

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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	IN THIS ISSUE	PAGE
COUNTRY REVIEWS	A. SOUTH ASIA	3-4
	B. EAST ASIA	5-8

1. COUNTRY REVIEW

A. SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

- **Gen. David Petraeus takes charge as top NATO commander in Afghanistan; 64 insurgents killed in an anti-narcotics operation in Helmand; EAM Krishna will attend Kabul conference; Secretary Clinton: People of Afghanistan do not see the return of Taliban; Afghanistan requests Pakistan to allow passage of Indian goods through Wagah border into its landlocked territory; Six Afghan soldiers killed in NATO's "friendly fire" in Ghazni province**

Gen. David Petraeus has taken command as top commander for US led NATO forces in Afghanistan on July 5 during a ceremony at NATO headquarters in central Kabul. Speaking at the occasion, Petraeus said, "We must demonstrate to the people and to the Taliban that Afghan and [coalition] forces are here to safeguard the Afghan people, and that we are in this to win."¹ However, 64 insurgents were killed in a three day operation jointly conducted by Afghan anti-narcotics police and international security forces in Helmand province of Afghanistan. The operation yielded nearly 37,000 pounds of narcotics, Afghan officials noted.²

Reports noted that External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna will attend Kabul conference on July 20 which is being organized by the Afghan government aimed at bringing Taliban elements into the mainstream. About 50 countries are expected to attend the conference.³ Meanwhile, US secretary of State Hillary Clinton has said that majority of the people in Afghanistan do not see return of the Taliban. "In every survey that's been done, the people of Afghanistan do not want to see the return of the Taliban. Yet, at the same time, they are constantly under attack by a relatively small, but nevertheless lethal suicidal band of extremists," Clinton stated in an interview. She expressed full confidence in General David Petraeus as the new commander of US-led NATO forces in Afghanistan.⁴

¹ "Petraeus assumes command in Afghanistan", *Dallas news*, July 5, 2010 at http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/world/stories/DN-afghanistan_05int.ART0.State.Edition1.293f6be.html

² "64 dead in Afghanistan drug bust", *UPI.com*, July 6, 2010 at http://www.upi.com/Top_News/International/2010/07/06/64-dead-in-Afghanistan-drug-bust/UPI-79761278391109/

³ "Kabul meet: India to back any move for peace in Afghanistan", *The Hindu*, July 11, 2010 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article510869.ece>

⁴ "Afghans do not see return of Taliban: Hillary Clinton", *The Times of India*, July 7, 2010 at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/Afghans-do-not-see-return-of-Taliban-Hillary-Clinton/articleshow/6138354.cms>

In other developments, reports noted that Afghan government has requested Pakistan to allow passage of Indian goods through Wagah border to Afghanistan as it is a landlocked nation. This request was made during the seventh round of the Pak-Afghan Joint Working Group in Islamabad which was jointly chaired by the finance ministers of Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, Pakistan has been denying requests by Afghanistan because of serious objections raised by Pakistan's security agencies. Afghanistan had raised this issue earlier as well during the sixth round of the Joint Working Group held in Kabul.⁵

PAKISTAN

- **President Asif Zardari pays a six day visit to China; Both nations vow to jointly fight the menace of terrorism; Zardari: Pakistan and China are the “cornerstones of stability in South Asia; Zardari: Pakistan will not “hand over” the perpetrators of 26/11 to India; Rehman Malik pledges to impose strict laws against terrorism in Pakistan; US: Najibullah Zazi was guided by the Al Qaeda leadership in Pakistan in the plan to bomb the New York subway; Gilani: War on terror has adversely impacted the economy of Pakistan**

President Asif Zardari was on a six day visit to China during which he met Chinese President Hu Jintao and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao. During his meeting with Hu Jintao, the two leaders resolved to jointly fight the threat of terrorism. Both countries signed six agreements in various fields. China pledged to provide 50 million Yuan for the purpose implementing agreed projects.⁶ In a related development, in his meeting with the Chinese Prime Minister, Wen Jiabao, Zardari stated that Pakistan and China are the “cornerstones of stability in South Asia”. Keeping in view that this was President Zardari’s fifth visit to China, PM Jiabao appreciated the degree of significance Pakistan’s President attaches to China Pak ties.⁷

Meanwhile, Zardari made it clear in Beijing that Pakistan was not going “hand over” the perpetrators of 26/11 to India. Instead, he said, these “non state actors” would be put to trial in Pakistan itself.⁸ However, the Interior Minister Rehman

