

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. East Asia

China

- **Polish President Bronislaw begins China visit; China, Cyprus hail fortieth anniversary of diplomatic ties; Japanese PM to visit China; China not to meddle in Taiwan elections; Chinese navy is considering the taking on supplies in the Seychelles while conducting escort missions**

In an important bilateral development the Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski reached Shanghai to start his state visit to China.¹ In another development, China and Cyprus celebrated 40th anniversary of establishment of their bilateral diplomatic relations.² Meanwhile reports noted that Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda will visit China for two days between December 25 and 26.³

On the regional front China has announced that it will not interfere in the upcoming Taiwanese elections based on the “1992 consensus”.⁴

In other developments, reports noted that the Chinese navy is considering the taking on supplies in the Seychelles while conducting escort missions to tackle piracy. But it was reaffirmed that this does not equate to establishing military base in the region.⁵

B. West Asia

Iran

- **Iran’s Supreme National Security Council Saeed Jalili: Departure of US troops from Iraq will pave the way for the progress and prosperity of the Iraqi nation; US military equipment**

¹ “Polish president starts China visit” *China Daily*, December 18, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-12/18/content_14283486.htm

² “China, Cyprus hail 40th anniversary of diplomatic ties” *China Daily*, December 16, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-12/16/content_14280014.htm

³ “Japanese PM to visit China on Dec 25-26” *China Daily*, December 16, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-12/16/content_14279666.htm

⁴ “Mainland not to meddle in Taiwan elections: spokesman” *China Daily*, December 14, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-12/14/content_14267000.htm

⁵ “Navy looks at offer from Seychelles” *China Daily*, December 13, 2011 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-12/13/content_14254395.htm

must pay Iran \$2.8 million in a dispute over a 1977 contract; Iran claims to arrest US spy near Bagram Air Field

According to reports, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Saeed Jalili said that the pullout of US troops from Iraq will definitely help Baghdad to promote its independence and strengthen its might. He mentioned during the meeting with Ammar Hakim, leader of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq that the departure of US' troops from Iraq will also pave the way for the progress and prosperity of the Iraqi nation. He also added that Iraq's stability is important to the Islamic Republic and Tehran is keen to promote cooperation with Baghdad in all spheres. During the meeting, Hakim appreciated the Islamic Republic's role in supporting the Iraqi nation and government.⁶

In another development, an appeals court ruled that a US manufacturer of military equipment must pay Iran \$2.8 million in a dispute over a 1977 contract despite a federal ban on trade with the country. Cubic Defense Systems had asked the US Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit to overturn an international arbitration award Iran won over a decades-old contract dispute. But refused, finding America's interest in enforcing international arbitration awards outweighed the public policy against trade with Iran. The dispute dates back to 1977, when Iran's Ministry of Defense hired Cubic Defense to provide an air combat system. Due to the Iranian Revolution in 1978, the equipment was never provided, and the parties agreed to discontinue the contract and settle accounts later. Cubic Defense eventually sold the equipment to Canada. In 1991, Iran brought an arbitration proceeding against Cubic Defense before the International Court of Arbitration of the International Chamber of Commerce and received a \$2.8 million award, plus interest and costs. When Cubic Defense failed to pay, Iran sued in California district court.⁷

In other developments, according to reports, Iran's Intelligence Ministry said that its agents have arrested a person of Iranian origin at Bagram Air Field on suspicion of spying for the US. It said the suspect, who did not identify by name, sought to infiltrate into Iran's secret services and funnel false information to deceive Iranian intelligence. The report alleged the attempted infiltration was part of a complicated intelligence battle the US has launched against Iran. The ministry claimed the suspect has already served in the US Army's intelligence units and spent time at US military bases in Afghanistan and Iraq. Iran periodically announces the capture or execution of alleged US or Israeli spies, and often no further information is released.⁸

⁶ "U.S. troop pullout will help foster Iraq's independence: Iran," *Mehr News*, December 13, 2011, at <http://www.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1483044>

⁷ "US military equipment-maker owes Iran \$2.8 million," *Khaleej Times*, December 16, 2011, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/December/middleeast_December420.xml§ion=middleeast

⁸ "Iran says it arrests suspected US spy," *Khaleej Times*, December 17, 2011, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/December/middleeast_December452.xml§ion=middleeast

