

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Bangladesh

- **Bangladesh agreed to allow India to use its water and land territory for transporting food grains to Northeast India; PM Hasina visits Thailand**

According to reports, Bangladesh has agreed to allow New Delhi to use its water and land territory for transporting food grains to the mountainous northern states of India. "India is being allowed to ferry 10,000 tonnes of rice on humanitarian ground," Commerce Secretary Mahbub Ahmed said, adding that a decision in this regard has already been made by the shipping ministry. According to shipping ministry sources, the decision to allow India to transship food grains was taken at a meeting at the ministry on April 29.¹

In another development, according to reports, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina made a visit to Thailand on May 19, 2013 to attend the Second Asia Pacific Water Summit. Ms. Hasina addressed the opening session of the summit on May 20 at Chiang Mai International Convention and Exhibition Centre.²

Sri Lanka

- **Exchange of Sri Lankan and Indian fishermen released from each other's side; JMSDF ships makes goodwill visit to Sri Lanka; Sri Lanka to obtain a US\$ 580 million loan from China**

According to reports, Sri Lanka Navy on May 23 assisted the exchange of Sri Lankan and Indian fishermen released from each other's side. Sri Lanka Naval Vessels Abeetha II and P 450 attached to the Northern Naval Command brought home twenty two Sri Lankan fishermen released from India along with their boats after they were handed over by the Indian Coast Guard ship "Rani Abbakka" at the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) off Kankasanthurai. In return, twenty six Indian fishermen, who were arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy on April 5, were handed over to the Indian Coast Guard ship along with their five fishing trawlers.³

Reports noted that two Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) ships, "Suzunami" and "Kirisame" arrived at the Port of Trincomalee on May 20 on a goodwill and supply visit.⁴

¹ "Dhaka to let New Delhi transship foodgrains", *The Daily Star*, May 26, 2013 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/beta2/news/dhaka-to-let-new-delhi-transship-foodgrains/>.

² "PM reaches Chiang Mai : Water summit starts today", *The Daily Star*, May 20, 2013 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/beta2/news/pm-reaches-chiang-mai/>.

³ "Sri Lanka Navy assists exchange of released Sri Lankan and Indian fishermen", *The Colombo Page*, May 24, 2013 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_13A/May24_1369380611CH.php.

⁴ "Two Japanese warships in Trinco", *The Daily Mirror*, May 20, 2013 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/29712-two-japanese-warships-in-colombo.html>.

In other developments, the Sri Lankan government will obtain a US\$ 580 million loan from China this year for the development projects in the country. The government has received the cabinet approval to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between Sri Lanka's Ministry of Finance and Planning and the China Development Bank Corporation for the loan. President Mahinda Rajapaksa in his capacity as the Minister of Finance and Planning has made the proposal to the cabinet in this regard.⁵

Maldives

- **Director General of South Asia Department of the Asian Development Bank met President; UNFPA Country Director met President**

Reports noted that Director General of South Asia Department of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Mr Juan Miranda has paid a courtesy call on President Dr Mohamed Waheed. During the meeting held at the President's Office on May 22, discussions were focused on the current economic challenges facing the country. In this regard, President Waheed briefed Mr Miranda on the measures being undertaken by the government to minimise the government expenditure.⁶

In another development, reports noted that United Nation's Population Fund's (UNFPA) Country Director Ms Lene Christiansen met with President Dr Mohamed Waheed on May 22 at the President's Office.⁷

B. East Asia

Southeast Asia

- **Taiwan protests Philippine ships in disputed areas; Philippines and Taiwan to launch independent probes; Twelve killed in clashes with militants in Philippines; Protests held against electoral frauds in Malaysia; Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visits Myanmar; Bomb blasts in southern Thailand kill five**

According to reports, Taiwan registered its protest to the Philippines for sending naval ships to disputed South China Sea islands in the latest diplomatic spat between the two governments on May 25. Amid widespread public outrage on the island, Taiwan's government has rejected repeated apologies from the Philippines and announced a series of economic sanctions against the country, including banning the entry of any more workers. Taiwan has also recalled its de facto envoy and held a military exercise in waters near the northern Philippines recently.⁸

⁵ "Sri Lanka to get US\$ 580 million loan from China for development projects", *The Colombo Page*, May 23, 2013 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_13A/May23_1369293408CH.php.

