

# THE WEEK IN REVIEW

September 21-27, 9(4), 2009

**EDITOR:** S. SAMUEL C. RAJIV

**REVIEW ADVISOR:** S. KALYANARAMAN

## CONTRIBUTORS

**MEDHA BISHT** – Bhutan, Maldives

**MAHTAB ALAM RIZVI** – Iran

**SANJEEV KUMAR SHRIVASTAV** – Afghanistan

**GUNJAN SINGH** – Korean Peninsula

**PRASHANT KUMAR SINGH** - China



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

<b>I. COUNTRY REVIEWS</b>	<b>IN THIS ISSUE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
	<b>A. SOUTH ASIA</b>	<b>3-5</b>
	<b>B. EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA</b>	<b>5-7</b>
	<b>C. WEST ASIA</b>	<b>7-8</b>

## 1. COUNTRY REVIEW

### A. SOUTH ASIA

#### AFGHANISTAN

- **McChrystal: More forces required in Afghanistan, “increasing Indian influence in Afghanistan is likely to exacerbate regional tensions and encourage Pakistani countermeasures”; Gibbs: Action on McChrystal report only after the declaration of poll results; UN: Nearly 70 per cent of civilian casualties due to IED’s planted by Taliban; Karzai to CNN: Any political effort to force a run-off against the will of the people will not be acceptable**

Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the top US and NATO commander in Afghanistan in a 66-page report to US Defence Secretary Robert Gates and President Obama warned that more forces would be required within the next 12 months to stabilize the situation. Gen. McChrystal stated that failure to “reverse insurgent momentum in the near-term ... risks an outcome where defeating the insurgency is no longer possible.” He however noted that though the situation in Afghanistan was serious, success was still achievable.<sup>1</sup>

Commenting on Indian activities inside Afghanistan, Gen. McChrystal stated that these “largely benefit the Afghan people, increasing Indian influence in Afghanistan is likely to exacerbate regional tensions and encourage Pakistani countermeasures in Afghanistan or India.”<sup>2</sup> The White House spokesperson Robert Gibbs meanwhile told reporters that President Obama was in favour of a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of the situation and that any decision on Gen. McChrystal’s report would only be taken after a new government was formed in Kabul.<sup>3</sup>

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) mid-year bulletin released on September 26 pointed out that the current year was the deadliest year in terms of civilian casualties since 2001. Over 1,500 civilians lost their lives in 2009, with August accounting for the largest number of deaths. Nearly 70 per cent of the civilian casualties were due to improvised explosive devices (IEDs) planted by the Taliban, followed by suicide attacks and air strikes by pro-government forces.<sup>4</sup>

In other developments, President Karzai told CNN that any political effort to force a run-off against the will of the people will not be acceptable. He

---

<sup>1</sup> “McChrystal: More Forces or 'Mission Failure'”, *The Washington Post*, September 21, 2009, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/20/AR2009092002920.html>

<sup>2</sup> “Indian role in Afghanistan may invite Pakistan reaction: US military commander”, *The Times of India*, September 23, 2009 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/news/world/us/Indian-role-in-Afghanistan-may-invite-Pakistan-reaction-US-military-commander/articleshow/5047377.cms>

<sup>3</sup> “McChrystal’s report: Obama to wait till new govt in Kabul”, *Pajhwok Afghan News*, September 24, 2009, at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=81934>

<sup>4</sup> “UN report finds 2009 deadliest year in terms of civilian casualties in Afghanistan,” *Xinhua*, September 28, 2009, at [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-09/28/content\\_12122794.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-09/28/content_12122794.htm)

however added that if any fraud was detected in the electoral process, it was a serious matter which needed to be thoroughly investigated.<sup>5</sup>

## **BHUTAN**

- **Earthquake measuring 6.9 strikes eastern Bhutan; Brazil establishes diplomatic relations with Bhutan**

