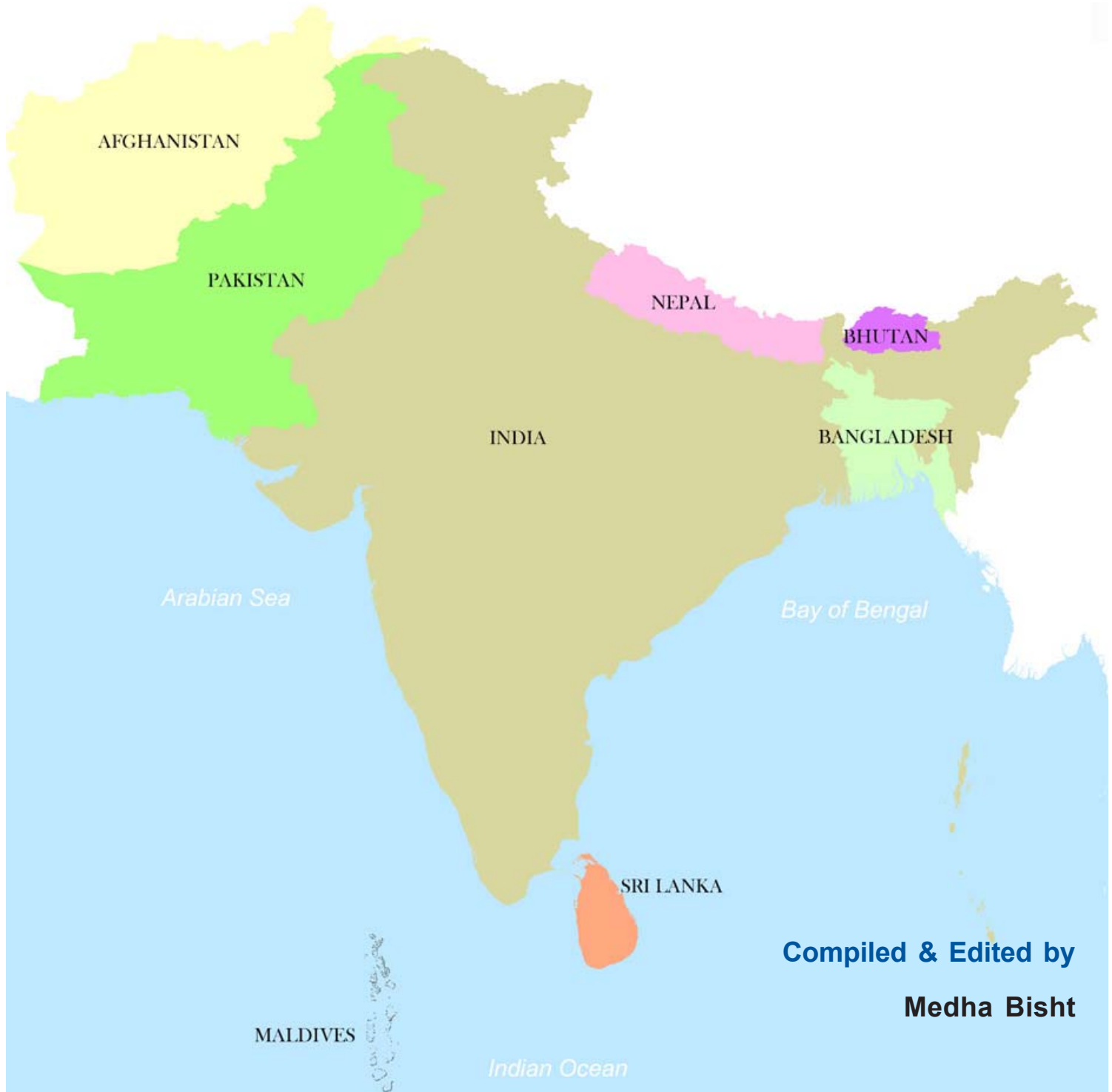


SOUTH ASIA TRENDS

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South Asia Trends is a fortnightly newsletter on South Asian affairs. The purpose of the newsletter is to provide a panoramic view of important events that shape and impact the politics of the subcontinent. The effort would be to inform our readers of the domestic, regional and international repercussions of the political debates and diplomatic engagements that take place in South Asia.



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Editor's Note

Even as various political parties in Nepal failed to elect a consensus prime-minister in the sixth round of voting on September 5, 2010, China's rejuvenated political role in influencing Nepal's domestic affairs was the highlight of the past two weeks. While there were much hopes pinned on China in facilitating Prachanda to power, the results of the seventh round of elections, which took place on September 7, 2010 showed contrary results. Though Upendra Yadav announced that MJF-N would vote for Prachanda in the seventh round, the Madhesi front abstained from the elections at the last moment. According to one report in this issue, India spent Nepali Rupees 220 million on the Terai parties to influence the outcome of the seventh round!

Meanwhile, the emerging nuances now confirm that China's renewed interest in Nepal is indicative of its proactive role in Southern Asia. Known for its policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, the recent development however point towards a policy shift. According to some sources while Washington has activated its embassy in Nepal on the Tibet issue, China seemingly has become bolder in expressing its stated interest in South Asian geopolitics. A report claims that Nepal has intensified patrolling its border areas since June 2010 and is not only detaining Tibetan refugee, but also handling them back to Chinese authorities. According to one report a visiting delegation of Chinese leaders called upon President Dr Ram Baran Yadav seeking assurance on Nepal's one-China policy.

Pacing up cooperation on bilateral front, connectivity has emerged as the key thrust binding Indo- Bangladesh relations. While NTPC has signed an MoU with Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) agreeing to set up a 1320 MW coal based power plant in Bangladesh, the Asian Development Bank has announced to provide USD 100 million loan for a cross border electricity initiative. This initiative is expected to provide impetus for increased power trading in the South Asian region. Meanwhile the Bangladesh draft

Industrial Policy-2010 has underlined the need to protect and promote local industries with a target of achieving 8 percent growth rate by next three years, thus turning Bangladesh into a mid income country by 2013.

Afghanistan

US Defense Secretary Robert Gates: Afghans Must Accept Future Responsibility

Daily Outlook Afghanistan, September 1, 2010.

US Defense Secretary Robert Gates said people of Afghanistan must take the responsibility for the future of their country. In his speech to American Legion in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Gates noted the Afghan security forces were making slow, but steady progress. "Afghans must accept responsibility for the future of their country. He said the US was committed to enforcing a hard line against the corruption that exploited the Afghan people and sapped their support for their elected government and that includes making sure American tax dollars and other assistance are not being misused.

(Source:http://outlookafghanistan.net/news_Pages/main_news.html#02)

Afghanistan, Turkmenistan Renew Pipeline Pledge

Daily Outlook Afghanistan, September 1, 2010.

Afghanistan and Turkmenistan say they remain committed to building a long-delayed pipeline to pump natural gas south to Pakistan and India, in spite of the ongoing Taliban insurgency. Ministers from the two countries signed an agreement in Kabul calling for officials from all four countries to hammer out remaining details of the project before a meeting of the Afghan and Turkmen leaders at the United Nations next month, the Afghan Ministry of Mines said in a statement. They also pledged to carry out geological studies along their border and conduct preparatory work on extending a rail line from the northern Afghan city of Mazar-e-Sharif to the Turkmenistan border, about 140 miles (225 kilometers) away, the statement said.

(Source:http://outlookafghanistan.net/news_Pages/main_news.html#02)

Taliban footprint 'spreading' across Afghanistan, claims Petraeus

Daily Star, September 1, 2010.

The US commander of the Afghan war acknowledged that the Taliban were expanding their footprint across the country even as international forces close in on their traditional southern strongholds. General David Petraeus said a sharp rise in attacks on foreign troops showed the Taliban were feeling threatened but said there needed to be political as well as military action to wipe out the "industrial-strength insurgency." In an interview with foreign media organizations, Petraeus also hailed the counter-insurgency efforts by neighboring Pakistan, which has faced accusations it has not done enough to combat extremism. Petraeus said the overall campaign strategy in Afghanistan after almost nine years of war was reaching its "final stages," with the number of US and NATO troops set to peak at 150,000 in the coming days. The number of American troops killed fighting the Taliban in the last four days hit 22 on August 2010 with the deaths of five US soldiers in the east of the country, NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said.

(Source: http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=10&categ_id=2&article_id=118848#axzz0ySgSiAoN)

Major Shuffle in Interior Ministry

Daily Outlook Afghanistan, September 2, 2010.

President Hamid Karzai has ordered a major reshuffle in the Ministry of Interior, one of the key state organs responsible for maintaining security in the war-torn country. Through a decree issued , the president asked for reshuffling 21 high-profile officers at the ministry, a statement from the presidential office said. Lt. Gen. Baz Muhammad Ahmadi has been made deputy minister of counternarcotics and Lt. Gen. Ghulam Ali deputy minister of administration. Former deputy minister of counternarcotics, Maj. Gen. Daud Daud, has been posted as commander of the 303rd Pamir Regional Police Zone and Maj. Gen. Muhammad Wasim Azimi as general director for planning and operation. Similarly, Maj. Gen. Muhammad Wakil Akbari has been appointed as director of the Human Resource Department and Maj. Gen. Abdul Masood Ragheb as general director of the Inspection Department.

(Source: http://outlookafghanistan.net/news/Pages/main_news.html#04)

Gates, in Afghanistan, Speaks on Local Issues

New York Times, September 2, 2010.

