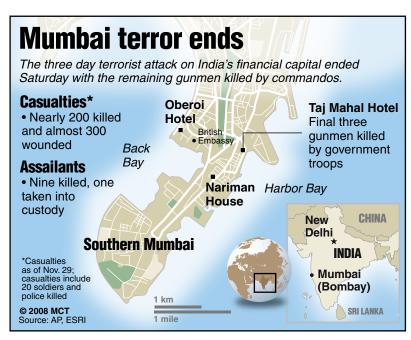
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December 3, 2008

Mumbai attacks inflame Indian, Pakistani tensions



By Saeed Shah McClatchy Newspapers

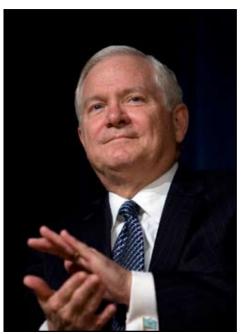
ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — India on Friday charged that militants with links to Pakistan were involved in the terrorist attack on major tourist sites in Mumbai, in which more than 160 civilians died. Pakistan denied the allegations but agreed to send an intelligence official to discuss them.

The rapidly rising tensions could scuttle a tentative peace process between the two nuclear-armed countries and even lead to a military confrontation, and some experts said they thought this might have been the aim of the terror opera-

"Preliminary reports point toward Karachi," Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told his Pakistani counterpart, Yousaf Raza Gilani, Gilani's office said in a statement.

"Preliminary evidence indicates elements with links to Pakistan are involved," said India's foreign minister, Pranab

Please see Page 6



President-elect Obama made a controversial decision as he announced that Robert Gates, current Secretary of Defense under President Bush, would be keeping his post under the Obama admimnistration.

Talent Tuesday finals bring students together

Talent Tuesday's finals went out with a bang as 8 talented artists or groups put on their last show to win cash prizes.

The first prize of \$250 went to singer Medjine Jaques who performed her own the original songs with help from a couple rappers as a backup. Soulful singer Elizabeth Vasquez took home second prize and \$100. Todd Gerding and his band Tam-Tam the Sandwhich Man took home the 3rd prized of \$50.

Acts ranged from a funky jam band to an R&B/Hip-hop collaboration graced the SSB Patio and showed off their skills.

SGA President TJ Cole joined Allen Collins as they set off the show with an energetic performance of their own.

This was followed by a remix performance of Lil Wayne's hit single "A Milli" by TJ Cole and rapper Heir Jordan.

Allen Collins took the show from there, engaging the audience and having fun with the performers.

First-prize winner Medjine Jaques took control of the crowd roaming through the audience pulling participants from the crowd to dance with her as she sang.

Tam-Tam the Sandwhich Band took the crowd by storm with a very danceable rock tune that had people in the crowd rocking out with them.

Vasquez performed a gospel song and really impressed the judges with her vocal

President Cole was very happy with the outcome. "I thought it was very successful, the finales are always bigger than the qualifying shows."

He talked about how the show has expanded and incorporated more acts than ever saying, "We had 8 finalists which is more than we'd ever done before."

He attributes the increasing scope of the event to a group effort.

"We got a lot of support from the student body," said Cole. "Performing with



Talent Tuesday winner Medjine Jaques holds the Rufus Hawkins trophy

Allen was great. Power 95.3 came out sup-

There was a note of sadness as Talent Tuesday's host of three semesters, Allen

Award for his time as the host.

"Not to be biased, my favorite act was Tam Tam the Sandwhich Man," Cole said.

showed the Unified Diverstiy theme with a primarily African-American crowd enjoying a band of white students."

In closing Cole said that students should be looking for new innovations next semester. "Expect the unexpected, you never know how we're going to revamp."

"Congratulations to Allen for hosting it for so long." Cole said. "Sticking to it, sticking to his guns, produced the show, hosted the show. I just want to thank all the people. Hopefully next semester will be bigger

Obama unveils security team

By Steven Thomma McClatchy Newspapers

CHICAGO — President-elect Barack Obama named his national security team Monday, vowing to bolster military strength with diplomacy. Highlighting the change, he named Hillary Clinton as his secretary of state.

Obama noted Clinton's "tremendous stature" as he picked her as the nation's chief dip-

He lauded his other picks and her as a broad and diverse team that will bring him sometimes dissenting views but always will end up working together to implement his policy, one that will focus on using "all elements of American power."

The team includes:

-Robert Gates as secretary of defense. Gates, who now serves as the secretary in the Bush administration, is the first civilian defense chief ever asked to stay on when a different party took over the White House.

-Eric Holder as attorney general. Holder was the No. 2 at the Justice Department in the Clinton administration and served on Obama's search team for a vice president.

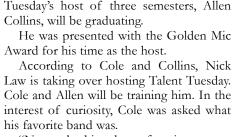
—James Jones as national security adviser. Gen. Jones is a retired commandant of the Marine Corps and a former supreme commander

-Janet Napolitano as secretary of homeland security. The Arizona governor recently won her second term.

—Susan Rice as ambassador to the United

The path was cleared for Clinton's nomination when her husband, former President Bill Clinton, signed an agreement this weekend to limit conflicts between his international work — making money from speeches and on issues such as AIDS — and his wife's diplomatic work as secretary of state.

Bill Clinton agreed to:



"Everybody was dope, but it really

and better."



Erica Teamer, Valencia Voice

Opinion

Are you stressed for finals? How are you getting ready?

