

### **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.

### **"No evidence of U.S. drone crash"**

**Hindu, 8 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan military has not yet found any evidence of a U.S. unmanned drone aircraft crashing in the tribal areas bordering Afghanistan on Saturday, said an official. Reports said a drone aircraft, commonly used by the U.S. for carrying out missile strikes in the tribal areas had crashed on Saturday morning in the Angor Adda area of South Waziristan. Some reports said the pilotless plane had been shot down by Taliban militants.

### **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.

### **India, Pakistan need peace, says Musharraf**

**Dawn, 8 March 2009**

NEW DELHI: Former president Gen Pervez Musharraf, whose interactions with Indian audiences have traditionally evoked hatred, love and applause, faced a gruelling battery of questions with aplomb here on Saturday, as he single-handedly revived hopes for peace with India and even planted the idea of a joint battle by both countries to eliminate religious extremism. Although billed as a private visit, there was little to suggest it was different from the last time Gen Musharraf visited New Delhi in April 2005 as the head of state. He thanked Indian officials for looking after his protocol and security, indicating New Delhi's support for the first major visit from across the border since the Mumbai terror attacks. The presence of Pakistan's High Commissioner Shahid Malik at the conclave bestowed it with Islamabad's concurrence. In the end Gen Musharraf appeared to vindicate the trust of both.

### **Siachen and Kargil linked to Kashmir issue: Musharraf**

**Hindu, 9 March 2009**

NEW DELHI: The former Pakistan President, General (retd.) Pervez Musharraf warned of many more Kargils and Siachens if the Kashmir issue was left unresolved. At times ducking questions at the India Today Conclave on Saturday night, he was also emphatic and agitated, especially when asked whether the present Army chief General Pervez Kayani was correct that the Taliban was Pakistan's strategic asset. But Gen. Musharraf only nodded when a Parliamentarian ticked him off after he listed their "ill treatment" as a factor bedevilling India-Pakistan relations. "Aapki nasihat ki zaroorat nahi [We don't require your counsel]," he was told by Lok Sabha Member Mehmood Madani. He did not want to comment on Kargil as it was a very sensitive issue but went on to observe that Siachen and Kargil were linked to the Kashmir issue and warned that if the "story went on" there would be more Kargils and Siachens.

### **Govt eyes sedition charges against Sharif**

**Dawn, 9 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: The government threatened on Monday to prosecute opposition leader Nawaz Sharif for sedition if violence erupts at an anti-government protest campaign due to begin later this week. Political tension is rising as country is reeling from a militant attack on Sri Lanka's cricket team last week and as its economy is being kept afloat with an International Monetary Fund loan. A cross-country 'long march' protest is due to begin on Thursday and to reach Islamabad next Monday and Interior Ministry chief Rehman Malik said opposition leaders would face sedition charges if serious violence erupted. 'If in this long march, any death takes place or anyone's property is damaged ... then those who are bearing the flag of sedition or have borne it, then a police compliant will be registered,' Malik told a news conference.

## **Obama hopeful about peeling away some in Taliban**

**Dawn, 9 March 2009**

WASHINGTON: President Barack Obama is holding out hope that US forces in Afghanistan can peel away elements of the Taliban and possibly move them toward reconciliation. There may be such opportunities, but the situation in Afghanistan is more complicated than the challenges the American military faced in Iraq, Obama said in an interview with The New York Times posted Saturday on the newspaper's Web site. US troops were able to persuade Sunni Muslim insurgents in Iraq to cooperate in some instances because they had been alienated by the tactics of al Qaida terrorists. Obama cautioned that Afghanistan is a less-governed region with a history of fierce independence among tribes, creating a tough set of circumstances for the United States to deal with.

