

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Afghanistan

- **Karzai visits India; Strategic partnership agreement signed between India and Afghanistan; India's PM Dr. Manmohan Singh: India will stand by the people of Afghanistan as they prepare to assume the responsibility for their governance and security after the withdrawal of international forces in 2014; Karzai assassination plan foiled**

In a significant development, Afghan President Hamid Karzai visited India on October 4-5, 2011 to strengthen relations between the two countries. During the visit, India and Afghanistan have signed a strategic partnership agreement. It would be worth noting that this is the first time Afghanistan has signed such a document with any nation. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh said at a press conference in New Delhi that "The greatest need today is for the Afghan people to have peace and stability. India will stand by the people of Afghanistan as they prepare to assume the responsibility for their governance and security after the withdrawal of international forces in 2014," . The agreement signed entails security cooperation between the two countries "to help enhance their respective and mutual efforts in the fight against international terrorism, organized crime, illegal trafficking in narcotics and money laundering".¹

Reports noted that India is a major player in Afghanistan and has already pledged \$2bn (£1.3bn) in assistance. During the press conference, Dr. Singh said that the strategic partnership between the two countries will create an "institutional framework" so that India can help in Afghan "capacity building" in the areas of education, development and people-to-people contacts. The prime minister said that the two countries had also signed two agreements relating to Afghanistan's energy requirements which represented "a new dimension in economic relations" to enable Kabul to integrate more effectively with the Indian economy and other economies in South Asia.²

On other developments, according to the Afghan Intelligence agency sources, they have arrested six people who were planning to kill Hamid Karzai. The accused had recruited Karzai's bodyguard to kill him. The plotters are believed to be connected to the Haqqani network.³

¹ "Pak in mind, Karzai signs pact with Manmohan Singh", *The Times of India*, October 5, 2011 at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-10-05/india/30246367_1_india-and-afghanistan-afghan-president-international-forces

² "Afghanistan and India sign strategic partnership", *BBC*, October 4, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-15161776>

³ "Afghans say Karzai assassination plot foiled", *BBC*, October 5, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-15187069>

Pakistan

- **Taseer's killer gets death sentence; Pakistan considers granting Most Favored Nation (MFN) status to India; US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta: A cooperative and trusting relationship with Pakistan necessary**

According to reports, an Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Pakistan has handed death sentence to Malik Mumtaz Qadri, killer of former Punjab Governor Salman Taseer. Judge Pervez Ali Shah announced the verdict at the court behind closed doors in the high-security Adiyala prison in Rawalpindi. Qadri had confessed in court that he had killed Punjab governor Salman Taseer for his 'blasphemous' statements.⁴

On another front, Pakistani Government is considering granting India the status of Most Favored Nation (MFN). It is waiting for all stakeholders to send a green signal for the same. As a first step towards this, the ministry of commerce has sent a summary to all stakeholders to comment on changing decade old trade regime with India. The summary was sent a couple of weeks ago and the stakeholders have been asked to submit their comments within three weeks. If no objection is raised, the summary will be sent to the federal cabinet for approval. This is seen as a step forward to bring about peace and stability between the two countries.⁵

In other developments, the US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta has said that it was necessary to have a cooperative and trusting relationship with Pakistan as goal of both countries is to eliminate terrorism. He described the relation as complicated but did not advocate disengagement from the region. This comes as a contrast to last month's US rhetoric where it came down hard on Pakistan for not doing enough on war on terrorism and having links with Haqqani network.⁶

Bangladesh

- **United States to provide US\$ 180 million development assistance to Bangladesh; Bangladesh will oppose Pakistan's plea regarding Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) to the EU at the next WTO meeting; 225-Megawatt power plant in Ashuganj; India-Bangladesh joint military exercise "Sampriti-II" begins**

Reports noted that the US government will provide over US \$180 million to Bangladesh as development assistance this year, an increase of over US \$20 million from last year. This was announced by the US Chargé d'Affaires Nicholas Dean and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission Director to Bangladesh Richard Greene on October 2, 2011. According to a press release of the American Centre in Dhaka, of the assistance through USAID, approximately \$13 million is allotted for democracy and governance while \$45 million

⁴ "Qadri gets death sentence in Salman Taseer's murder", *Dawn*, October 1, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/10/01/atc-awards-death-penalty-mumtaz-qadri.html>

⁵ "MFN for India under consideration", *Dawn*, October 3, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/10/03/mfn-status-for-india-under-consideration.html>

⁶ "Panetta calls for trusting ties with Pakistan", *Dawn*, October 5, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/10/05/panetta-calls-for-%E2%80%98trusting%E2%80%99-ties-with-pakistan.html>

for food security, \$61 million for population, health, and nutrition programmes and \$17 million for climate change and environment programmes.

Moreover, USAID will help Bangladesh government to expand its clean energy programmes.⁷

In another development, Bangladeshi Commerce Minister Faruk Khan said that Bangladesh will oppose Pakistan's plea regarding Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) to the EU at the next World Trade Organisation (WTO) meeting to keep the export growth of Bangladesh to Eurozone unhurt.⁸

Reports noted that South Korea's Hyundai Engineering Company and Daewoo International Corporation signed an agreement with Ashuganj Power Station Company to build a 225-megawatt power plant in Ashuganj on October 5.⁹

In other developments, commandos of Bangladesh army began a two-week joint military exercise "Sampriti-II" on counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency operations with Indian commandos at Jalalabad Cantonment in Sylhet on October 9 under the mandate of United Nations. The exercise involved 25 para-commandos from each country. This is the first-ever joint exercise to be held in Bangladesh. Earlier, "Sampriti-I" was held at Jorhat in Assam from November 1 to 14, 2010.¹⁰

Sri Lanka

- **India's Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai visits Sri Lanka; Indian Coast Guard hands over 35 Sri Lankan Fishermen; Japan agreed to provide a loan of Rs. 9,940 million to implement an emergency natural disaster rehabilitation project; UAE -Sri Lanka talk on extradition agreements; UN: Joint Plan for Assistance (JPA) of Sri Lanka's war-torn northern province faces US\$200 million shortfall**

Indian Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai visited Sri Lanka on October 8, 2011. During his two days visit to the island, Shri Mathai met President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Economic Development Minister Basil Rajapaksa, Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Opposition UNP leader Ranil Wickremesinghe.¹¹

Earlier, the Indian Coast Guard handed over 35 Sri Lankan fishermen on October 3, in seas off

⁷ "US to give \$180m dev assistance", *The Daily Star*, October 3, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=204962>

⁸ "Bangladesh to oppose Pakistan's GSP plea to the EU", *The Daily Star*, October 5, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=205192>

⁹ "Deal signed for 225MW power plant", *The Daily Star*, October 6, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=205348>.

¹⁰ "Indo-Bangla military exercise begins today", *The Daily Star*, October 9, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=205729>.

¹¹ "India Keen on Resolving National Question through Dialogue", *The Daily Mirror*, October 10, 2011 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/14043.html>.

