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	IO-00	ARMY-00	MOFM-00	MOF-00	M-00	VCIE-00	DCP-00
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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
 TAGS: KMDR, KPAA, OIIP, OPRC, PGOV, PREL, PK
 SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: AUGUST 06, 2009

Summary: Reports that the "government would try former military president Musharraf for high treason provided the National Assembly demands such a course" dominated headlines in all newspapers on Thursday. All dailies gave prominent coverage to reports that the "wife of Tehrik Taliban Pakistan chief Baitullah Mehsud and two militants were killed in a U.S. missile strike in South Waziristan." The Federal Cabinet's decision to "do away with the condition of bachelor's degree for the candidates contesting for the parliament and the provincial assemblies" received extensive coverage. Several major dailies reported that the government had armed and appointed the first community police in Swat valley, "hoping to prevent a Taliban resurgence and bolster security forces."

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Most major dailies ran editorials on yet another incident of alleged desecration of the Quran, and the approval of the domestic violence bill by the National Assembly. Disparaging the blasphemy law, the Lahore-based liberal English newspaper, "Daily Times," observed that it "doesn't care for evidence, has no concern for 'will' behind the act of blasphemy, has set aside the concept of 'Tauba' (contrition), and is subject to a widespread misuse by criminal elements of society who conflate blasphemy with desecration of the Quran." Similarly, the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News," also underlined that the "laws misused to settle scores must be undone; a message of communal peace must go out from mosques and over the official media." However, the Karachi based pro-Jihadi right-wing daily "Ummat," wrote: "The terror act and attack on the Christian minority should not be seen in isolation, as Muslims are also not safe in this country..." End Summary.

News Stories

"PM Gilani Links Musharraf Trial To NA Resolution" "Dawn" (08/06)

"Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani assured the National Assembly on Wednesday his government would try former military President Pervez Musharraf for high treason if the lower house demanded such a course through a unanimous resolution."

"Baitullah's Wife, Two Militants Killed In U.S. Drone Attack" "Dawn" (08/06)

"The wife of Baitullah Mehsud and two militants were killed in a U.S. missile strike in Laddha subdivision in South Waziristan on Wednesday. The woman killed in the raid is said to be second wife of Pakistan's most wanted militant leader, according to local people and official sources."

"Cabinet Decides To Do Away With Graduation Condition For MPs" "Dawn" (08/06)

"The federal cabinet decided on Wednesday to do away with the condition of bachelor's degree for candidates for the Senate and the national and provincial assemblies, in line with the Supreme Court judgment of April 21 last year."

"Govt. Launches Community Police In Swat" "Daily Times" (08/06)

"The country has armed and appointed the first community police force in Swat, hoping to prevent a Taliban resurgence and bolster the capacity of security forces depleted by beheadings and mass

desertions."

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"Eleven Killed In Lashkar Attack In Upper Dir" "Dawn" (08/06) ..

"Eleven militants were killed when a tribal Lashkar attacked their hideouts in Doog Darra area in Upper Dir on Wednesday. One militant, identified as Zakirullah, was arrested and four houses of suspected militants were set on fire in Shatkas."

"Mehsud Elders Ask Govt. To Stop Operation" "Dawn" (08/06)

"A delegation of the elders of Mehsud tribe of South Waziristan has arrived in the federal capital in an effort to persuade the government to stop military action against the people of their area."

"Soldier Killed, Three Hurt As Militants Attack Convoy" "Dawn" (08/06)

"One soldier was killed and three others sustained critical injuries when militants attacked a military convoy on Karakoram Highway in Kohistan district on Wednesday, sources said."

"12 Militants Arrested In Hangu, Kohat" "Dawn" (08/06)

"Twelve militants belonging to Waziristan and Afghanistan were arrested along with huge cache of arms and ammunition during search operations in Hangu and Kohat districts, police said on Wednesday."

"Mosques To Be Cleared Of Afghan Clerics" "Dawn" (08/06)

"The government has decided to take control of dozens of mosques in the Malakand region allegedly being run by Afghan clerics who have 'direct links with the Taliban.' 'All (Afghan) Maulvis acting as Imams (prayer leaders) will be expelled from Malakand division and border areas,' Lt-Gen. Nadeem Ahmed, the head of the Special Group for IDPs, told reporters in Islamabad on Wednesday."