Iraq

- **Iraq assumes command of the last US military base in the country; Iraqiya bloc Premier Iyad Alawi: Iraqiya bloc rejects system of policy-making**

According to reports, Iraq will assume command of the last US military base in the country, a day after US forces formally marked the end of their mission by bringing a divisive war to a low-key conclusion. Baghdad's security forces will take over a sprawling installation on the outskirts of the southern city of Nasiriyah, a senior Iraqi official said, a final step ahead of a complete American withdrawal from Iraq in the coming days. Meanwhile, US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta and top US military officers took part in a subdued "casing of the colours" ceremony near Baghdad airport, the first site US forces occupied in Baghdad in 2003. All that remains of the American military in Iraq are around 4,000 soldiers, down from a peak of nearly 170,000 troops on 505 bases across the country. After year-end, the US embassy will retain just 157 US soldiers, for training of Iraqi forces, and a group of marines to secure the diplomatic mission. The withdrawal ends a war that left tens of thousands of Iraqis and nearly 4,500 American soldiers dead, many more wounded, and 1.75 million Iraqis displaced, after the US-led invasion unleashed brutal sectarian fighting.⁹

In another development, the secular Iraqiya bloc, which won most of the votes of Iraq's disenchanted Sunni Arab majority, walked out of parliament sparking a political crisis days after US forces ended their mission. The bloc, led by former premier Iyad Alawi said it was suspending its participation in parliamentary business in protest at what it charged was Prime Minister Nuri Al Maliki's monopolisation of all decision-making. The Iraqiya bloc also said 'Iraqiya rejects this system of policy-making that consists of ignoring other political parties, politicising the justice system, exercising sole power and violating the law.'¹⁰

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

National

(December 12-18, 2011)

- **India to focus on military development over the next five years; India raises Gorshkov issue with Russia**

According to reports, India will spend heavily over the next five years on developing military

⁹ "Iraq to receive last US base ahead of pullout," *Khaleej Times*, December 16, 2011, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/December/middleeast_December419.xml§ion=middleeast

¹⁰ "Key Iraq bloc to boycott parliament as US quits," *Khaleej Times*, December 17, 2011, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/December/middleeast_December451.xml§ion=middleeast

infrastructure and capabilities for the western and eastern fronts to defend unresolved borders against two potentially hostile nuclear-armed neighbours. Defence Minister A K Antony on December 12 gave figures for the planned development of military infrastructure, with new fighter bases, helipads, bunkers, forward ammunition dumps and the like, to strategically counter China and Pakistan. Responding to queries on major projects of Military Engineer Services (MES) in Lok Sabha, the Minister pegged the planned “development” of Army infrastructure and “improvement” of IAF infrastructure in the north-east at Rs 7,374 crore and Rs 1,753 crore, respectively. Similarly, capability development along the northern borders will cost Rs 24,312 crore, while upgrade of storage facility for ammunition will come for Rs 18,450 crore. Construction of suitable habitat for soldiers deployed in high-altitude areas like Kargil, Siachen-Saltoro Ridge and Ladakh, which includes insulation, dome and fibre-glass based shelters, will cost another Rs 6,000 crore.¹¹

In another development, according to reports, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, during the 12th Indo-Russian Summit talks with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev at the Kremlin, raised the issue of delay in the delivery of Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier to the Indian Navy and emphasized that it was important for India that the ship arrives in time. Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai told reporters that both India and Russia were clear that they would take necessary action to ensure there was “no slippages” in the delivery of the aircraft carrier which will be rechristened ‘INS Vikramaditya’.¹²

(December 19-25, 2011)

- **DRDO plans Rs 500-crore unmanned ground vehicle for the Indian army; DRDO’s robot to help Indian army in fighting terrorism**

According to reports, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is working on an Rs 500-crore unmanned ground vehicle (UGV) programme that seeks to address the Army’s requirement for various types of UGVs over the next 10 years. The use of UGVs, which are state-of-the-art robots, has acquired a greater significance in counter-insurgency, urban- as well as jungle-warfare situations for varied tasks, including surveillance and reconnaissance operations and safe handling and disposal of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). DRDO’s distinguished scientist and chief controller of armament combat engineering and services interaction S Sundaresh said, “We are in discussion with the Army to finalise the UGV programme soon.” “The ongoing efforts of four DRDO laboratories, including Pune’s Research and Development Establishment (R&DE - Engineers), which are into developing various systems for UGVs, will be combined for rolling out products specified by the Army,” he added.¹³

