

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Afghanistan

(September 5-18)

- **At least 80 US troops injured in suicide attack in Wardak province; Militants attack US embassy, NATO headquarters and police buildings in Kabul, 25 people killed including militants; US Ambassador Crocker dismisses the attack as 'harassment' and 'not a big deal'; Afghan security forces accused of committing serious human rights abuses**

At least 80 US troops were injured and two civilians were killed when a suicide truck bomber hit a military base in Wardak province. However, the NATO has confirmed that the injuries are not life threatening. This attack comes in the wake of 10th anniversary of 9/11 which prompted US military operations in the country. The Taliban has claimed responsibility for the attack.¹

In another development, on September 13, militants launched a coordinated daylight attack on US embassy, NATO headquarters and police buildings in Kabul that killed almost 25 people. The dead included 11 civilians, among them children, along with at least four police and 10 insurgents. This operation lasted for 20 hour. However, the US ambassador to Afghanistan Ryan Crocker has said that militant attack was 'harassment' and 'not a big deal'. Meanwhile, the NATO commander in Kabul, Gen John Allen, admitted the insurgents had scored a propaganda victory. The Taliban said that it was behind the attack.²

In other developments, a Human Rights Watch (HRW) report has accused newly formed local police units in Afghanistan of committing serious human rights abuses. The 102-page report, 'Just Don't Call It a Militia' accuses militias and Afghan local police of carrying out abuses in the northern province of Kunduz and in Baghlan, Herat and Uruzgan provinces. The report also says that they are responsible for crimes including killings, rape, arbitrary detention, abductions and forcible land grabs and the government has failed to hold anyone accountable for the same.³

¹ "Afghan truck bomb hits US troops in Wardak", *BBC*, September 11, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-14871666>

² "Afghan gunbattle: Ryan Crocker says not a big deal", *BBC*, September 14, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-14909004>

³ "Afghanistan militias and police committing abuses", *BBC*, September 12, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-14883253>

Pakistan

(September 5-18)

- **Pakistan asks Swiss government for extradition of Brahmdagh Bugti; US missile strike kills three in North Waziristan; Pakistan and India sign accord on drug control/trafficking; US to help Pakistan on energy crisis**

According to reports, Pakistani authorities have requested Swiss government to help extradite Brahmdagh Bugti. Bugti who heads a Baloch rebel group called the Baloch Republican Party, has been accused of attacks against settlers and government installations in Balochistan. The Swiss authorities are yet to make a statement regarding the issue. Pakistan does not have an extradition treaty with Switzerland. However, they are hoping that Bugti would be sent back to Pakistan.⁴

In another development, the Pakistani intelligence unit has informed that three people have been killed by American missiles strike in North Waziristan. The people killed are believed to be part of Al Qaeda and Taliban. The US has launched a military operation in the region since 2008 to oust Al Qaeda.⁵

In a significant development, India and Pakistan signed an accord to control drug trafficking. Both the countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding that will reduce demands for drug and narcotics trafficking. The talks were led by Major-General Syed Shakeel Hussain, Director-General of Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) from Pakistan, and the Indian delegation led by Shri O.P.S. Malik, Director-General of Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). Under the accord, both countries will cooperate with each other in preventing suppressing and investigating drug trafficking and exchange literature on laws, rules and best practices for curbing the menace. The two countries will also provide legal assistance to each other when considered appropriate and necessary.⁶

In other developments, the United States has said that it will help out Pakistan to cope with its energy crisis. This was announced in the fourth Pakistan-US energy dialogue that was being held in Islamabad. The US Special Envoy for International Energy Affairs Carlos Pascual said that US was aware of the acute energy crisis taking a toll on socio-economic conditions of Pakistan and pledged to help them in the crisis. Federal Minister for Water and Power Syed Naveed Qamar, who led the Pakistan team, appreciated the US role in addressing the problem and also said that plans were underway to explore new sources of natural gas and also import LNG.⁷

⁴ "Pakistan seeks Brahmdagh's extradition", *Dawn*, September 11, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/11/pakistan-seeks-bramdaghs-extradition.html>

⁵ "American missiles kill three in North Waziristan", *Dawn*, September 11, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/11/american-missiles-kill-three-in-north-waziristan.html>

⁶ "Accord with India to curb drugs", *Dawn*, September 14, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/14/accord-with-india-to-curb-drugs.html>

⁷ "Fourth dialogue begins; US to help Pakistan in energy sector", *Dawn*, September 15, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/15/fourth-dialogue-begins-us-to-help-pakistan-in-energy-sector.html>

Bangladesh

- **PM Hasina visits the United States to attend UNGA; Members of the Executive Board of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) arrives on a six-day official visit to Bangladesh; A 14-member Russian team visited the Rooppur Nuclear Power Project; Bangladesh demands direct access to global climate fund; Bangladesh concludes the first round of its arguments on its claim in the maritime boundary dispute with Myanmar at the ITLOS; FAO assistance to Bangladesh**

Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina left for New York on September 17, to attend the 66th United Nations General Assembly.⁸

In another development, six members of the Executive Board of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) arrived on a six-day official visit to Bangladesh on September 18, 2011 to inspect WFP field operations and meet with ultra-poor and food-insecure families to see how food and cash assistance have helped in building their skills and assets. The WFP Executive Board members visiting Bangladesh are from France, India, Burkina Faso, Haiti, Denmark, and the Russian Federation.⁹

A 14-member Russian team comprising technical experts on geology, hydrology and environment visited the Rooppur nuclear power project site at Ishwardi in Pabna on September 14, 2011.¹⁰

Reports noted that Bangladesh demanded a direct access to Global Climate Fund (GCF) at a meeting on Transitional Committee on Designing Green Climate Funds in Geneva, which ensures decentralised decision making at the national level for effective and efficient resource management.¹¹

According to reports, Bangladesh has concluded the first round of its arguments on its claim in the maritime boundary dispute with Myanmar at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in Hamburg, Germany. Dhaka will present the second round of arguments on September 21 after Myanmar presents its case beginning September 15, according to a Foreign Ministry press release from Hamburg.¹²

In other developments, reports noted that Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations will give Bangladesh \$3.69 million technical assistance to build up capacity for investment in agricultural development.¹³

⁸ "PM off to New York", *The Daily Star*, September 18, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=202935>.

⁹ "WFP Executive Board members arrive today", *The Daily Star*, September 18, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=202907>.

¹⁰ "Russian team visits nuclear power site in Pabna", *The Daily Star*, September 15, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=202583>.

¹¹ "Dhaka wants direct access to global climate fund", *The Daily Star*, September 15, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=202527>.

¹² "Maritime Dispute with Myanmar: Bangladesh ends first round of arguments in int'l court", *The Daily Star*, September 14, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=202384>.

¹³ "Agri Sector Development:\$3.69m deal with FAO signed", *The Daily Star*, September 14, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=202351>.

Sri Lanka

- **U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Robert O' Blake visits Sri Lanka; India-Sri Lanka signs MoU on English language training system; An Indonesian naval ship arrives at the Port of Colombo; United States urges Sri Lanka to control para-military activity in its Northern part; Canadian PM will not attend the Commonwealth Summit in Sri Lanka, if there is no progress regarding human rights in Sri Lanka; Murli Manohar Joshi delivered the Anagarika Dharmapala Memorial Lecture at Colombo**

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert O. Blake arrived in Colombo on September 12 commencing his five-day visit to Sri Lanka and India.¹⁴ During his trip, Blake visited Jaffna and expressed his satisfaction over the de-mining process being carried out by the Army with the assistance of other foreign agencies and for the early resettlement of all IDPs in Jaffna.¹⁵

In another development, an MoU was signed between the Governments of India and Sri Lanka for Setting up a Three-Tier English Language Training System in Sri Lanka, on September 13, 2011 in Colombo.¹⁶

Reports noted that an Indonesian naval ship "Kri Sultan Iskandar Muda - 367" arrived at the Port of Colombo on September 15 for Logistics Support, en route to join the UN mission in Lebanon.¹⁷

The United States urged the government to control para-military activity in the North and for Tamil police personnel to be deployed to the North.¹⁸

Reports noted that Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper will not attend the Commonwealth Summit in Sri Lanka, if there is no progress regarding human rights in Sri Lanka. Prime Minister Harper noted this during remarks made at an Ethnic Media Round Table held on September 9. He stated, "I intend to make clear to my fellow leaders at the Commonwealth that if we do not see progress in Sri Lanka in terms of human rights, I will not as Prime Minister be attending that Commonwealth summit,".¹⁹

¹⁴ "Blake arrives", *Official Website of Government of Sri Lanka*, September 12, 2011 at http://www.priu.gov.lk/news_update/Current_Affairs/ca201109/20110912blake_arrives.htm

¹⁵ "Blake satisfied with demining process", *Official Website of Government of Sri Lanka*, September 14, 2011 at http://www.priu.gov.lk/news_update/Current_Affairs/ca201109/20110914blake%C2%AD_satisfied.htm

¹⁶ "SL, India sign MoU for English Language training", *The Daily Mirror*, September 14, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/56169.html>

¹⁷ "Indonesian naval ship in Colombo port", *The Daily Mirror*, September 17, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/56502.html>

¹⁸ Silva, Dianne, "US wants Paramilitary activity in north stopped", *The Daily Mirror*, September 15, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/56329.html>

