

# THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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**IN THIS ISSUE**

	<b>PAGE</b>
	<b>3-8</b>
<b>I. COUNTRY REVIEWS</b>	
<b>A. South Asia</b>	
<b>B. East Asia</b>	<b>8-13</b>
<b>C. Central Asia &amp;         Russia</b>	<b>13-18</b>
<b>D. West Asia</b>	<b>18-21</b>
<b>E. USA</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>II. DEFENCE REVIEW</b>	<b>22-23</b>
<b>III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW</b>	<b>24-26</b>
<b>IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW</b>	<b>26-28</b>

## I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

### A. SOUTH ASIA

#### PAKISTAN

- **Home Secretary level talks held between India-Pakistan in New Delhi; Pakistan hails Mohali meeting between India-Pakistan; US welcomes Cricket diplomacy between India-Pakistan; NATO official points out at Pakistan's inability to help in stemming militant groups in Afghanistan**

Home Secretaries of India and Pakistan began a two day dialogue on March 28 on the issues of counter terrorism, 2008 Mumbai attacks and drug trafficking. The Indian delegation was led by Gopal K. Pillai, Home Secretary of India, while the Pakistan delegation was headed by Qamar Zaman Chaudhary, Interior Secretary of Pakistan. The two sides took forward the dialogue process on several issues and came out with a joint statement. This dialogue was a part of the formal process that begun after long between the two estranged neighbors. The meeting was held amidst intense frenzy over Cricket World Cup semi final match between India-Pakistan.<sup>1</sup>

However, Pakistan Government has hailed the Mohali meeting between Prime Minister Yusuf Gilani and his Indian counterpart Dr Manmohan Singh as a fresh start to settle outstanding issues between the two countries. Regular interaction of this kind will help build solid platform to resolve all misconceptions and mistrust between the two countries said Pakistani President Asif Zardari.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, the United States has welcomed Cricket diplomacy between India-Pakistan over the World Cup semi finals terming it as an important turn of events. Welcoming the dialogue between two countries, US expected them to maintain the ties in the near future for stability in the region.<sup>3</sup>

In other developments, Mark Sedwill, a senior civilian representative for the Western military alliance in Afghanistan has noted that Pakistan has its hand full on fighting domestic terrorism that it can hardly do more to stem militant groups

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<sup>1</sup> "India, Pakistan home secretaries begin talks", Dawn, March 28 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/03/28/india-pakistan-home-secretaries-begin-talks.html>

<sup>2</sup> "Meeting with Singh called new opening for dialogue", Dawn, April 1 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/04/01/meeting-with-singh-called-new-opening-for-dialogue.html>

<sup>3</sup> "US hails India-Pakistan 'cricket diplomacy", Dawn, April 1 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/04/01/us-hails-india-pakistan-cricket-diplomacy.html>

in Afghanistan. He also said that western governments should resist seeking quick pressure against the Pakistani government.<sup>4</sup>

## BANGLADESH

- **Bangladesh Foreign Secretary: Robert Blake's statement will not affect Bangladesh-US relations; IMF attaches new conditions to Bangladesh; ADB to review some of its projects in Bangladesh; India uses Bangladesh roads for transshipment for the first time; Trade between Tripura and Bangladesh almost doubled; A four-member Bangladesh delegation left for Japan to offer aid and sympathy to the country devastated by earthquake and tsunami; UN honours Bangladeshi peacekeepers in Liberia; Bahrain's Foreign Minister meets with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina; UK to double its aid to Bangladesh**

Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh Mijarul Quayes has reportedly said that US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert Blake's remarks during his recent visit to Dhaka that the issue of Prof Muhammad Yunus will affect bilateral relations, will not affect US-Bangladesh ties. He pointed out that ties between the two nations are based on partnership and marked by common values, global position on international issues and institutional links.<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has attached a new condition of demutualisation of stock exchanges to its \$1 billion credit offer for Bangladesh.<sup>6</sup>

Reports noted that Asian Development Bank will review some of its key infrastructure and development projects in Bangladesh amid concerns that government agencies have failed to spend billions of dollars it lent for the schemes.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, four consignments of power plant equipment bound for Tripura left Ashuganj river port on March 28. This is the first instance of India using Bangladesh roads for transshipment.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> "Pakistan has 'hands full' against militants: Nato", *Dawn*, March 29 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/03/29/pakistan-has-%E2%80%98hands-full%E2%80%99-against-militants-nato.html>

<sup>5</sup> "Ties with US to stay unhurt", *The Daily Star*, March 28, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=179464>

<sup>6</sup> "IMF adds stockmarket string to \$1b credit", *The Daily Star*, March 28, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=179387>

<sup>7</sup> "ADB to review its aided projects worth \$3.8b", *The Financial Express*, VOL 18 NO -141, March 30 2011 at [http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news\\_id=130763&date=2011-03-30](http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news_id=130763&date=2011-03-30)

<sup>8</sup> "Power plant equipment hits road to Tripura:Transshipment begins thru diversion roads", *The Daily Star*, March 29, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=179572>

According to reports, trade between Tripura and Bangladesh almost doubled to Rs 300 crore in the current fiscal year from Rs 163 crore in the previous fiscal year, while export of eight Bangladeshi items registered a fivefold rise this year.<sup>9</sup> With the increase in trade between Tripura and Bangladesh, the Indian government is considering a Tripura's proposal for opening border markets and introducing flights on Agartala-Dhaka-Chittagong routes.<sup>10</sup>

In another development, a four-member Bangladesh delegation left for Japan on March 29 to offer aid and sympathy to the country devastated by earthquake and tsunami.<sup>11</sup> However, UN envoy in Liberia, Ellen Margrethe Loj, has honoured 1,432 Bangladeshi peacekeepers for their dedicated service to peace in Liberia.<sup>12</sup> Bahrain's Foreign Minister Shaikh Khaled Bin Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al Khalifa called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on March 31 at PM's office. During the meeting, they discussed the issues of human resources export and employment of Bangladeshis in Bahrain. Bilateral issues including trade and commerce between the two countries were also discussed.<sup>13</sup>

In other developments, the UK government has announced that it will double its aid to Bangladesh over the next four years, following a major review of Britain's global aid programmes.<sup>14</sup>

## SRI LANKA

- **Sri Lankan fishermen not satisfied with the outcome of the Indo-Sri Lanka Joint Working Group meeting on fishermen's issues; President Mahinda Rajapaksa attends Cricket World Cup final in Mumbai; Around 600 Sri Lankan refugees returned home with the Assistance of the UNHCR; Sri Lankan Government revokes the suspension on the import of power sets from India; Prof. G. L. Peiris urges European countries to remain vigilant regarding LTTE Activities in their territories; Indian Navy captures three Sri Lankan fishermen while poaching in Indian waters; President Rajapaksa allows the three-member UN advisory panel to visit Sri Lanka but not to carry out any**

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<sup>9</sup> "Trade with Tripura doubles", *The Daily Star*, April 1, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=180032>

<sup>10</sup> Bhattacharya, Pallab, "Bangladesh-Tripura Border: India mulls over opening haats", *The Daily Star*, April 1, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=180039>

<sup>11</sup> "Bangladesh relief team off to Japan", *The Daily Star*, March 30, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=179711>

<sup>12</sup> "1,432 Bangladeshi peacekeepers honoured", *The Daily Star*, April 1, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=180037>

<sup>13</sup> "Bahrain FM calls on PM", *The Daily Star*, April 1, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=179991>

<sup>14</sup> "UK to double aid to Bangladesh", *The Daily Star*, March 3, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=176207>

