

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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1. COUNTRY REVIEW

A. SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

- **More than 100 killed in Afghanistan; Mullen: Troops build up to stem violence in Afghanistan; Gilani fears enhancement of Taliban infiltration into Pakistan; Robert Gates urges international community to provide more aid for Afghanistan**

In a fierce firefight with Taliban insurgents in a mountainous region of eastern Afghanistan on May 28, the American and Afghan forces killed at least 29 militants in an operation.¹ In a separate statement, the Afghan Defense Ministry and NATO officials stated that more than 50 people were killed in a series of clashes in various parts of Afghanistan between May 28 and 29.² Earlier on May 27, an NATO-led air-strike in Paktia province killed 20 Taliban insurgents.³

Meanwhile, the chairman of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen said in an interview with ABC, that the current US troop buildup in Afghanistan will boost efforts at stemming the Taliban insurgency though he pointed out that a military solution alone was not enough to achieve success in Afghanistan.⁴ However, expressing concern over the increased presence of the US forces in Afghanistan, the Pakistan Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani said that it would enhance the chances of Taliban infiltration into Pakistan.⁵ The U.S. military said on May 31 that the majority of the 17,000 extra U.S. troops being sent to Afghanistan should be on the ground by mid-July. Another 4,000 troops to train Afghan security forces will be deployed by August this year.⁶

Elsewhere, while delivering the key note address at “Shangri-La Dialogue,” an annual Asia Security Conference in Singapore on May 30, the U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates urged the international community to give more aid to Afghanistan to build infrastructure, expand its military and police, and ensure security for elections this year.⁷

¹“29 Taliban Insurgents Killed, Coalition Says”, *The New York Times*, May 28, 2009 at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/29/world/asia/29afghan.html?scp=5&sq=AFGHANISTAN&st=cse>

² “Fighting Around Afghanistan Leaves 50 Dead”, *The New York Times*, May 30, 2009 at http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/31/world/asia/31afghan.html?_r=1&scp=2&sq=AFGHANISTAN&st=cs

³ “20 insurgents dead in Paktia air-strike: ISAF”, *Pajhwok Afghan News*, May 27, 2009 at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=75144>

⁴ “Troop buildup to stem violence: Mullen”, *Pajhwok Afghan News*, May 25, 2009 at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=75003>

⁵ “Gilani expresses concern over increase of US forces”, *Dawn*, May 30, 2009 at <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/06-gilani-expresses-concern-over-increase-of-us-forces-rs-03>

⁶ “Extra U.S. troops in Afghanistan by mid-July”, *Reuters*, May 31, 2009 at <http://www.reuters.com/article/asiaCrisis/idUSISL412184>

⁷ “U.S. urges more foreign aid for Afghanistan” *The Washington Post*, May 30, 2009 at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/30/AR2009053000227.html>

PAKISTAN

- **Suicide bomb attacks in Lahore and Peshawar; ‘Peace Pipeline’ declaration signed between Pakistan and Iran; UN invokes donors to help refugees in Pakistan; SC clears charges against Sharif brothers**

A suicide bomb attack in Lahore killed at least 27 people and injured over 300 on May 27. The vehicle laden with explosives caused massive damage to the Rescue 15 building next to the ISI building which reportedly was the actual target of the attack.⁸ A day later, 10 people were reported killed and several injured in twin bomb blasts which occurred in a market area in Peshawar.⁹

Meanwhile, the army secured Mingora in Swat from the Taliban on May 30 after successfully wiping out the terrorists camps situated there. Several militant leaders were also killed as these groups could not offer much resistance to the security forces and fled the area. Mingora is of immense strategic significance as it connects the Swat area with Malakand division, Buner and Shangla.¹⁰ In another related development, Peucher and Bahrain were also sanitized on May 29 as a result of the security operation in which 28 militants were killed. This was confirmed in a press statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (IPSR) on May 29.¹¹

The Supreme Court decided in favour of Sharif brothers who are free to contest elections and eligible for public office.¹²

In another development, President Zardari and President Ahmedinejad signed an ‘inter-governmental framework declaration’ to endorse the gas agreement signed by the two countries.¹³ Elsewhere, the UN once again urged the international community to come forward to rescue the Pakistani refugees from the Taliban controlled areas. It appealed the donors to collect \$543 million by the end of this year.¹⁴

