

# THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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## 1. COUNTRY REVIEW

### A. SOUTH ASIA

#### AFGHANISTAN

- **Russia, Afghanistan and Pakistan pledge cooperation to fight Taliban; Gen. McChrystal takes over as the top commander; US to toughen air strike policy aimed at reducing civilian casualties; Afghan presidential candidates begin campaigning; *New York Times* reporter escapes after 7 months of captivity**

At the sidelines of the SCO summit in Yekaterinburg on June 15, Russia, Pakistan and Afghanistan pledged to cooperate more strongly for fighting the Taliban insurgency. Though the possibility of a military role in the ongoing operations for Russia was ruled out, the country has allowed the delivery of non-lethal supplies to Western forces through its territory and wrote off a debt of over \$10 billion that was owed by Kabul.<sup>1</sup>

Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal meanwhile took over as the top commander of coalition forces in Afghanistan on June 15. He announced that an assessment of US and NATO troop's deployments would be made, adding "we don't have enough forces to do everything, everywhere."<sup>2</sup> Gen. McChrystal later stated that the use of air strikes will be sharply restricted in an effort to reduce the number of civilian casualties, which were undermining the American-led mission. He stated that air power contained "the seeds of our own destruction if we do not use it responsibly."<sup>3</sup>

President Karzai and 40 other candidates began their official campaigns for the Afghan presidential election from June 16. According to the schedule of the Election Commission, the campaign period begins on June 23 and will close on August 18, two days before the date of voting.<sup>4</sup>

In other developments, David Rohde, a *New York Times* reporter who was kidnapped by Taliban on November 10, 2008 outside Kabul managed to escape after more than seven months of captivity.<sup>5</sup>

#### PAKISTAN

- **Difficult task for Pakistani Army in Taliban stronghold of South Waziristan; US Drone attack kills 13 in South Waziristan; US Congress**

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<sup>1</sup> "Russia, Afghanistan, Pakistan pledge Taliban fight," *Reuters*, June 15, 2009, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/gc05/idUSTRE55E6LK20090615?sp=true>

<sup>2</sup> "New Afghanistan Commander Will Review Troop Placements," *Washington Post*, June 16, 2009, at [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2009/06/15/AR2009061502884\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2009/06/15/AR2009061502884_pf.html)

<sup>3</sup> "U.S. Toughens Airstrike Policy in Afghanistan," *The New York Times*, June 21, 2009, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/22/world/asia/22airstrikes.html?ref=global-home>

<sup>4</sup> "Afghan presidential candidates prepare to campaign," *The Associated Press*, June 15, 2009, at <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gH6zTk0ZvJGlju7bpEh3P2uECEwD98R66V8>

<sup>5</sup> "Times Reporter Held by Taliban Escapes," *The New York Times*, June 20, 2009, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/21/world/asia/21talibancnd.html?scp=10&sq=afghanistan&st=cse>

**approves \$1.4 billion for Pakistan with conditions attached; Hundreds of IDPs returning to Buner; UNHCR Report: Pakistan hosts largest number of refugees; EU, Pakistan delegations met in Brussels**

Reports noted that South Waziristan was presenting the toughest challenge for Pakistani forces in their fight against the growing insurgency. The region is home to Baitullah Mehsud, who heads the Taliban in Pakistan. Pakistan Army Chief Gen. Ashfaq Kayani on June 15 called for the 'elimination' of Mehsud even as the Army launched a renewed offensive against his hideouts.<sup>6</sup> 13 people were also killed in an American drone attack against a local Taliban commander in South Waziristan on June 25. Reports noted that there have been 22 drone attacks in Pakistan so far, compared to 36 in the previous year.<sup>7</sup>

Both the chambers of the US Congress meanwhile approved a supplemental budget which includes \$1.4 billion in economic and security assistance for Pakistan. The Senate however added a condition requiring a close scrutiny of American policies in Pakistan and Afghanistan.<sup>8</sup>

Reports noted that hundreds of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who were uprooted by the fighting in Buner started returning to their homes after authorities urged them to return to secure areas. The government believes that the return of these refugees would help build confidence of the people in that area and contribute to the defeat of the Taliban.<sup>9</sup>

