

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. East Asia

China

(April 9-15, 2012)

- Chinese Foreign Minister hold talks with US, ROK counterparts; China demands calm after DPRK's satellite launch; China eyes bigger investment in South Korea; Chinese fishing boats leave Huangyan Island; Xi meets Vietnamese army chief; Chinese army assists Pakistan avalanche victim search; Premier Wen to visit European nations; China to provide \$19.3m of aid to Egypt; China, Turkey pledge to advance ties; Bo gets suspended from key party post

According to reports, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi held separate conversations on phone with United States and Republic of Korea counterparts Hillary Clinton and Kim Sung-hwan respectively, over tensions on the Korean Peninsula.¹ On the other hand Beijing has also urged the relevant sides to maintain 'calm and restraint' in the post satellite launch scenario.²

In another development, according to reports, a delegation from China visited South Korea to discuss Chinese investments in culture, real estate and new energy industries.³

Meanwhile, according to reports, the Chinese boats left at the lagoon in Huangyan Island returned back after a five days stalemate.⁴

Reports noted that Chinese Vice-President Xi Jinping met with the Vietnamese army Chief Do Ba Ty in order to pursue friendly ties and peace and stability in the region.⁵

According to reports, Chinese armed forces have been providing technical devices to the Pakistani army in their search for bodies trapped by the avalanche.⁶ In other developments, according to reports, Wen Jiabao is expected to pay visit to Iceland, Sweden and Poland in late April.⁷

¹ "Chinese FM talks with US, ROK counterparts" China Daily, April 14, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-04/14/content_15049887.htm

² "China demands calm after DPRK's satellite launch" China Daily, April 13, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-04/13/content_15044786.htm

³ "China eyes bigger investment in South Korea" China Daily, April 13, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-04/13/content_15046465.htm

⁴ "Chinese fishing boats leave Huangyan Island" China Daily, April 14, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-04/14/content_15049729.htm

⁵ "Xi meets Vietnamese army chief" China Daily, April 13, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-04/13/content_15044863.htm

⁶ "Chinese army assists Pakistan avalanche victim search" China Daily, April 14, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-04/14/content_15049612.htm

⁷ "Premier Wen to visit European nations" China Daily, April 13, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-04/13/content_15041853.htm

Beijing has announced an aid worth \$ 19.3 million to Egypt in support of latter's economic projects.⁸

President Hu Jintao met the Turkish Prime Minister in order to promote bilateral strategic cooperation.⁹

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China has decided to suspend the membership of Bo Xilai from the CPC Central Committee Political Bureau and the CPC Central Committee in line with the CPC Constitution.¹⁰

South East Asia

(April 9-15, 2012)

- **British Prime Minister visits Myanmar; PM Cameron, Suu Kyi back suspension of sanctions; Thaksin in Cambodia, addresses supporters in a rally; US and the Philippine hold war games; China, Philippines discussion ended in stalemate; East Timor prepares for the April 16 polls**

According to reports, the British Prime Minister, David Cameron began his visit to Myanmar on April 13, 2012. He is the first British Prime Minister to visit Myanmar since 1948.¹¹ During his visit to the country, Prime Minister Cameron met the opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi. The two leaders agreed and backed for suspending sanctions on the country. Suu Kyi and UK have long been the biggest advocates of sanctions, imposed over the past 23 years for human rights abuses by Myanmar's military rulers.¹²

In another development, according to reports, addressing a gathering of thousands of supporters, former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra promised to return to Thailand. The rally was held on April 14, 2012 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. Thaksin supporters have been traveling to Siem Reap via road from Thailand since April 11.¹³ Thaksin, ousted by a 2006 military coup after being accused of abuse of power and disrespect for the monarchy, led a song-filled rally to mark Songkran, the Thai New Year.¹⁴

⁸ "China to provide \$19.3m of aid to Egypt" China Daily, April 13, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-04/13/content_15040789.htm

⁹ "China, Turkey pledge to advance ties" China Daily, April 10, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-04/10/content_15017509.htm

¹⁰ "Bo gets suspended from key Party post" China Daily, April 11, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-04/11/content_15017774.htm

¹¹ 'Cameron on first visit to Myanmar', Hindustan Times, April 13, 2012.

¹² 'Cameron, Suu Kyi back suspending Myanmar sanction', Edmonton Journal, April 14, 2012, <http://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/Cameron+back+suspending+Myanmar+sanctions/6459038/story.html>

¹³ 'Thaksin arrives in Cambodia', Bangkok Post, April 14, 2012, <http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/local/288843/thaksin-arrives-in-cambodia>

¹⁴ 'Exiled former Thai PM Thaksin celebrates with followers in Cambodia, plans early return home', Washington Post, April 15, 2012, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/exiled-former-thai-pm-thaksin-celebrates-with-followers-in-cambodia-plans-early-return-home/2012/04/15/gIQAAFMiIT_story.html

According to reports, thousands of US soldiers are to participate in two weeks of war games in the Philippines starting on April 16, 2012, as the two nations look to strengthen their military alliance. The Balikatan (Shoulder-to-shoulder) exercises are an annual event but this year are expected to attract a greater focus with some of the drills set to be held close to sensitive South China Sea waters claimed by the Chinese. The Philippines has insisted the exercises, involving 4,500 US personnel and 2,300 Filipino troops, should not be seen by China as a provocation.¹⁵

However, China, Philippine discussions on April 14, 2012 reportedly ended in stalemate as five Chinese ships left the Scarborough Shoal with alleged illegal haul of natural resources. The development ends a tense standoff between the two nations that started on April 10, 2012. Chinese vessels blocked Coast Guard ships trying to arrest Chinese fishermen said to be catching endangered coral, giant clams and black-tipped sharks. The Philippines wanted to confiscate the cargo, while China said the fishermen would be subject to Chinese law.¹⁶

