

# THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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# CONTENTS

<b>In This Issue</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>I. COUNTRY REVIEWS</b>	
A. South Asia	2-6
B. East Asia	6-7
C. Central Asia & Russia	7-9
D. West Asia	10-15
E. Africa	16-19
<b>II. DEFENCE REVIEW</b>	19-20
<b>III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW</b>	20-21
<b>IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW</b>	21-22

## I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

### A. South Asia

#### Afghanistan

- **Gunfire heard in CIA compound in Kabul; Eleven children killed in Herat blast; Two Afghan policewomen and a civilian killed in Herat; Afghan government says its investigations show that the killer of Burhanuddin Rabbani was a Pakistani**

According to reports, officials confirmed that gunfire was heard from a CIA compound in Kabul. The shots were heard inside Ariana Hotel compound which is used by CIA for operations. The details of death or injured were unknown as of presently.<sup>1</sup>

In another incident, eleven children were killed when a bus hit a roadside bomb in western province of Herat in Afghanistan. Officials say that the bomb went off as the bus was carrying a group back from an engagement party in Herat province.<sup>2</sup>

In a separate attack, two Afghan policewomen and a civilian were killed by a mine. This comes after five NATO soldiers were killed earlier in the week. The incident took place in Herat. The latest deaths came a day after the United Nations released figures saying that violent incidents in the Afghan war increased nearly 40 per cent in the first eight months of this year compared to the same period last year.<sup>3</sup>

In other developments, the Afghan government says its investigations show that the killer of Burhanuddin Rabbani, its negotiator with the Taliban, was a Pakistani. Evidence from the case showed the murder was plotted in the Pakistani city of Quetta, a statement said. Rabbani was assassinated on 20 September by a suicide attacker who purported to be a Taliban peace envoy. Kabul has often accused Pakistan of supporting militants but Islamabad has denied any role in Rabbani's death. Rabbani was a key figure in holding peace talks with the Taliban. After the killing, Afghan President Hamid Karzai said his government would no longer hold peace talks with the Taliban but would hold talks with Pakistan directly.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Gunfire heard from CIA compound in Kabul", *Dawn*, September 26, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/26/gunfire-heard-from-cia-compound-in-kabul-2.html>

<sup>2</sup> "Afghanistan: 11 children killed in Herat bus blast", *BBC*, September 27, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-15074216>

<sup>3</sup> "Five Nato troops, three Afghans killed", *Dawn*, September 29, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/29/three-afghans-killed-in-airport-road-blast-in-herat.html>

<sup>4</sup> "Afghan aide Burhanuddin Rabbani's killer Pakistani", *BBC*, October 2, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-15141985>

## Pakistan

- **IMF team to hold talks with Pakistan in November this year; Pakistan refuses to reign in Haqqani network; Bill moved in the US Congress to stop aid to Pakistan; India extends support to Pakistan's EU waiver at WTO; US puts sanctions on a key Haqqani commander along with several other militants of the network**

The Finance Minister of Pakistan has said that a team from IMF will visit Pakistan in November this year. He said that Pakistan will not seek fresh loan but will continue to hold article IV consultations with the organisation. The IMF consults annually with each member government. Through these contacts known as Article IV consultations, the IMF attempts to assess each country's economic health and to forestall future financial problems. The minister arrived in Washington to hold meetings with World Bank and IMF to explore future ties despite a decision of not seeking a new loan. Meanwhile, IMF officials noted that Pakistan does not meet the economic standards for a country to seek loan.<sup>5</sup>

In another development, according to a senior Pakistan security official, Pakistan will not launch an offensive against Haqqani militants despite Washington ramping up the pressure after a series of attacks on US targets in Afghanistan. Reports noted that Pakistan's army chief of staff gathered together his top generals in a meeting after a series of stinging rebukes from the Americans blaming the Haqqanis and Pakistani intelligence over attacks. General James Mattis, commander of the US Central Command, which oversees the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, became the most senior US commander to hold talks with Pakistani generals in Islamabad since the pressure mounted.<sup>6</sup>

In another development, a resolution has been moved in the US Congress to cut aid to Pakistan except for nuclear safety assistance. The move is in a sharp contrast to recent efforts made by US and Pakistan to deescalate tensions between both over Haqqani links. But temperatures remained high in the US Congress where lawmakers continue to attack Pakistan over the issue. The current bilateral crisis started after remarks by Admiral Mike Mullen, outgoing Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, who spoke openly of the links between Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence and the Haqqani network.<sup>7</sup>

In a significant development, India has extended support for Pakistan's EU waiver package in WTO and is issuing necessary instructions in this regard. This was announced on Wednesday after a meeting between Commerce Minister Makhdoom Amin Fahim and his Indian counterpart Anand Sharma in New Delhi. The two countries also agreed to more than double their bilateral trade in the next three years and open a second border trading post. The understanding reached at the meeting is part of a bid to put back on track the peace process which was derailed by the

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<sup>5</sup> "IMF team to visit Pakistan in November, says minister", *Dawn*, September 26, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/26/imf-team-to-visit-pakistan-in-november-says-minister.html>

<sup>6</sup> "Pakistan will not launch Haqqani offensive", *Dawn*, September 26, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/26/pakistan-will-not-launch-haqqani-offensive.html>

<sup>7</sup> "Resolution to stop aid moved in US Congress", *Dawn*, September 28, 2011, at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/28/resolution-to-stop-aid-moved-in-us-congress.html>

2008 Mumbai attacks. Deepening economic engagement between the two countries is seen as crucial to establishing lasting peace in South Asia. The decisions will add “width and depth to our economic engagement that will help us in defining our future roadmap” as neighbours, Mr Sharma told a joint news conference in New Delhi. The two countries also agreed to double their bilateral trades and open a second border trading post. That means present \$ 2.7 billion trade will amount to \$ 6 billion in three years. A memorandum of understanding has been signed between the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan and India’s Trade Promotion Organisation to this effect. <sup>8</sup>

In other developments, reports noted that the United States has decided to name a key Haqqani commander on its sanctions list. The Treasury said Abdul Aziz Abbasin, an Afghan native, was appointed by the Haqqani network as “the Taliban shadow governor” in Orgun district of Afghanistan. That apart several other names have also been put on the list. Treasury Undersecretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence David Cohen said that this way the networks violent aspirations will be curbed and limited. <sup>9</sup>

## Bangladesh

- **Bangladesh and India to exchange data on the availability of water in the Teesta; Bangladesh supports to Palestine for establishing an independent Palestine state ; Bangladesh sought US help in repatriation of the killers of Bangabandhu Mujibur Rahman**

Reports noted that Bangladesh and India are going to exchange data on the availability of water in the Teesta to sort out the Teesta water-sharing deal. Dhaka will ask New Delhi for 15 years’ data on water availability in the Teesta between North Sikkim and Gazoldoba in Paschimbanga. New Delhi has already asked for similar data recorded at the Teesta barrage point in Bangladesh. <sup>10</sup>

Replying to a question at a “meet the press” programme at the Bangladesh Mission office in New York on September 25, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said Bangladesh would always stand by the Palestinian people to establish an independent Palestine state. <sup>11</sup>

In other developments, according to a foreign ministry press release, Bangladesh has sought US assistance in repatriation of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to bring them to justice. <sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> “India supports Pakistan’s EU waiver package”, *Dawn*, September 29, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/29/india-supports-pakistans-eu-waiver-package.html>

<sup>9</sup> “US hits alleged Haqqani commanders with sanctions”, *Dawn*, September 29, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/29/us-levies-sanctions-on-haqqani-commander-others.html>

<sup>10</sup> “Teesta River:Dhaka, Delhi to assess waters”, *The Daily Star*, September 30, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=204548>.

