

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Bangladesh

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **Bangladesh meets inflation target, misses the export target in the fiscal year 2014-15.**

The government of Bangladesh has comfortably met its inflation target in the 2014-15 fiscal year. At the end of fiscal year 2014-15, the average inflation reached 6.41 percent – the lowest in 11 years – against the target of 6.5 percent. Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal, while releasing the latest inflation data on July 7, said lower oil prices and a stable local currency helped meet the inflation target.¹

Exports rose 3.35 percent year-on-year to \$31.2 billion in fiscal year 2014-15. But the amount was well below the year's target of \$33.2 billion, which the industry insiders blamed on the quarter-long political turmoil.²

Sri Lanka

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **Concerns expressed about Sri Lankan authorities' decision to re-establish the Press Council; UNP and its partners in the UNF sign MoU for Good Governance; Language lab set up by India lauded; EU assistance to Sri Lanka; R.C. Wijegunaratne appointed as the new Navy Commander; Former President Mahinda Rajapaksa files the nomination papers to contest the Parliament election.**

The Committee to Protect Journalists, a US based media rights group, is concerned about Sri Lankan authorities' decision to re-establish the Sri Lankan Press Council, a media regulatory body which gives the government powers to jail journalists in connection with their reporting. The Press Council was established under the 1973 Press Council law and is made up of members appointed by the president as well as two journalists chosen by media organizations. The Press Council was dissolved in January 2015 after Sirisena was elected president. During his presidential bid, Sirisena vowed to uphold press freedom. President Maithripala Sirisena announced the decision to re-establish the Press Council on July 2, and appointed new members to the council that day, according to news reports. The reason for the decision is unclear. The president did not

¹ "Inflation: Target Met", *The Daily Star*, July 8, 2015 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/business/inflation-target-met-109033>.

² "Exports Shake off Effect of Political Turmoil", *The Daily Star*, July 7, 2015 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/business/exports-shake-effect-political-turmoil-108616>.

consult any local media houses or press organizations, according to local press freedom organisations which called the move illegal. Under the 1973 Press Council Law, the president must consult stakeholders before re-constituting the council, the groups said.³

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed at Temple Trees on July 12 between the United National Party (UNP) and its partners in the United National Front (UNF) for Good Governance. UNP leader and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, UNP Chairman Malik Samarawickreme and UNP General Secretary Kabir Hasheem signed the MOU on behalf of the UNP. Jathika Hela Urumaya General Secretary Patali Champika Ranawaka and JHU Chairman the venerable Athureliya Rathana thero signed the MOU on behalf of the JHU. Members of the Sri Lanka Freedom Part breakaway faction led by Rajitha Senaratne, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress and civil society members also signed the MOU with the UNP. The United National Party had formally proposed and later agreed to register the United National Front after the August 17 Parliament election. The UNP, at a special convention on July 11, agreed on the proposal to also contest the Parliament election in August as the United National Front for Good Governance under the elephant symbol by including members from other political parties who have extended support to the UNP. The United National Front will look to campaign for good governance at the August 17 Parliament election with Ranil Wickremesinghe as the Prime Ministerial candidate.⁴

The High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka Y. K. Sinha and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, Mangala Samaraweera jointly inaugurated a Language Lab in Akuressa in a function held at Nilwala National College of Education. This Language Lab is one of the nine labs that the Government of India has set up in each of the nine provinces of Sri Lanka. Four language labs in Gampaha (Western Province), Kandy (Central Province), Bingiriya (North Western Province) and Adalaichenai (Eastern Province) have already been inaugurated. Other locations where Language Labs have been set up are Jaffna (Northern Province), Polonnaruwa (North Central Province), Ratnapura (Sabaragamuwa Province), and Badulla (Uva Province).⁵

The Delegation of the European Union to Sri Lanka and the Maldives and Transparency International Sri Lanka have signed a project with a financial envelope of Euro 1.2 million. The 18 month initiative aims at supporting the upcoming Parliamentary Elections through various activities such as voter education and election observation. As an integral part of the project, support and training will be provided to Community Based Organisations and Civil Society Organisations on how to register as voters with particular focus on marginalised groups including the Tamil community in the western province and plantation areas.⁶

³ "US Rights Group Concerned over Press Council", *Colombo Gazette*, July 12, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/07/12/us-rights-group-concerned-over-press-council/>.

⁴ "MOU Signed between UNP and UNF Partners", *Colombo Gazette*, July 12, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/07/12/mou-signed-between-unp-and-unf-partners/>.

⁵ "India Happy with Assistance Given to Sri Lanka", *Colombo Gazette*, July 11, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/07/11/india-happy-with-assistance-given-to-sri-lanka/>.

⁶ "EU to Provide Euro 1.2 Million for Polls Work", *Colombo Gazette*, July 10, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/07/10/eu-to-provide-euro-1-2-million-for-polls-work/>.

Rear Admiral R.C. Wijegunaratne has been appointed as the new Navy Commander of Sri Lanka.⁷

Former President Mahinda Rajapaksa signed the nomination papers to contest the Parliament election under the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA), former opposition leader Nimal Siripala de Silva said. Rajapaksa will be contesting the August 17 Parliament elections from the Kurunegala District.⁸

Maldives

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **Maldives signs agreements with the government of China for the Malé-Hulhulé Bridge Project; Chinese company to construct new runway at Ibrahim Nasir International Airport; Maldives signs a contract with India's Vijai Marine Services to acquire a landing craft for waste management efforts; Turkish Naval Ship visits the Maldives.**

The Maldivian government has signed two agreements with the government of China for the Malé-Hulhulé Bridge Project on July 9. The agreements are regarding the construction and financing aspects of the project.⁹ Minister of Finance Abdulla Jihad has said that the total cost of the project is \$300 million. According to the minister, \$100 million will be given as free aid while \$170 million will be given as a loan by the Chinese government, and the remaining \$30 million will be contributed by the Maldivian government. The interest rate of the loan is 2 percent. Housing Ministry has said that construction of the 1.39 km bridge will begin before the end of the year, and that the project will be completed within two years.¹⁰

Maldives Airports Company Limited (MACL) has signed an agreement with China's Sinohydro Corporation Limited for the construction of a new runway at Ibrahim Nasir International Airport (INIA). The agreement was signed at a ceremony at Hulhulé Island Hotel on July 9. 102 hectares of land will be reclaimed under this project.¹¹

The government of Maldives has signed a contract with India's Vijai Marine Services to acquire a landing craft for waste management efforts in the north of the island on July 6 at a ceremony at the Ministry of Environment and Energy, by Minister of Environment and Energy Thorig Ibrahim on behalf of the government, and Managing Director Jairam Dialani on behalf of Vijai Marine Services. The landing craft measures 30 metres in length and will have a capacity of 200 tons. The craft costs

⁷ "Wijegunaratne Appointed as the New Navy Chief", *Colombo Gazette*, July 10, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/07/10/wijegunaratne-appointed-as-the-new-navy-chief/>.

⁸ "Mahinda Signs Nomination Papers For Polls", *Colombo Gazette*, July 9, 2015 at <http://colombogazette.com/2015/07/09/mahinda-signs-nomination-papers-for-polls-2/>.

⁹ "Two Agreements Signed with China for Bridge Project", *SunOnline*, July 9, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/30943>.

¹⁰ "China To Provide \$100 M As Financial Aid for Bridge Project", *SunOnline*, July 9, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/30946>.

¹¹ "Runway Construction Project Awarded To Chinese Company", *SunOnline*, July 9, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/30942>.