¹⁹ Silva, Dianne, "Canadian PM threatens to boycott Commonwealth Summit in Sri Lanka", *The Daily Mirror*, September 13, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/56076.html>

In other developments, former Indian Human Resources Minister and currently Member of Parliament, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, delivered the Anagarika Dharmapala memorial lecture on September 17 at the Mahabodhi Centre headquartered in Colombo, to mark the 147th birth anniversary of the founder of the Mahabodhi Society.²⁰

Maldives

- **Vice President of the Maldives visits US to attend the UN General Assembly session; President Nasheed meets with the representatives of the World's main International Human Rights NGOs; President Nasheed addressed at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva; Ambassador of Cuba to the Maldives paid a courtesy call on President**

Vice President Dr Mohamed Waheed has departed Male' on a visit to the United States on September 15, 2011 to participate at the UN General Assembly.²¹

Meanwhile, President Nasheed met with senior representatives of the world's main international human rights NGOs such as, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Cairo Institute, Association for the Prevention of Torture, and the Asia Forum on Human Rights, to discuss human rights in the Maldives, the Maldives' work in the UN Human Rights Council, and the upcoming SAARC Summit.²²

In another development, President Nasheed addressed an event at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on September 14, 2011 on the subject of human rights and climate change.²³

In other developments, Ambassador of Cuba to the Maldives, Nirsia Castro Guevara paid a courtesy call on President Mohamed Nasheed on September 18 and elaborated on the current economic status of Cuba and the government's efforts in improving the economy of the country.²⁴

B. East Asia

South East Asia

- **Serial bomb blasts rock Thailand; Malaysians cautioned against travel to Thailand; Thailand**

²⁰ Jayasundere, Olindhi, "Murli Manohar Joshi to deliver Anagarika Dharmapala lecture", September 13, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/56046.html>.

²¹ "Vice President departs to the US", *The president's Office, Republic of Maldives*, September 16, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5951>.

²² "President Nasheed Holds Dialogue with International NGOs", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, 15 September 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5945>.

²³ "President Nasheed and Mary Robinson Call for Climate Justice", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, 15 September 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5948>.

²⁴ "President meets Cuban Ambassador", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, 18 September 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5959>.

burns drugs worth \$ 80 million; the Philippine President visits US; Indonesia, Pakistan resume PTA negotiations; Vietnam sailors released from Pirate captivity

On September 16, 2011, three car and motorbike bomb blasts rocked the Sungai Kolok part of Southern Thailand. More than 100 persons are reported injured in the incident.²⁵

After the deadly bomb attack in Southern Thailand on September 16, Malaysian authorities warned its people against non-essential travel to Thailand. Malaysia borders with Southern Thailand, which is affected by insurgency and drug-trafficking. The travel advisory was issued on September 18, 2011.²⁶

In the meanwhile, the Thai authorities on September 17, 2011, incinerated drugs worth US \$ 80 million. The drugs from over 130,000 seizures across the country were burnt in government's effort to fight drug-trafficking. Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra also presided over one of the drug-burning ceremonies in Ayutthaya near Bangkok.²⁷

In another development, the Philippine President Benigno on September 18, 2011 started his five-day visit to the US. The key points during his meeting with the US President Barak Obama are likely to be anti-corruption and government transparency efforts. Aquino will also attend the World Bank and International Monetary Fund conferences during his visit to New York and Washington DC.²⁸

Indonesia has resumed Preferential Trade Agreement negotiations with Pakistan. The report regarding the same came out on September 14, 2011. The two sides are likely to conclude the talks very soon. If the PTA comes into effect, Indonesia will be able to export goods worth US \$ 1 billion to Pakistan, which is considered a promising market in Indonesia.²⁹

In other developments in the region, after nine months of captivity, Vietnam owned bulk carrier MV Hoang Son Sun and its 24 crew members were released on September 15. The ship was hijacked 520 nautical miles southeast off the port of Muscat, on January 11, 2011. It was carrying a gross registered tonnage of 13,881 tonnes, owned and managed by the Vietnamese based Hoang Son Company Limited. The ship was held captive at Ceel Dhanaane by the Sanweyne pirate group.³⁰

²⁵ 3 killed, 118 wounded by Sungai Kolok bomb, *Bangkok Post*, September 17, 2011, <http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/security/257030/3-killed-118-wounded-by-sungai-kolok-bomb>

²⁶ Malaysia warns against travel to southern Thailand, *Strait Times*, September 18, 2011 http://www.straitstimes.com/BreakingNews/SEAsia/Story/STIStory_714221.html

²⁷ Thailand burns \$ 80m of drugs, *Channel News Asia*, September 19, 2011, http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_asiapacific/view/1154078/1/.html

²⁸ Philippine President visits US on anti-graft efforts, *Bangkok Post*, September 18, 2011, <http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/257166/philippine-president-visits-us-on-anti-graft-efforts>

²⁹ Indonesia, Pakistan in talks on PTA again, *The Jakarta Post*, September 16, 2011, <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/09/16/indonesia-pakistan-talks-pta-again.html>

³⁰ Freed Vietnam ship, 24 sailors head to Salalah, *Times of Oman*, September 18, 2011, <http://www.timesofoman.com/innercat.asp?detail=49794&rand=>

Japan

- **Japan to send Ground Self Defense Force (GSDF) to South Sudan; Japanese Prime Minister Noda may visit India in November this year**

According to reports, the Japanese government is to send an engineering unit of its Ground Self Defense Force (GSDF) to South Sudan as part of a UN peace keeping mission. The decision might be formally announced by Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda during his scheduled address at the UN General Assembly and his talks with UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon next week. This would be the second time for Japan to participate in UN peacekeeping operations under the current DPJ government. Earlier, this year, the SDF forces were dispatched to conduct relief operation in earthquake-struck Haiti.³¹

In the meanwhile, according to reports, with a view to strengthening Indo-Japan relationship, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda may visit India in November this year. Earlier this month, the newly elected Prime Minister expressed his eagerness to work more closely with India as in 2012, both the countries would celebrate the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.³²

South Korea & North Korea

- **Nuclear envoys of two Koreas to hold talks in Beijing; Russia and the two Koreas to hold talks on the pipeline project soon**

In a significant development, the chief nuclear negotiators of both the Koreas are to hold their second-high level talks in Beijing following their earlier meet in late July this year in Indonesia. This indicates renewed diplomatic efforts by both sides to reopen the stalled six party talks on North Korea's denuclearization.³³

In another development, officials from Russia and the two Koreas are to hold talks on a proposed pipeline project as early as September 15. The project under which Russia's new 1800 kilometer pine line will be linked with South Korea and Russian Far East via North Korea has already been given the go-ahead by the governments of North Korea and Russia. Although South Korea also supports the project, some officials in Seoul are skeptical about its success due to security concerns and poor inter-Korean relationship.³⁴

³¹ "Govt plans to send GSDF to S. Sudan/Engineers to repair roads, bridges", *The Yomiuri Shimbun*, September 18, 2011, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T110917002881.htm>

³² "Noda seeking to visit India in November", *The Japan Times*, September 16, 2011, at <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20110916b1.html>

³³ "Nuclear envoys of two Koreas to hold talks in Beijing next week", *Korea Herald*, September 16, 2011, at <http://www.koreaherald.com/pop/NewsFlash.jsp?newsMLId=null>

³⁴ "Russia-Korea gas pipeline talks to start soon", *Asahi Shimbun*, September 16, 2011, at <http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201109150267.html>

C. Central Asia & Russia

Central Asia

- **India to use Lake Issyk-Kul in Kyrgyzstan to test its latest torpedoes; CSTO conducts drills in Central Asia; New radical group in Tajikistan threatens jihad; 8th Russia-Kazakhstan Interregional Cooperation Forum held; Kazakh premier reached at several agreements with Kyrgyzstan; Russian government expresses displeasure over new agreement on Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline; New deposit discovered in Turkmenistan's portion of Caspian shelf; Ukrainian President visits Turkmenistan to discuss renewing purchases of natural gas**

According to a senior Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) official William Selvamurthy, India wants to use Lake Issyk-Kul in landlocked Kyrgyzstan to test its latest torpedoes. Indian authorities consider the lakeside Torpedo Testing Center, located in the Karakul province 155 miles east of the capital city Bishkek, as an excellent site to fire and recover their test torpedoes. In this regard an Indian delegation will visit the Kyrgyz state to make an assessment of investment needed for the project and the terms and conditions for co-developing it.³⁵

Central Asian states on September 19, began the military exercises sponsored by the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) which will last about a week. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Russia are all participating in the four-country drill or the 'Center 2011' exercises overseen by Russia's General Staff Chief Army General Nikolay Makarov.³⁶

In the meanwhile, Jamaat Ansarullah, recently formed Islamist organization has released a video calling on Tajik citizens to wage jihad against the secular government. The 15-minute video urges Tajik Muslims to support the group's aims to ensure that Koranic standards and ethics are honored before democratic and international standards.³⁷

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev met his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev on September 15th to discuss bilateral trade before opening a wide-ranging bilateral forum on emergency and environmental issues. In their meeting, the two leaders reviewed bilateral cooperation issues and the future of the trilateral customs union with Belarus.³⁸