<sup>11</sup> “Bangladesh to vote for Palestine: Says PM”, *The Daily Star*, September 26, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=203970>

<sup>12</sup> “Repatriation of Bangabandhu Killers: Bangladesh seeks US cooperation”, *The Daily Star*, September 28, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=204281>

## Sri Lanka

- **India to provide bicycles to the internally displaced civilians in Sri Lanka; Sri Lanka exports rice to Kenya; Sri Lanka gets aircraft from China; Japan to expedite de-mining activities in Sri Lanka**

Reports noted that the Indian government will provide a grant of SL Rs. 67 million for the distribution of 10,000 bicycles among the internally displaced civilians, the Indian High Commission in Colombo said on September 29.<sup>13</sup>

According to reports, the Sri Lanka Air Force took delivery of two MA 60 passenger aircraft from China on September 30.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile, marking an extension of a US\$ 780,000 grant to expedite humanitarian demining activities in the North Sri Lanka, the government of Japan signed several agreements with the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD). The grant contract was signed between the Ambassador of Japan, Mr. Kunio Takahashi and the Country Programme Manager of FSD, Nigel Robinson at a ceremony held at the Japanese Embassy in Colombo on September 30.<sup>15</sup>

In other developments, Sri Lanka reportedly, exported a stock of 250 tonnes of rice to Kenya on September 28.<sup>16</sup>

## Maldives

- **India's National Security Advisor Shivshankar Menon meets President Mohamed Nasheed; Maldivian Vice President's support to the Palestine at the UNGA; Secretary to the Sri Lankan Ministry of Defence visits Maldives**

Reports noted that India's National Security Advisor Shivshankar Menon paid a courtesy call on President Mohamed Nasheed on October 2. President Nasheed and the NSA Menon also exchanged ideas on the security measures to be taken for the safety of the Indian Ocean, and highlighted the Indian Ocean Cooperation's role in controlling and decreasing the rates of piracy and illegal fishing in the Indian Ocean. They also discussed compiling a Climate Change Declaration at the SAARC Summit.<sup>17</sup>

In another development, the Vice President of Maldives has pledged the Maldives steadfast support to the Palestinian people and to the creation of an independent Palestinian state during

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<sup>13</sup> "India to gift Rs. 67 M. to supply bikes to IDPs", *The Daily Mirror*, September 30, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/57690.html>

<sup>14</sup> "SLAF takes delivery of Chinese MA 60 aircraft", *The Daily Mirror*, October 1, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/57807.html>

<sup>15</sup> "Japan extends more aid for de-mining activities", *The Daily Mirror*, October 1, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/57804.html>

<sup>16</sup> "Lanka exports 250 tonnes of rice to Kenya", *The Daily Mirror*, September 29, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/57608.html>

<sup>17</sup> "Indian National Security Advisor pays Courtesy Call on the President", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, October 2, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=6034>.

his UN General assembly Speech. The Vice President says that he would like to see State of Palestine co-existing peacefully beside the State of Israel.<sup>18</sup>

In other developments, Secretary to the Sri Lankan Ministry of Defence Gotabaya Rajapaksa paid a courtesy call on President Mohamed Nasheed on October 2.<sup>19</sup>

## B. East Asia

### South East Asia

- **Indonesian bomb suspect arrested; China backed dam project in Myanmar halted; China expresses concerns on Myanmar dam; Thailand hopeful over oil spill dispute with Indonesia; Thailand to ask Cambodia for tern of detained Thais**

According to reports, the anti-terrorism squad of Indonesia arrested one of suspected militants accused of plotting bombs in the country. Beni Asri was arrested on September 30 in Solok of West Sumatra province. Asri is accused of planning and executing the suicide attack, which happened on September 25 in a church in Central Java.<sup>20</sup>

On September 30, 2011, Myanmar President Thein Sein ordered work on Myitsone dam on Irrawaddy river to stop, following a public protest to the project. The protesters enjoy the pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi. Suu Kyi had said that the dam threatened the flow of Irrawady River.<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile China has urged Myanmar to protect the rights of Chinese companies. The project is worth US \$ 3.6 billion and being built by Chinese companies.<sup>22</sup>

Thailand's Energy Minister on September 29 said that Thailand's dispute over oil spill at the Montara field will be resolved soon. The oil spill had happened in 2009 at the Montara field in the Timor Sea. Thailand is ready to compensate fishermen and local residents affected by the incident.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> "Vice President Pledges Support to Future Palestinian State in UN General Assembly Speech", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, September 26, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5998>

<sup>19</sup> "Secretary to the Sri Lankan Ministry of Defence Pays a Courtesy Call on the President", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, October 2, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=6033>

<sup>20</sup> Indonesia arrests Muslim militant suspected of plotting suicide attacks at church, mosque, *Washington Post*, October 2, 2011, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia-pacific/indonesia-arrests-muslim-militant-suspected-of-plotting-suicide-attacks-at-church-mosque/2011/10/02/gIQAnExMEL\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia-pacific/indonesia-arrests-muslim-militant-suspected-of-plotting-suicide-attacks-at-church-mosque/2011/10/02/gIQAnExMEL_story.html)

<sup>21</sup> Myanmar shelves US\$ 3.6 billion Mega dam, *Taipei Times*, October 1 2011, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/world/archives/2011/10/01/2003514669>

<sup>22</sup> China raps Myanmar over dam project, *The Statesman*, October 2, 2011, [http://www.thestatesman.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=385216&catid=37](http://www.thestatesman.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=385216&catid=37)

<sup>23</sup> Thai Energy Minister optimistic over oil spill dispute with Indonesia, *Pattaya Mail*, October 1, 2011, <http://www.pattayamail.com/business/thai-energy-minister-optimistic-over-oil-spill-dispute-with-indonesia-6668>

In other developments, according to reports, Thailand is actively considering the issue of return of two Thai nationals, currently detained in Cambodia. The two activists are detained in Cambodia on espionage charges. In that regard, Thai government spokesperson issued a statement saying that Thailand is mulling over the possibility of prisoner swap with Cambodia.<sup>24</sup>

## China

- **China: US arms sale to Taiwan will disrupt exchanges; China opposes internationalization of South China Sea disputes; Agreements enhance China-NZ relationship; Putin to visit China in mid October; China, France pledge to deepen military ties**

According to a Chinese Defense Ministry spokesman Geng Yansheng, the latest United States arms sale to Taiwan will disrupt China-US military exchanges and also joint drills.<sup>25</sup>

