

### **Pak caught, bowled & stumped**

**Asian Age, 4 March 2009**

March 3: Eight people, including six policemen and two civilians, were killed and seven players of the visiting Sri Lankan cricket team were injured when masked terrorists ambushed the cricketers near Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium at about 9 am on Tuesday. The ambush, similar in style to the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, stunned a world already trying to deal with an uncontrollable militant element that is threatening to destabilise Pakistan. Pakistani forces have been battling a wave of militancy in its northwest regions, considered by many to be a safe haven for Al Qaeda. Tuesday's attack demonstrates the Pakistan government's failure to contain these elements, our Delhi bureau reports

### **In Pakistan, India is emerging as prime suspect**

**Hindu, 4 March 2009**

Despite an early statement by the Governor of Pakistan's Punjab province, Salman Taseer, that "the same people who carried out the Mumbai attacks are behind the attack in Lahore," India is emerging as a prime suspect in the eyes of many Pakistanis. In the hours following the Lahore attack, some in Pakistan's influential electronic media said on air they did not want to mirror the finger-pointing by the Indian media following the Mumbai attacks. Even so, many discussions on several television channels with talking heads and politicians, both elected and un-elected, centred on speculation that Indian intelligence agencies were responsible for the brazen commando-style attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team as a revenge against the Mumbai attacks.

### **Failure not an option' in terror war: Zardari**

**Dawn, 4 March 2009**

WASHINGTON: 'Failure is not an option' in Pakistan's battle against terrorism, President Asif Ali Zardari said in an op-ed piece published in Wednesday's Wall Street Journal. 'This is an existential battle. If we lose, so too will the world. Failure is not an option,' the president said a day after a Mumbai-style attack on members of Sri Lanka's cricket team in Lahore killed eight people including six Pakistani policemen and two civilians. Tuesday's attack, said Zardari, 'shows once again the evil we are confronting.' Speaking for his government, Zardari also said 'we have not and will not negotiate with extremist Taliban and terrorists,' adding that the recently struck deal in the troubled Swat Valley was not with the Taliban.

### **President condemns**

**Daily News, 4 March 2009**

President Mahinda Rajapaksa unequivocally condemned the cowardly terrorist attack targeting the Sri Lankan Cricket Team in Lahore, Pakistan, yesterday emphasizing that the Sri Lankan team had gone to Pakistan as ambassadors of goodwill. The President, who is at present in Nepal, has instructed that immediately action be taken to bring back to Sri Lanka all members of the team, ensuring their safety and security. Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama who is now in Nepal has been instructed to leave for Pakistan immediately in this regard. Instructions also have been given to the Sri Lankan High Commissioner in Islamabad to facilitate the arrangements with the Pakistani authorities on medical attention for the players in hospital, and their safe return

to Sri Lanka.

### **Pakistan borders nerve centre of extremism: Hillary Clinton**

**Dawn, 6 March 2009**

BRUSSELS: US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Thursday proposed a high-level international conference to map out a new strategy for Afghanistan and said neighbour Pakistan would be invited.

'We hope that this meeting could provide an opportunity to reach a common set of principles, perhaps embodied in a chairman's statement on a common way forward,' Clinton told NATO foreign ministers, without saying where it would take place. Aside from Afghanistan and Pakistan, Clinton also proposed inviting NATO allies and other nations contributing forces to the operation in Afghanistan as well as major donors and international organizations. Pakistani and Afghan foreign ministers met in Washington last week when the conference idea was discussed. Clinton repeated at the NATO meeting in Brussels a US appeal for NATO members to provide more troops to fight al-Qaeda and Taliban militants in Afghanistan, adding to the additional 17,000 US forces that Washington offered last month.

### **ISI tells LeT, Hizb: Send 1,500 to J&K**

**Asian Age, 8 March 2009**

March 7: Islamabad appears to have learnt no lessons even after almost the entire world put it on the mat following the 26/11 outrage in Mumbai and even after the terror attack in Lahore on Tuesday in which visiting Sri Lankan cricketers were targeted. Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, in its latest instructions to "area commanders" of the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba and Hizbul Mujahideen, has directed them to send at least 1,500 militants from 26 camps located in Pakistan-occupied Kash-mir to carry out disruptive activities in Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere in India by the end of March. Intelligence sources here said the ISI's orders were: "Start fresh recruitment at camps at Rawalakot, Muzaffar-abad, Kotli and Mirpur. Arrange huge funds from rich people of Mirpur settled abroad." It made it clear that operations in Kashmir and India should not stop after 26/11 or Lahore.