⁵ “Afghanistan asks Pak to allow transit of Indian goods through Wagah border”, *Sify*, July 7, 2010 at <http://sify.com/news/afghanistan-asks-pak-to-allow-transit-of-indian-goods-through-wagah-border-news-international-khhpacbficb.html>

⁶ ‘China, Pakistan vow to step up fight against terrorism’, *Dawn*, July 8, 2010 at <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/china%2C-pakistan-vow-to-step-up-fight-against-terrorism-870>

⁷ ‘Pakistan, China cornerstone of stability in S Asia: Zardari’, *The News*, July 9, 2010 at http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=29937

⁸ ‘Pakistan won’t hand over 26/11 suspects to India’, *Daily times*, July 11, 2010 at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\07\11\story_11-7-2010_pg1_1

Malik reportedly pledged to impose strict laws against terrorism in Pakistan. Malik was speaking during a meeting with the Ulemas in Islamabad on July 4 in which the Ulemas promised their support in eliminating militancy.⁹

In other developments, US has alleged that Najibullah Zazi was guided by the Al Qaeda leadership in Pakistan in the executing of plan to bomb the New York subway. This was stated by David Kris, the Prosecutor in this case and the Assistant Attorney General for National Security at the Justice Department.¹⁰ Prime Minister Gilani admitted that that the war on terror has adversely impacted the economy of Pakistan. He was speaking during a meeting with a delegation of the International Crisis Group (ICG) in Islamabad on July 6.¹¹

B. EAST ASIA

CHINA

- **China and Pakistan sign six deals; China urges India to treat Chinese companies fairly; China raises serious concerns about a proposed naval drill between US and ROK; Chinese Defence Ministry refutes Japanese media reports regarding its military expenditure; British Chief of Defense Staff visits China; China has sent 15,000 soldiers to UN Peacekeeping missions in last two decades**

Reports noted that Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari's recent China visit had witnessed six deals being signed between China and Pakistan, which covered areas such as agriculture, healthcare, justice, media, economy and technology.¹² Another report noted Chinese Minister of Commerce Chen Deming as saying that China had urged India to treat Chinese companies fairly. Chen made these remarks with regard to India's alleged ban on purchases of telecom equipment from Chinese vendors. Referring to a list of telecom equipment providers from whom Indian telecom operators were supposedly forbidden to buy anything on

⁹ 'Malik promises strict law against terrorism', *The News*, July 5, 2010 at http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_default.asp?arc_date=7/5/2010

¹⁰ 'NY bomb plot hatched by al-Qaeda men in Pakistan: US', *The News*, July 8, 2010 at http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=29916

¹¹ 'War on terrorism has shattered economy: PM', *Daily Times*, July 7, 2010 at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\07\07\story_7-7-2010_pg1_1

¹² "China, Pakistan Ink 6 Deals, Pledge Joint Fight on Terrorism", *China Daily* (Online), July 7, 2010, at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-07/07/content_10078483.htm

the grounds of national security concerns, Chen said that the Chinese government had noticed the list and it is being investigated.¹³

China has expressed concerns about a scheduled joint naval drill between the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK) in the Yellow Sea. Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang commented on July 6 at a regular press conference that China had conveyed its concerns to “the relevant parties”. He further added that nothing should be done that may escalate tensions, and jeopardize the security of the regional countries.¹⁴

Meanwhile, in a response to recent Japanese media reports that China's military spending would, in fact, total 788 billion yuan this year, about 1.5 times higher than the budget unveiled earlier this year, the Chinese Defense Ministry responded that these reports were totally “groundless” and categorically stated that the China's military budget and spending was strictly monitored and there was no hidden expenditure.¹⁵

Last week, British Chief of Defense Staff Jock Stirrup was on an official visit to China. During the visit, he met with the Vice Chairman of China's Central Military Commission Guo Boxiong. Both the officials reiterated that the military relationship was an important component of China-Britain relations.¹⁶

In other developments, in a recently released data by the China's Ministry of National Defense figured out that China had sent 15,603 soldiers to participate in 18 United Nations peacekeeping missions since 1990. It notes that as of the end of June 2010, there were still 1,960 soldiers deployed in nine UN peacekeeping missions or working in the UN peacekeeping department. So far, China has bore nine casualties in these operations.¹⁷

¹³ “China Urges India to Fairly Treat Chinese Companies”, *China Daily* (Online), July 9, 2010, at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-07/09/content_10089039.htm

