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	EUR-00	OIGO-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VCI-00	DIAS-00
	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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 SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
 USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
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 THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
 NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
 HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCPA// IMMEDIATE
 JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
 DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
 AMEMBASSY LONDON
 AMEMBASSY PARIS
 AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
 HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI

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E.O. 12958: N/A
 TAGS: KMDR, KPAO, OIIP, OPRC, PGOV, PREL, PK
 SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: MARCH 31, 2010

Summary: The visit of two Congressional delegations, and their meetings with top Pakistani officials received extensive coverage in all newspapers, and TV networks on Wednesday morning. Newspapers highlighted President Zardari's statement made while talking with visiting U.S. Representatives that "people-to-people contact is must to bridge trust deficit between Pakistan and United States." Likewise, PM Gilani's remarks that "Pak-U.S. relations and ongoing cooperation should not be confined to the war against terrorism and should go beyond it on sustainable long-term relations" also received prominent display. Secretary Clinton's comments at the G-8 meeting expressing cautious optimism about Afghanistan's prospects for peace, also received prominent display. Reports about the

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ongoing military offensive against militants in western border areas continued to generate coverage in media. Newspapers reported that at least six persons were killed in a U.S. drone attack in North Waziristan, and that security forces backed by gunships bombed militant hideouts in Orakzai Agency, killing 40 militants and injuring several others. Meanwhile "Dawn," reported from Washington citing a Pentagon official that "Pak Army Chief General Kayani has informed the Obama administration that Pakistan will not launch a 'steamroller' operation in North Waziristan." Dailies also quoted a senior Pentagon official as saying that "around 200 U.S. military personnel are presently involved in security assistance and training programs in Pakistan." Media covered President Zardari's address to the National Defense University (NDU) assuring that "there will be no cut in the defense expenditures as the country is fighting a war for its survival." Reports that Iranian intelligence agents have freed an Iranian diplomat (abducted in Peshawar in November 2008) in what appears to have been a cross-border operation was also covered.

Nearly all major newspapers penned editorial comments on various political and judicial issues including renaming the NWFP province, and the Supreme Court's hearing of the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) related cases. However, commenting on the recent strategic talks, a columnist in "The News" stated that "this recently concluded dialogue has given hopes and offered a potential opportunity to both the countries to seize the moment and change things around in the context of long term U.S.-Pakistan relationship," and another op-ed writer noted in "Daily Times," that "no one can doubt there are some substantial gains here, stemming from some skilful and concerted diplomacy on our part to take real advantage of the present U.S. compulsions and our military successes." End Summary.

TOP STORIES

News Story: People-To-People Contact Must To Bridge Pak-U.S. Trust Deficit: Zardari - "Daily Times," "Pakistan Observer" (03/31)

"The cordial relations between the U.S. and Pakistan at the government level need to be applied at the people-to-people level to bridge the trust deficit at the grassroots, President Asif Ali Zardari said on Tuesday. Talking to a U.S. delegation, headed by Senator Jack Reed that called on him, Zardari said Pakistan appreciated the U.S. understanding of Pakistan's requirements and concerns in the recently-held strategic dialogue between the two countries.... The delegation also called on Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani at the Prime Minister's House on Tuesday. The Prime Minister expressed satisfaction over the successful fourth round of the Pakistan-U.S. strategic dialogue held in Washington DC last week.... The U.S. Senators and congressmen praised Pakistan's resolute and determined action in rooting out militancy and the menace of terrorism from the country. They agreed with the Prime

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Minister that there was a need to further expand the scope of parliamentary exchanges and people-to-people contact to remove misperceptions on both sides."

News Story: Pakistan Attaches Great Importance To Its Relations With U.S.: Fehmida - "Daily Times" (03/31)

"Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with the United States and is fully committed to a long-term and strategic relationship spanning various arenas, National Assembly Speaker Dr. Fehmida Mirza said on Tuesday. Talking to a 3-member Congressional delegation headed by Member of US House of Representatives/Chairman House Democracy Partnership Initiative David Price, which had called on her at the Parliament House, she said Pakistan desires to further enhance its existing relations through active interaction between its people and governments.... David Price said the U.S. was interested in developing multi-faceted long-term relations with Pakistan. He said it wanted Pakistan to be a strong democratic country and was ready to support it in this regard. He underlined

the need to expedite efforts for ending terrorism and extremism from the region."

