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ACTION INR-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	A-00		INL-00
	DOT-00	DS-00	EAP-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00	UTED-00
	H-00	TEDE-00	IO-00	LAB-01	AC-00	NEA-00	DGP-00
	NSAE-00	OIC-00	OIG-00	OMB-00	NIMA-00	EPAU-00	PA-00
	PM-00	GIWI-00	ACE-00	IRM-00	SA-00	FMP-00	BBG-00
	R-00	EPAE-00	ECA-00	IIP-00	SCRS-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00
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 JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
 DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
 AMCONSUL KARACHI  
 AMCONSUL LAHORE  
 AMCONSUL PESHAWAR  
 AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
 AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
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 AMEMBASSY LONDON  
 AMEMBASSY PARIS  
 AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
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STATE FOR INR/R/MR, IIP/T, IIP/G/NEA-SA, SA  
 SA/PAB, SA/INS, SA/RA, SA/PPD, DRL  
 LONDON FOR POL/GOODRICH; PARIS FOR POL/HANSON  
 CENTCOM PUBLIC AFFAIRS-MAJ.BALDWIN/SGT. BAKER  
 USCINCPAC FOR POLAD AMBASSADOR HOLZMAN  
 SECDEF FOR PA

E.O. 12958: N/A  
 TAGS: KMDR, KPAO, OIIP, OPRC, PGOV, PREL, PK  
 SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-PAK RELATIONS; DESECRATION  
 OF THE HOLY QURAN; CAMPAIGN AGAINST TERRORISM; INDIA-  
 PAKISTAN RELATIONS; IRAN: NUCLEAR PROGRAM; IRAQ: ANTI-  
 INSURGENT OFFENSIVES; PAKISTAN POLITICAL SITUATION; NON-

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: ARCHIE M BOLSTER  
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(May 14-16, 2005)

MR Highlights: Several papers today carry the retraction from "Newsweek" on the story of the alleged desecration of Quran. While "Dawn" reports the retraction the way it was put out, "Sacrilege Report May Be Wrong", rightwing Urdu daily "Nawa-e-Waqt" reports it as an apology. "'Newsweek' Apologizes for the Publication of Hurtful Article" (paras 5 and 6). "Daily Times" quotes a "Washington Post" story: "CIA And U.S. Special Forces Active In Pakistan" (para 23).

English daily, "The News" also reports today that Assistant Secretary Rocca will visit Pakistan May 24 to discuss "issues of bilateral interest and prevailing situation in South Asia" (para 1).

Over the weekend papers prominently reported the reaction shown by the top leadership in Pakistan to the alleged desecration of Quran. "National Assembly Assails Sacrilege; Demands U.S. Probe", "President Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz have urged the United States to carry out a thorough investigation into the reported sacrilege of the Holy Quran," (paras 7 and 11). Also notably reported were protest day rallies by an alliance of the country's religious parties and their demand for the "U.S. Ambassador's Expulsion" (para 14). The country's largest Urdu daily "Jang" today quotes former CIA Director Stanfield Turner as saying: "President Musharraf Cooperating At The Risk Of His Life" (para 22). "The Nation", an English paper with marked rightwing leaning, today carries two stories which are likely to give more ammunition to anti-Musharraf and anti-U.S. elements to criticize them yet again. "Pakistan, India Agree On U.S.-Backed Kashmir Plan", "U.S. Ready For Nuke Strikes On Hostile States: Report" (paras 33 and 35).

There was significant editorial reaction to a report by U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Pro-Jihadi Urdu paper "Islam" asks the U.S. that "it should review its own role vis-...-vis religious freedom, human rights and interference into other countries' affairs," (para 39). Police in Lahore resorted to violence against human rights activists who were trying to organize a mixed marathon of men and women. While other papers have either avoided writing on the issue or stayed noncommittal, liberal English paper "Daily Times"

criticizes the incident in the strongest terms and calls the police action "Shameful and Sinister Sabotage of Enlightened Moderation" (para 53). End Highlights.

-- News Stories/U.S.-Pak Relations

1. "Rocca Due On 24th For Talks On South Asia Situation" "The News" (05/16)

Quote: Pakistan and United States will discuss issues of bilateral interest and prevailing situation in South Asia at Islamabad in the last week of this month. Relations between Pakistan and India will figure prominently in the interaction with special reference to

the Kashmir dispute. The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Cristina Rocca, leading the U.S. team will have formal talks with Foreign Secretary Riaz Muhammad Khan. Some important recent developments will also come under discussion. She will call on President Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz separately during her stay here. Sources told "The News" here on Sunday that Rocca would reach Islamabad on May 24 with a team of experts on the region. The sources hinted that Rocca may also discuss political developments here with Pakistan authorities. Her meetings with some of the opposition leaders cannot be ruled out during her two-day stay in Islamabad. Rocca will also meet Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri.... End quote.

2. "U.S. Ambassador Did Not Meet Me: Nawab Akbar Bugti" "Ausaf" (05/16)

Quote: Veteran politician and Tribal Chief Nawab Akbar Bugti has denied the press reports about his meeting with the U.S. Ambassador. However, he said that Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, the President of Muslim League, and the Secretary General Mushahid Hussain visited Dera Bugti to see him several times.... End quote.

3. "PPPP Delegation Meets U.S. Officials In Washington" "The News" (05/16)

Quote: A high level delegation of Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) has discussed political developments in Pakistan with senior officials in the US Department of State, Pentagon as well as the United Nations. This was disclosed by the spokesman and a

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member of the delegation, Mohammad Khalid Awan, during a telephonic interview with The News from New York. The 3-member delegation headed by Raja Pervez Ashraf had separate meetings in Washington with M. Steven, Director South Asia, and Claudio Lienfeld, Director of South Asia at the Pentagon.... End quote.

