

Hindu, 2 December 2008

### **Hillary named Secretary of State**

CHICAGO: U.S. President-elect Barack Obama confirmed on Monday that former campaign rival Hillary Rodham Clinton is his choice for Secretary of State. Mr. Obama also announced that Robert Gates is to remain as Defence Secretary, making President George W. Bush's Pentagon chief his own as he seeks to wind down the U.S. role in Iraq. At a news conference, Mr. Obama also introduced the former NATO top commander, General James Jones, as White House National Security Adviser, former Justice Department official Eric Holder as Attorney-General and Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano as Secretary of Homeland Security

Hindu, 2 December 2008

### **US trusts Pakistan, says White House**

WASHINGTON, Dec 1: The United States has no reason to believe that Pakistan's government was involved in last week's terrorist attacks in Mumbai, and the Bush administration trusts Pakistan to investigate the issue, the White House said on Monday. White House spokeswoman Dana Perino also rejected suggestion that Pakistan could withdraw troops from the Afghan border if India mobilised troops on the eastern border. 'We have no reason not to trust Pakistan right now,' Ms Perino told reporters at a briefing. 'I've heard nothing that says the Pakistani government was involved.' Throughout the briefing the White House spokeswoman played down the suggestion that Pakistan or Pakistani intelligence agencies were involved in the Mumbai attacks or Pakistan cannot be trusted to investigate the attacks despite a promise by President Asif Zardari to do so

Hindu, 4 December 2008

### **Rice: we'll insist on direct, tough action by Pakistan**

NEW DELHI: United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has promised to persuade Pakistan to take 'very direct and tough action,' even as India warned that it would react in 'whatever way necessary' after receiving the response to its demarche to Pakistan served on Tuesday. Asked whether the series of terror attacks in Indian cities warranted Indian military strikes, Ms. Rice wanted New Delhi's response judged by its effectiveness which avoids 'unintended consequences.' She assured India that the U.S. would work 'very closely' to bring the perpetrators of the attack to justice and prevent further strikes of this kind. Even if non-state actors were involved, it was Pakistan's responsibility to take action if the terrorists were based on its territory, she observed at a joint press conference with External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee at the end of a 45-minute interaction on Wednesday

Dawn, 4 December 2008

### **Rice hints at Al Qaeda involvement: India determined to act 'decisively'**

NEW DELHI, Dec 3: In an escalation towards an uncertain denouement, India warned Pakistan on Wednesday that it would use any means to thwart cross-border terror attacks on its territory. And visiting US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice hinted that last week's massacre in Mumbai could have an Al Qaeda hand. 'Whether there is a direct Al Qaeda hand or not, this is clearly the kind of terror in which Al Qaeda participates,' she told a press conference during the one-day visit here. 'We are not here to jump to the conclusion that who is responsible,' Ms Rice said. As she spoke India's Defence Minister A.K. Antony met the chiefs of India's armed forces and urged security measures to watch out against an aerial attack by militants. Indian news agencies said Mr Antony asked the armed forces chiefs to be prepared to counter and prevent a repeat of 9/11-type of attacks carried out by Al Qaeda

Dawn, 5 December 2008

**Act now, Rice tells leaders in Islamabad: Enough information made available**

ISLAMABAD, Dec 4: US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said on Thursday that enough information was available for acting against the perpetrators of Mumbai attacks and forestalling such incidents. 'There is a lot of information and it needs to be used to get to the perpetrators and prevent them from doing it again,' she said at a news conference after meeting President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and Chief of Army Staff Gen Ashfaq Parvez Kayani during her brief visit to Islamabad

Dawn, 5 December 2008

**WMD attack to originate in Pakistan: US report**

WASHINGTON, Dec 3: The White House said on Wednesday that it agreed with a bipartisan congressional commission's report that Pakistan sat closest to the intersection of nuclear weapons and terrorism. 'I have no reason to disagree with it,' said White House Press Secretary Dana Perino when asked if the White House agreed with the report. The bipartisan Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism reported earlier on Wednesday that if there was a WMD attack on the United States, it would originate in Pakistan. 'Were one to map terrorism and weapons of mass destruction today, all roads would intersect in Pakistan,' and that 'the focus of US policy should be to help Pakistan achieve political and economic stability', the report said

Dawn, 6 December 2008

**Pakistan not moving troops from Afghan border: US**

WASHINGTON, Dec 5: Pakistan has assured the United States it is not withdrawing troops from the Afghan border despite tensions with India following the Mumbai terrorist attacks, a US general said on Friday. Major General Michael S. Tucker, the deputy chief of US and Nato forces in Afghanistan, also told a briefing in Washington that Pakistan had deployed additional troops along a key route to protect the convoys that bring supplies for US and allied troops in Afghanistan. Gen Tucker said US military commanders had contacted their Pakistani counterparts after the Mumbai attacks and were assured that Islamabad did not plan to withdraw troops from the Afghan border