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates arrived on an unannounced visit, and found himself grappling with some of Afghanistan's most troubling domestic issues as well as the military ones. At a joint news conference, President Hamid Karzai invoked the American official's support for a new law that would regulate anti-corruption investigators, and said they also discussed intense coverage of the government's takeover of the management of the country's biggest bank.

(Source: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/03/world/asia/03military.html?_r=1)

Taliban threatens to disrupt election

Daily Outlook Afghanistan, September 5, 2010.

Afghanistan's Taliban said it would attempt to disrupt elections this month and warned Afghans to boycott the vote, the first explicit threat against the poll by the hardline Islamists. The threat came just a day after Afghan President Hamid Karzai said he would soon announce members of a peace council to pursue talks with the Taliban, another step in his plan for reconciliation with the insurgents. The September 18th parliamentary election is seen as a litmus test of stability in Afghanistan before US President Barack Obama conducts a war strategy review in December that will examine the pace and scale of US troop withdrawals from July 2011. Despite the presence of almost 150,000 foreign troops, violence is at its worst across Afghanistan since the Taliban were ousted by US-backed Afghan forces in late 2001.

(Source: <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/world/2010/0906/1224278287022.html>)

Afghan Troops Probably will Take Control Next Year: NATO

Daily Outlook Afghanistan, September 8, 2010.

U.S.-led NATO troops in Afghanistan should be able to start handing off responsibility for security to the Afghan government forces next year, Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said. While stopping short of setting a firm deadline, Fogh Rasmussen's public declaration puts the security alliance in line with President Barack Obama's promise to begin pulling U.S. troops out in July 2011. The time line also reflects Europe's growing impatience with the nine-year-long war and a belief among many allies that the conflict should end. Some NATO members already have pulled out of the mission or plan to do so soon because of lagging public support. NATO members are to meet in Lisbon, Portugal, in November to devise a plan for handing off control to the Afghans, including a time line for various provinces and benchmarks to measure progress.

(Source:http://outlookafghanistan.net/news_Pages/main_news.html#03)

Operation to Clear Kandahar of Taliban By December: NATO

Daily Outlook Afghanistan, September 8, 2010.

NATO and Afghan forces hope to clear the Taliban out of Kandahar, the insurgency's stronghold, by the end of November, the commander of international forces in the south of Afghanistan. NATO has poured thousands of fresh troops into the country since the beginning of the year in a bid to break the insurgency's back. They have already secured Kandahar city, and are now targeting the surrounding districts of Arghandab, Zharay and Panjwa'i. The operation "will happen at some stage during the next two to three months ... Our expectation is that by mid to the end of November we would have rid those areas very much of the Taliban," General Nick Carter, officer commanding NATO's Regional Command South, told journalists in Brussels by video link from Afghanistan.

(Source:http://outlookafghanistan.net/news_Pages/main_news.html#03)

Taliban leader Mullah Omar says Taliban is winning war in Afghanistan

Examiner, September 8, 2010.

Taliban leader, Mullah Omar has not been seen in public since the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks and is believed to be hiding in Pakistan, however he posted a message on a jihadist website today telling Afghans that the Taliban is winning the war in Afghanistan. In his remarks, Mullah Omar said the U.S. military has failed to achieve its objectives after nearly nine years. "The victory of our Islamic nation over the invading infidels is now imminent and the driving force behind this is the belief in the help of Allah and unity among ourselves," Mullah Omar said. "In the time to come, we will try to establish an Islamic, independent, perfect and strong system." Mullah Omar said the insurgents are winning the war and warned Americans that they are wasting lives and billions in tax dollars by continuing in the conflict.

(Source: <http://www.examiner.com/world-news-in-national/taliban-leader-mullah-omar-says-taliban-is-winning-war-afghanistan-video>)

Thousands of Afghans in anti-Quran-burning protest

Guardian, September 11, 2010.

Thousands of people protested in eastern Afghanistan on Saturday against a small American church's earlier plan to burn the Muslim holy book, chanting "Death to America" and setting shops and police checkpoints on fire, officials said. Din Mohammad Darwish, spokesman for the governor of Logar province, said police fired warning shots into the air to prevent the protesters from storming the governor's house. He said no injuries were immediately reported. He said a highway linking Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan was briefly blocked by the protesters. Nabi Charkhi, the deputy provincial police chief, said more than 10,000 people took part in the protest in the provincial capital, Puli Alam.

(Source: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/9260774>)

US Expects to Spend \$6bln in Afghanistan

Afghanistan Daily Outlook, September 12, 2010.

The U.S. government's financial commitment to Afghanistan is likely to linger and reach into the billions long after it pulls combat troops from the country, newly disclosed spending estimates show. The United States expects to spend about \$6 billion a year training and supporting Afghan troops and police after it begins withdrawing its own combat troops in 2011. The estimates of U.S. spending through 2015, detailed in a NATO training mission document, are an acknowledgment that Afghanistan will remain largely dependent on the United States for its security. That reality could become problematic for the Obama administration as it continues to seek money for Afghanistan from Congress in a time of increasingly tight budgets.

(Source: http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/news/Pages/main_news.html#03)

Petraeus issues guidance for Afghan contracting

Herald Tribune, September 12, 2010.

The NATO command has issued new guidelines for awarding billions of dollars worth of international contracts in Afghanistan, saying that without proper oversight the money could end up in the hands of insurgents and criminals, deepen corruption and undermine efforts to win the loyalty of the Afghan people at a critical juncture in the war. The guidance, issued last week by Gen. David Petraeus and obtained Sunday by The Associated Press, was issued in response to concern that the military's own contracting procedures could be, in some cases, running counter to efforts on the battlefield. The changes are aimed, in large part, at addressing complaints that ordinary Afghans have seen little change in their daily lives despite billions poured into their country since 2001. "With proper oversight, contracting can spur economic development and support the Afghan government and NATO's campaign objectives," Petraeus wrote in a two-page memorandum. "If, however, we spend large quantities of international contracting funds quickly and with insufficient oversight, it is likely that some of those funds will unintentionally fuel corruption, finance insurgent organizations, strengthen

criminal patronage networks and undermine our efforts in Afghanistan.”

(Source: <http://www.heraldtribune.com/article/20100912/API/1009121223>)

Bangladesh

3 km of fencing along Indo-Bangladesh border done in August: Govt.

Sify News, September 1, 2010.

Union Home Minister P.Chidambaram said a stretch of three kilometres along the India- Bangladesh Border was fenced and five kilometres of road work was completed during the month of August under phase II of the project. Presenting the monthly report card of Ministry of Home Affairs, Union Minister P.Chidambaram, also mentioned about the Border Management, as he said on the Indo-Bangladesh border three kms of fencing and 5 kms of road works were completed in August, 2010 under phase II of the project. 7 kms of fencing was replaced in August, 2010 under phase III of the project. “Poles for floodlighting were erected on a length of 30 kms during the month of August, 2010,” he added

(Source:<http://sify.com/news/3-km-of-fencing-along-indo-bangladesh-border-done-in-august-govt-news-national-kjbvEechehib.html>)

ADB to provide USD 100 million loan for Indo Bangla power project

Steel Guru, September 2, 2010.

The Asian Development Bank said that it will provide USD 100 million loan for a cross border electricity initiative between India and Bangladesh, which is expected to provide impetus for increased power trading in the South Asian region. The Manila headquartered bank’s board has approved loan for the Bangladesh-India Electrical Grid Interconnection Project, which is scheduled for completion by December 2012. ADB in a statement said that “The funds will be used to build a 40 kilometer 400 KV transmission line, along with a high voltage direct current sub-station and connecting loop, linking the western electrical grid of Bangladesh with India’s eastern grid.”

(Source:http://www.steelguru.com/indian_news/ADB_to_provide_USD_100_million_loan_for_Indo_Bangla_power_project/163371.html)

Bangladesh Leads Way With International Crimes Tribunal

Irrawaddy, September 4, 2010.

As criticism over the lack of progress in Sri Lanka’s war inquiry is mounting and a defiant military regime in Burma resists increasing pressure for a UN war crimes inquiry, Bangladesh has high hopes for a war crimes tribunal that has been 40 years in the making. Bringing to justice key perpetrators of atrocities committed during Bangladesh’s 1971 liberation war for independence is the only way the nation will ever be able to heal, rights activists say. “We must have this tribunal, not just to move the nation forward, but also for the crimes that were committed. For the nation to move forward, this must be taken care of,” said Akku Chowdhury, who fought in the war.

(Source: http://www.irrawaddy.org/highlight.php?art_id=19377)

NTPC signs MoU with Bangladesh

Steel Guru, September 6, 2010

An MoU has been signed on August 30th 2010 between NTPC Ltd. and Bangladesh Power Development Board on mutual co operation between the parties for development of Power Sector in Bangladesh. NTPC may set up a 1320 MW coal based power plant in Bangladesh in joint venture with BPDB, subject to techno economic viability, for mitigating the power shortage of Bangladesh. NTPC will also provide training & development to human resources of BPDB and enhancement of productivity and efficiency of their existing power stations.

(Source: http://www.steelguru.com/indian_news/NTPC_signs_MoU_with_Bangladesh/163939.html)

Bangladesh Cabinet Approves Power and Energy Quick Supply Act

Energy Bangla, September 6, 2010.

