

# THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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## I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

### A. East Asia

#### China

(October 14-20)

- **China and Bangladesh discuss BCIM Economic Corridor; Chinese Navy begins a combat drill in the open sea of the West Pacific Ocean; Canadian Governor General visits China; President Xi Jinping has called for increased economic and strategic cooperation with Australia; China and Russia on October 18 agreed to expand pragmatic cooperation in a number of fields; China-Congo discuss defence cooperation; China responds to Japanese cabinet member's visit to the Yasukuni shrine; Li Keqiang meets the Prime Minister of Tanzania; Xi Jinping meets Myanmar's defense chief; China defends oil imports from Middle East; China-Vietnam discuss business co-operation; The Chinese President Xi Jinping met the speaker of the lower house of Kazakh Parliament; Russian Prime Minister to visit China next week**

According to reports, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with his Bangladesh counterpart Dipu Moni in Beijing on October 20 to push forward the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Economic Corridor. Wang said China cherishes the traditional friendship with Bangladesh and attaches importance to China-Bangladesh ties. China regards Bangladesh as a natural partner and important for China's opening up westward. He said China is willing to maintain high-level visits, deepen pragmatic cooperation and push forward the construction of the BCIM Economic Corridor with Bangladesh.<sup>1</sup>

In another development, the PLA Navy said the drill is in line with international laws and practices. As reported by the PLA Daily, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy has started a combat drill in the open sea of the West Pacific Ocean on October 18. This exercise will continue until the beginning of November. China's three fleets-North China Sea Fleet, East China Sea Fleet and South China Sea Fleet will participate in the exercises.<sup>2</sup>

Reports noted that President Xi Jinping met with the Canadian Governor General David Johnston. This was the first visit of the Canadian Governor General to China. They signed three agreements on dialogues mechanism on mineral resources, purchase of three aircrafts and sustainable energy development. Xi argued that China and Canada should increase their cooperation in the fields of energy, resources, environment and finance.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "China, Bangladesh to progress BCIM Economic Corridor" *China Daily*, October 20, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/20/content\\_17046669.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/20/content_17046669.htm)

<sup>2</sup> "PLA Navy begins West Pacific exercise" *China Daily*, October 19, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/19/content\\_17045682.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/19/content_17045682.htm)

<sup>3</sup> "China, Canada seek more energy ties" by Qin Jize and Zhou Wa, *China Daily*, October 19, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/19/content\\_17044770.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/19/content_17044770.htm)

According to reports, President Xi Jinping has called for increased economic and strategic cooperation with Australia, suggesting continued enthusiasm for a free trade agreement between the two nations. As he met visiting Governor-General of Australia Quentin Bryce in Beijing on October 17, Xi said the two nations should fully explore the potential in Sino-Australian cooperation.<sup>4</sup>

Reports noted that China and Russia on October 18 agreed to expand pragmatic cooperation in a number of fields as senior officials held meetings in Xi'an, capital city of Northwest China's Shaanxi province. Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang and his Russian counterpart Dmitry Rogozin co-chaired the 17th meeting of the joint commission for the regular meetings of heads of government of China and Russia.<sup>5</sup>

According to reports, Xu Qiliang, vice-chairman of China's Central Military Commission, met in Beijing on October 18 with Charles Richard Mondjo, the Republic of Congo's National Defense Minister. Xu said Chinese President Xi Jinping's successful visit to the Republic of Congo in March identified the direction for and injected new vitality into the development of bilateral relations. Noting that cooperation between the two military forces have been quite fruitful, he expressed the hope that the two sides will work together to take the existing friendship and cooperation to a higher level.<sup>6</sup>

According to reports, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying on October 18 responded to Japanese cabinet members' visit to the war-linked Yasukuni Shrine during its autumn festival by urging Japan to reflect on its history of aggression. About 160 Japanese lawmakers from a nonpartisan group on Friday morning worshipped at the shrine, which honors Japanese war dead, including 14 class-A war criminals.<sup>7</sup>

Reports noted that the Chinese Premier Li Keqiang met the Tanzanian Prime Minister Mizengo Pinda on October 17. Both sides agreed to strengthen their bilateral cooperation. It was also noted that 2014 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of China-Tanzania diplomatic relationship.<sup>8</sup>

According to reports, Chinese President Xi Jinping met with Min Aung Hlaing, commander-in-chief of Myanmar's Defense Services, on October 16 in Beijing. Xi, also chairman of the Central Military Commission, hailed the bilateral relationship and described China and Myanmar as "good neighbors, good friends and good partners".<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> "Xi calls for closer economic ties with Australia" By Zhao Yanrong, *China Daily*, October 18, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/18/content\\_17043220.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/18/content_17043220.htm)