## **investigations in Sri Lanka; A US business delegation pays a courtesy call on President Rajapaksa**

According to reports, the National Fisheries Solidarity Movement (NFSM), the umbrella body of the Sri Lankan fishermen's associations was not satisfied with the outcome of the Indo-Sri Lanka Joint Working Group meeting on fishermen's issues which was ended on March 29.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile reports noted that Indian Navy had captured three Sri Lankan fishermen who were poaching in Indian waters and handed them over to law enforcement authorities. In keeping with the practical arrangements in force between the two countries, Indian authorities were taking steps to release them from custody and to arrange for their early repatriation to Sri Lanka.<sup>16</sup> However, President Mahinda Rajapaksa has allowed the three-member UN advisory panel appointed by the UN Chief to visit Sri Lanka to give evidence to the LLRC, but, did not allow to carry out any investigations in Sri Lanka.<sup>17</sup>

President Mahinda Rajapaksa along with 30 member delegates attended the cricket World Cup final between India and Sri Lanka at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on April 2.<sup>18</sup> Reports noted that around 600 Sri Lankan refugees, who were in various countries, had returned home, mainly to Trincomalee and Mannar, with the assistance of the UNHCR during the first three months of this year.<sup>19</sup>

Sri Lankan Government has revoked the suspension on the import of power sets from India after the company, Rail India Technical Economic Services (RITES Ltd), gave quality assurance.<sup>20</sup> External Affairs Minister Prof. G. L. Peiris has urged European countries to remain vigilant regarding LTTE activities in their territories stating that the LTTE was a threat not only to Sri Lanka, but also for the security of Europe as recognized by Europol.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> "Northern fishermen unhappy over Indo-Lanka meeting" *The Daily Mirror*, April 2, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/40068.html>

<sup>16</sup> "Three lankan fishermen captured by Indian Navy", *The Daily Mirror*, March 29, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/39592.html>

<sup>17</sup> "Panel can give evidence, but no investigations: MR", *The Daily Mirror*, March 29, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/39593.html>

<sup>18</sup> "President in India for World Cup final", *The Daily Mirror*, April 1, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/39944.html>

<sup>19</sup> "More SL refugees returning home: UNHCR", *The Daily Mirror*, April 2, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/40045.html>

<sup>20</sup> "Suspension lifted on power sets from India", *The Daily Mirror*, April 1, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/39955.html>

<sup>21</sup> "Be vigilant on LTTE activities, GL urges EU", *The Daily Mirror*, March 31, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/39847.html>

In other developments, a US business delegation paid a courtesy call on President Mahinda Rajapaksa on March 30. The Acting Minister of External Affairs Neomal Perera, Secretary to the Ministry of External Affairs Karunatilaka Amunugama and Sri Lanka's Ambassador to the United States Jaliya Wickramasuriya were also present on this occasion.<sup>22</sup>

## MALDIVES

- **Bhutanese PM visits Maldives; Special Envoy of South Korean President meets President of the Maldives; The Maldives presents its claim for continental shelf limits to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf; Secretary General of SAARC, Fathimath Dhiyana Saeed meets with President Nasheed; Vice President of the Maldives visits Italy**

Prime Minister of Bhutan Lyonchhen Jigmi Y. Thinley visited the Maldives on March 31 as the Chairman of the SAARC. During his visit, he met President Mohamed Nasheed and inspected a Guard of Honour. During the meeting between PM of Bhutan and the President of the Maldives, talks were mainly focused on increasing bilateral cooperation and further strengthening the relations between both countries, especially in the areas of tourism and economic development.<sup>23</sup>

President Mohamed Nasheed met with Dr Soogil Young, the Special Envoy of South Korean President Lee Myung-bak on March 28. During the meeting Dr Soogil declared South Korea's willingness to establish a "very meaningful partnership between the Maldives and South Korea" to work towards a post-Kyoto Protocol agreement of climate change. President Nasheed also expressed his desire to collaborate with South Korea at both international and national levels in addressing climate change. The meeting was attended by Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmed Naseem, President's Foreign Policy Advisor Dr Ahmed Shaheed, National Security Advisor Ameen Faisal and Political Affairs Advisor of the President Mohamed Shihab.<sup>24</sup>

A high level delegation headed by National Security Advisor Ameen Faisal departed to New York to present the Maldives' claim for continental shelf limits

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<sup>22</sup> "US Business Delegation visits Sri Lanka", *The Daily Mirror*, April 1, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/business/127-local/39968.html>

<sup>23</sup> "Prime Minister of Bhutan Arrives in the Maldives", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, March 31, 2011 at <http://presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5056>; "President Nasheed Meets Bhutanese Prime Minister Leonchen Jigmi Yoezer Thinley", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, March 31, 2011 at <http://presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5059>

<sup>24</sup> "President Meets South Korean President's Special Envoy", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, March 28, 2011 at <http://presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5026>

to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf on March 31. Other members included in the Maldives delegation to UN are Attorney General Abdulla Muizzu, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Haula Ahmed Didi, Brigadier General Abdulla Shamal and Major Mohamed Ibrahim of Maldives National Defence Force.<sup>25</sup>

In other developments, Secretary General of SAARC, Fathimath Dhiyana Saeed, met President Mohamed Nasheed on March 30 to discuss the preparations for the forthcoming SAARC Summit to be held in Addu City, the Maldives.<sup>26</sup> While, Vice President Dr Mohamed Waheed went to Italy to address the Third Forum on Academic System to be held from 3 to 6 April in Milan.<sup>27</sup>

## B. EAST ASIA

### CHINA

- **The Chinese Defence White Paper 2010 released; PLA takes massive infrastructure building in Tibetan areas; Chinese military nuclear facilities are safe; Zambian military officers visit China; Major scientific achievement claimed; The 23rd International Medical Instrument and Equipment exhibition held; Chinese missile frigates visit Tanzania; BACC opens the Space Flight Laboratory; Improvement in military training stressed; Regulations of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army on secrecy promulgated; China and the UNDPO organize joint training session; Joint military exercises with foreign armies not targeted against any other country**

The Chinese Defence White Paper, 2010, which has been recently released, maintains that Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) adheres to the principle of being non-aligned, non-confrontational, and not directing against any third party in joint exercises and training with other countries. The White Paper informs that, as of December 2010, the PLA had held 44 joint military training and exercises with foreign troops, which is conducive to promoting mutual trust

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<sup>25</sup> “A High Level Delegation to Present the Maldives” Claim for Continental Shelf Limits to UN”, *The President’s Office, Republic of Maldives*, March 29, 2011 at <http://presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5042>

<sup>26</sup> “SAARC Secretary General Calls on the President”, *The President’s Office, Republic of Maldives*, March 30, 2011 at <http://presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5049>

<sup>27</sup> “Vice President Begins an Official Visit to Italy”, *The President’s Office, Republic of Maldives*, April 1, 2011 at <http://presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5065>

and cooperation, drawing on useful lessons, and accelerating PLA's modernization.<sup>28</sup>

Reports noted that the PLA has been undertaking massive infrastructure building in two Tibetan-populated regions of Garze and Aba in Sichuan province. Recently, it has sent the first batch of 300 military vehicles fully loaded with materials for Garze and Aba. The media reported that from 28 March 2011 to late May 2011, there will be over 1,000 military vehicles and more than 2,600 officers and men to participate in transportation of 12,000 tons of high-quality cement and 80,000 new-type tents featuring “cold-proof, heat-insulation, water-proof, flame-prevention, snow-bearing and portability” to 21 counties of the Garze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture. These missions will greatly help improve the living conditions of local Tibetans. It is claimed that this infrastructure building is being undertaken upon the request of the Communist Party of China Sichuan Provincial Committee and the Sichuan Provincial People’s Government and approved by the general headquarters/departments of the PLA. This transport mission aims at easing the shortage of transportation capacity in Tibetan-inhabited regions of Sichuan Province. In late February, 2009, the Chengdu MAC sent nearly 300 vehicles to transport 100,000-plus tents and related facilities to the Garze and Aba prefectures of Sichuan Province. From mid May to mid June, 2010, nearly 800 vehicles from the Chengdu MAC delivered 20,000 tons of cement to the four counties of Garze prefecture to support the construction of permanent houses for local farmers and herdsman.<sup>29</sup>

In view of Japanese nuclear crisis, there are world wide concerns about nuclear safety. Responding such concerns, China has said that its military nuclear facilities are safe. Cai Hualie, a senior officer with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) General Staff Headquarters has recently said that China has thoroughly examined the military nuclear facilities shortly after the nuclear plant accident in Japan.<sup>30</sup>

Reports noted that senior Zambian military officials under Zambian Army Commander Wisdom Lopa visited China. During their visit, they met Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie in Beijing on April 2. The two sides pledged to strengthen military cooperation between the two nations. Liang Guanglie described the Zambian army as an excellent partner of the Chinese military.

