

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Afghanistan

- **US encourages Karzai to seek Pakistan's help while negotiating with Taliban; UN Reports: Torture, beating, electric shock were administered to Taliban detainees in Afghan run detention centers; Six Afghan police personnel and a tribal leader killed in bomb blast in Kandahar**

Reports noted that US officials support Afghan President Hamid Karzai's call for engaging the Taliban through Pakistan, amid speculations that Washington and Islamabad are once again warming up to each other after unprecedented tensions. Instead of dealing with "shadow intermediaries", President Karzai wants to pursue reconciliation "in a way that's more focused with established interlocutors, which the government of Pakistan would be one. We welcome that", a senior US official reportedly noted. Meanwhile, US Special Representative Marc Grossman also underlined the need for Pakistan, Afghanistan and the United States to work together to fight against terrorism.¹

In another development, according a report prepared by the United Nations, torture, beating, electric shock were administered to Taliban detainees in Afghan run detention centers. The report found that detainees in 47 facilities in 24 provinces run by the Afghan National Police and the Directorate of Security suffered interrogation techniques that constituted torture under both international and Afghan law. The abuses were result individual actions looked over by the security agencies and not of the government. The report for the first time confirms the practice and outlines much of the abuse that has been suspected of earlier.²

In other developments, in a bomb blast in Kandahar, six Afghan police personnel and a tribal elder have been killed. According to a statement issues by Kandahar governor's office, a police truck struck the bomb on Tuesday while driving in Kandahar province's Zhari district. The tribal elder was part of the Zhari district's development council.³

Pakistan

- **Pakistan raises Kashmir issue at General Assembly's Fourth (Decolonization) Committee**

¹ "Negotiations with Taliban: US encouraging Karzai to seek Pakistan's help", *Dawn*, October 10, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/10/10/negotiations-with-taliban-us-encouraging-karzai-to-seek-pakistans-help.html>

² "Detainees tortured in Afghanistan: UN", *Dawn*, October 11, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/10/11/un-detainees-tortured-in-afghanistan.html>

³ "Bomb blast kills six Afghan police, one tribal elder", *Dawn*, October 12, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/10/12/bomb-blast-kills-6-afghan-police-1-tribal-elder.html>

meeting; Pakistan PM Gilani calls for reconciliation in Balochistan; Pakistan asks United States to stop open criticism; Pakistan offers intelligence sharing on Rabbani killing

According to reports, Pakistan's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Raza Bashir Tarar told the General Assembly's Fourth (Decolonization) Committee that Kashmiri people's right to self determination is only way to settle the Kashmir dispute. He also said that decolonization agenda of the UN is unfinished without resolution of Jammu and Kashmir dispute. However, his claim was refuted by Indian representative stating that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India.⁴

In another development, PM Gilani has stated that development and reconciliation is the only solution for Balochistan militancy. He said this while attending a ceremony to mark induction of 4000 Baloch men in the army in Quetta city. Gilani urged all militants in Balochistan to opt for reconciliation. He said they were only "delaying the inevitable rise of progress" in the province if they failed to do so.⁵

Reports noted that in a serious attempt to repair its relations with Pakistan, America's special envoy Marc Grossman held wide-ranging talks with political and military leadership in Pakistan on Thursday in Islamabad. After the talks he said that US-Pakistan relations were important for both the countries and served their best interests. He said at a joint press conference with Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar that the United States wants a strong and cordial relations with Pakistan. According to reports, during a meeting with Grossman, President Asif Ali Zardari told him bluntly that restraint should be exercised in public pronouncements for the sake of developing a cooperative roadmap to overcome trust deficit.⁶

In other developments, Pakistan PM Gilani has offered intelligence sharing for investigation into the assassination of former president of Afghanistan Burhanuddin Rabbani. Gilani said that Pakistan is working on the lines to devise a combined strategy with Afghanistan to counter-terrorism in the region.⁷

Bangladesh

- **Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dipu Moni calls for Asian states to build "Crises Management Fund" to battle against natural calamities and major economic downturns; Myanmar assures Bangladesh of postponing the construction of a road close to the zero line; Bangladesh accords its official recognition to the National Transitional Council of Libya**

Reports noted that Foreign Minister Dipu Moni has called for Asian states to jointly build a

⁴ "Pakistan urges settlement of Kashmir Dispute", *Dawn*, October 11, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/10/11/pakistan-urges-settlement-of-kashmir-dispute.html>

⁵ "Pakistan PM Gilani urges reconciliation for Balochistan", *BBC*, October 11, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-15254843>

⁶ "US urged to avoid verbal assaults, finger pointing", *Dawn*, October 14, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/10/14/us-urged-to-avoid-verbal-assaults-finger-pointing.html>

⁷ "Gilani offers intelligence sharing to Afghanistan in Rabbani killing", *Dawn*, October 11, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/10/11/gilani-offers-intelligence-sharing-to-afghanistan-in-rabbani-killing.html>

“Crises Management Fund” to battle against natural calamities and major economic downturns. She made the call while addressing the 10th Ministerial Meeting of the two-day Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) on October 10, 2011.⁸

Meanwhile, Myanmar assured Bangladesh of postponing the construction of a road close to the zero line of Tambru frontier under Ghumdhum union of Naikkhongchhari upazila in Bandarban on October 10. It has also pledged to relocate the barbed wire fence from two places along the zero line of this frontier. The assurance came from Myanmar border force Nasaka at a battalion level flag meeting with Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) at Dakhhin Ghumdhum Govt Primary School.⁹

In other developments, Bangladesh accorded its official recognition to the National Transitional Council as the interim authority of Libya on October 13.¹⁰

Sri Lanka

- **India’s Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai: India will help in re-building 79 schools in the war-affected Northern Province of Sri Lanka at a cost of LKR 160 million; India sets up, ‘the Development Co-ordination Wing’ at its High Commission in Colombo; President of Vietnam paid official visit to Sri Lanka**

