

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Bangladesh

- **Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) is on high alert near Teknaf of Cox's Bazar, fearing influx of Myanmar citizens into Bangladesh; Foreign Minister Dipu Moni: Bangladesh is not bound by any international law to open its border for the Rohingyas; Myanmar conveys its anxiety to the Bangladesh that Jamaat-e-Islami had been helping the Rohingya groups in Bangladesh to incite sectarian clashes in Myanmar**

According to reports, Border Guard Bangladesh is on high alert near Teknaf of Cox's Bazar, fearing influx of Myanmar citizens into Bangladesh as sectarian violence spreads in Myanmar.¹ Bangladesh border and coast guards pushed back 11 boats carrying around 500 Myanmar nationals as they tried to enter Bangladesh through Cox's Bazar for refuge from sectarian violence in Rakhine state on June 11, 2012.²

In the mean time on June 14, 2012, at a press briefing in Washington, DC, US Department of State urged Bangladesh to respect international obligations under the refugee convention and allow the Rohingyas fleeing the ethnic and religious violence in Myanmar into its territory. However, Dhaka vehemently reacted to the call for opening the border for Rohingyas and described such call as "interference in the sovereignty of Bangladesh". "Bangladesh is not bound by any international law to open its border for the Rohingyas, as there is no war-like situation in that country and that its government is not forcing its citizens out," Foreign Minister Dipu Moni said in parliament on June 14, 2012. It has urged the international community to take the refugee issue with Myanmar instead of Bangladesh, as the trouble spawned in that country and the incidents of human rights violation are taking place there.³

Reportedly, the Myanmar government has conveyed its anxiety to the Bangladesh mission there that the Jamaat-e-Islami had been helping the Rohingya groups in Bangladesh with arms to incite sectarian clashes in Myanmar.⁴

¹ "BGB on high alert: 4 injured Myanmar citizens held", *The Daily Star*, June 11, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=237855>.

² Barua, Dwaipayana, "Restive Myanmar:Border guards push back 500", *The Daily Star*, June 12, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=237990>.

³ "Dhaka sticks to its 'no':Says pressure from int'l community unfair; asks it to take up refugee issue with Myanmar", *The Daily star*, June 15, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=238336>.

⁴ "Sectarian Clash:Myanmar claims 'Jamaat link'", *The Daily Star*, June 15, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=238432>.

Sri Lanka

- **Thirty three recommendations out of the 135 listed by the LLRC to be implemented at the national level; Sri Lanka welcomes the decision of the United States government to exempt it from the economic sanctions imposed on Iran; MR' scuba Visit; MoU with UK company to build a new Cancer Hospital; Request for allocation of Indian funded houses in the North to the Muslims displaced from the Province; Naval delegation visits to Pakistan; Sri Lanka's GPI score experienced the largest year-on-year improvement; Sri Lanka is out from 'List of Shame'; Sri Lanka teams up with INTERPOL; IMF lowered the economic growth forecast for Sri Lanka; Japan extends a grant of Sri Lankan Rs. 468 million to boost the agriculture activities in eight provinces of SL; Former Deputy Leader of United National Party (UNP): the government needed to implement the recommendations of LLRC without further delay**

Reports noted that following a directive by President Mahinda Rajapaksa, the coalition parties of the ruling United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) have handed over their stance on the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) report to the President's Secretary who is the competent authority to implement the LLRC recommendations. According to Lalith Weeratunga, the task force has selected 33 recommendations out of the 135 listed by the LLRC to be implemented at the national level. Some of the recommendations will be implemented this year while the others may be implemented next year after the budget for 2013 is prepared since the 2012 budget allocations to the ministries have been done before the release of the LLRC report last year, Weeratunga has said.⁵

Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan government has welcomed the decision of the United States government to exempt Sri Lanka from the economic sanctions imposed on Iran.⁶

Reports noted that Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa who is on a state visit to Cuba met his Cuban counterpart President Raul Castro on June 16, 2012 at the Revolutionary Hall in the Cuban capital of Havana and discussed enhancing the five-decades long diplomatic ties between the two countries. Sri Lankan Ministers, Wimal Weerawansa, Anura Priyadarshana Yapa, Mahinda Amaraweera, Deputy Minister Nirupama Rajapaksa and Secretary to the President Lalith Weeratunga accompanied the President.⁷

According to reports, Sri Lanka's Ministry of health signed an agreement with the Ahmed Tea Company of United Kingdom to build a new cancer hospital affiliated to the National Cancer Hospital in Maharagama on June 13, 2012. The total cost for the construction of the hospital is estimated at 2.1 billion rupees and the Ahmed tea Company will provide 1.5 billion Sri Lankan rupees. The Construction work is expected to be finished by the end of 2014.⁸

⁵ "Sri Lanka to implement 33 LLRC recommendations this year", *Colombo Page*, June 13, 2012 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jun13_1339598658CH.php.

