

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Bangladesh

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inducts three new ministers into her council of ministers.**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inducted three new faces into her council of ministers and promoted two state ministers to the post of minister. Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and Yeafesh Osman were elevated to full ministers and reassigned the portfolios of home affairs and science and technology. Newly picked Nurul Islam, leader of Chittagong city Awami League, was made technocrat minister, while Nuruzzaman Ahmed, lawmaker from Lalmonirhat-2, and actress Tarana Halim, lawmaker from a reserved seat, were appointed as state ministers.¹

Sri Lanka

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **Sri Lanka and China concludes a joint army exercise; Sri Lankan civil society expresses outrage over the failure of the South African authorities to apprehend and detain President Omar al-Bashir; European Union starts the deployment of an Election Observation Mission (EOM) to Sri Lanka to observe the Parliamentary Elections; Iran deal will help the tea industry of Sri Lanka; TGTE urges the United Nations to refer Sri Lanka to the International Criminal Court through a signature campaign; Sri Lanka seeks grant assistance from the United States under the Millennium Challenge Corporation.**

Sri Lanka and China concluded a joint army exercise at a Special Forces training school in Maduruoya, located some 288 kilometres north-east of Colombo on July 13. A 43-member group of Chinese military officers, led by Lieutenant Colonel Qi Qiang of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) joined hands together with a similar number from the Sri Lanka Army's Commando Regiment and Special Forces in the 'Exercise – Silk Route – 2015' which began in June. Together with the Commander of the Sri Lanka army, Lieutenant General Crishanthe De Silva, the Ambassador for the People's Republic of China in Sri Lanka Yi Xianliang, graced the closing ceremony as the Chief Guest. The exercise was conducted under three phases focusing largely on weapon handling, VVIP protection study, live firing, lane firing, sniper firing, body protection drills, backup vehicle movement and training, body protection formation, ambush drills,

¹ Liton, Shakhawat and Tusher, Hasan Jahid, "Tarana Among 3 New Ministers", *The Daily Star*, July 15, 2015 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/tarana-among-3-new-ministers-112603>.

reconnaissance techniques, skill firing, special mission planning, combat tracking techniques, situation training exercise, jungle warfare and basic battle skills, vehicle ambush drills, aircraft and building option training.²

A group of Sri Lankan civil society members and organisations have in a petition to be submitted to the South African High Commission in Colombo, expressed outrage over the failure of the South African authorities to apprehend and detain President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan during his recent visit to South Africa for an African Union (AU) summit. This is in a context where President al-Bashir is wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) to face trial on charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Not only was President al-Bashir permitted to participate in a highly publicized conference, he was also permitted to leave South Africa in direct violation of an interim order issued on June 14 by a High Court in Pretoria. "This direct violation of the court's order rendered unenforceable the same court's welcome ruling the following day that the failure of the authorities to arrest al-Bashir was unconstitutional, and that al-Bashir be arrested and detained pending surrender to the ICC," the petition stated. The petition was signed by 48 rights activists and civil society members and 12 civil society organisations, including the Centre for Human Rights and Development (CHRD), Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), National Fisheries Solidarity Movement (NAFSO), Rights Now – Collective for Democracy, South Asian Centre for Legal Studies and the Women's Action Network (WAN).³

Following an invitation from the Sri Lanka authorities, the European Union has started the deployment of an Election Observation Mission (EOM) to Sri Lanka to observe the Parliamentary Elections scheduled for August 17, 2015. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, has appointed Cristian Preda, Member of the European Parliament, to lead the EOM as Chief Observer.⁴

The easing of sanctions on Iran will deliver a much needed pick-me-up to Sri Lanka's troubled tea industry by allowing the resumption of direct exports to one of its main markets, the government said on July 15. Although tea was not on the list of products banned from being exported to Iran over its nuclear programme, restrictions on banking meant exporters had to go through risky and expensive channels to be paid. But as part of the deal agreed on July 13 with major powers, the currency restrictions are being lifted, effectively allowing Iran to resume free trade with countries such as Sri Lanka. "Direct exports to Iran will mean a better deal for our producers. This is very welcome," said Sri Lankan Finance Minister Ravi Karunanayake.⁵

² "Sri Lanka and China Conclude Joint Army Exercise", *Colombo Gazette*, July 13, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/07/13/sri-lanka-and-china-conclude-joint-army-exercise/>.

³ "Lankan Civil Society Outraged over South Africa", *Colombo Gazette*, July 14, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/07/14/lankan-civil-society-outraged-over-south-africa/>.

⁴ "EU Deploys Election Observers To Sri Lanka", *Colombo Gazette*, July 15, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/07/15/eu-deploys-election-observers-to-sri-lanka/>.

⁵ "Sri Lanka Cheers End of Sanctions on Iran", *Colombo Gazette*, July 15, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/07/15/sri-lanka-cheers-end-of-sanctions-on-iran/>.

Over a million people from around the world have signed on to an appeal to urge the United Nations to Refer Sri Lanka to the International Criminal Court. The Signature Campaign in fifteen languages was launched about four months ago by the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE). The Signature Campaign observes that the presence of the former Commander of the Sri Lankan military in the present Government, and the potential culpability of the new President, Maithripala Sirisena, will not be conducive to meting out justice in any manner other than through a referral to the International Criminal Court.⁶

The Government has sought grant assistance from the United States under the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the Sri Lankan Embassy in Washington said. At a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer of the U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Dana J. Hyde, Sri Lanka's Ambassador Prasad Kariyawasam has emphasized the desire of the Government to establish a partnership with the United States under the Millennium Challenge Corporation. Acknowledging the progressive developments taking place in Sri Lanka, Ms. Hyde said that MCC was encouraged by the reform process and would continue to closely follow developments in the coming months. She invited the Ambassador to continue interaction with MCC.⁷

Maldives

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **Former President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom visits Oman as President Abdulla Yameen's special envoy; Mona Rishwami calls on Foreign Secretary Dr. Ali Naseer Mohamed; UK welcomes the political dialogue between the opposition parties and the government; Maldives welcomes the Iran Nuclear Deal.**

Former President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom has departed to Oman as President Abdulla Yameen's special envoy to represent the government in bilateral talks.⁸ During the visit, Gayoom presented a letter from President Abdulla Yameen to Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Oman, Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Albusaidi. Speaking to reporters at Ibrahim Nasir International Airport (INIA) on his return to the country, Gayoom said that discussions were held regarding increasing Omani investment in the Maldives, and that a proposal in this regard was presented to Omani officials. "Discussions were held regarding increasing trade relations between the two countries. An Omani team will visit Maldives soon," Gayoom said.⁹

Chief of Rule of Law Division of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Mona Rishwami has called on Foreign Secretary Dr. Ali Naseer Mohamed, at the Ministry of

⁶ "Over a Million Sign Petition against Lanka", *Colombo Gazette*, July 16, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/07/16/over-a-million-sign-petition-against-lanka/>.

⁷ "Government Seeks US Grant Assistance through MCC", *Colombo Gazette*, July 18, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/07/18/government-seeks-us-grant-assistance-through-mcc/>.

⁸ "Former President Gayoom Departs to Oman as President's Envoy", *SunOnline*, July 13, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/31025>.

⁹ "Former President Gayoom Concludes Visit to Oman", *SunOnline*, July 16, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/31102>.

