

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

March 10-16, 3(2), 2008

CONTENTS

- COUNTRY REVIEW..... 3
- ENERGY SECURITY REVIEW.....9
- INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW.....10
- NUCLEAR REVIEW12

EDITOR: M. AMARJEET SINGH

REVIEW ADVISOR: S. KALYANARAMAN

CONTRIBUTORS

MEDHA BISHT – Nepal, Sri Lanka

JAGANNATH PANDA – China, Japan

M. AMARJEET SINGH – Internal Security Review

ARUN VISHWANATHAN – Nuclear Review (INDIAN PUGWASH SOCIETY)

GUNJAN SINGH – Bangladesh, Myanmar

PRIYADARSHINI SINGH – Energy Security Review

PRIYANKA SINGH – Pakistan



**INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES,
1, DEVELOPMENT ENCLAVE, RAO TULA RAM MARG, NEW DELHI – 110010**

IN THE CURRENT ISSUE*

SECTIONS	HIGHLIGHTS	Page
1. COUNTRY REVIEW		3-8
China	Hu Jintao re-elected President; Tibetan demonstrations spread into other provinces; Chinese Government publishes its first handbook for students on 'national defence'	
Japan	Japan urges China to make sure Tibet crackdown does not affect 2008 Beijing Olympics; Iran reassures Japan of oil supplies	
Myanmar	Myanmar is one of the most prolific abusers of people's rights, says U.S. report; Thailand-Myanmar sign investment protection agreement	
SOUTH ASIA		6-8
Pakistan	National Assembly session commences on 17 March; PPP and PML-N sign a MoU; As many as 30 people killed in a suicide bomb attack	
Nepal	Koirala urges Terai armed outfits to accept agreement with the Madhesi groups; Maoists attacks UML team; CPN-UML will be wiped out, says Maoist leader Bhattarai; Army a non-political institution, says COAS	
Sri Lanka	Case filed against Prabhakaran and others; As many as 28 LTTE cadres killed; Local elections in Batticaloa district peaceful	
Bangladesh	Myanmar rejects Bangladesh request for gas; China and Bangladesh vow to reduce trade gap	
2. ENERGY SECURITY REVIEW		9-10
Yemen and India	Yemen and India to discuss gas cooperation	
China	Reshuffle in Chinese Energy Ministry	
Gas Pipeline	Iran-Pakistan-India Gas pipeline	
European Union and Russia	New report warns EU of conflict with Russia	
3. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW		10-12
Jammu and Kashmir	LeT, JeM, and HuM opt for local training	
North Eastern States	UNLF claims killing of six soldiers; ULFA kills four Hindi speaking people	
Other Developments	Subhas Ghising resigns	
4. NUCLEAR REVIEW		12-13
India	UPA-Left coordination committee says further discussions needed; Considerable progress made in talks with IAEA: Kakodkar	
North Korea	Two days of talks between US and North Korean envoys at Geneva; Talks very substantive and covered every aspect of the nuclear issue: Hill	
Iran	Iran reiterates Ahmadinejad statement that it will only talk to the IAEA on nuclear issues; US should negotiate directly with Iran on nuclear issues: Kissinger; Interest growing on multilateral enrichment proposal on Iranian soil	

1. COUNTRY REVIEW

CHINA

- *Hu Jintao re-elected President; Tibetan demonstrations spread to other provinces; Chinese Government publishes its first handbook for students on 'national defence'*

The fifth plenary meeting of the First Session of the 11th National People's Congress (NPC) in Beijing saw most of the key political leaders getting re-elected for key posts both in the government and in the Communist Party. While Hu Jintao was re-elected President of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), the plenary meeting also re-elected Wu Bangguo as the Chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, and Xi Jinping as the Vice-president of the PRC.¹ At the same time, in a secret ballot legislators accepted Wen Jiabao as the premier of China's State Council.²

