

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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1. COUNTRY REVIEW

A. SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

- **More than 90,000 secret Afghan war documents leaked by 'Wikileaks'; Leaked documents indicate at Pakistan's covert support to insurgency in Afghanistan; Documents reveal that ISI paid the Taliban and the Haqqani network to specifically target Indians; Obama administration strongly condemn the disclosure of classified information; President Karzai urges international partners to take stronger action against terrorist sanctuaries outside Afghanistan; Pentagon announces criminal probe into secret war documents leak; Afghan Cabinet: 52 civilians were killed in NATO's rocket attack in Helmand province; Gen. Petraeus issues a new set of Afghan counterinsurgency guidelines; British troops launch 'Operation Tor Shezada' in Helmand province of Southern Afghanistan**

In one of the biggest leaks in US military history, 'Wikileaks' website has made disclosures of more than 90,000 records of incidents and intelligence reports related to ongoing Afghan war, covering the period from January 2004 to December 2009.¹ Among many revelations, leaked documents reveal that scores of civilians in Afghanistan have been killed by NATO forces in unreported incidents. The documents claim that 195 civilians have been improperly killed and 174 wounded. The leaked classified reports also reveal the secret efforts of coalition forces to hunt down and "kill or capture" senior Taliban and al-Qaeda figures. While indicating at covert support to insurgency by Pakistan, leaked classified documents suggested that members of Pakistan's secret services, the ISI have been meeting with Taliban leaders in order to organise resistance against US forces and even kill US-supported Afghan leaders. This has been done by the ISI despite the fact that Pakistan has been receiving annual aid from the United States to fight against insurgency.

Reports noted that documents may lead to renewed doubts over strategy in Afghanistan. It would be worth noting that more than 1,000 US troops have been killed in the ongoing Afghan conflict.² The documents also revealed that Pakistan's ISI paid the Taliban and the Haqqani network to specifically target

¹ "Afghanistan war logs: Massive leak of secret files exposes truth of occupation", *Guardian*, July 25, 2010 at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jul/25/afghanistan-war-logs-military-leaks>

² "Afghanistan war logs: 90,000 classified documents revealed by Wikileaks", *The Telegraph*, July 26, 2010 at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/7909742/Afghanistan-war-logs-90000-classified-documents-revealed-by-Wikileaks.html>

Indian road construction teams and consulates in Afghanistan which have come under attack more than two dozen times.³

However, Obama administration has strongly condemned the disclosure of classified documents. The White House noted in a statement, "We strongly condemn the disclosure of classified information by individuals and organisations, which puts the lives of the US and partner service members at risk and threatens our national security. Wikileaks made no effort to contact the US government about these documents, which may contain information that endanger the lives of Americans, our partners, and local populations who cooperate with us."⁴ Meanwhile, the Pentagon has announced that the US Army has begun a criminal probe into the leak of classified military files. The probe has been assigned to the same Army Criminal Investigation Division that has been investigating Bradley Manning, a 22-year-old private charged in an earlier leak to Wikileaks.⁵ Reacting to the leak of secret documents, Afghan President Karzai said that leaks have endangered the lives of Afghan citizens who have cooperated with the international forces. However, in a clear reference to havens in Pakistan, President Karzai pushed his international partners to take stronger action against terrorist sanctuaries outside Afghanistan. He stated, "The international community is here to fight terrorism, but there is danger elsewhere and they are not acting." He was speaking at a press conference at the presidential palace in Kabul on July 29th.⁶

The Afghan cabinet said in a statement that 52 civilians were killed in a rocket attack by NATO forces in Sangin district of southern Helmand province on July 23rd. President Hamid Karzai who chaired the cabinet meeting, expressed deep shock and strongly condemned the killing of innocent civilians.⁷ Meanwhile, top NATO Commander in Afghanistan General David Petraeus have issued a new set of Afghan counterinsurgency guidelines which includes instruction to "be a good guest" but urges troops to "fight hard" and get tough on corruption. The three-page document which contains 24 points and dated July 27 is a blueprint for the behaviour of service members of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.⁸

