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ACTION INR-00

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	UTED-00	VCI-00	FOE-00	H-00	TEDE-00	IO-00	MOFM-00
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	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	IIP-00
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 HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCPA// IMMEDIATE
 HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CCPA// IMMEDIATE
 JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
 DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
 ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
 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: SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: December 16, 2008

SUMMARY: Prime Minister Gilani's statement that "Pakistan was ready to handle security threats" dominated headlines in all newspapers on Tuesday. All newspapers also gave front page coverage to Senator Kerry's engagements in New Delhi and his meeting with Pakistani officials. Newspapers highlighted that "Senator Kerry put fresh pressure on Pakistan saying its powerful spy agency must be brought under control." Newspapers gave prominent coverage to a U.S. news channel report quoting U.S. military officials statement that "India was ready for air strike on Pakistan" after the Mumbai attacks. Reports on U.S. missile attack in Miramshah "killing two militants" figured prominently. The signing of a "military cooperation pact between China and Pakistan" received wide coverage. Reports and photographs of Ambassador Patterson's meeting with former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif received prominent display. Newspapers quoted

Ambassador Patterson as saying that ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ was concerned over tension between Pakistan and India but it would play its role to defuse tension between the two countries."

Most major dailies continued to run editorials on the growing tensions between Pakistan and India. The national English daily, "Dawn," noted that "another Indo-Pakistan war will destabilize South Asia. This is exactly what the terrorists opposed to the now suspended normalization process want." English daily, "The News," said that "there are obvious concerns to world powers, given the nuclear status of both Pakistan and India. In recent months, the U.S. and the UK seem to be playing a good guy, bad guy' role." The leading Urdu daily, "Jang" noted that "seeing the serious charges leveled by India, the U.S., Britain and most of the western circles, we will have to rethink why no country in the world is ready to believe Pakistan's position and why everyone is blindly supporting India." End Summary

News Stories

01. "Pakistan ready to handle security threats, says PM" "Dawn" (12/16)

"Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani told the National Assembly on Monday that Pakistan did not want war but could stand up to one imposed on it as his government seemed seeking to shake off pressure from alleged Pakistani linkages with last month's Mumbai attacks. He also reaffirmed that Pakistan would not allow its territory to be used for terrorist activity."

02. "We Won't Let Foreigners Investigate Suspects: PM" "Daily Times" (12/16)

"Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani told the National Assembly on Monday that he had turned down a request that Britain be allowed to investigate those detained after the Mumbai attacks."

03. "President, PM discuss violation of airspace by Indian aircraft" "Daily Times" (12/16)

"Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani met President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday to discuss the latest security situation. Sources said the two leaders also discussed the violation of Pakistani airspace by Indian aircraft."

04. "Nuclear Assets Out Of Terrorists' Reach, Kerry Told" "Dawn" (12/16)

"Pakistan's nuclear assets are safe and out of terrorists' reach, President Asif Ali Zardari told US Senator John Kerry on Monday. He is also reported to have assured the Senator, who had arrived in

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Islamabad after a visit to India the ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ be allowed to use Pakistani soil for terrorist activities against any other country."

05. "Islamabad Asked To Bring ISI Under Its Thumb" "The News" (12/16)

"U.S. Senator Kerry says Pak spy agency created Lashkar-e-Taiba but not linked to Mumbai attacks. U.S. Senator Kerry visited India and Pakistan Monday and put fresh pressure on Pakistan over Mumbai attacks saying the powerful agency must be brought under control."

06. "India was ready for air strike" "Dawn" (12/16)

"The United States believes that after the Mumbai attacks India's air force began preliminary preparations for possible strikes at suspected terrorist camps in Pakistan, a US news channel reported on Monday."

07. "US missile attack kills two near Miramshah" "Dawn" (12/16)

"A missile strike by US forces killed at least two militants and injured three others in North Waziristan on Monday, an official said. A missile fired by US forces killed two people outside the town of Miramshah in North Waziristan tribal district," a security official told AFP."

08. "Pakistan, China to boost military ties" "Dawn" (12/16)

"Pakistan and China on Monday signed an agreement for military cooperation, pledging to take existing bilateral military ties to new heights."