Last week saw the biggest ever protest by Tibetans in the last 20 years. Demonstrations by monks in Lhasa spread to other provinces of China, as supporters and activists stepped up an international campaign against Chinese rule over Tibet. Releasing a statement on the occasion of the 49th anniversary of the Tibetan people's peaceful uprising in Lhasa on 10th March 1959, the Dalai Lama said: "In Tibet today, due to the Chinese government's numerous actions, driven as they are by a lack of foresight, the natural environment has been severely damaged.....repression continues to increase with numerous, unimaginable and gross violations of human rights, denial of religious freedom and the politicisation of religious issues."³

Conflicting reports are emerging about the violence in Lhasa. Western media have been very critical about the Chinese government's action against Tibetans. While the Chinese authorities have denied that they had fired on protesters in Lhasa, Tibetan refugees and Tibetan leaders in India have claimed that "30 Tibetans had died" in the crackdown and that the toll may well increase to more than 100.⁴ Citing some unconfirmed reports from Tibetan exile groups, *International Herald Tribune* noted that the "crackdown may have left as many as 80 people dead."⁵

On the Tibet issue, *People's Daily* reported that the 11th Panchen Lama Gyaincain Norbu has condemned the riot in Lhasa. In his statement, Norbu said that "we resolutely oppose all activities to split the country and undermine ethnic unity. We strongly condemn the crime of a

¹ "New leaders elected at NPC plenary meeting," *People's Daily* (online), March 15, 2008, at <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90785/6374005.html>

² "Wen Jiabao approved by parliament to be Chinese premier," *People's Daily* (online), March 16, 2008, at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90785/6374282.html>

³ "Statement of H.H. the Dalai Lama: In Tibet, repression continues to increase with numerous, unimaginable and gross violations of human rights!," *les communiqués de presse*, March 13, 2008, at <http://www.tv5.org/TV5Site/info/communiqués-de-presse-article.php?NPID=FR199944>

⁴ "Tibetans Clash With Chinese Police in Second City," *New York Times* (online), March 16, 2008, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/16/world/asia/16tibet.html?ref=asia>

⁵ "Riot death toll raised to 13 as protests spread in Tibet," *International Herald Tribune* (online), March 17, 2008, at <http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2008/03/17/sports/AS-SPT-OLY-Beijing-Tibet.php>

tiny number of people to hurt the lives and properties of the people.”⁶ For its part, the provincial government in Tibet rejected the Dalai Lama’s allegation that ‘cultural genocide’ is taking place in Tibet. It is also reported that the Chinese government has issued a notice to Tibetans and their supporters to stop the current “criminal activities” and violence. On an earlier occasion, the Tibetan higher people’s court had declared that the unrest in Lhasa since March 10 is a “political conspiracy plotted by the Dalai clique to split Tibet from the motherland and sabotage the peaceful and harmonious life enjoyed by people of all ethnic groups in Tibet.”⁷

Last week in Taiwan, both the ruling and opposition party supporters organised rallies to energise the campaigns of the two front-runners for the post of President. Crowds numbering in the tens of thousands marched through the day to drum up support for either the ruling Democratic Progressive Party presidential candidate Frank Hsieh or his rival Ma Ying-jeou of the main opposition Nationalist Party (KMT).⁸ On the issue of Tibet, both candidates condemned the Chinese crackdown on the monk-led protests. President Chen Shui-bian has been very categorical in his criticism, and he was quoted saying that “Tibet seeks independence...the Chinese Communist Party runs an authoritarian government that doesn’t allow other voices besides its own.”⁹

In a new development, the Chinese government has published its first handbook for students on ‘national defence’. The book is seen as a step to popularise and create awareness about the country’s national defence policies and attract the attention of students towards the military. Since 1949, China has issued more than 20 sets of policies and administrative rules related to the military but this book is the first of its kind for students who want to pursue a career in the military.¹⁰

JAPAN

- *Japan urges China to make sure Tibet crackdown does not affect 2008 Beijing Olympics; Iran reassures Japan of oil supplies*

The Japanese government has expressed its concerns over the incidents in Tibet and has asked the Chinese government to ensure that the violent incident does not affect the August 2008 Beijing Olympics. In a moderately worded statement, Foreign Minister