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<sup>28</sup> “PLA's drills with foreign military not direct against third parties”, *PLA Daily* (Online), 1 April 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/01/content\\_4414335.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/01/content_4414335.htm)

<sup>29</sup> “Chengdu MAC transports tents, building materials to Sichuan Tibetan regions”, *PLA Daily* (Online), 29 April 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/29/content\\_4412548.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/29/content_4412548.htm)

<sup>30</sup> “China's military nuclear facilities safe: senior officer”, *PLA Daily* (Online), 31 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/31/content\\_4413721.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/31/content_4413721.htm)

Guanglie also noted that China appreciates the Zambian government's "one China" policy and their support on issues concerning China's core interests, including Taiwan, Tibet and human rights issues.<sup>31</sup>

In another development, the General Staff Headquarters (GSH) of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has informed that the scientists have made a breakthrough in the research upon the national defense camouflage technology against guided weapon strike.<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, the Health Department of the General Logistics Department (GLD) of the PLA organized the 23rd International Medical Instrument and Equipment Exhibition at the China National Convention Center in Beijing, capital of China, on March 26. Around 500 exhibitors from over 20 countries and regions participated in this three-day-long exhibition.<sup>33</sup>

Missile frigates Zhoushan and Xuzhou of PLA's 7th escort taskforce reached Tanzania on 26 March. They have visited Tanzania upon the invitation of the Navy of the Tanzania People's Defense Force (TPDF). Tanzania was the first stop of their visit to three African countries. These frigates have just completed their escort missions in the Gulf of Aden and the waters off the Somali coast which started on 17 November 2010.<sup>34</sup>

Reports noted that Beijing Aerospace Control Center (BACC) has opened the Space Flight Dynamics Technology Key Laboratory. The purpose of the establishment of this laboratory is to promote the basic theoretical research on space flight dynamics in China, key technological innovation and scientific research achievement application. This laboratory is aimed at providing powerful theoretical and technical support for the implementation of major aerospace projects of China. The media has reported that the laboratory has more than 50 researchers. It is built in 3,000-plus square meters of research space, and has 40 million yuan worth of supporting facilities.<sup>35</sup>

Chen Bingde, a Member of the Central Military Commission (CMC) and Chief of General Staff of the PLA, has recently reiterated that it is imperative to deepen military training reform. He said this at the meeting on deepening military

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<sup>31</sup> "China, Zambia pledge to expand military ties", *PLA Daily* (Online), 3 April 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/03/content\\_4415809.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/03/content_4415809.htm)

<sup>32</sup> "PLA makes breakthrough in camouflage technology research", *PLA Daily* (Online), 28 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/28/content\\_4411963.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/28/content_4411963.htm)

<sup>33</sup> "23rd International Medical Instrument and Equipment Exhibition concludes", *PLA Daily* (Online), 28 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/28/content\\_4411962.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/28/content_4411962.htm)

<sup>34</sup> "Chinese naval escort ships arrive in Tanzania for visit", *PLA Daily* (Online), 28 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/28/content\\_4411960.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/28/content_4411960.htm)

<sup>35</sup> "Key laboratory for space flight dynamics technology unveiled", *PLA Daily* (Online), 30 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/30/content\\_4413144.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/30/content_4413144.htm)

training reform of the PLA on March 29. He said that this meeting presented a practical move to implement the overall plan of the PLA military reform and the Opinions on Further Boosting Military Training Transition issued by the CMC.<sup>36</sup> In fact, recently, the CMC, with the approval of its Chairman Hu Jintao, organized the meeting of the PLA on military training reforms. The meeting was held in Guangzhou on 28 March 2011. Chen Bingde, Member of the CMC and Chief of General Staff of the PLA attended the meeting. The meeting focused on the improvement of the systematic combat capability based on information system, innovation of the training mode as well as construction of the training system under informationization conditions, in-depth study of the major realistic issues of military training reform and development, and implementation of reforms in military training field step by step in a planned way, with a view of enhancing the overall level of military training under information-based conditions. The CMC Chairman Hu Jintao had propounded the concept of “promoting the transition from military training under conditions of mechanization to military training under conditions of informationization” at the meeting of the PLA on military training in June 2006.<sup>37</sup>

Reports noted that Hu Jintao, Chairman of the Central Military Commission, has recently signed an order to promulgate the newly revised “Regulations of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army on Secrecy”. The regulations will take effect as of May 1, 2011. The purpose of these regulations is “to accentuate and ensure the priority in secrecy work by narrowing down the scope and shortening the front”. The regulations have revised the basic scope of military secrets, and added the secret-definition personnel’s responsibility regulations and the evaluation and re-evaluation regulations regarding declassification in view of the existing problems in related work.<sup>38</sup>

In other developments, China’s Ministry of National Defense and the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations recently jointly organized a training session peacekeeping officials. The session was completed on 1 April in Beijing. In this session, 33 peacekeeping officers from 14 countries, including China, Russia and Canada, attended the session. The 12-day session was the first of its kind to be held in China.<sup>39</sup> The session marked the gradual

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<sup>36</sup> “Chen Bingde stresses on deepening military training reform”, *PLA Daily* (Online), 30 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/30/content\\_4413142.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/30/content_4413142.htm)

<sup>37</sup> “Meeting on deepening military training reform held”, *PLA Daily* (Online), 29 March 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/29/content\\_4412546.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-03/29/content_4412546.htm)

<sup>38</sup> “PLA promulgates revised regulations to enhance military confidentiality”, *PLA Daily* (Online), 2 April 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/02/content\\_4415520.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/02/content_4415520.htm)

<sup>39</sup> “First training session for UN peacekeeping officials concludes in Beijing”, *PLA Daily* (Online), 2 April 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/02/content\\_4415032.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/02/content_4415032.htm)

institutionalization and standardization of the Chinese participation in UN Peacekeeping.<sup>40</sup>

## SOUTHEAST ASIA

- **Myanmar-Bangladesh rail line construction begins; Reports: Nuclear fallout over Vietnam, but no health risk so far; Pakistan agrees to hand over the militant to Indonesia; Indonesian shipment to Japan plunge by 25 percent; Chinese official visits Myanmar**

Reports noted that Bangladeshi Prime Minister flagged off the work on railway line, on 3 April. The proposed railway line will connect Bangladesh's Cox Bazaar with Myanmar. The lines are expected to connect Jhilongjha with Chittagong, major port cities on the two sides by 2013.<sup>41</sup>

According to the Vietnamese officials and media, the radioactive plume from Japan has probably spread all over Vietnam. The levels of radioactive content is however too low to cause any damage to the people of Vietnam.<sup>42</sup>

Meanwhile, an Indonesian citizen, suspect of his involvement in Bali Bombings, has been held in Pakistan. The suspect could be extradited to Indonesia upon confirmation of his identity. Indonesian officials are expected to visit Pakistan to investigate the case further.<sup>43</sup>

According to the Central Statistics Agency of Indonesia, the country's exports to Japan fell by 25 percent to \$ 809 million in March 2011. In February only, Japan beat the United States, China and the European Union as Indonesia's biggest customer, with total shipments valued at \$1.66 billion.<sup>44</sup>

In other developments, Jia Quinlin, China's top political advisor arrived in Mandalay on 2 April as part of his four day visit to the country. The purpose of his visit, according to the media reports, is to meet newly elected leaders and

