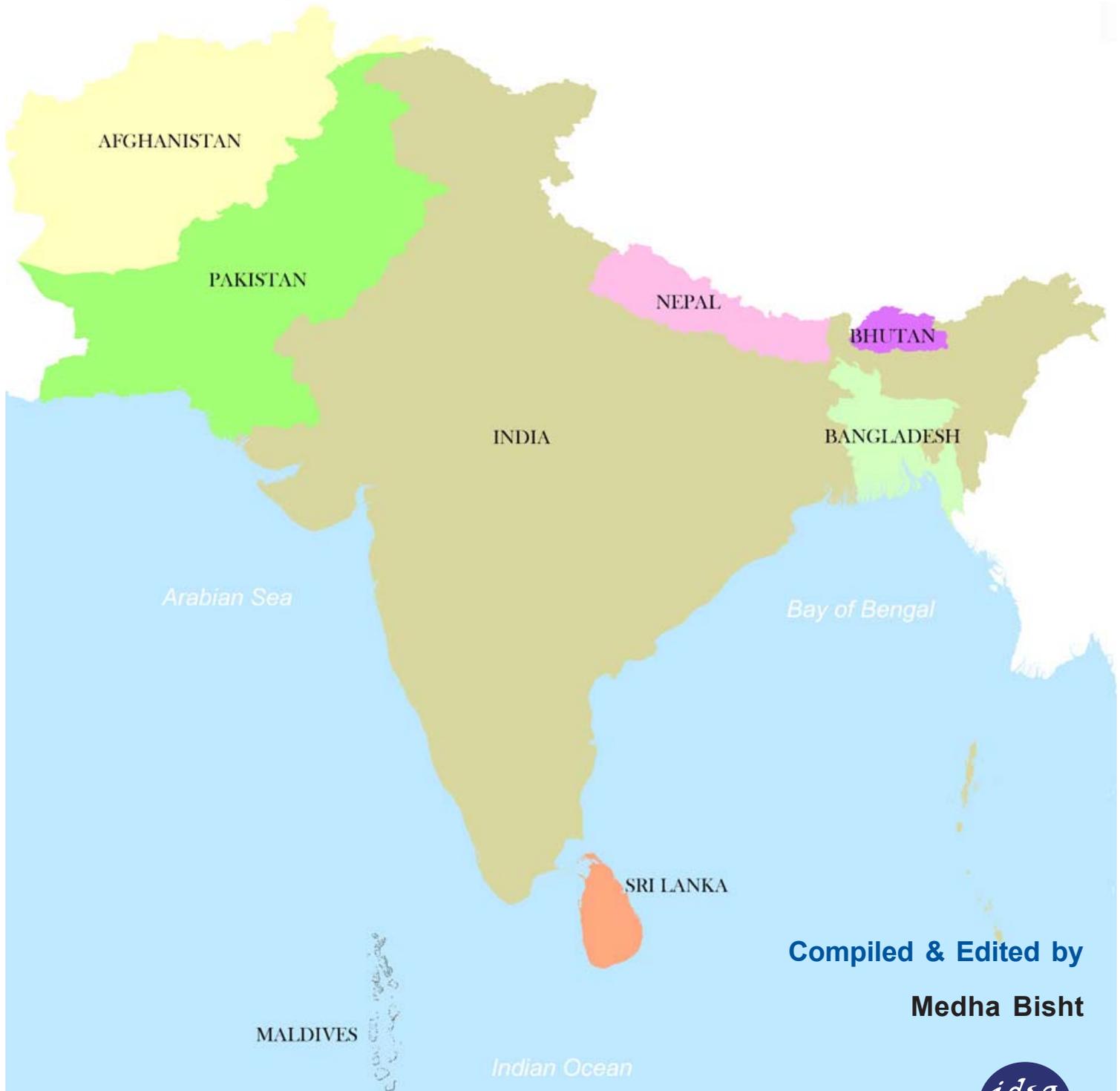


# ***SOUTH ASIA TRENDS***

**Volume 1 Number 4 June 7-20, 2010**

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

Is the clock ticking in Afghanistan? This is the big question that would require some deliberation, as the concerned countries chalk out their respective Afghan policy. While there was much apprehension in Washington, regarding the newly elected British premier, David Cameron's intentions of speeding the withdrawal of British troops from Afghanistan, Cameron's latest parleys with Karzai have validated these fears. According to media reports, Cameron in a joint press conference with Afghan President Hamid Karzai, announced that the British focus would be to enable Afghans take control of their own security.

Meanwhile the uncertainty revolving around U.S. troop reduction was also the moot point at the Capitol Hill on June 16, 2010, when Senator John McCain was visibly sordid in his remarks as he critiqued the Obama approach, calling it an "uncertain trumpet". Two patterns have significantly become visible in the past two weeks.

First, refers to Karzai's renewed efforts in trying to engage the Taliban. His recent overtures towards reconciliation, efforts to vindicate Taliban suspects and his visit to Kandahar to get public support against the operations are pointers to a proactive Karzai. The resignation of Hanif Atmar and Amrullah Saleh, two Afghan ministers who were known to be pro U.S. has also been considered by some analysts as Karzai's efforts to minimise American influence in Afghan politics.

The second pattern refers towards an embryonic but potential Pakistani influence in Afghan politics. Perhaps Karzai's reference to Pakistan as Afghanistan's "conjoined twin" can well take a life of its own in the year to come. A report released by the London School of Economics (LSE), which documents nine interviews with Taliban commanders in Afghanistan, states that the support for the Afghan Taliban was "official ISI policy". Meanwhile some media reports allege that Pakistan President Zardari met 50 captured Taliban leaders, including Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, in the first week of April 2010, assuring their release and Pakistan government's full support to them. In another instance General Stanley A. McChrystal, Commander, ISAF, announced that Pakistan would be taken into confidence on any new operation in Afghanistan.

While defence cooperation with China was the highlight of the week in Pakistan, Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping paid a two day visit to Bangladesh from June 14-16, 2010. Chairman of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) appealed to China for facilitating bilateral trade and economic cooperation between China and South Asia. Also, Bangladesh- Myanmar link road project, supported by China is in the offing.

On the defence pact with Pakistan, China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang announced that the civilian nuclear cooperation between Pakistan and China is for peaceful purposes and the nuclear deal with Pakistan would be under the IAEA supervision. On his part, Pak premier Gilani issued a statement that Paki-

stan values its relations with China.

Indo-Nepal bilateral relations ran into rough waters, as nine Nepali migrants were killed in Meghalaya. While the YCL criticised the killings, fifteen Maoist organisations prevented work on the 3,300 MW Sapta Kosi Multipurpose Project. Public Interest Litigation have also been filed against the 900 MW Arun III and 302 MW Upper Karnali project by local organisations on the ground that Indian companies have been working illegally in Nepal.

Frustration over the political crises in Nepal became apparent, as Mohan Baidya Pokharel, snapped on Madhav Nepal for his irreconcilable attitude. Pokharel's statement that Maoists do not want to be part of the government, seemed no less than a political posture when later at the politburo meeting on June 16, 2010, Maoists spoke in favour of a Maoist led national government. The possibility of Baburam Bhattarai as the new leader of the party has started doing rounds in Nepal. While there is a split in Nepali Congress over the proposed prime ministerial candidate, Madhesi Janadhikar Forum-Democratic, too has staked a prime-ministerial candidate on behalf of Madhes parties.

Meanwhile President Rajapakse's visit to India from June 8-12, 2010, was hailed as successful by the media despite the resistance from some political interests to transform the Indo-Lanka Free Trade Agreement into a new Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. Amongst the many issues that were discussed, India agreed to loan Sri Lanka USD 1 billion for infrastructure projects, USD 800 million for reconstruction of railway and USD 200 million for a power plant.