## **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.

## **President Zardari arrives in Tehran**

**Dawn, 10 March 2009**

TEHRAN: President Asif Ali Zardari arrived in Tehran on Tuesday on a two-day visit to represent Pakistan at the Economic Cooperation Organisation summit. The President was received at the airport by Iranian First Vice President Parvaiz Davoodi and Interior Minister Sadiq Mahsouli. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi is already in Iran to participate in the preliminary meetings of the 10-member ECO. President Zardari, during his talks with the Iranian leaders, will discuss issues of border security, the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline project and supply of power from Iran to Balochistan. On the sidelines of the ECO summit, the President is also likely to have bilateral meetings with leaders of other ECO member states.

## **Editorial: India should make up its mind!**

**Daily Times, 11 March 2009**

The Interior Adviser Mr Rehman Malik has been endorsed by the visiting Interpol General Secretary Richard K Noble when he called on India to "take the lead in investigations into the Mumbai attacks". Mr Malik's complaint was that the Indian authorities had so far failed to provide any report on the attacks to Interpol. What was highlighted in fact was India's reluctance to answer the 30 questions posed by Pakistan in consequence of its investigation of the "dossier" received from India. Mr Malik deserves credit for treating the Indian "dossier" in a speedy and efficient manner, objectively and without the knee-jerk reaction of denial. In a similar situation, most Pakistani officials would have thought it "safe" to aggressively deny the charges made by India, as if the truth was disputed between just India and Pakistan.

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### **Al Qaeda plans to target long march**

#### **Daily Times, 12 March 2009**

KARACHI: The Sindh government has been warned by intelligence agencies that terrorists could attack the lawyers’ long march in Sindh, with Karachi being a prime target. There is already growing concern over Talibanisation in Karachi and adjoining areas amid reports of possible Al Qaeda attacks during the long march. A Sindh Home Department official told Daily Times that the intelligence agencies have warned the Sindh government of possible terrorism threats. They said it had been decided to maintain law and order in Karachi in view of the lawyers’ long march.

### **Britain, US concerned by political turmoil**

#### **Daily Times, 12 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan Robert Brinkley met Prime Minister Yousuf Gilani on Wednesday, and conveyed his government’s concern over the political turmoil in Pakistan and the reported arrests of opposition leaders in Punjab – while the US urged restraint on part of all political parties and called for resolution of political issues in accordance with the country’s law. “Brinkley met Prime Minister Gilani ... and conveyed his government’s concern after dozens of people were arrested ahead of an opposition rally,” according to a statement by BHC spokeswoman Jennifer Wilkes. staff report/app

### **Fascism in action**

#### **News, 12 March 2009**

Even in Pakistan's troubled history of democratic governance, it is rare to find examples of the kind of open fascism we are seeing today. As lawyers and activists prepared to set out for their 'Long March' to Islamabad, Section 144 was slapped into place in Punjab and a massive crackdown initiated with raids on the homes of dozens of PML-N workers and leaders. Hundreds have been arrested; some dragged out of homes in the darkness. The PML-N claims the figure runs to thousands. In Islamabad and Rawalpindi, the action seems to have been even more vicious, with police goons arresting a prominent human rights activist after bursting violently into her home. Though Tahira Abdullah was released after a few hours – the message is clear: The Zardari administration has laid aside all pretence of following democratic practice or even the mere norms of civilized conduct and has reacted in a manner that would make many bloodthirsty dictators proud. Hundreds of lawyers and activists in the city have been rounded up and efforts to nab others are reported to be continuing in Karachi and Quetta, from where some are said to have already set out on the journey towards the federal capital.

### **Gilani orders foolproof security for Nawaz Sharif**

**Daily Times, 13 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani directed the Interior Ministry and Punjab Governor Salmaan Taseer on Thursday to provide foolproof security to Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) chief Nawaz Sharif and ensure his safety. The direction came after a meeting between PML-N Chairman Raja Zafarul Haq and Prime Minister Gilani to discuss threats to Nawaz's life. Raja handed over an anonymous threatening letter to the prime minister. The two leaders also discussed the political situation in the country. Meanwhile, Interior Adviser Rehman Malik told the Senate on Thursday that intelligence agencies have warned that the Sharif brothers' lives were in danger and that a Mumbai-like incident could be replicated in Karachi.

