

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

- **Kunar bombing kills elder tribal leader; Afghanistan and Pakistan set up joint peace commission; Ten killed in army base bombing in eastern Afghanistan**

According to reports, a well known Afghan war veteran Malik Zarin has been killed along with ten others in a suicide bombing in Kunar province of Afghanistan. He was considered close to President Hamid Karzai. The attack took place when elders from two tribes were meeting to discuss the course of Afghan war.¹

Afghanistan and Pakistan agreed to set up a joint peace commission to carry forward the process of reconciliation in post withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan. This comes in the wake of Pakistani Prime Minister's visit to the country. Prime Minister Gilani said that he, in consultation with President Karzai, Chairman Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani and members of the High Peace Council, had agreed to establish the two-tier Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Commission for facilitating and promoting reconciliation and peace. The first tier of commission will include the chief executives, foreign ministers along with chiefs of the military and intelligence services of the two countries while the second tier will comprise senior officials of foreign ministries, military and intelligence services.²

In other developments, five foreign and five Afghan troops were killed in an attack in eastern Afghanistan. A suicide bomber dressed as an army man attacked the base near the city of Jalalabad. The Taliban has taken responsibility of the attack.³

¹ "Afghanistan: Bomber kills Kunar elder Malik Zarin", *BBC*, April 13, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13059704>

² "Pakistan, Afghanistan set up joint commission to pursue peace", *Dawn*, April 17, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/04/17/pakistan-afghanistan-set-up-joint-commission-to-pursue-peace.html>

³ "Ten die in Afghanistan army base bomb, *BBC*", April 16, 2011 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13103286>

PAKISTAN

- **Pakistan Army Chief Kayani: Pakistan's road link to Afghanistan to be built by the Pak Army; Pakistan protests fresh US drone attacks; Next round of Pak-US strategic dialogue in May; Pakistan PM Gilani: Pakistan and India can ill afford a full-fledged war**

Pakistan Army Chief Pervez Ashfaq Kayani announced construction of a major road project between Afghanistan and the tribal areas of Pakistan. This road will be of prime importance in the sphere of trade and commerce and will run in the North Waziristan (Bannu) Area to Ghulam Khan. This project is being undertaken by the Pakistan army. The cost of the project is \$48 million and the length of the road is 50 Km.⁴

Reports noted that Pakistan has lodged protests against US drone attacks in Angoor Adda, in the tribal areas of Pakistan. For the first time a demarche has been issued against missile strikes targeting militants. Pakistan has called drone attacks as counterproductive in fight against the militants which strengthens militant's actions further. The drone attacks happened immediately after a meeting between Pakistan's ISI Chief Gen Shuja Pasha and CIA Chief Leo Panetta over limiting drone attacks.⁵

Pakistani Prime minister Yusuf Raza Gilani said that India and Pakistan are committed to solving Kashmir issue diplomatically. Another war over the dispute will be detrimental to the renewed talks between the two countries, he said.⁶

In other developments, Pakistan and the United States are expected to hold next round of strategic dialogue in May. The dialogue will focus on issues such as security, education and health etc. The date and place are yet to be announced.⁷

⁴ "Pakistan army to build road link to Afghanistan", *Dawn*, April 14, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/04/14/pakistan-army-to-build-road-link-to-afghanistan.html>

⁵ "Pakistan lodges protest against US attack", *Dawn*, April 14 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/04/14/pm-gilani-criticises-us-drone-strikes.html>

⁶ "Pakistan and India cannot afford another war: Gilani", *Dawn*, April 12, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/04/12/pakistan-and-india-cannot-afford-another-war-gilani.html>

⁷ "Pak-US strategic dialogue in May", *Dawn*, April 12, 2011 at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/04/12/pak-us-strategic-dialogue-in-may.html>

BANGLADESH

- **EU Ambassador to Bangladesh meets Foreign Minister Dipu Moni**

Reports noted that William Hana, EU Ambassador and head of delegation in Dhaka, paid his first call on Foreign Minister Dipu Moni at the Foreign Ministry on April 13. Dipu Moni briefed the envoy about recent achievements made by the Bangladesh Government in the field of women's emancipation, poverty eradication and especially mentioned about the strong measures taken to fight corruption. She informed that Bangladesh highly values her relation with European Union (EU) for being its biggest development partner, destination for its exports and source of foreign direct investments (FDI) in Bangladesh. The ambassador assured her that EU would continue extending support to Bangladesh in projects under existing areas of cooperation.⁸

SRI LANKA

- **PIL petition filed for scrapping the 1974 Indo-Sri Lankan accord on Kachchathivu Island; Indian government pledges to donate a full-fledged 150 bed hospital to Hatton - Dickoya; India to take legal action against Indian pharmaceutical companies for their failing to supply drugs on time to Sri Lanka; Eight Sri Lankan fishermen released from Indian custody while five still remain; The Panel of UN experts handed over a report on alleged war crimes in Sri Lanka against Tamil separatists to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, Sri Lanka rejects the report; The Minister of Industry and Commerce is in favour of Iraq-Sri Lanka Trading Centre in Baghdad; Prime Minister of Japan expresses his gratitude to Sri Lanka for helping his country during the time of disaster**

A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) petition has been filed by advocate B. Stalin, through his counsel W. Peter Rameshkumar in the Madras High Court Bench seeking a direction to the Centre for scrapping the 1974 Indo-Sri Lankan accord on Kachchathivu island and approach the International Court of Justice claiming damages from Sri Lankan Navy for killing hundreds of Indian fishermen on charges of fishing beyond the maritime border.⁹

Reports noted that during a meeting between Health Minister Maithripala Sirisena and Indian High Commissioner Ashok K. Kanth on April 11, at the

⁸ "EU biggest dev partner Says Dipu Moni", *The Daily Star*, April 14, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=181709>

⁹ "Petition insists on scrapping of 1974 pact", *The Daily Mirror*, April 11, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/40863.html>.

official residence of the Minister, Kanth has informed that the Indian government has pledged to donate a fully-fledged 150 bed hospital to Hatton - Dickoya under its health assistance programme. Kanth has also agreed to provide medical equipment to Kilinochchi and Mullaithivu base hospitals destroyed during the armed conflict.¹⁰ Indian High Commissioner assured Sri Lanka that the Indian government would take legal action against Indian pharmaceutical companies which had failed to supply drugs on time and also supplied sub-standard drugs violating the tender procedure.¹¹

Meanwhile, eight Sri Lankan fishermen who were arrested by the Indian Coast Guard for poaching in Indian waters were released and handed over to the Sri Lankan Navy on April 11 at the Kankesanthurai Harbour.¹² However, the five fishermen, who were taken into custody by the Indian Coast Guard on April 7, are yet to be released.¹³