Kankesanthurai who were arrested earlier by the Indian authorities for allegedly crossing the exclusive Economic Zone boundary.¹²

In another development, the Government of Japan had agreed to provide a loan of Rs. 9,940 million (Japanese Yen 7,000 million) to Sri Lanka to implement an Emergency Natural Disaster Rehabilitation Project aimed at restoring socio economic activities which were affected due to flooding after heavy rain in the North Central, Central and Eastern Provinces during December 2010 to February 2011. This loan was given at a concessionary interest rate of 0.01% per annum with a repayment period of 40 years including a grace period of 10 years.¹³

Reports noted that a second round of talks between UAE and Sri Lanka on extradition agreements and judicial assistance in criminal cases started on October 3 in Abu Dhabi.¹⁴

In other developments, according to the UN sources, the Joint Plan for Assistance (JPA) of Sri Lanka's war-torn Northern Province is facing a US\$200 million shortfall. According to the latest Joint Humanitarian and Early Recovery Update released of September 27, 2011, of the JPA's \$289 million appeal, only \$76.5 million, or 26 per cent, has been received.¹⁵

Maldives

- **The Maldives Police Service signed a Memorandum of Intent (MoI) with the United States; Maldives wants more investments from Sri Lanka**

Reports noted that the Maldives Police Service signed a Memorandum of Intent (MoI) with the US government on October 4, to "enhance the abilities of the law enforcement agencies of the government of Maldives to deter terrorists and terrorist groups from engaging in international terrorist acts." The MoI was signed by Commissioner of Police Ahmed Faseeh on behalf of the government while the Ambassador of the United States of America, Patricia Butenis, signed for the American government. According to a police press statement, the US State Department would be providing assistance to the Maldivian police under its anti-terrorism assistance programme.¹⁶

In another development, at the fourth Annual General Meeting of the Sri Lanka- Maldives Bilateral Business Council of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, the Maldives showed interest

¹² Dias, Supun, "India releases 35 Sri Lankan fishermen", *The Daily Mirror*, October 4, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/57993.html>

¹³ "Japan Gives Lanka Rs. 9,940 Million Loan", *The Daily Mirror*, October 3, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/57892.html>

¹⁴ "UAE, Lanka hold talks on judicial cooperation", *The Daily Mirror*, October 4, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/58025.html>

¹⁵ "Northern development faces \$200m shortfall: UN", *The Daily Mirror*, October 8, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/58418.html>

¹⁶ "Police Sign Memorandum with US Government for Counter-Terrorism Cooperation", *Minivan News*, October 6, 2011 at <http://minivannews.com/category/news-in-brief/page/2>

in increasing investments from Sri Lanka, especially in construction, transport and energy. Maldives also offered a credit line to Sri Lankan exporters beyond fruits and vegetables.¹⁷

B. East Asia

South East Asia

- **Vietnam President Truong Tan Sang to visit India; GSF- Singapore to set up 35 schools in India; Myanmar President on India visit next week; Indonesian police arrests three suicide attack accused; Indonesia, Malaysia start border talks**

The Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang is to visit India from October 11 to October 14, 2011. The visit is being seen as an important one given the close ties between the two countries which were described as “acquiring momentum, greater depth” by India’s foreign ministry spokesperson. During the visit of the President, the two sides are expected to sign a number of MoUs.¹⁸

In another development, Singapore based Global schools Foundation, which runs chains of world-class schools in eight countries including the US, Japan, Singapore and Vietnam is actively considering the plans to set up 35 schools in 15 Indian cities. The project is worth US \$ 50 million and is likely to be completed by 2017.¹⁹

Reports noted that the President of Myanmar, U Thein Sein would be visiting India from October 12 to 15, 2011. The President will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, and will also visit Gaya and Sarnath, the places of importance to Buddhists. U Thein Sein will hold talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Pratibha Patil.²⁰

According to reports, the Indonesian police arrested three men on October 8, on charges of plotting suicide attacks in the country. One of the arrested men Heru Komarudin is arrested on charges of plotting suicide bombing in April 2011, while the other two are believed to be involved in the September 25, 2011 suicide attacks.²¹

In other developments, according to the Indonesian foreign ministry spokesman Michael Tene, the representatives of Indonesian and Malaysian governments are in the process of negotiating

¹⁷ “Maldives Aims Beyond Usual Sri Lankan Investments”, *Minivan News*, October 6, 2011 at <http://minivannews.com/category/news-in-brief>

¹⁸ Vietnam President on India visit next week, *Deccan Chronicle*, October 8, 2011 at <http://www.deccanchronicle.com/channels/nation/north/vietnam-president-india-visit-next-week-150>

¹⁹ Singapore’s GSF plans to set up 35 schools in India, *The Economic Times*, October 9, 2011 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2011-10-09/news/30260273_1_three-schools-international-baccalaureate-global-indian-international-school

²⁰ Myanmar President to visit India from October 12, *The Indian Express*, October 11, 2011

²¹ 3 in Indonesia charged with plotting suicide attacks, *New York Times*, October 8, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/09/world/asia/indonesia-arrests-3-over-suicide-attacks.html?_r=3

their shared border near West Kalimantan. Indonesia and Malaysia share maritime boundary in the region. The next meeting on the issue will be held from October 16 to 18, 2011.²²

Japan

- **Japan and the United States agreed to transfer Okinawa fighter drills to Guam; A 12-member IAEA team of experts arrive in Japan to assist nuclear decontamination; Japanese Prime Minister to propose launching of a new maritime security framework at the East Asia Summit**

In a significant development, both the US and Japan have recently agreed to shift the location of a US fighter jet training exercise from US base in Okinawa to Guam.²³ This step has been taken to ease the base-hosting burden of the Okinawa prefecture. The exercise involving fighter jets belonging to the U.S. Marine Corps' Iwakuni Air Station in Yamaguchi Prefecture, scheduled to take place at Kadena Air Base from Monday to Oct. 31, will now be conducted at facilities in Guam. According to the sources, 20 F/A-18 fighter jets and about 400 personnel will participate in the exercise.²⁴ Reports noted that it will be the first time US military exercises held in Japan will be shifted outside Japanese territory, although the shift is not permanent.²⁵

In another development, a 12-member IAEA team of experts have arrived in Japan on October 7 to assist the country in decontaminating the areas near the radiation-leaking Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. The team which is to stay in Japan until October 15, is to present a preliminary summary report to the Japanese government on completion of its mission. Later on, the team will also submit its final report to the government.²⁶

In other developments, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda is to propose launching of a working-level meetings on maritime security during the upcoming EAS summit in Bali, Indonesia in mid-November this year. This step has been taken by Tokyo to counter China's growing assertiveness in regional waters. The Japanese government is hopeful about reaching a consensus on this issue among the sixteen members of ASEAN+6 countries as well as the US and Russia-who are to become a part of the EAS at the leaders' meeting in the Bali summit.²⁷

²² Indonesia, Malaysia start Borneo border talks, *The Jakarta Post*, October 9, 2011, <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/10/09/indonesia-malaysia-start-borneo-border-talks.html>

²³ "US military exercise to be shifted to Guam", *The Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 5, 2011, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T111004005485.htm>

²⁴ "Japan says transfer of Okinawa fighter drills to Guam to begin Mon", *Mainichi Shimbun*, October 4, 2011, at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/archive/news/2011/10/04/20111004p2g00m0dm114000c.html>

²⁵ "U.S. military exercise to be shifted to Guam", *Daily Yomiuri Online*, October 5, 2011 at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T111004005485.htm>

²⁶ "IAEA team arrives in Japan to assist nuclear decontamination.", *Mainichi Shimbun*, October 8, 2011, at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/archive/news/2011/10/08/20111008p2g00m0dm005000c.html>

²⁷ "Japan to call for new maritime security framework at East Asia Summit", *Mainichi Shimbun*, October 5, 2011, at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/archive/news/2011/10/05/20111005p2g00m0dm007000c.html>

C. Central Asia & Russia

Central Asia

(September 26-October 02, 2011)

- **United States expresses confidence that its “New Silk Road” policy direction, designed to draw Afghanistan closer into the Central Asian regional trading sphere; US welcomes greater Chinese investment in the region; US Secretary of State Clinton: United States should strengthen relations with Uzbekistan; Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan pen defense pact; Report points out to Central Asia facing rising threat from neglected tropical diseases; Tajikistan’s lower parliamentary house ratifies credit agreement from China**