### **NATO chief urges deep engagement with Pakistan**

**Daily Times, 13 March 2009**

BUDAPEST: NATO must deepen its engagement with Pakistan, ensure it has sufficient troops in Afghanistan and keep up a dialogue with Russia, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said on Thursday. "Of course we need to look beyond Afghanistan ... and especially Pakistan, with which we must deepen our engagement," Scheffer told a conference in Budapest on the 10th anniversary of the accession of Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic to NATO. He also said NATO must ensure it has enough troops in Afghanistan as that country prepares for elections. "We must ensure that we have sufficient troops on the ground to enforce security both during and after the coming election period," Scheffer said.

### **Editorial: Endgame Zardari; or goodbye to all of this**

**News, 13 March 2009**

This is not a tragedy. It is a self-manufactured farce-- a crisis wholly self-invented --which cannot go on much longer without irreparably compromising the nation's already embattled wellbeing and security. In other words, if the paladins pretending to run Pakistan are given free rein for some more time, even for a few more days, there won't be much left to save. In that eventuality we might as well invite Baitullah Mehsud, virtual Emir of Waziristan, and Maulana Fazlullah, very much Emir of Swat, to descend from their mountain fastnesses and march on Islamabad. More than any madressah, it was General Pervez Musharraf with his stupid actions who gave a fillip to Taliban power. President Asif Ali Zardari professes himself to be an enemy of the Taliban. By sowing discord in Pakistan, in reality he is proving to be their best friend. Our American godfathers, to whom we owe so many of our troubles, should savour the irony of it all. Asif Zardari was their Karzai in Islamabad, someone who was supposed to fight the Taliban better than the discredited Pervez Musharraf. But by proving an all-round disaster he is undermining everything.

### **Obama Afghan Plan Focuses on Pakistan Aid and Appeal to Militants**

**New York Times, 13 March 2009**

WASHINGTON — The emerging outlines of President Obama's plan for Afghanistan include proposals to shift more American efforts toward problems in neighboring Pakistan and to seek some kind of political reconciliation with the vast majority of insurgents in the region, according to administration officials. The police checked passengers on a bus crossing from tribal areas in Pakistan. The United States may focus more attention there. The plan reflects in part a conclusion within the administration that most of the insurgent foot soldiers in Afghanistan and Pakistan are "reconcilable" and can be pruned away from the hard-core organizations of the Taliban and Al

Qaeda. At least 70 percent of the insurgents, and possibly more, can be encouraged to lay down their arms with the proper incentives, administration officials have said.

### **Govt considering deal for PML-N**

**Daily Times, 14 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: Amid mounting external and internal concern over the political turmoil in the country – President Asif Ali Zardari’s government is likely to offer a package deal to the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) backed by US and Pakistan’s armed forces, Daily Times has learnt. Islamabad on Friday remained the hub of political activity where diplomats – including US Ambassador Anne Patterson – engaged in negotiations with the government over the political turmoil. The president and the prime minister also met during the course of the day. Separately, the US ambassador and UK High Commissioner Robert Brinkley also called on the prime minister.

### **Sherry Rehman resigns**

**Daily Times, 14 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Information Minister Sherry Rehman resigned from her ministerial slot on Friday night to protest the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA)’s blocking of a private TV channel without taking her into confidence, sources told Daily Times. Despite repeated attempts to contact her, Sherry was not available to confirm the news. However, sources close to the former minister insisted she had resigned as the federal minister for information and broadcasting. Separately, sources and a private news channel claimed that neither President Asif Ali Zardari nor Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani had accepted Sherry’s resignation yet.

### **Pakistan’s Leaders Take New Steps to Stifle a Protest; U.S. Appeals Seem Unavailing**

**New York Times, 14 March 2009**

LAHORE, Pakistan — The civilian government asked the army to be ready to guard the route of a national protest to the capital on Sunday in what appeared to be a hardening of the stance of President Asif Ali Zardari against a deal with the main opposition party. Appeals by the United States to Mr. Zardari and to the opposition party’s leader, Nawaz Sharif, to cool the political crisis, which many Pakistanis fear could result in bloodshed during the protest, appear to have been rebuffed as both sides geared up for a showdown on the streets. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton called Mr. Zardari and Mr. Sharif on Saturday evening to discuss the current situation, spokesmen for the two men said.

