

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

January 5 – January 11, 1 (2), 2015

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Bangladesh

(January 5–11, 2015)

- **Government bars BNP to hold rally on January 5; Violent clashes erupt over first anniversary of January 5 elections; British High Commissioner in Dhaka calls for all party dialogue; Amit Shah denies having any phone conversation with Zia; The US House Committee on Foreign Affairs denies to have commented on Bangladesh politics; NIA arrests JBM operative.**

BNP chief Khaleda Zia called an indefinite, countrywide blockade from January 6, protesting her confinement in her Gulshan office and the locking of the party office by police. Allegedly, police also used pepper spray to disperse the party leaders and activists waiting inside the gate. Several journalists were injured in the police action. BNP leaders said Khaleda wanted to go to the party's central office at Nayapaltan, where leaders were asked to gather for holding a planned rally to denounce the January 5 one-sided parliamentary election in 2014. After police barred her from coming out Zia called the blockade of roads, railways and waterways across the country. The ruling Awami League and its various front organisations, however, brought out processions and held rallies and human chains in many parts of the city, defying an indefinite police ban on political activities, to celebrate January 5 as the "Victory Day for Democracy." But the government took every possible measure to thwart the BNP to hold any rally in Dhaka.¹

Reportedly, violent clashes across the country left at least four people dead and over 300 injured with growing tension over the first anniversary of the controversial January-5 parliamentary polls.²

British High Commissioner in Dhaka Robert Gibson called for a dialogue among all the stakeholders to check violence and destructions. He said he was not talking about a dialogue only between two major political parties—BNP and Awami League—but among all the stakeholders including the civil society representatives. He made the call when his attention was drawn at a function in Dhaka on January 8 about political violence that killed and injured people over the last few days.³

¹ "Confined Khaleda Announces Nonstop BLOCKADE", *The Daily Star*, January 6, 2015 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/confined-khaleda-announces-nonstop-blockade-58498>.

² "4 Killed as Violence Erupts in Districts", *The Daily Star*, January 6, 2015 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/4-killed-as-violence-erupts-in-districts-58520>.

³ "United Kingdom Calls for All-Party Talks", *The Daily Star*, January 9, 2015 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/united-kingdom-calls-for-all-party-talks-59107>.

According to Bangladesh media report, Bharatiya Janata Party President Amit Shah phoned BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia to enquire about her health on January 7.⁴ Amit Shah however, has denied having any phone conversation with BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.⁵

The US House Committee on Foreign Affairs has trashed media reports that claimed the committee along with five members of the US Congress had condemned the Bangladesh government's action on the media and politicians. Neither the committee nor the Congress members issued any such statement on Bangladesh politics, the House body said on January 8, referring to reports run by a section of newspapers in Bangladesh and the UK edition of *International Business Times*.⁶

India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrested Rezaul Karim, an alleged operative of banned terror outfit Jamaat-ul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), in connection with the Burdwan blast case on January 10. Karim, who had a bounty on his head, was arrested from Jharkhand where he had been hiding since the blast on October 2. According to an NIA statement, he was an active member of the JMB and was "engaged in manufacturing and transporting bombs to different locations". So far, 12 people have been arrested in this connection.⁷

Sri Lanka

(January 5–11, 2015)

- **Maithripala Sirisena takes oaths as the sixth President of Sri Lanka; World leaders congratulate Sirisena; "Army chief under pressure to deploy force": Chief spokesman for the new president; Lanka tourist arrivals exceed 1.5 million in 2014.**

Election Commissioner Mahinda Deshapriya officially declared Maithripala Sirisena as the new President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka on January 9. Sirisena obtained a majority of 51.28 per cent votes in the Presidential elections held on January 8.⁸ Maithripala Sirisena took oaths as the sixth President of Sri Lanka on January 9 in front of Justice K. Sripavan and not Chief Justice Mohan Peiris. United National Party (UNP) leader Ranil Wickremesinghe also took oaths as the Prime Minister on the same day.⁹

⁴ "BJP Chief Phones Khaleda", *The Daily Star*, January 9, 2015 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/bjp-chief-phones-khaleda-59043>.

⁵ "No Phone Call To Khaleda", *The Daily Star*, January 11, 2015 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/no-phone-call-to-khaleda-59384>.

⁶ "US Trashes Media Reports Based On False Statement", *The Daily Star*, January 10, 2015 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/us-trashes-media-reports-based-on-false-statement-59190>.

⁷ "Burdwan Blast: India's NIA Arrests JMB Operative", *The Daily Star*, January 11, 2015 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/indias-nia-arrests-jmb-operative-59319>.

⁸ "EC Declares Maithree as New President", *Daily Mirror*, January 9, 2014 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/60829/hree-as-new-president>.

⁹ "Maithripala and Ranil Take Oaths", *Colombo Gazette*, January 9, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/01/09/maithripala-and-ranil-take-oaths/>.

World leaders including US President Barack Obama, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, British Prime Minister David Cameron, Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, Singapore President Tony Tan, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamalesh Sharma congratulated Sri Lanka's new president on his election win.¹⁰

Mahinda Rajapaksa tried to persuade the army chief to deploy troops when it became clear he had lost Sri Lanka's election, according to Rajitha Senaratne, the chief spokesman for the new president Sirisena. "The army chief was under pressure to deploy but he did not. He declined to do anything illegal," Senaratne told reporters in Colombo.¹¹

Statistics released by Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) showed that Sri Lanka had met its tourist arrival target of 1.5 million for the year 2014. According to SLTDA figures, Sri Lanka's tourist arrivals rose 16.1 percent in December 2014 compared to the same period in 2013 with the arrival of 178,672 tourists compared to the 153,918 arrived in December 2013. For the year a total of 1,527,153 tourists arrived in the island recording a 19.8 percent increase from the 1,274,593 came during 2013.¹²

Maldives

(January 5–11, 2015)

- **Sri Lanka thanks Maldives for decision to hand over prisoners; President Gayoom congratulates Sirisena; Maldivian representatives meet Ranil Wicremesinghe; President appoints High Commissioner to India, Non-Resident Ambassador to UAE; Tourism Ministry targets 1.4 million tourists for 2015.**

The Ministry of External Affairs of Sri Lanka has said that the Sri Lankan government was 'most appreciative' of the decision by President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, to hand over all Sri Lankan prisoners currently held in the Maldives to the Sri Lankan government. In a statement issued on January 7, the Sri Lankan External Affairs Ministry said that this gesture was in response to a request made on a humanitarian basis by former Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa during a recent conversation with the President Yameen.¹³

¹⁰ "Modi Speaks To Maithri Over Win", *Colombo Gazette*, January 9, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/01/09/modi-speaks-to-maithri-over-win/>. "UK Tells Maithri To Back UN Probe", *Colombo Gazette*, January 10, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/01/10/uk-tells-maithri-to-back-un-probe/>. "Ban Ready To Work With Maithri", *Colombo Gazette*, January 10, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/01/10/ban-ready-to-work-with-maithri/>. "Maithri Gets Boost from Obama", *Colombo Gazette*, January 9, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/01/09/maithri-gets-boost-from-obama/>.

¹¹ "Rajitha Says MR Was To Use Army", *Colombo Gazette*, January 10, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/01/10/rajith-says-mr-tried-to-use-army/>.

¹² "Sri Lanka Tourist Arrivals Exceeds 1.5 Million in 2014", *Colombo Page*, January 6, 2015 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_15A/Jan06_1420528125CH.php.

¹³ "Sri Lanka Thanks Maldives for Decision To Hand over Prisoners", *SunOnline*, January 7, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/26983>.