## Afghanistan

### **Karzai in Taliban suspects review**

*London Evening Standard, June 6, 2010.*

Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai has ordered a review of the cases of all Taliban suspects being held in Afghan jails and said those being detained on doubtful evidence must be released. President Karzai's decree was his first official response to a national conference on ways to end his country's nearly nine-year-old insurgency. The conference recommended that all militant suspects being held in Afghan jails and who are in US military custody be released if allegations against them are unsubstantiated.

(Source: <http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/standard/article-23841725-karzai-in-taliban-suspects-review.do>)

### **Afghanistan's Top Security Officials Resign**

*Wall Street Journal, June 7, 2010*

Afghanistan's two top security officials resigned on June 6, 2010, hours after President Hamid Karzai ordered a judicial review of all cases against suspected Taliban insurgents and promised that those incarcerated because of unreliable evidence will be released. The departures of Interior Minister Hanif Atmar and intelligence chief Amrullah Saleh come amid rising tensions between the security chiefs and Mr. Karzai over the Afghan president's approach to reconciliation with the Taliban, which some say is too soft on the insurgency. Mr. Karzai's order of the prisoner review was the final straw, two Afghan officials close to the situation said.

(Source: [http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704002104575290081095103668.html?mod=WSJ\\_hpp\\_MIDDLETopStories](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704002104575290081095103668.html?mod=WSJ_hpp_MIDDLETopStories))

### **More funding for Afghan peace expected: Holbrooke**

*Daily Times, June 8, 2010.*

More funds for Afghanistan's plan to reintegrate Taliban fighters who renounce violence are expected to be pledged next month at a conference in Kabul, US special envoy Richard Holbrooke said. "Almost \$200 million has been committed under a programme led by the Japanese, which is its largest contributor, and there will more developments on this at the Kabul conference," Holbrooke said, without specifying a sum.

(Source: [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\08\story\\_8-6-2010\\_pg7\\_4](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\08\story_8-6-2010_pg7_4))

### **Gates confident on British Afghanistan commitment**

*The Star, June 8, 2010.*

U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates said that Washington would not be asking Britain to pledge more troops for Afghanistan and voiced confidence the new government in London was committed to the war. Last month, Gates' British counterpart Liam Fox told the Times of London newspaper that the Prime Minister David Cameron's government, which took power last month, hoped to speed up

the process of withdrawal from Afghanistan.

(Source: [http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2010/6/8/worldupdates/2010-06-07T225345Z\\_01\\_NOOTR\\_RTRMDNC\\_0\\_-491117-1&sec=Worldupdates](http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2010/6/8/worldupdates/2010-06-07T225345Z_01_NOOTR_RTRMDNC_0_-491117-1&sec=Worldupdates))

### **Karzai's Isolation Worries Afghans and the West**

*Post Gazette, June 8, 2010*

Afghan observers and Western officials are interpreting the forced resignations of Afghanistan's two top security officials as another worrying sign of President Hamid Karzai's increasingly impulsive decision making and deepening isolation from his backers, both within Afghanistan and abroad. The two men who resigned over the weekend, Interior Minister Hanif Atmar and the intelligence director, Amrullah Saleh, had strong relationships with American and British officials and were seen as being among the most competent of his cabinet members, said several Western officials in Kabul.

(Source: <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/10159/1064039-82.stm#ixzz0qGZsxryP>)

### **US: Sacking of Afghan officials an internal matter**

*The Guardian, June 8, 2010.*

U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates urged Afghan President Hamid Karzai to replace two top security officials with ministers of "equal caliber," and said the sacking of the pair does not signal trouble in Karzai's government over efforts to seek a peace deal with the Taliban. Gates stepped gingerly in answering questions about the significance of the abrupt resignations of the two men whom U.S. officials had often singled out by name as examples of competent leadership in a government riven by corruption and patronage. "It's obviously an internal matter for the Afghans," Gates said.

(Source: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/9116096>)

### **US Ready to Accept 'Reformed' Taliban: Holbrooke**

*Outlook Afghanistan, June 8, 2010.*

Backing Afghan President Hamid Karzai's efforts to 'reach out' to the Taliban through the peace jirga, President Obama's Special Envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke has said that Washington accepts that the final political solution in the war-ravaged country could involve 'reformed' Taliban in the government if certain "red lines" are respected. Addressing an international conference here, Holbrooke described the recent peace jirga called by Karzai as an important step towards establishing stability and peace in the troubled country and that the Obama administration supports every move in that aspect.

(Source: [http://outlookafghanistan.net/news\\_Pages/main\\_news.html#01](http://outlookafghanistan.net/news_Pages/main_news.html#01))

### **Turkey to Enhance Cooperation with Afghanistan**

*Daily Outlook Afghanistan, June 8, 2010.*

President Hamid Karzai met with Turkish President, Abdullah Gul in Istanbul on June 7, 2010. The meeting came on the first day of the President's two-day visit to Turkey to attend the 3rd summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures (CICA). During the meeting several issues of mutual interest including Afghan government's efforts with support by the international community to ensure security and stability in Afghanistan, Turkey's continued support of Afghanistan and stronger bilateral relations between the two countries were discussed.

(Source: [http://outlookafghanistan.net/news/Pages/main\\_news.html#01](http://outlookafghanistan.net/news/Pages/main_news.html#01))

### **Afghanistan Strategy Shifts to Focus on Civilian Effort**

*New York Times, June 9, 2010*

The prospect of a robust military push in Kandahar Province, which had been widely expected to begin this month, has evolved into a strategy that puts civilian reconstruction efforts first and relegates military action to a supportive role. The strategy, Afghan, American and NATO civilian and military officials said in interviews, was adopted because of opposition to military action from an unsympathetic local population and Afghan officials here and in Kabul. There are also concerns that a frontal military approach has not worked as well as hoped in a much smaller area in Marja, in neighboring Helmand Province.

(Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/09/world/asia/09kandahar.html?hp>)

### **1,001 US troops killed in Afghanistan**

*Siasat Daily, June 9, 2010*

With two more US soldiers killed in southern Afghanistan on June 8, 2010, the death toll of American soldiers, from day one, has surpassed the 1,000 mark. The two soldiers were killed when an improvised explosive device went off bringing the total to nine Americans in just two days, and the total deaths in 104 months to 1,001, according to CNN calculations. Afghanistan is getting deadlier by the day, CNN said. From 2001 through 2006, the American casualty rate never reached 100 in any single year. But that number started going up in 2007 and spiked to more than 300 last year. If the current rate continues, 2010 will be the deadliest year of the war, nearly a decade after it started.

(Source: <http://www.siasat.com/english/news/1001-us-troops-killed-afghanistan>)

### **Afghan Mission will Fail without UK Help: Petraeus**

*Daily Outlook Afghanistan, June 9, 2010.*

Gen. David Petraeus warned that the effort to quash the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan would fail without British support, making his case to U.K. leaders facing painful choices over what kind of military commitments the country can afford. The head of the U.S. Central Command said that he needed Britain's help

to beat the Taliban. "As was the case in Iraq, the scale of the British contribution in Afghanistan is such that the coalition cannot succeed without you," he said. The U.K. currently has some 10,000 soldiers in the NATO-led mission fighting in Afghanistan, and it is the second-largest foreign contingent after the United States.

(Source: [http://outlookafghanistan.net/news\\_Pages/Local%20news.html#011](http://outlookafghanistan.net/news_Pages/Local%20news.html#011))

### **New British PM on first visit to Afghanistan**

*The Star, June 10, 2010.*

British Prime Minister David Cameron arrived in Afghanistan for talks with President Hamid Karzai on June 10, 2010, his first visit as prime minister to a country that his new coalition government has set as its top foreign policy priority. In the month since he took power at the head of a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, Cameron has been conducting an intensive assessment of the situation in Afghanistan where Britain has 9,500 troops, the second-biggest foreign contingent after that of the United States.

