

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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1. COUNTRY REVIEW

A. SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

- **Presidential run-off election to be held on November 7; Taliban threatens to disrupt the process; Gates: NATO to send more troops and civilian aid to Afghanistan; New British Army Chief: War against Taliban and al-Qaeda can be won; Gen. McChrystal: ISAF to establish new NATO headquarters to oversee training of Afghan National Security Forces; Obama administration appreciates India's developmental contribution in Afghanistan**

The Independent Election Commission on October 20 announced that the presidential run-off will be held on November 7 as none of the two leading candidates (Hamid Karzai and Dr. Abdullah Abdullah) were able to win 50 per cent of the vote. Dr Abdullah on his part stated that he was ready for a second round of voting and that he would present proposals to prevent fraud in the run-off.¹ Taliban meanwhile urged Afghans to boycott the November presidential election run-off and vowed to disrupt the process.²

US Defense Secretary Robert Gates, at a meeting of the 28 NATO defense ministers in Bratislavain, Slovakia on October 23 reminded his counterparts of NATO's long-term commitment to remain in Afghanistan until the conflict is successfully resolved. He added that NATO allies were moving toward sending more troops and civilian aid to Afghanistan.³

The new chief of the British Army Gen. David Richards expressed confidence that the UK and its allies can win the war against Taliban and al-Qaeda militants in Afghanistan. He pointed out that it was not a coincidence that al-Qaeda had been unable to orchestrate any further atrocities against the West from within Afghanistan's borders since the beginning of the NATO-led ISAF mission.⁴

ISAF Commander Gen. Stanley McChrystal meanwhile announced on October 20 that ISAF will establish a new NATO headquarters to oversee higher-level training and mentoring for Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). This will be known as NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A).⁵

In other developments, the Obama administration appreciated India's developmental contribution in Afghanistan and rejected Islamabad's contention

¹ "Abdullah says ready for run-off poll," *Pajhwok Afghan News*, October 21, 2009, at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=83489>

² "Taliban threaten to derail run-off vote," *Pajhwok Afghan News*, October 24, 2009, at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=83592>

³ "NATO allies may boost troops in Afghanistan: Gates," *CBC News*, October 23, 2009, at <http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2009/10/23/gates-nato-troops.html>

⁴ "Afghanistan war winnable, says British army chief," *Pajhwok Afghan News*, October 19, 2009, at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=83355>

⁵ "New NATO HQ to oversee training of Afghan forces," *Pajhwok Afghan News*, October 20, 2009, at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=83384>

that New Delhi's activities were detrimental to Pakistan's security. US State Department spokesman Ian Kelly stated that "a stable and more prosperous Afghanistan is only going to contribute to regional stability."⁶

PAKISTAN

- **Security situation worsens, attack on Islamabad University kills 6 and injures over 30; Balochistan's Education Minister shot dead in Quetta; 60 militants killed in South Waziristan, another 24 killed in Wana; Kerry: US not forcing Pakistan to accept money; US Congress imposes fresh limitations on military aid to Pakistan**

Security situation in Pakistan further worsened during the week. An attack on Islamabad University in Islamabad killed at least six students and 29 were injured. Schools and colleges across the country were closed as a result of the attack.⁷

Balochistan Education Minister Shafique Ahmed Khan was also killed by unidentified assailants in front of his residence in Quetta in the restive province on October 24. The Baloch Liberation United Front reportedly took responsibility for the killing.⁸

Security forces meanwhile made substantial gains in South Waziristan. At least 60 Taliban militants were reportedly killed in the ongoing operations involving both troops and air power.⁹ In Wana, Peshawar, security forces killed nearly 25 militants on October 22.¹⁰

In other developments, US Senator John Kerry on a short visit to Islamabad to address concerns on the provisions of the Kerry Lugar bill stated that the US was in no way forcing Pakistan to accept money and added that the set of explanation regarding the bill "could not be clearer."¹¹ The US Congress meanwhile imposed fresh limitations on US military aid to Pakistan on grounds of maintaining "balance of power in the region."¹² The new measures were

