

# THE WEEK IN REVIEW

March 7-13, 3(2), 2011

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## I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

### A. SOUTH ASIA

#### AFGHANISTAN

- **US Defence Secretary Gates: US 'well-positioned' to start Afghan withdrawal; UN Report: Targeted civilian killings in Afghanistan doubled last year; Reports: US private military firm formerly known as 'Blackwater' likely to stay on in Afghanistan**

US Defence Secretary Robert Gates has said that the United States is in 'well position' to begin withdrawing troops from Afghanistan in July this year. He was speaking during an unannounced visit to the Afghan capital Kabul, where he is discussing the future of US involvement in the conflict-torn country. Gates was speaking alongside President Karzai, who later this month is expected to announce the schedule for the handover of security responsibility from foreign forces to Afghans.<sup>1</sup>

A United Nations finding has revealed that targeted killings of civilians in Afghanistan have doubled last year. The civilian death has been the highest amongst all the killings and steadily rising by the year. However, the insurgents are responsible for 75% of the killings.<sup>2</sup>

In other developments, reports noted that US private military firm formerly known as Blackwater is likely to survive an Afghan government clampdown on mercenaries. The decision was made after Hamid Karzai was forced by his western partners to abandon a plan to completely disband private security companies.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "US 'well-positioned' to start Afghan withdrawal – Gates", *BBC*, March 7, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-12662121>

<sup>2</sup> "Targeted civilian killings spiral in Afghan war", *Dawn*, March 9, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/03/09/targeted-civilian-killings-spiral-in-afghan-war-un.html>

<sup>3</sup> "Afghanistan — Blackwater to stay on", *Dawn*, March 9, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/03/09/afghanistan-blackwater-to-stay-on.html>

## PAKISTAN

- **President Zardari: Mistrust must not spoil US-Pakistan ties; Hillary Clinton: Walking away from Pakistan will have dire results**

President Asif Ali Zardari has urged the United States to prevent mistrust caused by diplomatic incidents from spoiling ties between the two nations. The relation between the two countries has recently been under stress due to the Raymond Davis incident. Zardari requested the new visiting US envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Marc Grossman that the relation between the two countries should not be hostage to the incident or a case of mistrust.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has noted that the consequences of walking away from Pakistan will have dire results. Referring to a 16 per cent cut slapped last month by the House of Representatives on US foreign assistance, she told an appropriations subcommittee, "It will be very difficult for us... to absorb" the impact of this cut, particularly in places like Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq. It would be worth noting that the US State Department is seeking \$8.7 billion next fiscal year to fund its civilian missions in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq.<sup>5</sup>

## BANGLADESH

- **India-Bangladesh holds discussion over power sector cooperation; India Bangladesh set to construct 10-kilometre railway track linking Akhaura with Agartala; Exports grew by 40.28 per cent in Bangladesh in the fiscal year 2010-11; Meeting held between Border Guards of India and Bangladesh**

A 14-member Indian delegation led by India's Power Secretary, and NTPC's Chairman and Managing Director Arup Roy Choudhury visited Bangladesh to move forward the power sector cooperation between the two nations.<sup>6</sup> However, reports noted that India and Bangladesh are set to construct a 10-kilometre railway track late this year thus directly linking Akhaura with Agartala by next year to facilitate transit for India. The two countries have already finalised

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<sup>4</sup> "Mistrust must not spoil US ties, says Zardari", *Dawn*, March 7, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/03/07/gilani-meets-new-us-special-envoy-for-pakistan-afghanistan.html>

<sup>5</sup> "Walking away from Pakistan to have dire results: Clinton", *Dawn*, March 9, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/03/11/walking-away-from-pakistan-to-have-dire-results-clinton.html>

<sup>6</sup> "Procedural bottlenecks to delay power import from India", *The Financial Express*, March 8, 2011 at [http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news\\_id=128460&date=2011-03-08](http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news_id=128460&date=2011-03-08)

alignment of the rail tracks and are now determining construction cost as well as the modus operandi of the train service.<sup>7</sup>

According to reports, exports grew by 40.28 percent in the first eight months of the Bangladesh's fiscal year 2010-11, compared to the same period in the last fiscal year. According to the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), Bangladesh exported goods worth \$14.08 billion during July-February of fiscal 2010-11, up from \$10.31 billion in the same period of 2009-10. In February alone, exports grew by 43.33 percent to \$1.89 billion, compared to the same month of the previous year, according to government data.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, Border guards of India and Bangladesh began five-day discussions on issues related to joint verification of unfenced gaps, maintenance of status quo in areas of adverse possession of land and implementation of joint border management plan on March 9.<sup>9</sup>

## SRI LANKA

- **Sri Lankan PM: "LTTE terrorists were being trained at three different secret locations in Tamil Nadu"; India denies the claim by calling it unfortunate, urges Sri Lanka to desist from reacting to speculative and uncorroborated reports; Sri Lanka's trade deficit widened; The US Ambassador to Sri Lanka meets President Mahinda Rajapaksa; Gap between the sexes in Sri Lanka's labour force is the 20th largest in the World; India allocates US\$ 10.5 million for setting up a 150-bed hospital in central province; President conveyed sympathy message to Japan, allocates US\$ 1 million for the earthquake victims in Japan**

Sri Lankan Prime Minister D.M.Jayaratne has stated, "LTTE terrorists were being trained at three different secret locations in Tamil Nadu under the supervision of a person called Pugalendran Master, a close associate of Pottu Amman who acted as the head of the intelligence wing of the organization at that time". He made these remarks in Parliament during the debate on the extension of the State of Emergency on March 9, 2011.<sup>10</sup> However, India has categorically denied the existence of such camps and urged the Government of Sri Lanka to desist from

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<sup>7</sup> "Akhaura-Agartala Rail Link:Work to start by year-end", *The Daily Star*, March 10, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=177144>

<sup>8</sup> "Exports grow 40pc", *The Daily Star*, March 10, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=177069>

<sup>9</sup> "Dhaka-Delhi border co-ordination meet begin", *The Daily Star*, March 10, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=177170>