The Cabinet on September 6, 2010, approved a proposal on Bangladesh Power and Energy Quick Supply (special provision) Bill 2010. The approval was given at the 83rd cabinet meeting held at Bangladesh Secretariat with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair. Briefing newsmen at the PID conference room, Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad said the draft of the act was approved so that the government could take quick decision on power and energy production and supply. According to papers presented in the cabinet meeting, the government thinks that the existing laws are not effective enough to quickly formulate and implement development projects for increasing production and supply of electricity.

(Source: <http://www.energybangla.com/index.php?mod=article&cat=PowerSector&article=2701>)

Bangladesh, India to protect Sunderbans

Sify News, September 7, 2010.

Bangladesh and India will soon sign a protocol to protect the riverine Sunderbans that covers parts of both the South Asian neighbours. Sunderbans is home to famous Royal Bengal tiger. The two countries have resolved to cooperate to protect the area's ecology and the tiger, that is now an endangered specie. The draft of the bilateral protocol was approved Monday by the Bangladesh cabinet at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, The Daily Star reported.

(Source: <http://sify.com/news/bangladesh-india-to-protect-sunderbans-news-international-kjhpkcjggef.html>)

New Industrial Policy to turn Bangladesh a mid income country

The New Nation, September 7, 2010.

The draft of the Industrial Policy-2010 will have an aim to protect and promote local industries with a target of achieving eight percent growth rate by next three years and turn Bangladesh into a mid income country. The industries minister told BSS that the policy, which will be placed before the cabinet tomorrow, envisaged

fitting the local industries with regional and international ones by taking necessary active steps. The five-year industrial policy that was prepared keeping the Vision 2021 of the present grand alliance government insight has envisaged for 10% annual growth by 2017.

(Source: <http://nation.ittefaq.com/issues/2010/09/07/news0769.htm>)

Bangladesh moves to combat anthrax outbreak

Australian Network News, September 8, 2010.

Bangladesh has set up checkpoints at cattle markets in a bid to stem a growing outbreak of anthrax. More than 400 people in eight districts have been confirmed as infected by the disease, which commonly infects livestock and can be transmitted to those who handle or eat infected animals.

(Source: <http://australiannetworknews.com/stories/201009/3006659.htm?desktop>)

Bangladesh to firm up money laundering laws

Sify News, September 8, 2010.

Bangladesh will enact two legislation to firm up its laws against money laundering to fight the flow of funds used for terrorism, Finance Minister A.M.A. Muhith has said. Muhith said that amendments to the existing laws were imperative to let the global organisations know that Dhaka was right on track to prevent money laundering and terror financing. Two bills would be placed in the next session of parliament seeking amendments to the laws, New Age quoted him as saying Wednesday. The minister said that money laundering had become an international political issue as the smuggled money was used in terror financing. Muhith Wednesday chaired a meeting of the national coordination council to review the overall progress in drafting the amendments.

(Source: <http://sify.com/news/bangladesh-to-firm-up-money-laundering-laws-news-international-kjipucagcij.html>)

India, Bangladesh align rail link in Tripura

Times of India, September 8, 2010.

Indian and Bangladesh railway officials completed technical formalities and finalised alignments to link their networks to improve connectivity between the two countries. Senior officials of Northeast Frontier Railways (NFR), Bangladesh Railways and the Tripura government held a series of meetings here this week and visited several places proposed to be utilised for laying the railway tracks.

“The final technical and alignment reports would now be submitted to both the governments for taking final decision before starting the actual works,” Y. Ali Mirdha, Bangladesh Railway’s chief engineer, told reporters.

“A team of officials of IRCON (Indian Railway Construction Company) have recently visited Dhaka and held talks with Bangladesh government and railway

ministry officials to finalise alignment of the 13-km Agartala-Akhaurah connecting rail line," said Mirdha.

(Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/India-Bangladesh-align-rail-link-in-Tripura/articleshow/6519744.cms>)

Northeast terror outfits shifting camp to Myanmar, claims Tripura police chief

Sify News , September 14, 2010.

Tripura Director General of Police (DGP) Pranay Sahay has said the terrorist outfits of the northeast are under extreme pressure and are in the process of shifting their base camps to Myanmar following a crackdown by the Bangladesh army. "Underground groups operating from Bangladesh are under extreme pressure. Many of the groups are in the process of shifting to Myanmar. In fact ULFA are in the process of shifting to Myanmar because of the pressure from Bangladesh. "The improvement in the northeast is due to the function of political dispensation in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh army has crackdown on many militant camps," he added.

(Source: <http://sify.com/news/northeast-terror-outfits-shifting-camp-to-myanmar-claims-tripura-police-chief-news-national-kjenadebdbc.html>)

Bangladesh ill-prepared for disasters, warn experts

Sify News, September 14, 2010.

Bangladesh is ill-prepared for disasters, experts warned four days after an earthquake hit the country. Two earthquakes hit the country last Friday as people prepared to end the holy Ramadan and celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr. Most buildings essential for providing earthquake victims with support, shelter and treatment are themselves vulnerable even to moderate tremors, indicating the authorities will be in real trouble after a disaster, The Daily Star said Tuesday. The government has so far failed to take initiative to retro-fit vulnerable buildings like hospitals, schools and fire stations which would be used for victims' treatment, shelter and rescue operations after an earthquake, it said.

(Source: <http://sify.com/news/bangladesh-ill-prepared-for-disasters-warn-experts-news-international-kjolEchdacf.html>)

Meghalaya CM meets PM for Bangladesh trade

IBN, September 14, 2010.

Meghalaya Chief minister Mukul Sangma on Tuesday urged Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to facilitate trade with Bangladesh. "This would be beneficial for both the countries and would help to reduce illegal activities along the international border," Sangma told over phone from New Delhi. "I told the prime minister that trading activities should be promoted and infrastructure should be improved in the border areas," he said. Sangma requested the prime minister to take up on a priority basis the proposed railway connectivity between Jogighopa via Tikrikilla, Ampati, Dalu, Baghmara, Dawki and Badarpur through the southern

Bhutan

slope of Meghalaya, which would in turn connect the LCSs to Barak Valley and other North Eastern States including Mizoram, Tripura and Manipur in view of huge economic benefit and expected growth of trade and commerce with Bangladesh.

(Source: <http://ibnlive.in.com/generalnewsfeed/news/meghalaya-cm-meets-pm-for-bangladesh-trade/320443.html>)

US to resettle 30,000 refugees

Kathmandu Post, September 1, 2010.

The US embassy announced that the number of Bhutanese refugees resettled in America will reach 30,000 by the end of this week, taking the total number of resettled Bhutanese refugees in any country to 35,000. "We are gratified, together with our partners, to be able to help turn an unfortunate and often painful situation into something more hopeful for these people—America's newest residents, whom we welcome with open arms and hearts," said US Ambassador to Nepal Scott H. DeLisi in a press statement.

(Source: <http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/09/01/nation/us-to-resettle-30000-refugees/212263/>)

Good monsoon no help in increasing hydro power generation

Economic Times, September 2, 2010.

Favourable Monsoon could not boost hydro power generation in the country, as generation from this renewable source of energy remained same in August, compared to the same month last year. According to the latest data released by the power sector planning body Central Electricity Authority (CEA), the country's hydro power generation remained 12.23 billion units in August, exactly same to the figure in the same period last year. However it is a matter of great relief that the water level was slightly more in the month of August, as against the same period last year in the 31 reservoirs all across the country being monitored by the CEA.

(Source: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/news-by-industry/energy/power/Good-monsoon-no-help-in-increasing-hydro-power-generation/articleshow/6481096.cms>)

Memorandum of Understanding signed between two Agriculture Ministries, Bhutan and Thailand

Ministry of Agriculture, September 4, 2010.

Lyonpo, Dr. Pema Gyamtsho, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests (MoAF) and His Excellency Mr. Theera Wongsamut, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MoAC), Thailand signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Agriculture Cooperation between the two ministries. The purpose of this MOU is to promote scientific and technical cooperation in the field of agriculture between the two countries, without prejudicing other fields of cooperation that may be considered in the future.

(Source: http://www.moa.gov.bt/moa/news/news_detail.php?id=1371)

Hidden subsidy for big hitters?

Kuensel, September 6, 2010.

There is discussion brewing in some quarters on whether the power tariff structure has a hidden subsidy element for industries or high voltage (HV) users, which accounts for 70 percent of the domestic power consumption. In the revised power tariff structure, which came into force last month and will hold until June 2013, HV users will start paying at actual cost of supply from July next year. This is in keeping with existing policy, which says that subsidised power to big industries should end by 2011. For the medium voltage (MV) users, subsidy will end in 2020; and for the low voltage (LV) or household users, the policy does not state when subsidy will end.

(Source:<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=16618>)

Revenue from expats welcome

Kuensel, September 6, 2010

While health officials in Phuentsholing claim not to remember when the system of charging expatriates for health-care services began, they nevertheless welcome the revenue increase from it in recent years. Phuentsholing general hospital staff said although the consultation fees of Nu 150 an expatriate worker was borne by the contractor, the hospital brought in an increase in revenue from increasing foreign workers from across the borders. It has become mandatory for all foreign workers coming to work in Bhutan to go through physical examination, for which the contractor or the employer has to bear the cost of Nu 150 a worker. Last year, 38,973 foreign workers underwent physical examination in Phuentsholing referral hospital up from 28,963 in 2008. Similarly the revenue shot up to more than Nu 6M last year from Nu 4.6M in 2008.

