

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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Editor: Sanjeev Kumar Shrivastav

Contributors

Gulbin Sultana

Gunjan Singh

Princy Marine George

Rahul Mishra

Prashant Pradhan

Amit Kumar

Shristi Pukhrem

Keerthi Kumar

Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh

China

Syria, Turkey, Palestine

Southeast Asia

GCC, Bahrain, Kuwait

Defence Review

Internal Security Review

UN Review

Review Adviser: S. Kalyanaraman

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1, Development Enclave, Rao Tula Ram Marg, New Delhi-110010
Telephone: 91-26717983; Fax: 91-11-26154191 Website: www.idsa.in; Email: twir@idsa.in

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. SOUTH ASIA

Bangladesh

- **Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and India's Border Security Force (BSF) agreed to strengthen joint patrol and enhance coordination; Dipu Moni pursues EU officials to continue with the generalised system of preferences for Bangladesh**

According to reports, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and India's Border Security Force (BSF) have agreed to strengthen joint patrol and enhance coordination between them to reduce trans-border crimes along the Sylhet-Assam border. Officials of the BGB and BSF reached the agreement at a deputy director general-level meeting at the Supreme Community Centre near Sheola border in Beanibazar upazila of Sylhet on May 29, 2013.¹

In another development, according to reports, Foreign Minister Dipu Moni left for Brussels on May 27, 2013 to lobby top EU officials to continue with the generalised system of preferences for Bangladesh. She met EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht on May 28, 2013. During her meeting with the trade commissioner, she informed that Bangladesh would take determined action to improve health and occupational safety standards in garment factories to retain its preferential trade scheme with the European Union.²

Sri Lanka

- **President Rajapaksa visits China; Thailand PM visits Sri Lanka; Australian Naval Ship visits Port of Colombo**

According to reports, President Mahinda Rajapaksa, made a four-day state visit to China on May 27, 2013 on the invitation of President of China Xi Jinping. President Rajapaksa is among the first few foreign leaders to visit China since the new leadership assumed office in March this year. It would be worth noting that this is Rajapaksa's seventh visit to China. The Sri Lankan delegation accompanying the President included Minister of External Affairs Prof. G.L. Peiris, Monitoring MP for the Ministry of External Affairs Sajin de Vaas Gunawardena, Ministers Wimal Weerawansa and Douglas Devananda, Parliamentarians A.H.M. Azwer and Namal Rajapaksa, Secretary to the President Lalith Weeratunga and Chief-of-Staff Gamini Senerath. Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank of China (China Exim Bank), Li Ruogu, called on President Mahinda Rajapaksa at the China World Hotel on May 28, 2013. The two countries signed an agreement to establish

¹ "BGB, BSF agree to strengthen joint patrol on Sylhet-Assam border", *The Daily Star*, May 30, 2013 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/beta2/news/bgb-bsf-agree-to-strengthen-joint-patrol-on-sylhet-assam-border/>.

² "Dipu Moni, EU trade chief vow to work together on worker safety", *The Daily Star*, May 29, 2013 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/beta2/news/dipu-moni-eu-trade-chief-vow-to-work-together-on-worker-safety/>

two committees that would work towards a free trade agreement.³ President Xi Jinping and President Mahinda Rajapaksa also witnessed the signing of the contract between China Great Wall Industry Corp and SupremeSAT Ltd, to provide the satellite in the near future.⁴

Reports noted that Thailand Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra made a two days visit to Sri Lanka on May 31-June 1, 2013 to commemorate the 260th anniversary of Sri Lankan Buddhist monks obtaining higher ordination from Thailand. During her address in the Parliament, Ms. Shinawatra said the two aid that the countries should work together to strengthen Buddhism as a religion and as a way of life. During the visit, Ms. Shinawatra called on President Mahinda Rajapaksa at the Presidential Secretariat and held bilateral talks.⁵

