



PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lankan voters queue outside a polling booth in Colombo yesterday to vote in local elections. At least three people were killed and dozens wounded in political violence during the polls.

# Pak Army ready to address US concerns on Haqqanis

PTI, Islamabad

The Pakistan Army is ready to address US concerns on the Haqqani network but has no intention of going after the militants in North Waziristan tribal region where the Taliban faction has its headquarters, according to a media report yesterday.

At a meeting chaired by Army chief Gen Ashfaq Parvez Kayani in Rawalpindi on Friday, Pakistan's top army commanders expressed their willingness to lower tensions with the US by narrowing down differences on the Haqqani network, The Express Tribune newspaper quoted its sources as saying.

"Pakistan wants a constructive engagement with the US to deal with the Haqqani issue," an unnamed official familiar with the development said.

The official ruled out the possibility of a military operation in North Waziristan Agency.

"Use of force is not the answer to every problem," the official said, repeating a recent statement by Kayani.

Addressing troops participating in a Pakistan-Saudi Arabia joint military exercise in Mangla on Thursday, Kayani reportedly said military operations were not the ideal way of dealing with every issue.

His remarks are being seen as Pakistan's hardening stance on the conducting an operation in North Waziristan despite mounting US pressure.

It is unclear what exactly Pakistan is offering to the US as an alternative to a military operation to deal with the Haqqanis, the report said.

An unnamed senior military official referred to the foreign ministry's last news briefing in which the spokesperson said Pakistan's policy was guided by its national interests.

"We have our own national interests...we have certain red lines and we

are very clear that we won't compromise on them," the official said.

The army's corps commanders on Friday discussed the implications of the strategic partnership agreement signed by Afghanistan and India this week.

The commanders voiced concern at allegations by senior Afghan officials that the Inter-Services Intelligence agency was involved in the assassination of former Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

A brief statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations after the meeting only said yesterday's meeting was part of "regular monthly meetings".

The meeting took a comprehensive overview of "routine professional matters aimed at enhancing proficiency of the army", it said.

In a separate development, US ambassador Cameron Munter met foreign minister Hina Rabbani Khar on Friday.



## 'India seeking an anti-Pak Afghanistan'

PTI, Washington

As concerns mounted over Pakistan's military and intelligence links with terror groups, the country's former military ruler Gen Parvez Musharraf has accused India of seeking to "create an anti-Pakistan Afghanistan".

Describing Afghanistan as a proxy war between India and Pakistan, Musharraf claimed at a forum here that Afghanistan was sending its "diplomats, soldiers and intelligence staff" to India where they were being indoctrinated against Pakistan.

"In Afghanistan, there is some kind of a proxy conflict going on between Pakistan and India," he said. "India is trying to create an anti-Pakistan Afghanistan," The ABC news reported.

Musharraf made the charges as part of the rolling panels at the Washington Ideas Forum taking place at the Newseum. It came as President Barack Obama voiced concern over Pakistan's military and intelligence links with extremists, observing the US finds this "troubling."

## US, Pakistan spies rebuild ties

AP, Washington

In what could mark a turning point in US-Pakistani relations, Pakistani forces have arrested a handful of al-Qaeda suspects at the CIA's request and allowed the U.S. access to the detainees, US and Pakistani officials said.

Pakistan has also stopped demanding the CIA suspend the covert drone strikes that have damaged al-Qaeda's militant ranks in Pakistan's tribal areas, officials on both sides say - though the Pakistanis say they have simply put this on the back burner for now. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive strategic matters.

Only one of the al-Qaeda figures who was arrested is considered senior, but US and Pakistani officials called the combined moves a trend in the right direction.

"They are doing things to cooperate

and be helpful," Director of National Intelligence James Clapper said Friday in an interview with The Associated Press.