⁶ "US thumbs-up for Indian work in Afghanistan," *The Times of India*, October 20, 2009, at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/us/US-thumbs-up-for-Indian-work-in-Afghanistan/articleshow/5142620.cms>

⁷ "Students Terrorised," *Daily Times*, October 21, 2009, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\10\21\story_21-10-2009_pg1_1

⁸ "Balochistan education minister shot dead," *Dawn*, October 25, 2009, at <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/provinces/06-balochistan-education-minister-shot-dead-rs-02>

⁹ Sailab Mehsud, "60 Taliban, five troops killed: Troops make steady gains in Waziristan," *Dawn*, October 19, 2009, at <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/60-taliban%2C-five-troops-killed-troops-make-steady-gains-in-waziristan-909>

¹⁰ "24 militants, two soldiers killed in SWA action," *The News*, October 23, 2009, at http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_default.asp

¹¹ "Pak civil, military leaders on same page: Kerry," *Daily Times*, October 20, 2009, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\10\20\story_20-10-2009_pg1_1

¹² "US Congress slaps new curbs on Pak military aid," *Daily Times*, October 24, 2009, at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\10\24\story_24-10-2009_pg1_1

designed by US Senators Robert Menendez and Bob Crocker under the US defence appropriations 2010.

B. EAST ASIA

CHINA

- **Robust military-to-military cooperation with other countries deepens; Indian DSSC delegation visits China: Chinese defence officials visit DPRK, Singapore and Papua New Guinea; Eighth Sino-Thai Defence and Security Consultation held; Uzbek Defense Minister visits China; PLA conducts 'Airborne Maneuver 2009' exercise; 'Vanguard 2009A' concludes; Chinese Navy to cooperate with other navies in Indian Ocean; Xi'an satellite control centre becomes operational; SAEC, the 'officers' cradle of missile troops,' celebrates 50th anniversary; CMC Vice-Chairman calls for strengthening minority nationality officer ranks**

In continuing with its robust military-to-military ties with other countries, PLA senior officers met with many military delegations during the week. These included a delegation led by Lt. Gen. H.P.S. Klair, president of Defense Services Staff College of India, who met with Chen Yong, assistant to chief of general staff, PLA on October 19 in Beijing. Chen told the India delegation that the gradual increase of exchanges between the two militaries was an evidence of the fact that relations between China and India had developed smoothly in recent years.¹³

A PLA delegation led by Gao Wusheng, deputy political commissar of Nanjing Military Region visited Pyongyang and met with Pak Jae-gyong, vice minister of People's Armed Forces of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on October 20.

The Chief of General Staff of PLA Chen Bingde met with Singaporean Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong on October 23 in Singapore. Goh pointed out to Chen that both countries had cooperated well in economic and social areas as well as in people-to-people communication, and that the bilateral defense and military collaborations had also made new progress.¹⁴ Before going to Singapore, Chen Bingde visited Papua New Guinea (PNG) at the invitation of Commodore Peter Ilau, commander of Defense Force of PNG. Chen also met with Bob Dadae, PNG defense minister and Prime Minister Somare.¹⁵

The eighth Sino-Thai defense and security consultation took place in Beijing. The Chinese side was represented by Deputy Chief of the General Staff

¹³ "Chen Yong Meets Indian Guests," *PLA Daily*, October 20, 2009, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-10/20/content_4064480.htm

¹⁴ "China's PLA Chief of General Staff Meets Singapore Senior Minister," *PLA Daily*, October 25, 2009, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-10/25/content_4067699.htm

¹⁵ "Chen Bingde Meets PNG Defense Minister," *PLA Daily*, October 22, 2009, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-10/22/content_4066212.htm

of the PLA Ma Xiaotian and the Thai delegation by defense Permanent Secretary Gen. Apichart Penkitti.¹⁶ The Thai official also met with Chinese defence minister Liang Guanglie who told him that both countries need to expand and deepen bilateral strategic cooperation and make joint efforts for mutual benefit and common development.¹⁷

Guo Boxiong, vice chairman of China's Central Military Commission met with Kabul Berdiev, defense minister of Uzbekistan on October 23 in Beijing and expressed Chinese willingness to further its friendly military cooperation with the country.¹⁸