Reports noted that U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert Blake said during the UN’s first week of business in New York, that the U.S. is confident that its “New Silk Road” policy direction, designed to draw Afghanistan closer into the Central Asian regional trading sphere, will be a success, while it welcomes greater Chinese investment in the area.²⁸

In another development, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said that the United States should strengthen relations with Uzbekistan, which the U.S. State Department designated weeks earlier as one of eight ‘Countries of Particular Concern’ (CPC). Both sides want to deepen ties, she said following her meeting with Uzbek Foreign Minister Elyor Ganiyev in Washington. The United States seeks to step up Uzbek involvement in the U.S. military’s ‘Northern Distribution Network’ supply route into neighboring Afghanistan, since it faces crisis in diplomatic relations with Pakistan.²⁹

Reports noted that Tajikistan’s First Deputy Defense Minister Ramil Nadirov and his Kyrgyz counterpart Taalaybek Omuraliyav signed the bilateral military plan for 2012 towards the end of September as their joint counterterrorist military exercises came to a close. Six hundred soldiers of the armed forces of both countries participated in the final stage of military exercises in the eastern Rasht Valley, close to the border with Kyrgyzstan.³⁰

According to reports, plans to create a unified energy system in the north of Tajikistan are a step closer to realization after Tajikistan’s lower parliamentary house ratified a \$26.5 million credit agreement from China last week. The finance goes towards construction of a 500 kiloWatt (KW) electrical substation in the northern Sughd province, which is part of the South-North electrical power project CASA-1000 which Tajikistan is implementing with Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and Pakistan.³¹

²⁸ “US welcomes Chinese role in Central Asian, Afghan development”, *Universal Newswires*, September 27, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/tajikistan/viewstory.aspx?id=10275>

²⁹ “US seeks to boost ties with Uzbekistan”, *Universal Newswires*, September 30, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/uzbekistan/viewstory.aspx?id=10306>

³⁰ “Tajik, Kyrgyz military heads sign cooperation plan as exercises end”, *Universal Newswires*, September 27, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/tajikistan/viewstory.aspx?id=10274>

³¹ “China to aid Tajiks in creation of unified energy system”, *Universal Newswires*, October 03, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/tajikistan/viewstory.aspx?id=10319>

In other developments, Central Asia faces a rising threat from Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), according to a report published last month by health experts in the open-access journal *PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases*. Peter Hotez, President of the Sabin Vaccine Institute and co-author Ken Alibek of Nazarbayev University in Astana suggests that international organizations fighting tuberculosis and malaria should widen their remit to integrate NTDs into their programs which has aggravated due to the economic breakdown since independence.³²

(October 03-10, 2011)

- **KAZENERGY-2011 major energy meeting held in Astana; Kazakhstan may not participate in the Nabucco project at present; Kazakhstan teams up with EBRD to tackle Caspian Sea disasters; CPC pipeline to deliver less crude oil due to construction; 24 candidates for presidential election in Kyrgyzstan; New missile boats built under joint Russian-Turkmen project**

Addressing the 6th KAZENERGY Eurasian Forum on October 4, Oil and Gas Minister Sauat Mynbayev announced that Kazakhstan will ramp up crude oil exports by more than 50% by 2020. To accomplish this target, Kazakhstan, which ranks ninth in the world for proven crude reserves, will have to sell 111 million tons of crude per year, up from 79 million tons projected for 2011.³³ Kazakh national nuclear company Kazatomprom deputy chairman Sergei Yashin, addressing the Eurasian Energy Forum on the second day, said that Kazatomprom is planning to expand its reach into the renewable solar and wind power energies in 2015. However he added by saying, “Although these gorgeous eco-friendly sources of energy will definitely find their niche in the energy supply, they cannot fully provide the required increase in generating capacity...Therefore, nuclear energy is indispensable to humanity.”³⁴

While, European Union energy Commissioner Guenther Oettinger during the 6th KAZENERGY Eurasian Forum said, that the Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline “will become a very important contribution to the development of the Southern Corridor.” Europe expressed hope that Kazakhstan will participate in the development of a gas pipeline that will be laid on the bed of the Caspian Sea. Brussels envisages the Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline project to provide between 20 billion to 30 billion cubic meters (bcm) of gas to European countries as part of a so-called Southern Corridor of east-to-west pipelines,³⁵ so as to reduce dependency on Moscow.

Lyazzat Kiinov, deputy energy minister said that Kazakhstan cannot participate in the Nabucco project currently. The Kazakh officials were last week participating in KIOGE 2011, Central Asia’s largest trade event for the oil and gas industry. While speaking to journalists at the sidelines of a major energy conference, held in Kazakhstan’s financial capital Almaty, Kiinov said “In the

³² “Central Asia faces rising threat from neglected tropical diseases”, *Universal Newswires*, September 28, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/tajikistan/viewstory.aspx?id=10281>

³³ “Oil exports to balloon by 2020, Kazakh minister says”, *Universal Newswires*, October 04, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kazakhstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10329>

³⁴ “Nuclear power, renewables top talks at Astana energy meet”, *Universal Newswires*, October 05, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kazakhstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10349>

³⁵ “EU hopes Kazakhstan will join Trans-Caspian pipeline”, *Universal Newswires*, October 04, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kazakhstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10331>

future, Kazakhstan will consider joining Nabucco as a potential gas supplier if new high-potential gas fields are developed domestically and free gas volumes emerge.”³⁶

Reports noted that Kazakhstan has teamed up with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to establish expansive emergency response measures in case of disaster in the energy-rich Caspian Sea. Both will work on strategies to tackle oil spills and fires at offshore oil and gas production platforms, as well as address flow control issues. Following the signing ceremony, Kazakh Minister of Emergency Situations Vladimir Bozhko voiced his hope that action would quickly follow.³⁷

In the meanwhile, CPC General Director Nikolai Platonov announced that the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC), which links Kazakhstan’s Tengiz oilfield to Russia, will pump less crude in 2012 as it undergoes construction, however did not say how much crude will be shipped via the CPC in 2012. The pipeline expects to deliver 35.2 million barrels in 2011.³⁸

In another development, four candidates – Tursunbai Bakir Uulu, Akbaraly Aitikeev, Nariman Tyulejev and Torobai Kolubaev – whose applications to enter the Kyrgyz presidential race were rejected will now be allowed to campaign, the country’s Central Election Commission (CEC) ruled on October 6. The decision brings the number of presidential candidates in this year’s election to 24. The October 30 election will be the first presidential election held in Kyrgyzstan since the former president Kurmanbek Bakiev was deposed in April 2010.³⁹

In other developments, President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov recently visited the naval facilities near the Caspian port city of Turkmenbashi to view two newly received missile boats. The missile boats were built in a joint Russian-Turkmen project at the Sredne-Nevisky shipyard at Russia’s northern Caspian Sea coast. Turkmenistan’s defense ministry established the Naval Institute in June 2010 to develop the navy under a five-year strategy, following presidential approval given in 2009.⁴⁰

Russia

- **India’s Defence Minister A. K. Antony visits Russia; Russian and Indian defence ministers to discuss military cooperation; Russia challenges Medvedev promises to induct fresh faces in a shake-up of the establishment in 2012; International Monetary Fund advises Russia to bestow broader powers for Russia’s Central Bank; Russian army to form new sniper units; Russia to lend US\$ 4 billion to Venezuela to pay for new arms deals; Russia’s development of S-500 air defence systems behind schedule; Russia discusses usage of local currencies in**