In other developments, according to the media reports, East Timor is ready to conduct polls, which are due on April 16, 2012. The final elections, in which Taur Matan Ruak is competing against the Fretilin Party candidate Francisco Guterres Lu'olo, are considered crucial for the country. However, the election observer Professor Damien Kingsbury confirmed the reports that situation in the country is tense as several complaints have been made to authorities since the election began. However, he added that so far the allegations have not been substantiated.¹⁷

(April 16-22, 2012)

- **Indian business delegation to visit Indonesia; China warns against US- Philippines military exercise; Japan to write off US \$ 3.7 billion debt on Myanmar; Japan pledges US \$ 7.4 billion to Mekong region; Aung San Suu Kyi boycotts Parliament opening over oath dispute; 19th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting in Brunei Darussalam; Singapore to lend US \$ 5 billion to IMF**

According to reports, the Indonesian Ambassador to India, Andi M. Ghalib said on April 22, 2012, that a fifty member strong Indian business delegation from several Indian states will be visiting Indonesia to explore investment opportunities. He added that Indonesia invites Indian investments in the areas of agriculture, rubber, mining, coal, textiles, defence, information technology and other areas. Currently, the trade value is loaded in favour of Indonesia. Indonesian exports to India are around \$11 billion while the Indian exports to Indonesia are around \$9 billion. Indonesia exports to India coal, rubber, wood, palm oil and other items while it imports electronics, textiles and others.¹⁸

¹⁵ 'US, Philippines hold war games', *Hindustan Times*, April 14, 2012.

¹⁶ 'China, Philippines discussions end in stalemate', *Global Post*, April 14, 2012, <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/asia-pacific/120414/china-philippines-discussions-end-stalemate>

¹⁷ 'Tensions rise ahead of E Timor elections', *ABC News*, April 15, 2012, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-04-15/tensions-rise-as-final-elections-approach/3950954/?site=newcastle>

¹⁸ 'Indian business delegation to visit Indonesia', *Economic Times*, April 23, 2012

In another development, according to reports, China warned the US on April 21, 2012 that the US-Philippine military exercises have raised risks of armed confrontation over the disputed South China Sea, in the toughest high-level warning yet after weeks of tension. China's official *Liberation Army Daily* warned that recent jostling with the Philippines over disputed seas where both countries have sent ships could boil over into outright conflict, and laid much of the blame at Washington's door.

Meanwhile, reports noted that American and Filipino troops launched two weeks of annual naval drills on April 16, 2012 amid the stand-off between Beijing and Manila, who have accused each other of encroaching on sovereign seas near the Scarborough Shoal, west of a former US navy base at Subic Bay.¹⁹

Reports noted that Japan has agreed to write off more than \$3.7bn (£2.29bn) of debt owed by Myanmar and to resume development aid. The accord came at talks on April 21, 2012 in Tokyo between the countries' leaders. They also agreed to plan a special economic zone near Rangoon. Myanmar has begun political and economic reforms in the past year, since a civilian-led government ended nearly 50 years of direct military rule.²⁰

Further, Japan has pledged US \$7.4 billion in development aid to five Southeast Asia nations in an effort to promote cooperation with countries in the Mekong region. Also Japan said on April 21, 2012 that it will resume aid as a way to support the country's democratic and economic reforms in Myanmar. Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda announced the pledge at a Japan-Mekong summit in Tokyo on April 21, 2012.²¹

However, according to reports, Myanmar's opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi and elected members of her party on April 21, 2012 announced they will postpone attending parliament until changes are made to the swearing-in oath to the country's pro-military constitution. NLD leader Suu Kyi and 36 other members of Myanmar's main opposition party who won seats in the April 1 by-elections were initially scheduled to be sworn in to Parliament in the capital Naypyitaw, 350 kilometres north of Yangon, on April 23, 2012.²²

Reports noted that the 19th ASEAN - European Union Ministerial Meeting (AEMM) will be held in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam from April 26-27, 2012. Ministers and representatives from ASEAN member states, EU member states, the ASEAN Secretariat and the European External Action Service (EEAS) are likely to attend the event.²³

¹⁹ 'China's military warns of confrontation over seas', *The Malaysian Insider*, April 22, 2012, <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/world/article/chinas-military-warns-of-confrontation-over-seas/>

²⁰ 'Japan to write off \$ 3.7 bn Burma debt', *BBC News*, April 21, 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-17797910>

²¹ 'Japan forgives Burma debt; pledges \$ 7.4 billion to Mekong region', *Mizzima*, April 22, 2012, <http://www.mizzima.com/business/6981-japan-forgives-burma-debt-pledges-74-billion-to-mekong-region.html>

²² 'Myanmar's Suu Kyi to boycott Parliament opening over oath dispute', *The Hindu*, April 22, 2012.

²³ '19th Asean- EU Ministerial Meeting in Brunei Darussalam', *Borneo Bulletin*, April 22, 2012.