In other developments, reports noted that Australian Naval Ship 'HMAS Toowoomba' arrived at the Port of Colombo on May 31, 2013 on a goodwill visit. Ship's Commanding Officer, Commander Brendon Zilko accompanied by Australian Defence Adviser to Sri Lanka, Colonel Michael Collie paid a courtesy call on Commander Western Naval Area, Rear Admiral Sirimevan Ranasinghe at the Western Naval Command Headquarters in Colombo. They held discussions and exchanged mementos as a gesture of goodwill.⁶

Maldives

● Thai Prime Minister visits Maldives; Maldives inflation rate increased

According to reports, Prime Minister of Thailand Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra made a three days official visit to the Maldives from June 1-3, 2013.⁷ During the visit, Maldives and Thailand signed an agreement to establish a Joint Trade Committee and promote trade between the two countries. It was also decided to establish a Joint Trade Committee between the two countries.⁸

In another development, according to reports, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) published by the Maldives Department of National Planning shows that the Maldives inflation rate has increased by 4.38 percent from April 2012 to April 2013, compared with 4.17 percent through the year to March 2013.⁹

³ "MR promised more funding by China Exim Bank", *The Island*, May 28, 2013 at http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=80038.

⁴ "Chinese firm signs satellite deal", *The China Daily*, May 29, 2013 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2013-05/29/content_16541754.htm

⁵ "Thai PM meets MR", *The Daily Mirror*, May 31, 2013 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/30220-thai-pm-meets-mr.html>. "Thailand, SL should promote Buddhist way of life: Thai PM", *The Daily Mirror*, May 31, 2013 <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/30240-thailand-sl-should-promote-buddhist-way-of-life-thai-pm.html>.

⁶ "Australian Naval Ship in Colombo", *The Daily Mirror*, June 2, 2013 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/30272-australian-naval-ship-in-colombo.html>.

⁷ "Thai Prime Minister arrives in the Maldives", *The Sun Online*, June 1, 2013 at <http://sun.mv/english/13006>.

⁸ "Maldives, Thailand sign agreement to establish Joint Trade Committee", *The Sun Online*, June 2, 2013 at <http://sun.mv/english/13033>.

⁹ "Maldives inflation rate increases by 4.38 percent within a year", *The Sun Online*, May 27, 2013 at <http://sun.mv/english/12839>.

B. East Asia

Southeast Asia

- **India's Prime Minister visits Thailand; India and Thailand sign extradition treaty; Cambodia blocks Thai border; China condemns the Philippines over grounded ship; Demand for poll review rises in Malaysia; World Bank to support trade facilitation in Laos**

Reports noted that Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh on May 30, 2013 arrived in Bangkok on a two-day visit during which he had talks with his Thai counterpart Yingluck Shinawatra to outline the framework of a Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement and elevate bilateral ties into a strategic partnership. The previous talks in New Delhi last November made some progress, but the major task to overcome is to fine-tune how to open access to both countries' service sectors. An early harvest scheme of the free-trade agreement, with tariff exemption for 84 items of goods, has been in force since January 2010, resulting in a high-level of bilateral trade. Two-way trade between the two countries reached US\$ 9.2 billion in 2012-13.¹⁰

In another development, according to reports, during the visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Thailand, India and Thailand signed an extradition treaty and ratified the treaty on the transfer of sentenced persons. Both the treaties are welcome news for India since Thailand's visa-easy regime makes it easy for many known Indian gangsters to operate from outside the country. In a statement to the media after Singh held talks with his Thai counterpart Yingluck Shinawatra, the PM said, "Our growing security cooperation received a major boost today." In January 2013, Indian officials had travelled to Bangkok and handed over evidence like fingerprints and DNA samples to the Thai authorities to strengthen India's case for his extradition. The extradition treaty signed today will help India now to seek Jhingada's extradition.¹¹

In another development, according to reports, on June 1, 2013, two Cambodian military men, allegedly involved in smuggling of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) from Thailand into Cambodia, blocked the road during a protest at the Thai-Cambodian Friendship Bridge opposite Klong Luek checkpoint in Aranyaprathet against stricter border pass checking by Thailand. A regulation requiring people driving personal cars into Thailand to present their passports came into effect yesterday. But on request from Cambodia, the checkpoint temporarily let drivers pass if they showed a border pass with the proper stamp, until Cambodia provides passports to all after the election.¹²

