

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Bangladesh

- **India's External Affairs Minister visits Bangladesh; India and Bangladesh agree to include Nepal and Bhutan in the transit and transshipment loop; India-Bangladesh hold meeting aimed at hassle free export -import; Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dipu Moni: Negative attitude to neighbours counter productive;; "Foreign Friends Award" to be conferred on former India's PM Indira Gandhi posthumously; India provides houses to the victims of 2007 cyclone Sidr**

According to reports, India's External Affairs Minister SM Krishna visited Bangladesh on July 6. EAM Krishna's visit was preparatory to that of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's forthcoming visit in September this year.¹ Meanwhile, both Bangladesh and India agreed to include Nepal and Bhutan in the transit and transshipment loop to ensure wider regional connectivity. In an effort to turn the country into a regional economic hub, Bangladesh further wants to widen the transit and transshipment facilities to Myanmar, Thailand and China.² Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni said the present government has taken steps to improve relations with India and other neighbours as negative attitude towards them proved counterproductive in the past.³

In another development, Bangladesh and India held a meeting at Benapole Customs club on July 9 to make import and export between the two neighbouring countries more dynamic. The meeting, co-organised by United Bank of India and Kolkata Chamber of Commerce, emphasised the need to take immediate steps to remove hassle being faced by exporters and importers of the two countries.⁴

Reports noted that the Bangladesh Government will confer "Foreign Friends Award" on former Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi posthumously for her "tremendous support" to the Liberation

¹ "Indian FM Due Today: Dhaka, Delhi move for series of initiatives", *The Daily Star*, July 6, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=193033>

² "Bangladesh, India to keep other neighbours in transit loop", *The Daily Star*, July 7, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=193161>

³ "Negative attitude towards neighbours has proved counterproductive: Dipu Moni tells publication ceremony", *The Daily Star*, July 10, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=193590>

⁴ "Bangladesh, India move to make trade more dynamic", *The Daily Star*, July 10, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=193644>

War in 1971. Indian Congress Party President Sonia Gandhi will receive the Foreign Friends Award on behalf of her mother-in-law during her Dhaka tour on July 25-26, 2011.⁵

In other developments, on July 9, at least 1,600 families in Sharankhola of Bagerhat, who were affected by Cyclone Sidr in 2007, received new houses built by the Indian government.⁶

Sri Lanka

- **Sri Lankan External Affairs Minister Prof. G.L. Peiris: Outpouring of venom by the opposition on India is totally unnecessary; British Defence Secretary Liam Fox visits Sri Lanka**

Reports noted that speaking during an adjournment debate in Sri Lankan Parliament, External Affairs Minister G. L. Peiris told that Sri Lanka would not be able to achieve its set target of becoming a shipping hub in South Asia without the support of India. He said that the shipping industry in Sri Lanka was vastly dependent on India as 70 percent of container transshipment that reach the Colombo Port is from India. The Minister further stated that India was one of the biggest tourism markets which Sri Lanka was looking to and thereby pointed out that 25 percent of tourists that visit Sri Lanka would be from India by 2015. Therefore, he said that the outpouring of venom by the opposition on India is totally unnecessary. However Prof. Peiris said the government was not afraid of raising its voice whenever necessary, referring to the fishermen's issue.⁷

In other developments, British Defence Secretary Liam Fox went to Sri Lanka on July 8 and met President Mahinda Rajapaksa as well as External Affairs Minister G.L. Peries.⁸

Maldives

- **President Nasheed meets Patricia Butenis; Maldives re-opens its Embassy in Washington; Tata Housing Development will construct around 350 residential flats in the Maldives; Mohamed Nasheed congratulates President of the Republic of South Sudan**

Reports noted that President Mohamed Nasheed met with the US Ambassador to the Maldives, Ms Patricia Butenis on July 6 at his office. During the meeting, President Nasheed updated Ambassador Butenis on the government's economic reform programme. They also discussed regional issues and issues of mutual interest as well as the preparations for the SAARC summit to

⁵ "Posthumous award for Indira", *The Daily Star*, July 8, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=193357>

⁶ "Cyclone Sidr:India hands over 1,600 houses to families", *The Daily Star*, July 10, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=193604>

⁷ "India's role vital for Lanka: Govt.", *The Daily Mirror*, July 9, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/49568.html>

⁸ "Liam Fox Here", *The Daily Mirror*, July 9, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/49565.html>

be held in the Maldives this year.⁹ On the same day itself, President attended the reception hosted by Ambassador Butenis to mark 235th Independence Day of the US. At the reception, President Nasheed thanked the US government for its support and assistance to the Maldives and announced the reopening of the Maldives Embassy in Washington.¹⁰

According to reports, as part of a Maldives government-commissioned programme valued at an estimated US\$190million, Tata Housing Development will construct around 350 residential flats and a number of island villa properties. Tata estimates that about 80 per cent of the flat developments from the project would be sold to the Maldivian government, with the remaining properties sold privately in the country. The project is expected to be completed within two to three years, with work carried out by a company called Apex Realty, part of the SG18 Developers group.¹¹

In other developments, President Mohamed Nasheed sent a message of greetings to President of the Republic of South Sudan Salva Kiir Mayardit on the occasion of the declaration of Independence of South Sudan.¹²

B. East Asia

China

- **Chinese Vice Premier is on a visit to North Korea; President Hu Jintao congratulates South Sudan on becoming the independent nation; China and the Philippines agreed not to let affect bilateral ties**

According to reports, Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Dejiang along with a delegation is visiting Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).¹³

Meanwhile, President Hu Jintao has sent a congratulatory message to President Salva Kiir Mayardit on the official founding of the Republic of South Sudan.¹⁴

⁹ "US Ambassador Calls on the President", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, July 6, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5580>

¹⁰ "President Thanks US Support and Assistance to Maldives", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, 6 July 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5582>

¹¹ "Tata announces government link-up for residential developments", *Minivan News*, July 6, 2011 at <http://minivannews.com/category/news-in-brief/page/2>

¹² "President Sends Greetings on the Declaration of Independence of South Sudan", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, July 9, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5591>

¹³ "Chinese vice premier leaves for DPRK visit" *China Daily*, July 10, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-07/10/content_12871281.htm