³ "ISI paid Taliban to target Indian workers", *MSN News*, July 28, 2010 at <http://news.in.msn.com/international/article.aspx?ucpg=2&cp-documentid=4201894>

⁴ "Afghanistan war logs: Massive leak of secret files exposes truth of occupation", *Guardian*, July 25, 2010 at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jul/25/afghanistan-war-logs-military-leaks>

⁵ "Pentagon opens criminal probe into Afghan war file leaks", *The Hindu*, July 28, 2010 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/article537182.ece>

⁶ "Target militants outside Afghanistan: Karzai", *The Hindu*, July 29, 2010 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/article540071.ece>

⁷ "Karzai denounces NATO for killing 52 civilians in Sangin", *Pajhwok Afghan News*, July 26, 2010 at <http://www.pajhwok.com/viewstory.asp?lng=eng&id=99056>

⁸ "Petraeus: 'Fight hard' in Afghanistan but 'be a good guest'", *AFP*, July 28, 2010 at <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iI4U0UdHWdCCiffo3DjNrv-ow3mw>

In other developments, reports noted that hundreds of British troops have launched biggest offensive of summer on July 30th to wrest a Taliban stronghold in Helmand province from insurgent's control. The offensive has been code named as 'Operation Tor Shezada', or Black Prince.⁹

B. EAST ASIA

CHINA

- **China's Defense Minister: China would continue to enhance its military capabilities; The Defence Ministry describes Chinese defence budget as reasonable and at appropriate level; The UN praises Chinese contribution to its peace-keeping missions; China would establish security and trust mechanism across the strait only at appropriate time; China opposes sanctions on Iran; Chinese Foreign Minister visits Latin America; China is to participate in the anti-terror exercise of the SCO; The PLA Navy conducts live-ammunition exercises in South China Sea and Yellow Sea**

On the eve of the 83rd anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) on August 1, 2010, Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie reiterated that China's armed forces would continue to augment their capabilities and military readiness to safeguard sovereignty, security and development of the nation. He specified that China would continue to build up PLA's capability to carry out diversified military tasks, particularly for winning regional wars under informationized circumstances.¹⁰

The China's Defense Ministry spokesperson Geng Yansheng has maintained that China's defense expenditure has always been reasonable and at appropriate level. He claimed that China's annual defense expenditure has been around 1.4 percent of its GDP in recent years while the share of some major world powers is between 2 and 4 percent.¹¹

UN peacekeeping Chief Alain Le Roy has said that the UN was extremely pleased with Chinese participation in the UN peacekeeping operation. He made

⁹ "British troops launch biggest offensive of summer in Afghanistan", *The Telegraph*, July 30, 2010 at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/7918548/British-troops-launch-biggest-offensive-of-summer-in-Afghanistan.html>

¹⁰ "China to Enhance Army's Capabilities for National Interest: Defense Minister", *PLA Daily (Online)*, August 1, 2010, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-08/01/content_4270762.htm

¹¹ "China's Defense Expenditure at Appropriate Level: Spokesman", *PLA Daily (Online)*, July 31, 2010, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-07/31/content_4270287.htm

these remarks at a reception programme which was held to commemorate the 83rd anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). Incidentally, this year also marked the 20 years of China's participation in UN peacekeeping operations. China has participated in 18 UN peacekeeping operations, and contributed a total of 15,000 peacekeepers in last two decades. So far, nine Chinese peacekeepers have lost their lives in these operations. At present also, around 2,000 Chinese troopers are participating in nine of the 15 UN peacekeeping operations.¹²

The Chinese Defence Ministry has made it clear that the mainland China is ready to discuss and establish military security and mutual trust mechanism across the Taiwan Strait in order to maintain stability in the region, but this discussion will take place “at a proper time” only.¹³

China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Jiang Yu said on Friday that China did not support unilateral sanctions levied on Iran by the European Union (EU). She said that China hope that the relevant parties would adhere to diplomatic means on the issue. China is of the view that the Iran nuclear issue should be resolved through dialogue and negotiations.¹⁴

