

# THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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## 1. COUNTRY REVIEW

### A. SOUTH ASIA

#### AFGHANISTAN

- **Britain to host conference on Afghanistan in January 2010; Obama appreciates India's role in reconstruction and rebuilding efforts in Afghanistan; PM Dr. Singh urges US and the international community to stay in Afghanistan till the crisis is resolved; Former German Defence Minister resigns over controversy surrounding air strike in Kunduz in September; Pak PM Gilani expresses concern over US troop surge**

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, along with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon at the Commonwealth summit in Trinidad and Tobago on November 28 announced that Britain will host a conference on Afghanistan on January 28, 2010. The conference is expected to deal with issues relating to handing over control of the country back to local authorities. Brown stated that Afghanistan would be encouraged to build the capacities of its security forces.<sup>1</sup> Ban Ki-moon termed the proposed conference "a very timely opportunity" to discuss the country's agenda in the wake of Karzai taking over for the second term.

India and the United States, during Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit to Washington, "reiterated their shared interest in the stability, development and independence of Afghanistan and in the defeat of terrorist safe havens in Pakistan and Afghanistan." President Obama on his part appreciated India's role in the reconstruction and rebuilding efforts in Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Singh, speaking at the Center for Foreign Relations in Washington urged the US and the international community to remain engaged in Afghanistan as any "premature talk of exit will only embolden the terrorists."<sup>3</sup>

Former German Defense Minister and current Labor Minister Franz Josef Jung announced his resignation from the German Cabinet over allegations that the military withheld information from Parliament and from prosecutors regarding an air strike near Kunduz that resulted in many civilian casualties. Germany's top military officer, Gen. Wolfgang Schneiderhan and State Secretary Peter Wichert had also resigned earlier.<sup>4</sup>

Pakistan Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani expressed concerns over a possible increase in US troop strength in Afghanistan, stating that the move

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<sup>1</sup> 'Britain to host conference on Afghanistan in January next year', *Xinhua*, November 29, 2009 at [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-11/29/content\\_12557384.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-11/29/content_12557384.htm)

<sup>2</sup> 'India and the United States: Partnership for a Better World', *The Hindu*, November 25, 2009 at <http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article54866.ece>

<sup>3</sup> 'Stay the course in Afghanistan, PM Manmohan Singh urges US', *The Times of India*, November 24, 2009 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/us/Stay-the-course-in-Afghanistan-PM-Manmohan-Singh-urges-US/articleshow/5262957.cms>

<sup>4</sup> 'German Minister Resigns Over Afghan Airstrike', *The New York Times*, November 27, 2009 at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/28/world/europe/28germany.html>

could result in a spill over of militants inside Pakistan and worsen the situation.”<sup>5</sup>

## B. EAST ASIA

### CHINA

- **China-EU Summit held: Chinese Defence Minister Visits DPRK and Japan: Vice Chairman CMC Visits Russia: PLA Conduct ‘Iron Fist-2009’ military exercises; Jiuhuang airport in Aba Tibetan Autonomic Prefecture of Sichuan province wins highest civil engineering award**

The China-EU Summit was held in Nanjing, Jiangsu province on November 30. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso led the respective delegations.<sup>6</sup>

Chinese Defence Minister Liang Guanglie visited the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) during the week. He met with DPRK Defence Minister Kim Yong Chun and discussed relations between the armed forces of the two countries.<sup>7</sup> North Korean leader Kim Jong Il told Liang that the DPRK-China friendship, “a treasure inherited from the older generations ...” had “stood the test of history and was unbreakable.”<sup>8</sup>

Liang went to Tokyo after his Tokyo visit and met with Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama. Both leaders discussed measures to further strengthen mutual trust between the two countries.<sup>9</sup>

The Vice Chairman of China's Central Military Commission Guo Boxiong visited Moscow and met with President Dmitry Medvedev on November 26. Guo was visiting Russia at the invitation of Anatoly Serdyukov, Russian Defense Minister. 2009 marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of China-Russia diplomatic ties.<sup>10</sup>

PLA conducted ‘Iron Fist-2009’ military exercises at the Queshan Combined Tactics Training Base of the Jinan Military Area Command (MAC) from November 18-23. The exercises were conducted in “a complicated electromagnetic environment.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> ‘Pak PM concerned over US troop surge’, *Pajhwok Afghan News*, November 29, 2009 at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=85479>

