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	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	
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	BBG-00	R-00	EPAE-00	ECA-00	IIP-00	SCRS-00	DSCC-00	
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E.O. 12958: N/A
 TAGS: KMDR, KPAO, OIIP, OPRC, PGOV, PREL, PK
 SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: DECEMBER 18, 2009

Summary: The NRO reversal continues to dominate news coverage this morning, with most media carrying U.S. civil and military officials' statements terming the decision an "internal and constitutional matter of Pakistan". Matters involving the U.S.-Pakistan relationship also continued to garner wide coverage, with all major dailies publishing the New York Times story claiming harassment of U.S. diplomats. Papers also ran the State Department spokesman's statement that visa denials could affect "Washington's efforts to help stabilize" Pakistan. Turning their focus to the Afghan strategy, headlines prominently featured "the biggest attack so far" by drone aircraft in North Waziristan that killed 16 people including foreign militants. Several papers also quoted U.S. Air Force Lt. General Deptula that the "U.S. is adding more drones and

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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expanding video surveillance" over Pakistani. Post media highlighted the Lahore High Court's disposal of a habeas corpus petition against detention and possible extradition of six American nationals, linking their hand over to U.S. authorities with court permission. Continuing its malicious drive against the United States, The Nation front-paged an old story today that "414 non-diplomat Americans are living in 284 houses in different areas of Islamabad." The same paper also published another fabricated report, that "Americans are conducting a survey, and mapping each and every sensitive as well as strategic installation in Pakistan." Both print and electronic media extensively covered the U.S. agreement to provide \$36 million for reconstruction and rehabilitation in Swat. End Summary.

TOP STORIES

News Story: NRO Verdict Internal Matter Of Pak, Says U.S. "Dawn," "Daily Times" (12/18)

"The United States respects the Supreme Court's decision to rescind the NRO and hopes that all Pakistani leaders will act in accordance with their Constitution, the U.S. State Department said on Thursday. At a briefing in Washington, the department's Deputy Spokesman Robert A. Wood also expressed the U.S. desire to help stabilize Pakistan. 'Well, look, that is an internal Pakistani matter.' (Story also covered in all newspapers)

News Story: Visa Delay To Affect Aid Efforts, U.S. Cautions Pak "Dawn" (12/18)

"The U.S. State Department said on Thursday that if Pakistan continued to deny visas to hundreds of U.S. officials and contractors, Washington's efforts to help stabilize the violence-ridden country could be affected. At a briefing, the department's Deputy Spokesman Robert A. Wood confirmed earlier reports that Pakistan had denied visa to hundreds of U.S. officials and citizens." (Story also covered in all newspapers)

News Story: U.S. Raises 'Concerns' With Pakistan "The Nation" (12/18)

"The United States said Thursday it has raised its 'serious concerns' with Pakistan over the delays of hundreds of visas for officials and contractors, saying programs could be hurt, State Department deputy spokesman Robert Wood told reporters."

News Story: U.S. Diplomats Being Harassed In Pakistan, Alleges NYT "Dawn," "The Nation" (12/18)

"Some in Pakistani military and intelligence services have begun a

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campaign to harass American diplomats. Undermining the relations between the two countries, the New York Times reported on Wednesday night citing U.S. diplomats in Islamabad. The campaign, according to the report, comes at a critical moment when the Obama administration is demanding more help to fight the Taliban and Al Qaeda. But the newspaper quoted a Pakistani security official as saying the Americans had brought the problems on themselves. 'Unfortunately, the Americans are arrogant,' the Pakistani security official said."

News Story: Plea For Recovery Of U.S. Nationals Disposed Of "The News," "The Nation," "Daily Times" (12/18)

"Lahore High Court Chief Justice Khawaja Muhammad Sharif on Thursday disposed of a habeas corpus petition against detention and possible extradition to the U.S. of five U.S. nationals arrested from Sargodha on charges of planning to fight against the U.S. forces in Afghanistan. The Chief Justice, however, directed the authorities

concerned not to extradite the detainees without the court permission."

News Story: Americans Mapping Sensitive Info "The Nation" (12/18)

"Americans are conducting a detailed survey across the country and mapping each and every sensitive as well as strategic installation in Pakistan. The officials of Central Intelligence Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigations and mercenaries of Blackwater have started making diagrammatical drawings of important routes, especially the areas which interest them the most, a highly placed source said on Thursday."