The panel of UN experts handed over a report on alleged war crimes in Sri Lanka against Tamil separatists to Ban Ki-moon on April 12.¹⁴ The Sri Lankan Government has, however rejected the report and said that it includes unconfirmed and unsubstantiated details and figures on the final stages of the ethnic conflict which is entirely misleading and baseless.¹⁵

The Minister of Industry and Commerce, Rishard Bathiudeen met with the Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq to Sri Lanka and Maldives, Kahtan Taha Khalaf on April 12. During the meeting, minister Bathiudeen expressed his keenness on the proposed Iraq-Sri Lanka trading centre in Baghdad and establishment of direct Sri Lanka tea export channels to Iraq.¹⁶

¹⁰ Jayasekera, A., Sandun, "Indian Govt. to donate hospital to Sri Lanka", *The Daily Mirror*, April 13, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/41073.html>

¹¹ Jayasekera, A., Sandun, "India to indict errant drug firms", *The Daily Mirror*, April 12, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/41004.html>

¹² Perera, Yohan, "Eight more Lankan fishermen released", *The Daily Mirror*, April 12, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/40987.html>

¹³ De Silva, Thilini, "Five Lankan fishermen detained", *The Daily Mirror*, April 13, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/41081.html>

¹⁴ "UN panel hands report to Moon", *The Daily Mirror*, April 13, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/41108.html>

¹⁵ Jayasekera, A., Sandun, "Govt. rejects UN report as baseless", *The Daily Mirror*, April 16, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/41206.html>

¹⁶ "Lanka, Iraq Trading Centre: Minister expresses interest", *The Daily Mirror*, April 13, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/41083.html>

In other developments, Prime Minister of Japan Naoto Kan, in a special message expressed his gratitude to Sri Lanka for helping his country during the time of disaster.¹⁷

MALDIVES

- **Honourary Consul of the Maldives in Greece Stavros Galanakis paid a courtesy call on President Nasheed; The Male Health Services Corporation (MHSC) enters into an agreement with UK-Based NGO, Friends of Maldives, and the Maldivian High Commission in London; The International Monetary Fund (IMF) welcomes the Maldives' decision to declare a new exchange rate for Maldivian currency 'Rufiyaa'**

Honourary Consul of the Maldives in Greece Stavros Galanakis paid a courtesy call on President of the Maldives Mohamed Nasheed on April 11 and discussed furthering existing good relations between the countries and enhancing cooperation to promote boat building industry.¹⁸ However, the Male Health Services Corporation (MHSC) entered into an agreement with UK-based NGO, Friends of Maldives, and the Maldivian High Commission in London, to recruit professional volunteer doctors and nurses on April 12, 2011 at the Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital, Maldives.¹⁹

In other developments, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has welcomed the Maldives' decision to declare a new exchange rate for Rufiyaa, Maldivian currency, within a band of fluctuation of 20 percent around the rate of Rf12.85 per US Dollar peg.²⁰

¹⁷ "Japanese pm expresses gratitude to Sri Lanka", *The Daily Mirror*, April 12, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/40981.html>

¹⁸ "Honourary Consul of the Maldives in Greece Pays a Courtesy Call on the President", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, April 11, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5131>

¹⁹ "New MHSC agreement to bring UK medical workers to the Maldives", *Haveeru Online*, April 12, 2011 at <http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/35874>

²⁰ "IMF praises Maldives' move to introduce new exchange rate", *Haveeru Online*, April 11, 2011 at <http://www.haveeru.com.mv/english/details/35850>

B. EAST ASIA

CHINA

- **General Guo Boxiong visits Vietnam; Defense ministries of China and the United States held seventh working level meeting; The PLA rushes to fire fight**

General Guo Boxiong, Vice-Chairman of China's Central Military Commission paid an official visit to Vietnam last week. During his visit, he met Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung on Wednesday. On this occasion, the Vietnamese Prime Minister said that Vietnam wanted to join hands with China to strengthen coordination and consultation, broaden practical cooperation and overall strategic partnership.²¹

Reports noted that the defense ministries of China and the United States held their seventh working level meeting on Monday. Qian Lihua, Director of the Foreign Affairs Office with the National Defense Ministry and his U.S. counterpart Michael Schiffer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia co-chaired the meeting. The media reported that the working level meeting mechanism between the two countries' defense ministries was established in 2005. Now, it has become a key platform for the two countries to exchange opinions on issues concerning military relations.²²

In other developments, reports noted that fire broke out in a forest farm and two nearby villages located at the boundary between Funing and Qinglong counties, Qinhuangdao city in North China's Hebei Province, on April 12. More than 6,000 officers and men of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the Chinese People's Armed Police Force (APF) were rushed to aid and assist civil administration in fire fighting. The media reported that their efforts brought fire under effective control soon.²³

²¹ "China, Vietnam vow to improve bilateral ties", *PLA Daily* (Online), May 14, 2011 at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/14/content_4420302.htm

²² "7th China-U.S. defense ministry working level meeting held in Beijing", *PLA Daily* (Online), May 12, 2011 at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/12/content_4419217.htm

²³ "6,000-plus troops fight against forest fire", *PLA Daily* (Online), May 14, 2011 at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2011-04/14/content_4420706.htm

SOUTHEAST ASIA

- **Suicide attack in Indonesia wounds dozens; Vietnam plans first tsunami drill in Da Nang; US \$ 1.6 billion power station to be built in Vietnam with Chinese support; Samsung to invest US \$ billion in Indonesia; ASEAN+3 to prepare 720,000 ton rice stock to fight food inflation**

According to reports, a suicide bomber blew himself inside a mosque in Cirebon on April 15. This is the first suspected suicide attack in Indonesia in the past two years, though several letter bomb episodes have happened in the last two years.²⁴

Reports noted that Vietnam is preparing to hold the first ever tsunami preparation exercise on 1 September, 2011. The exercise will be held in Da Nang, a prominent city of Vietnam. According to the reports, the exercise will be based on simulated tsunami triggered by earthquake off the Philippines; western coast.²⁵ Meanwhile, Janakuasa will build a US \$ 1.6 billion power station in Vietnam. The project named as Duyen Hai 2, will be built in Tra Vinh district. Huadin Engineering Co Ltd, China has guaranteed to fund US \$ 1.59 billion for the project. The project is likely to be completed by 2014.²⁶

According to the Indonesian officials, the government is seeking US \$ 1 billion investment from Samsung group in the country. The proposed areas of investment include solar cell technology, coal, crude palm oil among other things. Though Samsung has not yet arrived at a decision on investment amount, according to the media reports, it has agreed on the overall plan.²⁷