⁶ "ADB Director General for South Asia calls on the President", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, May 22, 2013 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=12836>.

⁷ "UNFPA Country Director Meets the President", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, May 22, 2013 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=12833>.

⁸ "Taiwan protests Philippine ships in disputed waters", *Malaysia Sun*, May 25, 2013, <http://www.malaysiasun.com/index.php/sid/214759872/scat/ce3f552cecabceb8>

In another development, according to reports, investigators from the Philippines and Taiwan will fly to each other's country on May 27 to begin a parallel probe into the shooting death of a Taiwanese fisherman by a Philippine maritime patrol. A group of eight Philippine National Bureau of Investigation officials, led by Foreign Liaison Office head agent Daniel Deganzo, will arrive in Taipei for a probe that is expected to last four or five days. The Philippine investigators, including forensic, autopsy and firearms experts, will examine the Kuang Ta Hsing No. 28, a Taiwanese fishing boat attacked by a Philippine government boat on May 9.⁹

Reports noted that twelve people were killed in the Philippines on May 25, as troops clashed with a militant group blamed for the country's deadliest terror attacks. The fighting left seven Philippine marines dead and nine wounded on the remote southern island of Jolo. Five members of Abu Sayyaf were also killed in the firefight. The wounded marines were airlifted to a military hospital in the southern port of Zamboanga. The Abu Sayyaf group, responsible for the attacks, is on the US government's list of foreign terrorist organizations.¹⁰

According to reports, tens of thousands of people rallied near Kuala Lumpur against alleged electoral fraud, further raising the political temperature after divisive recent polls. The latest in a series of protest rallies over the May 5 elections which the opposition said were won fraudulently. There were no reports of any police action against the latest rally, which was to include speeches by top opposition figures including leader Anwar Ibrahim. Opposition speakers vowed to expose electoral fraud and keep up the pressure on the Barisan Nasional (National Front) government.¹¹

Reports noted that on May 26, Japan extended its first loan to Myanmar in 26 years and canceled the remainder of the Southeast Asian country's debt, as Tokyo looks to re-establish strong economic ties with the former pariah nation. The 51 billion yen (\$504 million) loan agreement was signed in Myanmar's capital, Naypyitaw, after Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met with Myanmar President Thein Sein. Abe arrived in Myanmar on May 24 on the first visit to the country by a Japanese leader in 36 years, a major part of Tokyo's effort to reassert its position as a top economic partner after decades of frosty relations with the previous military regime. Abe had met with Myanmar democracy icon and lawmaker Aung San Suu Kyi in the main city of Yangon on May 26.¹²

In other developments, according to reports, five paramilitary rangers were killed and one other wounded in an ambush when suspected rebels detonated a bomb buried in a road in Thailand's insurgency-plagued southern region. Police said the rangers were travelling in a pick-up truck to meet Muslim community leaders in the Saiburi district of Pattani, one of Thailand's southernmost

⁹ "Taiwan, Philippines to launch parallel probe into fisherman's death", *Focus Taiwan Channel*, May 26, 2013, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aall/201305260014.aspx>

¹⁰ "Philippine troops clash with militant group, 12 dead", *Taipei Times*, May 26, 2013, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2013/05/26/2003563191>

¹¹ "Thousands defy Malaysia govt to hold rally", *The Australian*, May 26, 2013, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/breaking-news/thousands-defy-malaysia-govt-to-hold-rally/story-fn3dxix6-1226650654514>

¹² "Japan gives Myanmar \$504 M loan, forgives remaining debt, as Tokyo looks to reassert itself", *The Washington Post*, May 26, 2013, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/japan-gives-myanmar-504m-loan-forgives-remaining-debt-as-tokyo-looks-to-reassert-itself/2013/05/26/011e6a4a-c5eb-11e2-9cd9-3b9a22a4000a_story.html#

provinces hit by a near-decade long rebellion which has claimed more than 5,500 lives. "Five rangers are dead, including the commander who was initially severely wounded," Sergeant Montri Prommee of Saiburi police said.¹³

Japan

- **Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe leaves for Myanmar, seeks stronger economic relations; Japan insists on concrete action from North Korea on denuclearization; Japan and Singapore to enhance bilateral cooperation**