⁸ “27 killed, nearly 326 injured; ISI agents, 11 policemen among the dead: ISI, police attacked,” *Daily Times*, May 28, 2009, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\05\28\story_28-5-2009_pg1_1

⁹ “Four blasts kill at least 10, hurt over 80 in northwest,” *Dawn*, May 28, 2009, at <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/metropolitan/04-blast-in-peshawar-no-word-on-casualties-qs-06>

¹⁰ Iftikhar A. Khan, “Army takes Mingora,” *Dawn*, May 31, 2009, at <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/army-takes-mingora-159>

¹¹ Muhammad Anis, “Forces secure Peuchar, Bahrain,” *The News*, May 30, 2009, at http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_default.asp

¹² “SC allows Sharif brothers to contest elections,” *The News*, May 27, 2009 http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_default.asp

¹³ “Trade and transit of goods get special attention : Pakistan, Iran sign ‘peace pipeline’ declaration,” *Daily Times*, May 25, 2009, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\05\25\story_25-5-2009_pg1_1

¹⁴ “UN issues desperate appeal to help Pakistanis,” *The News*, May 29, 2009, at <http://www.thenews.com.pk/updates.asp?id=78923>

SRI LANKA

- Conditions of the IDP's 'good and impressive', says US Congress delegates; New US Ambassador to Sri Lanka named; Sri Lanka Army Chief says LTTE is over

The United States Congress has officially passed a statement that the situation of IDPs in the Sri Lankan camps is "good and impressive". Issues such as demining and programmes conducted by Northern Development Task Force, which aims to resettle the displaced within a short period of 180 days, amongst others was discussed in detail.¹⁵ On the diplomatic front, Patricia Butenis, has been designated as the new Ambassador of Sri Lanka. Ms Butenis has earlier served in Iraq, Pakistan and India.¹⁶

Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama meanwhile reiterated the victory of the Lanka government in getting a clean chit from the Human Rights Council meeting which was held in Geneva. The Minister stated that key nations had acknowledged that Rajapakse had conducted human rescue operations and also protected the human rights of the common people. In the recently held Human Rights Council Meeting held on May 25, 2009, 29 nations voting for the motion while 12 voting against with 6 abstaining from the vote.¹⁷

Sri Lanka Army Chief General Sarath Fonseka, has cautioned that though he LTTE is almost finished, there were chances that the guerilla outfit could carry hit and run attacks. He pointed out that the top three leadership rungs of the outfit had been destroyed and chances of regrouping were negligible. As per the latest count the government had lost 190 officers and 5200 men, while 27,000 soldiers were injured. On the LTTE front, 22,000 Tiger fighters had been killed and 9000 rebels captured during the same period.¹⁸

At the domestic front provincial council elections would soon be held. According to the sources, United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA), is all set to contest elections in Jaffna and Vavuniya. These elections would take place between August 4 – 17, 2009.¹⁹ In other developments, Vinayagamorthy Muralitharan alias Karuna has been appointed as the vice president of Sri Lanka Freedom Party.²⁰

¹⁵ "IDP centre conditions good and impressive - US Congress delegates," *Daily News*, May 29, 2009, at <http://www.dailynews.lk/2009/05/29/news02.asp>

¹⁶ "New United States Ambassador to Sri Lanka named," *Colombo Page*, May 28, 2009, at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_091/May1243511937RA.html

¹⁷ "Majority of UN member nations endorse President's policies -FM," *Daily News*, at <http://www.dailynews.lk/2009/05/29/news03.asp>

¹⁸ "Sri Lanka Army Chief says LTTE "is over" but cadres may carry out hit-and-run attacks," *Colombo Page*, at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_091/May1243518720JV.html

¹⁹ "Sri Lanka ruling party to contest Northern polls," *Colombo Page*, May 29, 2009, at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_091/May1243558111RA.html

²⁰ "SLFP Executive Committee agrees to appoint former rebel leader as a party Vice President," *Colombo Page*, May 27, 2009, at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_091/May1243411989JV.html

B. WEST ASIA

IRAN

• **Iran and Pakistan signed Gas Pipeline deal; Larijani re-elected Majlis Speaker; No Any Compromise with the West: Ahmadinejad**

