

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

A. South Asia

Bangladesh

- **7th Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) held between Bangladesh and Myanmar**

Reports noted that Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh Md Shahidul Haque led the Bangladesh delegation at the 7th Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) between Bangladesh and Myanmar on June 14 in Naypyidaw, Myanmar.¹

Sri Lanka

- **Director General of the Indian Coast Guard discusses issues related to fishing with the Commander, North Central Naval Command of Sri Lanka; TNA delegates visit India; Indian Coast Guard intensifies patrol in the IMLB; Prof. G.L. Peiris visits Slovenia; The Chief of Defence Force of the Maldives National Defence Force meets Sri Lankan President; Sri Lanka urged Germany to 'keep a close watch on the several LTTE front organisations in Germany; Sri Lankan Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa: The United States' establishment of a base in the Maldives could change the complexion of the sub-continent region; Sri Lanka ranks at 110th place in Global Peace Index**

According to reports, Director General of the Indian Coast Guard, Vice Admiral Anurag Thapliyal visited Thalaimannar to discuss issues related to fishing with the Commander, North Central Naval Command, Rear Admiral Sisira Jayakody.²

In another development, a delegation of parliamentarians of Sri Lanka's major Tamil party, Tamil National Alliance left for India on June 15, 2013 to meet Indian political leaders and discuss the power devolution.³

In a bid to prevent fishermen from this region crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) and entering Sri Lankan waters, Indian Coast Guard station in Puducherry in Tamil Nadu has intensified patrol besides launching awareness campaigns.⁴

Reports noted that Sri Lanka and Slovenia have agreed to further strengthen the bilateral trade

¹ "Rohingya repatriation to dominate Dhaka- Naypyidaw talks", *The Daily Star*, June 11, 2013 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/beta2/news/rohingya-repatriation-to-dominate-dhaka-naypyidaw-talks/>.

² "Indian Coast Guard Chief in Mannar", *The Daily Mirror*, June 13, 2013 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/30852-indian-coast-guard-chief-to-discuss-fisheries-issues.html>

³ "Sri Lanka Tamil party delegation leaves for India to discuss 13th Amendment", *The Colombo Page*, June 15, 2013 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_13A/Jun15_1371305193CH.php.

⁴ "India intensifies patrolling near SL waters", *The Daily Mirror*, June 16, 2013 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/30996-india-intensifies-patrolling-near-sl-waters.html>.

and economic ties between the two countries at the conclusion of an official visit undertaken by Sri Lanka's Minister of External Affairs, Prof. G.L. Peiris to Ljubljana on June 10.⁵

The Chief of Defence Force of the Maldives National Defence Force Major General Ahmed Shiyam called on the Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa on June 10 at Temple Trees.⁶

Sri Lanka urged Germany to 'keep a close watch on the several LTTE front organisations in Germany, breaching the European Union proscription'. External Affairs Minister Prof. G.L. Peiris, during his bilateral discussions in Berlin with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Guido Westerwelle, also said that several LTTE front organisations were operating in Germany under the guise of community organisations.⁷

In other developments, according to reports, the United States' establishment of a base in the Maldives could change the complexion of the sub-continent region as there is likelihood of its growing interest in the region by aligning more with India; thus causing a factor which may affect Sri Lanka, Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa said this while delivering a lecture for students following the National Interest Module of the inaugural MPhil/PhD Programme of the Kotelawala Defence University on June 13. The Defence Secretary pointed out that it was essential to further strengthen the existing cordial relationships with powerful nations such as China and Russia, which have permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council and could influence any international action on Sri Lanka more significantly than other nations.⁸

Reports noted that Sri Lanka ranks at 110th place in this year's Global Peace Index (GPI) which ranked 162 nations according to their level of peace. Sri Lanka has however, improved 9 percent from 2008 placing it at the 5th place of the top most improved countries. In the South Asian region Sri Lanka ranked at fourth behind Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh in the order and one place above India which ranked at 141. Pakistan and Afghanistan ranked below India in that order.⁹

Maldives

- **Indian Coast Guard rescued twenty two crew members of a sinking Maldivian Cargo Vessel; India proposes to train judicial officers in the Maldives**

According to reports, the Maldivian cargo vessel that faced distress near India on June 12 has sunk completely. The Indian Coast Guard rescued all 22 crewmembers of the cargo vessel, which was on its way to Male'.¹⁰

⁵ "Sri Lanka, Slovenia agreed to strengthen trade and economic relations", *The Colombo Page*, June 11, 2013 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_13A/Jun11_1370973121CH.php.

