

# THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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## I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

### A. South Asia

#### Bangladesh

- **India's Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visits Bangladesh; India to provide grant of about Bangladesh Taka 320 crore to Bangladesh; India opens the Tin Bigha Corridor allowing 24-hour access of Bangladeshi nationals; Bangladesh Foreign Minister congratulates the newly appointed Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Nepal; Bangladesh begins submission of its case concerning delimitation of the maritime boundary with Myanmar at ITLOS; Foreign Minister Dipu Moni asked Myanmar for early repatriation of the Rohingya Refugees; Japan provides US\$ 10 million for food assistance to Bangladesh**

In a significant development, India's Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh paid his two-day official visit to Bangladesh. Dr. Singh became the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Bangladesh in more than a decade. The two countries signed 10 Memorandums of Understanding and protocols covering land boundary to preservation of Sundarbans, and a framework agreement on cooperation for development. However, Bangladesh and India have failed to sign agreements on transit and Teesta and Feni rivers.<sup>1</sup>

In one of several positive outcomes of the visits, reports noted that India will provide a grant of about Bangladesh Taka 320 crore to Bangladesh to implement several projects and initiatives including construction of rail track between Akhaura and Agartala – part of a proposed transit route. This was announced on September 7, 2011 in the Bangladesh-India joint statement issued after Prime Minister Dr. Singh's two-day visit to Dhaka.<sup>2</sup> India has also opened the Tin Bigha Corridor allowing 24-hour access of Bangladeshi nationals to Dahagram-Angorpota enclave in line with an agreement signed between the two neighbouring countries.<sup>3</sup>

In another development, Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni congratulated the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Nepal Narayan Kaji Shrestha on his assumption of office.<sup>4</sup>

According to reports, Bangladesh began submission of its case concerning delimitation of the maritime boundary with Myanmar at International Tribunal for Law of the Sea (ITLOS) on

<sup>1</sup> Karim, Rezaul, "Transit sinks in Teesta waters: Dhaka, Delhi shelve major deals, sign minor ones as Mamata's U-turn on river sharing changes course of talks", *The Daily Star*, September 7, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=201405>.

<sup>2</sup> Byron, Karim Rejaul, "Development Projects: India to give Tk 320cr", *The Daily Star*, September 9, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=201745>.

<sup>3</sup> "Tin Bigha now open for 24hrs", *The Daily Star*, September 9, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=201721>

<sup>4</sup> "Dipu Moni greets new Nepalese FM", *The Daily Star*, September 9, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=201701>

September 8, 2011, arguing for equitable solution of the long running dispute.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni asked Myanmar for early repatriation of the Rohingya refugees from Nayapara and Kutupalong camps in Cox's Bazar district. She made the request when Myanmar Ambassador in Bangladesh Min Lwin called on her at the Foreign Ministry on September 5, 2011.<sup>6</sup>

In other developments, the Japanese government has given the World Food Programme (WFP) US\$ 10 million to provide food assistance to the poor communities, vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change impacts in Bangladesh.<sup>7</sup>

## Sri Lanka

- **Joint Staff level talks held between the Sri Lankan and Indian Navy; India and Sri Lanka sign an agreement for the construction of second coal power plant in Sri Lanka; One hundred houses built by India for war victims are ready for occupation; EAM G.L. Peiris briefs the Serbian President, Foreign Minister and Defence Minister about the current situation in Sri Lanka; Prof. Peiris met the leadership of the Royal Jordanian Government in Amman; US urges Sri Lankan Government to charge or release former LTTE combatants still in custody; Sri Lankan Defence Secretary paid an official visit to Vietnam; Ambassador (Ms) Tamara Kunanayakam unanimously elected to the position of the Chair/Rapporteur of the Working Group on the Right to Development**

Reports noted that Joint Staff level talks between the Sri Lanka Navy and the Indian Navy began at the Sri Lanka Navy Headquarters on September 8, 2011. Focus of the discussion during the talk was on operational and training as well as logistics and technical matters concerning the two Navies.<sup>8</sup>

In another development, the agreement for the second coal power plant in Sri Lanka with the installed capacity of 500 MWs was signed by officials of India and Sri Lanka in Colombo on September 6, 2011 at a ceremony chaired by Power and Energy Minister Patali Champika Ranawaka, Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB).<sup>9</sup>

Reportedly, one hundred houses, for war-affected people in the North, constructed under financial assistance from India are now ready for occupation.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> "Maritime Boundary with Myanmar:Dhaka starts submission in int'l court", *The Daily Star*, September 9, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=201681>

<sup>6</sup> "Repatriate Rohingya refugees:Dipu Moni urges Myanmar envoy", *The Daily Star*, September 6, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=201252>.

<sup>7</sup> "Tk 75cr Japanese aid for food insecure poor", *The Daily Star*, September 6, 2011 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=201268>.

<sup>8</sup> "SL and Indian Navy discuss security issues", *The Daily Mirror*, September 9, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/55667.html>

<sup>9</sup> "500 MWs second coal power plant in Trincomalee", *The Daily Mirror*, September 6, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/55379.html>.

<sup>10</sup> "100 India-funded houses ready ", *The Daily Mirror*, September 5, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/55223.html>.

During his visit to Belgrade to attend the commemorative meeting of Foreign Ministers to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Non-Aligned Movement, External Affairs Minister Professor G.L. Peiris, met with President of Serbia Boris Tadic, Foreign Minister Mr. Vuk Jeremic and Defence Minister of Serbia Dragan Sutanovac and briefed them about the current situation in Sri Lanka.<sup>11</sup>

Earlier, on the eve of the departure by Professor G.L. Peiris to Geneva for meetings with the President of the Human Rights Council and with Heads of Missions accredited to the United Nations in Geneva, Professor Peiris had bilateral discussions in Amman with Dr. Marouf Al Bakhit, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Mr. Nasser Judeh, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Jordan. Professor Peiris provided a detailed briefing on developments in Sri Lanka to the leadership of the Royal Jordanian Government, a member of the Human Rights Council in Geneva.<sup>12</sup> However, the United States has urged the Sri Lankan government to charge or release former LTTE combatants, those who are still held in custody.<sup>13</sup>