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe left on a three day long trip to Myanmar on May 24. Abe is the first Japanese Prime minister to visit that country in 36 years.¹⁴ During his visit, Abe pledged to support Myanmar's democratic and economic advancement. He particularly expressed hope to extend assistance in the country's infrastructure development, especially its power grid, a high-speed communication network, transportation routes etc.¹⁵

In another development, the Japanese government has recently urged North Korea to take concrete action towards its own denuclearization. While stating that the North's recent willingness to hold dialogue with relevant parties is a 'positive move', Japanese government's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, on May 24, said that Tokyo would still not resume dialogue with Pyongyang unless the communist country takes some sincere steps towards denuclearization.¹⁶

During Singaporean Prime minister Lee Hsien Loong's recent visit to Tokyo, both Lee and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation. While emphasizing that both the countries share same basic values, Abe, on May 22, stated that Japan hopes to strengthen the bilateral relations with Singapore to jointly work towards peace and security in the Asia-Pacific.¹⁷

South Korea

- **South Korean President extends full support to boost defense industry; South Korea is to extend humanitarian aid to North Korea if inter-Korean dialogue resumes**

South Korean President Park Geun-hye, on May 22, pledged to offer extensive support towards localizing and modernizing weapons systems within the country. She also urged the defence

¹³ "Bomb kills five rangers in thailand's restive south", *The Strait Times*, May 24, 2013, <http://www.straitstimes.com/breaking-news/se-asia/story/bomb-kills-five-rangers-thailands-restive-south-20130524>

¹⁴ "Abe leaves for talks with Myanmar leaders", *The Yomiuri daily*, May 25, 2013, at <http://the-japan-news.com/news/article/0000254057>

¹⁵ "Visiting Abe assures Myanmar of support from 'whole of Japan'", *The Yomiuri Daily*, May 26, 2013, at <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2013/05/26/national/visiting-abe-assures-myanmar-of-support-from-whole-of-japan/#.UaSNIdJHKDk>

¹⁶ "Govt seeks concrete actions from North Korea", *The Yomiuri Daily*, May 25, 2013, at <http://the-japan-news.com/news/article/0000254066>

¹⁷ "Abe, Lee to increase bilateral cooperation", *The Yomiuri Daily*, may 23, 2013, at <http://the-japan-news.com/news/article/0000247672>

industry to contribute towards the country's economic advancement as a central engine of 'creative economy'. On North Korea, she affirmed that Seoul would not provide any assistance or concessions in response to North Korean saber-rattling.¹⁸

In other developments, according to reports, the South Korean government, on May 21 has pledged to offer humanitarian aid to North Korea if inter-Korean dialogue resumes. This announcement is in line with South Korean President Park's policy that insists on dialogue and exchange to build trust between the two countries.¹⁹

North Korea

- **North Korea denounces US ballistic missile test; North Korean envoy visits Beijing**

North Korea, on May 26, condemned the test carried out by the US of its intercontinental ballistic missile, named Minuteman 3 from a California base as part of the country's test flight aimed at determining weapon accuracy. While terming the test as 'military provocation', Pyongyang justified its own military buildup, including ballistic missiles, "in order to secure final victory in an all-out war against the US." Pyongyang also alleged the US of maintaining a double standard as it contradicts Washington's argument that Pyongyang recent missile test was a violation of international law.²⁰

In another development, according to reports, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's special envoy Choe Ryong-hae, arrived in Beijing on a three-day long visit on May 24 to deliver Pyongyang's willingness to re-join long-suspended six-party talks on ending its nuclear programs.²¹

C. West Asia

Jordan

- **Jordan seeks to deploy Patriot missiles on its territory after a similar move by Turkey**

According to reports, Jordan, which shares borders with war-torn Syria, said on May 26 that it is in talks with "friendly countries" to deploy Patriot missiles on its territory after a similar move by Turkey. "Jordan wishes to deploy Patriot missile batteries in order to boost its defence capabilities and help protect the country," Information Minister Mohammad Momani told a news

¹⁸ "President pledges full support for boosting defense industry", The Korea Herald, May 22, 2013, at <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130522000906>

¹⁹ "Seoul to offer humanitarian aid to N.K. if dialogue reopens", The Korea Herald, May 22, 2013, at <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130522000982>