¹⁴ "Hu congratulates on independence of S Sudan" *China Daily*, July 9, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-07/09/content_12870027.htm

In another development, according to reports, China and the Philippines agreed not to let maritime disputes affect relations during a meeting between Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi and Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario. They agreed that the recent disputes should affect the larger picture of friendship and cooperation.¹⁵

Japan

(June 27-July 3, 2011)

- **Japanese government decides to use ODA for boosting economies of earthquake affected areas of Japan**

Reports noted that with a view to boosting economic recovery of the earthquake affected areas in Japan, the Japanese government has recently decided to use the ODA fund to purchase products from those areas and offer them as assistance goods to developing countries. Such a step is expected to prevent the spread of false rumours regarding products of Northern Japan being unhealthy due to higher than normal levels of radiation. In the meantime, Tokyo reportedly has plans to use the ODA budget for the promotion of Japanese high-level quake resistance technologies overseas; improvement of legal systems and nurturing of human resources abroad. It is worth noting that the total ODA budget for this fiscal year has been cut by 10 % (or 50.1 billion yen) and the reduced amount is to be utilized in the reconstructions projects in the quake-affected areas.¹⁶

(July 4-10, 2011)

- **Japan and Egypt launches their first bilateral human rights dialogue; Opinion poll suggests more than half of the people in Japan are against restarting of operation of nuclear reactors; According to an interim report, Tokyo needs to engage more in UN Peacekeeping; Japanese Foreign Minister expresses concern over the territorial disputes between China and other southeast Asian nations; China lodges complaints against Japan's fishing activities off the disputed territory of Senkaku islands; Japan to conduct stress tests on all its nuclear plants; Japan, Australia and the US to conduct joint naval exercises on South China Sea**

Recently Japan and Egypt launched their first bilateral talk on human rights in Cairo earlier this week. During the dialogue, while the Japanese side took up the issue of the Egyptian military's treatment of detained female protesters, Egyptian officials expressed concerns over the discrimination against Muslims in Japan.¹⁷

¹⁵ "Maritime disputes 'will not affect ties'" *China Daily*, July 9, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-07/09/content_12867505.htm

¹⁶ "Japan to use ODA budget to assist quake-recovery efforts", *Asahi Shimbun*, June 30, 2011, at <http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201106290200.html>

¹⁷ "Japan, Egypt hold first human rights dialogue", *Mainichi Shimbun*, July 8, 2011, at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/archive/news/2011/07/08/20110708p2g00m0dm022000c.html>

According to a recent opinion poll conducted by the *Mainichi Shimbun*, more than half of the people in Japan are opposed to the restarting of operation of nuclear reactors which were stopped for inspection. Only 37 percent were in favour of restarting the reactors.¹⁸

According to an interim report produced by a Japanese government panel recently recommended that Tokyo needs to involve more in the UN peacekeeping operations, particularly in main activities such as truce monitoring. So far, Japan has participated in a number of peacekeeping operations in East Timor and Golan Heights. Although in 2001, Japan lifted its self-imposed ban on participating in the main activities, the SDF in Japan continued to limit its operations to liaison and reconstruction assistance. According to the panel report, Tokyo needs to review its principles and capacities to expand the SDF's participation in the UN peacekeeping operations.¹⁹

Reports noted that Japanese Foreign Minister Takeaki Matsumoto, during his recent meeting with Chinese counterpart Yang Jiechi, expressed Japan's concern over the ongoing territorial dispute between China and Southeast Asian nations in the South China sea region. As the international community is interested in freedom of navigation and maritime safety, Matsumoto sought cooperation from the Chinese side in preventing the tension escalating further. Yang however, stated that the bilateral disputes on the South China sea should be peacefully resolved by the parties involved. On the conclusion of the bilateral treaty between China and Japan on the joint gas field development in the East China Sea, both Matsumoto and Yang have agreed to resume negotiations on such treaty which was suspended earlier due to ship collisions of the two states in September 2010.²⁰

In a recent development, China has officially lodged complaints against Japan due to the latter's alleged fishing activities off the disputed territory of Senkaku islands. While noting that although Japan has been controlling the islands, they have long been China's territory, the Chinese Foreign Ministry has demanded Japan to ensure the fishing boats involved immediately leave that region.²¹

In the meantime, with a view to allaying continued public fear over the safety of nuclear plants, the Japanese government has decided to conduct 'stress tests' or safety assessments on those plants. After the recent Fukushima crisis, out of 54 commercial reactors in Japan, operation of thirty five reactors was halted due to safety concerns. The abrupt decision of the government to conduct such test however has triggered anger among the local municipalities hosting nuclear

¹⁸ "51% opposed to restarting nuclear reactors in Japan: Mainichi poll", *Mainichi Shimbun*, July 4, 2011, at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/archive/news/2011/07/04/20110704p2a00m0na014000c.html>

¹⁹ "Govt panel eyes more Japan engagement in UN peacekeeping", *Mainichi Shimbun*, July 4, 2011, at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/archive/news/2011/07/04/20110704p2g00m0dm071000c.html>

²⁰ "Japan expresses concern to China over tension in South China Sea", *Mainichi Shimbun*, July 4, 2011, at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/archive/news/2011/07/04/20110704p2g00m0dm033000c.html>

²¹ "China protests over Japanese fishing off Senkaku islands", *Mainichi Shimbun*, July 5, 2011, at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/archive/news/2011/07/05/20110705p2g00m0dm021000c.html>

reactors whose operation were to be resumed soon on the basis of industry ministry's earlier announcement that sufficient steps have already been taken to ensure the safety of those reactors.²²

In a significant development, MSDF of Japan, along with the navies from Australia and the US, were to conduct joint naval exercises near the coast of Brunei in the South China Sea on July 9. In a joint statement issued from the Japan-US Security Consultative Committee maintains that "safety and security of the maritime domain y defending the principle of freedom of navigation" was a common objective. The statement further urged the US and Japan to strengthen the trilateral defence cooperation with Australia. Considering that China claims sovereignty over the South China Sea region, the joint exercise is bound to trigger tension in China.²³

South Korea

(June 27-July 3, 2011)