⁶ "Sri Lankan government welcomes US decision and plans to commence development work with Iran", *Colombo Page*, June 14, 2012 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jun14_1339640957CH.php.

⁷ "Leaders of Sri Lanka, Cuba discuss strengthening bilateral ties", *Colombo Page*, June 17, 2012 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jun17_1339921740CH.php.

⁸ "Sri Lanka signs agreement with UK Company to build a new cancer hospital", *Colombo Page*, June 13, 2012 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jun13_1339606808CH.php

According to reports, a Western Provincial Councilor Arshad Nizamdeen has handed a written request to the Indian High Commission in Colombo seeking the allocation of Indian funded houses in the North to the Muslims displaced from Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Mannar and Vavuniya by the Tamil Tiger terrorists.⁹

Reports noted that the Commander of Sri Lanka Navy Vice Admiral D W A S Dissanayake along with a delegation of four members was on an official visit to Pakistan from 11 - 16 June 2012 on an invitation extended by Pakistan Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Mohammad Asif Sandila. During his stay, Vice Admiral Dissanayake visited various Naval Establishments in Karachi including the ship and small crafts manufacturing factories, Naval War College at Lahore and the equipment manufacturing industries at Taxila.¹⁰

According to the 2012 Global Peace Index (GPI) released on June 12, 2012, end of three-decade long civil war in Sri Lanka, three years ago, has propelled the country to experience the greatest improvement in overall peacefulness. Sri Lanka's GPI score experienced the largest year-on-year improvement of the 158 nations surveyed and it climbed 27 places to a still-low 103rd position overall and 17th in the Asia Pacific region ahead of India (142) and Pakistan (149). Sri Lanka joined Philippines, Zimbabwe, Bhutan and Guyana to be the top 5 countries that registered "improvements in peacefulness".¹¹

Meanwhile, according to reports, Sri Lanka is no longer in the United Nations Secretary-General's 'List of Shame' that lists countries where children are involved in armed conflict.¹²

Sri Lanka, in an effort to boost border security and curb illegal migration teamed up with the INTERPOL to launch South Asia's first Integrated INTERPOL Database Service. The Sri Lanka Immigration Border Control Systems linked up with INTERPOL to launch the program under the patronage of Secretary Defence and Urban Development Gotabhaya Rajapaksa today at the Defence Ministry.¹³

Reports noted that International Monetary Fund (IMF) lowered the economic growth forecast for Sri Lanka on June 15, 2012 but said the policy measures implemented by the government to curb the trade deficit are 'fruitful'. The global lending authority predicted Sri Lanka's economy to grow at 6.75 percent, lower than the 7.2 percent projected by the country's Central Bank.¹⁴

⁹ "Indian government asked to allocate houses to Muslims displaced from Sri Lanka's North", *Colombo Page*, June 13, 2012 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jun13_1339563658CH.php.

¹⁰ "Sri Lanka Navy Commander visiting Pakistan", *Colombo Page*, June 13, 2012 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jun13_1339526491CH.php.

¹¹ "Sri Lanka the biggest gainer in Global Peace Index", *Colombo Page*, June 12, 2012 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jun12_1339522184CH.php.

¹² "Sri Lanka no longer in 'List of Shame'", *Colombo Page*, June 12, 2012 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12/Jun12_1339482828CH.php.

¹³ "Sri Lanka teams up with INTERPOL to increase border security", *Colombo Page*, June 11, 2012 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12/Jun11_1339437793CH.php.

¹⁴ "IMF lowers economic growth rate for Sri Lanka, says policy measures effective", *Colombo Page*, June 15, 2012 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jun15_1339782557CH.php.

Meanwhile, the Japanese government has extended a grant of Sri Lankan Rs. 468 million (380 million Yen) to purchase tractors as a measure to boost the agriculture activities in eight provinces of Sri Lanka.¹⁵

In other developments, Karu Jayasuriya, the former Deputy Leader of Sri Lanka's main opposition United National Party (UNP) has said that the government needed to implement the recommendations of the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) without further delay and that Indian assistance could be sought to solve the national issue.¹⁶

Maldives

- **Former President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom calls for assistance from Islamic Arab countries; Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) protests in Colombo**

According to reports, Former President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom has called for assistance from Islamic Arab countries in developing education and other services in the Maldives, as well to protect the country's faith by "groups" which he alleged are trying to weaken it. Speaking at the Constituent Council of the Muslim World League in Saudi Arabia, Gayoom said that cooperation from Islamic Arab countries would be vital to fight political and economic challenges currently facing the country.¹⁷