Need help with your grades? Here's some advice about working with classmates from the book "How to Get A's in College" (Hundreds of Heads Books, www.hundredsofheads.com, \$14.95), straight from people who've done it:

"College is competitive, but that doesn't mean you have to work alone all the time. Working with classmates can be extremely helpful, especially if you have multiple deadlines. Be willing to share your thoughts and insights with others, and be open to receive theirs in return."

—Jacob Sze, Ellenville, N.Y., Cornell University

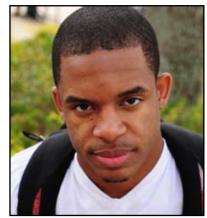
"Study groups are beneficial for two reasons. First you get to share your own knowledge with others and that helps you learn. The second reason is that you benefit from someone else's knowledge of something you may not understand. If you know something yourself, you get an opportunity to teach it to someone else in the group, which in itself is a great way to study because it solidifies that knowledge in your mind. When you know you can teach something to someone you can say, 'I've now mastered that subject.' Just remember not to ever go into a group without knowing anything because no one will want to work with you."

—Trevor Edmonds, Berkeley, Calif., University of California, Berkeley

"Studying in a group is excellent when preparing for multiple-choice exams. Study with a group by quizzing each other with possible answers, because that's how the format of the exam will be. Group studying for exams like essays is not helpful, because they require your own synthesis of the information."

—A.S., Chicago, Ill., University of Wisconsin

—MCT Campus



"Not really, I'm going to ace them. I get a nice sleep and eat a good breakfast."

— Pierra Pave

—Pierre Payen



Yeah, sure why not. I stay away from the club and stay in the book.

—Matt Hernandez



"Yes, I am. I procrastinate. I don't really study."

—Veronica Aries



"Kind of, just a little bit. I usually stay up really late. I like to read out loud or look at pictures. It depends on the subject."

—Summer Talent



""Yes. I just write everything on notecards and go over them over and over again until I can recite them." —Chris Bayles



"Yes. I just study all day.
Study groups are good."

—Nate Moreno



"Yes. I make flashcards." — Jasmine Wahba



"Not really because my teachers go over the same thing. I study a chapter every other day."

—Jacqueline Feazell

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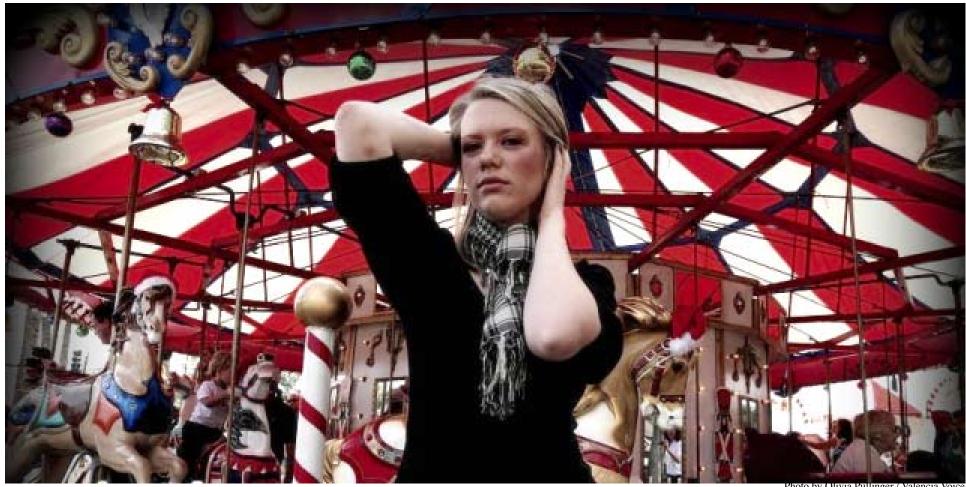
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Corrections

The photos on page 9 were incorrectly attributed to Jordan Keyes. They should have been attributed to Caleb Fooks.

Style conscious students prefer individuality



Todays students say that they find their choice of clothing to be an expression of their personality, and vie for a unique look as opposed to students in earlier eras.

By Jackie White McClatchy Newspapers

Watch old movies. Scan vintage fashion magazines. You get the message: College students tended to dress very much alike in the old days.

Sweaters and pearls starred in one era. Blazers and preppy khakis ruled in another. Plaid grunge once dominated. But times change.

Today's young scholars are more creative. They may have many of the same items as their dorm roommates. They have the skinny dark blue jeans, the message T-shirts, hooded sweatshirts and puffy vests.

But do they want to look the same as their roommates? Probably not.

They prefer to set themselves apart with a little tweak. Making a statement is a priority. They'll mix unlikely layers and relish juxtapositions even when they draw raised eyebrows.

"It's very important for women to show personal style," says Gregg Andrews, Midwest fashion director for Seattle-based Nordstrom stores. Young women are wearing dresses over pants, skirts and shorts over cropped leggings and short jackets over long

College men have the same yearning for

individuality. They like the "crumpled look," Andrews says.

"A guy will wear a hooded sweatshirt and a puffy parka with shorts and thongs. They love thongs. They wear them with everything. But it should look as if it was picked up off the dorm room floor."

Even preppy and traditional pieces are worn in unconventional ways. Polos are popped over long-sleeved T-shirts. An argyle sweater is paired with a swirling skirt.

Today's students tend to have a casual attitude toward clothes, especially for class and especially at the start of the school year.

Marshal Cohen, senior fashion analyst for NPD, which tracks shopping trends, says students may buy a new pair of jeans but because they start out with summer clothes, they usually wait until later in the fall for serious shopping.

"They don't want to show up with stuff that was cool in Wisconsin but not in Chapel Hill, N.C.," Cohen says.

Evidence of the low-key approach can be found in the school-oriented fashion media. In July, Seventeen magazine was promoting Christina Aguilera's cover shot for the September issue, traditionally the back-to-

school book.