³⁶ “Joining Nabucco not possible, Kazakh deputy says”, *Universal Newswires*, October 07, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10380>

³⁷ “EBRD to help Kazakhstan tackle Caspian Sea disasters”, *Universal Newswires*, October 07, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10375>

³⁸ “CPC pipeline to deliver less crude in 2012”, *Universal Newswires*, October 07, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10381>

³⁹ “Four candidates win appeal, will run for Kyrgyz presidency”, *Universal Newswires*, October 07, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10382>

⁴⁰ “New missile boats to bolster Turkmen navy, president says”, *Universal Newswires*, October 10, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10389>

bilateral trade; Russia-Netherlands relationship developing at a good pace; Prime Minister Putin: The current level of oil prices are acceptable to Russia; Russia is concerned by the detention of fishing ships in Norway; United Kingdom to provide evidence on the Litvinenko murder case

India's Defence Minister A. K. Antony was on an official visit to Russia from October 3-5, 2011. Reports noted that Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov and his Indian counterpart A. K. Antony will hold a meeting of the intergovernmental commission on military-technical cooperation on October 4. Serdyukov and Antony will "discuss urgent issues of bilateral relations in the [military] sphere," the Russian ministry said in a statement. Meanwhile, the head of Russian state arms exporter Rosoboronexport, Anatoly Isaikin, said in September that India remains Russia's largest strategic partner in military-technical cooperation. According to reports, Isaikin said Russia is taking part in twenty tenders in India, with which it has a military-technical cooperation agreement until 2020.⁴¹

In another development, President Medvedev has promised to radically renew the government made up of new people if he wins the Prime Ministerial elections to be held in 2012. This comes amidst concern that Medvedev may have to become a lame duck Prime Minister at the mercy of President Putin.⁴²

According to reports, the International Monetary Fund has recommended the Russian authorities broaden the central bank's supervisory powers as banks hold considerable volumes of non-performing loans. The IMF believes that the practice of granting loans to related companies on preferential terms, widely used in Russian banks, represents an inefficient use of resources which may lead to loan quality worsening.⁴³

Reports noted that Russia will create new special sharp shooter units which will be attached to its ground forces brigade. The units will have special target acquisition equipment, including portable lasers, binoculars and devices for computing ballistics data.⁴⁴

Meanwhile, Russia and Venezuela have signed an agreement on a \$4 billion loan for the oil-rich Latin American partner to buy Russian weaponry. Two billion will be provided next year and another two billion in 2013. Venezuela has been seeking a loan of another \$6.5 billion from Russia for infrastructure development. The two countries are also interested in oil cooperation. A group of Russian energy firms including Gazprom, Rosneft, TNK-BP, Surgutneftegaz and LUKoil formed an oil consortium chaired by Sechin in 2008 for projects in Venezuela. Moscow said it would invest \$12 billion in Venezuelan oil production in the next ten years.⁴⁵

⁴¹ "Russian, Indian defence ministers to discuss cooperation", RIA Novosti, October 4th, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20111004/167364438.html

⁴² "Medvedev promises a new government of new faces", RIA Novosti, October 3rd, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20111003/167354018.html>

⁴³ "IMF advises broader powers for Russian central bank", RIA Novosti, October 7th, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20111007/167465791.html>

⁴⁴ "Russian army to form sniper units", RIA Novosti, October 7th, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20111007/167464405.html

⁴⁵ "Russia to lend Venezuela \$4 bln to pay for arms deals", RIA Novosti, October 7th, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/world/20111007/167461572.html>

According to reports, the development of Russia's formidable S-500 air defence system is lagging behind schedule by at least two years. The first prototypes will be ready and tested by 2015, while the deliveries to the Russian army could start in 2017 at the earliest. The S-500, a long-range air defence missile system, is expected to become the backbone of a unified aerospace defence system being formed in Russia. The system is expected to have an extended range of up to 600 km (over 370 miles) and simultaneously engage up to 10 targets.⁴⁶

In other developments, Russia is discussing the option of employing local currencies in bilateral trade with Brazil, Turkey and Vietnam. Russia has a similar agreement with China.⁴⁷

Netherlands Prime Minister has said that relationship between Russia and the Netherlands have developed 'splendidly' in the recent past. Some key issues of cooperation can be seen in the field of agriculture, sports, culture and trade.⁴⁸

Prime Minister Putin has said that the current prices of crude oil is quite acceptable to Russia. This was in the backdrop of crude oil having sunk below the \$ 100 per barrel mark on the London Commodity Exchange for the first time in two months.⁴⁹

According to reports, Russia is concerned by the detentions of its fishery ships in Norway in the so-called fishery protection zone surrounding the Svalbard archipelago. There have been at least six cases of detention of Russian ships near Svalbard over the past three months. The Norwegians have in the past detained Russian ships in the 200-miles zone around Svalbard, which Norway has unilaterally declared to be its national territory.⁵⁰

In another development, Russia has denied any involvement in the murder of Alexander Litvinenko and challenged Britain to present any evidence to the contrary. The reaction came in response to an article, entitled "Russia murdered Litvinenko, published in 'The Sunday Times'. Litvinenko, a former KGB officer and outspoken critic of then-president Vladimir Putin, died in November 2006 in a London hospital after being poisoned with the radioactive substance polonium-210. British investigation revealed that he was murdered on behest of the establishment in Moscow. The diplomatic row led to a drastic deterioration in bilateral relationship between Russia and UK.⁵¹

⁴⁶ "Development of S-500 air defense systems behind schedule-paper", RIA Novosti, October 5th, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20111005/167395154.html

⁴⁷ "Russia discusses usage of local currencies in bilateral trade", ITAR TASS, October 6th, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/241396.html>

⁴⁸ "Russia-Netherlands relations develop splendidly-PM", ITAR-TASS, October 6th, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/241013.html>

⁴⁹ "Putin says oil prices acceptable for Russia", ITAR-TASS, October 5th, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/240805.html>

⁵⁰ "Russia's Lavrov says concerned by detentions of fishery ships in Norway", ITAR-TASS, October 6th, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/241737.html>

⁵¹ "Russia challenges UK to provide evidence on Litvinenko murder", RIA Novosti, October 3rd, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20111003/167356191.html>

D. West Asia

Iran

- **Lebanese President Michel Suleiman once again calls on Iran to arm his country's armed forces**

According to reports, Lebanese President Michel Suleiman has once again called on Iran to arm his country's armed forces. He added that "The Lebanese governments have not been able to offer a plan for equipping Lebanon's armed forces; when I traveled to Iran (almost three years ago) I asked Tehran to provide (Lebanon's) armed forces with weapons and we're still waiting for a reply." Following Suleiman's visit to Tehran and before President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's trip to Beirut in 2010, the Iranian defense minister expressed Tehran's country's readiness to equip the Lebanese armed forces. The decision, however, provoked furious reactions from the US and the Zionist regime, hence the issue sank into oblivion. In separate meetings with the Lebanese prime minister in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meeting, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton offered to provide arms to Lebanon's armed forces.⁵²

Iraq

- **Iran, Iraq signed an agreement to reduce the number of sand dunes in bid to cut the number of sandstorms from Iraq**

According to reports, a top Iranian environment official said that Tehran and Baghdad will jointly pay \$1.2 billion in a project to reduce the number of sand dunes in a bid to cut the number of sandstorms from Iraq. Iran's official media IRNA noted that "In order to reduce gravel levels we have signed an agreement with a foreign company to cover a million hectares (2.47 million acres) of Iraqi soil in the next five years." Media and some local officials have blamed sandstorms on countries west of the Islamic republic, particularly Iraq which has been hit by desertification and deforestation because of dam construction and declining agriculture. In mid-April, 20 of Iran's 31 provinces had to close schools and government offices, and flights to and from some western cities were cancelled because of sandstorms mostly originating in neighbouring Iraq. In September 2010, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Qatar and Turkey signed an accord in Tehran aimed at tackling the sandstorms problem over the next five years.⁵³