President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom sent a congratulatory message to the President-elect of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Maithiripala Sirisena, following his victory in the Presidential election.¹⁴ President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom also called up the President of Sri Lanka, H.E. Maithiripala Sirisena, on January 10 following his assumption of office. President Yameen and President Sirisena spoke on the importance of further strengthening the relations between the Maldives and Sri Lanka, noting the close bilateral relations between the two countries. The President of Sri Lanka said that the Maldives was one of the closest friends of Sri Lanka, and invited President Yameen to make an official visit at his earliest convenience. He also expressed his gratitude to President Yameen for the good wishes. President Sirisena assured President Yameen that he would give high priority to build on the existing relations between the two countries, during his tenure as President. Speaking in this regard, President Sirisena said that the good relations between the two countries must be maintained regardless of the administration in power.¹⁵

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dunya Maumoon and Minister at the President's Office, Mohamed Hussain Shareef met with the new Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Ranil Wickremesinghe, as representatives of the Government of Maldives. At the meeting, the Sri Lankan Prime Minister expressed his firm commitment to promote Maldives-Sri Lanka ties, and assured of his continued support for Maldives at international forums. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe also agreed to make an official visit to the Maldives at an early mutually convenient time. At the meeting, discussions were held on the importance of strengthening people-to-people relations between the Maldives and Sri Lanka. The Prime Minister also confirmed that health and education would be key areas of cooperation between the two countries. Further, he invited President Yameen to be the first Head of State to visit Sri Lanka under the new administration.¹⁶ President Sirisena also met with the Maldivian delegation in Sri Lanka. The delegates congratulated the new Sri Lankan President on behalf of the President and Government of Maldives. Discussions at the meeting were held on ways to further strengthen the existing relations between the two countries. At the meeting, the Sri Lankan President noted that this year marked the 50th anniversary of the Maldives' independence, as well as the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Maldives and Sri Lanka. He expressed his gratitude to the Maldivian delegation for being among the first foreign dignitaries to welcome the new Sri Lankan Government.¹⁷

President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom has appointed Ahmed Mohamed as the High Commissioner of the Maldives to India, and Abdulla Hameed as the Non-Resident Ambassador of the Maldives to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The letters of appointment to the new High

¹⁴ "President Yameen Congratulates Sri Lanka's President-elect Maithiripala Sirisena", *The Presidency, Republic of Maldives*, January 9, 2015 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=15199>.

¹⁵ "President Yameen Congratulates New Sri Lankan President", *The Presidency, Republic of Maldives*, January 10, 2015 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=15204>.

¹⁶ "Maldivian Delegation Meets the New Prime Minister of Sri Lanka", *The Presidency, Republic of Maldives*, January 10, 2015 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=15203>.

¹⁷ "President Yameen Congratulates New Sri Lankan President", *The Presidency, Republic of Maldives*, January 10, 2015 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=15204>.

Commissioner and Non-Resident Ambassador were presented by President Yameen, at a ceremony held at the President's Office this morning.¹⁸

According to Tourism Ministry, their target for the year 2014 was to bring 1.2 million tourists. However, 1.4 million tourists have visited Maldives by the end of 2014. That is a 7.1 percent rise when compared to tourist arrival in 2013. 1.2 million Tourists have visited Maldives in the year 2013. While more than 1.4 million tourists have visited Maldives last year, majority of the tourists have arrived in Maldives from Asia and Europe. According to the statistics of November 2014, most tourists have come to Maldives from China. President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayyoom has said that government aims to develop and widen the economy of the country and tourist arrival to Maldives can be made more than 1.2 million every year.¹⁹

B. East Asia

China

(January 5–11, 2015)

- **People's Liberation Army announces the plan to reshuffle officers at the grassroots' level; China announces that Chile will hold the second meeting of the China-CELAC in 2018; China wants the United States to be more cautious with respect to Taiwan issues.**

According to a circular issued by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) General Political Department, "the PLA has ordered chief officers in charge of military and political work at the grassroots level to switch posts to strengthen the army". As per the PLA Daily, "this is the first time the military has comprehensively undertaken work in this regard".²⁰

The Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi announced on January 9 that Chile will be holding the next ministerial meeting of the forum between China and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) in 2018. Wang said that, "The China-CELAC relationship has started a new stage with the overall cooperation and bilateral relations developing at the same time and facilitating each other". As per the meeting it was announced that there are 13 sectors which will be focused for further cooperation like infrastructure, trade and investment, energy and resources etc.²¹

As per the China's Foreign Ministry, the United States should be extra careful while approaching its Taiwan related issues. According to the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Hua Chunying,

¹⁸ "President Appoints High Commissioner to India, Non-Resident Ambassador to UAE", *SunOnline*, January 6, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/26963>.

¹⁹ "Tourism Ministry Targets 1.4 Million Tourists For 2015", *SunOnline*, January 5, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/26945>.

²⁰ "Chinese Military to Reshuffle Grassroot Officers", *China Daily*, January 11, 2015 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-01/11/content_19290530.htm, accessed on January 12, 2015

²¹ "Chile To Hold 2nd Ministerial Meeting of China-CELAC Forum", *China Daily*, January 9, 2015 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-01/09/content_19284095.htm, accessed on January 12, 2015

"We resolutely oppose the so-called 'flag-raising' ceremony held by the Taiwan authorities' organization in the United States and have already lodged solemn representations to the US side". She further added that, "We demand the US side to strictly abide by the one-China policy and three China-US joint Communiques, and handle Taiwan-related issue cautiously and appropriately to avoid a repetition of such matters".²²

C. Southeast Asia

ASEAN

(January 5-11, 2015)

- **Plan of action (PoA) to decide future ASEAN-India future cooperation: MEA Official; Laos to chair ASEAN in 2016; Singaporean diplomat Bilahari Kausikan talks about security challenges by ASEAN; Vietnam Agricultural Minister talks about farm linkages demanded by ASEAN integration; ASEAN Open Skies to go ahead despite disasters in 2014.**

On December 9, Ms. Pooja Kapur, Joint Secretary, ASEAN Multilateral Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, said that the future agenda of ASEAN-India future cooperation would be guided by Plan of Action (PoA)²³ 2016-2021²⁴ to implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for peace, progress and shared prosperity²⁵. She was speaking at Kolkata Dialogue on "Look East to Act East: New Frontiers in Trade, Investment and Business Cooperation" organised by the Indian Chamber of Commerce. "The Plan of Action (POA) is currently under discussion and is expected to include initiatives to deepen people-to-people and business linkage²⁶," she said. It has been reported Laos will hold the post of chair of ASEAN in 2016²⁷ after Malaysia's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2015²⁸.

²² "China Urges US To Be Cautious On Taiwan-Related Issues", *China Daily*, January 5, 2015 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2015-01/05/content_19244359.htm, accessed on January 12, 2015

²³ "Plan of Action To Implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity (2010-2015)", *ASEAN.org*, available at <http://www.asean.org/asean/external-relations/india/item/plan-of-action-to-implement-the-asean-india-partnership-for-peace-progress-and-shared-prosperity-2010-2015>, Accessed on January 12, 2015

²⁴ *Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India, "Chairman's statement of the 12th ASEAN-India Summit in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar", November 12, 2014, available at <http://www.mea.gov.in/aseanindia/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/22565/Chairmans+statement+of+the+12th+ASEANIndia+Summit+in+Nay+Pyi+Taw+Myanmar>, Accessed on January 12, 2015*

²⁵ "Plan of Action to Decide Agenda of ASEAN-India Cooperation: MEA Official," *The Economic Times*, January 9, 2015, available at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-01-09/news/57883631_1_act-east-economic-cooperation-asean-india-cooperation, Accessed on January 12, 2015

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ "Laos to Chair ASEAN Next Year", *The Nation*, January 7, 2015, available at <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/breakingnews/Laos-to-chair-Asean-next-year-30251423.html>, Accessed on January 12, 2015.

²⁸ "ASEAN Chair", *ASEAN.org*, available at <http://www.asean.org/asean/asean-chair>, Accessed on January 12, 2015

Veteran Singaporean diplomat Bilahari Kausikan, speaking at Institute of Southeast Asian Studies' (ISEAS) Regional Outlook Forum²⁹ in Singapore, said that ASEAN would face complex security challenges when USA and China were groping for a new challenge³⁰. In his 45 minute keynote speech, he criticized US and China actions that perpetrated uncertainty for ASEAN and he argued that it would test ASEAN policies to cope with the challenges. He argued that ASEAN members were pulled in different directions. He added, "Singapore, for example, has on occasion been accused by American friends of being too close to China and by Chinese friends of being too close to America³¹," he said. "Japanese friends have been discreet in keeping their thoughts to themselves³²." He also said that ASEAN should not take sides in the interests of major powers. He commented, "The US, China and Japan are all substantial powers. All of them will remain substantial for the foreseeable future, and none of them can be ignored³³."

Spokesperson of Transportation Ministry of Indonesia released a statement last week and said that aviation disasters in 2014, like crash of Indonesia Air Asia Flight QZ8501³⁴ would not deter Southeast Asian nations from embracing the ASEAN Open Skies Policy that came into effect from January 1³⁵. ASEAN Open Skies Policy is currently expected to boost connectivity by the end of this year across the region and people's movement in the region, which in turn would spur economic growth³⁶.