4. "U.S. Firm To Double Garment Imports From Pakistan"  
"The News" (05/16)

Quote: An international departmental stores chain of United States has decided to double its home textile products and readymade garments imports from Pakistan in two years. This was informed at a dinner hosted by Governor Punjab Lt. Gen. (Retd) Khalid Maqbool in the honor of JC Penny Incorporates at the Governor House Saturday night. The volume of textile export from Pakistan would increase by Rs 8 billion due to deal struck with U.S. departmental store. Tom Gorski head of the retailers said that sale of Pakistani garments at the stores of JC Penny Incorporates was about \$70 million per annum which was rapidly increasing due to the improvement in quality of the garments being manufactured in Pakistan. He added that owing to improved quality of Pakistan products, its demand had increased. Keeping in view upward trend in demand, he maintained, the company had decided to double the imports.... End quote.

-- Desecration of the Holy Quran

5. "Newsweek" Apologizes for the Publication of Hurtful Article and Pictures," "Nawa-e-Waqt" (05/16)

Quote: American magazine "Newsweek" has apologized over its May 9 article and photos on the desecration of Holy Quran at Guantanamo Bay. The magazine says that there is a possibility of error in that report. End quote.

6. "Sacrilege Report May Be Wrong: Magazine" "Dawn"  
(05/16)

Quote: The U.S. magazine whose story of desecration of the holy Quran sparked deadly protests in Muslim countries, said on Sunday that its report might have been wrong. Newsweek said the U.S. Defense Department had angrily protested that the story was wrong and its editor Mark Whitaker said in an editorial "we regret that we got any part of our story wrong and extend our sympathies to victims of the violence and to the US

7. "Punishment Sought For Sacrilege" "Dawn" (05/15)

Quote: President Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on Saturday urged the United States to carry out a thorough investigation into the reported sacrilege of the Holy Quran by the staff in Guantanamo Bay in order to identify those responsible for the crime. Taking notice of the incident, the president and the premier demanded exemplary punishment for the culprits and said it should be ensured that such incidents did not take place again. The demand came when Mr. Aziz called on General Musharraf and exchanged views with him on the prevailing political environment in the country and other matters of national importance.... End quote.

8. "U.S. Promises 'Appropriate Action'" "Dawn" (05/14)

Quote: U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has assured Muslims around the world that the Bush administration will take 'appropriate action' if allegations of desecration of the Holy Quran by U.S. interrogators at Guantanamo Bay are proven. Addressing the Senate Appropriations Committee on Thursday, Ms Rice sought an end to violent protests stirred by these allegations, noting that "sadly, some people have lost their lives in (these) demonstrations." Before making her statement, Ms Rice told the committee's chairman that she wanted to "speak directly to Muslims in America and throughout the world" on an issue that has disturbed the entire Muslim community. "I am asking all our friends around the world to reject incitement to violence by those who would mischaracterize our intentions," she said. Ms Rice said "disrespect for the Holy Quran is not now, nor has it ever been, nor will it ever be, tolerated by the United States."... End quote.

9. "Desecration of Holy Quran: The Entire American Nation Cannot be Held Responsible: Sher Afgan," "Din" (05/16)

Quote: The government has said that the (U.S.) statement to launch an inquiry into the desecration incident and take strong action against perpetrators is encouraging. This is the individual act of an American soldier, and the entire American nation cannot be held responsible for it. There is a need to exercise patience; these views were expressed by Secretary Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Sher Afgan in PTV's "News

Night" program. End quote.

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10. "U.S. Should Apologize To The Muslim World:  
Abdullah Badawi, Chairman OIC" "Mashriq" (05/16)

Quote: ... Dr. Abdullah Badawi, the Chairman of OIC and the Prime Minister of Malaysia has slammed the U.S. on the incident of desecration of Holy Quran at Guantanamo Bay and demanded the U.S. to apologize to the Muslim world. He said the U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had assured to look into the matter, 'but this is not enough'.... End quote.

11. "NA Assails Sacrilege, Demands U.S. Probe" "Dawn" (05/14)

Quote: Translating a fiery debate into a milder resolution, the National Assembly on Friday condemned the reported sacrilege of the Holy Quran at a U.S. prison and called for an inquiry to bring the guilty to justice. A poorly-attended sitting of the lower house unanimously passed the compromise resolution agreed between the ruling and opposition parties after a three-day debate marked by religious fervor and severe criticism of the United States and Pakistan's role in the so-called war against terrorism.... End quote.

12. "Desecration of Holy Quran" "The News" (05/16)

Quote: President of the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal and Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Qazi Hussain Ahmed on Sunday said the whole Muslim Ummah would observe protest day on May 27 against the desecration of the Holy Quran by U.S. troops in Guantanamo Bay. Addressing a news conference here, Qazi said he had contacted Muslim organizations the world over, particularly in the Muslim countries, on the issue. He said the Muslim organizations were unanimous that a protest day would be observed by the Muslim Ummah on May 27 against the heinous act committed by the Americans. "It is time to unite the Muslim world against any such conspiracy against them," said the MMA chief. Qazi said that May 27 would be the day of solidarity among the Muslim world against the condemnable act of desecration of the Holy Quran in Guantanamo Bay. "The incident has been reported by none but the Newsweek (magazine) and as such there is no doubt about the truth of its happening," he said.... End quote.