(Source: <http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=16633>)

Hold elections within set conditions

Kuensel, September 7, 2010.

In a letter sent yesterday to the election commission of Bhutan (ECB), the government has requested that it conduct the local government elections within the conditions set by parliament. It also says that the decision on whether all the conditions listed in the Constitution should be established immediately, regardless of the ground realities, should be left to the parliament and government. It has also directed the ministry of works and human settlement and the home ministry to extend all support to the commission to hold the elections.

(Source:<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=16646>)

Tata Power lines up Rs 70,000 cr investment

Hindu Business, September 9, 2010.

Tata Power will invest Rs 70,000 crore to raise its generation capacity eight times from about 3,000 MW to 25,000 MW by 2017, Mr Ratan Tata, Chairman, told shareholders at the AGM here on Wednesday. Mr Tata said the 114 MW Dagachhu hydro project in Bhutan would be commissioned in three years and the 1,050 MW Maithon project in Jharkhand would begin generating by March 2011. Sixty per cent of work at the 4,000 MW ultra mega power project at Mundra was complete, he said. He said the company was looking for opportunities in civil nuclear power generation. Tata Power has made investments in thorium power generation in the last few years.

(Source: <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2010/09/09/stories/2010090953790200.htm> commercial operations in 2015)

India's Aug power output grew lowest since Feb 2009

Reuters, September 14, 2010.

India's power output grew an annual 1 percent in August, the slowest growth since February 2009 as some plants were shut, but peak power deficit narrowed as heavy rainfall curbed demand. Generation by thermal plants, fired by coal, gas and liquid fuel, grew a paltry 0.6 percent, the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) said in a report posted on its website on Tuesday. Thermal power, which generate about two-thirds of the country electricity, were hit by coal shortages, unplanned and extended maintenance shutdown at some plants, and low demand from states getting power from gas-fired plants. Coal-based power generation grew by 2.79 percent in August from a year ago, slowed down by a 12 percent shortfall in supplies, it said.

(Source: <http://af.reuters.com/article/energyOilNews/idAFSGE68D0I420100914>)

How the numbers break down

Kuensel, September 14, 2010.

Only 37 percent of the total employed population are literate or have completed some kind of educational level, according to the labour force survey, 2010. About 332,000 people are employed, which is an increase of about 10,200 employed in one year. The labour ministry in the study defines "employed" as a person, who has performed some paid work in cash or kind, during the reference period for at least one hour; or the person has a job or business formally attached, but temporarily absent from the work and is going to resume the work. The report states that 244,000 people of the country's estimated population, 696,500 above 15 years till 64 years are illiterate. 49,300 had only primary education, 34,500 people had only junior and around 76,900 people had only high and higher secondary education.

(Source: <http://www.kuenselonline.com/2010/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=16717>)

Maldives

Fatimah Afiya, Political parties will not resolve current conflicts

Minivan News, September 6, 2010.

The UN has spent more than US\$40,000 to recruit a peace negotiator, and the resources allocated towards this are justifiable. There have to be efforts made to resolve the bickering and barking of the political parties. The international community has been adamant that the Maldivian politicians would be able to settle their differences for the sake of the Maldivian people. The deadlock in parliament's deliberations has been challenged several times, at a cost in public spending of Rf400,000 a day. When the deadlocks are at climax, the pressure rises from the public. The general public starts calling for the resignation of MPs through radio and television channels, which are their only outlet.

(Source: <http://minivannews.com/politics/comment-political-parties-will-not-resolve-current-conflicts-10988>)

Police uncover new drug network, seize drugs worth Rf 500,000

Minivan News, September 6, 2010.

The Maldives Police Service's Drug Enforcement Department (DED) claim to have discovered a new drug network during a special operation conducted last night, and have seized suspected narcotics potentially worth Rf 500, 000 (US\$38,910). Head of DED, Superintendent Mohamed Jinah, said the drugs were discovered inside a rented apartment in Male' and that four suspects had been arrested in connection with the case. "This is a new drug network we have discovered. The packets we found contained about 427 grams of suspected narcotics," said Jinah. "One of the persons' fingerprints matches fingerprints on the packets."

(Source: <http://minivannews.com/society/police-uncover-new-drug-network-seize-drugs-worth-rf-500000-10991>)

President Ratifies Second Amendment Bill to the Tourism Act

ISRIA, September 8, 2010.

President Mohamed Nasheed ratified the Second Amendment Bill on the Tourism Act. The Bill was passed by the People's Majlis on 26 August. Following ratification, the bill has been published in the Government Gazette. The Second Amendment to Tourism Act stipulates rent charges to be paid to the government by tourist resorts, tourist hotels and tourist guest houses. Under the Amendment Act, if rent charged from land smaller than 200,000 square metres is more than USD 1 million, the rent is set at USD 1 million per year. If the rent charged in less than USD 1 million, the rent is set at a rate of USD 8 per square metre. The Act also stipulates that USD 1.5 million per year is charged for 200,001 to 400,000 square metres, while where rent of land larger than 400,001 square metres is more than USD 2 million, the rent of the land is set at USD 2 million per year.

(Source: http://www.isria.com/pages/8_September_2010_98.php)

President Nasheed shoots down 'Iran is part of SAARC' notion, next SAARC in southern Addu

Asian Tribune, September 10, 2010.

President Mohamed Nasheed The outspoken Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed shot down any notion of Iran being considered as part of 'South Asia'. "No, Iran may be bordering South Asia, but South Asian (identity) ends with Pakistan and at most Afghanistan, and Iran is simply not one of us" opposed President Nasheed strongly, speaking to the *Asian Tribune*. By strict definition, South Asia consists of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan (sometimes) and Myanmar (sometimes considered). But, due to its differences with Middle Eastern and Arab neighbors, Iran has increasingly & vigorously been campaigning to be part of the South Asian region. In April 2007, following Iran's application, SAARC secretariat approved Iran for an 'observer status.'

(Source: <http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2010/09/09/president-nasheed-shoots-down-%E2%80%99iran-part-saarc%E2%80%99-notion-next-saarc-southern-addu>)

Indian Navy to patrol Maldives EEZ in routine patrol

Haveeru, September 13, 2010.

In a routine patrol, Indian Navy started patrolling the Maldives Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) along with the Maldives Coast Guard, Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) said Monday. In the operation set to be carried out from September 11-18, an Indian Navy Aircraft Carrier and Coast Guard vessels operating in the MNDF Northern area will patrol the zone for any violations of the regulations.

Maldives Coast Guard and Indian Navy carry out the operation routinely every two months, the Coast Guard added.

(Source: <http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/32245>)

Jumhoree Party demands action against those who planned to burn Quran

Minivan News, September 13, 2010.

The minority opposition Jumhoree Party (JP), led by MP Gasim 'Buruma' Ibrahim, has issued a statement urging the government of the Maldives to demand the US government take action against those who planned to burn the Quran on September 11. Pastor Terry Jones, from the 50 member Dove World Outreach Centre in Gainesville, Florida, drew headlines worldwide after he announced plans to burn copies of the Quran on the anniversary of the September 11 attacks.

(Source: <http://minivannews.com/politics/jumhoree-party-demands-action-against-those-who-planned-to-burn-quran-11148>)

Nepal

Maldives updates UN Human Rights Council on political developments*Minivan News, September 15, 2010.*

A day after taking a seat on the UN Human Rights Council, the government has updated UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay on recent political developments in the country, and the challenges “surrounding the division and balance of power between the three branches of government.” The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that Permanent Representative of the Maldives to the UN in Geneva Iruthisham Adam explained to the Council the Maldives was undergoing a democratic transition and was facing “many challenges and difficulties.” “Many of the institutions, mechanisms and concepts introduced by the 2008 Constitution are new to the Maldives and all of us, including decision-makers and the general population, are still adapting and learning,” Adam said.

(Source: <http://minivannews.com/society/maldives-updates-un-human-rights-council-on-political-developments-11207>)

Maoists to stay neutral*My Republica, September 1, 2010.*

Maoists are likely to stay neutral in the sixth round of voting slated for Sunday at the legislature-parliament to elect a new prime minister. “We will do something to get the party out of this mess, no matter what sacrifice we have to make as the largest political party. Our party will not go for the same process again and again,” Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal told journalists at his residence.

(Source: http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=22808)

NC’s no to PM candidacy withdrawal*My Republica, September 1, 2010.*

The Nepali Congress (NC) has decided not to withdraw its candidacy for prime minister. A parliamentary party meeting of the party held at Singha Durbar made decided not to withdraw its prime ministerial candidacy till the current process of electing a new prime minister reaches its logical end. NC maintained that the withdrawal of candidacy without reaching agreement on issues related to peace process, constitution drafting and government leadership would lead the country toward further uncertainty.

(Source: http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=22849)

Caretaker PM Nepal decides not to attend UN General Assembly*Nepal News, September 6, 2010.*

The caretaker Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal Monday decided not to attend the 65th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations due to start from September 14 in New York. As per the earlier schedule, PM Nepal was to leave for New York on September 17, though no official list of the Nepali delegates was submitted to the UN.

According to a highly placed source, PM Nepal took such a decision following advice from his close aides and some party leaders. They have expressed their concerns over his visit stating that his participation as a caretaker PM would not impart a good message, the source informed. Cancellation of the visit is yet to be announced officially.