⁶ "Maldivian Defense Force Chief calls on Sri Lankan President", *The Colombo Page*, June 11, 2013 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_13A/Jun11_1370962086CH.php.

⁷ "Keep close watch on LTTE activities - SL to Germany", *The Daily Mirror*, June 14, 2013 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/30928-keep-close-watch-on-ltte-activities-sl-to-germany.html>.

⁸ "Growing US interests in Asia could affect SL: Gota", *The Daily Mirror*, June 14, 2013 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/30894-growing-us-interests-in-asia-could-affect-sl-gota.html>.

⁹ "Sri Lanka ranks 110 in Global Peace Index out of 162 countries", *The Colombo Page*, June 12, 2013 at http://www.colombopage.com/archive_13A/Jun12_1371018283CH.php.

¹⁰ "Maldivian cargo vessel sinks near India", *The Sun Online*, June 13, 2013 at <http://sun.mv/english/13383>.

In another development, reports noted that India has proposed to train judicial officers in the Maldives in an effort to strengthen the country's judicial system. The Indian Minister of External Affairs Salman Kurshid conveyed the proposal to the Maldives Chief Justice Ahmed Faiz Hussain during the Chief Justice's current official visit to India.¹¹

B. East Asia

Japan

- **Japan and US insist on continuing Japan-China dialogue over the Senkaku islands; Japan to provide supplies to Syrian rebels; Japanese SDF and US military start joint exercises to 'recapture' remote island**

During a telephonic conversation on June 13 between Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and US President Barack Obama, both leaders agreed on the necessity to continue Tokyo-Beijing dialogue on the disputed Senkaku islands in the East China Sea. The two leaders also reaffirmed their close cooperation in realizing a nuclear-weapon-free North Korea.¹²

The Japanese government has decided to provide supplies, including vehicles and power generators, to the Syrian antigovernment rebels in order to assist them in toppling the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad. However Tokyo assures that those supplies are not intended to be used for military purposes or to fuel the civil war in the country. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is to make the announcement in this regard during the upcoming G-8 Summit.¹³

In other developments, the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and US military on June 10, started off joint exercises aimed at 'recapturing' a remote island at a US Navy base in San Diego. The exercise is scheduled to continue till June 26. This is a significant development considering that Chinese government ships allegedly continue to intrude into Japanese waters around the disputed Senkaku islands. The Japanese Defense Ministry maintains that ongoing exercises are necessary to enhance the security of the Senkaku and other islands situated between Kyushu and Taiwan. The Chinese government however has strongly objected to such development and insists on cancelling those exercises.¹⁴

North Korea

- **North Korea cancels inter-Korean talks at the last minute; Pyongyang proposes high-level bilateral dialogue with Washington**

North Korea, on June 11, cancelled the planned inter-Korea dialogue which was scheduled to be

¹¹ "India proposes to train Maldivian judicial officers", *The Sun Online*, June 10, 2013 at <http://sun.mv/english/13296>.

¹² "Abe, Obama agree on importance of ongoing talks over Senkakus", *The Yomiuri Daily*, June 14, 2013, at <http://the-japan-news.com/news/article/0000305061>

¹³ "Govt to give supplies to Syrian rebels", *The Yomiuri Daily*, June 12, 2013, at <http://the-japan-news.com/news/article/0000298594>

¹⁴ "SDF, US forces begin island drills", *The Yomiuri daily*, June 12, 2013, at <http://the-japan-news.com/news/article/0000298592>

held the next day. North Korea cited irreconcilable differences with South Korea over the level of their delegation as the main reason behind the collapse of the talk. It is worth noting that the talks, if held, would have been the first high-level government talks between the two Koreas since 2007.¹⁵

North Korea, on June 16, proposed a high-level dialogue with the US over issues such as military tensions in the Korean Peninsula, a peace treaty and a nuclear-free world order. Pyongyang also said that Washington could set the date and venue of the dialogue at the latter's own convenience.¹⁶ The US, however, remains non-committal on this issue while stating that it wants to have a 'credible negotiation' with the North. The White House has also indicated that Washington would judge the North by "its actions and not its words".¹⁷