Clapper would not comment on the details shared by other US and two Pakistani officials, but confirmed there has been some progress restoring the joint intelligence cooperation that used to be routine, prior to the covert US raid that killed Osama bin Laden inside Pakistan in May. The raid inflamed anti-American sentiment in Pakistan and embarrassed its intelligence services, who were already angry over an incident in January, when a CIA security contractor shot dead two Pakistanis he said were trying to rob him.

For a time, Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency refused to carry out any joint operations with American intelligence officers, nor would they allow the Americans access to question

militant detainees. Visas as well were hard to come by for US officials of any stripe. The breakdown in relations took on a tit-for-tat quality, with Pakistan expelling most of the US military trainers in the country, and the US cutting off several hundred million dollars in military aid.

There are still bumps, including over recent high-level US criticism of Pakistan's ties to militant groups.

Pakistan considered halting some of the increased cooperation after Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Adm. Mike Mullen accused Pakistan's spy shop of complicity with the militant Haqqani network's attack on the US embassy in neighbouring Afghanistan. Mullen levied that charge, the most serious US allegation against Pakistan since the 9/11 attacks, within a few days of leaving his post last month.

## TELANGANA STATE BID Andhra governor meets PM

ANI, New Delhi

Andhra Pradesh Governor E S L Narasimhan met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh here yesterday and is understood to have briefed him about the situation in the agitation-hit Telangana region.

The meeting assumes significance as the general strike in Telangana region entered the 27th day on Saturday.

Earlier, Narasimhan met Home Minister P Chidambaram and briefed him about the developments in the state.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister N Kiran Kumar Reddy is also scheduled to meet Singh and Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee over the issue.

Earlier, Union Health Minister and Congress in-charge for Andhra Pradesh Ghulam Nabi Azad has appealed to demonstrators agitating for the creation of a separate Telangana state, to end their strike.

"The strike should be called off immediately as it would provide the common people of the state some much needed respite," Azad told the media.

Pro-Telangana activists have stepped up their efforts for the four-decade-old demand of a separate state, which is sought to be carved out of the economically less developed parts of Andhra Pradesh.

## ROW OVER PHILIPPINE SEX TOURISM COMMENT

### US envoy regrets remarks

AP, Manila

The US ambassador to the Philippines has apologized for his recent statement that 40 percent of male tourists visit the country for sex, a government spokesman said yesterday.

Ambassador Harry Thomas sent a cellphone text message Friday to Philippine Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario, who was on a visit to Vietnam, expressing regret for his comments, foreign affairs spokesman Raul Hernandez said.

"I should not have used the 40 percent statistic without the ability to back it up. I regret any harm that I may have caused," Thomas said in the text message, which Hernandez



Harry K Thomas

forwarded to journalists.

US Embassy spokeswoman Tina Malone said yesterday that Thomas "offered his deep regret" for his comment. She said the United States would continue to be a "strong and dedicated partner of the Filipino people in com-

bating the global scourges of human trafficking and sexual tourism."

Thomas' remark last month angered some officials who questioned its basis and said it tarnished the country's image.

After addressing a discussion on human trafficking in the Philippines on Sept 22, Thomas also told journalists that the sex tourists included Americans and that it was "something I'm not proud of." He urged Philippine authorities to prosecute all foreign sex tourists, including Americans.

The Philippines is trying to revive its tourism industry and erase its 1980s reputation as a major destination for sex tourists.

## Taseer killer appeals death sentence

CNN ONLINE

A security guard who killed a liberal politician in Pakistan over his remarks on the nation's controversial blasphemy law has appealed his conviction and death sentence, his defense lawyer told CNN Friday.

Mumtaz Hussain Qadri was given the sentence this month by a terror court in the garrison city of Rawalpindi, near Pakistan's capital, Islamabad.

Police say Qadri, a policeman serving as a security guard for Punjab Gov. Salman Taseer, shot him dead in a market in Islamabad on January 4 because of Taseer's remarks on Pakistan's controversial blasphemy law.

Police say Qadri confessed to gunning down the man he was supposed to be protecting.