(Source: [http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2010/6/10/worldupdates/2010-06-10T140542Z\\_01\\_NOOTR\\_RTRMDNC\\_0\\_-491935-1&sec=Worldupdates](http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2010/6/10/worldupdates/2010-06-10T140542Z_01_NOOTR_RTRMDNC_0_-491935-1&sec=Worldupdates))

### **US commander in Afghanistan says Kandahar operation will take longer than planned**

*Star Tribune, June 10, 2010.*

The top commander in the largely stalemated Afghanistan war acknowledged that a crucial campaign to secure the region of the country where the Taliban insurgency was born will take longer than planned because local Afghans do not yet welcome the military-run operation. The operation to secure the Kandahar region will unfold more slowly and last longer than the military had planned, Gen. Stanley McChrystal said.

(Source: <http://www.startribune.com/world/96035184.html>)

### **Terror syndicate in Pakistan: U.S.**

*The Hindu, June 10, 2010.*

Robert Blake, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia, underscored shared interests and dimensions of cooperation between the United States and India in Pakistan and Afghanistan, including action against terror networks in the former and development projects in the latter. Addressing media at the Foreign Press Centre here Mr. Blake said counterterrorism was the U.S.' "highest priority" and the one area in which the U.S. had "made the greatest progress in terms of our cooperation with India – in terms of not only law enforcement cooperation but also intelligence cooperation".

(Source: <http://www.hindu.com/2010/06/10/stories/2010061063061300.htm>)

### **David Cameron, British Prime Minister: This Year Vital for Post-Taliban Afghanistan**

*Daily Outlook Afghnaistan, June 12, 2010.*

British Prime Minister David Cameron described the current year as a “vital year” for post-Taliban Afghanistan. “This is a vital year, this is a year we have to make progress, progress for saving Afghan people,” Cameron told reporters in a joint press conference with Afghan President Hamid Karzai. Prime Minister Cameron also said that, “Our ever rising focus must be to help the Afghans and to help Afghanistan to take control of its own security and that should be our purpose to focus on building up the Afghans national army and police.”

(Source: [http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/archive/June%2012,%202010/news\\_Pages/main\\_news.html#01](http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/archive/June%2012,%202010/news_Pages/main_news.html#01))

### **SCO for UN's a Leading Role in Afghanistan**

*Daily Outlook Afghanistan, June 12, 2010*

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) reiterated its support for the United Nations to play a leading role in international mediation efforts for Afghanistan. The SCO member states believed “military means alone” cannot solve the country’s problems, the declaration said. The SCO called on the international community to intensify the fight against all sections of drug production and circulation in Afghanistan.

(Source: [http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/archive/June%2012,%202010/news\\_Pages/main\\_news.html#01](http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/archive/June%2012,%202010/news_Pages/main_news.html#01))

### **Karzai Defends Key Resignations**

*Daily Outlook Afghanistan, June 12, 2010.*

President Hamid Karzai defended the resignations of two senior security chiefs this week, calling their failure to prevent an attack on a peace meeting “unacceptable”. Afghan observers said Karzai forced his powerful interior minister, Hanif Atmar, and his popular spy chief, Amrullah Saleh, to resign following a rocket attack on a landmark peace conference in Kabul. “A security failure was unacceptable,” Karzai told reporters during a joint press conference with visiting British Prime Minister David Cameron Saleh indicated there were “dozens of reasons” for his resignation, suggesting Karzai had lost confidence in his ability to protect the country

(Source: [http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/archive/June%2012,%202010/news\\_Pages/main\\_news.html#01](http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/archive/June%2012,%202010/news_Pages/main_news.html#01))

### **ISI provides funding and sanctuary to Afghan Taliban: report**

*Deccan Herald, June 13,2010.*

The report by the London School of Economics (LSE), based on interviews with nine Taliban commanders in Afghanistan between February and May this year, says the support for the Afghan Taliban was “official ISI policy”. Taliban field commanders interviewed for the report suggested that ISI intelligence agents even

attend Taliban supreme council meetings. "Some alleged that ISI agents had even attended meetings of the Taliban's top leadership council, the so-called Quetta shura. They claim that by backing the insurgents Pakistan's security service is trying to undermine Indian influence in Afghanistan," BBC quoted the report as saying.

(Source: <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/75140/isi-provides-funding-sanctuary-afghan.html>)

### **Afghanistan's Karzai seeks support for Kandahar op**

*The Guardian, June 13, 2010*

President Hamid Karzai called on community leaders in Kandahar to support a NATO campaign to bolster security in this Taliban stronghold, urging people to work with his government to "bring dignity back." NATO has already begun an operation to ramp up security in Kandahar, and the campaign is expected to accelerate the coming. Though civilian deaths from NATO forces have been decreasing, air strikes continue to be the main cause of civilian deaths by the military alliance.

(Source: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/9125142>)

### **Zardari met Taliban leaders**

*Siasat Daily, June 13, 2010*

Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari recently met 50 captured Taliban leaders, including Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, in a prison to assure them that their outfit had his government's full support and that they would be freed soon. A senior Taliban source in regular contact with members of the Quetta shura (Taliban war council) told that in early April, Zardari along with a senior Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) official met 50 high-ranking Taliban members at a prison in Pakistan.

(Source: <http://www.siasat.com/english/news/zardari-met-taliban-leaders>)

### **NATO Discovers Supply Route to Afghanistan through Russia**

*Daily Outlook Afghanistan, June 14, 2010.*

In a critical development to keep shipments for the International Security Assistance Force (IASF) troops to landlocked Afghanistan, safe from frequent ambushes by militants in Pakistan, NATO announced opening a new logistic route from Russia and Central Asia, local media reported. In another incident on June 10, 2010, some militants set a NATO truck on fire in Khuzdar in the southwest Balochistan province. The U.S. cannot give up dependency on the Pakistani route, said a Pakistani analyst.

(Source: [http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/news\\_Pages/Local%20news.html#05](http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/news_Pages/Local%20news.html#05))

**US discovers \$1 trillion Afghan mineral deposits: NYT**

*Dawn, June 14, 2010*

Afghanistan could be holding \$1 trillion of untapped mineral deposits including critical industrial metals such as lithium, the New York Times reported, quoting US government officials. "There is stunning potential here," the newspaper quoted General David Petraeus, commander of the US Central Command, as saying in an interview at the weekend. "There are lots of ifs, of course, but I think potentially it is hugely significant."

(Source: <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/world/04-us-discovers-1trillion-mineral-deps-afg-qs-04>)

**Pak to Be Taken Into Confidence on Any New Operation in Afghanistan: McChrystal**

*Daily Outlook Afghanistan, June 15, 2010*

General Stanley A. McChrystal, Commander International Security Assistance Forces, Afghanistan called on Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani at GHQ on June 14, 2010. General Stanley A. McChrystal, Commander International Security Assistance Forces, Afghanistan said that Pakistan will be taken into confidence on any new operation in Afghanistan. He further told the Army Chief that the main aim of his frequent visits to Pakistan is meant for enhancing military cooperation and process of joint consultation, military spokesman concluded.

(Source: [http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/archive/June%2015,%202010/news\\_Pages/main\\_news.html#02](http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/archive/June%2015,%202010/news_Pages/main_news.html#02))

**Britain will Not 'Lose Our Nerve' on Afghanistan: Fox**

*Daily Outlook Afghanistan, June 15, 2010.*

Britain will not lose its nerve over Afghanistan and expects to see "significant progress" there by the end of the year, British Defense Secretary Liam Fox said. On his trip, Cameron ruled out sending more troops and said he hoped for swift progress so Britain's roughly 9,500-strong deployment could return home. A total of 295 British personnel have died in Afghanistan since operations started in 2001 and there is growing public pressure for withdrawals. "Nobody wants British troops to be in Afghanistan a moment longer than is necessary," Cameron said

(Source: [http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/archive/June%2015,%202010/news\\_Pages/main\\_news.html#02](http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/archive/June%2015,%202010/news_Pages/main_news.html#02))

**Afghan president seeks support on Japan visit**

*Denver Post, June 16, 2010.*

Afghan President Hamid Karzai is seeking financial and political support from Japan, already one of his country's biggest donors. Karzai will be the first foreign leader to meet with Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan since he took office earlier this month. The two leaders are also expected to tackle the implementation of aid measures that Tokyo announced last year, including a five-year pledge of \$5 bil-

lion in fresh aid in November to help the war-torn nation strengthen its police force as well as support agriculture and infrastructure projects.