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<sup>40</sup> "PLA's three-level peacekeeping training system takes shape", *PLA Daily* (Online), 2 April 2011 at [http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/02/content\\_4415584.htm](http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/02/content_4415584.htm)

<sup>41</sup> Work begins on Bangladesh-Myanmar rail line, *IANS*, 4 April, 2011 at <http://www.sify.com/news/work-begins-on-bangladesh-myanmar-rail-line-news-international-ledqOlbjbjc.html>

<sup>42</sup> Nuclear fallout over Vietnam, still no health risk: Officials, *Thanh Nien News*, 4 April, 2011 at <http://www.thanhniennews.com/2010/Pages/20110401152817.aspx>

<sup>43</sup> "Pakistan ready to hand suspect militant to Indonesia", *Reuters*, 1 April, 2011 at <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/pakistan-ready-to-hand-suspected-militant-to-indonesia>

<sup>44</sup> "Indonesian shipment to Japan plunge by 25%", *Jakarta Globe*, 1 April, 2011 at <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/business/indonesian-shipments-to-japan-plunge-by-25/432997>

enhance bilateral cooperation. Myanmar is the first stop of Jia's three-nation tour, which will also take him to Australia and Samoa.<sup>45</sup>

### C. CENTRAL ASIA & RUSSIA

#### CENTRAL ASIA

- **Kazakh presidential election results to be announced on April 4; Kazakhstan aims to trade with Russia and China using local currencies by 2018; European Commission asks Astana to help seal Chernobyl plant; Tajikistan launches drive for compulsory conscription; Tajikistan ranked world's most pro-Russian country; Turkmenistan to head CIS in 2012; Uproar in Germany on paying Uzbekistan for base; Powerful earthquake could be devastating for Rogun dam; SCO to create committee to facilitate energy cooperation**

Kazakh Central Election Commission (CEC) Chairman Kuandyk Turgankulov said that preliminary results of the upcoming presidential elections in Kazakhstan will be announced on April 4. Four candidates passed registration at the Kazakh Central Election Commission (CEC) to participate in the snap presidential elections scheduled for April 3. It is widely believed that Nazarbayev, who has been in power for over 20 years, is supported by about 90 percent of the population, might easily win the election.<sup>46</sup> According to an early exit poll, Nazarbayev appears to have won his country's presidential election with almost 95 per cent of the votes.<sup>47</sup>

National Bank of Kazakhstan Governor Grigory Marchenko said that Kazakhstan aims to trade with Russia and China using local currencies by 2018. All three countries are currently trading almost wholly in dollars and Kazakhstan want to do away with dollars to increase the share of trade in national currencies.<sup>48</sup>

Meanwhile, the European Commission is asking Kazakhstan to help fund the sealing of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine, a top EU official said on 29<sup>th</sup> March which includes the closing the sarcophagus of the reactor at the

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<sup>45</sup> "China's top political advisor arrives in Myanmar for friendly visit", *Xinhua*, 2 April, 2011 at [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-04/02/c\\_13810600.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-04/02/c_13810600.htm)

<sup>46</sup> "CEC: Preliminary results of Kazakh presidential election to be announced on April 4" at *Trend*, April 02, 2011 at <http://en.trend.az/news/politics/1854693.html>

<sup>47</sup> "Kazakh President 'wins 95 per cent of vote'", *The Telegraph*, April 03, 2011 at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/kazakhstan/8425226/Kazakh-President-wins-95-per-cent-of-vote.html#>

<sup>48</sup> "Kazakhstan seeks switch to tenge for Chinese, Russian trade deals", *Central Asia Newswire*, March 31, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kazakhstan/Kazakhstan-seeks-switch-to-tengefor-Chinese-Russian-trade-deals/viewstory.aspx?id=3693>

Chernobyl nuclear power plant and the construction of burial places for nuclear waste. The Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster in 1986 is considered the world's worst nuclear accident. President Nazarbayev began the process in 1991 to close the nuclear weapons testing ground and remove an abandoned stockpile of around 1,300 nuclear warheads from the country after the collapse of the Soviet Union.<sup>49</sup>

However, Tajikistan on April 1<sup>st</sup> kicked off its twice annual effort to find young men who have failed to complete the country's compulsory military service and enlist them. The twice-yearly conscription drive aims to draft 15,000 to 16,000 men between the ages of 18 and 27 into the armed forces. Tajik President Emomali Rahmon signed the decree on March 16 to launch this year's spring campaign, which runs to May 31. The presidential order also decrees the retirement from active duty of military men whose conscription service has been completed.<sup>50</sup> In the meanwhile Gallup Poll conducted surveys in 100 countries throughout the world to determine which nation held the highest approval rates of Moscow's foreign policy and direction. Tajikistan was ranked as the world's most pro-Russian country having the highest approval rate with 94 percent of those surveyed approving of Russian policy. Only 2 percent of the polled Tajik public disapproves of Moscow's policies.<sup>51</sup>

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) officials revealed on 29<sup>th</sup> March that Turkmenistan will lead the organization in 2012. The CIS was formed in 1991 during the breakup of the Soviet Union to develop economic ties between former Soviet republics. It continues to foster relations among member states in the areas of security, lawmaking and trade. Central Asia's five nations are members along with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia.<sup>52</sup>

Germany gave Uzbekistan nearly \$100 million to use a military base – in Termez on the Afghan border – while the Central Asian country was still under sanctions imposed by the European Union, according to a document released last week by the German government. The EU imposed sanctions on the Central Asian state in 2005, after a violent crackdown in the Ferghana Valley city of Andijan resulted in

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<sup>49</sup> "European Commission asks Kazakhstan to help seal Chernobyl plant", *Central Asia Newswire*, March 29, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kazakhstan/European-Commission-asks-Kazakhstan-to-help-seal-Chernobyl-plant/viewstory.aspx?id=3672>

<sup>50</sup> "Tajikistan launches drive to fill its military", *Central Asia Newswire*, April 01, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Tajikistan/Tajikistan-launches-drive-to-fill-its-military/viewstory.aspx?id=3715>

<sup>51</sup> "Tajikistan among world's most pro-Russian countries", *Central Asia Newswire*, March 28, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Tajikistan/Tajikistan-among-worlds-most-pro-Russian-countries/viewstory.aspx?id=3660>

<sup>52</sup> "Turkmenistan to head CIS in 2012", *Central Asia Newswire*, March 29, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Turkmenistan/Turkmenistan-to-head-CIS-in-2012/viewstory.aspx?id=3676>

hundreds of deaths. The sanctions didn't expressly prohibit payments for military purposes, however there is opposition especially from the German Left Party against sending money to a repressive regime which also causing a scandal in the country.<sup>53</sup>

The Director of Uzbekistan's Gidroproyekt (Hydropower) institute, Sergei Zhigarev portends through his work in the Pravda Vostoka that a powerful earthquake in mountainous Central Asia could crack open Tajikistan's hydropower dams creating a tsunami 10 times higher than the one that hit Japan on March 11. The impact can affect many cities and flood dozens of other cities and populated areas in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. Uzbekistan, which lies downstream of Tajikistan's water resources, is strongly opposed to construction of Rogun, saying the dam will severely restrict water needed for its agriculture and population centers.<sup>54</sup>

In other developments in the region, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has shown interest in creating a committee to facilitate energy cooperation between member states, SCO General Secretary Muratbek Imanaliyev said this week. He said energy projects like Turkmenistan-China gas pipeline since it goes through the SCO countries, and the pipelines from Kazakhstan to China and from Russia to China are given priority. He expressed his support to the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline, recognizing its "importance for the settlement of the Afghan issue."<sup>55</sup>

