

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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1. COUNTRY REVIEW

A. SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

- **Independent Election Commission announces election results, Karzai gets 54.6 per cent of votes while Dr. Abdullah secures 27.8 per cent, results not final until approved by UN-backed Electoral Complaints Commission; EU: About 1.5 million votes cast mostly in favor of Karzai are suspicious; Obama administration calls for throwing out of fraud votes; 14 people including six Italian soldiers killed and 59 injured in Kabul blast; Italy to withdraw 500 troops over next few weeks**

The complete results of the August 20 presidential elections released by the Independent Election Commission (IEC) revealed that incumbent Hamid Karzai received 54.62 percent of the ballots cast, followed by Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, who secured 27.75 percent of the votes. Ramazan Bashedost was at third place with 9.2 percent while Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai could secure 2.74 percent of the votes.¹ These results are however not final until approved by the UN-backed Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC), which has called for a recount at about 10 per cent of the polling stations.²

The EU Observer's mission in a statement on September 16 stated that about 1.5 million votes cast mostly in favour of Mr. Karzai were suspicious which must be cross-checked for fraud. The IEC however termed the EU assessment as exaggerated.³ Reports also indicated that the recount process was a huge task which could potentially take a few months.⁴ The White House on its part urged that fraudulent votes should be thrown out.⁵

Fourteen people were killed including six Italian soldiers and 59 others were injured in a powerful car suicide bombing in Kabul on September 17. In the aftermath of the incident, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi asserted that he was planning to bring home at least 500 of the country's 3,000 troops deployed in Afghanistan within the "next few weeks."⁶

In other developments, the new head of the British Army, Gen. Sir David Richards stated that defeat for allied forces in Afghanistan would have an "intoxicating impact" on extremists around the world and that the failure of a

¹ "Karzai on course to win reelection," *Pajhwok Afghan News*, September 16, 2009, at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=81667>

² "Karzai Wins Afghan Poll," *Daily Express*, September 17, 2009, at <http://www.express.co.uk/posts/view/127848/Karzai-wins-Afghan-poll>

³ "1.5m votes are suspicious: EU observers," *Pajhwok Afghan News*, September 16, 2009, at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=81661>

⁴ "Afghan Recount Presents Huge Task," *The New York Times*, September 15, 2009, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/16/world/asia/16afghan.html?scp=37&sq=afghanistan&st=cse>

⁵ "Throw out fraudulent vote: White House," *Pajhwok Afghan News*, September 17, 2009, at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=81741>

⁶ "Italy plans to withdraw 500 troops soon," *Pajhwok Afghan News*, September 18, 2009, at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=81769>

coalition of such powerful Western nations would show to the terrorists that "anything might be possible."⁷

PAKISTAN

- **Pak Interior Minister: Anti Terrorism Court will prosecute Mumbai suspects; Zardari: Musharraf granted safe exit on the intervention of international powers with interests in South Asia; Zardari: 36 MoUs signed with China in one year; Pak US Ambassador: The term 'Af-Pak' is "unwarranted and counter to the geo-political realities"; 149 militants surrender in Swat; Suicide attack in Kohat kills 33**

Pakistan Interior Minister Rehmaan Malik stated in Islamabad on September 19 that the country's Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) would prosecute the 7 suspects involved in the Mumbai terrorist attack. Malik urged India to provide "concrete evidence" against Hafiz Saeed, the chief of the JuD and send a quick reply to the fifth dossier which was handed over to India's High Commissioner.⁸

President Asif Ali Zardari, addressing a group of media persons in Islamabad on September 14 stated that the decision to ensure a safe exit for former President Gen. Musharraf was taken on the intervention of certain international powers that had "interests in South Asia."⁹ However, PM Gilani on September 17 denied that such a deal was brokered. He added that any arrangement to provide Musharraf a safe exit could be called a deal "the day either his actions are indemnified by parliament or if he were to be convicted some day and then pardoned by President Zardari. Otherwise, how can anyone claim a deal?"¹⁰

President Zardari, in an interview with a Chinese daily, stated that Pakistan and China had identified over 50 projects for cooperation and have already concluded agreements regarding over three dozen projects in the recent past. Zardari praised Chinese economic development and added that there was "a lot to learn from the Chinese model of economic development, particularly the one adopted in provinces of Zhejiang and Guangdong."¹¹