● Kim Jong-Il cancels plan to hold summit level talks with Russian leadership

North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il reportedly cancelled his earlier plan to have a summit level meeting with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Vladivostok. During the summit, both the leaders were to discuss various issues of mutual concern, such as, the construction of railroad and gas pipelines, the provisions of humanitarian aid to North Korea; and the resumption of the stalled Six Party Talks.²⁴ However, Kim had reportedly cancelled the meeting due to health reason. However, it has been argued that disagreement over the agenda of the summit talk ultimately led to the cancellation. While Moscow suggested holding a round of the Six Party Talks before the summit, Pyongyang was much more interested in discussing fuel and food aid from Russia.²⁵

(July 4-10, 2011)

● South Korea to submit claim on East China sea shelf to the UN soon

In a recent development, South Korea has decided to submit to a UN Commission its claim to an extended continental shelf in the East China Sea, including the Okinawa Trough. Such a move is expected to intensify the territorial disputes among South Korea, China and Japan in this region.²⁶

²² "Japan to conduct nuclear plant 'stress tests' amid safety concerns", *Mainichi Shimbun*, July 6, 2011, at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/archive/news/2011/07/06/20110706p2g00m0dm031000c.html>

²³ "Japan, US., Australia navies to dill in South China Sea", *Asahi Shimbun*, July 9, 2011, at <http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201107080271.html>

²⁴ "North Korean leader to visit Russia for summit: report", *Dong-a-Ilbo*, June 29, 2011, at <http://english.donga.com/srv/service.php3?biid=2011062931158>

²⁵ "North Korea cancels leader's visit to Russia: Kyodo", *Dong-a-ILbo*, June 30, 2011, at <http://english.donga.com/srv/service.php3?biid=2011063050688>

²⁶ "South Korea to submit claim on E. China Sea shelf to UN this year: Yonhap", *Mainichi Shimbun*, July 4, 2011, at <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/national/archive/news/2011/07/04/20110704p2g00m0dm032000c.html>

C. Central Asia & Russia

Central Asia

- **Malaysian premier visits Turkmenistan; Turkmenistan rejects a second ambassador from Israel; Tajikistan will lower price on domestic oil products on procuring new shipment; Kyrgyz fuel smuggled into Tajikistan; China plans to make foray into the Kazakh automobile market; Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan hold talks on strengthening of border demarcations and railroads; Kyrgyzstan is ranked as the 7th worst economy in the world.**

According to reports, during his visit to Turkmenistan, Malaysian premier Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak pledged that Malaysia's state energy firm Petronas intends to be a good corporate citizen in Turkmenistan by following all the rules. Both the leaders are scheduled to conduct bilateral discussions on oil and gas sectors, as well as in trade, finance, investment and human capital. PM Najib and Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov will also inaugurate the Petronas Gas Terminal located near the Caspian city of Turkmenbashi.²⁷

Meanwhile Turkmenistan refused to accept the credentials of Israeli diplomat Haim Koren since August 2010, when he was appointed to the post. This is the second diplomat from Israel to be rejected by Turkmenistan on the grounds of being a Mossad spy with aims of collecting intelligence on Iran.²⁸

Reports noted that Tajikistan will drop the prices of domestic oil products once the country receives a new shipment of light oil from Russia that will carry a lower export tariff. Moscow had earlier decreed to lower the export duty on light oil sold to Tajikistan beginning from the first week of July to \$298.20 per ton from \$309.60 per ton.²⁹ Smugglers are reportedly transporting gas from the Batken region of Kyrgyzstan into Tajikistan at alarming rates. Association of Oil Traders of Kyrgyzstan President Zhumakydar Akeneyev said that due to variation diesel prices in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and porous borders have led to smuggling. Tajikistan is struggling with the additional export duties on fuel that Russia has imposed in recent months. Tajikistan relies on Russia for 90 percent of its fuel imports.³⁰

²⁷ "Malaysia vows to respect Turkmen business laws, expand trade", *Central Asia Newswire*, July 11, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Energy/Malaysia-vows-to-respect-Turkmen-business-laws-expand-trade/viewstory.aspx?id=4410>

²⁸ "Turkmenistan rejects Israeli diplomat, calls him "Mossad spy", *Central Asia Newswire*, July 07, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Turkmenistan/Turkmenistan-rejects-Israeli-diplomat-calls-him-IsquoMossad-spyrsquo/viewstory.aspx?id=4393>

²⁹ "Tajikistan to cut price of domestic oil products", *Central Asia Newswire*, July 07, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Energy/Tajikistan-to-cut-price-of-domestic-oil-products/viewstory.aspx?id=4388>

³⁰ "Smugglers transport fuel from Kyrgyzstan to Tajikistan", *Central Asia Newswire*, July 08, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Energy/Smugglers-transport-fuel-from-Kyrgyzstan-to-Tajikistan/viewstory.aspx?id=4401>

In another development, the head of the China-Europe Association for Technical and Economic Cooperation made the statement during the Chinese Brand Auto Expo in the Chinese capital Beijing that, "China views great possibilities and perspectives for car export to Central Asia, particularly to Kazakhstan". China increased its car export volume to Kazakhstan, through the Khorgos international checkpoint, by 70 percent in the period from January-April in 2011 compared to figures in the same period last year.³¹

In other developments in the region, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan wrapped up a seven-day meeting on July 7th that focused on the strengthening of border demarcations. Both countries are working together to undertake a bilateral rail project which will connect China to Uzbekistan through Kyrgyzstan. China, Afghanistan, Turkey, Iran and Tajikistan are interested in the rail project, expected to cost \$2 billion.³² While, according to a Forbes survey released this week, Kyrgyzstan is ranked as the 7th worst economy in the world. The compiled survey uses statistics of gross domestic product (GDP), inflation and GDP per capita to determine the ranks. Kyrgyzstan ranked 7th-worst due to its high inflation rate, estimated to be at 12.6 percent by the International Monetary Fund, and its low GDP per capita, figuring at \$943 per year.³³

Russia

- **Russia admits that there is no chance of a sectoral missile defence with NATO; Russia and NATO at odds over Libya; Gazprom delegation visits North Korea; All contracts on Russia's 2012 defence order to be signed by this year end; Russia criticizes EU parliament resolution on elections; Armenian Prime Minister welcomes improvement in trade relationship with Russia; Russian regulators oppose gasoline duty cut; Total interested in Russia offshore deal that Chevron quit; Russia's Soyuz spacecraft with six US satellites to blast off on July 11; Russia to stockpile oil, products to smooth price volatility; Russia plans to rent naval pilot training facilities in Ukraine; Putin wins Germany's Quadriga award**