<sup>5</sup> "China, Russia agree to push forward pragmatic co-op" *China Daily*, October 18, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/18/content\\_17044560.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/18/content_17044560.htm)

<sup>6</sup> "Republic of Congo military delegation in China" *China Daily*, October 18, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2013-10/18/content\\_17044532.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2013-10/18/content_17044532.htm)

<sup>7</sup> "China responds to Japan cabinet members' shrine visit" *China Daily*, October 18, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/18/content\\_17044464.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/18/content_17044464.htm)

<sup>8</sup> "Chinese premier meets Tanzanian prime minister" *China Daily*, October 17, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/17/content\\_17041668.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/17/content_17041668.htm)

<sup>9</sup> "Chinese president meets Myanmar defense chief" *China Daily*, October 16, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/16/content\\_17038011.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/16/content_17038011.htm)

In other developments, according to reports, the Chinese Foreign Ministry's spokeswoman on October 16 denied that China's increasing crude oil imports from the Middle East were against any third-party interests. Speaking at the ministry's daily media briefing, in response to a question on the matter, Hua Chunying said the energy cooperation between China and the Middle East is transparent and mutually beneficial, which is in the interests of both sides and is not against any third-party interests. As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, China has always played a positive and constructive role in the peace, security, development and prosperity of the Middle East, Hua said. According to the spokeswoman, it is clear to all that China has made tremendous efforts in supporting countries in the region to explore development paths in line with their own national conditions and improving their peoples' livelihood.<sup>10</sup>

According to reports, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on October 15 laid out a four-pronged proposal on further deepening business cooperation between his country and Vietnam. The rapidly growing economic and trade cooperation between China and Vietnam boasts great potential, and their common interests far outweigh their differences, Li said at a luncheon attended by Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung and representatives of the two countries' business communities.<sup>11</sup>

Reports noted that the Chinese President Xi Jinping met the speaker of the lower house of Kazakh Parliament, Nurlan Nigmatulin on October 15. During the meeting Xi said that, "The building of a Silk Road economic belt is in fundamental interests of China and Kazakhstan".<sup>12</sup>

According to reports, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev will pay an official visit to China from Oct 22 to 23 as a guest of Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying announced on October 10. During Medvedev's stay in Beijing, he and Li will co-chair the 18th regular meeting between the Chinese and Russian heads of government. Medvedev will also meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping.<sup>13</sup>

(October 21-27)

- **China and India sign landmark border agreement; The Beijing-Tokyo Forum urges for peaceful settlement of disputes and problems; The Beijing-Tokyo Forum says that security situation around the Diaoyu Islands was "not as serious" as the media make it out to be; Chinese Premier Li Keqiang: Great potential exists in trade, investment and people-to-people cooperation between China and ASEAN; China maintains that its drone training follows the international rules and regulations and law; Leaders from Russia, India and Mongolia**

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<sup>10</sup> "China FM defends Middle East oil imports" *China Daily*, October 16, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/16/content\\_17037832.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/16/content_17037832.htm)

<sup>11</sup> "Li raises proposals on China-Vietnam biz co-op" *China Daily*, October 16, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013livisiteastasia/2013-10/16/content\\_17035129.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013livisiteastasia/2013-10/16/content_17035129.htm)

<sup>12</sup> "Chinese president meets speaker of Kazakh parliament" *China Daily*, October 15, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/15/content\\_17034960.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/15/content_17034960.htm)

<sup>13</sup> "Russian PM to visit China next week" *China Daily*, October 14, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/14/content\\_17031681.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/14/content_17031681.htm)

**visits China; Chinese Vice-Premier urges for increased cooperation between China and EU; Iran's Parliament's speaker scheduled to visit China; China releases White Paper of Tibet's development; Chinese Premier Li Keqiang: Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev was a complete success**

According to reports, China and India made a major step forward in their ties on October 23 with an agreement on border defense cooperation and measures to promote regional economic integrity. After witnessing the signing of the border agreement with his Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh, Premier Li Keqiang said at a news conference that they believe "the two countries have more common interests than disagreements". The two countries have the ability to manage border disputes, Li said. Singh said the agreement "will add to the existing instruments to ensure peace, stability and predictability on our borders."<sup>14</sup>

According to reports, the Beijing-Tokyo Forum was held in China between October 26 and 27. Officials, diplomats and scholars from both the countries discussed issues and worked towards finding solution to the existing problems between the countries. It was concluded that both China and Japan should work towards peaceful settlement of disputes and problems. They agreed that shared interests should be maintained, unstable relations improved, and the deteriorating situation and confrontational feelings Chinese and Japanese harbor toward each other should be brought under control.<sup>15</sup> In addition to this it was also argued that the security situation around the Diaoyu Islands was "not as serious" as the media make it out to be. Yoji Kouda, the retired vice-admiral of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force said that, "Both Tokyo and Beijing knows full well that there is not any warship around the islands, and warships from both sides have always kept a distance to avoid direct contact".<sup>16</sup>