⁶ “11th Panchen Lama condemns Lhasa riot,” *People’s Daily* (online), March 16, 2008, at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90882/6374367.html>

⁷ “Tibetan authorities demand rioters surrendering, offer leniency,” *People’s Daily* (online), March 15, 2008, at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90785/6374045.html>

⁸ “Taiwan takes to streets in huge rallies,” *Taipei Times* (online), March 17, 2008, at <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2008/03/17/2003405872>

⁹ “Taiwan gov’t, candidates slams China over Tibet crackdown,” *Japan Today* (online), March 16, 2008, at <http://www.japantoday.com/jp/news/431218>

¹⁰ “China publishes handbook for national defense students,” *People’s Daily* (online), March 12, 2008, at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90781/90879/6371966.html>

Masahiko Komura urged the Chinese government to make certain that “the crackdown in Tibet doesn’t cause further casualties in Tibet.” Mr. Komura, further stated that Japan “is extremely concerned and keeping a close watch on developments” in Tibet.¹¹

On the bilateral front, the Japanese government has received an assurance from Iran that despite fresh UN sanctions it would continue to supply both oil and gas to Japan. Abbas Araghchi, the newly appointed Iranian ambassador to Tokyo, said that “the sanctions have nothing to do with our oil and gas industry” and confirmed that “we have been an oil supplier for Japan and will remain a reliable supplier for Japan in the future.” It is important to mention here that Iran is the fourth largest oil producer in the world.¹²

A Japanese defence ministry official made a bold suggestion that the self-defence forces (SDF) could take action and invoke a special law on situations surrounding Japan in case of developments in the Taiwan Straits. Many in Japan feel that the Taiwan crisis may deepen especially because of the forthcoming referendum on the island about application for UN membership. However, this opinion was negated by the Chief of the Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura who said that “a situation involving Taiwan does not mean that the law on contingencies in areas around Japan will be applied automatically at all.” He added that “as a matter of course, the SDF must strengthen its guard and take appropriate action before determining a situation as a contingency in areas around Japan.”¹³

MYANMAR

- *Myanmar is one of the most prolific abusers of people's rights, says U.S. report; Thailand, Myanmar sign investment protection agreement*

Myanmar is one of the most prolific abusers of Human Rights, according to the US State Department report on Human Rights violations for 2007. The report said that “Burma’s abysmal human rights record continued to worsen...Throughout the year, the regime continued to commit extrajudicial killings and was responsible for disappearances, arbitrary and indefinite detentions, rape, and torture.”¹⁴

Myanmar’s Ministry of Information has brushed aside the news that Head of State Senior General Than Shwe's health is failing and that he is currently hospitalised.¹⁵

¹¹ “Japan urges China to make sure Tibet crackdown doesn't affect Olympics,” *Japan Today* (online), March 17, 2008, at <http://www.japantoday.com/jp/news/431221>

¹² “Iran reassures Japan of oil supplies,” *Japan Today* (online), March 14, 2008, at <http://www.japantoday.com/jp/news/430980>

¹³ “Security law could cover China-Taiwan conflict,” *Japan Today* (online), 14 March 2008, at <http://www.japantoday.com/jp/news/430972>

¹⁴ “Junta slammed: Beijing offered slight reprieve,” *Mizzima News*, March 12, 2008 at <http://www.mizzima.com/MizzimaNews/News/2008/Mar/39-Mar-2008.html>

¹⁵ “Than Shwe rumored to be hospitalized,” *Mizzima News*, March 12, 2008 at <http://www.mizzima.com/MizzimaNews/News/2008/Mar/43-Mar-2008.html>

Thai Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej paid a one-day official visit to Myanmar on March 14. During the visit the two countries signed an investment accord aimed at protecting Thai investors in Myanmar, and helping to boost foreign investment in Thailand.¹⁶

SOUTH ASIA

PAKISTAN

- ***National Assembly session commences on 17 March; PPP and PML-N sign a MoU for running coalition government; 30 people killed in a suicide bomb attack in Lahore***