Southeast Asia

(January 5-11, 2015)

- **Brunei visited by Singapore Navy Chief; Khmer Rouge trial resumes again in Cambodia; Timor Leste (East Timor) Deputy Foreign Minister invites Angola for oil exploration; Indonesia Foreign Ministry releases annual press statement; Laos to Chair ASEAN next year; Malaysian armed forces urge to join fight against terrorism; Myanmar arrests more than 100 foreigners; Philippines to buy C130 transport planes from US Navy; Singapore Prime Minister condemns Paris Attack in letter to President of France; Thailand soldiers**

²⁹ "Regional Outlook Forum 2015," ISEAS (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies), available at <http://iseas-rof.sg/>, Accessed on January 12, 2015

³⁰ "ASEAN facing 'most complex security test'," *Asiaone News*, January 11, 2015, available at <http://news.asiaone.com/news/asian-opinions/asean-facing-most-complex-security-test>, Accessed on January 13, 2015

³¹ Ibid.

³² "ASEAN Facing 'Most Complex Security Test'," *Asiaone News*, January 11, 2015, available at <http://news.asiaone.com/news/asian-opinions/asean-facing-most-complex-security-test>, Accessed on January 13, 2015

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ "The Week In Review: Crackdown After Plane Crash," *Jakarta Post*, January 11, 2015, available at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/01/11/the-week-review-crackdown-after-plane-crash.html>, Accessed on January 13th 2014

³⁵ "Asean Open Skies Set to Go Ahead Despite Year of Disasters in 2014," *Jakarta Globe*, January 6, 2015, available at <http://thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/asean-open-skies-set-to-go-ahead-despite-year-of-disasters-in-2014/>, Accessed on January 13, 2014

³⁶ Ibid.

raise controversy over burning of 2 Cambodians to death; Vietnam to focus on defence cooperation with UK.

Chief of Singapore Navy, Rear Admiral Lai Chung Han visited Brunei and was received by ROYAL Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) Commander Pehin Datu Pekerma Jaya Major General Dato Paduka Seri Mohd Tawih bin Abdullah³⁷. This was a courtesy call and during the visit he visited RBAF Museum, Royal Brunei Navy (RBN) Headquarters, RBAF Academy and also met the RBN Commander First Admiral Dato Seri Pahlawan Abdul Aziz Hj Mohd Tamit³⁸. The Ministry of Defence viewed the visit of Rear Admiral valuable for defence relations for enhancing bilateral cooperation at multiple levels within the organisation³⁹.

Cambodia has resumed Khmer Rouge Trial backed by a UN tribunal⁴⁰ this week. The trial was resumed last week after adjournment⁴¹ since November 2014 when lawyers boycotted to defend one of the leaders who was among the defendants in the case⁴². The two defendants, Khieu Samphan, 84, the regime's former head of state, appeared in the courtroom during the hearing as Nuon Chea, 89, the chief ideologue of the Communist Party of Kampuchea, attended it from prison by video conferencing because of ill health⁴³.

East Timor Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Constâncio Pinto⁴⁴, in a meeting with Foreign Minister of Angola, Georges Rebelo Chikoti invited reputed oil company from Angola, Sonangol for oil exploration in East Timor. "We know that Sonangol already has a presence in Asia, in Singapore, and we want to extend its activity to Timor Leste. We have natural resources in the sea and on land and we believe that Sonangol can participate in oil exploration,"⁴⁵ said Pinto. On 8th January, Foreign Ministry of Indonesia released its annual statement and made important points about its foreign policy under new government. Minister of Foreign affairs Retno

³⁷ "Singapore Navy Chief on Introductory Visit to Brunei," *Borneo Bulletin*, January 9, 2015, available at <http://borneobulletin.com.bn/singapore-navy-chief-introductory-visit-brunei/>, Accessed on January 14th 2015.

³⁸ "S'pore Navy chief on Two Day Introductory Visit to Brunei," *The Brunei Times*, January 9, 2015, available at <http://www.bt.com.bn/news-national/2015/01/09/s%E2%80%99pore-navy-chief-two-dayintroductory-visit-brunei>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ "United Nations Assistance To The Khmer Rouge Trials", available at <http://www.unakrt-online.org/about-us>, accessed on January 14, 2015

⁴¹ "Court Adjourns Genocide Trial of Ex-Khmer Rouge Leaders Until Next Year," *NDTV*, available at <http://www.ndtv.com/article/world/court-adjourns-genocide-trial-of-ex-khmer-rouge-leaders-until-next-year-624981>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁴² "Khmer Rouge Defence Lawyers Boycott Cambodia Genocide Trial," *Channel News Asia*, available at <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/khmer-rouge-defence/1422730.html>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁴³ "Trial for 2 Khmer Rouge leaders resumes," *Global Post*, available at <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/xinhua-news-agency/150108/trial-2-khmer-rouge-leaders-resumes>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁴⁴ "Structure of the V Constitutional Government," Government of Timor Leste, available at <http://timor-leste.gov.tl/?p=13&lang=en>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁴⁵ "Timor Leste Reiterates Invitation to Angola to Be Involved in Oil Exploration," *Macauhub*, January 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mcauhub.com.mo/en/2015/01/05/timor-leste-reiterates-invitation-to-angola-to-be-involved-in-oil-exploration/>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

LP Marsudi said, "According to the vision and mission of President Jokowi, Indonesia's foreign policy in the next five years will be based on these priorities.⁴⁶" Foreign Minister mentioned Indonesia's diplomacy in the next five years will focus on maintaining sovereignty, enhancing the protection of its citizens, and intensifying economic diplomacy⁴⁷.

Indonesia's foreign ministry condemned the attacks on Charlie Hebdo⁴⁸ in Paris. It was released this week that Laos would chair ASEAN in 2016⁴⁹. The Chief of Malaysia Armed Forces(ATM) General Tan Sri Zulkifeli Mohd Zin has taken a pledge to fight terrorism. He was speaking to reporters after handing over a flag to ATM shooting team manager Lt Kol Nubli Hashim at the Transit Camp Hall in Jalan Padang Tembak. He said, "Security forces cannot be at every nook and corner of the country, especially in the interiors which could be used as training venues for terrorist activities. People with information or have suspicions of terrorist activities should report the matter to the authorities or the nearest police station."⁵⁰

Myanmar government has arrested more than 100 foreigners, in a crackdown on illegal logging, people who were mostly of Chinese origin. A total of 142 people, including 102 foreigners, were arrested during this military operation against logging in restive Kachin state between January 2-4 which was later reported in a newspaper run by the Army of Myanmar⁵¹.

Philippines has decided to buy C-130 Transport planes from US Navy after signing a pact⁵². Colonel Restituto Padilla, a spokesman for the Armed Forces of the Philippines quoted, "The United States is helping us pay for these two aircraft"⁵³. He added, "We have requested some 1.6 billion pesos to complete the purchase of the transport planes", Padilla said, referring to a sum equivalent

⁴⁶ "Indonesia to Focus on Sovereignty, Citizens' Safety, Economic Diplomacy," *Antara News.com*, January 8, 2015, available at <http://www.antaranews.com/en/news/97260/indonesia-to-focus-on-sovereignty-citizens-safety-economic-diplomacy>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁴⁷ "Indonesia Condemns Attack on Charlie Hebdo's Office in Paris," *Antara News.com*, January 8, 2015, available at <http://www.antaranews.com/en/news/97261/indonesia-condemns-attack-on-charlie-hebdos-office-in-paris>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁴⁸ "Recap in 50 pics: Charlie Hebdo Terror Attack To 'Rally For Unity' in Paris," *Hindustan Times*, January 12, 2015, available at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/a-look-back-in-50-pics-from-charlie-hebdo-terror-attack-to-rally-for-unity-in-paris/article1-1305955.aspx#sthash.9Vte0zjW.dpuf>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁴⁹ "Laos To Chair Asean Next Year," *The Nation*, January 7, 2015, available at <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/breakingnews/Laos-to-chair-Asean-next-year-30251423.html>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁵⁰ "Armed Forces Chief: All Must Join Fight against Terrorism," *Borneo Post*, January 13, 2015, available at <http://www.theborneopost.com/2015/01/13/armed-forces-chief-all-must-join-fight-against-terrorism/>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁵¹ "100 Arrested For Myanmar Logging," *Bangkok Post*, January 6, 2015, available at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asean/454676/100-arrested-for-myanmar-logging>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁵² "Philippines To Buy Two C130 Transport Planes From U.S. Navy," *Reuters*, January 9, 2015, available at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/09/us-philippines-usa-idUSKBN0KI14G20150109>) Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁵³ "Philippines to Buy C130 Transport Planes from US Navy," *defenseworld.net*, available at http://www.defenseworld.net/news/11879/Philippines_To_Buy_C130_Transport_Planes_From_US_Navy#.VLkN33nnMh8, Accessed on January 14, 2015

to \$35.61 million.⁵⁴ As per as the report, the acquisition would increase PAF's inventory of C-130s to a total of 5. In a letter to the President of France, Singapore Prime Minister Lee has condemned the attacks that happened in connection with cartoons drawn by Charlie Hebdo. He wrote, "It is yet another reminder of the threat posed by terrorism to all civilised societies, and that it is totally wrong to invoke religion to justify such savagery⁵⁵."