Hindu, 7 December 2008

**McCain warns Pakistan of Indian air strikes**

ISLAMABAD: United States Senator John McCain has said there is enough evidence of the involvement of former Inter-Services Intelligence officers in the planning and execution of the Mumbai attacks. If Pakistan did not act swiftly to arrest the people involved, the Senator said, India would be left with no option but to conduct aerial operations against select targets in Pakistan. Senator McCain, the Republican presidential candidate who lost to Barack Obama, told a select group of Pakistanis at an informal lunch in Lahore on Saturday that this was conveyed to him by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi

New York Times, 7 December 2008

**In New Strategy, U.S. Will Defend Kabul Environs**

KABUL, Afghanistan - Most of the additional American troops arriving in Afghanistan early next year will be deployed near the capital, Kabul, American military commanders here say, in a measure of how precarious the war effort has become. Go to Complete Coverage It will be the first time that American or coalition forces have been deployed in large numbers on the southern flank of the city, a decision

that reflects the rising concerns among military officers, diplomats and government officials about the increasing vulnerability of the capital and the surrounding area

New York Times, 7 December 2008

### **Revamping Aid to Pakistan Is Expected in Bush Report**

WASHINGTON - The Bush administration is preparing to present President-elect Barack Obama with a lengthy, classified strategy review aimed at reversing the gains that militants have made in destabilizing Afghanistan and Pakistan. The review contains an array of options, including telling Pakistan's military that billions of dollars in American aid will depend on the military's being reconfigured to effectively fight militants. That proposal amounts to a tacit acknowledgment that roughly \$10 billion in military aid provided to Pakistan as 'reimbursements' for its efforts to root out militant groups has largely been wasted.

Daily Times, 8 December 2008

### **Editorial: Senator McCain and 'Indian strikes'**

From the tone of the statement one can say that the Senator, possibly along with the rest of the US delegation, wanted Pakistan to respond positively, 'after receiving evidence from India', to the Indian demand that the culprits named by them be arrested. The Senator talked in the future tense about his willingness to persuade India not to embark on military action against Pakistan. He thought America would not be able 'do much' if India attacked Pakistan. He was more mindful of the assertion that India's Mumbai attack was an Indian 9/11 like America's in 2001, after which the US took the option of attacking Afghanistan

New York Times, 8 December 2008

### **Official Calls for Sensitivity to Afghan Demands**

KABUL, Afghanistan - In unusually blunt remarks, the chief of the United Nations mission in Afghanistan warned in an interview this weekend that unless Afghanistan's international partners conducted their military operations with more care and cultural sensitivity, redoubled their work to minimize civilian casualties and accelerated their reconstruction programs, they risked jeopardizing their efforts to stabilize and rebuild the country

Dawn, 9 December 2008

### **New attack on Nato supplies; 53 trucks torched**

PESHAWAR, Dec 8: Militants torched on Monday 53 Nato supply vehicles at a terminal on the Ring Road in the second such attack in two days. According to eyewitnesses, about 50 heavily-armed people, some of them carrying jerry cans full of kerosene, stormed the Jamil Terminal at the Jamil Chowk. 'They doused the vehicles parked in the rear of the terminal with kerosene and set them on fire.' Some of them said the militants were speaking 'Persian and appeared to be Afghans'

Daily Times, 9 December 2008

### **Editorial: Destruction of NATO trucks and trouble ahead**

While Pakistan awaits evidence from India so it can prove that it has the capacity to move against non-state actors threatening its writ and allegedly attacking other states in the region, another incident questioning its capacity to control events has taken place. An army of some 300 gunmen - official account puts the number on 30 - blasted their way into two transport terminals on Peshawar's Ring Road on Sunday and torched more than 160 vehicles destined for US-led NATO troops in Afghanistan

Dawn, 12 December 2008

### **Six killed in suspected US missile strike**

ISLAMABAD, Dec 11: Six suspected militants were killed on Thursday when a missile apparently fired by a US drone struck a house in a tribal district known to be a Taliban stronghold, an official said. The missile hit a house next to a seminary in South Waziristan district in the country's north west, a senior Pakistani security official told AFP. Local intelligence officials confirmed the strike, saying the missile destroyed the house and damaged the seminary. There were no immediate indications that any high-ranking Taliban militants were killed in the attack, which appeared to be the latest in a series of strikes from unmanned drones against suspected militant hideouts in tribal areas of Pakistan

News, 14 December 2008

### **Brown for Pak- Afghan cooperation**

KABUL: Britain's Prime Minister Gordon Brown on Saturday paid a surprise visit to Afghanistan, where he spoke to troops battling the Taliban and held talks with President Hamid Karzai. The visit came as the government and military sources speaking on condition of anonymity said around 300 British soldiers had been deployed from Cyprus as part of an increase in troop levels ahead of next year's presidential election. Brown condemned Friday's 'terrible' killing of British soldiers in Afghanistan, and said that other nations must also send more troops in support of the plan

Hindu, 15 December 2008

### **Lashkar is behind Mumbai attacks: Brown**

NEW DELHI: British Prime Minister Gordon Brown supported India's contention that the Lashkar-e-Taiba was behind the Mumbai terror attacks and observed that Pakistan had a 'great deal to answer for.' Mr. Brown arrived here on Sunday morning for a rescheduled visit. A meeting with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and senior officials was the only item on the agenda