### **Chittagong arms were for ULFA**

**Hindu, 8 March 2009**

DHAKA: Two prime accused in a big arms haul in Chittagong in 2004 have confessed in court that the weapons were being smuggled for the United Liberation Front of Asom and under the direct supervision of its leader Paresh Barua. In the statement to the Metropolitan Magistrate, Chittagong, Mohammad Hafizur Rahman and Din Mohammad said the then Ministers for Home and Industries under the four-party government led by Khaleda Zia and some high officials of the intelligence agencies and the coast guard were well aware of the smuggling which also involved a former MP of the Jatiya Party of Gen. H.M. Ershad and a film director.

### **Pakistan to give Interpol DNA data from Mumbai probe**

**Dawn, 8 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: The head of Interpol said Sunday that Pakistan had agreed to provide DNA profiles and other data on suspected terrorists it obtained during a probe into the Mumbai attacks, AFP reports. 'Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) will send Interpol the DNA profiles

that it obtained during its investigation,' Interpol Chief Ronald Noble told a news conference after talks with Pakistani officials. Interpol is a global organisation that facilitates cooperation among police forces of member countries. The profiles will be compared against the 'world's only global DNA database containing more than 83,000 DNA profiles,' he added. 'Information exchanged through the Interpol data could not only result in potential breakthroughs in the Pakistani investigation but will also help other police forces protect their citizens from terrorist attacks,' he observed.

### **"Next 72 hours crucial for Tigers"**

**Hindu, 9 March 2009**

COLOMBO: The Sri Lankan military on Sunday claimed that the war with the LTTE had reached its "final stages" amid reports that the next 72 hours were crucial for the Tigers. The Defence Ministry said that as Mullathivu battles reached their last phase, LTTE made several desperate attempts since Friday dawn to infiltrate the military's forward defences which left over 100 Tiger cadre killed and as many injured. "LTTE terrorists were preparing for a large scale offensive towards the existing military defences at Palamathalan and north of Puthukkudiyirippu, inducting over 200 cadre including suicide bombers and sea tigers," it said.

### **Troops surround Tiger leaders**

**Daily News, 9 March 2009**

More than 50 Tiger cadres were reportedly killed and scores of others injured as 58 Division troops foiled a desperate LTTE attempt to breach the Security Forces defences in Ampalavanpokkanai in the North of Puthukudiyirippu, once troops advanced 400 metres closer to the Puthumattalan safe zone, military sources told the Daily News yesterday. Military sources confirmed that fierce battles erupted in Ampalavanpokkanai in the South of Chalai and North of Puthukudiyirippu as desperate Tiger cadres now entrapped in less than 40 square kilo metres made yet another attempt to breach the Security Forces defences for the fourth consecutive day yesterday. "Top rung Tiger leaders Swarnam and Lawrence who were physically present to lead the Black Tiger cadres to breach the Security Forces defences in Ampalavanpokkanai were reportedly entrapped along with 50 other Tiger cadres in the ensuing battle and were making desperate attempts to escape from the area since yesterday morning as Security Forces effectively surrounded them in the area from all fronts", sources added.

### **26/11 trial to begin on March 23**

**Hindu, 10 March 2009**

Mumbai: From March 23, the Arthur Road jail, Mumbai, will witness the most famous trial on its premises till date. That day, the special sessions court set up at the jail will convene for the first hearing of the November 26, 2008 Mumbai terror attack case. Metropolitan magistrate N. Shrimangale gave the order on Monday and committed the case to the sessions court. The magistrate also spoke to the lone surviving gunman, Mohammad Ajmal Amir 'Kasab,' who addressed the court through video-conferencing. Ajmal told the court that he had received the charge sheet but did not understand its contents.

### **LTTE suicide bomber attacks Milad Festival - Akurassa [Updated]**

**Daily News, 10 March 2009**

The latest updates on brutal terrorist attack at the national Milad Festival in Sri Lanka, indicates

that 10 civilians were killed and at least 20 others , including a government minister were injured. An LTTE suicide bomber attacked the Jumma mosque at Godapitiya, in Akurassa , in the Matara district around 10.30 , this morning (Mar 10). According to the defence sources , the LTTE terrorist has targeted the Islam devotees attending the national Milad-Un-Nabi celebration , held at the mosque. The Milad-un-Nabi , the birthday of the Prophet Mohammed is celebrated as a national festival in Sri Lanka. Meanwhile , hospital sources say Minister Mahinda Wijesekara who was also attending the celebration has suffered injuries, in the explosion. The sources add that another 15 people with injuries have been admitted to the government hospital Matara.