### **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.

### **Govt to file review plea against Sharifs’ disqualification**

### **Daily Times, 15 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: The federal government is likely to file an application for a detailed Supreme Court (SC) verdict on the Sharif brothers' eligibility case on Monday – and after a study of the ruling, a review petition could be filed with the SC under directions from the Centre, Attorney General Latif Khosa said on Saturday. Talking to reporters here, Khosa said, "I hope for the detailed judgement to be announced on Monday or Tuesday." However, the attorney general said a legal provision to file a review petition over a short court decision also existed.

### **Hillary phones Zardari, Nawaz to defuse tension**

#### **Daily Times, 15 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: Amid the prevailing tensions between the PPP and the PML-N – US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Saturday called President Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif over the telephone in a bid to bring them to a workable cooperation formula, Daily Times has learnt. Hillary's separate conversations with Zardari and Nawaz marked the most senior foreign intervention yet in the crisis. Flexibility: Sources said that Hillary used her "good family relations during her talks with Nawaz Sharif to persuade him to show flexibility in reconciling differences with Zardari, so that issues can be settled amicably".

### **Army asked to be ready if security worsens**

#### **Daily Times, 15 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: The government has asked the army to remain on alert in case the security situation becomes uncontrollable during the long march. The government is focusing on security in Lahore, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Multan and Faisalabad, sources said. They also said that cell phone service might be suspended during the long march. "When the situation deteriorates, gets out of hand of police, paramilitary (troops), only then the army is deployed," Army spokesman Major General Athar Abbas told The Associated Press. On Saturday, more than 1,500 activists walked about seven kilometres through Multan in defiance of the government's ban, but dispersed just short of barricades erected by police at a city exit, AFP reported.

### **Editorial: Bombing Balochistan**

#### **News, 20 March 2009**

According to reports in the US media, Washington may be planning to embark on a new strategy involving drone attacks in Balochistan. The argument goes that drone bombings in the northern areas have led to key Al Qaeda militants fleeing southwards, to Quetta, where they are more vulnerable and can be targeted through aerial attacks. Senior US administration figures have also been quoted as saying the province had been used by militants as a safe haven for years. Security officials based in Balochistan have denied that Al Qaeda leaders are present in the area. The problem is that the issue of defeating the militants must go beyond the mere aim of bombing them out of existence. We must concede that the drone attacks seen in the tribal areas all through the last year have resulted in the death of at least some militants – possibly some important figures in the movement. But what they have also done is create immense anger and resentment among ordinary people, who have also been among the victims of the bombs and missiles that flatten homes and kill indiscriminately. The graves of women, children and the elderly killed in such attacks stand dotted across Waziristan and other tribal areas. The strategy that underpins the drone attacks sees these deaths as nothing more than 'collateral damage'. For local people, it is of course the worst possible tragedy. What, after all, could be more devastating than having a family member killed by

a ball of fire that descends from planes bearing the markings of a foreign power?

### **Government files review petitions against Sharifs' disqualification**

**Daily Times, 20 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Thursday filed review petitions against a Supreme Court verdict in which it had upheld a decision of the Lahore High Court disqualifying the Sharif brothers from contesting elections or holding any public office. Four review petitions seeking immediate hearing were filed by Deputy Attorney General Agha Tariq Mehmood through Advocate-on-Record Arshad Ali Chaudhry against the February 25 verdict. The petitions said the Federation reserved the right to supplement its pleas and additional documents for other grounds after the release of detailed judgment.

### **Parliament will be empowered: PM**

**Daily Times, 20 March 2009**

LAHORE: Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani said in an interview published on Wednesday he would seek to tip the balance of power from the president back towards parliament. "We are committed to changing the system," Gilani told the Wall Street Journal. Former president Pervez Musharraf had given sweeping powers to the presidency in 2002, including the authority to dismiss parliament.