India’s Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai visited Sri Lanka from October 8-10, 2011. During the visit, on October 10, he announced that India will help in re-building 79 schools in the war-affected Northern Province of Sri Lanka at a cost of LKR 160 million. India will also take up work on restoration of the Tirukoteeswaram Temple in Mannar, and has also offered help in restoration of another ancient temple near Sampur.¹¹ On the question of fishermen issue, Foreign Secretary stressed on the need for Sri Lanka and India to jointly encourage deep sea fishing by fishermen of the two countries so that possible clashes along the narrow strip of sea off the north of Sri Lanka could be avoided. Foreign Secretary visited Sri Lanka from October 8-10, 2011.¹²

Reportedly, India has set up a special unit, ‘the Development Co-ordination Wing’ attached to its High Commission in Colombo to oversee the development projects being funded by India in Sri Lanka and appointed a special official to co-ordinate and supervise work in this regard.¹³

⁸ “FM for pan-Asian crises fund”, *The Daily Star*, October 12, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=206141>

⁹ “Bandarban Border: Myanmar to stop road construction”, *The Daily Star*, October 11, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=205989>

¹⁰ “Bangladesh recognises Libya NTC”, *The Daily Star*, October 14, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=206494>

¹¹ “India to help rebuild 79 schools in North”, *Daily Mirror*, October 10, 2011 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/14032-india-to-help-rebuild-79-schools-in-north-.html>

¹² “Encourage SL-India deep sea fishing: Mathai”, *Daily Mirror*, October 12, 2011 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/14061-encourage-sl-india-deep-sea-fishing-mathai-.html>

¹³ “India sets up ‘Development Co-ordination Wing’”, *Daily Mirror*, October 16, 2011 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/14141-india-sets-up-development-co-ordination-wing.html>

In other developments, at the invitation of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam Truong Tan Sang paid a state visit to Sri Lanka from 13-15th October 2011. Eight MoU were signed by the two countries during the visit.¹⁴

Maldives

- **President Nasheed visits France; President Mohamed Nasheed invited to the 4th Democracy Forum to be held in Bali**

Reports noted that President Mohamed Nasheed paid an official visit to France October 11-13, 2011. During his visit, President Nasheed held discussions with the French Minister for Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing, and the French Minister of Foreign and European Affairs. The President also met with leading travel and tour operators of France.¹⁵

In another development, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia has invited President Mohamed Nasheed, to the 4th Democracy Forum to be held in Bali of Indonesia this December. The letter of invitation was presented to Special Envoy of the President Ibrahim Hussain Zaki, by the Special Envoy of Indonesia Abdurrahman Mohammad Fachir.¹⁶

B. East Asia

South East Asia

- **Myanmar President visits India to enhance bilateral cooperation; India, Vietnam ink energy pact; India agrees to assist Myanmar in agricultural sector; India's Tata Motors to set up bus-assembly line in Myanmar; China-Vietnam to strengthen military ties; Malaysian King to get Indonesia's highest honour**

Myanmar President was on a visit to India to enhance bilateral cooperation with India in a number of sectors.¹⁷ Reports noted that on October 12, 2011, India and Vietnam signed an agreement to promote oil exploration on Vietnamese shore. The accord was signed between

¹⁴ "Joint Communique between the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam", *Ministry of External Affairs, Sri Lanka*, October 15, 2011 at <http://www.mea.gov.lk/index.php/en/media/3068-joint-communique-between-the-democratic-socialist-republic-of-sri-lanka-and-the-socialist-republic-of-viet-nam>

¹⁵ "President Mohamed Nasheed Departs for France", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, October 11, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=6079>; "President Returns to Male' Following Conclusion of Visit to France", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, October 14, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=6090>

¹⁶ "Indonesian President Invites President Nasheed to the Bali Democracy Forum", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, October 10, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=6075>

¹⁷ India promises assistance to Myanmar in agri sector, *Deccan Herald*, October 15, 2011 at <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/198066/india-promises-assistance-myanmar-agri.html>

ONGC- Videsh and Petro Vietnam. The accord covers new investments and the exploration and supply of oil and gas.¹⁸

In another development, Indian Minister for Agriculture Harsh Rawat on October 15 said in a statement that India would help Myanmar in increasing yield of its key crops such as rice and pulses. India will also help Myanmar in livestock sector.¹⁹ Meanwhile, the Myanmar government and Tata Motors are discussing the possibility of Tata Motors setting up a bus-assembly line apart from supply of passenger vehicles to the Myanmar. The issue was discussed between Soe Thein, Myanmar's Minister of Industry and Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises Minister Praful Patel on October 14.²⁰

According to reports, China and Vietnam have agreed to strengthen military ties and establish regular contacts between high-ranking officers. The two sides also agreed to setup a hotline for the two defence ministers. The two sides also agreed upon joint patrol along the land border, and continuing with the joint naval patrols in the Beibu Gulf. A joint statement was released at the end of Vietnamese Communist Party's chief Nguyen Phu's visit to China.²¹

In other developments in the region, King Mizan Zainal Abidin will be awarded the highest Indonesian order. The Indonesian President Susilo Yudhoyono issued a statement in that regard on October 10, 2011. According to the media reports, this is a step to reduce tensions between the two Southeast Asian nations.²²

China

- **China, Vietnam pledge to properly settle maritime issues; CPC kicks off 6th plenum, focus on cultural development; Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin visits Beijing, hold talks with President Hu China pledges \$70m help to Horn of Africa; China to donate \$5m to Pakistani flood victims and \$1.6m to flood hit Thailand**

On the bilateral front, China and Vietnam have reasserted their determination to solve the existing maritime issues through negotiations. This was stated in a joint statement on October 15, 2011. The statement was issued at the end of Vietnamese Communist Party chief Nguyen Phu Trong's first visit to China from October 11-15 at the invitation of Hu Jintao, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and Chinese president.²³

¹⁸ India, Vietnam sign energy accord, *Yahoo News*, October 12, 2011, <http://news.yahoo.com/india-vietnam-sign-energy-accord-115834351.html>