### **14 killed in LTTE suicide attack**

**Hindu, 11 March 2009**

COLOMBO: Fourteen civilians were killed and 46 others, including a Minister, injured when a suspected cadre of the LTTE blew himself up at a mosque at Akurassa in Matara district in the Southern Province, 160 km from the Sri Lankan capital. Minister for Posts and Telecommunications Mahinda Wijesekara and the former Chief Minister of the Southern Province, H.G. Sirisena, were seriously injured. They were flown to Colombo. The Defence Ministry said here the suicide bomber targeted a procession, held to mark the birthday of Prophet Mohammad, as it approached the mosque. Three other Ministers, who were part of the procession, escaped unhurt. The condition of several of those injured is said to be serious.

### **Hillary, Menon discuss 26/11**

**Hindu, 11 March 2009**

Washington: Meeting for the first time, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon agreed on the need to prevent another Mumbai-type attack. During the meeting on Monday at the State Department's Foggy Bottom headquarters, the first high-level contact for India with the Obama administration, Ms. Clinton also said the two countries needed to improve cooperation in bilateral and global issues. The State Department acting spokesman Robert Wood told journalists on Tuesday that the Mumbai terror attack figured during the meeting.

### **India's 26/11 response packed with primary documents**

**Hindu, 14 March 2009**

NEW DELHI: India's response to a Pakistani questionnaire on November's attacks in Mumbai runs to over 400 pages — almost six times as long as an dossier of evidence released in January. Prepared in response to 30 investigation-related queries prepared by Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency, India's textual response runs to just a few pages — and follows the contours of details published earlier this week in The Hindu. However, the document contains voluminous appendices, which include five compact discs and over 400 pages of primary documentation.

### **Tangible action by Pakistan called for**

**Hindu, 15 March 2009**

NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee on Saturday said he expected Islamabad to follow up on its commitment with "tangible action." India on Friday handed over to Pakistan more evidence regarding the Mumbai terror attacks. "Words and commitments should be

followed by tangible action,” Mr. Mukherjee told journalists here to a question whether he was satisfied with Pakistan’s handling of the investigation.

### **Pak infiltrators killed in Kashmir**

**Daily Excelsior, 20 March 2009**

BARAMULLA: Alert troops foiled a major infiltration bid, first this year, when they gunned down two heavily armed militants in the frontier district of Kupwara, official sources said. They said a group of infiltrators was intercepted by troops at Chowkibal, Handwara, in north Kashmir this morning. When challenged and asked to surrender, militants opened fire with automatic weapons and also hurled grenades.

### **Editorial: Ill-judged**

**News, 21 March 2009**

We have never seen the detail of the agreement made between the government of NWFP and the TNSM, if indeed any such detail exists. For all the world knows it is nothing more than a sequence of sketched-out generalities and 'understandings' that can be interpreted flexibly by any of the parties to the agreement. The last week has begun to reveal the position of the TNSM in a number of areas, most especially relating to the Qazi courts. All the indications are that the TNSM now has sufficient leverage to dictate terms to the government at least in matters of the law. They are now, both literally and metaphorically 'the law of the land'. Lawyers and judges have been told that they are surplus to requirements and that they should leave Swat immediately. They have been told that their safety cannot be guaranteed either in the courts where they are no longer welcome or in their own homes. We would draw your attention to a report of 4th February 2009 of an announcement made by an illegal FM radio station in Swat that said that all lawyers and judges, being part of an 'infidel judicial system', would be killed if they did not quit their profession. Unsurprisingly, the Swat Bar Association president quickly confirmed that the lives of 300 of his co-professionals were under threat and he was trying to contact the extremists in an attempt to assure them that the lawyers were ready to work under an Islamic judicial regime. You can be killed for making a career-choice of lawyering?

### **Raisani warns US against drone attacks in Balochistan**

**Daily Times, 21 March 2009**

QUETTA: Warning Washington against launching drone attacks inside Balochistan, Chief Minister Muhammad Aslam Raisani on Friday said such actions could tarnish the Obama administration’s international image. Referring to a report published in The New York Times, he told media at the Balochistan Assembly that the people of America had voted for change and want to abolish the violent policies of George Bush. The people of Balochistan would unite to condemn any such attacks, he added. “We do not have to panic about published reports about possible drone attacks since they could be wrong. I will soon meet the American ambassador to convey our concerns to her. This issue would be brought to the attention of President Asif Ali Zardari and Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi as well,” he said.