¹⁰ "PM arrives in Thailand on two-day visit", *The Times of India*, May 30, 2013, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-05-30/india/39628234_1_indian-ambassador-two-day-visit-three-day-visit

¹¹ "India & Thailand ink pacts on extradition, black money", May 30, 2013, http://www.thestatesman.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=458812&catid=35

¹² "Cambodian military men block border", *The Nation*, June 2, 2013, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/national/Cambodian-military-men-block-border-30207403.html>

Reports noted that China condemned the Philippines on May 31, 2013, over a Filipino warship grounded on a Chinese reef in the South China Sea. It described the illegal grounding of the vessel on the Ren'ai Reef as a "serious encroachment of territorial sovereignty", and warned Manila not to stir up the situation in the South China Sea any further. It is believed that Beijing acted in response to an attempt by the Philippines to assert territorial claims by keeping the warship stranded on the reef since 1999. According to the Chinese media reports, after the warship was grounded on the reef, Beijing repeatedly asked Manila to retrieve it, but the Philippines ignored the request despite having promised to tow the ship away.¹³

According to reports, Malaysian Election Commission (EC) will soon begin a review of election laws and voter registration procedures to deal with complaints such as unusually large number of voters registered at the same address. Among the matters being considered by the commission was to seek the power to "remove" voters who do not live at the address and update the registration in accordance with the address listed in their MyKad. Representatives of political parties appointed by the EC as assistant voter registrars are allowed to sign up new voters but both Barisan Nasional and Pakatan Rakyat have traded accusations of "shifting" voters by getting supporters to change their address and be registered in constituencies where their side could win. One of the problems the Malaysian EC faced in dealing with such cases was its inability to strike out the name of any voter from an address even when the commission was sure that the voter had never lived there or was no longer staying at the place. It is also said that if it was deemed necessary, the EC would also recommend to the government new measures, amendments to laws or even to abolish the laws altogether so that they could be replaced with new legislation.¹⁴

In other developments, according to reports, the World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved US\$6.5 million in additional grant financing on May 28 for the Customs and Trade Facilitation Project in Laos. The grant builds on the achievements of the original International Development Association (IDA) grant of US\$6 million, which was approved in 2008, according to the World Bank Office in Vientiane on May 30, 2013. The newly approved financing compliments the Bank's support for the programme which is aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of customs administration and simplifying customs processes and procedures to eliminate duplication, redundancy, reduce transaction costs and time to clear goods. The Customs and Trade Facilitation Project also aims to support government objectives in achieving high rates of economic growth that translate into meaningful poverty reduction, increased transparency and accountability. The project forms part of an ambitious and integrated country trade programme supported by the World Bank in partnership with Australia, the European Union, Germany and Ireland.¹⁵

¹³ "Manila condemned over grounded warship", *China Daily*, May 31, 2013, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-05/31/content_16549333.htm

¹⁴ "M'sian poll body seeks election law review", *Yahoo News*, May 27, 2013, <http://my.news.yahoo.com/msian-poll-body-seeks-election-law-review-041004955.html>

¹⁵ "World Bank extends support to trade facilitation in Laos", *Vientiane Times*, May 31, 2013, http://www.vientianetimes.org.la/FreeContent/FreeContent_World_bank.htm

China

- **Chinese President Xi Jinping begins his seven day trip to Latin America and Caribbean states; China and Finland agreed to further their cooperation on trade and arctic affairs; China and United States work towards enhancing cooperation on climate change issues; Chinese VP meet leaders of Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Laos; China wants cooperation with US on cyber attacks; China reiterates that it is against all Internet hacking attacks and hopes to conduct dialogues and cooperate with the United States**