\$645,000. Minister Ibrahim said that the landing craft will arrive in the Maldives within five months as stated in the contract.¹²

Turkish Naval Ship TCG Gediz made a friendly visit in the Maldives. Minister of Foreign Affairs Dunya Maumoon, in her speech at the reception on board the vessel on July 7, welcomed the Commanding Officer of the TCG Gediz and his crew to the Maldives and highlighted the close historical ties of friendship between the Maldives and Turkey.¹³

B. East Asia

China

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **China dismisses the protests over Uyghur repatriation from Thailand; A book 'Xi Jinping: the Governance of China' published in minority languages; China urges Japan to undertake correct and respectful attitude towards history; China upset over Japanese protests with respect to East China Sea.**

On July 10, while responding to the debate surrounding the repatriation of around 100 Uyghurs to China from Thailand, the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying said that, "these repatriated Chinese minority citizens are illegal immigrants who have travelled to and stayed in Thailand through various channels". She further added that China "strongly protests some forces' attempts to interfere in China's internal affairs via ethnic and religious issues and to disrupt China's security and stability".¹⁴

The Chinese government announced that it has published a book titled 'Xi Jinping: the Governance of China' in five ethnic languages (Mongolian, Tibetan, Kazak, Korean and Uyghur). According to the Chinese authorities, "the ethnic minority languages of the book will help ethnic minorities enhance their identity of the motherland, the Chinese nation, Chinese culture and the socialist path with Chinese characteristics".¹⁵

On July 8 the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Hua Chunying, urged Japan to take a responsible attitude towards history. This was in response to the Japanese reaction with respect to the Chinese decision to commemorate its eight-year resistance against the Japanese invasion. Hua said that, "China and the international community are commemorating the victory of WWII to

¹² "Contract Signed for Purchase of Landing Craft for Waste Management in Northern Atolls", *Sunonline*, July 6, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/30852>.

¹³ "Turkish Naval Ship Visits Maldives", *SunOnline*, July 8, 2015 at <http://www.sun.mv/english/30903>.

¹⁴ "Beijing Dismisses Protests about Uyghur Repatriation", *China Daily*, July 11, 2015 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2015-07/11/content_21252365.htm, accessed on July 13, 2015

¹⁵ "Xi Jinping: The Governance of China Published in Minority Languages", *China Daily*, July 9, 2015 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-07/09/content_21237437.htm, accessed on July 13, 2015

remember history and cherish peace” She further added that, “China was committed to the road of peaceful development. People who are truly committed to peaceful development will not object to such activities”.¹⁶

On July 7, Beijing rebuffed the Japanese protests as a response to its gas development in the East China Sea. The Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said that, “China is conducting activities in the areas under undisputed Chinese administration. Japan’s so-called ‘protest’ is unreasonable, and China will not accept such unreasonable demands”.¹⁷

Japan

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **Japan and the US held TPP working-level talks; Japan renews protest against Chinese construction of gas platform in East China Sea; Yachi-Patrushev discuss the prospects of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s visit to Japan; Japan and China restart discussions on prisoner transfer treaty; Japan-Cyprus foreign ministers’ meeting in Tokyo.**

On July 10, Japan and the US concluded two-day TPP working-level talks. Both the countries discussed difficult issues including the rice import quota and automobile parts tariffs. Reports suggested that both Japan and the US are likely to resolve the concerns at the TPP minister meeting between Akira Amari and Michael Froman in Hawaii on the side-lines of a plenary ministerial gathering of the TPP-negotiating countries from July 28. During the working level meeting, the deliberations focused on Japan’s approach concerning tariff-free import quota for American rice along with the scheduling of US tariff removal for Japanese auto parts. While the US pursues a quota of 175,000 tons, Japan reportedly wishes to limit it to 50,000 tons.¹⁸

On July 6, Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga registered strong protest against Chinese ‘unilateral gas development’¹⁹ in the East China Sea which Japan fears may be used for military purposes. Since 2013 Japan objected to the Chinese construction near the maiden line between Chinese and Japanese shoreline. Both parties failed to agree on the boundary in East China Sea which has a 200-mile exclusive economic zones overlap.

Japanese National Security Advisor Shotaro Yachi and Secretary of Russian Security Council Nikolai Patrushev met in Moscow to discuss a wide range of issues including President Vladimir Putin’s visit to Japan, territorial dispute over Northern Territories/Kuril Islands, terrorism, global

¹⁶ “China Urges Japan to Take Correct Attitude towards History”, *China Daily*, July 8, 2015 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-07/08/content_21228026.htm, accessed on July 13, 2015

¹⁷ “China Rebuffs Japan’s Protest on Gas Development in East China Sea”, *China Daily*, July 7, 2015 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-07/07/content_21203963.htm, accessed on July 13, 2015

¹⁸ “Japan, U.S. Aim To Settle TPP Rice Issue”, *Japan News*, July 11, 2015 at <http://the-japan-news.com/news/article/0002280228>

¹⁹ “Japan Protests China’s Gas Development in East China Sea”, *Kyodo*, July 6, 2015 at <https://english.kyodonews.jp/news/2015/07/362265.html>

economic issues, and Asia-Pacific security.²⁰ Besides, both sides reportedly also referred to the Chinese activities in South China Sea and Ukraine cease-fire agreement. Earlier Yachi visited Moscow in March and May 2014.

Tokyo hosted two-day discussion on a proposed China-Japan treaty concerning the transfer of prisoners aimed at enabling rehabilitation of convicts sentenced abroad by letting them to serve their verdicts in their respective native states²¹. The talks were suspended since November 2011. There are reportedly 540 Chinese inmates until February in Japan and 57 Japanese prisoners till January in China.

Japanese foreign minister Fumio Kishida and his Cypriot counterpart Ioannis Kasoulides met on July 8 and agreed to cooperate on international issues as “partners that share basic values”. Foreign minister Kishida underscored the significance of people-to-people exchanges in tourism and education/academism.²² Moreover, both discussed a wide range of issues including fight against terrorism, United Nations reforms, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and regional security situation including threats from North Korea.

The Korean Peninsula

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **South Korea to increase investment in cyber-security; North Korea commemorate the 21st anniversary of Kim Il-sung; Lee Hee-ho to visit North Korea in an effort to improve ties; Vital agreement on North Korea likely during Park-Obama meeting.**

On the occasion of Information Protection Day on July 8, South Korean President *Park Geun-hye* promised to increase investment related to cy-security to manage cyber-attacks. Moreover, there was emphasis on developing technology related to cyber-security. South Korea has often blamed the North Koreans for cyber-attacks including its connection in leaking South Korea’s nuclear power plants in December.²³

On July 8, North Korean supreme leader Kim Jong-un paid his respects to Kim Il-sung to honour the 21st death anniversary of the state’s founder. Kim Jong-un visited the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun along with other officials in Pyongyang. North Korean media suggested that absolute loyalty to Kim Jong-un is required since the leader’s “words and orders” is the “absolute truth” amid

²⁰ “Security Chief Yachi Meets With Putin Aide To Discuss Russian Leader’s Visit”, *Jiji*, July 8, 2015 at <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/07/08/national/politics-diplomacy/security-chief-yachi-meets-putin-aide-discuss-russian-leaders-visit/#.VblalIK6a1t>

²¹ “Japan, China Resume Talks On Prisoner Transfer Treaty”, *Jiji*, July 10, 2015 at <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/07/10/national/japan-china-resume-talks-prisoner-transfer-treaty/#.Vblao1K6a1t>