¹⁹ India promises assistance to Myanmar in agri sector, *Deccan Herald*, October 15, 2011 at <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/198066/india-promises-assistance-myanmar-agri.html>

²⁰ Tata Motors in talks wit Myanmar to set up bus-assembly line, *Economic Times*, October 14, 2011 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2011-10-14/news/30279151_1_myanmar-minister-india-and-myanmar-myanmar-government

²¹ China and Vietnam to strengthen military ties: report, *News Daily*, October 15, 2011, <http://www.newsdaily.com/stories/tre79e0ir-us-china-vietnam/>

²² Malaysia King to get top Indonesian honor, *The Jakarta Post*, October, 2011, <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/10/16/malaysia-king-get-top-indonesian-honor.html>

²³ "China, Vietnam pledge to properly settle maritime issues" *China Daily*, October 15, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-10/15/content_13906253.htm

On domestic issues, the 17th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) opened the Sixth Plenary Session in Beijing on October 15, 2011. The committee will discuss the issue of country's deepening cultural reform and the ways to promote development and prosperity.²⁴

In a significant development, President Hu Jintao met Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin Wednesday in Beijing to exchange views on the development of the strategic relations of cooperation and partnership between China and Russia on October 12, 2011.²⁵

In other developments, China has decided to offer 70 million dollars in aid to Horn of Africa in order to help in coping with the drought.²⁶ China has also announced an aid of 5 million dollars to flood hit Pakistan²⁷ and 1.6 million dollars in aid to flood hit Thailand.²⁸

Japan

- **Japan-ASEAN Joint Declaration to emphasize on promoting maritime security cooperation; Japanese Prime Minister might announce Japan's intention to relax its ban on arms exports; Prime Minister Noda intends to join TPP talks**

According to reports, Japan and the ASEAN are to pledge to promote maritime security cooperation in the upcoming Japan-ASEAN summit talks scheduled to be held in mid-November in Indonesia. This pledge will be a part of the Japan- ASEAN Joint Declaration to be issued during the summit meeting. This will be the first joint Declaration between the two parties after the conclusion of the Tokyo Declaration (December 2003), which called for economic cooperation. Japan and ASEAN countries emphasis on maritime cooperation has a lot of significance considering that both have become increasingly wary of China's growing presence in the region and in recent years, territorial disputes between China and southeast Asian countries as well as Japan have intensified.²⁹

Meanwhile reports noted that during his upcoming meeting with US President Barack Obama in November this year, Japanese President Yoshihiko Noda might announce Japan's self-imposed ban on arms export, which have so far, virtually prohibited Japan from exporting all weapons and related technologies. In recent years, the export ban has been severely criticized as it has restricted Japan from participating in development projects of the latest defence equipment

²⁴ "CPC kicks off 6th plenum, focus on cultural development" China Daily, October 15, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-10/15/content_13906293.htm

²⁵ "Hu meets Putin on bilateral ties" China Daily, October 12, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-10/12/content_13877723.htm

²⁶ "China pledges \$70m help to Horn of Africa" China Daily, October 13, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-10/13/content_13894283.htm

²⁷ "China to donate \$5m to Pakistani flood victims" China Daily, October 7, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-10/07/content_13845104.htm

²⁸ "China sends relief aid to flood-hit Thailand" China Daily, October 12, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-10/15/content_13906253.htm

²⁹ "Japan, ASEAN to boost sea security", *Yomiurri Shimbun*, October 15, 2011, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T111014005101.htm>

technology. This has also adversely affected the technological foundation of Japan's defense industry. Under the plan to relax arms export, Japan will be able to participate in joint development and production of arms with countries that adhere to international arms export controls based on UN resolutions and other rules, while banning exports to specific countries not participating in such control mechanisms.³⁰

In other developments, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda has recently indicated his intention to announce Japan's participation in the negotiations for the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement (TPP) during the upcoming APEC summit meeting in Hawaii in November. Within Japan, agricultural and some other organizations have raised voice against the TPP as they fear that lowering tariffs under the free trade pact could bring a flood of imported products and affect the market of home-grown products. However, Noda apparently believes that it is necessary for Japan to join in the process of compiling rules for the TPP.³¹

South Korea

- **South Korean President Lee Myung-bak visits the United States, marking the first state visit by a South Korean President in thirteen years; President Lee and President Obama holds discussions on several important issues**

In a significant development, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak visited the United States on October 12. This marked the first state visit by a South Korean President in thirteen years. During the welcoming ceremony, US President Barack Obama said that the bilateral relationship between the two countries had been stronger than before. President Lee was particularly enthusiastic about the bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) which was approved by the Congress on October 12, just prior to his arrival in the US. Congressional approval is expected to ensure closer economic ties between the two allies. During the recent visit, both Obama and Lee discussed joint diplomatic initiatives, including cooperation in the construction of social infrastructure in Libya. As South Korea has recently decided to dispatch troops to Afghanistan once again to support the US effort there, many have started arguing that South Korea has emerged as the most dependable partner of the United States in Asia.³²

C. Central Asia & Russia

Central Asia

- **Astana hosts international forum for nuclear weapons-free world; Scientists in Kazakhstan successfully down blend 72 pounds of highly dangerous nuclear material; Kazakhstan lifts moratorium on Russian ICBM test launches; Turkmen South Iolotan becomes world's second**

³⁰ "Noda to brief Obama on arms exports/Relaxing ban to enable joint development", *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 15, 2011, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T111014004781.htm>

³¹ "PM indicates intention to join TPP talks/Aiming to announce at Nov. forum", *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 10, 2011, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T111009003175.htm>

³² "Lee's visit highlights South Korea's status as key US ally", *The Asahi Shimbun*, October 15, 2011, at http://ajw.asahi.com/article/asia/korean_peninsula/AJ2011101514652

largest gas field; Turkmenistan is ready to move ahead with Nabucco project; Caspian coastal states agree to establish Caspian Floating University; Members of extremist Islamist groups caught by Kyrgyz security agency; Kyrgyz premier exercises caution over joining the customs union; Kyrgyzstan: Soft loans sought from Japan; Kazakh and UAE leaders hold talks on trade and commerce