²⁰ "North Korea condemns US ballistic missile test", The Korea Herald, May 26, 2013, at <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130526000393>

²¹ "Kim Jong-un's special envoy meets Chinese president", The Korea Herald, May 24, 2013, at <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130524000780>

conference. "We are currently at the stage of talks with friendly states," said Momani, who is also government spokesman, declining to elaborate. Jordan, home to more than 500,000 Syrian refugees, has similar concerns as Turkey. "We wish and we demand Patriot missiles. We always talk about this because we want to protect ourselves," Jordan's Prime Minister Abdullah Nsur said last week.²²

Israel

- **Israeli President urges resumption of peace talks**

According to reports, Israel's president on May 26 enthusiastically urged Israeli and Palestinian leaders to resume peace negotiations, a process his counterpart said was being undermined by ongoing settlement construction in the West Bank. Israeli President Shimon Peres and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas spoke at the culmination of the World Economic Forum meeting on the shores of the Dead Sea in Jordan. During the conference, Peres and Abbas met for a rare face-to-face conversation, along with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, who has devoted much of the past two months to restarting long-stalled peace talks. "What holds back the renewal of the peace negotiation are some gaps in the bridge between the beginning and the conclusion. Knowing very well the nature of the missing link, I am convinced that this gap can be bridged," Peres said, calling on leaders of both sides to advance peace initiatives. However, the Palestinians noted that there is no point in negotiating while Israel continues to build Jewish settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which undermines their quest to create a meaningful sovereign state. Abbas reiterated this while speaking at the World Economic Forum. Ongoing Israeli construction in the West Bank and East Jerusalem is "unbearable" and will put an "end to the possibility of the two-state solution." Abbas also said Israel refused to discuss the issue of Palestinian refugees, who have been scattered throughout the Middle East since the creation of Israel 65 years ago.²³

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

National

- **India successfully test-fires the 290-km range BrahMos supersonic cruise missile; Indian National Defence University's foundation stone laid**

Reports noted that India on May 22 successfully test-fired the 290-km range BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from the Navy's latest guided missile frigate INS Tarkash off the Goa coast. The target was successfully hit by the missile. BrahMos Aerospace chief Sivathanu Pillai said, "The launch was carried out by the Navy as part of Acceptance Test Firing (ATF) of the ship."

²² "Jordan seeks to deploy Patriot missiles: minister", *The Daily Star*, May 26, 2013 at <http://dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/May-26/218386-jordan-seeks-to-deploy-patriot-missiles-minister.ashx#axzz2USrKYRwZ>

²³ "Peres urges return to peace talks, Abbas sceptical", *The Daily Star*, May 27, 2013 at <http://dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/May-27/218432-peres-urges-return-to-peace-talks-abbas-skeptical.ashx#axzz2USrKYRwZ>

Importantly, the vertical launch configuration of the supersonic BrahMos missile enhances the stealth capabilities of the ship as the missiles are under the deck and not exposed. BrahMos is jointly developed by India and Russia and is capable of carrying a conventional warhead of 300 kg.²⁴

In a significant development, according to reports, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh laid the foundation stone for the Indian National Defence University (INDU) at Binola, Gurgaon in Haryana on May 23.

The proposed Indian National Defence University spreads over more than two hundred acres of land. It will be fully functional by 2018. INDU will be set up as a fully autonomous institution to be constituted under an Act of Parliament. While the President of India would act as the Visitor, the Defence Minister will be its Chancellor. INDU

has been set up on the recommendation of Kargil Review Committee, headed by eminent strategic expert Shri K Subrahmanyam. The university would prepare officers for high level leadership, staff & policy responsibilities. National College of Defence Studies (NCDS), Indian Institute of Defence Technology (IIT), Indian Institute of Defence Management (IIDM) and Defence Institute of Distance & Open Learning (DIDOL) would be the constituent colleges and institutions of the INDU.²⁵

International

- **Iran's defence minister denies charges that the country has sent military forces to Syria; Turkey is likely to become exporter of arms**

According to reports, Iran's defence minister has insisted that the country has never sent military forces to Syria, a claim made by western powers backing Syrian rebels. The Iranian Defence minister Ahmad Vahidi said in a statement, "The Islamic Republic of Iran has never sent military forces to Syria and will never do so." He added further that "Iran does not believe in sending military troops to Syria based on its policies towards the resolution of the conflict."²⁶