Qadri's lawyer, Raja Shuja Ur Rehman, has appealed the sentence imposed by the Anti-Terrorist Court. The lawyer said he is arguing that the terror court did not have the jurisdiction to make the death penalty decision.

"Therefore the decision made by the court was illegal," Rehman said.

He said Qadri was "provoked" by Taseer, and that is what led to the death of the governor.



**National Human Rights Commission, Bangladesh**  
and  
**Bangladesh National Human Rights Commission Capacity Development Project**

**Call for participation in human rights awareness campaign of NHRC: Human rights day 2011**

To commemorate the International Human Rights Day on December 10, 2011, the National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh, in collaboration with the BNHRC-CDP of UNDP Bangladesh is organizing an awareness raising campaign on human rights. The theme of this year's campaign is: **Working together to promote human rights: giving young people a voice.**


On this occasion, the NHRC invites young people to share your ideas on what human rights mean to you. The NHRC encourages you to use creative modes of expression, such as, drawings, photographs, developing slogans (the use of different ethnic languages is encouraged) etc.

If you are aged 25 or below, we invite you to send your submission in any reasonable form and size to the address given below:

**Submission on What does human rights mean to you?**  
**Bangladesh National Human Rights Commission Capacity Development Project**  
**Level: 13, Gulphesha Plaza**  
**8, Sahid Sangbadik Selina Parveen Sarak**  
**Boro Mogbazar, Dhaka**

You are also requested to send a copy of your birth certificate or a certificate from your local Union Parishad/ Pouroshava (as applicable) as proof of your age. Please also include your detailed contact address with the submission. A token gift and certificate will be awarded to each of the shortlisted participants in a programme to be held on 10 December 2011 in Dhaka. An exhibition will present the items selected by a Panel.

**Deadline for submission: 31 October 2011, for more details please visit: [www.nhrc.org.bd](http://www.nhrc.org.bd)**






**VACANCY NOTICE**

**United Nations Development Programme in Bangladesh** announces a post of **Coordination and Research Officer** (1 position, SB-3 level) in Service Contract modality for the "Aid Effectiveness" project.

*The duration of the service contract is one year initially, subject to renewal on an annual basis upon satisfactory performance and availability of funds.*

For details of the Job Description and instructions to apply, please visit our website: <http://www.undp.org.bd/jobs>. Applications should be received no later than **Sunday, 23 October, 2011.**

**Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Female candidates are particularly encouraged to apply.**

## NEWS IN brief

### Steve Jobs' funeral held Friday

CNN ONLINE

The funeral for Apple co-founder Steve Jobs was set to be held on Friday, the Wall Street Journal was reporting.

Quoting an unnamed source, the newspaper said the service would be a small, family affair. The location was not mentioned.

The Journal called the source "a person familiar with the matter."

Apple has said there will not be a public memorial ceremony for Jobs, who died Wednesday in California after a long battle with pancreatic cancer.

### Burma censor chief calls for more media freedom

BBC ONLINE

The head of Burma's powerful press censorship department has called for greater media freedom in his country.

Tint Swe said censorship was incompatible with democratic practices and should be abolished in the near future.

The comments will be seen as further evidence that the new civilian-military hybrid government is trying to soften its stance.

Burma is said to have the world's most heavily censored media. Some previously blocked websites are now accessible.

### 2 Tibetans set selves on fire in latest protest

AP, Beijing

Two Tibetan men set themselves on fire in southwest China in the latest self-immolation protest against the Chinese government, state media and a rights group reported yesterday.

The two former monks, 18-year-old Thongan and 20-year-old Tenzin, set themselves on fire in Aba county in Sichuan province's Aba prefecture Friday, according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

Xinhua cited an Aba county spokesman as saying the monks were rescued and were being treated at a local hospital for non-life-threatening injuries.

**S@ifur's** এ কোচিং করে যুগান্তকারী সাফল্য:

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