An earthquake measuring 6.9 magnitude on the Richter scale struck Bhutan on September 21, with an epicenter located 180 km east of the capital Thimpu. About 10 people lost their lives, including 3 Indian citizens, and many monasteries and homes were damaged. Most of the deaths were reported from the eastern districts of Mongar and Trashigang. Reports noted that the tremors were felt as far as Bangladesh and Tibet.<sup>6</sup> The Bhutanese government described the quake as “one of the greatest disasters in recent times.”<sup>7</sup>

Brazil meanwhile became the first South American country to establish diplomatic relations with Bhutan. Both the countries pledged to increase bilateral cooperation on socio-economic issues.<sup>8</sup>

## **MALDIVES**

- **Nasheed at the UN Summit on Climate Change: Price of inaction on climate change could cost over \$170 billion; Maldives signs MoU with Israel**

President Nasheed, speaking at the UN Summit on Climate Change pointed out the dangers posed by rapid changes in climate, specifically to island nations. He pointed out that inaction on the issue could cost the international community as much as \$170 billion a year on adaptation measures. Mr. Nasheed also noted the various measures being adopted by his country to become the first carbon neutral country by 2030.<sup>9</sup>

Maldives signed a MoU with Israel on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly for collaboration on health services, educational services and tourism promotion.<sup>10</sup> Addressing the UN General Assembly, President Nasheed stated that Maldives was looking forward to renewing its relations with Israel and to

---

<sup>5</sup> “Karzai says no to a ‘forced’ run-off,” *Pajhwok Afghan News*, September 22, 2009, at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=81892>

<sup>6</sup> “Bhutan hit by strong earthquake,” *BBC News Service*, September 21, 2009, at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/8267067.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8267067.stm)

<sup>7</sup> “Bhutan PM laments the quake,” *BBC News Service*, September 23, 2009, at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/8270418.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8270418.stm)

<sup>8</sup> “Brazil-Bhutan Diplomatic Ties,” *The Kuensel*, September 24, 2009, at <http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=13511>

<sup>9</sup> “Interview with Maldives President at the UN,” *Oh My Gov*, September 27, 2009, at [http://ohmygov.com/blogs/general\\_news/archive/2009/09/27/interview-with-maldives-president-at-un.aspx](http://ohmygov.com/blogs/general_news/archive/2009/09/27/interview-with-maldives-president-at-un.aspx)

<sup>10</sup> “Maldives announces renewal of relations with Israel,” *Miadhu News*, September 26, 2009, at <http://www.miadhu.com.mv/2009/09/local-news/maldives-announces-renewal-of-relations-with-israel/>

use that relationship to reiterate its support for an independent and sovereign Palestinian homeland.<sup>11</sup>

## B. EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

### CHINA

- **Chinese defence diplomacy shows new vigour; Chinese and Russian navies conduct joint military exercise in the Gulf of Aden; China terms as “totally groundless and irresponsible” the US description of the country as “very aggressive in the cyber world”; Defence Minister Liang: China has “almost all types of weaponry in the arsenal of Western countries”; Latest military hardware to be displayed at National Day parade; Gen. Liang: China has drawn up a long-term military development and modernization strategy**

Chinese defence diplomacy continued with new rigour with Defense Minister Liang Guanglie retuning from a tour of Slovakia, Serbia and Bulgaria on September 14. Liang also met with the visiting Deputy Minister of Defense of Brunei on September 25, senior military officers from Mongolia and Vietnam, the Chief of Staff of the Indonesian Army on September 25, and the Moldovian Army Chief on September 19. The Chinese and Russian navies also held a joint military exercise on September 18 in the Gulf of Aden.<sup>12</sup>

The Chinese defence ministry spokesperson Hu Changming termed as “totally groundless and irresponsible” the description of his country as “very aggressive in the cyber world” by the 2009 National Intelligence Strategy document, which was recently released.<sup>13</sup>