(Source: [http://www.denverpost.com/rawnews/ci\\_15308320](http://www.denverpost.com/rawnews/ci_15308320))

### **The US and Karzai's little brother**

*Al Jazeera English, June 16, 2010.*

It would seem that the Americans just do not know what to do about Ahmed Wali Karzai. The younger half-brother of Hamid Karzai, the Afghan president, is the head of the provincial council of Kandahar province, and the unrivaled power-broker of what the Taliban used to call the "southern zone" of Afghanistan. As one of the few people who can actually get things done in greater Kandahar, Afghanistan's second-largest city, the traditional base of the Taliban and the scene of a looming US-led military push which some believe could determine the outcome of the current counter-insurgency struggle, one would think that the US government would be reinforcing its relationship with Ahmed Wali Karzai - particularly when Afghan-led local governance is seen as key to victory over the Taliban.

(Source: <http://english.aljazeera.net/focus/2010/06/20106147591376873.html>)

### **Military and Pentagon Leaders Urge Patience for Afghan Mission**

*New York Times, June 17, 2010.*

Mr. Gates questioned what he called the "narrative" of the war in news media reports and Washington over the past week, casting it as "too negative." He said, "I think we are regaining the initiative; I think we are making headway." But Senator John McCain of Arizona, the ranking Republican on the committee, continued to argue that the decision to announce a withdrawal date in advance "does not bode well for success in Afghanistan." "If we sound an uncertain trumpet, not many will follow," Mr. McCain said. "And that's what's being sounded now."

(Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/17/world/17military.html?ref=world>)

### **Afghanistan Seeks Bids to Extract Mineral**

*Daily Outlook Afghanistan, June 17, 2010.*

Afghanistan is to seek bids from global mining groups to extract the one trillion dollars of mineral wealth, Afghan mines minister Wahidullah Shahrani said. A number of Indian companies and global miners have already shown interest in Afghanistan's deposits, the minister said. "To start with, we will invite bids for iron ore and copper mines," Shahrani added. The value of the minerals, which include lithium, iron, gold, niobium, mercury and cobalt, was estimated at about a trillion dollars, the study said.

(Source: [http://outlookafghanistan.net/news\\_Pages/main\\_news.html#04](http://outlookafghanistan.net/news_Pages/main_news.html#04))

## Bangladesh

### **Dhaka, Delhi to talk boundary disputes next month**

*Sify News, , June 6, 2010*

The Joint Boundary Working Group of Bangladesh and India is expected to meet next month to comprehensively address long-pending land boundary disputes, a media report quoting officials said here. Both sides are working to implement various decisions and fulfil commitments made by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during her New Delhi visit in January.

They also decided to work on 115 enclaves created by the demarcation of the boundary determined by the British between India and the then East Pakistan during the 1947 partition of undivided India.

(Source: <http://sify.com/news/dhaka-delhi-to-talk-boundary-disputes-next-month-news-international-kgglabjgide.html>)

### **Bangladesh's Commerce Chief For Greater Cooperation Between China And South Asia**

*Headlines News, June 7, 2010*

Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) President Annisul Huq has urged China for help promoting bilateral trade and economic cooperation between China and South Asia. Huq, who is also the president of the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SAARC CCI) emphasized preferential market access to South Asian countries in the vast Chinese market, while addressing the inaugural session of the 5th China-South Asia Business Forum (CSABF) held at Kunming. The country's apex trade body chief regarded Chinese investment as a tool to promote China-SAARC trade which was only \$66 billion compared with China's trade of \$250 billion with ASEAN countries.

(Source: <http://www.allheadlinenews.com/articles/7018919674>)

### **ULFA leaders in Bangladesh, Myanmar to surrender: Pillai**

*Sify News, June, 7, 2010.*

Union Home Secretary G.K. Pillai says a number of top commanders and leaders of the outlawed United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) based in Bangladesh and Myanmar are expected to surrender shortly and join the peace process. 'Some of them are senior leaders and commanders based in Bangladesh and Myanmar who have expressed their willingness to come overground.' Pillai was in Meghalaya on a three-day visit to review the security situation from June 3-June 5, 2010

(Source: <http://sify.com/news/ulfa-leaders-in-bangladesh-myanmar-to-surrender-pillai-interview-news-national-kggkdebffb.html>)

### **Tripura seeks more security along border with Bangladesh**

*Sify News,, June 9, 2010.*

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar has urged union Home Minister P. Chidambaram to deploy more security on the India-Bangladesh border along the northeast region to check the movement of militants. 'Bangladesh-based northeast

terrorists are using the Tripura border as their corridor. Hence, four more battalions of Border Security Force (BSF) should be deployed along the border with Bangladesh. 'Many camps of northeast militants still exist in Bangladesh,' the chief minister said.

(Source: <http://sify.com/news/tripura-seeks-more-security-along-border-with-bangladesh-news-national-kgjmEfgghga.html>)

### **NBR fixes transit, transshipment fees**

*Daily Star, June 12, 2010.*

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has set fees for transshipment and transit of goods from neighbouring countries, as Bangladesh is getting ready to offer the service. The fees will be Tk 10,000 per TEU container if the cargo is transported by road or rail in such containers; and Tk 1,000 per tonne of cargo if transported by covered vans or trucks, or in bulk by non-container ships and trains. The SRO titled "Rules for Customs Management of Commodities in Transshipment and Transit 2010" will go into effect on July 1.

(Source: <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=142357>)

### **Chinese vice president arrives**

*Daily Star, June 14, 2010.*

Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping arrived in Bangladesh on a two-day official visit to Bangladesh. Foreign ministry sources said the visit by Xi Jinping is apparently the return visit against Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to China in March this year. He will join a luncheon to be hosted by Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad Abdul Hamid Advocate, meet main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) chief Begum Khaleda Zia and representatives of Bangladesh-China Friendship Society.

(Source: [http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest\\_news.php?nid=24224](http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=24224))

### **China-Bangladesh relations lauded in Bangladesh**

*Peoples Daily, June 14, 2010.*

China-Bangladesh relations are lauded by many Bangladeshis who believe high-level exchanges between the two countries will further advance their bilateral ties. The upcoming visit of the Chinese vice president will advance the bilateral relations between China and Bangladesh to a new level, S.A. Sikder, secretary general of Bangladesh-China People's Friendship Association (BCPFA), said in an exclusive interview with Xinhua. "I believe the visit will open a new chapter in the relations between the two countries," Sikder said.

(Source: <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90883/7026040.html>)

### **Economy to grow at 5.8pc next fiscal: WB**

*News Age Bangladesh, June 14, 2010.*

The World Bank has forecast that the growth in Bangladesh's gross domestic prod-

uct in the next fiscal year would be 5.8 per cent, almost 1 per lower than the finance minister's projected growth at 6.7 per cent. The global lender has also contested effectively this fiscal's provisional growth estimate of 6 per cent as mentioned in the budget speech, saying that the GDP growth would stand at 5.5 per cent at end of the financial year on June 30.

(Source: <http://www.newagebd.com/2010/jun/14/busi.html>)

### **BSF rejects commandant-level meet with Bangladesh border guards**

*Sify News, June 17, 2010.*

India's Border Security Force (BSF) rejected a meeting with the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) at the commandant level over the recent firing along the India-Bangladesh in southern Meghalaya, instead demanding a meeting at the sector commandant level. 'There was no point in opening unprovoked firing in all the border out posts. Therefore, we have rejected their (BDR) offer to hold talks at the commandant level and asked for a meeting at the sector commandant level. Meghalaya, which shares a 443-km border with Bangladesh, witnessed series of 'unprovoked firing' by the BDR June 15.