Reports noted that Sri Lankan Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa paid an official visit to Vietnam. Focus of discussion with the Vietnamese leaders, during the visit was how to increase defence ties between the two countries.<sup>14</sup>

In other developments, the Ambassador (Ms) Tamara Kunanayakam, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations, Geneva has been unanimously elected to the position of the Chair / Rapporteur of the Working Group on the Right to Development (R2D).<sup>15</sup>

## Maldives

- **President Nasheed is on official visit to the United Kingdom, Canada, France and Switzerland; President Nasheed conveys message of sympathy to India following the bomb attack in Delhi; President Nasheed attends meeting on the possible legal form of new climate agreement; Canadian High Commissioner to the Maldives meet President Nasheed**

President Mohamed Nasheed and the First Lady Laila Ali have departed on an official visit to the United Kingdom, Canada, France and Switzerland on September 7, 2011.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>11</sup> "At 50th Anniversary Meeting in Belgrade GL briefs NAM Foreign Ministers on Developments in Sri Lanka", *Ministry of External Affairs, Sri Lanka*, September 6, 2011 at <http://www.mea.gov.lk/index.php/en/media/2999-at-50th-anniversary-meeting-in-belgrade-gl-briefs-nam-foreign-ministers-on-developments-in-sri-lanka>.

<sup>12</sup> "Sri Lanka's experience immediately relevant to Developing World – GL tells Jordan's Prime Minister", *Ministry of External Affairs, Sri Lanka*, September 8, 2011 at <http://www.mea.gov.lk/index.php/en/media/3006-sri-lankas-experience-immediately-relevant-to-developing-world-gl-tells-jordans-prime-minister>

<sup>13</sup> "Charge or release ex-LTTEers: US urges Lanka", *The Daily Mirror*, September 5, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/front-page-news/55244.html>.

<sup>14</sup> "Gota's Vietnam visit increases defence ties", *The Daily Mirror*, September 7, 2011 at <http://print.dailymirror.lk/news/news/55452.html>.

<sup>15</sup> "Sri Lanka has been elected to the Chair / Rapporteur of the Working Group on the Right to Development", *Ministry of External Affairs, Sri Lanka*, September 9, 2011 at <http://www.mea.gov.lk/index.php/en/media/3004-sri-lanka-has-been-elected-to-the-chair-rapporteur-of-the-working-group-on-the-right-to-development>.

<sup>16</sup> "President and First Lady Depart on an Official Trip", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, September 7, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5894>

Meanwhile, Mohamed Nasheed sent a message of sympathy to President Pratibha Patil of India following the bomb attack in Delhi on September 7, 2011.<sup>17</sup>

President Mohamed Nasheed attended a meeting on the possible Legal Form of New Climate Agreement on September 9, 2011, hosted by the Mary Robinson Foundation-Climate Justice (MRFJC) at the Grantham Research Institute for Climate Change and Environment.<sup>18</sup>

In other developments, Canadian High Commissioner to the Maldives, Bruce Levy paid a courtesy call on President Mohamed Nasheed on September 7, 2011.<sup>19</sup>

## B. East Asia

### South East Asia

- **Thai Prime Minister to visit Cambodia; Philippines plans to set up South China Sea stations; Philippine Government and National Democratic Front (NDF) to resume dialogue; Indonesia-South Korea ink Defence pact**

The newly elected Prime Minister of Thailand, Yingluck Shinawatra is likely to make a one day visit to Cambodia on September 15, 2011. The visit aims to ameliorate diplomatic relations between the two countries. A statement in that regard was issued on September 9, 2011.<sup>20</sup>

In another development, the Philippine government officials said that the country will buy helicopters and build radar stations in order to strengthen its gas and oil assets in the South China Sea. On 7 September, the Philippine Budget Secretary said that the royalties from the Malampaya gas field, which are worth US \$ 117 million, would fund the project.<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile, reports noted that the Philippine government and the National Democratic Front (NDF) have agreed to resume peace talks to be held in November in Oslo. The Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, on 8 September confirmed that the government will discuss matters of concern with the NDF, a communist group. The representatives of both the sides said that resumption of the negotiations will be without pre-conditions or commitments, and called it a positive step in resolving the crisis.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup> "President Sends Sympathy to Indian President", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, September 7, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5890>

<sup>18</sup> "President Attends Meeting on Possible Legal Form of New Climate Agreement", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, September 10, 2011 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=5919> 10 September 2011

<sup>19</sup> "Canadian High Commissioner Meet president Mohamed Nasheed", *Haama Daily*, September 7, 2011 at <http://www.haamadaily.com/englishdetails.php?news=24342>

<sup>20</sup> Yingluck's visit to improve relations: Cambodian deputy PM, *Xinhua*, 9 September, 2011, at [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2011-09/09/c\\_131125788.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2011-09/09/c_131125788.htm)

<sup>21</sup> Philippines to set up radar station in South China Sea, *Straits Times*, 8 September, 2011, at [http://www.straitstimes.com/BreakingNews/SEAsia/Story/STIStory\\_710382.html](http://www.straitstimes.com/BreakingNews/SEAsia/Story/STIStory_710382.html)

<sup>22</sup> Govt, NDF resume talks in Norway next month, *Phil Star*, 8 September, 2011 at <http://www.philstar.com/nation/article.aspx?publicationsubcategoryid=200&articleid=725093>

In other developments, on September 9, Indonesia and South Korea signed a defence agreement, aimed at strengthening defence cooperation. Both sides agreed to hold regular bilateral talks on joint production, marketing and development of defence equipments. The two sides also agreed to exchange information on defence industries. A Memorandum of Understanding will give pave the way for cooperation in the above mentioned sectors of defence industry.<sup>23</sup>

## Japan

- **Japan's new Foreign Ministers asserts Japan's sovereignty over disputed islands**

