officially delivered the vehicles to Brigadier Omar Mahmood Hayat, SSG chief of staff, during a hand-over ceremony at Chaklala Airfield."

News Story: Washington Links Release Of Assistance To Visas - "The News," "The Nation," "Daily Times," "Pakistan Observer" (02/13)

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"U.S. Deputy Secretary of Treasury Neal S. Wolin on Friday said release of U.S. financial assistance to Pakistan was linked to the resolution of its Audit Department officials' visa issue. Talking to newsmen at the American Embassy, Wolin emphasized the need for early solution to the problem of visas for the American audit team. He said visas were required for ensuring disbursement of funds in a proper way. Appreciating the strict decisions taken by the Government of Pakistan to improve its economy, he said there was still a need to increase the revenue as Pakistan had the minimum revenue collection of 10 per cent to the GDP that had been creating financial problems."

News Story: U.S. Urged to Speed Up Reimbursement - "Dawn," "Daily Times," "Pakistan Observer" (02/13)

"Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani on Friday urged the United States to honor the pledges it made at a donors' conference in Tokyo and under the Kerry-Lugar-Berman bill, and to expedite reimbursements under the Coalition Support Fund (CSF). Talking to U.S. Deputy Secretary of Treasury Neal Wolin at the Prime Minister's Secretariat, Mr. Gilani said reimbursements under the CSF should be made through official channels for optimum use of funds. The money will be utilized to revive various sectors of the economy and to launch development projects in militancy-hit areas."

TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

News Story: U.S. Condemned Terrorist Attacks in Khyber Agency and Bannu - "Islam" - (02/13)

"The U.S. Embassy in Pakistan strongly condemned the terrorist attacks targeting innocent people on February 10 in Khyber and on February 11 in Bannu."

News Story: U.S., India, Israel Again In Action - "The Nation" (02/14)

The coming together of the U.S., Israel, and India, in an unholy alliance to tighten the noose around a Muslim lady reflects the new realities of global power politics. The prejudiced decision against Dr Aafia Siddiqui traces its roots to the active involvement of Israel in collusion with Indians like Preet Bharara who hold powerful legal positions in the U.S., under the support and shelter of the U.S. Why Aafia's case was assigned to a judge with controversial prejudiced past, who was more a Jew than juror, is too obvious to seek a reply. It is also astonishing that the burning news regarding Judge Richard Berman, being an orthodox Jew, and a member of jury who convicted Aafia has barely been noticed in

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international community and media. Apart from a few select forums, the issue was not raised elsewhere."

News Story: Training Afghan Army Top Priority, Says Holbrooke -
"The News" (02/16)

"U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke said on Monday that training the Afghan Army was the top priority and the international community would need to keep helping Afghan reconstruction even after the U.S.-led forces withdraw, he told a U.S.-Islamic Forum in Doha."

News Story: Allies Take Control Of Key Taliban Bastion - "The News"
(02/16)

"Afghanistan's military said on Monday that U.S.-led troops had almost taken control of a key Taliban bastion, although pockets of stiff resistance remained on the operation's third day. The U.S. Marines are leading 15,000 U.S., NATO and Afghan troops in the ground and air operation designed to clear the Taliban from the Marjah region of the Helmand province, in southern Afghanistan, and make way for Western-backed authorities."

News Story: Taliban Allow U.S. Troops Very Little Advancement In Marjah - "Daily Times" (02/16)

"Sniper teams attacked U.S. Marines and Afghan troops across the Taliban haven of Marjah, as several gun-battles erupted on Monday, the third day of a major offensive to seize the extremists' southern heartland. Multiple firefights broke out in different neighborhoods as U.S. and Afghan forces worked to clear out pockets of Taliban and push slowly beyond parts of the town that they have gained control of."

News Story: U.S. Marines Under Fire From Taliban 'Aks' - "Daily Times" (02/16)

"'Get down, get down!' scream U.S. Marines as Taliban bullets whistle through poppy fields and troops hit the ground on the outskirts of the southern Afghan town of Marjah. Marines lie flat on their stomachs, others duck behind sand dunes as they try to assess where the attack is coming from in the midst of an offensive designed to clear the Taliban out of Marjah, an AFP photographer witnesses. But their counterparts from the Afghan army open fire immediately. 'Cease fire, cease fire!' shouts a U.S. lieutenant over the din, telling them through a translator they should first know at whom and what they're shooting."

News Story: Operation Rah-e-Nijaat Objectives Achieved: COAS -
"Daily Times" (02/16)

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"The key objectives of the military operation in South Waziristan have been achieved and most of the high profile terrorists have been wiped out from the area, a private TV channel quoted Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Ashfaq Kayani as saying on Monday."