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his Pakistani counterpart Asif Ali Zardari signed an agreement in Tehran finalizing the deal to transfer gas from Iran to Pakistan. A Pakistani delegation headed by Pakistani Federal Minister of Petroleum and Natural Resources Asim Hussain arrived in Tehran on May 23 to work out the final details of the deal based on the new price formula suggested by Iran and approved by Pakistan's cabinet on April 10. According to the deal, Iran will initially transfer 30 million cubic meters of gas per day to Pakistan but will eventually increase the gas transfer to 60 million cubic meters per day. The Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project was conceptualized in 1990. Negotiations over the project were initiated in 1994 between the three countries but there were obstacles to closing the three-way deal due to tension between India and Pakistan. India has not participated in the last several rounds of talks, but Iran has encouraged India to rejoin the process. The IPI gas pipeline is a proposed 2,775-kilometer pipeline to deliver natural gas from Iran to Pakistan and India.²¹

Meanwhile, Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani was re-elected as the speaker of the Iranian parliament for the second term, winning the majority of votes at the 290-seat parliament. Larijani, the only candidate for the post, won 216 out of the total 241 cast votes while 25 blank or foiled votes were also cast. Prior to his election as Iran's Majlis speaker, he had served high positions at the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), Ministry of Post, Telegraph and Telephone and Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. Before serving as the Iranian Majlis speaker, Larijani was the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council and thus is in charge of holding nuclear talks with the West.²²

Elsewhere, the Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad vowed not to make any compromise with the West and defended his remarks against Israel and on the Holocaust. Ahmadinejad is being harshly criticized by his three rivals in the June 12 presidential election - Mir-Hossein Mousavi, Mehdi Karubi and Mohsen Rezaei - for having pushed Iran toward renewed international isolation with what they have called his "adventurous" foreign policies. The three candidates especially blamed Ahmadinejad for his uncompromising stance in the dispute over Iran's nuclear programmes and the president's tirades against Israel and questioning the Holocaust during World War II. Remarks by Ahmadinejad such as eradicating Israel from the Middle East, relocating the Jewish state to Europe and the US and questioning the historic dimensions of the Holocaust caused widespread international condemnation. Ahmadinejad also rejected any further nuclear negotiations with world powers and said any talks would be only with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Ahmadinejad, also pointed out Iran would neither allow

²¹ "Iran, Pakistan sign gas pipeline deal," *Tehran Times*, May 25, 2009, at http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=195354

²² "Larijani re-elected as Majlis speaker for another one-year," *IRNA*, May 27, 2009, at <http://www.irna.ir/En/View/FullStory/?NewsId=510888&IdLanguage=3>

outsiders to impose any time schedule on Iran nor make any concession in the nuclear dispute, including the freeze-for-freeze framework.²³

IRAQ

- **Bomb attack killed three Americans in Falluja; Obama does not want to release images of apparent rape and sexual abuse in Iraq: Telegraph**

American officials said that a bomb killed three Americans traveling in Falluja including a State Department official working at the US Embassy in Baghdad. The attack also killed an American soldier and a civilian working for the Defense Department. Two civilians working for the Defense Department were wounded. The attack took place within a few miles of the bridge where four American contractors were killed in March 2004, their bodies burned and mutilated, and dragged through the streets.²⁴

Meanwhile, the photographs of Iraqi prisoner abuse which US President Barack Obama does not want released include images of apparent rape and sexual abuse, Britain's daily *Telegraph* newspaper reported. The images are among photographs included in a 2004 report into prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib prison conducted by US Major General Antonio Taguba. Taguba included allegations of rape and sexual abuse in his report, and he confirmed that images supporting those allegations were also in the file. These pictures show torture, abuse, rape and every indecency. The photographs relate to 400 alleged cases of abuse carried out at Abu Ghraib and six other prisons between 2001 and 2005.²⁵

C. EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

CHINA

- **Senior PLA officer's view on DPRK's second Nuclear Blast**

Chinese Peoples' Liberation Army has taken due consideration of the second nuclear test conducted by Democratic People's Republic of Korea's on May 25. Ma Xiaotian, deputy chief of the General Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, speaking at the three-day 8th Asia Security Summit 2009 ((Shangri-La Dialogue)) in Singapore organized by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, said that the test had further complicated the situation in the Korean Peninsula. He conveyed that his country understands the concerns of international country over the recent development. He said that China is opposed to nuclear proliferation and insisted that the Korean peninsula should move towards denuclearization. Besides, he called upon all the concerned parties to take proper measures to address the problem. However, he suggested them that they restrain themselves and remain cool-headed.²⁶ In the same meeting, Xiaotian urged for