Reports noted that Astana-hosted international forum for a nuclear weapons-free world on 12th October, bringing together 400 scientists, experts and politicians from different countries, the heads and representatives of international organizations such as UN, IAEA, OSCE, SCO, CSTO, EurAsEC, CICA, UNESCO, CTBTO. President Nursultan Nazarbayev announced the closing of Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, which was operational since the first test in 1949. Kazakhstan was the first in the world to have closed the nuclear test site on its land.³³ The “Declaration on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World”³⁴ was adopted by the International Forum.³⁵

In a related development, scientists in Kazakhstan have finished converting 72 pounds of highly dangerous nuclear material into blended down uranium wherein the low-enriched uranium will now be returned to the Institute of Nuclear Physics in Almaty for use in civilian research projects. The Kazakh government collaborated with the United States and UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).³⁶ This is done with an aim to secure nuclear material, strengthen the international nuclear nonproliferation regime, and to pursue a world without nuclear weapons. However, according to the head of the Russian space agency Roscosmos Vladimir Popovkin, Kazakhstan has lifted a moratorium imposed in 2009 on test launches of Russian intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) from the Baikonur Space Center. The ban was in line with the Kazakh government’s plans to make Baikonur a purely commercial space launch facility. The last launch prior to the moratorium was carried out in October 2008 and involved an RS-18 (SS-19 Stiletto) ICBM with a range exceeding 9,600 km (6,000 miles).³⁷

According to reports, auditors have confirmed on October 11 that Turkmenistan holds the world’s second largest gas field, thus underlining its growing importance as a global energy supplier. After months of research, auditors Gaffney, Cline & Associates said that the South Iolotan field contains between 13.1 trillion cubic metres and 21.2 trillion cubic metres of gas, second only in size to Iran’s South Pars.³⁸ Chinese state oil and gas company CNPC is one of four companies

³³ “Astana forum of global scale. President Nursultan Nazarbayev’s initiatives on disarmament and nonproliferation”, *Kazpravda*, October 13, 2011 at <http://www.kazpravda.kz/c/1318498110> Sourced from Kazworld Info: <http://kazworld.info/?p=17134>

³⁴ Full copy of the Declaration is available at <http://portal.mfa.kz/portal/page/portal/mfa/en/content/news/news2011/2011-10-12>

³⁵ “Declaration on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World adopted in Astana”, *Kazinform*, October 12, 2011 at <http://www.inform.kz/eng/article/2411506>

³⁶ “US, Kazakh scientists complete nuclear conversion in secret op”, *Universal Newswires*, October 13, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10423>

³⁷ “Kazakhstan lifts ban on launches of Russian ballistic missiles”, *Ria Novosti*, October 08, 2011 at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20111008/167481011.html>

³⁸ James Kilner, “Turkmenistan holds world’s second largest gas field”, *The Telegraph*, October 11, 2011 at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/turkmenistan/8820509/Turkmenistan-holds-worlds-second-largest-gas-field.html>

that won a tender in 2009 to develop the South Ioloten field while the others being Petrofac Emirates, South Korea's LG International Corp and Hyundai Engineering Co.³⁹

In a related event, President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, while meeting his Austrian counterpart Heinz Fischer said that his country is ready to move ahead with plans to provide gas for the Nabucco pipeline project. Fischer indicated that Europe may be willing to pay a higher price for Turkmen gas. Europe is eager to begin construction on the 2,000-mile pipeline, which would provide the EU with energy security while breaking its reliance on Russia for much of its gas supplies.⁴⁰

According to reports, the Caspian coastal states- Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Russia and Azerbaijan, have agreed to establish a Caspian Floating University which is expected to be opened in 2012. The institution is intended to strengthen cooperation between littoral countries in spheres of scientific and practical studies and provide opportunities for students to gain foreign academic experience.⁴¹ According to the agreement between the five, countries who exhibit high levels of teaching in these subjects may receive students from the other four.⁴²

In another development, Chairman of Kyrgyz State Committee on National Security (GKNB) Keneshbek Dushebayev told a press conference in Bishkek that an ongoing security sweep in the volatile southern regions of the country has netted 11 members of banned extremist Islamist groups which includes ethnic Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Uighur, Tajiks and a Kazakh, who belonged to the banned organizations – Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and the Islamic Jihad Group.⁴³ The aim of these extremist groups was to disrupt the upcoming presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan. Acting Kyrgyz premier Omurbek Babanov emphasized recently that Kyrgyzstan would benefit from joining the customs union shared by Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus, but only if his country's interests were taken into account. Though he expressed the need to join the union, which will ease trade restrictions and movement, he added that Kyrgyzstan would need to negotiate special terms.⁴⁴

Reports noted that the proposal to request Japanese lenders to resume soft loans to Kyrgyzstan was expressed by Finance Minister Melis Mambetzhonov, during a one-day conference on October 12 in Tokyo. The conference was titled as "Sustainable development in low-income

³⁹ James Kilner, "Turkmenistan holds world's second largest gas field", *The Telegraph*, October 11, 2011 at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/turkmenistan/8820509/Turkmenistan-holds-worlds-second-largest-gas-field.html>

⁴⁰ "Turkmenistan moves forward with Nabucco talks", *Universal Newswires*, October 13, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10426>

⁴¹ "Caspian states to create 'floating university'", *Universal Newswires*, October 13, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10421>

⁴² "Caspian states to create 'floating university'", *Universal Newswires*, October 13, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10421>

⁴³ "Islamist plot foiled by Kyrgyz security agency", *Universal Newswires*, October 12, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10412>

⁴⁴ "Babanov gives measured support to Kyrgyz customs union accession", *Universal Newswires*, October 13, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10428>

Asian countries: Issues for infrastructure investment and financial sector". It would be worth noting that Japan stopped extending soft yen loans to the volatile Central Asian country in 2006, during the presidency of Kurmanbek Bakiev.⁴⁵