In other developments, according to reports, the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) on April 20, 2012 announced that Singapore will make a bilateral loan of US\$4 billion to the IMF but stressed that this contribution will be by way of contingent loans to the Fund, and not directly to countries borrowing from it. Thus, Singapore joined the ranks of the Group of 20 (G-20) countries by contributing a US\$4 billion (S\$5 billion) loan to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to help troubled economies. This is part of the broader international effort to boost the IMF's lending capacity, which managing director Christine Lagarde wants to increase by US\$400 billion.²⁴

B. Central Asia & Russia

Central Asia

(April 9-15, 2012)

- **Kyrgyzstan is unlikely to enter customs union in 2012; Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan business leaders have discussed ways to improve bilateral trade and investment; Uzbekistan announces new tax breaks to lure foreign investors; Turkmenistan to supply natural gas to Afghanistan for 30 years; ADB expects Central Asian economy to continue with its economic growth in 2013**

The World Bank in its report has said that Kyrgyzstan is unlikely to enter the customs union shared by Kazakhstan, Russia, and Belarus this year even though Kyrgyz politicians have been solidly behind Kyrgyzstan's accession to the customs union.²⁵

Meanwhile, according to reports, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan political and business leaders have discussed ways to improve bilateral trade and investment with a special focus on energy, transportation and communication sectors.²⁶

Reports noted that Uzbekistan has unveiled new tax breaks and legal protections in an effort to improve its image and lure foreign ventures to country.²⁷

In another development, Turkmenistan will supply 500 million cubic meters of natural gas per years to Afghanistan for 30 years from the start of operation of TAPI gas pipeline.²⁸

²⁴ 'Singapore to lend IMF \$ 5 billion', *Asia One*, April 22, 2012, <http://business.asiaone.com/Business/News/Story/A1Story20120422-341212.html>

²⁵ "Kyrgyzstan unlikely to enter customs union in 2012", *Central Asia Newswire*, April 13, 2012, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=11808>

²⁶ "Turkmen-Uzbek neighbors talk trade, investment", *Central Asia Newswire*, April 13, 2012, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=11804>

²⁷ "Uzbekistan announces new tax breaks to lure foreign investors", *Central Asia Newswire*, April 11, 2012, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=11779>

²⁸ "Turkmenistan to supply natural gas to Afghanistan for 30 years", *Central Asian News Service*, April 13, 2012, <http://en.ca-news.org/news:467561/>

In other development, according to reports, the Asian Development Bank has said that it expects Central Asia's economic growth to continue at 6.1 percent in 2012 and 6.2 percent in 2013.²⁹

Russia

(April 9-15, 2012)

- **Russia urges the Syrian leadership to more actively implement Kofi Annan's plan; Duma to have parliamentary hearings on direct gubernatorial polls; Putin expresses his willingness to discuss the President's term restrictions; Nicaragua expresses its gratitude for Russia's wheat supplies; Russia plans to organize the G8 summit in Skolkovo in 2014; Pensions to be raise by 30% by 2014; Russia calls for international cooperation for manned Mars mission; Russia opposes new sanctions against North Korea; New shelf projects to attract US\$ 500 billion for Russia over the next 30 years**

According to reports, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has urged the Syrian leadership to more actively implement Kofi Annan's plan which includes full and complete ceasefire and the establishment of an effective monitoring mechanism.³⁰

Reports noted that the State Duma will hold parliamentary hearings on direct gubernatorial polls as part of a set of reforms aimed at making people participate in the electoral process.³¹ Meanwhile, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin is reportedly willing to discuss the exclusion of the word "consecutive" from the regulation on the limitation of the presidential powers to two terms in office.³²

According to reports, the Nicaraguan government has praised Russia's relief wheat supplies amounting to a total of 50,400 tonnes of wheat grain in the last six months and hoped that ties with Russia can now be strengthened.³³

Reports noted that Russia plans to organize the G8 summit in the Skolkovo innovation centre in 2014 where it will chair the session.³⁴

²⁹ "Central Asian economic growth will continue, ADB report says", Central Asia Newswire, April 11, 2012, <http://www.universalnewswires.com/centralasia/viewstory.aspx?id=11787>

³⁰ "Russia urges Syrian leadership to more actively implement Kofi Annan's plan", ITAR-TASS, April 10, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/388224.html>

³¹ "Duma to have parliamentary hearings on direct gubernatorial polls", ITAR-TASS, April 9, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/386984.html>

³² "Putin ready to discuss president term restriction", ITAR-TASS, April 11, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/389889.html>

³³ "Nicaragua thanks Russia for wheat relief supplies", ITAR-TASS, April 9, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/386755.html>

³⁴ "Skolkovo innovations centre to be expedited to host G-8 summit 2014", ITAR-TASS, April 9, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/387372.html>

According to reports, Russia's space agency Roscosmos has called for international cooperation to develop a manned space exploration flight to the Mars. This comes in the backdrop of the failure of its Phobos Grunt Mars mission.³⁵

In other developments, according to reports, Russia has opposed new sanctions against North Korea over the launch of a rocket and has called for the UNSC to debate the current situation. It has also urged North Korea "to avoid actions, which lead to the escalation of tensions on the Korean Peninsula."³⁶

Meanwhile President elect Putin has said that new shelf projects would attract around US\$ 500 billion dollars to Russia in the next 30 years including projects related to extraction of oil and gas.³⁷

C. West Asia

Iran

(April 9-15, 2012)

- **EU foreign policy spokesman Michael Mann: Positive atmosphere prevailed in Iran-5+1 talks**

According to reports, a new Iranian willingness to discuss its nuclear programme in crunch talks with world powers on April 14, 2012 raises the chances of a second round of more in-depth negotiations soon, diplomats said. Michael Mann, spokesman for EU foreign policy Chief Catherine Ashton stated, "There is a positive atmosphere ... contrasting with the last time" in January 2011 and calling the talks "totally different". Another P5+1 diplomat noted, "They (Iranians) are showing a readiness this time to talk about their nuclear programme and they are not raising preconditions as they did 15 months ago." "If things continue in this direction we will be ready to start a cycle of negotiations," the official said, adding however he was "cautious because you never know with the Iranians. They may say something later which contradicts what they said earlier." Meanwhile, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov, head of Moscow's delegation, gave an encouraging appraisal. He stated, "The atmosphere is constructive and the talks are business-like. As of now, things are not going badly."³⁸