Newly appointed Japanese Foreign Minister Koichiro Gemba, while reiterating the Japanese government's stance on disputed territories like Dokdo (also claimed by South Korea) and Kuril Islands (also claimed by Russia), asserted Japan's sovereignty over them. According to him, both South Korea and Russia are illegally occupying those territories. On the Senkaku islands, where Japan has a territorial dispute with China, Gemba stated that as far as Japan is concerned, there is no territorial dispute over that territory. He further added that "in case of unexpected developments stemming from misunderstanding between the two countries, we need to set up a risk management mechanism." On the issue of the possible prospect for a dialogue between Japan and North Korea, Gemba stated that Japan needs to closely follow the developments in the inter-Korean talks first.<sup>24</sup>

## South Korea

- **South Korean President assures to cooperate with Japan's new PM to improve bilateral relationship**

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak has assured newly appointed Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda to extend his cooperation in improving the bilateral ties between the two countries and also to join hands in dealing with North Korea's nuclear issue. While stating that the two countries' dispute over Japan's colonial rule of South Korea could not be overlooked, Lee also insisted on moving the bilateral relationship forward. Lee also expressed hope that the two countries would cooperate closely with the United States in resolving North Korea's nuclear issue. Both the leaders had a fifteen minutes conversation on phone on September 6, 2011.<sup>25</sup>

## North Korea

- **North Korea celebrates its 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary**

On September 9, 2011, North Korea celebrated 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the country's foundation. Both North Korean leader Kim Jong Il and his third son and heir apparent Kim Jong Un, attended a military parade at Pyongyang to commemorate the occasion. While a lot of speculations are taking

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<sup>23</sup> Indonesia and South Korea sign defense cooperation agreement, *Channel 6*, 9 September, 2011, at <http://channel6newsonline.com/2011/09/indonesia-and-south-korea-sign-defense-cooperation-agreement/>

<sup>24</sup> "New Japan FM says Korea 'illegally occupying' Dokdo islets", *Dong-a-Ilbo*, September 6, 2011, at <http://english.donga.com/srv/service.php3?biid=2011090713418>

<sup>25</sup> "Lee agrees to cooperate with Japan's new PM on bilateral relations, N. Korea", *Korea Herald*, September 6, 2011, at <http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20110906000942>

rounds regarding the reason for arranging that parade to mark the 63rd anniversary as such event was normally held after five or 10-year intervals, an editorial published on September 9 in the online version of Rodong Sinmun, the official newspaper of the Workers' Party of Korea, threw some light on it. According to the editorial, "the great gate of the great, prosperous and powerful nation should be opened without fail in 2012." Apparently, by holding such arrangement, the North was trying to indicate to the world its preparation to open up by 2012.<sup>26</sup>

## C. Central Asia & Russia

### Central Asia

- **Kazakhstan- Pakistan sign agreement to boost trade with Kazakhstan during the visit of Pakistan's Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani ; Kazakh state to scrutinize religious literature and organizations; Production in Kashagan to begin by end of 2012; Kyrgyzstan to pay off foreign debts by 2050; Kyrgyz parliament ratifies visa agreement with Turkey; Tajikistan, Russia, Afghanistan and Pakistan agree to create anti-drug center in Kabul**

Kazakh Prime Minister Karim Massimov and his visiting Pakistani counterpart Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani agreed on September 7, to boost two-way trade and lay the groundwork for private entrepreneurs to expand their investments in each other's countries. They signed the document to boost trade and strengthen technical and economic ties by removing the current barriers to their bilateral trade.<sup>27</sup>

In the meanwhile, Kairat Lama Sharif, the head of the State Agency for Religious Affairs, announced at a parliamentary meeting to discuss a draft law on religious organizations. He vowed that religious "experts" in Kazakhstan will scrutinize every piece of religious literature entering the republic from now on. He added that the new law will ban prayer rooms in government offices and educational institutions.<sup>28</sup> In related news, officials in Western Kazakhstan said last week that several of the 22 recently detained terrorism suspects confessed to regularly receiving financing from Kazakh sponsors based in Pakistan and Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup>

According to reports, production in the Kashagan oil and gas field in the Caspian Sea will begin production by the end of 2012. ENI subsidiary, Agip Kazakhstan North Caspian Operating Company (Agip KCO), is responsible for the first phase of development of the project. The consortium comprises Agip KCO, Total, Shell, ExxonMobil and KazMunaiGas (KMG) with each holding 16.8 percent stakes of the project with Inpex Holdings and ConocoPhillips as minority shareholders.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> "North Korea fetes 63<sup>rd</sup> birthday with military parade", *Asahi Shimbun*, September 11, 2011, at <http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201109100194.html>

<sup>27</sup> "Kazakh, Pakistan premiers agree to boost trade and investment", *Universal Newswires*, September 07, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kazakhstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10127>

<sup>28</sup> "Kazakhstan to vet foreign religious literature, ban government prayer rooms", *Universal Newswires*, September 09, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kazakhstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10149>

<sup>29</sup> -ibid-

<sup>30</sup> "Kashagan to go onstream by end 2012, Eni chief says", *Universal Newswires*, September 05, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kazakhstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10109>

In another development, Deputy Finance Minister Mirlan Baygonchokov said during a conference on fiscal transparency, that Kyrgyzstan will be able to pay off its foreign debts in less than 40 years. The country's debt amounted to \$2.8 billion, as of June 30 and the debt is 58.1 percent of Kyrgyzstan's gross domestic product (GDP). The minister also said that Kyrgyzstan received "little more than half" of the foreign assistance loans and grants pledged after the country sustained weeks of violent ethnic riots in mid-2010.<sup>31</sup>

In another development, the Kyrgyz parliament on September 8<sup>th</sup> ratified an agreement with Turkey to introduce new measures that will allow Kyrgyz residents to remain in Turkey for a year without a permit. Kyrgyz Deputy Foreign Minister Nurlan Aytmurzaev said, "The intention is to introduce a visa-free entry and exit of citizens in both countries, travelers for tourist, business and official purposes, as well as for citizens in the diplomatic service and the international traffic of goods and passengers."<sup>32</sup> The agreement comes in the wake of an April visit from Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who announced that Turkey would cancel Kyrgyzstan's debt to the country as well as increase economic bilateral relations to aid the Central Asian state in regaining its footing after a tumultuous 2010.<sup>33</sup>