In other developments, President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan met his counterpart Nursultan Nazarbayev on October 13 for talks on expanding cooperation in a range of areas and exchanged views on issues that concerned both countries. The two countries are engaged in cooperative ventures in banking, commerce, industry and transport. The two governments have both expressed the need to develop more advanced technologies for their oil and gas industries while enhancing and protecting the environment.⁴⁶

Russia

- **Russia and United States conduct joint naval anti-terror exercises in the Pacific; Russia's decision to buy Spanish bonds to depend on the outcome of the EU summit in October this year; Russia to conduct active WTO talks within the next two weeks; Russia and Belarus will sign a new gas contract agreement in November this year; Russia and China discuss a whole range of issues, agreed to create a US\$ 4 billion investment fund; Transneft suspends oil supplies to China due to a big earthquake in the Amur region; Russia will review European energy rules; A second stealth corvette joins the Russian navy; Russia's Skolkovo Fund and Japanese University Waseda sign a cooperation agreement; Russia's Defence Ministry invites 600 defence plants to take part in the fulfilment of state defence orders of 2012; President Medvedev calls for Russia to formulate its position on the issue of trans-Caspian gas pipeline projects; USA's Ambassador nominee to Russia promises to provide support to civil society groups in Russia**

Reports noted that the Russian and the United States navies have begun a joint anti-terrorism exercises near the Mariana Islands. They will also start joint manoeuvring and exchange of light signals. After the drills, the Russian task force will pay a visit to Vancouver, Canada.⁴⁷

Russia's decision on acquiring Spain's debt securities will depend on the outcome of the EU summit scheduled to be held on 23rd October. Recently, the ratings agency Standard and Poor has downgraded the long-term credit rating of Spain by one notch to AA- from AA and has signalled further possible downgrades.⁴⁸

According to reports, Russia will conduct active WTO accession negotiations within the next two weeks. Both multilateral and bilateral consultations with WTO member-states are scheduled.

⁴⁵ "Kyrgyzstan requests soft loans from Japan", *Universal Newswires*, October 12, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kyrgyzstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10414>

⁴⁶ "UAE leader holds private talks with Nazarbayev", *Universal Newswires*, October 14, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10435>

⁴⁷ "Russian-US naval anti-terror exercises begin in Pacific", *RIA Novosti*, October 13th, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20111013/167641543.html

⁴⁸ "Russia's decision to buy Spain's bonds depends on EU summit", *ITAR-TASS*, October 14th, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/247730.html>

The next round of talks with Georgia through mediation of Switzerland is also in the pipeline. Moreover, only one section of the report of the working group on Russia's accession to the WTO – the industrial assembly of cars – remains unconsidered. Other forty five sections of the report have received preliminary approval.⁴⁹

Meanwhile, Russia and Belarus will sign a new gas supply and transit contract in November this year. Both countries have discussed details of the new contract based on a draft agreement on the purchase of 50 percent of shares in Beltransgaz.⁵⁰

Russia's Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has proposed to discuss the whole range of Russia-Chinese relations at the meeting with Chinese leader Hu Jintao. They have also agreed to create a US\$ 4 billion investment fund.⁵¹

Russia's Transneft oil pipeline monopoly has suspended oil supplies to China via the Eastern Siberia Pacific Ocean (ESPO) pipeline following a 5.9-magnitude earthquake on Russia's far eastern Amur region. The pipeline carries 300,000 barrels of oil to China per day.⁵²

According to reports, Russia's President Dmitry Medvedev has decided to evaluate the new energy rule that Europe is poised to introduce. The EU is keen to diversify its sourcing of oil and gas away from Russia, which supplies about a quarter of the European Union's gas needs. The European Union is set to introduce new rules, known as the Third Energy Package, that will impose limits on ownership of pipeline infrastructure by gas suppliers – rules that are likely to hit Gazprom's position in Europe.⁵³

In another development, a second stealth corvette has joined the Russian navy. The corvette features innovative solutions regarding hull design, armament, communications and electronics. The Soobrazitelny is the second Project 20380 or Steregushchy class corvette designed by the Almaz Central Marine Design Bureau. Two more ships are under construction.⁵⁴

Russia's Skolkovo Fund has signed an agreement with Tokyo's biggest private Waseda University on a working dialogue to select most promising projects of machines and equipments for decontamination of territories affected after the Fukushima-1 nuclear plant accident.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ "Russia to conduct active WTO talks within 2 weeks", *ITAR-TASS*, October 14th, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/247532.html>

⁵⁰ "Russia, Belarus to sign documents on new gas contract in November", *ITAR-TASS*, October 13th, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/246607.html>

⁵¹ "Russia, China to set up \$4 bln investment fund", *ITAR-TASS*, October 11th, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/244815.html>

⁵² "Earthquake suspends Transneft oil supplies to China", *RIA Novosti*, October 14th, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20111014/167685189.html>

⁵³ "Medvedev to review European Energy rules", *The Moscow Times*, October 16th, 2011, <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/medvedev-to-review-european-energy-rules/445560.html>

⁵⁴ "Second stealth corvette joins Russian navy", *RIA Novosti*, October 14th, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/mlitary_news/20111014/167671449.html

⁵⁵ "Russia's Skolkovo Fund, Japan's Waseda Univ sign coop agreement", *RIA Novosti*, October 14th, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/247385.html>

Russia's Defence Ministry has invited 600 defence plants to take part in the fulfilment of state defence orders of 2012. A total of 460 of them have replied and sent their price lists. The ministry has approved 200 bids. Loans on Russian state guarantees will be used actively in next year's defence procurements.⁵⁶

President Medvedev has called for the formulation of Russia's position on the trans-Caspian gas pipeline. He expressed his views on the trans-Caspian gas pipeline, which may be laid across the Caspian Sea, as a rather complex issue, which is directly linked to the status of the Caspian Sea – an issue requiring coordination by all the member states of the Caspian region. Recently, the European Union Council has authorized the European Commission to negotiate the construction of the trans-Caspian gas pipeline with Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan within the southern corridor initiative.⁵⁷