According to reports, Chinese President Xi Jinping Xi arrived at Trinidad and Tobago on April 31 at the beginning off a seven-day visit to Latin America and the Caribbean to give the relations between China and the region a further boost. This is the first time a Chinese president has visited the Caribbean country since the two nations established diplomatic ties in 1974. A number of cooperative documents covering economy, trade and education are expected to be signed.¹⁶

Reports noted that on May 31, China and Finland on Friday agreed to further their cooperation on trade and arctic affairs and foster high-level parliamentary exchanges.¹⁷

According to reports, Senior officials from China and the United States, the world's two largest economies and greenhouse gases emitters, agreed on May 31 to intensify their cooperation on climate change. The meeting came just days before President Xi Jinping and his US counterpart President Barack Obama are due to meet in California.¹⁸

Reports noted that Chinese Vice President Li Yuanchao on May 30 met with leaders of Sri Lanka, Laos and Cambodia during a conference of Asian political parties in Xi'an northwest China's Shaanxi province.¹⁹

In other developments, according to reports, China reiterated on May 29 that it is against all Internet hacking attacks and hopes to conduct dialogues and cooperate with the United States on this matter under the principle of mutual respect and trust. The remarks, made by Assistant Foreign Minister Zheng Zeguang at a news briefing, came ahead of the summit between President Xi Jinping and his US counterpart Barack Obama on June 7 and 8 – the first face-to-face communication between the two leaders since Xi became president in March.²⁰

¹⁶ "Xi begins Caribbean visit" *China Daily*, June 2, 2013 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013xivisit/2013-06/02/content_16556053.htm

¹⁷ "China, Finland eye further cooperation" *China Daily*, June 1, 2013 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-06/01/content_16554272.htm

¹⁸ "China, US step up climate change cooperation" *China Daily*, June 1, 2013 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-06/01/content_16554257.htm

¹⁹ "VP meets Sri Lanka, Laos, Cambodia leaders" *China Daily*, May 31, 2013 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-05/31/content_16549465.htm

²⁰ "Beijing seeks cooperation with US on cyberattacks" *China Daily*, May 30, 2013 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-05/30/content_16545304.htm

Reports noted that Senior Chinese and US military officials on May 28 vowed further naval cooperation. China will work with the United States to further deepen military trust and cooperation, said Qi Jianguo, deputy chief of the general staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), during his meeting with Cecil Haney, commander of the US Pacific Fleet.²¹

C. West Asia

Syria

- **Syrian death toll crosses 3,000 in May, 2013 alone**

According to reports, the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) has announced that the death toll in the Syrian conflict crossed 3,000 in the month of May alone this year. Out of the 3,397 people killed in May, more than 300 were women and an approximately equal number, children. A significant number of people also died as a result of torture.²²

Turkey

- **Anti-government protests as Erdogan rejects 'dictator' claims**

According to reports, thousands of people took to Turkey's streets late last week in a show of pent-up resentment against the government of Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Close to 10,000 people were estimated to have gathered at the country's landmark Taksim Square in the fiercest anti-government protests in many years. The demonstrations were triggered by police crackdown on a peaceful sit-in to prevent uprooting of trees at Taksim Square, and then spread around the country. The protests were exacerbated by plans by Erdogan to demolish a cultural centre and turn it into an opera hall. Many Turks see Erdogan as a 'dictator' and an 'uncompromising figure' exerting undue influence in every part of Turkish life. Erdogan, in a move to appeal to his large base of supporters, delivered two speeches and appeared in a television interview, dismissing the protesters as an 'extremist fringe'.²³

Palestine

- **New Palestinian prime minister appointed**

Reports noted that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has appointed a new prime minister following last month's resignation of Salam Fayyad. Rami Hamdallah who replaces Fayyad is an economist, and academic, with no prior experience in government service or politics. Hamdallah

²¹ "China, US vow further naval cooperation" *China Daily*, May 28, 2013 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-05/28/content_16541113.htm

²² "May death toll in Syria over three thousand", *Anadolu Agency*, June 2, 2013 at <http://www.aa.com.tr/en/headline/189085-may-death-toll-in-syria-over-three-thousand>