C. West Asia

Kuwait

- **Kuwaiti parliament dissolved**

Kuwait's Supreme Court has dissolved parliament on June 16, 2013 and called for new elections after an opposition challenge to the voting system was thrown out. The court rejected a case questioning the constitutionality of a change to the electoral system ordered by Emir Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmed al-Sabah. Head judge Youssef al Mutawa said that the Constitutional Court made its decision after examining and rejecting the challenge. Meanwhile, Kuwait's emir made a televised plea to the citizens to accept the changes to the voting rules, and asked them to reject "the voices of chaos". The Emir stated, "I accept...the ruling of the Constitutional Court regardless of its content, and I call on all citizens to respect it and abide by it."¹⁸

Oman

- **Oman Foreign Minister: Oman is not ready for Gulf Union**

Oman's Foreign Affairs Minister, Yousuf Bin Alawi Bin Abdullah has stated that Oman is not yet ready for the Gulf Union but would not come in the way of its formation. He said that Bahrain opted out of the proposed union for the sake of its own identity saying that, "We didn't want to

¹⁵ "Koreas cancel talks at last minute", The Korea Herald, June 11, 2013, at <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130611000981>

¹⁶ "N.K proposes high-level talks with U.S.", The Korea Herald, June 16, 2013, at <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130616000241>

¹⁷ "US wants 'credible negotiations' with N.K", The Korea Herald, June 16, 2013, at <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130616000381>

¹⁸ "Kuwait court dissolves parliament", *Aljazeera*, June 16, 2013, at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/06/201361613712160952.html>

lose our own identity for the sake of the Gulf Union." He said, that, "We studied the proposal of Gulf Union and felt that currently it cannot be achieved."¹⁹

Iran

- **President-elect Hassan Rohani receives guidelines from the Supreme Leader of Iran; Rohani, Larijani holds discussion on major issues**

According to reports, Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has given necessary guidelines to the president-elect, Hassan Rohani. The Supreme Leader also wished Rohani success in his new position. Rohani won Iran's 11th presidential election by securing 18,613,329 of a total of 36,704,156 ballots counted. His rival candidates Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf secured 15.76 per cent Mohsen Rezaei 11.16 per cent Saeed Jalili 11.38 per cent Ali Akbar Velayati 6.11 per cent Mohammad Gharazi 1.21 percent. Iran's Interior Ministry put voter turnout at 72.7 percent. Rohani currently represents the Supreme Leader in the Supreme National Security Council, and is member of the Expediency Council and the Assembly of Experts. He is also President of the Expediency Council's Center for Strategic Research.²⁰

In another development, reports noted that President-elect Hassan Rohani and Iran's Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani have exchanged views on leading issues and problems of the country that Iran is currently facing. Rohani and Larijani held a meeting one day after the official announcement that Rohani won the 11th presidential election following a vote that saw a massive popular turnout on June 14. Larijani later said that during the meeting, the present situation of the country and the necessity for tackling inflation and unemployment had been discussed. Rohani, for his part, said "In this meeting, [we] discussed important issues that we are facing in the country, particularly cooperation between the [new] administration and the Majlis." Rohani also added that post-election celebrations showed that Iranians are hopeful about the future.²¹

Iraq

- **Six people killed in recent bombing in Iraq**

According to reports, in recent bomb attacks, six people were killed in Iraq. Police officials said that a bomb struck a military convoy in the volatile city of Mosul, killing three soldiers and two officers. Also in Mosul, a policeman was killed when a roadside bomb hit his convoy around midday. Medical official confirmed the death toll. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks but security forces are a favourite target for Sunni insurgents. These attacks were came a day after a string of deadly attacks in several Iraqi cities, including Mosul, killed at least 63 people.²²

¹⁹ "Oman not ready for Gulf Union", *Gulf News*, June 16, 2013, at <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/oman/oman-not-ready-for-gulf-union-1.1197709>

²⁰ "Leader gives necessary guidelines to president-elect Rohani," *Press TV*, July 16, 2013, at <http://www.presstv.com/detail/2013/06/16/309355/leader-gives-guidelines-to-rohani/>

²¹ "Rouhani, Larijani discuss key Iran issues," *Mehr News Agency*, June 17, 2013, at <http://old.mehrnews.com/en/newsdetail.aspx?NewsID=1823599>

²² "Bombs strike troops in Iraq, kill 6," *Khaleej Times*, June 11, 2013, at http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2013/June/middleeast_June111.xml§ion=middleeast