### **5 IEDs, 4 AK-74 rifles recovered from Pak-made cylinders**

**Daily Excelsior, 21 March 2009**

JAMMU: Security forces today recovered a huge cache of arms and explosives hidden in Pakistan-made cooking gas cylinders from the Line of Control (LoC) in Mendhar sector of Poonch district , averting a major possible militant attack in light of forthcoming Parliamentary Elections in the State. According to official sources, Army troops manning Dobbri forward out post, facing Goba post of Pakistan forces, in the Balakote area of Mendhar sector, recovered two gas cylinders and a bag filled with arms and explosives from the other side of the barbed fence.

### **Sixteen Indians on hijacked vessel off Somalian coast**

**Hindu, 21 March 2009**

Mumbai (PTI): Sixteen Indians are onboard a ship, which was hijacked off the Somalian coast on Saturday, the Directorate General of Shipping said. The ship was hijacked on March 21 at 10.30 hours, the DG Shipping said in a release. The ship was travelling between Dubai and Mogadishu carrying rice, refined oil, wheat and general cargo. The coalition forces and the Indian navy vessel operating in the Gulf of Aden have been informed of the incident and have been asked to provide assistance.

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### **LTTE lose Iranapalai**

**Daily News, 23 March 2009**

Security Forces yesterday brought the LTTE's last operational centre, Iranapalai under their full control. The highly fortified Iranapalai, which had been surrounded by massive earth bunds had been fully captured after fierce battles, military sources added. The Media Center for National Security said the Iranapalai junction and its central area had been completely brought under Army control after breaching the final earth bund built by the Tigers to protect the area. The Tigers had built the earth bund with the twin purpose of denying further access to security forces and to prevent civilians from leaving the area.

### **Most Al Qaeda plots linked to Pakistan: Brown**

**Daily Times, 23 March 2009**

LAHORE: More than two-thirds of Al Qaeda plots threatening the UK are linked to Pakistan, Prime Minister Gordon Brown said on Sunday. Writing in the Observer, he said the core of the extremist group has shifted from Afghanistan to Pakistan. "We know that there is an Al Qaeda core in northern Pakistan trying to organise attacks in Britain."

### **Taliban order NGOs to leave Swat**

**Daily Times, 23 March 2009**

KARACHI: The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) on Sunday ordered all non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to immediately leave Swat. In an exclusive chat with IRIN, TTP

spokesman Muslim Khan said, "They come and tell us how to make lavatories in mosques and houses. I'm sure we can do it ourselves. There is no need for foreigners to tell us this." "NGO is another name for 'vulgarity and obscenity'," Khan said. He said NGOs hired women who worked with men, in the field and in offices. "That is totally unIslamic and unacceptable," he said. Infertility: When asked why the TTP was against the polio vaccination, Khan said, "The TTP is against polio vaccination because it causes infertility."

### **Interpol, Pakistan share terror suspect profiles**

**Daily Times, 23 March 2009**

PARIS: Pakistan has shared the DNA profiles of suspected terrorists linked to last year's attacks in Mumbai with Interpol, the policy agency said on Sunday, terming it a 'benchmark'. Interpol, which has 187 member countries, said the information would allow it to help Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to determine "the full international dimension" of the attacks. "Pakistan's decision to send its DNA terrorist-related profiles to Interpol so that all member countries can compare their DNA profiles against them sets a benchmark for Interpol in terrorist-related investigations," Interpol Secretary General Ronald K Noble said in a statement.

### **3 more ultras and a soldier killed, toll in 3 days risen to 14**

**Daily Excelsior, 23 March 2009**

SRINAGAR : soldier and three militants were today killed in the three- day fierce encounter going on since March 20 in the woods in the frontier district of Kupwara in north Kashmir, where the army had launched a massive offensive in the vast forest area. With this, a total of nine militants and five soldiers, including a Major, were killed and a jawan was injured so far, a Defence Ministry spokesman told. He said a soldier was killed when he was hit by a bullet during a search operation in the forest. "We killed a militant, who had taken shelter in a house this morning while two others were killed this afternoon," he said.

### **Editorial: All steps back**

**Indian Express, 23 March 2009**

The Mumbai attacks of November 26 appear to have claimed, among their many victims, a probable resolution of the Sir Creek maritime boundary dispute between India and Pakistan. Not only is the five-year-long composite dialogue between New Delhi and Islamabad in a freeze but the two states now look set to miss the May 13 deadline for submitting their mutually agreeable claims on continental shelves to the UN Convention on the Law of Seas. Sir Creek, a 96-km-long estuary in the Rann of Kutch, has been a matter of disagreement between India and Pakistan since the late '60s, with Pakistan claiming the whole of the creek and India asking for a maritime boundary midway through it, according to international maritime law applicable to all navigable waterways. Pakistan, till recently, had refuted India's claims of navigability; but negotiations last year, as part of the composite dialogue process initiated in January 2004, had brought Pakistan round to India's perspective.