²² “Japan-Cyprus Foreign Ministers’ Meeting and Working Dinner, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan”, July 8, 2015 at http://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e_000802.html

²³ “Park Vows To Expand Investment In Cyber-Security”, *Yohnap News Agency*, July 8, 2015 at <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20150708000630>

rumours that at least ten North Korean officials have asked for refuge as Kim Jong-un intensifies his control over the regime.²⁴

The former first lady of South Korea, Lee Hee-ho (wife of late President Kim Dae-jung) is scheduled to visit North Korea from August 5-8. The visit is aimed at easing tensions in the worsening inter-Korea relations. Officials from Kim Dae-jung Peace Centre earlier visited Kaesong to finalize the details of Lee Hee-ho's visit. She is reportedly expected to go to children's hospital in Pyongyang and a nursery facility at Mt. Myohyang in North Pyongan Province. It is unclear if the former first lady will meet the North Korean leader Kim Jong-un.²⁵

Korean foreign ministry reportedly indicated that Park-Obama summit, rescheduled in the latter half of 2015, will present some vital agreement on North Korea to facilitate improvement in the nuclear negotiation. Earlier in June, South Korean President Park Geun-hye deferred her scheduled visit to Washington following the outbreak of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) which claimed several lives.²⁶

C. West Asia

Iran

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **Iran says Western countries are not safe from Israel's threats; Kerry said some outstanding issues 'resolved' in Iran nuclear talks.**

Iranian Defence Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan said that the Zionist regime of Israel is not just a threat to the Islamic countries, but the U.S. and the Western countries are not safe from its threats. The Zionist regime of Israel has hundreds of atomic warheads and other weapons of mass destruction and is the "centre of war mongering" in the world, he stated. He also said that the Zionist regime of Israel fully supports the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and seeks to "occupy the land from the Nile to the Euphrates".²⁷

US Secretary of State John Kerry said progress has been made in intense negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 group of countries on Tehran's nuclear energy programme. "I think we have resolved some of the things that were outstanding and we've made some progress," Kerry told a group of reporters in Vienna. The top US diplomat praised the "constructive" atmosphere. Iran

²⁴ "N. Korea Leader Pays Tribute to Late Founder on Anniversary", *The Korea Herald*, July 8, 2015 at <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20150708000144>

²⁵ "(LEAD) Ex-first Lady To Visit N. Korea in early August", *Yonhap News Agency*, July 6, 2015 at <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2015/07/05/0401000000AEN20150705001151315.html>

²⁶ "Park, Obama To Make Crucial N.K. Agreement", *The Korea Herald*, July 9, 2015 at <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20150709001057>

²⁷ "Iran Says Western Countries Are Not Safe From Israel's Threats", *Tehran Times*, July 7, 2015 at http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=247916

and the P5+1 countries - the United States, Britain, France, Russia, China and Germany - have been engaged in crucial talks in the Austrian capital, Vienna, towards reaching a landmark agreement over Tehran's nuclear energy programme.²⁸

Iraq and Syria

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **ISIS retakes strategic Syrian city; Malala opens school for Syrian refugee girls; Iraq gets first funding to rebuild war-struck regions; Iraqi warplane accidentally bombs Baghdad.**

ISIS militants have retaken the key Syrian city of Ain Issa from Kurdish forces, the London-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. Backed by U.S.-led coalition airstrikes, Kurdish forces wrested control of Ain Issa and Tal Abyad last month. Both cities are strategically important, because they sit along a supply route on a main road between Raqqa, the city ISIS considers to be its capital, and the Turkish border. The development comes after a weekend of coalition airstrikes on ISIS targets in Raqqa, described by Brett McGurk, the U.S. envoy for the coalition against ISIS, as "the most sustained set of airstrikes to date" against ISIS in Syria.²⁹

Education campaigner Malala Yousafzai has turned 18, and marked the day by opening a school for Syrian girls in an informal refugee settlement in Lebanon's Beka'a Valley. Malala was attacked by the Taliban in her native Pakistan in 2012 because of her campaign for girls' education. In her speech at the school, funded by the Malala Fund, she criticised world leaders for "failing" Syrian refugees, especially Syrian children.³⁰

Iraq and the World Bank signed a \$350 million loan agreement to fund emergency reconstruction in towns recaptured from Islamic State militants, a deal Baghdad said marked the first international help to rebuild areas devastated by war. Finance Minister Hoshiyar Zebari said around a third of the money would go toward repairing roads and bridges, with a similar amount allocated to restoring electricity networks, water and sewage.³¹

An Iraqi warplane has accidentally dropped a bomb over a residential area of Baghdad after it experienced mechanical failure, according to the country's defence ministry. Officials confirmed that a bomb fell from a Russian-made Sukhoi Su-25 fighter jet, hitting at the New Baghdad neighbourhood of the city and leaving 12 people killed or wounded.³²

²⁸ "Some Outstanding Issues 'Resolved' In Iran Nuclear Talks: Kerry" , *Presstv* , July 10 , 2015 at <http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2015/07/10/419670/outstanding-issues-Iran-nuclear-talks-Kerry>

²⁹ "ISIS Retakes Strategic Syrian City by Dana Ford" , *CNN* , July 6 2015 at <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/07/06/middleeast/isis-syria-ain-issa/>

³⁰ "Malala Marks 18th Birthday By Opening School For Syria Girls" , *BBC* , July 12 , 2015 at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-33500883>

³¹ "Iraq Gets First Funding To Rebuild War-Struck Regions" , *Reuters* , July 12 , 2015 at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/12/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-loan-idUSKCN0PM0Q820150712>

³² "Iraqi Warplane Accidentally Bombs Baghdad, *Aljazeera*" , July 6 2015 at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/07/iraqi-warplane-accidentally-bombs-baghdad-150706095247679.html>

D. The United State of America

National

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **US conducts Cyber Guard exercise to train to handle cyber operations; OPM takes measures to protect federal workers from cyber-attacks, Defence Secretary Carter asks counties and communities to find new ways to work with service to troops and veterans; Army announces force structure decisions and stationing plans.**

It's an axiom in the military that "you train like you fight." Another is "the battlefield is a bad place to meet an enemy for the first time." U.S. Cyber Command is expanding these truisms to the cyber domain, and the Cyber Guard exercise — held June 8-26 in Suffolk, Virginia — brought together players from the Defence Department, the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, the Federal Aviation Administration, private firms and law enforcement to train to handle cyber operations and ensure all the players know each other and the capabilities each brings to the fight. The exercise also included participation from U.S. allies, including the United Kingdom.³³ In late May 2015, as a result of ongoing efforts to secure its systems, the US Office of Personnel Management (OPM) discovered an incident affecting background investigation records of current, former and prospective federal employees and contractors, officials said. On July 9, U.S. OPM officials announced the results of the interagency forensics investigation into a recent cyber incident involving federal background investigation data and the steps it is taking to protect those affected. Since learning of the incident affecting background investigation records, OPM and the interagency incident response team concluded that sensitive information, including the Social Security numbers of 21.5 million individuals, was stolen from the background investigation databases. This includes 19.7 million people who applied for a background investigation, and 1.8 million non-applicants, predominantly spouses or cohabitants of applicants, officials said. There is no information at this time to suggest any misuse or further dissemination of the information that was stolen from OPM's systems, they added.³⁴