D. Russia

- **Report: Russia has the world's largest shale oil reserves; Rosneft buys a 20 per cent stake in the Norwegian Continental Shelf Project; Rosneft and Exxon Mobil sign an agreement for joint research and development of the Arctic; President Putin backs the extension of arms procurement programme; President Putin calls for an overhaul of the IMF and a bigger role for the BRICS; Finland accuses Russia of airspace violation; Russia to send a 250 member servicemen for Indra 2013 drills in India; President Putin warns the US against 'imperialism'; Putin accuses the US of backing Russia's opposition; Georgia accepts Putin's offer for Olympic security role; Putin warns against any kind of foreign military intervention in Syria; World bank estimates that Russia's GDP will grow by 2.3 per cent in 2013; President Putin: Iran does observe all nuclear programme related commitments; Russia has serious doubts about the allegations of use of chemical weapons by the Syrian government; President Putin elected as the leader of the People's Front Movement**

According to reports, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) of the United States has announced that Russia has the biggest shale oil reserves in the world and the ninth largest gas resources. The EIA has released a report putting world shale oil reserves at 354 billion barrels, of which 75 billion are in Russia. The U.S. trails with 58 billion barrels, while China has 32 billion barrels.²³

In another development, reports noted that Rosneft has received a 20 per cent stake in a license to develop the Norwegian continental shelf in the Barents Sea. License PL713 consists of four promising blocks. RN Nordic Oil AS will develop the blocks in partnership with Statoil, which will act as an operator.²⁴

Meanwhile, Rosneft and Exxon Mobil have signed an agreement for joint research and development of new technologies which they can put in use for development of hydrocarbon resources in the Arctic with near term focus on the Kara Sea. Rosneft will take a 66.67 per cent stake in the project, with Exxon Mobil holding the remaining 33.33 per cent.²⁵

According to reports, President Vladimir Putin has agreed to a proposal to extend parts of Russia's ambitious arms procurement program beyond 2020. The Russian government has allocated 20 trillion roubles (US\$ 641 billion) for the comprehensive rearmament of Russia's armed forces. Russia's 2011-2020 arms procurement program stipulates the upgrade of up to 11 per cent of military equipment annually and will allow the country to increase the share of modern weaponry in the armed forces to 70 percent by 2020.²⁶

²³ "Russia Has World's Largest Shale Oil Reserves", The Moscow Times, June 13, 2013, <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/russia-has-worlds-largest-shale-oil-reserves/481596.html>

²⁴ "Rosneft Gets Stake in Norwegian Continental Shelf Project", Rianovosti, June 13, 2013, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20130613/181644191/Rosneft-Gets-Stake-in-Norwegian-Continental-Shelf-Project.html>

²⁵ "Rosneft, Exxon Mobil Team Up on Arctic", Rianovosti, June 12, 2013, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20130612/181623766/Rosneft-ExxonMobil-Team-Up-on-Arctic.html>

²⁶ "Putin Backs Extension of Arms Procurement Program", Rianovosti, June 13, 2013, http://en.ria.ru/military_news/20130613/181649237/Putin-Backs-Extension-of-Arms-Procurement-Program.html

President Putin has declared that Russia will use its 2014 leadership of the G8 to push for international regulation of offshore tax havens.²⁷

President Putin has said that Russia will use its presidency of the G20 to push for a radical overhaul of the International Monetary Fund and changes to its voting system to give developing economies a stronger voice. He also called for a bigger role for the BRICS.²⁸

The Finnish Defence Ministry has accused Russia of violating its airspace over the Gulf of Finland. The Russian Defence Ministry, on its part, did admit that an unspecified number of Tu-22 bombers and Su-27 fighter jets had conducted flights in the vicinity of Finland, but denied that they intruded the Finnish airspace.²⁹

According to reports, Russian nuclear power corporation Rosatom is ready to build nuclear power plants in Brazil and finance nuclear power projects there. Rosatom is currently implementing projects for the construction of 28 nuclear power plants, 19 of which are abroad, with ongoing projects in India, China, Belarus, Turkey and Vietnam topping the agenda. Rosatom has orders worth US\$ 70 billion over the next 10 year period.³⁰

Reports noted that Russia will send over 250 servicemen from the Eastern Military District to take part in the annual Indra-2013 joint anti-terrorism exercise with India scheduled to be held in October at the Mahajan field firing range in India. The goal of the exercise is to practice joint planning and execution of anti-terrorist missions in a semi-desert environment. This will be the seventh such exercise with the last one being held in 2012 in Buratiya.³¹