Syria

- **Russia, China veto UN resolution on Syria; India abstains from Syrian vote; Syria and South Africa discuss trade cooperation**

In a blow to US and European efforts to isolate President Bashar al-Assad regime, Russia and China vetoed a UN Security Council resolution threatening action against Syria's crackdown on

⁵² "Michel Suleiman wants Iran to arm Lebanese armed forces," *Tehran Times*, October 5, 2011, at <http://www.tehrantimes.com/index.php/politics/3203-michel-suleiman-wants-iran-to-arm-lebanese-armed-forces>

⁵³ "Iran, Iraq pay \$1.2 bn to battle sandstorms," *Khaleej Times*, October 3, 2011, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/October/middleeast_October56.xml§ion=middleeast&col=

protests. In the wake of new deaths in Syria and new threats of individual sanctions, the veto sparked the outrage of European nations, which proposed the resolution, and the United States, which said the council had “utterly failed to address an urgent moral challenge.” Nine countries voted for the text which had called for “targeted measures” if Assad pursues his policies, which the UN says has left at least 2 700 dead.⁵⁴

However, India abstained from Syrian vote. Explaining its position, the Indian Foreign Ministry said in a statement, that India abstained from voting on the Western draft resolution on Syria because countries should protect their citizens from extremists and armed groups. The statement said that India believes that engaging Syria in a constructive dialogue is the sole way to solve the crisis.⁵⁵

In other developments, Syrian Minister of Economy and Trade Mohammad Nidal al-Shaar discussed with the Ambassador of South Africa in Damascus cooperation between Syria and South Africa in the economic, trade and investment domains. During the meeting, al-Shaar underlined the importance of continuing coordination between the two states through broadening cooperation in the economic field and exchanging expertise. The South African Ambassador expressed desire to deepen cooperation with Syria, by opening new aspects to develop trade and investment between the two nations.⁵⁶

Libya

● NATO Chief discusses situation in Libya; NTC forces move into Sirte

According to reports, in the opinion of NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the end of the conflict in Libya is in sight and the Al Gaddafi forces are fighting for a lost cause. Rasmussen formed that impression after meeting and discussing the matter with the NATO partners in Operation Unified Protector and discussed the conditions under which the alliance could complete its mission for Libya. Rasmussen pointed out that NATO is determined to pursue its operation as long as threats persist.⁵⁷

Meanwhile, reports noted that Libyan government forces moved into the centre of Muammar Gaddafi's birthplace of Sirte after their commanders said the battle for the city was entering its final stage.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ “Russia, China veto UN resolution on Syria”, *Mail and Guardian*, October 5, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-10-05-russia-china-veto-un-resolution-on-syria>

⁵⁵ “Indian Foreign Ministry: International Community Measures on Syria Should Not Complicate Situation by Threats of Sanctions”, *Syrian Arab News Agency*, October 6, 2011, at <http://www.sana.sy/eng/337/2011/10/06/373988.htm>

⁵⁶ “Minister of Economy discusses trade cooperation with South African Ambassador”, *Syrian Arab News Agency*, October 5, 2011, at <http://www.sana.sy/eng/24/2011/10/05/373731.htm>

⁵⁷ “‘Al Qathafi Forces Are Fighting for a Lost Cause’ NATO Chief Says”, *The Tripoli Post*, October 6, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=7051>

⁵⁸ “Libyan gov't forces push into centre of Sirte”, *The Jordan Times*, October 6, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=42026>

Egypt

- **Military ruler clarifies on current situation in Egypt; Egypt arrests Hezbollah 'spy'**

Expressing concern that the country was going through a critical period, particularly on the security and economic fronts, Egypt's military ruler Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi called for national unity to achieve a democratic state under civilian rule. He added that disagreements and mistrust have dominated the period following the February uprising and the ruling generals were working to overcome the same. Further, the leader of ruling generals said the army had no interest in staying in power for a long time, but insisted the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces would not step down until it fulfills its commitments.⁵⁹

On the other hand, protesters and political groups have criticised Tantawi for his reluctance to implement comprehensive changes and dismantle elements of the former regime.⁶⁰

Separately, after the US Defense Secretary Leon Panetta urged him to secure the Sinai peninsula where militants blew up a gas pipeline to Israel, the military ruler of Egypt insisted that Sinai was under complete control.⁶¹

In other developments, Egyptian security authorities arrested Hassan Al-Manakhly who was suspected of spying for the Lebanese Islamist group Hezbollah after he escaped detention during the Egypt uprising. Manakhly had been serving a 10-year jail sentence for spying for Hezbollah and "planning terrorist attacks inside Egypt".⁶²

Israel

- **Turkey's Prime Minister Erdogan calls Israel a threat to its region; Suspected arsonists torched mosque in Israel**

Reports noted that in a foreign policy speech during an official visit to South Africa, Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan branded Israel as a "threat" to its region, accusing it of owning nuclear weapons. Erdogan's remarks came in response to comments from an Israeli embassy diplomat in South Africa, who blamed radical Islamic organisation Hamas for launching rocket attacks into Israeli territory. Erdogan also accused Israel of committing "state terrorism", saying Israel had attacked the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip as well as the UN buildings in Gaza with phosphorus bombs.⁶³

⁵⁹ "Egypt's ruler vows military will step down", *The Daily News Egypt*, October 6, 2011, at <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/egypt/egypts-ruler-vows-military-will-step-down.html>

⁶⁰ "Egypt's ruler says country in a critical phase", *The Jordan Times*, October 7, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=42042>

⁶¹ "Sinai under control: Egypt military ruler", *The Daily News Egypt*, October 6, 2011, at <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/egypt/sinai-under-control-egypt-military-ruler.html>

⁶² "Egypt re-arrests Hezbollah 'spy'", *The Daily News Egypt*, October 4, 2011, at <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/crime-a-accidents/egypt-re-arrests-hezbollah-spy.html>

⁶³ "Israel a 'threat' to region because of nuclear bomb - Erdogan", *The Jordan Times*, October 6, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=42000>

In another development, suspected arsonists torched a mosque in Tuba-Zangria in northern Israel, setting off protests by residents who clashed with Israeli forces. Graffiti sprayed at the site suggested Jewish radicals, suspected in other recent mosque fires, were involved. Israel's prime minister, president and other politicians as well as Jewish religious leaders condemned the attack. Reacting to the incident, about 200 villagers from Tuba-Zangria marched towards a major intersection to protest the arson, intending to block the road. Consequently, security was heightened across northern Israel to prevent further disturbances and Israeli forces met village leaders in an effort to defuse tensions.⁶⁴ Later, Israeli forces said they have arrested a suspect in the arson attack on a mosque in northern Israel. However, spokesperson Micky Rosenfeld did not disclose details of his identity.⁶⁵

Palestine

- **US Defense Secretary warns on blocking aid to Palestine; UNESCO backs Palestine bid for membership**

Reports noted Palestine won first diplomatic victory in its quest for statehood after the UNESCO executive committee backed its bid to become a member of the cultural body with the rights of a state. The motion was passed by 40 votes in favour to four against, with 14 abstentions. The Palestinian bid will now be submitted to the UNESCO general assembly for final approval.⁶⁶