(Source: <http://sify.com/news/bsf-rejects-commandant-level-meet-with-bangladesh-border-guards-news-national-kgrvafgdfdf.html>)

### **China endorses Bangladesh-Myanmar road project**

*The Economic Times, June 17, 2010.*

Beijing has agreed to implement a Bangladeshi proposal for a road link via Myanmar, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has announced after the visit of Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping. She told parliament on Wednesday that a project financed by Bangladesh government called "Study and Design for Bangladesh-Myanmar link road" was underway. The road project will be implemented in two phases, she added. She said her government has actively been trying to link Bangladesh with members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China "in the interest of the people of this country".

(Source: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics/nation/China-endorses-Bangladesh-Myanmar-road-project/articleshow/6058366.cms>)

## **Bhutan**

### **Lhasa joins hands with neighboring countries in tourism**

*China Tibet, June 8, 2010*

Lhasa, capital city of Tibet Autonomous Region strives to build a cross-Himalaya tourist destination with neighboring countries including Nepal, India, Bhutan, etc. in a bid to make Tibet a world class tourist attraction, sources from Lhasa Municipal Tourism Administration.

(Source: <http://chinatibet.people.com.cn/7016071.html>)

### **Barren land barter for carbon market**

*Kuensel, June 7, 2010*

Land that has become barren by slash and burn cultivation may be a potential area, where the REDD (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation) mechanism could be used to bring back forest. "Such land could be given to REDD+ as per the land act," said chief forest officer, Karma Tshering, department of watershed management (DoWM). REDD credits offer the opportunity to utilise funding from developed countries to reduce deforestation in developing countries. "Bhutan will study the good, the bad and the ugly part of REDD+ before becoming a member of REDD+," said the agriculture minister, Lyonpo (Dr) Pema Gyamtsho.

(Source: <http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=15692>)

### **From exporter to importer**

*Kuensel, June 10, 2010.*

As a result of growing domestic demand, Bhutan will face winter power shortages, until the completion of the Punatsangchhu I project, which is expected around 2016. The only "viable" way to offset these power shortages will be to import electricity from India, according to Druk green power corporation (DGPC) managing director, Dasho Chhewang Rinzin. The problem is, with India too facing chronic shortages, especially during the winter, Bhutan may ironically end up paying a higher import rate than at what it exports. "Indian counterparts may not agree to supply electricity to Bhutan at the same rates that Bhutan exports to India, considering the present market conditions in India," it says in a DGPC proposal for revising generation tariffs.

(Source: <http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=15735>)

### **Indian CoAS calls on PM**

*Kuensel, June 11, 2010*

The Indian army chief of staff, General Vijay Kumar Singh, who is on a four-day visit to Bhutan, met the prime minister and assured him of India's continued support to Bhutan's security interests. Calling on the prime minister at the Gyalong Tshokhang, the general, who had served as an instructor at headquarters with IMTRAT in Bhutan from 1979 to 1981, said that the relationship between the two countries was growing ever stronger. "I see the bonds becoming deeper and deeper," he said, pointing out that how the two sides reached out to each other would largely determine the level and maturity of future relationship.

(Source: <http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=15724>)

### **U.S. willing to resettle more Bhutanese refugees living in Nepal**

*Peopless Daily, June 11, 2010.*

The United States has expressed interest in taking more Bhutanese refugees living in eastern Nepal for resettlement, local media reported. The visiting U.S. Deputy Under-secretary for Population, Refugees and Migration Kelly Clements said during meeting with Nepali Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Sujata Koirala. "U.S. is willing to take more refugees to the U.S.," said Koirala about her meeting with Kelly. According to a report, Kelly discussed with Koirala issues of Bhutanese refugees. "A permanent solution to the Bhutanese refugee issue lies in their safe and honorable repatriation to Bhutan," said Koirala.

(Source: <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90777/90852/7022252.html>)

### **Tea gardens in India watered by Bhutan**

*Telegraph India, June 14, 2010*

If dams are modern India's temples, a group of eight tea gardens in Jalpaiguri district have been the new religion's outcasts. Six decades after Independence, these gardens have never tasted Indian water, their 60,000 residents perhaps alone in the country in being denied a necessity that even parched Rajasthan can claim by right. But now these tea estates, which have for almost a century drunk and bathed in mountain water imported from neighbouring Bhutan, are ready to enter India's water supply map in six weeks' time, thanks to a central scheme.

(Source: [http://www.telegraphindia.com/1100614/jsp/frontpage/story\\_12562876.jsp](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1100614/jsp/frontpage/story_12562876.jsp))

### **16 new SSB battalions for Nepal, Bhutan borders**

*Zee News, June 17, 2010.*

With an aim to strengthen security along the Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan borders, the government today decided to raise 16 more battalions of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) in the next three years. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) has cleared the proposal of the home ministry and the battalions will be raised at an estimated cost of Rs 1,800 crore, official sources said. The raising of 16 new battalions, with 16,000 personnel, for the SSB is the first phase of the proposal, while an equal number of battalions will be raised in the second phase in the next six years, raising the strength of the border-guarding force from current 35 to 67 battalions. The SSB guards 1,751 km-long Indo-Nepal and 699 km-long Indo-Bhutan borders.

(Source: <http://www.zeenews.com/news634793.html>)

## **Maldives**

### **India and Seychelles join forces against Somali pirates**

*Minivan News, June 6, 2010.*

After activating a comprehensive security cooperation agreement with Maldives, India will increase maritime cooperation with Seychelles and will help the island nation deal with the increased incidents of piracy occurring near its waters, reports the Indian Express. While the Navy already has a warship deployed in the

## Nepal

Seychelles since April last year – after Somali pirates shifted base near the island chain due to increased international patrolling in the Gulf of Aden – the two countries have agreed to enhance the cooperation during the state visit by Seychelles President James Alix Michel.

(Source: <http://minivannews.com/news-in-brief/india-and-seychelles-join-forces-against-somali-pirates-7817>)

### WB projects Nepal's growth at 3 pc

*Nepal News, June 8, 2010.*

A new World Bank report has painted dim economic progress for Nepal projecting country's GDP growth to remain at 3 percent in 2010 and 4 percent in 2011. The growth in 2011 is projected to increase as agriculture recovers with the return of normal rainfall. The World Bank South Asia Economic Update projected Nepal's growth rate for fiscal years 2012 and 2013 at 4.2 percent and 4.4 percent respectively. "In the high-case scenario, growth could reach 5 percent by the fiscal year 2013," the report says. The government's GDP growth projection for 2010 is at 3.5 percent, down from earlier estimate of 5.5 percent.

(Source: <http://www.nepalnews.com/main/index.php/business-a-economy/6655-wb-project-nepals-growth-at-3-pc.html>)

### Nepal Govt concerned over Maoists' threat to halt Kosi project

*Hindustan Times, June 7, 2010.*

The government today expressed serious concern over attempts by the Maoists to disrupt works on the 3,200 MW Kosi High Dam Project in eastern Nepal.

The Ministry of Energy expressed serious concern over the threats issued by the UCPN-Maoist affiliated ethnic groups Limbuwan Rastriya Mukti Morcha and Kirat Mukti Morcha to halt Detailed Project Report (DPR) on the 3,200 MW Kosi High Dam. The local stakeholders have been continuously engaged in dialogue from time to time to address their concerns and if needed, the government is ready to address any concern shown by the stakeholders regarding the project, it said in a statement.

(Source: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/Nepal-Govt-concerned-over-Maoists-threat-to-halt-Kosi-project/Article1-554548.aspx>)

### Another Hindu militant group on rise in Nepal

*Sify News, June 6, 2010.*

A year after a militant Hindu group came into prominence by engineering a bomb attack on a church in Kathmandu valley that killed three women, another such group is on the rise, seeking to restore Hinduism as Nepal's state religion, claims a prominent doctor who was a kidnap victim. The Nepal Hindu Janata Party, a new outfit that has branches in 18 of Nepal's 75 districts and an army of over 4,000. It is seeking to re-establish Hinduism as Nepal's state religion four years after parlia-

ment declared the world's only Hindu kingdom secular.