¹¹ “Defence spend in 5 years to cross Rs 5,20,000 crore,” *The Times of India*, December 13, 2011, at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-12-13/india/30511003_1_permanent-defences-and-bunkers-als-zakama

¹² “PM raises Gorshkov aircraft carrier issue with Medvedev,” December 17, 2011, at http://www.moneycontrol.com/news/current-affairs/pm-raises-gorshkov-aircraft-carrier-issuedmedvedev_635182.html

¹³ “DRDO plans 500-cr unmanned vehicle project for Indian Army,” TNN, December 20, 2011, at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-12-20/pune/30537685_1_s-sundaresh-robotics-development-establishment

In another development, reports noted that DRDO's robot, Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) Daksh was handed over to the Indian Army on Monday. The flagging off ceremony of six of the Limited Series Production (LSP) models took place at the Research and Development Engineers (R&DE), the laboratory, along with private partners has developed the robot starting May 2002. The robot, which can handle, scan and defuse Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) will add to the Indian Army's existing fleet of 45 such imported Unmanned Ground Vehicles (UGV). Besides the LSP order of 20 which would be delivered soon, over 100 ROVs are required by the Army in future. "Induction of ROV Daksh into the field Army is a step forward as far as fighting terrorism or non- state actors is concerned. IEDs are used by the non-state actors as they are low cost option and reap maximum dividends," said Maj Gen Rakesh Bassi, director general (Combat Engineers) who accepted the equipment on behalf of the Indian Army. Daksh is a 100 per cent indigenous robot with contribution from Indian SMEs, notable amongst them being Dynalog. It is an outcome of the Army's review of its counter IED Policy in the '90s.¹⁴

International

(December 12-18, 2011)

● US formally ends Iraq campaign; NATO ends its training mission in Iraq unexpectedly

In a notable development, according to reports, United States forces formally marked the end of their mission in Iraq with a low-key ceremony near Baghdad on December 15, after nearly nine years of war that began with the invasion to topple Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi dictator. There are a little more than 4,000 U.S. soldiers in Iraq, but they will depart in the coming days, at which point almost no more American troops will remain in a country where there were once nearly 170,000 personnel on more than 500 bases. "Your dream of an independent and sovereign Iraq is now reality," U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said at the symbolic flag-lowering ceremony held near Baghdad's airport. "This is a time for Iraq to look forward. This is an opportunity for Iraq to forge ahead on a path to security and prosperity," said Panetta assuring Iraqi people of continuous US support.¹⁵

In another development, according to reports, NATO ended its training mission in Iraq on December 17 as alliance officials lamented the collapse of a deal to extend it because Iraq refused to grant its troops immunity from prosecution, a key demand of NATO. U.S. Lt. Gen. NATO's training mission in Iraq was aimed at assisting "in the development of Iraqi security forces training structures and institutions,". As of November 2011, 12 countries were represented in its force, comprising around 120 soldiers.¹⁶

¹⁴ "DRDO hands over six Daksh ROVs to Army," Indian Express, December 20 2011, at <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/drdo-hands-over-six-daksh-rovs-to-army/889863/0>

¹⁵ "U.S. Forces Mark End of Iraq Mission," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, December 15, 2011, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=8574208&&s=TOP>

¹⁶ "NATO Ends Iraq Training Mission," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, December 17, 2011, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=8595072&&s=TOP>

(December 19-25, 2011)

- **Uncertainty prevails in US over Iran's nuclear programme; Philippines to boost its air power with US help**

According to reports, the Pentagon has sought to play down remarks by Defense Secretary Leon Panetta who has suggested Iran's nuclear program could be on a faster track than previously suspected. In an interview with CBS News, Panetta said Iran could have a nuclear weapon in a year or possibly sooner and that the timeline might be different if Tehran had a secret "hidden" site. But Pentagon spokesmen said Panetta was speaking "hypothetically" and that he was not suggesting there was new intelligence pointing to secret facilities. Significantly, in the interview, Panetta also refused to rule out military action to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons but unlike previous statements he made no mention of the potential risks associated with a strike that he has warned of repeatedly. United States officials however, have maintained that the country's intelligence agencies had not changed their view on the state of Iran's program.¹⁷ "Pentagon Downplays Panetta Iran, Nukes Comments," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, December 20, 2011, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=8617695&&s=TOP>