In the meanwhile, Kyrgyz government last week passed a medium-term agenda for 2012-2014 period to improve the state of the Central Asian country's flailing economy and curb wasteful expenditures.<sup>34</sup>

In other developments, last week the members of the Dushanbe Quartet – Tajikistan, Russia, Afghanistan and Pakistan agreed to create an anti-drug center in Kabul. The agreement comes after a two-day meeting, hosted in Kabul, in which the four sides tackled the issue of drug trafficking throughout the region. This meeting follows the Tajikistan-hosted four-way talks in Dushanbe.<sup>35</sup>

## D. West Asia

### Iran

- **Iran proposes to allow the UN nuclear watchdog 'full supervision' of its nuclear activities provided sanctions against Teheran are lifted; Iran criticises Turkey for accepting to host NATO's missile defence system**

Iran's nuclear chief Vice President Fereidoun Abbasi proposed to allow the UN nuclear watchdog 'full supervision' of its nuclear activities for five years provided that sanctions against Teheran

<sup>31</sup> "Foreign debt will be repaid in 2050, Kyrgyz finance official says", *Universal Newswires*, September 05, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kyrgyzstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10112>

<sup>32</sup> "Visa agreement with Turkey ratified in Kyrgyzstan", *Universal Newswires*, September 08, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kyrgyzstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10144>

<sup>33</sup> -ibid-

<sup>34</sup> "Kyrgyzstan passes new economic development program", *Universal Newswires*, September 06, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kyrgyzstan/viewstory.aspx?id=10121>

<sup>35</sup> "Dushanbe Quartet to create anti-drug center in Kabul", *Universal Newswires*, September 06, 2011 at <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/tajikistan/viewstory.aspx?id=10123>

are lifted. He didn't elaborate what he meant by 'full supervision,' or how far the International Atomic Energy Agency could go in trying to prevent Teheran's nuclear program from producing weapons. The United Nations has imposed four rounds of Security Council sanctions over Teheran's refusal to halt uranium enrichment. Iran's nuclear program is already subject to routine IAEA inspections. IAEA cameras monitor Iran's nuclear activities including its contentious uranium enrichment sites. The US and its allies accuse Iran of using its civilian nuclear program as a cover to develop nuclear weapons. Iran has denied the charges, saying its nuclear program is aimed at generating electricity and producing isotopes to treat medical patients. Iran says it voluntarily implemented the Additional Protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a confidence-building gesture, but its parliament passed legislation in 2007 forcing the government to end the cooperation after the country was referred to the UN Security Council for sanctions over its refusal to suspend uranium enrichment.<sup>36</sup>

In another development, Iran has condemned Turkey for agreeing to host NATO's missile defense system, saying Iran does not expect Turkey as a neighbor and friendly country to adopt policies that would create tension in the region. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast stated that "we expect our friendly countries and neighbors to show more vigilance and by considering the region's security interests do not pave the way for policies that create tension that will definitely lead to 'complicated consequences'." Turkey has recently agreed to host an early warning radar as part of NATO's missile defense system which is allegedly aimed to counter missile threats by Iran.<sup>37</sup>

## Iraq

### ● MoU signed between Iran and Iraq; Muqtada Al Sadr : Cease attacks on American forces

The Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines and the Iraqi Business Association inked a memorandum of understanding in Tehran. Based on the agreement, the two sides will establish a joint business council, facilitate the bilateral transactions, remove customs trade hurdles, and ease issuance of visas. Leather, building, transportation and food industries were among the topics of cooperation in the MOU. Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Rahimi said on July 7 that the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq have agreed to increase the volume of their bilateral trade to \$20 billion in the near future.<sup>38</sup>

In another development, reports noted that anti-American cleric Muqtada Al Sadr in Iraq has called on his followers to cease attacks on US troops leaving the country so that the withdrawal isn't slowed down. Al Sadr has been demanding that all American forces leave Iraq by the end of the year as planned, or potentially face widespread violence. According the cleric, his cease-fire

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<sup>36</sup> "Iran offers 'full supervision' of nuclear program," *Khaleej Times*, September 6, 2011, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/September/middleeast\\_September95.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/September/middleeast_September95.xml&section=middleeast)

<sup>37</sup> "Iran to Turkey: We don't expect neighbors to create tension," *Mehr News Agency*, September 8, 2011, at <http://www.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1402690>

<sup>38</sup> "Tehran, Baghdad ink MOU to ease trade," *Tehran Times*, September 8, 2011, at <http://www.tehrantimes.com/index.php/economy-and-business/2332-tehran-baghdad-ink-mou-to-ease-trade>

order was spurred by last week's notice by US officials in Baghdad that the withdrawal has begun. Al Sadr also warned he will step up attacks against US forces if any stay past the end of the year, a move that American and Iraqi officials are now considering.<sup>39</sup>

## Libya

- **Reports: Senior Libyan officials crossed into Niger; NATO ready to handover Libya to the UN; Libyan rebels assault Bani Walid; Twelve killed in infighting between Libyan rebels**

According to military sources from France and Niger, a number of Libyan army vehicles have crossed the desert frontier into Niger in a likely bid by Muammar Gaddafi to seek refuge in a friendly African state. The Libyan rebels added that about a dozen other vehicles that crossed the remote border might have carried gold and cash apparently looted from a branch of Libya's central bank in Gaddafi's home town. In response, the US government urged Niger to detain senior officials from the Qaddafi government who, it believes, crossed into the country in a convoy from Libya. The United States also urged Niger to work with Libya's National Transitional Council (NTC) to ensure that its interests are served in bringing the convoy's passengers to justice.<sup>40</sup>

In another development, NATO's Assistant Secretary General Dirk Brengelmann said that the military alliance will not stay in Libya longer than necessary and is ready to hand over the reins of post-conflict command to the United Nations. However, he added that NATO will assess whether there is still a danger for civilians in Libya before handing such command.<sup>41</sup>