Last week, Thai soldiers admitted to burning down 2 Cambodian citizens to death, who might have been undocumented. According to Anh Kamal, deputy military commander in Battambang's Sampov Loun district, "While they were dragging [the motorcycle] across the border, the soldiers shot at them, firing about 10 bullets. But all of the bullets missed so they deployed more soldiers and arrested two Cambodians while the other two escaped. The soldiers then burnt the two men alive in car tires.⁵⁶" In connection to the investigation, Cambodian authorities have reported lack of cooperation from Thai authorities⁵⁷.

The Defence Working Group from the Vietnam and UK'S ministries of defence held their third annual meeting in Hanoi last week to identify areas of bilateral defence collaboration in 2015. According to a release by the British Embassy in Hanoi, the two nations have agreed that defence industrial and maritime cooperation will be the two key focus areas for their bilateral defence collaboration in 2015⁵⁸. It is noteworthy that UK and Vietnam have been in a Strategic Partnership Agreement since 2010⁵⁹.

D. The United States of America

National

(January 5-11, 2015)

- **Defence Department releases updated instruction for acquisitions system; Air Force F-35 squadrons slated for RAF Lakenheath basing; Senate panel approves controversial US-Canada oil pipeline; Hagel, Carter discuss wide-ranging issues at pentagon; US jobless claims drop as economy continues advance; Defence Department releases breakdown of Ebola**

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ "Singapore 'Strongly Condemns' Charlie Hebdo Attack: PM Lee," *Channel News Asia*, January 8, 2015, Available on :(<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/world/singapore-strongly/1576074.html>) Accessed on January 14th 2015.

⁵⁶ "Thais 'Admit' To Burn Deaths," *The Phnom Penh Post*, January 12, 2015, available at <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/thais-admit-burn-deaths>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ "Vietnam, UK To Focus On Defence Industrial, Maritime Cooperation," *ThanhNienNews*, January 9, 2015, available at <http://www.thanhniennews.com/politics/vietnam-uk-to-focus-on-defense-industrial-maritime-cooperation-37436.html>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

⁵⁹ British Embassy Hanoi, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/british-embassy-hanoi>, Accessed on January 14, 2015

response effort; House leaders spar over deportations, homeland security funding.

The Defence Department's top acquisitions official January 7 released a new version of the acquisitions corps' guiding document: Department of Defence Instruction 5000.02, Operation of the Defence Acquisition System. The updated instruction cancels the interim version that was implemented November 25, 2013, Frank Kendall, undersecretary of defence for acquisition, technology and logistics, said in a memorandum accompanying the release. More than ever, the new instruction emphasizes that acquisitions programs should be tailored to the product being acquired, Kendall wrote.⁶⁰

Two operational squadrons of U.S. Air Force F-35 Lightning II joint strike fighter jets will be permanently stationed at the Royal Air Force Lakenheath facility in the United Kingdom starting in 2020, Defence Department officials announced on January 8. A considered and deliberative process led to RAF Lakenheath's selection as the first European base for U.S. F-35s, DoD officials said. The announcement was made at the same time officials released the department's plans for European Infrastructure Consolidation, a two-year effort designed to ensure long-term efficiency and effectiveness of the U.S. presence in Europe.⁶¹

The new Republican-led U.S. Senate is wasting no time pressing for construction of a controversial oil pipeline from Canada. The chamber's Energy Committee approved the project 13-9, moving Congress one step closer to a confrontation with President Barack Obama, who has threatened a veto. Keystone XL would expand existing North American pipelines to transport crude oil from Alberta, Canada to U.S. Gulf states. The Obama administration has yet to finalize a six-year review of the proposal, but the president has expressed strong doubts about the project. If constructed, the pipeline's direct impact on the U.S. economy and global petroleum supplies is expected to be modest. The issue, however, has provoked a fight involving America's energy sector and environmentalists and their allies in Congress.⁶² Earlier the White House warned the new Republican-controlled Congress Tuesday that President Barack Obama will veto pending legislation calling for construction of a controversial oil pipeline running from Canada through the central part of the United States.⁶³

Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel and Defence Secretary-nominee Dr. Ashton B. Carter discussed wide-ranging issues during a meeting at the Pentagon on January 8, according to a statement provided by Pentagon Press Secretary Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Roulo, Claudette, "DoD Releases Updated Instruction for Acquisitions System", *DoD News*, January 7, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123923>

⁶¹ Richmond, Jake, "Air Force F-35 Squadrons Slated for RAF Lakenheath Basing", *DoD News*, January 8, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123931>

⁶² Bowman, Michael, "Senate Panel Approves Controversial US-Canada Oil Pipeline", *VOA News*, January 08, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/senate-panel-approves-controversial-us-canada-oil-pipeline/2590855.html>

⁶³ "Obama Threatens Veto on Canada-US Oil Pipeline", *VOA News*, January 06, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/obama-republican-congress-keystone-pipeline-veto/2587995.html>

⁶⁴ "Hagel, Carter Discuss Wide-ranging Issues at Pentagon", *DoD News*, January 8, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123933>

Fewer Americans applied for unemployment assistance last week, the latest favourable sign from the growing U.S. economy. The government says as the calendar turned into the new year, 294,000 workers made first-time claims for jobless benefits, 4,000 fewer than the week before. The applications for unemployment compensation have stayed steady at below 300,000 a week since September, an indication employers are laying off fewer workers and hiring more. After uneven U.S. economic advances during much of his six years in office, President Barack Obama has been touting the recent robust growth of the world's largest economy.⁶⁵

The Defence Department on January 8 released a breakdown of the numbers of DoD personnel involved in the battle to stop the spread of Ebola. The efforts, led by the U.S. Agency for International Development, involve 2,367 DoD personnel, said Pentagon spokesman Army Col. Steve Warren. Most of those personnel — 2,174 — are based in Monrovia, Liberia's capital city. The remaining 193 personnel are Marine Corps members and port operations personnel operating in Dakar, Senegal. U.S. military personnel are not involved in treating patients with Ebola, defense officials have said. Their role in the fight is to provide logistical support and training for health care workers, to test medical samples and to construct Ebola treatment units.⁶⁶

The new 114th Congress is barely under way, but already Democratic and Republican leaders in the House of Representatives appear to be bracing for a new confrontation over the issue of immigration reform and deportations. The deportation debate is linked to funding for the Department of Homeland Security, at a time when the world is on edge due to January 7th's terrorist attack in Paris, France.⁶⁷

(January 5-11, 2015)

- **Defence Secretary Chuck says consolidation of POW/MIA mission moving forward; Hagel to thank service members on last official domestic trip; Obama says America experiencing economic growth; Dempsey says sequestration cuts would require strategy change; US concern over 'Lone Wolf Attacks'.**

On January 9, Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel said the Defence Department will, effective from January 12; consolidate into one new agency the organizations that account for U.S. military prisoners of war and those missing in action. Hagel called for a review early last year to bring together the Defence Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office, the Joint Personnel Accounting Command and related laboratories into a single DoD agency. The secretary said the single agency will be accountable, responsive and transparent, with comprehensive oversight of personnel accounting resources, research and operations.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ "US Jobless Claims Drop as Economy Continues Advance", *VOA News*, January 08, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/us-jobless-benefit-claims-drop-economy-improves/2590441.html>

⁶⁶ Roulo, Claudette, "DoD Releases Breakdown of Ebola Response Effort", *DoD News*, January 8, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123935>

⁶⁷ Saine, Cindy, "House Leaders Spar Over Deportations, Homeland Security Funding", *VOA News*, January 08, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/house-leaders-spar-over-deportations-homeland-security-funding/2590932.html>

⁶⁸ Cronk, Terri Moon, "Consolidation of POW/MIA Mission Moving Forward", *DoD News*, January 9, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123943>

