

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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1. COUNTRY REVIEW

A. SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

- **UN envoy Peter Galbraith recalled from Afghanistan; President Obama held meeting with key aides in the administration to review Afghanistan strategy; President Obama and NATO chief call Afghan war a multinational effort; 30 people killed as passenger bus hits roadside bomb; Pentagon: US needs support of India, Pakistan and Iran in Afghan crisis**

President Obama met with key aides including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Defence Secretary Robert Gates, National Security Adviser Gen. James Jones, Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke, heads of the CIA and the FBI, Gen. Casey, Gen. Petraeus, Gen. McChrystal (through a secure videoconference call), among others, to review the situation in Afghanistan. White House press secretary Robert Gibbs told reporters that Mr. Obama would be holding as many as five such meetings over the course of the next several weeks to arrive at decisions regarding prosecuting the war in that country, including on the question of increasing troop strengths.¹

NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen also met with Mr. Obama. The US President told reporters that the war in Afghanistan was a multinational effort aimed at fighting the Taliban and al-Qaeda terrorists. Rasmussen on his part stressed that Afghanistan was "not America's burden alone. It is, and it will remain, a team effort." ²

At least 30 people were killed when a roadside bomb exploded in the southern province of Kandahar on September 29. The Afghan Interior Ministry stated that the dead included 10 children, 7 women and 13 men.³

Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell urged cooperation from Afghanistan's neighbours – including Iran, Pakistan, and India, to help stabilize the situation in Afghanistan. Morell acknowledged that the Indian government has provided a lot of financial assistance to Kabul, which "is clearly needed..."⁴

In other developments, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon recalled one of the senior UN officials working in the country, Peter Galbraith, "in the best interest of the mission." Reports noted that Galbraith had developed differences and earned the displeasure of incumbent President Karzai when he called for a

¹ "Obama begins Afghan strategy review," *Pajhwok Afghan News*, October 1, 2009, at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=82313>

² "Obama, NATO chief call Afghan war a multinational effort," *Pajhwok Afghan News*, September 30, 2009, at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=82245>

³ "Roadside Bomb Kills 30 in Afghanistan," *The New York Times*, September 29, 2009, at http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/30/world/asia/30afghan.html?_r=1&scp=18&sq=afghanistan&st=cse

⁴ "India, Pakistan, Iran should support US in Afghanistan: Pentagon," *The Times of India*, October 1, 2009, at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/news/world/us/India-Pakistan-Iran-should-support-US-in-Afghanistan-Pentagon/articleshow/5074444.cms>

complete vote recount. Ban however reaffirmed his "full support for his special representative, Kai Eide."⁵

PAKISTAN

- **EAM Krishna urges meets with his Pakistani counterpart in New York, urges progress in bringing the perpetrators of Mumbai attack to justice; Interior Minister Malik: US will not be allowed to bomb Quetta; US Ambassador Patterson: Targeting Taliban leadership in Quetta is an American priority; US to re-organise aid delivery in Pakistan; Gilani: Government finding it difficult to house large numbers of surrendering Taliban militants; US drone attacks kill 16 in Waziristan**

External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna met with his Pakistani counterpart Shah Mehmud Qureshi in New York on September 27 and impressed upon him that the sustainability of the dialogue process between the two countries was subject to Pakistan's action on cross border militancy and in bringing the perpetrators of the Mumbai terror attacks to justice. Both sides could not agree on a specific time table for restarting the dialogue process. Mr. Krishna however stated India's intentions to carry out "purposeful negotiations" and added that there was no need for back-channel diplomacy when the "front channel is open."⁶

Interior Minister Rehman Malik, speaking to Reuters in London on September 28, stated that Pakistan would not allow the US to carry out air strikes in Quetta and termed information about the presence of Mullah Omar or Osama bin Laden in Balochistan as "incorrect and baseless." Malik also rejected the existence of the Quetta Shura.⁷ US Ambassador to Pakistan Anne Patterson however asserted in an interview with Washington Post that targeting the Quetta Shura was high on Washington's list of priorities.⁸

