

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Afghanistan

- **Afghan Foreign Minister: Afghanistan will work “vigorously” to seek peace with Taliban insurgents; Suicide attack kills 20 including NATO troops in eastern city of Khost**

According to reports, Afghan Foreign Minister Zalmay Rassoul has said that Afghanistan will work “vigorously” to seek peace with Taliban insurgents. He made these remarks at the launch of new body set up to steer ties with the US in Washington DC on October 3. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton also vowed the United States would stand by Afghanistan as it seeks to emerge from decades of war, even after all US and NATO combat troops have left the country by late 2014.¹

In another development, a suicide bomber tore through an Afghan-NATO foot patrol in eastern city of Khost on October 1, killing at least 20 people including three foreign troops and their interpreter. Taliban insurgents claimed responsibility for the attack.²

Pakistan

- **Newly appointed US ambassador to Pakistan Richard Olson: The “primary focus” of US engagement with Pakistan will now be to convince its government to act against the Haqqani network in North Waziristan Agency; Pakistan Foreign Office: Stability in Afghanistan in interest of Pakistan and Russia**

According to reports, the newly appointed US ambassador to Pakistan Richard Olson has said that the “primary focus” of US engagement with Pakistan will now be to convince its government to act against the Haqqani network which has sanctuaries in North Waziristan Agency. His appointment was approved by the US Senate only recently. Due to take formal charge from next month, he will assume office amid signs of improvement in Pak-US relations.³

In another development, according to reports, Pakistan Foreign Office Spokesperson Moazzam Khan on October 2 said that stable Afghanistan was in common interest of Pakistan and Russia. He said the forthcoming visit of Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov would provide an opportunity to further expand and intensify the existing mutually beneficial bilateral ties. He noted that the

¹ “Afghanistan will work to make peace with Taliban : FM”, *Dawn*, October 3, 2012 at <http://dawn.com/2012/10/03/afghanistan-will-work-to-make-peace-with-taliban-fm/>

² “Taliban suicide attack kills 20 in Afghanistan including NATO troops”, *Dawn*, October 1, 2012 at <http://dawn.com/2012/10/01/taliban-suicide-attack-kills-20-in-afghanistan-including-nato-troops/>

³ “New US envoy to urge North Waziristan clean up”, *The Express Tribune*, October 2, 2012 at <http://tribune.com.pk/story/445516/new-us-envoy-to-urge-north-waziristan-clean-up/>

two countries also share common objective of peace and stability in the region and attach importance to regional connectivity both in terms of trade and energy cooperation.⁴

Bangladesh

- **Indian Army Chief visits Bangladesh; Bangladesh and India express their concerns over the increasing trend of smuggling of synthetic and “party” drugs – largely used by youngsters – across the open border; Dipu Moni elected as chairperson to the CMAG; Bangladesh ranks 11th in the Happy Planet Index 2012**

Reports noted that Indian Chief of Army Staff General Bikram Singh paid a four-day goodwill visit to Bangladesh beginning from October 2 at the invitation of his Bangladesh counterpart General Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan.⁵

In another development, Bangladesh and India have expressed their concerns over the increasing trend of smuggling of synthetic and “party” drugs – largely used by youngsters – across the open border. To this end, both the countries have decided to share actionable intelligence and information regarding these drugs which are produced cheaply in laboratories and available easily under popular names like “Speed” and “Ecstasy”. The discussion took place in the two-day annual talks with India’s Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).⁶

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni has been unanimously elected chairperson to the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) at its 38th Session held in New York. With the election, she has become the first female chair of CMAG. She has also become the first from a South Asian country to chair the Commonwealth body.⁷

In other developments, the Happy Planet Index 2012 has ranked Bangladesh 11th among 151 countries, ahead of both India and Pakistan, which ranked 32nd and 16th respectively.⁸

Sri Lanka

- **US government is likely to allow Sri Lanka to import crude oil from Iran**

According to reports, despite the US embargo, the United States government is likely to allow Sri Lanka continue importing crude oil from Iran because of Sri Lanka’s satisfactory performance in the wake of trade sanctions. Sri Lanka has reduced the import of Iranian crude oil from 14 shipments

⁴ “Stable Afghanistan is in common interest of Pakistan, Russia : FO”, *Dawn*, October 3, 2012 at <http://dawn.com/2012/10/03/stable-afghanistan-is-in-common-interest-of-pakistan-russia-fo/>

⁵ “Indian army chief to visit Bangladesh”, *The Daily Star*, October 1, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=251942>.

⁶ Bhattacharya, Pallab, “Dhaka, Delhi agree to curb drug trafficking”, *The Daily Star*, October 6, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=252651>.

⁷ “Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group: Dipu Moni elected chairperson”, *The Daily Star*, October 1, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=251934>.

⁸ “Bangladesh 11th happiest country”, *The Daily Star*, October 7, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=252817>.

to 10 during the trade embargo. Therefore, the US is ready to allow Sri Lanka to import 10 shipments of Iranian Light for the use of Sapugaskanda Oil Refinery (SOR) as only Iranian crude oil is suitable for the purpose.⁹

Maldives

- **Maldives and Somalia discuss the issue of repatriation of Somalis drifted to Maldives**

Reports noted that an agreement has been made between the government of Maldives and Puntland government of Somalia, to repatriate forty Somalis who drifted to Maldives and have been kept under Police supervision. The agreement was made at a meeting held between a delegation of the UN Office on Drug and Crimes (UNODC), a Director General of Puntland government, Maldivian Foreign Minister, officials of MNDF and officials of Maldives Police Service.¹⁰

B. East Asia

South East Asia

- **Philippine government, Moro rebels agree on peace agreement; Myanmar President to visit South Korea; Thai delegation visits India; Philippines to host ASEAN Maritime Forum; Malaysian leader calls for more understanding between Indonesia and Malaysia**

The President of Philippines Benigno Aquino III said on October 7, 2012 that the government has reached a “framework agreement” with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) that would pave the way for lasting peace in Mindanao. Aquino described the deal in a nationally televised announcement as a road map for establishing a new autonomous region to be administered by minority Muslims in Mindanao. This new political entity will be called “Bangsamoro.” He lauded the efforts of everyone involved in the peace process, saying the framework agreement is a major breakthrough toward reaching a final peace deal. The framework agreement was concluded during the 32nd formal exploratory peace talks facilitated by panel chairs – Marvic Leonen of the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and Mohagher Iqbal of the MILF – in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia.¹¹

In another development, according to reports, Myanmar President U Thein Sein is to start his visit to South Korea which is believed to further boost bilateral relations and cooperation. At the invitation of his South Korean counterpart Lee Myung-bak, Thein Sein is to pay the three-day visit to South Korea. U Thein Sein is expected to discuss with Lee in Seoul on expanding ties in trade, investment, energy and developmental aid. The two leaders will also exchange views on

⁹ “US likely to allow import of crude oil from Iran”, *The Daily Mirror*, October 3, 2012 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/22375-us-likely-to-allow-import-of-crude-oil-from-iran.html>

¹⁰ “Agreement made to repatriate Somalis within two months”, *The Sun Online*, October 4, 2012 at <http://sun.mv/english/6263>.