In other developments, according to reports, Russian President Vladimir Putin has cautioned the United States against pursuing an imperialist policy. He further went on to add that Russia and the United States have “practically no ideological contradictions now,” except that the United States’ identity is based on an individual idea whereas Russia’s focus is on a collective approach.³²

President Putin has said that it is not right that the US State Department keeps supporting opposition activists in Russia since Russia itself does not support activities like ‘Occupy Wall Street’ in the US.³³

²⁷ “Russia Will Use G8 Platform to Tackle Offshore Zones – Putin”, Rianovosti, June 14, 2013, http://en.ria.ru/trend/interview_putin_ria_novosti_14062013/

²⁸ “Russia’s Putin Calls for IMF Overhaul, Bigger Role for BRICS”, Rianovosti, June 14, 2013, <http://en.ria.ru/russia/20130614/181652856/Russias-Putin-Calls-for-IMF-Overhaul-Bigger-Role-for-BRICS.html>

²⁹ “Finland Accuses Russia of Airspace Violation”, Rianovosti, June 12, 2013, <http://en.ria.ru/world/20130612/181627853/Finland-Accuses-Russia-of-Airspace-Violation.html>

³⁰ “Rosatom Wants to Build Nuclear Plants in Brazil”, Rianovosti, June 11, 2013, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20130611/181613713/Rosatom-Wants-to-Build-Nuclear-Plants-in-Brazil.html>

³¹ “Russia to Send 250 Troops for Indra-2013 Drills in India”, Rianovosti, June 11, 2013, <http://en.ria.ru/world/20130611/181610447/Russia-to-Send-250-Troops-for-Indra-2013-Drills-in-India.html>

³² “Putin Warns US Against Imperialism”, Rianovosti, June 11, 2013, <http://en.ria.ru/russia/20130611/181620030/Putin-Warns-US-Against-Imperialism.html>

³³ “Putin Accuses US of Backing Russia’s Opposition”, Rianovosti, June 11, 2013, <http://en.ria.ru/russia/20130611/181620451/Putin-Accuses-US-of-Backing-Russias-Opposition.html>

Georgian Foreign Minister Maya Panjikidze has said that Georgia is prepared to accept Russian President Vladimir Putin's offer to have a role in organising security at next year's Winter Olympics at Sochi. The breakaway region of Abkhazia, which Russia recognizes as independent and Georgia considers part of its own territory, is just eight kilometres away from some of the Olympic venues.³⁴

President Putin has said that foreign military intervention in the Syrian civil war is unacceptable because it would result in a new source of terror in the region. He further added that the situation in Syria could follow a Libya scenario, leading to a fight for resources and interethnic conflicts.³⁵

The World Bank has estimated that Russia's GDP will grow by 2.3 per cent in 2013, by 3.5 per cent in 2014 and by 3.9 per cent in 2015.³⁶

President Putin has said that Iran does observe all nuclear programme related commitments and declared that Iran has the full right to a civilian nuclear program of its own.³⁷

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has voiced the doubts over the allegations that Syrian authorities used the chemical weapons.³⁸

President Putin has been elected as the leader of the People's Front Movement (ONF). This is a revived pro-Kremlin movement that aims to unite civic activists loyal to the government.³⁹

E. United States of America (USA)

- **US Secretary of State John Kerry: United States is ready to engage with new Iranian regime; Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Robert D. Hormats: The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) has become a key component of our economic policy in the Asia-Pacific region; United States launches criminal investigations into leaks; United States' NSA chief Gen. Keith B. Alexander: Surveillance programs stopped 'dozens' of attacks; India takes up snooping issue with the United States**

According to reports, despite having reservations on the transparency of the electoral process, the United States said it is ready to engage directly with the Iranian Government led by its newly elected President moderate Hassan Rowhani with the hope that the new leader will honour

³⁴ "Georgia Accepts Putin's Offer for Olympic Security Role", Rianovosti, June 12, 2013, <http://en.ria.ru/world/20130612/181633162/Georgia-Accepts-Putins-Offer-for-Olympic-Security-Role.html>

³⁵ "Putin Warns Against Syria Intervention", Rianovosti, June 11, 2013, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20130611/181619597/Putin-Warns-Against-Syria-Intervention.html>