Pakistan's Ambassador to the US Hussain Haqqani during an event at the US Senate on September 16 stated that US expenditure and investment in Afghanistan, both military and non-military, exceeded that being given to Pakistan by over 30 times. He added that the US should not bracket Pakistan

⁷ "Victory in Afghanistan is vital", BBC, September 17, 2009 at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/8261350.stm

⁸ Tahir Niaz, "Mumbai suspects to be charged on 26th: Malik," *Daily Times*, September 20, 2009, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\09\20\story_20-9-2009_pg1_1

⁹ Syed Irfan Raza, "Musharraf's 'safe exit' deal confirmed by Zardari," *Dawn*, September 15, 2009, at <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/musharrafs-safe-exit-deal-confirmed-by-zardari-599>

¹⁰ Asim Yasin, "Musharraf alone cannot be tried under Article 6: PM," *The News*, September 17, 2009, at http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_default.asp

¹¹ "36 Sino-Pak MoUs inked in one year: Zardari," *Daily Times*, September 16, 2009, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\09\16\story_16-9-2009_pg1_1

along with Afghanistan and that the term 'Af-Pak' was "unwarranted and counter to the geo-political realities."¹²

In other developments, at least 149 militants surrendered in Kanju and Matta in Swat on September 14. At least 33 people were killed and several injured in suicide bomb attack perpetrated by Lashkar-e-Jhangvi on September 18 in Kohat.¹³

B. EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

JAPAN

- **Hatoyama sworn in as PM; Foreign Minister Okada meets US official Kurt Campbell; Okada orders thorough investigation into alleged secret pacts between Japan and the US; JASDF successfully participates in PAC-3 surface-to-air interception system in New Mexico**

A new Japanese government under the leadership of Yukio Hatoyama assumed office on September 16. Reports noted that among other issues, North Korea will pose a major diplomatic challenge due to its nuclear programme, the abductions of Japanese nationals and Pyongyang's demand for compensation over Japan's colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula.¹⁴ Reports also noted that the government might contemplate a new role in Afghanistan, after the end of its naval re-fueling mission. Prime Minister Hatoyama is reportedly keen to offer agricultural aid and other assistance aimed at stabilizing the economic and social situation in the country.¹⁵

Japan's new foreign minister Katsuya Okada met with US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell in Tokyo and reassured him of his government's commitment to further strengthen bilateral ties, despite potential areas of disagreement, including the status of their military ties. Okada had earlier stated that he wants to review the status of the nearly 50,000 US troops stationed in Japan. The US on its part has already agreed to move 8,000 soldiers from Okinawa to Guam by 2014 but maintain a presence near Okinawa as was negotiated with the previous government. However, members of the ruling party have expressed reservations about a sustained American presence in Okinawa.¹⁶

¹² "US spending more in Afghanistan than in Pakistan," *Daily Times*, September 18, 2009, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\09\18\story_18-9-2009_pg1_3

¹³ Syed Yasir Shah, "33 killed, 60 hurt in Kohat suicide attack," *The News*, September 19, 2009, at http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_default.asp

¹⁴ "Hatoyama will be tested early on N. Korea issues" *Japan Times*, September 14, 2009, at <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20090914a4.html>

¹⁵ "Japan mulls Afghan role after dropping naval mission," *Associated Foreign Press*, September 19, 2009, at <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jSsX-4IMPilG99xBxoGccnYuUE3Q>

¹⁶ "Japan, US agree to deepen alliance," *Associate Press*, September 19, 2009, at http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gEKVrhzwZfftMJWl33MP_YhakKBAD9APILP80

Foreign Minister Okada also stated on September 17 that he has ordered a thorough investigation into the alleged secret pacts between Japan and the US. He told reporters that there was a "high probability that the secret pacts exist" but that no clear evidence was available.¹⁷

The Japan Air Self-Defence Force successfully shot down a mock ballistic missile in its second test of the US-developed Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) surface-to-air interception system in New Mexico. The interceptor used to shoot down the missile was produced by Japan under license.¹⁸

In other developments, the IAEA formally approved the appointment of 62 year old Japanese diplomat Yukiya Amano as its next chief at the annual general meeting. Amano was elected as the next IAEA director general at a special Board of Governors meeting on July 2, 2009.¹⁹

SOUTHEAST ASIA

- **Thai PM not in favour of amending constitution to provide amnesty for corrupt politicians; 22 Philippines sailors captured 5 months ago released by Somali pirates, 20 more in captivity; Indonesia and the US to cooperate in health sector**

Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva, though admitting that certain articles of the 2007 constitution needed to be amended, stated that he was not in favour of amending any provision that might pave the way for granting amnesty retroactively for corrupt politicians.²⁰

The Philippines Department of Foreign Affairs stated that twenty more Filipino sailors were being held as hostages by Somali pirates in the Gulf of Aden after the release of the 22 sailors from a Greek-owned merchant vessel MV Irene which was hijacked five months ago.²¹

Following a series of anti-Malaysia demonstrations in Jakarta recently over ownership of the Pendet dance, Malaysia and Indonesia agreed not to stake exclusive claims over shared cultural icons and to strive to resolve any cultural dispute through dialogue and negotiations in the future.²²

Indonesia and the US entered into an agreement to promote bilateral cooperation in the health care sector. The agreement was signed by Indonesian Health Minister Siti Fadilah Supari with her US counterpart Kathleen Sebelius in

¹⁷ "Japanese FM orders investigation into Japan-US secret nuclear pact," *Xinhua*, September 17, 2009, at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-09/17/content_12066533.htm

¹⁸ "Japan shoots down mock missile," *Agence France-Presse*, September 17, 2009, at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,26085385-12377,00.html>

¹⁹ "IAEA formally approves Japan's Amano as next director general," *Associate Press*, September 14, 2009, at http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=D9AN11J00&show_article=1

²⁰ "PM opposes granting amnesty," *Bangkok Post*, September 17, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/154630/pm-opposes-change-for-granting-amnesty>

²¹ "Somali Pirates still holding 20 Filipinos," *Bangkok Post*, September 15, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/154483/somali-pirates-still-holding-20-filipinos-govt>

²² "RI, Malaysia agree to avoid cultural controversy," *The Jakarta Post*, September 17, 2009, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/09/17/ri-malaysia-agree-avoid-cultural-controversy.html>

Washington, and includes bilateral scientific exchanges, public health clinics and training programmes, among other initiatives.²³

C. WEST ASIA

IRAN

- **Nuclear talks to begin from October 1; Statement issued after the annual al-Quds Day march warns Israel against undertaking "any new adventurism"; Former President Khatami reportedly injured in anti-government protests**

EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana stated that talks on Iran's nuclear programme will likely be held in Turkey from October 1. Solana also noted that a US delegation will be formally represented at the talks and urged the Iranians to positively evaluate this development. The five UN Security Council permanent members along with Germany are scheduled to take part in the talks.²⁴

Thousands of Iranians took part in the annual al-Quds Day march on September 17. Ayatollah Khomeini in August 1979 had declared that the last Friday of the month of Ramadan be celebrated as the al-Quds Day as a mark of solidarity with the Palestinians. A statement issued at the end of the rally warned Israel against "any new adventurism" in the region.²⁵

In other developments, reports noted that a group of Iranian hard-liners attacked the reformist former president Mohammad Khatami when he was taking part in an anti-government rally in Tehran.²⁶

IRAQ

- **Shoe-thrower released from jail, Qadhafi to bestow his country's highest civilian honour in him, Emir of Qatar to gift a golden horse; US commander in Iraq expresses concerns about withdrawal of American troops**

Muntadhar al-Zaidi, the Iraqi journalist who threw his shoes at the then US President George Bush, was released from prison. al-Zaidi was initially sentenced to three years in prison but that sentence was subsequently reduced to one year on appeal. His sentence was subsequently further reduced to nine months for good behaviour. Many Iraqis greeted his release and even Libyan

²³ "RI, US step up health cooperation," *The Jakarta Post*, September 16, 2009, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/09/16/ri-us-step-health-cooperation.html>

²⁴ "Iran nuclear talks probably in Turkey: Solana," *Khaleej Times*, September 15, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/September/middleeast_September325.xml§ion=middleeast

²⁵ "Iranians begin Quds Day march," *Khaleej Times*, September 18, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/September/middleeast_September428.xml§ion=middleeast

²⁶ "Hard-liners attack reformist ex-President," *Khaleej Times*, September 18, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/September/middleeast_September436.xml§ion=middleeast

leader Muammar al-Gadhafi stated that he would bestow his country's highest honour, the Libyan Medal of Honour, on al-Zaidi. The Emir of Qatar also reportedly promised him a golden horse.²⁷

