

MORAL RECTITUDE? NO, JOHN BRENNAN IS A HONEY BADGER

A tweet yesterday by Arif Rafiq noted that there was a US drone strike in North Waziristan yesterday just a few hours before Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif would visit a spot only 20 miles away. At the New York Times article Rafiq linked:

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan visited a military camp in the tribal district of North Waziristan on Thursday in what was seen as a pointed show of support and an attempt to bolster his troubled relationship with the country's top generals.

The rare visit by Mr. Sharif to the tribal belt came three months after the military launched a sweeping offensive against the Taliban in North Waziristan, a hub of Taliban and Qaeda activity.

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His visit to Miram Shah, the main town in North Waziristan, on Thursday showed Mr. Sharif standing staunchly behind the country's generals. "Our courageous troops are fighting a difficult war against an invisible enemy," he told soldiers. "This is a war for the survival of Pakistan."

Pakistan's military claims that 80 percent of North Waziristan has been wrested from the militants and that at least 1,000 militants have been killed in the offensive, known as Zarb-e-Azb, which started on June 15. The figures are impossible to independently verify because the area is out of bounds for most reporters.

According to Pakistan Today, Sharif was emphatic in claiming victory by Pakistan over the militants they were attacking in North Waziristan:

Praising Pakistan Army for the success of Operation Zarb-e-Azb, the prime minister said he visited areas of North Waziristan which used to be havens for terrorists but now the army had purged all anti-state elements from there.

Despite Sharif's claim of total victory over the terrorists, the US obviously feels the job is not complete, as drone strikes this week have been heavy, including the strike Rafiq notes in the Times article as only 20 miles from where Sharif would visit a few hours later.

The beginning of this week was marked by observance of Eid-ul-Azha, but the religious holiday had no bearing on the timing of drone strikes by the CIA. This Express Tribune article notes that US drone strikes in North Waziristan killed five in the pre-dawn hours Monday, another five later on Monday, six early Tuesday, and another eight also on Tuesday.

And then as AP recounts, there were two separate attacks overnight Wednesday and Thursday that killed five more. Near the end of the Times article linked by Rafiq, we get the observation of how close in location and timing it was to Sharif's visit:

In an unexpected turn, Mr. Sharif's visit also had an unusual dimension in terms of his relationship with the United States. Hours before he arrived, an American drone fired a missile at a vehicle in Datta Khel, 20 miles west of the camp where Mr. Sharif visited. Four people were killed and two were wounded, a Pakistani security official said on the condition of anonymity.

Clearly, when it comes to drone strikes in

Pakistan, John Brennan is a honey badger. He don't care about religious holidays. He don't care about the Pakistani military claiming to have established control of North Waziristan. He don't care about the Prime Minister entering the area. John Brennan just don't care.

Who ever heard of a honey badger with moral rectitude?