¹¹ “Government, Moro rebels agree on peace draft”, *Sun Star*, October 7, 2012, <http://www.sunstar.com.ph/breaking-news/2012/10/07/government-moro-rebels-agree-peace-draft-246807>

regional affairs and cooperation in global issues. During Lee's visit to Myanmar in May, he had offered Myanmar expanded loan and aid and increased cooperation on energy and resources development, while U Thein Sein assured Seoul of ceasing to buy conventional weapons from North Korea.¹²

According to the reports, a 12-member Thai delegation recently surveyed Moreh town in Manipur with regard to improving land connectivity between India, Myanmar and Thailand. It held discussions on the early completion of the Mekong Ganga trilateral highway that will connect India with Myanmar and Thailand. The other important issues discussed, dealt with removal of trade bottlenecks and setting up of a rail network between Delhi and Hanoi.¹³

Reports noted that Philippines will host the third Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Maritime Forum (AMF) and the first Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) from October 3 to 5. The event will be attended by representatives from all ten member countries of the ASEAN. The AMF is envisioned to promote maritime cooperation under the ASEAN Political Security Community framework by serving as the primary venue within ASEAN to discuss cross-cutting maritime issues. Sessions at the third AMF will be chaired by Foreign Affairs Undersecretary for Policy Erlinda F. Basilio and will focus on maritime security and cooperation in Asean, ensuring freedom of navigation and combating sea piracy, and protecting the marine environment and promoting eco-tourism and fishery regimes in East Asia. Experts from international organizations, including the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (Recaap), will serve as resource speakers during the third AMF.¹⁴

In other developments, according to reports, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin stressed that Malaysia and Indonesia should not let extreme sentiments jeopardise bilateral relations between the two countries. He added that the relationship should be viewed in a wider context, as there were many collaborative areas that both could capitalise on, for their mutual benefit. Speaking in the 5th Malaysia-Indonesia Bilateral Colloquium on October 7 in Putrajaya, he said the synergy that had existed between them for more than 55 years should be fully utilised to raise such collaborations to a higher level.

In this regard, he said the two governments were determined to tackle and overcome the challenges, apart from strengthening the alliance and good relations between the countries.¹⁵

¹² "Myanmar president's S. Korea visit to further boost bilateral cooperation", *Xinhua*, October 7, 2012, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-10/07/c_131891517.htm

¹³ "Thai delegation visits Manipur to improve land connectivity", *News Track India*, October 7, 2012, <http://www.newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/2012/10/07/148-Thai-delegation-visits-Manipur-to-improve-land-connectivity.html>

¹⁴ "Philippines to host ASEAN Maritime Summit", *DiploNews*, October 3, 2012, http://www.diplonews.com/feeds/free/3_October_2012_73.php

¹⁵ "Do not let extreme sentiments jeopardize Malaysia- Indonesia relations- DPM", *Bernama*, October 7, 2012, <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v6/newsgeneral.php?id=700163>

China

(September 24-October 7, 2012)

- **Kathmandu-Beijing conclude five-point agreement; China establishes mission to ASEAN in Jakarta; China-France agree to improve cooperation; Bo Xilai expelled from Chongqing top legislature; Hillary Clinton calls for better China-US relations; Chinese aircraft carrier enters service on September 25; China opposes sanctions against Iran; Pakistan and China agree to promote ties; Beijing issues White Paper on Diaoyu Dao islands**

According to reports, Beijing has announced that it will work towards strengthening international cooperation on cyber issues.¹⁶

In another development, agricultural ministries of China and Nepal have finalized a five-point agreement during the third bilateral Nepal-China Agricultural Assistance meeting held in Kathmandu.¹⁷

China has inaugurated a Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta. This is in order to help improve relations between China and ASEAN.¹⁸

Beijing has asserted that China and France should develop a comprehensive strategic partnership with respect to urbanization, sanitation and high-tech development.¹⁹

On the domestic front, the Standing Committee of the Congqing Municipal People's Congress has decided to remove Bo Xilai from his post as deputy to 11th National People's Congress.²⁰

Hillary Clinton called for better China-US relationship and also offered "best wishes" to Chinese people on the 63rd anniversary of founding of People's Republic of China.²¹

Beijing's first aircraft carrier, the Liaoning with a hull number of 16, entered service in the People's Liberation Army Navy on September 25.²²

¹⁶ "Chinese gov't to strengthen int'l cooperation on cyber issues" *China Daily*, October 4, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-10/04/content_15796967.htm

¹⁷ "Nepal, China ink five-point agreement" *China Daily*, October 2, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-10/02/content_15794927.htm

¹⁸ "China launches mission to ASEAN" *China Daily*, October 1, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-10/01/content_15794732.htm

¹⁹ "China and France to further improve ties" *China Daily*, September 30, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-09/30/content_15793707.htm

²⁰ "Bo Xilai expelled from top legislature" *China Daily*, September 29, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-09/29/content_15793220.htm

²¹ "Clinton calls for deepening US-China ties" *China Daily*, September 28, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-09/28/content_15791018.htm

²² "Key facts of China's first aircraft carrier" *China Daily*, September 27, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-09/27/content_15788839.htm

In other developments, Beijing has further reiterated its opposition to sanctions on Iran over its nuclear programme.²³

Pakistani Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf met Chinese senior military officer Ma Xiaotian in Islamabad on September 25 and both sides agreed to further advance bilateral pragmatic cooperation.²⁴

The Chinese government has issued a white paper on Diaoyu Dao, asserting Chinese indisputable sovereignty over the islands.²⁵

Japan

(September 24-30, 2012)