### **U.S. wants India to de-escalate on border with Pakistan**

**Hindu, 20 March 2009**

New Delhi: South Block may have successfully fought off the initial drive to formally extend Richard Holbrooke's 'AfPak' mandate to India but the Obama administration's Special Representative for the region drew first blood last week, asking New Delhi to draw down its own troop presence on the Pakistan border so that Islamabad can beef up its presence on the Afghan front. The request that India de-escalate its forces on the border was conveyed to Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon during the latter's visit to Washington last week, well-placed sources said.

### **Afghanistan: A Plea for Talks**

**New York Times, 21 March 2009**

The leaders of Afghanistan's Muslim clerics council urged President Hamid Karzai on Friday to push ahead with a proposal for talks with the Taliban to be mediated by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. Meanwhile, four Canadian soldiers and an interpreter were reported killed Friday by roadside bombs, and the United States military said international forces killed 34 militants in two days of clashes in the south and east.

### **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?

### **Pakistan, India, Afghanistan fates linked: US senator**

**Daily Times, 21 March 2009**

WASHINGTON: The fates of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan are interlinked, Senator Carl Levin, chairman of the US Armed Service Committee said on Friday, emphasising that improvement in Pakistan-India relations is the key to stability in South Asia. Levin, a leading Democrat lawmaker, said Pakistan and India faced common threats. "In South Asia, the interests and fates of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan are linked. The Mumbai attacks last November, and the aftermath, remind us that tensions still exist between India and Pakistan, and stability between these two countries is vital to stability in the region," he said. His remarks came as media reports said Washington had asked New Delhi to pull back troops from its border with Pakistan, to ease bilateral tensions. The US believed lowering tensions over Kashmir between the two neighbours was essential to allow Pakistan to focus on Afghanistan.

### **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.

### **Gilani, Sharifs have tacit understanding on governor's rule?**

**Daily Times, 21 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has a tacit understanding with Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani that it would not pressure the government to lift governor's rule in Punjab before the Supreme Court's ruling on a review petition against the disqualification of the Sharif brothers, Daily Times has learnt. Sources said that following the successful lawyers' march and the restoration of the judiciary, Gilani contacted the Sharif brothers and extended 'a hand of cooperation' to proceed in line with the Charter of Democracy (CoD).

### **Gilani, Nawaz to meet tomorrow at Raiwind**

**Daily Times, 21 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) chief Nawaz Sharif are set to meet tomorrow (Sunday), after the leaders held talks over the telephone on Friday. The meeting between the two leaders would be held amid spiralling political tensions in Punjab. Sources said Nawaz had phoned Gilani and invited him to lunch on Sunday. Both leaders are expected to discuss the prevailing political situation in the country, with special focus on the imposition of governor's rule in Punjab and the disqualification of the Sharif brothers.

### **Pak troops fire indiscriminately at Indian posts in Uri**

**Daily Excelsior, 21 March 2009**

SRINAGAR: In a major ceasefire violation after a gap of few months, Pakistani troops fired throughout the night at Indian posts in Uri sector, leaving a soldier injured. A defence spokesman said today that Pakistani troops fired between 1500 to 2000 rounds at the Indian posts in Kamalkote area of Uri sector between 10 pm last night and 3am this morning. Lance Naik Prakash Singh of 10 JAK rifles was injured in the firing. He said the firing from across the border was unprovoked. Indian troops returned the fire but used small arms fire, the spokesman said.

### **The roles we play**

**Indian Express, 21 March 2009**

That Washington forces New Delhi to do things it does not like in order to please Islamabad is an important part of Indian foreign policy mythology. This particular myth gained some fresh wind this week amidst reports that the Obama administration has asked India to reduce its troops on the border with Pakistan so that Islamabad could focus on the war against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. According to media leaks, the US special representative on Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke, conveyed this to the Indian foreign secretary, Shiv Shankar Menon, in Washington a few days ago. The reports add that India rejected the suggestion outright. Before parsing the merits of the proposed troop reduction, we must return to the larger myth.