In another development, reports noted that repeating its stance on the South China Sea issue, China Defense Ministry spokesman Geng Yansheng said that stand that South China Sea issue should not be internationalized as this will further complicate the situation. Geng stated, "Any move, which is designated to multilateralize or internationalize the South China Sea issue, will make the question more complex and neither will it help."<sup>26</sup>

Meanwhile China and New Zealand signed five new agreements to show the growing relationship between them.<sup>27</sup>

In other developments, reports noted that Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin will visit China from October 11 to 12, 2011. This was announced by Hong Lei, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman.<sup>28</sup> While, the Chinese and French military leaders have announced to deepen army relations during the 10th strategic dialogue between the countries defence ministries.<sup>29</sup>

## C. Central Asia & Russia

### Russia

- **Russia's Defence Ministry stops buying AK-47 submachine guns; International conference**

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<sup>24</sup> Thailand mulls asking Cambodia to transfer two detained Thai activists, *MCOT*, September 30 2011, [http://www.mcot.net/cfcustom/cache\\_page/274933.html](http://www.mcot.net/cfcustom/cache_page/274933.html)

<sup>25</sup> "China:US arms sale to Taiwan will disrupt exchanges" *China Daily*, September 29, 2011 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/28/content\\_13813359.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/28/content_13813359.htm)

<sup>26</sup> "China opposes S China Sea disputes internationalization" *China Daily*, September 29, 2011 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/28/content\\_13813448.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/28/content_13813448.htm)

<sup>27</sup> "Agreements enhance China-NZ relationship" *China Daily*, September 29, 2011 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/29/content\\_13817686.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/29/content_13817686.htm)

<sup>28</sup> "Putin to visit China in mid October" *China Daily*, September 30, 2011 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/30/content\\_13828361.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-09/30/content_13828361.htm)

<sup>29</sup> "China, France pledge to deepen military ties" *China Daily*, October 1, 2011 at [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-10/01/content\\_13831911.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-10/01/content_13831911.htm)

**on Arctic shelf inaugurated in Russia; President Medvedev planning to radically change the government's make up; Turkey has refused to extend gas contract with Russia; Britain introduces secret ban on visas for unnamed Russian officials; President Medvedev asks Finance Minister Kudrin to resign; Russia's new Finance Minister allays fears that Russian economy may suffer on account of his predecessor's resignation; Russia tests fires a new ballistic missile; Russia's only missile cruiser to leave for the Mediterranean in November this year; Russia's Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov: There is no progress on Russia-US missile defence negotiations; Interpol to help investigate Domodedovo airport bombing**

According to reports, the Russian Defense Ministry has stopped buying Kalashnikov AK-47 submachine guns because the stock of such guns is too large and the weapon does not meet the Ministry's needs.<sup>30</sup>

In another development, the fourth international conference "The Arctic Shelf Exploration: Step-by-Step" has been inaugurated in Murmansk in Russia. The fourth international conference "The Arctic Shelf Exploration: Step-by-Step" is opening in Murmansk in the Russian north.<sup>31</sup>

Reports noted that President Dmitry Medvedev is going to radically change the government make-up, if he takes up the post of Prime Minister. He was quoted as saying that the 'government should be renewed'.<sup>32</sup>

According to reports, Turkey has refused to prolong a gas contract with Russia since it failed to agree on discount for fuel delivery. Turkey has thus refused to extend a contract for the purchase of Russian gas that is delivered via the western corridor through the Balkans. Turkey refused to extend a contract for the purchase of Russian gas that is delivered via the western corridor through the Balkans. It is believed that the decision will not affect the relationship between the two states since not all contracts with Russia had been annulled.<sup>33</sup>

Britain's Home Office has imposed a secret ban on the issuance of travel visas to the Russian citizens allegedly linked to the case over death in custody of the Moscow-based lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who worked for the Hermitage Capital Management hedge fund.<sup>34</sup>

President Dmitry Medvedev has asked Vice-premier and Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin to resign. The move is a direct result of Kudrin's apparent show of rebellion to the decision of

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<sup>30</sup> "Defense Ministry stops buying Kalashnikov Ak-47 submachine guns", *ITAR-TASS*, September 27, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/234612.html>

<sup>31</sup> "International conference on Arctic shelf opens in Murmansk", *ITAR-TASS*, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/235926.html>

<sup>32</sup> "Medvedev planning to radically change govt make-up", *ITAR-TASS*, September 30, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/237000.html>

<sup>33</sup> "Turkey refuses to extend gas contract with Russia", *ITAR-TASS*, October 2, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/237815.html>

<sup>34</sup> "UK introduces secret ban on visas for unnamed Russian officials", *ITAR-TASS*, October 2, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/237991.html>

Medvedev to run for the Prime Minister's post in March. Reportedly, Kudrin himself had Prime Ministerial aspirations.<sup>35</sup>

Russia's First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov, who after the dismissal of Alexei Kudrin from the position of Finance Minister was appointed to oversee the financial segment of the Cabinet, has promised that there will be no major policy changes. This comes amidst fears that his predecessor's resignation will force Russian economy into a deep slumber. Mr. Kudrin (G8 longest serving Finance Minister) was widely credited in helping Russia come out of the global financial crisis of 2008.<sup>36</sup>

Reports noted that Russia has successfully test fired a new sea-based intercontinental ballistic missile. The Lancer missile was launched from the Tula (Delta IV class) strategic submarine in the Barents Sea targeting the Kura test grounds on the Kamchatka peninsula. The Lancer is an advanced version of the solid-propellant Sineva submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) which is currently in service with the Russian Navy. It has a longer range and enhanced missile defence penetration capability.<sup>37</sup>

According to reports, the heavy air-capable cruiser Admiral Kuznetsov at the head of a squadron of Northern Fleet ships will set out on a long-distance voyage in November this year to accomplish combat duty missions in the Mediterranean Sea and the North-Eastern Atlantic. Verification is under way of a list of foreign ports to be visited by the Russian ships, including an update in view of the developments in the Middle East and North Africa. The question of the Russian ships' participation in joint exercises together with the navies of countries in the region is being worked out as well. The 60,000 tonne Admiral Kuznetsov is the only operational aircraft carrier in the Russian Navy and can carry 26 shipboard fighter planes Su-33 and MiG-29 K and 24 ASW helicopters – eighteen Ka-27 and Ka-29, two Ka-27PS, and four Ka-31.<sup>38</sup>

Russia's Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov has said that there has been no progress at the Russia-U.S. missile defence negotiations, and the United States continues the rapid implementation of its plans.<sup>39</sup>

In other developments, reports noted that Interpol will take an active part in investigating the terrorist attack at the Domodedovo airport in January 2011. Russian investigators have launched two-way information exchange with Interpol and already receive answers to a number of inquiries pertaining to the investigation.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> "President Medvedev asks Alexei Kudrin to resign", *ITAR-TASS*, September 26, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/233866.html>

<sup>36</sup> "Kudrin's dismissal spells no trouble for business, budget-Shuvalov", *ITAR-TASS*, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/236531.html>

