

International Relations – Newspaper Report #1
Source: The Afghan Daily – www.AfghanDaily.com

The Afghan Daily will be my online foreign news source for the purpose of newspaper summary reports. The website offers a huge variety of links to other news sources, and categories of stories; Kabul News, **War**, Society, Sports, etc. The front page often provides a range of stories in the international arena. As anticipated, many of the featured reports are war or violence-based hard-hitting stories. Contradictory reports about fraud in the election process, War continuation and escalation stories, and a select few articles on positive events make up the base collection of stories that the Afghan Daily offers. I have selected a couple articles that I feel portray the general feelings and motivations within the editors of the paper.

The first article, the source of which is the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), is titled “Anti-U.S. Protests in Pakistan Over Sentencing of Aafia Siddiqui; Taliban Video Warns of Revenge Against Pakistani Security Forces” (1). This article, published several days after the 86 year sentencing, explains that riots broke out in several Pakistani towns after a NY Court convicted Dr. Aafia Siddiqui of attempted murder of US soldiers. The articles source the riot to a number of organizations, but mainly a result of the Jameet-e-Islam Pakistan – the country’s largest political party. The article contains a number of images of protests and rallies for Siddiqui and against the US, giving the reader a better idea of how many people participated in the outcries. The article contains no real information into the circumstances which Siddiqui was arrested under, and upon further investigation I determined that she allegedly grabbed a gun in questioning and shot at officers. Some of the Pakistani people are clearly upset, but they do not provide the logic one might expect – “Where is the proof she is guilty?” The article instead details how Taliban and TTP (The Movement of Pakistani Taliban) reacted to the video, which was by saying how they would take revenge on the Pakistani Army for their act of infidel in “handing over” Siddiqui. I found that the article contains less of the facts I would be interested in knowing, and

more threats from the Taliban; if the Taliban weren't given such media attention, the effect of their fear-mongering would be significantly diminished.

“Afghanistan Elections Marred by Deadly Attacks” (2) was a common-themed story, among contradictory defensive and accusatory reports concerning election fraud. On September 18th, this article was released detailing the deaths of at least seven civilians in parliamentary elections voting. The election was conducted amidst at least five rocket attacks in three cities around the country. The report explains the previous fraud-ridden elections the country has seen, and how voters are able to easily clean their fingers of the ink which used to mark that they had previously voted. Fake voter cards also result in huge numbers of fraudulent votes, the most popular and effective way to rig the elections. Areas under Taliban rule experience the tightest and most corruption; one sentence in particular outlines the intensity of choosing to vote: “... the Taliban persuaded many voters to stay home – but may also have given some a better reason for wanting to clean their fingers”. The system in place clearly does not facilitate the proper and democratic style of voting that should predominate. The inked fingers and vulnerability at polling sites puts the Afghan people in such danger, that voting simply is not worth the associated risks. The basic polling method also means that results were first released after several days, but won't be final for almost a month! The Afghan Daily story that was published the day of elections stated that only 7 were killed during the voting process, while a separate story from the AP (Snow) which was written almost two weeks later stated that the U.N. recorded 32 civilian deaths on election day – a very worrisome discrepancy in facts.

(1) “Anti-U.S. Protests in Pakistan Over Sentencing of Aafia Siddiqui; Taliban Video Warns of Revenge Against Pakistani Security Forces.” MEMRI 28th September 2010.

<http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/4636.htm>

(2) Haynes, Jonathan. “Afghanistan Elections Marred by Deadly Attacks”. Guardian.co.uk 18th September 2010. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/sep/18/afghanistan-elections-marred-deadly-attacks>

(3) Snow, Anita “UN says Afghan election a positive sign”. Associated Press 29 Sept. 2010.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5ihcxvLQTtUCreNe2jbrDczmO9aQD9IHSAK80?docId=D9IHSAK80>