<sup>6</sup> ‘Focus to be Bilateral Ties’, *China Daily*, November 30, 2009 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2009-11/30/content\\_9074231.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2009-11/30/content_9074231.htm)

<sup>7</sup> ‘Chinese, DPRK Defense Ministers Discuss Closer Army Ties’, *PLA Daily*, November 25, 2009 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/today-headlines/2009-11/25/content\\_4084886.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/today-headlines/2009-11/25/content_4084886.htm)

<sup>8</sup> ‘DPRK Top Leader Meets Visiting Chinese Defense Minister’, *PLA Daily*, November 26, 2009 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/today-headlines/2009-11/26/content\\_4085555.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/today-headlines/2009-11/26/content_4085555.htm)

<sup>9</sup> ‘Japanese Prime Minister, Chinese Defense Minister Meet to Enhance Exchanges’, *PLA Daily*, November 28, 2009 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/today-headlines/2009-11/28/content\\_4086769.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/today-headlines/2009-11/28/content_4086769.htm)

<sup>10</sup> ‘Russian President Meets Chinese Military Leader on Cooperation’, *PLA Daily*, November 27, 2009 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/today-headlines/2009-11/27/content\\_4086160.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/today-headlines/2009-11/27/content_4086160.htm)

<sup>11</sup> ‘Iron Fist-2009 Military Exercise in Jinan MAC’, *PLA Daily*, November 27, 2009 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-11/27/content\\_4086521.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-11/27/content_4086521.htm)

Reports noted that the Armament Department of the Chengdu Military Area Command (MAC) of the PLA had made improvements in the techniques used in construction activities in frontier areas.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, the Jiuhuang Airport in the Aba Tibetan Autonomic Prefecture of Sichuan province, constructed by an aerial defense engineering section of the PLAAF under the Chengdu Military Area Command won the 'Zhan Tianyou Award', the highest award for civil engineering in the country.<sup>13</sup>

#### JAPAN

- **Japan launches spy satellite to monitor North Korea; Japan to officially acknowledge existence of secret US nuclear pact; Approval ratings for Hatoyama drop by 8 per cent since October**

Japan successfully launched a new spy satellite to monitor North Korean military activities aboard the H-IIA launch vehicle from Tanegashima Space Center in Kagoshima Prefecture. It was the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive successful H-IIA launch since 2005.<sup>14</sup>

Reports noted that Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada will soon officially acknowledge the existence of a secret Japan-US pact that allowed US vessels carrying nuclear weapons to enter Japanese territory.<sup>15</sup>

In other developments, approval ratings for PM Yukio Hatoyama dropped by eight points to 64 percent. However, 74 percent of those surveyed supported the government's ongoing budget-cut initiatives.<sup>16</sup>

#### KOREAN PENINSULA

- **Pyongyang tells IMO that maritime blockade was threatening 'free navigation of container ships'; US Envoy Bosworth to visit Pyongyang on December 8; Kim: Ties with China "unbreakable"; South Korean President says ready to hold summit meeting with Kim "anytime and anywhere"**

At the meeting of the International Maritime Organisation in London on November 27, North Korea charged that maritime blockade by 'certain' countries was threatening 'free navigation of container ships that have peaceful purpose ....' Reports noted that the North Korean argument was a complaint against the

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<sup>12</sup> 'Equipment Construction of Frontier Defense Troops Advanced', *PLA Daily*, November 27, 2009 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-11/27/content\\_4086543.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-11/27/content_4086543.htm)

<sup>13</sup> 'Engineering Unit Makes Contributions to Airport Construction in Tibetan-inhabited Areas', *PLA Daily*, November 26, 2009 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-11/26/content\\_4086058.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-11/26/content_4086058.htm)

<sup>14</sup> 'Japan successfully launches new optical spy satellite', *Mainichi Japan*, November 28, 2009 at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20091128p2a00m0na014000c.html>

<sup>15</sup> 'Okada to acknowledge secret Japan-U.S. nuclear pact', *Mainichi Japan*, November 23, 2009 at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20091123p2a00m0na007000c.html>

<sup>16</sup> 'Approval rating for Hatoyama Cabinet dips to 64 percent', *Mainichi Japan*, November 24, 2009 at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/news/20091124p2a00m0na026000c.html>

monitoring of the Kang Nam I in July 2009, which was forced to turn back after being suspected of carrying illicit weapons to Myanmar.<sup>17</sup>