³⁵ "Russia calls for international effort in manned Mars mission", ITAR-TASS, April 13, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/391382.html>

³⁶ "Russia opposes new sanctions against North Korea", ITAR-TASS, April 13, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/391857.html>

³⁷ "Shelf projects to attract 500 bln dollars to Russia-Putin", ITAR-TASS, April 12, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/391131.html>

³⁸ "Key talks on Iran's nuclear issue positive: EU official," *Khaleej Times*, April 14, 2012, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/middleeast/2012/April/middleeast_April195.xml§ion=middleeast

Iraq

(April 9-15, 2012)

- **Iraqi Parliament passed independent human rights commission; Five people killed in recent violence in Iraq**

According to reports, Iraqi MPs have approved the first independent human rights commission in the country's history, with a remit to track rights violations. A lawmaker Ashwaq al-Jaff, a member of parliament's human rights committee, said "The main role of this commission is to monitor all violations of human rights in all fields and in all governmental and non-governmental institutions...any citizen will have the right to file a complaint directly to the commission". The role of this commission is to show the citizens what human rights are". All of its members signed a commitment not to belong to political parties while serving on the commission, Jaff added.³⁹

In another development, according to reports, bomb attacks killed five people in Iraq, including three members of a family whose house was blown up north of the capital, security officials said. An interior ministry official said "Unknown gunmen planted three bombs around a house made of mud and reeds in the Taji area, causing it to completely collapse and killing a father, mother and five-year-old boy." In another incident in the northern city of Kirkuk, a car bomb blast reportedly killed the bodyguard of a local Kurdish security chief and wounded 11 other people. Also on the west of Kirkuk, a roadside bomb killed the son of a local leader of the Sahwa, an anti-Qaeda militia.⁴⁰

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

National

(April 9-15, 2012)

- **Indian Air Force facing critical deficiency; Agni V all set for launch**

According to reports, the Indian Air Force is facing "critical deficiency" of trainer aircraft and simulators, fighter squadrons are depleting and some airfields do not have certain landing facilities. The IAF has 34 fighter squadrons against the sanctioned strength of 42 squadrons and the number is likely to reduce further to 31 during the 12th plan period, the parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence was told during a recent presentation by top officials of IAF and the Defence Ministry.

³⁹ "Iraq parliament approves rights commission," *Khaleej Times*, April 10, 2012, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/middleeast/2012/April/middleeast_April151.xml§ion=middleeast

⁴⁰ "Five killed in Iraq violence," *Khaleej Times*, April 15, 2012, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/middleeast/2012/April/middleeast_April206.xml§ion=middleeast

The IAF also has critical shortage of simulators as well. It was also pointed out that out of 52 air operational fields, 10 air fields do not have static electrical airfield lighting system (AFLS).⁴¹

In another development, reports noted that, in the remote Wheeler Island off the Odisha coast, the countdown has begun for the first test of India's most sophisticated and powerful ballistic missile ever built, Agni V. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) which built the missile, is expected to launch Agni V on Wednesday, April 18, 2012, from the Island. With a planned range of 5,000 km, the Agni V will traverse 2,000 km more than any Indian missile has ever done. Wednesday's launch will see the missile first power its way to a vertical height of 500 km in the atmosphere before following a ballistic trajectory that will see it splash down in the Indian Ocean way beyond Indonesia. A commercial jetliner would take over six hours to traverse such a distance. But Agni V, travelling at 24 times the speed of sound and 30 times faster than a commercial jet, will traverse that distance in just 18 to 20 minutes. In doing so, it will become not just the longest range ballistic missile in India's strategic armoury but also its fastest. Most importantly, Agni V would put most of China's major cities, including Beijing and Shanghai, within Indian missile range. Vijay Kumar Saraswat, DRDO Chief and Scientific Adviser to the Union Defence Minister, said, "In terms of performance, Agni V is the ultimate step for India in terms of ballistic missile technology. It is pushing at the outer limits of the Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM) class."⁴²

(April 16-22, 2012)

- **Indigenous long-range missile Agni-V test fired successfully; Admiral Gorshkov to be commissioned in the Indian Navy on December 4, 2012**

In a significant development, reports noted that India has successfully tested an indigenous long-range missile that can carry a nuclear warhead and brings within striking distance targets as far as Shanghai, invoking pride within the country while rattling the state-controlled Chinese media. Literally meaning fire, Agni-V, the surface-to-surface missile launched from the Wheeler Island off the Odisha coast at 8:07 am on April 19, 2012 propelled India into the small group of nations that possess intercontinental ballistic missiles. Agni-V is expected to significantly add to India's firepower and enhance its deterrent capability because none of its earlier missiles has the range to cover China. The 17.5 metre-tall and two metre-wide missile, which can carry a nuclear warhead of more than one tonne, rose to a height of 600 km before hitting its target more than 5,000 km away in the Indian ocean, reports said. "We had a successful launch of Agni-V," said VK Saraswat, chief of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), which developed the missile. "This launch has given a message to the entire world that India has the capability to design, develop, build and manufacture missiles of this class, and we are today a missile power."