In other developments in the region, China, Japan and South Korea; the +3 members of 'ASEAN+3' have agreed to set up a rice reserve, in order to cope up with food price inflation. The three countries have agreed to provide 720,000 tons of rice reserves. The reserve will kick off in October 2011, during the 32th ASEAN agricultural and forestry ministerial meeting in Cambodia.²⁸

²⁴ "Indonesia 'suicide bomber' wounds 28 in mosque blast", *BBC News*, April 15, 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-13090306>

²⁵ "Vietnam to hold first tsunami response drill in Da Nang", *Thanh Nien*, April 15, 2011, <http://www.thanhniennews.com/2010/Pages/20110415152616.aspx>

²⁶ "Janakuasa to build US \$ 1.6 billion power station in Vietnam", *Bernama*, April 16, 2011, <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsbusiness.php?id=579629>

²⁷ "Samsung may invest \$ 1 b in Indonesia, govt claims", *The Jakarta Post*, April 16, 2011, <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/04/16/samsung-may-invest-1b-indonesia-govt-claims.html>

²⁸ "ASEAN+3 to prepare 720,000 ton rice reserve", *China Daily*, April 12, 2011, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2011-04/12/content_12310515.htm

C. CENTRAL ASIA & RUSSIA

CENTRAL ASIA

- **India, Kazakhstan sign seven deals; China plans new communications and investments in Central Asia; Malaysian, Saudi firms to invest in Uzbekistan; Central Asian states discuss problems of landlocked developing countries; Nazarbayev nominates new Supreme Court Chairman; Kyrgyz Deputy PM temporarily steps down; Kyrgyz Parliament elects new Prosecutor-General**

India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh who was on a two-day visit to Kazakhstan on 15-16 April, held talks with his counterpart on a slew of bilateral issues with emphasis on energy and trade. This visit comes after eight years by any Indian premier to Central Asia. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh welcomed the seven pacts signed between India and Kazakhstan, saying they represented "solid and substantive outcomes" in sectors where the countries had "complementary strengths".²⁹ Both leaders agreed on a three-year Joint Action Plan. It details specific milestones in hydrocarbons, civilian nuclear energy, space, IT & cyber security, high-tech and innovative technology, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, agriculture and cultural exchanges.³⁰ India got a foothold in Kazakhstan's oil and gas assets Saturday with the signing of an agreement to buy a 25 percent stake in the Central Asian country's Satpayev exploration block in the Caspian Sea.³¹ ONGC's overseas investment unit ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) sealed the deal with Kazakh state energy firm KazMunaiGas to gain exploration and production rights. OVL will invest \$400 million into the project for a 25 percent stake in the block, which is estimated to hold around 1.75 billion barrels of crude. The Kazakh fuel producer will retain the remaining 75 percent stake in the exploration block located in the energy-rich North Caspian Sea.³²

The two countries also moved a step towards more intensive collaboration in nuclear energy with the signing of the Agreement on Cooperation in Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy but this is subject to both sides "adhering to their

²⁹ 'Manmohan Singh welcomes Kazakhstan agreements', *The Deccan Herald*, April 16, 2011 at <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/154073/manmohan-singh-welcomes-kazakhstan-agreements.html>

³⁰ 'India, Kazakhstan sign pact on nuclear cooperation', *The Hindu*, April 17, 2011 at <http://www.hindu.com/2011/04/17/stories/2011041764961300.htm>

³¹ 'Manmohan Singh welcomes Kazakhstan agreements', *The Deccan Herald*, April 16, 2011 at <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/154073/manmohan-singh-welcomes-kazakhstan-agreements.html>

³² 'Indian state company to buy 25% stake in Kazakh oil field', *Central Asia Newswire*, April 13, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kazakhstan/Indian-state-company-to-buy-25-stake-in-Kazakh-oil-field/viewstory.aspx?id=3810>

existing obligations under multilateral nuclear regimes.”³³ Kazakhstan has supplied India with uranium for the South Asian country’s reactors under a deal signed in early 2009 between Kazakh nuclear holding corporation Kazatomprom and Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL). The new agreement will broaden the base of cooperation to include exploration and research of uranium. Both the countries signed the roadmap for projects and activities to be undertaken between 2011 and 2014 to improve land connectivity to facilitate trade and transit between India and Central Asia in general and Kazakhstan in particular and also inked a memorandum in the area of information security. India agreed to diversify our cooperation, particularly in pharmaceuticals, information technology, mining, fertilizers and science and technology; offered to set up a joint Information Technology Centre of Excellence in the Eurasian University in Astana; discussed the situation in Afghanistan and cooperation in international forums, including the United Nations and regional processes; and agreed to intensify dialogue in the fields of counter-terrorism, illicit drug trafficking and extremism.³⁴

Reports noted that China is set to begin construction on a new Silk Road to Europe via Central Asia to expedite transport and trade. The \$660 million project is expected to be finished in September 2013 and will traverse through Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Iran and Turkey, before heading into Europe. China has also initiated plans to construct road through Kazakhstan and the Caspian Sea, another via Kazakhstan and Russia to facilitate transportation with Europe and plans an East-West “Silk Track” rail link to Europe passing through Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and Iran.³⁵

Meanwhile, a subsidiary of China’s Sinopec has begun construction of \$1.04 billion aromatic hydrocarbons plant in Western Kazakhstan. This processing facility is expected to extract 551,156 tons per year of benzene, paraxylene and other chemical compounds from crude. Chinese investor Sinopec Tenth Construction Co. will also produce gasoline at Euro-3 and Euro-4 standards at

³³ ‘India, Kazakhstan sign pact on nuclear cooperation’, *The Hindu*, April 17, 2011 at <http://www.hindu.com/2011/04/17/stories/2011041764961300.htm>

³⁴ ‘Manmohan Singh welcomes Kazakhstan agreements’, *The Deccan Herald*, April 16, 2011 at <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/154073/manmohan-singh-welcomes-kazakhstan-agreements.html>

³⁵ ‘China to build highway link with Central Asia’, *Central Asia Newswire*, April 15, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Regional/China-to-build-highway-link-with-Central-Asia/viewstory.aspx?id=3829>

the plant, which will be built in two phases. Sinopec signed the agreement with Kazakh state energy firm KazMunaiGas in 2009.³⁶

However, Malaysia's Petronas Carigali Overseas Sdn Bhd, the firm's main hydrocarbon exploration arm, and Saudi Arabia's Delta Oil signed the agreement to form a consortium for the development of Uzbekistan's oil and gas fields. This agreement will establish an investment consortium that will be focused on the oil and gas fields in the Surkhandarya-based Boysun investment block.³⁷