Amidst uncertainties related to the post of prime minister in the forthcoming coalition, the National Assembly session began on March 17 as per a presidential order.¹⁷ Earlier Nawaz Sharif and Asif Zardari signed an agreement called the “Murree Summit Declaration,” in Bhurban on March 9 pertaining to the structure of a PPP and PML-Q coalition government in the country. Among other things, the agreement called for the restoration of the deposed judges within 30 days of the formation of the federal government.¹⁸

Zardari has been acquitted in the last of several pending cases against him rendering him free of all corruption charges.¹⁹ He expressed his willingness to take up the coveted post of prime minister citing his party’s willingness on the issue.²⁰ Reports stated that his differences with Fahim on this issue still remains unsettled. Notably, the PML-N is also opposed to Fahim’s candidature owing to his alleged proximity to President Musharraf.²¹ In a related development, Fahim, while addressing a press conference in Islamabad, rejected downright that he was in any way interested in becoming the president of Pakistan in exchange for giving up his candidature for premiership.²²

A suicide bomb attack hit the Federal Investigation Agency in Lahore and left at least 30 people dead and several injured on March 11.²³

¹⁶ “Thailand, Myanmar sign investment protection agreement,” *Xinhua*, March 15, 2008 at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-03/15/content_7797877.htm

¹⁷ “President summons NA session on 17th,” *Daily Times*, March 12, 2008 at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008\03\12\story_12-3-2008_pg1_9

¹⁸ “Zardari, Sharif in historic accord: PML-N to join govt at centre; Judges’ restoration in 30 days,” *Dawn*, March 10, 2008, at <http://www.dawn.com/2008/03/10/top1.htm>

¹⁹ “Asif emerges as ‘Mr Clean’ after acquittal in last case,” *Dawn*, March 15, 2008 at <http://www.dawn.com/2008/03/15/top3.htm>

²⁰ “Party wants me to be PM, says Asif Zardari,” *Daily Times*, March 12, 2008 at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008\03\12\story_12-3-2008_pg1_8

²¹ “PML-N vetoes Amin Fahim,” *Daily Times*, March 11, 2008 at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008\03\11\story_11-3-2008_pg1_9

²² “Fahim rejects offer to become president,” *Dawn*, March 14, 2008 at <http://www.dawn.com/2008/03/14/top1.htm>

²³ “Twin suicide attacks kill 30 in Lahore,” *Daily Times*, March 12, 2008 at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008\03\12\story_12-3-2008_pg1_1

NEPAL

- *Koirala urges Terai armed outfits to accept agreement with the Madhesi groups; Maoists attacks UML team; CPN-UML will be wiped out, says Maoist leader Bhattarai; Army a non-political institution, says COAS*

On March 9, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala called upon armed groups in the Terai to join the Madhesi groups stating that they should “come under the umbrella of the agreement” that was recently signed. He also emphasised on creating a conflict free environment to facilitate the election process.²⁴ According to some reports, Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha (JTMM) and Madhesi Mukti Tigers (MMT), allegedly operating from bordering Indian states, have decided to disrupt the polls. In response, the Election Commission has asked the government to confiscate illegal arms and maintain law and order in these areas.²⁵

Meanwhile the Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) stated that their reason for declining the potential alliance with the Maoists. According to UML general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal, the Maoists had an ‘extravagant proposal’, in which they demanded 60 per cent of seats in the alliance.²⁶ In another incident, several UML members were attacked by Maoist cadres. The victims included election candidate Dev Shankar Poudenine and eight UML workers.²⁷ In a war of words, the CPN-Maoist senior leader Dr. Baburam Bhattarai claimed that “CPN-UML would be reduced to a cipher” in the forthcoming polls scheduled for April 10.²⁸

In a recent statement, Chief of Army Staff General Rookmangud Katawal emphatically stated that the army is a “non-political institution” and that it should be the sustaining pillar of a democratic Nepal.²⁹

SRI LANKA

- *Case filed against Prabhakaran and others; As many as 28 LTTE cadres killed; Local elections in Batticaloa district peaceful*

The Sri Lankan Attorney General has filed a case against several LTTE leaders, including Velupillai Prabhakaran, before the Colombo High Court in connection with the assassination of former Foreign Minister Laxman Kadirgamar.³⁰