⁴¹ "IAF facing critical shortages: Par panel told," the Indian Express, April 15, 2012, at <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/iaf-facing-critical-shortages-par-panel-told/937037/0>

⁴² "India's most potent missile Agni V all set for launch," The Tribune, April 16, 2012, at <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2012/20120416/main2.htm>

The DRDO will conduct two more validation tests before starting the production of this missile, Saraswat added.⁴³

In another development, according to reports, the much-awaited Russian-built aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov will be commissioned in the Indian Navy on December 4, 2012 this year, and certain trials that needed to be done will now be completed post the induction of the aircraft carrier in the force. "The ship will be commissioned on December 4, when the Indian crew will take over the warship in Russia," Indian Navy's Chief of Material Vice Admiral Ganesh Madhavan said on Friday. With the commissioning of the floating deck carrier, that will have MiG-29 K fighter jets operating from its deck, the Indian Navy will become a two aircraft carrier Navy.⁴⁴

INTERNATIONAL

(April 9-15, 2012)

● North Korea's long-range rocket test failed; The Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty (DTCT) between US and UK enters into force;

According to reports, North Korea's long-range rocket test ended in failure on April 13, 2012, disintegrating in mid air soon after blast off and plunging into the sea. The defiant launch drew condemnation from world leaders who described it as a "provocative" act that threatened regional security, despite Pyongyang insisting it was intended to put a satellite into orbit for peaceful purposes. The North admitted the satellite had failed to enter orbit and that "scientists, technicians and experts are now looking into the cause of the failure." The United States and its allies slammed the exercise as a disguised ballistic missile test that contravened United Nations resolutions triggered by Pyongyang's two nuclear tests. White House spokesman Jay Carney said, "North Korea is only further isolating itself by engaging in provocative acts and is wasting its money on weapons and propaganda displays while the North Korean people go hungry". United Nations Chief Ban Ki-moon condemned the launch as "deplorable" and said it "defies the firm and unanimous stance of the international community." The debris fell into the Yellow Sea off South Korea, and its navy launched a salvage operation to retrieve the debris, despite warnings from Pyongyang last week not to attempt such an operation.⁴⁵

In another development, reports noted that the Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty (DTCT) between the United States and the United Kingdom officially entered into force on April 13, 2012. The treaty, signed in 2007 and ratified in 2010, is intended to ease the export of defense articles between the two countries by reducing the need for export licenses and other International Traffic in Arms

⁴³ "Agni-V test fired successfully; India enters elite ICBM club," ET Bureau, April 20, 2012, at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-04-20/news/31373918_1_agni-v-metre-wide-missile-tessy-thomas

⁴⁴ "Admiral Gorshkov to be commissioned in December," Express News Service, April 21, 2012, at <http://expressbuzz.com/nation/admiral-gorshkov-to-be-commissioned-in-december/384328.html>

⁴⁵ "North Korea Rocket Launch Fails, Draws Condemnation," Agence France-Presse, April 13, 2012, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120413/DEFREG03/304130001/North-Korea-Rocket-Launch-Fails-Draws-Condemnation?odysey=mod|newswell|text|World%20News|s>

Regulations (ITAR) approvals for certain items. The treaty, which is the first of its kind, creates “approved communities” of government agencies and companies that may export and transfer certain U.S. Munitions List items for preapproved end-uses within the United States and United Kingdom and to locations where military operations are being conducted or supported, according to the State Department. The United Kingdom is already one of the United States’ biggest defense trading partners, accounting for more than \$13 billion in authorized exports of defense articles and services from the United States in 2011, according to the State Department. The United States has signed and ratified a similar treaty with Australia, but it has not yet entered into force.⁴⁶

(April 16-22, 2012)

- **Philippine raises pitch against Chinese aggressiveness in the South China Sea; China and Russia launch their first joint naval exercises in the Yellow Sea**

According to reports, Philippine President Benigno Aquino warned his country’s neighbors on April 23, 2012 that they should fear Beijing’s growing aggressiveness over its claims in the South China Sea. The President stressed that China’s territorial claims spanned a huge area and were getting “closer and closer” to the Philippine archipelago. Aquino stated, “They claim this entire body of water practically. Look at what is excluded and what they are claiming... so how can the others not be fearful of what is transpiring?”. It would be worth noting that Manila and Beijing have been locked in a standoff over Scarborough, a group of islands in the South China Sea, since Chinese vessels blocked Philippine attempts to arrest eight Chinese fishing boats’ crews earlier this month. China claims almost the entire South China Sea and is also locked in disputes with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam, as well as its rival Taiwan.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, according to reports, China and Russia launched their first joint naval exercises on April 22, 2012, with war games in the Yellow Sea that come amid tensions between China and its Asian neighbors over territorial claims. The six days of drills are taking place off China’s east coast, the official Xinhua news agency said. China has 16 naval vessels and two submarines taking part in the exercises, while Russia has four warships, according to state media. They will focus on joint air defense, anti-submarine tactics and search and rescue, as well as simulated rescue of hijacked vessels and anti-terrorism drills. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Weimin said on April 19, 2012, “This joint military exercise is a long-scheduled one between China and Russia in order to uphold regional peace and stability”. China and Russia have together participated in four military exercises since 2005, some involving other countries.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ “U.S.-U.K. Defense Trade Cooperation Treaty Enters Into Force,” April 13, 2012, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120413/DEFREG02/304130003/U-S-U-K-Defense-Trade-Cooperation-Treaty-Enters-Into-Force?odyssey=mod|newswell|text|World%20News|s>

⁴⁷ “Philippines Warns Neighbors on China’s Territorial Claims,” AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, April 23, 2012, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120423/DEFREG03/304230007/Philippines-Warns-Neighbors-China-8217-s-Territorial-Claims?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|FRONTPAGE>

⁴⁸ “China, Russia Launch First Joint Naval Exercises,” AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, April 22, 2012, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120422/DEFREG03/304220010/China-Russia-Launch-First-Joint-Naval-Exercises?odyssey=mod|newswell|text|FRONTPAGE|p>

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

Jammu & Kashmir

(April 9-15, 2012)

- **Youths in large numbers return to the valley from Pak; Home Minister P. Chidambaram visit to Jammu and Kashmir grounds AFSPA revocation move; Shutdown observed in Kargil; Youths arrested in Pampore, South Kashmir for alleged involvement in stone pelting**

According to reports, as many as 52 youth from various districts of Jammu and Kashmir, who had crossed the line of control for arms training in early nineties, have returned to their home since the announcement of rehabilitation policy by Omar Abdullah-led coalition government.