Reports meanwhile noted that the US was planning to reduce the use of aid contractors for distributing aid in Pakistan and instead funnel money directly to the government and local groups, to cut overhead costs among other issues. A State Department official was quoted as stating that the US embassy in Pakistan was "working quickly to identify capable partners and mechanisms."⁹

Prime Minister Gilani, addressing the Pakistani Senate on October 2, stated that the government was finding it difficult to accommodate the more

⁵ "UN recalls envoy from Afghanistan," *BBC News*, September 30, 2009, at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8281934.stm

⁶ "No back channels needed when front channels open: Krishna: No breakthrough on composite dialogue," *Daily Times*, September 28, 2009, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\09\28\story_28-9-2009_pg1_1

⁷ "US will not be allowed to bomb Quetta: Malik," *The News*, September 29, 2009, at http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_default.asp

⁸ Mariana Babbar, "Quetta Shura," *The News*, October 2, 2009, at http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_default.asp

⁹ "US rethinking Pak aid delivery," *Daily Times*, October 3, 2009, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\10\03\story_3-10-2009_pg1_2

than 3,000 Taliban militants who had surrendered. He added that 2000 more militants were likely to surrender soon in the coming weeks.¹⁰

In other developments, even as a US counter terrorism official was quoted as stating that Hakimullah Mehsud, the new chief of Taliban could have been killed in a recent clash with a rival group, US forces killed over 15 militants in different parts of Waziristan.¹¹

B. EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

JAPAN

- **Hatoyama meets world leaders in New York; US asks Tokyo for ¥1 billion to provide information regarding F-35; Prosecutors launch investigations into political donations scandal involving PM Hatoyama; Japan could support reconstruction activities in Afghanistan as an alternative to refueling mission in Indian Ocean when it expires in January**

PM Hatoyama met a wide range of world leaders at the UN General Assembly meetings in New York. In a meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao on September 21, he called for the creation of an 'East Asian Community' along the lines of the European Union. The issue is expected to be discussed during a trilateral meeting between Hatoyama, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and South Korean President Lee Myung Bak on October 10 in Beijing.¹² During talks with his Australian counterpart, Kevin Rudd in New York, Hatoyama underscored the imperative of imposing tougher sanctions if necessary against North Korea to comprehensively solve its nuclear and missile problems, as well as the abduction issue.¹³ Reports also noted that both the governments will finalise a new defence agreement that would deepen co-operation between their military forces in peacekeeping and international humanitarian operations.¹⁴ At his meeting with Russian President Medvedev, both sides agreed to make renewed efforts to resolve the decades-old territorial dispute regarding the four Russian-administered islands off Hokkaido.¹⁵ President Obama on his part termed the over 50-years old US alliance with Japan a "cornerstone" of US diplomacy.¹⁶

¹⁰ "No place to keep surrendering Taliban: Gilani," *Daily Times*, October 3, 2009, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\10\03\story_3-10-2009_pg1_1

¹¹ "Hakimullah Mehsud may be dead: US official," *The News*, October 04, 2009, at http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_default.asp

¹² "China wary of Hatoyama's 'East Asian community'," *Japan Times*, October 3, 2009, at <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20091003f2.html>

¹³ "Sanctions against N. Korea necessary in some cases: Hatoyama," *Associated Press*, September 23, 2009, at http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=D9ATEDV80&show_article=1

¹⁴ "Defence deal looms with Japan," *The Australian*, September 22, 2009, at <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,26106932-5013871,00.html>

¹⁵ "Hatoyama, Medvedev agree to solve territorial row in their generation," *Associated Press*, September 23, 2009, at http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=D9AT68RO0&show_article=1

¹⁶ "New Japan PM offers Obama help on Afghanistan," *Associate Foreign Press*, September 23, 2009, at http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20090923/wl_asia_afp/unusjapandiplomacyobama_20090923200018