13. "Three Hundred Afghan Ulema Set Ultimatum: Handover

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the Responsible Officials For Desecration of Holy Qur'an in Any Islamic Country Within Three Days Otherwise Jihad Would Be Announced," "Ummat" (05/16)

Quote: Some three hundred Ulema of Afghanistan have given a three-day ultimatum to the United States to hand over the U.S. officials responsible for the desecration of Holy Koran to any Muslim country otherwise Jihad would be announced against it. In a joint statement, the Ulema who assembled in Faizabad area of Badakhshan province called upon President Bush to find out a sincere solution of the issue. End quote.

14. "MMA Demands U.S. Envoy's Expulsion" "Dawn" (05/14)

Quote: Thousands of Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) activists attended demonstrations organized across the country on Friday to protest against the desecration of Holy Quran by U.S. soldiers in the Guantanamo Bay detention center. MMA's president Qazi Hussain Ahmed said that he had written to religious organizations around the world to observe a 'world protest day' in the last week of May. The Ulema in their sermons before Jumma prayer called upon the faithful to protest against 'insensitive policies' of the US administration that had hurt sentiments of the Muslims throughout the world. In Rawalpindi and Islamabad, the religious leaders demanded expulsion of the U.S. Ambassador and severing of diplomatic ties with the United States.... End quote.

15. "Afghan Group Declares Jihad Against U.S. Forces" "The News" (05/16)

Quote: An Islamic group, reportedly linked to Afghanistan's Taliban regime, declared Jihad on Sunday against U.S.-led troops and the Afghan government over the desecration of the Holy Qur'aan by U.S. troops. Hundreds of leaflets praising those, who rallied against the alleged abuse of the Holy Qur'aan, appeared in Ningarhar Province's Jalalabad city, where riots erupted on Wednesday before spreading to other cities. "You did a valuable job, you showed in action that you can scarify your heads in defending the Holy Qur'aan," read the leaflets, left by a group calling itself the "Ningarhar Prevalent Mujahideen Front". The leaflets urged students to wage Jihad against U.S.-led troops, calling the coalition effort to combat insurgents a "crusade" that was killing innocent civilians.... End quote.

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16. "Afghan Protests Toll Rises To 14" "Dawn" (05/15)

Quote: Afghanistan's U.S.-backed government was trying to restore order on Saturday after 14 people died in increasingly violent protests against the alleged desecration of the Koran by interrogators at Guantanamo Bay. Anger directed at the United States, which runs the detention center in Cuba, spread throughout the Muslim world on Friday with Palestinian demonstrators taking to the streets and protests in Pakistan and Indonesia. Seven Afghans died on Friday alone as security forces and enraged protesters clashed in several towns and cities at both ends of the war-ravaged country. Afghan troops shot dead three people as protesters tried to storm the governor's house in southern Ghazni province, bringing the number of people killed since Tuesday to 14, officials said.... End quote.

-- Campaign Against Terrorism

17. "Pakistan, India On Same Side In Terror War: Rice" "Daily Times" (05/14)

Quote: Condoleezza Rice, U.S. secretary of state, told a Senate subcommittee in testimony on Thursday that the "the U.S.-led global war on terrorism has put Pakistan and India on the same side against extremism." She told the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee of State Foreign Operations and Related programs in a prepared statement, "We have de-hyphenated our relationship with Pakistan and with India, building strong, independent ties with each. At the same time that our relations with India have been moving forward we have the best relations with Pakistan that perhaps we have ever had, deepening our cooperation with Pakistan in the war on terrorism, supporting President Musharraf's modernization efforts and the liberalization of Pakistan's economy."... End quote.

18. "Rocca Urges Action Against 'Terrorism'" "Daily Times" (05/15)

Quote: U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca headed back to Washington this weekend after urging Bangladesh to "go after" those seeking to undermine the Muslim-majority nation's tolerant traditions. Rocca wound up on Saturday in Dhaka a week-long swing through South Asia that also took her to



Nepal and India. It was her first UNCLASSIFIED visit to the region since the re-election of President George W. Bush....  
End quote.

19. "Muslims Oppose U.S. Policies Not America" "Daily Times" (05/15)

Quote: Anti Americanism in the Muslim world flows from disapproval of given American policies and should not be interpreted as hatred of America as a country or the Americans as a people, several speakers told a conference on Islamic-American relations on Saturday. The two-day conference was held by the Council for American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the largest Islamic rights and advocacy group in the United States. Two sessions were devoted to examining anti-Americanism and its causes, "Islam phobia" and America's relations with the Islamic world.... End quote.

20. "U.S. Newspaper Regrets Publishing Cartoon" "Dawn" (05/14)

Quote: The Washington Times newspaper has expressed regrets for the 'misunderstanding a derogatory cartoon they published had caused'. In a letter sent to the Pakistani Embassy, WT editor-in-chief Wesley Pruden said that in his effort to portray Pakistan as a sovereign ally in the endeavor to find and punish those who would harm America and Pakistan alike, the cartoonist had inadvertently caused offence to Pakistani citizens. This was not his intention and nor was it the intention of the newspaper, he assured the Embassy. The cartoon, published on May 6, ridiculed Pakistan's cooperation in the war against terror in a manner that hurt the sentiments of millions of people.... End quote.

21. "Usama's Trail Getting Hot Again" "Daily Times" (05/14)

Quote: Pakistani and U.S. intelligence believe they are "hot" on the trail of Al-Qaeda leader Usama Bin Laden and will be around him soon, a senior Pakistani official, who asked not to be named, told the news website Asia Times Online. The official said information gleaned from Al-Qaeda operative Abu Faraj al-Libbi during interrogation signaled a potential breakthrough in the hunt for Bin Laden. Libbi was interrogated by various agencies, including Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, Britain's MI6 and the U.S.