Representatives from the five Central Asian republics gathered on 12th April in the Mongolian capital Ulaanbaatar to discuss the concerns of landlocked Asian countries. The two-day meeting was being hosted by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and Mongolian Prime Minister Sukhbaatar Batbold to evaluate the progress made since the 2003 Almaty Program of Action for Asia-Pacific Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDC). Mongolian premier Batbold called on transit countries to create favorable transportation agreements and conditions to ease trade for landlocked nations.³⁸

According to reports, newly-reelected Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has fired six justices from the country's Supreme Court who were suspected of corruption. As the Supreme Court Chairman Musabek Alimbekov was held responsible for the corrupt activities of the judges, Nazarbayev nominated Bektas Beknazarov to be the new Supreme Court chairman who won the approval of the Senators.³⁹

Meanwhile, Kyrgyzstan's Deputy Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov temporarily stepped aside on 14th April amidst allegations of corruption from coalition government partners. Babanov, leader of the Respublika party will wait until a parliamentary committee clears him of alleged involvement in illegal financial schemes and abuse of office. Meantime the parliamentary commission will study

³⁶ 'China's Sinopec begins construction on \$1B Kazakh hydrocarbons plant', *Central Asia Newswire*, April 12, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kazakhstan/Chinarsquos-Sinopec-begins-construction-on-1B-Kazakh-hydrocarbons-plant/viewstory.aspx?id=3790>

³⁷ 'Malaysian, Saudi firms to invest in Uzbek energy development', *Central Asia Newswire*, April 15, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Uzbekistan/Malaysian-Saudi-firms-to-invest-in-Uzbek-energy-development/viewstory.aspx?id=3832>

³⁸ 'Central Asian states discuss challenges of region's landlocked nations', *Central Asia Newswire*, April 12, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Regional/Central-Asian-states-discuss-challenges-of-regionrsquos-landlocked-nations/viewstory.aspx?id=3792>

³⁹ 'Nazarbayev removes six Supreme Court justices', *Central Asia Newswire*, April 15, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kazakhstan/Nazarbayev-removes-six-Supreme-Court-justices/viewstory.aspx?id=3831>

information presented by the former Prosecutor General Kubatbek Baybolov after President Roza Otunbayeva fired him.⁴⁰

However, the Kyrgyz Parliament in a secret ballot elected Aida Salyanova as the country's new prosecutor-general. Salyanova had been serving as interim prosecutor-general after her predecessor Kubatbek Baibalov was fired March 31 by the president following a real estate sales scandal. Otunbayeva fired Baibalov over a "conflict of interest" in his investigation of Russian telecommunications firm Alfa Telecom. Baibalov has continued to cause trouble for Kyrgyz politicians, alleging corrupt practices of high-ranking legislators including Respublika Party head Omurbek Babanov and Otunbayeva.⁴¹

RUSSIA

- **Russia says NATO has exceeded Libyan mandate, calls for an urgent move towards a political settlement of the conflict; Russia severely criticizes Europe's new energy policy; Russia and China discuss oil and security; Armenian parliament ratifies a new defence pact with Russia; Russia's space programme criticized; Russia woos foreign money with promise of high return; Russia steps up its efforts to create an international finance centre; Russia aims to expand presence in Latin American arms markets; Russia-US to discuss easing visa regime for Russians visiting the US; Russia, Poland agree on disputed crash memorial**

According to reports, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said that NATO was exceeding its UN mandate in Libya and called for an urgent move toward a political settlement to the conflict. Lavrov made the statement after talks with NATO foreign ministers in Berlin. He also cautioned against the use of excessive military force that would lead to further additional casualties among civilians. NATO Secretary-General Anders Mr. Fogh Rasmussen had denied earlier that NATO's air strikes in Libya were beyond the scope of the UN Security Council resolution, which authorized "all necessary measures" to protect Libya's population. Rasmussen had said on April 15 that he had not yet received

⁴⁰ 'Kyrgyz deputy PM temporarily steps aside amidst corruption allegations', *Central Asia Newswire*, April 14, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kyrgyzstan/Kyrgyz-deputy-PM-temporarily-steps-aside-amidst-corruption-allegations/viewstory.aspx?id=3823>

⁴¹ 'Kyrgyzstan names new prosecutor-general', *Central Asia Newswire*, April 14, 2011 at <http://centralasianewswire.com/Kyrgyzstan/Kyrgyzstan-names-new-prosecutor-general/viewstory.aspx?id=3827>

specific pledges for more aircraft needed for the alliance's Libya mission but that he expected the additional planes soon.⁴²

Meanwhile, Russia has severely criticized Europe's new energy policy which is aimed at preventing entrenched energy monopolies from dominating the market. Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin voiced his objections to the changes, known as Europe's third energy package, calling them confiscatory and claiming they would lead to higher prices for consumers. Russia is particularly opposed to a provision requiring "unbundling," which stipulates that energy companies operating in Europe must separate the production side of their business from their distribution networks. The European Commission on its part has said that it has uncovered widespread evidence of anticompetitive behaviour among the continent's integrated energy giants, including denying third parties access to pipelines. The ongoing controversy over the third energy package is part of a long-standing tug-of-war between Russia and the EU over energy policy. With its large oil and gas reserves and extensive pipeline system, Moscow has long been the key energy player on the continent. Russia provides 45 percent of the European Union's gas imports and has enjoyed close ties with frontline European states like Germany. But newer EU members in Eastern Europe, wary of the outsized influence enjoyed by companies like Russia's state-controlled natural gas giant Gazprom, have long pushed for the establishment of a single energy market with strong regulations. However, Russia has already secured exemptions from the new rules for two offshore stretches of the North Stream pipeline, a joint project with Germany that will carry Russian gas to Western Europe. According to the legislation, member states can use different methods of separating their production and distribution units. The European Commission's preferred option, called "ownership unbundling," would require companies who own both production and distribution to sell off one or the other. This option is also favoured by some new member states, such as Lithuania, who hope to limit Russia's influence.⁴³

Russian President Medvedev and his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao have pledged to expand cooperation in oil and energy, and discussed global security issues. They met in the southern Chinese resort of Sanya, where the leaders of the five emerging economies comprising the BRICS bloc had assembled to discuss global issues. The proposal of expanding energy cooperation by developing a second oil pipeline from Russia to China was also mooted. Medvedev called for expanding trade volume on both sides, and promoting cooperation in key fields such as oil, gas, water and nuclear energy. The two

⁴² "Russia says NATO exceeds Libya mandate, political fix urgent", *Radio Free Europe*, April 15, 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/russia_says_nato_exceeds_libya_mandate_fix_urgent/4745764.html

⁴³ Jozwiak Rikard, "Russia bristles at Europe's new energy policy", *Radio Free Europe*, April 14, 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/russia_european_union_energy_policy/3557283.html

leaders also discussed Libya, Afghanistan, the Korean Peninsula and other regional issues⁴⁴.