### **Five more militants killed in Kupwara encounter**

**Daily Excelsior, 24 March 2009**

SRINAGAR: Security forces today gunned down five more militants in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district as the fierce gunbattles between security forces and militants continued for the fifth day today. With this, the death toll of militants in the operation, which commenced on March

20, has reached 16. Eight army personnel, including a major, have so far been killed in the encounter that raged on in the dense forests. The five militants were killed in Shamsabari ranges in Hafrada forest today, a defence spokesman said. Combing operation was on when last reports came in, the spokesman said

### **Kasab accepts govt lawyer**

**Asian Age, 24 March 2009**

March 23: Looking straight into the camera and at times smiling and showing no signs of remorse, the lone surviving 26/11 terrorist, Mohammed Ajmal Amir Kasab, on Monday admitted to the special judge that he was from Faridkot in Pakistan. Notably, he responded in English when Judge M.L. Thahiliyani asked him certain questions, scotching earlier speculation that he did not understand any language other than Urdu and Punjabi. Earlier, police officials monitoring the CCTV surveillance of Kasab in his cell had said that the terrorist was reading the chargesheet, which is in English. The hearing took place via video-conferencing with him sitting in a chair inside a barrack of the Arthur Road Jail. Throughout the hearing Kasab, now sporting a French beard, was seen smiling and looked composed. However, when the judge asked if he had received a copy of the chargesheet, Kasab said yes and just laughed.

### **'Iron Gate' ordeal begins today**

**Kathmandu Post, 25 March 2009**

'Iron Gate' ordeal begins today

KATHMANDU, March 24 - Hundreds of Maoist PLA combatants will be sitting alongside regular students for the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) exams that begin on Wednesday. According to the Office of the Controller of Examination (OCE), the total number of examinees stands at 412,081. Of them, 364,591 are regular, while 47,490 are exempted students. The exams will get over on April 2. The number of examinees this year has gone up by 45,040 from the previous year. While Kathmandu has the highest number of SLC examinees (27,684), the thinly populated district of Manang has just 56.

### **LTTE 'finished', says Minister Muralitharan**

**Minivan News, 25 March 2009**

In an interview with the UK's 'The Guardian' former LTTE military commander, Minister Vinayagamoorthis Muralitharan alias Karuna Amman says the LTTE is "finished", having lost more than 90% of its fighters. Speaking to its Colombo correspondent, Muralitharan said around 1,500 surviving rebels, who have made their last stand on a sliver of the north-east coast, are surrounded by 65,000 troops of the Sri Lankan Army, with no way out. At the height of their powers the Tigers could muster more than 15,000 men at arms. "It is a do or die battle for the LTTE," the paper quoted Muralitharan. "The battle is now street to street and door to door."

### **Editorial: No easy exit?**

**News, 25 March 2009**

President Obama has now started the 'long goodbye' to Afghanistan. There are 34,000 American troops currently there, plus a rainbow of forces from NATO countries. The Taliban – who were not defeated in 2001, they simply went back to their homes – are resurgent, and have in the south and east of the country fought the coalition forces into a stalemate. The Karzai government is monstrously corrupt. Karzai himself is regarded as weak and unable to take a position, unable to

confront unpleasant realities - and elections loom. The good news is that elections are happening at all, the bad news is that there is no other presidential candidate who is likely to be any better at the job than Karzai; and indications are that all the alternatives would be significantly worse. Against this background the Obama administration is working to put together what is nowadays called 'the Af-Pak strategy'. A part of that may be the creation of the post of prime minister in Afghanistan which, it is hoped, may dilute the powers of Karzai – but there is no guarantee that the PM would enjoy any better relationship with the premier than does our own.

### **Taliban warn against cellular service in Waziristan**

**Daily Times, 25 March 2009**

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: The Taliban on Tuesday warned the government to stop expanding its mobile telephone network in Waziristan, claiming it would be used to spy on them. They circulated a pamphlet in Wana, the main town of South Waziristan, telling authorities to stop the network expansion and ordering vendors to stop selling SIM cards, residents and officials said. “A Jewish, Zionist-backed company is setting up the mobile phone network in Waziristan, which would be used to spy on Taliban activities and for drone attacks,” said the pamphlet

### **SBP asks banks not to open accounts of members of banned organisations**

**Daily Times, 25 March 2009**

LAHORE: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has issued a list of members of banned outfits and ordered all banks to scrutinise the list before opening accounts or transferring money, sources told Daily Times on Tuesday. A bank official, seeking anonymity, said the purpose of the list was to stop the banned outfits from operating their accounts and transferring money. However, people would face delays in opening accounts or transferring money, as it would take time to scrutinise the list, he added. SBP spokesman Syed Waseemuddin said Pakistan was bound to follow the instructions of the United Nations, which had banned several religious outfits for their alleged involvement in terrorism. He said the list, provided by the UN, was regularly updated