Defence Secretary Hagel next week will make his final official domestic trip to thank service members and their families across the country for the work they do every day to defend the nation, Pentagon Press Secretary Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby said on January 9.⁶⁹

U.S. President Barack Obama says 2014 was a “breakthrough year” for America and he has the “evidence to back that up.” The president said in his weekly address Saturday that 2014 was the strongest year for job growth since the 1990s, with unemployment falling faster than it has in three decades. Obama said “thanks to the Affordable Care Act” about 10 million Americans obtained health insurance last year. In December alone, Obama said, American businesses created 240,000 jobs and the unemployment rate fell to 5.6 percent.⁷⁰

Unless Congress changes the Budget Control Act, which now requires a return to sequestration-level spending cuts in 2016, the military will need to change its strategy, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said in an interview broadcast today. In an appearance on “Fox News Sunday With Chris Wallace,” Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey said the Army is drawing down from 570,000 soldiers to 450,000, but he noted that a Pentagon analysis shows sequestration would drive that number to 420,000, and even lower under some circumstances. Sequestration would leave the military “far less able to do the things that we think the country needs us to do,” Dempsey said. Meanwhile, the United States continues to face threats from both state actors and nonstate actors, the chairman said.⁷¹

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder said on January 11 he is concerned about so-called lone wolf attacks in the United States by Islamist militants inspired by al-Qaida affiliates. Holder met with his European counterparts in Paris on January 11 to discuss ways to prevent violent extremism, after Islamist militants killed 17 people in several attacks in the French capital.⁷²

International

(January 5-11, 2015)

- **Pakistani kidnapper of American sentenced to death; U.S. military begins training Iraqi forces to take on ISIL; Dempsey hosts Israel’s Lt. Gen. Gantz for talks at Pentagon; Dempsey says lack of credibility will aid terrorist group ISIL’s collapse; Inherent Resolve Airstrikes continue against ISIL in Syria, Iraq; Defence Secretary Hagel meets with Israeli Defence Chief.**

An anti-terrorist court in Pakistan on January 7 condemned to death Hafiz Imran, who was convicted of abducting of Warren Weinstein, an American aid worker seized by armed men from his home

⁶⁹ Pellerin, Cheryl, “Hagel to Thank Service Members on Last Official Domestic Trip”, *DoD News*, January 9, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123944>

⁷⁰ “Obama: America Experiencing Economic Growth”, *VOA News*, January 10, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/obama-says-america-experiencing-economic-growth/2593216.html>

⁷¹ Lyle, Amaani, “Chairman: Sequestration Cuts Would Require Strategy Change”, *DoD News*, January 11, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123948>

⁷² “US Official: Concerns Over ‘Lone Wolf Attacks’”, *Reuters*, January 11, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/us-official-concerns-over-lone-wolf-attacks/2593965.html>

in Lahore in 2011. He is still missing. Pakistan reinstated the death penalty last month after militants attacked a school in Peshawar and killed 150 people, most of them children. Weinstein is believed being held in a mountainous region near the Afghan border where the Pakistani military is fighting extremists. His captors released four videos of him, most recently in 2013.⁷³

The United States has begun training Iraqi army recruits, a central part of the strategy by the U.S.-led coalition that is working with the Iraqi government to retake territory and ultimately defeat Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorists in the country. Pentagon spokesman Army Col. Steve Warren told reporters on January 5 that six weeks of training began on December 27 for four battalions of Iraqi security forces at a base in Taji, north of Baghdad. Training began at Asad Air Base in Anbar province for members of the Iraqi 7th Division several days earlier.⁷⁴

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff hosted the Israel Defence Forces chief of the General Staff at the Pentagon on January 8 for talks on regional security and bilateral cooperation. U.S. Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey and Israeli Lt. Gen. Benjamin Gantz met with reporters today after more than an hour of talks. The United States, he said, is building the capacity of the Iraqi forces. Dempsey said the Iraqi government will initiate, with the United States, "some kind of broad counter-offensive" once Iraq is ready militarily to recapture territory, and then follow that with humanitarian and reconstruction efforts.⁷⁵

Though U.S. and coalition airstrikes are destroying facilities and equipment controlled by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, the terrorist group ultimately will fail because the people it's trying to control will reject its ideology, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said in an interview broadcast on January 11. Appearing on "Fox News Sunday With Chris Wallace," Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey noted that ISIL is inspiring other groups that already existed to "rebrand" themselves into a more radical ideology.⁷⁶

U.S. and coalition military forces have continued to attack Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant terrorists in Syria and Iraq, Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve officials reported on January 11.⁷⁷

On January 8, Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel discussed a range of regional security issues today with Israeli Defence Forces Chief of the General Staff Lt. Gen. Benjamin Gantz, according to a statement provided by Pentagon Press Secretary Navy Adm. John Kirby.⁷⁸

⁷³ "Pakistani Kidnapper of American Sentenced to Death", *VOA News*, January 07, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/pakistani-kidnapper-american-sentenced-death/2589385.html>

⁷⁴ Simeone, Nick, "U.S. Military Begins Training Iraqi Forces to Take on ISIL", *DoD News*, January 5, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123914>

⁷⁵ Ferdinando, Lisa, "Dempsey Hosts Israel's Lt. Gen. Gantz for Talks at Pentagon", *DoD News*, January 8, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123934>

⁷⁶ Lyle, Amaani, "Dempsey: Lack of Credibility Will Aid Terrorist Group ISIL's Collapse", *DoD News*, January 11, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123946>

⁷⁷ "Inherent Resolve Airstrikes Continue Against ISIL in Syria, Iraq", From a Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve News Release, *DoD News*, January 11, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123949>

⁷⁸ "Hagel Meets with Israeli Defence Chief", *DoD News*, January 8, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=123937>

(January 5-11, 2015)

- **US, Indonesia expand military cooperation agreement; Indonesia unsure of reason for US travel advisory in Surabaya; North and South Korea react to new US sanctions; North Korea offers nuclear test ban in exchange for Maneuvers Ban; US Embassy in Nicaragua voices concerns over Chinese-led canal; US says unaware of Taiwan flag-raising at Washington residence.**

Indonesia and the United States have signed an action plan to expand military cooperation and improve Indonesia's defence readiness. The signing ceremony at the Ministry of Defence in Jakarta on January 7 was witnessed by the ministry's Secretary General, Lt. Gen. Ediwan Prabowo, and U.S. Deputy Ambassador Kristen Bauer. After the ceremony, Prabowo said the 2015 action plan would substantially expand the U.S. Defence Institution Reform Initiative (DIRI) Program in Indonesia. Bauer said defence cooperation with Indonesia is a long-term commitment for the United States.⁷⁹

Indonesia said on January 8 it was unclear why the United States recently issued a travel advisory for American citizens in the city of Surabaya. President Joko Widodo, widely known as Jokowi, said there was nothing to worry about. "I have not received any information on threats of a security breach," he said. "That means we are safe. Don't be too zealous." Foreign Minister Retno Lestari Marsudi said she was aware of the travel advisory but didn't know the reason for it.⁸⁰

South Korea has called new U.S. financial sanctions against North Korea "appropriate," while Pyongyang described them as "counter-productive." President Obama's executive order on January 2 targeting three North Korean entities and 10 individuals followed a cyberattack on Sony Pictures that Washington blames on North Korea. A South Korean Unification Ministry spokesman on January 5 said Seoul considers the new sanctions an appropriate measure. However, he declined to say how it might impact the North-South relationship.⁸¹

North Korea says it is willing to declare a temporary moratorium on nuclear testing if the United States scraps plans for joint military manoeuvres held annually with South Korea. The U.S. State Department, in a brief response January 10, called the linking of possible nuclear testing with military drills "an implicit threat." Spokeswoman Jen Psaki called on Pyongyang to adhere to existing U.N. resolutions that prohibit such testing.⁸²

The U.S. Embassy in Nicaragua said on January 6 it was concerned by a lack of information surrounding the planned \$50-billion, Chinese-led canal that would bisect the poor Central

⁷⁹ Wardah, Fatiyah, "US, Indonesia Expand Military Cooperation Agreement", *VOA News*, January 07, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/us-indonesia-expand-military-cooperation-agreement/2589473.html>

⁸⁰ Lala, Andy, "Indonesia Unsure of Reason for US Travel Advisory in Surabaya", *VOA News*, January 08, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/indonesia-unsure-us-travel-advisory-surabaya/2590982.html>

⁸¹ Beattie, Victor, "North, South Korea React to New US Sanctions", *VOA News*, January 05, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/south-korea-welcomes-north-korea-denounces-new-us-sanctions/2585801.html>