- **Japanese Prime Minister vows not to compromise on the Senkaku territorial dispute with China; Japan and Australia to strengthen their defense ties**

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda has rejected any possibility of compromise on the Senkaku territorial dispute with China, even retraction of Japan's recent nationalization of the three of the islets. While reiterating Japan's stance that Senkakus were Japanese territory and owned by a Japanese national earlier, Noda insisted that the 'nationalization was just a [domestic] transfer of ownership'. He however urged China to engage in discussion with Japan on that issue.²⁶

During Australian Defense Minister Stephen Smith's recent visit to Japan, both Smith and his Japanese counterpart Satoshi Morimoto insisted on strengthening the two countries' defense cooperation, especially on equipment and technologies.²⁷

(October 1-7, 2012)

- **Deployment of the first squadron of 12 MV-22 Ospreys aircraft at the Futenma base completed amid strong protest among the Okinawa residents**

The US Marine Corps finally completed the deployment of the first squadron of the 12 MV-22 Osprey aircraft at the US Marine base in Futenma at the Okinawa Prefecture on October 6, 2012, despite strong protests by the Okinawa residents. It is worth noting that in the last few months, the possible deployment of the controversial tilt-rotor transport aircraft evoked strong public

²³ "China opposes sanctions on Iran" *China Daily*, September 26, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-09/26/content_15785735.htm

²⁴ "Pakistan, China pledge to promote ties" *China Daily*, September 25, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2012-09/25/content_15782718.htm

²⁵ "China issues white paper on Diaoyu Dao" *China Daily*, September 25, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012Diaoyu/2012-09/25/content_15782101.htm

²⁶ "Noda vows no compromise/Calls for dialogue with China over Senkaku Islands issue", September 28, 2012, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T120927004054.htm>

²⁷ "Japan to boost defense ties with Australia", *Yomiuri Daily*, September 26, 2012, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T120925003586.htm>

outrage as the people in Okinawa argued that Osprey would jeopardize their security. Osprey has recently experienced a spate of accidents overseas, including a crash in Morocco in April and a crash in Florida in June this year.²⁸

South Korea

(September 24-30, 2012)

- **US urges both South Korea and Japan to resolve the territorial dispute over Dokdo/Takeshima through dialogue**

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, during her recent talks with the foreign ministers of South Korea and Japan, urged both the allies to resolve their bilateral territorial dispute over Dokdo/Takeshima islands through dialogue. The ministerial-level meeting among the three countries was the first after the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute came to the forefront recently with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak's visit to the disputed islets in August.²⁹

In another development, the recent talks between South Korean foreign Minister Koichiro Gamba and his South Korean counterpart Kim sung Hwan over the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, however ended in discord though both sides agreed to make cooperate in areas such as economy, human and cultural exchanges and security in order to "build stable and forward-looking relations" While Gamba reiterated that the disputed islands were inherently Japanese territory, Kim not only rejected such claims but also opposed Japan's preparation to take the dispute to the International Court of Justice (ICJ).³⁰

(October 1-7, 2012)

- **South Korea criticizes Japan's preparation to unilaterally take the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute to ICJ**

According to reports, Seoul has strongly criticized Japan's reported preparation to take unilaterally the Dokdo/Takeshima Dispute to the ICJ. The South Korean Foreign Ministry, while reiterating the South's sovereignty over those islands, insist that such a step by Japan would not have a damaging impact on the bilateral relationship. Seoul also demanded Tokyo to withdraw such 'unjust claim'.³¹

²⁸ "Ospreys' deployment completed", Yomiuri Daily, October 7, 2012, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T121006002021.htm>

²⁹ "Clinton urges calm regarding Takeshima row/ Says direct talks best way to solve disputes", Yomiuri Daily, September 30, 2012, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T120929002559.htm>

³⁰ "No progress on Takeshima/Foreign ministers agree to work on other issues, discuss again", Yomiuri Daily, September 29, 2012, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T120928004510.htm>

³¹ "Seoul snubs Japan's legal move on Dokdo", Korea Herald, October 4, 2012, at <http://view.koreaherald.com/kh/view.php?ud=20121004000837>

North Korea

(October 1-7, 2012)

- **North Korea test-fired one short-range missile on September 27; North Korean diplomat warns of a nuclear war on the Korean Peninsula; North Korean leader Kim Jong-un urges the security agencies to display their loyalties**

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un recently urged the state's security agencies to demonstrate their loyalties to the sovereignty of the country. While calling on the agencies to be "fully aware of their heavy yet honorable combat missions", Kim also reportedly underscored the importance of "foiling the ideological and cultural poisoning and psychological warfare for the enemies."³²

North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Pak Kil-yon, during his recent speech at the UN General Assembly, warned of a nuclear war on the Korean Peninsula, while citing the constantly deteriorating inter Korea relationship under the conservative government of Lee Myung-bak in South Korea. He was also critical of US policy towards North Korea.³³

In other developments, on September 27, North Korea reportedly test-fired one-short range surface-to-ship missile into the Yellow Sea around the time when South Korean President Lee Myung-bak presided over a meeting of security ministers. Lee along with top security officials in Seoul recently urged North Korea to stop the latter's attempt to affect South Korea's upcoming presidential election. However analysts are largely of the view that Pyongyang might have decided to conduct the missile test to raise tension in the Korean Peninsula and to cause social division in the South ahead of December's presidential election.³⁴

C. Central Asia & Russia

Central Asia

- **Kazakhstan to help India meet its energy requirements; The Asian Development Bank raises previously estimated Tajikistan's GDP growth to 6.5 per cent; Kazakhstan initiates import restrictions on Kyrgyz dairy products; Presidents of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan criticise Tajikistan's Rogun dam construction; Japan expresses its interest in exploration and utilization of Uzbekistan's uranium deposits; Uzbekistan's President is on official visit to Turkmenistan; Kazakhstan's state-run oil and gas firm Kaz Munai Gas (KMG) to increase its crude oil output by 60 per cent by 2022**

³² "Kim Jong-un urges security agency's loyalty: KCNA", Korea Herald, October 7, 2012, at <http://view.koreaherald.com/kh/view.php?ud=20121007000215>

³³ "At UN speech, N. Korean diplomat threatens nuke war on peninsula", Korea Herald, October 2, 2012, at <http://view.koreaherald.com/kh/view.php?ud=20121002000376>

³⁴ "N.K test-fired short-range missile last week: source", Korea Herald, October 4, 2012, at <http://view.koreaherald.com/kh/view.php?ud=20121004001024>