News Story: General Kayani Meets Mahsud Elders At Tank Camp - "The News" (02/16)

"Life remained crippled in Tank after curfew was imposed by local authorities to ensure peaceful holding of Mahsud tribal Jirga at forces' Maanzai camp on Monday. Circles close to security forces said the event was kept secret because of participation by Army Chief General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani and other senior military and civil officials. Sources said that Army chief in his address to Mahsud elders assured that concrete steps were being taken for the rehabilitation and development of the militancy-plagued area."

News Story: U.S., Pakistan Capture Taliban's Top Commander - "Dawn" (02/16)

"The United States and Pakistani intelligence forces captured the Taliban's top commander Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar in a secret joint operation in Karachi, Pakistan, the online edition of The New York Times said late Monday."

News Story: U.S. Troop Pullout From Afghanistan Alarms India - "Dawn" (02/16)

"India fears that a quick pullout from Afghanistan would bring greater U.S. reliance on China and Pakistan, at India's expense, says a report published in The Washington Post."

News Story: Lashkars Enjoy Full Govt. Backing - "The Nation" (02/16)

"The National Assembly was informed that armed lashkars formed in Khyber, Bajaur, Mohmand and Orakzai Agencies as well as in Frontier Region were enjoying full support of Government. 'The Government is providing full monetary, material and moral support to these Lashkars and now the militants are on the run,' told Minister for States and Frontier Regions Najmuddin Khan in a written reply to National Assembly in question hour session."

POLITICAL ISSUES

News Story: PM's Remarks Fuel Tensions, Speculation - "The News" (02/16)

"Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani has opened another can of worms

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by declaring in the National Assembly that the executive order issued in March last year by the government for the restoration of pre-November 3 judges is yet to be endorsed by parliament, fuelling intense speculation that Mr. Zardari might withdraw it as a last desperate measure. Tensions on all sides snowballed immediately with the PM's speech in the NA as it was considered a part of the new confrontational strategy of the beleaguered government trying to save the presidency, especially after the PML-N attack on Zardari's person, declaring him as a threat to democracy."

ECONOMY/ENVIRONMENT

News Story: ADB Has Raised Objections Over Two RPPs, NA told - "Daily Times" (02/16)

"The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has raised objections over two rental power plants (RPPs) installed during the tenure of the previous government, and not on those starting in the future, Federal Minister for Power and Water Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said on Monday. Speaking during the question hour session in the National Assembly, the minister said four new independent power plants (IPPs) had started generating 671 megawatts of electricity."

EDITORIALS/OPINIONS

Editorial: Helmand Operation: U.S. Will Get Nothing, an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (02/16)

"The NATO and Afghan forces, fully armed with sophisticated and lethal weaponry, are facing intense resistance from the Taliban in their military offensive being conducted in the Helmand province. This operation is a test case for American and allied forces because it will decide the future of Afghanistan. However, one thing is clear that, like all its operations during the last nine years, this time, too, the current U.S. military offensive will fail to achieve its objectives."

Editorial: What Was Rationale Of Joint Operation On Negotiating Table?, an editorial in the Peshawar-based Urdu-language daily "Mashriq" (cir. 55,000) (02/16)

"Analysts are of the view that the impending military defeat of the U.S. and its allies in the Helmand operation will not only weaken the morale of their troops in Afghanistan, but will also result in more pressure from their masses to withdraw forces from the Afghan quagmire. It seems that after failing to create fissures in the

Taliban ranks through negotiations, Washington has adopted a 'do or die' policy. In case of suffering defeat in this offensive, the U.S.

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will be left with no other option except to accept the Taliban on their terms." UNCLASSIFIED

Editorial: U.S. Drone Strikes, Bomb Explosions And Helmand Operation, an editorial in the liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 25,000) (02/16)

"The government must remember that it would be very difficult to oust Taliban from Balochistan if they enter it [following an operation in Afghanistan]. Hence the government must take measures to deal with that situation as well. It is after a long time that the Allied forces have started an operation in Afghanistan; it must be taken to its logical end and not left incomplete. Leaving this operation incomplete would have disastrous results and would allow the Taliban to regroup. This eventuality must not be allowed to develop."

Editorial: The Marjah Adventure, an editorial in the Peshawar-based, independent regional daily "The Frontier Post" (cir. 7,000) (02/16)

"If Taliban's claims can be taken with a pinch of salt, the predominantly western media's reporting on the U.S.-led occupation coalition forces in Afghanistan cannot be taken as gospel truth either. Most of this reporting is embedded journalism that conceals more than it reveals. And since this reporting is the main window to the outside world to know of the occupied country, the international community stands fed less on objective information and more on motivated disinformation on post-Taliban Afghanistan.... The very projection of Marjah offensive as a milestone-marking operation in President Barack Obama's surge strategy in Afghanistan is sheer deceit.... All said and done, the best option for the U.S.-led occupiers is still direct peace talks with the Taliban leadership. All other options are fraught."