Foreign Affairs, on July 14, 2015. Foreign Ministry said that during the meeting, the Foreign Secretary briefed the OHCHR team on the current political situation in the Maldives and assured the government's commitment to upholding the Constitution, the rule of law, and the separation of powers. The OHCHR team also met with former President Mohamed Nasheed.¹⁰

UK's Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Hugo Swire has welcomed the political dialogue between the opposition parties and the government of the Maldives. Mr Swire made this remark at an Oral Answers to Questions session at the House of Commons on July 14, 2015.¹¹

In a statement welcoming the Iran Nuclear Deal, finalised on July 14, 2015, Minister of Foreign Affairs Dunya Maumoon has said that the Maldives continues to call for nuclear disarmament, and looks forward to all countries involved approving the agreement.¹²

B. East Asia

China

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **Xi Jinping says that slow and steady growth is good for China; SOE's important for economic development; China and Vietnam discuss bilateral relations; China upset with the United States.**

Xi Jinping concluded an inspection tour of the Jilin province on July 18. As a response to the downward trend in the economy he said that, "We should be confident that economic growth still enjoys promising prospects". He added that the Chinese economy is witnessing a "phase of slower but resilient growth".¹³ During the visit Xi also asserted the important role of the State Owned Enterprises (SOE) towards economic development.¹⁴

The Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli met with the Secretary General of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Nguyen Phu Trong on July 17 in Hanoi. During the meeting both sides agreed to handle

¹⁰ "OHCHR Team Calls on Foreign Secretary Ali Naseer", *SunOnline*, July 15, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/31078>.

¹¹ "UK Welcomes Political Dialogue between Opposition Parties and Government", *SunOnline*, July 15, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/31079>.

¹² "Dunya: Maldives Continues to Call for Nuclear Disarmament", *SunOnline*, July 15, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/31080>.

¹³ "China's Economic Growth Outlook Still Promising: President", *China Daily*, July 19, 2015 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-07/19/content_21326303.htm, accessed on July 20, 2015

¹⁴ "Xi Stresses Status of SOEs in National Development", *China Daily*, July 18, 2015 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-07/18/content_21321266.htm, accessed on July 20, 2015

their differences properly. Both sides also asserted that they need to work towards achieving, “greater cooperation in various areas, including connectivity and industrial capacity”.¹⁵

China expressed its “strong dissatisfaction and firm opposition” on July 13 in response to news of Senior White House adviser Valerie Jarrett attending the birthday celebrations of Dalai Lama in New York. The Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said that, “We urge the US to stay firm to its commitment that it recognizes Tibet as part of China and it does not support ‘Tibet Independence’”.¹⁶

Japan

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **Japanese Lower House passed the security-related bills amid protests; Japan and China reportedly organizing for “high-level political dialogue”; US-Japan third cyber dialogue scheduled in Tokyo; Japan, China and South Korea Free Trade Agreement talks to be held in Beijing.**

On July 16, the Lower House approved the fiercely debated security bills enabling the partial exercise of the right of collective self-defence in a plenary session. Opposition political parties including the Democratic Party of Japan, the Japan Innovation Party, the Japanese Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party refused to join the voting as a mark of protest. The security bills were sent to the House of Councillors for additional discussions. Meanwhile, several thousand people protested against Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s security bills.¹⁷ Abe reportedly said that these regulations were essential to avoid war and promised to seek public understanding on the issue.¹⁸

Reports indicate that on July 16 State Councilor Yang Jiechi suggested to Japanese national security adviser Shotaro Yachi that China is arranging for “high-level political dialogue” visit as rumours intensify regarding a possible bilateral summit in September. Chinese expressed hope that “the two countries could step in the same direction, enhance mutual trust, uphold the principles of learning from history and preparing for the future”. Moreover, state media in China suggested that President Xi extended an invitation to Prime Minister Abe to join the events marking the end

¹⁵ “China, Vietnam Pledge To Handle Differences ‘Properly’”, By Wang Jian in Hanoi and Zhao Shengnan in Beijing, *China Daily*, July 17, 2015 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2015-07/17/content_21315906.htm, accessed on July 20, 2015

¹⁶ “Protest after US Official Contacts Dalai Lama”, By Zhang Yunbi, *China Daily*, July 13, 2015 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-07/13/content_21270536.htm, accessed on July 20, 2015

¹⁷ Yoshida, Reiji and Aoki, Mizuho, “Lower House Passes Security Bills Amid Protests”, *The Japan Times*, July 16, 2015 at <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/07/16/national/politics-diplomacy/lower-house-set-to-pass-security-bills/#.VbXsjVK6a1t>

¹⁸ “Historic Security Legislation Passes Lower House of Diet”, *The Japan News*, July 16, 2015 at <http://the-japan-news.com/news/article/0002292181>

of the WWII.¹⁹ Shotaro Yachi also met Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and discussed the status of security dialogue between the two countries and the practicality of a trilateral summit among Japan, China and South Korea.

US-Japan third cyber security dialogue is scheduled to be held in Tokyo on July 22 where both parties will discuss cooperation on cyber concerns, such as situational awareness, and critical infrastructure protection. While the Japanese delegation will be led by Ambassador Takashi Okada at the helm of Cyber Policy and Deputy Director-General of Foreign Policy Bureau, the US delegation will be headed by Christopher Painter, Coordinator for Cyber Issues of the State Department. The second cyber security dialogue was held in April 2014.²⁰

The eighth round of talks on a Japan, China and South Korea Free Trade Agreement is scheduled to be held on July 20-24 in Beijing where they are expected to discuss a wide variety of issues including trade in goods, investment, trade in services, competition policies, and Intellectual Property. While the Japanese delegation will be led by Deputy Director-General Tatsuo Sato of the Economic Affairs Bureau in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Chinese delegation will be represented by the Deputy Director General Hong Xiao Dong of the Department of International Trade and Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Commerce. Director-General for FTA negotiations and East Asia FTA Yoo Myung hee from the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy of the Republic of Korea will represent the Korean side.²¹

The Korean Peninsula

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **Korea-Vietnam Joint Economic Committee meeting hosted in Seoul; South Korea China deepen strategic cooperation on North Korea; US Pacific Fleet commander on a three-day visit to Seoul; South Korea extended invitation to North Korea to participate in the Seoul Defence Dialogue.**

On July 14, Seoul hosted the 14th meeting of Korea-Vietnam Joint Economic Committee's. The Korean delegation was led by Lee Tae-ho, the Deputy Minister for Economic Affairs and the Vietnamese delegation was led by Nguyen Chi Dung, the Deputy Minister of the Vietnamese Ministry of Planning and Investment. During the meeting, both nations discussed the prospects of the bilateral FTA and reiterated the hope that it will help in attaining \$70 billion in bilateral trade by 2020. The South Korea-Vietnam FTA was settled in December 2014 and officially signed in May 2015. Presently it is in the process to gain the approval of National Assembly for ratification.

¹⁹ "China Says Japan, China Preparing For "High-Level" Talks," Reuters, July 17, 2015 at http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201507170018

²⁰ The 3rd Japan-US Cyber Dialogue, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan*, July 17, 2015 at http://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e_000813.html

²¹ Eighth Round of Negotiations (DG/DDG Meetings) on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) among Japan, China and the ROK, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan*, July 15, 2015 at http://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e_000808.html

During the meeting, both sides discussed several issues such as employment, labour, development and consular matters.²²

Hwang Joon-kook, South Korean Special Representative for Korean Peninsula Peace and Security Affairs visited China from July 19- 24. The objective was to strengthen strategic cooperation on North Korea and share Chinese views issues concerning the Korean Peninsula. Moreover, Hwang also met with Chinese Ambassador Wu Dawei in charge for the Six-Party Talks and discussed on various means to respond together to the developments in North Korea.²³

US Pacific Fleet commander Adm. Scott Swift was on a three-day visit to South Korea. He met senior military officials such as Choi Yun-hee, the Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman and Chung Ho-seop, the Chief of Naval Operations. North Korea was the focus of their meetings. Earlier Adm. Swift visited the Philippines and is expected to go to Japan from Seoul.²⁴