In another development, the 8th Forum of Interregional Cooperation between Kazakhstan and Russia was held in Astrakhan. President Medvedev stressed that Russia and Kazakhstan were both responsible for protection of the eco-system of the Caspian Sea basin. Therefore, the bilateral agreement on prevention and fighting forest and steppe fires became the first inter-governmental

³⁵ "India to test torpedoes in Kyrgyz lake", *Universal Newswires*, September 19, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10207>

³⁶ "CSTO military drills kick off in 4 countries", *Universal Newswires*, September 19, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10213>

³⁷ "New Islamist group calls for jihad in Tajikistan", *Universal Newswires*, September 16, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10205>

³⁸ "Nazarbayev, Medvedev talk bilateral trade in Astrakhan", *Universal Newswires*, September 16, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10199>

document signed at the forum.³⁹ Many other important issues discussed included – protection of the Ural River eco-system, Baikonur Cosmodrome, oil and gas cooperation, deepening of innovation cooperation between Russia's Skolkovo Innovation Centre and Kazakhstan's Innovation and Technology Park, formation of the Single Economic Space which will lead to the establishment of the Eurasian Union and on military-technical collaboration. Several cooperation agreements were signed within the framework of the event: agreement between the Governments of Kazakhstan and Russia on the foundation of Altai specially protected natural area; agreement on program of interregional and cross-border cooperation between Kazakhstan and Russia for 2012-2017; and protocol on amendments to the Agreement between the Governments of the Kazakhstan and Russia on conditions of crossing the Russian-Kazakh state border.⁴⁰

According to reports, Kazakh Prime Minister Karim Massimov visited Bishkek last week and met his Kyrgyz counterpart Almazbek Atambayev and Deputy Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov to negotiate economic agreements and expand bilateral trade. The former reached several agreements with Kyrgyz government officials on providing gas and jump-starting the planned Kazakh-Kyrgyz joint investment fund.⁴¹

In other developments, according to reports, the EU Council recently signed a new agreement with Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan to negotiate adding their gas reserves to the Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline. Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander K. Lukashevich expressed Russian displeasure, in a statement, "The Russian Foreign Ministry expressed regret over the decision of the EU Council. Apparently, it was made without taking into account the actually existence...of the international legal and geopolitical situation in the Caspian Basin."⁴² In the meanwhile, Turkmen national oil firm Turkmenneft confirmed that a new oil deposit in Turkmenistan's portion of the Caspian shelf has been discovered. Turkmenistan is estimated to have 12 billion tons of the crude oil in its Caspian Sea holdings alone.⁴³ Also, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych last week visited Turkmenistan to discuss renewing purchases of natural gas from the energy-rich republic. Yanukovych is interested in lessening his country's dependency on expensive Russian supplies. Ukraine considers Turkmen gas cheaper than Russian fuel, even when transportation costs are considered.⁴⁴

Russia

- **Russia and Belarus start joint military exercises; Russia and USA discuss and deliberates upon the developments in the Middle East; Members of Russia's Upper House to visit**

³⁹ "Results of 8th Forum of Interregional Cooperation between Kazakhstan and Russia", *Prime Minister of Kazakhstan website*, September 16, 2011 at <http://pm.kz/en/govnews/3150>

⁴⁰ "Results of 8th Forum of Interregional Cooperation between Kazakhstan and Russia", *Prime Minister of Kazakhstan website*, September 16, 2011 at <http://pm.kz/en/govnews/3150>

⁴¹ "Kazakh premier holds negotiations with Kyrgyz leaders", *Universal Newswires*, September 16, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10203>

⁴² "Moscow displeased with new Trans-Caspian gas agreement", *Universal Newswires*, September 14, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/turkmenistan/viewstory.aspx?id=10184>

⁴³ "Turkmenistan discovers new oil deposit on Caspian shelf", *Universal Newswires*, September 16, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=10201>

⁴⁴ "Ukraine president in discussions for Turkmen gas", *Universal Newswires*, September 13, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/turkmenistan/viewstory.aspx?id=10167>

Syria for talks; Russia and Iran to develop world's largest zinc deposit; Russia may sign a loan agreement with Cyprus; European Court of Human Rights criticizes Russia's investigation of Yukos Oil company; Prime Minister Putin: Russia will not have a budget deficit in 2011; South Korea to build thermal power plant in Sochi; Russia and North Korea set up a working group on gas pipeline project; Russia may host next meeting of SCO heads of state; New Japanese Prime Minister intends to build relationship with Russia; Russia exports 50,000 tonnes of milling wheat to Libya; Russian and Japanese metal products companies to develop a joint venture in St. Petersburg

As part of the Union Shield exercises, Russia and Belarus have taken part in joint military exercises. According to reports, close to twelve thousand servicemen are taking part in the exercise. The main aim of these exercises is to verify the operation of the Union State's defence system and its ability to ensure military security of Russia and Belarus. The exercises will also involve Sukhoi-34 bombers and KA-52 alligator assault helicopters.⁴⁵

In another development, Russia and USA have discussed the prevailing situation in the Middle East and deliberated upon the Palestinian intention of addressing the UN in order to gain membership of the organisation. Foreign Minister of Russia Sergei Lavrov and US Secretary of State Mrs. Clinton discussed these issues.⁴⁶

Reports noted that a delegation of Russia's Federation Council, headed by Deputy Speaker Ilyas Umakhanov will visit Syria for talks. The itinerary includes meetings with President Bashar al-Assad's political adviser Bouthaina Shaaban, the chairman of the National Council (Parliament) of Syria, Mahmoud al-Abrash, and the supreme mufti of Syria, Ahmad Badreddin Hassoun.⁴⁷

Russia and Iran have agreed to jointly develop the world's largest zinc-lead deposit in Mehdiabad in central Iran. Russia's Rostekhnologii Corporation and Iranian Bank Saderat Iran will run the Mehdiabad project with estimated investment of \$1.2 billion. The deposit's total reserves are estimated at 394 metric tons of ore with an average grade of 4.2% zinc and 1.6% lead. However, the fact that the Iranian bank could be subjected to international sanctions could play a spoilsport.⁴⁸

Reports noted that Russia is close to signing an agreement on Russian loan to Cyprus. It was earlier announced that Cyprus is in talks about a loan of 2-2.5 billion euro (\$2.7-3.4 billion) with a five-year maturity and an annual interest rate of 4.5%.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ "Russia, Belarus start joint military exercises", *ITAR-TASS*, September 16, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/227382.html>

⁴⁶ "Lavrov discusses Mid-East situation with Clinton", *ITAR-TASS*, September 17, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/227706.html>

⁴⁷ "Members of Russia's Upper House to visit Syria for talks", *ITAR-TASS*, September 17, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/227639.html>

⁴⁸ "Russia, Iran set to develop world's largest zinc deposit", *RIA Novosti*, September 20, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20110920/166970872.html>

⁴⁹ "Russia, Cyprus close to loan agreement", *Ria Novosti*, September 19, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20110919/166965026.html>

In another development, the European Court of Human Rights has ruled that an investigation by Russia's tax authorities into bankrupt oil company Yukos was unfair and violated the firm's property rights.⁵⁰

According to Prime Minister Putin, Russian budget will not have a deficit in 2011. He also added that under favourable conditions, there will not be a deficit in the 2012 budget.⁵¹

Meanwhile, South Korea's Korea Western Power Corporation will build a combined 180 MW thermal power plant in Central Russia's Sochi area before the 2014 Winter Olympics. The Russian government has guaranteed financing of 70 percent of the overall cost of the project estimated at 300 million dollars.⁵² On the other hand, Russia's national gas utility Gazprom and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) will set up a working group on a project of Russian gas supplies to the Korean Peninsula. This was in the backdrop of President Medvedev's recent meeting with North Korea's leader Kim Jong Il in Ulan Ude (Russia).⁵³

According to reports, Russia has proposed to host the next meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Moscow on November 7. The meeting is expected to focus on economic and humanitarian cooperation.⁵⁴

Reports noted that new Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihito Noda intends to build relation with Russia as with a partner in the Asia-Pacific region and simultaneously actively solve the issue of Southern Kuriles.⁵⁵ While, Russia has exported close to 50,000 tonnes to milling wheat to Libya. Good quality and cheaper price (Russia's wheat is cheaper by US\$ 20 per tonne) as compared to French wheat makes it very attractive for exports.⁵⁶

In other developments, Japan's Mitsui concern and Russia's Severstal have signed an agreement on the construction of a centre for the production and sale of rolled metal products in Vsevolzhsk, Leningrad region. Mitsui will be the first shareholder of such a centre in Russia. The joint venture's chartered capital will amount to 970 million roubles (2.5 billion yens). About 25 percent of the fund will belong to the Japanese company, and 75 percent – to the Russian partner. The commissioning of the joint venture is slated for the middle of 2013. Its designated capacity will make up 170,000 tonnes of rolled metal products.⁵⁷

⁵⁰ "European Court says Russian investigation into Yukos unfair", *RIA Novosti*, September 20, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20110920/166975563.html>

⁵¹ "Russia not to have budget deficit 2011-Putin", *ITAR-Tass*, September 16, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/227160.html>

⁵² "South Korea to build thermal power plant in Sochi", *ITAR-TASS*, September 15, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/226527.html>