²³ "Ahmadinejad says no compromise with West," *Khaleej Times*, May 28, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/May/middleeast_May567.xml§ion=middleeast

²⁴ MARC SANTORA, "State Department Official Is Among 3 Killed in Iraq," *New York Times*, May 27, 2009, at http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/27/world/middleeast/27iraq.html?_r=1&hpw=&pagewanted=print

²⁵ "Photos show rape and sex abuse in Iraq jails," *Khaleej Times*, May 28, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/May/middleeast_May558.xml§ion=middleeast

²⁶ "Chinese military official urges for calm on Korean peninsula issue", *PLA Daily* (Online), May 31, 2009 at http://english.chinamil.com.cn/site2/news-channels/2009-05/31/content_1781067.htm

promotion of Asia-Pacific security cooperation. He expressed his view that peace and security in the region requires concerted efforts by all the concerned parties in the region. He described security situation in the Asia-Pacific region as generally peaceful and stable. He was of the view that mutual cooperation and development is the dominating trend of the security environment in the region. However, he cautioned that negative trends existing in the security situation of the region must not be ignored. In this summit, he magnified interrelation between traditional and non-traditional security issues.²⁷

Meanwhile, the PLA has reportedly recruited more than 20,000 civil servants. Out of these, 16.5 per cent hold master or doctor degrees. The recruitment of them has been welcomed as claiming that they have boosted morale of army and are significantly contributing to reforms in the army. According to the statistics released, about 41 per cent of these civil servants are college graduates with an average age of 30. Besides, more than 5,400 are members of the Communist Party of China.²⁸

INDONESIA

- **Indonesia wants to play a constructive role in the Korean Peninsula**

The security situation in Korean peninsula has always attracted international attention. The recently conducted nuclear test by DPRK has once again reminded of grim security scenario in the region. Various countries have voiced their concerns with regard to the latest development in the region. Indonesia as a major Asia-Pacific country can offer services of its good office to mend fences between both the Koreas. *Xinhua* has quoted the South Korean news agency *Yonhap* as saying that since Indonesia has diplomatic relations with both Koreas, it could consider sending a special envoy to the peninsula to help restore normalcy between the two nations. According to Nicholas Dammen, Indonesia's ambassador to South Korea, while Indonesia "believes the six-party talks can do better", it "could consider sending an envoy to help bridge and try to bring something in a positive way".²⁹

SINGAPORE

- **Singapore appeal for greater transparency in military affairs in the Asia-Pacific**

In the 8th Asia Security Summit, Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defense Teo Chee Hean highlighted the importance and greater requirement of transparency in military affairs so as to avoid misunderstandings in the region. He categorically stated that military transparency "is not an end in itself but a means to peace and stability," and further delineated three operative levels of military transparency,

²⁷ "Chinese military officer calls for promotion of Asia-Pacific security co-op", *PLA Daily* (Online), May 31, 2009 at http://english.chinamil.com.cn/site2/news-channels/2009-05/31/content_1781060.htm

²⁸ "Chinese army has recruited more than 20,000 civil servants", *People's Liberation Army Daily* (Online), May 29, 2009, at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90785/6667283.html>

²⁹ "Indonesia could consider sending envoy to mend frozen Korean ties", *People's Daily* (Online), May 30, 2009, at <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90777/90851/6667650.html>

“namely disclosure armaments and arsenals, statements of strategic intent, cooperative and inclusive action”.³⁰

JAPAN

- Aso blasts North Korea's nuclear test as 'grave challenge' to NPT regime; Japan and the US outline draft UNSC resolution on the nuclear test; Japan to impose outright exports ban on North Korea

In the backdrop of the North Korean Nuclear test Prime Minister Taro Aso said on March 25 that North Korea's reported nuclear test is a "grave challenge" to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty regime and a clear violation of the U.N. Security Council resolution banning the North from nuclear activity.³¹ This has led to opinions which suggest that Japan should consider developing the capability to conduct pre-emptive military strikes given North Korea's nuclear test. “North Korea poses a serious and realistic threat to Japan ... We must look at active missile defense such as attacking an enemy's territory and bases,” former defense chief Gen Nakatani said in Tokyo at a meeting of Liberal Democratic Party officials.³² Meanwhile Japan has decided to impose an outright ban on exports to North Korea as part of its efforts to toughen sanctions on Pyongyang following its nuclear test, government sources said.³³