Kazakh Ambassador to India Doulat Kuanyshiev has said that his country will provide India the necessary energy to fuel its development projects. He also supported India's bid to become a member of the Shanghai Cooperation organization and called for an improvement in bilateral trade which stood at US\$215 million in the first half of the year.³⁵

The Asian Development Bank has increased the previously estimated Tajikistan's GDP growth to 6.5 per cent. It is the sole Central Asian state for which the ADB has increased its GDP growth projections and is partially due to higher than expected remittances.³⁶

According to reports, Kazakhstan has initiated import restrictions on Kyrgyz dairy products on the fears of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease (FMD). This trade restriction is the latest in a long string of unfortunate events for Kyrgyzstan's agricultural sector. Earlier this summer, an outbreak of FMD sent Kyrgyz farmers scrambling. Combined with a scorching drought which encompassed most of Eurasia and significantly cut farmers' wheat harvests, as well as a tainted vaccine which killed thousands of livestock in southern Kyrgyzstan, this critical sector is having a difficult time regaining the levels of production seen before violent riots in 2010 disrupted the state's economy.³⁷

According to reports, Presidents of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have criticised Tajikistan's Rogun dam construction on the grounds that significant amounts of water from local rivers will be diverted, which will ultimately cause hardship for Uzbekistan's cotton crops and farmers.³⁸

Japanese state-run oil and metals major Japan Oil, Gas, and Metals National Corp (JOGMEC) has reportedly agreed to work with the Uzbek government on exploiting uranium deposits in north-central Uzbekistan. The agreement is expected to be signed early next year and put into operation by March 2013.³⁹

Uzbek President Islam Karimov, as part of his official visit to Turkmenistan, has discussed with his Turkmen counterpart issues like regional security in the backdrop of the post 2014 military withdrawal in Afghanistan, fuel and energy, transportation, and communications linkages.⁴⁰

In other developments, according to reports, Kazakhstan's state-run oil and gas firm Kaz Munai Gas (KMG) will look to increase its crude oil output to 39.4 million tons by 2022, from the projected level of 24.3 million tons for 2012. The volume of oil and gas condensates will be increased from

³⁵ "Kazakhstan will help India meet energy demand", Central Asia Newswire, October 4, 2012, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=12929>

³⁶ "ADB increases estimated 2012 Tajik GDP growth to 6.5%", Central Asia Newswire, October 3, 2012, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=12922>

³⁷ "Astana puts import restrictions on Kyrgyz dairy products", Central Asia Newswire, October 4, 2012, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=12933>

³⁸ "Turkmen, Uzbek presidents condemn Rogun construction", Central Asia Newswire, October 2, 2012, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/uzbekistan/viewstory.aspx?id=12912>

³⁹ "Japan to seek, exploit Uzbek uranium deposits", Central Asia Newswire, October 2, 2012, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/uzbekistan/viewstory.aspx?id=12911>

⁴⁰ "Karimov arrives in Ashgabat for state visit", Central Asia Newswire, October 1, 2012, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/uzbekistan/viewstory.aspx?id=12903>

858 million tons in 2012 to 1.5 billion tons 10 years from now. A large part of the growth will be achieved by increasing hydrocarbons reserves and production from projects in the Caspian Sea region.⁴¹

Russia

- **Russia to participate in WTO General Council on October 3; Russia urges Turkey from taking steps that can escalate the prevailing tensions on its border with Syria; Russian and the US coast guards have signed a cooperation plan for 2013; Georgia looking to gradually restore normal bilateral relations with Russia; Russia and Tajikistan sign an agreement on the Russian military base in Tajikistan; Russia to purchase a whopping 39 Ilyushin -476 transport jets; South Ossetia's Foreign Minister to visit Russia; Facebook discussing the proposal of establishing a research and development centre in Russia**

Reports noted that Russia will participate for the first time in the General Council of the World Trade Organization (WTO) as a full-fledged WTO member on October 3. Among the issues slated for discussion are the commitments of both Russia and WTO's member states of the fulfilment of conditions of membership.⁴²

Russia has urged the Turkish government to refrain from steps that might deteriorate the already tense situation on the Turkish-Syrian border. On October 4, the Turkish parliament had responded to an appeal from the Cabinet of Ministers and issued an authorization, for a period of twelve months, to carry out cross-border military operations.⁴³

According to reports, Coast guards of Russia and the United States have agreed to step up cooperation in ensuring security in the Pacific Ocean and the Bering Sea in 2013, exchange information and counteract illegal fishing. In 2012 the two countries' coast guards detained ten non-compliant vessels and held 500 online conferences for coordination of actions and information exchange.⁴⁴

According to reports, the leader of the Georgian Dream Coalition and a candidate for the Prime Minister's post Bidzina Ivanishvili has said that a rapid enough restoration of cultural and trade relations between Georgia and Russia is possible and it is in the interest of both parties to restore normal relations.⁴⁵

⁴¹ "KazMunaiGas to hike output 60% by 2022", Central Asia Newswire, October 2, 2012, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/kazakhstan/viewstory.aspx?id=12910>

⁴² "Russia to participate in WTO General Council on October 3", ITAR-TASS, October 2, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/534859.html>

⁴³ "Moscow urges Turkey to refrain from risky steps on border with Syria", ITAR-TASS, October 5, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/538569.html>

⁴⁴ "Russian, US coast guards sign cooperation plan for 2013", ITAR-TASS, October 4, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/536625.html>

⁴⁵ "Georgia to move gradually to restoration of relations with Russia", ITAR-TASS, October 4, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/538663.html>

During president Putin's official visit to Dushanbe, Russia has signed an agreement on the usage of its military base in Tajikistan. The agreement is valid for 30 years and will last upto 2042. They will then have the option of extending it.⁴⁶

In one of the largest military orders in post Soviet Russia, the defence ministry has signed an agreement to purchase 39 Ilyushin -476 transport jets in a deal worth 140 billion roubles. Ilyushin-476 is practically the first entirely new jet designed by Russian aircraft makers over the past 21 years.⁴⁷

In other developments, reports noted that South Ossetia's foreign minister, David Sanakoyev, will pay an official visit to Russia on October 8-9. They are expected to exchange opinions on urgent issues on the bilateral agenda, first of all in the context of preparation for the upcoming official visit to Russia by South Ossetian President Leonid Tibilov.⁴⁸

