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E.O. 12958: N/A
 TAGS: KMDR, KPAO, OIIP, OPRC, PGOV, PREL, PK
 SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: JANUARY 16-19, 2010

Summary: Coverage of the Taliban attack in the heart of Afghanistan's capital dominated headlines in all major English-language newspaper on Tuesday morning. However Urdu dailies preferred to focus on Prime Minister Gilani's statement, made in the National Assembly, ruling out any row with the superior judiciary. Newspapers highlighted reports that the Pak Army has conducted a successful test of shooting down drones near Muzaffargarh (Punjab). Reports of the forthcoming visit of the U.S. Defense Secretary Gates started appearing in the media, as "The Nation" reported that Mr. Gates is coming to Islamabad to "silence Pakistani drone critics." Media also reported that ISAF Commander in Afghanistan General McChrystal visited Chaman border and reviewed the security.

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situation. U.S. Special Envoy Holbrooke in New Delhi, continued to garner attention in Pakistani media. His remarks emphasizing the need to "involve India in peace efforts in the region" and that he expects "more action" from Pakistan in tackling Taliban and other issues were prominently displayed. The Weekend editions of nearly all newspapers covered Ambassador Holbrooke's meeting with President Zardari, and the promise to "review the new screening regime instituted at U.S. airports." In addition, papers also highlighted reports that Mr. Holbrooke expressed concerns over anti-American sentiments among Pakistanis despite channeling of millions of dollars of aid to the country. Yesterday (Monday) newspapers highlighted reports that 20 Taliban including foreign terrorists were killed in a U.S. drone strike in South Waziristan. Several major newspapers published a Sunday Times' story that the "Elite U.S. troops are ready to combat Pakistani nuclear arms hijack," and the Pakistani Foreign Office's immediate rejection of the report by terming it as "absurd and mischievous." "Dawn," editorializing a WP report about the U.S. spending on education in Pakistan, noted that "there is realization on America's part that its war strategy has been misdirected and that a military approach alone will not lead to a conclusive victory." Commenting on the "U.S.'s India Tilt" the Lahore-based liberal paper, "Daily Times," observed that it "is creating suspicions in Pakistan that this may eventually translate into Indian hegemony in the South Asia region." End Summary.

TOP STORIES

News Story: Audacious Attacks By Taliban In Kabul: 12 Dead -
"Dawn" (01/19)

"Taliban gunmen and suicide bombers attacked buildings across the heart of Kabul on Monday, triggering fierce gun battles with security forces and killing at least five people, including a child."

News Story: Senior Baloch Leaders Off ECL: Gilani Sees No Face-Off With Judiciary - "Dawn" (01/19)

"Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani ruled out on Monday an opposition-perceived row with the countries superior judiciary with which, he told the National Assembly; his government had 'excellent relations'."

News Story: Pakistan Test Fires Anti-Drone Technology; Laser-Guns Used To Hit 4 Drones - "The Post" (01/19)

"The Air Defense Unit of Pak Army conducted a successful experiment of downing drones in Khudai Range near Muzaffargarh. Pakistan Air Defense Unit commander Lt-Gen Ashraf Saleem revealed that four

drones downed with the help of 35mm ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ and 127mm guns. He said that the Air Defense Unit of Pak Army is equipped with the latest system which is capable of downing every kind of drones."

News Story: Gates Coming To Silence Pakistani Drone Critics - "The Nation" (01/19)

"In a bid to silence US critics who have been raising voices against US policies in the region, especially US drone attacks inside Pakistan, US Defence Secretary Robert Gates is expected to arrive in Islamabad this week on a two-day visit."

News Story: India's Role Crucial To Regional Peace: Holbrooke - "Daily Times" (01/19)

"Hailing Pakistan's fight against terrorism, US special envoy Richard Holbrooke on Monday emphasized the need to involve India in peace efforts in the region. Holbrooke said India was an important actor for regional peace, thereby, rejecting Pakistan's opposition to India joining a regional council on Afghanistan."