Federal Bureau of Investigation. President Musharraf assigned the official to coordinate and oversee investigations involving recent Al-Qaeda detainees in Pakistan. He said, "Libbi's arrest is significant for Pakistan because he was involved in the assassination plots on Musharraf. Apparently we will not get Usama Bin Laden through Libbi and MI6 also share the opinion, that Libbi is little more than a foot soldier and not an operational chief. However, U.S. interrogators have a different opinion and they call him the catch of the year."... End quote.

22. "President Musharraf Cooperating At The Risk Of His Life: Former CIA Chief," "Jang" (05/16)

Quote: The former head of U.S. CIA, Stanfield Turner, has said that President Musharraf was risking his life for cooperating with the U.S. for the elimination of terrorism. He said that it was not right to assume that President Musharraf was hiding any information on the terrorists from the U.S. He said that the U.S. should continue supporting President Musharraf. He said that Musharraf would continue cooperating with the U.S. because he fully realized that 'his bread is there but his butter is here.'" End quote.

23. "CIA And U.S. Special Forces Active In Pakistan: WP" "Daily Times" (05/16)

Quote: "The CIA and U.S. Military Special Operations forces have been operating inside Pakistan for more than two years with the knowledge of the Pakistani authorities," the Washington Post said in a report published on Sunday. The report by correspondent Dana Priest also said that Haitham Al-Yemeni, the Al Qaeda figure killed last week by a missile fired from Predator, a CIA-operated aerial drone, had been under surveillance for more than a week by U.S. intelligence working along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Sources told the newspaper that the Predator, operated from a secret base hundreds of miles from the target (did not say where), located and fired on al-Yemeni late on Saturday night in Toorikhel, Pakistan, a suburb of Mirali in North Waziristan. This would mean that al-Yemeni was killed in Pakistan and not Afghanistan.... End quote.

24. "Musharraf Says Al-Libbi Arrest Provided No Clues On Bin Laden" "The Nation" (05/16)

Quote: The arrest of Al-Qaeda operative Al-Libbi has failed to provide any clues on Usama bin Laden's whereabouts, Pakistani leader Pervez Musharraf was quoted as saying Monday. The Pakistani military ruler, speaking to the "Financial Times," hailed this month's arrest of Al-Qaeda's alleged number three as vital in helping to sever links between the terror network's members and central command. "We have broken their back," Musharraf said. "They cease to exist as a cohesive, homogenous body under good command." He added: "Whatever they are now capable of doing is individual and group actions divorced from central command and coordinated centrally. They are on the run in the mountains, not in contact with each other."... End quote.

25. "Abu Faraj's Arrest was an Important Development; Breakthrough to Come Soon: U.S. Intelligence Agency," "Khabrain" (05/15)

Quote: Pakistani and American intelligence agencies are actively searching for Usama Bin Laden and believe that they can tighten the noose around him soon. This was revealed by a senior intelligence official to the "Asia Times" website. He said that the information gathered from Abu Faraj could lead to a breakthrough leading to Bin Laden. End quote.

26. "Al Libbi To Be Tried Under ATA" "Dawn" (05/14)

Quote: Interior Minister Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao said on Friday said that Al-Qaeda leader Abu Faraj Al Libbi would be tried under the Anti-Terrorism Act. The Minister told journalists after the graduation ceremony of the Federal Investigation Agency's anti-trafficking unit at FIA headquarters that Al Libbi's extradition had not been demanded by any country. Mr. Sherpao said Al Libbi was involved in many terrorism cases in the country, therefore, he would be tried under its laws. In reply to a question, he said: "As I am not directly involved in the interrogation process, I have no idea what Al Libbi has disclosed before the investigation team."... End quote.

27. "Al-Yemeni Was Killed In Pakistan, U.S. Officials" "The Nation" (website) (05/16)

Quote: Despite Pakistan's denials, American officials are asserting that al-Qaeda leader Haitham al-Yemeni was killed last week by a missile fired from an unmanned

CIA-operated drone in Toorikhel, a ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ in North Waziristan bordering Afghanistan. "The Predator drone, operated from a secret base hundreds of miles from the target, located and fired on al-Yemeni late Saturday night...", The Washington post reported Sunday, citing an unnamed U.S. official and two counter terrorism experts. The U.S. team was hoping Haitham al-Yemeni would lead them to al-Qaeda leader Usama bin Laden, the Post said in a dispatch from Washington. But

after Pakistani authorities early this month captured another al Qaeda leader, Abu Faraj al-Libbi, CIA officials became concerned that al-Yemeni would go into hiding and decided to try to kill him instead, said the counter terrorism experts.... End quote.

28. "Zarqawi Wounded, Treated In Ramadi Hospital" "Daily Times" (05/16)

Quote: Abu Musab Al Zarqawi, the man most wanted by US-led forces in Iraq, was wounded and treated briefly at a hospital in Iraq last week before he disappeared with his men, a British newspaper reported Sunday. The doctor who claims to have treated him told an Iraqi reporter in the western city of Ramadi that Zarqawi was bleeding heavily when he was brought into the hospital on Wednesday, the Sunday Times reported. The doctor was able to recognize the Jordanian-born militant linked to Al-Qaeda network by photographs he had seen of him on television, the newspaper said. End quote.