The state government had announced the rehabilitation policy for all those youth who crossed over to Pak following eruption of militancy and are now eager to return and settle as normal citizens.⁴⁹

In another development, reports noted that almost grounding the much hyped proposal of the Jammu and Kashmir government on partial revocation of the 'contentious' Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from the state, Union Home Minister P Chidambaram said his ministry was considering three amendments to be incorporated in the Act. Accompanied by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, the Home Minister chaired a high level meeting at the official residence of the Chief Minister to take stock of the security situation and law and order, especially in view of the ensuing summer months and Amarnath Yatra. The meeting reviewed various measures on anti-militancy front, such as cross-border infiltration, synergy between various security agencies and anti-militancy operations.⁵⁰

Meanwhile, reports noted that a complete shutdown was observed in Kargil on April 15, 2012 in protest against the recent violence in Gilgit-Baltistan region of northern Pakistan. Responding to a bandh call by Anjuman-e-Jamiyatul Ulama Asna Ashriya (Islamia School Kargil) to express solidarity with the people of Gilgit-Baltistan, all shops and business establishments in the town remained closed and vehicles kept off the roads. People from many villages in Kargil district assembled at Islamia School Kargil carrying black flags and placards and chanting slogans against the killings in the region. Nayib Imam Jumma of Islamia School Kargil, Hujattul Islam Sheikh Hussain Mukaddas, appealed to Government of India to intervene and help stop the killings in the region.⁵¹

⁴⁹ "52 youth return from PaK", *Greater Kashmir*, April 9, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Apr/10/52-youth-return-from-pak-67.asp>

⁵⁰ "Chidambaram grounds AFSPA revocation move", *Greater Kashmir*, April 10, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Apr/11/chidambaram-grounds-afspa-revocation-move-96.asp>

⁵¹ "Kargil observes shutdown", *Greater Kashmir*, April 15, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Apr/15/kargil-observes-shutdown-24.asp>

In other developments, according to reports, police in Pampore area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district have arrested seven youth for their alleged involvement in a stone pelting incident during a recent shutdown call given by Hurriyat Conference (G) Chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani. Families of the arrested youth have alleged that their wards were innocent and police was harassing them. They have demanded immediate release of youth.⁵²

(April 16-22, 2012)

- **Assistant Sub-Inspector shot dead in old city; Police arrested Bijbehara car blast mastermind**

According to reports, suspected militants killed a police officer at police post-Bagyas-Chattabal, near Darish Kadal in the old city. Soon after the incident police and paramilitary CRPF men reached the spot and launched searches to track the assailants. Militant outfit Islamic Front claimed the responsibility for attack.⁵³

In another development, according to reports, police claimed to have achieved a major break through by arresting the Divisional Commander of Hizbul-Mujahideen, a master mind in the Bijbehara car blast. Addressing a news conference in the South Kashmir district, Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, S M Sahai said, that the militant named Latif was active in the Awantipora area for past four years and was involved in many militancy related activities including Bijbehara car blast in which one person was killed and 21 others sustained injuries last month.⁵⁴

North East India

(April 9-15, 2012)

- **Missing SULFA man's body found; Positive progress claimed by Centre in ULFA talks; Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) given one week to surrender; Tension occurs in Arunachal-Assam border; Grenade blast in Assam-Arunachal border**

According to reports, the body of a surrendered ULFA activist missing for the last 14 days was recovered from a forest at Sonapur. Dhruva Talukdar was missing since March 26, 2012 and was allegedly killed by his personal body guard and some businessmen colleagues had disposed of the body at Amchang forest area. The police have arrested the bodyguard and another person, while a massive search operation has been launched to nab four others who are absconding. Talukdar since his surrender was engaged in business activities.⁵⁵

⁵² "7 Pampore youth arrested", *Greater Kashmir*, April 15, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Apr/16/7-pampore-youth-arrested-50.asp>

⁵³ "ASI shot dead in old city", *Greater Kashmir*, April 20, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Apr/21/asi-shot-dead-in-old-city-52.asp>

⁵⁴ "Bijbehara car blast mastermind arrested: Police", *Greater Kashmir*, April 21, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Apr/22/bijbehara-car-blast-mastermind-arrested-police-64.asp>

⁵⁵ "Missing SULFA man's body found", *The Assam Tribune*, April 10, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr1012/at0152>

In another development, reports noted that the third round of dialogue between pro-talk ULFA and Government concluded on a positive note, with the Centre claiming to have made tangible progress. The negotiations held at North Block lasted for over 90 minutes. ULFA chairman Arabinda Rajkhowa describing the talks as 'very satisfactory, said discussions were held on the charter of demands presented by the outfit, last year. The next round of talks is now expected to be held after about two months after consultations between the pro-talk group and Centre's interlocutor, PC Halder. Following the meeting with the ULFA leaders, the Union Home Secretary held a separate round of meeting with State Government officials, ostensibly to take stock of the peace process.⁵⁶