Reports noted that while meeting with the ASEAN trade minister's delegation on October 25, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang said that great potential exists in trade, investment and people-to-people cooperation between China and ASEAN. Li pledged China's willingness to build strategic trust with ASEAN countries, deepen all-round cooperation, upgrade the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area (CAFTA) and bring more benefits to people in the region.<sup>17</sup>

In response to Japanese claims that it will shoot down any drones that infringe into its airspace, the Chinese Defense Ministry spokesman Geng Yansheng said that the Chinese training and flight of its military aircraft as well as drones over the East China Sea is very much in line with the international law. Geng further added that the, "Chinese aircraft have never infringed on other

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<sup>14</sup> "China and India sign 'landmark' border pact" By Zhang Yunbi and Li Xiaokun, *China Daily*, October 24, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/24/content\\_17055248.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/24/content_17055248.htm)

<sup>15</sup> "Forum urges stable relations for China, Japan" By Cai Hong and Zhang Yunbi, *China Daily*, October 28, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/28/content\\_17061977.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/28/content_17061977.htm)

<sup>16</sup> "Military tension around Diaoyu Islands overstated" By Li Xiaokun, Zhang Yunbi and Pu Zhendong, *China Daily*, October 27, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/27/content\\_17061170.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/27/content_17061170.htm)

<sup>17</sup> "China underscores commitment to upgrading FTA with ASEAN" *China Daily*, October 27, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/27/content\\_17061085.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/27/content_17061085.htm)



countries' airspace and China never allows other countries' aircraft to infringe on China's airspace".<sup>18</sup>

According to reports, leaders of countries like Russia, India and Mongolia visited China last week. Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Mongolian Prime Minister Norov Altankhuyag visited Beijing and met the Chinese leaders. They discussed issues related to economic cooperation, people to people contact, border issues and political relations. The China Daily reported that it is first time since 1954 that reciprocal visits have been made between the Indian and the Chinese leaders within the same year. This visit was also the first visit of the Mongolian Prime Minister after he took over the office.<sup>19</sup>

According to reports, the Chinese Vice-Premier Ma Kai met the European Commission President Jose Manuel Borroso. The Chinese Vice-Premier stated that China and the European Union (EU) should undertake preparations for negotiations on an investment agreement and strengthen cooperation in the fields such as high technology. He also added that increasing cooperation between China and EU will benefit both the partners.<sup>20</sup>

Reports noted that Iran's speaker of Majlis (parliament) Ali Larijani will pay an official visit to China from Oct 29 to Nov 1, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), China's top legislature. Larijani will visit at the invitation of Zhang Dejiang, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee.<sup>21</sup>

In other developments, the Chinese Information Office of the State Council published the White Paper on the development and progress of Tibet on October 23.<sup>22</sup>

While addressing a press briefing after the meeting with the Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang said that the meeting was a complete success, adding that a number of new consensuses on boosting bilateral strategic cooperation were reached.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> "Chinese drone training in line with international law, practice" *China Daily*, October 27, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/27/content\\_17061083.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/27/content_17061083.htm)

<sup>19</sup> "China goes on diplomatic offense with leaders' visits" , *China Daily*, October 26, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/26/content\\_17060993.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/26/content_17060993.htm)

<sup>20</sup> "Chinese VP calls for strengthened co-op with EU" *China Daily*, October 26, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/26/content\\_17060337.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/26/content_17060337.htm)

<sup>21</sup> "Iran's parliamentary speaker to visit China" *China Daily*, October 25, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2013-10/25/content\\_17059265.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2013-10/25/content_17059265.htm)

<sup>22</sup> "Full Text: Development and Progress of Tibet" *China Daily*, October 22, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/22/content\\_17050578.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/22/content_17050578.htm)

<sup>23</sup> "China, Russia reach new consensuses" *China Daily*, October 22, 2013 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/22/content\\_17051492.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-10/22/content_17051492.htm)

## B. West Asia

### Iran

(October 14-20)

- **The deputy chairman of the Majlis: Iran would study the implementation of the additional protocol if West lifts all sanctions: The White House reported to be weighing a proposal to offer Iran access to US \$ 12 billion funds against steps to cut down on its nuclear programme**