### **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.

**Gilani, Nawaz agree on reconciliation**

**Daily Times, 23 March 2009**

LAHORE: Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and opposition leader Nawaz Sharif called for reconciliation to end Pakistan's political crisis, but stopped short of announcing concrete agreements on Sunday. The pledge for reconciliation came at the first meeting between Nawaz and Gilani since the Supreme Court disqualified the Sharifs from contesting polls, sparking a showdown that pushed the nation to the brink of chaos. Addressing a press conference after the meeting with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz chief, Gilani said Nawaz' response to President Asif Ali Zardari's message of reconciliation had been positive

**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.

**Editorial: The return of the CJ**

**News, 24 March 2009**

The moment of triumph that we saw Sunday, as the national flag was raised once more over the Islamabad home of the man who resumes charge as Chief Justice of Pakistan, marks a historic moment that will become a part of history. Civil society activists who had waged a two-year struggle to see this victory were quite naturally jubilant. The accusations that former SCBA president Aitzaz Ahsan had tried to take credit for the success, with many key figures in the lawyers' movement not a part of the ceremony, created an unfortunate note of disharmony. Even the PML-N leadership, whose role in the final push to restoration, was absent. But this cannot detract from the fact that a great deal has been achieved. Those who stand with the CJ, and for justice, must however keep in mind that the road they have boldly marched down does not end here. The real purpose of the struggle was, after all, the independence of the judiciary. The effort to ensure that the judiciary can function independently must then go on. The unusual involvement of

people from all walks of life in the judicial restoration also means there are now enormous expectations from the judiciary.

### **US asks India to support Pakistan on extremists**

**Daily Times, 24 March 2009**

WASHINGTON: The US has called on India to support Pakistan in rooting out extremism. Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg also said on Monday that the US backed a 'global role for India. Steinberg delivered the first substantive remarks on India by President Barack Obama's administration which is expected this week to unveil a new strategy on fighting terrorism in Afghanistan and Pakistan. "I think it will be important for India to make clear that as Pakistan takes steps to deal with extremists on its own territory that India will be supportive of that," said Steinberg.

### **Judges' restoration has not weakened me: Zardari**

**Daily Times, 24 March 2009**

LONDON: President Asif Ali Zardari said in an interview aired on Monday that reinstating sacked judges to settle the political crisis after the long march earlier this month was not a climbdown and had not weakened his position as president. Talking to Sky News television, Zardari called on the United States and Britain to help his government fight terrorism and extremism in Pakistan

### **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.

### **U.S. Weighs Sharif as Partner in Pakistan**

**New York Times, 25 March 2009**

LAHORE, Pakistan — The opposition leader, Nawaz Sharif, sealed his place as the most popular politician in Pakistan this month when he defied his house detention and led a triumphant protest that forced the government to restore the country's chief justice. Now, as the Obama administration completes its review of strategy toward the region this week, his sudden ascent has raised an urgent question: Can Mr. Sharif, 59, a populist politician close to Islamic parties, be a reliable partner? Or will he use his popular support to blunt the military's already fitful campaign against the insurgency of the Taliban and Al Qaeda?

### **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

### **Afghan Strikes by Taliban Get Pakistan Help, U.S. Aides Say**

**New York Times, 26 March 2009**

WASHINGTON — The Taliban's widening campaign in southern Afghanistan is made possible in part by direct support from operatives in Pakistan's military intelligence agency, despite Pakistani government promises to sever ties to militant groups fighting in Afghanistan, according to American government officials. The support consists of money, military supplies and strategic planning guidance to Taliban commanders who are gearing up to confront the international force in Afghanistan that will soon include some 17,000 American reinforcements.