However, the Armenian parliament has ratified a key agreement to prolong Russia's military presence in Armenia and deepen broader defence links between the two countries. The agreement, signed during Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's August visit to Yerevan, extended Russia's lease on a military base in Gyumri by 24 years, until 2044. It also upgraded the base's role in contributing to Armenia's security and committed Moscow to supplying the Armenian military with modern weaponry. The Armenian Constitutional Court upheld the legality of the defence pact and paved the way for its parliamentary ratification in a ruling announced on February 15.⁴⁵

Almost half a century ago, the Soviet Union shocked and awed the world with Yuri Gagarin's historic 108-minute flight. But as Russia marks that historic milestone with gala celebrations, the country's space program appears to be a shadow of its storied predecessor. Many observers believe that Russia's space programme has stagnated, has been marked by a series of mishaps and delays and is in dire need of fresh investments.⁴⁶

Russia's planned \$10 billion private equity fund will be mostly funded by foreign capital, lured by targeted returns of up to 20 percent from investing in industries such as technology and pharmaceuticals. Russia hopes the fund will help diversify its \$1.3 trillion economy away from the hydrocarbon sector, which contributes more than a fifth of the country's gross domestic product. Russia hopes the fund will also improve foreign capital inflows, held back by a poor view of the country among some investors. It aims to attract cash-rich sovereign wealth funds and international private equity funds. Foreign investors are expected to contribute the lion's share of the capital into the fund, which will seek to make investments of between \$100 million and \$150 million. In recent weeks, Russian government officials have been conducting an unofficial road show for the fund, to be called The Direct Investment Fund, in Europe and the United States. The fund will be launched in June, with Russia committing \$2 billion every year over the next five years. It hopes to attract some \$60 billion. Oil

⁴⁴ "China Russia presidents discuss oil, security", *Radio Free Europe*, April 13, 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/china_russia_presidents_discuss_oil_security/3556210.html

⁴⁵ "Armenia parliament ratifies new defense pact with Russia", *Radio Free Europe*, April 13, 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/armenian_parliament_ratifies_defense_pact_russia/3555657.html

⁴⁶ Balmforth Tom, "As Russia celebrates Gagarin's flight, space program comes under fire", *Radio Free Europe*, April 11, 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/russia_celebrates_gagarin_flight_space_program_under_fire/3553957.html

and gas projects would be "categorically" excluded from the fund, unless they clearly were connected to the development of new technologies⁴⁷.

Meanwhile, President Medvedev has stated that Russia is halfway past its efforts to create an international financial center in Moscow. At a meeting with the director of the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, Medvedev spoke about Russia's plans to turn Moscow into an international financial hub. He said that "Russia is at an organizational stage of creating an international financial center, adopting laws and seeking to improve the investment climate and create the infrastructure". Medvedev first announced the project at the 12th St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in 2008, stressing that it was aimed at turning Russia's national currency, the ruble, into a leading regional currency. Today, there are two major global financial centers - London and New York. As of October 2010, Moscow ranked 68 of 75 on the list of international financial centers. The financial center in Moscow will become not only the core of Russia's financial system, but also the impetus for the development of financial markets in the entire post-Soviet region⁴⁸.

Reports noted that Russia wants to expand its sale of weapons in Latin America, especially in Brazil. More than 300 types of weaponry were showcased by Russia at the Latin America Aero and Defense 2011 (LAAD-2011) arms show in Rio de Janeiro. In addition to the wide array of combat aircraft and helicopters, including the Sukhoi Su-35 and Su-30MK2 multirole fighters and Ka-52Hokum B attack helicopters, Russia will focus on marketing its highly-acclaimed air defense systems, such as S-400, Tor-M2E, Buk-M2E, Tunguska-M1, Pantsyr-S1, and Igla-S. Russia, the world's second largest arms exporter after the United States, sold \$8.6 billion worth of weaponry last year and is looking to increase its arms sales to almost \$10 billion in 2011. Rosoboronexport has established mutually beneficial arms trade ties with Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, Uruguay, and Ecuador through active marketing efforts. These countries express their interest in Russian air defense systems, radars, combat aircraft and helicopters, naval equipment, and small arms.⁴⁹

In other developments, the easing of visa restrictions for Russian citizens traveling to the United States will be a focus during talks between Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and his U.S. counterpart Barack Obama in France's Deauville in May.⁵⁰ Meanwhile, Russia and Poland have said that they would

⁴⁷ Kelly L & Davies M, "Russia woos foreign money with promise of high return", *Reuters*, April 18, 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/04/18/russia-fund-idUSN1715781320110418>

⁴⁸ "Russia halfway past efforts to create international finance center- Medvedev", *RIA Novosti*, April 17, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20110417/163566855.html>

⁴⁹ "Russia aims to expand presence on Latin American arms market", *RIA Novosti*, April 17, 2011, http://en.rian.ru/mlitary_news/20110413/163504009.html

⁵⁰ "Medvedev, Obama to discuss easing visa regime for Russians visiting US", *RIA Novosti*, April 18, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20110418/163575982.html>

agree on the text for a new memorial for the plane crash that killed president Lech Kaczynski after a bitter row over the replacement of a previous plaque. Russia has angered Poland by replacing a Polish-language memorial at the site of the crash in Smolensk, Russia, which referred to the "genocide" of Polish officers by Soviet secret police at the nearby Katyn forest at the start of World War II.⁵¹

D. WEST ASIA

IRAN

- **Iran proposes for establishment of joint bank with China; Iran successfully test-fired anti-craft missile**

The Director of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI), Hamid Safdel confirmed that Iran and China can boost mutual trade by establishing a joint bank and using national currencies for their transactions. He also said that the two countries' joint economic committee would help expand bank relations and ease opening letters of credit as well as establishing commercial firms. The Chinese ambassador, Yuhong Yang, told for his part that soon an economic delegation from his country would visit to Iran. The president of Iran-China Joint Chamber of Commerce has predicted that the annual trade between the two countries will reach \$50 billion in the next 5 year.⁵²

Meanwhile, Iran has successfully test-fired its newest version of Sayyad (hunter) anti-aircraft missiles. Sayyad 2, the domestically-made missile will be delivered to the military forces in the near future. Sayyad defense system is able to be used in electronics warfare as well. Sayyad 2 is a great deal more powerful compared to Sayyad 1 and can help improve the country's anti-aircraft systems.⁵³