Reports noted that the US had asked Tokyo to pay around ¥1 billion for information on the capabilities of the F-35 fighter, which is a leading candidate to replace the country's aging fleet. Washington is also not expected to provide information on the plane's radar-evading capabilities until Tokyo makes a decision to purchase it.¹⁷

In domestic developments, reports noted that prosecutors had launched investigations into a political donations scandal involving PM Hatoyama. Mr. Hatoyama on his part charged his former accountant of incorrectly recording donations worth over \$200,000 under people who had not given that amount or people who were dead. Hatoyama's predecessor Ichiro Ozawa had to resign after being accused of accepting illegal donations in return for public works contracts.¹⁸

Japan's Foreign Ministry stated that the country will support reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, including agricultural and vocational training, as an alternative to the Maritime Self-Defense Forces (MSDF) refueling mission in the Indian Ocean, which expires in January.¹⁹ The US and other countries have urged the new government to continue the country's anti-terrorism activities in and around Afghanistan.²⁰

In other developments, Japan's Foreign Ministry announced that a team would be formed to look into aspects relating to a purported Japan-US secret nuclear pact, in an attempt to demonstrate enhanced transparency in government functioning. The investigations are expected to be finished by the end of November.²¹

SOUTHEAST ASIA

- **Vietnam suffers due to typhoon Ketsana; Earthquake measuring 7.6 strikes Sumatra; At the Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers meeting, Burmese Foreign Minister promises 'free and fair' elections in 2010; Burmese court rejects Suu Kyi's appeal against the extension of her house arrest by 18 months; Campbell: US willing to reciprocate Burmese leadership's interest in improving bilateral relations with Washington; Thai political leaders agree for a public referendum on changing the charter of constitution**

¹⁷ "U.S. asks Tokyo to pay ¥1 billion for F-35 details" *Japan Times*, October 4, 2009, at <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20091004a6.html>

¹⁸ "Prosecutors probe Japan PM's fund scandal: report," *Associate Foreign Press*, October 3, 2009, at http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20091003/wl_afp/japanpoliticsdonationshatoyama_20091003065720

¹⁹ "Japan to train former Taliban soldiers," *United Press International*, October 2, 2009, at http://www.upi.com/Top_News/2009/10/02/Japan-to-train-former-Taliban-soldiers/UPI-10981254522513/

²⁰ "PM still cool to extension of MSDF fuel mission," *Yomuri Shimbun*, September 27, 2009, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/20090927TDY01304.htm>

²¹ "Investigation team on 'secret pact' issue to be launched," *Associated Press*, September 24, 2009, at http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=D9ATUT801&show_article=1

Typhoon Ketsana wrecked havoc in Vietnam with over 160 people losing their lives and around 170,000 people were rendered homeless.²² The Indonesian island of Sumatra was also struck by a 7.6 magnitude earthquake on October 1. Casualties in the quake were estimated to be in their thousands.²³

At a meeting of Foreign Ministers from Japan, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam in Siem Reap province on October 3, Burmese Foreign Minister U Nyan Win promised a “free and fair” election in his country to be held next year but added that “democracy cannot be imposed from outside.” Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada on his part hoped that “Aung San Suu Kyi will be released and transparent elections will be conducted with the participation of all political parties.”²⁴ A Burmese court meanwhile rejected an appeal by Suu Kyi against the extension of her house arrest for another eighteen months. The sentence would effectively sideline Suu Kyi from taking an active part in the election.²⁵

US Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell stated that the US was willing to reciprocate the Burmese leadership’s recent interest in improving its bilateral relations with Washington. Campbell told reporters at the State Department that the US intended “to begin a direct dialogue with Burmese authorities to lay out the path to better relations.” He however added that the US would not immediately ease sanctions and would press for the unconditional release of Suu Kyi.²⁶

In Thailand, the Senate, opposition and government whips have consented to Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva’s recent proposal for a public referendum to change the charter of the Constitution. Mr. Vejjajiva has to decide whether the referendum will be held before or after the election.²⁷