News Story: 414 'special Americans' In Islamabad "The Nation" (12/18)

"Intelligence agencies have submitted a complete report to the Interior Ministry regarding 414 non-diplomat Americans living in 284 houses in different sectors of the Federal Capital. According to a source in the intelligence agency, as many as 101 Americans are living in 69 houses in Sector F-5, 109 in 85 houses in F-7, 12 Americans living in Sector E-7. Whereas in the area of Aabpara Police Station, 64 Americans are living in 38 houses; in the area of Margala Police Station 108 Americans are living in 61 houses of F-8; one American living in a house in Sector G-8, 15 Americans living in 15 houses in the precinct of Shalimar Police station and 4 Americans living in 3 houses in the precinct of Industrial Area Police station. Sources told the nation that these Americans are named 'Special Americans' and they are not American diplomats."

TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

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News Story: U.S. To Expand Eyes In The Sky Over Afghanistan "The News" (12/18)

"The U.S. military is adding more drones and expanding its video surveillance in the skies over Afghanistan to meet the needs of American forces as 30,000 more troops head into the war zone, Air Force Lt. Gen. David Deptula, deputy chief of staff for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, told reporters in Copenhagen on Thursday."

News Story: Pak Will Hunt Haqqani Group After TTP: Mullen "Daily Times" (12/18)

"The Pakistan Army will crackdown on the Sirajuddin Haqqani network after the completion of the South Waziristan operation, a private TV channel quoted US Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Admiral Michael Mullen as saying on Thursday. In an interview with the channel, Mullen said Pakistan's operation against terrorists in Waziristan was in its final phase, adding that the security forces had gained considerable success against the Taliban."

News Story: Russian Mily Role In Afghanistan "The Post" (12/18)

"The Secretary General of NATO held talks at the Kremlin on Wednesday for the first time since relations soured last year, though Russia would not immediately agree to his request that it provide more military assistance in Afghanistan. The secretary general, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, met with the Russian leadership and asked for Russian helicopters and spare parts for the Afghan military, as well as more help in training the Afghan police and combating drug trafficking."

News Story: Commanders Discuss Obama's Afghan Policy "Business Recorder" (12/18)

"Top brass of Pakistan Army has discussed the upcoming Afghan policy of Obama Administration and its impact on regional and international politics particularly with reference to on-going war on terror. The 124th Corps Commanders' conference was held here on Thursday at General Headquarters of Pakistan Army with Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Ashfaq Pervaiz Kayani in the chair."

News Story: 16 Killed As U.S. Drones Rain Missiles In NWA "The News" (12/18)

"Sixteen people, including local and foreign militants, were killed and several others were injured in the biggest attack so far by the U.S. spy aircraft in two small villages of North Waziristan on Thursday. Just in one day, the drone carried out three deadly

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attacks in the restive North Waziristan tribal region." (Story also covered in all newspapers)

News Story: Commander Among 17 Militants Die In Orakzai "Dawn"
(12/18)

"Seventeen militants, a local 'commander' among them, were killed and four compounds and three tunnels were destroyed as helicopter gunships pounded terrorists' hideouts in Dabori area of Orakzai Agency on Thursday. The 'Commander' was identified as Ajmer, officials said, adding that 21 militants were also injured in attacks." (Story also covered in all newspapers)

News Story: Two Security Men, Three Militants Die In Bara Attack
"The News" (12/18)

"Two security personnel and three suspected militants were killed in a remote-controlled bomb attack in the Bara subdivision of Khyber Agency on Thursday. Separately, security forces set 25 houses on fire after an attack on them in the Ferozkhel area of Orakzai Agency in the wee hours of Thursday, officials said."

News Story: Ulema Conference Declares Suicide Attacks Un-Islamic
"Dawn" (12/18)

"A conference of Ulema and Mashaikh, convened by the government on Thursday, declared suicide attacks as 'Haram' and un-Islamic and supported military operations against militants and extremists. Leaders of Jamaat-i-Islami, Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-F and JUI-S and Maulana Abdul Aziz, the former head of Lal Masjid, did not attend the conference because of differences with the government over its policy on war on terror." (Story also covered in all newspapers)

News Story: Militants Blow Up Girls School In Bannu "Dawn" (12/18)

"Unidentified militants blew up a government-run school for girls in the jurisdiction of Saddar police station, Bannu on Thursday."