### **CIA wary of British Pakistanis**

**Daily Times, 25 March 2009**

LAHORE: Washington’s fears that future attacks on the US are likely to be carried out by Muslims from the UK could be boosting surveillance of British Pakistanis. According to Sky News, the CIA is working alongside British security services in an effort to quash what they see as the ‘greatest threat’ to homeland security. Former US FBI investigator Matthew Levitt told Sky, “There is a very acute threat, especially from the South Asian community ... (and) has direct ties back to South Asia – where the core of Al Qaeda is believed to be hiding. That of course presents a threat not only to our allies in Britain, but because of the visa waiver programme ... it presents a problem to the US as well.”

### **UK eyes Pakistan with new strategy against terrorism**

**Daily Times, 25 March 2009**

LONDON: Britain faces an increased threat of a chemical or even nuclear terrorist attack, officials said on Tuesday, highlighting the risks from extremists in Pakistan and Somalia. Unveiling a new counter-terrorism strategy, they said the Al Qaeda network was becoming weaker, but warned its ideology would survive and of the growing threat from ‘self-starting’ militants, and of attacks using chemical, biological or atomic weapons. “There is the

potential (for such an attack), given the international situation, what we believe to be the aspirations of some international terrorists,” said Home Secretary Jacqui Smith.

### **Taliban suicide bomber kills 11 in Pakistan**

**Christian Science Monitor, 26 March 2009**

A Taliban suicide bomber in Pakistan's restive northwest killed at least 11 members of a rival, pro-government militant group on Thursday. The attack highlights the complicated divisions among militant groups operating in Pakistan, some of which receive support from the government or the powerful intelligence agency. The Press Trust of India reports that the bomber targeted a roadside restaurant at a hotel in the busy bazaar area in the town of Jandola, in the Tank district just outside South Waziristan

### **Bhola militants' den financier Faisal held**

**Daily Star, 26 March 2009**

Law enforcers yesterday (Wednesday) arrested the financier of the London-based NGO Green Crescent, which runs the madrasa-cum-orphanage in Bhola that turned out to be a mini-ordnance factory Tuesday. Shafique Ahmed, father-in-law of Bangladeshi expatriate in London Faisal Mostafiz, told The Daily Star that he had been informed by Faisal's relatives that Faisal was picked up yesterday from a house in the capital. However, as of filing this report at about 1:00pm today (Thursday), the law enforcers did not make any announcement about the arrest.

### **Taliban Attacks in Afghanistan Kill 9 Police Officers**

**New York Times, 26 March 2009**

KABUL, Afghanistan — Nine Afghan policemen were killed and six officers were wounded in two attacks by Taliban insurgents in southern and central Afghanistan on Thursday, the Interior Ministry said. The attacks came one day after the police said an explosive device ripped through a minibus on Wednesday, killing nine civilians and wounding seven on a road frequently used by Afghan security forces and international troops in eastern Afghanistan

### **No escape**

**News, 26 March 2009**

No matter which way we turn in these troubled times it seems there is always somebody pointing an accusatory finger at us. Today it is the turn of the British, the country with which we have perhaps the closest ties. Britain is home to a large Pakistani population that contributes to its ethnic and cultural diversity and has roots that go back generations before partition. Britain also has a significant problem with some people of Pakistani origin who live there, because of their links to terrorism. This is not some half-heard tale, some over-boiled conspiracy theory, there is a real and present threat to the UK, its people and its institutions from people who have their origins here, receive training here and are operationally tasked from here.

### **LT warns of fresh attacks on Indian Army**

**Daily Times, 26 March 2009**

SRINAGAR: Banned militant organisation Lashkar-e-Tayyaba on Wednesday warned of fresh attacks against Indian troops, as the Indian Army said a “large number” of guerrillas were poised to infiltrate Indian-held Kashmir (IHK). Eight soldiers and 17 militants were killed in protracted gun battles that started Saturday in IHK's Kupwara district, close to the Line of Control

(LOC).Lashkar said its men were involved in the clashes, some of the fiercest in recent years.“The gun battles should serve as a message to India that the struggle for Kashmir’s freedom is on with full vigour,” Lashkar spokesman Abdullah Ghaznavi said.