South Korea reportedly extended invitation to North Korean Ministry of the People's Armed Forces to participate in the Seoul Defence Dialogue (SDD) scheduled from September 9-11. However, North Korea is yet to respond. Since its inception in 2012, several countries including the US, China, Japan, and Russia send their vice defence ministers to the meeting. Meanwhile, in a separate development, both countries failed to resolve their differences during the meeting to settle the Kaesong Industrial Complex wage issue.²⁵

C. West Asia

Iran

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **Iran, P5+1 make diplomatic breakthrough in nuclear talks; Obama hails Iran nuclear deal but Netanyahu condemns.**

The *presstv* reported that "Well over a decade of negotiations on Iran's civilian nuclear programme have finally concluded, with the Islamic Republic and its latest interlocutors, the P5+1, sealing an

²² Outcome of the 14th Meeting of the ROK-Vietnam Joint Economic Committee, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea*, July 14, 2015 at http://www.mofa.go.kr/webmodule/htsboard/template/read/engreadboard.jsp?typeID=12&boardid=302&seqno=315470&c=TITLE&t=&pagenum=2&tableName=TYPE_ENGLISH&pc=&dc=&wc=&lu=&vu=&iu=&du=

²³ Special Representative for Korean Peninsula Peace and Security Affairs to Visit China to Meet with Special Representative Wu Dawei and Chinese Experts on the Korean Peninsula, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea*, July 16, 2015 at http://www.mofa.go.kr/webmodule/htsboard/template/read/engreadboard.jsp?typeID=12&boardid=302&seqno=315484&c=TITLE&t=&pagenum=2&tableName=TYPE_ENGLISH&pc=&dc=&wc=&lu=&vu=&iu=&du=

²⁴ "U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander In Seoul," *The Korea Herald*, July 19, 2015 at <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20150719000347>

²⁵ "S. Korea Invites North To Int'l Security Talks in Seoul in September", *The Korea Herald*, July 17, 2015 at <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20150717000694>

agreement". The UNSC sanctions against the Islamic Republic, including all economic and financial bans, will be lifted at once under a mutually agreed framework and through a new UN resolution. None of the Iranian nuclear facilities will be dismantled or decommissioned. The arms embargo imposed against the Islamic Republic will be annulled and replaced with certain restrictions, which themselves will be entirely removed after a period of five years. Additionally, tens of billions of dollars in Iranian revenue frozen in foreign banks will be unblocked. A total of 800 natural persons and legal entities, including the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines and the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), will be taken off sanctions lists.²⁶

U.S. President Barack Obama hailed a step towards a "more hopeful world" and Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said it proved that "constructive engagement works". But Israel pledged to do what it could to halt what it called an "historic surrender". The agreement will now be debated in the U.S. Congress, but Obama said he would veto any measure to block it. "This deal offers an opportunity to move in a new direction," Obama said. "We should seize it." Under the deal, sanctions imposed by the United States, European Union and United Nations will be lifted in return for Iran agreeing long-term curbs on a nuclear programme that the West has suspected was aimed at creating a nuclear bomb.²⁷

Iraq and Syria

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **Suicide car bomb kills more than 100 in Baghdad targeting shias; Syria's Assad congratulates key ally Iran on nuclear deal.**

More than 100 people were killed in a suicide car bombing at a busy market in an Iraqi town on July 17, in one of the deadliest attacks carried out by Islamic State militants since they overran large parts of the country. The blast brought down several buildings in Khan Bani Saad, about 30 km (20 miles) northeast of Baghdad, crushing to death people who were celebrating the end of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, police and medics said. Islamic State, which controls large parts of northern and western Iraq claimed responsibility for the attack in the mixed eastern province of Diyala where Khan Bani Saad is located and said the target was "rejectionists", as the group refers to Shi'ite Muslims.²⁸

Syrian President Bashar al Assad congratulated key ally Iran on reaching a nuclear deal with world powers on July 14, calling the agreement a "great victory." He said the deal would be a "major turning point in the history of Iran, the region and the world." He added that it provided "clear recognition on the part of world powers of the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme,

²⁶ "Iran, P5+1 Make Diplomatic Breakthrough In Nuclear Talks", *Presstv*, July 14, 2015 <http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2015/07/14/420151/Iran-P51-JCPOA-Vienna>

²⁷ "Iran Deal Reached, Obama Hails Step Towards 'More Hopeful World'", *Reuters*, July 14, 2015 at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/14/us-iran-nuclear-idUSKCN0PM0CE20150714>

²⁸ "Islamic State Claims Suicide Car Bomb That Kills More Than 100 in Iraq", *Reuters*, July 17, 2015 at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/17/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-blast-idUSKCN0PR21A20150717>

while preserving the national rights of your people and confirming the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran.”²⁹

The Gulf

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **Saudi arrests 431 ISIS-linked suspects; Yemen’s Houthis Lose Aden Airport in New Fighting.**

Saudi Arabia arrested 431 people as part of a crackdown on a cluster of cells linked to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) militant group, the kingdom’s Ministry of Interior (MOI) said. Among the arrested were Saudi nationals and suspects from nine other nationalities, he said adding that the cluster of cells was divided by tasks and target, he told reporters. In one cell, made of five members, their task was to prep suicide bombers while another five-member cell had the mission to manufacture explosive belts. Of the 431 arrested, 190 made up the four cells suspected to be behind the Al-Qadeeh and Al-Unoud mosques’ bombings which claimed the lives of dozens of worshippers in May.³⁰

Southern fighters battling Houthi rebels seized control of the international airport in Yemen’s port city of Aden on July 14, dealing the Houthis their most significant defeat in the city since they stormed it more than three months ago, witnesses and security officials said. Backed by a column of new, heavily armoured vehicles, the southern fighters, who are supported by Saudi Arabia and its allies, also drove the Houthis from the nearby Khor Maksar district, site of some of the bloodiest clashes in Aden since the Houthis entered the city.³¹

D. The United State of America

National

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **DoD renames the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO) as the Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Agency (JIDA); President’s Transportation Command nominee pledges to address cyber security concerns; Four marines were killed in Chattanooga shootings; Obama and Carter express nation’s sympathy to marines families;**

²⁹ “Syria’s Assad Congratulates Key Ally Iran On Nuclear Deal”, *Times of Israel*, July 14, 2015 at <http://www.timesofisrael.com/syrias-assad-congratulates-key-ally-iran-on-nuclear-deal/>

³⁰ “Saudi Arrests 431 ISIS-linked Suspects”, *Alarabia*, July 18, 2015 at <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/07/18/Saudi-arrests-431-ISIS-linked-suspects-.html>

³¹ “Yemen’s Houthis Lose Aden Airport in New Fighting” , *The New York Times*, July 14, 2015 at <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/15/world/middleeast/yemens-houthis-lose-aden-airport-in-new-fighting.html>

Carter approved immediate force-protection steps; Chairman of the JCS describes his job as being 'the dash'.