POLITICAL ISSUES

News Story: NRO is Pakistan's Internal Matter: Mullen "The News"
(12/18)

"U.S. Chairman Joint chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen has made it clear that judicial decision on the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) is Pakistan's internal and constitutional matter and the U.S. did not interfere in its internal matter, while talking to a private TV channel, senior journalists and those of who were travelling with him at the aeroplane after visit to Pakistan."

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News Story: SC Decision on NRO - No Immediate Comments: U.S. "The Nation" (12/18)

"The United States has offered 'no immediate comment' after Supreme Court, Wednesday, ruled the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) shielding President Asif Ali Zardari and several senior politicians from grant charges unconstitutional. 'I have seen reports about that. I don't have anything for you now,' spokesman Ian Kelly said to reporter in Washington."

News Story: President Zardari Under Pressure After NRO Ruling "Dawn"

"President Asif Ali Zardari faced fresh calls to step down Thursday after the Supreme Court struck down an amnesty that had protected the increasingly unpopular leader and several of his political allies from corruption charges."

News Story: Ready To Face New Challenge: Zardari "Dawn" (12/18)

"President Asif Ali Zardari has said that he does not want confrontation with the judiciary or any other institution, adding that the Pakistan People's Party respects the Supreme Court's verdict on the National Reconciliation Ordinance. Talking to office-bearers of the Hyderabad Press Club in Islamabad on Thursday, he said that the PPP had coped with such challenges in the past and do so in future as well." (Story also covered in all newspapers)

News Story: Govt. Under Pressure Over NRO Ministers "Dawn" (12/18)

"With both the Pakistan People's Party and its government in a quandary over the Supreme Court's verdict against the National Reconciliation Ordinance, cracks that have been visible in the party for months are poised to widen, a spokesman for the Prime Minister said on Thursday." (Story also covered in all newspapers)

News Story: 248 Bigwigs' Names Put On ECL "The News" (12/18)

"The Interior Ministry has placed the names of 248 NRO beneficiaries on the Exit Control List (ECL) on the directives of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), sources said."

ECONOMY/ENVIRONMENT

News Story: U.S. Gives \$36m For Swat Reconstruction "The News" (12/18)

"The United States on Thursday announced 36 million dollars aid for

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the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the militancy-hit Swat district. The U.S. envoy to Pakistan, Anne W. Patterson, who was accompanied by the NWFP Chief Minister Ameer Haider Hoti during her visit to Swat, announced the aid for development of health and education sectors in the area." (Story also covered by "Daily Times," "Jang," "Express," "Nawa-i-Waqt," "Pakistan Observer," "The Statesman," "Mashriq," "Ausaf," "Al-Akhbar")

News Story: World Powers Must Bolster Support For Pakistan:
Holbrooke "The News" (12/18)

"The world economic powers must lend economic support to Pakistan as robustly as they are doing for Afghanistan to help Islamabad step up socio-economic development of its people, U.S. Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke said.... Speaking at the Council on Foreign Relations, Holbrooke said Washington had an 'undiminished' commitment to Pakistan's progress but stressed expansion in economic support for the key South Asian anti-terrorism partner must be an international effort."

News Story: U.S. Experts To Provide Technical Help To FBR "Business Recorder" (12/18)

"An assessment team from the U.S. Government Treasury Department is likely to visit Pakistan in January 2010 to provide technical assistance to the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) in smooth implementation of tax reforms, including Inland Revenue Service and enforcement of new value-added tax (VAT) law for broadening the tax-base."

News Story: July-Nov C/A Deficit Narrows To \$1.359bn "The News" (12/18)

"Pakistan's current account deficit in the first five months of the 2009/10 fiscal year was a provisional \$1.359 billion compared with a deficit of \$7.318 billion in the same period last year, the central bank said on Thursday. Higher remittances and a lower trade deficit compared with last year were the reasons for the narrowing of the current account deficit, analysts said."