News Story: U.S. Senators (sic) Asked to Help Bail Out Pak From Economic Crunch - "The News" (03/31)

"The visiting U.S. Senators on Tuesday were urged to help bail out Pakistan from economic depression caused due to the war on terror. 'We need market access like other countries have been enjoying from U.S. and NATO nation,' stated Senator Gul Muhammad Lot, Chairman Senate Committee on Textile Industry while briefing U.S. Senators (sic), headed by David Price at the Parliament House.... The leader of the delegation assured that Pakistan's concerns would be conveyed at appropriate level in the U.S."

News Story: Clinton Expresses Caution, Optimism On Afghanistan - "The News" (03/31)

"U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton Tuesday voiced cautious optimism about Afghanistan's prospects for peace, saying progress on military and civilian fronts needed to be sustained. 'I think the situation in Afghanistan about which we spoke at some length during our meeting in the last two days is cause for both optimism and caution,' she said after two days of talks among G-8 Foreign Ministers. 'On the optimism side, I believe that we are employing a strategy that is working,' she said in the Canadian town of Gatineau."

News Story: Suspected U.S. Drone Kills 6 in N.Waziristan - "The News" (03/31)

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"At least six persons were killed in a U.S. unmanned plane attack on Tapi area located on Miranshah road in Bannu of North Waziristan district, sources told media late on Tuesday night."

News Story: 39 Militants Killed In Orakzai Operation - "The News" (03/31)

"At least 39 militants were killed and 49 injured in the ongoing military operation in various parts of Orakzai Agency, official and tribal sources said on Tuesday."

News Story: No Operation In North Waziristan, U.S. ToId - "Dawn," (03/31)

"The Pakistani Army Chief has informed the Obama administration that Pakistan will not launch a 'steamroller' operation in North Waziristan, although it already has 40,000 troops in the area combating militants, the Pentagon said. Briefing journalists on meetings between U.S. and Pakistani military officials during last week's strategic dialogue, a senior Pentagon official said U.S. officials also had seen evidence that supported what they learned from Gen. Ashfaq Pervez Kayani."

News Story: 200 U.S. Troops In Pakistan - "The News" (03/31)

"Around 200 U.S. military personnel are presently involved in security assistance and training programs in Pakistan, a senior military official from Pentagon has said, reported PTI."

News Story: Defence Expenditures Won't Be Slashed, Says Zardari - "Daily Times" (03/31)

"There will be no cut in the country's defence expenditure as the country is fighting a war for its survival, President Asif Ali Zardari said on Tuesday. Addressing students of a course on security at the National Defence University (NDU), President Zardari said, 'We cannot afford to cut down allocations for the armed forces.'"

News Story: Iran Agents Free Envoy Nabbed In Pakistan In 2008 - "Dawn" (03/31)

"Iranian agents have freed a diplomat from the Islamic republic who was kidnapped in Pakistan in November 2008, state media reported on Tuesday, in an apparent cross-border operation. 'Iranian intelligence agents, in a complex operation, have released Heshmatollah Attarzadeh, the Iranian diplomat who was abducted in Pakistan, and brought him home,' the official IRNA news agency said."

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News Story: U.S. Acknowledges Pakistan Has Delivered: Qureshi - "The News" (03/31)

"Minister for Foreign Affairs, Shah Mehmood Qureshi said the United States has not only realized but also has acknowledged that the Pakistani nation has delivered their due role in fighting war against terrorism. He said, now the Americans have to do something extraordinary. Commenting on the recently concluded strategic dialogue between Pakistan and the United States, he said it is a long process which has been initiated at last, he told media."