In another development, US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta has criticised US lawmakers for blocking \$200 million in aid for the Palestinian territories at a "critical" moment in the region. The aid was frozen in response to a Palestinian bid to secure full state membership at the United Nations, despite strong opposition from Israel and Washington. Panetta said the aid has proved effective and brought "benefits" to Israel and the Palestinians. Separately, the Arab League appealed to its members to increase financial aid to the Palestinians as a result of the move by American lawmakers.⁶⁷

E. Africa

Somalia

- **Dozens killed in Mogadishu blast carried out by Al-Shabaab**

Somalia's Al Qaeda-linked rebels Al Shabaab struck at the heart of the capital Mogadishu, killing scores of people with a truck bomb in the group's most deadly attack in the country since launching an insurgency in 2007. At least 70 people had been killed in the blast. The African

⁶⁴ "Radical Jews suspected of burning mosque in Israel", *The Jordan Times*, October 4, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41929>

⁶⁵ "Israel forces say mosque arson suspect arrested", *The Jordan Times*, October 7, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=42055>

⁶⁶ "Palestine state quest wins first victory in UNESCO vote", *The Jordan Times*, October 6, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=42024>

⁶⁷ "US defence chief warns on Palestinian aid block, urges return to negotiations", *The Jordan Times*, October 4, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41952>

Union force in Somalia (AMISOM) said the attack had claimed “scores of lives”.⁶⁸ The Al Shabaab insurgents later warned Somalis to stay away from government buildings and military bases as more serious blasts were planned.⁶⁹ Meanwhile, Britain criticized the blast as “callous” while France said it was a “vile terrorist attack” and reasserted its support for the country’s UN-backed transitional government. The United States also condemned the attack.⁷⁰

South Africa

- **South Africa defends its stance on Syria; South Africa’s R1-trillion nuclear contract underway**

President Jacob Zuma’s special adviser on foreign relations Lindiwe Zulu has defended South Africa’s decision to abstain on a United Nations Security Council resolution on sanctions against Syria after it was criticised for being a “bystander” in Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s relentless military crackdown on civilian protests. Earlier, South Africa was accused for failing to support the resolution, saying its foreign policy was becoming more and more “inconsistent” and in conflict with its professed agenda of advancing international peace and security.⁷¹

In another development, reports noted that South Africa is all prepared to issue the largest tender in its history — an estimated one-trillion-rand contract to build six new nuclear reactors by 2030. The energy department submitted its nuclear tender proposal to the Cabinet, and Energy Minister Dipuo Peters has been quoted as saying it will finalise the proposal before the end of 2011. The contract could account for as much as 20% of the world’s total nuclear spending over the next two decades. Five companies — from France, China, South Korea, Russia and a joint United States-Japanese consortium are competing to win the contract.⁷²

Sudan

- **FAO warns of food crisis in Sudan’s border regions; UN warns of further tension in Abeyi region**

Reports noted that the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) sounded the alarm over a looming food crisis in Sudan’s border states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, saying it needs 3.5 million USD to save the harvest in both regions. South Kordofan and Blue Nile, which lie on the borders between Sudan and the newly independent South Sudan, descended into violence after clashes erupted between the Sudanese Army (SAF) and rebels of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement North (SPLM-N) who are aligned with South Sudan.⁷³

⁶⁸ “Rebels kill scores in Somali capital blast”, *The Jordan Times*, October 5, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41961>

⁶⁹ “Mogadishu carnage only the beginning, says al-Shabaab”, *Mail and Guardian*, October 5, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-10-05-mogadishu-carnage-only-the-beginning-says-alshabaab/>

⁷⁰ *The Jordan Times*, No. 1

⁷¹ “SA defends ‘ambivalent’ stance on Syria”, *Mail and Guardian*, October 7, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-10-07-sa-defends-ambivalent-stance-on-syria>

⁷² “Battle for South Africa’s R1-trillion nuclear contract”, *Mail and Guardian*, October 7, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-10-07-r1trillion-nuclear-tender-bidding-war>

⁷³ “UN agency warns of food crisis in Sudan’s border regions”, *The Sudan Tribune*, October 5, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/UN-agency-warns-of-food-crisis-in,40346>

In another development, the United Nations warned that neither Sudan nor South Sudan have fulfilled their pledges to withdraw their forces from the disputed Abyei area, threatening a deterioration in tensions between migrating herders and displaced farmers returning to plant their crops. Referring to the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), the UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Hervé Ladsous told the Security Council that the mission's best efforts cannot compensate for the progress urgently needed on the political track.⁷⁴

Nigeria

- **Police question British oil worker over arms import; Obasanjo refutes the idea that Nigeria has failed after fifty one years of its political independence**

According to reports, former President Olusegun Obasanjo has disagreed with some Nigerians that the country has failed after 51 years of its political independence. Obasanjo did not subscribe to the notion that the security challenge facing the country must solely be addressed by the Federal Government. Further, he appealed to Nigerians to stop shifting the blame of insecurity on the agencies and the political leadership, insisting that it is the business of all the citizens.⁷⁵

In other developments, according to reports, a female British oil worker was questioned by the Police in Onne Port, Rivers State over alleged illegal importation of arm and ammunition into Nigeria.⁷⁶

Côte D'ivoire

- **World Food Programme (WFP) launches scheme to help poor buy food; FRCI army is rebranded as FANCI; HRW releases report on atrocities since 2010 elections**

Reports noted that the World Food Programme (WFP) launched a pilot programme that uses mobile telephone technology to facilitate cash transfers to help poor people buy food in Côte d'Ivoire. According to Alain Cordeil, the WFP Country Director in Côte d'Ivoire, more than 10,000 households in Abobo and Yopougon districts in the commercial capital, Abidjan, will receive a text message on their mobile phones alerting them to the transaction and allowing them to withdraw money from local cash points of the telecoms provider MTN. A total of \$1.6 million will be disbursed in the pilot project, with each household receiving \$75 per month, equivalent to the food basket of an average family of five.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ "UN Warns of Further Tension As Sudan and South Sudan Maintain Troops in Disputed Area", *AllAfrica.com*, October 6, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110061173.html>

⁷⁵ "Nigeria has not failed, says Obasanjo", *Nigerian Guardian*, October 7, 2011, at http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=63522:-nigeria-has-not-failed-says-obasanjo&catid=1:national&Itemid=559

⁷⁶ "Police quiz Briton over arms import", *Nigerian Guardian*, October 7, 2011, at http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=63521:-police-quiz-briton-over-arms-import&catid=1:national&Itemid=559

⁷⁷ "UN Launches Phone-Based Scheme to Help Poor Buy Food", *AllAfrica.com*, October 4, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110050012.html>

Separately, in an attempt to change the army's negative image, the Ivoirian government rebranded the national army as Forces Armées Nationales de Côte d'Ivoire or (FANCI) as it undergoes major reforms, which include demobilizing 10,000 soldiers by the end of 2011, training up troops, and restructuring existing posts. While the current army, Forces Républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI), is made up mainly of ex-members of rebel group Forces Nouvelles (FN) and volunteers; the FANCI will be made up of 29,000 ex-Forces de Défense et de Sécurité (FDS) troops previously under President Gbagbo, 9,000 ex-FN troops, and 2,000 volunteers.⁷⁸

In other developments, releasing a report titled "They Killed Them like It Was Nothing": The Need for Justice for Côte d'Ivoire's Post-Election Crimes," the Human Rights Watch noted that civilians in Côte d'Ivoire suffered through six months of violence after disputed elections in November 2010. The 130-page report details the war crimes and likely crimes against humanity committed by forces under both Gbagbo and Ouattara. HRW expressed that the government of President Alassane Ouattara should match its rhetorical commitment to impartial justice with action against its own troops involved in crimes during the post-election violence and its aftermath. It opined that any imbalance in justice efforts threatens to open new divisions at a moment when the Ouattara government has a unique opportunity to move Côte d'Ivoire past the manipulation of political and ethnic blocs that occurred under former President Laurent Gbagbo.⁷⁹