Last week Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi was on a tour to Latin America. Speaking at a joint press conference with his Mexican counterpart Patricia Espinoza on July 30, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said that he disagreed with the theory that world power was shifting from West to East. On the contrary, the world was witnessing a trend that various forces were moving toward a relative balance of power, Yang added.¹⁵ It was noted in media reports that during this Latin American tour, China explored new opportunities of mutual cooperation in that part of the world. Reports noted Venezuela and China held talks on ten new agreements involving cooperation in energy, mining, food and gas sectors on Thursday. It was also reported that China had agreed to back Venezuela's 17 development projects by providing \$4 billion in credit loans via the China Development Bank (CDB). Since May 2010, the two countries have been discussing a host series of non-oil projects in Venezuela, which will be financed by the China Development Bank (CDB) with a credit of

¹² “UN official lauds China's contribution to peacekeeping efforts”, *People's Daily Online*, July 30, 2010 at <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90883/7087261.html>

¹³ “Mainland will Agree to Cross-Strait Military Security Talks: Defense Spokesman”, *PLA Daily* (Online), July 30, 2010, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-07/30/content_4269904.htm.

¹⁴ “China Opposes EU Sanctions on Iran: Spokeswoman”, *China Daily* (Online), July 30, 2010, at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-07/30/content_11075047.htm

¹⁵ “World Moving toward Balance of Power: Chinese FM”, *China daily* (Online), July 31, 2010, at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-07/31/content_11076794.htm

\$20 billion. Incidentally, Venezuela is China's fifth-largest trading partner in Latin America, and the two countries have set up a bilateral investment fund of \$12 billion to finance their economic and manufacturing development.¹⁶ In addition, China and Mexico also agreed on Friday to boost bilateral cooperation in economy, trade, investment and tourism.¹⁷

The Chinese Defense Ministry spokesman has informed that more than 1,000 army and air force officers and soldiers from China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) will take part in an anti-terror exercise, code-named "Peace Mission 2000" and seventh of its kind under the aegis of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), in Kazakhstan this autumn.¹⁸

In other developments, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy has conducted a large scale of live-ammunition training exercise in the South China Sea on July 26th. In this exercise, a large group of warships, submarines and combat aircraft was brought together.¹⁹ On the other hand, the artillery troops under the Nanjing Military Area Command of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) carried out a massive actual-troop and live-shell exercise near the Yellow Sea also. In this exercise, the PLA for the first time conducted fire strike exercise with the long-range rocket launcher.²⁰

SOUTHEAST ASIA

- **Myanmar's military ruler General Than Shwe visits India, signs wide-ranging agreements; India agrees to consider providing assistance to Myanmar in three critical areas; Bilateral tie in the in education sector between Malaysia and South Korea to be further strengthened**

During Myanmar's military ruler General Than Shwe's five-day long visit to India this week, a number of agreements were signed between the two countries to boost the bilateral relationship. Under the treaty on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, both the countries agreed on close cooperation in tackling terrorism, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, money laundering and

¹⁶ "Venezuela, China Discuss New Co-op Agreements", *China Daily* (Online), July 30, 2010, at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-07/30/content_11072080.htm.

¹⁷ "China, Mexico Agree to Strengthen Economic Ties", *China Daily* (Online), July 31, 2010, at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-07/31/content_11076661.htm

¹⁸ "China to Send Troops to Kazakhstan for Anti-terrorism Drill: Spokesman", *PLA Daily* (Online), July 31, 2010, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-07/31/content_4270282.htm

¹⁹ "PLA Navy Conducts Live-ammunition Training in South China Sea", *PLA Daily* (Online), July 30, 2010, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-07/30/content_4269366.htm

²⁰ "PLA Conducts Large-scale Actual-troop and Live-shell Exercise near Yellow Sea", *PLA Daily* (Online), July 28, 2010, at http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/news-channels/china-military-news/2010-07/28/content_4268408.htm

transnational organized crime. Both sides pledged not to let use their territory for terror and insurgent activities against each other.²¹