US special envoy on North Korea Stephen Bosworth is scheduled to fly to Pyongyang on December 8 on a mission to persuade Pyongyang to return to the six-party talks. The meeting will be the first direct contact with the DPRK regime by the Obama administration.<sup>18</sup>

North Korean leader Kim Jong-il met with the visiting Chinese defense minister Liang Guanglie and asserted that the relations between the two countries were "unbreakable." Liang on his part told his North Korean counterpart Kim Yong-chun that ties with Pyongyang were "sealed in blood" when Chinese troops fought the 1950-1953 Korean War on the side of the North Koreans.<sup>19</sup>

In other developments, North Korea and Russia signed a 'protocol' to cooperate in the field of science through the end of 2011 at the Siberian city of Novosibirsk.<sup>20</sup>

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak meanwhile stated that he was ready to hold a summit meeting with Kim Jong-il "anytime and anywhere" if it would help resolve the nuclear question and the issue of South Korean citizens abducted by DPRK.<sup>21</sup> On Afghanistan, Lee stated that his government planned to dispatch hundreds of civilian aid workers and security personnel as part of efforts to meet Seoul's growing international obligations.<sup>22</sup>

Egypt's Deputy Foreign Minister Ahmed Fathalla and his South Korean counterpart Lee Yong-joon discussed ways to enhance cooperation in renewable and nuclear energy, defense and tourism, among other areas.<sup>23</sup>

## SOUTHEAST ASIA

- **24 people massacred in southern Philippines province; Myanmarese militia unit made into a border security battalion; Thailand and Cambodia reaffirm commitment to resolve border dispute through peaceful means; Indonesia signs MoU with Switzerland**

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<sup>17</sup> 'N. Korea criticizes maritime blockade at U.N. meeting', *Yonhap News*, November 30, 2009 at <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/11/30/60/0401000000AEN20091130002000315F.HTML>

<sup>18</sup> 'S. Korea sees dim prospects for N. Korea-U.S. talks', *Yonhap News*, November 29, 2009 at <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/11/29/8/0401000000AEN20091129001600315F.HTML>

<sup>19</sup> 'N. Korean leader Kim meets with China's defense minister', *Yonhap News*, November 26, 2009 at <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/news/2009/11/26/0200000000AEN20091126000700315.HTML>

<sup>20</sup> 'N. Korea, Russia agree to cooperate in scientific research: report', *Yonhap News*, November 28, 2009 at <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/news/2009/11/28/0200000000AEN20091128002400315.HTML>

<sup>21</sup> 'Lee says will meet N. Korean leader anywhere to resolve nuclear issue', *Yonhap News*, November 28, 2009 at <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/news/2009/11/28/0200000000AEN20091128000200315.HTML>

<sup>22</sup> 'Lee calls Afghan troop deployment part of Seoul's int'l obligation', *Yonhap News*, November 28, 2009 at <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/news/2009/11/28/0200000000AEN20091128000500315.HTML>

<sup>23</sup> 'S. Korea, Egypt agree on closer ties in energy, defense', *Yonhap News*, November 27, 2009 at <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/news/2009/11/27/0200000000AEN20091127006700315.HTML>

In one of the worst incidents of political violence in recent Philippines history, around 24 people were massacred when nearly 100 gunmen ambushed a caravan of political supporters of Ismael Mangudadatu, deputy mayor of Bulun town ship.<sup>24</sup> Following the massacre, President Gloria Arroyo declared a state of emergency in two southern provinces. Amidst mounting pressure on the government to crack down on the perpetrators of the heinous crime, Andal Ampatuan Jr., a town mayor and prime suspect, turned himself in to authorities.<sup>25</sup>

After failing in its efforts to persuade militant groups observing ceasefire to join the country's border guard forces (BGF), reports noted that the military authorities had decided to accelerate the process of recruiting and forming militia units into battalions. Accordingly, a Lahu militia unit, active along the Mekong region, has been transformed into the Mekong border security battalion.<sup>26</sup>

During a two-day defence-minister level meeting on November 26-27 at Pattaya, Thailand and Cambodia reaffirmed their commitment to resolve their border dispute only through peaceful means.<sup>27</sup>

In other developments, Indonesia signed a MoU with Switzerland on November 26 for a joint economic and trade commission in an effort to strengthen bilateral economic ties. The volume of trade between the two countries reached \$938.8 million in 2008, which was \$229.7million more than the previous year.<sup>28</sup>