## RUSSIA

- **The International Court of Justice rejects Georgian ethnic cleansing case against Russia saying it has no jurisdiction to hear the case; Russian security forces get the go-ahead to crush rising militancy in the Caucasus; Rosatom signs a US\$ 2.8 billion contract to enrich uranium for the US; Russia to launch space freighter to ISS on April 27; Violent crimes increase in the Russian Army; Russian army to get new multiple rocket launchers; Russia to move Naval HQs to St. Petersburg by 2012; Census results show continuing demographic crisis; Head of Statistics**

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<sup>53</sup> 'Germany pays Uzbekistan for base access despite EU's Uzbek sanctions', *Central Asia Newswire*, March 28, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Uzbekistan/Germany-pays-Uzbekistan-for-base-access-despite-EU's-Uzbek-sanctions/viewstory.aspx?id=3658>

<sup>54</sup> 'Earthquake damage at Rogun dam could cause Japan-like tsunami, says Uzbek analyst, *Central Asia Newswire*, March 31, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Regional/Earthquake-damage-at-Rogun-dam-could-cause-Japan-like-tsunami-says-Uzbek-analyst/viewstory.aspx?id=3695>

<sup>55</sup> "Regional security group considers expanding into energy", *Central Asia Newswire*, March 21, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Regional/Regional-security-group-considers-expanding-into-energy/viewstory.aspx?id=3591>

**Services: Russia's shadow economy 16% of GDP ; President Medvedev asks his ministers must to leave board of Russia's firms by July; Russia grants direct access to oil pipelines for independent producers**

The International Court of Justice has refused to hear complaints of human rights abuses allegedly committed by Russia in Georgia's separatist regions. Georgia had accused Russia of "serious violations" of a 1965 antidiscrimination treaty in its breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and denounced Russia's "systematic policy" of ethnic discrimination against ethnic Georgians. Tbilisi lodged the case at the United Nations' highest court in August 2008 at the end of a brief war with Russia over Moscow-backed South Ossetia. The court ruled that it had no jurisdiction to hear the case because Georgia never attempted to settle the dispute before bringing it to the court, as required under the treaty. Georgian First Deputy Justice Minister Tina Burjaliani put down Georgia's legal defeat to "a procedural technicality" and said the ruling was a disappointment for her country. Georgia claims Russian forces and allied militias killed thousands of ethnic Georgians and displaced 300,000 more in Abkhazia and South Ossetia in over two decades leading up to a five day war in August 2008. The 10-6 ruling, however, shows that Georgia's complaints were not deemed entirely unfounded<sup>56</sup>.

Reports noted that Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has ordered his security forces to crush the rising Islamic insurgency in the Caucasus, saying their criminal activities must be wiped out. The President met with security officials as Russian authorities announced that airstrikes and an attack on a rebel base in Ingushetia had killed 17 militants on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2011. The authorities say Chechen rebel leader Doku Umarov, who has been charged in the January Moscow airport suicide bombing, may be among the dead. Umarov had claimed responsibility for the suicide attack at Domodedovo airport in January that killed 37 people and last year's double suicide blast in the Moscow subway. He had vowed to keep up his campaign of terror in a drive to set up an Islamic state in the Caucasus. Russia has fought two major and often bloody wars with the Chechnyan separatists in the last 20 years. Violence continues to plague the North Caucasus region, as authorities try to contain an Islamist insurgency that has spread across several provinces.<sup>57</sup>

According to reports, Russia's government- owned nuclear holding company Rosatom has signed a contract worth US\$ 2.8 billion to supply enriched uranium

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<sup>56</sup> "World court throws out Georgia's case against Russia", Radio Free Europe, April 1, 2011, [http://www.rferl.org/content/world\\_court\\_ends\\_georgia\\_case\\_against\\_russia/3543799.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/world_court_ends_georgia_case_against_russia/3543799.html)

<sup>57</sup> "Medvedev orders security forces to crush militants", *VOANews* March 29, 2011, <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/europe/Russia-Accuses-Chechen-Militants-of-Airport-Bombing-118831889.html>

to the US. The accord includes an option to double supplies, possibly boosting the value of the deal to \$6 billion. Rosatom's Techsnabexport unit, known as Tenex, agreed a 10- year deal to supply low-enriched uranium to Bethesda, Maryland- based USEC Inc. (USU) from 2013. Tenex has previously worked with USEC on the "Megatons for Megawatts Program," in which Russia agreed to supply \$8 billion of uranium from dismantled warheads<sup>58</sup>.

In another development, a Russian cargo spacecraft will be sent to the International Space Station (ISS) on April 27. The Progress M-10M will lift off atop a Soyuz-U carrier rocket from the Baikonur space center in Kazakhstan. It is to deliver 2.5 tons of expendables, fuel and foodstuffs to the ISS. The foodstuffs will include 20 packages of marinated cucumbers, green apples, lemons and oranges, as well as unspecified fresh vegetables. The freighter will also deliver "psychological support kits" from the cosmonauts' families, including candy.<sup>59</sup>

Russian Military Prosecutor-General Sergei Fridinsky has said that more than 500 violent crimes have taken place in the Russian army since January 2011. There has also been a 16 percent increase in the rate of crimes related to hazing and violence in army barracks this year compared to 2010.<sup>60</sup>

Russia's armed forces will start taking delivery of the new Tornado-G multiple rocket launching systems (MRLS), replacing the current Grad systems which have been in service since 1964. It is believed that the tornadoes will substantially add to the military's fire power and standoff capability for effective engagement. The army spokesman mentioned that the Tornados are superior to Grads in their effectiveness, automated control, aiming and satellite navigation systems. A Tornado MRLS vehicle can carry up to twelve 300-mm rockets with an effective range of up to 90 kilometres.<sup>61</sup>

The Defence Ministry of Russia has declared that the Naval HQs will be shifted from Moscow to St. Petersburg by early 2012. In 2007, Boris Gryzlov, the speaker of the lower house of parliament, proposed transferring the Navy headquarters from Moscow to St. Petersburg as part of an ongoing military reform. However,

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<sup>58</sup> "Rosatom signs \$2.8 billion contract to enrich uranium for US", *Bloomberg*, March 25, 2011, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-03-25/rosatom-signs-2-8-billion-contract-to-enrich-uranium-for-u-s-.html>

<sup>59</sup> "Russia to launch space freighter to ISS on April 27", *RIA Novosti*, March 29, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/science/20110329/163266772.html>

<sup>60</sup> "Violent crimes in Russian army increase", *Radio Free Europe*, March 27, 2011, [http://www.rferl.org/content/violent\\_crimes\\_in\\_russian\\_army\\_increase/3538265.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/violent_crimes_in_russian_army_increase/3538265.html)

<sup>61</sup> "Russian army to get new multiple rocket launchers", *RIA Novosti*, March 28, 2011, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20110328/163247668.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20110328/163247668.html)

several top Russian military commanders were against the idea, saying it would be too costly and ineffective<sup>62</sup>.

The Russian government has released the first preliminary results from last year's census, so far confirming a long-running demographic crisis and sparking debate about the latest headcount's accuracy and the government's response. Russia's population dropped by 2.2 million -- or 1.6 percent, to 142.9 million -- since the last census in 2002. A disproportion in favour of women continues to grow as well, with 53.7 percent of the population female. The census also shows that 73.7 percent of Russians live in urban areas. Just 20 of the country's 83 regions saw population increases, many of them the so-called ethnic republics. Complete final results of the census -- including crucial information on mortality and birth rates -- is expected in early 2013.<sup>63</sup>

The head of Russia's Statistics Service, Mr. Alexander Surinov has said that Russia's 'gray, or semi-legal economy amounts to 16% of the country's gross domestic product. The hidden economy now stands at about 16% of GDP. Current data shows that some 13 million people, or 17-18% of the economically active population, are employed there<sup>64</sup>.