(Source: <http://sify.com/news/another-hindu-militant-group-on-rise-in-nepal-news-international-kgg!Obhggcd.html>)

### **Nepal's Maoists submits memo to Indian Embassy**

*Sify News, , June 8, 2010.*

The Young Communist League (YCL), youth wing of the UCPN (Maoist) has submitted a memorandum to the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu denouncing the recent killing of 19 Nepali speaking persons in Meghalaya. According to Kantipur, the YCL has demanded that India should guarantee the Nepali speakers' right to live a dignified life. The statement submitted by YCL coordinator Ganeshman Pun said that India should immediately take steps to maintain social harmony and provide compensation to the victims and take stern action against the perpetrators of the killing.

(Source: <http://sify.com/news/nepal-s-maoists-submits-memo-to-indian-embassy-news-international-kgimuedabbg.html>)

### **NC, UML hit upon package deal as pol solution**

*The Himalayan Times, June 9, 2010*

A meeting of the major two parties of the current ruling coalition government Nepali Congress and CPN-UML concluded at the latter's parliamentary party office at Singha Durbar, Kathmandu evening with the decision to initiate discussion with the main opposition UCPN-Maoist for a package deal to end the ongoing political deadlock

(Source: <http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=NC%2C+UML+hit+upon+package+deal+as+pol+solution&NewsID=246414>)

### **We can't fix integration numbers: Dahal**

*Republica, June 8, 2010.*

Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal said that his party cannot fix the number of combatants to be integrated into state security agencies. He said the number would depend on the wishes of the combatants residing in the UNMIN-monitored cantonments."The government must ask the combatants about their wishes. The party cannot fix the integration numbers," said Dahal . He said the wishes of all those aspiring to join the Nepal Army (NA) should be fulfilled.

(Source: [http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news\\_details&news\\_id=19628](http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=19628))

### **OHCHR-Nepal term extended by a year**

*Republica, June 9, 2010.*

The government of Nepal and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) inked an agreement in Geneva on Thursday over renewal of the mandate of OHCHR's Nepal office for one more year. This is the fifth extension of the

mandate of the OHCHR-Nepal since it was established in 2005. Details of the agreement were not available until late Wednesday evening.

(Source: [http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news\\_details&news\\_id=19708](http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=19708))

### **Conspiracy in progress to sideline Nepal Maoists: Mohan Baidya**

*Telegraph Nepal, June 9, 2010.*

Nepal's main opposition party, Unified Maoists' which has been demanding resignation of Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal for over a year period but yet has failed miserably to force PM Nepal out of office has begun saying that it no longer wants Madhav Kumar Nepal to resign. Senior vice chairman of the Unified Maoists' Party, Mohan Baidya Pokharel 'Kiran', said addressing a program in Kathmandu, June 8, 2010 that "We do not want to be in the government any more, we have been demanding his resignation but, he seem not to resign even on moral grounds".

(Source: [http://telegraphnepal.com/news\\_det.php?news\\_id=7785](http://telegraphnepal.com/news_det.php?news_id=7785))

### **After Kosi dam, Nepal protesters target GMR, Satluj**

*Hindustan Times, June 14, 2010*

Even as 15 Maoist organisations vowed to prevent work on the mega 3,300 MW Sapta Kosi Multipurpose Project signed between the governments of India and Nepal, local organisations have begun calling afresh for scrapping the licences given to two Indian companies to develop smaller hydel projects in Nepal, calling them "illegal". Private Indian infrastructure major GMR Group became the first private enterprise to enter Nepal's contentious hydropower sector in 2008 by winning the licence to develop the 302 Upper Karnali project.

Source: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/After-Kosi-dam-Nepal-protesters-target-GMR-Satluj/Article1-557521.aspx>

### **PM assures business sector**

*The Himalayan Times, June 13, 2010.*

Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal said that the government is serious about maintaining law and order in the country. Speaking to a delegation of industrialists and businessmen across the nation in the capital, PM Nepal said that the government has made it top priority to ensure peace by bolstering law and order in the country. Nepal said that the government is committed to foil the agents who have nexus with criminals who are troubling the businessmen and industrialists. Saying that the progress of the nation lies in the progress of the business and industrial sector, PM Nepal said that the government has a duty to promote the sector.

(Source: <http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=PM+assures+business+sector+&NewsID=246824>)

### **Most leaders support Bhattarai's view**

*Republica, June 17, 2010.*

Most of the Maoist leaders at the party's politburo meeting spoke in favor of a Maoist-led national consensus government while at the same time keeping open the option of another leader of the party becoming prime minister. They were making comments on the party's next strategic move proposed by party chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal at the meeting. "The party should not stay in opposition, but lead the government by keeping the option of leadership open," a politburo member quoted standing committee member Barshaman Pun. But another vice-chairman, Dr Baburam Bhattarai, has pushed for a national consensus government by making another party leader other than Chairman Dahal the prime minister if other parties so wish.

(Source: [http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news\\_details&news\\_id=19998](http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=19998))

### **NC leaders split over party's PM candidate**

*Republica, June 17, 2010.*

A fresh debate has begun within the Nepali Congress (NC) whether the Parliamentary Party (PP) leader is to be the sole prime ministerial candidate should the party get a chance to head a new government. Speaking during CWC meeting, Party Vice-president Prakash Man Singh argued that there was no point in discussing about a prime ministerial candidate from the party as the NC parliamentary party statute clearly states in Article 6 that the PP leader will automatically get to head the government from the party.

(Source: [http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news\\_details&news\\_id=19997](http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=19997))

### **Try on Madhes parties for top job: Gachhadar**

*The Himalayan Times, June 17, 2010*

Amidst entrenched row over which party should next hold the premiership, Madhesi Janadhikar Forum-Democratic (MJF-D)'s chairman Bijaya Kumar Gachhadar asked the three largest parties to name a prime ministerial candidate from Madhes-based parties. Gachhadar stressed on the need to form a government of broader alliance incorporating in it the non-Maoist parties, adding that the leadership of such a new government should be determined on consensual basis.

(Source: <http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=Try+on+Madhes+parties+for+top+job%3A+Gachhadar&NewsID=247176>)

## **Pakistan**

### **Chinese deputy premier to visit Pakistan tomorrow**

*Daily Times, June 8, 2010.*

Chinese Vice Premier Zheng Dejiang is scheduled to pay an official visit to Pakistan from June 9 to 10, a press release by the foreign office said. This will be his first bilateral visit to Pakistan, during which he will call on the president, the prime

minister and the chairman of the senate and will be meeting with the chairman joint chiefs of staff committee and the chief of army staff.

(Source: [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C06%5C08%5Cstory\\_8-6-2010\\_pg7\\_34](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C06%5C08%5Cstory_8-6-2010_pg7_34))

### **India, Iran discuss underwater gas line bypassing Pak**

*Times of India, June 8, 2010.*

The prospect may not have sounded feasible initially, but India is now coming round to the idea of having an underwater gas pipeline with Iran which would allow it to bypass Pakistan. In fact, when Turkmenistan president Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov visited India last month, the two sides discussed the prospect of transporting gas from Turkmenistan to northern Iran with help from India and using the underwater pipeline option to transport gas to India from southern Iran.

(Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/India-Iran-discuss-underwater-gas-line-bypassing-Pak/articleshow/6021888.cms>)

### **Pollution new threat to Pakistani water supply from Held Kashmir**

*Daily Times, June 8, 2010.*

India and Pakistan are usually bickering over the quantity of water received from Kashmir rivers, however they will soon have to lock horns on the issue of quality of this water as well, as a team of experts has found proof that a major lake that supplies water to the River Jehlum is becoming more and more contaminated. A survey carried out by a non-government organisation (NGO) in Wullar Lake has found large quantities of deadly methane gas in the reservoir.

(Source: [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\08\story\\_8-6-2010\\_pg7\\_3](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\08\story_8-6-2010_pg7_3))

### **Pakistan, Australia ink MoU to boost defence ties**

*Daily Times, June 8, 2010.*

Pakistan and Australia signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to increase bilateral defence cooperation, a press release issued said. The MoU was signed when Australian Defence Minister Senator John Faulkner called on Federal Minister for Defence Chaudhry Ahmed Mukhtar at the Ministry of Defence.