India has also agreed to consider providing assistance to Myanmar in three areas i.e. information technology, industrial development and infrastructure development. India is to assist Myanmar in restoring its major tourist site, Ananda temple which is a noted Buddhist shrine. Keeping in mind its energy interest in Myanmar, India has already begun working on an ambitious transport corridor across Myanmar that would enable the northeast states in India to get access to the Bay of Bengal through Burmese port city Sittwe.²² While the Indian government has pledged to give US\$10 million to Myanmar to purchase agricultural machinery, the EXIM Bank of India has agreed to provide Myanmar with a credit fund of US\$60 million to fund various railway projects.²³

During his recent four-day visit to South Korea, Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, who is also serving as the Education Minister, emphasized on enhancing the bilateral ties between the two countries by collaborating in curriculum development, teacher's training, vocational and technical as well as sports development in schools. A MoU is to be signed soon in this regard.²⁴

C. WEST ASIA

IRAN

• **European Union imposed new sanctions against Iran; Iran and the United States indicate at fresh nuclear talk**

European Union foreign ministers have imposed new tougher sanctions against Iran in an effort to stop its nuclear programme. The new restrictions cover foreign trade, financial services and the oil and gas sectors which are considered to be the back bone of Iranian economy. EU officials noted that the package was "by some way the most far-reaching sanctions adopted by the EU against any country." Reacting to the newer sanctions, Iran said it would fail. Iranian foreign

²¹ "India, Myanmar boost economic, energy ties", *Indo Burma News*, July 28, 2010, at http://www.indoburmanews.net/archives-1/2010/july_2010/india-myanmar-boost-economic-energy-ties

²² "India to aid Burma", *Indo-Burma News*, July 28, 2010, at http://www.indoburmanews.net/archives-1/2010/july_2010/india-to-aid-burma

²³ "Burma, India sign wide-ranging agreements", *Indo-Burma News*, July 28, 2010, at http://www.indoburmanews.net/archives-1/2010/july_2010/burma-india-sign-wide-ranging-agreements

²⁴ "Malaysia wants to enhance education ties with South Korea", *Bernama.com*, July 28, 2010, at <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsindex.php?id=517187>

ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast stated that "sanctions are not considered an effective tool... and they will only complicate the situation."²⁵

Iran and the United States have sent positive signals about the possibility of fresh talks on the Iranian nuclear program. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said that Iran has given an assurance to stop enriching uranium to 20 percent purity if world powers agreed to a proposed nuclear fuel swap. The offer, conveyed to Davutoglu could bode well for an expected resumption of talks in September between Iran and major powers on Iran's enrichment program. After Davutoglu's comments, the US State Department said Iran had often sent mixed signals but that the United States was "fully prepared" to resume talks among the six major powers and Tehran. Last time, talks were held between Iran and six major powers i.e. the United States, Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia in Geneva in October 2009. US State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley stated, "we hope to have the same kind of meeting coming up in the coming weeks that we had last October...we are interested in a process, more than one meeting."²⁶

IRAQ

• 12 killed and many injured in targeted attacks in Iraq; 5 member crew of Iraqi military killed in helicopter crash

In a rocket attack on the Iraqi shrine city of Karbala in Baghdad, 7 people have been killed and many injured. The Karbala Police officials noted that several mortars landed and killed seven pilgrims and injuring 46, in a neighborhood a few kilometers northwest of the center of the city. The mortar explosions also ripped through a number of nearby houses in the northwest of Karbala. Meanwhile, a bomb detonated inside a restaurant in Baghdad's northern neighborhood of Sadr City, killing five people.²⁷

In another development an Iraqi military helicopter has crashed in a sandstorm southwest of Baghdad, leaving all five of its crew dead, the commander of the country's air force says. Defense ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Mohammed al-

²⁵ "EU tightens sanctions over Iran nuclear programme," *BBC News*, July 26, 2010, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-10758328?print=true>

²⁶ "Iran, US send positive signals on nuclear talks," *Khaleej Times*, July 29, 2010, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2010/July/middleeast_July556.xml§ion=middleeast

²⁷ "12 killed in Karbala, Baghdad attacks," *Tehran Times*, June 29, 2010, at http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=223801

Askari confirmed the crash, saying the helicopter was a Russian-designed Mi-17.²⁸

²⁸ “Iraq military helicopter crash kills five, “ *BBC News*, July 28, 2010, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-10788989>