In other developments, US Ambassador nominee for Russia Michael Mc Faul has given his assurance that he is committed to pursue the reset policy with Russia despite the looming challenges and Putin's likely return to Presidency. He has also pledged to increase US support for civil society in Russia.⁵⁸

D. West Asia

Iran

- **Saudi Arabia weighing its response to an alleged Iranian plot to assassinate its Ambassador in the United States**

According to reports, Saudi Arabia said it was weighing its response to an alleged Iranian plot to assassinate its Ambassador in Washington which has resulted in increased tensions between OPEC's two top oil producers. Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal said the kingdom would have a "measured response" to the alleged plot. Iran called the accusations a fabrication designed to hurt its relations with its neighbours. Prince Saud added that "We hold them (Iran) accountable for any action they take against us." He also mentioned that this was not the first time Iran had been suspected of similar acts, and condemned Tehran for trying to meddle in the affairs of Arab states. Asked what actions Saudi Arabia might take, he stated, "We have to wait and see." US authorities said they had uncovered a plot by two Iranian men linked to Tehran's security agencies to hire a hit man with a bomb planted in a restaurant. One man, Manssor Arbabsiar, was arrested last month while the other is believed to be in Iran. Iran has denied the

⁵⁶ "Defense Ministry approves 200 plant bids for defense orders 2012", ITAR-TASS, October 11th, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/245257.html>

⁵⁷ "Russia position on trans-Caspian gas pipeline must be formulated-Medvedev", ITAR-TASS, October 14th, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/248027.html>

⁵⁸ "White House Nominee for Ambassador to Russia vows deep support for civil society", Radio Free Europe, October 12th, 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/mcfaul_us_ambassador_to_russia_senate_hearing_iran_georgia_putin/24357942.html

charges and expressed outrage, saying the allegations threaten stability in the Gulf. It would be worth noting that relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran soured after the 1979 revolution that brought Shiite Muslim clerics to power on the other side of the Gulf. Sunni Saudi Arabia and Shi'ite Iran consider themselves protectors of Islam's two main rival sects.⁵⁹

Iraq

- **Fourteen people killed in suicide attack in Baghdad**

According to Iraqi interior ministry and police sources, two suicide car bombers and a car bomb hit police in separate districts of the Iraqi capital Baghdad and killed at least fourteen people and wounding around sixty. One bomber rammed an explosives-filled car into a police station in central Alwiya district, killing six people including four policemen, and another bomber blew up his car outside a police building in northwestern Hurriya district, killing at least five people. In a third attack a car bomb targeted a police patrol in southern Ilaam district, killing at least three. Reports noted that the bombings underscored the ability of insurgents to hit multiple targets in the capital despite security improvements and a fall in overall violence in Iraq as the last US troops prepare to withdraw by the end of this year. Insurgents this year have increasingly targeted local security forces and local government offices outside the capital in an attempt to show that Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's government cannot provide security as US troops leave.⁶⁰

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

National

- **Brahmos to be deployed soon in the Eastern Sector; Sea trials of Gorshkov delayed due to the onset of winters in Russia**

Reports noted that the government has given the go-ahead to the deployment of Brahmos cruise missiles in Arunachal Pradesh. The three Brahmos missile regiments raised so far have been deployed in the western sector to counter the Pakistan threat. The fourth regiment is to be deployed in the Eastern Sector to counter the Chinese threat. These cruise missiles with a range of 290 km are being deployed to improve India's military reach into the Tibet Autonomous Region and counter China's elaborate missile deployment along the Sino-Indian border. In addition, the second army expansion on the China border will include setting up a corps

⁵⁹ Angus McDowall and Sylvia Westall, "Saudi Arabia weighs response to alleged Iran plot," *Khaleej Times*, October 13, 2011, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/October/middleeast_October240.xml§ion=middleeast

⁶⁰ "Bombs hit Iraqi police in Baghdad, 14 dead: sources," *The Star Online*, October 12, 2011, at http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2011/10/12/worldupdates/2011-10-12T130539Z_01_NOOTR_RTRMDNC_0_-598451-1&sec=Worldupdates

headquarter in Panagarh, West Bengal, along with two more divisions. An independent armoured brigade along with an artillery division will be part of the set-up.⁶¹

Meanwhile, due to the onset of winters in Russia, sea trials of aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov, which is getting a face-lift ahead of its induction in the Indian Navy, have been postponed for another five to six months. "We have to change the trial plans as they can't be held during the winters. So, now we will carry out all the trials to be held in the harbour during the winter and then hold the sea trials after the winter is over," senior Defence Ministry sources told PTI on Sunday. They said the change in trial plans will not affect the delivery schedule of the aircraft carrier, which India has procured at a cost of USD 2.33 billion. The project has already been delayed by over three years since Russia's state-run arms exporter Rosoboronexport and the Indian Navy envisioned that work on the aircraft carrier would be completed in 2008. The progress of the project was reviewed during the recent visits of Indian Navy Chief and Defence Minister A K Antony to Russia.⁶²

International

- **British Defence Minister Liam Fox resigns amid scandal; US President Obama announces sending troops to Uganda to capture rebel leader Joseph Kony**

Reports noted that British Defence Minister Liam Fox resigned on October 14 amid a scandal over his links to the best man at his wedding. He is the first Conservative minister to quit the coalition government. Fox, who played a key role in Britain's military campaigns in Libya and Afghanistan, stepped down after it was known that his friend Adam Werritty posed as a government adviser and took a string of foreign trips with the minister and misutilized his proximity with the defence minister. In his resignation letter to Prime Minister David Cameron, Fox admitted he had "mistakenly allowed the distinction between my personal interest and my government activities to become blurred". "The consequences of this have become clearer in recent days," he said, adding: "I am very sorry for this." Fox said in his resignation letter addressed to Cameron he had "repeatedly said that the national interest must always come before personal interest. I now have to hold myself to my own standard".⁶³

Meanwhile, U.S. President Barack Obama announced on October 14 that he is sending roughly 100 "combat-equipped" troops to Uganda as part of an effort to capture rebel leader Joseph Kony, who leads the Lord's Resistance Army. Kony is wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes charges because of his role as the head of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a rebel group that has waged a 20-year war against government forces in northern Uganda.