On July 11, 2015, Defence Secretary Ash Carter asked counties and communities across America to consider new ways to provide service to troops and veterans. Carter told the National Association of Counties conference in Charlotte, North Carolina, that as strategies change to keep America safe, personnel policies will change, too. Counties, cities and towns across America will be affected. He said, "Our men and women don't come from the Pentagon... they come from your communities. We recruit from your communities." Attracting and retaining men and women with high-demand

³³ Garamone, Jim, "Cyber Guard Exercise Points to Need for Persistent Training", *DoD News*, July 7, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129230>

³⁴ "OPM Acts to Protect Federal Workers, Others From Cyber Threats", *DoD News*, July 10, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129254>

talents and high-level skills means moving away from an Industrial Age recruiting and retention model. He said, these changes will affect communities across the country.³⁵

President Barack Obama assured service members yesterday that they “are going to get paid” despite disagreements over the fiscal year 2016 defence budget. Speaking at the Pentagon following a meeting with his national security team, Obama said it is important to take a long view of the defence budget and understand that the American military must be ready to fight and win today as well as 25 years in the future. The president said he is not going to accept a budget “that shortchanges our long-term requirements for new technologies, for readiness.” The administration has informed Congress that the president’s senior advisors would recommend that the president veto current House and Senate versions of the National Defence Authorization Act. The president said Americans must remember that the U.S. economy powers the best military in history. The bottom line, the president said, is that Americans must think long-term and recognize that a strong economy is an integral part of national security.³⁶ Meanwhile, on July 9, Army officials announced force structure decisions and stationing plans for the reduction of the regular Army from 490,000 to 450,000 soldiers. The reduction of force structure will occur in fiscal years 2016 and 2017. The end-strength reduction of 40,000 will be completed by the end of fiscal year 2018, and will be accompanied by the reduction of 17,000 Army civilian employees, officials said, adding that the cuts will affect nearly every Army installation in the United States and overseas. As part of these reductions, the number of regular Army brigade combat teams, the basic deployable units of manoeuvre in the Army, will continue to decline from a wartime high of 45 to 30 by the end of fiscal year 2017. Budget constraints are forcing the Army’s reduction, said Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson, the Army’s deputy chief of staff for operations and plans.³⁷

International: Asia

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **Obama discusses long-term strategy to destroy ISIL forces; Carter and Dempsey testify on department’s counter-ISIL strategy; Dempsey described the global security picture as ‘uncertain’; Airstrikes against ISIL continued; Thailand’s military government faces international condemnation over deportation; EU joins US in condemning Thailand’s forced deportation; US Senators introduce bill to toughen sanctions on NK; Drought-hit North Korea reduces food distribution; US urges China to sustain economic reform; US bipartisan resolution urges China to improve human rights in Tibet; US and Vietnam leaders met forty years after the end of the Vietnam War.**

On July 6, 2015, President Barack Obama discussed the strategy to degrade and ultimately destroy the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) with civilian and military leaders of his national

³⁵ Garamone, Jim, “Carter Asks County Execs to Find New Ways to Work With Service Members, Vets”, *DoD News*, July 11, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129261>

³⁶ Garamone, Jim, “Obama: Won’t Accept Budget That Shortchanges Readiness”, *DoD News*, July 7, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129229>

³⁷ “Army Announces Force Structure, Stationing Decisions”, *DoD News*, July 9, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129246>

security team at the Pentagon. The president spoke to the press following the meeting. He stressed that the strategy will take time to work, and that there is no substitute to working through indigenous forces in the region. The strategy envisions a long-term campaign, he said.³⁸ On July 7, Defence Secretary Ash Carter, joined by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, in testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee on the department's counter-ISIL strategy. Carter said, the Defence Department and a global coalition share the intent to deal the ISIL a lasting defeat.³⁹ Dempsey said that embedding joint tactical air controllers with Iraqi forces would not be the silver bullet in the fight against the ISIL. He described the global security picture as "uncertain as I've ever seen it." "The world is rapidly changing everywhere, and we are seeing significant shifts in an already complex strategic landscape," Dempsey said.⁴⁰ Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve officials reported on July 11 that the U.S. and coalition military forces continued to attack the ISIL terrorists in Syria and Iraq.⁴¹

On July 9, Thailand's military government confirmed the deportation of more than 100 ethnic Uighur people from western Xinjiang province back to China, a move condemned by rights groups and the United Nations. The deportation followed months of negotiations and came after more than 170 Uighurs were cleared to travel to Turkey last week.⁴² Meanwhile, the European Union has joined the United States in condemning Thailand's forced deportation of more than 100 ethnic Uighurs to China, where they could face harsh treatment and a lack of due process. On July 11, an EU statement called the deportation a violation of core principles of international humanitarian law. Thailand sent the more than 100 Uighurs, including women and children back to China despite the willingness of Turkey to accept them. The United States urged Thai officials to allow ethnic Uighurs remaining in Thailand to depart voluntarily to a country of their choice.⁴³

On July 9, 2015, the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2015 was introduced by Senator Robert Menendez, a New Jersey Democrat, and Lindsey Graham, a South Carolina Republican to toughen sanctions against North Korea, responding to a House measure introduced earlier this year. According to a statement released by Menendez's office, the Senate measure aims to expand the U.S. government's ability to sanction "property and seize funds of the people or organizations that provide support" to the North Korean regime. It also would expand the government's ability

³⁸ Garamone, Jim, "Obama Discusses Anti-ISIL Strategy With National Security Team at Pentagon", *DoD News*, July 6, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129224>

³⁹ Pellerin, Cheryl, "Carter: DoD, Global Coalition Seek ISIL's Lasting Defeat", *DoD News*, July 7, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129231>

⁴⁰ Garamone, Jim, "Dempsey Describes ISIL Strategy, 'Uncertain' Global Security", *DoD News*, July 7, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129234>

⁴¹ "Airstrikes Destroy ISIL Positions in Iraq, Syria", *DoD News*, July 11, 2015 at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=129260>

⁴² Corben, Ron, "Thailand Draws Ire Over Deportation of Uighurs to China", *VOA News*, July 09, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/thailand-draws-ire-over-deportation-of-more-than-100-uighurs-to-china/2854935.html>

⁴³ "US, EU Condemn Thailand's Deportation of Uighurs", *VOA News*, July 11, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/united-states-european-union-condemn-thailands-deportation-of-uighurs/2857804.html>

to sanction “support for cyber-attacks or cyber vandalism”.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Cristina Coslet, FAO’s Global Information and Early Warning System officer in charge of Far East Asia, told VOA the North Korean government informed the agency that the country’s food ration for July was 310 grams per person per day, a 25 percent decrease from the previous month. Between January and June 2015, the average food ration was 410 grams per person per day. Coslet said a severe drought is affecting the country’s crop production.⁴⁵

U.S. Treasury Secretary Jack Lew said he does not see the Greek debt crisis or China’s market volatility as direct threats to the U.S. economy, but he nevertheless urged China to maintain its pace of economic reform. Speaking at the Brookings Institution think tank in Washington on July 8, Lew said that while China’s markets are not fully integrated in the global financial system, the recent sharp decline in Chinese stock values raises concerns about long-term growth in China. Lew said Chinese officials have a “quite determined” commitment to a reform agenda, and that they have clearly set forth a plan to allow market forces to work in the economy.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, the U.S. House of Representatives on passed a bipartisan resolution urging China to improve human rights in Tibet. The non-binding resolution called for substantive dialogue, without preconditions, in order to address Tibetan grievances and secure a negotiated agreement for the Tibetan people. The resolution also called on the U.S. government to establish an office in Lhasa, Tibet, to monitor political, economic and cultural developments in Tibet, and to provide consular protection and citizen services.⁴⁷