According to reports, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said that Russia and NATO cannot agree on the establishment of a so-called sectoral missile defense system in Europe. Russia and NATO agreed to cooperate on the so-called European missile defense system at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010. NATO insists there should be two independent systems that exchange information, while Russia favors a joint system with full-scale interoperability. Under a proposal put forward by President Dmitry Medvedev, Russia would reportedly be responsible for shooting down missiles aimed at NATO members but passing through Russia's airspace or sector, with

³¹ "China looking to enter Kazakh auto market", *Central Asia Newswire*, July 11, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kazakhstan/China-looking-to-enter-Kazakh-auto-market/viewstory.aspx?id=4413>

³² "Kyrgyzs, Uzbeks holding railroad talks, Chinese ambassador says", *Central Asia Newswire*, July 08, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kyrgyzstan/Kyrgyzs-Uzbeks-holding-railroad-talks-Chinese-ambassador-says/viewstory.aspx?id=4402>

³³ "Kyrgyz economy ranked 7th worst in world", *Central Asia Newswire*, July 07, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kyrgyzstan/Kyrgyz-economy-ranked-7th-worst-in-world/viewstory.aspx?id=4392>

NATO members committing to protect Russia in a similar fashion. Mr. Lavrov added that despite the differences, Russia would work to develop its ties with the North Atlantic alliance.³⁴

Also, Russia and NATO have failed to narrow their differences over the Western air campaign in Libya. Speaking in the Black Sea city of Sochi after talks with the head of the alliance, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Sergei Lavrov said, "So far there is no common understanding over how the resolution is being implemented." He was referring to the UN Security Council resolution that paved the way for the air campaign. Russia abstained in the resolution vote and has since expressed growing anger over the duration and intensity of the NATO-led air strikes against targets of Muammar Qaddafi's Libyan regime. The NATO-Russia Council meeting was joined by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and South African President Jacob Zuma.³⁵

According to reports, a delegation from Russian gas giant Gazprom led by Deputy Managing Chairman Aleksandr Ananenko has visited North Korea. The news follows a report in May that a top Russian intelligence official had traveled to Pyongyang to discuss economic projects involving North and South Korea, the world's No. 2 consumer of liquefied natural gas. According to an Interfax report in May, Foreign Intelligence Service director Mikhail Fradkov and North Korean leader Kim Jong Il discussed projects including a railway junction, a gas pipeline, and a power line from Russia to South Korea via North Korea. Russia's "Kommersant" newspaper reported on June 30 that Kim had decided to cancel a trip to Russia due to worries about security sparked by media reports about the trip.³⁶

In another development, Russia's Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov has said that all contracts on Russia's 2012 state defense order will be signed by the end of this year. The issue of next year's defense order is particularly important in light of possible complications from the 2011 state defense order due to soaring armament prices and delays in contract signing. Serdyukov said his ministry has to complete work on the 2012 contracts by the end of September, adding that a budget commission has been established in the ministry to "look into the justification of the number of products being bought and their prices." Russian President Dmitry Medvedev had ordered Serdyukov to submit in three days a report on the implementation of the state defense order for 2011.³⁷

Reports noted that Russia's Foreign Ministry has criticized the European Parliament for passing a resolution calling on Moscow to guarantee free elections and lift curbs on the opposition People's

³⁴ "Russia admits no chance of sectoral missile defence with NATO", *RIA Novosti*, July 4, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20110704/165016655.html>

³⁵ "Russia, NATO still at odds over Libya", *Radio Free Europe*, July 4, 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/nato_russian_council_meets_in_sochi/24255046.html

³⁶ "Gazprom delegation visits North Korea", *Radio Free Europe*, July 4, 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/gazprom_delegation_visits_north_korea/24255688.html

³⁷ "All contracts on Russia's 2012 defense order to be signed by year end", *RIA Novosti*, July 7, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20110707/165076664.html

Freedom Party. The ministry called the resolution, passed earlier on June 7 in Strasbourg, a crude attempt to interfere in Russian internal affairs.³⁸

However, Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sarkisian has praised his country's expanding commercial ties with Russia, particularly the growing rate of exports to Russian markets. Prime Minister Sarkisian, who heads the Armenian-Russian intergovernmental committee for the Armenian side, made the remarks during a meeting with Russian Transport Minister Igor Levitin, his Russian counterpart on the committee, which convened in the southern Russian city of Rostov-na-Donu. Trade between Armenia and Russia in 2010 grew by more than 10 percent to reach nearly \$1 billion.³⁹

Meanwhile, Russia's Deputy Economy Minister Stanislav Voskresensky has said that Russia must retain a protective export duty on gasoline, including straight-run gasoline, to prevent a rush of exports. Russia, the world's largest crude exporter, has faced acute gasoline shortages in recent months as refineries have proven unequipped to refine enough gasoline to supply the country's growing number of cars.⁴⁰

Reports noted that France's oil producer Total has offered to replace Chevron as a partner to Russia's oil giant Rosneft in an offshore oil project on the Black Sea. Last summer, Chevron signed a deal to join Rosneft in a \$32-billion Black Sea oil exploration project, but the American super major has since pulled out.⁴¹ Another report noted that Russia plans to create a stockpile of crude oil and refined products to help ease price volatility. OAO Lukoil and OAO Gazprom Neft have agreed to supply oil products to the state to form such a reserve. Prime Minister Putin has held a meeting on oil refining and taxation at OAO Surgutneftegas's refinery in Kirishi, north-western Russia.⁴²

According to reports, Russia's Soyuz-2.1a space carrier with six U.S. Globalstar-2 communications satellites will be launched on July 11. The spacecraft equipped with a Fregat booster is scheduled to blast off at 6:58 Moscow time (2:58 GMT) from the Baikonur Space Center in Kazakhstan. Globalstar is a low-earth orbit (LEO) satellite-based telecommunications system founded by U.S.-based Loral Corporation and Qualcomm Inc.⁴³

