

# THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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## I. COUNTRY REVIEW

### A. EAST ASIA

#### CHINA

- **China introduces a new trial regulation to fight against corruption in armed forces; China's military reserves reduced; PLA navy's ships reached Indonesia on a friendship mission; PLA focuses on basic education for military; The Lanzhou Military Area Command provides new standard uniforms to its troops; The PLA's 11<sup>th</sup> peacekeeping transportation detachment assumes charge in Liberia**

China has introduced a new trial regulation for its fight against prevailing corruption among the party officials in the country's armed forces. Chinese President Hu Jintao has approved this new disciplinary regulation on inner-party supervision in the armed forces. The Central Military Commission (CMC) issued this after his approval. Reports noted that the regulation will be applied to CPC members and officials, especially party chiefs in the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the armed police forces. This regulation identifies some "key areas" prone to corruption, which include the selection and promotion of officials, the enrollment of new students for the armed forces-affiliated schools, funds management, construction work and supplies and armaments procurement.<sup>1</sup>

However, China's Defence Minister General Liang Guanglie, informed the media that China's military reserves forces have been reduced from 600,000 to 510,000 men and women over the past five years.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, three ships of PLA Navy reached Indonesia's Tanjung Priok, on a friendship mission aimed at improving relations between the two countries.<sup>3</sup> It is leant that the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has gradually moved towards "in-base, cyberization and simulation by centering on standardized and regularized construction". The report came from the academic seminar on "Accelerating Innovative Development of Military Basic Education" organized by the Military Basic Education Committee (MBEC) of the China Military Education Society that the

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<sup>1</sup> "China intensifies anti-corruption supervision of Party officials in armed forces", *PLA Daily* (Online), December 30, 2010 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-12/30/content\\_4360693.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-12/30/content_4360693.htm)

<sup>2</sup> "Defense minister says China has 510,000 in military reserves", *PLA Daily* (Online), December 30, 2010, at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-12/29/content\\_4360215.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-12/29/content_4360215.htm)

<sup>3</sup> "Chinese Navy fleet visits Indonesia", *PLA Daily* (Online), December 28, 2010 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-12/28/content\\_4359520.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-12/28/content_4359520.htm)

military basic education and training. According to the report, during the past four years, the MBEC completed around 100 research subjects.<sup>4</sup>

In other developments, the Lanzhou Military Area Command (MAC) of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has provided all the officers and men of the Lanzhou Theater with the 07-style fit uniform.<sup>5</sup> However, the PLA's 11<sup>th</sup> peacekeeping transportation detachment took charge from its 10th transportation detachments on 24 December 2010 in Liberia.<sup>6</sup>

## SOUTHEAST ASIA

- **Thailand's Yellow Shirts' group makes appeal to the UN Secretary General for justice and protection of seven Thai nationals detained in Cambodia; Suu Kyi calls for national reconciliation; UN calls Thailand not to forcibly return Myanmar citizens; India provides Visa-on-Arrival facility for four ASEAN countries; India-Myanmar ratify Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty; Indonesia, Pakistan pledge cooperation on terrorism**

The Thailand Patriot Network Representatives submitted a letter to the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki- Moon on January 1, 2011, asking for justice and protection of human rights of seven Thai nationals who are currently detained in Cambodia. The detained Thai nationals were arrested by Cambodian authorities as they allegedly intruded into their soil.<sup>7</sup>

Reports noted that the Nobel Prize winner and pro-democracy leader of Burma, Aung San Suu Kyi called on citizens of Myanmar to work toward achieving national reconciliation. She asked the people of her country to struggle together with new strength so as to achieve the target of national reconciliation.<sup>8</sup>

On December 28, 2010, the UN Refugee agency urged Thailand not to force Myanmar nationals who left their country amid clashes and repeated incidents of human rights violations. This is in the light of the fact that on

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<sup>4</sup> "PLA military basic education and training get constant innovative development", *PLA Daily* (Online), December 29, 2010 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-12/29/content\\_4360513.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-12/29/content_4360513.htm)