Meanwhile, the UNHCR report '2008 Global Trends', released on June 16 states that Pakistan is home to the largest number of refugees in the world. These include about 1.8 million Afghans. The report also notes that the number of IDPs in Pakistan had approached the two million mark as compared to 156,000 at the end of 2008.<sup>10</sup>

In other developments, the first-ever summit between Pakistan and the EU was held in Brussels on June 17. While the Pakistani delegation was led by President Asif Ali Zardari, the EU delegation included President Vaclav Klaus of the Czech Republic, currently holding the presidency of the EU, Jose Manuel Barroso, head of the European Commission, and Javier Solana, High

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<sup>6</sup> "Tough Battle in Pakistan Insurgency Stronghold," *The New York Times*, June 15, 2009, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/16/world/asia/16pstan.html?scp=6&sq=pakistan&st=cse>

<sup>7</sup> "Pakistan Says U.S. Drone Kills 13," *The New York Times*, June 19, 2009, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/19/world/asia/19pstan.html?sq=pakistan&st=cse&scp=7&pagewanted=print>

<sup>8</sup> "US Congress approves \$1.4bn for Pakistan," *Dawn*, June 20, 2009, at <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/us-congress-approves-%241.4bn-for-pakistan-069>

<sup>9</sup> "IDPs returning to Buner," *Dawn*, June 21, 2009, at <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/idps-returning-to-buner-169>

<sup>10</sup> "UNHCR releases 2008 global trends: Pakistan hosting largest number of refugees," *Dawn*, June 17, 2009, at <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/unhcr-releases-2008-global-trends-pakistan-hosting-largest-number-of-refugees-769>

Representative for the EU's foreign policy.<sup>11</sup> Among other issues, the two sides discussed measures to help promote democracy in Pakistan.

## B. EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

### CHINA

- **PLA to recruit more than 100,000 students in the current year; Academic calls for setting up Chinese space forces; Chinese President visits Russia, Slovakia and Croatia**

The Chinese Ministry of Education reported that the PLA will recruit more than 1,20,000 students in the current year. While the age limit for joining PLA for men is between 18 and 20 and for women between 18 and 19, persons having higher education can get age relaxation and join the army up to 23 years of age, and those with a bachelor degree can be recruited till the age of 24. The drive will ensure that the overall quality of PLA cadres will be improved and more help find some jobs for the more than 6 million college students who are unemployed.<sup>12</sup>

A Chinese military strategist, Wang Fa'an of the Academy of Military Sciences has called for the setting up of space forces which will help protect the country's growing extraterrestrial assets. Currently, the US, Russia and some other developed countries are busy with developing their space forces to protect their 'off-world interests'. Currently, China has 54 satellites orbiting the Earth.<sup>13</sup>

President Hu Jintao visited Russia, Slovakia and Croatia during the week. He attended the 9<sup>th</sup> annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the first BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) Summit in Yekaterinburg, Russia. During his Slovakia visit, the Chinese President noted that Slovakia was "a trustworthy friend and partner of China in the EU" and welcomed Slovak investment in China.<sup>14</sup> Mr. Hu's visit to Croatia was the first visit to the country by a Chinese head of state since the two countries established diplomatic relations 17 years ago.<sup>15</sup>

### SOUTHEAST ASIA

- **Thailand-Cambodia tensions grow over classification of border temple; 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties between Malaysia**

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<sup>11</sup> "EU, Pakistan to start strategic talks," *Dawn*, June 18, 2009, at <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/eu%2C-pakistan-to-start-strategic-talks-869>

<sup>12</sup> "China to Recruit 120,000 College Graduates to Join the Army in 2009," *People's Daily*, June 21, 2009, at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90785/6682913.html>

<sup>13</sup> "PLA should play role in space: Strategist," *People's Daily*, June 16, 2009, at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/6679004.html>

<sup>14</sup> "Chinese President Meets Slovak PM on Ties," *PLA Daily*, June 20, 2009, at [http://english.pladaily.com.cn/site2/news-channels/2009-06/20/content\\_1806380.htm](http://english.pladaily.com.cn/site2/news-channels/2009-06/20/content_1806380.htm)