News Story: IMF Asks Pakistan To Restrict Overdraft To Provinces
"The News" (12/18)

"The mounting raise in the overdraft of provinces has forced the International Monetary Fund (IMF) into asking Pakistan to impose certain restrictions on ballooning of this phenomenon or the country would find it difficult to achieve fiscal discipline. This issue has been discussed in the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) of the IMF on the basis of which the Fund's executive board will approve the fourth tranche for Pakistan worth \$1.2 billion on

News Story: Militancy Impeding Economic Growth "The News" (12/18)

"The ongoing military offensive against militants in South Waziristan Agency (SWA) has dented the government's efforts to put the national economy back on the growth path as no one had anticipated the backlash in the form of deadly suicide bombings in the main cities of Pakistan. The high-ups of the Ministry of Finance said this in their presentation to the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Finance, which met in Islamabad on Thursday."

EDITORIALS/OPINIONS

Editorial: The Post-NRO Reality, an editorial in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (12/18)

"There are smiles on many faces. The Karachi Stock Exchange has shown signs of bouncing back and there is some sense of excitement almost everywhere. The scrapping of the NRO by the Supreme Court has revived some hope that morality and justice do after all exist and from time to time assert themselves over all else.... The exuberant response to the scrapping of the NRO has brought expectations that we could now be moving towards establishing a society which is somewhat less corrupt than the one we know today."

Editorial: A Landmark Judgment, an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English daily "The Post" (cir. 5,000) (12/18)

"The latest Supreme Court judgment is in line with the new national mood and aspirations of the people for a corruption free Pakistan - a society based on the rule of law and constitution. It is to be hoped that the annulment of the discriminatory National Reconciliation Ordinance will be followed by actions to bring to book law breakers.... The Supreme Court decision has in this regard set a healthy precedent."

Editorial: Historic Decision On NRO: More Expectations From The Supreme Court, an editorial in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (12/18)

"The nation rightly expects that that the higher judiciary should also order the return through Interpol of NRO-creator general (retired) Musharraf, and try him in several cases including the Lal Masjid-Jamia Hafsa incident; appointing his favorites on key positions; and getting loans worth billions written off. This would ensure that in future no one would dare amend the Constitution and bring black laws in. This can only be done by the superior judiciary because the politicians have disappointed the nation."

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Editorial: Supreme Court Verdict And editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (12/18)

"It must be remembered that NRO beneficiaries are not responsible for all the ills besetting the country today. There are several others who are running around scot-free.... We will lose a golden opportunity [for across the board accountability] if we limit the campaign against corruption to one or a few individuals. Pakistan has now been bestowed with a judiciary that has integrity and dignity. We all stand to lose if just a few persons are made a target."

Editorial: Austerity Measures, an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (12/18)

"Austerity became a buzzword soon after this government came to power last year. But talk aside, little was done on the ground to minimize expenses.... Such official profligacy is nothing new in Pakistan. But what made it particularly distasteful was that it came at a time of severe economic stress when the country was looking to the IMF for survival and the ranks of Pakistan's newly poor were swelling.... The government needs to show that it is alive to the misery of the people and is taking steps to alleviate their condition."

Editorial: Suspicious Activities of Foreigners in Pakistan, an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (12/18)

"The persistent incidents of altercation between the police and the foreigners, especially the American diplomats, over the latter's use of vehicles with tinted panes and having fake number plates in various cities has become almost a constant source of concern and panic in the Pakistani masses. However, it is a good omen that our law-enforcement agencies have realized their responsibilities and are searching these vehicles. We think that all hurdles in the way for independent Pakistan would cease to exist on the very day when our rulers, too, will change their thinking."

Editorial: Zardari's Correct Response To Obama, an editorial note in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (12/18)

"President Zardari has rejected an appeal by the U.S. to expand the scope of the military operation.... The U.S. is trying to create a situation in Pakistan similar to Columbia or Iraq; scores of Americans travel within Pakistan in tinted-glass vehicles carrying weapons. When the police stop them [at checkpoints] they [Americans]

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adopt an inappropriate stance. Do Pakistani Specials in the U.S. have such privileges? The U.S. must announce the number of diplomatic staff it has [in Pakistan] and direct its diplomats to respect Pakistani laws, to obey the directives of Pakistani law enforcement agencies."

Editorial: Right Way, At Last!, an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (12/18)

"It is an undeniable fact that involvement in the war on terror has created a host of problems for us and given rise to greater dangers. Indian machinations to destabilize Pakistan through its presence in Afghanistan is one instance of that danger. If the U.S. really esteems Pakistan's friendship President Obama should actively pursue his own thoughts about the resolution of Indo-Pakistan disputes as a prerequisite to peace and stability in the region. President Zardari's reference to 'historical conflicts' and call for their settlement should, therefore, be taken in right earnest."