News Story: Strategic Vision Exchanged, Says Haqqani - "The News" (03/31)

"Pakistan's Ambassador in the United States Hussain Haqqani has said that the Pakistani delegation during the recent round of strategic dialogues with the U.S. exchanged a document regarding the country's strategic vision and it had no such thing like a wish-list in it. Talking to a private television channel late on Monday, the ambassador said that the document was prepared jointly by all the stakeholders and it defined the country's strategic paradigm and concerns."

TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

News Story: Mullen In Afghan War Zone As U.S. Gears Up For Kandahar - "The News" (03/31)

"The top U.S. military commander on Tuesday visited Marjah, the frontline of U.S.-led operations against the Taliban in southern Afghanistan where a battle for Kandahar is already ramping up. Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, arrived in the battle zone a day after President Barack Obama left Afghanistan after a surprise visit, pledging to defeat the Taliban and 'to get the job done.'"

News Story: U.S. Hopes To Give Pakistan Drones Within A Year - "Dawn" (03/31)

"The Pentagon hopes to deliver "within a year" around a dozen unarmed drone aircraft to Pakistan to aid its fight against extremism, a U.S. senior military official said on Monday."

News Story: Karzai Wraps Up Talks With Militants - "The News" (03/31)

"President Hamid Karzai and representatives of a major militant group wrapped up the first round of peace talks on Tuesday, reaching no final deal but pledging to continue a dialogue that if successful

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would split the ranks of the Taliban. The talks with Hizb-e-Islami were the first public face-to-face negotiations in the capital between Karzai and the representatives of an insurgent group."

POLITICAL ISSUES

News Story: 18 MPAs, MNAs Reject Invitation To Visit U.S. - "The News," "Express" (03/31)

"At least 18 Members Provincial Assembly and Members National Assembly belonging to different Political Parties have rejected official invitation extended by U.S. Embassy in Pakistan to visit United States of America because of scanning at U.S. airports, sources informed Online."

News Story: Pakistan Made Major Gains In Washington: Indian Media - "Dawn" (03/31)

"A U.S. nuclear deal with Pakistan is simply a matter of time, says a report distributed on Tuesday by the India Abroad news service.... The report claimed that when the Pakistani delegation to the strategic dialogue asked for nuclear power plants, the U.S. response was that 'this could be discussed.' 'The U.S. has nothing to lose by signing a nuclear deal with Pakistan. In fact, it will gain by nuclear trade with Pakistan, which will have no qualms about meeting the American conditions,' the report said."

News Story: Day of Reckoning - "The News" (03/31)

"It was indeed a day of reckoning for many of the mightiest of the land. The first victim of an enraged Supreme Court, angry because its NRO judgment was not being implemented, went to jail on Tuesday

and a 24-hour ultimatum was given to others to implement the court verdict, including writing the letter for the reopening the Swiss cases against President Zardari. A six-member larger bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry directed Chairman National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Naveed Ahsen to implement the court's verdict on the NRO by tomorrow (Wednesday) after a close friend of President Asif Ali Zardari, FIA officer Ahmed Riaz Sheikh was ordered to be sent to Adiala jail."

News Story: Pak-India Talks On Hydro Projects Fail - "The News" (03/31)

"After the failure of the Permanent Indus Waters Commissions of India and Pakistan to bridge differences over two projects on the Chenab and Jhelum rivers, the commissions also failed to make progress on controversial hydropower projects being built by India

on the Indus River."

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ECONOMY/ENVIRONMENT

News Story: FoDP Aid Through 'Assignment Account' - "The News"
(03/31)

"In a major development, Pakistan and USA have agreed to channelize over \$800 million project financing committed at the Friends of Democratic Pakistan (FoDP) through official 'Assignment Account', enabling Islamabad to get the whole picture about pouring millions of dollars into the country, which will be utilized through local as well as international NGOs. Pakistan's representatives from Economic Affairs Division (EAD), the Ministry of Finance and the State Bank of Pakistan and visiting USAID high-ups held crucial talks here on Tuesday during which it was decided that the flow of U.S. money would be channelized through the Assignment Account, which will be opened at the National Bank of Pakistan with the consent of the central bank."