<sup>15</sup> "Chinese President Arrives in Zagreb for State Visit," *PLA Daily*, June 20, 2009, at [http://english.pladaily.com.cn/site2/news-channels/2009-06/20/content\\_1806418.htm](http://english.pladaily.com.cn/site2/news-channels/2009-06/20/content_1806418.htm)

**and China; India-Malaysia to set up a task force to address issues concerning higher education; Import of Burmese goods to Mizoram to start from June 20; Sea boundary dispute among India, Myanmar and Bangladesh intensifies; Report: India's plan to open up trade links with China via Myanmar suffers setback; Sri Lanka and Myanmar sign agreements to ease visa and travel restrictions; China to help Myanmar stabilise**

Tensions between Thailand and Cambodia grew over the classification of the border temple of Preah Vihar. While the UNESCO has already decided to formally list the ancient temple, the Cambodian government has warned of military action against Thailand in case of a outbreak of clashes over the issue.<sup>16</sup>

Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak, during his visit to China during the week marking the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of diplomatic ties, expressed the hope that the two countries can “walk faster and further” in strengthening their bilateral relationship.<sup>17</sup>

Reports indicated that India and Malaysia will set up a task force to address issues concerning higher education. After the Task Force will submit a report within three months, future courses of action will be decided.<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, the import of Burmese goods to Mizoram will become possible from June 20 after the dispute between the Zokhawthar Welfare Committee (ZWC) and Champhai Transport Union (CTU) was finally resolved. However, in order to prevent the spread of Swine flu, import of pigs will not be allowed by the Mizoram government.<sup>19</sup> India and Burma have also stepped up efforts to prevent the spread of this disease along the Indo-Myanmar border.<sup>20</sup>

The sea boundary dispute among India, Bangladesh and Myanmar has intensified further with Dhaka's recent decision to approach the UN Commission on Limits of Continental Shelf (CLCS) to object territorial claims made by India and Myanmar over certain areas in the Bay of Bengal. India and Myanmar claim jurisdiction over 29,000 and 22,000 square nautical miles respectively of the continental shelf in the Bay of Bengal. While India and Myanmar have already submitted their claims on the issue to the UN, Bangladesh will do so by May

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<sup>16</sup> “PM hits back in border temple row,” *Bangkok Post*, June 21, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/146724/thai-pm-hits-back-in-cambodia-border-temple-row>

<sup>17</sup> “Najib Wants to Walk Faster and Further in developing ties with China,” *Bernama.com*, June 16, 2009, at [http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/news\\_lite.php?id=418494](http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/news_lite.php?id=418494)

<sup>18</sup> “India, Malaysia set up Task Force on Higher Education,” *Bernama.com*, June 18, 2009, at [http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/news\\_lite.php?id=418860](http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/news_lite.php?id=418860)

<sup>19</sup> “Burmese goods to be imported to Mizoram again,” *Burma News International*, June 19, 2009, at <http://www.bnionline.net/news/khonumthung/6534-burmese-goods-to-be-imported-to-mizoram-again.html>

<sup>20</sup> “India, Burma step up measures to check swine flu near border,” *Indo-Burma News*, June 16, 2009, at <http://www.indoburmanews.net/archives-1/2009/june-2009/india-burma-step-up-measures-to-check-swine-flu-near-border/>

2011.<sup>21</sup> Dhaka has also decided to submit a formal complaint to the UN against Myanmar over 22,000 square miles of sea territory which has been a bone of contention between them.<sup>22</sup>

Reports indicated that India's ambitious plan to open up land trade links with China via the country's northeast through Myanmar have suffered a setback as Myanmar's military authorities have not been forthcoming with their cooperation. This was on the pretext that improved roads will be used by rebels and transportation of weapons will also become easier.<sup>23</sup>

During the visit of Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse to Myanmar, two agreements to ease visa restrictions and strengthen cooperation in the tourism sector were signed.<sup>24</sup>

In other developments, China's Vice President Xi Jinping met with the visiting Burmese Vice-Senior Gen. Maung Aye and expressed his country's willingness to help bring about stability and prosperity in Myanmar.<sup>25</sup>

## C. WEST ASIA

### IRAN

- **Ahmadinejad: Stop interfering in internal affairs of Iran; 19 People Killed in Iran in Post Election Violence; Guardian Council Agreed for Partial Recount; Assembly of Experts Supports Khamenei Statements**