### **Top LeT militant among two killed**

**Daily Excelsior, 26 March 2009**

SRINAGAR: A top Lashkar-e-Toiba militant was among two ultras killed in separate encounter with security forces in Kashmir Valley, a defence spokesman said today. Self-styled district commander of LeT Abdullah Uni was killed in an encounter with troops of 28 Rashtriya Rifles, nine Para and special operation group of local police at Dorusa-Lolab last night, the spokesman said

### **Pakistani and Afghan Taliban Unify in Face of U.S. Influx**

**New York Times, 27 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — After agreeing to bury their differences and unite forces, Taliban leaders based in Pakistan have closed ranks with their Afghan comrades to ready a new offensive in Afghanistan as the United States prepares to send 17,000 more troops there this year. In interviews, several Taliban fighters based in the border region said preparations for the anticipated influx of American troops were already being made. A number of new, younger commanders have been preparing to step up a campaign of roadside bombings and suicide attacks to greet the Americans, the fighters said. The refortified alliance was forged after the reclusive Afghan Taliban leader, Mullah Muhammad Omar, sent emissaries to persuade Pakistani Taliban leaders to join forces and turn their attention to Afghanistan, Pakistani officials and Taliban members said

### **Zardari vows to pacify disgruntled Baloch**

**Daily Times, 27 March 2009**

QUETTA: President Asif Ali Zardari has directed the Balochistan government to form a parliamentary committee to hold talks with the disgruntled elements in the province. Presiding over a briefing on law and order in the province, he stressed the need for expediting the reconciliation process so that the disgruntled people could be brought into the mainstream and play a proactive role in the province’s development and progress

### **Death toll in Jamrud mosque suicide attack reaches 50**

**News, 27 March 2009**

Friday, March 26 JAMRUD: A suicide bomber killed at least 50 people when he blew himself up in a crowded mosque near a security check post in Jamrud town of Khyber Agency on Friday. The attack came hours before U.S. President Barack Obama was scheduled to announce a new strategy for the Afghan war, an approach U.S. officials said would also recognise Pakistan as a key part of the conflict. Police, paramilitary forces and government officials were among the congregation in the mosque, about 30 km (20 miles) from the Afghan border. The bomber set off his explosives as a cleric began prayers. "So far we have counted 50 bodies," Tariq Hayat Khan, the top administrator in the Khyber region, told Geo news, adding the toll could rise.

### **70 killed, 125 injured in Jamrud mosque attack**

**Daily Times, 28 March 2009**

JAMRUD: At least 70 people were killed – according to various TV channels – and 125 injured when a suicide bomber blew himself up at a mosque during Friday prayers near Baghiari checkpoint area in Jamrud tehsil of Khyber Agency, said political administration officials. Jamrud Assistant Political Agent Fida Bangash told Daily Times that 10 security personnel were also among the dead. He said that 25 of those injured were in critical condition, and expressed fear that the death toll could rise. The official said that 115 Khasadaars were positioned at a nearby checkpoint, three had been deployed outside the mosque and several were inside.

### **Reducing vigil in J&K is premature: Army**

**Daily Excelsior, 29 March 2009**

Reducing vigil in J&K is premature: Army

SRINAGAR: Warning that separatists and other like-minded political parties trigger anti-security force protests to gain political mileage in view of decrease in violence in Jammu and Kashmir, the army today said reducing vigil will invite an increase in the presence of terrorists. "A let down in the vigil will invite an increase in the presence of terrorists who are simply waiting for an opportunity of this nature. Thus, any talk of reducing vigil in J and K is premature to say the least," a senior army officer said. The army has also prepared a security assessment analysis after the Bomia (Sopore) incident, which has detailed information on militancy, violence, separatists machinations and terrorists' strategy in the state

### **Top militant killed**

**Daily Excelsior, 29 March 2009**

SRINAGAR: Three militants including a self-styled commander of Lashker-e-Toiba (LET) outfit were killed in two separate operations in Jammu and Kashmir. Abu Baker, a self-styled commander of the LeT was today killed in a gunfight with security forces during search operations at Hangulul-Putshaie in Lolab area of Kupwara district, a defence spokesman said. The encounter took place during a search operation by security forces in the area following information about presence of militants.

### **Troops close in on Safe Zone from three directions**

**Daily News, 30 March 2009**

Heavy fighting raged in the Puthukudiyiruppu East, Iranapalai East and Palamattalan as troops attached to the 53, 58 and 55 Divisions further close in on the Safe Zone from three directions surrounding the Safe Zone amidst thousands of civilians fleeing the Tiger held area seeking refuge in Security Forces controlled areas, military officials told the Daily News yesterday. "The Safe Zone has now been surrounded from all three directions and troops are poised to liberate the civilians trapped inside the Safe Zone clearing paths for them to reach Security Forces controlled areas," a senior military official told the Daily News. Tiger cadres are now fighting within a one square kilometre stretch in the Iranapalai East, the last build up area under LTTE control at present.