²⁴ “PM Koirala urges Terai armed outfits to accept agreement with Madhesi groups,” *Nepal News*, March 9 2008, <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/mar/mar09/news05.php>

²⁵ “EC asks govt to beef up security,” *Nepal News*, March 12, 2008, <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/mar/mar12/news10.php>

²⁶ “Maoists asked for 60 percent seats, claims MK Nepal,” *Nepal News*, March 14 2008, <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/mar/mar14/news02.php>

²⁷ “UML team attacked by Maoists in Ramechhap,” *Nepal News*, March 13, 2008, <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/mar/mar13/news01.php>

²⁸ “CPN-UML Will be Wiped Out: Dr Bhattarai,” *Himalayan Times*, March 14, 2008 <http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullstory.asp?filename=aFanata0vfqzpcalUa9a9a.axamal&folder=aHaoamW&Name=Home&dtSiteDate=20080314>

²⁹ “Army a non-political institution: COAS,” *Nepal News*, March 13, 2008, <http://www.nepalnews.com/archive/2008/mar/mar13/news04.php>

As many as 28 LTTE cadres were killed by security forces in fresh fighting across Sri Lanka's embattled north.³¹ Meanwhile, Batticaloa district which was recaptured by the Sri Lankan military in 2007 from LTTE, witnessed local elections with a 51 per cent turnout. LTTE's rebel faction, Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikkal led by Pilliyan, participated in the elections, thus marking its entry into mainstream politics. The United National Party did not participate in the elections on account of its scepticism on the nature of elections.³²

BANGLADESH

- *Myanmar rejects Bangladesh request for gas; China and Bangladesh vow to reduce trade gap*

Myanmar refused to supply gas to Bangladesh, insisting that India and China are its top priorities. The decision was a blow to Bangladesh, which faces a daily shortage of at least 100 million cubic feet of gas. It needs the fuel to help feed its economy, which expanded by 6.6 per cent in the last financial year up to June 2007. The energy shortage would become acute after 2009 if new gas finds are not made.³³

Business leaders of Bangladesh and China, at a meeting in Dhaka on March 12, decided to enhance bilateral trade and reduce the trade gap of some US\$ 2.44 billion. They claimed that the two countries have huge scope for boosting exports, imports and investment.³⁴

A four-day India-Bangladesh Border conference held in Shillong ended on March 13. Officials of both countries agreed to resolve disputes of a trans-border nature, including illegal migration, border fencing, smuggling of explosives, firearms, etc. through discussions and by taking necessary measures in time.³⁵ For their part, the Border security forces of Bangladesh and India at a sector commander level meeting at Mohdipur on March 12 agreed to maintain peace and stability along the border.³⁶

³⁰ "Case filed against Prabha over Kadirgamar killing," *Daily Times*, 12 March 2008, <http://www.dailynews.lk/2008/03/12/sec01.asp>

³¹ "28 Tigers killed in fresh fighting," *Daily News*, March 13, 2008, <http://www.dailynews.lk/2008/03/13/sec10.asp>

³² "Batticaloa poll peaceful," *The Hindu*, March 11, 2008, <http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/11/stories/2008031160181300.htm>

³³ "Myanmar rejects Bangladesh request for gas," *Daily Star*, March 12, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=27371>

³⁴ "Sino-Bangla businessmen vow to reduce trade gap," *Daily Star*, March 12, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=27311>

³⁵ "BSF agrees to resolve major disputes," *Daily Star*, March 15, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=27773>

³⁶ "Border forces agree to maintain peace," *Daily Star*, March 13, 2008, at <http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=27534>

2. ENERGY SECURITY REVIEW

YEMEN AND INDIA

- *Yemen and India to discuss gas co-operation*

Talks were held between an Indian delegation led by Under Secretary for Middle East Affairs Ann Raffi and Yemen's Deputy Minister of Oil and Minerals Ahmed Abdullah Dares in Sana'a to explore prospects for joint co-operation in oil, gas and mineral exploration. The meeting also reviewed Murli Deora's visit to Yemen in 2007 and means of activating the cooperation protocol signed by the two countries last year.³⁷