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad asked the US and Britain to stop interfering in Iran's internal affairs in the aftermath of the country's June 12 presidential elections. British Foreign Secretary David Miliband had earlier rejected Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki's charge that 'foreign' countries, specifically Britain, had manipulated the demonstrations in Tehran and other places. Mottaki had claimed that Britain "plotted against the presidential election for more than two years" and that there had been an "influx" of British agents into Iran ahead of the election.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> "Raising sea boundary issue at UN," *Indo-Burma News*, June 20, 2009, at <http://www.indoburmanews.net/archives-1/2009/june-2009/raising-sea-boundary-issue-at-un>

<sup>22</sup> "Dhaka Sends UN Protest Note over Junta Offshore Gas Hunt," *Indo-Burma News*, June 20, 2009, at <http://www.indoburmanews.net/archives-1/2009/june-2009/dhaka-sends-un-protest-note-over-junta-offshore-gas-hunt>

<sup>23</sup> "India-Burma-China Business Road Scotched by Jittery Junta," *Indo-Burma News*, June 20, 2009, at <http://www.indoburmanews.net/archives-1/2009/june-2009/india-burma-china-business-road-scotched-by-jittery-junta>

<sup>24</sup> "Myanmar signs two agreements with Sri Lanka," *Indo-Burma News*, June 15, 2009, at <http://www.indoburmanews.net/archives-1/2009/june-2009/myanmar-signs-two-agreements-with-sri-lanka/>

<sup>25</sup> "China wants stability in Burma: Xi," *Burma News International*, June 18, 2009, at <http://www.bnionline.net/news/mizzima/6519-china-wants-stability-in-burma-xi.html>

<sup>26</sup> "Iran tells Obama, Brown to stop interfering," *Khaleej Times*, June 21, 2009, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=middleeast/2009/June/middleeast\\_June669.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=middleeast/2009/June/middleeast_June669.xml&section=middleeast)

State television meanwhile put the death toll after a week of unrest at 19. However the English-language Press TV, which is broadcast only outside the country, put the toll at 13 and termed those who died as “terrorists.” Amnesty International meanwhile stated that it was “perilously hard” to verify the casualty tolls.

Report also stated that authorities arrested the daughter and four other relatives of former President Hashemi Rafsanjani, who was accused by President Ahmadinejad of ‘corruption.’ Rafsanjani heads two very powerful groups. These include the Assembly of Experts, made up of senior clerics who can elect and dismiss the Supreme Leader and the other is the Expediency Council, a body that arbitrates disputes between parliament and the unelected Guardian Council.

US President Barack Obama on June 20 urged Iranian authorities to halt “all violent and unjust actions against its’ own people.” He stated that the United States “stands by all who seek to exercise the universal rights to assembly and free speech.” Supreme Leader Khamenei on his part sided firmly with Ahmadinejad, and termed the election results an “absolute victory” that reflected popular will and ordered opposition leaders to end their street protests.<sup>27</sup>

A spokesman of the Guardian Council stated that it was ready to randomly recount 10 percent of the ballot boxes. It also invited defeated presidential candidates Mir-Hossein Mousavi, Mahdi Karroubi, and Mohsen Rezaii to attend its emergency session to discuss their complaints about the election results. However, only Mohsen Rezaii attended the meeting.<sup>28</sup>

The Assembly of Experts also expressed its strong support for the Supreme Leader’s statements on the presidential elections. In a statement, members of the assembly hoped that the nation would adhere to the Supreme Leader’s guidelines and show patience. Other groups like the Qom Seminary Teachers Society also issued a statement declaring strong support for the guidelines of the Supreme Leader.<sup>29</sup>

## IRAQ

- **72 killed in truck bombing in Kirkuk**

Ahead of the June 30 deadline for the withdrawal of US troops from the country, 72 people were killed and more than 200 injured in a truck bombing near the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk. This was the bloodiest attack in nearly 16 months. The al-Qaeda was blamed for the attack. Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki vowed to

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<sup>27</sup> “Iran raises death toll in clashes to at least 19,” Khaleej Times, June 21, 2009, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/June/middleeast\\_June666.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/June/middleeast_June666.xml&section=middleeast)