⁶¹ "China flexing muscles, govt clears Brahmos for Arunachal", *Indian Express*, October 17, 2011, at <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/china-flexing-muscles-govt-clears-brahmos-for-arunachal/860799/>

⁶² "Sea trials of aircraft carrier Gorshkov put off", *The Hindustan Times*, October 17, 2011, at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/News-Feed/newdelhi/Sea-trials-of-aircraft-carrier-Gorshkov-put-off/Article1-757981.aspx>

⁶³ "U.K. Defence Minister Resigns in 'Best Man' Scandal", *Agence France-Presse*, 14 October 2011, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=7955519&&s=TOP>

Obama further said in a message to Congress that the U.S. troops could be deployed to Uganda, South Sudan, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, if authorities in those countries will permit it. "These forces will act as advisers to partner forces that have the goal of removing from the battlefield Joseph Kony and other senior leadership of the LRA," Obama said. He stressed that American troops would not lead the fighting. "Although the U.S. forces are combat-equipped, they will only be providing information, advice and assistance to partner nation forces," the President noted.⁶⁴

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

Jammu & Kashmir

- **Kashmiri youth detained in Bangladesh with relation to Delhi High Court blast released; Taliban presence in Valley denied by Indian Army; Interlocutors to submit report; Omar Abdullah meets Union Home Minister P.C. Chidambaram; Presence of militants in Gandherbal District, Kashmir; Cop shot at Hazratbal; Revoke AFSPA campaign begins**

According to reports, four Kashmiri medical students picked up by Bangladesh police on the request of National Investigation Agency (NIA) probing Delhi High Court blast case have been released. The team wanted to know about the conduct and connections of Wasim Akram, another student of the college presently in NIA custody. Wasim and two of the students picked up for questioning are said to be residents of Kishtwar, while two others belong to Kashmir region. Since the four were picked up by unidentified plainclothes people, neither police nor Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) admitted their involvement in the incident, media report added.⁶⁵

In another development, downplaying the presence of any Taliban militants in the Valley, Army said the coming two months are vital for turning tables on Kashmir on the militancy front. Lieutenant General Ata Hasnain responding to queries from media persons about the encounter in Kangan where two militants from Pakistan Taliban's heartland Swat valley were killed said he does not read too much in that. Such incidents have taken place in Kashmir earlier also. Three years ago, some militants from Kerala were killed, so these events come and go in Kashmir and said that attempts are being made by militants to infiltrate through Machil and Keran as they are the shortest routes to get into chosen forests of Kupwara.⁶⁶

Reports noted that as the Kashmir interlocutors appointed by Centre are to submit their roadmap for political settlement of Kashmir issue to Home Ministry, all eyes are on the contours of the

⁶⁴ "U.S. Deploying Troops to Central Africa", 14 October, 2011, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=7953237&s=TOP>

⁶⁵ "4 detained Kashmiri youth released in Bangladesh", *Greater Kashmir*, October 10, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/11/4-detained-kashmiri-youth-released-in-bangladesh-64.asp>

⁶⁶ "Army deny Taliban presence in Valley", *Greater Kashmir*, October 11, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/12/army-deny-taliban-presence-in-valley-92.asp>

final settlement churned out by the intermediaries. Chief Interlocutor Dileep Padgaonkar said that they have taken into account both mainstream and off-stream opinions and in particular various inputs made by both Hurriyat factions and have endeavored to address all aspects on Kashmir- political, economic, social and cultural.⁶⁷

In another development, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah called on Union Home Minister, P Chidambaram and discussed with him matters relating to the revocation of Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from certain areas of the State. Omar said the gradual improvement in the security scenario and restoration of peace has paved the way for revocation of AFSPA in peaceful areas of the State. In an hour long meeting the Chief Minister briefed the Home Minister about this year's peaceful summer in the Valley resulting in smooth and fast-track implementation of development works. He said the peaceful conditions also contributed in the form of successful tourist season.⁶⁸

Meanwhile, a caravan to mobilize support for revocation of Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) would begin its journey from here on Sunda, with noted civil rights activist Madeha Patekar, Magsaysay award winner Dr Sandeep Pandey and brother of Irom Sharmila, Irom Singhajit flagging it off. Convener of Jammu and Kashmir Right to Information Movement Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat said 20 activists from different parts of India arrived to participate in "Save Sharmila Solidarity Campaign."⁶⁹

In other developments, the General Officer Commanding of Victor Force Major General Gurdeep Singh said that there were six to eight militants present in Ganderbal district. Addressing a news conference the GOC said that there are inputs about some militants trying to infiltrate from the other side into Kashmir. The counter infiltration grid has been strengthened to meet the challenge.⁷⁰ In another incident, unidentified gunmen shot a policeman from point-blank range at Hazratbal in Srinagar. Police said the cop belonging to Indian Reserve Police, 19 battalion, Sajad Ahmad was fired upon by militants on his head. Eyewitnesses said that soon after the shootout reinforcements were rushed to the area to nab the gunmen. Traffic remained suspended in the area for some time.⁷¹

North East India

- **Four killed in police firing in Dalgaoon, Assam; Militant leader killed in Manipur; Blast in**

⁶⁷ "Interlocutors to submit report today", *Greater Kashmir*, October 11, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/12/interlocutors-to-submit-report-today-87.asp>

⁶⁸ "Omar meets Chidambaram", *Greater Kashmir*, October 11, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/12/omar-meets-chidambaram-85.asp>

⁶⁹ "Revoke AFSPA campaign to begin today", *Greater Kashmir*, October 15, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/16/revoke-afspa-campaign-to-begin-today-45.asp>