New York Times, 15 December 2008

### **Bush Affirms Commitment to Afghanistan in Surprise Visit**

KABUL, Afghanistan - President Bush made a surprise visit to Afghanistan on Monday morning and asserted that the United States would not walk away from the conflict here despite rising violence and instability. Air Force One arrived in the predawn darkness, five-and-a-half hours after leaving Iraq, and the details of the Afghanistan trip were shrouded in even greater secrecy than the first stop in Baghdad. En route, Mr. Bush said that he wanted to pledge that the United States would not relent in the effort to strengthen Afghanistan, even as he steps down in 36 days

Daily Times, 16 December 2008

### **Kerry urges Pakistan to control spy agency**

ISLAMABAD: US Senator John Kerry visited India and Pakistan on Monday and put fresh pressure on Islamabad over the Mumbai attacks, saying the powerful Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency must be brought under control. Ahead of talks with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Kerry said Pakistan's ISI must stop operating independently of the government and end its links with militant groups.

News, 16 December 2008

### **US drone kills two in NWA**

MIRAMSHAH: Two persons were killed when a suspected US drone fired a missile at a house in Tabbi Tolkhel area of Miramshah, headquarters of North Waziristan Agency, on Monday night. Sources said the US spy plane fired a missile at a house of

an unidentified tribesman, killing two persons on the spot, whose identity could not be ascertained immediately. The drone attack created panic among the area people. Meanwhile, two US jets on Monday intruded into Pakistani territory and flew over the border villages of Angoor Adda in South Waziristan. Official and tribal sources told The News from the border town that two US fighter planes violated Pak airspace four times and intruded almost two to three kilometres into villages of South Waziristan, bordering Afghanistan's troubled Paktika province

Times of India, 17 December 2008

### **FBI: Kasab is a Pak national**

Dec. 16: American investigators who questioned Ajmal Kasab, the lone terrorist captured during the Mumbai attack, are convinced he is a Pakistani national and that the terrorist strike was planned and executed by the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT), diplomatic sources said on Tuesday. Investigators from the Federal Bureau of Investigation were given access to Kasab for nine hours and after questioning him, they came to the conclusion that he was a Pakistani national as contended by Indian authorities, the sources said. The sources, familiar with the probe being conducted by the FBI team dispatched to Mumbai, said American investigators were also convinced that the Mumbai attacks were intricately planned and directed by the LeT leaders based in Pakistan

News, 17 December 2008

### **Iraq, Afghan wars cost US more than \$900 bn**

WASHINGTON: US military operations, including the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, have cost \$904 billion since 2001 and could top \$1.7 trillion by 2018, even with big cuts in overseas troop deployments, according to the latest report. A new study released by the nonpartisan Centre for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA) said the Iraq conflict's \$687 billion price tag alone now exceeds the cost of every past US war except for World War II, when expenditures are adjusted for inflation

Dawn, 18 December 2008

### **Army under civilian control, believes US**

WASHINGTON, Dec 17: The US State Department has said that the United States deals with the civilian government in Pakistan and believes that the Pakistan military submits to the civilian government control. The department's deputy spokesman, Robert Wood, who has served as a diplomat in Pakistan, made the observation on Wednesday while responding to a question on whether the Pakistani military was backing Islamabad's efforts to bring the perpetrators of the Mumbai terrorist attacks to justice. 'I have no reason to doubt that,' said Mr Wood. 'I mean the Pakistani military submits to civilian government control, so we deal with the Pakistani government.'

New York Times, 19 December 2008

### **Tensions Rise As Afghans Say U.S. Raid Kills Civilians**

KABUL, Afghanistan - A deadly United States military raid on a house near Afghanistan's border with Pakistan became a new source of tension on Thursday, with the Americans calling it a successful counterterrorism strike and the Afghans saying it left three innocent civilians dead and two wounded, including a 4-year-old boy bitten by an attack dog. The raid took place on Wednesday in the village of Kundi, in Khost Province. American military leaders and Afghan officials said they were investigating the conflicting accounts of what happened. But President Hamid Karzai, who has grown increasingly impatient with the American-led war effort against the Taliban insurgency, condemned the raid in front of government leaders

and foreign diplomats, saying that 'entering by force to our people's houses is against the government of Afghanistan.'

New York Times, 31 December 2008

**U.S. to Widen Supply Routes in Afghan War**

WASHINGTON - The United States and NATO are planning to open and expand supply lines through Central Asia to deliver fuel, food and other goods to a military mission in Afghanistan that is expected to grow by tens of thousands of troops in the months ahead, according to American and alliance diplomats and military officials. The plan to open new paths through Central Asia reflects an American-led effort to seek out a more reliable alternative to the route from Pakistan through the strategic Khyber Pass, which was closed by Pakistani security forces on Tuesday as they began an offensive against militants in the region. The militants have shown that they can threaten shipments through the pass into Afghanistan, burning cargo trucks and Humvees over recent weeks. More than 80 percent of the supplies for American and allied forces in Afghanistan now flow through Pakistan