⁵³ "Russia's Gazprom, DPRK set up working group on gas pipeline project", *ITAR-TASS*, September 15, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/226435.html>

⁵⁴ "Russia seeks to host next meeting of SCO heads of state council", *ITAR-TASS*, September 14, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/225283.html>

⁵⁵ "New Japanese PM to build partnership relations with RF", *ITAR-TASS*, September 13, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/224322.html>

⁵⁶ "Libya acquires 50,000 tonnes of Russian milling wheat", *ITAR-TASS*, September 13, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/224787.html>

⁵⁷ "Japan's Mitsui, Russia's Severstal sign agt on setting up of JV in St. Petersburg", *ITAR-TASS*, September 13, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/224926.html>

D. West Asia

Iran

- **Fereydoun Abbasi: Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant connected to the National Grid; The representative of the Supreme Leader in the IRGC criticises Ahmadinejad to readjust his attitude; Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi to visit India on November 15, 2011 to attend IOR-ARC**

The head of Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Fereydoun Abbasi announced in a special ceremony that the Bushehr nuclear power plant was temporarily connected to the national grid. Reportedly, the power plant has reached 40 percent its power generation capacity. The AEOI has also announced that the power plant will reach its full capacity in November this year. The plant, which is located near the port city of Bushehr on the coast of the Persian Gulf, will generate 1000 megawatts of electricity once it becomes fully operational. Iranian and Russian experts have given permission for the initial launch of the power plant after carrying out rigorous safety tests and inspections.⁵⁸

In another development, the representative of the Supreme Leader in the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, Hojjatoleslam Ali Saeedi in a recent meeting with President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has criticized him for not living up to his ideals and advised him to readjust his attitude. He said that his sympathizers are displeased with some of his actions and behaviors. However, he noted that the president still has time to make up for his past.⁵⁹

Coinciding with India's plans to develop the strategically important Chabahar Port in Iran, Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi will visit India on November 15 this year. Tehran has conveyed to New Delhi about Salehi's plans to attend Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) in Bangalore and to hold discussions with his Indian counterpart SM Krishna on a host of issues. Chabahar port — 72 km from Pakistan's deep-sea Gwadar port built with Chinese assistance — holds immense strategic and economic significance for India. New Delhi maintains the port is in the common interest of "India, Iran Afghanistan, as well as Central Asia". Chabahar is also closer to India than the existing port at Bandar Abbas. India, Iran and Afghanistan have signed an agreement to give Indian goods, heading for Central Asia and Afghanistan, preferential treatment and tariff reductions at Chabahar.⁶⁰

Iraq

- **Gunmen killed 22 people in Noukhair region west of Baghdad; Iraqi officials pushes Iran to free two US hikers**

According to reports, gunmen killed 22 passengers on a bus coming from Syria in a desert region

⁵⁸ "Iran celebrates initial launch of Bushehr nuclear power plant," *Mehr News Agency*, September 12, 2011, at <http://www.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1405977>

⁵⁹ "Cleric advises Ahmadinejad to readjust his attitude," *Tehran Times*, September 15, 2011, at <http://www.tehrantimes.com/index.php/politics/2568-cleric-advises-ahmadinejad-to-readjust-his-attitude>

⁶⁰ "India to participate in developing Iran's Chabahar port," *Tehran Times*, September 15, 2011, at <http://www.tehrantimes.com/index.php/economy-and-business/2557-india-to-participate-in-developing-irans-chabahar-port>

west of Baghdad. Police general Haider Rzayj said that “some armed men stopped the bus and killed 22 passengers with automatic weapons in Noukhair. The region is about 300 kilometres (185 miles) west of Baghdad.”⁶¹

In another development, Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari has noted that Iraq’s leaders, including the president and prime minister, have repeatedly called on Iran to release two US hikers convicted by Tehran for spying. Zebari told that while there was “cause for optimism” that the pair would be released. He stated, “I have carried a number of messages; we have urged the Iranian authorities to release them as a goodwill gesture, for humanitarian reasons.” Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said in interviews that hikers Josh Fattal and Shane Bauer, who have been held in Iran for more than two years, would be released imminently. But Iran’s judiciary, which is dominated by ultra-conservatives, said that no decision has yet been taken to free them. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said she was confident Iran would free Fattal and Bauer, and rejected concerns about the delay in their release.⁶²

Syria

- **Syria and Mauritania discuss means of enhancing cooperation; 17 people were killed in activists protest against Russia; Syria opposition vows protests until regime change**

Syrian Deputy Foreign and Expatriates Minister Fayssal Mikdad met with the Mauritanian General Secretary of the Foreign and Cooperation Ministry Ali Ould Haiba and discussed the situation in Syria and various means of enhancing cooperation between the two countries. Mikdad also briefed on the role of media in the political campaign against Syria by departments which want to subjugate the Arab nation to the Western hegemony. In response, Ould Haiba underlined his country’s support to Syria and satisfaction over reforms carried out by President Bashar al-Assad.⁶³

In another development, security forces shot dead at least 17 people around the city of Hama as activists called for a day of protest against Russia for backing the al-Assad regime. More than 60 others were also arrested. Earlier, Russia had blocked attempts by the United Nations to sanction Assad’s regime and is promoting a separate draft resolution that simply calls on the government and the opposition to open direct talks.⁶⁴

After the incident, the Arab League demanded an end to the bloodshed in Syria. Also, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan warned that Syria could slip into “civil war” if the current trend is not arrested.⁶⁵

⁶¹ “Gunmen kill 22 bus passengers in Iraq,” *Khaleej Times*, September 13, 2011, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/September/middleeast_September236.xml§ion=middleeast&col=

⁶² “Iraq pressing Iran to free US hikers: Zebari,” *Khaleej Times*, September 16, 2011, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/September/middleeast_September298.xml§ion=middleeast&col=

⁶³ “Mikdad: Media and Political Campaign against Syria Aims to Subjugate Arab Nation to Hegemony”, *Syrian Arab News Agency*, September 14, 2011, at <http://www.sana.sy/eng/22/2011/09/14/369212.htm>

⁶⁴ “20 dead in Syria as Russia defends Assad”, *The Jordan Times*, September 13, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41248>

⁶⁵ “Syria bloodshed must end - Arab League”, *The Jordan Times*, September 14, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41281>

In other developments, members of the opposition National Coordinating Committee for Democratic Change, which includes opposition parties of various ideologies, including Arab and Kurdish nationalists, Marxists and independent figures, have discussed the means of ending the crisis and vowed to continue protests until the current regime is overthrown. This response came as al-Assad praised Moscow's "balanced" position on the unrest in a meeting with Russian lawmakers. The opposition also planned to announce the formation of a coalition that includes the coordinating committee, liberal parties of the opposition "Damascus Declaration", the Muslim Brotherhood and independent Islamists.⁶⁶

Libya

- **Gaddafi forces launch fight back on three fronts; China recognizes National Transitional Council (NTC); National Transitional Council (NTC) gaining more international recognition and support**

According to reports, Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi vowed to fight until victory as his forces launched surprise fight backs on three fronts including on a Ras Lanuf oil refinery, near Qadhafi's hometown of Sirte, and at Bani Walid near Tripoli. At least 12 NTC soldiers were killed in the attack.

In the meantime, Libya's interim government, the National Transitional Council (NTC), was recognized by China. Separately, NATO vowed that there would be no let-up in its bombing campaign against Gaddafi's remaining strongholds, including the southern oases of Waddan and Sabha, as long as they pose a threat.⁶⁷

In another development, during their visit to Libya, British Prime Minister David Cameron and French President Nicolas Sarkozy promised strong support to Libya's new leaders and vowed to release more billions of dollars in frozen assets in order to help in the rebuilding of the country and to push ahead with NATO strikes against Qadhafi's last remaining strongholds.⁶⁸

Separately, the African Union appeared to soften its stance towards Libya's interim government but still stopped short of recognising the National Transitional Council as Libya's legitimate government. The African Union's Ad Hoc Committee said it is committed to working with the NTC and other Libyan stakeholders to establish an "all-inclusive national unity government".⁶⁹

In other developments, the World Bank, in a statement, said that based on evolving events in Libya and the views of member countries, it is engaging with the National Transitional Council (NTC) as the Government of Libya. As Libya begins its recovery from conflict, the World Bank has been asked to lead the effort in the areas of public expenditure and financial management, infrastructure repair, job creation for young people and service delivery.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ "Syria opposition vows protests until regime ousted", *The Jordan Times*, September 19, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41423>

⁶⁷ "Qadhafi defiant as forces launch fightbacks", *The Jordan Times*, September 13, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41247>

⁶⁸ "Update: France, UK Leaders Promise Strong Support, Release of More Frozen Assets", *The Tripoli Post*, September 15, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=6915>

⁶⁹ "African Union Prepared to Work with Libya's New Leaders", *The Tripoli Post*, September 15, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=6917>

⁷⁰ "World Bank Recognises New Libyan Leadership, Promises to Help in the Rebuilding", *The Tripoli Post*, September 14, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=6904>

Egypt

- **Ex-Intelligence chief testifies in Mubarak trial; Insider of former Egypt regime sentenced in a corruption case; Rift between Egypt and Israel continues; Egypt and Ethiopia discuss issues of mutual concern**