On July 7, forty years after the end of the Vietnam War, U.S. President Barack Obama and the head of Vietnam’s Communist Party sat side by side in the Oval Office, hailing the “remarkable progress” in relations between the former enemies. President Obama said that “Obviously, there has been a difficult history between our two countries in the 20th century and there continues to be significant differences in political philosophy and political systems between our two countries. But because, I think, of the effort of leaders in both parties here in the U.S. and leaders in Vietnam, what we have seen is the emergence of a constructive relationship that is based on mutual respect, and that has benefited the peoples of both countries”. Obama welcomed General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, who is on his first U.S. visit during the 20th anniversary of the normalization of relations between Washington and Hanoi.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Lee, Jee Abbey, “US Senators Introduce Bill to Expand Sanctions on North Korea”, *VOA News*, July 10, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/senators-introduce-bill-expand-sanctions-north-korea/2857619.html>

⁴⁵ Kim, Hyunjin, “UN: Drought-hit North Korea Cuts Food Distribution”, *VOA News*, July 10, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/un-drought-hit-north-korea-cuts-food-distribution/2856178.html>

⁴⁶ Beattie, Victor, “US Urges China to Sustain Reform Despite Market Plunge”, *VOA News*, July 09, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/us-urges-china-to-maintain-reform-despite-market-plunge/2854684.html>

⁴⁷ Chen, Yang, “US House Resolution Urges China to Improve Human Rights in Tibet”, *VOA News*, July 09, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/us-house-resolution-urges-china-to-improve-human-rights-in-tibet/2854609.html>

⁴⁸ Pande, Arun, “Obama Meets Vietnam’s Communist Leader”, *VOA News*, July 07, 2015 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/obama-meets-with-vietnams-communist-leader-/2852352.html>

India-US Relations

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **U.S. Vice-President Biden to speak on India-U.S. nuclear deal; Atlanta feels the new vibes in India-US relations; Menon says, little evidence of a triangle relationship between US, China and India; Work Permits For Spouses of H1-B Visa Holders; Phone scam leader Sahil Patel imprisoned over 14 years.**

U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden would deliver a keynote speech on India-U.S. relations at an event hosted by a top American think-tank to mark the tenth anniversary of the historic civilian nuclear deal between the two countries. The event is being hosted jointly by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Carnegie Endowment for International Relations, a top U.S. think-tank. Mr. Biden's speech follows a full-day conference at Carnegie Endowment for International Relations on the 10th anniversary of the landmark U.S.-India civil nuclear agreement that will include remarks by Arun K Singh, India's Ambassador to the U.S., it said. The day-long conference is likely to be addressed by some of the key architects of the civil nuclear deal.⁴⁹

Sonjui L. Kumar, chair of the Georgia Indo-American Chamber of Commerce, told Global Atlanta that the positive personal chemistry between Barack Obama and Narendra Modi has recast U.S.-India relations to such an extent that even Atlanta is feeling the new vibes. The mood even crept into a later meeting with the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce where Ms. Kumar delivered a presentation in Mumbai on the laws affecting mergers and acquisitions in the U.S. While Atlanta has a large and active Indian-American community and the presence of several large Indian companies, they haven't always been active in the Georgia Indo-American chamber.⁵⁰

Shivshankar Menon, former national security adviser and a Brookings Institution analyst of the region, says, the U.S., China and India could find common ground in creating better cybersecurity, but there is little evidence of a triangle relationship for now. Menon says in a recent online Q&A session with the National Bureau of Asian Research said that "A key opportunity for trilateral cooperation is cybersecurity". However, he added, "There are high levels of mistrust and lack of transparency in this new domain, where the rules and nature of contention are still very opaque."⁵¹

The United States has finally decided to amend its regulations to allow the dependent spouses of the specialised H-1B visa holders to work was hailed with jubilation by Indian Americans. Effective immediately, US Citizenship and Immigration Services will begin accepting applications for employment. Technology companies have lobbied hard for this change, which they say will retain

⁴⁹ "Biden To Speak On 10th Anniversary of Indo-U.S. Nuke Deal", *The Hindu*, July 9, 2015 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/biden-to-speak-on-10th-anniversary-of-indous-nuke-deal/article7402522.ece>

⁵⁰ "Atlanta Hosts Mumbai Delegation as U.S.-India Relations Warm Up", *Global Atlanta*, July 9, 2015 at <http://www.globalatlanta.com/article/27709/atlanta-hosts-mumbai-delegation-as-us-india-relations-warm-up/>

⁵¹ "U.S., China, India Could Find Accord In Cybersecurity, Regional Analyst Says", *Aviation Week Network*, July 9, 2015 at <http://aviationweek.com/awin-only/us-china-india-could-find-accord-cybersecurity-regional-analyst-says>

and attract more foreign talent and their educated spouses. This will apparently affect 97,000 people in the first year, and 30,000 per year after that.⁵² Meanwhile, Sahil Patel, the notorious Indian American leader of a gang that operated for at least two years through an intricate phone scam that specialized in getting personal information of victims based in the United States, then terrorizing them through phone calls with threat to either have them arrested or deported if they don't pay money to federal government agencies, was sentenced to over 14 years in prison in New York City on July 8. Patel committed the crimes from December 2011 until his arrest in December 2013, reported the *Associated Press*.⁵³

II. DEFENCE REVIEWS

National

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **Indigenously designed, developed and produced Akash Air Defence missile system inducted into the Indian Air Force; Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha on a four day visit to South Africa.**

Defence minister Manohar Parrikar formally handed over to the Indian Air Force (IAF) the indigenously designed, developed and produced Akash Air Defence missile system at Air Force Station Gwalior on July 10, 2015. Akash is the first made-in-India missile system and is a hallmark of sustained and focused jointmanship between DRDO, BEL, private sector and more importantly the IAF. Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha, who formally received the key of the Akash system from Parrikar said that a total of 27 missiles had been fired after inking of the contract, to ascertain the serviceability of the system in various conditions and a high success rate had been achieved. He also brought out that plans were afoot in the IAF for procurement of additional Akash systems. Akash is a potent supersonic mobile multi-directional, multi-target point/ area Air Defence system that can simultaneously engage multiple air targets using sophisticated multi-function phased array radars. It is also capable of handling the counter electronic warfare scenario. Indigenous development of Akash system has given impetus to the defence industrial base of the country and generated business of more than Rs. 20,000 crore. Akash is the outcome of successful partnership between DRDL, the nodal lab in DRDO, along with 13 other DRDO labs, 19 Public Sector Units (PSUs), 5 Ordnance Factories (OFs), 3 National Laboratories, 6 academic institutions and more than 265 private industries across the country.⁵⁴

Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha, Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chief of the Air Staff have proceeded on a four day visit to South Africa. During the visit, Air Chief Marshal Raha is scheduled

⁵² "Work Permits For Spouses of H1-B Visa Holders Will Help Families, Economy", *The Huffington Post*, July 7, 2015 at http://www.huffingtonpost.in/sonia-chopra/decision-to-allow-spouses_b_7531824.html

⁵³ "Phone Scam Leader Sahil Patel Gets Over 14 Years In Prison, but H-1B Visa, Green Card Holders Continue To Get Duped", *The American Bazar*, July 8, 2015 at <http://www.americanbazaaronline.com/2015/07/08/phone-scam-leader-sahil-patel-gets-over-14-years-in-prison-but-h-1b-visa-green-card-holders-continue-to-get-duped/>