IRAQ

- **Five people including soldiers killed in bomb attacks in Iraq**

Iraqi Police officials informed that in bombings in a town west of Baghdad five people have been killed including three family members of a former pro-

⁵¹ "Russia, Poland agree on disputed crash memorial", *Radio Free Europe*, April 11, 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/russia_poland_katyn_plane_crash/3553449.html

⁵² "Iran proposes setting up joint bank with China," *Tehran Times*, April 14, 2011, at http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=238625

⁵³ "Iran test-fires newest anti-aircraft missile," *Mehr News*, April 16, 2011, at <http://www.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1290271>

government Sunni fighter. Police officers also added that bombs planted around the house of Ahmed Jassim in the town of Khan Dhari went off, killing his wife and two sons and wounding the former Sons of Iraq militiaman and his daughter. Minutes later, a roadside bomb hit an Iraqi army patrol that was rushing to Jassim's house, killing two soldiers and injuring four others.⁵⁴

YEMEN

- **Yemeni opposition holds talk with GCC leaders in Riyadh; New political bloc formed in Yemen**

Foreign Ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and a delegation of top opposition leaders from Yemen met in Riyadh on April 17 to discuss ways and means to defuse the worsening political crisis in Yemen. In the meeting, the GCC and Yemeni leaders discussed a proposal for an early departure of President Ali Abdullah Saleh to secure peace and an end to political unrest in the country. They also reviewed a proposal that calls for a timetable for the president to leave office. The GCC proposal calling for Saleh to hand over power to his Vice-President and form a unity government headed by the opposition was the basis of the talks. The plan entails Saleh handing over power to the Vice-President within 30 days, with the transfer occurring no more than a week after naming a new Vice-President. The offer guarantees Saleh will not be prosecuted. The GCC initiative also included the expulsion of the President's son and head of security Ahmed Ali Abdullah Saleh, as well as head of the national security agency Col. Ammar Mohamed Abdullah Saleh and Col. Yehya Mohamed Abdullah Saleh, chief of staff of the central security agency.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, a new political bloc was formed from within President Ali Abdullah Saleh's ruling General People Congress (GPC) causing a direct blow to Saleh efforts to keep his rule powerful. At least twenty members of parliament resigned from Saleh's party and joined the bloc. The bloc, called the "justice and development bloc", appealed Saleh to step down immediately. Mohammed AbuLahoum, founder of the political bloc stated that, "We will only stand with an initiative that calls for Saleh to step down from power." He also said that, "The bloc is of the view that the revolution is the backbone of this bloc and that is why the revolution must continue peaceful. The revolution was able to put the

⁵⁴ "Bomb attacks kill 5, wound 6: Iraqi officials," *Khaleej Times*, April 12, 2011, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/April/middleeast_April250.xml§ion=middleeast

⁵⁵ "GCC leaders, Yemeni opposition hold talks", *Arab News*, April 17, 2011, available at <http://arabnews.com/saudi Arabia/article363866.ece>

Islah and Houthis on the same grounds as well as the northern tribes and southerners with the same agenda."⁵⁶

JORDON

- **Jordan seeks to redraft 24-year-old agreement with Syria**

According to reports, Jordan Valley Authority Secretary General Saad Abu Hammour has noted that consultations were under way with Syria to consider redrafting an agreement signed between the two countries in 1987 to regulate the joint utilisation of Yarmouk River water. The agreement was signed with the aim of regulating the collection and use of Yarmouk River Basin water for irrigating agricultural land and generating electric power.⁵⁷

SYRIA

- **Armed criminals open fire on security personnel in Talbisa; Huge Weapons Consignment bound for Syria was seized**

According to an official source at the Ministry of Interior, one policeman Ahmad al-Ahmad was killed and 11 police and security personnel were injured when a group of armed criminals opened fire on them in Talbisa near Homs. It all started when armed criminal groups cut off the Homs-Hama-Aleppo international highway in the area and were terrorizing civilians. The military was mobilized to the area to put an end to the armed groups' crime spree and prevent them from cutting off the highway again.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, the Syrian Customs authorities seized a huge consignment of weapons, including up-to-date machine guns of various kinds, automatic rifles, sniper rifles, pistols, night-vision scopes, grenade launchers and large quantities of various kinds of ammunition, in a refrigerator truck driven by an Iraqi in a bid to smuggle it from Iraq to Syria via al-Tanf border crossing. Director-General of Syrian Customs, Mustapha al-Bikai, said that other weapons consignments have been seized lately as there were attempts at smuggling them into Syria via Bab al-Hawa, as-Salama, Jdaidet Yabous crossings.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ "New Political Bloc Big Blow to Yemen's President", *Yemen Post*, April 18, 2011, available at <http://www.yemenpost.net/Detail123456789.aspx?ID=3&SubID=3456&MainCat=3>

⁵⁷ "Jordan seeks to redraft 24-year-old agreement with Syria", *The Jordan Times*, April 18, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=36638>

⁵⁸ "One policeman martyred, 11 injured when armed criminals opened fire on them in Talbisa near Homs", *Syrian Arab News Agency*, April 18, 2011, at <http://www.sana.sy/eng/21/2011/04/18/342080.htm>

⁵⁹ "Authorities Seize Huge Weapons Consignment Bound for Syria", *Syrian Arab News Agency*, April 18, 2011, at <http://www.sana.sy/eng/21/2011/04/18/342011.htm>

LIBYA

- **UN agrees to provide humanitarian aid in Tripoli; Russia warns NATO against excessive use of military force in Libya**

According to reports, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has said that the organisation has reached an agreement with the Libyan government to provide humanitarian aid in the country's capital, Tripoli. The deal to establish a "humanitarian presence" in Tripoli was completed by Ban Ki-moon's special envoy to Libya and the U.N. humanitarian chief, Valerie Amos. The U.N. already is providing aid in the rebel stronghold of Benghazi.⁶⁰

Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov warned NATO not to use excessive military force in Libya, which will lead to further additional casualties among civilians, and called for a political settlement to the conflict. However, leaders of Britain, France and the United States have decided to continue their military campaign in Libya until Muammar Al Qathafi leaves power.⁶¹

E. USA

- **Reports: Growing rift between USA and Pakistan**

Over the last two weeks, there have been reports on how the US - Pakistan relations are getting strained further due to widespread presence of US intelligence agencies in Pakistan and continued drone attacks.⁶² It is being said that this is the lowest point in US - Pakistan relations. "The rupture over Pakistan's demands that the Americans end drone strikes – which the Obama administration rejected – and scale back their intelligence presence within Pakistan exposed the tentative nature of the alliance forged after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. It is increasingly apparent that the two countries have differing, even irreconcilable, aims in Afghanistan."⁶³ Reports noted that there are major differences of opinions between the two allies on the nature of Afghanistan's government. While the US wants a strong centralized government in Afghanistan with a large army that can guard its borders. Pakistan on the other