News Story: Holbrooke Harps On 'Do More' Mantra - "The Nation" (01/19)

"U.S. Special Envoy for Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke on Monday said he expects 'more action' from Pakistan in tackling Taliban and other issues. The US Special Envoy said the spread of Taliban in the NWFP areas was the 'main subject' of his discussion with Pakistani leadership during his visit there last week."

TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

News Story: McChrystal Visits Chaman Border - "The Nation" (01/19)

"Commander International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan General Stanley A. McChrystal visited Chaman border on Monday and reviewed the security situation. The official sources said earlier General Stanley A. McChrystal had arrived in Quetta. Commander Southern Command of Pakistan Army Lt. General Khalid Shamim Wyne and Inspector General Frontier Corps Major Saleem Nawaz also accompanied him during his visit to bordering area. Commandant FC Col. Asad Shehzad briefed the ISAF Commander about the security arrangements at Pak-Afghan border. He also visited Veshmandi area of Afghanistan."

News Story: Holbrooke Promises Review Of New Screening Measures - "Daily Times" (01/16)

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"The U.S. regional campaign against terrorism and the violence it has provoked in Pakistan have almost crippled the country's economy, said President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday. The president made the comments at a meeting with US special envoy Richard Holbrooke in Lahore. . . . Holbrooke assured Zardari that his government had agreed to review the new screening regime, and said the US homeland security secretary would personally look into the matter."

News Story: Holbrooke Concerned Over Anti-America Sentiments Despite Aid - "The Statesman" (01/16)

"U.S. Special Envoy for Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke on Friday expressed concerns over anti-American sentiments among Pakistanis despite channeling of millions of dollars of aid to Pakistan."

News Story: Foreigners Among 20 Taliban Killed In SWA Drone Strike - "Daily Times" (01/18)

"A U.S. drone strike on Sunday killed at least 20 Taliban, including foreign terrorists, in a South Waziristan area where local Taliban chief Hakimullah Mehsud reportedly escaped death days ago, said officials."

News Story: Elite US Troops Ready To Combat Pak Nukes Hijack - "The News" (01/18)

"The US Army is training a crack unit to seal off and snatch back Pakistani nuclear weapons in the event that militants, possibly from inside the country's security apparatus, get their hands on a nuclear device or materials that could make one. However, a Foreign Office spokesman rejected the report saying Pakistan's strategic assets are as safe as that of any other nuclear weapon state and these assets are fully safeguarded and secure under the protection of a well-established command and control system . . . however Pakistan strongly rejected the report of Christina Lamb and termed it 'rubbish and a figment of the imagination of the reporter'."

News Story: Pak-Based Terrorists Main Threat To India: Narayanan - "Daily Times" (01/19)

"India expects China to be an increasingly high security priority in the coming years, but the main threat still comes from militants based in Pakistan, New Delhi's former national security adviser MK Narayanan, said in an interview on Monday."

News Story: Pakistan Says India Dampening Peace Hope - "Dawn" (01/19)

"Foreign Office accused India on Monday of dampening peace prospects"

in the region by continuing its 'vitriolic' ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ propaganda campaign

against Pakistan. 'Indian foreign secretary's vitriolic remarks against Pakistan yet again reveal that the Indian government persists in its propaganda campaign that only vitiates the atmosphere, darkens the horizon and dampens hopes for peace and tranquility in South Asia,' said Foreign Office Spokesman Mr. Abdul Basit."

News Story: Pak-Afghan Border Security Discussed - "Dawn" (01/19)

"Military officials from Nato, Pakistan and Afghanistan agreed on Monday to enhance cooperation and intelligence sharing along the Pakistan-Afghan border."

News Story: Security Forces Kill 10 Taliban In N Waziristan - "Daily Times"

"Security personnel killed 10 Taliban and arrested five others in a clash in North Waziristan on Monday; officials' said. The incident occurred in the border town of Iwara Mandi, a bastion of Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters, a senior military officer said, AFP reported."