<sup>28</sup> “Guardian Council ready to recount 10% of votes,” *Tehran Times*, June 21, 2009, at [http://www.tehrantimes.com/index\\_View.asp?code=197198](http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=197198) examined

<sup>29</sup> “Assembly of Experts expresses strong support for Leader’s guidelines,” *Tehran Times*, June 21, 2009, at [http://www.tehrantimes.com/index\\_View.asp?code=197201](http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=197201)



bring the perpetrators to justice and termed the incident an “ugly crime” and “an attempt to harm security and stability and spread mistrust of the Iraqi forces.”<sup>30</sup>

## II. MISSILES, SPACE AND DEFENCE REVIEW

### MISSILES AND SPACE

- **Kasturirangan: Need for India to develop capabilities to protect its space assets; DRDO to test Agni III missile by July 2009**

The former Chairman of ISRO, Dr. K. Kasturirangan addressing a gathering in Chennai pointed out that India’s civilian satellites were vulnerable to attack and urged the taking of steps to prevent such a possibility.<sup>31</sup> He however did not elaborate on the kind of counter-measures India can develop to safeguard its civilian space-based assets.

Reports noted that the DRDO is expected to test-fire the Agni III ballistic missile by the end of July 2009.<sup>32</sup> The Agni III will become completely operational in 2012. The first test conducted in July 2006 was a failure, but the subsequent two tests carried out in April 2007 and in May 2008 were successful. The DRDO is also reportedly working on the longer range 5,000 kms Agni V, which can hit targets deep inside China. The Agni V, for whose development Rs. 2,500 crores have been allocated, will have improved navigation and guidance. The missile is intended to be canister-launched, giving it the operational capacity to be fired from any part of the country. Union Defence Minister Mr. A.K. Anthony had earlier stated that the government was implementing “all steps” to develop “whatever capabilities” were necessary “as per changing threat perceptions.”<sup>33</sup>

### NATIONAL

- **IAF inducts Sukhoi Su-30 MKI fighter aircraft**

The IAF inducted four Sukhoi-30MKI fighter aircraft into its Eastern Air Command in Tezpur, Assam, in the presence of Eastern Air Commander Air Marshal S.K. Bhan. Reports indicated that the induction of the aircraft at Tezpur, which will soon become a full operational base for the Sukhoi squadron, was

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<sup>30</sup> “Northern Iraq truck bomb killed 72: officials,” Khaleej Times, June 21, 2009, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/June/middleeast\\_June660.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/June/middleeast_June660.xml&section=middleeast)

<sup>31</sup> “India has to address issues of space security: Kasturirangan”, *LiveMint.com and Wall Street Journal*, 11 June, 2009 <http://www.livemint.com/2009/06/11144926/India-has-to-address-issues-of.html>

<sup>32</sup> Rajat Pandit, “Agni III, with China in range, to be tested”, *Times of India*, 20 June, 2009 <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/Agni-III-with-China-in-range-to-be-tested/articleshow/4677847.cms>

<sup>33</sup> *ibid*

aimed at strengthening the IAF's abilities at the northeastern Sino-Indian border.<sup>34</sup>

#### INTERNATIONAL

- **US deploys missile defence to guard against North Korean threat to Hawaii**

Reports noted that in response to the alleged threat posed by North Korea to Hawaii, US Defense Secretary Robert Gates ordered the deployment of Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missiles to Hawaii and the sea-based SBX Radar to the island state.<sup>35</sup>

- **Boeing to fund F-15 Silent Eagle development programme**

At the Paris Air Show, the Boeing Company announced that it will provide funds for the development of the F-15 Silent Eagle, the first flight demonstrations of which will be held in the third quarter of 2010. F-15 Silent Eagle is the most modern variant of the F-15 multi-role strike fighter. The aircraft will have a digital electronic warfare suite coupled with Advanced Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar for enhanced situational awareness and cost-effective radar cross-section reduction technologies. These technologies will provide the aircraft with greater flexibility, a longer-range, ability to carry larger payloads, high-speed along with reduced observability.<sup>36</sup>

- **Roll-Royce bags \$4.1 billion contract**

At the Paris Air Show, Rolls-Royce bagged contracts worth \$4.1 billion, mostly from the Asian and Middle Eastern customers. The company also inked a major research contract, ENTAPS (Engine Technologies for Aircraft Persistence and Survivability) with the UK Ministry of Defence. Under the terms of the contract, mature propulsion technologies like distortion-tolerant fans and high temperature combustion and turbine systems are proposed to be developed.<sup>37</sup>