In another development, reports noted that Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) supporters took to the streets of the Sri Lankan capital Colombo on June 15, 2012 to protest for early elections and the resignation of President Dr Mohamed Waheed Hassan. The demonstration, which was attended by Former president Mohamed Nasheed's Press Secretary Mohamed Zuhair, also focused on the alleged use of excessive force by Maldivian security forces in order to disperse protesters on the streets of Male'. The MDP contends February's controversial transfer of power that brought President Waheed to power was a "coup d'etat" sponsored by mutinous sections of the police and military.¹⁸

B. East Asia

China

(June 4-17)

- **Chinese top legislator Wu Bangguo: Space a show of Chinese power; Hu attends G20 summit; Hu meets Danish PM; China blames UK for stained relations; China urges Myanmar for**

¹⁵ "Japan grants Rs. 468 million to boost agriculture activities in Sri Lanka", *Colombo Page*, June 14, 2012 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jun14_1339697916CH.php.

¹⁶ "Former Deputy Leader of UNP says Indian assistance could help solve Sri Lanka's national issue", *Colombo Page*, June 14, 2012 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jun14_1339651354CH.php.

¹⁷ "Gayoom calls for Muslim World League assistance to protect national peace, order and faith", *Minivan News*, June 17, 2012 at <http://minivannews.com/category/news-in-brief>.

¹⁸ "MDP holds anti-government protests in Colombo", *Minivan News*, June 16, 2012 at <http://minivannews.com/category/news-in-brief>.

safety of Chinese projects; SCO accepts Afghanistan as Observer and Turkey as Dialogue Partner; China promises aid to Afghanistan; Beijing to enhance sea security; China Pakistan sign Space and trade agreements; China releases National Human Rights Action Plan

According to reports, Chinese top legislator Wu Bangguo has stated that the current manned space programme demonstrated China's ever growing strength.¹⁹

On the bi-lateral front, President Hu Jintao reached Mexico on June 16, 2012 to attend the G20 Summit.²⁰ Meanwhile he also met Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning Schmidt to discuss China-Denmark strategic partnership.²¹

According to reports, Beijing expressed hope that Britain will work towards improving relations with China as the meeting between Dalai Lama and David Cameron adversely affected the relationship.²²

Reports noted that Vice President Li Keqiang urged Myanmar to look after the interest of the Chinese projects and also provide cordial environment for the Chinese companies to work in Myanmar.²³

According to reports, the SCO decided to grant Afghanistan the position of the observer and also accepted Turkey as a dialogue partner.²⁴

On the other hand, Beijing pledged that China and Afghanistan will improve their relationship to a strategic and cooperative level.²⁵

Reports noted that China and Pakistan outlined their space cooperation plan for the next eight years.²⁶

On the domestic front, the Information Office of the State Council published the National Human Rights Action Plan of China (2012-2015).²⁷

¹⁹ "Space program demonstrates China's power" *China Daily*, June 17, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-06/17/content_15507785.htm

²⁰ "Hu arrives in Los Cabos for G20 summit" *China Daily*, June 17, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/HuvisitsDenmark/2012-06/17/content_15507445.htm

²¹ "President Hu, Danish PM hold talks on cooperation" *China Daily*, June 16, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-06/16/content_15506994.htm

²² "UK to blame for damaged relations with China" *China Daily*, June 14, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-06/14/content_15500114.htm

²³ "Li urges Myanmar to ensure projects" *China Daily*, June 14, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-06/14/content_15500113.htm

²⁴ "SCO accepts Afghanistan as observer, Turkey as dialogue partner" *China Daily*, June 7, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-06/07/content_15483673.htm

²⁵ "Hu promises more aid to Afghanistan" *China Daily*, June 9, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-06/09/content_15490004.htm

²⁶ "China signs space, trade agreements with Pakistan" *China Daily*, June 8, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-06/08/content_15484208.htm

²⁷ "National Human Rights Action Plan of China(2012-2015)" *China Daily*, June 11, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-06/11/content_15493731.htm

South Korea

- **South Korea and the US agree to strengthen missile cooperation to deal with North Korea**

According to reports, during a so called 'two-plus two' dialogue held between defence and foreign secretary officials between the US and South Korea held in Washington recently, both the sides agreed to strengthen a comprehensive missile defence capability to deal with North Korean nuclear threats. While taking into consideration Pyongyang's increasing focus on electronic and cyber warfare tactics, Seoul and Washington agreed to establish a consultation channel on cyber security as well.²⁸ The US militaries are to share intelligence and provide support for an air and missile defence system that South Korea plans to launch in December this year.²⁹

North Korea

- **The US conveys worries to China over its alleged shipment of missile vehicles to North Korea**