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

National

- **Chinese presence in PoK raises alarm in India; Indo-Bangladesh Army exercise begins**

Army Chief Gen VK Singh has said that around 4,000 Chinese including the troops of the People's Liberation Army of China are in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK). "There are certain construction working teams, a large number is available. Around 3,000 to 4,000 of these people are present including certain people for security purposes. There are certain engineers' troops. Now (like) our own engineers are combat engineers. So, in some way they are part of the PLA," he told reporters. The Army Chief was responding to a query on the presence of Chinese Army troops in the PoK on the sidelines of the 16th Field Marshal K M Cariappa Memorial Lecture delivered by National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon. The statement comes against the backdrop of concerns and anxiety in India about the presence and engagement of Chinese troops in PoK, which India considers as its own land. China is engaged in construction activities of highways and dams in PoK as well as the northern areas which are very close to the LoC.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ "Rebranding the Army", *AllAfrica.com*, October 5, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110051041.html>

⁷⁹ "Impartial Justice Poses Test for Ouattara", *AllAfrica.com*, October 5, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201110060709.html>

⁸⁰ "Around 4,000 Chinese, Including Troops In PoK", *Defence News*, October 06, 2011, at <http://www.defencenews.in/defence-news-internal.asp?get=new&id=736>

Meanwhile, India Bangladesh Joint army Exercise Sampriti II began on Sunday at Sylhet, in Bangladesh about 240 kilometres from Dhaka. The exercise is organized at the Jalalabad Cantonment of the Bangladesh army at Sylhet. A twenty five member team of the Indian army led by Major S.Y Mahadhik is participating in the Joint exercise with its counterparts in Bangladeshi army. The first exercise Sampriti I was organized in Jorhat at Assam last year in the month of November. A 25 member team of the Bangladesh Army had participated in the first exercise. These platoon level exercises are part of the co-operative efforts between the two armies for professional development and also to promote goodwill between the forces of the two neighbouring countries.⁸¹

International

● Japan grounds F-15s after accident; Army chief sacked in Zambia

According to reports, a fuel tank and other parts dropped from a Japanese F-15 fighter jet on October 7, the air force has suspended all F-15 fighter flights and began an investigation into the accident. However, no injuries were reported after the parts landed on a water treatment center and in an empty lot just outside Komatsu base in Ishikawa prefecture in western Japan, the air force said. The air force is yet to ascertain the reason as to why the jet's parts fell during the morning practice flight. Reports added that despite the incident, the aircraft returned to the base safely.⁸²

Meanwhile, Zambia's new President Michael Sata on October 7 sacked army chief Wisdom Lopa and appointed Lt. Gen. Paul Mihova, previously the defense attache at Zambia's embassy in South Africa, as the new army commander. At Mihova's swearing-in ceremony, Sata asked Defense Minister Geoffrey Mwamba to improve the conditions of service for defense personnel, who cannot afford better housing on their salaries. "You have to look after the welfare of officers, accommodation and salaries should be improved. I want the army to be comfortable," the President said. Mihova's appointment was the latest top-level change by Sata, who has also sacked the police chief, the central bank governor, the head of the anti-corruption bureau and the chief of the public broadcaster. Nicknamed the "man of action", he promised to deliver major reforms within 90 days of taking office and seems to be on course.⁸³

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

Jammu & Kashmir

● Two militants killed in South Kashmir's Pulwama district; Union Minister of State Defence Dr. Pallam Raju visits Jammu and Kashmir; JKLF unites after a long gap; Yasin Malik,

⁸¹ "India-Bangladesh Joint Army Exercise Sampriti II Begins", Defence News, October 10, 2011, at <http://www.defencenews.in/defence-news-internal.asp?get=new&id=744>

⁸² "Japan Grounds F-15s After Parts Fall Near Houses", "AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE", October 07, 2011, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=7894331&c=ASI&s=AIR>

⁸³ "Zambia's President Sacks Army Chief", AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, October 07, 2011, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=7897079&c=MID&s=LAN>

Chairman JKLF arrested on way to Sopore; Suspect of September 7 Delhi High Court blast sent to custody; Hizb Commander killed; Two militants killed in Kangan, Ganderbal District

Reports noted that two militants, including a divisional commander of Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), were killed in separate encounters across the Valley. Army's 55-RR and SOG, Pulwama cordoned off the Subdan village in south Kashmir's Pulwama district and launched searches. Militants present there opened fire on the search party which was retaliated triggering a gunfight in which the LeT commander identified as Abdul Rehman, alias Rehman Bhai was killed. In another incident a militant was killed in an ongoing gunfight in frontier district of Kupwara.⁸⁴

In another development, Union Minister of State for Defence Dr M M Pallam Raju arrived for two day visit of Jammu and Kashmir. On the first day, he reviewed various projects undertaken by Border Road Organisation in Jammu and Kashmir and is also expected to visit some forward areas of Jammu to review the security situation along Indo-Pak border and Line of Control.⁸⁵

According to reports, Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front Chairman Muhammad Yasin Malik announced the formal merger of his faction and the other one led by the veteran JKLF leader Amanullah Khan. Addressing a news conference Malik said, after 16 years, JKLF headed by him and Amanullah Khan is announcing the decision of formal reunification in Srinagar and Islamabad simultaneously.⁸⁶

Meanwhile, reports noted that police arrested the Chairman of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) Muhammad Yasin Malik along with some other party leaders and activists at Sangrama, while he was on his way to Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. Malik was scheduled to address a protest rally at Sopore organized against the proposed hanging of Afzal Guru and several other issues.⁸⁷

In another development, a Delhi court allowed the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to quiz Wasim Akram Malik, a Kashmiri native, for fourteen days in its custody in connection with the September 7 Delhi High Court blast case. Special NIA judge H S Sharma remanded Malik, a student of medicine in Bangladesh, for interrogation by the NIA, termed by the investigators as 'key link' in the conspiracy behind the blast.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ "2 militants killed in encounters", *Greater Kashmir*, October 3, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/4/2-militants-killed-in-encounters-59.asp>

⁸⁵ "Raju arrives on 2-day visit", *Greater Kashmir*, October 5, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/6/raju-arrives-on-2-day-visit-40.asp>

⁸⁶ "JKLF reunites after 16 years", *Greater Kashmir*, October 6, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/7/jklf-reunites-after-16-yrs-44.asp>

⁸⁷ "Yasin Malik held on way to Sopore", *Greater Kashmir*, October 7, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/8/yasin-malik-held-on-way-to-sopore-42.asp>

⁸⁸ "Court sends Wasseem to 14 days custody", *Greater Kashmir*, October 7, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/8/court-sends-waseem-to-14-days-custody-30.asp>

According to Army sources, a top commander of Hizbul Mujahideen was killed in the remote mountainous area of Doda district. A joint party of police and soldiers cordoned off Marmat area, about 180 km from here, and launched searches. Militants present there opened fire on the search party which was retaliated triggering an encounter in which a Hizb militant was killed. The slain militant is identified as Azad Hussain Wani of Doda. He was active in the area since 1998 and was involved in numerous cases.⁸⁹