⁸² "N. Korea Offers Nuclear Test Ban in Exchange for Maneuvers Ban", *VOA News*, January 10, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/north-korea-nuclear-test-ban-military-maneuvers-ban/2593437.html>

American nation. Work began in late December on the 172-mile (278-km) waterway, which its Hong Kong-based developer HK Nicaragua Canal Development Investment Co Ltd (HKND Group) has said will be operational by 2020. So far, the project has been met with widespread skepticism.⁸³

The United States has disavowed any advance knowledge of a controversial New Year's Day ceremony involving the raising of the Taiwan flag over the residence of the Taiwan representative to Washington. China's Foreign Ministry denounced the ceremony and urged the United States to prevent similar events from happening again. U.S. State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said January 5 the U.S. government was unaware of the event involving a flag-raising ceremony at the Twin Oaks estate in Washington that serves as the principle resident office of Taiwan in the United States.⁸⁴

India-US Relations

(January 5-11, 2015)

- **India, US look forward to boost ties during Obama visit; President Obama visit ideal for Indo-US energy cooperation, experts say; India looks to boost energy ties with the United States; Diplomats say good business driving force behind Indo-US relations; Secretary of State Kerry lays groundwork for Obama's visit to India; Kerry says 'Make in India' dream can be realized through sustainable energy; Solar, nuclear, climate progress possible on Obama India visit.**

India and the US are set to boost bilateral ties in cyber security and counter-terrorism during President Barack Obama's visit this month, as the two countries prepare to put in place a mechanism for exchanging terrorist watch lists, officials told *Hindustan Times* on January 6. Indian officials said the two countries are already on way to finalising protocols to be followed in the exchange of terrorist watch lists that has become an effective counter-terrorism measure for the US government. Both countries will also look to shore up existing counter-terrorism cooperation in international forums like the United Nations and Global Counter-terrorism Forum. Another focus area is strengthening live-time sharing of information and data.⁸⁵

Ahead of President Barack Obama's trip to India, a top US energy expert has said the upcoming visit is a "golden opportunity" for the two nations to join hands in the energy sector and address the key issue of climate change. Obama is scheduled to visit India to attend the annual Republic Day celebrations on January 26 as its Chief Guest at the invitation of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Energy is likely to be a major part of the discussion between the two leaders, said Raymond

⁸³ "US Embassy in Nicaragua Voices Concerns over Chinese-led Canal", *Reuters*, January 07, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/reu-us-embassy-in-nicaragua-voices-concerns-over-chinese-led-canal/2588594.html>

⁸⁴ Beattie, Victor, "US: Unaware of Taiwan Flag-raising at Washington Residence", *VOA News*, January 6, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/us-disavows-knowledge-of-taiwan-flag-raising-in-washington/2587177.html>

⁸⁵ Jacob, Jayanth, "Obama Visit: India, US Look Forward To Boost Ties", *Hindustan Times*, January 6, 2015 at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/obama-visit-india-us-to-boost-ties-on-counter-terrorism-cyber-security/article1-1303965.aspx>

Vickery, who served as Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Trade Development in the Clinton Administration, where he was responsible for India in the Department's Big Emerging Markets initiative.⁸⁶

India is looking to boost energy ties with the United States during President Barack Obama's visit to New Delhi as the chief guest for Republic Day celebrations. Ahead of the visit, the ministry of external affairs (MEA) has asked the petroleum ministry to come up with ideas for cooperation in the oil and gas sector, *Financial Express* reported. In their second bilateral meeting on January 25, Obama and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will discuss a range of priority issues, including cooperation in the oil and gas sector. The specific elements of engagement between India and the US would include allowing LNG exports from the US to India and technological cooperation in the field of oil and natural gas.⁸⁷

Former Indian and US diplomats on January 10 held business as a force to drive the two economies, a signal US President Barack Obama must send out in his bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi later this month. While a rising China, terrorism and cyber warfare were the issues that dotted their bilateral concerns, there was a strong consensus among American panellists that the rise of India as a global power is in the interest of their country, and Obama must extend partnership in order to make India self-reliant in trade and business. Drawing upon the positive side of India-US relationship, Nicholas Burns, the former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs under Bush administration from 2005 to 2008, said, "Trade and services between the two countries have quadrupled in the last decade. But we are also victims of extreme terrorism, and homeland security is critical to both of us. A rising China is also a common concern that we must focus on."⁸⁸

Secretary of State John Kerry met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 11 to promote economic ties with India and set the stage for President Obama's visit later this month. Mr. Obama is planning to attend India's Republic Day celebrations on Jan. 26. It is the first time that an American president has been invited to the event as the nation's chief guest. Negotiations between India and the United States on issues like climate change, an agreement on civilian nuclear plants, military purchases, and investment and manufacturing rules have quickened in recent weeks because of Mr. Obama's coming visit. But it remains to be seen whether the president's trip will be mainly symbolic or if it will lead to significant agreements. During his presentation to the investment conference, Mr. Kerry underscored that the United States wanted to increase trade with India to \$500 billion a year, a significant leap from \$97 billion in 2013. "We can do more together, and we must do more together, and we have to do it faster," Mr. Kerry said.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ "Obama Visit Ideal For Indo-US Energy Cooperation: Expert", *Press Trust of India*, January 6, 2015 at <http://www.indiatvnews.com/news/world/obama-visit-ideal-for-indo-us-energy-cooperation-expert-22077.html>

⁸⁷ Siddiqui, Huma, "As Obama Comes Calling, Govt Pitches For Stronger Energy Ties", *The Financial Express*, January 7, 2015 at <http://www.financialexpress.com/article/miscellaneous/as-obama-comes-calling-govt-pitches-for-stronger-energy-ties/27298/>

⁸⁸ "Good Business Driving Force Behind Indo-US Relations", *Zee News*, January 10, 2015 at http://zeenews.india.com/business/news/economy/good-business-driving-force-behind-indo-us-relations_116033.html

⁸⁹ Gordon, Michael R. and Harrisjan, Gardiner, "Kerry Lays Groundwork for Obama's Visit to India", *The New York Times*, January 11, 2015 at http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/12/world/asia/john-kerry-india-narendra-modi.html?_r=0

Lauding Prime Minister Narendra Modi's, US secretary of state John Kerry said the 'Make in India' project can serve not just India but the entire planet if it taps into sustainable energy resources. Kerry was speaking at the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit (VGGS), a brainchild of Modi. The US is one of eight partner countries of the three-day summit this time. On bilateral relations, Kerry said India-US trade has grown five-fold since 2000 and that investments too have grown. "We can do more together, we must do more and we need to do it much faster. With the prime minister we intend to take bilateral trade to grow by five-fold in next five years," he said.⁹⁰

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vigorous foreign policy in the months since he took office has surprised observers. This month, US President Barack Obama will travel to New Delhi as Modi's special guest at events commemorating Republic Day, India's national holiday - just three months after the two leaders held substantive talks in Washington, DC. The visit should thus be regarded as a clear signal of Obama's desire, no less than Modi's, to strengthen US-India relations. Three issues stand out - Trade, terrorism, China -- seen as key discussion points during Obama trip.⁹¹

There could be progress on U.S.-India civil nuclear cooperation, solar power and climate change when U.S. President Barack Obama visits India in two weeks, U.S. officials said on January 11. While stressing there were no guarantees that some of the most vexing economic issues between India and the United States would be resolved, the officials said some agreements were conceivable. Obama's visit to India and trips by Kerry and other U.S. senior officials aim to woo India as a strategic partner and to win greater access to the vast Indian market of 1.2 billion people for U.S. companies. U.S. officials have long argued that Indian policies are a barrier to U.S. investment and trade, including its tariff and customs practices and its requirements that foreign companies in some industries ensure a given percentage of local content.⁹²

II. DEFENCE REVIEWS

National

(January 5–11, 2015)

- **DRDO laboratory achieves another milestone as new generation electronic warfare equipment integrated on Tejas Aircraft; Indian troops to strike where it hurts says Chinar Corps GOC.**

⁹⁰ "‘Make in India’ Dream Can Be Realized Through Sustainable Energy: John Kerry", *Live Mint*, January 11 2015 at <http://www.livemint.com/Industry/NI6VjVXTCFwbcYVoFbMeIP/Make-in-India-dream-can-be-realized-through-sustainable-en.html>

⁹¹ Feldstein, Martin, "Visit Highlights Issues in US-India Relationship", *Global Times*, January 12, 2015 at <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/901443.shtml>