News Story: G-8 Announces Pak-Afghan Economic Plan - "Daily Times"
(03/31)

"Foreign ministers of the G-8 countries agreed on an economic initiative plan for the Pak-Afghan border regions, Canadian Foreign Minister Lawrence Cannon said on Tuesday. 'Stability in the region is critical for global security,' Cannon told reporters at the start of two days of G-8 talks."

EDITORIALS/OPINIONS

Editorial: Financial Difficulties, an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000)
(03/31)

"Pakistan is more than halfway through the IMF's standby arrangement deal, yet its economic troubles are far from over. Even with the implementation of harsh conditions attached to the IMF loan, the government's financial difficulties refuse to go away.... The reasons for the financial woes are neither new nor difficult to understand. Tax revenue collection remains dismally low and security expenditure has shot up due to the war on terror, increasing the government's reliance on domestic and foreign debt. The so-called Friends of Democratic Pakistan are also hesitant to help the country's economy in spite of pledges made in Tokyo a year ago.... Global experience shows that IMF funding may help a country stave off economic collapse, but it takes much more than multilateral assistance to put an economy on the growth trajectory."

Editorial: Finally... IMF Has Stopped The Fifth Tranche, an

editorial in the Lahore-based independent Urdu daily "Din" (03/31)

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"The IMF's condition for Pakistan was that it would impose value added tax by July 2010 but the government has been unable to get the bill passed from the provincial assemblies. Instead of getting it approved immediately, the government left it to the parliamentarians' choice on whether they approved it or not. It was due to this lack of government attention that the IMF has now stopped the fifth tranche, worth \$1.2 billion.... Among all the issues facing the government these days, it is the 18th Amendment that is not getting settled. The entire nation is unanimous on the 18th Amendment and feels that the government must now get rid of this issue and focus on other issues."

Editorial: Pakistan Should Reconsider Indus-Basin Treaty, an

editorial in the Lahore-based populist center-right Urdu daily "Khabrain" (cir. 50,000) (03/31)

"Indus Water Commissioner Jamaat Ali Shah has said that India does not provide water data on time, has opposed telemetry system installation and hinted at building new power projects.... Indian water aggression is at its height and according to Mr. Jamaat Ali Shah India is not implementing the Indus-Basin Treaty. If India does not implement the treaty then Pakistan is also free to quit the treaty. The government of Pakistan should consider this question seriously."

Opinion: U.S.-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue: A Perspective, an op-ed by Bassam Javed in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (03/31)

"How far and fast America would go to follow the words with deeds for helping Pakistan rebuild its economy, energy, infrastructure and security. It will be equally challenging for Pakistan as it has to continue to fight the extremists and terrorists with associated heavy costs, work towards softening the anti-Americanism so abundantly found in the middle-class and down below and resist efforts to disburse Kerry-Lugar aid through NGOs by surgical cleansing of its related institutions to win trust of aid providers. This recently concluded dialogue has given hopes and offered a potential opportunity to both the countries to cease the moment and change things around in the context of long term U.S.-Pakistan relationship."

Opinion: Dialogues, Strategic And Tactical, an op-ed by Munir Attaullah in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (03/31)

"From our demands for drone technology and a civil nuclear deal to

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putting pressure on India over the ~~issues of water~~ and the stalled composite dialogue, has not the U.S. lent us a receptive ear? Are we not getting some F-16s and additional military aid? Have not future talks been upgraded to ministerial level and expanded, and mechanics been put in place to remove irritating bottlenecks in the smooth flow of Coalition Support Fund and financial aid? Yes, no one can doubt there are some substantial gains here, stemming from some skilful and concerted diplomacy on our part to take real advantage of the present U.S. compulsions and our military successes. Meanwhile, let us consider what the cynics and the anti-U.S. lobby had to say. They rightly pointed out that the Americans made only polite noises and no commitments, either on drone and civil nuclear technology or on putting pressure on India on the water and stalled composite dialogue issues. But is this not somewhat disingenuous? Should it not be obvious that these demands were merely a sop for our domestic political consumption and not really seriously meant? Was it really within reason to think we had such a hold over the U.S. that they would meekly accept such far-fetched demands?"