<sup>37</sup> "Russia tests new ballistic missile", *RIA Novosti*, September 30, 2011, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20110930/167259462.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20110930/167259462.html)

<sup>38</sup> "Cruiser Adm Kuznetsov to leave for Mediterranean in Nov", *ITAR-TASS*, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/236147.html>

<sup>39</sup> "No progress at Russia-US missile defense negotiations", *ITAR-TASS*, September 27, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/234721.html>

<sup>40</sup> "Interpol to help investigate Domodedovo airport bombing", *ITAR-TASS*, September 27, 2011, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/234623.html>

## D. West Asia

### Iran

- **Iran dismisses proposal for the setting up of military hotline with the United States; Iran's Supreme Leader: Proposal to establish two states on the occupied Palestinian territories unacceptable**

Reports noted that the commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Navy has rejected the proposal for the establishment of a direct military hotline between the United States and Iran. Rear Admiral Ali Fadavi stated, "when we go to the Gulf of Mexico, we will establish direct communication with them. In the view of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the illegitimate presence of the US in the Persian Gulf makes no sense." Some US media outlets have recently quoted an unidentified US defense official as saying that the US is considering setting up a direct military hotline with Iran after a series of close encounters between US and Iranian forces in the Persian Gulf. Fearing that a misunderstanding could lead to a wider conflict, US officials are weighing establishing emergency communications but a final decision is still pending, the US official said.<sup>41</sup>

Meanwhile, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has said that the proposal to establish two states on the occupied Palestinian territories is completely intolerable. Khamenei said "Our demand is the liberation of Palestine, not part of Palestine. Any initiative calling for the disintegration of Palestine is rejected outright. The two-state proposal, which they have been seeking to justify through the recognition of Palestine as a full member of the United Nations is nothing but capitulation to the demand of the Zionists, which is the recognition of a Zionist government on the Palestinian territory. That would mean trampling on the rights of the Palestinian nation, ignoring the historic rights of the displaced Palestinians, and even posing a threat to the rights of Palestinians living in the 1948 lands. That would mean a cancerous tumor would remain and pose a constant threat to the body of the Islamic ummah, particularly regional nations. That would mean the repetition of decades of suffering and trampling upon the blood of martyrs." He also noted that "we do not suggest launching a classic war by the armies of Muslim countries, or throwing immigrant Jews into the sea, or mediation by the UN and other international organizations. We propose holding a referendum with (the participation of) the Palestinian nation." "The U.S. president says that the security of Israel is his red line. What has determined that red line? The interests of the people of the United States or Obama's need for the money and support of Zionist companies to win the next presidential election? How long will you be able to deceive your people?", he added.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> "Iran rebuffs proposal for hotline with US," *Mehr News Agency*, September 26, 2011, at <http://www.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1417460>

<sup>42</sup> "Two-state solution rejected outright: Leader," *Mehr News Agency*, October 1, 2011, at <http://www.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1421211>

## Iraq

- **Eighteen people killed in car bomb attack in Hilla city near Baghdad**

According to reports, a large car bomb killed 18 people in a Shia funeral in Iraq's Hilla city. The blast left burned bodies and damaged vehicles near a Shia mosque where relatives had gathered in a tent for the funeral of a local sheikh. Hilla, 100 km south of Baghdad, is a mainly Shia city on a route used by pilgrims visiting Shi'ite holy sites in the south of the country. Violence in Iraq has eased since the sectarian strife took the country to the brink of civil war a few years after the US invasion. But Sunni Islamists tied to al Qaeda and Shia militias still carry out daily attacks. Sunni insurgents often target Shia pilgrims with car bombs and suicide attacks in an attempt to rekindle sectarian tensions and test Iraq's government as the last US troops prepare to withdraw by the end of the year. Recent attacks and incidents in the Sunni heartland of Anbar in western Iraq and in the Shia holy city of Kerbala have fuelled worries of resurgent sectarian violence.<sup>43</sup>

## Syria

- **Syria and Lebanon discuss events in the Middle East; Weapons and ammunition seized at Jdeidet Yabous border; Security Council still divided over Syria; Syria and Iran discuss means of enhancing bilateral relations**

Reports noted that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad held a meeting with the Lebanese Ex-Premier, Omar Karami and Youth and Sports Minister Faisal Karami and discussed the events in Syria and the attempts of targeting its security and stability. The situation in Lebanon was also discussed during the meeting. On his part, Karami expressed confidence in the ability of the Syrian people and leadership to overcome the current circumstances, calling for vigilance over the attempts of fragmenting the region, and the effects of such attempts on the Middle East as a whole.<sup>44</sup>

In another development, authorities at Jdeidet Yabous border crossing seized large amounts of weapons and ammunition set for smuggling to Syria in a truck coming from Lebanon. The authorities recovered 125 machine pump-action shotguns and more than 30,000 bullets for pistols in the operation.<sup>45</sup>

Meanwhile, reports noted that the UN Security Council is trying again to reach agreement on a resolution condemning the violence in Syria, but members remain deeply divided over sanctions against President Bashar Assad's regime. The Europeans and Russians have revised their rival texts which the council was expected to discuss. The new European draft drops the demand for

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<sup>43</sup> "Bomb kills 18 at Shia funeral in Iraq," *Khaleej Times*, September 30, 2011, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/September/middleeast\\_September615.xml&section=middleeast&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/September/middleeast_September615.xml&section=middleeast&col=)

<sup>44</sup> "President al-Assad, Karami Review Events in Syria and Bids of Targeting its Security", *Syrian Arab News Agency*, September 29, 2011, at <http://www.sana.sy/eng/21/2011/09/29/372403.htm>

<sup>45</sup> "Large Amounts of Weapons and Ammunition Set for Smuggling to Syria from Lebanon Seized", *Syrian Arab News Agency*, September 29, 2011, at <http://www.sana.sy/eng/337/2011/09/29/372455.htm>

immediate sanctions in an attempt to win greater support in the Security Council and expresses “determination” to impose targeted sanctions if the Syrian government doesn’t comply with demands. Russia’s UN Ambassador Vitaly Churkin rejected the European draft, calling it “a continuation of the [Europeans’] openly declared policy of regime change”.<sup>46</sup>

In other developments, Syrian Speaker of the People’s Assembly, Mahmoud al-Abrash, discussed with Iranian Parliament Speaker, Ali Larijani, means of enhancing bilateral relations, particularly the parliamentary ones, in addition to the Palestinian issue and the latest regional and international developments. The two sides stressed the importance of the Parliaments’ role in strengthening relations between the countries and achieving more developments. Larijani stressed that the main reason behind the West’s hostility against Syria is its support to the Palestinian people, hailing Syria’s stances in supporting the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.<sup>47</sup>

## Libya

- **NTC fighters capture Sirte airport; High-level visits from US and Sudan to Libya; “5+5 Group” discuss security threats in North African, Mediterranean region**