29. "Mystery Of Al-Qaeda Man Killed By CIA" "The News" (05/15)

Quote: The claim by the U.S. intelligence officials and sections of the American media that a missile fired by a CIA predator aircraft over Pakistan earlier this week killed senior al-Qaeda operative Haitham al-Yemeni was apparently a reference to an incident near Mir Ali in North Waziristan on the night of May 8. The government has denied the claim that the man was killed in Pakistani territory. Information Minister Shaikh Rashid Ahmad issued the denial and at the same time was quoted as saying that the incident could have taken place in neighboring Afghanistan.... Tribesmen were saying that a missile fired from the air had hit and destroyed the car. The mystery remained unsolved. Many tribesmen in North Waziristan are now convinced that the second man killed in that incident was an Arab national. They were not aware of his name and

nationality but speculation in the UNCLASSIFIED that the Arab man belonged to al-Qaeda. The ABC News television channel seems to have solved the mystery by identifying this man as Haitham al-Yemeni. Quoting U.S. intelligence officials, the ABC News reported exclusively on May 13 that the senior al-Qaeda operative was killed by a missile fired from a CIA predator aircraft over Pakistan earlier this week.... End quote.

30. "Pakistan's Domestic Security Weakened" "Dawn" (05/16)

Quote: Pakistan's domestic security and political stability appears to have weakened in 2005, particularly in Balochistan where the government faces an increasingly restive armed uprising, says the latest congressional report on Pakistan. The Congressional Research Service, which prepares this report for U.S. lawmakers, notes that: "Beginning in January and continuing to the present day, well-armed tribesmen in the sparsely populated, but resource-rich Balochistan province have caused serious disruptions by targeting power, transportation, and communication lines, and

engaging in sporadic battles with government forces there."... End quote.

31. "Fatwa Forbidding Suicide Attacks Tomorrow: Minister" "Daily Times" (05/16)

Quote: The government has got a Fatwa (decree) signed by religious scholars of all Islamic sects declaring suicide attacks on places of worship forbidden in Islam. "The Fatwa has been signed by hundreds of religious scholars of all sects and will be announced on Tuesday," Dr. Aamer Liaquat Hussain, minister of state for religious affairs, told "Daily Times." President Pervez Musharraf had assigned Dr Hussain to get a 'comprehensive decree' from clerics of all Islamic sects in an attempt to develop harmony among people of various sects and religions. "It took Dr. Hussain around five months to get this Fatwa signed," an official based in Islamabad said. "Those who plan and carry out such attacks are involved in anti-Islam and anti-humanity acts," it says. The Minister finally got this document signed by the clerics on Friday and has decided to announce it on Tuesday.... End quote.

32. "Clerics Adamant Against 'Interference' In Madarassas" "Daily Times" (05/16)

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Quote: Leaders of Madarassas (Islamic seminaries) said on Sunday that they would not allow the government or anyone else to interfere in Madarassa matters such as their syllabi and examination system. In a communique issued after the Deeni Madaris Convention arranged by the Wafaqul Madaris Al Arabia, Madarassa leaders said seminaries would continue working towards making Pakistan an Islamic and democratic state and would stay united and would not allow anyone interfere in Madarassa matters. It also said they would not accept the imposition of embargos to fulfill the agenda of the West. "Religious schools weren't involved in any kind of politics or terrorism and they don't want to fight the government, but they want it to accept their demands through dialogue because religious schools will not accept any imported philosophy in the name of so-called enlightened moderation," the declaration added. End quote.

-- India-Pakistan Relations

33. "Pakistan, India 'Agree' On U.S.-Backed Kashmir Plan" "The Nation" (05/16)

Quote: Pakistan and India are engaged in serious discussion on American roadmap for Kashmir, prepared by US-based Kashmir Study Group, with official quarters here saying the South Asian nuclear rivals have agreed to strive for solution to the core issue in accordance with this plan. Farooq Kathwari, a Srinagar-born naturalized American furniture tycoon who heads the Kashmir Study Group (KSG), has made several visits to Islamabad and New Delhi in recent months to discuss his plan for Kashmir. The plan recommends soft Kashmir borders with free access between the two sides while leaving the Line of Control undisturbed. "Kathwari, who

has full support of the U.S. Administration, has been in contact with President Musharraf, Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri and the top Indian leaders discussing the plan. After the recently held hectic discussions India and Pakistan have agreed to implement the KSG plan in next two to three years," a well-placed diplomatic source confided to "The Nation" here on Sunday.... End quote.

34. "Aziz Urges Strategic Restraint In S. Asia" "Dawn" (05/16)

Quote: Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz UNCLASSIFIED  
highlighted the importance of South Asia's human capital  
and urged leaders to cash in on it and build a viable  
architecture for peace, security and cooperation in the  
region for ensuring progress and prosperity of the  
people. He was addressing the delegates of South Asian  
Parliaments Conference at a dinner hosted by him at the  
PM House. The Prime Minister said there was a need for  
substantive dialogue for peaceful settlement of all  
disputes in the region and mechanisms to address issues  
on bilateral and multilateral bases with respect to  
sovereign equality of all states.... End quote.

-- Iran: Nuclear Program

35. "U.S. Ready For Nuke Strikes On Hostile States:  
Report" "The Nation" (05/16)

Quote: The United States is now ready to attack, if  
necessary with nuclear arms, hostile countries  
developing weapons of mass destruction; media reports  
said in Washington, Doordarshan and Zee News TV channel  
reported on Sunday. Early last summer, Defense  
Secretary Donald Rumsfeld approved a top secret 'Interim  
Global Strike Alert Order' directing the military to  
assume and maintain readiness to attack hostile  
countries that are developing weapons of mass  
destruction, specifically Iran and North Korea, the  
"Washington Post" reported.... End quote.

-- Iraq: Anti-Insurgent Offensives

36. "Nine U.S. Troops Among 25 Killed In Iraq Violence"  
"Daily Times" (05/15)

Quote: The U.S. military said on Saturday that nine of  
its troops were killed in an offensive against  
insurgents and foreign fighters in western Iraq, and  
guerrillas struck again in Baghdad, leaving at least  
five people dead. Backed by air power, U.S. Marines,  
sailors and soldiers have been trying to root out  
guerrillas in the rebellious Anbar province to weaken an  
insurgency that has escalated attacks since a new Iraq  
government was announced April 28. Insurgents struck  
again in the capital when a suicide car bomber blew  
himself up next to an Iraqi police patrol in central  
Baghdad, killing at least four people, police sources  
said.... End quote.