⁹² Mohammed, Arshad, "Solar, Nuclear, Climate Progress Possible On Obama India Visit", *Reuters*, January 11, 2015 at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/11/us-india-usa-kerry-idUSKBN0KK0J420150111>

In a major success to DRDO, an advance Electronic Warfare suite (EW suite) developed by Defence Avionics Research Establishment (DARE), a DRDO laboratory, flew for the first time on board the "Tejas-PV1 Light Combat Aircraft" on January 10 at Bengaluru. In addition to the Radar Warner, the EW suite is also equipped with jammer. The equipment was successfully detecting Radar signals operating in and around the flight path. This warfare suite adds an important capability to our LCA.⁹³

Meanwhile, in a change of strategy by the Indian army, Indian troops have been ordered not to react to cross-border shelling or firing from Pakistan immediately but wait for targets to show along the Line of Control (LOC). This was revealed by Lt General Subrata Saha, GOC of the Srinagar-based 15Corps. The General said, "After all, we have no plans to fight a war so it's no use aimlessly shelling or firing across the LOC. The troops simply stay put while the firing continues and then maintain strict vigil through night-vision equipment if necessary. Whenever a target presents itself, it is neutralized. This has yielded good results. After all, it's better to strike where it hurts."⁹⁴

International

(January 5–11, 2015)

- **France to boost Army's presence in the capital following terror attack; Turkey to order four more F-35 fighter jets and five more Chinook heavy transport helicopters.**

Reports say that the France is to deploy another 600 troops to the capital Paris and the immediate region to boost security following the recent killing of 10 journalists and two police officers. As set out in the France's official white paper on defence and national security, the highest priority of the armed forces is to protect domestic integrity, ahead of deployment in foreign operations. The troops will support patrols by local police and paramilitary gendarmerie forces, which are protecting media offices, public buildings, places of worship and public transport. The civil police authorities and the Paris military governor have joint command of the soldiers once they are in the capital under the mission of observation and surveillance.⁹⁵

Meanwhile, according to reports, Turkey's top procurement panel decided on January 7 to order four more F-35 fighter jets and five more CH-47F Chinook heavy transport helicopters. Turkey's procurement agency, the Under secretariat for Defence Industries (SSM), said in a press release that the government decided to order four more F-35s from the multinational Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) consortium, in which Turkey is a member. The move increases Turkey's official orders to six. Turkey plans eventually to buy 100 F-35s. SSM also said that the Defence Industry Executive Committee, the top panel for procurement also decided to place an order for five CH-47F Chinook

⁹³ "New Generation Electronic Warfare Equipment Integrated on Tejas Aircraft," *PIB*, January 10, 2015, at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=114514>

⁹⁴ "Indian Troops Asked To Wait For Specific Targets Along LoC: Chinar Corps GOC," *The Times of India*, January 9, 2015, at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Indian-troops-asked-to-wait-for-specific-targets-along-LoC-Chinar-Corps-GOC/articleshow/45826402.cms>

⁹⁵ "France Boosts Army's Presence in Paris," *Defence News*, January 8, 2015, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/land/army/2015/01/08/france-killing-journalists-army-charlie-hebdo/21439235/>

heavy transport helicopters. This will be a follow-on order to a previous deal involving six platforms.⁹⁶

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEWS

Jammu & Kashmir

(January 5–11, 2015)

- **Pak shelling kills BSF jawan, thousands flee homes; Governor's rule imposed in J & K; Proposed rehabilitation of West Pakistan refugees raises furore in valley.**

A BSF trooper identified as Devinder Singh of the 9th battalion was killed in mortar shelling by Pakistan Rangers on Khawada post on the international border in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir on January 5. Pakistan also resorted to unprovoked shelling at three places in Ramgarh sector as well as in Samba district. The BSF retaliated using same calibre weapons. Tension gripped areas close to the international border in Samba, Kathua and Jammu districts, as mortars fired by Pakistan landed as close as three km to the strategic Pathankot-Jammu national highway. The shelling by Pakistan on January 5 came after a lull of two days.⁹⁷ Pakistan fired mortar shells and gunshots at over 60 villages and scores of forward posts in Kathua and Samba districts in Jammu and Kashmir in continuing ceasefire violations. India had tried handing over a protest note regarding the ceasefire violation, but Pakistan allegedly refused to accept it. Nearly 10,000 people have fled from the border areas with 7,500 taking shelter in camps set up by the government in safer areas in Kathua and Samba districts since the latest round of ceasefire violations by Pakistan started on New Year Eve, officials said.⁹⁸ Meanwhile, BSF has foiled yet another bid by Pakistan-based militants to infiltrate into Jammu and Kashmir under the cover of firing from across the border and thick fog in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir. "There was movement of a group of militants along international border in Pallia area in Chilyari-khora forward belt in Kathua district last night," a senior BSF officer said. This is the fifth infiltration attempt in a week by militants under the cover of firing by Pakistani troops and thick blanket of fog along the international border.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ "Turkey To Order 4 More F-35s, 5 More Chinooks," *Defence News*, January 7, 2015, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/air-space/air-force/2015/01/07/turkey-f35-chinook-order-davutoglu/21397345/>

⁹⁷ "J&K: Pakistan Violates Ceasefire Again, One BSF Jawan Killed In Firing", *The Indian Express*, January 5, 2015 at <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/jk-pakistan-violates-ceasefire-again-one-bsf-jawan-reportedly-killed-in-firing/>

⁹⁸ "J-K: Thousands Flee Homes; Pak Firing Continues", *Hindustan Times*, January 6, 2015 at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/10-000-frightened-villagers-abandon-homes-in-kashmir-following-pak-shelling/article1-1303716.aspx>

⁹⁹ "BSF Foils Infiltration Bid in Kathua, 5th This Week", *The Economic Times*, January 7, 2015 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-01-07/news/57791721_1_infiltration-bid-alert-bsf-kathua

In the wake of efforts at government formation remaining unsuccessful and Omar Abdullah triggering a crisis by declining to continue as the caretaker chief minister, Governor's rule was imposed in the state on December 9. The proclamation placing the state under governor's rule was issued under Section 92 of the Constitution of J&K.¹⁰⁰

The mainstream political parties as well as separatists have upped the ante against the reported inclination of Government of India (GoI's) plans to settle West Pakistan refugees in Jammu and Kashmir. Terming the recommendation of the JPC to settle the refugees permanently in J&K as anti-state, NC general secretary and former minister Ali Muhammad Sagar on January 10 said that these are unacceptable. Earlier, separatist leader Syed Ali Geelani had threatened to launch an agitation if the Centre granted citizenship and voting rights to West Pakistan refugees living mainly in the border areas of Jammu. He also termed the reported move as an attack on the special status of Jammu and Kashmir and a conspiracy to change its demography. However, the refugees claim that many of them lived in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir before they were uprooted by the 1947-48, 1965 and 1971 wars between India and Pakistan. To grant them citizenship and voting rights in the State Assembly elections, apart from monetary and other benefits, was one of the main election planks of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Various representative bodies of these refugees too have been struggling for their "rights" for decades but would always be denied on the plea that since they were not bona fide citizens of the state, the law does not permit it.¹⁰¹

Northeast Insurgency

(January 5-11, 2015)

- **Nine NDFB (Songbijit) members arrested in connection with Assam violence; BSF and BGB to jointly patrol Indo-Bangla border in Tripura.**

In connection with the December 23 terror attacks on Adivasi villages in Kokrajhar and Sonitpur districts of Assam, security forces have so far apprehended nine cadres of National Democratic Front of Boroland (Songbijit). The terror attacks by militants of NDFB (Songbijit) on Adivasi villages and subsequent retaliatory attacks on Bodo villages by miscreants among the Adivasis and the police firing on protestors claimed 81 lives (Adivasi-66, Bodo-13, others-2) and displaced over 2.70 lakh people, which had both the Bodos and the Adivasis. Assam State Disaster Management Authorities stated that as on January 6, 1, 29,828 inmates were taking shelter in 77 relief camps in the four affected districts.¹⁰²

In a two-day Indo-Bangla Deputy Commissioner level meeting which concluded in Agartala on January 10, the two countries decided to conduct joint patrolling along the Indo-Bangla Border

¹⁰⁰ Jain, Bharti, "Governor's Rule Imposed in Jammu & Kashmir", *The Times of India*, January 9, 2015 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Governors-rule-imposed-in-JK/articleshow/45822947.cms>