Defence Minister Gen. Liang Guanglie, in an interview on the newly launched website of the Ministry of National Defense on September 14 stated that the PLA had “almost all types of weaponry in the arsenal of Western countries.”<sup>14</sup> Reports noted that the PLA will be displaying 52 new weapon systems, all claimed to be made indigenously, in the National Day parade on October 1. These include the J-10 fighter aircraft, main battle tanks, strategic missiles, early warning aircrafts, armed helicopters and improved type-95 rifles. The country’s newest nuclear and other upgraded missiles will also be on display. In a related development, Maj. Gen. Gao Jianguo, a spokesman at the joint headquarters for the military parade, dismissed suggestions that the

---

<sup>11</sup> “Maldives looking to renew relations with Israel: President,” at <http://www.miadhu.com.mv/2009/09/local-news/maldives-looking-to-renew-relations-with-israel-president/>

<sup>12</sup> “China, Russia Hold Joint Naval Military Exercise in Gulf of Aden,” *PLA Daily*, September 21, 2009, at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/today-headlines/2009-09/21/content\\_4044060.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/today-headlines/2009-09/21/content_4044060.htm)

<sup>13</sup> “U.S. Assertion of China Military Threat ‘groundless, irresponsible’: Spokesman,” *People’s Daily*, September 18, 2009, at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90786/6761184.html>

<sup>14</sup> “Military Arsenal on Par with the West: General,” *People’s Daily*, September 22, 2009, at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90786/6764040.html>

Chinese National Day parade might create concerns among its neighbours. He pointed out that holding a military parade on major festivals was an international practice.<sup>15</sup>

Defense Minister Liang stated that China had drawn up a three-step strategy for modernization of the armed forces. He added that "the army will give priority to nationwide mobility instead of regional defense, the navy will be armed with strong coastal defense capabilities, as well as means of warfare farther out to sea, the air force will be updated from mere territorial air defense to the combination of offense and defense, and the missile force will become an effective strategic force capable of both conventional and nuclear launches."<sup>16</sup>

In other developments, more than 150 Lhasa-based PLA officers and soldiers participated in a publicity activity for "building safe and sound Tibet" on September 16.<sup>17</sup>

#### KOREAN PENINSULA

- **South Korean President Lee Myung-bak urges the international community not to be distracted by Pyongyang's conciliatory gestures; Lee praises Pakistani efforts to fight terrorism; South Korean Navy launches two new patrol boats; Reports: North Korea paid \$3million to obtain nuclear know-how from A.Q. Khan; Dai Bingguo meets with Kim Jong-Il; US may hold bilateral talks with North on nuclear issue in October**

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak urged the international community to take a strong stand against nuclear-armed North Korea and not be distracted by Pyongyang's conciliatory gestures. He stressed that the North should be left with no other choice but to denuclearize and that it was "unthinkable" for the world to recognize it as a de-facto nuclear power.<sup>18</sup>

Addressing an international conference in New York on curbing the spread of the insurgency in the Middle East, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak stated that his government will continue to support the efforts of Pakistan in its fight against terrorism. He also praised the Pakistani government's successful efforts to contain the spread of an extremist movement in the region and restore stability.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> "Military Ready for N-Day Parade: Official," *People's Daily*, September 24, 2009, at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90786/6766510.html>

<sup>16</sup> "Military Playing Catch-up in Modernization," *People's Daily*, September 22, 2009, at <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90786/6763773.html>

<sup>17</sup> "Troops Participate in Activity of Building Safe and Sound Tibet," *PLA Daily*, September 17, 2009, at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-09/17/content\\_4042613.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-09/17/content_4042613.htm)

<sup>18</sup> "Lee calls for strong stand against N.K.," *Korea Herald*, September 27, 2009, at [http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html\\_dir/2009/09/27/200909270004.asp](http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/09/27/200909270004.asp)

<sup>19</sup> "Korean president pledges support for Pakistan's anti-terrorism drive," *Korea Herald*, September 25, 2009, at [http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html\\_dir/2009/09/25/200909250074.asp](http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/09/25/200909250074.asp)

South Korea's Navy stated that it had launched two new high-speed guided-missile patrol boats, in the port city of Jinhae, 410km south of Seoul, to help guard the tense western sea border with North Korea.<sup>20</sup>