At the same time, students are devoting money to furnishing dorm rooms and apartments. College kids have returned to fashion, Cohen says. For a time, they were spending their money on electronics. But now it's about the dorm room, having the cool coffeemaker, towels and pillows. "It's all about style," he says.

In general fashion trends, young women want to separate themselves from the guys. They are wearing skirts, Cohen says, and leggings are a surprise hit. Pants in menswear fabrics in a range of shapes, including wide legs, are likely hits. And some women will love the gauchos.

A shift in clothing proportion is making the biggest news, says Patricia McCune, J.C. Penney's trend analyst for juniors. With leggings, high boots and skinny jeans, legs are a new focal point. They are balanced by longer tops and tunics often anchored by a wide belt. Layers are also important.

"Just put layers upon layers," McCune

For women, short, shrunken jackets are good basics that can be dressed up or down. For guys, the blazer will go from jeans to

twill trousers to shorts.

Accessories offer a good way for women to explore personal style. Tall boots can be paired with cropped pants or jeans, which will be tucked into the tops, says Eurydice Sanchez, J.C. Penney trend manager for accessories and footwear. Short ankle boots are getting attention from the fashion magazines. Platform shoes and ballet flats will go with ankle jeans and miniskirts and tights.

Slouchy oversized handbags are everywhere. Headbands are popular for both style and convenience. Layered long bead necklaces and pendants, including the dagger and skull icons, are the jewelry of the moment.

But the one look likely to be an all-round favorite for both sexes is the message T-shirt.

Some are inspired by music, Andrews says, but guys are going for the gothic graphics such as the skull, angels, wings and dragons. For women, they may be political or celebrity- or status-oriented.

"It's like wearing your personality," Cohen says.

Isn't that what it's all about?

—MCT Campus

Fetching fashion for canines rising in popularity

By Kate Santich Orlando Sentinel

ORLANDO, Fla. — Sasha seems to have all the makings of a supermodel _ she's leggy, exotic-looking, full of attitude and so chic she doesn't even need a last name. The camera loves her.

But in her debut on the catwalk, on a recent balmy night at a College Park, Fla., fashion show, Sasha turned her moment in the spotlight into a spectacle. First, she started sniffing the other models in unmentionable places. Then, she tried to shake off her dress and strut around naked. When that failed, she spun in circles, biting at the fabric over her derriere.

It's probably safe to assume the long-coat Chihuahua won't be on the cover of Elle anytime soon.

Bloomingdale's, Neiman-Marcus, Gucci, Louis Vuitton; all have pawed their way into the lucrative pet-accessories market, an industry that raked in an estimated \$8 billion last year.

"It's phenomenal. Absolutely phenomenal," says Jody Goldman, owner of Dog &

Friends, a Florida boutique. "We sell a dozen pieces of clothing a day now. You wouldn't believe it."

Her shop co-sponsored the recent dualspecies fashion show Mutts & Divas, which featured Sasha and her faux pas. The event: a catered affair complete with wine, pulsating music, a deejay and a worthy cause (Canine Companions for Independence); attracted more than 100 humans and the outfits of fledgling Orlando designer Kara Kono, whose boldly colored doggy dresses and vests are making their way to Hollywood.

The trend is mostly a small-breed phenomenon and dates back to a teacup Chihuahua named Bruiser in the 2001 Reese Witherspoon hit "Legally Blonde." The tiny dog was a shameless fashionista.

The Japanese loved it. Soon too did chi-chi Aussies, Kiwis, French and Brits, spawning a legion of pricey boutiques and Web sites and one tongue-in-cheek Dogue magazine.

"Which just goes to show you that wackiness is international," says Longwood veteri-

narian Rick Marrinson, a frequent radio and TV commentator on pet issues. "Not that there's anything wrong with that. I've actually had a dog come in with a bomber jacket on," he says. "It was very cute."

These days celebrities everywhere are accessorizing their pets; Paris Hilton's pooch, Tinkerbell, seemingly wouldn't be caught dead in public naked.

But four-legged fashion isn't solely for the well-heeled. Oh, sure, Yap Wear and Von Dutch hoodies retail for roughly \$50 to \$60, but Target is pricing its new line at less than \$15

So who's buying?

"Some are people who do not have children, and so their pets are their children," says Brian Wettstein, co-owner of the Doggie Door on Park Avenue in Winter Park, Fla. "And some people are pre-children, and this is just practice. And then others are just really caught up in fashion personally, and they extend that to their dogs."

At the outspoken nonprofit organization

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, there are mixed emotions

mals, there are mixed emotions.

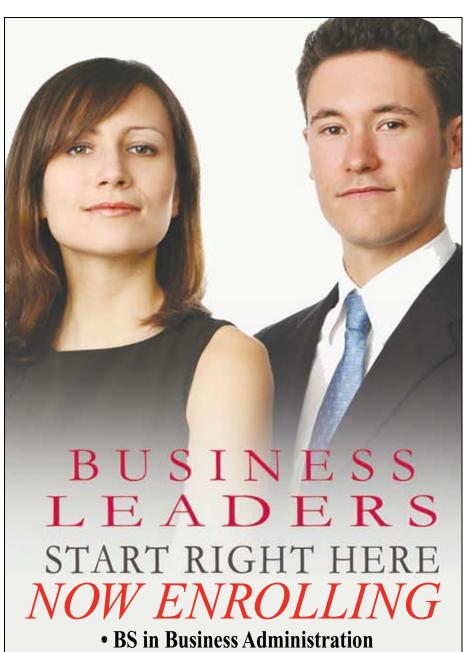
"Our office handles so many calls about dogs that are put at the end of a chain for the duration of their lives and never given so much as a pat on the head that it's difficult to condemn someone who wants to take their dog out and parade it around," says PETA spokeswoman Daphna Nachminovitch. "On the other hand, the disparity is a little bit tragic."