In another development, according to reports, two Turkish companies are in separate talks with Saudi Arabia and Indonesia to co-produce and sell scores of new-generation battle tanks, officials and industry sources said in Ankara. The deals would signal Turkey's ability to produce vehicles for export after years of being an arms importer. At the same time, a deal with the Saudis would politically cement ties with Turkey against the Iranian-led Shia bloc of countries, sources said. They said Turkish armored vehicles maker Otokar could sell hundreds of its third-generation

²⁴ "BrahMos supersonic cruise missile successfully test-fired", The Hindu, May 22, 2013, at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/brahmos-supersonic-cruise-missile-successfully-testfired/article4739027.ece>

²⁵ "Prime Minister Lays the Foundation Stone of Indian National Defence University," PIB, May 23, 2013, at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=96158>

²⁶ "Iran Denies Sending 'Military Forces' to Support Syrian Regime," Defense News, May 25, 2013, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20130525/DEFREG04/305250011/Iran-Denies-Sending-Military-Forces-Support-Syrian-Regime>

tank, the Altay. Meanwhile, rival manufacturer FNSS Defence Systems is close to inking a deal to co-produce medium tanks with an Indonesian partner. Otokar designed and is producing prototypes of the Altay in a deal to sell four 250-unit batches to the Turkish military.²⁷

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

Jammu & Kashmir

- **Prime Minister's Office (PMO) to review schemes implementation in Jammu & Kashmir; Prime Minister to visit Kashmir in June; Lashker-e-Toiba (LeT) commander killed in Srinagar; Soldiers and militants killed in gunfight at Tral, South Kashmir; Project Umeed to be announced in Kashmir; Palhallan, North Kashmir witnesses clashes and shutdown; Firing at LoC leaves a Brigadier and Colonel injured**

Reports noted that the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is scheduled to undertake the review of Prime Minister's Reconstruction Program (PMRP) and centrally-sponsored skill development programs being implemented in Jammu and Kashmir on May 21. The meeting would be chaired by Principal Secretary to PM, Pulok Chatterji.²⁸

In another development, reports noted that Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh is scheduled to arrive in Kashmir on a two-day visit on June 25 to dedicate Mughal Road and Banihal-Qazigund rail line to the people. He will also release a stamp in the memory of famous Kashmir poet Mehjoor.²⁹

According to reports, the authorities on May 21, foiled the Eidgah Chalo program of Hurriyat Conference (M) to commemorate the death anniversaries of Mirwaiz Moulvi Farooq and Abdul Gani Lone by putting senior separatist leaders under house arrest.³⁰

According to reports, a Lashker-e-Toiba (LeT) militant commander was killed while three policemen including an officer were injured in an early morning raid on May 23 in Fatehkadal area of Srinagar. The militant was identified as Hilal Ahmad Rather alias Hilal Moulvi of Pattan area of Baramulla district of north Kashmir.³¹

²⁷ "With Tank Deals, Turkey Focuses on Arms Exports," Defense News, May 25, 2013, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20130525/DEFREG01/305250010/With-Tank-Deals-Turkey-Focuses-Arms-Exports>

²⁸ "PMO to review PMRP, CSS today", *Greater Kashmir*, May 20, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/May/21/pmo-to-review-pmrp-css-today-22.asp>

²⁹ "PM to visit Kashmir on June 25", *Greater Kashmir*, May 22, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/May/23/pm-to-visit-kashmir-on-june-25-36.asp>

³⁰ "Govt foils Eidgah march: Kashmir observes shutdown", *Greater Kashmir*, May 21, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/May/22/govt-foils-eidgah-march-kashmir-observes-shutdown-38.asp>

³¹ "LeT commander killed in Srinagar shootout: Police", *Greater Kashmir*, May 23, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/May/24/let-commander-killed-in-srinagar-shootout-police-42.asp>

However, according to reports, in a major attack, militants killed four army men in Buchoo village of Tral in south Kashmir's Pulwama district on May 24. A Hizb-ul-Mujahideen militant was later gunned down by the forces in an encounter that followed the incident while two other militants reportedly managed to escape from the scene. This is the second major attack in less than a month. On April 26, militants ambushed and killed four policemen in a village near Sopore in north Kashmir.³²