According to reports, the deputy chairman of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, Mansour Haqiqatpour has said that the Majlis would study the implementation of the additional protocol to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) only after the West lifts all sanctions against Iran. The additional protocol allows unannounced inspection of the nuclear sites. He also said "Signing the additional protocol is a complicated issue. If we sign it, they may ask to inspect... the Parchin site which is a military facility. So I think the Westerners should take necessary confidence-building measures so that, after winning our full trust, we would study the protocol." It would be worth noting that Iran and world powers held talks over Tehran's nuclear programme in Geneva on October 15 and 16, 2013. The negotiations were held between representatives from Iran and the six major powers (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany, known as the 5+1 group).<sup>24</sup>

In another development, according to reports, Tehran stands to gain access to nearly \$50 billion if the Obama administration decides to free up \$12 billion of frozen Iranian assets in the US, inevitably followed by Europe's release of another \$35 billion. The White House was reported on October 18 to be weighing a proposal to offer Iran access to these funds "in installments" against "steps to cut down on its nuclear program." This plan offers Barack Obama a way to ease sanctions on Iran, while avoiding political and diplomatic fallout in Congress and from Jerusalem that would result from an attempt to get the sanctions legislation repealed or amended. The Iranian delegation advised the six world powers on the opposite side of the table to simply accept Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's fatwa as an ironclad pledge of the Islamic Republic's commitment to refrain from developing a nuclear weapon and continue to pursue a peaceful programme. Ahead of the next round of talks to be held on November 7-8, the Obama administration hopes to warm world opinion to the proposition that Iran's leaders, especially President Hassan Rouhani, Foreign Minister Javad Zarif and his deputy Abbas Araghchi, need more incentives for concessions. They must be able to show their doctrinaire colleagues at home that diplomacy and smiles win more than intransigence.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> "Majlis would study additional protocol once sanctions lifted: MP," *Mehr News Agency*, October 20, 2013, at <http://old.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1829439>

<sup>25</sup> "US to release \$12bn frozen Iranian assets followed by \$35 bn by Europe," *Mehr News Agency*, October 19, 2013, at <http://old.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1829402>



## Iraq

(October 14-20)

- **Fifteen people killed in suicide attacks in Iraq**

According to Iraqi official sources, suicide bombers targeted police and local officials in Rawa, northwest of Baghdad, killing eight people, while seven died in other attacks in Iraq. The attacks come as Iraq witnesses its worst violence since 2008. The dead from suicide bombings included three members of the local council for the Rawa area of Anbar province, three police, a child and another person, while 28 people were wounded. Police Captain Mohammed Ahmed al-Rawi said two suicide bombers on foot and another driving a vehicle rigged with explosives attacked the police headquarters for the area, while another driving a vehicle hit an army checkpoint at the town's entrance. Another three bombers on foot and a fourth in a vehicle attacked the local administrative headquarters. Local council member Suhaib al-Rawi said officials were meeting at the building when the bombers struck. Militants, including those linked to Al Qaeda, frequently target Iraqi security forces and other government employees.<sup>26</sup>

## Central Asia

(October 14-20)

- **Suspected members of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) held in Tajikistan; Memorandum on Co-operation on Mass Communication Services signed between Kazakhstan and China**

According to reports, three persons accused of being members of the outlawed Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) have been detained in Sughd Province in northern Tajikistan, the Tajik Interior Ministry's regional department for the fight against organized crime said in a press release on October 17.<sup>27</sup>

According to reports at a meeting of parliamentarians from Kazakhstan and China held in Beijing on October 16<sup>th</sup> 2013, the President of Kazakhstan Nurlan Nigmatullin and the Chairman of China's Committee of the National People's Congress (NPCSC) Zhang Dejiang have signed a memorandum of cooperation on Mass Communication Services. The Memorandum of cooperation will enable the two sides to have parliament committees and cooperation groups exchange expertise and best practices and render mutual support within international parliamentary organizations. "The Memorandum seeks to render legislation support to strategic agreements reached between the two nations' leaders", Nigmatullin noted.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> "Iraq suicide bombings kill 15," *Khaleej Times*, October 20, 2013, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/middleeast/2013/October/middleeast\\_October205.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/middleeast/2013/October/middleeast_October205.xml&section=middleeast)

<sup>27</sup> "Three extremism suspects hold in Tajikistan", *Times of Central Asia* October 18, 2013 at <http://www.timesca.com/index.php/m-news-by-category/politics-analyses-and-opinions/12013-three-extremism-suspects-hold-in-tajikistan>

<sup>28</sup> "Kazakhstan's Majilis and China's NPCSC sign memorandum of understanding", *Tengri News* October 16, 2013 at [http://en.tengrinews.kz/politics\\_sub/Kazakhstans-Majilis-and-Chinas-NPCSC-sign-memorandum-of-understanding-23331/](http://en.tengrinews.kz/politics_sub/Kazakhstans-Majilis-and-Chinas-NPCSC-sign-memorandum-of-understanding-23331/)

## Russia

(October 14-20)