⁵⁴ "Indian Air Force Formally Inducts the Akash Missile," *PIB*, July 10, 2015, at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=123140>

to hold talks with senior military leadership and discuss a wide range of bilateral issues on enhancing defence cooperation between the two countries. The itinerary also includes a visit to Armscor, the Armament Corporation of South Africa. In recent years, there have been close and frequent contacts at political and military levels between the two countries which are members of the tri-lateral initiative IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa). Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha's visit to South Africa is likely to boost relations between the two Air Forces and provide impetus to the Make in India initiative.⁵⁵

International

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **Dozens of Russian soldiers facing trial for fleeing their unit fearing deployment to Ukraine; Military aid provided by Saudi Arabia and the United States has boosted the firepower of the Lebanese Armed Forces.**

Reports say that dozens of Russian soldiers are facing trial for fleeing their unit, fearing deployment to Ukraine. The popular Gazeta.ru website said several dozen soldiers would be prosecuted after fleeing a training ground in southern Russia where they were under pressure to volunteer to fight in Ukraine. The troops had freely enlisted for the army and are not draftees, the newspaper report said. It is the latest report to allege Russian soldiers are being sent to eastern Ukraine despite Moscow's insistence that only "volunteers" are fighting alongside the pro-Russian separatists. The Russian defence ministry said that only four soldiers named in the report are under investigation for disciplinary offences denying dozens were involved.⁵⁶

Meanwhile, according to reports, military aid provided by Saudi Arabia and the United States has boosted the firepower of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) by about 30 to 40 percent in recent years. Over the past eight years Lebanon has received US military aid worth \$1 billion, according to David Hale, the US ambassador to Lebanon. The firepower of the LAF has at least multiplied by 30 to 40 percent. According to an article authored in November for the Middle East Institute by Basem Shabb, a member of the Lebanese parliamentary Committee for National Defence and Interior, the LAF has quietly been developing a credible force over the past few years with US assistance. Lebanon has also recently received a military grant from Saudi Arabia worth \$3 billion for French weapons. French support culminated in the delivery of Milan launcher systems last April. Another \$1 billion Saudi grant delivered in December facilitated the purchase in June of six A-29 Super Tucano aircraft worth \$462 million.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ "Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha Visits South Africa," *PIB*, July 12, 2015, at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=123179>

⁵⁶ "Dozens Of Russian Troops 'Flee Unit, Fearing Ukraine Deployment,' *Defence News*, July 11, 2015, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/2015/07/11/russia-ukraine/30012235/>

⁵⁷ "Saudi, US Aid Boost Lebanese Firepower," *Defence News*, July 11, 2015, at <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/land/weapons/2015/07/11/lebanon-firepower-saudi-us-increases/29913841/>

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEWS

Jammu & Kashmir

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **Ceasefire violations: Pak targets BoPs on IB and LoC; 3 militants killed in Keran encounter: Army.**

Pakistani troops violated the ceasefire again on July 7 by firing on forward posts along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district, leaving a jawan injured. This is the fifth such incident in the last 72 hours. On July 6, Pakistani troops had resorted to night-long firing and mortar shelling targeting six Border out Posts (BoPs) and some villages along Indo-Pak border in Jammu district. They used small arms and also fired 82 mm mortar shells targeting BoPs in the sector triggering panic among villagers located along the borderline. One BSF jawan was killed in Pakistani firing along LoC in Nougam sector in Kashmir valley on July 5.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, a Border Security Force (BSF) jawan was killed on July 9 when Pakistani troops opened sniper fire at Indian forward post along the Line of Control (LoC) in Baramulla of North Kashmir. The incident, coming ahead of the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif in Russia on July 10, took place at around 3.30 p.m. when the jawan, posted in Karam post in Uri area of Baramulla sector, collapsed after being hit in his right eye by a bullet from across the border, the officials said. The Pakistani firing was retaliated by the troops and some casualties were inflicted on the other side, the officials claimed.⁵⁹

Army, on July 12, claimed to have killed three militants while foiling an infiltration bid in Keran Sector of frontier district of Kupwara in north Kashmir. A senior Army official said the militants were killed at Gale Gali on the Line of Control. "A group of five to seven militants were intercepted by 5 Rajput regiment at Gale Gali on July 12 morning and asked to stop. But they opened indiscriminate fire on Army and in retaliatory fire three unidentified militants were killed," he said. He said the militants were "cutting fencing" erected along the LoC "when soldiers detected their activity using night vision devices." The official said gun-battle in the area is on.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ "Army Jawan Injured In Pakistani Firing Along LOC", *The Economic Times*, July 7, 2015 at <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/army-jawan-injured-in-pakistani-firing-along-loc/articleshow/47972696.cms>

⁵⁹ "BSF Jawan Killed In Pakistan Firing", *The Hindu*, July 10, 2015 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/bsf-jawan-killed-in-sniper-fire-by-pak-troops-in-jk/article7404233.ece>

⁶⁰ Yusuf, Shabir Ibn, "3 Militants Killed In Keran Encounter: Army", *Greater Kashmir*, July 12, 2015 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/front-page/3-militants-killed-in-keran-encounter-army/191704.html>

Northeast India

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **NSCN (K) cease-fire abrogation decided in advance, claim sources; Senior GNLA militant killed in encounter; NSCN (K) asks Airtel to withdraw operations from Nagaland; Indo-Myanmar Regional Border Committee meet discusses issues; NIA will ask Myanmar for custody of SS Khaplang.**

Militant outfit NSCN (K) withdrew from the ceasefire agreement with the Government of India soon after signing a formal agreement with the Government of Myanmar. However, the decision to withdraw from the ceasefire agreement with the Government of India was taken some time back. These revelations have come out following the arrest of senior leader of the outfit Khumlo Abi Anal by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in connection with the killing of 18 Army personnel in Manipur. Highly placed security sources told *The Assam Tribune* that Anal met Khaplang in Taga in Myanmar in December last year and the issue of withdrawal from the ceasefire agreement was discussed during that time. The leaders of the outfit felt that their importance was being reduced and the Government was giving more importance to NSCN (I-M). They felt that under the circumstances, the best option for them was to withdraw from the ceasefire agreement to show its strength to the Government of India. Security sources said that the arrest of Anal and another senior leader K Rochilli and their confessions before the security agencies revealed that the leaders of the NSCN (K) wanted a comprehensive solution to the Naga political issue, by incorporating the Naga-inhabited areas in India and Myanmar, but it was not possible for the Government of India to make any commitment on the issue. The Government made it clear that it cannot go for any solution cutting across the international boundary. Following the deliberations, Khaplang directed the office-bearers of his outfit not to attend the scheduled meeting of the ceasefire monitoring group to discuss the extension of the ceasefire agreement, which was due to expire in April this year. Sources said that Khaplang was also under pressure from other militant groups of the region, including ULFA (I), to break away from the ceasefire agreement so that their idea of forming a common platform becomes a reality.⁶¹

The Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) suffered a body blow with the killing of senior cadre and in-charge of the outfit's media wing, Savio Ch Marak, in a police encounter in East Garo Hills on July 9. Marak was killed in a police operation in Ringregre village near Rongsak, about 30 kms from Williamnagar. The encounter took place at around 4.30 am when SWAT personnel raided a hideout where Marak was allegedly present along with five-six GNLA men.⁶²

The NSCN (K) has asked Airtel to withdraw its operations from Nagaland and remove all infrastructure and installations within one month. The NSCN (K), in a Press release, further warned that if Airtel failed to act within the stipulated deadline, "it would initiate demolition of every