²³ "Erdogan rejects 'dictator' claims", *The Daily Star*, June 2, 2013 at <http://dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/Jun-02/219176-erdogan-rejects-dictator-claims.ashx#axzz2V7kQ22uo>

is seen as more pliant than Fayyad, who frequently clashed with Abbas, and his appointment is likely to shore up the president's power. Hamdallah takes office at a time when the US is attempting to revive Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.²⁴

GCC

- **GCC designates Hezbollah a terror group**

According to reports, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) unanimously declared Lebanon-based Hezbollah a terrorist organisation on May 2, 2013 and has stated that it would take measures against Hezbollah's interests in the Gulf countries. Following a meeting of the GCC foreign ministers in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Bahraini Foreign Minister Ghanim bin Fadl Al-Buainain stated that, "All GCC countries are convinced that Hezbollah is a terrorist organisation." He also reiterated that, "There is no difference of opinion among the GCC countries on considering Hezbollah a terrorist organisation, especially after its involvement in the Syrian conflict."²⁵

Bahrain

- **Seven policemen injured in bomb explosion, Ten suspects arrested**

According to reports, at least seven policemen were injured in a homemade bomb explosion in the Bani Jamra village outside the capital Manama on May 30, 2013. It has been reported that a home-made bomb planted by some terrorists and was remotely detonated.²⁶ Meanwhile, ten people have been arrested by Police and four of them have reportedly confessed about their involvement. According to Police sources, the suspects were arrested "from a house known to be used by conspirators to hatch terrorist plots". Some weapons and equipment were also seized during the operation. According to the statement by the Police, "Bani Jamra is considered the base of the Shirazi movement that is supported by Iran and that has an agenda of regime change. The February 14 terrorist group is an extension of this movement. Various locations in the village have been used to store weapons and plan terrorist attacks. Automatic weapons, homemade guns and explosive devices have also been used against police in this area. The lives of the Bani Jamra residents are often badly hit by these terrorist operations."²⁷

Kuwait

- **Kuwait grants Oman US\$ 2.5 billion development aid**

According to reports, Kuwait has announced on May 27 that it will finance development projects in Oman worth US\$ 2.5 billion as part of pledges made in 2011 by members of the Gulf Cooperation

²⁴ "Palestinian president appoints new prime minister", *The Daily Star*, June 2, 2013 at <http://dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/Jun-02/219183-palestinian-president-appoints-new-prime-minister.ashx#axzz2V7kQ22uo>

²⁵ "GCC: Hezbollah terror group", *Arab News*, June 3, 2013, at <http://arabnews.com/news/453834>

²⁶ "Explosion in Bahrain wounds several police", *Aljazeera*, May 31, 2013, at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/05/201353121451720379.html>

²⁷ "Bahrain blast suspects confess, police say", *GulfNews*, June 2, 2013, at <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/bahrain/bahrain-blast-suspects-confess-police-say-1.1191788>

Council (GCC). Based on the framework agreement signed by representatives from both countries' governments in Muscat, Oman will receive the funds over 10 years with US\$ 250 million to be granted annually. The money will be used to finance joint construction and infrastructure projects.²⁸

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

National

- **Air Force Station at Thanjavur dedicated to the nation by the defence minister; Pilatus PC-7 MK II trainer aircraft inducted into the Indian Air Force**

Reports noted that the Defence Minister Shri A K Antony on May 27 dedicated the New Air Force Station at Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu to the nation. The Minister stressed that in view of the various upcoming sensitive, strategic, industrial, aerospace and economic assets in the Southern Peninsula, the operationalisation of the Air Force Station, Thanjavur would strengthen the air defence capabilities of the Indian Air Force in general and the Southern Command, in particular. The Defence Minister added that the station will also help protect our island territories and Sea Lines of Communication in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). He said the IOR is increasingly becoming more and more active. The Minister also said that in the emerging security scenario, the presence of Fighter Planes in Thanjavur will not only guard India's interests but also give confidence to India's neighbours. Thanjavur airbase is poised to become a premier airbase in Southern Air Command. The Air Force Station is slated to house an array of IAF platforms in the future including Su-30 'Air Dominance' Fighter Aircraft, Medium Transport Aircraft, Remotely Piloted Aircraft and a Medium Power Radar on build up of further infrastructure.²⁹