Separately, Libyan fighters launched an attack on the desert town of Bani Walid, one of the last strongholds of former leader Muammar Gaddafi, after a deadline set by the National Transitional Council (NTC) for Gaddafi strongholds to surrender has expired. At the same time, the provisional government, which is trying to establish its control over the entire country and restore normal life, announced that it could restart some production of oil within days that strengthens Libya's economy. However, the head of the provisional government warned that the former leader still posed a threat.<sup>42</sup>

Further, despite plea by the chief of the National Transitional Council for different factions among the anti-al Qathafi fighters to retrain themselves in dealing with each other, at least 12 people were killed and others wounded when two groups of fighters clashed in Libya's west. The pitted combatants were reported from the towns of Gharyan and Kikla on the one side and from Asabah on the other. Responding to the killings, the interim Prime Minister Mahmoud Jibril said that the

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<sup>39</sup> "Iraq cleric to followers: Stop attacking US troops," *Khaleej Times*, September 11, 2011, at [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/September/middleeast\\_September198.xml&section=middleeast&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/September/middleeast_September198.xml&section=middleeast&col=)

<sup>40</sup> "Senior Libyan officials convoy in Niger, Qadhafi on run", *The Jordan Times*, September 7, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41072>

<sup>41</sup> "NATO Alliance Won't Stay in Libya Longer than Needed", *The Tripoli Post*, September 11, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=6879>

<sup>42</sup> "Libyan rebels enter Gaddafi stronghold", *Mail and Guardian*, September 11, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-11-libyan-rebels-enter-gaddafi-stronghold>

NTC has mapped out a path and hope that Libyans understand that they have to move along this path fast and that it is not the time for revenge.<sup>43</sup>

## Egypt

- **High-profile witnesses summoned in Mubarak's trial; Thousands march to Tahrir to 'Correct the Path'; Egypt kicks off economic cooperation with Libya; Three people killed in clashes outside Israeli embassy**

The Chief Judge in the trial of former President Hosni Mubarak summoned high-profile witnesses including Egypt's military ruler Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi to testify in court. Meanwhile, prosecutors accused Captain Mohammed Abdel Hakim of having revised his testimony to favour the defendants, following accusations in the Egyptian media of a cover-up over the killing of hundreds of anti-regime protesters. Hakim testified in court that anti-riot units in Cairo on January 28 had been equipped with blank ammunition and tear gas, whereas he said in previous questioning that hunting ammunition was used. But Judge Ahmed Refaat, who initially ordered Hakim detained following the prosecution's accusation, declared him innocent at the end of the session. Till now, none of the police witnesses who gave evidence implicated Mubarak or his interior minister Habib Al Adly for the deaths during the revolution against Mubarak's autocratic rule.<sup>44</sup>

Reports noted that dubbed as "Correcting the Path", several marches started all around Cairo and rallied to Tahrir Square calling for accelerating the pace of reform and handing power over to a civilian authority and ending military trials for civilians. The rights groups claim that the ruling military council has tried over 12,000 civilians in military courts in the span of seven months, when even Mubarak only subjected 2,000 civilians to military trials throughout his 30 years in power.<sup>45</sup>

In a another development, three people were killed and 1,049 wounded in clashes around the Cairo tower block housing the Israeli embassy when police and soldiers fired shots in the air and tear gas to disperse the crowd, who hurled stones at them. Following the clashes, Israel evacuated its ambassador from Cairo, mounting pressure on army rulers to respond to public fury against Israel. In response, Egypt vowed to try those behind the violence. Separately, Washington, which has poured billions of dollars of military aid into Egypt since it made peace with Israel in 1979, urged Cairo to protect the mission after protesters hurled embassy documents and the Israeli flag from the windows of the building. Later, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel is preserving its more than three-decades-old peace with Egypt.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> "Reports: Infighting Between Libyan Rebels Kills 12", *The Tripoli Post*, September 11, 2011, at <http://www.tripolipost.com/articledetail.asp?c=1&i=6884>

<sup>44</sup> "Egypt's military ruler summoned in Mubarak trial", *The Jordan Times*, September 8, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41091>

<sup>45</sup> Fahmy, Heba (2011), "Tens of thousands flock to Tahrir to 'Correct the Path'", *The Daily News Egypt*, September 9, 2011, at <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/egypt/tens-of-thousands-flock-to-tahrir-to-correct-the-path.html>

<sup>46</sup> "Israeli envoy leaves Cairo after embassy attack", *The Jordan Times*, September 11, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=41173>

In other developments, Egypt reopened economic cooperation with Libya and plans to send two million Egyptian workers to Libya upon the request of the National Transitional Council (NTC), a step that would benefit both countries. Egypt's Minister of Manpower Ahmed El-Borai has agreed to send the workers to help rebuild Libya as part of several plans of economic cooperation across sectors. With an 11.4 percent unemployment rate in Egypt that will continue to remain high, the move is seen as a step forward for both nations, especially during these bleak economic times. The offer also comes as Libya is preparing to rebuild after six months of a fierce civil war.<sup>47</sup>

## Israel

### ● Israeli air strike kills one in Gaza; Israel deploys surveillance aircraft over Egyptian border

Reports noted that an Israeli air strike on Gaza killed a fighter and wounded three people including a father and his two sons. The strike, east of the central city of Khan Younis, killed Popular Resistance Committees (PRC) member Khaled Sahmud, after militants fired a mortar round to push back an "Israeli incursion". According to witnesses, Israeli troops penetrated 100-200 metres into the Palestinian enclave, east of Khan Younis. Earlier, Israeli warplanes bombed a suspected weapons manufacturing site in the central Gaza Strip after a rocket was fired from the Palestinian territory. The new mortar and rocket fire came despite a ceasefire that came into force after contraction of violence that followed a militant attack in Eilat on August 18, which left eight Israelis dead.<sup>48</sup>

Separately, according to a senior Israeli military official, the air force has deployed a special unit of unmanned surveillance aircraft along its long, porous border with Egypt after militants crossed the frontier and killed eight Israelis in August 2011. Currently, the drones are monitoring both sides of the 150-mile border, though the aircraft is flying only in Israeli airspace. Further, in the wake of attack on Israeli embassy, Israel also has sent more troops along the border.<sup>49</sup>