On the other hand Japan and the US have outlined a draft resolution of the U.N. Security Council over North Korea's second nuclear test. This was reported by U.N. diplomatic sources.³⁴ While there have been reports which suggest that Prime Minister Taro Aso and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev agreed on the need for the U.N. Security Council to adopt a new resolution on North Korea, including additional sanctions against the country for conducting a nuclear test, a Japanese government official said.³⁵

In other developments, the Japanese government decided that it will promote "Green New Deal" policies to expand the nation's markets related to environmental conservation and build a society where environmental policies will not hamper economic growth. This is according to a draft of the 2009 white paper on the environment.³⁶

³⁰ “Singapore official: Military transparency crucial to avoid misunderstandings”, *People's Daily* (Online) May, 31, at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90777/90851/6668298.html>

³¹ “LEAD: Aso blasts North's nuclear test as 'grave challenge' to NPT regime+” *Associate Press*, May 25, 2009 at http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=D98D65HO0&show_article=1

³² “Japan Should Consider Pre-emptive Strikes, LDP Lawmaker Says” *Bloomberg*, May 26, 2009 at http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601101&sid=aVoR7GOucg_k&refer=japan#

³³ “Japan to impose outright exports ban on N. Korea following nuke test+” *Associate Press*, May 26, 2009 at http://www.breitbart.com/print.php?id=D98DU0MO2&show_article=1

³⁴ “Japan, U.S. outline draft UNSC resolution on N. Korea's nuclear test+” *Associate Press*, May 27, 2009 at http://www.breitbart.com/print.php?id=D98EO7901&show_article=1

³⁵ “Aso, Medvedev agree on need for new U.N. resolution on N. Korea+” *Associate Press*, May 30, 2009 at http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=D98GIE2O0&show_article=1

³⁶ “Government to embrace 'Green New Deal'” *Japan Times*, May 26, 2009 at <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/print/nn20090526a3.html>

KOREA

- **North Korea fires new type of missile off east coast; North Korea urged not to use PSI to justify threats**

In a very important development in the region, North Korea has launched a short-range missile from its Musudan-ri rocket launch site on the country's east coast. This was reported by a South Korean government official. "What the North has launched this time appears to be different from what it had launched (previously)," the official said. "It is a new type of a land-to-air missile," the official said.³⁷ Meanwhile there have been reports that South Korean Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan is expected to meet with his US counterpart Hillary Clinton in Washington on June 5 to discuss North Korea's latest threats. This was reported by ministry officials on May 29.³⁸

There were reports by the Foreign Ministry which suggest that North Korea is severely distorting the intention behind South Korea's recent decision to join a US-led anti-proliferation campaign, while urging Pyongyang to scrap its nuclear and missile programs.³⁹ To this, the North Korea said that it would conduct military strikes and would no longer be bound to the armistice agreement in response to Seoul's recent decision to fully join the Proliferation Security Initiative.⁴⁰ On the other hand the US welcomed South Korea's full-scale participation in the international consortium against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which aims mainly at North Korea and Iran.⁴¹

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak arrived in Jeju on May 31 for a special summit with leaders of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that will focus on expanding economic ties and efforts to fight the global economic crisis, Yonhap News reported. The special Korea-ASEAN summit marks the 20th anniversary of the "dialogue partnership" between the two sides.⁴²

On the bilateral front, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak and Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo agreed to improve ties between their countries and join efforts to peacefully resolve the North Korea nuclear issue.⁴³

³⁷ "N.K. fires new type of missile off east coast" *Korea Herald*, May 30, 2009 at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/05/30/200905300028.asp

³⁸ "Yu to visit D.C. for N.K. discussions" *Korea Herald*, May 30, 2009 at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/05/30/200905300027.asp

³⁹ "N.K. urged not to use PSI to justify threats", *Korea Herald*, May 28, 2009 at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/05/28/200905280114.asp

⁴⁰ "N.K. says not bound to armistice", *Korea Herald*, May 28, 2009 at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/05/28/200905280051.asp

⁴¹ "U.S. welcomes Seoul's full membership in PSI", *Korea Herald*, May 27, 2009 at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/05/27/200905270091.asp

⁴² "Korea, ASEAN to hold special summit", *Korea Herald*, May 31, 2009 at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/05/31/200905310004.asp