¹⁰¹ Jameel, Yusuf, "Row in J&K over West Pakistan Refugees", *The Asian Age*, January 11, 2015 at <http://www.asianage.com/india/row-jk-over-west-pakistan-refugees-754>

¹⁰² Talukdar, Sushanta "Nine NDFB (Songbijit) Members Arrested", *The Hindu*, January 8, 2015 at http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/nine-ndfb-songbijit-members-arrested/article6765543.ece?utm_source=RSS_Feed&utm_medium=RSS&utm_campaign=RSS_Syndication

by BSF and BGB in Tripura to check cross-border movement of Indian insurgents. A joint statement signed by both the sides stated that the Indian side raised issues about the presence of banned National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) in Chittagong Hill Tracts of the neighbouring country and about NLFT engaged in kidnapping and extortions in the bordering areas in India side. Both sides then agreed for joint patrolling by BSF and BGB and Bangladesh security would swung into action if insurgents were found to be using their soil. The Bangladesh side informed that instructions have been given to launch operation against Indian insurgents using the soil of Bangladesh for carrying out “subversive” activities in India. They also said that a decision to set up five more border outposts in the Chittagong Hill Tract areas bordering Dhalai district of Tripura has been taken for better vigil and stop cross-border movement of insurgents. Both sides also decided to share information about dual citizenship of people and take necessary action against them.¹⁰³

Left-wing Extremism

(January 5-11, 2015)

- **Kerala Police to get better logistics support to fight Maoist threat; Four armed Maoist cadres surrender in Malkangiri, Odisha.**

As part of equipping the Kerala state police to face Maoist threats, the Ministry of Home is planning to extend them superior logistic support and special training. Minister for Home Ramesh Chennithala discussed the action plans and strategies in detail at a high-level meeting, which was attended by top police officers, including the State Police Chief at Kozhikode on January 9. Other than the specially trained Thunderbolt squad, the local police would be given more support in terms of State funding, logistics, and training. The police stations in North Kerala would be given special focus as three newly constituted wings of the Maoist movement had its focus on the region.¹⁰⁴ Also, in a bid to fight the Maoist menace, tribes people will be recruited directly to the police force, said Ramesh Chennithala. The minister said the police would be entrusted with overseeing the implementation of development projects in tribal areas. Urging the media not to glorify Maoists, he said a meeting of news editors would be held soon.¹⁰⁵

Four armed Maoist cadres, including three women, surrendered in Malkangiri district of Odisha on January 10. The surrendered Maoists were part of Andhra Odisha Border Special Zonal Committee (AOBSZC) of the outlawed CPI (Maoist). The AOBSZC is led by Maoist central committee member Ramkrishna alias RK. The surrendered Maoists included female cadres Bhima

¹⁰³ “Joint Patrolling By BSF and BGB at Tripura Border”, *The Economic Times*, January 10, 2015 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-01-10/news/57913061_1_indian-insurgents-chittagong-hill-tract-banned-national-liberation-front

¹⁰⁴ Joseph, Mithosh, “Police To Get Better Logistics Support To Fight Maoist Threat”, *The Hindu*, January 10, 2015 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kozhikode/police-to-get-better-logistics-support-to-fight-maoist-threat/article6773755.ece>

¹⁰⁵ “Police To Recruit Tribals To End Maoist Menace”, *The Times of India*, January 10, 2015 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kozhikode/Police-to-recruit-tribals-to-end-Maoist-menace/articleshow/45828952.cms>

Padiami alias Rita, Walal Gangi alias Sakila, Singe Padiami alias Mase and Kuma Khila, a male cadre. The Maoists said they had understood the futility of violent activities.¹⁰⁶

Terrorism & Radicalisation

(January 5-11, 2015)

- **Pakistan rejects India's charges on 'Terror Boat'; Three suspected IM operatives arrested in connection with Bangalore blast; Punjab deputy CM seeks release of terrorists.**

Union Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar on January 5 reiterated that all "circumstantial evidence" surrounding the Pakistani fishing boat pointed to a terror link and that its occupants were in touch with Pakistan maritime security agencies and the army.¹⁰⁷ Contradicting the claims, the investigators in Karachi have identified the fishing boat destroyed on New Year's Eve as a vessel allegedly linked to a drug mafia based in Pakistan. According to sources, the 25-foot vessel, named Qalandar, was captained by Yaqboob Baloch, a resident of the gang war-torn Lyari town in Karachi. The boat often carried contraband for the Balochistan-based drug cartel of Mir Yakub Bizenjo, a fugitive named by the US in 2009 as a leading player in the trans-border trade of narcotics. Few details were immediately available on the crew, but one police source said the men are thought to have worked for multiple criminal groups, running alcohol, diesel and drugs allegedly from and to ports from Dubai to Karachi.¹⁰⁸ The Pakistani boat episode has exposed the fault lines in the country's intelligence set-up, with the premier agency Intelligence Bureau expressing unhappiness over being kept out of the loop. The issue of intelligence sharing has come up amid recommendations by some agencies for a central anti-terror mechanism for more coordinated action.¹⁰⁹

In a joint operation by the Central Crime Branch (CCB) and state internal security division, three suspected Indian Mujahideen (IM) operatives were arrested and a large cache of bomb making materials and communication devices were seized. These arrests were made in two simultaneous raids in Bengaluru and Bhatkal district of Uttara Karnataka on January 8. City Police Commissioner M.N. Reddi, announcing the arrests, said the module prima facie had no links to the December 28, Church Street blast. However, he added that nothing could be ruled out at this stage, and a further probe was on. Mr. Reddi said police raided a house in Cox Town from where they arrested Syed Ismail Afaq (34) and Saddam Hussein (35), and recovered laptops, mobile phones and incriminating communication equipment. Abdus Subur (24), an MBA student in Bhatkal, was

¹⁰⁶ "Four Maoists Surrender", *The Hindu*, January 11, 2015, at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/four-maoists-surrender/article6776244.ece>

¹⁰⁷ Peri, Dinakar, "Pakistan Boat Had Suspected Terror Links, Says Manohar Parrikar", *The Hindu*, January 5, 2015 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/pakistan-boatmen-not-smugglers-but-suspected-terrorists-parrikar/article6756272.ece>

¹⁰⁸ Chishti, Ali Kamran and Swami, Praveen "Pakistan boat Trail Allegedly Linked To Karachi-Based Drug Mafia", *The Indian Express*, January 5, 2015 at <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/pak-boat-trail-leads-to-drug-smuggling-ring-in-karachi/2/>

¹⁰⁹ Pandey, Devesh K, "IB Sore At Being Ignored", *The Hindu*, December 5, 2015 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/ib-sore-at-being-ignored/article6757588.ece?ref=sliderNews>

arrested from a house, from where the police recovered “substantial quantities of explosives”.¹¹⁰

Punjab Deputy Chief Minister Sukhbir Singh Badal on January 8 sought Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh’s intervention to facilitate the release of more than a dozen Sikh terror convicts serving life terms. However, home ministry sources said the Centre was unlikely to entertain Punjab government’s plea seeking amnesty for the terrorists, five of whom were convicted for the assassination of former Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh. Among the 13 Sikh terror convicts whose release is being sought by the Punjab government are Lakhwinder Singh, Shamsheer Singh and Gurmeet Singh, lodged in Burail Jail, Chandigarh; Jagtar Singh Hawara, Paramjit Singh Bheora, Davinder Singh Pal Bhullar and Daya Singh Lahoria in Tihar Jail; Waryam Singh in Bareilly jail; Gurmeet Singh Fauji serving life sentence in a Rajasthan jail; Gurdeep Singh Khaira in Gulbarga Jail, Karnataka; Lal Singh Akalgarh lodged in Nabajail and Subeg Singh and Nand Singh serving in Chandigarh jail. The Punjab government’s pitch for the release of Sikh life-term terror convicts comes against the backdrop of former terrorist Gurbax Singh Khalsa’s hunger strike at Ambala since November 4. The SGPC is backing his demand for “permanent release” of 7 Sikh terror convicts handed life sentence.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Bharadwaj, K V Aditya, “Suspected IM Module Busted, 3 Operatives Arrested”, *The Hindu*, January 9, 2015 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/bangalore/suspected-im-module-busted-3-operatives-arrested/article6768540.ece>

¹¹¹ Jain, Bharti, “Punjab Deputy CM Sukhbir Singh Badal Demands Release Of Terrorists”, *The Times of India*, January 8, 2015 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Punjab-deputy-CM-Sukhbir-Singh-Badal-demands-release-of-terrorists/articleshow/45813240.cms?>