## Palestine

### ● Palestine blames Israel for mosque arson; Palestine holds talks with US ahead of UN bid

According to reports, burning tyres were rolled into a mosque in Qusra village, 15 kilometres southeast of Nablus in northern West Bank by some miscreants. However, the building, which was also spray-painted with Hebrew graffiti, sustained damage from fire and smoke. The attack was blamed on Jewish settlers responding to the demolition of three homes in the outpost of Migron overnight. Responding to the incident, Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad said the Israeli government bore full responsibility for this arson attack on a mosque as it failed in the past to hold the perpetrators of such attacks accountable. Nabil Abu Rudeina, spokesman for Palestinian

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<sup>47</sup> Abdellatif, Reem (2011), "Egypt-Libya economic cooperation starts with 2 million workers", *The Daily News Egypt*, September 4, 2011, at <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/economy/egypt-libya-economic-cooperation-starts-with-2-million-workers.html>

<sup>48</sup> "Israel air strike on Gaza kills one", *The Jordan Times*, September 7, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41059>

<sup>49</sup> Cheslow, Daniella (2011), "Israel deploys drones over Egyptian border", *The Daily News Egypt*, September 9, 2011, at <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/egypt/israel-deploys-drones-over-egyptian-border.html>

President Mahmoud Abbas, said the attack was “proof of Israel’s rejection of peace” and called on the international community to pressure Israel over the attack and similar incidents.<sup>50</sup>

In a separate development, Yasser Abed Rabbo, a senior member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) said that President Mahmoud Abbas is holding talks with the US and European envoys ahead of a Palestinian bid for UN membership. Rabbo said that Washington’s Middle East envoy David Hale was coming to Ramallah for talks to “save what could be saved”, in an apparent reference to Washington’s attempts to convince the Palestinians to scrap their UN bid in exchange for a new round of peace talks that will be acceptable to Israel, as well as Russia, the European Union and the UN - the other members of the international peacemaking Quartet.<sup>51</sup>

In a later development, Presidential spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeina told after the meeting in the West Bank city of Ramallah that differences with Washington over the UN bid are “still wide”. However, he stressed that efforts were being made to continue communication with the US administration and the Middle East Quartet envoy.<sup>52</sup>

Separately, the Palestinians launched a “National Campaign for Palestine: State 194” in support of their UN membership bid, as their leaders met to reaffirm plans to become the world body’s 194th member state. Washington, however, confirmed it would veto any such bid and an EU source said European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton was to travel to the Middle East for talks on the Palestinian push.<sup>53</sup>

## E. Africa

### Somalia

#### ● 12 people killed in separate incidents in Somalia

Reports noted that a Somali soldier opened fire at a food aid distribution centre in Mogadishu’s Waberi district and killed at least seven civilians who were victims of famine. The soldier has been arrested later. This deadly shooting came at a time when Transitional Federal Government (TFG) officials have publicly stated that the Somali interim government has established a “special force” to protect humanitarian aid in Mogadishu.<sup>54</sup>

In a separate incident, at least five people were killed in Mogadishu when a bomb exploded at Suk Ba’ad in north Mogadishu. According to witnesses, at least two Somali soldiers were among

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<sup>50</sup> “Fayyad holds Israel gov’t responsible for mosque arson”, *The Jordan Times*, September 6, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=40994>

<sup>51</sup> “Abbas talking with US, EU ahead of UN bid”, *The Jordan Times*, September 7, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41074>

<sup>52</sup> “Differences with US on UN bid still wide - Palestinians”, *The Jordan Times*, September 8, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41090>

<sup>53</sup> “Palestinians launch campaign to support UN bid”, *The Jordan Times*, September 9, 2011, at <http://www.jordantimes.com/index.php?news=41141>

<sup>54</sup> “5 Killed in Mogadishu Bombing, Soldier Shoots Famine Victims”, *AllAfrica.com*, September 10, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109110004.html>

the five dead. It was not clear what type of bombing it was and no group claimed responsibility for the bombing. But Suk Ba'ad, in Mogadishu's Yaaqshid district, is among the locations vacated by Al Shabaab militant group in August 2011.<sup>55</sup>

## South Africa

- **Documents on plans for South African intervention force in Libya leaked; Malema threatens African National Congress (ANC) of war and casualties; ANC taken to court over R1.7-million bill; Security Minister calls for resignations amid succession race**

Reports noted that documents showing plans for a 136-strong South African-led rapid intervention force being deployed in Libya have been leaked to the media. It lists equipment for the teams, including 127 AK-47 assault rifles, 12 PKM machine guns, a dozen RPG-7 rocket launchers, 12 sniper rifles, 60mm mortars, pistols and medical bags. The documents also include an invoice from what appears to be a South African security company for "specialist training" in the country. It also says that arms shipments from Chinese companies, via South Africa, were being considered. The documents were discovered by Graeme Smith, a foreign correspondent for Canada's 'Globe and Mail' newspaper, on a street corner in Tripoli.<sup>56</sup>

In another development, the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League leader Julius Malema has threatened the ruling party leadership of war and casualties ahead of the resumption of his disciplinary hearing. Malema and four other youth league leaders were appearing before the ANC's national disciplinary panel on charge of disrupting a meeting of the ANC leaders in August 2011. Malema is also expected to face the panel alone to answer further charges of dividing the ANC and bringing it into disrepute. He risks suspension or expulsion from the ruling party. However, Malema insisted that he had done nothing wrong and that the ANC leadership was taking disciplinary action against him because he had called for economic transformation.<sup>57</sup>

Separately, Malema supporters pelted half-bricks and bottles at police and journalists and set fire to T-shirts bearing pictures of President Jacob Zuma. Later, the ANC condemned the rampage, with secretary-general Gwede Mantashe comparing it to "the storming of the Bastille".<sup>58</sup>

Reports noted that the African National Congress in the Western Cape has been taken to court over R1.7-million owed to the Cape Town International Convention Centre. The centre applied for a default judgment against the provincial ANC in the high court in Cape Town, six months after its provincial conference was held there between February 11 and 13, 2011. Joey Pather, the centre's chief operating officer, said the centre was left with no choice after repeated requests for payment. In response, ANC Provincial Secretary Songezo Mjongile said that the party was committed to resolving the problem.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> *ibid*