(Source: [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\08\story\\_8-6-2010\\_pg7\\_8](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\08\story_8-6-2010_pg7_8))

### **Gilani agrees trust deficit exists between Centre, Baloch**

*Daily Times, June 8, 2010.*

Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani conceded that there was a trust deficit between the federal government and the Baloch people and that his government was trying to bridge it with concrete measures. Regarding the missing persons, Gilani said they would be traced soon, adding he had asked the provincial government to prepare an authentic list of the missing persons in order to take con-

crete measures. On unemployment in the province, the PM said 5,000 jobless candidates from Balochistan would get their appointment letters in the next few weeks. He said the federal government would recruit around 5,400 unemployed people from Balochistan for government departments. He added that the government intends to provide 20,000 jobs to educated youth in Balochistan.

(Source: [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\08\story\\_8-6-2010\\_pg7\\_11](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\08\story_8-6-2010_pg7_11))

### **Pakistan needs aid for development of tribal areas: Gilani**

*Daily Times, June 9, 2010*

In an interview to a Belgian newspaper *Le Soir*, the PM stressed the need for social and economic development in FATA after the successful completion of military operations in the areas. To a question, he said the security forces now control the strongholds of insurgents in South Waziristan, Orakzai, Malakand and Swat. The militants are in retreat, looking for places to establish themselves, territories where they could demoralise the Pakistani security forces, he said. He pointed out the terrorists are reacting by attacking soft targets like the civil population, but the government is certainly not losing control of the territory. "We can find them for example in Sindh or Punjab. But that doesn't mean that they control Punjab," he said.

[http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\09\story\\_9-6-2010\\_pg1\\_8](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\09\story_9-6-2010_pg1_8)

### **NATO tankers torched in Rawalpindi**

*Dawn, June 9, 2010.*

Unidentified persons have set fire to at least seven Nato trucks in Tarnol, Rawalpindi. The trucks were transporting oil and other essentials to Nato troops in Afghanistan. Suspected militants have attacked NATO trucks in Pakistan before. Most of the previous attacks have taken place in Quetta and other places close to the Afghan border. This is the first reported attack to have taken place in Rawalpindi, close to the capital Islamabad. The latest attack puts into question the security situation in the nation's capital.

(Source: <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/06-nato-tankers-torched-in-rawalpindi-rs-07>)

### **US says India backs Pakistan strategy**

*Dawn, June 9, 2010*

India has voiced understanding for the giant US aid plan for its historic rival Pakistan despite earlier security fears, a senior US official said Tuesday. "They believe we have a shared interest in helping to stabilize Pakistan," said Robert Blake, the assistant secretary of state for South Asia "They're certainly well aware that a spiral-down would not be in India's interests," he told a State Department blog forum.

(Source: <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/world/12-us+says+india+backs+pakistan+strategy-bi-03>)

**Pak-China friendship vital for regional stability: PM**

*Dawn, June 11, 2010*

Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani said Pakistan values its relations with China based on complete trust, mutual understanding and convergence of views on all bilateral, regional and international issues. He further said Pakistan-China friendship is a factor of peace and stability for the region and welcomed Chinese support. During a one-on-one meeting with Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Dejiang prior to bilateral talks at the PM House. The prime minister thanked China for its steadfast support and solidarity.

(Source: <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/06-pak-china-friendship-vital-for-regional-stability-pm-rs-05>)

**Turkey to support Pakistan for UN Security Council seat**

*Dawn, June 10, 2010*

Turkey will support Pakistan's candidacy for a non-permanent seat of the UN Security Council, Turkish President Abdullah Gul said during a meeting with Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi on Wednesday. The Turkish leader also offered support for the next Friends of Democratic Pakistan (FoDP) ministerial meeting that is going to be held in Brussels in October this year. During the meeting, Gul said that Turkish businessmen were investing in the energy sector in Pakistan, and expressed satisfaction over the growing economic cooperation between the two countries.

[http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C06%5C10%5Cstory\\_10-6-2010\\_pg7\\_32](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C06%5C10%5Cstory_10-6-2010_pg7_32)

**Pakistan says UN curbs won't hit Iran gas pipeline**

*Reuters, June 10, 2010.*

A \$7.6 billion project for export of Iranian natural gas to Pakistan will remain unaffected by the imposition of fresh U.N. sanctions against Tehran, Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said. The U.N. Security Council imposed a fourth round of sanctions on Iran over its nuclear programme that the West suspects is aimed at developing atomic weapons. Iran denies any such ambitions. Pakistan said the much-delayed project for the construction of the gas pipeline from Iran was not covered by the U.N. curbs. "This resolution or whatever sanctions or restrictions have been imposed are those related to the nuclear or ballistic missile programme of Iran," Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesman Abdul Basit told a news briefing.

(Source: <http://af.reuters.com/article/energyOilNews/idAFSGE6590G720100610>)

**Pak to support Afghan peace efforts: FO**

*Daily Times, June 11, 2010.*

Pakistan said that it would continue to support Afghanistan's efforts towards reintegration and reconciliation while the outcome of the peace jirga should be given due consideration at the Kabul conference. "The peace jirga held in Kabul

on June 2 has come up with a broad range of recommendations. As you are aware, an international conference on Afghanistan is being held in Kabul on July 20, 2010." Foreign Office (FO) spokesman Abdul Basit said in a weekly briefing. "The outcome of the peace jirga, in our view, should be given due consideration at the Kabul conference," he said.

(Source: [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C06%5C11%5Cstory\\_11-6-2010\\_pg7\\_26](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C06%5C11%5Cstory_11-6-2010_pg7_26))

### **PPP ignored on upcoming Punjab budget: Raja Riaz**

*The News, June 9, 2010.*

Senior Punjab Minister Raja Riaz has said that Pakistan People's Party, one of the main coalition partner, was not taken into confidence on the upcoming Punjab budget and even the ministers will receive its details during the budget session. Talking to media men here, Raja Riaz said the provincial government of Pakistan Muslim League-N was always extended support but PPP continues to face excesses in Punjab. Punjab Senior Minister complained that PPP should have been taken into confidence for the preparation of the provincial budget so that it could also give its proposals.

(Source: <http://www.thenews.com.pk/updates.asp?id=106347>)

### **North Waziristan next priority: FM**

*Daily Times, June 10, 2010.*

Pakistan's next priority in the fight against the Taliban is North Waziristan, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said. In an interview at the end of the third summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Qureshi said the army was moving toward an offensive in North Waziristan in a 'calculated fashion' after an earlier successful operation in South Waziristan. "Our next priority is going to be North Waziristan, but we have to time our operations in line with our resources. At the moment we are consolidating our position in South Waziristan," he said.

(Source: [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\10\story\\_10-6-2010\\_pg7\\_2](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\10\story_10-6-2010_pg7_2))

### **Pakistan wants friendly relations with Afghanistan, India: PM**

*Xinhuanet, June 13, 2010.*

Pakistani Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani said that his country wants enhanced relations with Afghanistan and India. He said that "we convinced Indian Premier Manmohan Singh that dialogue is a better solution. And Singh is ready to discuss all the issues. Pakistan is also ready to discuss all the issues with India." Gilani said that Singh wants to resolve all the issues between the two countries. On the ongoing terrorism in the country and the region, he said that the entire nation is united against the menace.

(Source: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-06/13/c\\_13347650.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-06/13/c_13347650.htm))

**Pak nuclear plants for peaceful use: China**

*Daily Times, June 18, 2010.*

China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said has that the civilian nuclear cooperation between Pakistan and China is for peaceful purposes, and is in line with each side's international obligations. Addressing a news briefing, he said the nuclear deal was for peaceful purposes and was under the IAEA supervision. He said that China enjoys excellent relations with Pakistan and was ready to cooperate with its friend.