In other developments, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has said that government ministers have until July 1 to give up their seats on boards of some of the country's biggest state firms. The move is part of an attempt to improve Russia's investment climate.<sup>65</sup> However, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has signed an order granting unhindered and direct access to oil pipelines for independent producers. The new regulations will enter into force in a month.<sup>66</sup>

## D. WEST ASIA

### IRAN

• **Iran welcomes Egypt proposal to reestablish diplomatic ties; Iranian Defence Minister condemns Saudi Arabia for military intervention in Bahrain**

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<sup>62</sup> "Russia to move Navy HQ to St. Petersburg by 2012", *RIA Novosti*, March 29, 2011, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20110329/163265474.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20110329/163265474.html)

<sup>63</sup> Coalson R, "Russian census results show continuing demographic crisis", *Radio Free Europe*, April 1, 2011, [http://www.rferl.org/content/russia\\_census\\_results\\_demographic\\_crisis/3543674.html](http://www.rferl.org/content/russia_census_results_demographic_crisis/3543674.html)

<sup>64</sup> "Russia's shadow economy 16% of GDP- head of Statistics Service", *RIA Novosti*, April 1, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20110401/163321504.html>

<sup>65</sup> "Medvedev says ministers must leave boardrooms by July", *RIA Novosti*, April 2, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20110402/163339220.html>

<sup>66</sup> "Putin signs order on pipeline access for independent oil producers", *RIA Novosti*, March 31, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20110331/163310582.html>

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi has welcomed a proposal by his Egyptian counterpart Nabil el-Arabi that Cairo is willing to reestablish diplomatic ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Salehi stated, "good relationship between the two countries will certainly help stability, security, and development in the region." Salehi also added that despite ups and downs the "historic relations" between the two countries have always persisted and "I hope in the new environment we witness an upgrade of relationship." While, Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil el-Arabi stated that Egypt is ready to "open a new page" with Iran and the Egyptian government doesn't consider Iran to be an enemy state." He also pointed out that restoring full diplomatic ties depends on the Iranian side.<sup>67</sup>

However, the Iranian Defense Minister, Ahmad Vahidi criticized Saudi Arabia for its military intervention in Bahrain and said that the presence of Saudi troops in Bahrain will cause insecurity and instability in the region. He pointed out that "such moves will increase tension, and if such thoughtless and unlawful moves become a norm the region will be turned into a center of hostility and conflict." Vahidi also criticized the Manama officials for inviting foreign troops to suppress the Bahraini people.<sup>68</sup>

## IRAQ

### • **Iraqi officials blame Al-Qaeda for Tikrit attack; Two US soldiers killed by militants**

Iraqi officials have stressed that Al-Qaeda linked Sunni militants were responsible for a bloody siege in Tikrit in which 56 people were killed. A fierce gun-battle ended when the attackers - numbering about eight - blew themselves up. Among the dead were local government officials and an Iraqi journalist. Another 100 people were injured in the attack. Tikrit - the capital of Salahuddin province - was once a stronghold of the Sunni insurgency which followed the American-led invasion of 2003. Shortly afterwards, a curfew was imposed in Tikrit, about 160km (100 miles) north-west of Baghdad.<sup>69</sup>

In another violent incident, the US military sources informed that two American soldiers have been killed by enemy forces during an attack in Iraq. In a statement

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<sup>67</sup> "Tehran welcomes overture by Egypt to establish ties with Iran," *Mehr News Agency*, March 30, 2011, at <http://www.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1279222>

<sup>68</sup> "Iran defense minister warns against presence of Saudi troops in Bahrain," *Mehr News Agency*, March 29, 2011, at <http://www.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=12789688>

<sup>69</sup> "Iraq blames al-Qaeda for Tikrit attack," *BBC News*, March 30, 2011, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12906043>

released, the military said that the soldiers were killed by indirect fire on their unit. However, the statement did not give any details. The death raises to at least 4,443 the number of US military personnel who have died in Iraq since the war began in March 2003. The U.S. ended combat operations in Iraq in September and will withdraw all troops from the country by the end of the year. About 47,000 American troops still remain in Iraq.<sup>70</sup>

## SYRIA

- **Syrian government resigns**

Syrian President Bashar Al Assad accepted his government's resignation on March 29 after the protests challenging his rule. Protesters at first had limited their demands to greater freedoms. But the move was unlikely to satisfy protester demands since the cabinet has little authority in Syria, where power is concentrated in the hands of Assad, his family and the security apparatus. But, increasingly incensed by a security crackdown on them, especially in the southern city of Deraa where protests first erupted, they now call for the "downfall of the regime."<sup>71</sup> The coming days will be key to determining whether Assad's concessions will quiet the protest movement, which began after security forces arrested several teenagers who scrawled anti-government graffiti on a wall in the impoverished city of Daraa in the south. The protests spread to other provinces and the government launched a swift crackdown, killing more than 60 people since March 18, according to Human Rights Watch. However, the violence has eased in the past few days and the demonstrations might quickly die out if the president's promises appear genuine.<sup>72</sup>

## EGYPT

- **Mubarak under house arrest; Egypt decides to lift emergency laws and eases conditions for forming parties**

Egypt's Supreme Council of the Armed Forces has said on its website that the ousted President Hosni Mubarak and his family are under house arrest. The Supreme Council stated, "There is no truth to reports that former President Hosni Mubarak has left Egypt for Tabuk in Saudi Arabia. He is under house

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<sup>70</sup> "Militants kill 2 US soldiers in Iraq: US military," *Khaleej Times*, April 3, 2011, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/April/middleeast\\_April40.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/April/middleeast_April40.xml&section=middleeast)

<sup>71</sup> "Syrian government resigns", *The Khaleej Times*, March 30, 2011, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data%2Fmiddleeast%2F2011%2FMarch%2Fmiddleeast\\_March493.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data%2Fmiddleeast%2F2011%2FMarch%2Fmiddleeast_March493.xml&section=middleeast)

<sup>72</sup> "Syrian Cabinet Resigns", *The Saudi Gazette*, March 30, 2011, at <http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentID=2011033097084>

arrest, with his family, in Egypt." The Supreme Council announced on March 28 that the hated emergency laws will be lifted before parliamentary elections set for September this year. The council also issued a decree easing conditions for forming new political parties. Under the new decree, new parties must have 5,000 members in 10 provinces with 300 members in each of them in order to gain recognition. Egypt has 29 provinces. The Supreme Council, however, banned the formation of political parties on religious grounds and those discriminating against citizens based on their race or faith.<sup>73</sup>

## LIBYA

- **Libya's Foreign Minister Moussa Koussa defects**

Libyan Foreign Minister Moussa Koussa, one of Muammar Gaddafi's closest advisers defected and flew to UK on March 30. It is believed that he defected because of attacks by Gaddafi's forces on civilians. Koussa was the architect of a dramatic shift in Libya's foreign policy that brought the country back to the international community after years of sanctions. Koussa is one of the most senior members of Gaddafi's inner circle and it would be a major setback for Gaddafi. A British Foreign Office spokesman said in a statement that, "He travelled here under his own free will. He has told us he is resigning his post." The Libyan government, however, has said that Koussa was travelling on a diplomatic mission and denied that he had defected from the government.<sup>74</sup>

## YEMEN

- **Yemen: 11 protesters killed and several injured in Taiz by security forces**

Around 11 protesters were killed by the security forces in Taiz, Yemen. Two people were killed on April 3 while nine others were killed on April 4. More than 500 protesters have been injured in the incident when security forces opened live fire on protesters and attacked them with batons and tear gas when the protesters tried to march to a presidential palace.<sup>75</sup> According to eyewitnesses, protesters gathered around the province's administrative building and headed to the presidential palace, but police stopped them by firing gunshots in the air and using teargas which left many people injured.