In another development, according to reports, the Union Minister of State for Defence Jitendra Singh inducted the Pilatus PC-7 MK II trainer aircraft into the Indian Air Force at Dundigal Air Force Station. After unveiling the new Basic Trainer aircraft, the minister said, "The induction of PC-7Mk II as Basic Trainer Aircraft in Indian Air Force is a very important landmark in our nation's quest to modernise its Armed Forces". As part of the ongoing transformation, IAF is being equipped with cutting edge technology and state of the art aircraft and systems. However, the need to train pilots on modern trainers is crucial to prepare them for the exacting requirements of combat flying. The induction of Basic Training Aircraft (BTA) will give further impetus to the task of imparting high quality flying training to budding pilots. On this occasion, the Chief of Air Staff said that India expected to receive all the 75 PC-7 trainer aircraft by August 2015.³⁰

²⁸ "Kuwait grants Oman \$2.5b in development aid," *Gulf News*, May 27, 2013, at <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/oman/kuwait-grants-oman-2-5b-in-development-aid-1.1189106>

²⁹ "Antony Dedicates to Nation New Air Force Station at Thanjavur," PIB, May 27, 2013, at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=96238>

³⁰ "IAF Inducts Basic Trainer Aircraft Pilatus PC 7 MKII," PIB, May 31, 2013, at <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=96325>

International

- **Deputy Chief of the general staff of the People's Liberation Army: Chinese patrols in Asian Seas 'Legitimate'; First F-35s to be operational by 2015**

According to reports, Chinese warships will continue to patrol waters where China has territorial claims. Lt. Gen. Qi Jianguo, deputy chief of the general staff of the People's Liberation Army, defended the patrols as legitimate and said his country's sovereignty over the areas could not be disputed. "Why are Chinese warships patrolling in East China Sea and South China Sea? I think we are all clear about this," Qi told the annual Shangri-La Dialogue security conference in Singapore. "Our attitude on East China Sea and South China Sea is that they are in our Chinese sovereignty. We are very clear about that." He added that, "the Chinese warships and the patrolling activities are totally legitimate and uncontroversial," while maintaining that China has no hegemonic ambitions.³¹

In another development, according to reports, the F-35 joint strike fighter will be operational for the US Marines in December 2015, followed by the Air Force in December 2016 and the Navy in February 2019. These initial operating capacity (IOC) dates were delivered to the U.S. Congress on May 31 and announced shortly thereafter. According to a Pentagon news release, IOC will be achieved for each service when they "acquire enough aircraft to establish one operational squadron with enough trained and equipped personnel to support the various missions prescribed by each service." The size of each squadron varies from service to service, with 10 aircraft for the Marines, 12 for the Air Force and 10 for the Navy.³²

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

Jammu & Kashmir

- **Defence Minister Antony: Chinese incursion in Ladakh handled by Army; Jammu & Kashmir Police disturbed by changing trends in militant attacks; Union Home Secretary designate to visit Kashmir; Gunfight in Pulwama killed a militant; 26 hour Shopian Encounter ends**

According to reports, Defence Minister Shri A K Antony on May 27, said that Army was handling the situation arising out of the latest incursion in Ladakh after Chinese troops prevented Indians from patrolling up to LAC in Finger-VIII area where they have built a road inside Indian territory. "Indian can protect its national interests. India is not the India of the past," the Minister said. A recent incident has come to light in Ladakh where Chinese troops prevented their Indian

³¹ "General Says Chinese Patrols In Asian Seas 'Legitimate', Defense News, June 2, 2013, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20130602/DEFREG03/306020005/General-Says-Chinese-Patrols-Asian-Seas-Legitimate->