According to reports, the United States has recently expressed its worries about China's alleged missile cooperation with its wayward ally North Korea. Earlier this week, Asahi Shimbun, a Japanese Daily reported, on the basis of government information, that in August 2011, China exported four special vehicles for transportation and launching of ballistic missiles to North Korea.³⁰ The sale of missile launch vehicles was banned under the UN Security Council resolutions aimed at containing the North's nuclear ambitions.³¹ Those four vehicles attracted international attention during their display during a military parade in Pyongyang in April this year, as they were designed like Chinese missile vehicles. However, Chinese Foreign Ministry issued a statement in April denying China's involvement in those vehicles and reiterated its firm stance against the proliferation of WMD.³² According to the Asahi report, although the US, Japan and South Korea were aware of Chinese involvement, they decided not to raise the issue publicly as Chinese help was essential to deal with North Korea's nuclear issue.³³

C. Russia

- **Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Rogozin: Russian weapons exported to Syria cannot be**

²⁸ "S. Korea, US to strengthen missile defense against NK", Jakarta Post, June 15, 2012, at <http://view.koreaherald.com/kh/view.php?ud=20120615001045>

²⁹ "Korea, US boost missile defense cooperation", Korea Herald, June 17, 2012, at <http://view.koreaherald.com/kh/view.php?ud=20120617000392>.

³⁰ "US raises concerns with China over alleged missile ties with N. Korea", Korea Herald, June 14, 2012, at <http://view.koreaherald.com/kh/view.php?ud=20120614000198>

³¹ "US overlooked China shipment of missile vehicles to North Korea", Korea Herald, June 13, 2012, at <http://view.koreaherald.com/kh/view.php?ud=20120613001084>

³² "Reports: North Korea missile launchers came from China", Mainichi Daily, June 13, 2012, at <http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20120613p2g00m0in090000c.html>

³³ "US raises concerns with China over alleged missile ties with N. Korea", Korea Herald, June 14, 2012, at <http://view.koreaherald.com/kh/view.php?ud=20120614000198>

used against civilians; EU expresses its concern over the scale of opposition protests in Russia; Russia's Foreign Minister to visit Iran to discuss Syria situation; Russia is ready to host an international conference on Syria; Thirteen new political parties registered in Russia after registration procedures were liberalized; Russia's Foreign Minister to participate in the regional conference on Afghanistan in Kabul; Belarus and Russian agree on setting up holding companies; Kazakhstan permits Russia to make unplanned launches from Baikonur; Russia Air Force to get 600 planes, 1,000 helicopters by 2020; Magnitsky bill, ABM, Syria, Iran and Afghanistan are main issues that will be discussed during the Putin-Obama talks on June 18; Sextet-Iran meeting to be held in Moscow

According to reports, Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin has said that the weapons Russia has exported to Syria cannot be used against the civilians and the weapons systems especially the air defence systems supplied will be used by Syria only to defend itself against external threats.³⁴

In another development, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton has expressed EU's concern over the scale of opposition protests in Russia. She said the Russian government must respect the freedom of assembly and the laws regulating public actions must guarantee that freedom in the first turn.³⁵

Reports noted that Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will visit Iran on June 13, 2012 to discuss with leaders of that country the situation in Syria and preparations for the sextet meeting. The focus will be made on the general situation in the Middle East and Northern Africa, including special attention to the current transformation processes in the Arab world and to the state of affairs in Syria.³⁶

Meanwhile, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said that Moscow is ready to host an international conference on Syria and Iran should participate in its deliberations.³⁷

According to reports, thirteen new political parties have been already registered with the Russian ministry of justice, thus bringing the overall number of official parties to 20. Before a new liberalized law on political parties was passed, there had been seven political parties in Russia, namely United Russia, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF), A Just Russia, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), Right Cause, Yabloko, and Patriots of Russia.³⁸

Reports noted that Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will participate in the Regional

³⁴ "Arms supplied to Syria cannot be used against civilians - Rogozin", ITAR-TASS, June 11, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/444326.html>

³⁵ "EU concerned over scale of opposition protests in Russia - Ashton", ITAR-TASS, June 13, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/445349.html>

³⁶ "Lavrov to visit Iran June 13 to discuss Syria situation, sextet meeting", ITAR-TASS, June 11, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/444129.html>

³⁷ "Moscow ready to host conference on Syria - Iran should participate - Lavrov", ITAR-TASS, June 12, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/444712.html>

³⁸ "13 new political parties registered in Russia after registration procedures were liberalized", ITAR-TASS, June 14, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/446935.html>

Conference on Afghanistan. The main topic of the forum is transfer of responsibility for security in Afghanistan to the local Afghans there.³⁹

Belarus and Russia's constituent region of Bashkortostan have agreed on setting up high-tech manufacturing facilities and holding companies to be exported to markets of third world countries.⁴⁰

Kazakhstan has permitted Russia to make unplanned launches from Baikonur. There has been disagreement over the terms and conditions of the lease of Baikonur and also the fact that Russia is building its own launch pad in the Russian Far East.⁴¹

President Vladimir Putin has said that Russian Air Force as part of the massive modernization plan will receive more than 600 planes and 1,000 helicopters by 2020.⁴²