<sup>10</sup> "LTTE TRAINING IN t'nadu", *The Daily Mirror*, March 10, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/37788.html>

reacting to speculative and uncorroborated reports. India considered such a reference by the Sri Lankan Prime Minister unfortunate.<sup>11</sup> Sri Lanka Freedom Party Treasurer and Minister Dulles Alahapperuma said at a news conference that the rejection by India of the claim of PM Dayaratne would strengthen bilateral relations. According to the minister the incorrect statement by Mr. Jayaratne was now a closed chapter.<sup>12</sup>

According to Central Bank's data, Sri Lanka's trade deficit in 2010 has been widened by 66.7 percent, from US \$3.1 billion during 2009 to US \$ 5.2 billion in 2010. However, the cumulative earnings from exports increased to US \$8.3 billion during the year 2010, indicating the increase by 17.3 per cent which is the highest annual value so far in the history.<sup>13</sup>

In other developments, the United States Ambassador Patricia Butenis met with President Mahinda Rajapaksa on March 8 and discussed the progress of talks with the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) and the post-conflict reconciliation process, strengthening of ties between the US and Sri Lanka in trade and aviation and the issue of Indian fishermen entering Sri Lankan waters and the progress made towards finding a solution to the problem. External Affairs Minister G L Peiris and Secretary Romesh Jayasinghe were also present during the discussion.<sup>14</sup>

## MALDIVES

- **Maldives Islamic Bank inaugurated; President Nasheed visits Mauritius- receives the highest distinct Order of Merit in Mauritius; President's sympathy message to Japan; Maldives disaster assistance to Japan; Mohamed Nasheed meets the IMF mission in Maldives to review the IMF programme in the Maldives**

President Mohamed Nasheed inaugurated Maldives Islamic Bank on March 7.<sup>15</sup> President Nasheed visited Mauritius on the invitation from Prime Minister of Mauritius Dr Navinchandra Ramgoolam to officiate the country's National Day celebrations on March 12, 2011. During his stay in Mauritius, President Nasheed met President of Mauritius Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister Dr

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<sup>11</sup> "India says 'Don't react to speculation'", *The Daily Mirror*, March 12, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/37997.html>

<sup>12</sup> "Minister Welcomes India's rejection of PM's claim", *The Daily Mirror*, March 12, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/37994.html>

<sup>13</sup> "Sri Lanka's trade deficit widens", *The Daily Mirror*, March 7, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/business/127-local/37455.html>

<sup>14</sup> "US Ambassador meets President", *The Daily Mirror*, March 9, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/37711.html>

<sup>15</sup> "President Inaugurates Maldives Islamic Bank", March 7, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=4898>

Ramgoolam, Chief Justice Yeung Sik Yuen, Speaker of the Mauritius National Assembly Rajkeswur Purryag, and Leader of Opposition of Mauritius Paul Bérenger. During the official talks with the Mauritian leaders President Nasheed proposed to form an official body of Indian Ocean island countries to collectively promote development cooperation and common interests at the world stage. During the meeting, the Mauritian Prime Minister proposed to explore the possibility of jointly conducting economic zone surveillance by two countries.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, President of Mauritius Sir Anerood Jugnauth has awarded President Mohamed Nasheed the highest distinct order of merit in Mauritius, Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and the Key of the Indian Ocean (GCSK).<sup>17</sup>

President Mohamed Nasheed has sent a message of sympathy to Prime Minister of Japan Naoto Kan following the loss of many lives, injury to many people, and extensive damage caused by the massive earthquake that hit Northern parts of the country and the tsunami triggered by the earthquake.<sup>18</sup> The Maldives has also offered Japan in-kind assistance of 1,800 cases of canned Maldivian tuna, containing a total of 86,400 cans, to help feed a town affected by the disaster.<sup>19</sup>

In other developments, President Mohamed Nasheed met the International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission to review the IMF programme in the Maldives under its Stand-by Arrangement and Exogenous Shock Facility to assist economic recovery in the Maldives on March 10, 2011.<sup>20</sup>

## B. EAST ASIA

### CHINA

**Liang Guanglie extends condolences to Japan and offers help; Ma Xiaotian visits Bolivia; International military cooperation stressed; Hong Kong Garrison of the PLA conducts sea-air joint patrol; The 8th Chinese naval escort taskforce participates in the "Peace 11"; Guo Boxiong underscores the importance striking a balance between**

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<sup>16</sup> "President Nasheed Holds Talks with Mauritian Prime Minister", *The President's Office, Government of Maldives*, March 12, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=4931>  
<sup>17</sup> "President Nasheed Officiates Mauritius National Day Celebrations", *The President's Office, Government of Maldives*, March 13, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=4933>

<sup>18</sup> "Mauritius Awards Highest Order to President Nasheed", *The President's Office, Government of Maldives*, March 12, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=4929>

<sup>19</sup> "President Sends Sympathy to Japanese Prime Minister Following the Earthquake and Tsunami", *The President's Office, Government of Maldives*, March 11, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=4921>

<sup>20</sup> "Maldives Provides Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster Assistance", *The President's Office, Government of Maldives*, March 12, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=4927>

<sup>21</sup> "President Meets the IMF Mission in the Maldives", *The President's Office, Government of Maldives*, March 10, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=4913>

**military modernization and fulfilling historic missions; The need of having a proper legal framework for overseas naval missions felt; Improvement in national defense contracts told to be a priority requirement**

Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie has extended deep condolences and sympathy to the earthquake and Tsunami victims and their families in Japan. He conveyed his condolences to Japan over the massive earthquake. He also expressed willingness to offer help. The earthquake measuring 8.9 magnitude on the Richter scale hit northeastern Japan on Friday 11 March and triggered a massive tsunami in the Pacific Ocean.<sup>21</sup>

Ma Xiaotian, Chinese Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the People's Liberation Army, visited Bolivia last week. During his visit he met the Bolivian President Evo Morales, who on this occasion, said that his country attached great importance to relations with China, and pragmatic exchanges and cooperation between the two nations were mutually beneficial. Ma also remarked that since the two countries established diplomatic ties 26 years ago, the bilateral relationship has developed smoothly with frequent exchanges of visits of top leaders.<sup>22</sup>