In a strategic victory, anti-Gaddafi forces captured Sirte’s port as intense fighting carried on inside the city. However, in Bani Walid, Muammar Gaddafi’s forces went on offensive, resulting in casualties. Meanwhile, the formation of a transitional government has been postponed until the entire country is liberated. In other developments, NATO urged Libya’s new regime to make plans to destroy stockpiles of chemical weapons and nuclear-related agents amassed by Qadhafi.<sup>48</sup>

In another development, four United States Republican senators have visited Libya to meet the nation’s new rulers, the National Transitional Council. The highest-profile American delegation to visit the country since the overthrow of the former Libyan leader Muammar Al Qathafi is made up of John McCain of Arizona, Mark Kirk of Illinois, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and Marco Rubio of Florida.<sup>49</sup> Also on an official visit was Sudan’s Vice President Ali Osman Taha. Relations between Sudan and former Libyan leader Al Qathafi were strained, with Khartoum accusing the ousted Libyan leader of supporting rebel groups in Darfur in an effort to expand his influence in the region.<sup>50</sup>

In other developments, forming the 5+5 group of nations, army chiefs from four North African

<sup>46</sup> “Security Council still divided over Syria”, *The Jordan Times*, September 29, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41798>

<sup>47</sup> “Larijani: The West Targets Syria Due to its Pan-Arab Stances”, *Syrian Arab News Agency*, October 3, 2011, at <http://www.sana.sy/eng/22/2011/10/03/373084.htm>

<sup>48</sup> “Anti-Qadhafi fighters capture Sirte’s port”, *The Jordan Times*, September 28, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41749>

<sup>49</sup> “US Senators, Sudanese V/President on Libya Visit”, *The Tripoli Post*, September 29, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articleDetail.asp?c=1&i=7015>

<sup>50</sup> *ibid*

states of Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia and five from Europe (France, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain) met in the Mauritanian capital Nouakchott, to discuss security threats in the region. The members of the group raised fears that extremists could take advantage of the chaos resulting from conflict in Libya, and that the proliferation of arms raided from the vast stores of the former Libyan leader would fall into the hands of radical groups like Al-Qaeda. Meanwhile, the United States is working closely with Libya's new interim leaders to secure all arms stockpiles, amid concerns over weapons proliferation.<sup>51</sup>

## Egypt

- **Egypt's parliamentary elections announced, to be held on November 28, 2011; US Secretary of State Clinton urges Egypt's interim military leadership to strengthen Egypt's partnership with Israel; High-ranking officials of Mubarak's regime convicted; Egypt gas pipeline to Israel blown up**

In a significant development, launching the process of handing power to a civilian rule, Egypt's parliamentary elections have been scheduled to be held on November 28, 2011. In this regard, the military council has issued a decree inviting candidates to start registration for the elections starting October 12. The Freedom and Justice Party, the political wing of Egypt's biggest Islamist group the Muslim Brotherhood, welcomed the move though it was unhappy about the election procedures which provide for some seats to be contested by party lists and others by individuals.<sup>52</sup> The Democratic Alliance, a coalition of 34 political parties, threatened to boycott the elections if its demands are not met soon. The alliance also called on SCAF to set a specific timeline to hand over power to civilians by a date not later than June 2012.<sup>53</sup> On the other hand, activists who helped oust Mubarak criticised the long parliamentary election process, and said they wanted a date for presidential election to be fixed.

In another development, following meetings with Egypt's Foreign Minister Mohammed Kamel Amr at the US State Department in Washington, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton urged Egypt's interim military leadership to strengthen Egypt's partnership with Israel and proceed with the scheduled elections. Clinton also described the country's ruling military council as "an institution of stability and continuity", commending it for adhering to peace agreement with Israel. However, she expressed some growing concerns with the military's domestic policies, specifically a decision to extend the emergency laws.<sup>54</sup>

In another high-ranking conviction, Anas el-Fiqqi, an official from the former regime of Hosni Mubarak was convicted for crimes committed during Mubarak's rule and was jailed for seven

<sup>51</sup> "5+5 Group Discuss Security Threats in North African, Mediterranean Region, *The Tripoli Post*, September 28, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=7009>

<sup>52</sup> "Egypt's parliamentary vote starts November 28", *The Jordan Times*, September 28, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41742>

<sup>53</sup> "Democratic Alliance threatens to boycott PA elections", *The Daily News Egypt*, September 29, 2011, at <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/egypt/democratic-alliance-threatens-to-boycott-pa-elections.html>

<sup>54</sup> "US presses Egypt on Israel, democracy", *The Daily News Egypt*, September 29, 2011, at <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/egypt/us-presses-egypt-on-israel-democracy.html>

years. Osama el-Sheikh, who was in charge of state television under Mubarak was also found guilty in the same case and was given a five-year prison term. Meanwhile, activists have accused the country's current military rulers of dragging their heels in the prosecution of former regime officials.<sup>55</sup>

In other developments, according to reports, unknown assailants blew up an Egyptian pipeline in Sinai that supplies Israel and Jordan with gas. According to security sources, three men in an area known as al-Maidan, south-west of the city of el-Arish, opened fire on the pipeline. This was followed by a large explosion and witnesses said 15m high flames could be seen shooting up from the pipeline. It is to be recalled that since President Hosni Mubarak was ousted in February 2011, the pipeline has been repeatedly blown up by assailants believed to be opposed to selling Egyptian gas to Israel. The pipeline is run by Gasco, Egypt's gas transport company which is a subsidiary of the national gas company EGAS.<sup>56</sup>

## Israel

- **International community opposes Israel's new housing units; Israel and Palestine differ over Quartet peace call**

Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat claims that in a move that flagrantly affects the Quartet proposal for new peace talks, Gilo district planning committee approved a plan for 1,100 new houses in an East Jerusalem settlement. It is just one stage of a lengthy, multi-year approvals process for the planned expansion of the Gilo neighbourhood, which lies in Jerusalem's south. The European Union's chief diplomat Catherine Ashton slashed Israel's decision and urged the government to reverse it.<sup>57</sup>

However, reports noted that international pressure was mounting on Israel over its housing construction plans. Turkey argued that the construction plan further underlined the need for the world to back the Palestinian bid for full UN membership. In addition, the United States, China, Egypt, and Russia voiced their opposition.<sup>58</sup>

In the meanwhile, Israel called for an immediate return to direct peace talks under the framework of a Quartet proposal, but it said the plan included no preconditions, an interpretation the Palestinians quickly rejected. The Palestinians reported that Israel could not say it had accepted the Quartet statement without announcing a halt to Israeli settlement construction and a willingness to use the lines that existed before the 1967 Six-Day War as a basis for negotiations on future borders.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>55</sup> "Former Mubarak's Info Minister Gets Seven Year Prison Term", *The Tripoli Post*, September 29, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=7016>

<sup>56</sup> "Assailants blow up Egypt gas pipeline to Israel", *Mail and Guardian*, September 27, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-27-assailants-blow-up-egypt-gas-pipeline-to-israel/>

<sup>57</sup> "Israel approves new settler housing units in East Jerusalem", *The Jordan Times*, September 28, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41748>