Opinion: "Blackwater" an op-ed by Hamid Akhtar in the liberal Urdu daily "Express" (circ. 25, 000) (12/18)

"Some people are pointing to a threat of [the U.S.] taking control of our nuclear assets through Blackwater, but Interior Minister Malik, the U.S. Embassy and U.S. representatives visiting Pakistan strongly deny Blackwater's presence in the country. What is Blackwater? We got the facts after reading Jeremy Scahill's book on it, after which I fervently hope that the denials of its presence in Pakistan are true.... The last chapter of the book [the Urdu translation of it] is titled 'Blackwater's Activities in Pakistan,' the matters discussed in it are based on hearsay, and are not referenced with facts. It is also not clear whether this last chapter is a part of the original [Scahill] book or was added by the Urdu translator. There are no details given either about the [Urdu] translator or publisher. Some unnecessary details also get in the way of the reader's interest. However, the book could be a great help in understanding the present dangers facing the country. This [Urdu] version is 400 pages, and is priced at Rs 400/- It is available at Darul Shaoor, 37 Mozang Road, Lahore."

Opinion: The Fog of War, an op-ed by Dr. Maleeha Lodhi in the Lahore-based liberal English daily "The Post" (cir. 5,000) (12/18)

"The claims about the Drones did not go unchallenged in the American media with several experts questioning if they did not create more enemies than they eliminate and whether these would hurt America's cause more in the end. However hotly contested the arguments, what concerns Pakistanis, who bear the brunt of these policies, is what the leads about a threatened escalation portend for the country. If implemented such a course of action will have serious ramifications

for national stability and security UNCLASSIFIED policy. But the pattern of the leaks is much too familiar for Islamabad not take urgent notice and undertake a careful evaluation of the risks ahead. The immediate danger - even before any planned escalation materializes - is that this coercive diplomacy-by-leaks can reinforce official and popular Pakistani suspicions about U.S. intentions, intensify public alienation from the West, and promote more anti-American rage. By contributing to such a toxic environment this strategy of leaks can badly backfire making it infinitely harder for the government (Pakistani) to cooperate 'fully' with the U.S., as President Obama is asking Islamabad to do. This should give the sources of these leaks much pause for thought."

Opinion: If U.S. Attacks Quetta?, an op-ed by Ashraf Javed in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (12/18)

"Under the circumstances drone attacks on Balochistan and especially on Quetta will unleash a harsh public reaction, creating circumstances for Indian sponsored BLA and other separatist parties to take the lead. Indian involvement in Balochistan is like an open secret. U.S. Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen has already raised the issue of Balochistan with the Indian leadership.... If U.S. forces opt to eliminate few Al-Qaeda or Taliban leaders, presumably hiding in Balochistan through drone attacks, that will create a serious crisis for the sitting government, besides overstressing Pakistan armed forces operation,

ultimately climaxing into turnabout in presently improving public perception about U.S.... Initiating drone attacks on Balochistan would be tantamount to supporting Indian regional ambitions at the cost of their own victory in Afghanistan. Under the circumstances, instead of conducting drone attacks on Balochistan and neutralizing Pakistan's ability to support them, it will be more pragmatic to keep low the level of violence in the area and work on economic uplift of Afghanistan and resolution of long-term regional disputes."

Opinion: Ethnicity in Afghanistan, an op-ed by Arif Ayub in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (12/18)

"Ethnicity is the most important element in Afghanistan's churning politics and unfortunately an issue which has received the least attention from the U.S. as it has tried to stabilize that country.... The U.S. had at least theoretically tried to provide an ethnic framework for the Afghan army with the recruitment based on 40 percent Pashtuns, 25 percent Tajiks, 20 percent Hazaras and 10 percent Uzbeks. However, despite the skewed quotas, the reality was even worse and in the security organizations the Pashtun percentage

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was around 10 percent and in the office of the Director was almost negligible. These discrepancies have to be corrected before even contemplating any increase in the army and police forces, which would otherwise merely feed the sense of grievance of the Pashtuns."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)
Patterson

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