Gao Shouwei, member of the PLA delegation to the 4th Session of the 11th National People's Congress (NPC), reiterated that enhancing exchange with foreign militaries was an important measure to promote the international influence of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) as well as one of the effective ways to speed up the transformation of generation mode of combat capabilities. Gao Shouwei argued that it was necessary for the PLA to carry out joint exercises and trainings with foreign militaries in a wider scope with more contents, establish and perfect the normalized mechanism for joint military exercise and training with relevant foreign militaries in order to promote the transition of Sino-foreign joint military exercise and training from the one staged by single service or single arm to the one involving multiple services and arms, from non-traditional security field to both traditional and non-traditional security fields, and from highlighting bilateral cooperation to attaching equal importance to both bilateral and multilateral cooperation. He also remarked that the PLA should further strengthen exchange of visit and study with foreign militaries, lower properly the rank thresholds of the military personnel to go abroad for military exchange purpose, so as to increase the proportion of

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<sup>21</sup> "Chinese defense minister offers condolences to Japan after massive earthquake", *PLA Daily* (Online), 12 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/12/content\\_4401928.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/12/content_4401928.htm)

<sup>22</sup> "Bolivian president says co-op with China mutually beneficial", *PLA Daily* (Online), 12 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/today-headlines/2011-03/12/content\\_4401740.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/today-headlines/2011-03/12/content_4401740.htm)



responsible officers of combat units at division, brigade and regiment levels in the PLA delegations to go abroad to have military exchange with foreign armed forces.<sup>23</sup>

According to reports, the Hong Kong Garrison of the PLA conducted this year's first sea-air joint patrol on the morning of March 9 in order to effectively fulfill the sea and air defense task in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China. It is learnt from reports that the sea-air joint patrol mainly focused on monitoring, tracking, and identifying suspicious targets in the waters and airspace of the Hong Kong SAR, as well as timely dealing with emergencies.<sup>24</sup>

The 8th Chinese naval escort taskforce participated in the "Peace 11" multinational joint maritime exercise on 9 March. In the exercise, it demonstrated an anti-terrorism boarding drill together with the foreign navies from Pakistan, Italy, France, Indonesia, and Malaysia. The contents of the drill included approaching the target vessel, shouting to the suspected terrorists for inducing them to capitulate, climbing rope ladders, searching for and then controlling the targets, interrogating the "suspects", and investigating and collecting evidence.<sup>25</sup>

Guo Boxiong, a Deputy from the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) to the National People's Congress (NPC), member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and vice chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), has reiterated CMC Chairman Hu Jintao's insistence on accelerating transformation of combat power generation mode. He said the need of hour is to resolve the principal contradictions of two "incompatibles" in the development of the Chinese military, promoting the scientific development of national defense and army building, and effectively performing the historical mission of the PLA in the new century and the new period.<sup>26</sup>

Huang Jiaxiang, a Deputy to the 11th National People's Congress (NPC) has highlighted the need of a proper legal framework for PLA Navy's overseas missions. He has recently said that there was still some vacuum in the relevant laws and regulations on the escort actions of the Navy of the Chinese People's

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<sup>23</sup> "PLA deputy calls for more opportunities for responsible officers of combat units to study abroad", *PLA Daily* (Online), 11 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/11/content\\_4401417.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/11/content_4401417.htm)

<sup>24</sup> "PLA Hong Kong Garrison conducts 1st sea-air joint patrol in 2011", *PLA Daily* (Online), 10 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/10/content\\_4400496.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/10/content_4400496.htm)

<sup>25</sup> "Anti-terrorism boarding drill of "Peace 11" exercise staged", *PLA Daily* (Online), 10 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/10/content\\_4400497.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/10/content_4400497.htm)

<sup>26</sup> "Guo Boxiong urges accelerating transformation of combat power generation mode", *PLA Daily* (Online), 7 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/07/content\\_4397587.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/07/content_4397587.htm)

Liberation Army (PLA), and there existed some ambiguities in the understanding and application of these laws and regulations. He said that it was imperative to establish and prefect relevant laws and regulations to provide comprehensive legal support for the PLA Navy's oceangoing escort actions.<sup>27</sup>

In other developments, Ma Jianguo, a Deputy of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) to the National People's Congress (NPC) and political commissar of Military Economics Academy of the PLA has argued that national defense contracts constitute the basis of military economic activities and offer ways to effectively improve the benefits of military economy. He further said that the lack of a norm in the operation and management of national defense contracts leads to problems like ambiguity of responsibilities, rights and obligations, content segmentation, loose supervision, inadequate incentive, less than effective relief, low work efficiency among others, suppressing the essential function of the national defense contracts. He averred that with the further advancement of military logistical support outsourcing and in-depth development of the weapon and equipment system reform, it is imperative to strengthen national defense contract legislation and appropriately allocate responsibilities, rights and obligations, in order to maintain the military economic order and improve the benefits of military economy.<sup>28</sup>

#### JAPAN

(February 28-March 13, 2011)

- **Japan faces the worst crisis since World War-II; Pressure mounts on Kan to quit; Takeaki Matsumoto to be the new Foreign Minister of Japan; Japan stealth jet prototype set to fly in 2014; Russia to deploy cruise missiles on Kuril Islands**

Reports noted that Japan is today experiencing its greatest hardships since World War II. It is tackling an earthquake, tsunami and a growing nuclear crisis. The Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan said in a television statement that there will be sweeping power cuts. He further added that the existing situation at the quake-hit Fukushima nuclear plant remained grave. There have also been reports that the death toll in tsunami-hit Miyagi prefecture alone could exceed 10,000.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> "PLA deputy to NPC suggests lawmaking for naval escort actions", *PLA Daily* (Online), 9 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/09/content\\_4399457.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/09/content_4399457.htm)

<sup>28</sup> "PLA deputy proposes strengthening national defense contract legislation", *PLA Daily* (Online), 10 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/10/content\\_4400499.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/10/content_4400499.htm)

<sup>29</sup> "Japan crisis 'worst since WW2'" *BBC*, March 13, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-12726297>

On the political front, there are reports that the people who are within the government have also started demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Naoto Kan. The most vocal were members of the Democratic Party of Japan who are close to former party President Ichiro Ozawa.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand Japan appointed a new foreign minister. It was announced that Vice Foreign Minister Takeaki Matsumoto will succeed Seiji Maehara as Foreign Minister of Japan.<sup>31</sup>

On the defence front, a senior military official said that Japan is on track to test a domestically designed prototype stealth fighter in three years. This was announced by Lt. Gen. Hideyuki Yoshioka who stated that the prototype will likely be rolled out for a test flight on schedule in 2014.<sup>32</sup>