PLA exercises 'Airborne Maneuver 2009' began on October 18. Majority of airborne troops and equipment of the Chinese airborne forces participated in this exercise, other than those aviation forces and troops which were participating in the just concluded 'Vanguard 2009' exercises. 'Airborne Maneuver 2009' was "the largest trans-theater comprehensive campaign maneuver exercise in the history of the Chinese airborne force."¹⁹ Meanwhile, another air-and-land joint exercise, 'Vanguard 2009A,' ended on October 22. The exercises were viewed by military cadets and observers from more than 70 countries at the Queshan Combined Tactics Training Base of the Jinan Military Area Command of the PLA.²⁰

The Director General of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Chinese Ministry of National Defense stated in an interview on October 22 that the Chinese naval escort taskforce was working in close cooperation with navies of other countries to strengthen patrol and escort capabilities in the area of the Indian Ocean where a Chinese ship was hijacked in the recent past.²¹

Reports noted that the Xi'an Satellite Control Center has completed the construction of a in-orbit spacecraft diagnosis and maintenance centre which will enable the centre to carry out real-time tracking for several types of spacecraft simultaneously and manage nearly 100 in-orbit satellites for a long term. This is expected to greatly enhance the centre's capability to manage in-orbit spacecraft and mal-function handling.²²

¹⁶ "China, Thailand Hold Annual Defense Consultation in Beijing," *PLA Daily*, October 21, 2009, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-10/21/content_4064776.htm

¹⁷ "China, Thailand Agree to Deepen Military Cooperation," *PLA Daily*, October 23, 2009, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-10/23/content_4066455.htm

¹⁸ "China Vows to Advance Military Co-op with Uzbekistan," *PLA Daily*, October 24, 2009, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-10/24/content_4067307.htm

¹⁹ "Airborne Maneuver 2009' Kicks Off," *PLA Daily*, October 19, 2009, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-10/19/content_4063716.htm

²⁰ "'Vanguard 2009A' Exercise Concluded," *PLA Daily*, October 23, 2009, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-10/23/content_4066930.htm

²¹ "China Tries to Avoid Recurrence of Hijacking Ship," *PLA Daily*, October 23, 2009, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-10/23/content_4066923.htm

²² "Xi'an Satellite Control Center Improves Spacecraft Control Capability," *PLA Daily*, October 19, 2009, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-10/19/content_4063731.htm

The Second Artillery Engineering College (SAEC) of the PLA, famous for being known as the 'officers' cradle of missile troops,' celebrated its 50th anniversary on October 12. Over the past 5 decades, the SAEC has produced nearly "30,000 graduates for the troops, of which more than 100 have become officers above corps level, 88 per cent current commanders, 75 per cent chiefs of staff and 90 per cent directors of equipment departments of the missile brigades of the Second Artillery Force."²³

Xu Caihou, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPC and vice chairman of the CMC has called for strengthening minority nationality officer ranks and urged minority nationality officers to strive hard to make greater contributions to national defense and army building.²⁴

KOREA (OCTOBER 5-25)

- **US expects Seoul to offer economic assistance to Afghanistan if it has difficulty sending troops; Two US military bases in central Korea likely to be closed in 2010; South Korea to increase budget for inter-Korean economic cooperation projects in 2010 by 30 per cent; Seoul to launch a 3,000-strong military unit in 2010 for peacekeeping operations; UN envoy for North Korea criticizes human rights situation in that country as "abysmal"; Asia Society urges Obama administration to engage economically with North Korea on a long-term basis**

Even as South Korean Ambassador to the US Han Duck-soo suggested that President Obama will not ask President Lee Myung-bak to send South Korean troops to Afghanistan when they meet in Seoul in November 2009, reports noted that South Korea was carefully considering the deployment of military or police troops to Afghanistan to protect its civilian aid workers operating in the war-torn country.²⁵ Meanwhile, US is reported to have indicated that it expects Seoul to offer economic assistance to Afghanistan if it has difficulty sending troops. However, authorities in Seoul stated that the government was not reviewing economic support since it was yet to receive an official request in this regard.²⁶