The Department of Defence approved a new mission for the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO), renaming the Department's newest defence agency as the Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Agency (JIDA). As chartered by the Secretary of Defence, JIDA shall enable Department of Defence actions to counter improvised threats with tactical responsiveness and anticipatory acquisition in support of combatant commanders' efforts to prepare for, and adapt to, battlefield surprise in support of counter-terrorism, counter-insurgency, and other related mission areas including counter-improvised explosive device. The name change is part of a more-than-two-year effort to figure out how JIEDDO fits into the Pentagon's future. The organization is now nested under Frank Kendall, the Pentagon's acquisition chief. At a late-June meeting at then-JIEDDO, Kendall called the move "stabilizing" and said it makes the group a "more permanent" part of the Defence Department's infrastructure.³² Lt. Gen. John D. Johnson, JIDA's director said, "While we have changed our name and expanded our mission, the transition should be seamless to the warfighters we support daily. We are in the business of helping warfighters adapt."³³ Army Maj. Gen. Julie A. Bentz, the agency's vice director, told DoD News that the nation's adversary is an adaptive one, adding that the next generation of IED will be an improvised threat. Bentz said, "The department has given us an increased latitude to go after those innovative networks, because it takes a network to defeat a network".³⁴

President Barack Obama's nominee, Air Force Gen. Darren W. McDew, to be the next commander of U.S. Transportation Command told the Senate Armed Services Committee on July 14 that problems in the cyber domain worry him, and that he will emphasize operations to make that domain safer if he's confirmed. McDew, currently the commander of Air Mobility Command – Transcom's air component – has been nominated to succeed Air Force Gen. Paul Selva, who has been nominated to be the next vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Transportation Command is particularly vulnerable when dealing with commercial partners, the general said, noting that about 90 percent of the work the command does with private firms is done on the commercial networks. He said, "That is a threat that I have got to face going forward, if confirmed".³⁵

According to DoD news reports, four marines were killed and another service member was wounded in two separate shootings in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on July 16, 2015. The shootings took place at the Navy Operational Support Centre, operated by the Navy, and at an armed forces

³² Weisgerber, Marcus, "The Defence Department's IED Office Reinvents Itself For a New Era", July 14, 2015 at <http://www.govexec.com/defense/2015/07/defense-department-ied-office-reinvents-itself-new-era/117766/>

³³ "Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Agency Established, New Mission Set", July 13, 2015 at https://www.dvidshub.net/news/169850/joint-improvised-threat-defeat-agency-established-new-mission-set#.VcCde_QpHw.

³⁴ Cronk, Terri Moon, "New DoD Agency Focuses on Improvised Threats", *DoD News*, July 13, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129265>

³⁵ Garamone, Jim, "Transcom Nominee Pledges to Address Cyber Concerns", *DoD News*, July 14, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129275>

recruiting centre.³⁶ President Barack Obama expressed his sympathy and that of the nation for the families of the four Marines. In a statement, the president said, “My main message right now is, obviously, the deepest sympathies of the American people to the four Marines that have been killed”.³⁷ Defence Secretary Ash Carter also expressed his gratitude to local law enforcement personnel for their swift response. The Defence Department will continue to work with them as they investigate this heinous crime, he added, and “will support our military families in their time of grief.”³⁸ Meanwhile, Carter approved immediate force-protection steps in the wake of Chattanooga shootings. Carter also has directed the services to examine additional steps that can be taken to ensure the safety of service members and civilians at military installations.³⁹

In the world of political-military affairs, Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey likes to say that he is “the dash.” The dash is not the name of some superhero. It is the punctuation mark found between “political” and “military” when both factors exist in a given situation. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff lives at the intersection of policy objectives and the military activities used to achieve them. Dempsey said during a recent interview that “When we testify, we all get drawn into different discussions about strategic objectives and campaign objectives and political objectives”. He added, “But the one that lives at that intersection is the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.” Dempsey is the 18th officer to hold the chairman position since it was established in 1947. Nominated by President Barack Obama, he was confirmed by the Senate and took office in October 2011, succeeding Navy Adm. Mike Mullen. By statute, the chairman is the military advisor to the president, the secretary of defence and the National Security Council. The chairman also has the responsibility of consulting with Congress on issues related to national security. The chairman is the U.S. military’s highest-ranking officer, but he commands no troops. The general noted that people who don’t understand the nature of the job — the idea of the chairman being the dash — accuse the chairman of being an administration stooge.⁴⁰

International: Asia

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **Amidst growing security challenges in Afghanistan, the US notes progress; Time and Iranian behaviour will determine the success of Iran nuclear pact; US stressed a whole-of-government approach to defeat ISIL; US and coalition airstrikes continue against ISIL and destroyed**

³⁶ “Shootings in Tennessee Leave Four Marines Dead”, *DoD News*, July 16, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129287>

³⁷ “President Expresses Nation’s Sympathy to Victims’ Families”, *DoD News*, July 16, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129290>

³⁸ “Carter Offers Condolences in Wake of Chattanooga Tragedy”, *DoD News*, July 16, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129288>

³⁹ “Carter Approves Force-Protection Steps in Wake of Chattanooga Shootings”, *DoD News*, July 17, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129296>

⁴⁰ Garamone, Jim, “Dempsey Describes Chairman’s Job as Being ‘The Dash’”, *DoD News*, July 17, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129294>

vehicle bomb factory in Iraq; Mixed US response on developing nuclear cooperation with China; Russia, China, Iran, North Korea and sequestration are biggest challenges for the US; US campaigns for Freedom Now's accreditation despite Chinese opposition; China's state media accuses human rights lawyers of being troublemakers intent.

Christine E. Wormuth, the undersecretary of defence for policy speaking at a Centre for Strategic and International Studies military strategy forum, said on July 13 that although the fighting season in Afghanistan has been tough this year, with Afghan forces taking 60 percent more casualties than they did last year, progress has continued there. Wormuth said Afghan forces are coping in a very difficult environment and that the Taliban “does not pose an existential threat to the Afghan government.” The Taliban are testing Afghan security forces as the coalition draws down. But the Taliban are not the only threat, Wormuth said. The Afghan government also must contend with al-Qaida, the Haqqani network and other extremist groups, including a branch of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). She explained that President Barack Obama's time-phased approach to withdrawal from Afghanistan is helping the process. Under the approach the United States — which now maintains about 9,800 troops in the country — will draw down until there is a “normalized embassy footprint” by the end of next year.⁴¹

July 17, 2015, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, said that time and Iranian behaviour will determine whether the Iran nuclear pact has achieved its intended objective. Speaking with reporters traveling with him, Dempsey said the United States will carefully watch how the Iranian government uses the additional revenue it will gain from the agreement. He said, “There's every reason to believe that the majority of it will be used to fix their economy that suffered under the sanctions.” He added, “But I also am alert to the possibility that some of it could be used to support the other malign activities.” The general said he will watch Iranian capabilities and the ways they use them. The chairman said he recommends maintaining pressure on the non-nuclear sanctions to curb Iran's weapons trading, its missile proliferation, its funding of surrogates and proxy forces, its cyberattacks and its maritime mines. Dempsey noted that the agreement does not change the chairman's military responsibilities in the region.⁴²

Christine E. Wormuth stressed that the campaign in Syria and Iraq against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is a whole-of-government approach. Wormuth is the latest official to emphasize that ISIL cannot be defeated by military power alone. Last week, Defence Secretary Ash Carter told the Senate Armed Services Committee that of the nine lines of effort in the strategy, the Defence Department has only two of them: denying ISIL safe haven in Iraq and Syria, and building partner capacity in Iraq and Syria. The undersecretary reported on DoD's efforts against the terror group. To date, Wormuth said, there have been more than 5,000 airstrikes in Iraq and Syria.⁴³ Meanwhile, the U.S. and coalition military forces have continued to attack ISIL terrorists

⁴¹ Garamone, Jim, “Policy Chief Notes Progress During Afghan Fighting Season”, *DoD News*, July 13, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129267>

⁴² “Dempsey: Time, Iranian Behaviour Will Determine Pact's Success”, *DoD News*, July 17, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129298>

⁴³ Garamone, Jim, “Wormuth Stresses Whole-of-Government Approach to ISIL”, *DoD News*, July 13, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129269>

in Syria and Iraq. Army Lt. Col. Thomas Gilleran, task force spokesman said, "In the past 48 hours, coalition airstrikes hit five vehicle-borne [improvised explosive devices] and a factory producing these weapons in Ramadi". He added, "Removing these weapons from the battlefield is a high priority for the coalition."⁴⁴