<sup>56</sup> "Report shows plans for SA 'intervention force' in Libya", *Mail and Guardian*, September 7, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-07-report-shows-plans-for-sa-intervention-force-in-libya>

<sup>57</sup> "Malema: It's war (but we'll win)", *Mail and Guardian*, September 11, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-11-malema-its-war-but-well-win>

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> "ANC dragged to court over R1.7-million bill", *Mail and Guardian*, September 11, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-11-anc-dragged-to-court-over-r17million-bill>

In other developments, South Africa's Minister of State Security Siyabonga Cwele has ordered three top intelligence officials to resign as divisions emerge in the country's spy community ahead of crucial elections to select a ruling African National Congress leader in 2012. Cwele told the head of the State Security Agency (SSA) Jeff Maqetuka to quit after a row over government protection for his wife, a convicted drug dealer. Earlier, the SSA announced the resignation of Gibson Njenje, head of the domestic intelligence gathering service. According to reports, his resignation was linked to the succession battle in the ANC. Again, Cwele had asked secret service head Mo Shaik to quit but he had refused and sought legal advice. According to media reports, Njenje, Shaik and Maqetuka recently complained to President Jacob Zuma about difficulty in their relationship with Cwele.<sup>60</sup>

## Sudan

- **Sudanese policemen killed in clashes in Darfur; North, South Sudan agree to complete Abyei pullout; Meeting of the follow-up committee to implement the Doha peace agreement begins**

According to reports, about 13 Sudanese policemen were killed and 33 others injured in clashes with armed groups in Jebel Marra in the troubled region of South Darfur. The Governor of South Darfur, Abdel Hamid Kasha informed that police had been trying to free three soldiers taken hostage by armed groups when clashes erupted. However, Kasha denied a report that one of the hostages was 34-year old Italian aid worker Francesco Azzara who was abducted in South Darfur by an armed group in August 2011.<sup>61</sup>

In another development, the rebel Sudan Liberation Movement led by Abdel-Wahid al-Nur (SLM-AW) claimed to have killed 33 soldiers during the clashes with the Sudanese army in Jebel Marra, South Darfur state. SLM-AW spokesperson Major-General Nimer Abdel-Rahman said that Sudanese army troops attacked their positions in Tourain Taora near Kaas in South Darfur, which resulted in the death of 33 soldiers and 49 wounded.<sup>62</sup>

Meanwhile, Deputy Head of the UN peacekeeping department Edmond Mulet announced after a Security Council meeting on Sudan that North and South Sudan have agreed to completely withdraw their respective armed forces from the contested oil-producing border region of Abyei before October 2011. This agreement was reached after representatives of the two governments met in the Ethiopia capital, Addis Ababa. The accord was brokered by an African Union mediation panel led by former South African President Thabo Mbeki. The agreement also includes the launch of a joint oversight committee for Abyei. On its part, Khartoum government dropped its precondition of insisting upon a governing administration be established before pulling out its

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<sup>60</sup> "Cwele calls for resignations amid succession race", *Mail and Guardian*, September 11, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-11-cwele-calls-for-resignations-amid-succession-race>

<sup>61</sup> "Sudanese policemen killed in clashes in Darfur", *Mail and Guardian*, September 9, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-09-sudanese-policemen-killed-in-clashes-darfur/>

<sup>62</sup> "Darfur rebels kill 33 soldiers in South Darfur, deny abduction of aid worker", *Sudan Tribune*, September 9, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Darfur-rebels-kill-33-soldiers-in,40101>

military.<sup>63</sup> UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the agreement between Sudan and South Sudan to withdraw all forces from the disputed area around Abyei, a long-running source of tensions in the region.<sup>64</sup>

In other developments, reports noted that the Washington Forum on Darfur intends to support the Doha peace process and to convince the reluctant Sudanese parties to join it, Qatar's State Minister of Foreign Affairs Al-Mahmoud said after the first meeting of the follow-up committee to implement the Doha peace agreement. Sudanese government showed some reservations to hold Washington meeting initially scheduled in September 2011 to discuss the ongoing efforts for peace in Darfur and warned that such gathering will undermine the Doha process and the agreement signed with the Liberation and Equality Movement (LJM). However, the US officials said the meeting does not aim to launch a new initiative or to replace the Doha venue but intends to discuss ways to revitalize the process and include the other rebel groups in the talks. Nevertheless, Khartoum's reservations led to delay the meeting till October 27.<sup>65</sup>

## South Sudan

- **Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) accuses North of re-arming rebels in Jonglei**

South Sudan's army has accused North Sudan of arming a rebel group in Jonglei state. According to Philip Aguer, spokesman of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the forces of rebel leader George Athor Deng were being mobilized at Phom el Zeraf in Fangak county of Jonglei state. Planes had also been seen landing in the area and the SPLA believes this was to deliver weapons and other supplies from Khartoum. As a former general and minister in the southern government, Athor is the most senior defector currently fighting the SPLA.<sup>66</sup>

## Nigeria

- **Overnight attacks kill 15 in central Nigeria; US backs Nigeria's counter-terror plans**

According to government spokesperson Pam Ayuba, overnight attacks in Nigeria have killed at least 15 people in Vwang district of Jos south local government area of Plateau state, the latest in a wave of recent killings in an area beset by sectarian violence. The attack in a central district on the outskirts of the city of Jos, targeted predominantly Christian ethnic farming villagers known as Beroms. More villagers were missing in a wave of spiralling attacks suspected to be staged by Fulani herdsmen from adjoining villages. Some of the attacks in recent days have nearly wiped out entire families.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>63</sup> "North, South Sudan agree to complete Abyei pullout this month", *Sudan Tribune*, September 9, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/North-South-Sudan-agree-to,40098>

<sup>64</sup> "Ban Welcomes Agreement Between Sudan and South Sudan On Disputed Abyei Area", *AllAfrica.com*, September 10, 2011, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109110044.html>