Omar Suleiman, Hosni Mubarak's longtime intelligence chief and vice president during the last weeks of Mubarak's rule, testified at the ousted leader's trial on whether Mubarak ordered the use of lethal force against protesters. One of the most secretive figures of Hosni Mubarak's inner circle, Suleiman is the first in a string of members of the ousted leader's senior leadership to appear in the court. It is unprecedented for a court in Egypt to summon such high-level figures—particularly authorities from the highly secretive military and intelligence services.⁷¹

In another development, one of the Middle East's prominent steel magnates Ahmed Ezz was sentenced to a 10 years imprisonment along with former government official Amr Assal in a corruption case. The two were also fined a total of \$110 million. Ezz is a leading figure associated with ousted president Hosni Mubarak and his son. The court has also sentenced former trade minister Rachid Mohammed Rachid to 15 years in jail and ordered to pay a \$237 million fine for approving production licences to Ezz without auctioning them publicly first.⁷²

Separately, Egypt Prime Minister Essam Sharaf said the Camp David agreement between Egypt and Israel was not sacred and was always open to discussion or change if that would benefit the region or enhance peace. Reacting to the comments, Israeli spokesperson Mark Regev said that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had already voiced his commitment to the treaty on at least two occasions when he stressed the importance of maintaining the peace treaty with Egypt, and that the peace treaty is an anchor for regional stability.⁷³

Reports noted that Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia Hailemariam Desalegn led a delegation to Cairo to discuss bilateral ties and security concerns with the Egyptian administration. The Ethiopian minister is scheduled to attend the joint Egyptian-Ethiopian committee that will examine the relationship between the two countries, particularly in terms of trade and investment.⁷⁴

In other developments, Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi said that that Egypt and Ethiopia have agreed to set up a technical team to review the impact of a \$4.8-billion Nile river dam which Addis Ababa announced in March 2011. He made this announcement in Cairo. It would be worth noting that relations between Egypt and Ethiopia have strained after the treaty was signed in 2010 by six of the nine countries through which the Nile runs. Ties began to improve

⁷¹ "Ex-spy chief testifies in Mubarak trial", *The Jordan Times*, September 14, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41280>

⁷² "Egypt regime insider found guilty of corruption", *The Jordan Times*, September 16, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41358>

⁷³ "Peace deal with Israel not sacred - Egypt PM", *The Jordan Times*, September 16, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41364>

⁷⁴ "Ethiopia, Egypt foreign ministers set for talks on bilateral, African concerns", *The Sudan Tribune*, September 14, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Ethiopia-Egypt-foreign-ministers,40150>

after Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak was overthrown in a popular uprising in February 2011.⁷⁵

Israel

- **Human rights experts say Israel's blockade of Gaza illegal**

Disputing the conclusion reached by the Palmer Report on Israel's raid on a Gaza-bound aid ship in May 2010 that killed nine Turkish activists, a panel of human rights experts reporting to the UN Human Rights Council said that Israel's naval blockade of the Gaza Strip violates international law. The Palmer Report said in September 2011 that Israel had used unreasonable force in the raid, but its naval blockade of the Hamas-ruled strip was legal. Rejecting that conclusion, a panel of five independent UN rights experts reporting to the UNHRC said the blockade had subjected Gazans to collective punishment in "flagrant contravention of international human rights and humanitarian law". The four-year blockade deprived 1.6 million Palestinians living in the enclave of fundamental rights. However, Israel believes its Gaza blockade is a precaution against arms reaching Hamas and other Palestinian fighters by sea.⁷⁶

Palestine

- **Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas visits Egypt for consultations over UN membership bid; US envoys tour Middle East to avert Palestinian bid**

Reports noted that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas was in Egypt to consult Arab officials days before he submits a formal request to the United Nations to accept Palestine as its 194th member state. Abbas was also scheduled to meet EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton in Cairo, where Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan was to begin an "Arab Spring" tour. Later, Abbas will attend the Arab League follow-up committee devoted to the Palestinian-Israeli crisis and brief its members on preparations to request UN membership for Palestine.⁷⁷

In a further development, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan expressed that recognition of a Palestinian state is an "obligation". Erdogan also said governments should not use force to repress the legitimate demands of their people. He reiterated that Turkey's strained ties with Israel will not improve unless Israel apologises over the death of nine Turks killed in a raid on an aid flotilla that tried to break the Israeli-imposed blockade of Gaza.⁷⁸

Reports noted that US Middle East peace envoy David Hale and senior White House aide Dennis Ross are trying to revive Middle East peace talks and avert a Palestinian bid for UN membership, but a UN official said it was probably too late to stop the move opposed by Israel and the US. The US envoys were scheduled to hold talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. Meanwhile, US lawmakers in Washington warned

⁷⁵ "Egypt, Ethiopia to review impact of mega dam", September 18, 2011, at <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/environment/egypt-ethiopia-to-review-impact-of-mega-dam.html>

⁷⁶ "Israel's blockade of Gaza illegal -UN experts", *The Jordan Times*, September 14, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41289>

⁷⁷ "Abbas, Arabs consult in Egypt over UN membership bid", *The Jordan Times*, September 13, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41253>

⁷⁸ "Erdogan tells Arabs Palestinian UN bid an obligation", *The Jordan Times*, September 14, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41282>

the Palestinian leadership that they could lose hundreds of millions of dollars in aid if they continue to seek recognition of statehood at the United Nations.⁷⁹

Yemen

- **Yemen: 26 protesters killed and 500 injured in clash with the security forces**

About 26 people were reported killed and another 500 injured in Saana after a clash started between the security forces and the anti-government protesters on September 18, 2011. According to medical sources, live rounds, batons or after inhaling tear gas was used in the clash. Presence of some armed civilians among the protesters was also reported. According to the eye witnesses, firing started after the protesters began their march towards the city centre from the Change Square where they have been camping since February demanding regime change. Meanwhile, the Yemeni interior ministry accused protesters of instigating the clash by wounding four members of the security forces, throwing petrol bombs at electricity generators, and burning official vehicles.⁸⁰

E. Africa

Somalia

- **Security forces stop aid workers from reaching to Al Shabaab areas; Somali forces plans to liberate Jubba region; Somalis protest over corruption of food aid in Mogadishu; Somalia bans foreign aid workers from rebel areas**

According to reports, forces loyal to the transitional federal government have again stopped Turkish and Somali aid workers from reaching famine victims in Al shabaab controlled areas. Security officials confirmed the incident at Ex-Control Afgoye checkpoint outskirts of Mogadishu. The security officials said they halted the voyage of aid workers to Al shabaab controlled areas for reasons related to their security saying it is extremely difficulty operating those places. It is second time in a week that Somali forces have stopped aid workers from reaching Al Shabaab strongholds.⁸¹

Reports noted that Somali military vowed that they will do all what they can to liberate Jubba regions in southern Somalia. Mohamed Farah Dahir, a spokesperson for Somali forces in Jubba region said that Al shabaab movement invaded Somalia and its people and said military is committed in preventing them. Dahir spelled that they engaged new plans for the region in which they wanted the rebels to be eradicated from the region completely.⁸²

In another development, complaining about lack food aid and at the same time widespread

⁷⁹ "US, Europe in Mideast peace push before UN showdown", *The Jordan Times*, September 15, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41338>

⁸⁰ "Yemen security forces kill 26 protesters", *Gulf News*, September 18, 2011, at <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/yemen/yemen-security-forces-kill-26-protesters-1.869180>

⁸¹ "Forces Stop Again Aid Workers From Reaching At Al Shabaab Areas", *AllAfrica.com*, September 15, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109160466.html>

⁸² "Govt Threatens It Will Liberate Al Shabaab From Jubba Regions", *AllAfrica.com*, September 15, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109150836.html>

corruption in the distribution of aid food, many of famine affected people staged a huge protest at Maka Al Mukarrama in the Somali capital. The protesters also expressed their need of humanitarian aid without graft.⁸³

In other developments, reports noted that Somalia has banned foreign aid workers and journalists from entering areas controlled by al-Shabaab insurgents after members of a Turkish charity took food to famine victims in an area under the Islamist group. Nearly all aid agencies have already barred their expatriate workers from operating in Somalia, due to the risk of kidnapping as the hard-line militants linked to al-Qaeda control most of the southern part of the country after retreating from the capital. However, Somali security forces briefly detained two Turks who went to an al-Shabaab area to deliver food to famine victims, and prevented others along with a group of journalists from doing so.⁸⁴

South Africa

- **President Zuma to appoint a commission of inquiry into arms deal**

Reports noted that President Jacob Zuma is preparing to appoint a commission of inquiry to investigate allegations of wrongdoing in the Strategic Defence Procurement Packages, popularly known as the arms deal. The move represents a stunning vindication for anti-corruption campaigner Terry Crawford-Browne, who has spent the past decade in a series of legal bids to have the contracts cancelled. Crawford-Browne's most recent court application formed the backdrop to the president's decision. The cost of the arms deal, which was signed in 1999, is estimated to have been R60-billion. It included the purchase of frigate warships, submarines, helicopters, jet fighters and trainers — but the cost crowded out other defence spending and left little over for operational expenses.⁸⁵