While U.S. government officials and industry advocates have told lawmakers that renewing a nuclear cooperation deal with China would be beneficial to the U.S., some lawmakers and experts said they are concerned about issues such as proliferation, diversion of civilian nuclear technology and export control. At a hearing July 16 by two U.S. House subcommittees, Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Non-proliferation Thomas Countryman said bringing the new agreement with China into force will improve not only cooperation on non-proliferation between the two countries, but also the overall bilateral relationship with China. A new agreement would permit China, the biggest nuclear power market in the world, to buy more U.S.-designed reactors and nuclear technology to reprocess plutonium from spent fuel. The Obama administration submitted the agreement for congressional review three months ago.⁴⁵

In his confirmation hearing on July 14, Air Force Gen. Paul Selva, president's nominee to be the next vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the Senate Armed Services Committee that Russia, China, Iran and North Korea are the nation's most able to threaten the United States. Selva said that while terror groups like al-Qaida and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) have the desire and capability to attack the American homeland, they do not present an existential threat to the United States. He noted another direct threat to the U.S. military: sequestration – spending caps that will take effect October 1 in the absence of congressional action to change budget law. He said, "We see the effects of sequestration and the potential declines in the defence budget affecting readiness". If confirmed by the Senate, Selva, who is currently the commander of U.S. Transportation Command, will succeed Navy Adm. James A. Winnefeld Jr. to become the tenth vice chairman.⁴⁶

The United States has launched a campaign to get U.N. accreditation for the non-profit organization *Freedom Now*, which works to free prisoners of conscience around the world, but the effort is facing opposition, especially from China. Last month, the U.N. committee that accredits non-governmental organizations, or NGOs, rejected the Washington-based group's application. But the United States has decided to take the issue to the committee's parent body, the 54-member Economic and Social Council known as ECOSOC, which is scheduled to vote on July 20. A simple majority vote is needed for the group's accreditation for special U.N. consultative status. *Freedom Now* takes on cases of individuals who have not advocated or used violence and have been detained for who they are or what they believe. U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power testified at a congressional hearing last month that the NGO committee which rejected *Freedom Now* "is stacked with a

⁴⁴ "Coalition Airstrikes Destroy Vehicle Bomb Factory in Iraq", *DoD News*, July 15, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129281>

⁴⁵ Chen, Yang, "Benefits of Renewing US-China Nuclear Deal Argued", *VOA News*, July 18, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/us-considers-renewing-nuclear-deal-with-china/2867620.html>

⁴⁶ Garamone, Jim, "Selva Discusses Threats, Capabilities During Confirmation Hearing", *DoD News*, July 14, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129274>

group of countries who don't themselves tolerate NGOs in their own countries ... but we're not giving up."⁴⁷ Earlier China's state media accused more than two dozen human rights attorneys rounded up in recent days of being troublemakers intent on illegal activism, as foreign governments and rights groups expressed growing concern over the crackdown. In its latest tally on July 14, the Hong Kong-based China Human Rights Lawyers Concern Group said 21 human rights lawyers and civil activists had been detained or have disappeared since last July 9. Another 125 people — mostly lawyers and activists — have been warned not to speak up or act on behalf of those detained. The U.S. State Department condemned the detentions and called for the release of the lawyers, who it said were "seeking to protect the rights of Chinese citizens." China's nationalist newspaper *Global Times* responded on July 14 by calling the U.S. criticism uncomfortable but inconsequential — like having "chewing gum stuck to your shoe" — and said it was up to Chinese courts to decide whether the lawyers acted illegally.⁴⁸

India-US Relations

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **India-US nuclear deal after 10 years; The Defence Acquisition Council clear defence proposals; India to build aircraft carrier with US technology; India-US economic ties improving; India-US should cooperate, share knowledge and skills.**

On 18 July, India and the US mark a decade since the two countries decided to join hands in the area of civil nuclear cooperation marking a paradigm shift in relations and laid the foundations of a truly strategic partnership. The deal, which was finally signed on 10 October 2008, injected warmth and vitality into an otherwise cold relationship.⁴⁹ Ashley J. Tellis, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said, "The nuclear deal transformed India overnight from being a target of this determined American non-proliferation policy to becoming a partner in US's larger geopolitical endeavours."⁵⁰ The US vice president Joe Biden speaking at an event to mark the 10th anniversary of the U.S.-India civil nuclear agreement, a pact which he said helped "remove the single-largest irritant between the world's greatest democracies and provided a way forward for low-carbon technologies and clean energy production in India." In listing the close ties between the U.S. and India, Vice President added his own family to the tally. "There are five Bidens in India, in Mumbai," Mr. Biden told a gathering at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a Washington-based think tank.⁵¹

⁴⁷ "US Pushes for NGO's Acceptance Despite China Lobbying", *Associated Press*, July 16, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/ap-us-pushes-for-ngos-acceptance-despite-china-lobbying/2863998.html>

⁴⁸ "Chinese Media Slams Human Rights Lawyers", *Associated Press*, July 14, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/chinese-media-slams-human-rights-lawyers/2860820.html>

⁴⁹ Roche, Elizabeth, "How the nuclear deal thawed India-US relations", *livemint.com*, July 17, 2015 at <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/dLt18KTAIbIa8OZd4zUfpJ/How-the-nuclear-deal-thawed-IndiaUS-relations.html>

⁵⁰ Tellis, Ashley, J., "A Decade Of The Nuclear Deal", *livemint.com*, July 17, 2015 at <http://www.livemint.com/Opinion/xLcr28bxIK7ncNRSM6vEVL/A-decade-of-the-nuclear-deal.html>

⁵¹ "Joe Biden's Mumbai Relations", *The Wall Street Journal*, July 14, 2015 at <http://blogs.wsj.com/indiarealtime/2015/07/14/joe-bidens-mumbai-relations/>

The Defence Acquisition Council has cleared purchases of over Rs 29,000 crore of equipment, including four maritime spy planes from Boeing worth Rs 4,380 crore and hundreds of air defence guns. The largest order approved was for 428 L-70 and ZU-23 air defence guns worth around Rs 16,900 crore, a defence spokesman said after the meeting chaired by minister Manohar Parrikar. *The Economic Times* reported that the guns are to be manufactured in India as part of the push to expand the defence industry and end the country's status as the world's largest arms importer.⁵² According to news reports, India and the US have worked out the terms of reference for building the next Indian aircraft carrier with US technology. As both countries prepare for a September round of strategic dialogue in Washington DC, India is preparing to send a team to speed up talks on the aircraft carrier and the Light Combat Aircraft jet engine, which is also slated to be built with US assistance. The agenda has been set in the two summits held in September and January, but the key will be checking off the ambitious bucket list of projects. It was report that this will be the first strategic dialogue to be held in the new 2+2 format, including the foreign and commerce ministers.⁵³

Richard Verma, United States Ambassador to India, addressing students at the Indian Institute of Technology – Madras, on Indo-US relations, said that India and the US should cooperate, share knowledge and skills that will benefit both the countries and bring in innovation and excellence. Verma said strategic cooperation between the two countries, especially in joint military exercises, was one of the reasons for the resurgence in ties between the two. There has been a huge improvement on trade and investment relationships too, with two-way trade crossing \$103 billion. Indian investments in the US too are on the rise, he said. The goal is to reach \$500 billion, he added.⁵⁴

⁵² "Parrikar-led Panel Oks Long-Pending Defence Deals Worth Rs 30,000 Crore", *The Times of India*, July 15, 2015 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Parrikar-led-panel-OKs-long-pending-defence-deals-worth-Rs-30000-crore/articleshow/48077485.cms?prtpage=1>; and, "Government Clears Defence Proposals Worth Rs 30,000 Crore, To Buy Four P8i Maritime Patrol Aircraft", *The Economic Times*, July 15, 2015 at <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/government-clears-defence-proposals-worth-rs-30000-crore-to-buy-four-p8i-maritime-patrol-aircraft/articleshow/48072983.cms>