<sup>5</sup> "Frontier defense officers and men dressed with fit uniform", *PLA Daily* (Online), December 28, 2010 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-12/28/content\\_4360012.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-12/28/content_4360012.htm)

<sup>6</sup> "Chinese peacekeeping transportation detachments to Liberia complete rotation and hand-over", *PLA Daily* (Online), December 27, 2010, [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-12/27/content\\_4359364.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-12/27/content_4359364.htm)

<sup>7</sup> Yellow Shirts Appeal to UN, *Bangkok Post*, 1 January, 2011, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/214073/yellow-shirts-appeal-to-un>

<sup>8</sup> Aung San Suu Kyi Calls for National Reconciliation in 2011, *VOA News*, 31 December, 2011 at <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/asia/Aung-San-Suu-Kyi-Calls-for-National-Reconciliation-in-2011-112717869.html>

December 25, 2010, the Thai authorities asked the Myanmar citizens to go back to their country.<sup>9</sup>

India, on December 30, 2010, extended the visa-on-arrival facility to four ASEAN countries. The countries include Laos, Vietnam, the Philippines and Cambodia. The facility is available from 1 January, 2011. The facility allows the travelers single entry facility with a 30 day validity period. Starting first at the Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai airports, the VOA facility will be allowed for a maximum of twice a year with a minimum gap of two months.<sup>10</sup>

During the 16<sup>th</sup> Home Secretary level talks between India and Myanmar, held in Delhi, the two countries ratified the mutual legal assistance treaty on criminal matters. Issues such as action against insurgent groups along the international border, strengthening of intelligence sharing mechanism, arms smuggling and drugs trafficking were also discussed during the meeting.<sup>11</sup>

In other developments, according to a top Pakistani diplomat, Indonesia and Pakistan are joining hands in efforts to minimize the threat of terror groups in the region. Pakistani ambassador to Indonesia, on 28 December, 2010, said that the two countries are exchanging information and would create a hotline to detect possible terror attacks as early as possible and to share expertise in wiping out terrorism.<sup>12</sup>

## B. CENTRAL ASIA & RUSSIA

### CENTRAL ASIA

- **Chinese Foreign Minister visits Kazakhstan; Kazakhstan expresses concern over dam building by China in Xinjiang; Kazakh CEC approves referendum for extending Nazarbayev's term; Newly elected Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan visits Russia; Kyrgyz interim President Otunbayeva to be nominated for Nobel Peace Prize; Uzbekistan appoints new Foreign Minister; Uzbekistan hikes Gas prices to**

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<sup>9</sup> UN Refugee Agency Calls on Thailand not To Forcibly Return Myanmar Nationals, *UN New Centre*, 28 December, 2010,

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37162&Cr=myanmar&Cr1=refugee>

<sup>10</sup> Visa-on-arrival Facility for 4 ASEAN Countries, *Times of India*, 31 December, 2010, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Visa-on-arrival-facility-for-4-Asean-countries/articleshow/7191444.cms>

<sup>11</sup> India-Myanmar Ratify Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, *Hindustan Times*, 31 December, 2010, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-Myanmar-ratify-Mutual-Legal-Assistance-Treaty/Article1-644925.aspx>

<sup>12</sup> Pakistan, Indonesia Pledge Cooperation On Terrorism, *The Jakarta Post*, 30 December, 2010, <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2010/12/30/pakistan-indonesia-pledge-cooperation-terrorism.html>

## **Kyrgyzstan; Tajikistan clears national debt to Turkey; Turkmenistan-Iran hold discussion on fuel and energy complex**

Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China Yang Jiechi paid an official visit to Astana on 27-29 December 2010 aimed at promoting Kazakh-Chinese strategic partnership. Discussions were held between the two sides on a wide range of issues of bilateral cooperation in political, economic and humanitarian spheres. The foreign ministers of both the countries discussed coordinating efforts in Astana within international organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the United Nations and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA).<sup>13</sup> Particularly discussions were held on the up coming events to mark the 10th SCO anniversary, to be held in 2011 in Kazakhstan and, 2012 in China. Kazakh Secretary of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs Kanat Saudabayev and Yang Jiechi signed the Memorandum on Cooperation for 2011-2013. Both sides agreed to deepen the mutual trust in political field, increase practical cooperation, enhance cultural exchanges and coordination in world affairs, promote increased understanding and friendship between the people of the two countries, and enhance cooperation in trade, infrastructure and energy.<sup>14</sup>