However, according to reports, the Meghalaya Government served a week's ultimatum to the Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) to surrender all its arms before the government or else 'force' would be used against them according to officials. The ultimatum was served following police reports that a large number of youngsters were presently at the camp of the GNLA apart from few armed militants according to Meghalaya Director General of Police N Ramachandran. The police chief warned that security forces will be compelled to use 'lethal arms' as the militants are equipped with 'sophisticated' weapons. Intelligence sources said about 120 persons were presently housed in the main camp identified by the police in one of the thick jungles of Garo Hills.⁵⁷

According to reports, forest personnel in Assam were attacked on April 11, 2012 by armed men from Arunachal Pradesh near the Assam-Arunachal border in Lakhimpur district, creating fresh tension. Official sources said a group of unidentified persons, heavily armed with guns and bow and arrows, and attacked forest personnel engaged in plantation at Duluong in the Lakhimpur district. Security forces posted along the border rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control. The forces are maintaining a strict vigil in the area.⁵⁸

In other developments, according to reports, suspected militants triggered a grenade blast at remote Bordumsa area in Tinsukia district of Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border. According to police no one was injured. The grenade was lobbed by two motor cycle-borne youth just outside the Bordumsa police outpost. Although police have not named any particular militant for the blast, locals have pointed fingers at the anti-talk faction of the ULFA rebels led by Paresh Baruah alias Paresh Asom, who are very active in the area. There have also been reports of massive extortion drive by the anti-talk faction of the ULFA militants in the area.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ "Centre claims progress in ULFA talks", *The Assam Tribune*, April 9, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr1012/at05>

⁵⁷ "GNLA given one week to surrender", *The Assam Tribune*, April 10, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr1112/oth05>

⁵⁸ "Tension along Arunachal border", *The Assam Tribune*, April 11, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr1212/at08>

⁵⁹ "Grenade blast on Assam-Arunachal border", *The Assam Tribune*, April 12, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr1412/oth06>

(April 16-22, 2012)

- **Anti-talk ULFA faction stepping up extortion drive; Police to be ruthless against Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA); NSCN (IM) leader's release demanded; Karbi People's Liberation Tiger (KPLT) ultras killed in Karbi Anglong; Level of violence coming down in North-East; NSCN-Assam Rifles stand off continues**

According to reports, the hardline faction of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) is getting desperate for money and most of the intercepts of discussions between the senior leaders of the outfit were on collection of funds. The senior leaders of the outfit themselves started calling up people demanding money, while, those inside India are also receiving calls from their senior leaders on the same issue. Sources revealed that Paresh Baruah, apart from using the channels of the ULFA, has his own channels to collect money directly and he is still calling up people directly demanding substantial amounts of money. Sources claimed that Paresh Baruah collects money through some sympathizers and according to intelligence inputs, he recently managed to send some money to Bangladesh, proving that though he had to escape from that country, he is still maintaining links there.⁶⁰

In another development reports noted that after its seven day surrender offer was ignored by the Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA), Meghalaya police asserted it would now be 'ruthless' against the militant outfit. Last week, Meghalaya police served the GNLA a deadline of seven days to surrender with their weapons. The militant outfit, however, gave scant respect to the ultimatum. According to police estimates, there are about 120 -130 unarmed cadres in the GNLA camps, mostly teenagers. He said that the police does not want to shed "unnecessary blood" and therefore has given adequate time to the young cadres to decide about their future.⁶¹

According to reports, residents of Ukhrul town under the aegis of Committee for Release of Ningkhan Shimray comprising Tangkhul frontier organisations and Tashar western areas chiefs associations took to the streets demanding early release of NSCN (IM)'s head of foreign affairs Ningkhan Anthony Shimray without any condition. The speakers at the meeting called for immediate release of Anthony, who is presently lodged at Tihar Jail, for a meaningful peace process.⁶²

However, reports noted that the General Secretary of the Karbi People's Liberation Tiger (KPLT), Nilip Enghi and four other members of the outfit were killed on the spot and one got serious bullet injuries during an encounter with Assam Police and security forces in the wee hours on the hill track of the Harlong Woti of Borpong under the Chowkihol Police Station in East Karbi Anglong.⁶³

⁶⁰ "Anti-talk ULFA stepping up extortion drive", *The Assam Tribune*, April 17, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr1812/at07>

⁶¹ "Deadline expires, police to be ruthless against GNLA", *The Assam Tribune*, April 17, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr1812/oth06>

⁶² "NSCN (IM) leader's release demanded", *The Assam Tribune*, April 17, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr1812/oth07>

⁶³ "5 KPLT ultras killed in Karbi Anglong", *The Assam Tribune*, April 20, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr2112/state07>

Meanwhile, reports noted that though the level of violence in the entire North East region is coming down gradually over the years, the situation in Manipur remains a cause of concern, while, inter-factional clashes between militant groups in Nagaland is also causing concern. According to the annual report of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), as many as 498 civilians and 79 security force personnel were killed in acts of violence by militants in the North east region in 2007, but the figure is gradually coming down and last year, 70 civilians and 32 security personnel were killed by militants. The report said that 31 persons were killed in Assam last year by militants as compared to 65 in the previous year. The report said that talks with militant groups like both factions of the DHD and KNLF have been concluded and peace accords would be signed shortly, while, talks are also on with pro-talk faction of the ULFA, NDFB(P) are going on.⁶⁴

In other developments, according to reports, the stand off between the Assam Rifles and the NSCN-IM completed days with no sign of easing and have spread to Manipur. The current quagmire was triggered by the incident where the NSCN-IM had detained five Assam Rifles jawans after snatching their weapons. The Assam Rifles personnel traveling in a truck allegedly 'trespassed' into Hebron Camp area violating the ceasefire ground rules which prompted the Naga militants to act, a source said. In Manipur, security forces personnel in large numbers were rushed to the vicinity of NSCN-IM designated camps.⁶⁵