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<sup>73</sup> "Mubarak and family under house arrest", *Arab News*, March 28, 2011, at <http://arabnews.com/middleeast/article333634.ece>

<sup>74</sup> "Libya foreign minister defects", *The Khaleej Times*, March 31, 2011, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data%2Finternational%2F2011%2FMarch%2Finternational\\_March1703.xml&section=international](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data%2Finternational%2F2011%2FMarch%2Finternational_March1703.xml&section=international)

<sup>75</sup> "11 killed in Taiz by Yemen Security Forces", *Yemen Post*, April 4, 2011, at <http://www.yemenpost.net/Detail123456789.aspx?ID=3&SubID=3372&MainCat=3>

## E. USA

- **US is again trying to find an appropriate response to the situation in Yemen**

Reports noted that as protests in Yemen intensify and as they grab world attention, the US is again trying to find an appropriate response to the situation in Yemen. The United States, which long supported Yemen's president, even in the face of recent widespread protests, "has now quietly shifted positions and has concluded that he is unlikely to bring about the required reforms and must be eased out of office, according to American and Yemeni officials."<sup>76</sup> The protests have picked up intensity as many thousands have started participating in the protests over a period of time. "In the capital, Sanaa, two rival demonstrations are being held – one in support of and another against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Representatives from the government and the opposition are reported to have met and agreed to avoid confrontation."<sup>77</sup> For over a few months now, the US has been trying to calibrate its views and its position on the mass, anti – establishment protests that have been happening in various countries of West Asia. To this effect, the US intervened militarily in Libya to stop the Libyan army from killing its own people.

## II. DEFENCE REVIEW

### NATIONAL

- **MMRCA deal not to be affected by the new offset rules: MoD; Reports: US endeavors to rope in India for building a ring of missile defence systems encircling Russia and China**

The Defence Ministry has decided that new rules that relax defence offset obligations to include the civil aviation and internal security sectors will not apply to the upcoming \$10 billion contract for medium multi-role combat aircraft (MMRCA) and the older rules restricting the investment to the defence sector will remain in force. The Air Force contract for 126 medium multirole combat aircraft (MMRCA) is now at a decisive phase, seven years after the efforts for the acquisition began. The ministry is certain that it will conclude the contract in the coming financial year.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> "US Shifts to Seek Removal Of Yemen's Leader, an Ally" *The New York Times*, April 3, 2011, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/04/world/middleeast/04yemen.html>

<sup>77</sup> "Many Thousands turn out for Yemen Protests" *BBC News*, April 1 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12931727>

<sup>78</sup> "New offset rules won't apply to multi-role fighter contract: MoD", *Bharat Rakshak*, April 01 2011 at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/NEWS/newsrfr.php?newsid=14574>

The United States has been trying to rope in India for its plans to build a global missile defence system threatening Russia and China as a part of its policy of encircling and containing Russia and China. Indo-U.S collaboration on missile defence has so far been confined to technical and fact-finding discussions. The Government of India has focused its attention increasingly on developing indigenous Missile Defence system capabilities and has ruled out any possibility of joining the United States' Missile Defense system.<sup>79</sup>

## INTERNATIONAL

- **America's Libya operations costing US Air Force \$4M each day; India bans Iran nuclear-related trade to conform to a U.N. Security Council resolution**

Reports noted that the U.S. Air Force is spending \$4 million a day on operations over Libya, but the service's top officials are not yet sure whether the Obama administration will ask Congress for supplemental funding to cover those costs as to date the govt. has shown no such inclination. The US Air Force is providing the key command-and-control and surveillance capabilities that only it can, although, allied nations are also taking over more of the strike missions of late.<sup>80</sup>

Meanwhile, India has banned trade in all goods and services with Iran that could help Iran pursue development of nuclear weapons, according to a government statement released. The changes were made in new foreign policy trade rules to conform to a U.N. Security Council resolution imposing sanctions on Iran related to its nuclear and missile development program in order to deter it from her weaponisation programme. India is currently also a non-permanent member of the U.N. Security Council.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> "The US Wants To Use India In The Missile Shield Against Russia & China", *Defence News*, April 01, 2011, at <http://www.defencenews.in/defence-news-internal.asp?get=new&id=408>

<sup>80</sup> "Libyan Ops Costing USAF \$4M Each Day", *Defense News*, March 31 2011 at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=6102100&c=air;%20budget&s=TOP>

<sup>81</sup> "India Bans Iran Nuclear-Related Trade", *Agence France-Presse*, April 2, 2011 at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=6130118&c=ASI&s=TOP>

### III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

#### JAMMU & KASHMIR

- **Cricket diplomacy should keep Kashmir in mind; Lt. General Parnaik states Kashmir attachment to Pakistan is not the solution; Gilani states Kashmir stands the important issue; Home Secretary talks optimistic development**

Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Chairman of Hurriyat Conference (G) urged the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan to discuss Kashmir dispute on priority during their talks. He noted that peace would continue to elude India and Pakistan till the Kashmir dispute is resolved.<sup>82</sup>

Meanwhile, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command Lt. General Parnaik has said that no political or economic solution could be implemented in Jammu and Kashmir unless overt and covert interference of Pakistan was neutralized. He stressed that accession to Pakistan is not the answer rather the call at present is to weed out terrorism infrastructure within the state by choking their funding and communication from across initiating more of development projects.<sup>83</sup>

However, Pakistan Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani has said that Kashmir is the basic contentious issue between Pakistan and India. He emphasized that both countries should overcome the war phobia and concentrate on the issues as to resolve it they need to work together.<sup>84</sup>

In other developments, Home Minister P. Chidambaram described the recent Indo-Pak Home Secretary level talks as a positive development. It is regarded to be one among many steps to be taken towards resolution of disputes between the two countries. Discussions on visa and on Mumbai Commission were also undertaken.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> 'Don't neglect Kashmir in cricket diplomacy: Gilani', *Greater Kashmir*, March 30, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Mar/30/don-t-neglect-kashmir-in-cricket-diplomacy-geelani-62.asp>

<sup>83</sup> 'Azadi accession to Pak no solution: Lt Gen Parnaik', *Greater Kashmir*, March 28, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Mar/28/azadi-accessionto-pak-np-solution-lt-gen-parnaik-32.asp>

<sup>84</sup> 'Kashmir Basic Issue: Gilani', *Greater Kashmir*, April 2, 2011 at <http://greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Apr/2/kashmir-basic-issue-gilani-60.asp>

<sup>85</sup> 'Home Secretary talks positive development: PC', *Greater Kashmir*, April 2, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Apr/2/home-secretary-talks-positive-development-p.c-51.asp>

## NORTH EAST INDIA

- **Section 144 CrPC imposed in Ri-Bhoi district in Meghalaya; Dibrugarh-Tinsukia bandh creates violence; Naga political groups confirm commitment to Covenant of Reconciliation; Obstruction hit in talks with Mizoram rebel outfit; Findings on fake encounter of July 23 in Imphal to be submitted by April;**

The District Magistrate of Ri-Bhoi, M Kharmujai, has banned the carrying of arms and other deadly weapons in the district within an area of five kilometers from the boundary with Assam in the light of Assembly polls there. The prohibition will come into effect immediately, and will remain in force till the completion of the elections in Assam. Polling in Assam will be held on April 4 and 11.<sup>86</sup>

Reports noted that vehicles were damaged at various places in the district by activists of the Sadou Assam Mottock Yuba Chatra Sanmilan (SAMYCS) during the Dibrugarh-Tinsukia bandh called by the organization today. Fifteen youths were arrested and sent to jail for assaulting a driver and a handyman of a night super bus at Lepetkatta. They were later released on bail.<sup>87</sup>

According to reports, after a lull in the “Naga reconciliation: A journey of common Hope”, the journey seems to be back on track with the three Naga political groups re-affirming their commitment to the ‘Covenant of Reconciliation.’ Hopes of the proposed “highest level meeting” of the three groups-NSCN/GPRN, NNC/FGN and GPRN/NSCN-have also revived with the three groups giving verbal or written assurances to the Forum for Naga Reconciliation that they have not backtracked from their commitments.<sup>88</sup>

Meanwhile, peace talks between the Mizoram government and the separatist outfit Hmar People’s Convention-Democrats (HPC-D) have run into rough weather, with the state declining a “foreign negotiator” in the rebel team. Chief Minister Lal Thanhawla informed the Mizoram Assembly that peace negotiations had run into a deadlock as the Manipur-based rebel group insisted