Reports noted that two US military bases in central Korea will likely close in 2010 as part of ongoing plans to consolidate American forces. The US has currently 28,500 troops stationed in Korea as a deterrent against North Korea, a

²³ "Second Artillery Engineering College Creates 100-plus Generals," *PLA Daily*, October 20, 2009, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-10/20/content_4064565.htm

²⁴ "Xu Caihou Stresses Building of Minority Nationality Officer Ranks," *PLA Daily*, October 21, 2009, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2009-10/21/content_4065403.htm

²⁵ "Obama not likely to ask Lee MB for troop dispatch to Afghanistan," *Korea Herald*, October 9, 2009, at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/10/09/200910090082.asp; "Seoul considering troop deployment to Afghanistan," *Korea Herald*, October 9, 2009, at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/10/09/200910090080.asp

²⁶ "US Wants Korea's Economic Aid for Afghanistan," *Korea Times*, October 20, 2009, at http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2009/10/116_53883.html

legacy of the 1950-53 Korean War that ended in a truce instead of a peace treaty.²⁷

South Korea's finance ministry sources indicated that a 30 percent increase in budget spending aimed at supporting inter-Korean economic cooperation projects for next year will be proposed.²⁸

North Korean leader Kim Jong-il told the visiting Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao that his country will return to the Six-Party talks depending on the outcome of discussions with the US.²⁹ Wen also asserted that China seeks to further promote relations with North Korea "in all areas." Report also noted that Pyongyang was apparently eager to reciprocate Wen's sentiments as it has signed a deal to build a bridge over the Amrok River bordering China and North Korea in addition to existing ones.³⁰

South Korea is to launch a 3,000-strong military unit in 2010 that can be readily deployed overseas for peacekeeping operations. The unit will consist of a 1,000-strong Special Forces unit from the country's Special Warfare Command, along with additional troops who can be deployed as a back-up.³¹

The UN envoy for North Korea Vitit Muntarbhorn criticized the human rights situation in that country as "abysmal" and stated that one-third of the country's population was going hungry needlessly. Pointing out that the UN could help fewer than two million people due to a shortfall in aid, the envoy urged Pyongyang to drop its "military first" policy.³²

A report of a task force commissioned by the Asia Society meanwhile urged the Obama administration to engage economically with North Korea on a long-term basis to complement the short-term denuclearization efforts.³³ In other developments, reports suggested that North Korea employs over 3,000 workers in 20 facilities connected to its nuclear program.³⁴

²⁷ "Two U.S. bases in Korea likely to close next year," *Korea Herald*, October 6, 2009, at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/10/06/200910060101.asp

²⁸ "Seoul proposes 30 pct increase in budget for inter-Korean economic cooperation," *Korea Herald*, October 6, 2009, at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/10/06/200910060084.asp

²⁹ "Kim Jong-il says N.K. will return to 6-way talks," *Korea Herald*, October 6, 2009, at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/10/06/200910060079.asp

³⁰ "China seeks closer ties with N. Korea: Wen," *Korea Herald*, October 6, 2009, at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/10/06/200910060045.asp

³¹ "Korea to launch 3,000-strong peacekeeping unit in 2010," *Korea Herald*, October 4, 2009, at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/10/04/200910040016.asp

³² "N.Korea human rights 'abysmal'," *BBC News*, October 23, 2009, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8321670.stm>

³³ "Obama urged to engage N.K. economically to complement denuclearization efforts," *Korea Herald*, October 23, 2009, at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/10/23/200910230072.asp

³⁴ "N. Korea employs 3,000 workers in 20 nuclear facilities," *Korea Herald*, October 22, 2009, at http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/10/22/200910220153.asp

SOUTHEAST ASIA

- **15th ASEAN summit held in Hua Hin city of Thailand from October 23-25; ASEAN Inter governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) launched; Burma's Gen. Their Sein attends the Summit; Japan urges Indonesia to play a vital role in realizing the proposed East Asia community; Yudhoyono takes oath as President of Indonesia for the second time; Malaysian police detain boat carrying 18 Afghan immigrants trying to sail to Indonesia, on their way to Australia; An earthquake of magnitude 6.4 strikes Jakarta on October 16**