### **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.

### **Report asks US to identify regional dimension of Pakistan's security**

**Daily Times, 26 March 2009**

Report asks US to identify regional dimension of Pakistan's security

WASHINGTON: The United States must prevent a power vacuum in Afghanistan that could destabilise Pakistan, an influential Washington think tank said on Tuesday. The Centre for American Progress also recommended an integrated regional effort to address the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan and the Tribal Areas. It called on the Obama administration to "implement policies that recognise the regional dimension of Pakistan's security challenges"

### **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.

### **US says will continue to work closely with Zardari govt**

**Daily Times, 26 March 2009**

WASHINGTON: The United States said on Wednesday it is working closely with the democratically elected Pakistani government led by President Asif Ali Zardari in wide-ranging areas of common interest and that American officials maintain contacts with the opposition parties in Pakistan just as they do in other countries. The State Department also made it clear that

Washington would continue to work with the current democratic government until Pakistan has a new government in due course of political process and as a result of elections in the mandated timeframe

### **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 reformed 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

### **Obama calls President Zardari**

**Daily Times, 27 March 2009**

ISLAMABAD: US President Barack Obama on Thursday called President Asif Ali Zardari and discussed bilateral relations, the security situation of the region, and other matters of mutual interest. The two leaders also discussed matters relating to the fight against militancy, with particular reference to peace in the region, APP reported. Also on Thursday, Obama called Afghan President Hamid Karzai to inform him that Washington had completed a review of its strategy in Afghanistan, Karzai's office told AFP. agencies

### **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.

### **Zardari for constitutional package to resolve Balochistan problems**

**Daily Times, 28 March 2009**

QUETTA: Evolving a package of amendments to the constitution is the best way to resolve the Balochistan issue, President Asif Ali Zardari said on Friday. Addressing a press conference, he said he could announce a general amnesty in the province but it would not help as such moves had failed several times in the past. "Keeping this aspect in view, I have recommended amendments to the constitution for amicable resolution of the issue," he said. Zardari said he had recommended the constitution of a parliamentary committee, adding Balochistan Chief Minister Muhammad Aslam Raisani had been assigned the task of evolving a constitutional package that could resolve the Balochistan issue, APP reported

### **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.

### **Obama unveils sweeping new Afghan war strategy, includes Iran in Afghan contact group: Qaeda 'cancer'**

**Daily Times, 28 March 2009**

WASHINGTON: Unveiling a sweeping new strategy for the Afghan war – US President Barack Obama warned on Friday that Al Qaeda was a cancer that could devour Pakistan. "Al Qaeda is actively planning attacks on the US from safe havens in Pakistan ... to the terrorists who oppose us, my message is ... we will defeat you." "We will insist that action be taken ... one way or another," he said, indicating that the US would act on intelligence against terrorists if Pakistan does not. He said Pakistan and Afghanistan were inextricably linked. Obama said the US military would also shift the emphasis of its mission to training and expanding the Afghan army.

### **India, Iran in Obama AfPak plan**

**Asian Age, 28 March 2009**

March 27: US President Barack Obama said on Friday that he plans to further bolster American forces in Afghanistan, increase aid to Pakistan, and for the first time set benchmarks for progress in fighting Al Qaeda and the Taliban in both chaotic countries. In strikingly ominous tones, Mr Obama warned — just as President George W. Bush did repeatedly over the years — of intelligence estimates that Al Qaeda "is actively planning attacks on the US homeland from its safe haven in Pakistan". Among other things, officials said he planned to recast the Afghan war as a regional issue involving not only Pakistan but also India, Russia, China, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and the Central Asian states. His plan envisions persuading Pakistan to stop focusing military resources on India so it can concentrate more on battling insurgents in its lawless tribal regions.

### **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.

### **US trying to give everything Pakistan needs: Holbrooke**

**Daily Times, 30 March 2009**

LAHORE: United States special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke has said the US would give everything that is required by Pakistan and Afghanistan to fight terrorism, a private TV channel reported on Sunday. “We are treating Afghanistan and Pakistan as a single theatre and address them in an integrated way. We are going to give them more resources,” Holbrooke said. According to the channel, Holbrooke told an American TV that efforts were being made to eradicate extremism in collaboration with Pakistan’s neighbours and for that reason the US was also in contact with India and China

### **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.