³⁶ "World Bank expects Russian GDP to increase by 2.3 percent in 2013", Itar-Tass, June 13, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/769331.html>

³⁷ "Putin has no doubts Iran observes all nuclear program-related commitments", Itar-Tass, June 11, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/768447.html>

³⁸ "Lavrov doubts about use of chemical weapons in Syria", Itar-Tass, June 15, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c32/772442.html>

³⁹ "Russia People's Front Movement Picks Putin as Leader", Rianovosti, June 12, 2013, <http://en.ria.ru/russia/20130612/181632311/Russia-Peoples-Front-Movement-Picks-Putin-as-Leader.html>

international obligations. United States' Secretary of State John Kerry on June 15, stated, "We, along with our international partners, remain ready to engage directly with the Iranian government. We hope they will honour their international obligations to the rest of the world in order to reach a diplomatic solution that will fully address the international community's concerns about Iran's nuclear program,". Both Secretary of State Kerry and the White House issued similar statements after Iran's Interior Ministry declared moderate cleric Rowhani winner of the country's 11th presidential election. White House Press Secretary Jay Carney said, "It is our hope that the Iranian government will heed the will of the Iranian people and make responsible choices that create a better future for all Iranians."⁴⁰

In another development, according to reports, US Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, Robert D. Hormats has stated, "The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) has become a key component of our economic policy in the Asia-Pacific region. The TPP is intended to be a far-reaching trade agreement that brings together some of the largest and fastest growing economies of the Pacific Rim, including Japan, which will join the negotiations in about six weeks' time. Through the TPP, we are pursuing a rules-based and high-standard regional economic and trade architecture." Hormats was making remarks on "U.S. Economic Engagement with the Asia Pacific" at the Asia Society Global Forum on June 12, 2013 in Washington, DC. He also noted that "no discussion of engagement in the Asia-Pacific region would be complete without a reference to the Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor. The United States sees great value in integrating India into the Asia-Pacific architecture and strongly supports the Government of India's efforts to improve trade and connectivity in Southeast Asia - a region with which it shares many historical and cultural links. The creation of an Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor, linking the economies of India, Bangladesh, and Southeast Asia, holds great promise for greater trade and cooperation throughout the region."⁴¹

In another development, reports noted that the US Justice Department has launched a criminal investigation into the leaks of classified information about secret electronic surveillance programmes to get details of phone calls of its citizens and to gather data trails left by foreigners using internet outside America. The US Justice Department spokeswoman Nanda Chitre, stated, "The Department of Justice is in the initial stages of an investigation into the unauthorised disclosure of classified information by an individual with authorised access,". The US statement came hours after British newspaper The Guardian released a video interview with Edward Snowden, a 29-year-old who claimed responsibility for being the source of the information about the secret intelligence practices of National Security Agency (NSA) of the US. Snowden said he leaked the information because he disagreed with the agency's surveillance practices. "I do not want to live in a world where everything I do and say is recorded," he told The Guardian newspaper. It would be worth noting that Snowden is a former technical assistant for the CIA and has been working at the NSA for the past four years as an employee of various outside contractors,

⁴⁰ "Ready to engage with new Iranian regime: Kerry", The Hindu, June 16, 2013 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/ready-to-engage-with-new-iranian-regime-kerry/article4819691.ece>

⁴¹ "U.S. Economic Engagement with the Asia Pacific" Remarks Robert D. Hormats, Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, Asia Society Global Forum Washington, DC, June 12, 2013, US Department of State, at <http://www.state.gov/e/rls/rmk/210563.htm>

the paper reported. Meanwhile, the Office of Director of National Intelligence on June 9 said that it is currently assessing the damage that has been caused to the national security by this leak.⁴²

Meanwhile, Army Gen. Keith Alexander, National Security Agency (NSA)'s director and head of U.S. Cyber Command under fire for the widespread surveillance of U.S. phones and Internet servers told lawmakers on June 12 that such data collections have foiled "dozens" of terrorist plots. Addressing the simmering controversy in the first open congressional hearing on this issue, he defended the collection of phone records and online data of millions of Americans, saying such practices were essential to protecting the homeland. But while Alexander credited the programs with preventing dozens of attacks, he told the Senate Appropriations Committee that he didn't have an exact count. He said he would provide a number by week's end.⁴³