- **Russian and Iranian diplomats hold meeting; Russia and US discuss developments in Middle East; Russia begins weapons shipments to Iraq; Russia welcomes Syria's decision to join OPCW; Russia's defence minister concludes his visit to Brazil and Peru; Visa free agreement between Russia and Bosnia and Herzegovina has come into force; Russia and Belgium discuss a range of issues; Russian and Ukrainian Prime Ministers hold 10th meeting of the Committee on Economic Cooperation of the Russian-Ukrainian Interstate Commission**

According to reports, Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov has met with his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araqchi on the sidelines of the talks between Iran and the sextet of international mediators (five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany).<sup>29</sup>

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov in his meeting, with U.S. Ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul held in Moscow on October 19, has discussed Iran's nuclear programme and chemical disarmament in Syria. They also discussed bilateral issues.<sup>30</sup>

The advisor of the Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Musawi has said that Russia has begun shipping military hardware to Iraq. A US\$ 4.2 billion contract was signed in 2012 for the supply of 40 Mi-35 and Mi-28 attack helicopters.<sup>31</sup>

Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Lukashevich has said that Russia 'lauds' Syria's joining of the Organization of the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Convention on Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has come into effect from October 14.<sup>32</sup>

In other developments, according to reports, Russia's Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu visited Brazil and Peru during October 14-17. Russia is negotiating the sale of Pantsir-S1 anti-aircraft missile and gun ground-based system with Brazil and establishment of a comprehensive military-technical cooperation.<sup>33</sup>

An agreement on visa-free mutual trips for citizens of Russia and Bosnia and Herzegovina has come into force on October 20, 2013. Under the new agreement, the two countries' citizens can stay on each other's territory for 30 days within every 60 days from the date of the first entry.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>29</sup> "Russian and Iranian top diplomats meet on sidelines of Iran-Sextet talks", Itar-Tass, October 15, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/913185.html>

<sup>30</sup> "Russian, US diplomats discuss Iran's nuclear programme, chemical disarmament in Syria", Itar-Tass, October 19, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/918483.html>

<sup>31</sup> "Russia begins weapon shipments to Iraq", Itar-Tass, October 17, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/916695.html>

<sup>32</sup> "Russia lauds Syria's joining of OPCW", Itar-Tass, October 17, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/916264.html>

<sup>33</sup> "Russia's defence minister tells reporters about his first official visits to Brazil, Peru", Itar-Tass, October 19, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/918328.html>

<sup>34</sup> "Visa-free agreement between Russia, Bosnia and Herzegovina comes into force", Itar-Tass, October 10, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/918698.html>

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in a meeting, held in Brussels on 15 October, with his Belgium counterpart Didier Reynders, has discussed a range of issues. These include visa regime, international developments and economic ties.<sup>35</sup>

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev and his Ukrainian counterpart Nikolai Azarov on October 15, held the 10th meeting of the Committee on Economic Cooperation of the Russian-Ukrainian Interstate Commission. Some key issues discussed during the meeting included trade, investment, transportation, aerospace industry, nuclear energy, natural gas, agriculture and Ukraine's EU Association Agreement.<sup>36</sup>

(October 21-27)

- **Prime Minister Medvedev pays an official visit to China; Russia-NATO Council meeting at Defence Ministers level held; Russia and Netherlands discuss the situation over Russian Embassy in Hague; Russia's Air Force Commander pays an official visit to Iran; Duma urges US to lift Cuba's blockade; Russia has put into operation the Kirinsky gas and condensate field on the shelf of Sakhalin Island; Russian Investigative Committee mitigates charges against Greenpeace activists; Vikramaditya to be transferred to India on November 16 this year; Russia criticises Latvia's calls to tear down WWII memorial in Riga; Russia begins testing of a new hypersonic missile; Ukraine's chances of joining Customs Union will decline if it signs an association agreement with European Union; Russia's Proton-M carrier rocket launched from Baikonur; Russia and US have discuss plans to convene the Geneva II peace conference on Syria; Syria seeks to develop closer economic ties with Russia; Russia delivers humanitarian aid for Syrian refugees in Iraq; Russia to increase its military presence in Kyrgyzstan; Council of CIS Foreign Ministers Meeting held in Minsk; Supreme Eurasian Economic Council meeting held; Russian government drafts a proposal for monitoring the internet**

According to reports, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev visited China on an official trip during October 21-23. Apart from participating in the 18th regular meeting between heads of government of the two states, he also met members of PRC. A total of 20 agreements were signed which include bilateral economic, investment, nuclear, energy, hydrocarbon and humanitarian cooperation. Developments in Syria were also discussed.<sup>37</sup>