PETA does advise that humans take their lead from the dogs. Don't force them into clothes they can't wait to tear off.

Veterinarian Marty Becker, author, radio host and syndicated pet columnist, concurs. But he also notes that some dogs do indeed enjoy, well, putting on the dog.

"They read body language, and they read tone of voice," he says. "They hear, 'Oh, my gosh, aren't you cute!' And it's like somebody tossing them an emotional Milk-Bone."

—MCT Campus



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A Degree of Difference



Vince Vaughn and Reese Witherspoon really hold this crazy holiday flick together with funny performances.

Irreverent Christmas comedy not quite 'Bad Santa,' still good

By Alex Barrett Valencia Voice

Okay, I know what you're thinking. It's Christmas time, and you have to deal with crazy Aunt Kimmy.

Well, consider yourself extremely lucky you aren't Brad (Vince Vaughn) or Kate (Reese Witherspoon) in "Four Christmases."

Vaughn and Witherspoon play a couple whom are forced to see their parentals and extended family for the first time in 3 years.

They had always gone on vacation on Christmas, spreading some outlandish excuse about how they couldn't make the holidays to get out of the festivities.

When the fog in San Fransisco grounds all the flights, Fiji becomes even more heavenly sounding as you get to meet all the members of each divorced family's trees.

If you have ever seen a bad christmas movie, you have probably been stained for life. Few things in this world can be as bad as off-humor Tim Allen-esque holiday films, but this one is different. Aside from Vaughn acting, speaking, looking, and stuttering like he does in *every* movie the same way, this inventive comedy about everyone's families is surprisingly amusing. It pushes the label on

it's PG-13 rating, but never crosses the line, making it a great family movie, if not to just tell your kids, "See? I could be alot worse."

As Brad, who's real name in the film is "Orlando," and like his bretheren is named after his city of conception, and Witherspoon, who went from looking like the overweight Michelin Tire Baby to the perfect-haired model she plays in the film, continue on their family trips, they encounter everything anyone's family could possibly throw at them.

Expect to see at least someone in this film who directly relates to someone in your own family that scares the hell out of you - that uncle you pray will go missing before this time next year so you don't have to deal with him

Or, you could go see 4 Christmases, and realize how much worse off you could be.

I don't often recommend Christmas movies, but this one is up on the list now.

Not quite as good as some of it's predecessors, but it is a decent view. While it is good, it is easily a rental flick, unless you feel the need to get in the spirit a little early this year. I give it a 7 out of a possible 10, and that's a great omen considering my favorite Christmas movie is Bad Santa.

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While most industries are seeing a downturn in sales due to the slow economy, the gaming industry has had an increase in sales

Videogames hit the right buttons

Gaming industry thrives amidst troubled economy

By Victor Godinez
The Dallas Morning News

Bailouts, bankruptcies, liquidations and layoffs have been the business buzzwords over the last few months, but the videogame industry remains stubbornly resistant to the gloom enveloping the rest of the economy.

While game industry executives and analysts aren't ignoring the broader economic trends, all the evidence seems to point to a robust holiday season for game makers and sellers and continued prosperity next year.

Part of the explanation for videogames' continuing popularity, game insiders say, is the "nesting" effect, in which cash-strapped consumers stop going out and look for ways to entertain themselves at home.

"Clearly, interactive entertainment is a great value in a down economy," said Dan DeMatteo, chief executive at Grapevine, Texas-based GameStop Corp., the largest standalone game retailer in the world.

The numbers seem to bear that out.

In October, videogame sales jumped 18 percent, according to market research firm NPD Group.

November has been solid, too, as Game-Stop said in its quarterly earnings conference call this month that initial signs for the fourth quarter are positive.

There are other signs that games remain as popular and lucrative as ever.

Blizzard Entertainment Inc. said that Wrath of the Lich King, the latest expansion for its popular World of Warcraft online game, sold more than 2.8 million copies in the first 24 hours after it was released on Nov. 13.

Blizzard said the sales avalanche made Lich King the fastest-selling PC game of all time.

Microsoft Corp. has also done block-buster business in the last few weeks. The shooting game Gears of War 2 for Microsoft's Xbox 360 console went on sale on Friday, Nov. 7, and sold more than 2 million copies over the weekend. Generally, any game that sells more than 1 million copies is considered a big success.

And almost anything sold by Nintendo Co. remains a hot commodity, especially the new Wii Fit exercise game for the Wii console, with GameStop and other retailers reporting essentially instant sellouts as copies hit shelves.

That's not to say the game industry is ignoring the trends in other industries.

"We have some concerns about the short term," DeMatteo said, noting that Game-Stop has frozen hiring at its corporate offices. "We're watching expenses as anybody would prudently do."

Arvind Bhatia, a game industry analyst in Dallas with Sterne Agee, said it's unrealistic to assume that games will be completely unscathed by the broader economy.

"I think we're going to see relative outperformance (compared with the rest of the economy), but I don't think the industry is immune," he said. "To think there will be zero impact is not right, in my opinion."

GameStop did lower slightly its projected earnings for the fourth quarter when it released the third-quarter numbers and said it will open fewer stores next year, after opening more than 600 in 2008.

Electronic Arts Inc., one of the largest game publishers, reported a second-quarter loss of \$310 million last month, much worse than the \$195 million loss in the same period a year earlier.