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<sup>86</sup> ‘Section 144 CrPC in Ri-Boi’, *The Sentinel*, April 2, 2011 at <http://www.sentinelassam.com/meghalaya/story.php?sec=2&subsec=8&id=70175&dtP=2011-04-02&ppr=1#70175>

<sup>87</sup> ‘Violence marks Dibrugarh-Tinsukia bandh’, *The Sentinel*, April 2, 2011 at <http://www.sentinelassam.com/state1/story.php?sec=2&subsec=2&id=70124&dtP=2011-04-02&ppr=1#70124>

<sup>88</sup> ‘Three Naga political groups affirm commitment to Covenant of Reconciliation’, *The Sentinel*, April 1, 2011 at <http://www.sentinelassam.com/northeast/story.php?sec=2&subsec=9&id=70027&dtP=2011-04-01&ppr=1#70027>

on including a US citizen in its delegation in the next round of talks in May - a proposal "unacceptable" to the Mizoram Government.<sup>89</sup>

In other developments, the PG Agarwal commission of Inquiry which was investigating the Khwairamband firing incident has carried out their investigation by taking statements of all relative witnesses. As per the court order, the case had been handled by the Special Court of the CBI. The Khwairamband firing incident involved Imphal West district police commandos which led to the death of a former UG Sanjit and a pregnant woman Rabina devi and injured five others on July 23, 2009. A full report on the findings of the commission will be handed over to the State government sometime in the third week of April, 2011.<sup>90</sup>

#### IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

**March 21-27, 2011**

- **India calls for termination of use of force in Libya; India supports Iran on use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes; UNSC extends UN mandate in Afghanistan for another year; Security Council expresses deep concern on the situation in Ivory Coast**

India on March 22, urged all parties in Libya to abjure violence and use of force to resolve differences. The External Affairs Minister, S.M. Krishna called for the cessation of conflict. He also called for peaceful dialogue between the parties under the purview of the United Nations and other regional organizations.<sup>91</sup>

At a Security Council meeting to discuss the status of sanctions imposed on Iran, India's envoy to the UN, Hardeep Singh Puri said, "India has taken a consistent stand on the Iranian nuclear issue" and "Iran is entitled to the rightful use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and should at the same time restore international confidence to the exclusively peaceful nature of its activities." India

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<sup>89</sup> 'Talks with Mizoram rebel outfit hit roadblock', *The Sentinel*, March 29, 2011 at <http://www.sentinelassam.com/northeast/story.php?sec=2&subsec=9&id=69663&dtP=2011-03-29&ppr=1#69663>

<sup>90</sup> 'PG Agarwal commission likely 2 submit July 23 "fake encounter" findings in April', *Imphal Free Press*, March 29, 2011 at <http://www.ifp.co.in/imphal-free-press-full-story.php?newsid=15981>

<sup>91</sup> 'Cessation of conflict need of the hour: India', *The Hindu*, March 22, 2011 at <http://www.hindu.com/2011/03/22/stories/2011032265411400.htm>

also noted that the misgivings about Iran's nuclear programme needed to be addressed by "peaceful means, through dialogue and negotiation".<sup>92</sup>

Meanwhile, the Security Council gave strong backing to the United Nations (through resolution 1974 that extended the mandate of the UN for another year) to lead international civilian efforts in Afghanistan as the nation assumed responsibility for its own security and development. It stressed the importance of a comprehensive approach to address the challenges to a successful transition to Afghan security leadership and also emphasized that security gains must be supported by improvements in the way the country is governed and in the living standards of the people. It also expressed concern at the continuing "alarming threats" posed by the Taliban, al-Qaida and other extremist groups.<sup>93</sup>

In other developments, the UN Security Council expressed its indignation at the shelling of a market, allegedly carried out by elements of the Ivorian Defense and security forces in Ivory Coast's commercial capital and warned that it would punish anyone who obstructed the resolution of the country's prolonged post-election crisis. The members of the Council expressed their "deep concern about the continuing post-electoral crisis in Cote d'Ivoire and its negative humanitarian consequences on the civilian population, including refugees and internally displaced persons".<sup>94</sup>

### **March 28-April 3, 2011**

- **Security Council imposes sanctions against Gbagbo; India supports UNSC resolution 1975; UNSC condemns attack against UN staff in Afghanistan**

The U.N. Security Council on March 30 unanimously demanded an immediate end to the escalating violence in Ivory Coast and imposed sanctions on Laurent Gbagbo, who refused to relinquish the presidency. The resolution demanded "an immediate end to the violence" and urged all Ivorian parties "to respect the will of the people and the election" of Alassane Ouattara as president. The latest resolution slapped a travel ban and asset freeze on Gbagbo, his wife Simone, and

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<sup>92</sup> 'Iran has a right to peaceful nuclear energy', *Business Standard*, March 23, 2011 at <http://www.business-standard.com/india/news/iran-hasright-to-peaceful-nuclear-energy-india/129898/on>

<sup>93</sup> 'Security Council backs UN to lead international civilian efforts in Afghanistan', *The Washington Post*, March 22, 2011 at [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/security-council-strongly-backs-un-to-lead-international-civilian-efforts-in-afghanistan/2011/03/22/ABfBmyCB\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/security-council-strongly-backs-un-to-lead-international-civilian-efforts-in-afghanistan/2011/03/22/ABfBmyCB_story.html)

<sup>94</sup> 'Security Council voices outrage at deadly shelling of Ivorian market', *UN News Centre*, March 21, 2011

three other key supporters.<sup>95</sup> The Security Council also condemned the use of Radiodiffusion Télévision Ivoirienne (RTI) and other media to incite discrimination, hostility, hatred and violence, including against UNOCI, and demanded that all parties abide “scrupulously” by their obligation to respect the safety of UNOCI and other UN personnel and ensure their freedom of movement.<sup>96</sup>

India supported the Security Council resolution 1975 and also warned that peacekeepers should not be used as “instruments of regime change”. India’s representative to the UN Hardeep Singh Puri said that India was “seriously concerned” about the situation in the country and also expressed support to all efforts for the peaceful resolution of the problem. Puri said, “...we have supported the efforts of the ECOWAS (a regional west African body) and African Union to find a political solution leading to restoration of democracy and will of the Ivoirian people at the earliest. With that objective in mind, we have voted in favour of the resolution today (Thursday)”.<sup>97</sup>

In other developments, the Security Council and the UN Secretary General strongly condemned the attack in Afghanistan which killed a number of people including three UN staff members. The Council issued a press statement condemning “all incitement to and acts of violence” and expressed their deep condolences to the families of the victims. The Council called on Afghan authorities to take ‘all possible steps’ to protect UN personnel and premises, and to bring the perpetrators of the attack to justice.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> ‘UN imposes sanctions on Ivory Coast’s Gbagbo who refuses to relinquish presidency’, *The Washington Post*, March 30, 2011 at [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/un-imposes-sanctions-on-ivory-coasts-gbagbo-who-refuses-to-relinquish-presidency/2011/03/30/AF0r5j4B\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/un-imposes-sanctions-on-ivory-coasts-gbagbo-who-refuses-to-relinquish-presidency/2011/03/30/AF0r5j4B_story.html)

<sup>96</sup> ‘Demanding end to violence in Cote d’Ivoire, Security Council imposes targeted sanctions’, *UN News Centre*, March 30, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37949&Cr=Ivoire&Cr1=>

<sup>97</sup> ‘India supports UNSC on Ivory Coast President’, *Indian Express*, April 01, 2011 at <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/India-supports-UNSC-on-Ivory-Coast-President/770100/>

<sup>98</sup> ‘UN strongly condemns deadly attack against staff in Afghanistan’, *UN News Centre*, April 01, 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37967&Cr=Afghan&Cr1=>