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PRESS RELEASE

"Brief Initial Summary of the Panel Discussion on Media Coverage of Terrorism in India and Pakistan at the National Press Club, Washington, DC."

The 2+ hour discussion with panelists, Professor Romesh Diwan, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Dr. Rita Frenchman, Member, AAPI Governing Body, Mr. Selig Harrison, Center for International Policy, Ambassador Dennis Kux, Woodrow Wilson Center of International Scholars, and Professor Chandrakant Panse, Friends of India Society International, Inc. (FISI), moderated by Professor Bal Ram Singh of the Center for Indic Studies drew a packed hall of audience in the First Amendment room with 85 seat capacity at the 13th floor of the National Press Club building.

Among the audience were Amassador-at-large Honorable Bhisma K. Agnihotri, Mr. Navtej Sarna of Indian Embassy in Washington, D.C., a Pakistani Embassy official, over half-a-dozen media representatives (Doordarshan, Mahnoranjan TV, News India Times, India Post, India Abroad, etc.) and scores of Indian Americans. The presentations, discussion, and question-answer session remained lively to the last minute. Everyone wished there was more time.

The panelists presented a wide range of issues from diplomatic successes (and failures), lopsided and ignorant media to the need for community assertion in demanding fair and full coverage of terrorism against India, especially the role of Pakistan and ISI.

Everyone involved (the audience, panelists, and the sponsors) felt very satisfied with the event, first such nationally event after September 11 incident. The only shortcoming remained was the lack of media interest. Although CSPAN staff had indicated interest in the event, for some reason their final decision which is generally taken the evening before did not include coverage of this event.