⁶¹ Choudhary, R Dutta, "New Revelations About NSCN (K) Activities", *The Assam Tribune*, July 6, 2015 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0615/at053>

⁶² "Militant Killed", *The Assam Tribune*, July 10, 2015 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul1015/oth056>

structure and also enforce military action upon any company official found contravening this directive". The outfit alleged that Airtel was culpable of "practising manipulative lobby" to misguide a certain "major NGO" and also attempting to create chasm between NSCN (K), civil organisations and Naga public with a pure ulterior motive to maximise its profit". It said it took strong exception to the company daring to challenge its authority and warned that such conspiracy shall never be tolerated.⁶³

The seventh Indo-Myanmar Regional Border Committee meet was organised from July 6- July 10 at Mantripukhri in Imphal East district of Manipur, an Assam Rifles press release said on July 11. A 19-member delegation from Myanmar with high ranking officials of Army and civil government departments attended the meeting at the Head Quarters, Inspector General of Assam Rifles (South). The meeting was held under the aegis of Spear Corps of Indian Army. The meet provided opportunities for representatives of security forces of both countries to discuss and resolve crucial issues relating to border management, bi-lateral cooperation and terrorism.⁶⁴

The National Investigation Agency will ask the Myanmar authorities through Interpol to hand over NSCN (K) chief S.S. Khaplang for trial over the killing of 18 Indian Army soldiers in Manipur last month. Sources said the NIA had named Mr Khaplang as the prime conspirator behind the June 4 ambush, and was preparing the final charge sheet detailing the evidence against him, to be given to the Myanmar government. The issue may also be discussed when the Myanmar Army chief visits India soon, the sources said, adding that Myanmar recently told India it had given medical help to Mr Khaplang and shifted him to a hospital for treatment.⁶⁵

Left-wing Extremism

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **Maoist in-fighting behind killing of senior Cadres; Chhattisgarh police launch smartphone app for anti-Maoist intel; Maoists hold meeting on first day of bandh; 9 wanted Maoists surrendered in Gadchiroli.**

The "infighting" between the cadres of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) has allegedly resulted in the killing of four guerrillas, including a Commander, in the last 10 days in Sukma and Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh. "Four Maoist leaders — Hemla Bhagat, Kosi, Hinga and Badru — were killed by other Maoist leaders in the last few days. There are some inputs of another Maoist leader Ayatu being killed by his own party comrades, but his status is yet to be known," Sukma Additional Superintendent of Police Santosh Singh told *The Hindu*. Hemla Bhagat belonged

⁶³ "NSCN (K) Asks Airtel To Pack Up", *The Assam Tribune*, July 10, 2015 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul1015/oth055>

⁶⁴ "Indo-Myanmar Regional Border Committee Meet Discusses Issues", *The Economics Times*, July 11, 2015 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-07-11/news/64308696_1_myanmar-army-discusses-issues-indian-army

⁶⁵ Anand, Manoj, "NIA will Ask Myanmar For Custody of SS Khaplang", *The Asian Age*, July 11, 2015 at <http://www.asianage.com/india/nia-will-ask-myanmar-custody-ss-khaplang-165>

to the military wing of the Maoists in south Bastar, Kosi was working with DKMS (Dandakaranya Kisan Majdoor Sangh) and Badru was the section commander of Maoist's military platoon no.24, Mr. Singh said. The killings came to light when the villagers of Kundri village of Sukma informed the police that Badru was killed and his body was thrown in an open field by the Maoists on July 2 after which the villagers cremated his body near the village.⁶⁶

The Chhattisgarh Police have launched a smartphone app on which people can secretly pass on crucial information about insurgents. 'Chhattisgarh Police' – the specially-designed app launched to mark Digital India week, can be downloaded from Google Play store and is also available on android platforms. The app will enable people in Maoist-hit areas to share with the police videos, audios and other information on Maoists without revealing their identity. Police believe the app will have an obvious edge over human intelligence gathered through a network of trusted ground-level informers. It would also bring on board those who are hesitant to visit a police station and volunteer information out of fear of compromising their identity. The inputs will be accessed only by top officials engaged in anti-Maoist operations and intelligence gathering, said ADG (anti-Maoist operation) RK Vij.⁶⁷

People from as many as 30 villages have reportedly attended a meeting conducted by the banned CPI (Maoist) on the Andhra-Odisha border on July 6, the first day of the two-day bandh. The meeting was conducted by the Malkangiri-Visakha-Koraput division committee of the party and the committee's secretary Venu had renewed the party's warning to the five families that the party accused of involving in the killing of two Maoists near Korukonda in Visakha Agency during October last. Venu also demanded the people's representatives to pass resolutions in the Gram Sabhas and legislative bodies against the State Government's proposal to take up bauxite mining in the Agency area. He also wanted the people's representatives to resign their posts and participate in the Girijans' agitation against bauxite mining. The large number of people participating in the meeting was significant since there was not much of Maoist activity in Visakha Agency and one Maoist was killed and some others had a narrow escape from police in exchanges of fire that took place in recent past.⁶⁸

Nine wanted Maoists surrendered before police in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra on July 11. A senior Maoist cadre of the CPI (Maoist) military wing People's Liberation Guerrilla Army was also arrested by Gadchiroli police.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Dahat, Pavan, "Infighting Behind Killing Of Senior Maoists: Police", *The Hindu*, July 7, 2015 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/infighting-behind-killing-of-senior-maoists-in-chhattisgarh-police/article7393014.ece>

⁶⁷ Kaiser, Ejaz, "Chhattisgarh Police Launch Smartphone App For Anti-Maoist Intel", *Hindustan Times*, July 07, 2015 at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/chhattisgarh-citizens-can-give-intel-for-anti-maoist-ops-via-app/article1-1366443.aspx>

⁶⁸ "Maoists Hold Meeting On First Day Of Bandh", *The Hindu*, July 7, 2015 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Visakhapatnam/maoists-hold-meeting-on-first-day-of-bandh/article7393372.ece>

⁶⁹ Dahat, Pavan, "Another Maoist Leader Faces 'Execution'", *The Hindu*, July 12, 2015 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/another-maoist-leader-faces-execution/article7411617.ece>

IV. UNITED NATIONS REVIEWS

India and the UN

(June 22-June 28, 2015)

- **India calls for rethink on Afghan troop withdrawal; China prevents discussion on Lakhvi's release in UNSC; India back in top 10 investment destinations.**

At a Security Council debate on the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, the Indian Permanent Representative (PR) to the UN, Asoke Mukherji, urged the international community to redeploy troops in Afghanistan in view of the rising violence levels in the country. The PR said that incidents of violence indicate that what is happening in Afghanistan is not only an ethnic clash, rather it is terrorism.⁷⁰

China prevented the Security Council Sanctions Committee from taking up the issue of the release of the alleged 26/11 mastermind, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi. India had requested for a meeting of the Committee to discuss violation of the 1267 Committee's sanctions against Al-Qaeda linked terrorist entities and individuals. China said India's request was based on incomplete information.⁷¹ The Indian government conveyed its serious concern regarding this matter to the Chinese government.⁷²

The World Investment Report 2015 of the UNCTAD has stated that in the year 2014, India was among the top FDI destinations and was in the 9th place. While FDI flows fell by 16 per cent globally, they increased by 22 per cent in India, thus making it \$ 34 billion. Much of the FDI has come in the automotive industry. This investment has helped create vibrant some industrial clusters in the country. The "Make in India" initiative is likely to attract more FDI into the manufacturing sector.⁷³