## II. DEFENCE REVIEW

### DEFENCE NATIONAL

- **Agni-II missile fails in night trial**

The first ever night trial of the 2000 km nuclear-capable Agni-II missile failed to achieve the desired results. The missile, fired at around 7.50 PM on November 23 from Wheeler Island off the Orissa coast tumbled into the sea after a snag developed just before the second stage separation began. The test was part of

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<sup>24</sup> '24 killed in election massacre in the Philippines', *The Jakarta Post*, November 24, 2009 at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/11/24/24-killed-election-massacre-philippines.html>

<sup>25</sup> 'Prime Suspect in Philippines massacre surrenders', *The Jakarta Post*, November 26, 2009 at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/11/26/prime-suspect-philippine-massacre-surrenders.html>

<sup>26</sup> 'Junta steps up formation of militia battalions', *Burma News International*, November 26, 2009 at <http://www.bnionline.net/news/shan/7483-junta-steps-up-formation-of-militia-battalions.html>

<sup>27</sup> 'Ministers reaffirm close military ties', *Bangkok Post*, November 27, 2009 at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/161257/jbc-agrees-to-maintain-good-military-ties>

<sup>28</sup> 'RI, Switzerland sign MoU on economic, trade cooperation', *The Jakarta Post*, November 26, 2009 at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/11/26/ri-switzerland-sign-mou-economic-trade-cooperation.html>

user's trial and conducted by the Army officials with the DRDO scientists present to provide necessary logistical help.<sup>29</sup>

- **Mahindra Defence Systems to bid for \$3.5 bn defence projects**

The CEO of Mahindra Defence System (MDS), a unit of Mahindra and Mahindra (M&M) stated that the company will bid for defence projects worth \$3.5 billion over the next seven years, mostly in artillery systems and armoured vehicles. The company's joint venture with UK's BAE System, which was approved by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), will try to generate up to \$430 million by 2016, from the current levels of \$21.7 million. The British company holds 26 per cent equity in the JV.<sup>30</sup>

- **DRDO to develop unmanned combat aerial vehicle**

DRDO chief V.K. Saraswat stated that his organization would design and develop an indigenous unmanned combat vehicle (UCAV) for surveillance activities as well the detection and destroying of the identified target. The project will be led by its Bengaluru-based Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE), with private sector participation.

The ADE is also developing a medium altitude long endurance unmanned aerial vehicle (MALE), codenamed Rustom. Its prototype, developed by Taneja Aerospace and Aviation Ltd, however crashed in its first ever trial on November 16.<sup>31</sup>

- **Tejas trainer makes successful maiden flight**

The first flight of the two-seater trainer version of Light Combat Aircraft, Tejas conducted on November 26 was successful. DRDO officials noted that the flight test "covered an altitude of 9 km and a speed of 0.85 Mach."<sup>32</sup>

## **INTERNATIONAL**

- **Japan considers F-35 Purchase**

Reports noted that Japan was considering buying about 40 F-35 fighter jets. It had earlier intended to buy the F-22 Raptor, considered to be the most advanced fighter with radar-evading capability, to replace its aging F-4EJ fighter fleet.

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<sup>29</sup> 'Agni-II missile fails to clear night trial', *The Times of India*, November 24, 2009.

<sup>30</sup> 'Mahindra arm to bid for \$3.5 bn defence deals', November 23, 2009 at [http://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/mahindra-arm-to-bid-for-3635-bn-defence-deals\\_426647.html](http://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/mahindra-arm-to-bid-for-3635-bn-defence-deals_426647.html); BAE Systems, 'Mahindra & Mahindra and BAE Systems Joint Venture Approved', *New Release*, January 7, 2009 at [http://www.baesystems.com/Newsroom/NewsReleases/autoGen\\_10907105031.html](http://www.baesystems.com/Newsroom/NewsReleases/autoGen_10907105031.html)

<sup>31</sup> 'India to develop unmanned combat vehicle', *IBN Live*, November 25, 2009 at <http://ibnlive.in.com/news/india-to-develop-unmanned-combat-aerial-vehicle/105939-3.html>

<sup>32</sup> 'Tejas's trainer version makes successful maiden flight', *Sify News*, November 26, 2009 at <http://sify.com/news/Tejas-39-s-trainer-version-makes-successful-maiden-flight-news-jl0ukfadfih.html>



However, the US announced that it would halt its production. The F-35 is likely to cost over \$100 million each.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> "Japan Mulls F-35 Purchase As Next Main Fighter Jet: Report", *Defense News*, November 23, 2009 at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=4389389&c=AIR&s=TOP>