⁷⁰ "8 militants in Ganderbal: Army", *Greater Kashmir*, October 13, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/14/8-militants-in-ganderbal-army-40.asp>

⁷¹ "Gunmen shoot cop at Hazratbal", *Greater Kashmir*, October 14, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/15/gunmen-shoot-cop-at-hazratbal-17.asp>

Lakhimpur, Assam injures two; Stir hit in helpless conditions cries for medicines; Centre to resume talks with ULFA; Manipur bandh disrupts normal life

According to reports, four persons were killed in police firing at Bechimari under Dalgaon Police Station in Darrang district when an irate mob, demanding a just price for jute, attacked on-duty policemen with stones and bricks. The incident followed the NH-52 blockade by hundreds of jute growers in protest against the lowering of the minimum support price of jute in the weekly market in comparison to the previous week. The protesters came on to the NH along with their jute brought for selling, thereby blocking traffic movement completely.⁷²

In another development, leader of Manipur-based armed group Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP-MTF) Sunil Meitei, who escaped from a police station lock-up a week ago, was shot dead in a police operation last midnight. The incident took place in the residence of one Longjam Shyam Singh, of Yumnam Huidrom village, under Wangoi police station in Imphal West district when police commandos conducted a house to house search based on information that the militant leader's wife had left for the location of her husband late last midnight. Police said Longjam Shyam, who was later identified as Secretary in-charge of KCP-MTF (Sunil Meitei faction)'s Home department gave shelter to the 'fugitive'.⁷³

Reports noted that at least two people were injured in an explosion in Assam. The blast took place at the courtyard of a village house at Harmoti in Lakhimpur district, about 320 km east of Assam's main city of Guwahati. Preliminary investigations revealed the IED was found by a rag picker. He unknowingly brought the explosive home and kept it outside his house. Officials noted that officials said a major tragedy was averted.⁷⁴

According to reports, as the economic blockade in Manipur continues for over seventy days now, the state is raising a helpless wail. Seriously ill patients are being turned away from hospitals, which are battling a shortage of life-saving drugs, and many are losing their lives. Ever since the blockade began Aug 1, the price of an oxygen cylinder has gone up by four-five times.⁷⁵

Meanwhile, according to reports, the Government of India is planning to resume the process of talks with the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) by the end of October. The Government is also hoping to sign peace pacts with at least three militant groups of Assam by November this year. However, no decision has yet been taken on starting the process of talks with the Ranjan Daimary faction of the National Democratic Front of Boroland (NDFB). Joint secretary (North East) of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Sambhu Singh said that the Union Home Secretary

⁷² "4 killed in Dalgaon police firing", *The Assam Tribune*, October 10, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct1111/at06s>

⁷³ "Militant leader killed in Manipur", *The Assam Tribune*, October 11, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct1211/oth07>

⁷⁴ "Lakhimpur blast injures two", *The Assam Tribune*, October 14, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct1411/at016>

⁷⁵ "Stir hit Manipur cries for medicines, doctors helpless", *The Assam Tribune*, October 14, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct1411/at019>

is likely to hold talks with the leaders of the ULFA on October 25 to review the situation after the signing of the cease-fire pact. He said that the meeting would review whether all the cadres of the outfits are staying in the camps and whether the weapons in possession of the outfit are kept in double lock system under the provisions of the cease-fire pact.⁷⁶

In other developments, normal life was today disrupted in Manipur due to a Bandh called by major insurgent groups. Declaring October 15 as “National Black Day”, the Coordination Committee of seven underground organisations of Manipur had imposed the bandh against the merger of Manipur with the Indian Union on October 15, 1949. Markets, business establishments and shops were closed all over the State in view of the bandh. No untoward incidents were reported from any part of the State.⁷⁷

IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

- **UN Security Council debates security sector reforms; UNSC extends mandates of security assistance force in Afghanistan and peacekeeping forces in Haiti; 15-member body allows judge to work part-time with ICTR**

The Security Council debated the need to reform the security sector in African countries emerging from conflict.⁷⁸ During the debate, India called for vital security sector reform for the establishment of enduring peace and stability in a post-conflict, peace-building phase. The Minister of State for External Affairs, Preneet Kaur told that the role of UN must be based on ‘impartiality, equity and non-interference’.⁷⁹

Meanwhile, the Security Council extended the authorization of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan till the next year. The Council also urged UN member states to contribute personnel, equipment and other resources to ISAF and to also continue to support security and stability in Afghanistan.⁸⁰ The Security Council also extended the mandate of UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) until 15 October 2012 and decided to reduce the number of troops on the ground by 2,500. The 15-member body also called on the international

⁷⁶ “Centre to resume talks with ULFA by Oct-end”, *The Assam Tribune*, October 13, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct1411/at05>

⁷⁷ “Manipur bandh disrupts normal life”, *The Assam Tribune*, October 15, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct1611/oth07>

⁷⁸ “Security sector reform in African countries emerging from conflict vital, UN says”, *UN News Centre*, October 12, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40024&Cr=liberia&Cr1=>

⁷⁹ “India cautions against premature withdrawal of UN missions”, *The Economic Times*, October 13, 2011 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2011-10-13/news/30275180_1_missions-countries-human-rights

⁸⁰ “Security Council extends mandate of international force in Afghanistan”, *UN News Centre*, October 12, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40023&Cr=afghan&Cr1=>

community to work closely with the mission to assist the impoverished nation on education, health and security matters.⁸¹

In other developments, the Security Council allowed one of the judges in the UN tribunal for the 1994 Rwanda genocide to work part-time and engage in other judicial occupation until the end of the year. The Council also added that the exceptional authorization should not be considered as establishing a precedent.⁸²

⁸¹ "Extending UN peacekeeping force in Haiti, Security Council cuts troops numbers", *UN News Centre*, October 14, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40059&Cr=haiti&Cr1=>

⁸² "Security Council allows judge in UN tribunal for Rwanda to work part-time", *UN News Centre*, October 14, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40052&Cr=Rwanda&Cr1=>