<sup>58</sup> "Pressure mounts on Israel over settler homes", *The Daily News Egypt*, September 29, 2011, at <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/region/pressure-mounts-on-israel-over-settler-homes.html>

<sup>59</sup> "Israel, Palestinians spar over Quartet peace call", *The Jordan Times*, October 3, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=41912>

## Palestine

- **UNSC begins talks on Palestinian bid; Palestine Foreign Minister Riyad Al Malki claims support from more UNSC members states; US Congress freezes \$200m in aid to Palestine; UN experts call for ending Palestinian property destruction**

Reports noted that the UN Security Council started negotiations on the Palestinian bid for UN membership as major powers stepped up pressure for new Palestinian-Israeli talks. Later, the Security Council referred the request to a committee. However, there is little indication that the two parties are ready to resume negotiations. Further, the United States has vowed to veto any resolution in favour of the Palestinians, but no vote is expected for several weeks. Ahead of the meeting, experts from the 15 council nations started contacts on how the bid will be dealt with. Meanwhile, China highlighted its support for the Palestinian bid for full membership of the United Nations.<sup>60</sup>

According to the Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad Al Malki, the Palestinians have secured eight Security Council yes votes for their UN membership bid including latest assurances from two additional nations - Nigeria and Gabon, just one short of the nine they need. He added that the leadership is working on support from Bosnia, Colombia and Portugal. On the other hand, even with the requisite nine votes, the United States has pledged to use its veto to block the request, but the Palestinians hope they can at least claim a diplomatic victory by securing a majority in the Security Council.<sup>61</sup>

In another developments, members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee have blocked about \$200 million in Palestinian aid in response to the latter's UN statehood bid. However, the economic package is separate from security aid, which the US lawmakers say would be counterproductive to block. Because, they fear that withholding those funds would weaken the ability of Palestinian security forces to put down anti-Israel violence.<sup>62</sup>

In other developments, the UN special rapporteurs on the rights to housing, food, and drinking water called for an end to the destruction by Israeli authorities and settlers of Palestinian-owned houses and structures in the West Bank and East Jerusalem as these actions by the Israeli authorities violate human rights and humanitarian law. Since January 2011, at least 387 structures had been destroyed, including 140 residential and 79 structures for agriculture or livelihood, resulting in the forced displacement of 755 people and impacting a total of 1,500 individuals.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> "UN Security Council starts talks on Palestinian bid", *The Jordan Times*, September 27, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41708>

<sup>61</sup> "Palestinians struggle for a ninth vote at UNSC", *The Jordan Times*, September 30, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41833>

<sup>62</sup> "US Congress freezes \$200m in aid to Palestinians", *The Jordan Times*, October 2, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41882>

<sup>63</sup> "UN experts say Palestinian property destruction must end", *The Jordan Times*, September 28, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41758>

## E.Africa

### Somalia

- **Bahrain provides relief aid to Somalia; Somali forces and Al Shabaab clash in Gedo region**

Bahrain extended its relief effort to Somalia by agreeing to provide its first relief aid consignment to help cure 1,000 citizens with cataracts. Under the agreement, Bahrain will fund the \$1.5 million development of a state-of-the-art specialist hospital in Somalia, as well as a nursing school to train medical personnel. In cooperation with Islamic Relief, Bahrain will also invest \$1.2 million to develop ten wells within the country.<sup>64</sup>

However, reports noted that forces belonging to the transitional federal government of Somalia and Al shabaab fighters clashed in parts of Gedo region of southern Somalia. The clash was very fierce as there could be both deaths and injuries during the brief firefight. The confrontation took place after newly trained Somali forces were ambushed while traveling in a road linking between the towns of Belet Hawo and Garbaharey.<sup>65</sup>

### South Africa

- **South Africa and Russia agree to enhance bilateral cooperation; Petrosa and Unipec sign oil deal**

Reports noted that South Africa and Russia have agreed to increase their cooperation in various fields, including technology, energy, trade and investment, in the meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Co-operation (ITEC) held in Pretoria. The meeting sought ways to enhance cooperation and relationships that already exist between the two governments, their people and businesses. The two ministers agreed to take steps to increase trade, while shifting the focus to high value-added products, as well as to enhance cooperation in high-technology areas.<sup>66</sup>

In other developments, PetroSA signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the China United International Petroleum & Company Ltd. (Unipec), one of the world's largest oil trading companies to secure oil. The MoU makes it possible for the two organisations to discuss the development and operation of a suitable business arrangement in the purchase and sale of crude oil and refined petroleum products. The MoU also allows for the two companies to identify areas of cooperation in the supply of crude oil, refined products and logistics.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> "Bahrain Provides Additional Relief Aid to Somalia, Funds Specialist Hospital", *AllAfrica.com*, September 29, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109290993.html>

<sup>65</sup> "Somali Forces, Al Shabaab Clash in Southern Somalia Town", *AllAfrica.com*, September 29, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109290279.html>

<sup>66</sup> "Country, Russia Further Partnership", *AllAfrica.com*, September 29, 2011, <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109300063.html>

<sup>67</sup> "South Africa: Petrosa, Chinese Company Signs Oil Deal", *AllAfrica.com*, September 29, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109291087.html>

## Sudan

- **Sudan vows to conquer rebel stronghold in Blue Nile; JEM splinters ready for peace deal with Khartoum; Chad reassures Sudan over border security agreements**

Sudan's President Omer al-Bashir has vowed that the country's army will soon conquer the stronghold of the rebels Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) in Blue Nile State. Battles between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and SPLM-N forces in Blue Nile erupted on September 1 as each side accused the other of starting the fighting.<sup>68</sup>

In another development, a breakaway group from the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) announced its commitment to the Doha process and said keen to conclude a peace agreement with Khartoum.<sup>69</sup>

In other developments, Chad's President Idris Deby dispatched a special envoy to Khartoum to reassure his Sudanese counterpart that Chad is committed to the security cooperation agreement signed between the two countries in January 2010. Relations were strained after the return of the leader of the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), Khalil Ibrahim to Darfur. Sudanese intelligence service believes that Khalil successfully came back to Darfur through the Chadian border after crossing from Libya to Niger to avoid the Sudanese army deployed along the Libyan border.<sup>70</sup>

## South Sudan

- **UN asks South Sudan to prosecute corrupt officials; South Sudan launches national disarmament campaign**

According to reports, UN's special representative to South Sudan, Hilde F. Johnson, urged the president Salva Kiir to ensure that those implicated in corruption are thoroughly investigated and prosecuted. She expressed that such anti-corruption moves are the preconditions for South Sudan to succeed in building a new, strong and stable nation. Johnson also urged South Sudanese to put the country above any individual interests. Johnson called upon the international community to assist the Republic of South Sudan in implementing its development plans.<sup>71</sup>

In another development, reports noted that days after the cabinet passed a resolution allowing the removal of 150,000 combatants from the new country's rebel group turned national army the SPLA, South Sudan launched an official national Disarmament Demobilization and

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<sup>68</sup> "Bashir says Sudan's army to "liberate" rebels' bastion in Blue Nile", *Sudan Tribune*, September 28, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Bashir-says-Sudan-s-army-to,40278>