In another development, reports noted that Philippines is in the process of acquiring F-16 fighter jets from the United States as part of stepped up efforts to defend the archipelago, Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario said. Chances were "high" that Manila would acquire the fighter planes, but the foreign secretary did not reveal further details. Filipino officials raised the potential jet deal during a visit last month by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who pledged a wide-ranging commitment to Philippines from military to economic cooperation, and said Washington must address "new challenges" in the region.¹⁸

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

Jammu & Kashmir

(December 12-18, 2011)

- **Defence Minister A K Antony: Decision of AFSPA revocation to be taken after consultation with security forces; Militants held by Police in Baramulla**

According to reports, Defence Minister AK Antony said the issue of partial revocation of AFSPA from Jammu and Kashmir was discussed in a meeting of Unified Headquarters last month and maintained that decisions on security matters are taken after consultation with concerned states

¹⁷ "Pentagon Downplays Panetta Iran, Nukes Comments," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, December 20, 2011, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=8617695&&s=TOP>

¹⁸ "Philippines Seeks U.S. F-16s Amid China Concerns," AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, December 21, 2011, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=8625565&&s=TOP>

and security forces. In written reply to a question in Lok Sabha, Defence Minister AK Antony stated, "The issue of partial revocation of AFSPA from some districts of J&K was discussed in the Unified Headquarters (UHQ) meeting held at Jammu on November 9." Decisions on matters affecting security are taken after evaluation of situation on ground and after detailed consultations among the central government, state governments concerned and the security forces, he noted.¹⁹

In another development, according to reports, Police claimed to have arrested three militants along with arms and ammunition in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. A police spokesman in a statement said a team of Baramulla police along with 52 RR arrested two militants during vehicle checking at Muqam crossing. Police identified the militants as Muhammad Rafiq Lone of the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM) outfit resident of Krankshivan, Sopore and Ejaz Ahmad Shah of Al Baraq outfit resident of Delina, Baramulla. Meanwhile, a team of Pattan police along with 29 RR claimed to have arrested another militant of HM near Baramulla.²⁰

North East India

(December 12-18, 2011)

- **The hard-line faction of the ULFA claims Himanta Biswa Sharma, Health Minister, Assam was a member of the outfit; Supreme Court to hear petition on Manipur blockade; Six injured in a blast in Imphal; PM's statement undermines Naga talks; United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) cadres lay down arms; Blockade against mega dams construction in Lakhimpur; Militants surrender in Manipur; Two Garo militants killed in Meghalaya**

According to reports, the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) claimed that Health and Education Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma was once a member of the political wing of the outfit. Meanwhile, Sarma said that it was a political attack against him and asserted that the fight against the militant outfit would continue. In a release, the publicity in charge of the hard-line faction of the ULFA, Arunodoi Dohotiya said that Himanta Biswa Sarma was a member of the political wing of the ULFA but he was forced to leave the outfit because of his lack of knowledge about the revolution.²¹

In another development, reports noted that the over three-month-long road blockade in Manipur has led the Supreme Court to hear a petition seeking directions to Centre and the State Government to ensure free movement on the National Highways running through the State. The Supreme Court is going to hear the petition tomorrow seeking appropriate action to clear the blockade. The petition moved by the former Director General of BSF Prakash Singh has

¹⁹ "AFSPA revocation decision after consulting security forces: Antony", *Greater Kashmir*, December 12, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Dec/13/afspa-revocation-decision-after-consulting-security-forces-antony-47.asp>

²⁰ "3 militants held in Baramulla: Police", *Greater Kashmir*, December 13, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Dec/14/3-militants-held-in-baramulla-police-49.asp>

²¹ "Himanta a former cadre: ULFA", *The Assam Tribune*, December 12, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=dec1311/at094>

sought directions to the Centre and the State Government that they should take steps to ensure that there was no recurrence of such blockades.²²

Meanwhile, six people were reportedly injured when a powerful bomb went off in the Public Works Department (PWD) office complex in a crowded area of the Manipur capital.²³

