

ACTION INR-00

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INFO	LOG-00	EEB-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	A-00		INL-00
	DNI-00	DOTE-00	PDI-00	DS-00	EAP-00	DHSE-00	EUR-00
	OIGO-00	FAAE-00	UTED-00	VCI-00	DIAS-00	H-00	TEDE-00
	IO-00	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	NCTC-00	FMP-00	BBG-00
	R-00	EPAE-00	ECA-00	IIP-00	SCRS-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00
	PRM-00	DRL-00	G-00	SCA-00	CARC-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2033

SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE

THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCPA// IMMEDIATE

HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CCPA// IMMEDIATE

JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS ISLAMABAD 000644

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KMDR, KPAO, OIIP, OPRC, PGOV, PREL, PK

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: March 26, 2009

SUMMARY: Reports of a "suspected U.S. drone attack killing seven Arabs in South Waziristan" figured prominently on all front pages on Thursday. The English daily, "Dawn," reported that "trade will be a valuable part of the new U.S. strategy for fighting terrorism in Pakistan." The U.S. announcement of "\$5 million reward for information on Baituallh Mehsud and Sirajuddin Haqqani" also received prominent coverage. All newspapers also highlighted reports that "one person was killed and several others injured during a clash between police and people displaced from Bajaur in Nowshera." Chief of Army Staff General Kayani's "meetings with senior government and military officials" in London received wide coverage in all dailies. Some newspapers also reported that the U.S.

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Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs David Miliband and senior government and military officials in London." UNCLASSIFIED

"UK stresses coop with Pakistan" "Pakistan Observer " (03/26)

"British Foreign Secretary David Miliband has stressed the need for international cooperation with Pakistan in the fight against global terrorism because in his opinion the majority of terrorist incidents that happen in the UK have links in Pakistan."

"U.S. Says It Will Continue To Work With Zardari Govt" "Dawn" (03/26)

"The United States said on Wednesday it was working closely with the democratic government led by President Asif Ali Zardari in areas of common interest and that American officials maintained contacts with opposition parties in Pakistan just as they did in other countries."

"Deposed Judges Restored To Keep Country Intact: PM Gilani" "The News" (03/26)

"Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani said on Wednesday the issue of deposed judges threatened the integrity of the country and the PPP-led government restored them to save the federation."

"Security Lapse Caused Attack On Sri Lanka Team" "Dawn" (03/26)

"Pakistan shared with Sri Lanka on Wednesday findings of preliminary investigations into the attack on its cricket team in Lahore earlier this month. Prime Minister's Adviser on Interior Rehman Malik handed over the report to Sri Lankan High Commissioner Jayalath Weerakkody during a meeting at the interior ministry."

"Mastermind' Of Islamabad Suicide Attack Arrested" "Daily Times" (03/26)

"The mastermind of Monday's suicide attack in Islamabad and eight others have been arrested and shifted to an unknown location for interrogations, according to sources."

"UN Remembers Solecki, Seeks Direct Contact With Kidnappers" "Dawn" (03/26)

"The United Nations system in Pakistan remembered its kidnapped official John Solecki on the International Day of Solidarity with Detained and Missing Staff Members observed all over the world on Wednesday. Reiterating its stand for a direct contact with the kidnappers, the UNHCR said in a statement that it had no information about Mr. Solecki who was kidnapped in Quetta on February 20."

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"Meetings On Afghan Situation: Pakistan To Attend Regional Reconciliation" "Dawn" (03/26)

"Afghanistan will be in the spotlight when world leaders meet in Moscow, Hague, Strasbourg, Kehl and Ankara over the next few days to formulate a new strategy to address issues of governance, security and reconstruction in the conflict-ridden country. As Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi left Islamabad on Wednesday to attend international conferences in Moscow and Hague, Foreign Office spokesman Abdul Basit told Dawn that Pakistan would propose a policy of broader regional reconciliation to tackle militancy and terrorism in Afghanistan."

"Pakistan Opposes 'Fixing Of Seats' In UNSC" "Dawn" (03/26)

"Pakistan warned on Tuesday that 'fixing seats for individual countries' would defeat the objective of wider representation in the expanded UN Security council saying they must be available to all countries of the respective regions and groupings."