Editorial: Some New Concerns About Afghan Transit Trade, an editorial in the country's premier business newspaper, "Business Recorder" (cir. 25,000) (02/16)

"People associated with the Afghan transit trade are worried about the likely impact on their businesses by allowing Afghan trucks to carry the proposed Wagah-Khyber transit trade items, as well as existing Afghan imports, via Karachi ports.... Although, Pakistan and Afghanistan signed a memorandum of understanding at a high profile trilateral meeting in Washington last May, it is yet to be turned into an agreement.... The government must ensure that if and when the trade starts, it does not harm local transporters' business interests in any way."

Opinion: Biden's 'Biggest Worry', an op-ed by A.B. Shahid in the

country's premier business newspaper, "Business Recorder" (cir. 25,000) (02/16)

"In a recent interview with CNN's Larry King, U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden has said the security situation in Pakistan worries him more than the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and Iran's nuclear program.... So much for the concern, the U.S. has for stabilizing Pakistan; its visible deficiency is to limit the U.S. concern for transparency only when it comes to using the U.S. aid and grant funds, nothing else. It is an utterly dumb to hope that a regime, which practices transparency only to this extent, can survive in a country of 180 million of which 85 percent live virtually hand to mouth, and two of whose provinces are battling against organized terrorism. Joe Biden's views (courtesy the quarters he represents) expressing 'primarily' the U.S. views reflecting Zionist fears about Muslim countries acquiring nuclear capability. The powerful Joe Bidens in the U.S. administration go by this blinkered view reducing the rationality of every other help - assisting in the fields of education, building social and physical infrastructure, and improving transport, communication and industry - to zero."

Opinion: The Battle For Marjah, an op-ed by Gen. (Retd) Mirza Aslam Beg in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (02/16)

"A "massive build-up" is afoot for the battle of Marjah, which is the stronghold of Taliban in the Helmand province of Afghanistan. About 15,000 ground troops, reinforced by 20,000 Afghan Army and police force launched the offensive, supported by the entire US/NATO

air power in Afghanistan.... The result of this battle as well as the war in Afghanistan is the real contest. The coalition forces are demoralized and defeated, fighting a war which has no ideal and no moral justification. The Taliban are fighting for the freedom of their homeland.... They say the time is on their side, whereas, it is running-out for the oppressors in Afghanistan. It is obvious that the outcome of the battle of Marjah would be a stalemate due to the heavy casualties, coalition forces are likely to suffer. In no way it would help the peace process in Afghanistan.... Special modalities, therefore, are needed for bringing peace in Afghanistan and to ensure an honorable way out, for the U.S. and its Allies, and a smooth transition to the civil order, 'without triggering bigger chaotic conditions.'"

Opinion: Developments in U.S. Conspiracy, an op-ed by Afshain Afzal in the Lahore-based liberal English daily "The Post" (cir. 5,000) (02/16)

"The U.S. is facing a defeat-like situation in Afghanistan, which compelled top bosses at Pentagon and White House to reconsider

United States' Afghan strategy. The heavy load of alien forces at the hand of Taliban for the last two years, especially in December 2009, January and February 2010 forced the foreign forces to pullout their troops from Afghanistan.... However, many analysts have not noticed that the withdrawal has already taken place and instead of combatants as replacement, fresh groups of trainers and members of reconstruction team have already started arriving in Kabul and Islamabad. The most striking feature of the new U.S. strategy is that a new private army is being raised on the lines of Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams. To achieve this goal, Washington has started recruiting non-U.S. citizens in its Army. The controversial plan of opening recruitment centers in Afghanistan and Pakistan is already underway and more foreigners from Asia and Arabia are being offered citizenship. The concept is not new as most of the U.S. personnel in Afghanistan are not Americans but foreign citizens, serving as mercenaries to achieve United States' objectives."

Editorial: The Fate Of Talks, an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (02/16)

"India's recent decision to restart the process of talks with Pakistan had not duped subcontinent watchers, or for that matter many people, to feel that the wisdom of having a peaceful and understanding relationship between the two countries had suddenly dawned on its leadership. The decision appeared to be a formal gesture devoid of any meaning, and soon the world learnt that India wanted only to discuss terrorism; it is not the composite dialogue it had offered to resume to discuss issues that spawn tragedies like terrorism, but only the symptoms. To judge whether India is sincere about resolving disputes, it must be kept in mind that, at work in persuading it to sit on the negotiation table was the mounting international pressure, in particular from the U.S., which was acutely anxious about the fate of its surge in Afghanistan, in the event Islamabad's attention remained centered on the hostile posture New Delhi persisted in exhibiting towards it. One would, perhaps, be justified in assuming that even Washington, with its perceived strategic interests in keeping New Delhi on its right side, would not have been so keen to pressurize it against its wishes to recommence the stalled composite dialogue."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)
Patterson

NNNN