(Source: <http://www.nepalnews.com/main/index.php/news-archive/2-political/8965-caretaker-pm-nepal-decides-not-to-attend-un-general-assembly.html>)

Nepal Fails To Elect Premier For The Seventh Time

Stock Market Review, September 7, 2010.

The two-month-long constitutional crisis in Nepal continues with the land-locked Himalayan nation's parliament failing Tuesday to elect a new prime minister for the seventh successive time following the June 30 collapse of a 22-party coalition led by Madhav Kumar Nepal. Both Maoist supremo Pushpa Kamal Dahal, alias Prachanda, and his Nepali Congress rival Ramchandra Poudyal were unable to muster a majority support of the lawmakers in the 601-member Constituent Assembly.

(Source: <http://www.stockmarketsreview.com/news/36646/>)

Prachanda fails to make it as Nepal PM

One India, September 7, 2010.

Maoists leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' failed to become Nepal's new Prime Minister in the seventh round of voting held at the Constituent Assembly hall in New Baneshwor as a breakaway group of Madheshi Front, whose support he was banking on, preferred to stay away from voting in Parliament at the last moment. Prachanda fell far short of majority support in the fresh round of voting in the constituent assembly, which failed to end an impasse that has held up vital government spending and threatened the fragile peace process. He managed to get only 252 votes, far short of 301 required to get elected with Madheshi Front opting to stay out. It has been reported that over 110 lawmakers voted against him, while 159 stayed neutral. Earlier on Sunday, the Parliament in Nepal voted for a sixth time for the post of Prime Minister.

(Source: <http://news.oneindia.in/2010/09/07/prachandafails-to-make-it-as-nepal-pm.html>) Nepal govt vs Maoists over UN)

Prachanda may make it with help from China, Madhesis

Times of India, September 7, 2010.

If the Maoists in Nepal did actually take money from China to fix the prime ministerial election, they appear to have succeeded. After Sunday's sixth round of unsuccessful elections, the Maoists have set the stage for a win on Tuesday, which will see the next round of elections. On Sunday, Upendra Yadav walked out with his 25-member Madheshi Janadhikar Forum (Nepal) from the voting. Yadav later said while the issue of Chinese offering money to the Maoists prevented them from backing Prachanda on Sunday, the MJF-N would vote for Maoists on Tues-

day. With their walkout, the four-party Madhesi Morcha has broken up. Thus far, the 84-member group had abstained from voting. Earlier, Yadav had said they would support the party that promised them an autonomous Madhesi province. The date for next round of election has been fixed for September 7.

(Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/china/Prachanda-may-make-it-with-help-from-China-Madhesis/articleshow/6509168.cms>)

More than 4.5 million women in Nepal still cannot read and write.

Earth Times, September 8, 2010.

UNESCO announced Wednesday in a press release issued to mark International Literacy Day. The statement further stated that literacy remains an elusive target because of widespread poverty. "This is an intolerable situation reflecting one of the most persistent injustices of our times: unequal access to education equalities," the press release quoted Irina Bokova, head of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as saying. "Literacy gives women a voice; in their families, in political life and on the world stage". Out of the country's 28.8 million population, 6.4 million men and women in Nepal remain illiterate.

(Source: <http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/news/343383,million-women-illiterate-nepal.html>)

Nepal tourism faces crunch as govt formation delayed in Nepal

MSN News, September 9, 2010.

Nepal's tourism authority is facing an acute cash crunch due to the political limbo and delay in the formation of a government, and has asked the caretaker government to release Rs 230 million in funds. Nepal is observing 2011 as the Nepal Tourism Year to promote its tourism industry which is the backbone of its economy, as it recovers from a decade-long insurgency that had severely hit the industry.

The tourist arrival by air in the first eight months of 2010 reached 260,072 registering a growth of 20 per cent as against the same period last year. "This is encouraging," Yogendra Shakya, Coordinator of Nepal Tourism Year 2011 steering committee, said during an interaction programme organised by The Nepal Tourism Board.

(Source: <http://news.in.msn.com/business/article.aspx?cp-documentid=4358308>)

Nepal detaining Tibetan refugees, handing them over to China

Times of India, September 9, 2010.

In yet another sign of increasing Chinese influence in India's neighbourhood, Nepal is detaining refugees from China's Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and handing them back to Chinese authorities. Tibetan agencies in Kathmandu have brought the matter to the notice of the Indian embassy in Kathmandu but highly placed government sources said New Delhi is not inclined to take up the matter officially with Nepal.

According to information available with government agencies, Nepal intensified

patrolling along its border with China in June and since then, has been regularly handing over Tibetan refugees, who were on their way to India, back to Chinese authorities. While Indian officials admitted this was another manifestation of China's influence in Nepal, they said they had no option but to convey to the Tibetans that it may not be possible for India to intervene in the matter.

(Source:<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Nepal-detaining-Tibetan-refugees-handing-them-over-to-China/articleshow/6521098.cms>)

Nepal govt vs Maoists over UN

Hindustan Times, September 10, 2010.

The caretaker government in Nepal and opposition Maoists are on a collision course over the role of United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), which is monitoring the country's peace process. While the government wants it to change its current mandate and monitor only the Maoist combatants and their arms, the Maoists want it to continue monitoring the Nepal Army as well. There is another difference. The government wants UNMIN's tenure, which expires on September 15, to be extended by four months while the Maoists want the UNMIN to remain for six months or till the peace process is complete. A day after the government sent a letter to United Nations Security Council seeking an extension for UNMIN, the Maoists on Thursday shot a separate letter to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. In his letter Maoist chief Pushpa Kamal Dahal asked the SC not to change UNMIN's mandate and extend its tenure by six months.

(Source: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/Nepal-govt-vs-Maoists-over-UN/Article1-598252.aspx>)

Chinese officials meet Maoist, NC leaders

My Republica, September 11, 2010.

Leaders of the UCPN-Maoist and Nepali Congress (NC) met the visiting Chinese delegation separately and discussed the long-existing bilateral relations between China and Nepal. During the meeting, the Chinese delegation expressed concern over the stalled peace process in Nepal but reiterated that they are not for interfering in the internal affairs of the country. "Our policy is not to interfere in the internal affairs of your country and we expect other countries to do the same," Maoist Vice-chairman Narayankaji Shrestha quoted the Chinese delegation as saying. Led by He Yong, Vice-premier and Secretary at Secretariat of the 17 Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the 21-member Chinese delegation arrived in Kathmandu on Saturday. The delegation is on a goodwill visit to Nepal.

(Source:http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=23193)

Nepali, Chinese biz bodies sign MoU

Himalayan Times, September 12, 2010.

The Nepal-China Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCCI) and the China

Council for Promotion of International Trade, Taizhou Sub-Council (CCPIT Taizhou) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote investment in Nepal and foster the economic and commercial relations between Nepali and Chinese business entrepreneurs. NCCI chairman Rajesh Kaji Shrestha and CCPIT Taizhou chairman Zhang Jiming signed the MoU amid a function at Taizhou in China, according to an NCCI statement released here in Kathmandu on Sunday. The two bodies agreed upon business extension and information sharing. While signing the MoU, Shrestha pointed out that if the two countries can jointly explore the business potential in various sectors including hydroelectricity, minerals, cement, herbs, medicine, banking, technology and tourism in Nepal.

(Source: <http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=Nepali%2C+Chinese+biz+bodies+sign+MoU&NewsID=257566>)

Nepalese prime minister lobbies against Maoist premier candidate

Monsters and Critics, September 12, 2010.

Nepalese Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal on Sunday sought the support of the Madhesi Front in opposing the Maoists, as parliament prepares for an eighth round of voting to choose a new premier. The Madhesi Front has abstained from much of the voting because it has been divided over whom to support, but intends to participate in the next round on September 26 to resolve the political deadlock. 'We held discussions on the possibility of forming a democratic government,' said the prime minister's political advisor Raghuji Panta, who was at the meeting.

(Source: http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/southasia/news/article_1583987.php/Nepalese-prime-minister-lobbies-against-Maoist-premier-candidate)

Prez reiterates 'one-China policy'

My Republica, September 12, 2010.

The visiting delegation of Chinese leaders on Sunday called on President Dr Ram Baran Yadav at the latter's official residence in Shital Niwas and sought assurance on Nepal's one-China policy. The 21-member high-level delegation led by Communist Party of China's secretary He Yong sought assurance from Nepal that it would not allow any anti-China activities to occur from within its soil, said Rajendra Dahal, press adviser to the president. Yong has the official designation of vice premier.

(Source: http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=23225)

India accused of spoiling Maoist chances in Nepal

Sify News, September 12, 2010.

Fresh India bashing has started in Nepal with a Communist leader accusing New Delhi of having spent millions of rupees to prevent the Maoists from coming to power again. Veteran communist leader Narayan Man Bijukchhe, whose Nepal Workers and Peasants Party has five MPs in the 601-member parliament and a stronghold in the Newar community-dominant Bhaktapur city, is now alleging

that India's external intelligence agency RAW (Research and Analysis Wing) has threatened an ethnic party from the Terai plains with dire consequences if it supports Maoist chief Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda during the prime ministerial poll. Bijukchhe, who has been calling for the dissolution of parliament and imposition of president's rule in Nepal, said at a public programme in Kathmandu valley Saturday that the Indian government had spent NRs.220 million on the Terai parties to stop them from voting for Prachanda.

(Source: <http://sify.com/news/india-accused-of-spoiling-maoist-chances-in-nepal-news-international-kjmo4dfjca.html>)

Hurdles to power import from Nepal

Times of India, September 13, 2010.