Russia's Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu has said that the Russia-NATO Council is concerned over the evolving situation in Afghanistan. His comments were made in the backdrop of a session of Russia-NATO Council at Defence ministers' level held on October 23. Other issues discussed include Anti Ballistic Missile deployment, fight against terrorism, plans for joint exercises and interaction on logistical support.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> "RF foreign minister to discuss in Belgium Moscow-Brussels relations, international issues", "Itar-Tass, October 15, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/912408.html>

<sup>36</sup> "Russian and Ukrainian foreign ministers to hold talks in Kaluga", Itar-Tass, October 15, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/912496.html>

<sup>37</sup> "Medvedev to pay official visit to China", Itar-Tass, October 21, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/919220.html>

<sup>38</sup> "RNC Defence ministers to focus on Afghanistan, ABM, maneuvers, anti-terror", Itar-Tass, October 23, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/922217.html>

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte discussed, over a telephonic conversation held on October 21, the recent irritants in their bilateral relations. The negotiators of both sides also shared their views on the ongoing Russian-Dutch cross years and gave a positive assessment to the events within the programme of the cross years.<sup>39</sup>

Russia's Air Force Commander Viktor Bondarev has paid an official visit to Iran wherein bilateral military cooperation was discussed. Some of the deals agreed in principle include cooperation in training of military pilots, technical maintenance of missiles and radar air defence systems and expert experience exchanges. However, delivery of S-300 air defence systems was not part of the agenda.<sup>40</sup>

According to reports, Russia's state legislature 'Duma' has urged the international community to demand lifting the American blockade of Cuba. This was the 11th similar resolution of the Duma.<sup>41</sup>

Russia has put into operation the Kirinsky gas and condensate field on the shelf of Sakhalin Island. The field which is owned by Gazprom and located in the Sea of Okhotsk at about 28 kms from Sakhalin shore is to become a resource base for the Vladivosotk-LNG project. The prospected reserves of the gas-field amount to 162.5 billion cubic metres of gas and 19.1 million tonnes of gas condensate. The projected production is estimated to be 5.5 billion cubic metres a year.<sup>42</sup>

Russian Investigative Committee has mitigates charges against Greenpeace activists from piracy to more lenient 'hooliganism'. The activists were arrested for staging protests in the Russian offshore oil drilling rig Prirazlomnaya.<sup>43</sup>

Aircraft carrier Vikramaditya will be transferred to India on November 16 when a ceremony will be held at the Sevmash shipyard. It is expected to sail for India on November 30.<sup>44</sup>

Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Lukashevich has said that Moscow is deeply outraged with "the cynical statement" made by Latvia's Minister of Justice Jānis Bordāns, in which he called for bringing down Riga's Memorial to Soviet Liberators.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> "Putin, Dutch prime minister discuss situation over Russian embassy in Hague", Itar-Tass, October 21, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/920475.html>

<sup>40</sup> "Russian Air Force commander to meet with Iranian aerospace corps chief", Itar-Tass, October 21, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/919736.html>

<sup>41</sup> "Russian State Duma again urges US to lift Cuba's blockade", Itar-Tass, October 22, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/921766.html>

<sup>42</sup> "Putin to participate through video conf in opening Kirinsky gas condensate field on Sakhalin shelf", Itar-Tass, October 23, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/922160.html>

<sup>43</sup> "Russian Investigative Committee mitigates charge against Greenpeace activists to hooliganism", Itar-Tass, October 23, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/923529.html>

<sup>44</sup> "Aircraft carrier Vikramaditya to be transferred to India's Navy on November 16", Itar-Tass, October 23, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/923410.html>

<sup>45</sup> "Moscow is outraged over Latvia's calls to tear down WWII memorial in Riga", Itar-Tass, October 23, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/923261.html>

According to reports, Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin has announced that Russia has started testing a new hypersonic weapon.<sup>46</sup>

President Putin has declared that Ukraine cannot become a member of Customs Union if it signs the Association Agreement with the European Union.<sup>47</sup>

A Russian Proton-M carrier rocket with a Briz-M booster and a U.S. Sirium FM-6 radio satellite has been successfully launched from the Baikonur space pad in Kazakhstan on October 25.<sup>48</sup>

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, in a telephonic conversation (held on October 26) with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, has discussed plans to convene the Geneva II peace conference on Syria. The conference is expected to take place at the end of November while the Russia-U.S.-U.N. consultative meeting will be held in Geneva on November 5.<sup>49</sup>

In other developments, according to reports, Syrian Deputy Minister of Economy Hayan Solaiman has said that Syria is looking to develop closer economic cooperation with Russia. He added that the share of Russian imports by Syria has reached 15 per cent (from five per cent before the beginning of war) and will reach 35 per cent within the next two years. Bilateral trade has increased by 40 per cent in 2012. Moreover, Syria has also applied for membership to the Customs Union and is interested in joining BRICS and SCO.<sup>50</sup>