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Editorials/Op-eds  
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"Britain, Al Qaeda And Pakistan," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (03/26)

". . . Pakistan is in trouble today. Al Qaeda is embedded here and Pakistanis are more busy hating America and its side-kick, the UK, than paying attention to the consequences of allowing the terrorists to win territory and then enforce their own laws on it. Pakistan may have the will to fight them but lacks the material capacity to do so. The British report is right in its diagnosis that Pakistan has to be helped. Whether this will happen in these cash-strapped days is another matter."

"Drone attacks; Acting President's reaction" an editorial note in the second-largest, center-right nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 125,000) (03/26)

"Acting President Farooq H. Naek said that the world would see the reaction of a sovereign state if the province of Balochistan was subjected to drone attacks. Talking to newsmen in Karachi, he said that President Asif Ali Zardari has made it clear to CIA chief that drone attacks are not acceptable. The resolve demonstrated by the acting President is appreciable. The tribal areas, where drone attacks take place every now and then, are also part of Pakistan. The rulers should defend Pakistan's sovereignty there as well."

"Don't let the Swat peace deal unravel," an editorial in liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 100,000) (03/26)

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"Undoubtedly, the Nizam-i-Adl deal between the government and Tehrik Nifaz-i-Shariat-i-Muhammadi helped peace return to Swat but a recent press conference by Sufi Muhammad has caused some apprehensions again. His stance is that the Qazis do not have any authority and that the implementation of the deal is not up to his satisfaction. Sufi Muhammad alone should not take all the responsibility for Nizam-i-Adl, the government should also implement promises that are part of the deal. Zardari's signature on the deal should not be made an issue. However, it would bode well for peace if President Zardari signs the deal so that the peace process can continue to move forward gradually."

"Plan to turn Pakistan into a desert," an editorial in the Lahore-based independent Urdu daily "Din" (circ. 5000) (03/26)  
"Pakistan's water needs for agriculture are not being fulfilled, but the leadership is busy in its own political squabbles. According to sources, in utter violation of the Indus Basin Treaty, India is stopping river water flowing into Pakistan from Occupied Kashmir by building dams on it. In this manner, India is working on a plan to turn hectares of arable land in Pakistan's four provinces into a desert... Pakistan should pay immediate attention to building water reservoirs and to contact the World Bank - a guarantor of the Indus Basin Treaty - in case of violation by India."

"Obama's Omniscient Onset," an Op-ed by I.M. Mohsin in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (03/26)

"By being a statesman, he realizes that history, geography, faith/tradition advocate against holding Afghanistan by force of arms. It has been, therefore, a graveyard of Empires. . . Yet another factor which militates against the U.S. interests in this area is the drone-attacks which kill innocent civilians in far bigger numbers than it does the 'suspects.' Apparently the current Administration wants to carry on with such attacks which may prove counter-productive in the long run. Their short-term effect erodes U.S.' goodwill and tends to swell the ranks of the Taliban which enables the aggrieved to be able to avenge the blood of their dear ones. Apparently such a measure would work against the idea of 'winning hearts and minds' of the people in the area. One can hope that the new policy would dictate a change of approach also on this front so that the process of reconciliation is facilitated."

"Obama Wants Out," an Op-ed by Zafar Hilaly in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (03/26)

"It seems that Obama wants out. He wants a second term and come 2012 a Vietnam-like situation on his hands in Afghanistan is a big no... The bad news for Obama is that the Taliban and Al Qaeda intend to remain one, whole and united. For the U.S. to draw a distinction where none exists smacks of intellectual duplicity. Besides, to engage the Taliban in negotiations at this sensitive juncture of the

war would be foolhardy. In the words of a top military adviser to General Petraeus: "If the Taliban sees we are negotiating for a stay of execution or to stave off defeat, it will harden their resolve."... Some also believe that a U.S. withdrawal would end our differences with the Taliban. They are living in cloud cuckoo land. The war in Afghanistan would intensify and spill over to Pakistan with horrendous consequences for us."

Patterson

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