Indian companies which have invested in hydel joint ventures in Nepal, with a total a capacity of over 6,000 mw, face uncertainties over exporting the bulk of the power to India due to several policy barriers that also restrict New Delhi's plans to put in place a SAARC grid and create a thriving power trading market in the region. GMR, Tata and Bhilwara groups, SN Power and state-run Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam are working on 16 projects in partnership with either the Nepal government or private partners. These projects are in various stages of implementation and were based on the premise that power sale to India will constitute the bulk of revenues.

(Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/Hurdles-to-power-import-from-Nepal/articleshow/6543737.cms>)

China to Nepal: Willing to contribute to development of Lumbini

Telegraph Nepal, September 14, 2010.

The leader of the 21 member jumbo high level Chinese delegation Mr. He Yong told journalists at Gautam Buddha Airport, September 13, 2010, in Bhairawaha of Rupandehi district that he was very happy to have made a trip at the birth place of Lord Buddha."China has large Buddhist population, who would like to visit Lumbini...visit at the people to people level will further deepen existing cordial ties between the two countries," he also said. He made the remark after visiting Lumbini. The Chinese leader also assured that his county was very much willing to contribute to the overall development of Lumbini area. That would be great, analysts opine.

(Source: http://www.telegraphnepal.com/news_det.php?news_id=8267)

Govt, Maoists agree on UN mission extension

Hindustan Times, September 14, 2010.

Ending days of confusion on the fate of United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), the Nepal government and opposition Maoists have agreed to extend its term by another four months. Caretaker Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal and Maoist chief Pushpa Kamal Dahal signed a four-point agreement. Ending days of confusion on the fate of United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), the Nepal

government and opposition Maoists have agreed to extend its term by another four months.

(Source: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/Govt-Maoists-agree-on-UN-mission-extension/Article1-599953.aspx>)

MK Nepal puts three conditions to help Khanal become PM

Nepal News, September 14, 2010.

Madhav Kumar Nepal, caretaker Prime Minister and senior leader of CPN (UML), has put forward three conditions before party chairman Jhala Nath Khanal to help him become the PM, Annapurna Post Daily reported. Nepal has sent a message to Khanal through his aides that he will strive to create an environment outside the party to accept Khanal as the Prime Minister of a consensus government if the conditions are accepted. The conditions Nepal has proposed are, to take action against vice chairman Bamdev Gautam by suspending him from the position, to make him (Nepal) the acting chairman and to make party leader KP Oli a Constituent Assembly (CA) member. If the conditions are accepted, Nepal has assured he will convince Nepali Congress candidate Ram Chandra Paudel to withdraw candidacy and proposed Khanal to convince Unified CPN (Maoist) candidate to withdraw candidacy.

(Source: <http://www.nepalnews.com/main/index.php/news-archive/2-political/9146-mk-nepal-puts-three-conditions-to-help-khanal-become-pm.html>)

Pakistan

Pakistan gets IMF relief, tightens security

The Star, September 2, 2010.

The International Monetary Fund will give Pakistan \$450 million in emergency flood aid, providing some relief for a government overwhelmed by the disaster and facing renewed militant violence. IMF Managing Director Dominique Strauss-Kahn said in Washington on Thursday that the funds would be dispersed in “coming weeks”. Strauss-Kahn said discussions with a delegation led by Pakistan’s Finance Minister Abdul Hafeez Shaikh on how to “reorganise” an \$11 billion IMF loan program would continue. Pakistan tightened security in the eastern city of Lahore on Thursday after three bomb attacks killed 33 people and wounded 171. A new wave of violence would be especially difficult to manage given the enormity of the task of providing relief to millions of flood victims.

(Source: http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2010/9/3/worldupdates/2010-09-02T221945Z_01_NOOTR_RTRMDNC_0_-512502-1&sec=Worldupdates)

US puts Pakistan Taleban on official terrorist register

Nzherald, September 3, 2010.

United States officials launched a broad legal offensive against Pakistan’s Taleban yesterday, placing the group on its international terrorism blacklist and charging its leader with planning last year’s suicide bombing in Afghanistan that killed seven CIA employees. The Pakistani group, known as the Tehrik-e-Taleban or TTP, was officially designated a “foreign terrorist organisation”, a classification that

imposes additional state and treasury department sanctions. The Pakistani Taliban threatens US national security, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in a note published in the Federal Register. The Justice Department then unsealed charges against the self-proclaimed emir of the Pakistani Taliban, Hakimullah Mehsud. He is accused of planning the attack in December in which a suicide bomber detonated explosives at a CIA base in Khost, Afghanistan, killing a Jordanian intelligence officer and the CIA employees.

(Source: http://www.nzherald.co.nz/crime/news/article.cfm?c_id=30&objectid=10670698)

Pakistan releases 141 Indian fishermen

Press TV, September 6, 2010.

Justice Nasir Aslam Zahid said a total of 442 fishermen were detained in Malir Jail for violating the maritime boundary between Pakistan and India and fishing in Pakistan's territorial waters. They were released on Monday on the orders of the Supreme Court as they have completed their 18-month term in prison. He said that the fishermen would stay at the South Asia Partnership (SAP) premises in Lahore and depart from the Wagah border to India on Tuesday. Meanwhile, 14 fishermen are still awaiting their freedom as the Indian High Commission is yet to confirm their nationality, he said. The Supreme Court of India has already ordered their release but legal and bureaucratic hurdles have been obstructing the process.

(Source: <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/141511.html>)

US Drone Strike Kills Five Militants In Northwestern Pakistan

Rtt News, September 6, 2010.

A suspected US drone strike has left at least five people dead in Pakistan's northwestern tribal belt near the Afghan border, local news reports quoting unnamed officials said Monday. According to the reports, the US drones fired at least two missiles at a vehicle carrying five militants in the Datta Khel area of Pakistan's restive North Waziristan tribal region, destroying the vehicle and killing all its occupants. Pakistan's northwestern tribal regions, especially North and South Waziristan, are dominated by Taliban militants, who often launch cross-border attacks on U.S. and NATO forces stationed in neighboring Afghanistan.

(Source: <http://www.rttnews.com/Content/GeneralNews.aspx?Node=B1&Id=1410587>)

China donates additional US \$ 30 million in kind for Pakistan flood victims

Associated Press of Pakistan, September 6, 2010.

Liu Jian, Ambassador of China to Pakistan called on Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani on Monday to convey the message of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao that Chinese Government will immediately provide an additional assistance of 200 million RMB (equivalent to US \$ 30 million) in kind, to supplement the flood relief efforts of the Government of Pakistan. China has already committed relief

assistance worth of \$ 20 million for the Pakistan's flood victims in the past weeks and this additional contribution will raise the total of its assistance to \$ 50 million, said a press release issued by the PM Media Office. The Chinese Ambassador also apprised the Prime Minister that while a field hospital manned by 55 male and female doctors from his country was already operational in Sindh, another hospital, to be mostly manned by the female doctors of Peoples Liberation Army, will reach Pakistan in next few days time.

(Source: http://ftpapp.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=115285&Itemid=1)

26\11 case: India open to Pak proposal to record testimony of 2 key witnesses

Times of India, September 7, 2010.

India is open to Pakistan's proposal to form a commission on 26\11 attacks and send it here to record testimony of two key witnesses – the magistrate, who recorded the confessional statement of lone surviving attacker Ajmal Kasab, and the police officer who investigated the incident – but will wait for a formal request from Islamabad.

Government sources said India has no problem in discussing Pakistan's proposal for such an arrangement as New Delhi had already agreed to let its officials depose before a Pakistani court via video-conferencing.

(Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/2611-case-India-open-to-Pak-proposal-to-record-testimony-of-2-key-witnesses/articleshow/6507796.cms>)

UN requires more money for Pakistan floods

Daily Times, September 7, 2010.

The United Nations says it needs hundreds of millions of dollars in new donations to get food, medicine and shelter for flood-hit Pakistanis. "The UN is preparing to ask member nations to give an amount that will be double the \$460 million it requested last month, at the start of the flooding, said UN secretary general's special envoy for assistance to Pakistan, Jean Maurice Ripert. The UN has received \$310 million, although private and bilateral donations bring the global total committed amount for Pakistan flood aid to \$1.1 billion. Ripert says 8 to 10 million people remain in dire need still.

(Source: http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\09\07\story_7-9-2010_pg7_9)

Bomb Blast in Pakistan: Kohat Bombings after Lahore and Quetta

CNM News Network, September 8, 2010

A bomb blast in Pakistan killed at least 20 people and injuring a reported 98, in what seems to be an endless stream of violence. The Kohat bombings came after last week's attacks in Lahore and Quetta, where many more were injured. Insurgents are perpetrating attacks as the authorities in Pakistan are strug-

gling to cope with the recent floods. As their attention is diverted elsewhere, it's sad but there are those who see the opportunity to hurt others. Last week's attacks were directed at Shiite Muslims by Sunni insurgents. This is not an uncommon occurrence. This attack was aimed at police.

(Source:<http://cnmnewsnetwork.com/125915/bomb-blast-in-pakistan-kohat-bombings-after-lahore-and-quetta/>)

China's power play

Times of India, September 9, 2010.

We must understand the implications of China's denial of visa to General Jaswal, heading India's Northern Command, for defence talks in Beijing on the ground that he came from the "sensitive location of Jammu and Kashmir" and "people from this part of the world come with a different kind of visa".