News Story: Detained Americans Complain Of Torture - "Daily Times" (01/19)

"Five Americans facing charges for allegedly plotting attacks against Pakistan and its allies alleged they were tortured in custody, as a court extended their detention on Monday. The five young men were arrested in December on suspicion of trying to contact Al Qaeda-linked groups, with police officials accusing them of trying to travel to Afghanistan to fight with the Taliban against US and NATO troops."

News Story: Drone Strikes Unlikely To Hurt Taliban In Long Term - "Daily Times" (01/19)

"A U.S. drone strike that nearly killed the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) chief may encourage the CIA to keep up its campaign to eliminate high-profile Taliban by remote control. But the strikes may only have limited success and generate more anti-American sentiment in Pakistan, which the US sees as a front-line state in its war on terror."

News Story: Eight Terrorists Could Target Punjab - "Daily Times" (01/19)

"Terrorists can target the province at any time in the coming days; police sources informed Daily Times on Monday. The sources said that the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and Lashkar-e-Tayyaba had dispatched

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around eight well-trained men who could target prominent cities in the province, including Rawalpindi, Lahore, Faisalabad and Multan."

News Story: Boys' School Blown Up In Landikotal - "Daily Times"
(01/19)

"Terrorists blew up a boys' primary school in Landikotal tehsil of Khyber Agency on Monday, local officials said. The explosion, in the Ashraf Kalay village school, occurred at 3 a.m. Tribal administration official Daulat Khan told an AFP reporter that all seven rooms of the school were destroyed in the attack, however there were no casualties."

News Story: 26/11 Attackers Were Indian, Says Kasab - "Daily Times"
(01/19)

"All four attackers in the Mumbai terror attacks were Indian nationals, Ajmal Kasab said on Monday. Kasab told Tahaliyani, the judge of the special court in Mumbai, that Abu Ismail, one of the four attackers, hailed from Mumbai."

News Story: Mianwali Police Arrest Seven Terrorists - "Daily Times"
(01/19)

"Mianwali police has arrested seven men who were wanted for their involvement in various terrorist attacks, a private TV channel quoted Sargodha Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Mian Javed Islam as saying on Monday. Addressing a press conference, Aslam said the arrested men were involved in suicide attack in Khosa Market, Dera Ghazi Khan and the attack on former Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz in Attock."

POLITICAL ISSUES

News Story: Indians Opened Unprovoked Firing: Rangers - "Dawn"
(01/19)

"Indian forces opened 'unprovoked' fire on Pakistani positions along the border near Sialkot on Sunday night, triggering an exchange of fire, Pakistan said on Monday. Indian troops using automatic weapons opened unprovoked fire on Pakistani positions, Rangers spokesman Nadeem Raza said, adding 'our soldiers strongly retaliated and forced them to stop firing'."

ECONOMY/ENVIRONMENT

News Story: Govt In A Fix Over Oil Pricing Mechanism - "Dawn"
(01/19)

"The government is in a fix about revising the oil pricing mechanism

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for the benefit of consumers as desired by the Supreme Court, because proposals made by independent experts remain short of pulling the refining industry out of heavy losses."

News Story: Sugar Crisis May Get Worse, NA Told -"Dawn" (01/19)

"The sugar crisis may get worse in coming months with an estimated decline of over one million tons in production this year. The government said in the National Assembly on Monday that there was enough sugar last year, but this year there have been severe problems because of hoarding in view of an expected rise in international prices and reduction in sugarcane production."

News Story: Zardari Promises Price Relief In Three Years -"Dawn" (01/19)

"President Asif Ali Zardari said that prosperity would come to Pakistan within three years and the government would cut petrol and electricity prices and provide jobs to the masses."

MISCELLANEOUS

News Story: Senators Call For Uniform Education System - "Daily Times" (01/19)

"Members of the Senate called upon the government on Monday to ensure the provision of education to every child and demanded a uniform education system across the country."

News Story: Iran Promises Revenge On US, Israel For Killing Scientist - "Daily Times" (01/19)

"Iran said on Monday it would take revenge on Israel and the US for the killing of an Iranian scientist last week, the media reported. Professor Massoud Ali-Muhammadi was killed in a bombing outside his home in Tehran on Tuesday. Officials have accused Israel and the US of being behind the assassination. Washington has dismissed the charge as absurd."