CHINA

- *Reshuffle in Chinese Energy Ministry*

The Chinese government announced a much awaited reshuffle of its energy sector, creating two new though toothless energy bodies. The overhaul stopped short of creating the speculated new energy ministry and analysts have pointed out that it will not be effective in controlling the vast energy industry. Of the two new bodies, the Energy Commission will develop national strategy and security. The other body, the Energy Bureau, will administer the sector under the powerful National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC). Energy analyst Adrian Loh of Merrill Lynch shared his scepticism regarding the efficacy of the new bodies and stressed that the NDRC remains the key body in charge of energy. The proposed energy ministry failed to come through as powerful energy interests such as the NDRC and energy industries in China were dead set against it.³⁸

GAS PIPELINE

- *Iran-Pakistan-India Gas pipeline*

Vahid Zeydifard, a senior pipelines expert at National Iranian Gas, said in an interview at the Gastech conference in Bangkok that Iran is set to sign the long awaited final agreement to export gas via pipeline to Pakistan in April. According to an Islamic Republic News Agency report on October 23, Iran and Pakistan have agreed on the pricing formula for transporting natural gas.³⁹

EUROPEAN UNION AND RUSSIA

- *New report warns EU of conflict with Russia*

A report by EU's foreign policy chief Javier Solana and the commission 'Climate Change and International Security' on security challenges to the Union, is all set to bare possible conflicts

³⁷ "Yemen and India to discuss cooperation in gas, oil and minerals," *Sabnews*, March 10, 2008, at <http://www.sabanews.net/ar/news148942.htm>

³⁸ "China reshuffles energy sector, little change seen," *Guardian.com*, March 11, 2008, at www.guardian.co.uk/feedarticle?id=7374593

³⁹ "Iran to Sign Final Gas Sales Agreement With Pakistan (Update2)," *Bloomberg*, March 11, 2008, at www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601091&sid=ap7du._0dlj0&refer=india

with Russia over energy at the EU leaders' meeting next week in Brussels. The report also warns the EU about the challenges stemming from severe food and water shortages, which will spark regional conflicts and humanitarian disasters in fragile states of Asia, Africa and the Middle East.⁴⁰

The EU leader's meeting next month is also set to witness the approval of a timetable to implement an agreed 20 per cent cut by 2020, compared with 1990 levels. Slovenia's Prime Minister, who will chair the meeting next month, described the move as the third industrial revolution.⁴¹

3. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

- *LeT, JeM, and HuM opt for local training; Infiltration in decline along Indo-Pak border, says Union Government*

With exfiltration and infiltration becoming a tough task for militants due to fencing and installation of sophisticated gadgetry along the Line of Control (LoC) and International Border (IB), at least three major militant outfits including Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and Hizbul Mujahideen (HuM) have reportedly started running their training camps within the State to train a fresh lot of new recruits. Some of these training camps are reportedly located at Bandipora, Kupwara, Pir Panjal range, Poonch and the upper reaches of Doda and Ramban. According to unspecified intelligence sources, the 'recruitment commanders' of these militant outfits were hesitant to take the risk of exfiltration of new recruits to Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK) for training and then ensuring their safe return. It has been reported that the 'militant commanders' were taking the risk of exfiltration only for those Pakistani militants who wish to go back. For infiltration, only hardcore Pakistani militants including fidayeen and some local militants are being given green signal. According to sources, they have been compelled to go for local training of fresh recruits as they were facing shortage of manpower. Reports said that presently only 800 to 900 listed militants were left in the State.⁴²

In the meantime, *Daily Excelsior* quoting official sources has reported that at least half of the 16 Close Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras installed in Jammu City to maintain surveillance on militants have gone out of order within a year of their installation.⁴³

Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil informed the Rajya Sabha on March 11 that cross-border infiltration along the India-Pakistan and India-Bangladesh Borders has declined and there is no significant incidence of foreign intrusions on other borders. The Minister said that in 2005 there