⁶⁰ "UN to Provide Humanitarian aid in Tripoli", *The Tripoli Post*, April 18, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=5862>

⁶¹ Strong, Morgan (2011), "News Summary from the US/International Press on the Libyan Crisis", *The Tripoli Post*, April 18, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=5860>

⁶² "Pakistan Tells US It Must Sharply Cut CIA Activities", *The New York Times*, April 11, 2011 at <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/12/world/asia/12pakistan.html>

⁶³ "US Relations with Pakistan falter in Rift over Drone Attacks", *The New York Times*, April 17, 2011 at <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/18/world/asia/18pakistan.html>

hand prefers a loosely governed Afghanistan. Many commentators have suggested that Pakistan prefers a loosely governed Afghanistan so that Pakistan may be able to influence or control areas of Afghanistan via a proxy, such as the Taliban.⁶⁴

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

NATIONAL

- **India to strengthen Air Defence System; India to resume full defence cooperation with China**

India will soon buy a large number of missiles to defend the country's vital tactical and strategic locations and high-security zones from enemy threats and possible aerial attacks. The defence ministry has a request for information (RFI) from global and domestic missile manufacturers asking them if they could supply the weapon system within a short time-frame to the Indian Air Force (IAF). The ministry has accorded high priority to this deal.⁶⁵

In a significant development, after a long gap, India is all set to restore full defense cooperation with China, with a high-level military delegation to visit the country expectedly in June this year and an in-principle agreement reached for setting up a mechanism for consultations and coordination on border affairs. The decisions were concluded during a 50-minute meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Hu Jintao in Sanya, China. As part of the measure, there will be a series of visits including by an Indian military delegation to China besides exchange of visits by senior political leaders, holding of strategic economic dialogue, official consultations and people-to-people contact. The decision to send a military delegation to China marks an end to the freeze on all high level defense exchanges by India after the then Northern Army Commander Lt. Gen. B.S. Jaswal was denied a proper visa in July last year for travel to Beijing because he served in Jammu and Kashmir for which China follows a different visa policy from the rest of India.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Ibid

⁶⁵ "India To Buy Air Defence Missiles In Large Numbers", *Defence News*, April 14, 2011, at <http://www.defencenews.in/defence-news-internal.asp?get=new&id=429>

⁶⁶ "India To End Freeze on High-Level Defense Exchanges With China", *Defence News*, April 14, 2011, at <http://www.defencenews.in/defence-news-internal.asp?get=new&id=428>

INTERNATIONAL

- **South Korea and U.S to hold Anti-Invasion Drill; China's "military might" does not find favour with the US**

Reports noted that South Korean and U.S. troops will carry out an anti-invasion drill on a frontline island next month in response to North Korea's construction of a hovercraft base. It would be the first time the two allies will conduct a joint exercise on Baengnyeong Island, near the disputed sea border in the Yellow Sea. SBS TV and Chosun daily said special troops from the two allies will conduct the drill around the middle of next month. Inter-Korean ties remain bitter since South Korea blamed the North for allegedly torpedoing a South Korean warship near Baengnyeong Island in March last year, in which 46 sailors lost lives.⁶⁷

Meanwhile, expressing concern over the increasing military might of China in the Asia Pacific region, a top Pentagon commander and several senators have favoured the demand for more counter-balancing US efforts in the region. "As China was exerting its influence last year in a very assertive way, we were receiving general appeals across the Asia-Pacific from among our partners with regard to a desire for more US influence in the region," Admiral Robert Willard, Commander, US Pacific Command (PACOM) said. "Countries in the Asia Pacific region are asking for its influence to counterbalance China as they are being challenged by it," he said. Senator Carl Levin, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator John McCain and several other Senators have expressed their concern over China's development of aerial weapons, anti-satellite capabilities, stealth combat aircraft, a growing arsenal of ballistic missiles, offensive cyber-weapons and an aircraft carrier.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ "S.Korea, U.S. to Conduct Military Drill: Media", *Agence France-Presse*, April 16, 2011, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=6254303&c=ASI&s=SEA>

⁶⁸ "US concerned at China's military strength", April 13, 2011, at <http://www.brahmand.com/news/US-concerned-at-Chinas-military-strength/6789/1/13.html>

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

JAMMU & KASHMIR

- **Jammu shell blast kills two people; Separatists show no interest in joining Indo-Pak talks; Explosion in Jehangir Chowk; Woman candidate killed in the Panchayat elections; General A.S.Hasnain claimed no infiltration happened as yet; Accused of Moulana Showkat's killing arrested**

A shell explosion in a scrap dealer's shop in Jammu district left two persons dead and another injured. The border belt of Jourian in Akhnoor tehsil of the district was completely rocked due to the blast. Several live shells were also recovered after the blast which were later defused.⁶⁹ Reports noted that the invitation for talks to separatists from India and Pakistan is likely to be deferred as Kashmiri leaders have expressed reservations to join the process till both countries take some serious steps to resolve the Kashmir issue.⁷⁰

In another incident, mysterious explosion rocked Jehangir Chowk. Reports noted that explosion created panic following which police and paramilitary CRPF men cordoned off the area and launched searches.⁷¹ However, in central Kashmir's Budgam district, a gunman was shot dead a woman candidate for Panchayat elections. The woman is Hasina Begum, a Panch candidate. This is the first political killing in Kashmir since the 16 phase polls began on April 13.⁷²

Meanwhile, Chinar Corps GOC Lt. Gen A.S. Hasnain has confirmed there has been no infiltration bid observed from across the Line of Control so far this year. He made the observation from across the Line of Control owing to the hostile climatic conditions and the strict vigilance maintained. He reiterated the presence of Chinese troops in Pakistan Administered Kashmir as a cause of worry.⁷³

In other developments, police have claimed that three persons have been arrested, involved in the killing of Jamiat-a-Ahli Hadees (JAH) Chief Moulana

⁶⁹ '2 die in Jammu blast', *Greater Kashmir*, April 12, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Apr/13/2-die-in-jammu-blast-51.asp>

⁷⁰ 'Separatists not keen to join Indo-Pak talks', *Greater Kashmir*, April 11, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Apr/11/separatists-not-keen-to-join-indo-pak-talks-31.asp>

⁷¹ 'Blast in Jehangir Chowk', *Greater Kashmir*, April 15, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/ShowStoryLatest.asp?NewsID=2124>