⁴³ "Lee, Arroyo call for better ties", *Korea Herald*, May 31, 2009 at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/05/31/200905310007.asp

II. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

- **Omar favours amendment to AFSPA; India slams OIC Kashmir comments**

Seeking a political solution to the Kashmir issue, the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said that the time has come for initiating important confidence building measures which included amendment of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. "The UPA has got a comfortable majority and it is in a position to work out for a political solution to the Kashmir problem. To begin with, we may set up an expert group which may study the AFSPA and find out what were the rules that needed to be amended for removing the draconian nature of the Act," Omar said this in New Delhi on May 31.⁴⁴

Meanwhile, India slammed the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) for commenting on Kashmir issue and dubbing the Mumbai terror attacks merely as an "incident". "We note with regret that the OIC has chosen to comment on India's internal affairs during the 36th Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in Syria," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement in New Delhi on May 29. During the meeting that took place between May 23 and 25, the OIC Secretary General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu had said the grouping affirms "commitment and support to the Kashmiri freedom struggle" and stressed the need for resumption of dialogue between India and Pakistan to achieve "a just and peaceful resolution" of the Kashmir issue. The ministry statement asserted that the "OIC has no locus standi on India's internal affairs". Taking note of the OIC resolution where the Mumbai attack has been referred to as a mere 'incident', the ministry said "we strongly reject such resolutions ... it is most unfortunate that the spectre of terrorism confronting the international community, of which the attack on Mumbai by elements from Pakistan was an extreme manifestation, is not being unambiguously addressed by the OIC."⁴⁵

MAOIST INSURGENCY

- **CPI-Maoists procuring weapons from Northeast-based militant groups**

According to media reports, the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist) is getting foreign-made weapons, especially Chinese ones, from Northeast-based militant groups. Security forces have reportedly recovered Chinese, American, Israeli and Belgian guns, small arms, rifles and grenade launchers during encounters in Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh in the past two years. MHA officials have confirmed that of the total number of arms seized, roughly placed at 230, there are about 80 Chinese ones. The arms were being smuggled through Bihar and distributed along the red corridor that stretches down to Karnataka in the south.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ "Omar favours for early amendment to AFSPA", *Daily Excelsior*, May 31, 2009, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/09may31/newsupdate.htm#4>

⁴⁵ "India slams OIC Kashmir comments", *Daily Excelsior*, May 30, 2009, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/09may30/news1.htm#4>

⁴⁶ "Maoists procuring foreign made weapons from Northeast-based militant groups", *SATP*, May 28, 2009, at http://satp.org/satporgrp/detailed_news3.asp?date3=2009%2F5%2F29#18

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

- **States alerted on regrouping of SIMI**

Central security agencies have alerted 11 states to the possibility of the regrouping of the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI). The agencies have warned of the possible re-grouping of SIMI members who have remained elusive for many years. In Gujarat, police have been asked to keep a special watch over places like Vadodara and Surat. Though the surveillance list has 73 names procured from call lists of SIMI members arrested from MP, Bihar, AP and Maharashtra. Some SIMI members' transaction details with two banks of Bangalore too have come handy.⁴⁷

III. MISSILES, SPACE, DEFENCE AND NUCLEAR REVIEW

National

- **AWACS: India Receives Eye in the Sky**

India received the first of the three Airborne Early Warning and Control System (AWACS) 'Phalcon' also called as 'eye in the sky'. Now India is now among the select group of countries having such system namely, the US, Russia, UK, China, France, Israel and Australia. The AWACS is mounted on Russian Ilyushin-76 heavylift transport aircraft's airframe. Through its enhanced surveillance capabilities, the system would enable India to keep an eye on enemies' aircrafts and missiles, movement of troops across the border without infringing the territorial limits under all weather conditions.⁴⁸

- **India to Hold Naval Exercises with France, Germany, Russia and United Kingdom to Hold Naval in Atlantic**

Reports noted that the Indian Navy in order to hone its blue water capabilities has sailed out to Atlantic to participate into anti-submarine warfare with four major naval forces namely, French, British, Russian and German. According to the Indian naval sources, the exercise would continue four months four warships, namely INS Beas, INS Delhi, INS Brahmaputra and INS Aditya would take part. On its way to the final destination, Indian warships would sail through the north Russian port of St Petersburg and conduct passage exercise with most Gulf countries. Each warship will be equipped with specific equipments such as INS Delhi is a guided missile destroyer, Brahmaputra and Beas are guided missile frigates, and Aditya is a fleet replenishment tanker that carries supplies for the warships so the ships could stay for longer at the sea.⁴⁹