Minister of Communications and Mass Media Nikolai Nikiforov has said that Facebook's research and development centre may be established in the country. As part of the interaction between Prime Minister Medvedev and Facebook's founder Mark Zuckerberg, there was also a discussion on opening a start up in Skolkovo.⁴⁹

D. West Asia

Syria

- **Syrian opposition softens stance on future role for Assad party**

According to reports, the Syrian National Council (SNC), Syria's main opposition group has said that it might accept a role for members of the ruling Baath Party in a future Syrian government if they did not participate in violence during the current conflict in the country. SNC leader Abdelbasset Sida's comments are seen to be a softening of the SNC's stance so far; it had earlier stated that it would only accept complete removal of the Assad regime and its members. The Turkey-based SNC is due to meet in Qatar next week to discuss, among other issues, Turkey's suggestion for current Syrian Vice President Farouk Al-Sharaa to be appointed interim leader if Assad were to step down.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ "The agreement on the Russian military base in Tajikistan is signed", ITAR-TASS, October 4, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/538376.html>

⁴⁷ "Russian Def Min signs contract for 39 Ilyushin-476 transport jets", ITAR-TASS, October 4, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/537564.html>

⁴⁸ "South Ossetia's Foreign Minister to Visit Russia", RIA Novosti, October 8, 2012, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20121008/176472182.html>

⁴⁹ "Facebook R & D centre may be opened in Russia", ITAR-TASS, October 1, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/534125.html>

⁵⁰ "Syria opposition may accept role for Assad's party", The Daily Star, October 8, 2012 at <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2012/Oct-08/190573-syria-opposition-may-accept-role-for-assads-party.ashx#axzz28hXoByBN>

Lebanon

- **Lebanese coalition MPs slam Hezbollah 'role in Syria'; Lebanese President attends South American-Arab Summit in Lima**

According to reports, the March 14 coalition has criticised the Hezbollah for its alleged role in the Syria crisis, following reports by several media agencies that Hezbollah fighters have carried out several operations inside Syria. Hezbollah had earlier denied the allegations but is yet to respond to the most recent reports. March 14 coalition MP Antoine Zahra has criticised Hezbollah's insistence on maintaining its arsenal in Lebanon. Zahra has said that the resistance group could no longer claim that their weapons were solely directed at Israel, given the recent reports. Lebanese President Michel Sleiman has recently supported a proposal for weapons of the resistance group to fall under the command of the state.⁵¹

Meanwhile, President Sleiman headed the Arab delegation to the one-day summit of South American and Arab countries (ASPA) that took place in Lima, Peru on October 2. The summit was first launched in 2005 in Brazil under former President Luiz Lula da Silva, and is aimed at strengthening the relationship between Latin American and Arab businesses in order to promote trade and investment. The ASPA brings together 22 Arab countries and 12 South American nations.⁵²

Turkey

- **UNSC condemns Syria attack on Turkish town; Turkish PM says 'no intention for war'**

According to reports, the UN Security Council, on October 5, condemned the shelling of the southeastern Turkish town of Akcakale during the week. The shelling by Syrian armed forces led to the deaths of five civilians and a number of injured. UNSC members have pointed out that the incident highlights the grave consequences that the Syrian conflict is having on the security of its neighbours, and on regional peace.⁵³ Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan responded to the incident saying that Turkey had no intention for a war.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, Russia has stated that it hoped the tense situation at the Turkish-Syrian border would not warrant intervention in Syria by Turkish troops.⁵⁵

⁵¹ "March 14 MPs slam Hezbollah 'role in Syria'", The Daily Star, October 8, 2012 at <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Politics/2012/Oct-08/190564-march-14-mps-slam-hezbollah-role-in-syria.ashx#axzz28hXoByBN>

⁵² "Sleiman in Peru for South American-Arab Countries summit", The Daily Star, October 1, 2012 at <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Politics/2012/Oct-01/189751-sleiman-in-peru-for-south-american-arab-countries-summit.ashx#axzz28ryIgkVS>

⁵³ "UNSC strongly condemns Syrian attack on Turkey", Anadolu Agency, October 5, 2012 at <http://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkey/87698-f>

⁵⁴ "We have no intention for a war", Anadolu Agency, October 4, 2012 at <http://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkey/87645-we-have-no-intention-for-a-war>

⁵⁵ "Russia hopes situation will not lead to Turkish troops entering Syria", Anadolu Agency, October 4, 2012 at <http://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkey/87627-russia-hopes-situation-will-not-lead-to-turkish-troops-entering-syria>

E. Africa

- **Trial of Henry Okah for Abuja bombings begins in South Africa; African Union troops capture the last stronghold of al-Shabaab; Egypt pledges to relax crackdown in Sinai Peninsula; European and North African leaders discuss terrorism and regional issues; Persistent attacks on Somalis in South Africa creates uncertainty; Libyan Parliament dismisses its Prime Minister; Nigerian soldiers kill thirty Boko Haram militants**

The trial of a former leader of the Nigerian oil militants, Henry Okah, who was accused for bombings at Nigeria's 50th independence celebrations in 2010 was opened in South Africa. However, Okah denied the thirteen charges related to acts of terrorism leveled against him. He was arrested in Johannesburg after two car bombs in the Nigerian capital Abuja killed 12 people in October 2010. The Mend militant group, of which he was a senior leader, claimed responsibility for the attacks. He has been living in South Africa since 2003 and is now a South African citizen.⁵⁶

In another development, the African Union troops captured the Somali port city of Kismayo, the last stronghold of the al-Shabaab Islamist group in Somalia. With their four-day offensive against the militant group in Kismayo, the African Union troops were able to separate al-Shabaab from the population centers where it raised funds by taxing commerce. This marks a turn in the U.S.-supported offensive against al-Shabaab, which controlled much of Somalia and sought to extend its reach with attacks around the region.⁵⁷ On the other hand, the Somali Islamist militants gave notice of their intention to fight back, by detonating a bomb in the port city. It was reported that the blast points to the al Qaeda-linked rebels' ability to hit back with covert strikes and continues a pattern of attacks in other urban strongholds from where they have retreated under military pressure.⁵⁸