Sudan

- **Sudan denies reports of new agreement on Abyei; Gambari urges rebels to join peace process in Darfur; Sudan calls on Arab states to augment its forex reserves; Sudan and South Sudan sign agreement on cross-border arrangements; Ethiopia disputes advising U.S. to overthrow al-Bashir government**

According to reports, the Sudanese government dismissed the announcement by Edmond Mulet, deputy head of the UN peacekeeping department of a deal reached between Sudan and South Sudan in the Ethiopian capital on withdrawing troops from the contested region of Abyei. Omar Suleiman, a member of Sudan's negotiating team, told the government run Sudanese Media Center (SMC) that Mulet's assertions were inaccurate and that a meeting took place only for the oversight committee comprised of representatives from the two sides to follow up on the implementation of the interim protocol on Abyei administration. He further said the two countries reached an understanding on the speedy formation of the executive committee for

⁸³ "Famine Affected Somalis Protest over Corruption of Food Aid in Mogadishu", *AllAfrica.com*, September 14, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109150671.html>

⁸⁴ "Somalia bans foreign aid workers from rebel areas", *Mail and Guardian*, September 17, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-17-somalia-bans-foreign-aid-workers-from-rebel-areas/>

⁸⁵ "Zuma's arms deal bombshell", *Mail and Guardian*, September 16, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-16-zuma-arms-deal-bombshell>

Abyei administration, the legislative council, setting up the agenda for the committee and mechanisms for decision making process.⁸⁶

Separately, stressing Darfurians have suffered enough during the past eight years, the head of Darfur peacekeeping operation and temporary mediator Ibrahim Gambari called on the rebel groups to join the peace process. Earlier, Princeton Lyman, US special envoy to Sudan, urged the rebel groups to hold peace talks with the government and discouraged them from pursuing an alliance with the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement – North (SPLM-N) to wage war against Khartoum.⁸⁷

Reports noted that attending a meeting of Arab central bank governors in Doha, the Bank of Sudan governor Mohamed Khair al-Zubeir acknowledged the country's shortage in hard currency and asked his Arab peers for deposits to shore up Sudan's foreign exchange reserves. al-Zubeir said that Sudan needs about \$4 billion for this year.⁸⁸

In another development, reports noted that few days after Khartoum said it was experiencing an influx of southerners returning to the north, Sudan and South Sudan have signed an agreement to monitor their shared borders and open crossing points. The agreement was announced following a meeting in Khartoum between Sudan's defence minister Abdel-Rahim Mohamed Hussein and his southern counterpart John Kong Nyuon. Hussein announced that ten crossing points would be opened along the 2,200 km borders, which remain partially un-demarcated even after South Sudan gained full independence. Further, 300 monitoring teams consisting of six individuals from north Sudan army, six from the southern army and six Ethiopian peacekeepers would oversee cross-border arrangements and investigate any violation on the ground.⁸⁹

In other developments, the Ethiopian government disputed allegations that its Prime Minister Meles Zenawi advised the U.S. Administration that toppling the Sudanese government of president Al-Bashir is the "preferred option" for Washington. Allegations of Zenawi's advice were revealed by the whistle-blowing website Wikileaks in a diplomatic cable detailing discussions that took place on January 30, 2009 between the Ethiopian PM and Acting Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Phil Carter in the presence of the Director of Sudan Programs Group (SPG) at the US State Department Tim Shortley. Countering the cable, the Ethiopian government argued that Zenawi had actually advised the U.S. administration to devise clear proposals to persuade Khartoum to overcome challenges with South Sudan and Darfur.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ "Sudan denies UN announcement of new agreement on Abyei", *Sudan Tribune*, September 14, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Sudan-denies-UN-announcement-of,40152>

⁸⁷ "Gambari urges rebels to join efforts for peace in Darfur", *Sudan Tribune*, September 14, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Gambari-urges-rebels-to-join,40153>

⁸⁸ "Sudan needs \$4 billion in forex reserves, calls on Arab states to make deposits", *Sudan Tribune*, September 15, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Sudan-needs-4-billion-in-forex,40162>

⁸⁹ "Sudan, South Sudan sign deal on cross-border arrangements", *Sudan Tribune*, September 18, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Sudan-South-Sudan-sign-deal-on,40186>

⁹⁰ "Ethiopia denies advising U.S. to overthrow Sudan's government", *Sudan Tribune*, September 15, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Ethiopia-denies-advising-U-S-to,40163>

Nigeria

- **Nigerian leaders renew agitation for national conference; Experts excavate 17,519 unexploded bombs across Nigeria; Nigerian President Jonathan inaugurates Nigeria's Atomic Energy Commission**

Reports noted that Nigerian leaders have revisited the endless clamour for the convocation of a Sovereign National Conference and a new constitution to address the country's unresolved problems. They insisted that it is only through these two initiatives that Nigeria can come out of the myriad of problems confronting it. The agitation has arisen against new moves by the National Assembly to amend the 1999 Constitution.⁹¹

Separately, according to the Ministry of Defence, about 17,519 unexploded war bombs have been excavated in different parts of Nigeria. The states where the explosives were recovered include Imo, Abia, Anambra, Cross River, Benue and Nassarawa. Some of the bombs weighed about 120 kilograms, stressing that the famous Ojukwu rocket was also recovered.⁹²

In another development, Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan formally inaugurated Nigeria's Atomic Energy Commission in Abuja, calling its members to quickly evolve implementable plans and time-lines for delivery of atomic energy for peaceful purposes in the country. The development came as Nigeria and the United States signed pact on shared disaster recovery services to ensure data security and reliability in Nigeria's financial sector. President Jonathan added that generating power from atomic energy is very much part of the Federal Government's long-term plans for ensuring steady power supply in the country.⁹³

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

National

- **India dismisses Chinese objections over its oil exploration projects in Vietnam; Report: China's intrusion into Ladakh confirmed**

India dismissed Chinese objections over its oil exploration projects in two Vietnamese blocks in the South China Sea, saying its cooperation with Vietnam was as per international laws and it would like the cooperation to grow. External Affairs Ministry official Spokesperson Vishnu Prakash on Thursday said cooperation in the area of energy, hydrocarbon as well as renewable

⁹¹ "Leaders renew agitation for national conference", *Nigerian Guardian*, September 16, 2011, at http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=61257:leaders-renew-agitation-for-national-conference&catid=1:national&Itemid=559

⁹² "Experts excavate 17,519 unexploded bombs", *Nigerian Guardian*, September 16, 2011, at http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=61254:experts-excavate-17519-unexploded-bombs&catid=1:national&Itemid=559

⁹³ "Govt moves to generate power from atomic energy", *Nigerian Guardian*, September 16, 2011, at http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=61253:govt-moves-to-generate-power-from-atomic-energy&catid=1:national&Itemid=559

energy was one of the important facets of trade and economic cooperation with Vietnam. He was replying to a question on China asking India and other countries to refrain from oil exploration in maritime areas offered by Vietnam in the South China Sea, claiming it enjoys 'indisputable sovereignty' there. He also reiterated India's position that New Delhi 'supports freedom of navigation in South China Sea and hopes that all parties to the dispute would abide by the 2002 declaration of conduct in South China Sea.' The issue is expected to find a place in the Joint Commission Meeting, to be co-chaired by External Affairs Minister S M Krishna along with his Vietnamese counterpart Pham Binh Minh, in Hanoi on Friday. Significantly, Krishna's visit also comes close on the heels of an incident of an Indian Navy vessel reportedly being warned by the Chinese Navy off the coast of Vietnam against entering 'Chinese waters' in late July and New Delhi defending freedom of navigation in international waters, including in the South China Sea, and the right of passage in accordance with accepted principles of international law.⁹⁴

Meanwhile, reports noted that Chinese intrusion into Ladakh was confirmed by an official report of sub-divisional magistrate of Nyoma which was forwarded by the deputy commissioner, Leh, to the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) government. It stated 17 bunkers demarcating the Indo-China border were "dismantled" by army men who crossed the line of actual control. The deputy commissioner's report said, upon reaching the site of the incident, the SDM and the SHO (Nyoma) met troopers of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police and the army, and enquired about the incident. It then transpired on August 25 two Chinese helicopters entered Indian territory in Chumur village, "violating the international boundary". "The helicopters had intruded into Indian territory by about 200-300 metres inside and halted for about 20-25 minutes. Further, 6-7 persons, reportedly Chinese army personnel, got down from the choppers and thereafter dismantled about 17 structures made of loose stones in the shape of bunkers inside Indian territory along the border," the report said.⁹⁵

International

- **China and Bangladesh to increase military cooperation; Royal Australian Air Force conducts first flight test of advanced tanker aircraft**

Reports noted that China and Bangladesh have agreed to deepen bilateral military ties during a key meeting between Chinese Defence Minister Liang Guanglie and the visiting Bangladeshi Army Chief, General Muhammad Abdul Mubeen in Beijing. "China is willing to enhance interactions with Bangladesh in all fields and at all levels to advance bilateral and military relations and make contributions to safeguarding regional peace and stability," Chinese Defence Minister Liang said on Thursday. He said strengthening and developing a friendly cooperation with Bangladesh is an established policy of the Chinese government, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. General Mubeen said Bangladesh is willing to work with China to enhance cooperation and further promote military-to-military relations and attaches great importance to developing relations with China.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ "India rebuffs China's objections to oil exploration in Vietnam", September 16, 2011, at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/NEWS/newsrfl.php?newsid=15360>