Even so, EA did increase its sales to \$894 million in the quarter from \$640 million.

GameStop's DeMatteo said industry sales are forecast to grow 10 percent to 15 percent next year.

That's a best-case scenario, he conceded. But if people continue nesting next year, "we could have a best-case scenario," he said. Some analysts think GameStop is much too conservative in its official outlook.

"The company's total sales growth guidance is pessimistic to the point of being ridiculous," Wedbush Morgan analyst Michael Pachter wrote in a report Nov. 21.

Pachter said he expects holiday software sales to be "robust" and said GameStop probably is equally confident internally.

"We believe that management is intent

upon setting expectations that it can easily beat, and expect GameStop to do so."

Regardless of the specific numbers, De-Matteo is clearly bullish on the business.

"I think we're being prudently cautious given the environment we're in," he said. "But strategically, long range, do we believe videogames are a robust, growing industry? Absolutely. How could you come to any different conclusion?"

—MCT Campus



Blizzard pulls millions of gamers back into the fantasy world of Azeroth with the recent launch of "Wrath of the Lich King."



Gears of War 2 returns for more bloody, gorey, rated mature fun.

Mumbai attacks have lasting effect

Terrorist violence ignites tensions between India, Pakistan

Continued from COVER

Mukherjee. He added, however: "Proof cannot be disclosed at this time."

Gilani accepted Singh's request to send the head of the Inter-Services Intelligence, Pakistan's premier spy agency, Lt. Gen. Ahmed Shujaa Pasha, "for exchange of information." Later, Pakistan decided to dispatch a more junior ISI official instead, news reports said.

"When we're not involved, and we have nothing to hide, we should not fear about this," Gilani said at a news conference, defending the move.

Indian naval officials said the militants came by boat from the Pakistani port of Karachi, while the home (interior) minister, Jaiprakash Jaiswal said a captured gunman had been identified as a Pakistani. Vilasrao Deshmukh, the head of the provincial government, said two British-born Pakistanis were among gunmen arrested by Indian authorities.

A U.S. counterterrorism official said preliminary information indicated the terrorists may be from the Kashmiri separatist group Lashkar-e-Taiba, or Army of the Righteous, the armed wing of an extreme Pakistanbased Sunni Muslim missionary organization blamed for numerous attacks in India. The group has close links with Pakistan's intelligence services.

He said the group is known for staging highly coordinated attacks by skilled fighters who are prepared to die. He also noted, however, that there are differences between the group's previous attacks and the assault on Mumbai, which singled out foreign nationals. The official asked for anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss the issue openly.

Other experts suggested that India-based militants were involved in the attacks.

"This is beyond the capability of Lashkare-Taiba and beyond Pakistani intelligence," said Hassan Abbas, a research fellow at Harvard University and author of "Pakistan's Drift Into Extremism."

"This is a new brand of radical Muslim group, a modern face, which is more similar to attacks in London (in 2005) and Madrid (in 2004) than with the Kashmiri cause."

Abbas pointed out that the clean-shaven young assailants, captured in photographs, who clearly knew their way round luxury hotels, didn't appear to be the products of an education at a madrassa _ an Islamic school _ in Pakistan, which would be typical for members of Lashkar-e-Taiba and similar groups such as Jaish-e-Mohammad.

Wilson John, a senior fellow at Observer Research Foundation, a New Delhi based policy group, said Lashkar-e-Taiba was "the prime suspect." John, a critic of Pakistan, said the "modus operandi is the same as their past attacks, an attack with assault rifles in a public place."

Lashkar-e-Taiba was involved, by its own admission in the 2000 armed attack on the Red Fort in Delhi, the assault on the Indian parliament in 2001 and an attack on a temple in the Indian city of Ahmedabad in 2002. However, those strikes were amateurish compared with the well-organized and large-scale terrorist operation in Mumbai this week and they weren't directed against Western nationals.

A former Pakistani security official, in contact with figures associated with Lashkar-e-Taiba, said the group appeared to be "totally stunned" by the Mumbai attacks. The militant outfit also issued a formal denial on Thursday. The former official could not be identified because of the sensitivity of the issue.

Al-Qaida has strongly influenced Pakistani extremist groups, including Lashkar-e-Taiba,

and many Pakistani militants were trained in Osama bin Laden's camps prior to the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.

Lashkar fighters are known to have trained "from time to time" at bases belonging to bin Laden's terrorist network in Pakistan's remote tribal area bordering Afghanistan, the U.S. counterterrorism official said. However, al-Qaida has shown little interest in India.

While Lashkar has had close ties with ISI, the U.S. counterterrorism official said it wasn't believed that there was any official Pakistani government involvement in the Mumbai assault.

Meanwhile, groups claiming to be Indian have taken responsibility for a series of terrorist attacks in India over the past 18 months, including the latest in Mumbai.

Experts said the Indian groups could be linked to a home-grown extremist organization, the Students Islamic Movement of India, which was banned in 2002. The younger generation among India's 150 million Muslims is being radicalized as a result of economic and social exclusion in the Hindu-majority country.

Some experts said the group behind the Mumbai assault could be a hybrid of foreign and local radicals, including al-Qaida. The city's criminal underworld, blamed for terrorist attacks in the past, also could be involved, especially a group called D-Company headed by fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim _ who's believed to be hiding in Pakistan.

"I distinctly see the hand of Dawood Ibrahim's gang, in the knowledge of Mumbai we witnessed," said Maloy Krishna Dhar, a former joint director of India's Intelligence Bureau, a spy agency, "But the executors of the program were not local boys."