However, on the bi-lateral front, it is believed that Russia will deploy antiship cruise missiles and anti-aircraft missiles systems on the Kuril Islands. This will be including the four Russian-held islands off Hokkaido claimed by Japan.<sup>33</sup>

### C. CENTRAL ASIA & RUSSIA

#### CENTRAL ASIA

- **United States calls for democratization in Central Asia; CSTO to compile a list of extremist and terrorist organizations; Anti-drug trafficking center approved; Tajikistan and Uzbekistan seek guidance on applying to WTO; Ata-Zhurt party threatens Kyrgyzstan's governing coalition while protesters demand Bakiev extradition; Tajik President visits Pakistan; Progress on Turkmen-Afghan railway link discussed; Turkmen to supply gas to China**

The United States gave a call to the Central Asian republics for democratization. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Robert Blake said this week that the situations in Tunisia and Egypt make the case for Central Asian nations on the “need to be sure that their political and economic systems respond to the aspirations of their young people, and that they address things like

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<sup>30</sup> “Pressure mounts on Kan to quit / Voices within government now calling for prime minister's resignation” *The Yomiuri Shimbun*, March 10, 2011 at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T110309006822.htm>

<sup>31</sup> “Japan names new foreign minister” *CNN*, March 9, 2011 at <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/asiapcf/03/08/japan.foreign.minister/?hpt=T2>

<sup>32</sup> “Japan stealth jet prototype set to fly in 2014” *The Washington Post* March 8, 2011 at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/03/08/AR2011030800114.html>

<sup>33</sup> “Russia to deploy cruise missiles on Kuril Islands” *Associated Press*, March 2, 2011 at [http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=D9LMFLF80&show\\_article=1](http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=D9LMFLF80&show_article=1)

corruption".<sup>34</sup> The United States is attempting to deepen ties in the region, an important northern route for non-military supplies for U.S. forces in Afghanistan, Blake told a Congressional hearing in Washington, D.C.<sup>35</sup>

The Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) will compile a list of extremist and terrorist organizations in its member states to prevent suspect groups and members from slipping across borders. In doing so, it hopes to prevent suspected group members from escaping prosecution in one CSTO member state by taking refuge in another.<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev on March 9 signed a law ratifying an agreement to create a center to combat drug trafficking in Central Asia. This follows passage of the measure by both houses of Russia's legislature and an agreement reached in 2009 between Russia and Central Asian nations to create the center to coordinate measures to curtail drug trafficking and drug trafficking networks in partner nations as well as to gather, store and analyze information aimed at cutting down on trans-border crimes.<sup>37</sup>

Reports noted that representatives of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan joined delegates from nine other developing nations to attend an international conference, sponsored by the Center for WTO Studies in the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) in New Delhi, offering guidance on applying to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Delegates from countries interested in acceding to the global trade body learned from the experiences of Nepal, China and Vietnam on the rules and regulations of the WTO and the challenges countries face before being offered membership in the body.<sup>38</sup>

Ata-Zhurt (Motherland) party head Kamchybek Tashiev who is the faction leader of Kyrgyzstan's ruling coalition has threatened to pull his party out of the government over Russian corruption allegations against First Deputy Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov. The allegations swirl around an investigation

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<sup>34</sup> 'U.S steps up call for democratization in Central Asia, *Central Asia Newswire*, March 11, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Regional/US-steps-up-call-for-democratization-in-Central-Asia/viewstory.aspx?id=3516>

<sup>35</sup> -ibid-

<sup>36</sup> 'CSTO to track regional terror organizations, *Central Asia Newswire*, March 07, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Regional/CSTO-tonbsptrack-regional-terror-organizations/viewstory.aspx?id=3460>

<sup>37</sup> 'Russia approves new regional anti-drug trafficking center, *Central Asia Newswire*, March 09, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Regional/Russia-approves-new-regional-anti-drug-trafficking-center/viewstory.aspx?id=3490>

<sup>38</sup> 'Tajikistan, Uzbekistan receive guidance on joining WTO' *Central Asia Newswire*, March 08, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Regional/Tajikistan-Uzbekistan-receive-guidance-on-joining-WTO/viewstory.aspx?id=3479>

supported by Babanov into a leading Kyrgyz mobile operator Megacom.<sup>39</sup> While Kyrgyz protesters took to the street in front of the Belarusian embassy in Bishkek this week to demand the extradition of former Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiev for financial crimes, corruption. Reports noted that Kyrgyzstan's security forces had to open fire on protesters in Bishkek.<sup>40</sup>

Tajikistan's President Emomali Rahmon paid a three day state visit to Pakistan from March 8-10 along with a delegation of lawmakers and businessmen to tie down bilateral agreements in the fields of hydropower, trade and investment, healthcare, agriculture and sports. During his visit, Rahmon expressed interest in helping Pakistan construct power plants to combat extensive electricity outages; they concluded agreements to expand highway and rail connections to link their countries and vowed to set up joint ventures to produce construction materials and process precious and semi-precious stones; and reaffirmed their commitment to aid stabilization efforts in Afghanistan.<sup>41</sup>

Turkmenistan's Railway Minister met with delegates from the Afghan government on March 9 to discuss progress on a proposed railway line that will link the two countries. The proposed railway, upon its completion, will run 75 miles from Atamyrat-Imamnazar in Turkmenistan to Akina, Afghanistan.<sup>42</sup> Meanwhile, London-listed energy company Petrofac announced on Monday that Turkmenistan will be ready to pump gas to China from its massive South Yolotan field by the end of 2013. Turkmenistan—already has one pipeline to China in operation which provides China with 40 bcm per year—announced it would increase its gas deliveries to China by 20 bcm following an agreement reached by the two sides earlier this month.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> 'Corruption allegations threaten Kyrgyzstan's governing coalition, *Central Asia Newswire*, March 11, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kyrgyzstan/Corruption-allegationsnbspthreaten-Kyrgyzstan39s-governing-coalition/viewstory.aspx?id=3518>

<sup>40</sup> 'Kyrgyz protesters demand Bakiev extradition, *Central Asia Newswire*, March 11, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kyrgyzstan/Kyrgyz-protesters-demand-Bakiev-extradition/viewstory.aspx?id=3522>