⁵³ Bagchi, Indrani, "India To Build Next Aircraft Carrier with US Technology", *The Times of India*, July 17, 2015 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/India-to-build-next-aircraft-carrier-with-US-technology/articleshow/48106791.cms>; and, "Boost to Indo-US Ties! India to Apply US technology to Manufacture Aircraft Carrier", *The Business Insider*, July 17, 2015 at <http://www.businessinsider.in/Boost-to-Indo-US-ties-India-to-apply-US-technology-to-manufacture-aircraft-carrier/articleshow/48113956.cms>

⁵⁴ "India, US Must Cooperate, Share Knowledge And Skills", *The Hindu Business Line*, July 13 2015 at <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-us-must-cooperate-share-knowledge-and-skills/article7417986.ece>; "Indo-US Economic Ties Improving, Says US Envoy", *Business Standard*, July 13, 2015 at http://www.business-standard.com/article/prtner-friendly-version?article_id=115071300980_1

II. DEFENCE REVIEWS

National

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship signed to increase employability of ex-servicemen; Chief of Naval Staff on a five day visit to Singapore and Thailand.**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) was signed on July 13 to facilitate strategic partnership on skill development and entrepreneurship for supporting skill development initiative to contribute towards Nation Building and 'Make-in-India' initiative. The MoU is likely to provide impetus to using the skills of servicemen for the country when they retire from the Armed Forces. The servicemen will also take to civilian life some rare skills which they acquire during their service life, benefiting both. The MoU will boost employability and acceptability of Ex-servicemen (ESM) by the industry for those service personnel who are on the verge of retirement or already retired. The MoU signed will train and provide gainful employment to approximately 3 lakh ESM/their family members in five years starting from this financial year. At the apex level, a steering committee chaired by the Defence Minister and Co-Chaired by the Minister of State for Skill Development will provide necessary policy direction for the implementation of this ambitious scheme.⁵⁵

The Chief of Naval Staff Admiral RK Dhowan is on a five day visit to Singapore and Thailand from July 20 -25. These visits are aimed at further consolidating the Navy to Navy cooperation and explore future avenues in further strengthening the relationship in accordance with India's 'Act East policy'. India Singapore relations date back to Cholas who are credited with naming the Island and establishing a permanent settlement. Navy to Navy cooperation between the two countries covers almost the entire spectrum of naval operations. Bilateral exercise between the two navies started way back in 1994 and has matured into an all-encompassing SIMBEX (Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise). SIMBEX 15 was recently held in South China Sea in May 2015 wherein ships and maritime patrol aircraft from both navies participated. During the second leg of the visit, Admiral Dhowan will also visit Thailand from July 23 to 25 with an aim of reviewing and furthering the existing maritime cooperation at the highest level. India and Thailand located in each other's extended neighborhood, share a maritime boundary in the Andaman Sea. India's 'Act East' policy has been complemented by Thailand's 'Look West' policy and has assisted in bringing the two countries together. The Navy to Navy cooperation is the leading component of the defence cooperation between the two countries.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ "MoD and MSDE Sign MoU to Increase Employability of Ex-Servicemen by the Industry," *PIB*, July 13, 2015, at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=123218>

⁵⁶ "Chief of Naval Staff to Visit Singapore and Thailand," *PIB*, July 19, 2015, at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=123376>

International

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **US top military leaders consider Russia as the greatest threat to American security; Philippines to re-open former US military base that faces the flashpoint South China Sea.**

As per news reports, the US considers Russia as the greatest threat to American security in the world. US Army chief Gen. Ray Odierno has described Russia as the greatest threat. He also opined that despite the new nuclear agreement with Iran, the government in Tehran will continue to require oversight. In recent weeks, US leaders including Marine Gen. Joe Dunford – widely expected to be confirmed as the next Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff – have begun publicly calling Russia as the biggest threat.⁵⁷

Meanwhile, according to reports, the Philippines would re-open a former US naval base that was closed more than 20 years ago. Its location is very strategic. Currently, the base that faces the flashpoint South China Sea is used by Philippines to station its own military hardware. The announcement comes as the Philippines is embroiled in a bitter dispute with China over rival claims to parts of the sea, including a rich fishing shoal close to the military base. Defence department spokesman Peter Galvez said the Philippines would station aircraft and naval vessels at Subic Bay, which was one of the US military's biggest overseas bases until it closed in 1992.⁵⁸

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEWS

Jammu & Kashmir

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **One terrorist killed as Army foils infiltration bid along LoC; Hizbul militants post training video on FB; Hardliner Gilani declines Pakistan High Commission's Eid Milan invite; Former DSP of J&K shot dead by terrorists; Pakistan resorts to heavy firing along IB ahead of PM Modi's visit to Jammu; Pak militant who beheaded Indian jawan killed in Rajouri district.**

Alert Army troops on July 13 foiled an infiltration attempt from Pakistan occupied Kashmir killing a terrorist along the Line of Control (LoC) in Mendhar sector. Pointing out that the two terrorist had sneaked into the Indian territory from across the LoC at Balnoi, sources said that the troops

⁵⁷ "Army Chief: Russia Major Threat, Iran Bears Watching," *Defence News*, July 17, 2015, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/2015/07/17/army-chief-russia-major-threat-iran-bears-watching/30305975/>

⁵⁸ "Philippines To Re-open Former US Military Base," *Defence News*, July 16, 2015, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/international/asia-pacific/2015/07/16/philippines-re-open-former-us-military-base/30273327/>

opened fire when they tried to flee on being challenged by them. While one was killed, another managed to escape under cover of darkness.⁵⁹

In another audacious move, the banned Hizbul Mujahideen has uploaded a video of its militants training in army fatigues with assault rifles and cracking jokes on a social networking site, seen as a “psychological warfare” against the security forces. The brazen display of nonchalance came within a fortnight the law enforcement agencies managing to remove still photos of the militants in battle gear from *Facebook*, official sources said. It is rare for the militants to expose their faces apprehending action by the security agencies. The video shows 11 militants roaming in the orchards of Yaripora, a place located between Shopian and Kulgam in south Kashmir. Analysts closely watching the situation in the Valley, feel the banned terror outfit was trying to engage in a “psychological warfare” by audaciously posting these pictures and videos to “break” the morale of the security agencies, which have launched fresh anti-militancy operations in south Kashmir after a brief lull.⁶⁰

In a surprise move, hard-line separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani has decided against attending the Eid Milan being hosted by the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi on July 21 over the Kashmir issue being “ignored” at Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s meeting with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi in Russia last week. “As the two prime ministers ignored the fate of over 10 million people of Jammu and Kashmir in their meeting, we reject being a part of any of their (Pakistan’s) celebration,” Geelani told *IANS* over the phone from Srinagar.⁶¹

Unidentified motorcycle-borne militants on July 15 shot dead a former DSP of Jammu and Kashmir police while he was coming out of a mosque after offering prayers in Srinagar’s Kulgam district. The militants opened fire at former DSP Bashir Ahmed, killing him on the spot. The attackers later fled the scene taking advantage of the panic that followed his killing. A hunt has been launched to arrest the ultras.⁶²

Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s scheduled visit to Jammu on July 17, Pakistan Rangers resorted to heavy firing and mortar shelling on five border outposts and some villages in Jammu district injuring four people early on July 16, officials said. The fresh firing also comes a day after a woman was killed in the ceasefire violations prompting India to lodge a protest with Pakistan. “Pakistani Rangers resorted to small arms firing and mortar shelling along IB in RS Pura sector of Jammu district since 0115 hours on July 16,” a BSF officer said. They targeted five border outposts

⁵⁹ “Infiltration Bid From PoK Foiled, Army Kills Terrorist Along LoC”, *The Indian Express*, July 13, 2015 at <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/infiltration-bid-from-pok-foiled-army-kills-terrorist-along-loc/>