C. WEST ASIA

IRAN

- **China calls for restraint amidst Iran’s missile tests and revelations of second uranium enrichment plant; US terms missile tests as “provocative”; Iran’s Foreign Minister visits Washington ahead of**

²² “Vietnam typhoon toll hits 162,” *Bangkok Post*, October 4, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/156039/vietnam-typhoon-death-toll-hits-162>

²³ “Sumatra quake toll in thousands,” *Bangkok Post*, October 1, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/155812/thousands-likely-dead-in-indonesian-quake>

²⁴ “Burma vote to be ‘free and fair’,” *Bangkok Post*, October 4, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/156000/burma-minister-promises-free-and-fair-elections>

²⁵ “Suu Kyi’s appeal rejected,” *Bangkok Post*, October 2, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/155854/suu-kyi-appeal-against-conviction-rejected>

²⁶ “US to open Burma dialogue,” *Bangkok Post*, September 29, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/155508/us-to-open-dialogue-with-burma>

²⁷ “PM, whips agree on a referendum,” *Bangkok Post*, October 2, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/155870/pm-whips-agree-on-charter-referendum>

Vienna talks; Iran to allow IAEA to inspect nuclear enrichment site at Qom on October 25

China has called for restraint after it was confirmed that Iran was building a second uranium enrichment plant near Qom, without informing the IAEA. Foreign ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu hoped that “relevant countries can do more things that are conducive to relaxing the situation and positively resolving it rather than to the contrary.” After US President Obama revealed Iran’s building activities, Tehran confirmed to IAEA on September 21 that it was building a second uranium enrichment plant near Qom. Tehran had also test-fired surface-to-surface Sejil and Shahab-3 missiles with ranges of over 2,000 kms, thus placing Israel, most Arab states and parts of Europe within range. The United States has demanded full access to Tehran’s newly-revealed uranium plant and denounced the missile tests as “provocative.”²⁸

Iran’s Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki visited Washington on October 1 even as the US and Iran prepared for critical talks over Tehran’s nuclear program. Mottaki’s visit was the first such visit by an Iranian Foreign Minister in more than a decade. Analysts noted that the visit was an indication of the policy of engagement currently being pursued by the Obama administration.²⁹

After talks in Tehran on October 3, IAEA Chief Mohamed ElBaradei announced that his organization will inspect Iran’s new uranium enrichment plant on October 25 and praised Teheran’s shift “from conspiracy to cooperation.” He however warned that “concerns” remained over its nuclear aims. President Ahmadinejad on his part insisted that because of “good cooperation” between Iran and the IAEA, there were no ambiguous issue left between Iran and the agency.³⁰

IRAQ

• US Commander: Iraq’s budget shortfall presents security challenges

Lt. Gen. Frank Helmick, head of the US training command in Iraq told reporters in Baghdad on September 30 that Iraq’s budget shortfall due to low oil prices will pose a challenge to efforts aimed at building up the country’s armed forces. The drop in oil prices has hampered efforts to buy ships, planes and weapons. US combat troops are scheduled to leave Iraq by August 31, 2010, and only up to 50,000 troops will train and advise Iraqi forces until the end of 2011.

²⁸ “China calls for restraint amid Iran nuclear tension,” *Khaleej Times*, September 29, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/September/middleeast_September684.xml§ion=middleeast

²⁹ Mark Lander and Steven Erlanger, “On the Eve of Talks, Iranian Makes a Washington Visit,” *New York Times*, October 1, 2009, at http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/01/world/middleeast/01nuke.html?_r=1&hp=&pagewanted=print

³⁰ “UN to inspect Iran’s new nuclear plant on Oct 25,” *Khaleej Times*, October 4, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/October/middleeast_October98.xml§ion=middleeast

Gen. Helmick's comments came a day after Iraq's Deputy Finance Minister Fadhil Othman stated that the proposed budget for 2010 was 20 percent higher but was still short of the country's funding needs. The Iraqi government had to cut its 2009 budget from \$79 billion to \$58.6 billion as oil prices plummeted from a high of nearly \$150 per barrel.³¹