<sup>65</sup> "Washington Forum aims to support Doha process for peace in Darfur - Qatar", *Sudan Tribune*, September 11, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/Washington-Forum-aims-to-support,40120>

<sup>66</sup> "SPLA says rebels being re-armed in Jonglei", *Sudan Tribune*, September 10, 2011, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/SPLA-says-rebels-being-re-armed-in,40106>

<sup>67</sup> "Central Nigeria overnight attacks kill 15", *Mail and Guardian*, September 10, 2011, at <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-09-10-central-nigeria-overnight-attacks-kill-15/>

In another development, as the global community marks the 10th anniversary of the September 11 terror attacks, US President Barack Obama has ordered a communications campaign against terrorist groups in countries like Nigeria, where terrorist activities are increasingly feared and elsewhere where they have found roots. Besides, the US government also announced that its Terrorist Finance Tracking Program (TFTP) has been made available to Nigeria among other countries, which have suffered terror attacks in recent times. Citing Nigeria as a beneficiary of the programme, the US Treasury Department said, "the TFTP-derived information has played an important role in the investigation of the October 2010 Nigerian Independence Day car bombings in Abuja, Nigeria".<sup>68</sup>

## Cote d'Ivoire

- **Reports: Cote d'Ivoire financed former French President's electoral campaign**

Confirming the charges made by Robert Bourgui, Mamadou Koulibaly, a former number two in the Laurent Gbagbo's government and now speaker of the National Assembly, said that former French president, Jacques Chirac, received •3 million from Cote d'Ivoire in 2002 to finance his electoral campaign. Koulibaly also added that he told Gbagbo that Cote d'Ivoire should not have to pay to finance elections for politicians in rich countries as it is a poor country. Earlier, Bourgui made allegations in 'Journal du Dimanche' newspaper that he took part in handing over several briefcases to Jacques Chirac in person, at Paris city hall brought from Abidjan.<sup>69</sup>

## II. DEFENCE REVIEW

### National

- **Defence Minister A.K. Antony in a reply in the Rajya Sabha: Indian Army chief to retire in just over 8 months**

The government on Wednesday ended the uncertainty over the birth date of Indian Army chief General V.K. Singh in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha. Defence Minister A.K. Antony said that Singh's birth date has been maintained as May 10, 1950 at the time of his selection as a corps commander in 2006 as well as his subsequent promotions as army commander in 2008 and army chief in 2010. "Accordingly, he is left with 8 months and 23 days of service as on date," the minister said, fixing the date of Singh's superannuation. Antony also said that a different date of birth finds mention in certain documents and Singh had recently filed a statutory complaint in the matter. Reports noted that the army chief has sought a change of date of birth to May 10, 1951 in

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<sup>68</sup> "US Backs Nigeria's Counter-terror Plans", *Nigerian Guardian*, September 11, 2011, at [http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=60670:us-backs-nigerias-counter-terror-plans&catid=1:national&Itemid=559](http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=60670:us-backs-nigerias-counter-terror-plans&catid=1:national&Itemid=559)

<sup>69</sup> "Chirac got •3 million from Cote d'Ivoire", *The Nigerian Guardian*, September 12, 2011, at [http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=60791:-chirac-got-3-million-from-cote-divoire&catid=1:national&Itemid=559](http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=60791:-chirac-got-3-million-from-cote-divoire&catid=1:national&Itemid=559)

official records. Singh's school leaving certificate mentions 1951 as his year of birth, on the basis of which he wants the records set straight. However, the army's Military Secretary branch, which handles appointments and promotions, maintains May 10, 1950, as his date of birth.<sup>70</sup>

## International

### ● US considering request from Turkey for predator drones; Change of guard for NATO's Kosovo Mission

According to reports, the United States is considering a request from Turkey to base Predator drones there to operate against Kurdish separatists based in northern Iraq. Citing unnamed senior U.S. military officials, the Washington Post reported that a decision to deploy the drones could strengthen the U.S.-Turkish diplomatic alliance but draw the United States deeper into the conflict. The U.S. military has flown unarmed Predators from Iraqi bases since 2007, sharing their surveillance video with Turkey as part of a secretive crackdown against fighters from the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), the report said. According to the report, U.S. President Barack Obama's administration has not yet made a decision on the Turkish request although, last month, the United States offered Turkey its continued support in the fight against PKK rebels, after they claimed responsibility for the deaths of eight Turkish soldiers in an ambush. Previously undisclosed diplomatic cables show Turkey has become highly dependent on the Predators, U-2 spy aircraft and other U.S. intelligence sources in its military campaign against the PKK.<sup>71</sup>

Meanwhile, German Gen. Erhard Drews on September 9 took over the command of the NATO-led mission in Kosovo (KFOR), as the tense Serb-majority north remained the main challenge for the peacekeeping force. Drews replaced fellow countryman Gen. Erhard Buhler at a ceremony in the KFOR headquarters in Pristina flanked by Kosovo's President Atifete Jahjaga. KFOR should continue to be "a preventing force for all those extremists who by violence want to achieve political goals," Kosovo President Atifete Jahjaga said at the ceremony. Tensions have been running high in Serb-dominated northern Kosovo since a trade row in July spilled over into violence at two flashpoint border posts with Serbia. Tensions erupted when Pristina forcibly replaced ethnic Serb border guards attached to the Kosovo police with ethnic Albanian officers to enforce the trade ban with Serbia. NATO peacekeepers have maintained security in Kosovo since the end of 1998-1999 war between Belgrade-backed forces and ethnic Albanian pro-independence guerrillas. Kosovo unilaterally declared independence in 2008 and has since been recognized by more than 80 countries. However, Serbia still considers it to be its southern province.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> "Indian Army chief to retire in just over 8 months: Antony", *Bharat Rakshak*, September 07, 2011, at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/NEWS/newsrfr.php?newsid=15242>

<sup>71</sup> "Turkey Asks U.S. to Base Predators There: Report", *Agence France-Presse*, September 11, 2011, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=7649429&c=MID&s=AIR>

<sup>72</sup> "German General Takes Over NATO's Kosovo Mission", *Agence France-Presse*, September 9, 2011, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=7637291&c=EUR&s=LAN>