The British newspaper *The Times* on September 21 revealed the contents of a letter written by disgraced Pakistani nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan to his wife in 2003 which indicates that the Pakistan government might have approved the sale of nuclear secrets to Iran and several other countries including North Korea. Pyongyang had reportedly paid about \$3million for nuclear drawings and material. Khan wrote that the Pakistan government ordered him to undertake nuclear proliferation activities, including the supply of blueprints and equipment to North Korea, China, Iran and Libya.<sup>21</sup>

The visiting Chinese State Councillor Dai Bingguo met with North Korea's leader Kim Jong-Il during the week. Reports indicated that Kim conveyed his country's willingness to engage in bilateral and multilateral talks on the controversial nuclear program.<sup>22</sup>

Meanwhile, reports noted that the US was expected to decide soon on whether it would hold bilateral talks with North Korea, after consultations with other partners in the Six-Party talks. The US had announced that it will soon undertake negotiations with North Korea as part of efforts to bring Pyongyang back to the suspended multilateral talks.<sup>23</sup> These bilateral talks could be held as early as late October, with Stephen Bosworth, the US Special Representative on North Korea policy, most likely visiting Pyongyang for talks with the North's Vice Foreign Minister Kang Sok-ju.<sup>24</sup>

## C. WEST ASIA

### IRAN

- **Obama: Discovery of an underground uranium enrichment plant continues "a disturbing pattern of Iranian evasion"; Rafsanjani warns of a "mysterious plot" targeting the concept of *velayat-e faqih***

US President Barack Obama urged Iran to demonstrate its peaceful intentions after the discovery of a covert nuclear facility near Qom. He stated that evidence showing Iran was building an underground plant to enrich uranium that could be used for an atomic bomb continues "a disturbing pattern of Iranian evasion" which jeopardizes global nonproliferation efforts. Obama urged Tehran to open

---

<sup>20</sup> "Navy launches new guided-missile boats to guard western sea border," *Korea Herald*, September 23, 2009, at [http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html\\_dir/2009/09/23/200909230095.asp](http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/09/23/200909230095.asp)

<sup>21</sup> "Pakistan sold nuke secrets to N.K. for \$3m," *Korea Herald*, September 22, 2009, at [http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html\\_dir/2009/09/22/200909220092.asp](http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/09/22/200909220092.asp)

<sup>22</sup> "N. Korea's Kim says willing for nuclear talks," *Korea Herald*, September 18, 2009, at [http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html\\_dir/2009/09/18/200909180098.asp](http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/09/18/200909180098.asp)

<sup>23</sup> "U.S. to decide soon on direct talks with N.K.," *Korea Herald*, September 17, 2009, at [http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html\\_dir/2009/09/17/200909170090.asp](http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/09/17/200909170090.asp)

<sup>24</sup> "U.S.-N.K. direct talks expected in late October at earliest," *Korea Herald*, September 17, 2009, at [http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html\\_dir/2009/09/17/200909170074.asp](http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/09/17/200909170074.asp)

the site to international inspectors, or face consequences. President Ahmadinejad reiterated that his country had done nothing wrong and that Mr. Obama would regret any actions that he might take. The head of the country's atomic energy agency on his part stated that Tehran will allow the IAEA to inspect its newly revealed, but still unfinished uranium enrichment facility.<sup>25</sup>

In domestic developments, the Assembly of Experts Chairman and former president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, on a visit to the mausoleum of Imam Khomeini, charged that a "mysterious plot" was underway targeting the concept of *velayat-e faqih* (the rule of the supreme jurisprudent). He urged the Assembly of Experts to be vigilant and to defend the accomplishments of the Islamic Revolution.<sup>26</sup>

---

---

<sup>25</sup> "Obama issues ultimatum to Iran," *Khaleej Times*, September 26, 2009, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/September/middleeast\\_September606.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/September/middleeast_September606.xml&section=middleeast)

<sup>26</sup> "Trying to separate Imam Khomeini's family and the revolution is treason: Rafsanjani," *Tehran Times*, September 26, 2009, at [http://www.tehrantimes.com/index\\_View.asp?code=203924](http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=203924)