Reports noted that Presidents Vladimir Putin and Barack Obama will have their first bilateral summit on June 18, 2012, on the sidelines of the G20 Los Cabos event. They will meet before the first G20 session, upon the end of the BRICS mini-summit. The primary issues slated to be discussed include the "Magnitsky bill" advocated by the U.S. Congress, U.S. missile defence plan in Europe, Syrian conflict, Iranian nuclear program and the situation in Afghanistan.⁴³

In other developments, according to reports, the negotiations between Iran and the Sextet of international mediators (Russia, Great Britain, China, the United States, France and Germany) on the settlement of the Iranian nuclear dossier will begin in Moscow on June 18, 2012. The Moscow meeting continues the Baghdad round of negotiations. The negotiators are expected to discuss in detail the initiatives, which were formulated at the Baghdad negotiations.⁴⁴

D. West Asia

Iran

- **US exempts seven countries from Iran oil sanctions**

According to reports, the United States has decided to exempt seven countries including India,

³⁹ "Lavrov to participate in Regional Conference on Afghanistan in Kabul", ITAR-TASS, June 14, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/446361.html>

⁴⁰ "Belarus, Russian region agree on setting up holding companies", ITAR-TASS, June 14, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/447433.html>

⁴¹ "Kazakhstan permits Russia to make unplanned launches from Baikonur", ITAR-TASS, June 15, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/448229.html>

⁴² "Russia Air Force to get 600 planes, 1,000 helicopters by 2020", ITAR-TASS, June 14, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/447273.html>

⁴³ "Magnitsky bill, ABM, Syria, Iran, Afghanistan are main items of Putin-Obama summit", ITAR-TASS, June 17, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/449161.html>

⁴⁴ "Sextet-Iran meeting to be held in Moscow", ITAR-TASS, June 17, 2012, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/449252.html>

from Iranian oil sanctions, owing to their significant reduction in crude oil purchases from Iran. The six other countries are Malaysia, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Taiwan. The US has said the sanctions aim to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.⁴⁵ China, Iran's biggest oil importer was not on the waiver list, and has slammed the US for the decision.⁴⁶

Syria

- **Syria rejects UN claim of civil war; Reports: Recent wave of attacks on civilians could lead to Syrian military disintegration as well as massive migration**

According to reports, the Syrian government has rejected a statement by UN peacekeeping chief, Herve Ladsous that Syria is facing a "full-scale civil war". The Foreign and Expatriates Ministry stated that this did not reflect reality, and the ongoing war in Syria is against armed groups. The statement added that it expected the UN to deal even-handedly with developments in Syria.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, a Turkish newspaper report has assessed that the recent wave of attacks on civilians is a clear sign of the disintegration of the Syrian military. It also said that a massing of Syrian military forces near Aleppo, which borders southern Turkey, could lead to massive migration of civilians towards the Turkish border. The number of Syrian migrants in Turkey has touched 30,000. Turkey is of the view of establishing a buffer zone or humanitarian corridors for dealing with migrants, but this requires multilateral consensus.⁴⁸

Yemen

- **Eight militants and two soldiers killed in violent clashes in Aden province**

According to reports, eight al Qaeda militants and two soldiers were killed in an encounter in the al Qaeda stronghold of Shuqra town in the Abyan province in Southern Yemen. Eleven other soldiers were also injured in the incident. An unnamed local official has stated that, "Clashes using machine guns between al Qaida militants and the army, backed by local militiamen, left two soldiers dead and 11 wounded." Fierce clashes between the militants and the security forces took place on June 14, 2012, when the militants were trying to retake Shuqra town. It is believed that the security forces drove the militants out of the provincial capital Zinjibar and Jaar and thus forcing them to move to Shuqra.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ "US exempts South Korea, six other countries from Iran oil sanctions", Xinhua news agency, June 11, 2012

⁴⁶ "China flays US over "unilateral" action on Iran oil imports", Kyodo News Service, June 12, 2012

⁴⁷ "Syria rejects UN peacekeeping chief's civil war remark", SANA news agency website, June 13, 2012

⁴⁸ "Turkish source views Syrian military disintegration, fears massive migration", Hurriyet website, June 14, 2012.