News Story: Aafia Trial Begins Today In New York - "The Nation" (01/19)

"The trial for Aafia Siddiqui, the Pakistani neuroscientist under US detention, will begin today (Tuesday) in New York City after jury selection was completed last week. A jury of seven women and five men were chosen Thursday, with four alternate jurors."

News Story: Blackwater Active In Pak, Says Nizami "The Nation" (01/19)

"It cannot be said that Waziristan operation was launched after having approval of the Parliament, rather it is purely a government's move. Neither any political party was taken on board nor had any political party given its permission." This was said by Majid Nizami, Editor-in-Chief Nawa-i-Waqt Group while talking to a private TV channel on Monday. "

EDITORIALS/OPINIONS

Editorial: Aid For Education, an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (01/19)

"According to the Washington Post, the US is all set to spend \$200m on education in Pakistan this year. This is USAID's largest education program worldwide. There is realization on America's part that its war strategy has been misdirected and that a military approach alone will not lead to a conclusive victory. . . . With many ambiguities in the government's approach to education, it is not clear how the massive US aid meant to change mindsets is to be spent."

Opinion: Generous Aid, an op-ed by Mir Jamilur Rahman in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (01/19)

"The U.S. is mindful of the heap of problems that have piled up on Pakistan today and is threatening its security. It also realizes that the foremost problem is terrorism gnawing at the fabric of the society. The U.S. firmly believes that if Pakistan were to buckle down in the face of terrorism, regional and world peace would be shattered adversely affecting Pakistan as well as the western world. To ward off such an eventuality, the U.S. is providing massive assistance to Pakistan to deal with its problems. Some European countries are also contributing generously but it is no match for the U.S. efforts. In addition to the \$7.5 billion earmarked for the next five years, the US is also helping out Pakistan in various social and economic fields. . . . Prime Minister Gilani reminds the U.S. every other day that these strikes are counter-productive and bring more harm than benefit. One cannot convince the U.S. by using big words. One has to produce a better argument to convince them that their policy is flawed. Nothing impresses the U.S. more than a good argument backed by facts. . . ."

Editorial: U.S.'s India Tilt , an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (01/19)

". . . . The U.S. attitude is not very helpful. It is embarking on a strategic partnership with India, which can ironically give rise to

greater regional instability as it leads to Pakistan's insecurities. US patronage gives India the feeling that it is winning vis-à-vis Pakistan on Kashmir and other regional issues. The very visible US tilt towards India is creating suspicions in Pakistan that this may eventually translate into Indian hegemony in the South Asia region in the near future."

Editorial: Continuation Of Drone Strikes In Pakistan And Suicide Attack In Kabul; U.S. Withdrawal From Afghanistan Is The Only Solution, an editorial in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (01/19)

"U.S. Special Representative has reached India after visiting Pakistan and Afghanistan. Holbrooke should tell his defense ally (India) that exploitation of the Afghan soil against Pakistan's integrity will cost dearly to America and India. Therefore, they should desist from their conspiracies. In this connection they should consider Kabul suicide attacks as warnings and should go for the troops' withdrawal from Afghanistan after holding talks with the Taliban. This will be in the interest of the region and America."

Editorial: Increasing Drone Strikes: Reveal The Facts, an editorial in the liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 25,000) (01/19)

"Drone attacks are taking place regularly despite repeated protests by Pakistan. Initially, the drone attacks were few and far between, but now they happen at an almost daily basis, sometimes even twice a day... The situation is not very clear, the government keeps on making protests, but these protests do not have an effect on the U.S.... On the one hand, the U.S. is continuing drone strikes against Pakistan's wishes, but on the other hand it does not support Pakistan's desire to mediate in the Kashmir issue. This U.S. double standard is also affecting Pakistan's war against terror. Hence the government needs to adopt a clear stand."