³⁸ "Russia slams EU parliament resolution on Elections", *Radio Free Europe*, July 7, 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/russia_slams_eu_parliament_resolution_elections/24258741.html

³⁹ "Armenian Premier praises trade growth with Russia", *Radio Free Europe*, July 8, 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/armenia_trade_with_russia/24260127.html

⁴⁰ "Russia regulators oppose gasoline duty cut", *Reuters*, July 8, 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/07/08/russia-oil-gasoline-idUSLDE76711420110708>

⁴¹ "Total wants Russia offshore deal that Chevron quit", *Reuters*, July 8, 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/07/08/rosneft-total-idUSLDE76719H20110708>

⁴² Doroshev, A, "Russia to stockpile oil, products to smooth price volatility", *Reuters*, July 8, 2011, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-07-08/russia-to-form-oil-product-stockpile-to-smooth-price-volatility.html>

⁴³ "Russia's Soyuz spacecraft with six US satellites to blast off July 11", *RIA Novosti*, July 8, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/science/20110708/165091286.html>

Reports noted that Russia has sent in a formal request to Ukraine to enable it to rent facilities on Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula for naval pilot training. In line with a 1997 bilateral agreement, Russia occasionally uses the Nitka Naval Pilot Training Center in Ukraine as the only training facility for its naval pilots.⁴⁴

In other developments, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has won Germany's prestigious Quadriga award for his key role in the development of Russia. The Quadriga award is presented each year on October 3, the anniversary of German reunification, to four people or groups for their commitment to innovation, renewal and a pioneering spirit through political, economic and cultural activities. Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and former Czech president Vaclav Havel have won the award in the past.⁴⁵

D. West Asia

Iran

- **Iran takes part in meeting of the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly for the first time; Indian foreign secretary visited Iran and discussed many issues of mutual interest; Iranian president resists separation of sexes at universities**

According to reports, for the first time, the Islamic Republic of Iran participated in a meeting of the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly which opened in La Maddalena, Italy. Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for European Affairs Ali Ahani represented Iran at the meeting. He will hold talks with a number of participants in the meeting. The participants will discuss the situation in the Mediterranean, the Middle East, the Persian Gulf region, transition of power in certain Arab countries, the role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region, the situation in Iraq, and NATO's operations in the Mediterranean. The NATO PA Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group (GSM) provides a forum for parliamentarians from NATO countries and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region to discuss political and security issues and to enhance cooperation.⁴⁶

Indian Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao Ms. Nirupama Rao visited Iran and noted that Iran and India have been enjoying historical ties. She proposed that the two countries should establish strategic cooperation. Nirupama Rao made these remarks in a meeting with Supreme National Security Council Secretary Saeed Jalili in Tehran. In a separate meeting with Iranian Foreign

⁴⁴ "Russia plan to rent naval pilot training facilities in Ukraine", *RIA Novosti*, July 6, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20110706/165061686.html

⁴⁵ "Russia's Putin wins Germany's Quadriga award", *RIA Novosti*, July 10, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/world/20110710/165115315.html>

⁴⁶ "Iran attends NATO meeting for the first time," *Mehr News*, July 4, 2011, at <http://www.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1351478>

Minister Ali Akbar Salehi, Ms. Rao said that Tehran and New Delhi should make efforts to expand their relations in various spheres. Salehi, for his part, said that the two countries should further increase cooperation in economy and trades. In addition, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali Fatollahi, in a separate meeting with Ms. Rao said that Iran and India should cooperate on campaign against piracy.⁴⁷

In another development, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has written separate letters to Science, Research, and Technology Minister Kamran Daneshju and Health Minister Marzieh Vahid-Dastjerdi, urging them to take measures necessary to prevent the implementation of the plan to separate the classes of male and female students at universities. He also described the plan as “unwise”. The president also called on both ministries to refrain from indiscriminate retiring of university professors until the relevant bylaw is ratified.⁴⁸

Iraq

● United States offers 10,000 troops for Iraq next year; Iran-Iraq signed six memoranda of understandings

According to reports, the United States is offering to keep up to 10,000 troops in Iraq next year, American officials say, despite opposition from many Iraqis and key Democratic Party allies who demand that President Barack Obama bring home the American military as promised. Any extension of the military’s presence, however, depends on a formal request from Baghdad which must weigh questions about the readiness of Iraqi security forces against fears of renewed militant attacks and unrest if US soldiers stay beyond the December pullout deadline. Iraq is not expected to decide until September at the earliest, when the 46,000 US forces left in the country had hoped to start heading home. Any change in the US military withdrawal timetable in Iraq – after more than eight years and more than 4,450 US military deaths – could open up difficult political confrontations for Obama as pressure builds to close out the Iraq mission and stick to pledges to draw down troops in Afghanistan.⁴⁹

In another development, Iran and Iraq have agreed to enhance the value of their bilateral trade to \$20 billion in the near future. Iran’s First Vice-President Mohammadreza Rahimi told that “We agree to increase the value of mutual economic and trade exchange, which is expected to reach 10 billion dollars by the end of the current year, to 20 billion dollars in the near future.” Rahimi arrived Iraq for a two-day official visit. The two sides inked six memoranda of understandings to boost ties in various sectors such as information technology, health and medication and culture.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ “Indian foreign secretary says Delhi, Tehran should establish strategic ties,” *Tehran Times*, July 7, 2011, at http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=243719

⁴⁸ “Ahmadinejad opposes separation of sexes at universities,” *Mehr News*, July 6, 2011, at <http://www.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1353106>

⁴⁹ “US offers ten thousand troops for Iraq next year,” *Khaleej Times*, July 6, 2011, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/July/middleeast_July125.xml§ion=middleeast

⁵⁰ “Tehran, Baghdad set \$20b trade target,” *Tehran Times*, July 9, 2011, at http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=243794

Syria

- **Report: Nearly 150 Syrians flee to Jordan**

According to the Amman-based Arab Bridge Centre for Development and Human Rights report, nearly 150 Syrians have fled to the northern town of Mafraq, Jordan via the Jaber border crossing. This is believed to be the largest number of displaced Syrians since protests began in Syria on March 15, 2011. The majority of these refugees originated from Hama, which is currently under a military-imposed siege. In Jordan, the centre and local societies are working to reach out to the families to provide social, medical and legal support as they attempt to file for refugee status.⁵¹