⁹⁵ "China intruded into Ladakh, confirms official report," *The Hindustan Times*, September 18, 2011 at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/China-intruded-into-Ladakh-confirms-official-report/Article1-747389.aspx>

⁹⁶ "China, B'desh agree to deepen military ties," *Brahmand*, September 16, 2011 at <http://www.brahmand.com/news/China-Bdesh-agree-to-deepen-military-ties/8018/1/14.html>

Meanwhile, Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) conducted the first flight for the advanced tanker aircraft. The aircraft took off from Base Amberley at about 10.40am on Friday for a 2 hours and 45 minutes long flight over Roma and the Sunshine Coast, before returning to RAAF Base Amberley, an Australian MoD release said. Minister for Defence Materiel Jason Clare said this flight was the next step towards the new air tanker entering service with the RAAF. "This is the most advanced tanker aircraft in the world. It's an important piece of equipment for our Air Force. It's an Airbus aeroplane which has been converted into a flying petrol station, which will allow our Hornets, Super Hornets, C-17s and Wedgetail to be refuelled in the air." "It can carry more than 100 tonnes of fuel, and can itself be refuelled by another tanker mid-flight. This means these planes can fly further without having to return to base, making them more effective."⁹⁷

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

Jammu & Kashmir

(September 5-11)

- **Defence Secretary visits LOC in north Kashmir's Kupwara district; Strike hits normal life; HuJI mail traced to Kishtwar**

The Defence Secretary Shashikant Sharma visited Line of Control in north Kashmir's Kupwara district. He called on Governor N N Vohra and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. The Defence Secretary was accompanied by Lt Gen AS Lamba Vice Chief of Army Staff, Subhash Chandra, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Defence and Senior Army Officers.

The High level delegation was briefed by the Brigade Commander on the current situation on the Line of Control, infiltration and 'ceasefire violation' by Pak Army.⁹⁸

In another development, reports noted that normal life continued to be hit partially across the Kashmir Valley on second consecutive day due to the strike called by Hurriyat Conference (G) to press for the release of detainees.

Reports of partial response to the strike came in from districts, however no protests or incidents of stone-pelting were reported anywhere in the volatile old city where officials said prohibitory orders remained in force. Most shops, business establishments and educational institutions including private schools remained closed in the summer capital.⁹⁹

Investigators have traced the HuJI email claiming responsibility for the blast outside the Delhi High Court to a cybercafe in Kishtwar and detained three persons in this connection including

⁹⁷ "RAAF conducts first flight for new air tanker," September 17, 2011, at <http://www.brahmand.com/news/RAAF-conducts-first-flight-for-new-air-tanker/8030/1/14.html>

⁹⁸ "Def Secy reviews LoC situation", *Greater Kashmir*, September 5, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Sep/6/def-secy-reviews-loc-situation-65.asp>

⁹⁹ "Strike affects normal life", *Greater Kashmir*, September 7, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Sep/8/strike-affects-normal-life-69.asp>

the cafe owner. According to police officials Cyber cafe owner Mehmood Khawja was detained along with two others for questioning in connection with the Delhi Blast. They were being interrogated in connection with the email. One of the detained persons has been identified as Khalid.¹⁰⁰

(September 12-18)

- **Protests in Kishtwar; Lashkar commander killed in an encounter in Sopore; Shutdown observed amid protest a day after the killing of the militant**

According to reports, protests have erupted in mountainous Kishtwar town over continuous detention of several youth in connection with Delhi High Court blast. The protests broke out after rumours that some of the detained youth have been subjected to third degree torture. Hundreds of youth took to streets and shouted anti-police slogans demanding an end to the arrests and alleged harassment of locals in the name of investigation. The youth were, however, pacified after police and district administration intervened and refuted having tortured any of the detainees.¹⁰¹

In another development, Police claimed to have killed the divisional commander of militant outfit Lashkar-e-Toiba, Abdullah Unni, in a gunfight in the north Kashmir town. Police termed the killing as one of the biggest successes against militants during last few years.¹⁰²

However, according to reports, a shutdown was observed amid protests in North Kashmir's Sopore town, a day after the divisional commander of militant outfit Lashkar-e-Toiba, Abdullah Unni, was killed in an encounter. Shops, business establishments and other commercial establishments remained shut. Public transport remained off the roads while private transport was plying partially in the town. Government offices and a few other institutions remained open. Hundreds of policemen donning riot gear were deployed in the sensitive areas to prevent protests. Meanwhile, militants reportedly targeted paramilitary CRPF forces in the town's bus stand. Police and CRPF officials said two militants targeted CRPF personnel. No casualty was reported, however firing created chaos in the area.¹⁰³

North East India

(September 5-11)

- **Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) ultras surrender and money seized; Ultras**

¹⁰⁰ "HuJi mail traced to Kishtwar", *Greater Kashmir*, September 8, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Sep/9/huji-mail-traced-to-kishtwar-24.asp>

¹⁰¹ "Protest, shutdown in Kishtwar", *Greater Kashmir*, September 12, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Sep/13/protest-shutdown-in-kishtwar-56.asp>

¹⁰² "Lashkar commander Abdullah Unni killed", *Greater Kashmir*, September 13, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Sep/14/lashkar-commander-abdullah-unni-killed-76.asp>

¹⁰³ "Shutdown, militant attack in Sopore", *Greater Kashmir*, September 14, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Sep/15/shutdown-militant-attack-in-sopore-70.asp>

surrender in Manipur; Clashes in Bongaigaon; Trucks burnt down in Sadar Hills; AFSPA extended in Tripura; Apunba Lup calls for ban on 'The Telegraph' in Manipur

Reports noted that East Garo Hills police have seized Rs 7 lakh that was being transported to a hideout of militant outfit Garo National Liberation Army and arrested three persons including two Garo Students Union leaders. Alongside four militants surrendered to police at Williamnagar police station.¹⁰⁴

In another development, 29 underground cadres including 23 from five armed Naga groups have laid down their arms and surrendered to the Army authority at the 57th Mountain Division headquarter. The surrendered militants which included seven cadres each of National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-Khole) and Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN), six cadres of NSCN (K), three cadres of People's United Liberation Front (PULF), two cadres each of the banned United National Liberation Front (UNLF) and Naga National Council (NNC) and one each of NSCN-IM and banned Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL). They also handed over 28 weapons including four Kalashnikov rifles, 16 pistols, one Lathode grenade launcher, 645 rounds of ammunition along with 21 magazines and two radio sets to the Army authority.¹⁰⁵

According to reports, Police and security forces dispersed members of Koch Rajbanshi United Forum who blocked the railway track at New Bongaigaon railway level crossing. Police burst teargas shells, fired rubber bullets and resorted to lathicharge to clear the track on which the Rajdhani (Down) Express was supposed to run. In retaliation the picketers, observing 12-hour rail blockade demanding separate Kamatapur state and ST status, pelted stones at the security personnel. More than twenty picketers were injured. A few security personnel also received minor injuries.¹⁰⁶

However, nine goods- laden trucks were burnt down at Kangpokpi bridge in Sadar Hills by blockade volunteers. According to the Sadar Hills District Demand Committee spokesman, over 20 trucks came from Dimapur side along with a convoy of Assam Rifles. The volunteers of SHDDC intercepted the convoy at the bridge and set the goods trucks on fire. He added that nine of the trucks were burnt down.¹⁰⁷

Reports noted that Tripura has extended for another six months the operation of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), a stringent law that gives sweeping powers to security forces deployed in disturbed areas to curb terrorism. The state level coordination committee (SLCC), supervising the anti-insurgency operation in the state, recently reviewed the overall situation and suggested to extend the AFSPA's term in Tripura by another six months. The state government has accepted the recommendation.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ "GNLA money seized, 4 ultras surrender", *The Assam Tribune*, September 5, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep0611/oth05>

¹⁰⁵ "29 ultras surrender in Manipur", *The Assam Tribune*, September 7, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep0811/oth05>

¹⁰⁶ "Protestors clash with police in Bongaigaon", *The Assam Tribune*, September 6, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep0711/state06>

¹⁰⁷ "9 trucks burnt down in Manipur", *The Assam Tribune*, September 6, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep0711/oth05>

¹⁰⁸ "AFSPA extended for six months in Tripura", *The Assam Tribune*, September 8, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep0811/at015>

In other developments, reports noted that Apunba Lup, an umbrella organisation of various civil society bodies in Manipur banned 'The Telegraph' newspaper in the State for carrying a report that allegedly belittle the people's movement against the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), 1958. Representatives of Apunba Lup also set on fire copies of The Telegraph in Imphal.¹⁰⁹

(September 12-18)

- **Manipuri Mothers' Association (IMMA) appeals to lift blockades; AASU stages mass protest; ULFA chairman meets NSCN leaders; Deployment of forces to continue in North East India; Trafficked girl rescued from Haryana; Seven ultras surrender in Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh; Quake jolts eastern India**

According to reports, Chief of International Manipuri Mothers' Association (IMMA) R K Khumanleima has appealed that the blockades on Imphal-Dimapur-Guwahati (NH 39) and Imphal-Jiribam-Silchar (NH 53) should be immediately lifted as it might lead to a civil war and division among different communities in the State. The State has been witnessing an indefinite economic blockade on the two national highways since August 1 after Sadar Hills District Demand Committee (SHDDC) has launched the blockade to demand conversion of Kuki-majority Sadar Hills area in Naga-majority Senapati district into a full-fledged district.¹¹⁰