⁶⁰ “After Photos, Hizbul Militants Post Training Video On FB”, *The Times of India*, July 13, 2015 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/After-photos-Hizbul-militants-post-training-video-on-FB/articleshow/48057426.cms>

⁶¹ “Hurriyat Conference Leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani Declines Pakistan High Commission’s Eid Milan Invite”, *The Times of India*, July 14, 2015 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Hurriyat-Conference-leader-Syed-Ali-Shah-Geelani-declines-Pakistan-High-Commissions-Eid-Milan-invite/articleshow/48070194.cms>

⁶² “Former DSP of J&K Shot Dead By Terrorists”, *The Times of India*, July 15, 2015 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Former-DSP-of-JK-shot-dead-by-terrorists/articleshow/48078158.cms>

(BoPs) and some civilian areas in RS Pura and Tawi forward belts, he said adding that Pakistani Rangers fired 81 mm mortar shells around 3:50am. The Abdullian, Tubewell number five, Kathmarihana, Korotana and Sangral BSF posts in RS Pura area were also targeted by the Pakistan rangers. Border Security Force officials said Pakistan Rangers have increased the arch of firing and shelling from Kanachak-Akhnoor sector to RS Pura sector now. There have been nine ceasefire violations during July.⁶³

The man responsible for the beheading of an Indian soldier in 2013, which became a flashpoint in India-Pakistan ties, was killed by security forces in Jammu and Kashmir, said sources. Anwar Faiz, said to be a divisional commander of the terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba, was reportedly killed on July 13 at Rajouri in Jammu and Kashmir. He was identified through a video that was uploaded on social media soon after the beheading of Lance Naik Hemraj Singh on January 8, 2013. Sources said Faiz was spotted trying to sneak into India with two more terrorists in Sangrila. He was killed in a joint operation by the Border Security Force and the army. Weapons like AK-47 rifles, Indian and Pakistan currency, mines, wire-cutters and mobiles were reportedly found near his body.⁶⁴

Northeast India

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **NIA files charge sheets against dreaded NDFB (S) militants; Army kills 2 NSCN-K militants; Hardcore NDFB (S) cadre killed in encounter in Assam; NIA probe point towards NSCN-IM involvement in April 2 ambush.**

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on July 15 filed charge sheets in connection with two separate incidents of violence that were carried out by the NDFB(S) faction in Baksa district in Assam in May last year, naming as many as eight militants for these crimes. While two hardcore NDFB(S) cadres Bikanush Narzary and Swmkwr Basumatary were named in the charge sheet pertaining to an attack on people of a religious minority community living in village Narsingbari on May 1, 2014 in which two persons were killed; six other NDFB(S) cadres were named in the other case pertaining to an attack on Khagrabari village in the same district in which 36 persons had lost their lives one day later. The NIA press release said a group of NDFB(S) militants had carried out the May 2, 2014 attack on innocent people belonging to a religious minority community of Khagrabari in connivance with some employees of the forest department employed in the Manas National Park. The NIA had only on July 13 submitted another charge sheet naming four dreaded NDFB(S) militants in connection with the incident of a ghastly attack on Adivasi settlers of a village in Sonitpur district on December 23 last year in which 30 persons were killed.⁶⁵

⁶³ "J-K: Ceasefire Violations By Pak Ahead of PM Modi's Visit, India Protests", *Hindustan Times*, July 16, 2015 at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/fresh-ceasefire-violation-by-pakistan-near-jammu-india-protests/article1-1369721.aspx>

⁶⁴ "'Pak Militant Who Beheaded Indian Jawan Killed in J&K'", *Kashmir Times*, July 18, 2015 at <http://www.kashmirtimes.com/newsdet.aspx?q=43133>

⁶⁵ Kashyap, Samudra Gupta, "NIA Names 8 NDFB Rebels In Charge Sheets On May 2014 Attacks", *The Indian Express*, July 15, 2015 at <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/nia-names-8-ndfb-rebels-in-charge-sheets-on-may-2014-attacks/>

The Army, on July 16, killed two NSCN-K rebels and captured a third who was injured in a fierce exchange of fire along the India-Myanmar border in Nagaland. The Army has intensified counter-insurgency operations in the area following the kidnapping of two schoolboys by the militants from Meluri, in Phek district of Nagaland. Security sources said the NSCN-K is believed to have been kidnapping schoolboys from different areas to enrol them in the outfit.⁶⁶

A hardcore NDFB(S) cadre identified as Sijou, who was carrying a reward of Rs five lakh on his head, was killed in an encounter with Assam police in Kokrajhar district on July 17, police said. Sijou was the deputy commandant of 14 battalion of the Songbijit faction of National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB-S). He was involved in killing Additional SP of Sonitpur, Guljar Hussain, in January 2014. He was also accused of a number of killings, including seven Muslims at Balapara, SI Narayan Barman and scores of Adivasis in Kokrajhar district. The police team recovered one pistol, two hand grenades, one magazine, 12 rounds of ammunition and three mobile phones from the spot.⁶⁷

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is inching towards establishing the motive behind the April 2 ambush on an army convoy at Khonsa in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh, with the investigation suggesting it to be the handiwork of NSCN (I-M) rebels to avenge action by security forces against its cadres. Initially there was confusion over who was actually behind the attack as the finger of suspicion pointed to the NSCN (K) as it had abrogated the 15-year ceasefire with the Centre a few days before the incident. No group had claimed responsibility for the attack. Three jawans of Army's Rajput Regiment died while three others were injured when militants fired on the last of the four vehicles of the convoy on Khonsa-Longding road at Old Tupi village under Khonsa police station. An official source told *The Telegraph* that from the statements of the residents of the area and other clues collected by the investigators, the needle of suspicion now pointed towards NSCN (I-M). Though the NSCN (I-M)'s ceasefire with the Centre is limited only to Nagaland, the outfit's presence is all-pervasive in Tirap, Changlang and Longding districts in Arunachal Pradesh. The source said though both the NSCN factions have a strong presence in Tirap, the ambush site is generally considered as a stronghold of NSCN (I-M). "The kind of explosives used and the way the ambush was carried out also suggest NSCN (I-M)'s involvement since its cadres are more adept in the use of explosives and better trained compared to the NSCN (K) cadres," he said. He said according to information shared by the Arunachal police, a group of NSCN (I-M) rebels, comprising self-styled sergeant major Ayo Tangkhul, captain Kapai, lieutenant Ami Tangkhul, lieutenant colonel Kewang Hassik, major Anok Wangsu and sergeant major Chenaye Tangkhul alias Ayo are suspected to have carried out the attack with the help of some villagers.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Anand, Manoj, "Army Kills 2 NSCN-K Men, Rebels Force Kids To Join", *The Asian Age*, July 17, 2015 at <http://www.asianage.com/india/army-kills-2-nscn-k-men-rebels-force-kids-join-676>

⁶⁷ "Hardcore NDFB(S) Cadre Killed In Encounter", *Business Standard*, July 17, 2015 at http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/hardcore-ndfb-s-cadre-killed-in-encounter-115071701258_1.html

⁶⁸ Sarma, Pankaj, "NIA Probe Points To NSCN-IM Handiwork", *The Telegraph*, July 18, 2015 at http://www.telegraphindia.com/1150718/jsp/frontpage/story_32259.jsp#.VbCZo9KqpHw

Left-wing Extremism

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **Maoists admit to killing their own leaders in Chhattisgarh; Maoists kill 4 auxiliary constables in Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh; Maoists abduct, release eleven persons in Malkangiri district of Odisha; Tamil Nadu police books 5 Maoists under NSA.**