<sup>69</sup> "JEM splinters say ready for peace deal with Khartoum", *Sudan Tribune*, September 28, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/JEM-splinters-say-ready-for-peace,40280>

<sup>70</sup> "Chad's president reassures Sudanese counterpart over border security agreements", *Sudan Tribune*, September 27, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Chad-s-president-reassures,40267>

<sup>71</sup> Uma, Julius N. (2011), "Prosecute corrupt officials, UN tells South Sudan President Kiir", *Sudan Tribune*, September 28, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Prosecute-corrup-officials-UN,40273>

Reintegration strategic plan. William Deng Deng, Chairperson of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration commission said 80,000 soldiers would be removed from the army and 70,000 to be removed from the police, prison, wildlife, fire brigade and other security organs. Deng said the countrywide exercise would take about six to eight years to be completed.<sup>72</sup>

## Nigeria

- **Boko Haram militants arrested; Former office bearers warn against collapse of judiciary; United States seeks more Nigerian action on drug trafficking**

According to the Borno State Governor, Kashim Shettima, a top commander of Boko Haram has been arrested alongside five other members and are being detained. However, the governor did not disclose their names. The Governor expressed that officials believe a negotiated peace can be reached with the sect now. Nevertheless, he warned that members of the group who still continue sectarian campaign of assassinations and bombings will be hunted down by the increasing military and police presence in Borno state.<sup>73</sup>

In another development, former Head of State, Gen. Muhammadu Buhari, and the erstwhile Governor of Lagos State, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, urged Nigerians to be proactive to save the nation's judiciary from compromise and subsequent collapse. Also, Senate President David Mark stressed the need for civil servants to establish equity, justice and transparency towards ensuring the federal character principle as enshrined in Section 14 of the 1999 Constitution.<sup>74</sup>

In other developments, despite moving up to tier one status since 2009 in the campaign against all forms of trafficking, the United States said that more work needs to be done by Nigeria on human and drug trafficking and money laundering. Because transnational crime is global in nature, Washington is desirous of helping Nigeria sustain progress already made and also to maintain its current tier status. Nigeria is both a source of origin, transit as well as destination for trafficked persons.<sup>75</sup>

## Côte D'Ivoire

- **Speaker attempts reconciliation at top level**

Reports noted that tracing the ongoing Ivorian crisis to political differences at top level, the

<sup>72</sup> Garang, Ngor Arol (2011), "South Sudan launches national disarmament campaign", *Sudan Tribune*, September 29, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/South-Sudan-launches-national,40274>

<sup>73</sup> "Nigeria: Boko Haram Top Commander, Five Others Arrested", *AllAfrica.com*, September 29, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109290004.html>

<sup>74</sup> "Buhari, Tinubu warn against collapse of judiciary", *The Nigerian Guardian*, September 30, 2011, at [http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=62802:buhari-tinubu-warn-against-collapse-of-judiciary&catid=1:national&Itemid=559](http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=62802:buhari-tinubu-warn-against-collapse-of-judiciary&catid=1:national&Itemid=559)

<sup>75</sup> "U.S. seeks more action on drug trafficking, others in Nigeria", *The Nigerian Guardian*, September 30, 2011, at [http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=62800:us-seeks-more-action-on-drug-trafficking-others-in-nigeria&catid=1:national&Itemid=559](http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=62800:us-seeks-more-action-on-drug-trafficking-others-in-nigeria&catid=1:national&Itemid=559)

speaker of Côte d'Ivoire's parliament, Mamadou Koulibaly, called for reconciliation talks between President Alassane Ouattara and his predecessors, Laurent Gbagbo and Henri Konan Bedie.

In another development, vowing to unite Ivory Coast after a political standoff, Ouattara launched a Commission on Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation in the capital Yamoussoukro, headed by former Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny. The 11-member commission includes one Christian and one Muslim religious leader and five representatives from the country's major regions.<sup>76</sup>

## II. DEFENCE REVIEW

### National

- **INS Shakti commissioned into the Indian Navy; A K Antony to miss out on the flight display of Sukhoi T-50 during his forthcoming Russia visit**

In a significant development, INS Shakti was commissioned into the Indian Navy in the presence of Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Nirmal Verma on Saturday in Visakhapatnam. INS Shakti is the fourth fleet tanker, and the second of the two fleet tankers built by M/s Fincantieri Shipyard, Italy, for the Indian Navy at the Naval Dockyard. The construction of the INS Shakti commenced in November 2009 in Italy. The ship is 175 metres in length, and 32 metres wide. The ship is fitted with a credible self-defence capability, and an indigenous Anti Missile Defence Chaff System. While interacting with media persons on the occasion, the Navy chief said that Italy was also extending cooperation for another aircraft carrier, which is currently being built by the Cochin shipyard. "The aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, would be delivered to the Indian Navy as per schedule," he added. The Chief also said that all possible measures were being taken to enhance the coastal security in the country.<sup>77</sup>

Meanwhile, according to reports, Defence Minister A K Antony would miss out on the flight display of Sukhoi T-50 during his forthcoming Russia visit. At the last minute, Russia has cancelled the display of the plane which is to be evolved into Indo-Russia fifth generation fighter aircraft. During his three-day tour of Russia beginning Monday, the defence minister was to see the flying of the T-50 (PAK-FA), which made its debut at Moscow air show last month. But Russia has called off the flight though reasons are unknown.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> "Koulibaly Says the Country Needs Reconciliation At Top-Level", *AllAfrica.com*, September 29, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109291336.html>

<sup>77</sup> "INS Shakti inducted into Indian Navy," *Deccan Chronicle*, October 2, 2011, at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/NEWS/newsrf.php?newsid=15647>

<sup>78</sup> "Moscow cancels Sukhoi T-50 show," *Deccan Herald*, September 30, 2011, at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/NEWS/newsrf.php?newsid=15653>

## International

- **United States Air Force gets its first HC-130J Combat King II from the Lockheed Martin; Iran's Army, Navy receives indigenously built Cruise Missiles**

According to reports, United States Air Force's Air Combat Command (ACC) got its first HC-130J Combat King II from the Lockheed Martin. The aircraft was flown from Lockheed Martin Aeronautics' facility to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., by Gen. Norton A. Schwartz, chief of Staff of the US Air Force. The aircraft which is based on a KC-130J tanker baseline is the first of 11 currently on order. The new C-130J configuration has Enhanced Service Life Wing, Enhanced Cargo Handling System, a Universal Aerial Refueling Receptacle Slipway Installation (boom refueling receptacle), an electro-optical/infrared sensor, a combat systems operator station on the flight deck, and dual Satcom.<sup>79</sup>

Meanwhile, Iran's Navy and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) have received new anti-ship cruise missiles from the Iranian Defence Ministry. The missile called "Qader" (Able) is built indigenously by Iranian scientists and has a high destructive ability against coastal targets and warships. The anti-ship cruise missiles has a range of 200km, features a short launch time and is able to hit all naval vessels, including frigates and warships, as well as onshore enemy targets. It will boost Iran's naval defence power, the Fars news agency reported on Wednesday. "Iran has managed to mass produce in the shortest time possible," Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Ahmad Vahidi was quoted as saying in the news report.<sup>80</sup>