The 15th ASEAN summit was held in Hua Hin city of Thailand from October 23-25. Presiding over the opening ceremony, Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva stated that the purpose of the summit was to continue with the efforts to build a 'people-centered ASEAN community.' Abhisit expressed the hope that an ASEAN based on 'community of action, connectivity and people' will emerge by 2015.³⁵

One of the main agendas of the Summit was the launch of the ASEAN Inter governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), the first human rights mechanism in the Asia-Pacific region.³⁶ During the ASEAN Economic Ministers' meeting on October 22, the plan for the reduction of developmental gaps among the member countries for a successful implementation of the East Asian Community by 2015 was also given much emphasis.³⁷

Burma's Prime Minister Gen. Their Sein attended the Summit. Analysts noted that this trip, along with Thein Sein's visit to UN General Assembly in September, indicated the Burmese junta's willingness to open up diplomatic channels abroad.³⁸ Gen. Their on his part stated that given Aung San Suu Kyi's recent soft attitude toward the ruling military junta, the junta could relax its position on her detention.³⁹

The three-day Summit came to an end on October 25. The leaders of member states also ratified a statement on disaster management, agreed to join hands in fighting global economic crisis and strengthen trade cooperation efforts among the concerned states.⁴⁰

During his meeting with his Indonesian counterpart Hassan Wirajuda on October 18, Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada stated that Indonesia,

³⁵ "15th ASEAN Summit opened," *Bangkok Post*, October 23, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/157911/15th-asean-summit-kicks-off>

³⁶ "15th ASEAN Summit starts with SOM," *Bernma.com*, October 21, 2009, at http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/news_lite.php?id=448564

³⁷ "ASEAN to reduce developmental gaps," *Bangkok Post*, October 22, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/157854/asean-to-reduce-developmental-gaps>

³⁸ "Burmese PM to attend ASEAN summit," *Bangkok Post*, October 19, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/157517/burmese-pm-to-attend-asean-summit>

³⁹ "Burma 'softens' Suu Kyi stance," *Bangkok Post*, October 25, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/158054/burma-softens-suu-kyi-stance>

⁴⁰ "15th ASEAN summit ends," *Bangkok Post*, October 25, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/158098/asean-summit-ends>

being an important part of the ASEAN, will have to play a vital role in realizing the proposed East Asia community. Pointing out that Jakarta had a “mature democracy and firm economy in recent years,” Okada expressed his willingness to have a dialogue with Indonesia regarding the details of establishing such a community.⁴¹

Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono took oath as the President of Indonesia for the second time on October 20. Boediono was sworn in as Vice President in the ceremony attended by several foreign dignitaries, including Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak.⁴²

Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva stated that his government was ready to drop its earlier plan to bring about constitutional amendments in case such a move was opposed by majority of the people. Abhisit denied any conflicts within his party over the issue.⁴³

Malaysian police detained a boat carrying 18 Afghan immigrants who were trying to sail to Indonesia, on their way to Australia. Reports noted that people from countries like Iraq, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were using Malaysia as a starting point on their way to Australia via Indonesia.⁴⁴

In other developments, an earthquake of magnitude 6.4 shook Jakarta on October 16. The epicenter of the quake was reportedly in the Sundra Strait, about 42 kilometers northwest of Ujung Kulon in Banten province. No tsunami warning was issued after the quake.⁴⁵ Over 1,000 people lost their lives in the powerful earthquake that struck West Sumatra in September.⁴⁶

C. WEST ASIA

IRAN

- **Russia agrees to enrich uranium for Iran; UN team visits Qom facility**

IAEA chief Mohamed el-Baradei stated that a draft agreement has been drawn up after talks between Iran, Russia, the United States and France on the supply of enriched uranium to Teheran and has been sent to the respective capitals for approval. He added that the agreement reflected a “balanced approach on how to move forward.” The agreement states that France and Russia will enrich low-

⁴¹ “RI to help integrate East Asia: Japan FM,” *The Jakarta Post*, October 13, 2009, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/10/13/ri-help-integrate-east-asia-japan-fm.html>