VI. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

(April 9-15, 2012)

- **UNSC sends military observes to Syria; Council alarmed at Sudan-South Sudan conflict; Military coup in Guinea-Bissau condemned; India reiterates the immediate need for UNSC expansion; India, Russia and China voice regret over N Korea's rocket launch**

In a resolution adopted unanimously, the UN Security Council authorized the sending of an advance team of up to 30 military observers to Syria which will report on the implementation of a full cessation of armed violence, pending the deployment of a UN supervision mission that will be tasked with monitoring the ceasefire. The Council also called on all parties to guarantee the safety of the advance team and ensure its freedom of movement and access.⁶⁶ India which also supported the resolution underlined the importance of the mission observing principles of integrity

⁶⁴ "Level of violence coming down in NE", *The Assam Tribune*, April 21, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr2212/at092>

⁶⁵ "NSCN-Assam Rifles stand-off continues", *The Assam Tribune*, April 22, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=apr2312/oth05>

⁶⁶ "Syria: Security Council authorized deployment of advance military observer team", *UN News Centre*, April 14, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=41779&Cr=Syria&Cr1=>

by being impartial and independent and also called on the Syrian government to start an 'inclusive' political process.⁶⁷

Meanwhile, the Council voiced alarm at the escalating conflict between Sudan and South Sudan, which manifested most recently by the seizure and occupation of the town of Heglig and its oil fields by South Sudan's army. In this light, the Council demanded a complete, immediate and unconditional end to all fighting along with the withdrawal of the army of South Sudan from Heglig. The Council also reiterated its demand for the urgent redeployment of troops from the disputed Abyei area.⁶⁸

According to reports, at the 8th round of intergovernmental negotiations UN Security Council reforms, India demanded the expansion of Council by the addition of 10 more members and also cautioned that the any delay in reforming the body will be at the international community's 'own peril'. India also added that structural reforms of the Council should respond to the pressing need for credible improvements in the global governance architecture.⁶⁹

In other developments, the military coup in Guinea-Bissau ahead of the presidential run-off elections was strongly condemned by the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon and the Council and demanded the immediate restoration of constitutional order.⁷⁰

While voicing 'regret' over North Korea's rocket launch, India, Russia and China also opposed new sanctions against the country and called for restraint from the Security Council as well as the neighbouring countries.⁷¹

(April 16-22, 2012)

- **UN Security Council authorizes observer mission to Syria, India reiterates impartiality; India makes a case for membership to nuclear export control regimes; UNSC demands restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau; UNSC condemns attempted satellite launch by North Korea**

According to reports, the UN Security Council authorized the establishment of a UN observer mission to Syria, UN Supervision Mission in Syria for an initial period of 90 days to monitor the

⁶⁷ "Impartiality key to UN mission in Syria: India", *The Hindu*, April 15, 2012 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article3315472.ece>

⁶⁸ "Security Council demands unconditional end to Sudan-South Sudan fighting", *UN News Centre*, April 12, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=41767&Cr=sudan&Cr1=>

⁶⁹ "UN Security Council should be expanded to 25 members: India", *The Economic Times*, April 11, 2012 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-04-11/news/31324955_1_unsc-security-council-puri

⁷⁰ "Ban and Security Council strongly condemn Guinea-Bissau military coup", *UN News Centre*, April 13, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=41775&Cr=bissau&Cr1=>

⁷¹ "Russia, China, India voice regret", *The Hindu*, April 14, 2012 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/article3311954.ece>

ceasefire in the country.⁷² On the same occasion, India demanded an immediate halt to violence in Syria to allow an impartial supervision and monitoring of the ceasefire. India also reiterated the need for the UN observers to implement the mandate impartially, objectively and fairly and to help the parties to build on the ceasefire and to commence an inclusive Syrian-led legitimate political process.⁷³

Meanwhile, India at the UNSC meeting on nuclear security made a case for its membership to the four nuclear export control regimes given its ability and willingness to promote global non-proliferation objectives. It further called for the reduction of the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines and increase of universal restraints on the first use of nuclear weapons in order to reduce nuclear dangers.⁷⁴

Reports noted that the Security Council demanded the immediate restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau and the country's legitimate government. The Council also stated that it was prepared to consider possible further measures which could include targeted sanctions against the perpetrators and supporters of the military coup if the situation remains unresolved.⁷⁵

In other developments, the UN Security Council strongly condemned the attempted satellite launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The 15-member body also demanded that the DPRK refrain from any further launches using ballistic missile technology and to comply with previous resolutions by suspending all activities related to the country's ballistic missile programme.⁷⁶

⁷² "Security Council authorizes UN observer mission in Syria, Ban welcomes decision", *UN News Centre*, April 21, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=41835&Cr=Syria&Cr1=Security>

⁷³ "India stresses impartiality of UN observers", *The Hindu*, April 22, 2012 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article3340298.ece>

⁷⁴ "India seeks membership of N-export control regimes", *IBN Live*, April 22, 2012 at <http://ibnlive.in.com/news/india-seeks-membership-of-nexport-control-regimes/250912-3.html>

⁷⁵ "Guinea-Bissau: Security Council demands restoration of constitutional order", *UN News Centre*, April 21, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=41833&Cr=Guinea-Bissau&Cr1=>

⁷⁶ "Security Council strongly condemns DPR Korea's satellite launch attempt", *UN News Centre*, April 16, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=41784&Cr=Democratic&Cr1=Korea>