"Govt. Bans 25 Religious Outfits" "The Nation" (08/06)

"The government has banned as many as 25 organizations while placing one on watch list under the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997, Federal Minister for Interior Rehman Malik told the Nation Assembly on Wednesday."

"Another Blasphemy Incident" "The Nation" (08/06)

"Enraged people surrounded the house of a 60-year old woman at Sanghar (a town of Sindh) and tried to kill her for her alleged

attempt to desecrate the Holy Quran UNCLASSIFIED
on Wednesday." UNCLASSIFIED

"5-Year Plan To Address Root Causes Of Militancy: President" "The Nation" (08/06)

"President Asif Ali Zardari has said that the government is working on 'Malakand Pilot Project,' a five-year plan of action for providing not only rehabilitation and reconstruction of Malakand but also to address the root causes of extremism and militancy."

"Friends' Meeting In Istanbul: Pakistan To Seek \$2.5 Billion For Malakand" "Dawn" (08/06)

"Pakistan will seek \$2.5 billion for rehabilitation and reconstruction of Malakand division from Friends of Democratic Pakistan at a meeting in Istanbul next week, said Lt-Gen Nadeem Ahmed, Chief of the Special Support Group for Internally Displaced Persons."

"IDPs Return From Mardan Ends Today" "The News" (08/06)

"The NWFP government has announced a complete return of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Mardan district to their hometowns in Malakand division."

"Balochistan Peace: Help Iran, Talk to Bugti, Befriend Kabul-Delhi" "The News" (08/06)

"The Balochistan government has warned Islamabad in unequivocal terms that it should mitigate Iran's sense of regional isolation in the prevalent turbulent circumstances. It must remain vigilant that any unfortunate event of sabotage within Tehran borders should not be allowed to be linked with Pakistan at any cost to preclude all possibilities of Iranian territory being used in future for any anti-Pakistan activity, as is presently the case with Afghanistan."

"Arms In Balochistan Linked To NATO Countries: FO" "Pakistan Observer" (08/06)

"Arms in Balochistan have been traced back to NATO countries, Foreign Office spokesman Abdul Basit told journalists at the Karachi Press Club on Wednesday."

"Objections On Posting Of Marines At U.S. Embassy Rejected" "Mashriq" (08/06)

"Pakistan's Foreign Office Spokesman Abdul Basit while rejecting the objections raised against the posting of hundreds of the Marines at

the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, has said that these postings are in accordance with the diplomatic norms. He said that Pakistan can also appoint its security personnel at the compound of its embassy in Washington. Talking to journalists on Wednesday, Mr. Basit said that hundreds of our security personnel are posted at the Pakistani embassy in Washington too, and if we desire we can also post additional policemen and security staff within the premises of our Mission. He maintained that no objection can be raised over the deployment of hundreds of security personnel and soldiers at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad. The embassy of a country is like an independent country and it can appoint anyone there, he added."

"Mullen For Sustained Relationship With Pakistan, Afghanistan"
 "Daily Times" (08/06)

"The U.S. needs to focus on a regional approach that incorporates Pakistan and Afghanistan, and allows for a sustained relationship with both countries, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Admiral Mike Mullen told the National Public Radio (NPR) in an interview."

 Editorials/Op-eds

"State And Intolerance," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (08/06)

"The blasphemy law doesn't care for evidence, has no concern for 'will' behind the act of blasphemy, has set aside the concept of 'Tauba' (contrition), and is subject to a widespread misuse by criminal elements of society who conflate blasphemy with desecration of the Quran. The state, impotent after its 'Jihad' phase, extends lame excuses, blaming incidents on the ubiquitous 'foreign hand.' Its executive knows that the state is weak-kneed and therefore sides with the empowered Jihadi non-state actors as they enter the town with murder on their minds."

"Mob Madness," an editorial in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (08/06)

"What is far more alarming is what these incidents say about the environment we have created in our country. It seems that we have been able to whip up so much hatred that the tide has overwhelmed all humanity and all reason. Simply making an accusation of blasphemy is enough to bring violent death. The mob mentality seen at the Muridke factory has been demonstrated too in other places and has taken an equally tragic toll on lives.... We need to change this...."