According to reports, during his visit to the northern Sinai city of el-Arish, Egypt's president Mohammed Morsi pledged to relax the crackdown in the Sinai Peninsula and not pursue fugitives that has seen a surge in militancy and cross-border attacks on Israel. He also met tribal leaders, top ultraconservative Salafi clerics and Christian families who were lately forced to leave their homes in the area after getting death threats from Islamic militants. Further, he assured the tribal elders that "sons of Sinai" would not be pursued and that the judiciary would review many of the cases from the region.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ "Nigeria's Okah on trial in South Africa for Abuja bombs", *BBC News*, October 1, 2012, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-19789199>

⁵⁷ Nicholas Bariyo (2012), "African Troops Overtake Somali Militant Stronghold", *The Wall Street Journal*, October 2, 2012, at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444004704578032362162236622.html>

⁵⁸ Abdi Sheikh (2012), "Somali militants hit Kismayu as African troops move in", *Reuters*, October 2, 2012, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/02/us-somalia-conflict-forces-idUSBRE8910E320121002>

⁵⁹ "Egypt's president pledges to ease up on crackdown in restive Sinai, not pursue fugitives", *The Washington Post*, October 5, 2012, at http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/egypts-president-pledges-to-ease-up-on-crackdown-in-restive-sinai-not-pursue-fugitives/2012/10/05/72345680-0f26-11e2-ba6c-07bd866eb71a_story.html

Reports noted that ten European and North African leaders met in Malta for the first such summit of Mediterranean neighbours in a decade, with the agenda focused on fighting terrorism and lawlessness, and strengthening political and economic cooperation in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. French President Francois Hollande was likely to seek support for his call to the U.N. Security Council to endorse a West African-led military intervention in northern Mali, where al-Qaeda-linked Islamists are in control. The tense situation in the Middle East, which directly affects the Mediterranean region, as well as the continued migration from North Africa into southern Europe, were also on the agenda.⁶⁰

According to reports, attacks on Somalis have been persistent throughout South Africa, particularly with Somali traders, and frequent attacks on Somalis living in South Africa created lot of uncertainty. It mentioned that three Somali traders from Cape Town were killed within 72 hours of each other in September 2012 and ten Somali business owners were killed and their stores robbed by South African gangs in June 2012. It added that Somalis in South Africa expressed alarm of the repeated killings and robberies of Somalis with many appeals to police proving unsuccessful in stopping the targeted killings.⁶¹

The Libyan Parliament voted to dismiss its Prime Minister Mustafa Abu Shagour, who was chosen less than four weeks ago, creating a power vacuum and deepening a leadership crisis. This development has happened at a moment when the country's transitional authorities are under intense pressure to catch the killers of the American ambassador, J. Christopher Stevens, and to stop the prevailing lawlessness that led to his death. With the dismissal, Libya also effectively lacks ministers of defence and interior, the officials most responsible for apprehending the attackers and reining in the local militias that control the streets. Mohammed Ali Abdallah, a member of the National Front Party from Misurata opined that militias would try to take advantage of this power vacuum to exert their own authority.⁶²

In other developments, according to reports, Lieutenant Eli Lazarus, an army spokesman, said that Nigerian soldiers killed about thirty suspected members of Boko Haram, including a close associate of the group's leader, during a gun battle in north eastern Yobe state. Lazarus mentioned that troops of the Joint Task Force (JTF) were "engaged in a gun battle with the suspected terrorists" during a search-and-cordon operation on Boko Haram's hideout in Kandahar and around cemetery areas of Damaturu, the state capital. Six rifles, ninety rounds of ammunition, several telephone sets were recovered during the raid.⁶³

⁶⁰ "Mediterranean nations hold 1st summit since North Africa uprising; terrorism, econ on agenda", *Fox News*, October 5, 2012, at <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2012/10/05/mediterranean-nations-hold-1st-summit-since-north-africa-uprising-terrorism/>

⁶¹ "Somalia: South Africa - Somalis Systematically Targeted in Killings and Robberies", *Garowe Online*, Quoted in All Africa, October 7, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201210080023.html>

⁶² David D. Kirkpatrick (2012), "Libya's Prime Minister Is Dismissed", *The New York Times*, October 7, 2012, at http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/08/world/africa/libyas-prime-minister-is-dismissed.html?_r=0

⁶³ "Nigerian Army Kills Dozens Of 'Terrorists'", *Leadership*, October 7, 2012, at http://leadership.ng/nga/articles/36801/2012/10/07/nigerian_army_kills_dozens_terrorists.html

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

National

- **Nuclear-capable ballistic missile Dhanush successfully test-fired: New Agni series missile programmes not soon**

Reports noted that India successfully test-fired its nuclear-capable ballistic missile Dhanush on October 5 from a naval ship in the Bay of Bengal off the Odisha coast. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) spokesperson Ravi Kumar Gupta said, "The test was successful." Dhanush, with a pay-load capacity of 500 kg, is a naval version of the nuclear-capable ballistic missile Prithvi. It is capable of carrying both conventional as well as nuclear warheads and can strike targets in the range of 350 km. The missile gives the Indian Navy the capability to strike enemy targets with great precision. Moreover, Dhanush can carry conventional or nuclear payload of 500-1,000 kg and hit both land and sea-based targets.⁶⁴

In another development, speaking to reporters on the sidelines of DRDO excellence awards in Delhi, Defence Minister Shri AK Antony on October 1 indicated that India will first "stabilise" its present missile programmes before thinking of starting any project for having capabilities to strike targets at longer distances than the 5,500 km-range Agni-V. "Don't be impatient. Let the present Agni series stabilise," the minister said when asked if India was working on any programme such as Agni-6 after the success of 5,500 km-plus range Agni-5 earlier this year. While praising the contribution of DRDO in defence arena, Shri Antony advised stakeholders to adopt a consortium approach involving academic institutions and industries to act as a cohesive team to explore all aspects of nano-technology for development of missiles, aeronautics, armaments and combat vehicles.⁶⁵

International

- **Restructuring plan of Germany's Federal Armed Force comes into effect; South Korea's missile programme receives a major boost with the announcement of a deal with the United States**

According to reports, as a part of the ongoing major restructuring and downsizing of the Bundeswehr (Federal Armed Force), Germany has restructured its military's branches and organizations with effect from effective October 1. The five new military commands and three new civil agencies are now the top administrative level below the Defense Ministry. The Bundeswehr's personnel level will be cut from 225,000 military and 76,000 civil posts to 185,000

⁶⁴ "India successfully test-fires nuclear-capable Dhanush missile," IANS, October 5, 2012, at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-10-05/india/34278476_1_nuclear-capable-prithvi-ii-chandipur-on-sea-in-balasore-district