According to reports, India's National security adviser Shiv Shankar Menon has spoken to US ambassador to India Nancy Powell regarding reports that India is the fifth most tracked country by the American intelligence. The matter was taken up on June 11 by Menon and Powell during their preparatory discussions ahead of the India-US strategic dialogue later this month, sources said, adding that the envoy said the US itself was still studying the issue. India had earlier said it was "concerned and surprised" by the reports regarding the American intelligence using a secret data-mining programme to monitor worldwide internet data.⁴⁴

II. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

Jammu & Kashmir

- **Prime Minister's visit to Kashmir stands postponed; Lashkar-e-Taiba militant killed in a gunfight in Pulwama; Union Home Minister: Decision on AFSPA to be taken after discussion; South Kashmir emerges as hotbed of militants; Chief Justice of India to visit Kashmir**

Reports noted that Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh's proposed visit to Kashmir later this month to inaugurate Pirpanchal railway tunnel has been postponed. State Congress President Prof Saifuddin Soz said that the new dates for his visit will be finalized soon.⁴⁵

In another development, according to reports, Union Home Minister Sushilkumar Shinde has said that the government is considering the demand of various states including Jammu and Kashmir

⁴² "United States launches criminal probe into leaks", The Economic Times, June 10, 2013 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-06-10/news/39873022_1_classified-information-the-guardian-nsa

⁴³ "NSA chief claims surveillance programs stopped 'dozens' of attacks", Washington Examiner, June 12, 2013 at <http://washingtonexaminer.com/nsa-chief-claims-surveillance-programs-stopped-dozens-of-attacks/article/2531791>

⁴⁴ "India takes up snooping issue with US envoy", The Hindustan Times, June 14, 2013 at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NewDelhi/India-takes-up-snooping-issue-with-US-envoy/Article1-1076032.aspx>

⁴⁵ "PM's visit postponed", *Greater Kashmir*, June 10, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/Jun/11/pm-s-visit-postponed-43.asp>

for withdrawal of the controversial Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act and a final decision will be taken only after talking to all stakeholders. AFSPA, which grants special powers to the armed forces, is also in force in some northeastern states besides Jammu and Kashmir. The Union Home Minister rejected demand for an all-party meeting and made it clear that only the states concerned would be consulted before taking a final call on repealing AFSPA.⁴⁶

According to reports, after traditional stronghold in north, South Kashmir is emerging as a militant hotbed. During the past three weeks, six local militants and four soldiers were killed in different encounters. All the six militants and four soldiers were killed in different parts of South Kashmir's Pulwama district. The militants who killed in South Kashmir were mostly belonged to Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) outfit. Police believe that militants are shifting base from their traditional strongholds to less suspect places.⁴⁷

Reports noted that Chief Justice of India Altamas Kabir is arriving in Kashmir on two-day visit beginning June 16. He would inaugurate Jammu and Kashmir State Judicial Academy (JKSJA) building and deliver a lecture at University of Kashmir. This would be his first visit to Kashmir after taking over as the Chief Justice of the country's highest Court last year.⁴⁸

In other developments, according to reports, one Lashkar-e-Taiba militant was killed and two policemen injured in a brief encounter in Niloora village of Litter area in Pulwama district on June 10.⁴⁹

North East India

- **Protests across Manipur for demand of Inner Line Permit (ILP); Report: Chinese ties with ULFA may boost Maoist presence in Assam; NSCN (IM) cadres arrested in Arunachal Pradesh; Arms and ammunition recovered in Guwahati**

According to reports, hundreds of students on June 11 staged sit-in protests against the non-implementation of Inner Line Permit (ILP) system in Manipur. The Manipur government has already forwarded the resolution of the Assembly to the Centre and the Centre has to take a decision on its implementation.⁵⁰

In another development, according to reports, the Chinese interest in causing problems in India will play an important role in the growth of Maoist rebels and the equations between the Maoists and the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) within the next 10 years. This was the observation made by the Task Force constituted by the Assam Government to study the growth of Maoists in

⁴⁶ "Discussion on AFSPA after discussion: Shinde", *Greater Kashmir*, June 11, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/Jun/12/decision-on-afspa-after-discussion-shinde-30.asp>

⁴⁷ "South Kashmir emerges as hotbed", *Greater Kashmir*, June 12, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/Jun/13/south-kashmir-emerges-as-hotbed-27.asp>

⁴⁸ "CJI arriving on maiden Kashmir visit on June 16", *Greater Kashmir*, June 13, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/Jun/14/cji-arriving-on-maiden-kashmir-visit-on-june-16-85.asp>