Editorial: Drone Issue Must Be Raised on International Level, an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (01/19)

"Despite Pakistan government's continuing resentment over the drone attacks, there is no letup in these sorties. Defense Minister Ahmed Mukhtar has admitted that he does not see any change in Washington's policy on this issue. It seems that the U.S. considers the drone attacks as a successful and viable strategy in the ongoing war on terror. We think that the Parliament can adopt a unanimous resolution to raise this issue at the UN and other international

forums such as the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC)."

Editorial: Nuclear Assets: U.S. Should Not Be Concerned, an

editorial-note in the Lahore-based populist center-right Urdu daily "Khabrain" (cir. 50,000) (01/19) UNCLASSIFIED

"According to a British newspaper, the U.S. has started training a crack unit keeping in view the threat of militants taking over Pakistan's nuclear assets. Meanwhile, the Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman Abdul Basit has said that propaganda against nuclear assets has no value.... The fact is that Pakistan's nuclear assets are a thorn in U.S.-Israeli-Indian side, and they cannot bear an Islamic country becoming a nuclear power. This is also the only reason they are opposing Iran... The Pakistan government should make it clear to the U.S. that it need not worry about [Pakistan's] nuclear assets, Pakistan is fully capable of defending its weapons."

Opinion: The Road Not Taken, an op-ed by Dr. Maleeha Lodhi in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (01/19)

". . . In many of the 14 countries that the U.S. has placed on a virtual 'black-list,' traditional Islamic political movements are being outflanked in a sea of anti-Americanism by militant organizations with sympathy for Al Qaeda's narrative, even if they disagree with its methods. This is a disturbing trend which needs to be reversed, not reinforced by U.S. actions. . . The question Washington needs to ask is whether its anti-terrorism efforts can succeed in an environment of intense and growing anti-American sentiment. The only way to reverse this trend is to move decisively to resolve disputes, heal conflicts and engage with the grievances in the Muslim world that are leveraged by the extremists. Until strategies are fashioned to deal with the unjust situations in which Muslims find themselves as victims, the danger of radicalization will increase."

Opinion: Downhill For Pakistan, an op-ed by Tariq Amin-Khan in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (01/19)

". . . Zardari's government has allowed Pakistan to be a veritable playground for Blackwater/Xe, US Special Forces, a much-expanded US embassy 'staff' and complex (mimicking Iraq's Green Zone), and the trigger-happy controllers of aerial drones. Collectively, these boys with their deadly toys will wreak further havoc in the country. Furthermore, cowing before the demands of the US and the western world to 'do more' has been unprecedented under Zardari. He has effectively given a blank cheque to the Americans, while unprotected ordinary Pakistanis are left to face the fallout from his and the military's commitment to wage US's 'long war' (Pentagon's language for the 'war on terror'). The long war brings in its wake some terrible consequences in terms of untold death and destruction. . .

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. Given that the present leadership is incapable of promoting these ideals, the Pakistani people will have to decide whether they will roll over and submit or come together and resist. My view, based on the people's epic struggles for justice, is that they will choose the latter."

Opinion: The Hunt For Hakimullah, an op-ed by Rahimullah Yusufzai in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (01/19)

". . . Pakistan's stated policy opposing the US drone strikes is also hard to believe, considering the fact that these missile attacks have facilitated its own task by eliminating some of its most dangerous enemies, such as Baitullah and Haji Omar. Since the government itself was unable to get these militants, Islamabad would be pleased if Hakimullah and the other militants too were taken out by the American drones. This is one reason why many Pakistanis are convinced that the authorities are secretly cooperating with the U.S. in carrying out the drone strikes, even though they publicly complain about it in a bid to calm down resentment among people. It also explains the government and military's reluctance to follow the parliament's unanimous resolution against the US drone attacks and its recommendation for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in the NWFP and its tribal areas. That resolution wasn't meant to be implemented and the government's meaningless protests on this count shouldn't be taken seriously. And thus, for the foreseeable future, the US drone attacks and Pakistan's military operations in the tribal areas will continue, in the hope that the militants, after having lost all public support, will be eventually defeated."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)

Patterson

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