09. "U.S. to defuse Indo-Pak tension: Patterson" "The News" (12/16)

"U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Anne W Patterson, Consulate Principal Officer Bryan D Hunt and Political and Economic Officer Matt Louis met PML-N leader Mian Nawaz Sharif at his Raiwind residence in Lahore on Monday. On the occasion, Patterson said the U.S. was concerned over the tensions between Pakistan and India but it would play its due role to defuse them."

10. "Hauliers Stop Nato Supplies" "Dawn" (12/16)

"Haulage companies have stopped delivering to foreign troops in Afghanistan after a major deterioration in security along the key supply route. We have stopped supplies to foreign forces in Afghanistan from today," Mohammad Shakir Afridi, president of the Khyber Transport Association, told AFP on Monday."

11. "Security Beefed Up For Supply Depots, Convoys" "Dawn" (12/16)

"The govt is taking drastic steps to increase security for supplies to Nato and U.S. forces in Afghanistan."

12. "Drone attacks to continue: Bush" "The News" (12/16)

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"U.S. President George W. Bush has indicated that drone attacks on suspected terrorist targets inside the tribal areas would continue and Washington will not consult other governments before ordering such strikes."

Editorials/Op-eds

13. "Maintaining Sanity," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (12/16)

"Another Indo-Pakistan war will destabilize South Asia. This is exactly what the terrorists opposed to the now suspended normalization process want. The British prime minister asserted what the media - and not just in India - tends to forget: Pakistan was one of the worst victims of terrorism having suffered 50 suicide attacks last year. Mr. Brown's was the second high-profile visit by a western diplomat in recent days, and he echoed the sentiments Condoleezza Rice had expressed during her visit to Islamabad and New Delhi. Both believed that the Mumbai terrorists had links with elements in this country, but both also made it clear that Pakistan had pledged to continue to combat terrorism. Islamabad has committed 100,000 troops to the operation against the Taliban, and it would be a pity if the hawks in India were allowed to create a situation that would distract Islamabad from its anti-terrorist operations in Fata."

14. "Unity Against Terror," an editorial in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (12/16)

"The international pressure Pakistan has come under since the terrorists struck Mumbai continues to grow. These are obvious concerns to world powers, given the nuclear status of both Pakistan and India. In recent months, it has also been noted that the US and the UK, in that tactic much favored by interrogators everywhere, seem to be playing a 'good guy, bad guy' role. Generally, Washington takes the tougher line, London a more conciliatory one. This time too, Brown has spoken of the need to forge an international front against terror and offered a new pact for this purpose between Pakistan and Britain. The offer makes sense. Given that the increasingly radicalized Muslims based in the UK seem to have established direct links with extremist organizations in Pakistan, such a partnership could bring dividends for both nations."

15. "Pakistan Defends Airspace Violation," an editorial in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (12/16)

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"Though President Zardari denied that he was pursuing a policy of appeasement but it is a fact that the apologetic posture adopted by our leadership is encouraging India to indulge in more provocative acts that amount to humiliating the country. Already the situation is very serious with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown hurling threats on Pakistan and that too inside the premises of Aiwan-e-Sadr, forgetting the norms a visitor or guest is expected to observe. Brown was angry because of killing of three British nationals in Mumbai but easily overlooked the fact that Pakistan has lost thousands of its people in the so-called war on terror and in efforts to provide shield to American and British occupation troops in Afghanistan. And in return he is very proudly offering a hefty amount of 6 million pounds - what a shame! It is absolutely clear that the United States, United Kingdom and India have formed a triangle to strangulate Pakistan and the answer lies in national unity and not in burying our heads in the sand."

16. "Why Islamabad speaking behalf of India," an editorial in the Karachi-based right-wing pro-Jamaat-e-Islami Urdu daily "Jasarat" (cir. 3,000) (12/16)

"President Zardari's statement that India air planes did not violate Pakistan's airspace is very strange. Why Pakistani rulers have to speak on behalf of India when India is not even admitting violating the air space."