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-- Religious Freedom Report

37. "American Report on Religious Tolerance and Pakistan," an editorial in the second largest Urdu daily "Nawa-e-Waqt" (05/14)

Quote: Rejecting U.S. report on religious freedom Pakistan has said that the report has drawn a mutilated picture of Pakistan.... America has always used human rights and religious freedom issues as political weapons.... America and the Congress keep quiet if some countries are in good books of America, even if democracy, freedom of expression and religious tolerance is non-existent in those countries.... America pressure on Pakistan reflects its designs against our nuclear capability and our Islamic identity, which it wants to undermine some way or the other.... The minorities in Pakistan are better protected than India, Israel and many European countries. End quote.

38. "Blacklisting Pakistan," an editorial in the center-right national English daily, "The Nation" (05/14)

Quote: The advice of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom to the Bush government to blacklist Pakistan along with two Central Asian states for alleged violations of religious freedom was met with a firm rebuttal by the Foreign Office spokesman who described the report as distorted and contrary to facts.... The Commission might be right to the extent that after the defeat of the BJP religious freedom may have improved, but how much? And then what about those parts of India where the BJP is in power? If Commission Chairman Preeta Bansal accuses Pakistan of tolerating religious freedom violations, does the Indian government deserve any latitude for BJP-controlled states? Pakistan must seriously pursue this matter rather than lodge a mild protest against its proposed blacklisting based on fabricated charges. Those basking in the glow of ridding the country of extremism need to get acknowledgement for their success from the West rather than blindly cooperate in its so-called War on Terror and being accused of not doing enough, not to forget being gratuitously insulted in cartoons. End quote.



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39. "Pakistan's Reaction Over American's Religious Freedom Report," an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban/Jihad Urdu daily, "Islam" (05/14)

Quote: Instead of accusing other countries for violating religious freedom, the U.S. should review its own role vis-...-vis religious freedom, human rights and interference into other countries' affairs. Does the U.S. have no role of closing all doors for the Muslims of Palestine? Is Washington not responsible for the fire in Iraq and Afghanistan? The desecration of Holy Quran, thereby hurting the religious sentiments of 1.25 billion Muslims of the country, fits in which definition of religious freedom? End quote.

-- Desecration of the Holy Quran

40. "Desecration Of Holy Quran And Insensibility Of Muslim Rulers," an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban/Jihad Urdu daily, "Islam" (05/14)

Quote: On this incident of the desecration of Holy Koran, the entire Pakistani nation humbly asks its 'liberal,' 'enlightened' and 'moderate' President [Musharraf] that if a Muslims is termed extremist just on the pretext of sporting a beard then how the American troops who insulted the Holy book of about 1.25 billion Muslims remain enlightened and moderate? If this is not the case then the Pakistani nation is awaiting its President to declare the American troops to be 'extremists.' End quote.

41. "Muslims Cannot Tolerate Sacrilege Of Holy Quran," an editorial in the leading mass circulation Urdu daily, "Jang" (05/15)

Quote: The statement of the U.S. Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice [to the Senate's committee] clearly reflects that the U.S. government is fully alive to the delicate situation arising out of this incident [of desecration of Holy Quran] and would not hesitate in taking actions against those found responsible. Such type of step was very important for the consolation of Muslims. End quote.

42. "To Deal With The Evil," an editorial in the sensationalist Urdu daily, "Ummat" (05/15)

Quote: The U.S. officials who desecrated the Holy Koran deserve no concession. On getting the information of

such an incident, the U.S. government ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ have come into motion at once but it cannot be expected to act so because right now its own mission is to insult Islam and Muslims. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has said that the probe is going on into the incident and if it is proved than action would be taken against those found responsible. The U.S. officials do not feel the need of any proof, evidence, investigation and interrogation when they level any allegations Muslims anywhere in the world. But for incidents as grave as desecration of Holy Koran they are waiting for the results of their investigations. End quote.

43. "Global Protest Against Desecration Of Holy Koran," an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban/Jihad Urdu daily, "Islam" (05/15)

Quote: On the one hand the West raises the slogan of peace and moderation but on the other hand it attempts at violating the religious sentiments of the Muslims. In these circumstances, how is it possible that the serious elements of both the religions sit together and solve the growing issues between the two civilizations through dialogue? As long as the West does not give up its extremism, it should not expect other nations to adopt 'moderation.' End quote.

44. "Desecrating The Quran," an editorial in the center-right national English daily, "The Nation" (05/15)

Quote: That the recent Newsweek report about THE desecration of the Holy Quran at the Guantanamo Bay prison has sparked a strong wave of anger, and even small pockets of violence in the Muslim world, should come as little surprise to those familiar with the religious sentiments of all Muslims, not just so-called hardliners. The U.S. interrogators must have realized this, since they had been holding Muslim prisoners since 2001, and presumably developed an understanding of their commitment to their faith. Seen in the backdrop of the prison abuse revelations, it seems that this understanding was cynically used to engineer a mental breakdown of the inmates. However, profaning the Quran is a step too far, and the masses across the Muslim world are making their feelings known, even though the timid reactions from most governments have left something to be desired.... It sends a strong signal to Islamabad that the Afghan people have not forgiven their