⁶⁵ "India to 'stabilise' present missile programme: AK Antony," DNA, October 1, 2012, at http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_india-to-stabilise-present-missile-programme-ak-antony_1747664

military personnel and 55,000 civilians. The reform is due to a changed security-political environment and budget deficits.⁶⁶

In another development, reports noted that USA will help South Korea to increase South's missile capability. South Korea announced of a deal with the United States on October 7. The deal will almost triple the range of South Korean missile systems. According to South Korea's National Security Advisor Chun Yung-Woo, the agreement will allow South Korea to deploy missiles with a range of 800 kilometers (500 miles), up from the current limit of 300 kilometers. "The biggest purpose of the revision is curbing military provocations by North Korea," Chun said. The current move will ensure that the whole of North Korea comes within reach of South's rockets. Moreover, the extension will also bring under its reach parts of China and Japan.⁶⁷

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

Jammu & Kashmir

- **Union Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde on 2 days visit to Ladakh: Five militants killed in Ganderbal; Congress General Secretary, Rahul Gandhi to visit Kashmir valley; CRPF men hurt in Sopore blast**

Reports noted that Union Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde on October 6 arrived in Ladakh region on a two-day visit where he reviewed the development works. The Union Minister presided over a high-level meeting to review security situation in the area. He also presided over a meeting with the councilors of Kargil Autonomous Hill Development Council and officials of the district administration to have a first-hand account of development progress in the area. On the demands, the Home Minister said the airport extension work will be completed within two years while the work on Zojjila Tunnel has started.⁶⁸

In another development, according to reports, Police and Army on October 1 informed that five militants have been killed in an encounter with them in Wangat forests of Ganderbal district. Police sources noted that all four of the killed militants were foreigners.⁶⁹

Reports noted that Congress General Secretary and Member of Parliament Rahul Gandhi will begin his two day visit to Kashmir Valley on October 4 amid growing differences among ruling

⁶⁶ "German Military Restructuring Takes Effect," Defense News, October 1, 2012, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20121001/DEFREG01/310010009/-1/7daysarchives/German-Military-Restructuring-Takes-Effect>

⁶⁷ "U.S. OKs Longer-Range Missiles for South Korea," Defense News, October 7, 2012, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20121007/DEFREG03/310070006/U-S-OKs-Longer-Range-Missiles-South-Korea?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|FRONTPAGE>

⁶⁸ "Home Minister on 2-Day visit to Ladakh", *Greater Kashmir*, October 6, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Oct/7/home-minister-on-2-day-visit-to-ladakh-31.asp>

⁶⁹ "5 militants killed in Ganderbal", *Greater Kashmir*, October 1, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Oct/2/5-militants-killed-in-ganderbal-47.asp>

coalition partners, National Conference and Congress, over empowerment of Panchayats in Jammu and Kashmir and continued threats to the grassroots representatives. He will be bringing along a powerful business delegation that includes among others Ratan Tata and Kumar Manglam Birla.⁷⁰

In other developments, according to reports, three Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were injured when suspected militants hurled a grenade at their bunker in Sopore town of Baramulla district on October 4 afternoon.⁷¹

North East India

- **Indefinite curfew continued for the fifth day in Dima Hasao hill district of Assam: still under curfew; Insurgents ambush policemen in Manipur; Public in agitation drive out ultras in Tamenglong, Manipur; United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) commander-in-chief arrested; Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) cadres killed in Assam: Extrajudicial killings in Manipur sought justice**

According to reports, indefinite curfew continued for the fifth day in Dima Hasao hill district of Assam with no report of any violence. Curfew was first imposed in the district on September 28 following violence during a 48-hour bandh called by the North Cachar Hills Indigenous Peoples' Forum (NCHIPF) to press for bifurcation of Dima Hasao district into two autonomous districts. An additional company of CRPF (100 personnel) has reached the district which witnessed violence on October 1 during a four-hour relaxation of the curfew. According to officials the situation in the district was tense but under control.⁷²

In another development, according to reports, seven policemen escorting a senior police official were injured when insurgents detonated a powerful bomb leading to an hour-long exchange of fire in Manipur's Chandel hill district bordering Myanmar on October 4.⁷³

According to reports, Tamenglong district headquarters on October 3 erupted in fury to drive out all the underground cadres from the town. The situation in the town was highly charged since last afternoon following the killing of a civilian in a cross fire between NSCN-IM and the combined team of Zeliangrong United Front (ZUF) and NSCN-K. The furious mob started hunting down all the underground groups in the district headquarters asking them to leave the town immediately. According to reports cadres of NSCN-K and ZUF had gone away when the mob started hunting for the underground elements.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ "Rahul arriving today with Tata, Birla", *Greater Kashmir*, October 3, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Oct/4/rahul-arriving-today-with-tata-birla-50.asp>

⁷¹ "3 CRPF men hurt in Sopore blast", *Greater Kashmir*, October 4, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Oct/5/3-crpf-men-hurt-in-sopore-blast-73.asp>

⁷² "Curfew on in Dima Hasao", *The Assam Tribune*, October 2, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct0312/state07>

⁷³ "7 policemen hurt in ambush by insurgents in Manipur", *The Assam Tribune*, October 4, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct0412/at0142>

⁷⁴ "Public drives out ultras from Tamenglong", *The Assam Tribune*, October 3, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct0412/oth05>

Reports noted that a self-styled 'commander-in-chief' of militant outfit United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) and six of his associates were arrested with arms and ammunition from Mimi village of Arunachal Pradesh.⁷⁵

According to reports, two militants from the Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) have been killed in a gun battle with a joint team of police and security forces in Assam on October 6. The incident took place in Jharpara in Goalpara district.⁷⁶

In other developments, according to reports, acting on a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), the Supreme Court on October 1 issued notices to the Centre and Manipur Government. The petitioners have sought an inquiry into alleged killings since 1978.⁷⁷

Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) News

- **Third DG level talks took place between India and Bangladesh on narcotics; Measures to be strengthened to control drug trafficking by India and Bangladesh; Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) signed between Central Government, Government of Assam and Dima Haram Daogah (DHD) Nunisa faction**

