

## PAKISTAN

### Sources

Most of the Pakistani online newspapers and magazines are in Urdu, English or Arabic. From a total of 12 daily newspapers and 49 weekly and monthly magazines initially consulted, three main sources were reviewed: the Pakistani English version of *News Network International* (which consistently covered Canadian news related to both Pakistan and Afghanistan), *Hipakistan* (English/Urdu newspaper), and the *Daily Kawish*.<sup>17</sup>

### References to Canada

Having examined each of the three online sources over a 3-month period, we found that Canadian news was well covered in the Pakistani English press. Canada was mentioned on an almost daily basis in a total of 104 articles and editorials and made headlines 39 times over the same period. News of the Canadian peacekeeping force in Afghanistan was very well covered. However, Canadian domestic news was not given prominence in the Pakistani papers and magazines. In many cases, Canadian news was “embedded” within articles related to terrorists and other international issues such as NATO.

### Findings in the Pakistani online press

The Pakistani papers had editorials relating to Canadian Muslim terrorist suspects. There were several articles covering the case of five Pakistani students who threatened to sue Canada after they were deported for suspected al-Qaeda links, especially after the men told a news conference in Islamabad that they had been badly treated at the time of their arrest in Toronto and during three months in detention. Local papers covered as well the cases of Maher Arar, Zahid Ghani (a Pakistani journalist who was arrested in Montreal by a local police officer on a minor traffic violation), Hassan Almrei (described by Canadian officials as a Muslim fundamentalist with links to al-Qaeda and Afghan training camps) and Abdurahman Khadr (20 years old) who had just returned to Canada after being released from the Guantanamo Bay detention centre.

Reporting on Canada in the Pakistan online press gave a lot of attention on Canadian peacekeeping forces in Afghanistan and visits of Canadian officials to Pakistan. The papers reported Allan Rock’s comments on his visit to Canada: “Canada has an interest in investment in Pakistani information technology, exploration of oil and gas, manufacturing, textile machinery and heavy machinery.” No outwardly negative perceptions of Canada were reported in the Pakistani online press, though Muslim editorialists were critical of America and the West in general. The Pakistani government has a high opinion of Canada as Mr. Musharraf described the relation between Canada and his country as “a very close relationship that gained a greater depth.”

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<sup>17</sup>The Arabic Pakistani magazines reviewed contained no Canadian news.