In other developments, according to police sources, two militants were killed in a gunfight in Kangan area of north Kashmir's Ganderbal district. Joint party of police and soldiers of 24-Rashtriya Rifles cordoned off Herpora village in Kangan area and launched searches. Militants holed up inside the house of Muhammad Subhan Mir resorted to indiscriminate firing and tried to break the cordon. The fire was retaliated, triggering a gunfight.⁹⁰

North East India

- **Economic blockade in Manipur completes seventy days; Garo militants overrun forest office in Williamnagar, Meghalaya; Militant escapes from police custody in Manipur; Gun-making tools and IED recovered from Goalpara, Assam; Six NSCN-IM cadres and a civilian killed in a shootout in Manipur;**

Reports noted that the economic blockade by Sadar Hills Districthood Demand Committee (SHDCC) entered the 70th day on October 9, becoming in the process the longest ever blockade imposed on road links to Manipur till date. The blockade began from July 31 midnight after SHDCC choked the National Highway 39 and 53 – Manipur's lifelines that meet in capital Imphal from two different directions after cutting through hills inhabited by various tribes. The SHDCC demands creation of Sadar Hills district while the Naga group-United Naga Council(UNC), protesting the creation of the district with Naga inhabited area, called a counter blockade on the above highways and NH 150 from August 21.⁹¹

In another development, heavily armed Garo militants belonging to the Garo National Liberation Army attacked a Forest department Range office in East Garo Hills district headquarters of Williamnagar and took away seven weapons but leaving the office staff unharmed. As many as 15 GNLA militants dressed in battle fatigues and armed with AK rifles crossed over from the nearby Simsang river to the Range office at Chidekgre, four kms from Williamnagar town and surrounded the Range office. Among the looted weapons were three pump action shot guns and four Single Barrel guns (SBBL).⁹²

⁸⁹ "Hizb commander killed: Army", *Greater Kashmir*, October 8, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/9/hizb-commander-killed-army-31.asp>

⁹⁰ "2 militants killed in Kangan", *Greater Kashmir*, October 9, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/10/2-militants-killed-in-kangan-40.asp>

⁹¹ "Manipur economic blockade completes 70 days", *The Assam Tribune*, October 9, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct1011/oth05>

⁹² "Garo militants over-run Forest office", *The Assam Tribune*, October 4, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct0511/oth07>

According to reports, Leader of Manipur-based armed group Kangleipak Communist Party-Mobile Task Force (KCP-MTF) Ch Aken Meitei alias Sunil Meitei alias Leninkumar alias Premkumar alias Prakash (35), a resident of Wahengkhuman Mayai Leikai village in Imphal West district escaped from the custody of Porompat police station in Imphal East district. The militant is suspected to have escaped by making a small hole in the cell wall before scaling a 6 ft high compound wall of the Police station. Seven police personnel including Officer-in-Charge of a police station have been suspended and an inquiry has also been ordered into the incident.⁹³

However, an improvised explosive device (IED) and implements for making guns were recovered during search operations from Goalpara district. A joint police and CRPF team led by district additional superintendent of police P K Brahma recovered the 1.5 kg bomb from near the house of one Pulen Rabha at Dhekiabari under Krishnai police station. Meanwhile, at Makri on National Highway 37, army personnel from the 36 Regiment during a search operation apprehended Kapil Das, militant of Rava Viper Army (RVA), a local ethnic insurgent outfit from a dhaba (roadside eatery). The militant was handed over to police for further action.⁹⁴

In other developments, reports noted that six NSCN-IM cadres and a civilian were killed in a shoot-out with the Zeliangrong Tiger Force (ZTF), the armed wing of the Zeliangrong United Front (ZUF) in Tamenglong district of Manipur. The incident happened when a group of NSCN (IM) cadres heading towards Khoupum village were ambushed by a group of ZUF cadres near Leishom near Khoupum, bordering Churachandpur, Tamenglong and Bishnupur districts, resulting in heavy casualty on the NSCN (IM) side.⁹⁵

IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

- **India abstains on Syrian resolution; UN condemns terrorist attack in Mogadishu; Indian President and Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha push for early UN reforms; India fights to include protection differentiated responsibility enshrined in the Kyoto Protocol in the proposed climate treaty**

In the Security Council, India abstained from voting on the Syrian resolution while Russia and China vetoed. The resolution threatened action against Syria if it did not immediately stop the deadly crackdown on anti-regime protestors. Justifying India's abstention, India's representative at the Council, H.S.Puri said that the actions of the international community should facilitate an engagement of the Syrian government and not complicate the situation by threats of sanctions and regime change. He also added that the resolution did not include condemnation of violence

⁹³ "7 cops suspended after ultra leaders escapes", *The Assam Tribune*, October 7, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct0811/oth05>

⁹⁴ "Gun-making tools, IED recovered", *The Assam Tribune*, October 8, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct0911/at098>

⁹⁵ "6 NSCN cadres, civilian killed in shoot out", *The Assam Tribune*, October 8, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct0911/oth06>

perpetrated by the Syrian opposition. India believes that engaging the country in a 'collaborative and constructive' dialogue is the only 'pragmatic and productive' way forward.⁹⁶

Meanwhile, the Security Council and other UN officials condemned the suicide bombing in the Somali capital of Mogadishu which killed scores of people and injured many more. The Council also reaffirmed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations is 'criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of its motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed'. The members of the Council also reiterated their support to the Transitional Federal Government to achieve peace, security and reconciliation through the Djibouti Peace Process and the African Mission in Somalia.⁹⁷

According to reports, India's President Pratibha Patil, on her state visit to Austria urged a reform of the UN.⁹⁸ On another occasion, in his meeting with the President of the UN General Assembly Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha K. Rahman Khan reiterated India's demands for early reform of the UN Security Council.⁹⁹ At the same meeting, he also added that India believed in the adoption of the Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) as the UN global counter-terrorism strategy is incomplete without a comprehensive convention.¹⁰⁰

In other developments, reports noted that India is fighting to include protection differentiated responsibility enshrined in the Kyoto Protocol in the proposed climate treaty with the intention of defeating the call of the developed countries of having mandatory emission reduction target for all nations. India has also urged the UN members to adopt a new climate agreement which have the basic tenements of the Kyoto Protocol. India could face difficulty in getting the Indian proposal through with many developing countries not willing to support India fully.¹⁰¹ India is also pushing for an Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) regime for developing countries to have access to costly western technologies.¹⁰²

⁹⁶ "Russia, China veto UN resolution on Syria; India abstains", *Moneycontrol.com*, October 05, 2011 at http://www.moneycontrol.com/news/wire-news/russia-china-veto-un-resolutionsyria-india-abstains_594107.html

⁹⁷ "UN deplores deadly bombing in Somali capital", *UN News Centre*, October 04, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39928&Cr=Somali&Cr1=>

⁹⁸ "Indian president Patil urges UN reform", *WAM – Emirates News Agency*, October 05, 2011 at http://www.wam.ae/servlet/Satellite?c=WamLocEnews&cid=1289995369759&pagename=WAM%2FWAM_E_Layout&parent=Query&parentid=1135099399852

⁹⁹ "India wants early UNSC reforms", *The Hindu*, October 08, 2011 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article2518614.ece>

¹⁰⁰ "India wants UN to adopt anti-terror Convention", *The Hindu*, October 05, 2011 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article2514065.ece>

¹⁰¹ "India bid to have Kyoto-like treaty faces resistance at UN", *Hindustan Times*, October 03, 2011 at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-bid-to-have-Kyoto-like-treaty-faces-resistance-at-UN/Article1-753091.aspx>

¹⁰² "Climate change: India ready to play hard ball", *Hindustan Times*, October 09, 2011 at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/Climate-change-India-ready-to-play-hard-ball/Article1-755139.aspx>