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eastern neighbors for aiding the US invaders in the 2001 war and handing over prisoners to them unconditionally. It sends a strong signal to Islamabad that the Afghan people have not forgiven their eastern neighbors for aiding the US invaders in the 2001 war and handing over prisoners to them unconditionally. About 6000 Afghan refugees also took out a procession near Peshawar. The most populous Muslim country, Indonesia, also witnessed unrest as hundreds took to the streets in protest and students caused uproar by hunting for Americans to punish.... The strongest reaction came from the Saudi government, expressing 'deep indignation' at the incident and stressing 'in case the reports were true, deterrent measures be taken against the perpetrators to prevent recurrence and protect sentiments of Muslims.'... The Pakistani public has long been accusing the present government of 'bending over backwards' to facilitate the USA's so-called War on Terror even at the cost of national honor. The U.S. too should realize that such actions make it difficult to substantiate its claim that its war is against terror, not Islam. The U.S. government's promised investigation should be fair and speedy, lest there is a wave of resentment among Muslims, including those residing in the West. The resulting instability would bode ill for the world as a whole. End quote.

45. "Gitmo Blowback And U.S.-Pak Responsibilities," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English daily, "Daily Times" (05/14)

Quote: The story in a U.S. newsmagazine about the desecration of the Holy Quran by some U.S. army personnel as an interrogation technique to rattle prisoners at Guantanamo Bay has resulted in massive demonstrations in Pakistan and U.S.-occupied Afghanistan. The evidence was unearthed by investigators looking into abuses at Gitmo and adds to a growing list of infractions that have surfaced as the FBI's (Federal Bureau of Investigation) work has proceeded apace. The former Gitmo commander, Maj-Gen Geoffrey Miller, is already feeling the heat and two

months ago Air Force Lt-Gen Randall Schmidt was tasked with probing the issue and questioning Miller. It has been learnt through FBI sources that the U.S. military has been resorting to some aggressive interrogation techniques under orders from Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.... It is interesting to note that the reaction to the outrage has been most severe in Pakistan

and Afghanistan. Pakistan is a U.S. UNCLASSIFIED  
Afghanistan is under U.S. occupation and its government  
actually wants the U.S. troops to stay on and help  
rebuild that country. Yet, people in both countries  
have shown their feelings through demonstrations and, in  
the case of Afghanistan, through violence. This shows  
the hiatus between official policies and the street.  
Ironically, while most Pakistanis are angered, the angry  
Afghans have chosen to attack and vandalize the  
Pakistani consulate in Jalalabad. Why would the Afghans  
attack the Pakistani embassy when there is equal rage in  
Pakistan to what has happened? Could it be that the  
Afghans consider the Pakistani government complicit in  
the act because most of those rotting at Gitmo were  
rounded up by Islamabad and handed over to US forces?  
Moreover, while doing so Pakistan made no attempt to  
work out the status of these prisoners with the U.S....  
End quote.

46. "Attack On Pakistan Consulate," an editorial note  
in the second largest Urdu daily "Nawa-e-Waqt" (05/14)

Quote: In Jalalabad, Afghanistan protestors torched  
Pakistani consulate and ransacked the building..  
Afghans are under the yoke of U.S. slavery, but their  
love for Islam is intact. The people of Afghanistan  
know America as their enemy number one. And due to our  
status as the frontline ally of America, they do not  
hold good opinion about us. Whenever they resort to  
protest against American excesses, they also target us.  
The attack on the consulate could be a result of such  
policies.... So far the President of the country  
[Pakistan] hasn't come out with a stance on the attack  
on the consulate or desecration of Holy Quran, which has  
created ambiguity. In a bid to appease America, we are  
annoying our friends, especially the Muslim countries.  
End quote.

47. "Messages From The Jalalabad Incident," an  
editorial in the centrist national English daily, "The  
News" (05/15)

Quote: Wednesday's burning of the Pakistani Consulate  
in Jalalabad emphasized what's already obvious: that we  
cannot be closely tied to the Americans without  
receiving some of the hostility directed at the United  
States. There are strategic, military and financial  
advantages to Pakistan's close ties with Washington;  
this also helps us deal more effectively with the  
fanatical followers of the Taliban in this country. But

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the incident clearly shows that, at the same time we're in danger of losing popular goodwill in our neighboring country. There's understandable rage against the United States in much of the Islamic world following the reported anti-Islamic sacrilege in the U.S. gulag of Guantanamo Bay, but nowhere else has Pakistan been the

target of that anger. Regardless of whether Al-Qaeda and the Taliban find favor among Afghans, the incident did come less than a week after the announcement of the capture of Al-Qaeda No 3 Abu Faraj al Libbi, something that re-emphasized Pakistan's close collaboration with President Bush's "war on terror." It's good we confined the cooperation to our own borders, and did not dispatch troops to Afghanistan. We made that mistake in support of the Taliban and saw the intervention boomerang on us - in the shape, among other things, of the curse of the "Pakistani Taliban." The wisdom of Pakistan's refusal to dispatch troops to Iraq is thus another element clearly borne out by what happened in Jalalabad.... End quote.

48. "Smile Of Usama Bin Laden," an op-ed by Hamid Mir in the leading mass circulation Urdu daily, "Jang" (05/16)

Quote: The entire anti-U.S. leadership in Afghanistan is hiding in the mountains. But despite that, there were comprehensive demonstrations against the desecration of Holy Quran. But in Pakistan there is no dearth of anti-American leaders but despite this excess, there was a lack of leadership visible on this issue. So long as the rulers of the Muslim countries do not adopt a challenging tone and tenor about the U.S. policies, they won't be able to cap the growing hatred against America in the Muslim youth. End quote.