According to reports, the Naga International Support Center (NISC) has stated that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has put a bomb under the 14-year-old peace talks between India and Nagaland with his statement on guaranteeing the integrity of Manipur made in Imphal earlier this month. The Naga body questioned on what had moved the Prime Minister to make such a statement when he knew that this was deadly against the reunification of Naga areas.²⁴

Meanwhile, marking an end to its arms movement, the United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) laid down arms, vowing to contribute towards the development and peace of Karbi Anglong through political activism. Having already made its political pursuits clear, a total of 568 members of the outfit, including 14 from the central executive committee, took part in the arms laying ceremony organised at Diphu, Karbi Anglong in the presence of Assam DGP Sankar Barua, General Officer Commanding, 4 Corps, Shakti Gurung, ADGP Khagen Sarma and Deputy Commissioner of Karbi Anglong Rakesh Kumar, among others.²⁵

Reports noted that the Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) and several other organisations opposing the construction of the mega dam over river Subansiri in Gerukamukh blocked vehilces carrying construction materials to the NHPC worksite on the outskirts of North Lakhimpur. As a result, more than a hundred trucks carrying machinery and other logistics were left stranded. This created a huge convergence of curious onlookers and mediapersons at the Pahumara tinali here. Normal traffic was also affected considerably as the vehicles had to slow down due to the blockade.²⁶

According to reports, fifty-seven cadres of 17 different underground outfits surrendered in Imphal along with a huge cache of arms and ammunition before Manipur Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh during a surrendering ceremony held at the Headquarters IGAR (South) at Mantripukhri, Imphal. The surrendered 57 cadres included five from United National Liberation Front (UNLF), 15 from People's United Liberation Front (PULF), two each from PULF (UF), UTLA and People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak PREPAK (VC), one each from PULF (MI Khan), Kangleipak

²² "SC to hear petition on Manipur blockade today", *The Assam Tribune*, December 12, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=dec1311/oth05>

²³ "Six injured in Manipur blast", *The Assam Tribune*, December 14, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=dec1411/at015>

²⁴ "PM's statement undermines Naga talks", *The Assam Tribune*, December 13, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=dec1411/oth05>

²⁵ "568 UPDS cadres lay down arms", *The Assam Tribune*, December 14, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=dec1511/at05>

²⁶ "Blockade against mega dams in Lakhimpur", *The Assam Tribune*, December 16, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=dec1711/at05>

Communist Party (KCP) MTF, KCP (City Meitei), KCP (Tabongia), PREPAK (PRO), People's Revolutionary Army (PRA) and NSCN (K), six cadres each from PREPAK, People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Kuki National liberation Front (KNLF) and four from Kanglei Yaol Kanna Lup (KYKL). The Chief Minister appealed to all other underground outfits which are not under SoO to abjure violence.²⁷

In other developments, two rebels of the Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) were killed in a gunfight in Meghalaya's East Garo Hills. The battle broke out in Darimgre forests near Williamnagar, the district headquarters when the rebels fired at the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) commandos who were tracking them down.²⁸

IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

(December 12-18, 2011)

- **UN Security Council calls on Iraq to intensify efforts to clarify whereabouts of Kuwait's archives; Mandate of UN panel of experts on Liberia extended; Security Council expands mandate of UN peacekeeping force in Abyei; Chad and Malawi referred to the UNSC for failing to cooperate with ICC; UNSC stresses for comprehensive strategy to address Somalia's problems; Russia backs India's bid for permanent membership to UNSC; India's calls for measures against armed groups in Darfur; India calls for the prevention of transatlantic slave trade**

The UN Security Council called on Iraq to intensify its efforts to clarify the whereabouts of Kuwait's national archives that was lost during Iraq's invasion of the country in 1990. At the same time, the Council welcomed the Iraqi Government's approval of an inter-ministerial committee to lead and coordinate efforts regarding the archive.²⁹

Meanwhile, the mandate of a UN panel of experts monitoring compliance with sanctions imposed on Liberia was extended for another 12 months. The panel will conduct two follow-up assessment missions to Liberia and neighbouring states to investigate and compile a mid-term and a final report on the implementation and any violations of the sanctions measures on arms.³⁰