Reports noted that 3rd DG level talks between Narcotics Control Bureau, India and Department of Narcotics Control, Bangladesh took place on October 4 at New Delhi.⁷⁸ India and Bangladesh have agreed to enhance mutual cooperation through effective sustained steps to control drug trafficking. This was decided at the third Director General level talks between Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) India and Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) Bangladesh held in New Delhi on October 4. Both sides agreed to continue sharing of actionable intelligence and adopt a coordinated strategy to prevent cross border drug trafficking. It was also decided that the best practices in curbing drug trafficking and demand reduction will be shared bilaterally. Both sides expressed their commitment towards their obligations under the different international and bilateral agreements, protocols, conventions, declarations and resolutions in letter and spirit. It was also agreed to enhance cooperation in capacity building by organizing training programmes as well as sending resource persons in combating drug trafficking. Both sides agreed that the Directorate General level talks between NCB, India and DNC, Bangladesh should be held annually and the next meeting would be held in Dhaka sometime in June next year.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ "UPDF chief arrested", *The Assam Tribune*, October 3, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct0412/oth06>

⁷⁶ "Two Garo militants killed in Assam", *The Assam Tribune*, October 7, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct0712/at049>

⁷⁷ "SC notices on extrajudicial killings", *The Assam Tribune*, October 1, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=oct0212/oth06>

⁷⁸ "Issue of Joint Statement of 3rd DG level talks between Narcotics Control Bureau, India and Department of Narcotics Control, Bangladesh", *Press Information Bureau, GOI*, October 3, 2012 at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=88117>

⁷⁹ "India and Bangladesh to strengthen measures to control drug trafficking", *Press Information Bureau, GOI*, October 4, 2012 at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=88142>

In another development, reports noted that a Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) with both factions of Dima Haram Daogah (DHD) was signed on October 8 at New Delhi by Shri Shambhu Singh, Joint Secretary (NE), MHA, Shri Sailesh, Principal Secretary, Home & Political, Govt. of Assam and the Representatives of DHD(J) and DHD(N). The MoS provides for enhanced autonomy for the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council in Assam and also a special package for speedier socio-economic and educational development of the area for which the Council has been set up. Under the Memorandum of Settlement, a Committee will be constituted to deal with the matters relating to the 6th Schedule Councils. The DHD shall dissolve itself as an organization within a reasonable time as a precursor to the Government initiating further process to implement the agreed decisions of this agreement. As part of the restructuring and empowerment process, the existing North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council (NCHAC) will be renamed as the Dima Hasao Autonomous Territorial Council (DHATC).⁸⁰

IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

- **India's Minister for Environment and Forests: India committed to implementation of Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety; Row over J&K at the 67th UN General Assembly session; India calls for expansion of enforcement mechanisms to destroy terrorists' safe havens; UNSC condemns recent terrorist attacks in Aleppo, Council and UN chief call for restraint in Syrian-Turkish border areas; Peaceful resolution of disputes among the top priorities for 67th UNGA session**

At the UN Convention on Biodiversity, India's Union Minister for Environment and Forests, Jayanthi Natarajan called for effective coordination among countries on providing adequate protection to ecological diversity from adverse effects of genetically modified organisms. She also added that India was committed to the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety in a balanced manner.⁸¹ Meanwhile, before the 16th October, India is hopeful of becoming the seventh nation to ratify the Nagoya Protocol that prevents bio-piracy and ensures that the benefit from the commercial exploration of natural genetic resources reaches the local communities.⁸²

In another development, at the 67th session of the UN General Assembly, Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari disputed India's claims over Jammu and Kashmir and contented that J&K was a sign of UN "failure". Responding to these statements, India's Foreign Minister, S M Krishna in his

⁸⁰ "Signing of a tripartite MoS among Central Government, Govt. of Assam and Factions of Dima Haram Daogah", *Press Information Bureau, GOI*, October 8, 2012 at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=88249>

⁸¹ "UN Bio-diversity convention begins in Hyderabad", *India Today*, October 01, 2012 at <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/un-bio-diversity-convention-begins-in-hyderabad/1/223008.html>

⁸² "India sets in motion process to ratify Nagoya Protocol before summit", *The Hindu*, October 06, 2012 at <http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/india-sets-in-motion-process-to-ratify-nagoya-protocol-before-summit/article3969656.ece>

speech said that the references to Kashmir were “unwarranted” and asserted that J&K was an integral part of India.⁸³

Meanwhile at the 11th Meeting of the Heads of Special Services, Security Agencies and Law-Enforcement Organizations, India’s Ambassador to the UN and Chair of the Counter Terrorism Committee, H S Puri asked UN member states to expand enforcement efforts to destroy safe havens and terrorists’ support networks besides evolving a counter-narrative to combat radicalisation. Puri added that to combat terrorism effectively, it is necessary that member states have political will and greater international and regional cooperation.⁸⁴

In other developments, the UN Security Council condemned the recent terrorist attacks in Aleppo, Syria that caused dozens of deaths and left more than a hundred civilians injured. The Council also expressed deep sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims.⁸⁵ In the face of escalating tensions along the Syrian-Turkish border, UN Secretary-General and the Security Council called on parties to exercise restraint. The Council members also said that the incident highlighted the grave impact that the Syrian crisis has on regional peace and security.⁸⁶

Following the conclusion of the UN General Assembly’s high-level General Debate, its current President, Vuk Jeremic said that the top priorities for the session would be giving the General Assembly a more prominent role in discussion on global governance and strengthening efforts to achieve peaceful resolution of disputes. Other priorities include devising the sustainable development goals, enhancing the role of the UN-backed Alliance of Civilizations and strengthening cooperation between the initiative and the Assembly.⁸⁷

⁸³ “India, Pak trapped in war of words over Kashmir at UN”, *The Times of India*, October 03, 2012 at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-10-03/india/34237801_1_india-and-pakistan-islamabad-clear-interference

⁸⁴ “India for UN efforts to destroy terrorists’ safe havens”, *Outlook*, October 06, 2012 at <http://news.outlookindia.com/items.aspx?artid=777396>

⁸⁵ “Syria: UN Security Council condemns terrorist attacks in Aleppo”, *UN News Centre*, October 05, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43223&Cr=syria&Cr1=#.UHJryJi7LNZ>

⁸⁶ “UN chief, Security Council urge restraint amid rising tensions along Syrian-Turkish border”, *UN News Centre*, October 04, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43214&Cr=syria&Cr1=#.UHPN7ji7LNZ>

⁸⁷ “New President outlines priorities for 67th General Assembly session”, *UN News Centre*, October 03, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43208&Cr=general+assembly&Cr1=#.UHPN75i7LNZ>