- **Sniper ATPs to the Royal Saudi Air Force**

Reports noted that the Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF), under a Foreign Military Sales (FMS) deal, will receive Lockheed Martin AN/AAQ-33 Sniper Advanced Targeting Pods (ATPs), within a period of two years. The deal is the first phase of a multi-year, \$100 million precision sensor modernisation programme to replace

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<sup>34</sup> "Four Sukhoi Su-30 MKI Fighter Jets Inducted in Indian Air Force," June 15, 2009, at <http://www.india-defence.com/reports-4432>

<sup>35</sup> "United States Deploys Missile Defense as North Korea Prepares Missile Launch," June 20, 2009, at <http://www.india-defence.com/reports-4449>

<sup>36</sup> "Boeing Committed to Funding F-15 Silent Eagle Development," June 20, 2009, at <http://www.india-defence.com/reports/4454>

<sup>37</sup> "Rolls-Royce Secures USD 4.1 Billion Worth Orders During Paris Air Show," June 20, 2009, at <http://www.india-defence.com/reports/4451>

the old LANTIRN (Low-Altitude Navigation and Targeting InfraRed for Night) targeting and navigation pods used aboard RSAF F-15S aircraft.<sup>38</sup>

### III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

#### JAMMU AND KASHMIR

- **PM Dr. Singh to separatists: Option of dialogue still open but give up violence; Obama rules out mediation on Kashmir**

While returning from a three-day visit to Yekaterinburg in Russia on June 17, PM Dr. Manmohan Singh stated that the central government was ready to engage in a dialogue with the separatists if they were willing to give up violence. Stating that "the option of dialogue is still open," he added that the government "will welcome even those who are not in the political mainstream."

Talking about his talks with Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari, Dr. Singh stated that he had asked Pakistan to show the same determination against terrorism directed against India as was being done in dealing with Taliban and Al-Qaeda. The Pakistan President is reported to have responded that they require "some time."<sup>39</sup>

Meanwhile, President Obama firmly ruled out any US mediation on the Kashmir issue. In an interview with Pakistan's Dawn TV, Obama noted that India and Pakistan can start a dialogue over issues other than Kashmir and "over time to try to reduce tensions and find areas of common interest." He added that India and Pakistan were both "great friends" of the US and that it hurts "to see friends fighting."<sup>40</sup>

#### MAOIST INSURGENCY

- **Crackdown on Maoists begins in Lalgarh; Madni reveals LeT, Maoists link; 11 CRPF personnel killed in Dantewada district**

Security forces moved into Lalgarh on June 18 to end the three-day siege of the place by Maoists, who have gone on a rampage targeting CPI(M) cadres. Agitating tribals of West Midnapore and adjoining areas have been protesting against the police atrocities on them in the wake of the landmine blast at Salboni, which was believed to target Chief Minister Bhattacharya. Under the banner of People's Committee against Police Atrocities, they have dug up roads and even supposedly laid landmines to stop the security forces.

The Union government deployed 500 CRPF personnel, including 200 personnel of the elite COBRA trained in anti-Maoist operations, to deal with the

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<sup>38</sup> "Royal Saudi Air Force prepares to receive Sniper ATPs," June 18, 2009, at [http://www.janes.com/news/defence/jdw/jdw090618\\_3\\_n.shtml](http://www.janes.com/news/defence/jdw/jdw090618_3_n.shtml)

<sup>39</sup> "Give up gun for dialogue: PM to Kashmir separatists," *Daily Excelsior*, June 18, 2009, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/09june18/news.htm#1>

<sup>40</sup> "Obama rules out mediation on Kashmir," *Hindu*, June 21, 2009, at <http://www.hindu.com/2009/06/21/stories/2009062156270100.htm>

situation.<sup>41</sup> CM Bhattacharjee meanwhile on June 20 stated that his government would give a serious thought to the central government's suggestion to ban the CPI-Maoists.<sup>42</sup>