⁷⁰ "Reconsider International Military Force Pullback from Afghanistan: India", June 23, 2015, at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Reconsider-international-military-force-pullback-from-Afghanistan-India/articleshow/47779189.cms>

⁷¹ "China Blocks India's Move Seeking Action against Pakistan over Lakhvi's Release", June 23, 2015, at <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/9xmQYfxmpy6uzq99Tbav7O/China-blocks-Indias-move-seeking-action-against-Pakistan-o.html>

⁷² "India Conveys 'Grave Concerns' To China for Blocking UN Action Against Pak over Lakhvi", June 24, 2015, at http://zeenews.india.com/news/india/india-conveys-grave-concerns-to-china-for-blocking-un-action-against-pak-over-lakhvi_1618741.html. Also see "China blocks bid for U.N. action on Pak. over Lakhvi", June 24, 2015, at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-wanted-to-see-pakistan-clarification-on-release/article7347637.ece>

⁷³ "India among Top 10 Countries to Attract Highest FDI in 2014: Unctad", June 25, 2015, at <http://www.livemint.com/Money/ZxJzJKTVc5sPD2XcxJQZvI/India-among-top-10-countries-to-attract-highest-FDI-in-2014.html>

(June 29-July 05, 2015)

- **India bans oil trade with ISIL, ANF; India begins prosecution of errant peacekeepers; India not to announce 'peak' year; India urges the need to bridge the global digital divide; India abstains on UNHRC resolutions; Christof Haynes: Make Nanavati Commission report on Gujarat riots public.**

Complying with UNSC Resolution 2199 (2015), India has passed an order that restrains oil trade and trade in refined oil products, modular refineries and related materials, besides items of cultural (including antiquities), scientific and religious importance with ISIL, Al Nusra Front and other Al Qaeda related entities.⁷⁴

The Secretary General has appreciated India's effort to investigate and prosecute the peacekeepers who have been accused of sexual abuse and exploitation. Other countries like South Africa, Pakistan, also named in the report, are yet to do so.⁷⁵

In an interview with the *BBC*, Environment Minister, Prakash Javadekar clarified that while India is likely to announce its INDCs soon and they are likely to be substantial, it will not give a date for the beginning of a downturn in its emissions. China in the meantime has stated in its INDC that its emissions would peak in 2030 and will go down from then.⁷⁶

At the World Summit for Information Society (WSIS) +10 review in the General Assembly, Santhosh Jha, Director General, MEA, urged the need to bridge the digital divide between the developed and developing/least developed countries. He spoke of the need for affordability and multilingualism of ICTs for inclusiveness and development.⁷⁷ He also emphasized the need for striking a balance between national security and human rights while engaging in internet surveillance.⁷⁸

At 29th session of the UNHRC in Geneva, India abstained from voting on two resolutions. The first was a 'prescriptive' resolution asking Myanmar to adopt measures to end the discrimination against Rohingyas. In this case, as explained by India's PR in Geneva, Ajit Kumar, India abstained as in its view, the government of Myanmar was in the process of restoring law and order in the

⁷⁴ "India Bans Oil Trade with Al Qaida Linked Groups", June 30, 2015, at <http://www.dnaindia.com/money/report-india-bans-oil-trade-with-al-qaida-linked-groups-2100403>

⁷⁵ "India's Prosecution Of Peacekeepers For Abuse Encouraging: UN", July 1, 2015, at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-07-01/news/64004206_1_sexual-exploitation-and-abuse-indian-army-united-nations

⁷⁶ "India 'will not Announce' Carbon Emissions Peak Year", July 2, 2015, at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-33353181>

⁷⁷ "PM Modi's 'Digital India' Programme To Focus On Digital Empowerment", July 2, 2015, at http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/modi-s-digital-india-prog-to-focus-on-digital-empowerment-115070200157_1.html

⁷⁸ "India Calls For Transparency In Internet Surveillance", July 3, 2015, at <http://telecom.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/internet/india-calls-for-transparency-in-internet-surveillance/47920111>

Rakhine state and was willing to cooperate with external humanitarian relief efforts.⁷⁹ India also abstained from voting on a resolution adopting the Report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry on the 2014 Gaza Conflict, condemning Israel for human rights violations during the war in Gaza in 2014. MEA spokesperson, Vikas Swarup, explained that this was due to reference in the resolution to the International Criminal Court, whose jurisdiction India does not accept.⁸⁰

At the UNHRC, Special Rapporteur for Human Rights Christof Heyns raised the issue of making public the report of the Nanavati Commission on the Gujarat riots of 2002 submitted to the Gujarat government last year.⁸¹

(July 6-12, 2015)

- **India's MDG targets partially met, SDGs may be difficult to achieve; Afghan refugees in India get skill development training; Nigeria seeks India's support for UNSC seat.**

A report on Millennium Development Goals released by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia-Pacific (UN-ESCAP) had highlighted that while India had succeeded in achieving the poverty reduction goal set by the MDGs as also the primary education enrolment goals, it lags behind in gender parity in the education. Also, secondary education has not picked up sufficiently, with India still having the highest numbers of school-drop out at that level.⁸² Bibek Debroy of the NITI Aayog, who was attending the report-release function, however, expressed concern regarding the over-ambitious Sustainable Development Goals- 17 goals and 169 targets- being formulated for adoption in September 2015. He said collecting relevant data and then implementing and monitoring them will be a very difficult task.⁸³

UNHCR in partnership with the Anudip Foundation is helping with imparting skill development training to Afghan refugees in India. 79 refugees are being imparted IT and communications skills at two centres in New Delhi. After three months of training, they get placements in BPOs, IT

⁷⁹ "UNHRC Adopts Resolution on Myanmar's Rohingya Muslims", July 3, 2015, at http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/unhrc-adopts-resolution-on-myanmar-s-rohingya-muslims-115070300776_1.html

⁸⁰ "India Abstains From Voting on UN Resolution on Israel", July 3, 2015, at <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/487292/unhrc-adopts-resolution-palestine-india.html>

⁸¹ "UN Rapporteur Christof Heyns Urges Government to Make Nanavati Commission Report On 2002 Riots Public", July 4, 2015, at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-07-04/news/64090875_1_nanavati-commission-report-final-report-un-report

⁸² "UN Notes Progress on MDGs, But Says Challenges Remain for India", July 7, 2015, at http://zeenews.india.com/news/india/un-notes-progress-on-mdgs-but-says-challenges-remain-for-india_1626085.html

⁸³ "New United Nations Development Goals Will Drive Nations 'Nuts': NITI Aayog's Bibek Debroy", July 7, 2015, at <http://www.financialexpress.com/article/economy/new-united-nations-development-goals-will-drive-nations-nuts-bibek-debroy-niti-aayog/96743/>

firms, banks and other sectors. A total of 10,395 Afghan refugees are registered with the UNHCR in India.⁸⁴

The speaker of the Nigerian House of Representatives, Hon. Yakubu Dogara, requested that India support Nigeria's candidacy for a permanent seat at the UNSC. He did so during the visit of the Indian High Commissioner to Nigeria, A R Ghanashyam to his office.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ "Afghan Refugees In India Getting Skill Development Training", July 9, 2015, at <http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-afghan-refugees-in-india-getting-skill-development-training-2103122>

⁸⁵ "UNSC Seat: Dogara Seeks India's Support for Nigeria's Bid", July 11, 2015, at <http://leadership.ng/news/446298/unsc-seat-dogara-seeks-indias-support-for-nigerias-bid>