Libya

- **Gadhafi to stay out of peace talks on Libya**

According to reports, South Africa Foreign Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane told at a news conference that the Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi has sent envoys to South African President Jacob Zuma to convey that he does not want to stand in the way of a settlement, and hence will not participate in talks on a peace deal as well as on his own future.⁵²

Israel

- **UNIFIL report criticizes Israel role in Nakbeh bloodshed**

A United Nations report by the UN peacekeeping force in south Lebanon (UNIFIL) has criticized the Israeli army for using unnecessary firing on protesters along the Israeli-Lebanon border on Nakbeh anniversary. The study focused on the events of May 15 when thousands of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon marched on the Israeli border in a show of mass mourning over the creation of Israel in 1948 on Palestinian lands. As the protesters tried to scale the fence, Israeli troops opened fire, killing seven and injuring 111.⁵³

Jordan

- **Jordan Finance Minister talks of economic cooperation with GCC; Jordan plans to improve nuclear capacity**

According to reports, Jordan Minister of Finance, Mohammad Abu Hammour, said that Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries are aware of the financial and energy challenges being faced by Jordan and are willing to extend support to the Kingdom. This remark was made with reference to the visit of Saudi Finance Minister Ibrahim Al Assaf to the Kingdom wherein Abu Hammour

⁵¹ "Over 100 Syrians flee to Jordan", *The Jordan Times*, July 7, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=39226>

⁵² "Qadhafi will not stand in way of Libya deal - S. Africa minister", *The Jordan Times*, July 7, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=39208>

⁵³ "UN report 'slams Israel over Nakbeh protests bloodshed'", *The Jordan Times*, July 7, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=39227>

briefed on the economic challenges, and the impact of the interruptions in natural gas supplies from Egypt on fiscal conditions.⁵⁴

Separately, according to Jordan Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources, Khaled Toukan, as Amman considers vendors for the country's first nuclear power plant, officials are preparing plans for a second reactor as part of a long-term vision for four nuclear reactors within the next quarter-century that will provide Jordan with 60 per cent of its electricity needs. The construction of the second reactor, expected to take place within three years of the first, aims to meet an expected rise in electricity demand, estimated to reach 5,000 megawatts (MW) by 2020.⁵⁵

E. Africa

Somalia

- **Refugees flee Somalia in worst humanitarian disaster**

Reports noted that fearing for their lives, many Somalians have fled war in Somalia to go to refugee camps in neighbouring Ethiopia. These refugee camps in Dolo Ado, just a kilometre north of the border with Somalia, have become home to thousands escaping war and now a second killer, drought. These camps, set up by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and Ethiopia, are currently sheltering almost 100 000, but officials predict that the bloodshed and regional drought would force many more to arrive in the coming months.⁵⁶

Separately, hospitals in Mogadishu have reported a number of malnourished children among refugees arrived fleeing the drought. Emilia Casella of WFP said that drought and fighting have put about 2.85-million people, a third of Somalia's population, in need of humanitarian assistance.⁵⁷

South Africa

- **Jacob Zuma praises Mbeki's role in Sudan; Justice Minister defends public protector investigating corruption; Pro-Democracy groups in Swaziland insist on democratic reforms**

Reports noted that South African President Jacob Zuma appreciated the role played by his predecessor Thabo Mbeki in bringing an end to conflict in Sudan. Zuma was quoted as saying in a statement that "President Mbeki is a man of integrity and enormous experience". It is to be recalled that Mbeki headed the African Union's high-level implementation panel that helped in

⁵⁴ Obeidat, Omar (2011), "GCC countries willing to help - minister", *The Jordan Times*, July 11, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=39344>

⁵⁵ Luck, Taylor (2011), "Jordan set to add to nuclear plans", *The Jordan Times*, July 7, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=39224>

⁵⁶ "Somalia faces 'world's worst humanitarian disaster'", *Mail and Guardian*, July 09, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-07-09-somalia-faces-worlds-worst-humanitarian-disaster/>

⁵⁷ *ibid*

ensuring a peaceful solution to Sudan's conflict.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, the UN Security Council announced to establish a new mission under Norwegian diplomat Hilde Johnson for poor, conflict-ravaged, but oil-producing South Sudan. The new mission, called UNMISS, calls for up to 7000 UN peacekeepers and an additional 900 civilian police for South Sudan. The mandate also called for reviews after three and six months to see whether conditions on the ground allow for a reduction of peacekeepers to 6 000.⁵⁹

In another development, South African Justice Minister Jeff Radebe called on all South Africans to protect Public Protector Thuli Madonsela, who complained of police intimidation intended to disrupt her investigation into corrupt leases for police offices. Madonsela earlier said she would seek Parliament's protection against police "intimidation and dirty tricks", which included leaking false information about her arrest for fraud and corruption. Her interim report finds maladministration against police commissioner Bheki Cele.⁶⁰

In other developments, Swaziland's pro-democracy groups insisted that they would support a bail-out of the kingdom by South Africa only if King Mswati gives a written undertaking to institute democratic reforms. In an apparent change of course from their earlier position wherein they were against any financial assistance for Swaziland without the removal of King Mswati, now they agreed that a financial aid package for the kingdom is inevitable, but wanted conditions attached to it like strict fiscal and political reforms.⁶¹

Sudan

- **North Sudan's President Al-Bashir warns rebels ahead of secession; Salva Kiir sworn-in in South Sudan, grants amnesty to rebels**

North Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir said in a televised speech that the north would not take part in foreign talks on solving internal conflicts such as violence in South Kordofan where the army is fighting armed groups allied to the south, after South Sudan secedes from the North. Further, North Sudan would not sign any international agreements after it finalizes a peace accord in July with a group in the western region of Darfur. Al-Bashir also said that he is seeking friendly relations with the south, but warned both countries should not interfere in other's internal affairs.⁶²

Separately, Salva Kiir was officially sworn-in as the first president of the newly-created Republic of South Sudan after he signed the country's transitional constitution in Juba. In his speech, Kiir

⁵⁸ "Zuma hails Mbeki's role in Sudan", *Mail and Guardian*, July 9, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-07-09-zuma-hails-mbekis-role-in-sudan/>