Reports noted that the Kazakhstan government will discuss its concerns with Beijing over building dams in West China in early 2011. Kazakhstan believes that the frenzy in which the new dams and irrigation projects are built, have led to substantial water level drops in Kazakhstan's Balkhash Lake. These constructions, taking place on the Xinjiang region bordering Kazakhstan, have reduced volumes of water flowing from Irtysh and Ili rivers that drain into the Lake<sup>15</sup>. The Irtysh and Ili rivers, crucial to Kazakhstan's water security, have their source in Xinjiang, which sustains the livelihood of more than two million Kazakhs. The problem has been persisting since 2000 as China accelerated development in the region.<sup>16</sup> "The water level is now lower by more than two metres to what it was three decades ago. Pollution is also rising, which has affected the banks and surrounding areas. Agriculture, the health of the ecosystem and the communities around it are at risk," Gabit Koishibayev, a senior counsellor at the Kazakh Embassy in China who is involved in negotiations with the Chinese government noted.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> "Kazakhstan, China to strengthen cooperation within international organizations", *Trend*, December 28, 2010 at <http://en.trend.az/news/politics/1804600.html>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> "Kazakhstan fears impacts of dam building spree in China", *Central Asia Newswire*, December 27, 2010 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kazakhstan/Kazakhstan-fearsnbspimpacts-of-dam-building-spre-in-China/viewstory.aspx?id=2744>

<sup>16</sup> "China's dams in Xinjiang region trigger concerns in Kazakhstan", *The Hindu*, December 27, 2010 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/article981267.ece>

<sup>17</sup> -ibid-

Meanwhile reports noted that Kazakhstan's Central Election Commission has endorsed a bid by supporters of President Nursultan Nazarbayev to extend his term until 2020. A group of President Nursultan Nazarbayev's supporters had convened in Ust-Kamenogorsk earlier in December 2010 to take this decision. It would be worth noting that Nazarbayev's term ends in 2013, who has been president since 1990. Under the Kazakh constitution, proposed referenda must first be registered by the Kazakhstan's Central Election Commission (CEC), and then 200,000 signatures must be collected to put the question to the public.<sup>18</sup>

The newly elected Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev was on a two days working visit to Moscow on December 27-28, 2010. This is the first visit of Prime Minister Almazbek abroad as head of the new government. The PM was accompanied by cabinet Ministers, Kyrgyz Ambassador to Russia Ulugbek Chinaliyev and other officials. He requested Russia to include a Kyrgyz monitor in the Customs Union between Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus.<sup>19</sup> Apart from the possibilities of joining the Customs union, both leaders discussed energy projects. In this regard the PM met representatives from Russia's Gazprom and Rushydro and pushed for the resumption of joint energy projects<sup>20</sup>.

Meanwhile, Kyrgyz interim President Roza Otunbayeva is proposed to be nominated for the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize 2011 by the Islamic Human Rights Commission in Central Asia. This is in recognition for her efforts to bring in Parliamentary democracy within Central Asia and particularly Kyrgyzstan. As the interim President of Kyrgyzstan she oversaw the referendum in which vast majority of Kyrgyz citizens voted to switch the country from presidential to parliamentary system of government.<sup>21</sup>

Reports noted that Uzbekistan President Islam Karimov signed a decree on December 28, 2010 to appoint Elyor Ganiev the country's Foreign Minister including other changes in the ministerial appointments.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, Uzbekistan has raised the price it charges for gas sold to Kyrgyzstan, the Kyrgyz Energy Ministry announced on 29 Dec 2010. The new rates would be \$255 for every 1,000 cubic meters of gas, as compared to \$240 for the same amount in

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<sup>18</sup> "Kazakh CEC approves referendum to extend Nazarbayev term", *Central Asia Online*, December 27, 2010

at [http://centralasiaonline.com/cocoon/caii/xhtml/en\\_GB/newsbriefs/caii/newsbriefs/2010/12/27/newsbrief-09](http://centralasiaonline.com/cocoon/caii/xhtml/en_GB/newsbriefs/caii/newsbriefs/2010/12/27/newsbrief-09)