In another development, the UN Security Council expanded the mandate of the UN peacekeeping force in Abyei area (UNISFA) that is assisting Sudan and South Sudan to abide by and implement their agreements on the demilitarization of the area. It was also decided that UNISFA will

²⁷ "57 militants in Manipur surrender", *The Assam Tribune*, December 16, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=dec1711/oth07>

²⁸ "Two Garo militants killed in Meghalaya", *The Assam Tribune*, December 18, 2011 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=dec1811/at0151>

²⁹ "Security Council calls for greater Iraqi efforts to resolve post-invasion issues with Kuwait", *UN News Centre*, December 15, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40749&Cr=iraq&Cr1=>

³⁰ "Security Council extends mandate of panel of experts on sanctions on Liberia", *UN News Centre*, December 15, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40736&Cr=liberia&Cr1=>

support the two sides in the operational activities of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM), including carrying out verifications, investigations, monitoring, arbitrations, liaison coordinating, reporting, information exchange, patrols and security.³¹

According to reports, due to Chad not meeting its obligation to fully cooperate with the International Criminal Court (ICC) by failing to arrest and surrender Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir during his visit to the country, the court referred the matter to the Security Council and the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute.³² Earlier, Malawi was also referred to the Council for failing to cooperate with court.³³

According to reports, welcoming UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's visit to Somalia, the UNSC stressed the need for a comprehensive strategy to address the political, security and humanitarian challenges in the country through collaborative efforts. In a press statement, the Council pointed out the problems that Somalia faces such as terrorism, piracy and hostage-taking.³⁴

Reports noted that Russia backed India's bid for a permanent seat in an expanded UN Security Council calling it 'a strong candidate' for a place on the international body's high table.³⁵ The leaders of India and Russia, in a joint statement underscored that the UNSC reform should be carried out in way to make it 'more representative and effective' in countering the existing and new challenges.³⁶

Meanwhile, at the UN Security Council, India said that the body should consider measures against the armed groups in Darfur that have refused to join the peace process in the Sudanese region. India's representative, H S Puri said that all the parties in the region must join the political process 'without preconditions' or any further delay.³⁷

In other developments, India asked the international community to take upon itself the commitment to prevent crimes such as transatlantic slave trade from being repeated again.³⁸

³¹ "Security Council expands mandate of UN peacekeeping force in Abyei", *UN News Centre*, December 14, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40731&Cr=abyei&Cr1=>

³² "Chad failed to arrest Sudanese President, ICC tells Security Council", *UN News Centre*, December 13, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40721&Cr=chad&Cr1=>

³³ "ICC informs Security Council about Malawian failure to arrest Sudanese leader", *UN News Centre*, December 12, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40705&Cr=criminal+court&Cr1=>

³⁴ "Security Council urges comprehensive strategy to tackle Somalia's crises", *UN News Centre*, December 13, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40715&Cr=somali&Cr1=>

³⁵ "India strong candidate for permanent UNSC membership: Russia", *The Economic Times*, December 16, 2011 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2011-12-16/news/30524963_1_unsc-reforms-permanent-membership-permanent-seat

³⁶ "Russia backs India's bid for UN seat", *The Hindu*, December 16, 2011 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/article2720634.ece>

³⁷ "India for UN measures against Darfur's armed groups", *MSN News*, December 15, 2011 at <http://news.in.msn.com/international/article.aspx?cp-documentid=5682361>

³⁸ "India asks international community to condemn slave trade", *MSN News*, December 13, 2011 at <http://news.in.msn.com/international/article.aspx?cp-documentid=5674151>

(December 19-25, 2011)

- **India calls for diplomatic solutions to Iran's nuclear programme; UNSC condemns terrorist attacks in Syria; Security Council welcomed political progress in Yemen; UN Security Council extends mandates of UN missions in Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Golan Heights, Burundi and Abyei; UNSC appreciates efforts made by Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia; Bhutan expresses support to India's bid for permanent membership to UNSC**

India has called for a 'diplomatic solution' to any international concern over Tehran's nuclear programme. In a UN Security Council briefing on Iran, India's representative said that the country has been consistently underscoring the importance of continued dialogue between Iran and the IAEA to resolve 'all outstanding substantive issues' including concerns over Tehran's nuclear programme.³⁹ This position taken by India was seen as positive by Iran and also maintained that it is not involved in any violation of the Nuclear non-proliferation Treaty (NPT).⁴⁰