Russia has provided urgent humanitarian assistance (37 tonnes) for Syrian refugees living in Iraq.<sup>51</sup>

Russia has declared that the number of combat planes stationed at Kant airbase in Kyrgyzstan will be doubled in the near future.<sup>52</sup>

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said that in a Council of CIS Foreign Ministers meeting held in Minsk on October 25, a number of issues of international concern were discussed. These include the situation in Syria, prospects for cooperation in Afghanistan and interaction with the UN and OSCE.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> "Russia begins testing of hypersonic weapons", Itar-Tass, October 23, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/923182.html>

<sup>47</sup> "Putin says Ukraine may not join Customs Union after signing Association Agreement with EU", Itar-Tass, October 24, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/925283.html>

<sup>48</sup> "Russia's Proton-M carrier rocket with US Sirius FM-6 satellite launched from Baikonur", Itar-Tass, October 25, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/927384.html>

<sup>49</sup> "Lavrov, Kerry discuss international conference on peaceful settlement in Syria", Itar-Tass, October 26, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/928237.html>

<sup>50</sup> "Syria seeks to develop economic cooperation with Russia", Itar-Tass, October 22, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/921510.html>

<sup>51</sup> "Russia delivers humanitarian aid for Syrian refugees in Iraq", Itar-Tass, October 23, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/922815.html>

<sup>52</sup> "Twice as many Russian Air Force planes to be based in Kyrgyzstan", Itar-Tass, October 26, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/927774.html>

<sup>53</sup> "CIS foreign ministers focus on foreign policy cooperation – Lavrov", Itar-Tass, October 25, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/925590.html>



A Supreme Eurasian Economic Council meeting, comprising of Presidents of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan has taken place in Minsk on October 24. Among the documents signed include agreements on integration of development areas, work on the draft Eurasian Economic Union treaty, Armenia's accession to the Customs Union and the Common Economic Space.<sup>54</sup>

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) has drafted a proposal which will allow it to monitor the internet. This includes getting access to internet history, phone numbers, IP-addresses, account names and emails of social network users.<sup>55</sup>

## II. DEFENCE REVIEW

### National

(October 14-20)

- **DRDO to display latest defence products at ADEX- 2013 in Seoul; Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel INS Sunayna commissioned into the Indian navy**

According to reports, for the first time India will display during an international event its latest, state-of-the-art weapon systems, platforms, sensors, communication systems and equipment designed and developed by DRDO (Defence Research & Development Organization). DRDO, along with its production partners will display India's strength and expertise in design, development and production of such items at the International Aerospace and Defence Exhibition ADEX-2013 schedule to be held at KINTEX, Seoul, South Korea from 29 Oct to 3 Nov 2013. More than 30 countries are participating in this event.<sup>56</sup>

In another development, according to reports, INS Sunayna, the second of the NOPV (Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel) class of ship was commissioned at Kochi on October 15. INS Sunayna will be based at Kochi under Southern Naval Command. It is built at Goa Shipyard Limited. Sunayna will meet the increasing ocean surveillance and patrolling requirements of the Indian Navy. The warship is designed to undertake fleet support operations, coastal and offshore patrolling, ocean surveillance and monitoring of Sea Lines of Communications and offshore assets, and escort duties. INS Sunayna can achieve speeds in excess of 25 knots. The ship is fitted with the latest Navigation, Communication and Electronic Support Systems. INS Sunayna can also carry a helicopter.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> "Supreme Eurasian Economic Council meeting", President of Russia, October 24, 2013, <http://eng.kremlin.ru/news/6169>

<sup>55</sup> "Russia's Federal Security Service to take control over internet users, media reports say", Itar-Tass, October 21, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/919481.html>

<sup>56</sup> "India to Display Latest Products at Adex 2013 in Seoul," PIB, October 17, 2013, at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=100085>

<sup>57</sup> "INS Sunayna to Extend SNC's Reach," PIB, October 15, 2013, at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=100058>



(October 21-27)

- **Second bi annual Air Force Commanders' Conference begins in New Delhi; Indian Air Force launches its 3 G cellular network named AFCEL**

According to reports, the second bi annual Air Force Commanders' Conference for the year 2013 began at Air Headquarters, New Delhi on October 22. The theme for this four day conference is 'Aircraft and Systems Maintenance and Operational and Training Issues.' Addressing the Commanders' Air Chief Marshal NAK Browne said, "We must consolidate our newly acquired aircraft and equipment towards maintaining a High Operational Status at all times." Emphasising on the role of Human resource in the overall process of modernisation the Chief said, "When, Air Warriors, our most important asset, are happy and motivated, it clearly indicates that we are moving in the right direction."<sup>58</sup>