<sup>19</sup> "Kyrgyz wants its monitor in Customs Union", *The Voice of Russia*, December 28, 2010 at <http://english.ruvr.ru/2010/12/28/38149691.html>

<sup>20</sup> -ibid-

<sup>21</sup> "Otunbayeva to be nominated for Nobel Peace Prize, *Central Asia News Wire*, December 27, 2010 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/International/Otunbayeva-to-be-nominated-for-Nobel-PeacePrize/viewstory.aspx?id=2748>

<sup>22</sup> "Uzbekistan appoints new FM", *Trend*, December 29, 2010 at <http://en.trend.az/news/politics/1805013.html>

2010.<sup>23</sup> However, Kyrgyzstan's state gas company Kyrgyzgas refutes the claim by Uzbek state gas company Uzbekneftegaz that the former failed to pay its 2010 gas bill amounting \$3 million.<sup>24</sup>

Tajikistan has paid off its entire \$25 million debt owed to Turkey, the Tajik Finance Ministry said in a statement on December 31, 2010. The Central Asian nation had received \$25 million in loans from Turkey in 1998. Turkey and Tajikistan have been trying to boost their economic relations, particularly in the past couple of years.<sup>25</sup>

In other developments in the region, reports noted that issues relating to priorities and perspectives of the traditional Turkmenistan-Iran cooperation were discussed during a visit to Ashgabat by a high-level delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran led by Deputy Oil Minister, Chairman of the National Gas Company of Iran Javad Oudzhi.<sup>26</sup>

## RUSSIA

- **Russia-China Pipeline becomes operational; Russia and Vietnam agreed to extend the terms of their joint venture on oil and gas exploration 'Vietsovpetro' for another 20 years**

As a growing sign of increased Russia-China cooperation in the energy sector, Russia has started delivering oil to China through the brand new East Siberian Pacific Ocean (ESPO) pipeline. This is a significant milestone since all the pipelines of Russia were till now concentrated towards Europe. The pipeline stretches for 2700 kms and when construction is finished by 2013, it will be the world's longest pipeline network covering roughly 4000 kms. Being constructed at an expenditure of 25 billion US\$, the project is by far the single largest infrastructure initiative ever undertaken in Russia.<sup>27</sup>

However, Russia and Vietnam have agreed to extend the terms of their joint venture on oil and gas exploration 'Vietsovpetro' for another 20 years. As per the new terms and conditions, state owned Petro-Vietnam will raise its stake to 51

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<sup>23</sup>“Uzbekistan hikes prices for gas to Kyrgyzstan”, *Central Asia News Wire*, at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Uzbekistan/Uzbekistan-hikes-prices-for-gas-to-Kyrgyzstan/viewstory.aspx?id=2778>

<sup>24</sup> -ibid-

<sup>25</sup> “Tajikistan clears national debt to Turkey”, *Today's Zaman*, January 1, 2011 at [http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail\\_getNewsById.action?load=detay&newsId=231211&link=231211](http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&newsId=231211&link=231211)

<sup>26</sup> “Turkmenistan, Iran discuss cooperation in fuel and energy complex”, *Turkmenistan.ru*, January 1, 2011 at <http://www.turkmenistan.ru/en/articles/14470.html>

<sup>27</sup> “Russia in Milestone Oil Pipeline Supply to China”, *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, January 2, 2011, at [http://www.rferl.org/content/russia\\_milestone\\_oil\\_pipeline\\_to\\_china/2265060.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/russia_milestone_oil_pipeline_to_china/2265060.html)



percent while Russian state owned oil firm Zarubezhneft will own the remaining 49 percent. Geographical exploration and extraction of crude oil and gas in Vietnamese territory remain the principal objective of the joint venture which was established in the year 1981. At present, Vietsovpetro's output represents about 40 percent of Vietnam's annual crude oil production.<sup>28</sup>