⁴² “Susilo inaugurated as Indonesian President for second term,” *Bernamea.com*, October 20, 2009, at http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/news_lite.php?id=448152

⁴³ “PM ready to drop Charter change plan,” *Bangkok Post*, October 15, 2009, at <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/157158/pm-ready-to-drop-charter-change-plan>

⁴⁴ “Malaysia detains 18 Afghans in boat to Indonesia,” *The Jakarta Post*, October 18, 2009, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/10/18/malaysia-detains-18-afghans-boat-indonesia.html>

⁴⁵ “Magnitude 6.4 quake rattles Jakarta,” *The Jakarta Post*, October 16, 2009, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/10/16/magnitude64-quake-rattles-jakarta.html>

⁴⁶ “Death toll from West Sumatra earthquake reaches 1,117,” *The Jakarta Post*, October 16, 2009, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/10/15/death-toll-west-sumatra-earthquake-reaches-1117.html>

weapons grade uranium for Iran. Teheran has however stated that it does not want France to be part of any deal. Iran had reached an agreement in Geneva on October 1 under which it pledged to ship 1,200 kgs of stockpiled uranium to Russia, and subsequently France, by the end of the year.⁴⁷

Following three days of multilateral talks in Vienna, Tehran has eventually chose Russia as the main supplier of nuclear fuel for its research reactor. This was stated by Iran's Envoy to the IAEA Ali Asghar Soltanieh. He added that any other country, including France, which was willing to cooperate with Iran, can serve as a subsidiary to Russia.⁴⁸ Russia would enrich the material to the nearly 20 per cent needed to use it in a research reactor that is intended to produce radio-isotopes for medical use.⁴⁹

A four-member IAEA team visited Iran's Qom uranium enrichment facility during the week. The revealing of the reactor had raised Western suspicions about the extent and aim of Tehran's nuclear program.⁵⁰

IRAQ

- **Twin suicide attacks kill 136 in Baghdad; Iraqi MPs fail to agree on election law**

Two suicide car bombs were detonated in Baghdad in front of government buildings killing at least 136 people. This was the worst attack during the year. Such massive car bombs have been the handiwork of Sunni insurgents seeking to overthrow the Shiite-dominated government. At least 25 staff members of the Baghdad Provincial Council were killed. The blasts occurred just a few hundred yards from the Green Zone that houses the US Embassy as well as the prime minister's offices. They surpassed the attacks against two government ministries in August 2009 that killed more than 100 people and were a big blow to the efforts of the government of PM al-Maliki to bring order to the country.⁵¹

In other developments, Iraqi MPs failed to agree on a new electoral law which was intended to establish more transparency ahead of general elections scheduled to be held on January 16, 2010. Stalemate persisted over the status of the oil-rich province of Kirkuk. Parliamentary speaker Iyad Al Samarrai told reporters that the issue had been referred to a senior political council made up of

⁴⁷ "Draft agreement on Iran uranium deal on table: IAEA," *Khaleej Times*, October 21, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/October/middleeast_October548.xml§ion=middleeast

⁴⁸ "Iranian Envoy Names Russia as Main N. Fuel Supplier for Tehran Reactor," *Fars News*, October 21, 2009, at <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=8807291645>

⁴⁹ "Iran faces new deadline on uranium deal," *Khaleej Times*, October 23, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/October/middleeast_October594.xml§ion=middleeast

⁵⁰ "UN inspectors visit once-secret Iranian site," *Khaleej Times*, October 25, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/October/middleeast_October658.xml§ion=middleeast

⁵¹ "Car bombs in Baghdad kill 136," *Khaleej Times*, October 25, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/October/middleeast_October657.xml§ion=middleeast

Prime Minister al-Maliki, President Talabani and leaders of major political parties.⁵²