In another development, according to reports, the Indian Air Force launched its 3 G Cellular Network named AFCEL (Air Force Cellular) on October 25. The IAF has thus become the first among the services to have commissioned its own captive 3 G network. The AFCEL is a pan India project. The Air Chief Marshal NAK Browne launched the Phase I of AFCEL in the National Capital Region. The Chief said that AFCEL will form a crucial component of IAF's network centric operations delivering timely and accurate information to our air warriors. The IAF through AFCEL aims to bring all its units and stations under the overarching umbrella of 3 G connectivity. While Phase I of the project will ensure mobile connectivity to all air warriors in the National Capital Region, Phase II will cover the rest of the bases. AFCEL has been customised for Defence requirements and is a full IP network with stringent quality of service, high quality voice and data solutions.<sup>59</sup>

## International

(October 14-20)

- **Chemical weapons watchdog OPCW says its inspectors have checked 11 out of 20 sites identified by Syria; Recent US government shutdown cost the US Defense Department at least \$600 million in lost productivity**

According to reports, the world's chemical weapons watchdog, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has said that its inspectors have checked 11 out of 20 sites identified by Syria as it works to eliminate Syria's banned weapons. "The OPCW mission has now conducted verification activities at a total of 11 sites that are identified by Syria's disclosure," the Hague-based Organisation said. The inspectors of the chemical watchdog, which last week was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize arrived in Syria two weeks ago. The OPCW and the United Nations now have about 60 experts working in Syria to eradicate chemical weapons, around a month after the

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<sup>58</sup> "IAF Focusses on 'Maintenance and Training' as IAF's Commanders' Conference Gets Underway," PIB, October 22, 2013, at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=100162>

<sup>59</sup> "To Link Air Warriors Across the Nation IAF Launches its 3 G WCDMA Cellular Network Project," PIB, October 25, 2013, at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=100250>

OPCW accepted Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's application to join the Chemical Weapons Convention amid fear of a possible Western military strike.<sup>60</sup>

Meanwhile, reports say that the recent US government shutdown cost the US Defense Department at least \$600 million in lost productivity. Pentagon Comptroller Robert Hale has said, "There were a number of other costs where I can't put a number on them... I can't quantify those, but it's at least the \$600 million to start with in essentially lost productivity." However, Hale is hopeful and said that "we will be able to catch up reasonably quickly."<sup>61</sup>

(October 21-27)

- **OPCW: Syria has handed over on time a detailed plan to destroy its chemical stockpile; Russia to expand its airbase in Kyrgyzstan**

According to reports, Syria has handed over on time a detailed plan to destroy its chemical stockpile to the international watchdog OPCW. "On 24 October 2013, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted to the OPCW its formal initial declaration covering its chemical weapons program," the watchdog said in a statement. Syria had until Sunday to do so. Syria was required to submit the destruction plan under a US-Russian deal agreed last month that headed off military strikes on Syria. The accord also gives Syria up to mid-2014 to destroy its chemical arsenal. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's regime has already handed over an inventory of its chemical weapons and facilities.<sup>62</sup>

In another development, according to reports, Russia will expand its airbase in Kyrgyzstan at the end of the year ahead of the shutdown of a US base in the country. The number of planes at Russia's Kant airbase in the country is likely to double by December this year. The Kant airbase last year was a source of disagreement between Kyrgyzstan and Russia. However in September this year Russia and Kyrgyzstan signed an agreement allowing the former to continue operations at Kant until 2032 in exchange for Russia's waiving off nearly half a billion dollars in debt owed by Kyrgyzstan. The Kant airbase, located about 20 kilometers from Bishkek, currently has 10 Sukhoi fighters, two Mi-8 helicopters, and about a dozen other transport and training airplanes. It is Russia's only airbase in Central Asia.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> "Chemical Watchdog: 11 of 20 Syria Sites Checked," Defense News, October 16, 2013, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20131016/DEFREG04/310160010/Chemical-Watchdog-11-20-Syria-Sites-Checked>

<sup>61</sup> "Comptroller: US Shutdown Cost DoD \$600M in Productivity," Defense News, October 17, 2013, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20131017/DEFREG02/310170017/Comptroller-US-Shutdown-Cost-DoD-600M-Productivity>

<sup>62</sup> "OPCW: Syria Submitted Chemical Arms Destruction Plan On Time," Defense News, October 27, 2013, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20131027/DEFREG04/310270008/OPCW-Syria-Submitted-Chemical-Arms-Destruction-Plan-Time>

<sup>63</sup> "Official: Russia To Expand Kyrgyzstan Military Airbase," Defense News, October 27, 2013, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20131027/DEFREG03/310270006/Official-Russia-Expand-Kyrgyzstan-Military-Airbase>