In another development, more than 15,000 people led by All Assam Students' Union rocked Jorhat town in protest against the government's role in dealing with several burning questions of the State. Among the issues, the Indo-Bangla land swapping pact, the inter-State border disputes between Assam and its neighbouring States, protection of Majuli, mega dam project in Assam were highlighted. The students' body also sent memorandum addressed to the President of India and the Prime Minister of India via Jorhat deputy commissioner.¹¹¹

Reports noted that an 18 member ULFA team led by its chairman Arabinda Rajkhowa has made a courtesy visit to GPRN/NSCN camp near Dimapur and met the top leaders of the Naga outfit as a gesture towards building better understanding between the people of the two neighbouring state. The ULFA team expressed solidarity to the Naga people for exhibiting great courage in undertaking the Naga re-conciliation process, a joint statement issued by the two organisations said after the meeting at Khehoi camp of NSCN led by Khole Konyak and N Kitovi Zhimomi.¹¹²

Despite remarkable improvement in internal security situation in the North-eastern States, Union Home Minister P Chidambaram pushed for continued deployment of security forces to tackle threat of violence and extortions in the region. Reporting improvement in the security situation

¹⁰⁹ "The Telegraph banned in Manipur", *The Assam Tribune*, September 6, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep0711/oth06>

¹¹⁰ "Economic blockade may lead to civil war", *The Assam Tribune*, September 12, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep1311/oth05>

¹¹¹ "AASU stages mass protest rally in Jorhat", *The Assam Tribune*, September 13, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep1411/state07>

¹¹² "Arabinda meets NSCN leaders in Dimapur", *The Assam Tribune*, September 14, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep1511/at098>

in the North-east, the Home Minister chose to tread cautiously, pointing to presence of splinter groups, which have refused to sit for negotiations.¹¹³

In yet another case of human trafficking involving a girl from the North-east has come to light, with security forces rescuing a minor girl hailing from Mizoram from the traffickers in Rewari district of Haryana. In a joint rescue operation conducted by Mizoram Police, Delhi-based NGO Shakti Vahini and a Mizoram-based NGO, CHAN rescued the girl and apprehended five traffickers.¹¹⁴

According to reports, seven cadres of various underground outfits operating in Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh surrendered before security forces giving a major boost to the peace building process in the insurgency-affected district. Six cadres of Arunachal Naga Liberation Front (ANLF) and an ultra of NSCN (K) laid down their arms yesterday in a simple ceremony organised at Changlang Town by the Assam Rifles. The cadres surrendered one .22 rifle, 4 pistols, 2 revolvers and ammunition.¹¹⁵

In other developments, an earthquake hit large parts of northern and eastern India in the evening on September 18. The quake, with the epicenter in Sikkim, measured 6.8 on the Richter scale and struck around 6.10 p.m.¹¹⁶

IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

(September 5-11)

- **Ban Ki-moon and Security Council strongly condemn New Delhi High court bomb attack; Talks underway for setting up a UN Mission in Libya**

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Security Council members strongly condemned the bomb attack at the New Delhi High Court. The Secretary-General and the Council extended their condolences to the families of the victims. The UNSC statement also reiterated that terrorism in all forms and manifestations constituted one of the most serious threats to international peace and security.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ "Deployment of forces in NE to continue: PC", *The Assam Tribune*, September 15, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep1611/at08>

¹¹⁴ "NE trafficked victim rescued from Haryana", *The Assam Tribune*, September 15, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep1611/oth06>

¹¹⁵ "7 ultras surrender", *The Assam Tribune*, September 16, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep1711/oth06>

¹¹⁶ "Quake jolts north, east India", *The Assam Tribune*, September 18, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep1811/at012>

¹¹⁷ "UN chief and Security Council strongly condemn bombing at India's High Court", *UN News Centre*, September 07, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39475&Cr=terror&Cr1=>

In another development, following a proposal from the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, talks are underway in the Security Council for setting up a United Nations mission to provide support to the new authorities in Libya. The mission's mandate would include assistance to national efforts to restore public security and order and promote the rule of law, undertake inclusive political dialogue, promote national reconciliation and embark on the constitution-making and electoral processes among others.¹¹⁸

(September 12-18)

- **UN General Assembly opens its annual session; National Transitional Council (NTC) takes over Libyan seat in the UN; India seeks comprehensive action to address piracy off the coast of Somalia; Security Council extends mandates of UN missions in Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire; India to work proactively on UNSC reforms; India to support Palestinian membership for UN; UNSC reappoints prosecutors working at UN tribunals for former Yugoslavia and Rwanda; Germany extends support to India's bid for permanent seat in Council**

The UN General Assembly opened its annual session with an appeal for cooperation in tackling crises from conflicts to climate change. Four main areas of focus were outlined for this year's session – peaceful settlement of disputes, UN reform, improving disaster prevention and response and sustainable development and global prosperity.¹¹⁹

In another development, the National Transitional Council was handed over Libya's seat following an overwhelming support in the United Nations. Economic and military sanctions against the nation were relaxed to enable it to begin economic recovery and restore political order. The resolution adopted by the Security Council mandated a three-month UN mission (UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)) to assist Libyan efforts to restore security, protect human rights and undertake inclusive political dialogue to establish a democratic government. The resolution retained provisions pertaining to the no-fly zone and protection of civilians.¹²⁰

At a UN Security Council debate on Somalia, India's permanent representative to the UN, Hardeep Singh Puri said that piracy off the coast of Somalia is a persistent and serious problem that the international community needs to address. India also expressed its readiness to work with UN Security Council members on a draft resolution on the necessary legal mechanism for prosecution and detention of pirates. Puri also noted that the international community should adopt a comprehensive counter-piracy strategy that should include an UN-led anti-piracy force to conduct naval operations, enactment of national laws to criminalise piracy, effective sanitization of the Somali coastline as well as identifying safe corridors and buffer zones.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ "Security Council mulls resolution on potential UN mission for Libya", *UN News Centre*, September 09, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39497&Cr=libya&Cr1=>

¹¹⁹ "General Assembly opens new session with plea for unity to tackle global crises", *UN News Centre*, September 13, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39537&Cr=general+assembly&Cr1=>

¹²⁰ "Sanctions lifted as Libya's NTC claims UN seat", *Indian Express*, September 17, 2011 at <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/sanctions-lifted-as-libyas-ntc-claims-un-seat/847986/0>

¹²¹ "Ready to work with UN for legal mechanism to counter pirates: Puri", *Firstpost*, September 15, 2011 at <http://www.firstpost.com/fwire/ready-to-work-with-un-for-legal-mechanism-to-counter-pirates-puri-84487.html>

Meanwhile, the UN Security Council extended the mandate of UN office in Sierra Leone (UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL)) for another year till September 15, 2012. The Council also called on the government, political parties and all stakeholders to contribute to ensuring that next year's elections are peaceful, transparent, free and fair.¹²²

The Council also extended the mandate of the UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia (UNMIL) for another year through September 30, 2012. The Council underlined the importance of its work in helping organize elections that are scheduled to take place next month. The Council also stressed on the need for UNMIL to coordinate closely with UN peacekeeping forces in Cote d' Ivoire (UNOCI) to ensure common strategies and activities near the Liberian-Ivorian border.¹²³

Ahead of the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to the UN, the Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai said that India along with the G4 would continue to work proactively to maintain the momentum of UN Security Council reforms. The PM will address the General Assembly on September 24 and hold bilateral meetings with a number of government heads.¹²⁴

According to reports, India will support Palestinian bid for UN membership at the General Assembly in the later part of September. India was among the first countries to recognize the state of Palestine as early as 1988.¹²⁵

In two separate resolutions the Security Council reappointed the prosecutors working at the UN tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. The council called on both the tribunals to complete all remaining work no later than 31 December 2014.¹²⁶

In other developments, Germany expressed its continuing support to India's bid for permanent membership in the Security Council.¹²⁷

¹²² "Mandate of UN peacebuilding office in Sierra Leone extended for another year", *UN News Centre*, September 14, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39544&Cr=Sierra&Cr1=Leone>

¹²³ "Liberia: Stressing importance of elections, Security Council extends life of UN force", *UN News Centre*, September 16, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39586&Cr=liberia&Cr1=>

¹²⁴ "PM heads for UN meet; UNSC reform on agenda", *The Pioneer*, September 17, 2011 at <http://www.dailypioneer.com/nation/7152-pm-heads-for-un-meet-uns-c-reform-on-agenda.html>

¹²⁵ "India to back Palestinian bid for UN membership", *The Hindu*, September 17, 2011 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article2462323.ece>

¹²⁶ "Security Council reappoints prosecutors at UN war crimes tribunals", *UN News Centre*, September 14, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39547&Cr=criminal+tribunal&Cr1=>

¹²⁷ "Germany supports India's bid for permanent membership of UN Security Council", *The Economic Times*, September 13, 2011 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2011-09-13/news/30149561_1_permanent-membership-uns-c-reforms-india-thomas-matussek