

RELEASE IN PART
B5,B6

From: McHale, Judith A <McHaleJA@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 9, 2010 10:28 AM
To: H
Cc: Mills, Cheryl D; Sullivan, Jacob J; Reines, Philippe I
Subject: FW: Indian Home Minister Appeals to Media to Help Maintain Communal Harmony in View of U.S. Pastor Threatening to Burn Quran

FYI, as Bob reported this morning. Note last sentence about action by "US Authorities",

B5

**Press Information Bureau
 Government of India
 Ministry of Home Affairs
 09-September-2010 11:44 IST**

Home Minister Appeals to Media to Help Maintain Communal Harmony in View of U.S. Pastor Threatening to Burn Quran

The Union Home Minister Shri P.Chidambaram has appealed to media to help maintain communal peace and harmony in the wake of reports of a pastor in the United States threatening to burn the holy Quran. In a statement issued here today, the Union Home Minister said that the act is calculated to increase strife between different religious groups. Following is the text of his statement :

"There are reports of a pastor in the United States threatening to burn the Quran on September 11, 2010.

The US authorities have strongly condemned the statement of the pastor. Religious leaders all over the world have also condemned his proposed action.

We condemn the action of the pastor. It is totally unbecoming of anyone who claims to be a man of religion. It is obviously calculated to increase bitterness and strife between different religious groups. No one who is interested in maintaining harmony and peace among different sections of the people can condone such action.

We hope that the US authorities will take strong action to prevent such an outrage being committed. While we await the action of the US authorities, we would appeal to the media in India – both print and visual media – to refrain from telecasting visuals or publishing photographs of the deplorable act. We would also appeal to the media to exercise great restraint over the next couple of days and help in maintaining communal peace and harmony."

OK/KS

India Condemns U.S. Pastor's Plan to Burn the Quran, Urges Media Restraint

By Bibhudatta Pradhan - Sep 9, 2010

India "condemns" a plan by a Florida pastor to burn copies of the Koran and the government hopes the U.S. will take strong action against him, Home Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram said in New Delhi.

Terry Jones, pastor of the Dove World Outreach Center in Gainesville has been criticized by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and the Vatican for his plan to burn the Muslim holy book on Sept. 11. General David Petraeus, commander of international coalition forces in Afghanistan, said the act would endanger U.S. troops.

Chidambaram urged Indian newspapers not to publish photographs of what he said would be a "deplorable act" and asked television channels to refrain from broadcasting images. The media must show restraint over the "next couple of days and help in maintaining communal peace and harmony," the minister said, reading a government statement.

The proposed burning "is totally unbecoming of anyone who claims to be a man of religion," Chidambaram said. About 13 percent of India's 1.2 billion people are Muslim.

Facing mounting criticism around the world and at home, Jones said yesterday that supporters have sent him copies of the Koran to burn and he was not convinced "that backing down is the right thing to do," Associated Press reported.

To contact the reporter on this story: Bibhudatta Pradhan in New Delhi at bpradhan@bloomberg.net

Chris Hensman

Special Assistant

Office of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (R)

U.S. Department of State

2201 C St, NW Rm 5932

W: 202.647.9130 | M: | ✉: hensmancd@state.gov

B6