³² "Pentagon: First F-35s Operational in 2015," Defense News, May 31, 2013, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20130531/DEFREG02/305310021/Pentagon-First-F-35s-Operational-2015>

counterparts from patrolling up to the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Shri Antony noted that he would be visiting China soon as was decided during the visit of the then Chinese Defence Minister Gen Liang Guanglie in September last year. The Minister also said that he would visit Australia, Singapore and Thailand in the first week of June.³³

In another development, according to reports, worried over the spurt in militancy related incidents in Kashmir in the recent past, the Jammu and Kashmir police have issued an advisory to the force to remain cautious. Police is also studying the changing trend in attacks and also examine if the spurt was fallout of the hanging of Muhammad Afzal Guru. J&K Director General of Police (DGP) Ashok Prasad said that there seems a changing trend in attacks and that is being studied. The matter was discussed in Core Group meeting and every security agency has been asked to study the trend. It needs to be seen whether only Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) has changed attack trends or other militant groups also.³⁴

Meanwhile, reports noted that The Union Home Secretary designate Anil Goswami is arriving on a three-day visit to Kashmir on June 7 to review the security and developmental issues in Jammu and Kashmir. This is for the first time that Goswami would visit his native State after his name was cleared for the post. During his program between June 7-9, Goswami will preside over two high-level meetings to discuss prevailing security situation and implementation of developmental programs particularly Prime Minister's Reconstruction Program (PMRP) in the State. Goswami, whose name was cleared by the Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) headed by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in last week of April this year, will take charge from R K Singh on June 30. He is the first bureaucrat from J&K to be appointed Union Home Secretary.³⁵

In other developments, according to reports, a militant was killed in an encounter that started at Mehlura area between militants and security forces on May 31. Army's 55 Rashtriya Rifles and J&K police cordoned off Mehlura village, 18 kms from Pulwama town and during the search operation, militants hiding in a house fired upon the forces which triggering an encounter.³⁶

According to reports, the encounter between militants and forces at Wanduna village of Shopian district in south Kashmir, which started May 31, continued for the second day on June 1. The encounter ended June 1 evening with the killing of 2nd militant Muhammad Ashraf Rather of Nawpora Payeen Pulwama. Two residential houses were completely damaged in the gunfight.³⁷

³³ "Army handling Chinese incursion in Ladakh: Antony", *Greater Kashmir*, May 27, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/May/28/army-handling-chinese-incursion-in-ladakh-antony-64.asp>

³⁴ "Changing trends in militant attacks disturb JK police", *Greater Kashmir*, May 28, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/May/29/-changing-trends-in-militant-attacks-disturb-jk-police-68.asp>

³⁵ "Anil Goswami visiting Kashmir on June 7", *Greater Kashmir*, May 30, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/May/31/anil-goswami-visiting-kashmir-on-june-7-52.asp>

³⁶ "Gunfight in Pulwama, 1 militant killed", *Greater Kashmir*, May 31, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/Jun/1/gunfight-in-pulwama-1-militant-killed-53.asp>

³⁷ "26 Hour Shopian Encounter Ends", *Greater Kashmir*, June 1, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/Jun/2/26-hour-shopian-encounter-ends-65.asp>

North East India

- **Assam government requests Centre to declare nine districts as Maoist affected; Two border haats to come up at Manipur-Myanmar border; Lt Gen (Retd) Nirbhay Sharma assumes charge as new governor of Arunachal Pradesh; Manipur government claims Maoist-PLA links broken**

According to reports, the Assam Government has requested the Centre to declare nine districts of the State as Left Wing Extremism affected districts, while, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has directed all the states to keep close watch on the activities of the suspected sympathizers of the Maoist rebels. The proposal sent by the State Government said that 35 police station areas of the nine districts are affected by Maoist activities. If the districts are declared as Left Wing extremism affected districts, the Government of India, through the Ministry of Home Affairs, would provide special infrastructure development fund of Rs 10 crore a year for each district.³⁸