China began giving stapled visas on the Indian passports of Kashmir residents to make the point that it does not recognise J&K as an integral part of India. Now it has gone a step further by denying a visa to the Indian army general in charge of J&K. The implication here is that those associated directly with Indian rule in J&K are not politically acceptable to China for visits even if they are travelling for purposes agreed to at the governmental level. This would suggest that the Chinese now consider India's presence in J&K as lacking in legitimacy. Even the legality of India's 'control' over J&K is being questioned.

(Source:<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/opinion/edit-page/Chinas-power-play/articleshow/6520389.cms>)

Clinton emphasises Pakistan partnership

Daily Times, September 9, 2010.

United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Wednesday said that the United States is working with Pakistan as the South Asian country recovers from catastrophic floods and continues its fight against violent extremism.

She emphatically noted the importance of approaching challenges like the fight against extremism in Pakistan and Afghanistan in a regional perspective. The diplomat stressed that "solving foreign policy problems today requires us to think regionally and globally, to see the intersections and connections linking nations and regions and interests, and to bring people together as only America can".

(Source:http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C09%5C09%5Cstory_9-9-2010_pg7_36)

China to offer more aid to Pakistan, Chinese ambassador says

Xinhua Net, September 9, 2010.

Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Liu Jian said Thursday that China would offer more assistance to flood-hit Pakistan as the country are still facing difficulties. China on Monday announced another 200 million yuan (29.4 million U.S. dollars) of humanitarian aid to flood-hit Pakistan, which has suffered a worst-ever monsoon

flooding since late July, killing 1,754 people and left millions homeless. China had previously given 120 million yuan (17.6 million U.S. dollars) in aid to the neighboring Pakistan. Liu was visiting a mobile hospital set up by a Chinese search and rescue team in south Pakistan's Thatta, one of the worst-hit region in the south Asian country.

(Source: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2010-09/09/c_13487203.htm)

Pakistan urges US, Interpol to take action

Daily Times, September 10, 2010.

Interior Minister Rehman Malik on Thursday urged Interpol Secretary General Ronald K Noble and the US government to take strict action against the planned burning of the holy Quran by an American pastor. In a letter to the Interpol chief, Malik observed that the burning of the holy book was a crime against humanity and amounted to international offense, as it would harm world peace and harmony. "Interpol must play its role to stop this heinous criminal act," Malik demanded. Calling it an insane act, he warned "it would do irreversible damage to world peace, especially when the world is fighting against all kind of acts of terrorism".

(Source: http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\09\10\story_10-9-2010_pg1_5)

While Pakistan grapples with floods, U.S. turns up the heat in northwest

Reuters, September 12, 2010.

While Pakistan's devastating floods may have set back the army's campaign against militants, the US drone war in the northwest is unabated. Indeed America may have just stepped up the deadly attacks, if the first 12 days of this month are any indication. At least nine attacks have already been carried out in what may well turn out to be the most active month since the U.S. military began drone strikes against members of al Qaeda and the Taliban in Pakistan in 2004. On Sunday there was a fresh air strike in North Waziristan in which five suspected militants were killed, intelligence officials said. The most active month recorded so far was January 2010, with the US launching 11 strikes in Pakistan in the aftermath of the suicide attack on a US combat outpost in Khost, Afghanistan, that killed seven CIA officials and a Jordanian intelligence officer, according to the Long War Journal which tracks the drone campaign.

(Source: <http://blogs.reuters.com/afghanistan/2010/09/12/while-pakistan-grapples-with-floods-u-s-turns-up-the-heat-in-northwest/>)

No operation in Balochistan: PM

Daily Times, September 13, 2010.

Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Friday categorically stated that the federal government had no intention to launch a Swat-like military operation in Balochistan. "There is no such plan to launch a Swat or Malakand-like operation. That is wrong. It is for the provincial government in Balochistan to take decisions

about their province," Gilani told a group of newspaper editors and media persons at the Prime Minister's House. The PM said that Interior Minister Senator Rehman Malik, who had also already contradicted the statement, told him that he did not talk about starting any military operation in Balochistan. Gilani said that the federal government was very sensitive about Balochistan, adding the approval of a special Balochistan package was reflective of the government's positive approach. "We have also invited the nationalist leaders for talks," the PM said.

(Source: http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\09\11\story_11-9-2010_pg1_2)

PM urges international community for more help

Dawn, September 13, 2010.

Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani said that Pakistan was not seeking economic assistance from the international community by using floods as a pretext. Gilani, while talking to media representatives in Jampur on Sunday, appealed to the international community to help Pakistan in these difficult times. The floods were a large scale tragedy and assistance from international community can help meet the challenges, he added. Gilani said that Pakistan was facing the history's worst floods at a time when it was fighting the war against terrorism as a frontline state. "This is a war for peace and development of the world, and Pakistan was determined to confront terrorism," he added. The premier while visiting the flood-hit areas said that Jampur was like his home as he possessed land there.

(Source: <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/12-gilani+urges+international+community+for+more+help-bi-04>)

Second Chinese contingent arrives in Pakistan's Thatta for disaster relief

Xinhua Net,, September 15, 2010.

A second Chinese rescue team flew into flood-hit Thatta in southern Pakistan aboard a chartered plane Tuesday to carry out relief work. The 64-member team will focus on providing medical services for residents in Thatta, a region severely struck by the floods that have left 1,700 dead and affected more than 20 million others throughout the country. Yin Guanghui, head of the team, said it would do its best to support the efforts of the Pakistani government and people in disaster relief. Liang Liwu, deputy head of China's Armed Police General Hospital, said the team had brought medicine and advanced equipment with it, and could conduct biochemical checks and bacterium-free operations. The first 55-member Chinese rescue team left Thatta Tuesday after a three-week mission, during which they rescued and treated more than 11,200 people.

(Source: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2010-09/15/c_13495099.htm)

Holbrooke to visit Pakistan this week

Hindustan Times, September 15, 2010.

US Special Envoy for Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke will visit Pakistan this week to get a first-hand assessment of the flood relief operations in the

country, where more than 20 million people have been affected by the worst-ever floods. During his trip, Holbrooke would visit camps, where the displaced people are lodged, and see for himself the situation there. He will assess "what the most critical needs on the ground are as the US begins to help Pakistan with the transition from immediate relief to recovery and reconstruction," State Department spokesman P J Crowley said. He said the central focus of Holbrooke's trip will be to find how America needs to adapt its approach to Pakistan and support it in light of this "devastating disaster." This will be Holbrooke's first trip to the region after the devastating flood hit Pakistan and the Special Envoy has no plans to visit Afghanistan this time, he said.

(Source: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/Holbrooke-to-visit-Pakistan-this-week/Article1-599941.aspx>)

Sri Lanka

Nirupama visits Vavuniya, Kilinochchi, Jaffna

The Hindu, September 1, 2010.

Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao on Tuesday visited Vavuniya, Kilinochchi and Jaffna for a firsthand assessment of Indian assistance and the situation of resettled Tamils. Ms. Rao is the first Foreign Secretary to visit these areas in nearly three decades. The visit is taking place against the backdrop of concerns in India over the pace of resettlement of nearly three lakh Tamils displaced in the conflict between the Sri Lankan security forces and the LTTE. The official met a number of civilians awaiting resettlement and those who have already been resettled. India is engaged in massive relief and rehabilitation of the displaced Tamils and in demining operations in the erstwhile conflict areas. Within days of the conflict ending in May last year, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced a Rs. 500-crore humanitarian assistance. During the June visit of Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa to India, New Delhi committed itself to building 50,000 houses for the displaced.

(Source: <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/article606046.ece>)

More than 300,000 landmines cleared

Daily News, September 3, 2010.

Military Spokesman Major General UAB Medawela said that more than 300,000 landmines laid by the LTTE terrorists in the North and East have been cleared by the de-mining groups. There is still another area of 2000 square kilometres to be cleared. Making this observation at a press conference held at the Media Centre for National Security, the Military Spokesman said that an area of 1,800 square kilometres of the Northern, Eastern and North Central Provinces have been cleared by the de-mining groups. He said the land mines have been strewn without a proper system making the de-mining process difficult. He also said that 90 percent of the de-mining work is done by the Army Engineering Unit with a crew of 1,100 personnel. He added that the de-mining program is also supported by eight locally and foreign operating NGOs.

(Source: <http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/09/03/sec01.asp>)

Oil drilling in Sri Lanka amidst imminent sale of Cairn India

Sunday Times, September 5, 2010.

Cairn Sri Lanka (Pvt) Ltd (CSLL), a subsidiary of Cairn India which is owned by UK-based Cairn Energy Plc is going ahead with the drilling of the first test well in Mannar basin next year amidst reports on the sale of a majority stake in Cairn India to Vedanta Resources, a senior official said. Even if the deal comes through Cairn India will continue to exist as an independent company and operate the oil fields and only its corporate ownership is changing, he said. "Cairn Sri Lanka (Pvt) Ltd's oil exploration in Sri Lanka will not be affected," said Neil de Silva, head of Sri Lanka's Petroleum Resources Development Secretariat overseeing exploration efforts.

(Source: <http://www.sundaytimes.lk/100905/BusinessTimes/bt05.html>)

More opposition MPs to support government's Eighteenth Amendment Bill? Opposition groups call for general strike and civil disobedience

Asian Tribune, September 5, 2010.