## C. WEST ASIA

### IRAN

- **India willing to participate in the IPI gas pipeline project**

Reports noted that India is willing to rejoin the IPI gas pipeline project. This was noted by the Additional Secretary of India's Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Shri Sudhir Bhargava. During the meeting with Iranian Deputy Oil Minister for International and Commercial Affairs, Ahmad Khaledi, he stated, "India welcomes boosting oil and gas ties with Iran." The IPI gas pipeline is a projected 2,775-kilometer pipeline to deliver natural gas from Iran to Pakistan and India. The three countries conceptualized the Peace Pipeline project in the 1990s to help boost peace and security in the region. Due to the edgy India-Pakistan relations, New Delhi stepped back from the later stages of negotiations, although it has never formally withdrawn from the project.<sup>29</sup>

### IRAQ

- **Nine people killed and many wounded in Ramadi; Suicide bomber killed police commander in Mosul**

According to Ramadi police sources, seven people were killed and at least 51 wounded when a car bomb detonated near the provincial headquarters in the heart of Ramadi, 100 kilometres (60 miles) west of Baghdad which was followed by a suicide bombing 15 minutes later. Muhanad Taha, a health department media official in Ramadi, put the toll at nine dead, including four policemen, and 49 wounded, among them five women and four children. This is third time in 2010 when the headquarters of the Anbar provincial government have been

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<sup>28</sup> "Vietnam Signs Oil Exploration Pact", *The Moscow Times*, 29 December 2010, <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/vietnam-signs-oil-exploration-pact/427951.html>

<sup>29</sup> "India reiterates interest in IPI," *Tehran Times*, December 30, 2010, at [http://www.tehrantimes.com/index\\_View.asp?code=233186](http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=233186)

targeted and a day after a new police chief for the province in Western Iraq took up his charge.<sup>30</sup>

In another development, two suicide bombers attacked a police compound in the Northern Iraqi city of Mosul, killing a commander. Police said the commander was asleep in his ground-floor office when one of the attackers entered early in the morning and blew himself up. The other bomber set off his device shortly afterwards. A police source told news agency that the commander “was known to be active in pursuing al-Qaeda members in Mosul and for this reason he was targeted.” Even militants had tried to kill him several times before.<sup>31</sup>

#### D. USA

- **Republicans aim for budget cuts in the House of Representatives**

Republican Party aims at budget cuts in the House of Representatives as it promised to cut \$100 billion from domestic spending this year, which was supported by conservatives. Though, the programs which will stop receiving funds or will have reduced funding has not been decided yet. However, it has been suggested that spending for the military, domestic security and veterans will not be decreased.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> “Death toll rises to nine in twin Iraq bombings,” *Khaleej Times*, December 28, 2010, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2010/December/middleeast\\_December432.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2010/December/middleeast_December432.xml&section=middleeast)

<sup>31</sup> “Iraq suicide bombers kill police commander in Mosul,” *BBC News*, December 29, 2010, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12088145>

<sup>32</sup> G.O.P. Sets Up Huge Targets for Budget Ax. *The New York Times*, January 3, 2011. [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/04/us/politics/04fiscal.html?\\_r=1&ref=us](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/04/us/politics/04fiscal.html?_r=1&ref=us)

## II. ENERGY REVIEW

- **India's Coal Minister: Coal India's workers have not benefited from Coal India's mega Initial Public Offering (IPO) due to trade union politics**

India's Coal Minister, Sriprakash Jaiswal has said that due to the politics present in trade unions, the workers have not benefited from the mega initial public offering (IPO) of public sector major Coal India. Coal workers had a golden opportunity to profit from Coal India's over Rs 15,000-crore IPO. But because of politics by trade unions, they failed to benefit from the issue. Meanwhile he noted that the minister said Coal India's annual turnover was Rs 52,000 crore and its balance sheet is not going to be affected by the Rs 765-crore debt to public sector units.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> "No benefit for trade union workers in Coal India IPO: Minister", *The Economic Times*, December 28, 2010 at <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/markets/ipos/fpos/rights-issues/no-benefit-for-trade-union-workers-in-coal-india-ipo-minister/articleshow/7180897.cms>