In another development, reports noted that two border Haats between Manipur and Myanmar's Saigang division at Behiang and New Somtal have been approved besides opening two more haats at Konkan Thana and Tusom in Manipur's Ukhrul district bordering Myanmar. Manipur Chief Minister O Ibobi Singh disclosed this while addressing the opening ceremony of the two-day Regional Investment and Business Conclave at Monywa, the capital city of Myanmar's division on May 28.³⁹

Reports noted that Lt Gen (Retd) Nirbhay Sharma, one of the most decorated field commanders of the Indian Army, has assumed charge of Governor of the strategically located frontier State of Arunachal Pradesh on May 29.⁴⁰

In other developments, according to reports, the tie-up between Maoists and the Manipur-based People's Liberation Army (PLA) has been broken. According to Shambhu Singh, Joint Secretary (Northeast) in the ministry, Indian militants hiding in Myanmar, were finding it difficult to infiltrate into India. The link between Maoists and Manipur's PLA has been broken due to logistical problems in Myanmar and the strong presence of security forces along the India-Myanmar border. He said this happened after the outlawed PLA shifted its training camps to Taga in northern Myanmar.⁴¹

³⁸ "Declare 9 districts as Maoist affected", *The Assam Tribune*, May 28, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=may2913/at07>

³⁹ "Two haats approved at Manipur-Myanmar border", *The Assam Tribune*, May 29, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=may3013/oth05>

⁴⁰ "Sharma sworn-in as Arunachal Governor", *The Assam Tribune*, May 29, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=may3013/oth07>

⁴¹ "Maoist-PLA links broken, says Manipur government", *The Assam Tribune*, June 1, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun0113/at046>

IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

- **India and Japan to hold consultations on UN issues; India wants greater say in deciding UN peacekeeping mandates; Mandate of UN force in Abyei extended; UNSC called on regional actors to cooperate on Central African Republic**

According to reports, during his visit to Japan, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his Japanese counterpart joined hands to work together in multilateral for a for early reforms of the UNSC in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. They also decided to hold the first India-Japan Consultation on UN issues, including UNSC reform. They agreed to take an active part in the intergovernmental negotiations in the UN General Assembly to achieve meaningful progress. They further recognised the need to finalise and adopt the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism in the UN.⁴²

In another development, reports noted that India is concerned about the lack of its involvement in deciding the mandates of UN peacekeeping mission despite its contribution to the operations. New Delhi has called upon the UN Security Council to evolve a mechanism to ensure greater say of the troop contributing countries in deciding the mandate of such missions.⁴³

According to reports, the mandate of the UN peacekeeping force for Abyei was extended until November 30, 2013 by the UN Security Council. The Council also increased the authorised number of troops there by more than 1,100 personnel. The troop boost will provide additional resources “to support fully” the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism.⁴⁴

In other developments, the UN Security Council called on regional actors to cooperate on all fronts to tackle the dual crises in the Central African Republic. Following a power grab by rebels in the country, all operations to neutralise the Lord’s Resistance Army has been stalled. The Council also expressed concern about the ensuing violence and looting in the wake of the takeover by the Seleka rebels.⁴⁵

⁴² “India, Japan to hold regular consultations on UN reforms”, *Business Standard*, May 29, 2013 at http://www.business-standard.com/article/international/india-japan-to-hold-regular-consultations-on-un-reforms-113052900924_1.html

⁴³ “India unhappy with no say in deciding UN peacekeeping mandate”, *Deccan Herald*, June 01, 2013 at <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/336045/india-unhappy-no-say-deciding.html>

⁴⁴ “Security Council extends mission in Abyei for six months, enlarges UN presence”, *UN News Centre*, May 29, 2013 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45032&Cr=abyei&Cr1=#.Ua2SNNLe4y4>

⁴⁵ “Security Council urges regional cooperation to tackle Lord’s Resistance Army threat”, *UN News Centre*, May 29, 2013 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45034&Cr=central+african+republic&Cr1=#.Ua2SNtLe4y4>