<sup>41</sup> 'Tajik president concludes 'constructive' Pakistan visit, *Central Asia Newswire*, March 10, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Tajikistan/Tajik-president-concludes-39constructive39-Pakistan-visit/viewstory.aspx?id=3510>

<sup>42</sup> 'Ashgabat hosts Afghan delegation to discuss rail link, *Central Asia Newswire*, March 10, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Turkmenistan/Ashgabat-hosts-Afghan-delegation-to-discuss-rail-link/viewstory.aspx?id=3507>

<sup>43</sup> 'Turkmenistan's South Yolotan gas field to supply China by 2014' *Central Asia Newswire*, March 07, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Turkmenistan/Turkmenistanrsquo-s-South-Yolotan-gas-field-to-supply-China-by-2014/viewstory.aspx?id=3462>

## RUSSIA

- **Russia contributes to Japan's earthquake rescue efforts; US Vice President meets Russian leaders; US assures Russia support for its membership bid in WTO; Aeroflot and Boeing sign an agreement worth US\$ 2.2 billion; Russia set to buy 500 combat vehicles from France; Russia to ratify maritime border pact with Norway within a month; Croatia introduces visa free travel regime for Russians; Medvedev asks US to ditch travel visas; Foreigner bill ratified by Duma; Modernization of armed forces a key agenda for the Russian government; Weapons sales exports estimated to be \$9.5 billion US\$ in 2011; Russia's steel company MMK takes full control over Turkish joint venture**

Russia has sent an additional team of 50 rescuers to join in the search for survivors of Japan's massive natural disaster. President Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin have instructed Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin and Emergencies Minister Sergey Shoygu to take specific measures to help Japan. Russia is going to increase the shipments of liquefied natural gas supply by 150,000 tonnes through Gazprom and coal supply between 3-4 million tonnes. This help is in addition to sending necessary resources and units consisting of 6 flights, and an air-borne hospital with medicines and medical equipment and a 300 member Rescue Team consisting of Doctors and Psychologists to Japan to help in rescue operations in disaster hit areas.<sup>44</sup>

Reports noted that the US Vice President Joe Biden held talks with Kremlin leaders and assured Russia of Washington's support for Russian membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO).<sup>45</sup> Russia, the largest economy outside the WTO, has been seeking to enter the organization for 18 years. Advocates believe Russia's entry into the WTO will help foster more stability in the country and make its rapprochement with the United States more impervious to political tensions by bolstering economic ties. But membership remains uncertain and could be derailed by Georgia, which fought a brief war with Russia in 2008 over its pro-Russian separatist region of South Ossetia. Georgia, as a WTO member, has veto power. Biden's visit to Russia is intended to build on the "reset" in bilateral ties initiated by President Barack Obama two years ago. In a bid to underscore U.S. hopes for improved economic ties, Biden met with business

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<sup>44</sup> "Russia is in forefront to help Japan in crisis period", *All Voices*, March 12, 2011 at <http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news/8457431-russia-is-in-forefront-to-help-japan-in-crisis-period>

<sup>45</sup> "Biden urges Medvedev to expand economic ties after arms pact", *Bloomberg*, March 9, 2011 at <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-03-09/biden-urges-medvedev-to-expand-economic-ties-after-arms-pact.html>

leaders at the Moscow suburb of Skolkovo, where authorities are building what they tout as Russia's future version of Silicon Valley.<sup>46</sup>

Biden and Shuvalov oversaw the signing of a deal between Russian airline Aeroflot and U.S. plane manufacturer Boeing, under which Aeroflot is to purchase eight long-range Boeing B-777 planes for \$2.2 billion. Aeroflot agreed to buy six Boeing 777-300ERs and two Boeing 777-200ERs that the Russian carrier will use to expand its fleet before the 2014 Winter Olympics in the Black Sea resort town of Sochi.<sup>47</sup>

According to reports, the French military manufacturer Panhard is in talks with the Russian government for the possible sale of 500 light armoured vehicles for Russia's border guards. The contract which could total US\$ 260 million is specifically earmarked for use by Federal Security Service border guards.<sup>48</sup>

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has declared that the lower house of parliament of Russia, the State Duma, will ratify a maritime border demarcation treaty with Norway within a month. Last year, Russia and Norway signed a deal to delimitate their maritime border in the Barents Sea and Arctic Ocean after 40 years of negotiations. Both countries have been disputing the 175,000 square km area since 1970. The absence of defined maritime border often resulted in detentions of fishing vessels in the region. The agreement has also paved the way for the lifting of a 30-year-long moratorium on oil and gas extraction in the previously disputed zone.<sup>49</sup>

In a bid to increase the number of Russian tourists visiting Croatia, the country has introduced a visa free travel programme for the Russian citizens. In the Balkans, Russians also enjoy visa free travel regimes with Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia.<sup>50</sup>

Reports noted that Moscow has sent a proposal to the US to entirely do away with the travel visas. But analysts have warned that the country is nowhere near meeting the U.S. Visa Waiver Program's stringent requirements and speculated that the Russian initiative reflected frustration over ongoing talks for visa-free

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<sup>46</sup> "U.S. Vice President Meets Russian Leaders", *Radio Liberty*, March 3, 2011 at [http://www.rferl.org/content/biden\\_russia\\_moldova\\_reset\\_skolkovo/2332861.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/biden_russia_moldova_reset_skolkovo/2332861.html)

<sup>47</sup> "Boeing wins Aeroflot order for 777 airplanes worth \$2.2 billion", *Bloomberg*, March 9, 2011 at <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-03-09/boeing-wins-aeroflot-order-for-777-airplanes-worth-2-2-billion.html>

<sup>48</sup> "Russia set to buy 500 combat vehicles from France", *Ria Novosti*, March 11, 2011 at [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20110311/162951763.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20110311/162951763.html)

<sup>49</sup> "Russia to ratify maritime border pact with Norway within month – Lavrov", *Ria Novosti*, March 7, 2011 at <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20110307/162902601.html>