(Source: [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\18\story\\_18-6-2010\\_pg1\\_4](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\18\story_18-6-2010_pg1_4))

**Pakistan and US agree on water sector partnership**

*Daily Times, June 18, 2010.*

Pakistani and US officials agreed to strengthen ties in the water sector, and stressed the need for setting up a new regulatory authority to deal with the issue of water shortage. The US officials agreed with the Water and Power Ministry that Pakistan needed a water regulatory authority to deal with rising water insecurity in the region. The Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) has forwarded eleven proposals to the visiting US delegation for water conservation and enhancement of water resources in the country.

(Source: [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\18\story\\_18-6-2010\\_pg1\\_5](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\06\18\story_18-6-2010_pg1_5))

**Pakistani militancy spreads to country's heartland**

*Newsvine, June 16, 2010.*

At least two dozen militants once supported by the government have split off to lead one of Pakistan's newest and deadliest terrorist groups, working with al-Qaida at remote camps near the Afghan border to carry out attacks in the center of this U.S.-allied country, police say. The men are based at a camp in the North Waziristan tribal area where they train foot soldiers to carry out attacks in Punjab and elsewhere in the country, said Punjabi police chief Tariq Saleem Dogar. They have links with both al-Qaida and the Pakistani Taliban, a mostly ethnic Pashtun group from the Afghan border area. Punjabi Law Minister Rana Sanaullah, who controls the provincial police, estimated that 10-20 percent of the members of banned groups like Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Jaish-e-Mohammad and Sipah-e-Sahaba have split off to join forces with the Punjabi Taliban network.

(Source: [http://www.newsvine.com/\\_news/2010/06/16/4517328-pakistani-militancy-spreads-to-countrys-heartland](http://www.newsvine.com/_news/2010/06/16/4517328-pakistani-militancy-spreads-to-countrys-heartland))

**Pak lets LeT loose in Afghanistan**

*Times of India, June 17, 2010.*

A Pakistani-based militant group identified with attacks on Indian targets has expanded its operations in Afghanistan, inflicting casualties on Afghans and Indians alike, setting up training camps, and adding new volatility to relations be-

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tween India and Pakistan. The group, Lashkar-e-Taiba, is believed to have planned or executed three major attacks against Indian government employees and private workers in Afghanistan in recent months, according to Afghan and international intelligence officers and diplomats here. It continues to track Indian development workers and others for possible attack, they said.

(Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/Pak-lets-LeT-loose-in-Afghanistan/articleshow/6057138.cms>)

### **India, Sri Lanka to discuss Tamil settlement, sign pacts**

*Sify News, June 8, 2010.*

Sri Lanka will brief India on the post-war political reconciliation plan and sign a slew of pacts to expand cooperation in areas ranging from counter-terrorism to development when leaders of the two countries hold talks here on June 9, 2010.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's wide-ranging talks with Rajapaksa on Wednesday are set to be dominated by India's concerns over the rehabilitation of nearly 300,000 war displaced Tamils and the political resettlement plan for Tamil and Muslim minorities in the island country.

(Source: <http://sify.com/news/india-sri-lanka-to-discuss-tamil-settlement-sign-pacts-news-national-kgimacbcchib.html>)

### **Top Sri Lanka exporter bats for freer trade with India**

*Lanka Business, June 8, 2010.*

A top Sri Lankan exporter which is already doing business in India has backed the signing of a new deal to further open trade between the two countries, building on an existing ten-year-old agreement. Attempts to expand and incorporate the Indo-Lanka Free Trade Agreement into a new Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement have been stalled with protectionist business interests and some politicians lobbying against it. Under the original ILFTA, both countries put a large number of goods which were already traded and subject to high tariffs on a 'negative list' and India put quotas on others such as garments, without putting them on a 'negative list' outright.

(Source: <http://www.lankabusinessonline.com/fullstory.php?nid=2094532581>)

### **No adverse results to Sri Lanka-Indian MP**

*Daily Mirror, June 8, 2010.*

India said that, "No agreement signed between Sri Lanka and India has brought any adverse results to the country. From the Indo-Lanka Agreement signed in 2003 both countries have had immense benefits. Within the first year of the Indo Lanka Agreement, Sri Lanka had exported items worth 450 million dollars to India," visiting Member of Indian Lok Sabha Dr. Shashi Tharur said. Addressing a press conference held at the office of the governor of the Central Province on 'CEPA' he said that certain individuals in this country were against it as they were without proper awareness of its contents. When there is a proper dialogue about this trade agreement, he said that nobody would oppose it.

(Source: <http://www.dailymirror.lk/print/index.php/news/news/12533-no-adverse-results-to-sri-lanka-indian-mp.html>)

### **Sri Lanka, UN duel over wartime investigations**

*Christian Science Monitor, June 8, 2010.*

One year after Sri Lanka's decisive victory over Tamil insurgents, controversy still swirls over the bloody end to the 26-year civil war. Political leaders have drawn parallels to America's wartime actions and asked why nobody calls Western powers to account for civilian suffering. Critics say both parties to the conflict violated international humanitarian laws and terrorized trapped civilians. Human rights groups have called for an international inquiry into the war's final stages, when tens of thousands of civilians may have died during repeated shelling by government forces of designated no-fire zones.

(Source: <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-South-Central/2010/0607/Sri-Lanka-UN-duel-over-wartime-investigations>)

### **Canada monitoring Tiger ship**

*Daily Mirror, June 9, 2010*

The Canadian authorities are monitoring a ship with some 300 refugees on board believed to be operated by the LTTE and heading to Australia via Thailand, Canada's Globe and Mail reported. According to the report the federal scrutiny of the ship, known as the Sun Sea, is a rare example of Canada's "pushing-borders-out strategy," a tactic that is meant to prevent a repeat of a massive asylum claim that occurred last fall.

(Source: <http://www.dailymirror.lk/index.php/news/4226-canada-monitoring-tiger-ship.html>)

### **India to seek Rajapaksa's word on devolution**

*The Hindu, June 9, 2010*

India will look for a reassurance from Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapaksa on "genuine" devolution of power to the provinces as a step towards solving the ethnic problem. Mr. Rajapaksa, who arrived here on June 8, 2010 on a four-day visit, will hold delegation-level talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. He has unveiled plans to set up an Upper House that will ensure all-round representation, but India feels this step would amount to only decentralisation. Provinces should be the unit of devolution, and Sri Lanka must activate the provision of a Finance Commission in the 13th Amendment to ensure they are financially viable.

(Source: <http://www.hindu.com/2010/06/09/stories/2010060961121000.htm>)

### **Indian government agrees to lend US\$ 1 billion for Sri Lanka's infrastructure projects**

*Lanka Page, June 10, 2010.*

Sri Lanka's Treasury Secretary has said that India has agreed to lend US\$1 billion to fund Sri Lanka's infrastructure projects, mainly in former war zones in the

north and east. "India assured US\$ 800 million for the reconstruction of railway and a further US\$ 200 million for a power plant," Treasury Secretary Dr. P.B. Jayasundara , confirmed "It is a 20-year credit at an absolutely low interest rate. About US\$ 250 million in a grant will also be available in support of housing development in the north and east," he added.

(Source: [http://www.lankapage.com/index\\_new.php](http://www.lankapage.com/index_new.php))

### **Lanka firm on UN stand**

*Daily Mirror, June 18, 2010*

The Sri Lankan government says its stand on the appointment of a panel of experts by the UN remains unchanged and it is awaiting the outcome of the Commission of Inquiry on Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation appointed by President Mahinda Rajapakse. The government has consistently opposed the appointment of a panel of experts by the UN to advise UN Secretary General Ban ki-moon on Sri Lanka's civil war and UN Under Secretary General for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe told reporters following a two day visit to Sri Lanka that the UN will go ahead with the panel. When asked to comment on the still UN going ahead with the panel government Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said that the government stand on the matter is clear and the reply to the creation of a panel was Sri Lanka creating its own commission.

(Source: <http://www.dailymirror.lk/index.php/news/4456-lanka-firm-on-stand.html>)