—MCT Campus



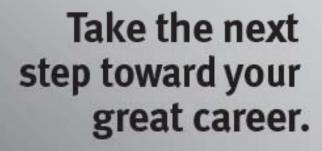
Nancy Stone, Chicago Tribune / MCT Campus President-elect Obama made Hillary Clinton's Secretary of State job official.

Obama picks security team

Continued from COVER

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- Abandon day-to-day management of the foundation.
- —Refuse foreign contributions to the Clinton Global Initiative, his annual conference.
- —Stop holding that meeting in foreign
- —Submit his speaking schedule to ethics reviews by the State Department and White House counsel.
- —Submit any new sources of income to ethics reviews.
- —The ethics reviews still could raise questions: The State Department would be controlled by his wife and the White House counsel would be Greg Craig, one of Bill Clinton's lawyers and a chief defender at his impeachment trial over lying in testimony to conceal an affair.

—MCT Campus



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e Bruno is limiting himself to 100 personal po

Cut to 100: Giving up most 'stuff'

By Julia Feldmeier, Special to The Washington Post

Stuff. We have a lot of it. They're nice, these belongings. Entertaining and helpful and cool. And yet: They're also a little oppressive, the way they clutter our homes and dictate our actions.

Lo, the 100 Thing Challenge: an endeavor by Dave Bruno, a San Diego resident who decided to whittle his way down to 100 personal possessions. Gone was the iPod. The baseball jersey signed by Pete Rose. The dress pants and the sport coat and the nosehair trimmer. Purged, all of them.

Bruno, a 37-year-old Web editor, officially began his challenge Nov. 12 and plans to continue it for one year (see things he kept, and ditched, at www.guynameddave.com).

Q. When you decided to start this and began weeding through your things, were you horrified by how much you had?

A. Some things I thought, "Oh, I don't have as many shirts as I thought I had" --but then, "Wow, how do I have all these extra pairs of shoes?'

Q. Is there a feeling of wastefulness that accompanies discarding these items?

A. I put a lot of stuff on Craigslist and gave a lot away, but some stuff wasn't going out the door unless it got thrown away.

Q. You didn't just put items in storage. You got rid of them. Is your plan to repurchase these things once the year is up?

A. For the year, I don't have these things to go back to. My anticipation is that I won't even want to.... It's not a bad practice to give up stuff for a while, to come back with a fresh perspective and new appreciation.

Q. Your challenge makes exceptions for things like socks and undergarments each category counts as one thing.

A. Yes. The idea is to focus on consumerism things. The big exception is books. I'm keeping "one library" of books.

Q. The holidays are around the corner. How are your family and friends supposed to accommodate you regarding gifts?

A. I just had a birthday on Nov. 12. I got a chocolate bar. And I love vanilla, so one of my daughters got me these genuine vanilla beans. My mom and my wife's mother gave us some money to go out on dates. So far, everybody gave a ton of thought toward figuring out what's something that's not a "thing" that'll give me pleasure.

Q. You're a devout Christian. Does materialism cloud people's faith?

A. Yes. The Bible talks a lot about materialism. In one of his sermons, Jesus says no person can serve both God and money; you cannot serve two masters.

— LATWP News Service

What's in a name? Perks for Obamas

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON - Nicanor Obama began to realize he might be onto a good thing when he didn't get a speeding ticket that he deserved. After stopping the 28-year-old for a little downtown lead-footing, a District of Columbia police officer looked at his driver's license and put the citation book away.

"He said, Well, I'm going to let you go because you have the Obama name" is how the Arlington, Va., resident recalled the incident.

Since Election Day, his surname has sparked goodwill, from nightclub freebies to hearty handshakes from fellow students at the University of the District of Columbia, where he studies political science.

"I'm not related to the president," Nicanor said, "but I think Obama is a good name to have right now."

Their lives might not have changed as dramatically as a certain Chicago-based Obama family, but non-Barack Obamas have been basking in a little low-watt glory of their own. Suddenly, having the most famous last name in the world means cashing a check, flashing an ID or making a dinner reservation might never be the same.

"I signed up for a Harris Teeter card the other day, and the woman was, like, 'Obama?'," said Denise Maye Obama, 19, of Alexandria, Va. "She said: 'That's a first. Are you related to the president?'

"Everyone asks if I'm related to the president now. One of these times I'm going to say yes, just for the fun of it."

Having a famous last name of any kind sparks a lifetime of predictable checkoutline chitchat; just ask anyone named Sinatra or Kissinger.

Denise, a freshman at the University of Virginia, said she is asked daily whether she can leverage her name for good seats at the inauguration parade or a White House visit. But the only time she has seen the other Obama, at a campaign rally in Charlottesville, she had terrible seats. "My name didn't do me much good that time," she said. "I didn't even get to shake his hand."

At the very least, according to Francisca Obama, a graduate student in Human Resources at Strayer University, no one forgets or botches her name any more.

"Sometimes African names are kind of hard," said Francisca, 29. "Now I don't even have to spell my name. Everybody knows it."

If it's good to be an Obama, it's also exceedingly rare. According to databases, there might be fewer than 20 Obama families in the United States, compared with more than 11,000 Clintons and 60,000 Bushes.

small social wave that started election night, dent-elect's father was from — and Guineans



University of Virginia freshman Denise Maye Obama, 19, of Arlington, Va., says she is asked daily whether she can leverage her name for good seats at the Jan. 20 inaugural parade or a White House visit. No, she's not related to President-elect Barack Obama.

Washington nightclub with no cover charge.

And last week, when Nicanor and his family went to visit a cousin and her new baby at Virginia Hospital Center, they created a minor buzz in the lobby when they asked for Josephina Obama's room.