⁴⁹ "Ten killed in Yemen army, Al Qaida clashes", *Gulf News*, June 16, 2012, at <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/yemen/ten-killed-in-yemen-army-al-qaida-clashes-1.1035955>

II. DEFENCE REVIEW

National

- **Vice Admiral DK Joshi will be the next Indian Navy chief; Chinese Navy calls for trust building and boosting exchanges with India**

Reports noted that Vice Admiral DK Joshi, a highly-decorated anti-submarine warfare specialist, will be the new Indian Navy chief in the rank of admiral, an official announcement said in Mumbai on June 12, 2012. He will take over from incumbent Admiral Nirmal Verma, who will retire on August 31, 2012. Vice Admiral Joshi (58) is currently the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Western Naval Command, the Indian Navy's sword arm. During his long and distinguished service spanning nearly four decades, Joshi has served in different command, staff and instructional appointments. His sea command includes guided missile corvette INS Kuthar, guided missile destroyer INS Ranvir and the aircraft carrier INS Viraat. Prior to taking over his present assignment, Joshi served as the navy's deputy chief, Commander-in-Chief of the Andaman and Nicobar Command and Chief of the Integrated Defence Staff. Joshi has been awarded the Param Vishist Seva Medal, the Ati Vishist Seva medal, Yudh Seva Medal, Nau Sena Medal and the Vishist Seva Medal.⁵⁰

In another development, according to reports, a top officer of the East Sea Fleet of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) has called for improving trust with India and boosting exchanges, ahead of passage exercises between the two navies. Rear Admiral Gu Xiangping, who is the Deputy Commander of the Chinese East Sea Fleet, called for "enhancing trust and understanding" between the militaries and navies of India and China, and increasing the frequency of interactions. In what officials described as a reflection of the importance China has accorded to the visit of four Indian naval ships, which arrived in Shanghai harbor on a rare port call on June 13, 2012 after stops in Singapore, Vietnam, the Philippines, South Korea and Japan, the PLAN dispatched the highest ranked official in charge of the East Sea fleet, Vice Admiral Su Zhiqian, from its headquarters in Ningbo. He held talks with Vice Admiral Anil Chopra, Flag Officer Commanding in Chief of the Eastern Naval Command, who came in from India only for the port calls in China and Japan. The visit of the Indian navy ships, which include the indigenous built guided missile stealth frigate Shivalik, destroyer Rana, corvette Karmuk and fleet tanker Shakti, has been described by the Indian and the Chinese officials as the highlight of defence exchanges this year.

International

- **Norway authorizes orders for the first two of 52 jet fighters from USA for a total of \$10 billion; Taiwan concerned that U.N. Trade Talks could cripple U.S. arms sales to Taiwan**

According to reports, Norway said on June 15, 2012 that it had authorized orders for the first two of dozens of F-35 fighter jets it plans to buy from the United States as part of its largest-ever government spending project. The government said in a statement, "Norway today commenced

⁵⁰ "DK Joshi named new Indian Navy chief," Hindustan Times, June 05, 2012, at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/Mumbai/DK-Joshi-named-new-Indian-Navy-chief/Article1-866447.aspx>

the largest public procurement project in its history,” Defense Minister Espen Barth Eide hailed the 60-billion-kroner (\$10 billion) deal for a total of 52 jet fighters. “The F-35, which Norway selected in 2008, represents a completely new generation of combat aircraft that will form a corner stone of the future Norwegian Armed Forces,” he said in the statement.⁵¹

In another development, according to reports, Taiwan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs has expressed concerns over scheduled negotiations in July for a new United Nations Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) that could cripple U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. The U.S. is Taiwan’s sole source for sophisticated arms, such as fighter jets and command-and-control systems. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has instructed all overseas offices to gather data on ATT developments, said Lily Hsu, the ministry’s director-general of international organizations. The ATT would require signatories to control their imports and exports of arms and not to circumvent the import control systems of other countries.⁵²

III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

Jammu & Kashmir

- **Army Chief General Bikram Singh to visit Jammu and Kashmir; Shutdown paralyzes life in Kashmir valley; National Conference worker shot dead in Srinagar; CRPF men hurt in a grenade blast in Sopore**

According to reports, revocation of the contentious Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from certain pockets of the state is back on the fore-front as Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is likely to take up the issue with the Army Chief General Bikram Singh, who is scheduled to arrive in the valley on his maiden visit on June 15, 2012. Army said that General Singh will review the overall prevailing security scenario of the valley and will meet Governor and Chief Minister.⁵³

In another development, reports noted that normal life across the Kashmir valley was paralyzed on June 11, 2012 due to a strike, sponsored by Hurriyat Conference (G) to remember the youth who lost their lives during 2010 unrest in police and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) firing. Hurriyat (G) Chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani has appealed the people to observe “Martyrs Week” in valley. Shops, business establishments and schools across the valley remained closed while banks and government offices witnessed thin attendance. The courts in Srinagar were also closed.⁵⁴

⁵¹ “Norway Orders 1st 2 F-35s in \$10B Deal,” AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, June 15, 2012, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120615/DEFREG01/306150001/Norway-Orders-1st-2-F-35s-10B-Deal?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|FRONTPAGE>

⁵² “Taiwan Concerned U.N. Trade Talks Could Undercut U.S. Imports,” June 15, 2012, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120615/DEFREG03/306150002/Taiwan-Concerned-U-N-Trade-Talks-Could-Undercut-U-S-Imports?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|FRONTPAGE>