The senior American commander in Iraq Gen. Ray Odierno meanwhile stated that there was always a risk that the security situation in Iraq could deteriorate and therefore the current US troop levels will be maintained. The US has currently 130,000 troops in Iraq, almost twice the number as those present in Afghanistan. The number of US troops will however reduce by about 50,000 by September next year.²⁸

II. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

- **Chidambaram: Pak-based terror outfits continuing to plot attacks against India; J&K government: China taking Indian land by inches, not yards; Mirwaiz urges central government to initiate talks with separatists**

Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram warned on September 14 that Pakistan-based groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) were continuing to plot terror attacks against India and finding support from disgruntled elements for those plans. He also pointed to joint efforts by separatists in J and K in a bid to escalate violence.²⁹

Reports noted that the Chinese army has carried out construction activities along the international border across the Karakoram ranges in Ladakh sector for the first time since 1962. A report of the J and K government by former Sub-Divisional Magistrate (Nyoma), Tsering Norboo, for instance has charged that the Chinese have been taking land "in inches and not in yards." Norboo noted that the Chinese construction activities, apart from being geared towards either stationing of additional personnel or for mounting surveillance activities on Indian troop movements, also threaten "the nomadic people who had been using Dokbug area (in Ladakh sector) area for grazing ..." Norboo was asked by the state government to probe the Chinese incursions in Dokbug area.³⁰

The chairman of the moderate faction of the Hurriyat Conference Mirwaiz Umar Farooq on September 18 urged the central government to initiate talks

²⁷ "Shoe-throwing journalist released from jail," *Khaleej Times*, September 15, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/September/middleeast_September322.xml§ion=middleeast

²⁸ "US warns against forgetting Iraq," *BBC News*, September 15, 2009, at http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8256134.stm?ad=1

²⁹ "Pak bid to forge unity among separatists in J&K: PC," *Daily Excelsior*, September 15, 2009, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/09sep15/news.htm#1>

³⁰ "China taking Indian land by inches: J-K Govt.," *Assam Tribune*, September 15, 2009, at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/details.asp?id=sep1409/at02>

with separatists in J&K as well as with Pakistan for resolution of the Kashmir issue.³¹

NORTHEAST DEVELOPMENTS

- **373 insurgents lay down arms in Assam; Car bomb defused at Raj Bhavan complex in Imphal**

373 insurgents belonging to the Dima Halam Daogah-Jewel Gorlosa (DHD-J) laid down their arms in Assam's NC Hills district on September 13-14.³²

An explosives-laden car with about 25 kg of improvised explosive device (IED) was detected inside the Raj Bhavan in Imphal on September 18. The Kangleipak Communist Party (Military Council) claimed responsibility for the incident. The police however defused the bomb successfully. This is the first time that militants have used a car bomb to target vital installations.³³

MAOIST INSURGENCY

- **30 Maoists and six policemen killed in Chhattisgarh; Chidambaram: Maoists tie up with insurgent outfits of the Northeast**

About 30 Maoists and six police personnel were killed in a series of gun battles in South Bastar region of Chhattisgarh since September 17. Police sources indicated that the CPI (Maoist) has suffered a major blow as a result of the ongoing operations 'Operation Greenhunt' in Dantewada district.³⁴

Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram stated on September 14 that CPI (Maoists) were "keenly seeking ideological resonance and tactical understanding with the North East insurgents" to expand their network and influence.³⁵

Editor's Note: The contributions of Dr. Amarjeet Singh (Internal Security Review, Myanmar, and occasional Editor of *The Week in Review*), who is taking up a new position at NIAS Bangalore, are deeply appreciated.

³¹ "Mirwaiz invites Centre for talks," *Daily Excelsior*, September 19, 2009, at <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/09sep19/news1.htm#4>

³² "More from Jewel camp surrender," *Telegraph*, September 15, 2009, at http://telegraphindia.com/1090915/jsp/northeast/story_11494007.jsp

³³ "Car bomb in Raj Bhavan," *Telegraph*, September 19, 2009, at http://telegraphindia.com/1090919/jsp/frontpage/story_11515852.jsp

³⁴ "Maoists suffer major blow in Chhattisgarh," *Hindu*, September 20, 2009, at <http://www.hindu.com/2009/09/20/stories/2009092059410900.htm>

³⁵ "Maoists tie up with NE UGs: PC," *Sangai Express*, September 15, 2009, at http://thesangaiexpress.com/News_pages/Local_page-07.html