<sup>50</sup> "Croatia introduces again visa free travel regime for Russians", *Ria Novosti*, March 11, 2011 at <http://en.rian.ru/world/20110311/162949114.html>

travel with Europe. Set up in 1986, the Visa Waiver Program allows travelers to stay up to 90 days without a visa. The program currently has 36 participating states, ranging from Australia to Switzerland. To be admitted, a country must meet requirements like law enforcement data sharing with the United States, timely reporting of lost and stolen passports and high counter-terrorism, border control and document security standards. In addition, admittance is at the discretion of the U.S. government and meeting the requirements does not guarantee a successful candidacy.<sup>51</sup>

Meanwhile, the State Duma has passed an amendment that eases registration rules for foreigners. As per the new regulations, foreigners only have to register seven and not three working days after arrival in the country. This should help in removing a lot of red tape for businessmen and tourists. It also re-affirms the responsibility for registering foreigners working in the country to employers, doing away with a February reform that has made it the job of private landlords.<sup>52</sup>

Reports noted that modernization of its armed forces, by focusing on advanced weaponry, remains a key objective of the defence planners of Russia. The Russian government has allocated 22 trillion rubles (\$730 billion) on the new program, which includes purchases of eight missile-carrying strategic submarines, equipped with Bulava ballistic missiles, 600 aircraft, S-400 and S-500 air defense systems. The Navy will receive new conventional submarines, destroyers and corvettes equipped with advanced Kalibr missile system, which can fire anti-ship cruise missiles (3M-54) and long-range cruise missiles (3M-14) to destroy land-based targets. Top priority will be given to the development and the maintenance of Russia's nuclear triad. According to official data, the share of modern equipment in the strategic nuclear forces is about 20 percent, while in the conventional forces it does not exceed 10 percent. The goal is to bring the share of modern weaponry to 70 percent of the total by 2020.<sup>53</sup>

Meanwhile, Russia's state run arms exporter Rosoboronexport has estimated that revenue from the sale of weapons will cross 9.5 billion US\$ in 2011. Russia is the world's second largest arms exporter and last year arms exports had totaled US\$ 8.6 billion. Aircraft and related equipment account for 43% of Russian arms

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<sup>51</sup> Twickel, NV, "Medvedev asks US to ditch travel Visas", *The Moscow Times*, March 14, 2011, <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/medvedev-asks-us-to-ditch-travel-visas/432432.html>

<sup>52</sup> "Foreigner bill sails through Duma", *The Moscow Times*, March 14, 2011, <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/foreigner-bill-sails-through-duma/432441.html>

<sup>53</sup> "Russia to prioritize modern weaponry in new arms acquisition programme", *Ria Novosti*, March 11, 2011, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20110311/162956743.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20110311/162956743.html)



exports, ships and naval equipment 22%, arms and military equipment for ground forces 10% and air-defense systems some 13% of the total arms exports.<sup>54</sup>

In other developments, Russia's Magnitogorsk Iron and Steel Works (MMK) has signed an agreement to acquire a 50% stake in Turkish joint venture MMK-Atakas from the Atakas family, thus gaining full control over the company. The value of the deal, which is expected to be completed by November 1, amounts to U.S. \$485 million. The plant's production capacity is expected to reach over 800,000 tonnes of metal products in 2011 and exceed 2 million tonnes in 2012. The full capacity of the plant amounts to 2.3 million tonnes of metal products per year. Total investments in the project are estimated at approximately \$2.1 billion.<sup>55</sup>

#### D. WEST ASIA

##### IRAN

**• Robert Einhorn: United States was not looking for new UN Security Council sanctions but rather focusing on steps taken on its own and in concert with allies**

The US State Department's Senior Adviser for Nonproliferation and Arms Control, Robert Einhorn has said the United States was not looking for new UN Security Council sanctions but rather focusing on steps taken on its own and in concert with allies. He made these remarks as he provided the most detailed US public briefing on January talks among six major powers and Iran in Istanbul that failed to break a deadlock over the Iranian nuclear program. The six major powers (Britain, China, France, Russia, the United States and Germany) have pursued a two-track approach toward Iran, seeking to negotiate a resolution to the disagreement while also pursuing sanctions to pressure Iran. Einhorn also added that "we have determined that, in the wake of Istanbul, we have no choice but to increase the cost to Iran of refusing to engage seriously." There have been four rounds of UN Security Council sanctions to punish Iran for failing to halt its uranium enrichment and address questions about its activities by the International Atomic Energy Agency.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> "Russia hopes to make \$9.5 bln in 2011 arms sales", *Ria Novosti*, March 9, 2011, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20110309/162923334.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20110309/162923334.html)

<sup>55</sup> "Russia's MMK inks deal to take full control over Turkish JV", *Prime-TASS*, March 11, 2011, <http://www.prime-tass.com/news/0/%7B6D3C532C-134D-4581-877C-74358FFE736A%7D.uif>

<sup>56</sup> "US believes more sanctions needed against Iran," *Khaleej Times*, March 10, 2011, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/March/middleeast\\_March177.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/March/middleeast_March177.xml&section=middleeast)

## IRAQ

• **Iraq's Deputy PM Saleh al-Mutlaq: Prime Minister Maliki should step down if fails to meet deadline for improving performance; Seven Iraqi soldiers killed in Mosul by gunmen**

Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, Saleh al-Mutlaq said that Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki should step down if his government fails to meet his own 100-day target to improve its performance in the wake of Egypt-inspired protests. The remarks, by Mutlaq reveal the deep divisions remaining in a fractious coalition government formed in December after nine months of wrangling following an inconclusive election. Like other countries in the Arab world inspired by the fall of Egyptian leader Hosni Mubarak, Iraq has seen a steadily growing wave of demonstrations this year among a public angry about corruption, a lack of public services and jobs. Meanwhile, security forces have responded with tear gas, water cannon and gunfire. The prime minister had said two weeks ago that he would sack ministers if performance did not improve within 100 days, effectively giving them a June deadline. It would be worth noting that Deputy PM Mutlaq is a leading figure in the secularist Iraqiya bloc which enjoys support of the Sunni Arab minority.<sup>57</sup>

Police said seven Iraqi soldiers were killed by three gunmen in a speeding car on the outskirts of Iraq's city of Mosul, where the Iraqi government continues to fight a stubborn Sunni insurgency. The men opened fire on the soldiers' car in Badush, west of Mosul. The soldiers, who were dressed in civilian clothes, were shot as they left their unit to go on a break.<sup>58</sup>