II. MISSILES, SPACE AND DEFENCE REVIEW

MISSILES AND SPACE

- **Chandrayaan Project Director: NASA's M3 instrument detected water on the moon; Roskosmos: India trying to secure a Soyuz TMA spaceship to send tourists into space**

Dr. Mylswamy Annadurai, the project director of India's first moon mission Chandrayaan-1 stated that it had discovered water on the moon before being terminated. NASA's Moon Mineralogy Mapper (M3), one of the payloads on board the satellite, detected the presence of water, a finding which could kick start more moon missions and a search for life in outer space.³²

An official of the Russian Space Agency Roskosmos stated that ISRO was trying to secure a Russian spaceship to send tourists into space as part of the country's manned spaceflight programme.³³ A Russian cosmonaut is expected to pilot the reusable 'Soyuz TMA' capsule that can accommodate two space tourists. While the contract between the two space agencies will be commercial, its value was still unknown, as it was contingent on the duration as well as the flight path of the spaceship. Reports noted that Roskosmos typically charges \$35 million for a ten-day trip to the International Space Station (ISS).

DEFENCE

- **29 more MiG-29Ks for Indian Navy**

Reports noted that India was looking to buy 29 more MIG-29 K aircraft worth around Rs. 5,380 crores (\$1.12 billion) for the Navy. These are in addition to the 16 jets that India has already been contracted in 2004 in an initial combined deal worth \$1.5 billion, to be based on the Gorshkov aircraft carrier.³⁴ These jets would also operate from the indigenous carrier, the Air Defence Ship (ADS) currently being built at Cochin Shipyard Ltd. And will be armed with air-to-air and air-to-surface missiles.

³¹ "Iraq budget shortfall poses security challenge," *Khaleej Times*, September 30, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/September/middleeast_September718.xml§ion=middleeast

³² "Chandrayaan finds water on Moon's surface," *Times of India*, September 24, 2009, at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/news/india/Chandrayaan-finds-water-on-Moons-surface/articleshow/5049459.cms>

³³ "ISRO Seeks Russian Spaceship for Manned Flight," *MSN News*, October 4, 2009, at <http://news.in.msn.com/national/article.aspx?cp-documentid=3270197>

³⁴ Rajat Pandit, "India to buy more MiG-29 Ks," *The Times of India*, October 4, 2009

- **IAF seeks permission to fire at naxals in self-defence; Defence Ministry averse to the idea**

Reports noted that the Indian Air Force (IAF) had asked for permission from the Ministry of Defence to retaliate at Maoists who fire at its helicopters.³⁵ The IAF's request came in the wake of death of an IAF flight engineer, Sergeant Mustafa Ali in a naxal attack on an MI-8 helicopter on November 2008. However, Defence Minister, A.K. Antony stated that no decision has been taken on the matter so far. Mr. Antony added that the government does not want "the direct involvement of our armed forces, whether it is Army or IAF, in anti-naxal operations."³⁶

- **IAF to Station all MiG 29s along Pak Border**

The IAF plans to station all of its MiG-29 fighter squadrons at Adampur, the IAF's second largest air base along the Pakistan border. The base already has two squadrons of the aircraft and another squadron from Jamnagar is expected to join it. The Ministry of Defence has also reportedly signed a contract with RAC MiG corporation to upgrade around 60 fighters currently in service with IAF with "better radar systems and avionics, a new weapon control system, modernised RD-33 engines, which would increase the aircraft hitting capability from long ranges," according to the commanding officer of the Adampur air base.³⁷

³⁵ "IAF seeks permission to open fire in naxal areas," *The Hindu*, October 2, 2009

³⁶ "IAF wants to fire back at Maoist rebel in 'self-defence'," *The Times of India*, October 2, 2009

³⁷ "India to station all MiG 29s along Pak border," *The Indian Express*, October 4, 2009, at <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/india-to-station-all-mig-29s-along-pak-border/524838/>