¹⁴ “China Seriously Concerned about US-ROK Naval Drill: Spokesman”, *PLA Daily* (Online), July 7, 2010, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-07/07/content_4253707.htm

¹⁵ “China Says Japanese Reports on its Military Expenditure “Groundless” ”, *PLA Daily* (Online), July 10, 2010, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-07/10/content_4256154.htm

¹⁶ “China, Britain Pledge to Enhance Military Ties”, *PLA Daily* (Online), July 6, 2010, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-07/06/content_4252723.htm

¹⁷ “China Sends 15,603 Soldiers on UN Peace Missions in 20 Years”, *PLA Daily* (Online), July 7, 2010, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-07/07/content_4253709.htm

SOUTHEAST ASIA

- **Malaysia to seek ICJ opinion on Israeli attack on Gaza flotilla; China emphasizes on strengthening trade ties with Malaysia; Second ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM) on Non-proliferation and Disarmament took place in Singapore; Malaysia signs an MoU with Iran on education; CECA agreement between India and Malaysia expected to be signed in November 2010; India is to sign a treaty with the Myanmar to check cross-border movement of insurgents**

Malaysia has decided to urge the UN General Assembly to seek advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) regarding Israeli attack on Gaza flotilla. Consistent with UN Security Council resolution 1860, Malaysia has also demanded the immediate lifting of Israeli blockade on Gaza that was imposed since June 2007. Malaysia would put pressure on the adoption of these two measures through the Emergency Special session of the UN General Assembly. But if the calls by the international community to initiate an impartial and transparent investigation of the still remain unheeded by the concerned party, Malaysia would urge the UN member states to reconvene the 10th Emergency Special session of the General Assembly to deliberate on the issue. This was stated by Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin on July 11 while closing an international conference at the Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur.¹⁸

During his five-day official visit to Malaysia recently, China's Vice Minister of the State Council Information Office, Dong Yunhu emphasized on expanding cooperation between the two countries on various fields, especially in trade. In 2009, the trade volume between the two countries reportedly reached at almost US\$52 billion of which Malaysia enjoyed a trade surplus of around US\$1.7 billion.¹⁹

The Second ASEAN Regional Forum's Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM) on Non-proliferation and Disarmament was held in Singapore recently. The three-day long meeting was jointly hosted by Singapore, China and the US and its theme was "Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy and Technology". Besides the ten ASEAN

¹⁸ "Malaysia will request UN General assembly to seek ICJ opinion on Freedom Flotilla Attack", *Bernama.com*, July 11, 2010, at <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsindex.php?id=512702>

¹⁹ "China wants to promote further ties with Malaysia", *Bernama.com*, July 6, 2010, at <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsindex.php?id=511274>

member states, several other members of the ARF, including India, Japan, Australia, Canada EU, Russia, two Koreas, also took part in the meeting.²⁰

Malaysia and Iran has recently signed an MoU to promote cooperation in the areas of mutual interest in the field of education. The idea of signing of the MoU was mooted in 2008 and approved by the Cabinet in April 2009. The MoU basically include collaboration in school/institution linkages; science and mathematics; information and communication technology (ICT); and sport, culture and music; exploration of collaboration in teacher training and professional development, quality assurance in education, and technical and vocational education.²¹

Malaysia's Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib has noted that there is a need to complete the ongoing talks over the Comprehensive Economic Agreement (CECA) between India and Malaysia before Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's official visit to Kuala Lumpur in November 2010. It is worth noting that both the countries are currently involved in preparing a Framework for Strategic Partnership to enhance their bilateral relationship further.²²

With a view to curb cross border movements of insurgents, India is to sign a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) with Myanmar. India has been emphasizing on signing of this accord as it is increasingly concerned about the Northeastern insurgents using Myanmar as a safe haven. An important aspect of this accord is the inclusion of the 'cost compensation' clause which would allow Myanmar to seek expenses incurred on special investigation carried out by it on India's request.²³

²⁰ "ASEAN Regional Forum on Non-Proliferation and disarmament", *Bernamea.com*, July 5, 2010, at <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsindex.php?id=511015>

²¹ "Malaysia, Iran sign MoU on Education", *Bernamea.com*, July 5, 2010, at <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsindex.php?id=510989>

²² "Najib wants CECA with India signed in November", *Bernamea.com*, July 8, 2010, at <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsindex.php?id=511780>

²³ "India, Myanmar pact to help curb NE insurgents", *Indo-Burma News*, July 7, at http://www.indoburmanews.net/archives-1/2010/july_2010/india-myanmar-pact-to-help-curb-ne-insurgents