## LIBYA, YEMEN, EGYPT

- **Security forces open fire on protesting students in Saana University in Yemen; Egypt: New Prime Minister and Cabinet sworn in; Gaddafi forces regain control over the rebel stronghold**

Reports noted that security forces opened fire and used tear gas to disperse anti government protesters in Sana'a University campus in Yemen on March 13 where around 110 students were injured because of direct gun shots and inhaling tear gas used by the forces. Protesters claim that the reason behind the attack was

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<sup>57</sup> "Meet demands or go, deputy tells Iraq leader," *Khaleej Times*, March 10, 2011, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/March/middleeast\\_March189.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/March/middleeast_March189.xml&section=middleeast)

<sup>58</sup> "Gunmen kill seven Iraqi soldiers in Mosul," *Khaleej Times*, March 12, 2011, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/March/middleeast\\_March205.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/March/middleeast_March205.xml&section=middleeast)

that the security forces did not allow protesters to enter the square of the protest, and harassed protesters as they leave the area. The governmental sources claim that anti government protesters are causing problems for residents living in the Sana'a University area, and locals were fed up with all the road blocks and were demanding that the protesters find a different location to protest.<sup>59</sup> Earlier on March 8, 98 students were injured when soldiers fired rubber bullets and tear gas at students in the same university. The army stormed the University campus hours after thousands of inmates rioted at the central prison in the capital, taking a dozen guards hostage and calling for President Ali Abdullah Saleh to step down. At least one prisoner was killed and 80 people were wounded as the guards fought to control the situation.<sup>60</sup>

However, Egypt's military rulers swore in a new Cabinet on March 7 that includes new faces in key ministries, in response to protesters' demands that the new government be free of stalwarts of ousted president Hosni Mubarak. The new Cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Essam Sharaf, is expected get the approval of the pro-reform groups. The main task of the government will be to help steer the country through reforms and toward free elections. Among the most significant changes in the Cabinet designed to meet with protesters' demands, Sharaf named a new Interior Minister. Major General Mansour El-Essawy, a former Cairo security chief, replaces Mahmoud Wagdi, who held the post for less than a month. The Interior Ministry is in charge of the security forces. Among the other new faces in Egypt's Cabinet was Nabil El-Arabi the new Foreign Minister and Mohammed Al-Jundi, the new Justice Minister.<sup>61</sup>

While in Libya, Gaddafi's forces have regained control over the eastern Libyan town of Bin Jawad from rebel forces. The Libyan rebels retreated from another key town under heavy shelling from government forces as Gaddafi's forces swept closer towards the main opposition-held city of Benghazi. But following the fall of Brega, the commander of the vastly outgunned rebels, Gaddafi's former Interior Minister, vowed to defend the next town in the path of Gaddafi's forces, Ajdabiya. A lightning counter-offensive over the past week has pushed the rebels out of Mediterranean coastal towns, allowing Gaddafi to wrest back the momentum against the uprising. Dozens of rebels fled east out of Brega towards Ajdabiya, the last rebel-held town before Benghazi which the opposition has made its de facto capital just 100 miles away.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> "110 injured in Sana'a and Security Shoot Live Bullets", *Yemen Post*, March 13, 2011, available at <http://www.yemenpost.net/Detail123456789.aspx?ID=3&SubID=3272&MainCat=3>

<sup>60</sup> "Yemeni army storms university, wounding 98", *Asharq Al Awsat*, March 9, 2011, available at <http://www.aawsat.com/english/news.asp?section=1&id=24432>

<sup>61</sup> "Egypt swears in new PM, key ministers" *The Saudi Gazette*, March 8, 2011, Available at [http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home\\_regcon&contentID=2011030895424](http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home_regcon&contentID=2011030895424)

<sup>62</sup> "Gaddafi forces regain control over the rebel stronghold", *Asharq Al Awsat*, March 14, 2011, available at <http://www.aawsat.com/english/news.asp?section=1&id=24496>

## E. USA

- **Concerns expressed over safety of US nuclear reactors**

Reports noted that in the wake of the problems experienced in the Japanese nuclear reactors after the earthquake and tsunami, concerns are being expressed in the United States as well over the safety state of US nuclear reactors as well. It is being reported that US reactors have similar safety measures as the Japanese reactors. This has put the plans for nuclear energy sector expansion in the US under the scanner. According to the reports, given that nuclear energy has been a sensitive issue in the US [courtesy the Three Mile Island case] the recent events in Japan will only erode support in the US for the expansion of nuclear energy sector.<sup>63</sup>

According to the reports, although exactly what happened at Japan's nuclear power plants is still being sorted out, most of the nuclear plants in the United States share some or all of the risk factors that played a role at Fukushima Daiichi: locations on tsunami-prone coastlines or near earthquake faults, aging plants and backup electrical systems that rely on diesel generators and batteries that could fail in extreme circumstances.<sup>64</sup> However, the biggest problem with news reports seems to be – can any alternative safety measures [assuming they are better ones than the ones US and Japan have] be able to withstand the destruction caused by an earthquake of a magnitude similar to the one seen in Japan? Perhaps more in depth analysis is only possible once more credible information regarding the Japanese nuclear plant is known in the future.

## II. DEFENCE REVIEW

### National

- **SIPRI report: India becomes the world's largest arms importer; Defence Minister A K Antony: India still has a long way to go to attain self-reliance in defence production**

India is now the world's largest weapons importer. According to the Swedish think tank, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) which monitors global arms sales, India's weapons imports had overtaken China's, as the South Asian nation pushes ahead with plans to modernise its military and

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<sup>63</sup> "U.S. Nuclear Industry Faces New Uncertainty", *The New York Times*, March 13, 2011 at <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/14/science/earth/14politics.html?partner=rss&emc=rss>

<sup>64</sup> "U.S. Nuclear Plants have same Risks and Backups and Japan Counterparts" *The New York Times*, March 13, 2011 at <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/14/world/asia/14industry.html>

gain international clout. According to the report, India accounted for 9 per cent of all international arms imports in the period from 2006 to 2010, and it is expected to keep the top spot for the foreseeable future. China dropped to second place, with 6 per cent of global imports, as it continued to build up its domestic arms industry. The United States was the largest arms exporter, followed by Russia and Germany, according to the report. Russia was the biggest arms supplier for India and Israel was another important supplier. With its booming economy and growing power, India has been pushing for a greater international role, including a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council.<sup>65</sup>