International

- **Proposal submitted by the BAE to supply Medium Tactical Vehicle Competition to U.S. Army**

Report noted that the BAE Systems has submitted a proposal to the U.S. Government to manufacture around 12,400 vehicles and 10,900 trailers of the next generation of medium

⁴⁷ "States alerted on regrouping of SIMI", *Times of India*, May 25, 2009, at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/States-alerted-on-regrouping-of-SIMI/articleshow/4573380.cms>

⁴⁸ "India Receives First AWACS" on May 25, 2009 at <http://www.ptinews.com/pti%5Cptisite.nsf/0/404FB59699FBFA86652575C1004AF534?OpenDocument>

⁴⁹ "India, France, Germany, Russia and United Kingdom to Hold Naval Exercise in Atlantic", on May 25, 2009, at <http://www.india-defence.com/reports-4410>

tactical vehicles for the U.S. Army. The contract is expected that it would be supplied to the U.S. Army between 2010 and 2014.⁵⁰

- **BAE Systems and L-3 of Canada bagged \$120 million Maintenance Award of Aussie F/A-18s**

The BAE Systems Australia and L-3 MAS Canada bagged a contract of approximately AUD \$150 million (\$120 million equivalent) to provide long-term maintenance and modification support for the RAAF's F/A-18 Hornet fighters. The four years contract period (2009-2012) can be extended for another four years, up to 2018. The key element of the contract is to add fast jet support system capabilities. Besides this, the BAE Systems is also building new facilities at RAAF Williamtown, which would provide future support not only to the RAAF Hornet aircraft but also the Joint Strike Fighter which would finally replace them.⁵¹

- **France Opens Military Base in UAE**

The French President Nicolas Sarkozy has inaugurated the first-ever French military base at Abu Dhabi, the UAE. The base is expected to provide a support base to France in its Middle East mission. At this occasion, hope has been expressed that this would also facilitate the updating the defence accord between the two signed in 1995. During the inaugural ceremony the French President said that "This region is strategic for the world balance" and "France is ready to shoulder its responsibility to ensure stability in the region". This new development shows that the GCC countries are now in mood to diversify their defence partners, besides the US.⁵²

- **Thailand Buying JAS-39 Gripens, AWACS**

News reported that Sweden has beaten out its rival bidders Russia, MIG-29, France Rafale to supply light weight JAS-39 Gripen, 4th Generation Wild Card AWACS to Thailand. It is a low cost and high performance, small and agile aircraft which can take off and land on highways, while carrying latest technologies and weapons.⁵³

- **German Army Receives Advanced Mobile Ground Surveillance Radar - Bodenüberwachungsradar**

Reports noted that the German Armed Forces will receive 80 ground surveillance radar (BÜR - Bodenüberwachungsradar) by 2012 which is quite effective in detecting movements on ground and at low altitude with a precision. BUR is suited most to the mobile DINGO 2 armoured vehicle manufactured by Munich-based Company Krauss-Maffei Wegmann. The stem of the radar based on latest electronic scan control technology "AESA" (Active Electronically Scanned Array) which is quite innovative in detection and surveillance; its delay-free electronic beam control enables the radar to

⁵⁰ BAE Systems Submits Proposal for U.S. Army Medium Tactical Vehicle Competition , on May 29, 2009 at <http://www.india-defence.com/reports-4409>

⁵¹ "\$120M to BAE Systems, L-3 for Maintenance of Aussie F/A-18s", on May 31, 2009 at

⁵² "France opens first ever Middle Eastern military base in UAE", May 29, 2009 on http://www.janes.com/news/defence/jdw/jdw090529_2_n.shtml

⁵³ "Thailand Buying JAS-39 Gripens, AWACS" on May 31, 2009 on <http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/>

perform multiple reconnaissance tasks and achieve a much greater level of efficiency and reliability in comparison to mechanically scanned radars. The system built by EADS Defence and Security is having unmatched technical precision in the world. This will help German Armed forces to fill the gap in intelligence gathering and reconnaissance.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ “German Army Receives Advanced Mobile Ground Surveillance Radar – Bodentüberwachungsradar”, on May 27, 2009 at <http://www.india-defence.com/reports-4407>