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ "All South Africans' must help defend public protector, says Radebe", *Business Day*, July 8, 2011, at <http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=147920>

⁶¹ "No reform, no rescue, Swazi groups insist", *Business Day*, July 8, 2011, at <http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=147924>

⁶² "Sudan's al-Bashir warns rebels ahead of secession", *Mail and Guardian*, July 07, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-07-07-sudans-albashir-warns-rebels-ahead-of-secession>

offered amnesty to six South Sudanese rebel groups which were destabilising the new nation and urged them to join hands to take forward the new nation. President Kiir also appealed to citizens to focus on unity based on cultural and ethnic diversity. Further, he emphasized that the new republic will closely work with development partners and the international community in efforts to steer the country's progress. The president also called for a just and lasting solution to the conflicts in Sudan's troubled western region of Darfur, oil-producing region of Abyei and southern Kordofan.⁶³

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

National

- **Another Russian project for Indian Navy likely to be delayed; Admiral Gorshkov's harbour trials to begin by August end**

According to reports, a top Russian official has said that the first of the new Talwar class frigates, ordered under a \$1.1 billion contract in 2006 and set to be delivered by the end of this year, has been delayed. Defence deals with Russia in the past have been hit by a series of delays with the biggest example being the Gorshkov aircraft carrier. The aircraft carrier which was to be delivered by 2008 has been delayed by almost four years and is likely to be delivered only by next year. While Russia has not formally conveyed any delay in the project for construction of three Talwar class frigates to India, concerns have risen after a senior official from the state-run arms exporter Rosoboronexport publicly stated that a new deadline will have to be drawn. India ordered three of the frigates in 2006, with the first ship to be delivered in 2011. "We have not yet been informed of any delay. We have a team in Russia that is overseeing the project and they will discuss the matter," a defence ministry official said. While the quantum of delay has not been specified, senior Russian officials have been quoted as saying that while dockside trials are on, the frigate will not be able to meet its deadline. Besides the delay, a price escalation is also expected as the Yantar shipyard that is constructing the warships has asked for an additional \$100 million for the ships to factor in inflation.⁶⁴

Meanwhile, harbour trials of the aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov set for induction into the Indian Navy next year, are expected to begin by August end in Russia. These trials are aimed at testing the functioning of all the systems of the warship. The harbour trials will be followed up by sea trials which are expected to start by November where the major systems of the warship including its weapon firing capabilities would be put to test, senior Navy sources said. The sources said that

⁶³ "Salva Kiir takes oath, grants amnesty to rebels", *Sudan Tribune*, July 10, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Salva-Kiir-takes-oath-grants,39479>

⁶⁴ "Russian frigate project for Navy likely to be delayed", *Indian Express*, July 05 2011, at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/NEWS/newsrfr.php?newsid=14973>

the warship is expected to be delivered as per the original schedule of December 2012. The 45,000 tonne, 283-metre aircraft carrier, rechristened INS Vikramaditya by the Indian Navy, is undergoing refit and repairs at the Sevmash shipyard in Russia. During his recent visit to Russia, Defence Secretary Pradeep Kumar was taken to the Sevmash shipyard and shown the progress in work on the Gorshkov. The contract for the warship was signed between India and Russia in 2004 but the cost escalation and price revision by Russia for retrofitting the ship were cited as reasons for the delay. After long negotiations, the two sides had settled on USD 2.3 billion as the price of the second hand warship. With only a lone aircraft carrier INS Virat being operated now, the Russian origin warship is key to India's plan of having one aircraft carrier each on both the seaboards. Construction of another indigenous aircraft carrier is on in Kochi and is expected to be inducted into the navy by the end of 2014.⁶⁵

International

● Pakistan claims to be capable of fighting it's own battle; US communication satellite launch postponed by Russia

According to reports, a day after the US moved to suspend USD 800 million military aid to Pakistan, apparently, angered by Pakistan's reluctance to go full throttle in the war against terror, the Pakistan army on Monday claimed it would continue to conduct operations without American assistance while maintaining it had no official intimation of Washington's decision. "We have no comments" on the move, said a spokesman for the Pakistani military in response to the reports, claiming, that US had suspended aid to Pak military. "We have not received any official intimation or correspondence on the matter." The Pakistan Army, "in the past as well as at present, has conducted successful military operations using its own resources without any external support whatsoever," the spokesman said. The US officials also indicated that the step was also in retaliation for Islamabad's call for a "significant cutback" of American military trainers on its soil. The present Pak-US impasse comes as Washington has stepped up pressure on Islamabad to crack down on al-Qaeda linked Haqqani Taliban faction, who used Pakistani soil to launch attacks against US and NATO forces in Afghanistan. The Pakistan army has claimed its troops are overstretched to undertake such an offensive on North Waziristan. US Media reports have said that Pakistani military intelligence still maintains its links with groups like Haqqani network.⁶⁶

In another development, Russia has postponed the launch of US Globalstar-2 communications satellites from its Souyz-2.1a spacecraft for at least twenty four hours, a media report said. "We have postponed the launch till the reserve date on July 12. The reasons for the postponement will be announced later," RIA Novosti quoted the space agency spokesperson as saying. Globalstar is

⁶⁵ "Harbour trials of Admiral Gorshkov to begin in Aug in Russia", *Bharat Rakshak*, July 4 2011, at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/NEWS/newsrfr.php?newsid=14972>

⁶⁶ "Capable of operations sans US aid: Pakistan Army", *Brahmand*, July 11 2011, at <http://www.brahmand.com/news/Capable-of-operations-sans-US-aid-Pakistan-Army/7480/1/13.html>

a low-earth orbit (LEO) satellite-based telecommunications system founded by US-based Loral Corporation and Qualcomm Inc. It provides high-quality satellite voice and data services across North America, and to over 120 countries worldwide.⁶⁷

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

Jammu & Kashmir

- **Seven injured in Kishtwar protest; Two militants arrested by the Police in Kulgam; Pampore shuts for third day**

Reports noted that seven persons, including three policemen, were wounded in Kishtwar when police resorted to baton charge to disperse people protesting against a verdict in Panchayat polls. Scores of people assembled on Kishtwar-Islamabad highway against the verdict of an election appellant authority to declare a defeated Sarpanch candidate, Pyaree Lal, from Drubeel (Inderwal Block) successful. The demonstrators offered resistance which led to the clashes.⁶⁸