"They said, 'Obama? Is she one of the Obamas? Are they here?'," Nicanor said. "They treated us like VIPs."

Nicanor is a native of Equatorial Guinea. The name is common there — much more Nicanor Obama said he has been riding a so than in Kenya, in fact, where the presiwhen he was waved under the rope line at a wonder whether they can make their own

claim to a branch of the president-elect's family tree. There are also a few Obamas of Japanese decent.

"Every day, I'm having so much fun with this," said Susie Obama, a real estate investor in Palm Coast, Fla. "When I stop at the bank, they say, 'Roll out the red carpet.' I get e-mails from Japan saying, 'Hello to the first lady."'

It's all a big improvement over her most recent name association, she said.

"I'm so glad Obama is finally a good guy," Susie said. "I really had a hard time for a while there with Osama."

— LATWP News Service

Involve, don't follow, parents in college choice

Dear Babs,

My parents both went to the University of Florida and have sort of insisted that I'd go there as well. I've started my own college search, though, and I'd rather find colleges outside of Florida that have my major. I know that my folks will be devastated that I won't be a legacy student at UF, but I just don't care anymore. Is it OK to have these feelings or am I a terrible son? Reluctant Legacy

Dear Reluctant.

You are not a terrible son — but it is hard to say no to Mom and Dad, especially when they are going to be footing the tuition bill. You are in a quandary that many students would envy. Being a legacy at a well-regarded university is nothing to sneeze at, but it's also admirable to forge your own college path.

It seems as though your parents both had incredible college experiences at the University of Florida and they want to share them with you. I'm assuming your parents met at UF, so I bet they are hoping that you'll have similar luck at college.

But if you truly want to go elsewhere then you need to sit down and

have an honest talk with your parents.

It's obvious that your parents want to be a part of your college search, so let them. Ask them what's so special about Florida, then try to find those qualities at other schools. Was it the professors? Greek life? The Gators athletic teams?

Explain to them that you want to use college as an opportunity to gain new experiences and independence — like moving out of your home state. Have your parents' search colleges using online college info to find schools outside of Florida that remind them of what they

You don't have to apply to all their suggestions, but I bet just involving them in your selection process will put their minds at ease.

Your parents may indeed be devastated that you don't want to go to Florida, but they'll get over it. What they really want most is to see you happy and enjoying your college experience, so do your homework and find colleges that are the best match for your interests.

Got a question for Babs? Log onto campuscompare.com, or send e-mail to dearbabs@campuscompare.com.

— LATWP News Service

Knights fall to Blazers in 15-0, loss

By Neil Tredray Valencia Voice

The UCF Knights needed a win against the UAB Blazers this past Saturday afternoon. They needed a win not for conference championship dreams; those had been dashed long ago. They needed a win not for bowl eligibility; those hopes had been smashed by a Homecoming loss to Southern Miss.

The Knights needed a win for the one word Head Coach George O'Leary wrote on the locker room chalkboard after that loss to Southern Miss: "Pride."

The pride of the graduating seniors, the pride of the incoming recruits, the pride of the program and of its fans.

Well, what few fans showed up, anyway. An announced crowd of 23,644 showed up to Bright House Networks Stadium for UCF's Senior Day 15-0 loss to the Blazers, the first shut-out loss at home for the Knights since 1981.

By halftime fans were already trickling out and that trickle became a flood after quarterback Joe Weatherford threw his second interception of the day with just over two minutes left in the game.

"For the last game for the seniors, it obviously wasn't pretty," O'Leary said after the game. "I don't know what phase of the

game we did well. We just didn't make things happen when we had the opportunity.

I thought defensively it was probably our worst outing of the year as far as tackling was concerned.

Offensively there was no consistency in the play," he said.

Consistency of play was a theme during the post-game conference:

"We were just not consistent enough," O'Leary said. "You have to throw the ball accurately and consistently...We just fell behind and you can't continue to do that."

"[Offensive inconsistency] is something that in the off-season that we are going to have to work hard on as both individuals and as a team," Weatherford said.

Weatherford did his part, posting a career-high 99 yards through the air, completing 12 of 26 attempts with 2 interceptions and no touchdowns.

"We were trying to go out there and win it for the seniors. Everyone went out there and gave great effort and we just couldn't come away with a win," he said.

Rob Calabrese started the game at quarterback but only managed 6 yards on two completions of eight attempts. Weatherford took over with 1:40 left in the first half and set up UCF's only scoring opportunity of the game.

After two completions to receiver Brian

Watters and a 4th-and-1 16-yard rush by running back Brynn Harvey, the Knights were set up for a 39-yard field goal. Kicker Daren Daly hesitated on the kick, however, and the ball fell well short of the uprights.

O'Leary said Daly hesitated because holder Blake Clingan's hand was in the

"That's about the way the day went," O'Leary said.

The closest the Knights got again was the UAB 12 in the fourth quarter.

That possession ended the way so many late-game drives have ended for UCF this season: with an interception.

Kevin Sanders picked off Weatherford's errant pass at the 2 and returned it 21 yards, setting UAB up with 2:08 left in the game and, after gaining a new set of downs, the chance to kneel down and run out the clock for the win

Weatherford remained optimistic about his team's chances next season.

"We are a young team. We have a lot of great players with a lot of confidence and we are going to eventually be a great team. It is just going to take a lot of hard work again both as individuals and as a team in the offseason," he said.

The Knights and UAB both finished the year 4-8 overall and 3-5 in Conference

Neil's NFL Picks Week 14 Playoffs looking a little clearer now

By Neil Tredray Valencia Voice

Week 14 is here already and the playoff picture is becoming clearer. Much love to the NFC North for keeping the winless Lions in contention until week 11. Last week Kansas City and Seattle were officially eliminated, joining Cincinnati and St. Louis in the early draft pick club.