⁴⁰ "EU report warns of conflict with Russia over energy issues," *Ireland.com*, March 10, 2008, at http://www.ireland.com/newspaper/frontpage/2008/0308/1204843629530_pf.html

⁴¹ "EU set to agree to emission cut plans," *BBC.CO.UK*, March 14, 2008, at news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7293436.stm

⁴² "3 major militant outfits opt for local training," *Daily Excelsior*, March 13, 2008, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/08mar13/news.htm#5>

⁴³ "Half of surveillance cameras out of order," *Daily Excelsior*, March 16, 2008, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/08mar16/news.htm#6>

was a total of 6,586 attempts of foreign intrusion. This number declined to 5,258 in 2006 and further to 4,334 in 2007.⁴⁴

NORTH EASTERN STATES

- ***Manipur: UNLF claims killing of six soldiers; ULFA kills four Hindi speaking persons in Assam***

Imphal Free Press quoting unofficial sources has reported that as many as six security forces personnel were killed and several others wounded, following an attack on an Assam Rifles camp by United National Liberation Front (UNLF) militants in Manipur's Chandel district on March 15. For its part, the UNLF claimed responsibility for the attack.⁴⁵

Suspected ULFA militants shot dead four Hindi-speaking persons in Assam's Tengakhat in Dibrugarh district on March 9.⁴⁶ And six ULFA militants laid down arms before the Kamrup district administration in Assam on March 15.

Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi during his budget speech on the floor of the Assam State Assembly on March 10 hinted about the government's plan to set up a full-fledged counter-insurgency (C-I) academy in Assam and raise a dedicated task force for counter-insurgency operations. The C-I academy, as reports indicate, would be modelled along the lines of the Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School at Vairengte in Mizoram. The budget also proposes to set up 45 new police stations, including 19 in the *char* areas, raising of 24 India Reserve Battalions of Assam Police and filling up of all existing vacancies in the state police force.⁴⁷

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

- ***GNLf chief and caretaker administrator of DGHC Subhas Ghising resigns***

Amidst growing opposition, Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) chief and caretaker administrator of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) Subhas Ghising tendered his resignation on March 10, 2008. Ghising, the former Chairman of DGHC, ruled the Darjeeling hills of West Bengal for 20 years. The Gorkha Janamukti Morcha (GJM), a rival of GNLF led by Bimal Gurung, which has virtually barred Ghising's entry into the Darjeeling hills, had been demanding Ghising's resignation for long.⁴⁸ This is the first time since the formation of the DGHC in 1988 that Ghising is not in any administrative post of the council.

⁴⁴ "Infiltration in decline along Indo-Pak border: Govt," *Daily Excelsior*, March 12, 2008, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/08mar12/news.htm#11>

⁴⁵ "Six security men feared killed in UNLF attack; Police confirm one dead, several hurt," *Imphal Free Press*, March 16, 2008, at http://kanglaonline.com/index.php?template=headline&newsid=41493&typeid=1&Idoc_Session=04d5700a10d66135f64aebaea5951d5b

⁴⁶ "Four shot dead," *The Hindu*, March 10, 2008, at <http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/10/stories/2008031056880100.htm>

⁴⁷ "Assam budget trains gun on rebels," *Telegraph*, March 11, 2008, at http://telegraphindia.com/1080311/jsp/northeast/story_9005119.jsp

⁴⁸ "Ghising steps down as Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council head," *India eNews*, March 10, 2008, at <http://www.indiaenews.com/politics/20080310/103190.htm>

The Anti-Terrorist Squad of the Maharashtra Police shot dead two suspected terrorists, including a Bangladesh national, in an encounter on Mira Road on March 11. Explosive material, two firearms and fake currency were recovered from them.⁴⁹

4. NUCLEAR REVIEW

INDIA

- **UPA-Left coordination committee says further discussions needed; Considerable progress made in talks with IAEA: Kakodkar**

The UPA-Left coordination committee, which had its first meeting after the conclusion of the India-specific safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), decided that further discussions were needed on the draft agreement. Speaking to reporters after the March 17, 2008 meeting, External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee said, “The members felt that further discussions were needed. It was decided to hold the next meeting in April.”⁵⁰