However, while noting that there has been a rise in indigenous production in defence platforms, equipment and ammunition, Defence Minister A K Antony on Wednesday said that the government's first priority is to reduce dependence on foreign players in supply of these items. He stated, "All our defence PSUs are in the process of modernisation. We will be able to increase our indigenous products substantially,". He added that government has taken policy initiatives to promote indigenous production of defence equipment. However, "we have to go a long way" to attain self-reliance, admitted the minister.<sup>66</sup>

## **International**

- **Russia deploys RS-24 Yars intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM); Pakistan successfully tests one more nuclear nuclear-capable missile**

According to reports, Russia's new RS-24 Yars intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) was put on combat duty for the first time with the Teikovo missile regiment in the Ivanovskaya Oblast in Central Russia on 4 March. RS-24 is a missile that is heavier than the current Topol M (which can carry up to 10 independently targetable warheads) and is claimed by Russian government as being designed to defeat present and potential anti-missile systems. According to Youri Solomonov, head of the Moscow Institute for Thermal Technology, it is a Russian MIRV-equipped, thermonuclear intercontinental ballistic missile that is capable of "penetrating highly protected targets", as well as any current ballistic missile defence (BMD) system.<sup>67</sup>

However, in another development, Pakistan on Friday successfully test-fired the short-range surface-to-surface nuclear-capable Hataf-II or Abdali missile, which

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<sup>65</sup> "India named world's largest arms importer", *The Hindu*, March 13, 2011 at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/NEWS/newsrf.php?newsid=14524>

<sup>66</sup> "Rise in indigenous production in defence sector: A K Antony", *Brahmand.com*, March 10, 2011 at <http://www.brahmand.com/news/Rise-in-indigenous-production-in-defence-sector-A-K-Antony/6533/1/10.html>

<sup>67</sup> "Russia stands up RS-24 ICBM" *HIS Jane's*, 10 March 2011 at [http://www.janes.com/news/defence/jdw/jdw110310\\_1\\_n.shtml](http://www.janes.com/news/defence/jdw/jdw110310_1_n.shtml).

has a range of 180 km, the military said. The missile can carry nuclear and conventional warheads with "high accuracy", it said. Speaking on the occasion, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Chairman Gen Shamim Hyder Wynne said, the test "will go a long way in consolidating Pakistan's strategic deterrence capability and further strengthening national security". In the hierarchy of military operations, the Abdali missile system provides Pakistan an "operational level capability" that is in addition to the strategic capability the country already possesses through its medium-range and long-range ballistic missiles, he said.<sup>68</sup>.

### III. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

- **IBSA disapproves the imposition of a military solution on the civil war in Libya; U.N. Security Council condemns violence by pirates on Somalian coasts; UNSC welcomes African Union's move on Cote d'Ivoire; World community called on to provide assistance in Somalia**

India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) on March 8 disapproved the imposition of a military solution on the civil war in Libya. A joint communiqué was issued by them which "underscored that a no-fly zone on the Libyan air space or any coercive measures additional to those foreseen in Resolution 1970 can only be legitimately contemplated in full compliance with the U.N. Charter and within the Security Council of the United Nations." The three countries also agreed to work closely with Lebanon at the U.N. Security Council. The communiqué also called for urgent reform of the UNSC, including expansion of permanent and non-permanent memberships, with increased participation from the developing world.<sup>69</sup> On a separate occasion, India expressed its concerns about the lack of clarity on key questions like objective and assets required to enforce a no-fly zone over Libya.<sup>70</sup>

In the light of 53 Indians currently being held by pirates on the Somalian coast, the United Nation Security Council issued a statement that stressed the need for "comprehensive response to tackle piracy and its underlying causes" and called on member-states of the UN to maintain the arms embargo against Somalia. The Security Council also condemned violence including 'hostage taking, murder and other acts of violence against individuals'. The Indian envoy at the Council called for strong collective action on the part of the international community to

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<sup>68</sup> "Pakistan test-fires nuclear-capable missile", *Brahmand.com*, March 11, 2011 at <http://www.brahmand.com/news/Pakistan-test-fires-nuclear-capable-missile/6542/1/17.html>

<sup>69</sup> 'IBSA averse to no-fly zone over Libya', *The Hindu*, 09 March, 2011 at <http://www.hindu.com/2011/03/09/stories/2011030966101800.htm>

<sup>70</sup> 'No clarity on no-fly zone move in Libya', *Indian Express*, 09 March, 2011 at <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/no-clarity-on-nofly-zone-move-in-libya-india/759954/0>

rein in piracy.<sup>71</sup> India was also in touch with the Contact Group on Piracy on Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) to coordinate action on piracy.<sup>72</sup>

Meanwhile, the UN Security Council welcomed the move by African Union's (AU) Peace and Security Council reaffirmation of all its previous decisions on the post-electoral crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, recognizing Mr. Ouattara as the country's President. The Council also took note of the AU's decision to appoint a High Representative for the implementation of an overall political solution in Côte d'Ivoire. The Council urged all parties to the conflict to immediately comply with the AU decision and reaffirmed their readiness to impose measures, including targeted sanctions, against all parties which obstruct attempts to produce a speedy and peaceful resolution of the crisis.<sup>73</sup>

In other developments, the Security Council has called on the world community to provide urgently needed equipment to African peacekeepers in Somalia to consolidate recent fragile gains in stabilizing a country torn by factional fighting for the past 20 years. It also stressed the need to reinforce the forces of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). The Council urged the transitional parliament to refrain from any further unilateral actions.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> "Shipowners should tackle pirate-hostage situations: India to UNSC", *Indian Express*, 11 March, 2011 at <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/shipowners-should-tackle-piratehostage-situations-india-to-unscl761046/0>

<sup>72</sup> "Government to frame law to tackle piracy on the seas", *The Hindu*, 13 March, 2011 at <http://www.hindu.com/2011/03/13/stories/2011031364651000.htm>

<sup>73</sup> "Côte d'Ivoire: UN scaling up aid delivery as post-election unrest worsens", *UN News Center*, 11 March, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37740&Cr=ivoire&Cr1=>

<sup>74</sup> Somalia: Security Council calls on world to step up supplies for African force', *UN News Centre*, 10 March, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37735&Cr=somali&Cr1=>