In other developments, according to reports, the All India Congress Committee's Vice-President Rahul Gandhi is scheduled to visit Kashmir on May 28 to announce Rs 900 crore package approved by the Union Cabinet for the ambitious skill development project named 'Umeed'. The scheme is operational in four districts of the State that include, Ganderbal, Budgam in Kashmir and Basoli, Chenani in Jammu. Umeed is aiming to cover 9 lakh rural families and impart skilled training to improve their living standards.³³

According to reports, one person was injured during sporadic clashes between youths and police that erupted in Palhallan area of north Kashmir on May 24.³⁴ While, an Army Brigadier, Colonel and a soldier were reportedly injured after Pakistani Army attacked Indian posts on the Line of Control (LoC) in Nowgam Sector in Handwara Tehsil of Kupwara district on May 24. This is the second time when the ceasefire was violated this year. Earlier on January 6, India and Pakistan troopers exchanged heavy artillery fire in Uri sector of Baramulla district.³⁵

North East India

- **India and China to cooperate on trans-border rivers; New infrastructure projects in North-East; Bangladesh allows transit for food grains for Northeast; Maoists pumping in funds to North East; Manipur outfit signs MoU with the Centre and State Govt; Women's armed wing created in Achik National Volunteers Council (ANVC-B)**

According to reports, India and China agreed to further strengthen cooperation on trans-border rivers, even as the two countries discussed the possibility of developing the infrastructure to link the North Eastern Region with Bangladesh, Myanmar, China and other countries in the South East Asian region. An MoU was signed between the Ministry of Water Resources of India and the Ministry of Water Resources of the People's Republic of China on sharing of hydrological information of the Yaluzangbu-Brahmaputra river in flood season by China to India. According to the terms of the agreement, China will provide India with information of water level, discharge and rainfall of 8 am and 8 pm (Beijing Time) twice a day from June 1 to October 15 each year, in respect of three hydrological stations on the mainstream Brahmaputra river.³⁶

³² "4 soldiers, militant killed in fierce gunfight at Tral", *Greater Kashmir*, May 24, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/May/25/4-soldiers-militant-killed-in-fierce-gunfight-at-tral-32.asp>

³³ "Rahul to bring Umeed to Kashmir", *Greater Kashmir*, May 24, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/May/25/rahul-to-bring-umeed-to-kashmir-29.asp>

³⁴ "Shutdown, clashes in Palhallan", *Greater Kashmir*, May 24, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/May/25/shutdown-clashes-in-palhallan-26.asp>

³⁵ "LoC firing: Brigadier, Colonel injured", *Greater Kashmir*, May 25, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/May/26/loc-firing-brigadier-colonel-injured-65.asp>

³⁶ "India, China to cooperate on river waters", *The Assam Tribune*, May 20, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=may2113/at05>

In another development, according to reports, claiming that security situation in the North-east has improved considerably, the UPA Government's report card noted about its initiatives in the region. It stated that UPA government has sanctioned 81 infrastructure projects at an estimated cost of Rs 908.32 crore. The Report to the People (2012-2013) jointly released by the Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi contained a chapter 'Addressing Special Development Needs – The North-east'.³⁷

Reports noted that Bangladesh will allow India ferry food grains for the mountainous North Eastern States via its territory. According to Tripura Food and Civil Supplies Minister Bhanulal Saha, the Bangladesh government has issued necessary orders earlier this week following a series of diplomatic and other parleys. After some security-related clearance, the carrying of food grains, mainly rice and wheat, is likely to start within a month. After Tripura, food grains would be ferried through Bangladesh for other North Eastern states, including Mizoram, Manipur and southern Assam to save time and costs.³⁸

According to reports, the central committee of the Maoist rebels has been pumping in funds to the North East region for some time to expand their bases in this part of the country. Meanwhile, hardcore Maoist rebel Aditya Bora is likely to be elevated within the outfit after the arrest of Aklanta Rabha alias Maheshji, a central committee member of the Maoists. Some vital facts regarding the plan of the Maoists came to light after the recent arrest of Aklanta Rabha and a few other Maoist rebels. According to sources, the security agencies have come to know that the central committee of the Maoists has been pumping in funds to the region every month through Rabha to expand the bases of the Maoists in this region and also to recruit members for the outfit.³⁹