Investigators informed a court in New Delhi on June 19 that Mohd Omar Madni, a suspected militant had disclosed about the links between Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) and Maoists in Jharkhand. The court was told that Madni was acting as a conduit for LeT and was providing training to recruits in PoK. Madni, a resident of Bihar who acquired Nepalese citizenship, was arrested on June 4 from Delhi and produced before the court after the completion of 14 days in police custody.<sup>43</sup>

In other developments, eleven CRPF personnel and policemen were killed and 11 injured when Maoists triggered a landmine blast in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district on June 21. The Maoists ambushed a 60-member police party returning in three trucks from Kokawada.<sup>44</sup> Nine personnel of the Orissa Special Strike Force were also killed in a landmine blast triggered by Maoists in Koraput district in Orissa on June 18.<sup>45</sup>

#### NORTHEAST DEVELOPMENTS

- **Naga rebel groups take unity leap; 12 killed in Assam**

Reports indicated that the warring Naga insurgent groups signed a joint declaration to resolve all outstanding issues among themselves at the 5<sup>th</sup> Naga Reconciliation meet, which concluded at Chiang Mai in Thailand recently. The 'Covenant of Reconciliation' was signed by Isak Chishi Swu, the chairman of NSCN-IM, S.S. Khaplang, the chairman of NSCN-K, and S. Singya, the president of Federal Government of Nagaland. The meet was held at the behest of the Forum for Naga Reconciliation (FNR). Disclosing this on June 15, FNR convener Wati Aier stated that the declaration would give a "new direction" to the Nagas. The leaders of the outfits on their part pledged that they would pursue Naga reconciliation and forgiveness based on the "historical and political rights of the Nagas."<sup>46</sup>

Unidentified gunmen killed 12 persons, including 8 children and 2 women, in a gruesome attack at Michidui in Assam's NC Hills district on June 16. Police stated that the village, inhabited by the Zeme Naga, was abandoned

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<sup>41</sup> "Crackdown on Maoists begins in Lalgah," *Hindu*, June 18, 2009, at <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/000200906181003.htm>

<sup>42</sup> 'We will give serious thought to banning Maoists: Buddhadeb," *Hindu*, June 21, 2009, at <http://www.hindu.com/2009/06/21/stories/2009062156590100.htm>

<sup>43</sup> "Madni reveals LeT, Maoists link," *Daily Excelsior*, June 21, 2009, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/09june20/news2.htm#1>

<sup>44</sup> "11 security personnel killed in ambush," *Hindu*, June 21, 2009, at <http://www.hindu.com/2009/06/21/stories/2009062155960100.htm>

<sup>45</sup> "Maoists kill nine policemen in Orissa," *Hindu*, June 19, 2009, at <http://www.hindu.com/2009/06/19/stories/2009061957410100.htm>

<sup>46</sup> "Naga rebel groups take unity leap," *Telegraph*, June 16, 2009, at [http://telegraphindia.com/1090616/jsp/frontpage/story\\_11116836.jsp](http://telegraphindia.com/1090616/jsp/frontpage/story_11116836.jsp)

following the recent incidents of clashes and that the villagers had taken shelter near a camp of the Assam Rifles located three kilometers away. But only recently, they started going back to the village during day time for cultivation and the armed miscreants took advantage of the situation to attack them.<sup>47</sup> With these killings, the death toll in the spate of militants' attacks on Zeme Naga and Dimasa villages since March 18, 2009 has gone up to 47.

#### OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

- **Army proposes special units to fight urban terrorism**

Setting up of specialised Army units to deal with urban terrorism has been proposed after an assessment of the lessons learned during the operations against terrorists who struck in Mumbai on November 26. An official assessment of the operations carried out by the Army's Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa area headquarters admits that its basic training and equipment does not give it the ability for anti-terrorist operations. The assessment notes that specialised units capable of being deployed in any part of the country in short notice were required. The report also notes that infantry battalions located in important cities need to be equipped with special equipment like stun guns, grenades, close quarter battle weapons, hands-free communication equipment and bullet-proof jackets.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> "12 killed in NC Hills violence," *Assam Tribune*, June 17, 2009, at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/details.asp?id=jun1709/at01>

<sup>48</sup> "Army proposes special units to fight urban terrorism," *Daily Excelsior*, June 21, 2009, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/09june21/newsupdate.htm#1>