"Gojra Incident: Even Muslims Are Not Safe In The Country," an

editorial in Karachi based Pro-Jihadist English daily "Ummat" (Cir. 33,000) (08/06)

"The terror act and attack on the Christian minority should not be seen in isolation, as Muslims are also not safe in this country, and terrorists have killed numerous Muslims in dozens of terror incidents. Consequently this incident should not be presented as the Christian-specific violence."

"In the Grip Of Fear," an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (08/06)

"The Gojra incident is a stark reminder that administrative lapses can accentuate communal unrest in the province where minorities feel more insecure now than at any time in the past. The government has to deal with this situation effectively."

"Another Incident Of 'Blasphemy'," an editorial in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (08/06)

"What is worrisome is that the politico-religious parties try to take advantage of such incidents and fan hatred among the people. We would therefore appeal to the Ulema belonging to all schools of thought to play a proactive role in promoting harmony and in no way individuals or groups be allowed to take law in their hands."

"Is There A Way To Get Rid Of Global Terrorist America?," an editorial in the Karachi-based right-wing pro-Jamaat-e-Islami Urdu daily "Jasarat" (cir. 3,000) (08/06)

"Can anyone has doubt in believing that the U.S. is the biggest terrorist state in the world whose very foundation was laid on blood of the native Indians. Only those will not believe this fact whose interests are directly linked with the Americans. The nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki reminds us of the American barbarism when they unleashed terror and destruction which human beings have never experienced before. American terrorism did not end with the nuclear attacks on Japan. In the aftermath of 9/11 attacks, the killing of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and Afghans that we witnessed, and now there are reports that the U.S. is building a fortress in Islamabad at its embassy where 300 marines would be stationed. Following 9/11 CIA established its bases in Karachi, Peshawar, Islamabad and Quetta. Today our rulers are supporting the U.S. policy, and only the Jamaat-e-Islami opposes the American agenda. Before the U.S. turns Pakistan into another Nagasaki and Hiroshima, it is time for Pakistanis to wake up and say 'go (away) America go.'"

"Afghanistan: For Winning The War," UNCLASSIFIED Mohsin in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (08/06)

"Obama is not George W. Given his statesmanlike solemnity, he would realize that U.S. has permanent interests in the 'Af-Pak' region which would preclude decamping like in Saigon. It can't even desert the area like it did after the collapse of the Soviet Union under Daddy Bush nor can it maintain 'occupation.'"

"Time To Stem The Rot," an op-ed by Faizullah Jan in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (08/06)

"Growing Talibanization inside the country is the blowback of using Jihadi indoctrination for strategic goals. With strategic depth no longer anywhere in sight, Pakistan's own social fabric is in tatters with extremists posing an existential threat to the country. Little did our policymakers know that their policies formulated so many years ago for a strategic objective could boomerang with such force. Pakistan should reassess its Afghan policy and befriend the Afghan nation."

"Fatah's Mistakes," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (08/06)

"The fratricide between Hamas and Fatah has frozen the peace process, and the West Bank and Gaza have become two cantons with no status in international law. Fatah can undo this mistake by ending its feud with Hamas, because unity is a prerequisite for a successful struggle for the liberation of Palestine."

"U.S. Embassy's Clarification," a letter to the Editor by Charge d' Affaires Gerald M. Feierstein in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (08/06)

"We were disappointed to read the report published by 'Dawn' on Aug 1 (U.S. plans for bigger presence raise eyebrows in Islamabad), and then editorialized on Aug 3 (U.S. security plans) concerning U.S. plans to re-develop its embassy compound over the coming years. While this mission will grow in the coming years as well, it should ensure our ability to implement plans to treble the amount of assistance the people of the United States are providing to Pakistan under the terms of the Kerry-Lugar legislation, the numbers of additional staff bandied about in the 'Dawn' article, as well as assertions that there will be hundreds of 'Marines' and 'APCs' assigned here, are quite simply untrue."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)

Feierstein

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