## III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

### Jammu & Kashmir

- **Nine killed in an encounter between militants and security forces at Kralpora in Kupwara; Gunfight rages in Keran sector, five militants killed**

Reports noted that in an encounter between Security forces and militants in the forests of Awath Khul at Kralpora in Kupwara district ended on 29 September. At least nine persons, including five militants, two SOG men and two army soldiers were killed besides one injury in five-day gun battle. Official sources said that the bodies of militants were retrieved following the engagement of locals along with police.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>79</sup> "Lockheed delivers new HC-130J to US Air Force," *Brahmand.com*, September 27, 2011, at <http://brahmand.com/news/Lockheed-delivers-new-HC-130J-to-US-Air-Force/8124/1/13.html>

<sup>80</sup> "Iran's Army, Navy receives new anti-ship cruise missiles", *Brahmand.com*, September 29, 2011, at <http://brahmand.com/news/Irans-Army-Navy-receives-new-anti-ship-cruise-missiles/8143/1/13.html>

<sup>81</sup> "Kupwara encounter ends, toll 9", *Greater Kashmir*, September 29, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Sep/30/kupwara-encounter-ends-toll-9-68.asp>

In another development, a gun battle broke out between militants and soldiers near Line of Control (LoC) in Keran sector on September 30, in frontier district of Kupwara in which four militants were reportedly killed. Army's Srinagar based spokesman claimed that it was a fresh infiltration bid.<sup>82</sup> Later, Army sources noted that one more militant was killed in encounter at Keran, taking the number of militants killed in the gunfight to five.<sup>83</sup>

## North East India

- **Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) ambushes a police patrol in South Garo Hills, no casualties reported; Meghalaya ambushed by militants; Large scale operation in Tirap, Changlang districts of Arunachal Pradesh**

Reports noted that heavily armed militants belonging to the Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) ambushed a police patrol in remote Chokpot area of South Garo Hills, leading to a heavy exchange of fire. However, there were no casualties. The incident occurred when a team of police personnel led by the Chokpot police station chief were conducting a road opening and area dominance operation against militants in the main road connecting Chokpot town to other parts of Garo Hills. The militants numbering between seven to nine hiding in the dense undergrowth suddenly opened fire from automatic rifles on the patrol party.<sup>84</sup>

However, in another development, reports noted that with Tirap and Changlang districts of Arunachal Pradesh becoming a hotbed of militant activities, the Government of India has decided to launch a full scale operation in the area. A major offensive in the area will also restrict the movement of the militants from their bases in Myanmar. Highly placed security sources said that the militants belonging to the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) normally use two major routes to enter India from the camps in Myanmar. One of the routes is through the Mon district of Nagaland and the other through the Tirap and Changlang districts. But in recent times, the ULFA members are mostly using the route through Arunachal Pradesh and launching of an offensive in that area would make it difficult for the militants to maintain the shelters in the place.<sup>85</sup>

## IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

- **UN Security Council extends mandate of peacekeeping force in Somalia; UNSC refers Palestine's application for membership to committee; Council tries to reach agreement on**

<sup>82</sup> "Gunfight rages in Keran sector", *Greater Kashmir*, September 30, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/1/gunfight-rages-in-keran-sector-66.asp>

<sup>83</sup> "Militant killed, toll 5", *Greater Kashmir*, October 2, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Oct/3/militant-killed-toll-5-41.asp>

<sup>84</sup> "Militants ambush police patrol in Garo Hills", *The Assam Tribune*, September 27, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=sep2811/oth06>

<sup>85</sup> "Full-scale operation in Tirap, Changlang", *The Assam Tribune*, October 2, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct0311/at05>

**Syrian issue; Counter Terrorism Committee: 'Zero tolerance' towards terrorism; Indian ship-owners demand UN forces to halt maritime piracy**

The UN Security Council called on the African Union to immediately increase the strength of its peacekeeping force in Somalia (AMISOM) to the mandated level of 12,000 and also extended its mandate period to 31 October 2011.<sup>86</sup>

Meanwhile, Palestine's application for the membership of the United Nations was referred by the Security Council to a committee that comprises the 15 members to the Council deals with the admission of new members.<sup>87</sup> Thereafter the proposal will be reviewed by a group of experts to determine if the application meets the UN Charter. India's envoy to the UN, Hardeep Singh Puri reiterated the country's support to the Palestinian bid.<sup>88</sup>

Given the division within the Council over sanctions against President Bashar Assad's regime, it is trying to reach a consensus on a resolution condemning the violence in Syria. Earlier, the resolution drafted by the Europeans and backed by the Americans was opposed by Russia, China, India, South Africa and Brazil. The current European draft resolution drops the demand for immediate sanctions in an attempt to win greater support in the Council.<sup>89</sup>

In other developments, the UN Security Council's Counter Terrorism Committee under the chairmanship of India's envoy, H.S Puri on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the committee came out with a document asking member states to ensure 'zero tolerance' towards terrorism by denying safe havens to terrorists bringing the perpetrators to justice.<sup>90</sup>

According to reports, due to the increasing shipping costs borne from piracy, Indian ship owners demanded that the UN set up a maritime force to halt pirates operating off the Somalian coast in the Indian Ocean. The Indian National Shipowners Organization has requested the government to push their proposal at the Security Council.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> "Security Council calls for increase in Africa peace force in Somalia to 12,000", *UN News Centre*, September 30, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39900&Cr=somalia&Cr1=>

<sup>87</sup> "Security Council refers Palestinian application to UN membership committee", *UN News Centre*, September 28, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=39863&Cr=Palestin&Cr1=>

<sup>88</sup> "UN committee begins review of Palestinian membership request, next goes to experts", *The Washington Post*, September 30, 2011 at [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/un-committee-begins-review-of-palestinian-membership-request-next-goes-to-experts/2011/09/30/gIQAfr6LAL\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/un-committee-begins-review-of-palestinian-membership-request-next-goes-to-experts/2011/09/30/gIQAfr6LAL_story.html)

<sup>89</sup> "Security Council tries again on Syria resolution", *The Hindu*, September 29, 2011 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/article2494586.ece>

<sup>90</sup> "India-led UN body asks to adopt 'zero tolerance' to terrorism", *Daily News and Analysis*, September 29, 2011 at [http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report\\_india-led-un-body-asks-to-adopt-zero-tolerance-to-terrorism\\_1592955](http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_india-led-un-body-asks-to-adopt-zero-tolerance-to-terrorism_1592955)

<sup>91</sup> "Indian shipowners say piracy costs tops \$9 billion annually, demand UN maritime force", *The Washington Post*, September 03, 2011 at [http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/industries/indian-shipowners-say-piracy-costs-tops-9-bln-annually-demand-un-maritime-force/2011/10/03/gIQAriNFHL\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/industries/indian-shipowners-say-piracy-costs-tops-9-bln-annually-demand-un-maritime-force/2011/10/03/gIQAriNFHL_story.html)