In other developments, reports noted that Manipur-based outfit United People's Party of Kangleipak (UPPK) has entered the peace process after they signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) involving the Centre and State Government on May 24. Eighty cadres of UPPK attended the function where 37 weapons which were surrendered by the cadres were also displayed. The State Government with the financial assistance of the Ministry of Home Affairs is starting the construction of designated camps to host these cadres.⁴⁰

According to reports, the breakaway faction of the A'chik National Volunteers Council (ANVC-B), a rebel outfit in Meghalaya, has raised a women's militant wing to fight crime against women. The women rebels, numbering around 300, are located in two undisclosed camps at Garo Hills in western Meghalaya. The ANVC-B is a splinter group of the ANVC, which has been observing a tripartite ceasefire with the central and Meghalaya governments for nine years.⁴¹

³⁷ "81 infrastructure projects in NE", *The Assam Tribune*, May 23, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=may2413/at07>

³⁸ "Bangladesh allows transit for foodgrains for Northeast", *The Assam Tribune*, May 25, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=may2513/at04>

³⁹ "Maoists pumping funds in NE", *The Assam Tribune*, May 24, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=may2513/at08>

⁴⁰ "Manipur outfit signs tripartite agreement", *The Assam Tribune*, May 24, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=may2513/oth05>

⁴¹ "Meghalaya rebel group now has women's armed wing", *The Assam Tribune*, May 27, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=may2713/at043>

Ministry of Home Affairs News

- **India observes Anti-Terrorism Day; Union Home Minister reviews cooperation with United States during second Homeland Security Dialogue**

Reports noted that Anti Terrorism Day was observed throughout the country on May 21. Employees in Govt. offices, Public Sector Undertakings and other public institutions in the country took a pledge to oppose all forms of terrorism & violence. The Day is observed to generate awareness in the country among all sections of people about the danger of terrorism, violence and its dangerous effect on the people, the society and the country as a whole. The objective behind the observance of Anti-Terrorism Day is to wean away the youth from the terrorist/violence cult by highlighting the suffering of the common people and showing how it is prejudicial to the national interest.⁴²

In another development, according to reports, Union Home Minister Shri Sushilkumar Shinde, currently on visit to the United States met senior US government functionaries including Secretary for Homeland Security Janet Napolitano, Attorney General Eric Holder and FBI Director Robert Muller. Shri Shinde also led the Indian delegation for second round of the Homeland Security Dialogue. US Secretary for Homeland Security Janet Napolitano lead the US delegation. The outcomes of these meetings and the overall strategic perspective within which this dialogue took place are outlined in the Joint Communique released by the Home Minister Shri Shinde and Secretary Napolitano after their the bilateral dialogue.⁴³

IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

- **UNSC extends mission to Guinea-Bissau; UNSC condemns terrorist attacks in Niger**

Reports noted that the mandate of the UN political mission in Guinea-Bissau was extended by the UN Security Council through May 31, 2014 to assist in finding solutions to the political and economic crisis that is being exacerbated by additional challenges posed by transnational crime especially drug trafficking and money laundering. The mission will support efforts focused on fully restoring constitutional order and medium-term stability in the country recovering from a military coup.⁴⁴

In another development, according to reports, the UN Security Council strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in Niger and highlighted the need to bring the perpetrators to justice. At least twenty people have been killed and several others injured in these attacks. The Council expressed its deep sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims.⁴⁵

⁴² "Anti-Terrorism Day Observed", *Press Information Bureau, Govt. Of India*, May 21, 2013 at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=96103>

⁴³ "Union Home Minister Reviews Cooperation with United States of America in High Level Meetings", *Press Information Bureau, Govt. Of India*, May 23, 2013 at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=96164>

⁴⁴ "Security Council extends UN political mission in Guinea-Bissau", *UN News Centre*, May 22, 2013 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44972&Cr=bissau&Cr1=#.UaMmG6Le4y4>

⁴⁵ "Deploing attacks in Niger, Security Council says perpetrators must be brought to justice", *UN News Centre*, May 24, 2013 at http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44989&Cr=+niger+&Cr1=#.UaMl_KLe4y4