### **Editorial: Death by bombing**

**News, 30 March 2009**

Once again the image of us, our faith and our country that goes around the world is one of violence and intolerance. Between 48 and over 70 people were killed on Friday as they prayed at a mosque – and more than 170 injured according to most reports. The explosion was probably

caused by a suicide bomber and he struck just as the Imam began to recite the opening prayer. The mosque was a popular stopping point for people travelling between Afghanistan and Pakistan and was always crowded on a Friday – the softest of soft targets. Tariq Hayat Khan the administrator of Khyber Agency opined that the blast was the work of the supposedly-defunct Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan. Who knows? There are very rarely arrests subsequent to the bombing of a mosque or imambargah and it is almost as if the agencies of law enforcement have given up even trying to prevent them, never mind catching those responsible for the planning and logistics of such an attack. This is unlikely to be something which can have the label ‘hidden hand’ attached to it. This butchery is entirely home-grown and springs from either the internal denominational conflicts or a local dispute, a struggle for power, by one group or another in the area where the blast happened.

### **Strikes to be with Pak consent: Obama**

**Daily Times, 30 March 2009**

WASHINGTON: Washington will strike Al Qaeda and Taliban targets in Pakistan “after consulting with” Islamabad, US President Barack Obama said in an interview aired on Sunday. He said US troops would not go in hot pursuit of extremists across the Afghan border into Pakistan – but demanded Islamabad hold up its end of the anti-terror struggle. “I haven’t changed my approach,” Obama said in the CBS programme “Face the Nation”, referring to US missile strikes. “If we have a high-value target within our sights, after consulting with Pakistan, we’re going after them.

### **‘Plans to disrupt polls from across the border will be foiled’**

**Daily Excelsior, 30 March 2009**

SRINAGAR : Jammu and Kashmir Government today warned that attempts could be made to disrupt Lok Sabha polls in the state from across the border, but those will be foiled. "We are well aware of the threat that is posed to elections. I am reviewing the situation on a regular basis with my two security advisors and taking whatever steps are necessary," Chief Minister Omar Abdullah told reporters here. "We do understand that attempts would be made to disrupt the elections and we will do everything possible to render those attempts unsuccessful," he added

### **Editorial: War on terror?**

**Indian Express, 30 March 2009**

As US President Barack Obama promotes his restructured “Af-Pak” strategy on the international stage this week, India has reasons to be pleased and concerned. The good news from the much touted review, announced by Obama last Friday, comes from his diagnosis of the problem. He has taken on board much of India’s own analysis of the challenges confronting the world in the badlands between the Indus and the Hindu Kush. He agrees with India that Pakistan is the source of Afghanistan’s insecurity and the world must act together to cure Islamabad of its political malaise. In recognising that the borderlands between Pakistan and Afghanistan constitute the single most important threat to global peace and security, arguing that Islamabad is part of the problem rather than the solution, and asking India to join an international concert in managing the Af-Pak region, he has made welcome departures from the American policy towards South Asia since September 11, 2001.

### **High alert in Kerala after reports of LTTE sneaking in**

**Hindu, 30 March 2009**

Thiruvananthapuram (PTI): A high alert has been sounded across Kerala on Monday following reports of a group of suspected LTTE militants sneaking into the southern state with Police, Navy and Coastguard launching a joint intense search between Alappuzha and Kochi towns. The alert had been sounded since intelligence agencies also corroborated the possibility of a militant group landing in Thyckal Beach near Cherthala, about 30 km South of Kochi, as claimed local fishermen, official sources said. A large contingent of police, including armed commandos, has been deployed on the busy Cherthala-Kochi highway where all the vehicles were being searched. The Navy has pressed two helicopters for aerial surveillance while the Coast Guard boats are searching the off-shore areas.

**Indo-Pak Attari Wagah border on high-alert****Hindu, 30 March 2009**

Amritsar (PTI): A high alert has been sounded along the Indo-Pak Attari border immediately after the terrorist attack at a police training academy in Lahore on Monday morning. "A high alert has been sounded on Indo Pak Attari border and its surrounding areas immediately after the attack at Lahore", Inspector General (IG) Border security Force (BSF) Himmat Singh said. Mr. Singh said that security has also been enhanced at Indo-Pak Joint Check Post (JCP), the only land transit route in Punjab that leads to Pakistan, particularly in the evening's "Beating Retreat Ceremony" when a large number of people assemble to watch the flag lower ceremony at sunset.