⁷² 'Panchayat elections: Woman candidate shot dead', *Greater Kashmir*, April 16, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/ShowStoryLatest.asp?NewsID=2125>

⁷³ 'No infiltration bid yet', *Greater Kashmir*, April 15, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Apr/16/no-infiltration-bid-yet-hasnain-37.asp>

Showkat Ahmad Shah. The three accused who are arrested were members of a religio-political organization.⁷⁴

NORTH EAST INDIA

- **One killed and five injured in police firing in Darrang district; Infiltrators held along India-Bangladesh border; Repatriation of Bru refugees to begin; UDPF leader killed in Gossaigaon; Tension in Nagaland-Manipur border; Seven killed, six hurt in an ambush in Manipur**

According to reports, clashes between villagers and the police in Dalongghat village under Mangaldai police station in Darrang district left a college student dead and five others, including three policemen and two youth injured. The incident occurred due to the agitation of the villagers accusing the police of delayed response to the situation. The police fired in the air to drive away the mob which led to the fatal incidents.⁷⁵

Meanwhile, nine Indians were apprehended by BSF along the international border near Kulaing in Jaintia Hills district in Meghalaya, infiltrating from Bangladesh to India. Dry fish worth Rs. 50,000 were seized from the people. The apprehended persons had earlier crossed over and were returning.⁷⁶

Reports noted that the third phase of repatriation of Bru refugees from Tripura relief camps would be resumed. They will be brought back to Mizoram. The refugees were resettled in Damdiai, Khanthum, Baumgva, Damparengpui and Tuipuibari villages of Mizoram-Tripura border Mamit district.⁷⁷

In another incident, one supporter of UDPF (United Democratic People's Front) was killed while another one injured when some unidentified youths kidnapped and killed one of them in Gossaigan in Assam. The body was recovered by police from Kusumbil area.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ 'Moulana Showkat's Killing', *Greater Kashmir*, April 16, 2011 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Apr/17/moulana-showkat's-killing-50.asp>

⁷⁵ 'Student killed in police firing; 3 cops, 2 youth injured', *The Sentinel*, April 13, 2011 at <http://www.sentinelassam.com/mainnews/story.php?sec=18&subsec=0&id=71407&dtP=2011-04-13&ppr=1#71407>

⁷⁶ 'Nine held along India-Bangladesh border', *The Sentinel*, April 13, 2011 at <http://www.sentinelassam.com/meghalaya/story.php?sec=2&subsec=8&id=71623&dtP=2011-04-14&ppr=1#71>

⁷⁷ 'Bru refugee repatriation to begin on April 19', *The Sentinel*, April 13, 2011 at <http://www.sentinelassam.com/northeast/story.php?sec=1#715>

⁷⁸ 'One UDPF leader killed in Gossaigaon', *The Sentinel*, April 13, 2011 at <http://www.sentinelassam.com/state2/story.php?sec=2&subsec=14&id=71540&dtP=2011-04-14&ppr=1#71540>

In other developments, according to reports, tension is running high along the Nagaland-Manipur border with the stand off between the Southern Angami and Mao communities threatening to lead to a confrontation over the Kezol dispute. Volunteers are checking vehicles and identifying people belonging to the Mao community and preventing them from entering or exiting the point.⁷⁹ However, six security escort personnel of MLA of Phumgyar Assembly Constituency, Wungnaoshang Keishing and his personal driver lost their lives while six others including civilian sustained injuries when armed cadres of NSCN (IM) laid an ambush on the MLA.⁸⁰

IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

- **India's PM Manmohan Singh: Support for India's seat at UN high table growing; Resolution 1976 passed to fight piracy; UNSC condemns terrorist attacks in Belarus; UN Security Council urges Quattara to form all-inclusive government**

India's Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh has said that the support for the country's bid to the UN Security Council is growing.⁸¹ Reports noted that China had earlier vaguely backed India's bid during the BRICS summit held recently. However, there was no promise that China would vote for India's inclusion on the high table.⁸²

Meanwhile at the UN Security Council, in an effort to fight piracy, the members decided to urgently consider the establishment of specialized Somalian courts to try suspected pirates in Somalia and in the region. The Council also urged both States and non-State actors affected by piracy, most notably the international shipping community, to provide support for a host of judicial- and detention-related projects through the trust fund set up for that purpose. The 15- member body passed a resolution wherein the need for "a comprehensive response to

⁷⁹ 'Nagaland-Manipur border tense over Kezol dispute', *The Sentinel*, April 16, 2011 at <http://www.sentinelassam.com/northeast/story.php?sec=2&subsec=9&id=71668&dtP=2011-04-17&ppr=1#716>

⁸⁰ 'Seven killed, Six Hurt in Ambush on Wungnaoshang's Convoy', *Manipur Online*, April 15, 2011 at <http://manipuronline.com/headlines/seven-killed-six-hurt-in-ambush-on-wungnaoshangs-convoy/2011/04/1>

⁸¹ 'Support for India's bid for permanent UNSC seat growing: PM', *DailyIndia.com*, 16 April 2011 at <http://www.dailyindia.com/show/435089.php>

⁸² 'China backs India for UNSC seat, vaguely', *The Times of India*, 15 April 2011 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/China-backs-India-for-UNSC-seat-vaguely/articleshow/7986629.cms>

tackle piracy and its underlying causes by the international community” was stressed.⁸³

Meanwhile, the Security Council strongly condemned the terrorist attack in Belarusian capital which killed at least 11 people and injured dozens of others. The 15-member body reaffirmed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and reiterated its determination to combat all forms of terrorism in accordance with the UN Charter.⁸⁴

In other developments, reports noted that the UNSC encouraged President Quattara of Cote d’Ivoire to form an all-inclusive government. The Council urged all the Ivorians to refrain from any reprisals, revenge or provocation and to exercise maximum restraint and to work together to promote national reconciliation and restore sustainable peace through dialogue and consultation. The Council also encouraged the UN peacekeeping mission in the country to help the government in the task of disarmament, the establishment of security, public order and rule of law throughout the country.⁸⁵

⁸³ ‘Security Council to consider plans for specialized courts to try pirates’, *UN News Centre*, 11 April 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38073&Cr=piracy&Cr1=>

⁸⁴ ‘Security Council deplors deadly blast in Belarusian capital’, *UN News Centre*, 14 April 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38108&Cr=Belarus&Cr1=>

⁸⁵ ‘Cote d’Ivoire: Security Council calls for formation of an all-inclusive Government’, *UN News Centre*, 13 April 2011 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=38101&Cr=ivoire&Cr1=>