The outlawed Communist Party of India (Maoist) has owned up to killing two of its senior guerrillas in the restive Bastar region of Chhattisgarh. Four Maoist guerrillas active in Bastar were killed by their own party men in the last few days. One Maoist leader has been “detained” and another Maoist leader managed to escape from the captivity of his own comrades and surrendered to the police. “Our party held a people’s court which awarded death penalty to Badru [a DVC member of the Darbha area] and Hemla Bhagat [another Darbha DVC member and chief of Maoists’ military intelligence wing in the area]. Both of them have been killed for indulging in anti-people, anti-party activities. They were in contact with the police and were planning to kill some senior leaders of the party. They were also conspiring to surrender with weapons before the enemy [the police],” said Surinder, secretary of the Darbha Division of the CPI (Maoist), in a press statement on July 12. However, the statement did not mention anything about two other leaders — Hinge and Kosi — who have been killed by the rebels in the last week of June. Cautioning the people of Bastar against the “traitors” like Badru and Bhagat, Surinder claimed that the police and the government are spreading “lies” that the Maoists are killing their own cadres who want to leave the party and go home. “Our party never executed any of its cadres who wanted to go home. We only punish those who indulge in treachery and damage our party and the movement. We appeal to the people to continue this struggle,” said the Maoist leader.⁶⁹

Four Chhattisgarh Police constables, who were abducted by Maoists on July 13 were killed by the rebels. The bodies of the four SPO-turned-auxiliary constables were found on July 15 near Kutru in Bijapur district. The four were identified as Jaydev Yadav, Mangal Sori, Raju Tela and Rama Majji. Three of them were posted in Kutru police station, another was in Bedre. In a July 2011 order, the Supreme Court had asked the Chhattisgarh government to disband the SPOs. The government, however, brought a new law to bypass the SC order and rechristened the SPOs as auxiliary constables. They are always on the prime target of Maoists, yet receive minimum security. The incident has stirred the police as this is the first instance in last several years that four personnel were abducted and killed by the rebels. Last week, another auxiliary constable Madvi Soma was abducted in Sukma district. His whereabouts are not yet known.⁷⁰

Eleven persons allegedly abducted by Maoists from Mohupadar village under Mathili police station limits in Malkangiri district of Odisha were released on July 17. Speaking to *The Hindu*, Malkangiri Superintendent of Police (SP) Mitrabhanu Mohapatra said they had received information that 11

⁶⁹ Dahat, Pavan, “Maoists Admit To Killing Their Own Leaders in Chhattisgarh”, *The Hindu*, July 13, 2015 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/maoists-admit-to-killing-their-own-leaders-in-chhattisgarh/article7414112.ece>

⁷⁰ “Chhattisgarh: Maoists Kill 4 Constables, Bodies Found Near Bijapur District”, *The Indian Express*, July 15, 2015 at <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/maoists-kill-four-auxiliary-constables-in-chhattisgarh/>

persons allegedly abducted by Maoists had been released. According to him, one of these kidnapped persons was said to be a forest guard. According to sources, a group of armed Maoists had reached remote Mohupadar village on July 15 night to abduct eight persons. On July 16 night, Naxalites had allegedly again stuck at the same village and kidnapped three persons, including the forest guard Pintu Durua. According to police sources, neither family members of abducted persons nor anyone else had come out to complain before police about these alleged abductions by Maoists.⁷¹

The five Maoists, Roopesh, Anoop Mathew George, Kannan, Veeramani and Shyna, have been detained under the National Security Act. The Q branch officials who visited central jail on July served them the copies of the notices. Collector Archana Patnaik had signed the orders and forwarded it based on the investigation files produced by the Q branch officials. "Under this act, the Maoists cannot apply for bail and will be detained for a year in jail," said officials. Calling it a draconian law that has been abused the most by Tamil Nadu police, advocates and lawyers representing the Maoists said that they would challenge it at the advisory board in Chennai and will also move the Madras high court. "Among all the states, Tamil Nadu has abused the act the most. I cannot understand how these five can be a threat to national security," asked S Bala Murugan, advocate. He added that they have detained them under this act only because they did not have enough proof against them. "They've already been booked under UAPA which was condemnable, but NSA is completely unnecessary," he said.⁷²

IV. UNITED NATIONS REVIEWS

India and the UN

(July 13-19, 2015)

- **India hopes to gain from Iran nuclear deal; New AIDS cases decline by 20 per cent in India; Pakistan raises ceasefire violation by India with UNMOGIP; UNESCO takes note of Vyapam scam.**

With the signing of the nuclear deal with Iran, India is likely to benefit from the lowering of oil prices due to increase in supply from Iran. It is also hoped that India will resume the construction of the Chabahar port and retain two terminals on a 10-year lease to export oil to India. Also, as per a deal signed in 2005, India will import 5 million tonnes of gas from Iran.⁷³

⁷¹ "Maoists Abduct, Release Eleven Persons", *The Hindu*, July 18, 2015 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/maoists-abduct-release-eleven-persons/article7435861.ece>

⁷² "5 Maoists Booked Under NSA", *The Times of India*, July 19, 2015 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/coimbatore/5-Maoists-booked-under-NSA/articleshow/48129966.cms>

⁷³ "How N-Pact Is Good for India", July 15, 2015, at <http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-how-n-pact-is-good-for-india-2104655>. Also see "Iran Deal to Ease Pressure on India Oil Bill", July 16, 2015, at <http://www.newindianexpress.com/business/news/Iran-Deal-to-Ease-Pressure-on-India-Oil-7/16/article2922407.ece>

A report released by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) titled, "How AIDS changed everything - MDG 6: 15 years, 15 lessons of hope from the AIDS response" states that from 2000-2014, India has reduced the spread of new HIV infections by 20 per cent. It has done so with the help of community-centred initiatives. India is home to 65 per cent of the HIV-related TB cases in the Asia-Pacific region, and supplies nearly 85 per cent of the antiretroviral medicines. India however continue to have among the highest number of new cases.⁷⁴

Pakistan requested the UN Military Observer Group on India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) to investigate border shelling and ceasefire violations by Indian troops which resulted in four deaths on its side across the Sialkot Working Boundary of Jammu and Kashmir. India had earlier raised the issue with Pakistan since Pakistani firing had resulted in the death of a civilian in the Akhnoor sector in Jammu region. The Secretary General's spokesperson, Stephane Dujarric, declined to comment on the request.⁷⁵ Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson, Vikas Swarup, said the UNMOGIP had no locus standi as the ceasefire line that it was monitor was converted into the Line of Control in 1972.⁷⁶

The Director General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, has raised concern over the death of the TV reporter Akshay Singh investigating the Vyapam examination scam in Madhya Pradesh. In the interest of freedom of expression, she urged the authorities to investigate the case well.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ "New HIV Infections Down by 20% in India: UN", July 15, 2015, at http://zeenews.india.com/news/health/health-news/new-hiv-infections-down-by-20-in-india-un_1630287.html

⁷⁵ "Pakistan Asks UN Observers to Investigate Border Fire by India", July 17, 2015, at <http://www.arabnews.com/news/777821>. Also see "UN Declines Comment On Indian Firing", July 17, 2015, at <http://nation.com.pk/national/17-Jul-2015/un-declines-comment-on-indian-firing>

⁷⁶ "MEA Brushes Aside Pak Bid To Approach UN for Alleged Ceasefire Violations", July 18, 2015, at http://zeenews.india.com/news/india/mea-brushes-aside-pak-bid-to-approach-un-for-alleged-ceasefire-violations_1632260.html

⁷⁷ "Vyapam Scam: UN Body Calls For Probe Into Death Of Journalist Akshay Singh", July 18, 2015, at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Vyapam-scam-UN-body-calls-for-probe-into-death-of-journalist-Akshay-Singh/articleshow/48121529.cms>