Meanwhile, the Security Council strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in Syria and sent condolences to the victims, their families and Syrian people but digressed from the usual practice of offering condolences to the government.⁴¹

According to reports, the Security Council welcomed the progress made thus far in implementing the agreement for a peaceful transition of power in Yemen and called on the parties to ensure adherence to the timetable set out for the process.⁴²

In the past week, the UN Security Council extended the mandates of various UN missions. The Council extended the mandate of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) for a year, till the end of January 2013. The Council looks forward to progress on part of the Government in creating a permanent and independent electoral body to organize future elections and to revise the electoral code.⁴³ Meanwhile, the mandate of the UN Integrated Peace building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) was also extended until the end of February, 2013. The Council called on the members of Guinea-Bissau's armed forces, particularly its leaders

³⁹ "India for diplomatic solution to Iran N-standoff", *ZeeNews.com*, December 22, 2011 at http://zeenews.india.com/news/nation/india-for-diplomatic-solution-to-iran-n-standoff_748110.html

⁴⁰ "Iran: India's position at UN positive", *Deccan Chronicle*, December 24, 2011 at <http://www.deccanchronicle.com/node/80033>

⁴¹ "UN condemns Syria terrorist attacks and sends condolences to the people but not the government", *The Washington Post*, December 24, 2011 at http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/un-condemns-syria-attacks-and-sends-condolences-to-the-people--but-not-the-government/2011/12/23/gIQAHfwKEP_story.html

⁴² "Security Council calls on Yemeni parties to ensure political transition stays on track", *UN News Centre*, December 22, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40827&Cr=Yemen&Cr1=>

⁴³ "Central African Republic: Security Council extends mandate of UN office", *UN News Centre*, December 21, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40814&Cr=central+african&Cr1=>

to respect constitutional order, civilian rule and oversight, as well as rule of law and human rights and to refrain from interfering in political issues.⁴⁴

The Security Council also extended the mandate of the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) that is monitoring the ceasefire between Israel and Syria in the Golan Heights through June 30, 2012. The resolution passed by the council urged both Syria and Israel to exercise maximum restraint and prevent any breaches of the ceasefire and the area of separation between the two parties.⁴⁵ Meanwhile, the mandate of the UN political mission in Burundi was extended through February 15, 2013 and the Council stressed that the country must continue to make progress on protecting human rights, fighting corruption, reforming its security sector and boosting economic development.⁴⁶

According to reports, the mandate of the UN Peacekeeping Force for the Abyei area was extended by five months and it was also stressed that the mission's ability to do its work effectively will depend on the implementation of earlier agreements by Sudan and South Sudan. The resolution passed by the Security Council also demanded that both the governments withdraw all remaining military and police personnel from the Abyei area immediately and without preconditions and also finalize the establishment of the Abyei Area Administration and the Abyei Police Service.⁴⁷

In other developments, the Security Council praised the efforts made by the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA), particularly its focus on trans-boundary threats to stability, the management of common resources and cooperation on anti-terrorism measures.⁴⁸ In the interim, Bhutan supported India's "indisputable right" to get a permanent seat in an enlarged UN Security Council.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ "Security Council extends mandate of peacebuilding office in Guinea-Bissau", *UN News Centre*, December 21, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40813&Cr=bissau&Cr1=>

⁴⁵ "Security Council extends mandate of UN force in Golan Heights", *UN News Centre*, December 21, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40809&Cr=Syria&Cr1=>

⁴⁶ "Security Council extends the mandate of UN political mission in Burundi", *UN News Centre*, December 20, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40794&Cr=burundi&Cr1=>

⁴⁷ "Security Council extends mandate of Abyei peacekeeping force for five months", *UN News Centre*, December 22, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40828&Cr=Abyei&Cr1=>

⁴⁸ "Security Council praises role of UN centre in promoting stability in Central Asia", *UN News Centre*, December 19, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40786&Cr=central+asia&Cr1=>

⁴⁹ "India should lead the world; must get permanent UN seat: Bhutan", *IBN Live*, December 20, 2011 at <http://ibnlive.in.com/generalnewsfeed/news/india-should-lead-the-world-must-get-permanent-un-seatbhutan/939993.html>