For Thursday:

Oakland @ San Diego - Both of these teams are bad this season, but the Chargers are less bad and should win.

Sunday's action:

Jacksonville @ Chicago - The Jaguars are another disappointment in the AFC this year.

Cincinnati @ Indianapolis - Indy's back to form and may make a run at a Wild Card spot.

Philadelphia @ New York Giants - The Gians clinch NFC East title with this win, even without Plaxico "Plaxidental Shooting" Burress.

Cleveland @ **Tennessee** - The Titans clinch AFC South here.

Atlanta @ New Orleans - NFC South teams are either undefeated (Tampa, Carolina) or 5-1 (Atlanta, New Orleans) at home. It might take until week 17 to sort this division out.

Houston @ Green Bay - Aaron Rodgers had some big shoes to fill, but the potential for a 9-7 season is there.

Minnesota @ Detroit - I bet \$10 on the Lions at the start of the season. Each week, my bookie lets me bet double or nothing. The Lions better win at some point, otherwise I'm out \$327,680 and my kneecaps at the end of the season.

Miami @ Buffalo - Ordinarily you'd think the Dolphins would struggle in Ralph Wilson stadium in December, but this game will be played at the Rogers Centre in Toronto with the roof closed.

New York Jets @ San Francisco - I'd like to see the Jets in the playoffs with a good quarterback instead of Chad "Noodle Arm" Pennington.

Kansas City @ **Denver** - Denver needs the Chargers to lose or tie to clinch the AFC West title, but since the Chargers are playing the Raiders they have to wait another week.

New England @ Seattle - Ordinarily I pick home teams when the visitor is coming from the East coast, but Seattle is really bad.

St. Louis @ **Arizona** - Cardinals clinch the NFC West by virtue of being less awful than their division.

Dallas @ **Pittsburgh** - The Steelers' defense is number one across the board, which should help the anemic offense out.

Washington @ **Baltimore** - The Ravens are another team with a fantastic defense helping out a sometimes-sluggish offense.

And Monday's action:

Tampa Bay @ Carolina - Blatant homer pick of the week. At least it's not blind optimism; the Bucs have the best record against division opponents in the NFC South and are on a four-game win streak.

Does NFL commissioner know what he's doing?

By Alex Barrett Valencia Voice

It almost seems like being an NFL Commissioner would be an awesome job, right?

Regulating the league, making important decisions, like weather to increase the season at the cost of preseason games, if we should play more games abroad, and there's that \$11.2 million he makes a year in salary which doesn't hurt the pocket any.

It would seem like you have a lot on your plate, but it would also seem like you would be completely involved in your work; just ask late commissioner Paul Tagliabue, whom served the NFL for 16

Tagliabue was responsible for 16 years without a strike or a lockout, had a huge hand in the collective bargaining agreements, brought in major endorsements and exclusivity deals, strengthened revenue sharing, and saw to massive internal expansion, including NFL Europe, several new expansion teams, and 17 new stadiums during his tenure, which shows his uncanny ability to get government backing for such undertakings.

Goodell, surely has some big shoes to fill, and it seems like he may never come close.

As we look at Goodell's performance so far, all we see is mistakes and confusion.

First, there was Adam "Pac-Man" Jones and his antics. Jones was arrested more times than years Tagliabue served in

office, and that is only in his first 3 years as a member of the Tennessee Titans.

Because of these arrests, we have seen Jones more or less not able to stay away from the gentleman's clubs, and for some strange reason, he likes to pick fights with bouncers and encourage other people to shoot their guns.

Because of his off-field involvement, Goodell suspended Jones for the entire 2007 season, which seemed like an appropriate penalty, and then informed Jones that there was "zero-tolerance" for any more off field issues.

Last month, after being re-instated earlier this season, Jones got in a fight with a bodyguard at a hotel.

That was it for Jones' career, right? Apparently not.

Goodell suspended Jones for 4 more games and recently reinstated him this week.

Note to the Commish: If you can't

make "Good-ell" on your promises, these guys are going to walk all over you. Let's look at another issue with Goodell in office, the whole "Spy-Gate"

issue revolving around the New England

Patriots.

The Pats were accused of, and found to be recording sessions of practices and games in which they had a member of their staff on the opposing sideline steal-

ing signs and recording classified mate-

Having been found doing this at least twice before, this was the end of the road for Bill Belichick, right?

Apparently not.

The Patriots and Belichick were docked a mediocre 5th round draft pick, and fined a total of \$750 thousand dollars in pocket change.

The assumption around the league was, if you get caught cheating, you're disqualified; one of those foundation rules you learn in little league.

Goodell let the Patriots off easy, and their subsequent season they posted an 18-1 record, losing to the New York Giants in the Super Bowl. Karma?

It almost seems like Goodell would have suspended Michael Vick, who was indicted for dog fighting charges earlier this year, for 4 games and fined him a measly \$100k if he wasn't in jail and unable to play.

It remains to be seen if Goodell will reinstate Vick after his 2-year prison sentence has been carried out, but hasn't it already tarnished the league?

Roger Goodell has been given the office of a \$30.6 billion dollar conglomerate, and seems as though he is making it out to be a circus.

Non-conforming suspensions, fines and penalties aside, his face time with the media is always teased and made to be a farce as he simply repeats his previous words when asked about controversial issues.

Tagliabue may have cast a big shadow, one that is far too large for Goodell to even think about leaving for his successor. Only time will tell if Goodell will shake off his ill-advised decisions and return the league to it's well-oiled machine ways.



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