With three United National Party (UNP) parliamentarians- Lakshman Senevirathne, Earl Gunasekera and Manusha Nanayakkara already declaring support for the Eighteenth Amendment of the ruling United Peoples' Freedom Alliance (UPFA), more opposition MPs are tipped to support the Bill on Wednesday's (September 8) historic vote. Lakshman Senevirathne (Badulla District), Earl Gunasekera (Pollonnaruwa District) and Manusha Nanayakkara (Galle District) declaring their support to UPFA's constitutional reforms bill on Friday (September 3), severely blamed the UNP leadership for seventeen election defeats in a row. Recently, UPFA front-liner Minister Maithreepala Sirisena claimed as many as ten UNP MPs would support the Bill on the day of voting. Speculation is rife that Palitha Range Bandara (Puttlam), Jeya Sri Ranga (Nuwara Eliya) and John Amaratunga would support the Bill.

(Source: <http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2010/09/05/sri-lanka-more-opposition-mps-support-government%E2%80%99s-eighteenth-amendment-bill-opposite>)

Sri Lanka President says 18th Amendment will dilute some powers of the Executive Presidency

Colombo Page, September 6, 2010.

Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa says that the proposed Constitutional Council in the 18th amendment to the Constitution will better assure the supremacy of the parliament as there will not be a presidential representative in the proposed council and it will consist only of parliamentary members. Addressing media heads and publishers at Temple Trees today, the President said the five-member constitutional council will have the Speaker, Prime Minister, Opposition Leader and two other nominees from the legislature. If an opposition member is elected as the Speaker, the majority control of the Council could fall into opposition hands, he pointed out.

(Source: http://www.colombopage.com/archive_10B/Sep06_1283787880CH.php)

Ranil seeks Indian help to revive agriculture

The Hindu, September 6, 2010.

The Leader of the Opposition in Sri Lanka and former Prime Minister, Ranil Wickremesinghe, sought India's assistance in reviving agriculture and fisheries in the Vanni region, pointing out that "until the region returns to normalcy and commences food production and fisheries, Sri Lanka will continue to have problems." "It will affect the food supply and also have an impact on cost of living," Mr Wickremesinghe told *The Hindu* in Chennai. Mr. Wickremesinghe, who had a detailed discussion with agricultural scientist M.S. Swaminathan on these issues, said: "India's technical knowledge and its advances in agriculture... will help not only the people of Vanni region but the whole country."

(Source: <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article615922.ece>)

The East Coast of Sri Lanka is Ripe for Investment

Property Report, September 6, 2010

The East Coast of Sri Lanka which runs from Arugam Bay, past Trincomalee and up to Nilaveli beach has finally come of age with a surge in interest from holiday makers and investors. Boasting some of the most beautiful beaches on the island, rich coral reefs and what some consider being one of the top ten surf spots in the world, the East Coast stands out from the crowd. The peak season along this coastline runs from March to October which marries well with the west and south coast peak seasons which extend from October to April. In addition to beach activities, the East Coast is recognized for its ancient cultural sites including Koneswaram Kovil and Buddhist rock sculptures at Buduruwagala and Maligavila. Since the end of the war late last year, investment and tourism-related revenue has been steadily increasing.

(Source: <http://www.property-report.com/site/the-east-coast-of-sri-lanka-is-ripe-for-investment-8950>)

Army Chief in Colombo to promote defence cooperation

The Hindu, September 6, 2010.

Army chief General V.K. Singh arrived here on Sunday on a five-day visit to promote defence cooperation between the two countries. General V. K. Singh and his wife Bharati Singh were received at the airport by the Sri Lankan Army Chief Jagath Jayasurya and his wife. General Singh served in the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) during Operation Pawan in Sri Lanka in 1987. In the course of his stay here, General Singh would pay a floral tribute at the memorial for the IPKF soldiers and officers who laid down their lives in the fight against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). He will be the first Indian Army chief to visit the memorial. General Singh is scheduled to meet the Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Prime Minister D.M. Jayaratne, Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, Army Commander Lt. General Jagath Jayasuriya and a few other senior defence officials.

(Source: <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article615932.ece>)

Iran, Sri Lanka joint economic summit in Colombo

Colombo Page, September 8, 2010.

Iran and Sri Lanka's joint economic committee will hold its 9th meeting in Colombo on September 13, Iran's IRNA News Agency reported. The two countries are to sign six memorandums of understanding during the three-day summit, according to Amir Talebi an Iranian official with the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran. "During the meeting the two sides will sign 6 memorandums of understanding in different fields such as science, culture and art, standard, costumes, and sisterhood agreement between Rajaei and Colombo ports," the official has said. The meeting is aimed at promoting Iran and Sri Lanka's trade, increasing cooperation in holding international economic

(Source: http://www.colombopage.com/archive_10B/Sep08_1283959487CH.php)

Sri Lanka passes constitutional amendment

Reuters, September 8, 2010.

Sri Lanka's parliament on Wednesday passed a constitutional amendment that grants President Mahinda Rajapaksa even more unchecked power, which had prompted opposition cries of a looming dictatorship. Rajapaksa's amendment won 161 votes in favour with 17 votes against out of the 225-member legislature. The main opposition United National Party had boycotted the vote to protest what it called undemocratic changes.

(Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSSGE6870J920100908>)

Tamil refugee claimant rejected

Colombo Page, September 9, 2010.

A Tamil man who claims he faces torture or death from the Tamil Tigers terror group has lost his bid for refugee status and faces deportation from Canada in a matter of weeks. And Toronto lawyers said federal officials will use the deportation of Shandeep Sathivadivel, 24, as a test case to return to Sri Lanka most of the 492 Tamil migrants, who arrived in B.C. by ship. In Sathivadivel's case, federal officials took the position that the situation in Sri Lanka has improved since the Tamil Tigers were defeated. Sathivadivel, who lives in Toronto, had his case dismissed Sept. 1 by a federal court. With his last-ditch effort to remain in the country rejected, he faces deportation in weeks, officials said. Court heard he was returned to the U.S. in 2009 after trying to file a refugee claim at a Niagara Falls border crossing. He was ineligible because of an agreement between the United States and Canada which bans potential refugees from making claims in both countries.

(Source: http://www.colombopage.com/archive_10B/Sep09_1283979133JR.php)

Sri Lanka receiving an overwhelming response for Hambanthota Port ventures says Ports Chief

Asian Tribune, September 10, 2010.

Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) has received a good number of Requests for

Proposals (RFPs) on Hambantota Harbour-related projects and ventures, country's Ports Chief Dr. Priyath Bandu Wickreme told the Asian Tribune in an exclusive interview "We opened up RFPs for Hambantota Port-related projects last August 8, and so far the response has been overwhelming. We have already received 26 RFPs under both our categories- services sector and logistics sector. The deadline falls on September 30," SLPA Chairman said. Ship-repairing, crew-changing, ship chandelling and the only sector set apart exclusively for SLPA- bunkering, are categorized under the 'Services Component' while car assembling, manufacturing, value adding industries, bulk operations, warehousing and storage operations are under the umbrella of 'Logistics Component', Dr. Wickreme said.

(Source: <http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2010/09/10/sri-lanka-receiving-overwhelming-response-hambanthota-port-ventures-says-ports-chief>)

No LeT training camp in Sri Lanka: Defence secretary

Times of India, , September 11, 2010.

Sri Lanka has said that no militant group was operating on its soil after the elimination of the LTTE in May last year, dismissing reported claims of an LeT terror suspect and key accused in the Pune German bakery blast that he was trained in Colombo. Sri Lanka is free of terrorists and there is no ground for militants to receive training in the island nation, said the country's powerful defence secretary Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, brother of President Mahinda Rajapaksa. His remarks came in the wake of reported claims of 29-year-old Mirza Himayat Baig, the alleged conspirator and co-planter of the bomb placed at Pune's German bakery, that he had received his terror training in Colombo. The defence secretary rejected Baig's reported claims, saying there was no ground in Sri Lanka for such activities, according to a Defence Ministry statement.

(Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/No-LeT-training-camp-in-Sri-Lanka-Defence-secretary/articleshow/6536717.cms>)

Tax waiver for Indian power plant in Sri Lanka

Express Buzz, September 13, 2010.

The Sri Lankan government has given a 25-year tax waiver and customs duty concessions to the India-Lanka joint venture to establish a 500 MW coal-fired power plant in Sampur, Trincomalee. The Sunday Times reported that a gazette notification to this effect was issued on September 6. The notification, issued by the Ministry of Economic Development, had said that it was a "Strategic Development Project" under the Strategic Development Projects Act. The Sampur plant is a joint venture between two state-owned entities, the Indian National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) and the Ceylon Electricity Board. NTPC would provide the funds and technical knowhow.

(Source: <http://expressbuzz.com/world/tax-waiver-for-indian-power-plant-in-sri-lanka/206276.html>)

Sri Lanka's major opposition to bring a new party constitution in December

Colombo Page, September 14, 2010.

Lanka's Opposition Leader Ranil Wickremasinghe said today that the United National Party (UNP) he leads will propose the new party constitution to the party general assembly scheduled to be held in December. Addressing a press briefing held in the parliament premises today, the UNP leader said that the party restructuring has already commenced. Wickremasinghe also said that the party responsibilities would be vested in to the youth leaders soon. The UNP leader's statement came in a time the party is in a severe crisis as MPs are crossing over, sitting as independent MPs and some others urging a change in the leadership.

(Source: http://www.colombopage.com/archive_10B/Sep14_1284473458KA.php)