From Relationship To Partnership, Opinion: an op-ed by S.M. Hali in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (03/31)

"Netting key Afghan Taliban leaders within the country, offering security training to the Afghan forces and political support to Kabul for negotiations with insurgents, and decimating the miscreants in Pakistan, has opened fresh vistas and a new phase in Pak-US relations. It is imperative that the US develops and strengthens Pakistan to assume its rightful place in the region and deliver on its promise of the fulfillment of its capacity-building goals. Needless to say, Pakistan on its part will have to play its cards carefully. It should have learnt lessons from the past and instead of letting history repeat itself, the Pakistani decision-makers must make a cogent representation of their case to ensure that the transition of the relationship to a partnership is long-term, secure and devoid of dictations on Pakistan's domestic policies or even external affairs."

Opinion: Are Drone Attacks Legal?, an op-ed by Rafia Zakaria in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (03/31)

"The need for Pakistan to engage in the legal debate over drone attacks is crucial for the following reasons. If democracy and the rule of law are to be defended then the tactics used against terrorists must not undermine the democratically mandated rule of law that is being fought for. International law, however weak or

defunct, provides Pakistan a realm in which to safeguard its sovereignty and protest against hundreds of its citizens being

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unthinkingly labeled as collateral damage. The current wrangling over the legality of drone attacks marks the beginning of the development of the legal regimes that will govern warfare in a new era. In standing up for the sovereignty of smaller nations Pakistan can ensure that the existence of borders is not a superfluous exercise noted by superpowers only when convenient, and disregarded when strategic interests dictate otherwise."

Opinion: The Third Summer Of Discontent, an op-ed by Anjum Niaz in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (03/31)

"The deals the minister for water and power concluded for rental power plants were according to the Asian Development Bank rife with kickbacks. The minister is again making tall promises as we continue to be hit with unscheduled power outages whose duration, instead of decreasing, is on the rise."

Opinion: Bomb With The Fuse Lit, an op-ed by Zafar Hilaly in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (03/31)

"Once upon a time to get on in Pakistan religion did not matter. On the other hand, a criminal record did not help. Today, by the looks of it, one can have a criminal record and still actually occupy sensitive positions in government or industry. Religion, though, continues to be immaterial; mostly because there is only one religion in Pakistan, the others are extinct, except statistically. But what does count is sect, so much so that one's livelihood, nay, life, may depend on it. From courageous and outspoken publications that dot the media landscape, amidst much trash, we learn that there are as many as 269 sects and sub-sects in Pakistan. And that since 1989 sectarian disputes have thus far accounted for 5,400 killed. We owe this malady to the fundamentalism injected into our politics by Ziaul Haq and his Salafist backers. It is not only Shias and Sunnis killing each other but, more so, sub-groups within sects that are likewise engaged in slaughter.... But lest the malaise of extremism spread, causing the plummeting economy to worsen, and more businessmen to relocate, capital to flee and joblessness and crime become endemic, it is perhaps best to bite the bullet. It would be a pity if we stood aside tilting at tribals and attempting to secure the edges of the country while the centre was left unguarded."

Opinion: Jihad Jane, an op-ed by Lubna Jerar Naqvi in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (03/31)

"Sure Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and their consorts pose a threat, but these can be labeled as the known enemies. Apart from the audio and sometimes video tapes released every quarter by Osama Bin Laden and

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the Taliban - blowing up more of their own lands - most of the threats posed to the west seems to be springing from within them. Considering the situation all over the world and all the checks and balances wielded out to them, an average Muslim will try to evade situations where he/she can evoke suspicion. Probably, this makes a good case for recruits from the non-Muslim scion of those societies. But frankly, brainwashing a person from another faith to the extent of convincing him to commit cold-blooded murder makes a case for a criminal profile or psychologists."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)
Patterson

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