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

NATIONAL

- **India-US air exercises begin at Agra**

Cope India-09, the fifth edition of the joint exercises between Indian and US air forces began at Air Force Station, Agra on October 19. During the five-day exercises, India fielded three AN-32 transport aircrafts, two Mi-17 1V helicopters, one Chetak helicopter, along with 270 personnel. The US flew in three C-130H Hercules, one C-130J Super Hercules, one C-17 Globemaster and 180 personnel for the exercise. The exercises are a part of the larger India-US defence cooperation meant to enable forces from two countries to “learn about each other’s operational aspects, validate procedures for operations towards internal security, airborne operations and night vision goggles (NVG)-aided tactical operations.”⁵³

- **MoD seeks safeguards on FDI in defence production**

Reports noted that the Ministry of Defence has voiced its concerns over the current method of calculating foreign direct investment (FDI) in defence production. At present, FDI up to 26 per cent is allowed in defence industry. This limit however does not take into consideration those foreign investments which are routed through the majority-holding Indian companies. The MoD argues that this allows foreign companies to increase their stakes in Indian defence companies, beyond what is desired under the FDI rules.⁵⁴

- **Navy to get its own dedicated communication satellite in 2010; Air Force and Army to follow suit**

Defence Minister A.K. Antony, in his address to the Naval Senior Officer’s Conference in New Delhi, stated that the Indian Navy will get its own dedicated military satellite. The Naval Communication Satellite, to be launched in 2010, is expected to “significantly improve connectivity at sea.”⁵⁵ Being built by ISRO, the satellite would be placed in geo-stationary orbit and would have a coverage area of about 600-1000 nautical miles over the Indian Ocean Region. This would

⁵² “Iraqi MPs fail to reach agreement on election law,” *Khaleej Times*, October 21, 2009, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/October/middleeast_October546.xml§ion=middleeast

⁵³ Government of India, Press Information Bureau, “Indo-US air exercise ‘Cope India-09’ gets underway at Agra,” October 19, 2009.

⁵⁴ Gireesh Chandra Prasad, “Defence ministry seeks safeguards in FDI math,” *The Economic Times*, October 20, 2009.

⁵⁵ Government of India, Press Information Bureau, “Multidimensional maritime responsibilities of Indian Navy central to prosperity and security of nation: Antony,” October 22, 2009

enable the Navy to link all its ships, submarines and aircrafts through a high-speed secured communication channel.

Reports also noted that the Air Force and the Army are expected to launch their own dedicated satellites in 2011-12.⁵⁶

- **Boeing submits \$2 billion IAF helicopter bid**

Boeing has submitted two proposals to the Indian Air Force, offering its AH-64D Apache Longbow attack helicopter and the CH-47F Chinook heavy-lift, twin-rotor helicopter. The IAF had floated a global tender for 22 combat helicopters and 15 heavy-lift helicopters, valued at around \$2 billion, in May 2009. Vivek Lall, Vice-President and India country head for Boeing Integrated Defense Systems stated that the "Apache will be a capable and lethal defender of India's troops and assets, while the Chinook will answer many of the country's military and humanitarian needs." In January 2009, Boeing had signed a \$2.1 billion contract with the India's MoD for supplying eight P8I maritime reconnaissance aircraft by 2015.⁵⁷

INTERNATIONAL

- **Russia to continue arms supplies to Iran**

Amidst concerns in the West over Russia's controversial decision to sell advanced S-300 anti-aircraft missiles to Iran, Moscow on October 22 reiterated its intention to continue arms supplies to Tehran, "in strict accordance with existing legislation and its international obligations." The statement by Russia's Federal Service for Military and Technical Cooperation came a few days after Interfax news agency quoted a Russian government official as stating that the delivery of "S-300 systems to Iran was frozen indefinitely due to an array of circumstances practically right after it was signed [in 2007]."⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Rajat Pandit, "Navy to get its own eye in the sky by '10," *The Times of India*, October 23, 2009.

⁵⁷ Bappa Majumdar, "Boeing submits bids for \$2bln India defence projects," *Reuters*, October 23, 2009, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/marketsNews/idUSDEL11035120091023>; Government of India, Press Information Bureau, "Defence deal with USA," July 15, 2009.

⁵⁸ "Russia Pledges To Continue Arms Supplies to Iran," *Defense News*, October 22, 2009, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=4337370&c=EUR&s=TOP>