In another development, Police busted a militant module in Kulgam by arresting two persons carrying cash allegedly meant for a militant commander. After receiving specific information, police and along with personnel of CRPF's 18 Battalion frisked people near the hospital and apprehended two persons carrying Rs 1,19,000 meant for Divisional Commander of Hizbul Mujahideen, Muhammad Rafiq alias Basharat for carrying out militant activities.⁶⁹

In other developments, Pampore observed a shutdown for third running day against police detaining a local youth, Bilal Ahmed Sofi, under Public Safety Act. All shops and business establishments remained closed and traffic was off the roads in Drangbal and Namlabal localities. Scores of people, including women and children staged peaceful protests in the town demanding Bilal's release.⁷⁰

North East India

- **ULFA's commander Paresh Baruah's assets to be seized; Meghalaya Police claim top rebel**

⁶⁷ "Russia postpones US Communication satellite launch", *Brahmand*, July 11 2011, at <http://www.brahmand.com/news/Russia-postpones-US-Communication-satellite-launch/7477/1/13.html>

⁶⁸ "Protest rocks Kishtwar, 7 injured", *Greater Kashmir*, July 4, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Jul/5/protest-rocks-kishtwar-7-injured-26.asp>

⁶⁹ "Police busts militant module, arrest 2", *Greater Kashmir*, July 5, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Jul/6/police-busts-militant-module-arrest-2-17.asp>

⁷⁰ "Pampore shuts for third day", *Greater Kashmir*, July 7, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Jul/8/pampore-shuts-for-third-day-64.asp>

leader present in Bangladesh; Centre extends truce with DHD (N); Gunfight between Garo rebels and commandos; Barak Tribal leader shot dead

Reports noted that International pressure on the commander-in-chief of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), Paresh Baruah is mounting as the Government of Bangladesh has issued an order for seizure of his assets in that country. Meanwhile, Baruah is facing two Interpol Red Corner notices. The Government of Bangladesh first issued a warrant of arrest against Baruah after he was charge sheeted in the 2004 arms haul case and recently an Interpol Red Corner notice has been issued by Bangladesh against the ULFA leader. Sources pointed out that this was the second Interpol Red Corner notice against Baruah as such a notice issued by the Government of India is already pending.⁷¹

In another development, Bangladesh authorities have launched a manhunt to nab Champion R. Sangma, an Indian rebel leader, and Meghalaya Police confirmed he has shifted base to the neighbouring country. Champion is the leader of the A'chik Special Dragon Party. A'chik Special Dragon Party is a rebel group and operates along the India-Bangladesh border in the western part of Meghalaya.⁷²

Reports noted that the Centre has formally announced extension of ceasefire with Dima Haram Daogah (DHD) Nunisa Group for a period of six months. The Suspension of Operation would continue up to December 31. Tripartite talks on the demands of DHD are continuing.⁷³

However, a fierce gunfight lasting for an hour broke out between Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) rebels and Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) commandos in Meghalaya's East Garo Hills district. The exchange of fire took place at Nengmandalgre area of the district, when SWAT commandos came under fire from a group of 20 GNLA rebels hiding there. Though there were no casualties on the security forces' side, police are yet to confirm if any of the rebels were injured.⁷⁴

In other developments, Babul Rongmai, Chairman of Barak Valley Hills Tribal Development Council was shot dead by three miscreants around in the morning at his residence of Sabhaspur under Ghungoor police station. The miscreants, who came on a motorbike, shot Rongmai in his forehead from point-blank range killing him on the spot.⁷⁵

⁷¹ "Bangla orders seizure of Paresh assets", *The Assam Tribune*, July 4, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0511/at08>

⁷² "Top rebel leader in Bangladesh, say Meghalaya Police", *The Assam Tribune*, July 7, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0711/at046>

⁷³ "Centre extends truce with DHD(N)", *The Assam Tribune*, July 4, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0511/state07>

⁷⁴ "Fierce gunfight between Garo rebels and commandos", *The Assam Tribune*, July 9, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0911/at044>

⁷⁵ "Barak Valley Tribal Council leader shot dead", *The Assam Tribune*, July 10, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul1111/at094>

IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

- **UN Security Council praises progress made by West African countries; UNSC amends statute of UN tribunal for Rwandan genocide; UNAIDS appreciates India's efforts; Netherlands backs India's claim to permanent UNSC seat**

Reports noted that the UN Security Council praised the progress West African countries were making towards greater peace and stability and welcomed the positive developments in post-conflict recovery and peace-building in Guinea, Niger and Cote d'Ivoire. However, it expressed concern that the progress still remained fragile. The Council also stressed the importance of strengthening trans-regional and international cooperation on the basis of a common and a shared responsibility to counter world drug problem and related criminal activities.⁷⁶

Meanwhile, the Security Council amended the statute of the UN tribunal for the 1994 Rwandan genocide to enable non-permanent judges eligible to vote for presidency of the court and to become president themselves. The Council also decided that a temporary judge elected as President of the tribunal may exercise same powers as a permanent judge. The Council resolution also added that the amendment would not change the status of an *ad litem* judge.⁷⁷

In other developments, the UNAIDS head welcomed the announcement that India would continue to make generic drugs to combat the disease. The Indian government reaffirmed its full commitment to ensure that quality generic medicines are made available to all countries.⁷⁸ Meanwhile, another report noted that after UAE's backing for India's permanent membership in the UNSC, Netherlands too extended its support.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ "Security Council praises progress towards peace and stability in West Africa", *UN News Centre*, July 8, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38986&Cr=west+africa&Cr1=>

⁷⁷ "Security Council amends judicial eligibility rules for UN tribunal for Rwandan genocide", *UN News Centre*, July 6, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38960&Cr=rwanda&Cr1=>

⁷⁸ "UN welcomes India's decision to continue making generic HIV/AIDS drugs", *UN News Centre*, July 6, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38955&Cr=hiv&Cr1=aids>

⁷⁹ "Netherlands backs India for permanent UNSC seat", *The Economic Times*, July 5, 2011 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2011-07-05/news/29738931_1_permanent-membership-india-for-permanent-unscc-economic-ties