⁵³ “Army Chief to visit JK today”, *Greater Kashmir*, June 14, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/June/15/army-chief-to-visit-jk-today-45.asp>

⁵⁴ “Shutdown paralyzes life in Valley”, *Greater Kashmir*, June 11, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/June/12/shutdown-paralyzes-life-in-valley-41.asp>

Meanwhile, according to reports, unidentified gunmen on June 15, 2012 shot dead an acting Block President of ruling National Conference (NC) in Natipora area of Srinagar. This is the third political killing in the Valley during this year. Police sources said that Abdul Rehman Ganie (63) son of Muhammad Shaban Ganie was shot dead from point blank range while he was on way to the local mosque to attend the Friday prayers. Heavy contingents of police and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) reached the spot and began search operation.⁵⁵

In other developments, reportedly, five Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were wounded after suspected militants on June 16, 2012 lobbed a grenade at their post in Sopore town of Baramulla district in North Kashmir. The explosion created panic in the area even as Police and CRPF cordoned the area after the blast.⁵⁶

North East India

- **Army ready to tackle militants from Myanmar; Two leaders of separatist outfit Hmar People's Convention Democrats (HPC-D) arrested in Assam; Centre urged to expedite National Front of Bodoland (NDFB) talks; 48 hour bandh hits Itanagar; Garo ultras kill two; Naga body calls 48 hour bandh in Manipur; Specialised police force formed to tackle ultras**

According to reports, the army is prepared to tackle any situation along the Indo-Myanmar border in the event of any infiltration of insurgents from Myanmar as stated by Maj Gen Binoy Poonnem, GOC, 57 Mountain Division. He was replying to question by media persons at a community hall inauguration near Leimakhong army headquarters, 20 km north of Imphal, Manipur. Earlier even the IG of Assam Rifles (South) Maj Gen UK Gurung had stated that the Assam Rifles troops are vigilant across the International border between India and Myanmar.⁵⁷

In another development, reports noted that two top leaders of separatist outfit Hmar People's Convention-Democrats (HPC-D) were arrested by Mizoram Police in southern Assam. The Mizoram Police with the help of Assam Police arrested the self-styled army chief of HPC-D Lalropuia and his deputy Biaknunga near the Kumbigram Airport in Silchar in Southern Assam. Mizoram Home Minister R Lalzirliana while addressing the media said, "The HPC-D was one of the extremist groups in Manipur that had signed suspension of operations (SoO) agreement with the security forces in that state under the supervision of the union home ministry. However, its cadres were indulging in a series of violent and illegal activities in Mizoram."⁵⁸

Meanwhile, Bodo National Council (BNC) has urged the Centre to release Ranjan Daimary and expedite the ongoing negotiations with the two factions of NDFB. A six member delegation of BNC led by chairman of BTC, Hagrama Mohilary called on interlocutor, P C Haldar and Joint

⁵⁵ "NC worker shot dead in Srinagar", *Greater Kashmir*, June 15, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Jun/16/nc-worker-shot-dead-in-srinagar-66.asp>

⁵⁶ "5 CRPF men hurt in Sopore grenade blast", *Greater Kashmir*, June 17, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Jun/18/5-crpf-men-hurt-in-sopore-grenade-blast-12.asp>

⁵⁷ "Army ready to tackle militants from Myanmar", *The Assam Tribune*, June 11, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun1212/oth05>

⁵⁸ "Top militant leaders arrested in Assam", *The Assam Tribune*, June 13, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun1312/at04>

Secretary (Norh-East), Shambhu Singh to press upon the Centre for early resolution of the peace process with NDFB (P) and Ranjan Daimary factions.⁵⁹

According to reports, sporadic incidents of violence were reported in Itanagar as normal life was hit during the 48-hour bandh called from June 13, 2012 by three organisations in support of their demands. Educational institutions, business establishments, Central Government offices and banks remained closed while attendance in State Government offices was thin. The bandh has been called by the All Nyishi Youth Council, Arunachal Pradesh Abo Tani Clans Youth Organisation and Arunachal Pradesh Youth Forum demanding immediate cancellation of land certificates awarded to non-Arunachalees.⁶⁰

Reports noted that suspected GNLA militants in Garo Hills gunned down a former cadre who surrendered to police early this year and also killed a village defence party secretary accusing him of working for the police. A big group of heavily armed GNLA militants on June 16, 2012 midnight went to the house of VDP secretary SK Sangma at Dajong gate near Mendipather in East Garo Hills and opened fire killing him on the spot. They left behind a note accusing him of being a dacoit and a police informer. At around the same time another group of militants from the outfit raided a small house on the outskirts of Nangalbibra police station in South Garo Hills. They attacked the house and shot dead their former colleague Sonaram R Sangma alias Chingkam for leaving the outfit.⁶¹