0. "Diplomatic corps should be activated on external front," an editorial in the leading mass circulation centrist Urdu daily "Jang" (cir. 300,000) (12/16)

"Seeing the serious charges leveled by the U.S., India, Britain and most of the western circles, we will have to rethink that why no country in the world is ready to believe Pakistan's position while everyone is blindly supporting the Indian posture. Why our diplomatic front is so feeble, ineffective and helpless that no one is willing to trust us?"

17. "In the epicenter of terrorism" an op-ed by Shamim-ur-Rahman in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (12/16)

"Whether or not the world community is pressuring us, we must clean up our own house and eliminate the terrorists. While the operation against the militant groups must be a sustained process, we must also ask the world community to fulfill its responsibility by ensuring the early repatriation of 2.5 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Coalition forces in Afghanistan must create conditions for their settlement as equal citizens in their homeland. This is necessary because refugee settlements provide the best sanctuary for

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the militants. This is a failure of the liberal community which accuses Pakistan of harboring the terrorists." UNCLASSIFIED

18. "Prosecuting Pakistan's "terrorists," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (12/16)

"Pakistan's request for justifiable evidence to India gets lost in the understandable fury of the media and the Indian common man who is influenced by the media. The politicians are also not too willing to pay heed to Pakistan's request possibly because of the coming elections in India. But if Pakistan has to move, it must do so under its laws. There is no martial law in Pakistan and the constitution is fully in operation."

19. "A dangerous vacuum" an op-ed by Zeenia Satti in the centrist national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (12/16)

"Externally, if the civilian government in Pakistan is perceived as weaker than the military, the hawks in India will reap the benefit. Their assertion that it is futile to ask Islamabad to squash the terrorists because the real power lies with the military which sponsors them will gain popularity. This will further incline Indo-Pakistani relations towards war."

20. "Overkill leads to nowhere" an op-ed by Shehryar in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (12/16)

"The sanctions have been clamped down on Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JUD) which has been included in a list of entities subject to an assets freeze, travel ban and arms embargo. The UNSC committee members have endorsed the Indian standpoint according to which JuD is a new front for the Laskhar-e-Taliba (LeT) which allegedly masterminded the November 26 Mumbai siege that killed more a number of people. The question, of course, is not that the decrying or defying the sanctions. Pakistan has rather acted swiftly to implement the sanctions and detained a number of JuD activists. What is more Pakistan's Ambassador to the UN, Abdullah Hussain Haroon, had told the Security Council even a day before the sanctions that his country would take action against the JuD, including freezing its assets, if it was designated a terrorist organization by the UN."

21. "The new U.S. outlook" an op-ed By Shahid Javed Burki in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (12/16)

"In a remarkably lucid 45-minute interview with journalist Tom Brokaw on the popular news program, Meet the Press, president-elect

Obama covered a number of areas where His Administration would get deeply involved the moment it was sworn into office. South Asia is one of them. President Bush looked at the countries of this region from the perspective of two of his concerns. His preoccupation with terrorism had him focus on Pakistan. And his concern about rising China was the main reason for his efforts to develop a close relationship with India. Obama promises a different kind of engagement with South Asia. Islamabad would do well to prepare itself for the new dialogue with Washington."

22. "Background of humiliating treatment with President Bush in Baghdad," an editorial note in the leading mass circulation centrist Urdu daily "Jang" (cir. 300,000) (12/16)

"The U.S. targeted Iraq simply to capture its oil reserves, and to support Israeli intents against the Muslim world. And as a result of this adventure, hundreds of thousands innocent Iraqi women, men and children have been killed, and this holy land of Muslims have been changed into ruins. However the popular resistance movement in Iraq is being intensified with each passing day. The sooner the American and its allied troops quit Iraq, the better it will be for them and the cause of the global peace."

23. "Farewell treatment for President Bush in Baghdad," an editorial note in the popular rightist Urdu-language daily "Ausaf" (cir. 10,000) (12/16)

"Perhaps the U.S. President Bush does not mind such incidents, but the millions of Americans will certainly feel ashamed who mind their national pride. Whatever President Bush has done during eight years of his rule with the Muslim world will be seen as a shameful part of the American history."

"Patterson

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