-- Non-Proliferation

49. "Unwarranted Demand," an editorial in the centrist national English daily, "The News" (05/16)

Quote: The conditional offer by France to help Pakistan build its nuclear-power-generation capacity indicates the distrust that still inhibits this country's ability to acquire nuclear technology from Western countries even for peaceful purposes. That Paris wants Islamabad to first clear itself from proliferation charges before being eligible for nuclear cooperation indicates the deep suspicions that continue to exist regarding

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Pakistan's ability to protect its nuclear facilities. The same reservations motivated France to abandon its nuclear-power-plant deal with Pakistan, reached in the seventies, leaving the country in the lurch. The United States may have played the devil's advocate, but backtracking on the deal was the decision by the sovereign government of France.... It is against this backdrop that the French ambassador must have thought twice before asking Islamabad to absolve itself of proliferation charges. That Islamabad has been fully committed to cooperating with the international probe into nuclear leakages that are the acts of individual scientists evidences the promise of non-proliferation. Pakistan has never patronized horizontal proliferation and has always opposed it. In fact, the international community as well as international nuclear agencies have recognized Islamabad's cooperation. Amid such hard facts, it is unjustified for the French Ambassador to issue a statement that could be interpreted as Pakistan's indictment with regard to nuclear

proliferation. End quote.

#### -- India-Pakistan Relations

50. "American Decision to Make India a World Power," an editorial note in the populist Urdu daily "Khabrain" (05/15)

Quote: Expert on South Asian affairs Ashley J. Tales (sp?) has written in an analysis that "American authorities have confirmed that the U.S. has decided it would help India become a world power in the 21st century." These views are no less than a revelation. If we review events that have taken place in the recent past, we will see that there has been a visible change in the U.S. policy towards South Asia... The question is why does the U.S. need to turn India into a world power? The reason could be that the U.S. wants to counter China's growing power in the region.... Whatever the reason for this decision, it does not bode well for Pakistan or other countries of the region. The reason for this concern is simple. India's record with respect to other South Asian countries is not satisfactory. End quote.

#### -- Pakistan Political Situation

51. "New Leadership?," letter to the Editor by Senator Farhatullah Babar in the centrist national English

Quote: With reference to Rauf Klasra's article "U.S. pushing Benazir, Sharif to abdicate party leadership" (The News, May 13), while quoting 'top western diplomatic sources' the reporter says that Americans are trying to convince the two former prime ministers currently in exile Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif to quit active politics. In their bid to manufacture 'new leadership' minus the two former Prime Ministers the establishment carried out experiments in the past also. These included elections (described by the Commonwealth as 'seriously flawed'), a questionable referendum, re-writing of the Constitution, and putting on hold the law against floor crossing until the main political parties were broken to bolster the King's Party. The result of all these experiments has been an unstable political system which could not neither give enough confidence to a President who claimed duly elected status to shed his military uniform nor to the Parliament to complete quorum. The experiments failed in foisting test tube leadership on the people and succeeded only in making Pakistan a garrison state. Rauf Klasra is an intelligent reporter and it is hard to say that he misunderstood or misreported the sense of the western diplomats. One would have thought that the American and western diplomat knew better what genuine leadership was; the one conferred by the people and elected Parliament, or the one claimed on the basis of a questionable referendum. It is therefore surprising that American diplomats should seek to circumscribe the right of the people to choose their leaders and seek to promote test tube leadership. It runs counter to President Bush's own defense of this right of the people

in his inaugural address: "Rights must be more than the grudging concessions of dictators; they are secured by free dissent and the participation of the governed. Democratic reformers facing repression, prison, or exile can know: America sees you for who you are: the future leaders of your free country." It is surprising that while Bush should see the exiled leaders as future leaders of the country his diplomats should seek to 'convince' Ms Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif to abdicate leadership in deference to a military command. Genuine leaders, genuine parties and genuine political institutions are what hold the countries together. General Zia also thought that by physically eliminating the country's genuine leadership he would throw out the "rotten eggs" and bring in "fresh faces." What he

actually gave to the country in the process we will  
known. End quote. UNCLASSIFIED

52. "More Confusion," an editorial in the centrist national English daily, "The News" (05/14)

Quote: President Musharraf's statements for two consecutive days about the government's contacts with the opposition, particularly the Pakistan People's Party, have only created more confusions than clearing the uncertainties that are fogging the political landscape.... The president, while making public statements, must show some degree of respect for the right of Parliament to amend the Constitution. As the president, who symbolizes neutrality and should in theory be above party politics, Gen. Musharraf must not appear to be taking political sides. There is no denying the fact that reconciliation among political leaders is the need of the hour. It would lead to stability, which is essential for economic growth and prosperity. However, such a process of reconciliation must be pursued with open minds and in the spirit of give and take. If the military is interested in ensuring its political, institutional and corporate interests, it will only attain its objectives by sharing power with the people's representatives. Whatever emerges from such contacts must ultimately be brought to the people for approval, as they are the best and rightful judges to stamp it with the seal of legitimacy. End quote.

53. "Shameful And Sinister Sabotage Of 'Enlightened Moderation'," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English daily, "Daily Times" (05/16)

Quote: The abrasive police action in Lahore against the participants of a mixed race is highly unfortunate. The event was organized by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and the Joint Action Committee for People's Rights to test the official claim of enlightened moderation. Like all things good and bad, the incident raises important questions about the nature of state and society in Pakistan.... General Musharraf is the grand patriarch of this political dispensation and the sole conceptualizer of 'enlightened moderation'. If he is genuinely upset with what his minions are doing down the line to sabotage his agenda, he should do something about it. The HRCP et al have announced a bigger mixed race a week or so down the line. This time the Punjab



government should give it all the security needs and actively encourage it. End quote. Crocker

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