Meanwhile, reports noted that a 48- hour total bandh beginning from June 16, 2012 midnight in the Naga-inhabited areas of Manipur has been called by the United Naga Council (UNC) Manipur in protest against the government's alleged failure to fulfill their demands. The decision to call the bandh has been taken in the recent Presidential Council meeting of UNC, said a statement of the Council. The bandh will also cover railway construction works particularly in Manipur's Tamenglong district. The UNC statement, however, added the bandh was called to protest against the lack of sincerity of the Government of India (GoI) and Government of Manipur (GoM) in taking forward the tripartite talks regarding the alternative arrangement demand of the Council. The 48 hour total bandh would be followed by a series of other agitations if no response is forthcoming from the GoI and the GoM. It would be worth noting that the last tripartite talk was held in presence of State and Central officials on June 30, 2011 at Senapati district in Manipur.⁶²

In other developments, according to reports, the Assam Police has launched a specialized force called Assam Police Rangers to launch specific operations against militants. Meanwhile, the Task Force created by the State Government for dealing with Maoists is planning to visit some other states where the Maoists have strong bases to study the problem. The Assam Police Rangers will

⁵⁹ "Centre urged to expedite NDFB talks", *The Assam Tribune*, June 12, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun1312/at08>

⁶⁰ "48-hour bandh hits Itanagar", *The Assam Tribune*, June 13, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun1412/oth06>

⁶¹ "Garo ultras kill two", *The Assam Tribune*, June 16, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun1712/oth05>

⁶² "Naga body calls 48-hour bandh in Manipur", *The Assam Tribune*, June 16, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun1712/oth06>

operate directly under the Inspector General of Police (Law and Order). The personnel of the Rangers include around 120 police personnel specially trained for counter insurgency operations and the men of the force are deployed in insurgency infested areas of the State including Tinsukia, Sivasagar, Karbi Along etc. Sources said that with leaning of the Maoists in Assam towards Manipur based militant group PLA, their movement is likely to be concentrated more towards armed movement rather than mass movements. Though the Maoists are still not strong enough in Assam, they should be dealt with immediately to prevent the growth of left wing extremism.⁶³

IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

- **UN observer mission in Syria suspends its operations; UN Security Council asks Libya to release detained ICC members; UNSC asks Yemen to reject violence; Killings in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) condemned; IIM Shillong, only Indian institute at Rio +20 Summit**

Reports noted that in response to the escalation of violence which jeopardizes the Kofi Annan-led peace plan, the UN observer mission monitoring the turmoil in Syria suspended its operations. The fighting in the country posed a threat to the unarmed observers and prevented them from carrying out their mandate. For the time being, suspension will be reviewed on a daily basis and operations will resume when the situation is deemed fit to carry out the mandated activities.⁶⁴

Meanwhile, the UN Security Council urged the Libyan authorities to work towards the immediate release of four staff members of the International Criminal Court who were detained in the country for more than a week. The Council further added that Libya was obligated under UNSC resolution 1970 to cooperate fully with and provide necessary assistance to the Court.⁶⁵

In another development, all sides in Yemen were urged by the UN Security Council to abjure violence to achieve political goals. It was demanded that all actions aimed at undermining the Government of National Unity and the ongoing political transition be halted. The resolution adopted by the Council also expressed its readiness to consider further measures if the violence continues.⁶⁶

According to reports, the UN Security Council condemned the recent mutiny by renegade soldiers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the killing and abuse of civilians by armed groups.

⁶³ "Specialised police force formed to tackle ultras", *The Assam Tribune*, June 17, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun1812/at05>

⁶⁴ "UN suspends Syria monitoring as violence rages", *The Times of India*, June 16, 2012 at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-06-16/middle-east/32268602_1_anti-assad-syrian-observatory-khan-sheikhoun

⁶⁵ "Security Council urges Libyan authorities to work towards release of detained ICC staff", *UN News Centre*, June 15, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42242&Cr=libya&Cr1=>

⁶⁶ "Security Council calls on Yemenis to reject violence, proceed with peaceful transition", *UN News Centre*, June 12, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42201&Cr=yemen&Cr1=>

The Council also appreciated the quick response from the DRC government and the UN mission in the country.⁶⁷

In other developments, reports noted that Indian Institute of Management, Shillong will be the only educational institution from the country to participate as an official invitee at the UN Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ "DR Congo: Security Council deplores recent mutiny, killing and abuse of civilians", *UN News Centre*, June 15, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42250&Cr=democratic&Cr1=congo>

⁶⁸ "IIM, Shillong to participate at UN Earth Summit at Rio", *ZeeNews.com*, June 14, 2012 at http://zeenews.india.com/news/eco-news/iim-shillong-to-participate-at-un-earth-summit-at-rio_781867.html