In other news, Dr. Anil Kakodkar, recently said that “We have made considerable progress in our talks with IAEA and will be making further consultations in the matter.” He however declined to comment on whether India and IAEA have finalised the draft text of India-specific safeguards.⁵¹

In other news, L.K. Advani has said that the UPA government had privately conveyed to the Left parties that it would not pursue the Indo-US nuclear agreement. Advani said his party was not opposed to having a “strategic friendship” with the United States, but made it clear that it was opposed to the nuclear deal because it was a “treaty between unequals”. He claimed that India would not be able to conduct nuclear tests after signing the deal.⁵²

NORTH KOREA

- **Two days of talks between US and North Korean envoys at Geneva; Talks very substantive and covered every aspect of the nuclear issue: Hill**

Two days of substantive talks between the United States and North Korea’s top nuclear envoys took place in Geneva last week. Speaking to reporters after the talks, Ambassador Hill said that the talks covered just about every possible aspect of the nuclear issue, notably the crucial question of the North's efforts to develop nuclear warheads with uranium at their core. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said discussions are under way with the four others in the six-party talks – China, the host country, as well as Russia, Japan, and South Korea, on moving the process ahead. She however, advised not to “expect anything immediate.”⁵³

⁴⁹ “Terrorists’ shot dead,” *The Hindu*, March 12, 2008, at <http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/12/stories/2008031257250100.htm>

⁵⁰ Vinay Kumar, “More talks needed, says UPA-Left panel,” *The Hindu*, March 18, 2008, at <http://www.hindu.com/2008/03/18/stories/2008031860370100.htm>

⁵¹ “Considerable progress in talks with IAEA: Kakodkar,” *The Hindu*, March 13, 2008, at <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/000200803132140.htm>

⁵² “Govt. tells Left ‘privately’ that it won’t pursue N-deal: Advani,” *The Hindu*, March 14, 2008, at <http://www.thehindu.com/holnus/000200803141761.htm>

⁵³ “High-level talks keep North Korea nuclear deal alive,” *Christian Science Monitor*, March 17, 2008, at <http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0317/p04s01-woap.html>

IRAN

- **Iran reiterates Ahmadinejad statement that it will only talk to the IAEA on nuclear issues; US should negotiate directly with Iran on nuclear issues: Kissinger; Interest growing on multilateral enrichment proposal on Iranian soil**

Iranian officials have reiterated the statement made by President Ahmadinejad that Iran would henceforth talk only to the IAEA on nuclear issues. The Iranian government spokesperson said, “The issue of nuclear talks with the countries of the 5+1 is over.” This also points to the possibility that Iran might discontinue its talks with Javier Solana, the EU’s Foreign Policy chief.⁵⁴

In other news, Henry Kissinger has said that the US should negotiate directly with Iran over its nuclear programme and other bilateral issues. There has been no direct contact between the United States and Iran since the 1979 Iranian revolution, except for talks in Baghdad on Iraqi security between their ambassadors or technical experts.⁵⁵

Last week also saw growing interest in a possible US-Iran nuclear compromise that could possibly allow Iran to continue with uranium enrichment but with international involvement. The change in policy could be possible because more and more analysts and officials are coming around to the fact that though ‘turning back the clock is impossible,’ the potential danger of the technology being used for weapons purposes can be minimised.⁵⁶

*S. Samuel C. Rajiv is on leave and this issue does not therefore cover Afghanistan and Iraq. Dr. M. Amarjeet Singh is standing in as Editor during Samuel Rajiv’s absence.

⁵⁴ “Iran rejects nuclear talks with world powers,” *ABC News*, March 15, 2008, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/03/15/2190605.htm?section=world>

⁵⁵ “Kissinger Backs Direct U.S. Negotiations With Iran,” *Bloomberg*, March 14, 2008, <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aI2w6QWscYSc>

⁵⁶ Scott Peterson , “Iran's nuclear program: talk of international consortium,” *Christian Science Monitor*, March 14, 2008, at <http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0310/p06s03-wome.htm>