⁴⁹ "Militant killed in Pulwama gunfight", *Greater Kashmir*, June 11, 2013 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2013/Jun/12/militant-killed-in-pulwama-gunfight-32.asp>

⁵⁰ "Sit-in protests across Manipur demanding ILP", *The Assam Tribune*, June 11, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun1213/oth06>

the State and to recommend measures to deal with the same. The report admitted that Assam stands to face a stiff challenge of yet another armed movement, that is with the Maoists in the days to come and a comprehensive action plan needs to be implemented quickly to deal with the growth of the Maoist rebels in Assam and other parts of North East.⁵¹

In other developments, reports noted that two cadres of NSCN-IM were arrested and a government official was rescued from their clutches during a joint operation in troubled Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh. The joint security operation arrested the cadres and recovered extortion money from their possession.⁵²

According to reports, the Guwahati city police arrested three arms carriers and recovered a cache of arms and ammunition from the Inter State Bus Terminus (ISBT) on June 13 in Guwahati. The consignment originated at Dimapur and was meant to be further delivered for banned outfit GNLA in Meghalaya after its arrival in ISBT. This is the sixth consignment of GNLA that have been intercepted by City Police since March, 2011.⁵³

III. UNITED NATIONS REVIEW

(June 3-9)

- **UN Security Council concerned about fighting in Golan Heights; UNSC urges Syrian authorities to protect civilians; Mandate of expert panel on sanctions against Iran extended; India adds items to prohibited trade list with North Korea**

Amid intense fighting and the injury of two peacekeepers, the Security Council expressed their concern at the resurgence of fighting in the Golan Heights and at the prospect of countries withdrawing their troops from the UN peacekeeping mission. The Council called on all parties to fully cooperate with the mission to enable it to operate freely and to ensure full security of its personnel.⁵⁴

Meanwhile, the UNSC urged Syrian authorities to protect civilians and to allow humanitarian access to the town of Al-Qusayr. The Council also urged the Syrian government to protect civilians and avoid civilian casualties. The government was also urged to allow “immediate, safe and unhindered access” in accordance with the UN guiding humanitarian principles.⁵⁵

⁵¹ “Chinese role, ties with ULFA may boost Maoists in State”, *The Assam Tribune*, June 16, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun1713/at05>

⁵² “NSCN-IM cadres arrested”, *The Assam Tribune*, June 12, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun1313/oth07>

⁵³ “Arms, ammo found;3 arrested”, *The Assam Tribune*, June 13, 2013 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jun1413/city07>

⁵⁴ “Security Council concerned at fighting in Golan Heights, possible troop withdrawals”, *UN News Centre*, June 07, 2013 at http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45110&Cr=golan&Cr1=#.UcE_Q-cbCwp

⁵⁵ “Syria: Security Council ‘gravely concerned’ about situations of civilians in Qusayr”, *UN News Centre*, June 07, 2013 at http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45113&Cr=syria&Cr1=#.UcE_ROcbCwp

According to reports, the mandate of the expert panel, established to monitor and enforce sanctions against Iran over its failure to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency, was extended for one year through July 09, 2014.⁵⁶

In other developments, India added a few more items, including gems and jewellery to its list of items prohibited for trade with North Korea which is facing UN sanctions because of its nuclear programme. The list of items are prohibited for direct or indirect import or export from or to North Korea. India's implementation of the sanctions is based on the belief that the nuclear programme pursued by the country was not beneficial for the region.⁵⁷

(June 10-16)

- **Antigua and Barbuda UN representative next UNGA president; India to support investigation into use of chemical weapons by Syrian government; UN report: India to become most populous nation by 2028; UN peacekeeper killed in Abyei; India to approach UN panel against EU's emission norms**

The UN General Assembly elected John W. Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda as the President of its upcoming 68th session. Mr. Ashe said that the theme he has chosen for the 68th session will be "Post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage".⁵⁸

Reports noted that with the worsening of the Syrian crisis, India will support a UN investigation into the use of chemical weapons by the regime in the country. New Delhi has opined that the situation is getting "increasingly complicated" in Syria and that it will support the next conference called "Geneva-2". Meanwhile, it also plans to extend humanitarian assistance to Syrian people.⁵⁹

According to UN reports, India will surpass China to become world's most populous nation around 2028, with its population crossing 1.45 billion mark. It is predicted that India's population will continue to grow while that of China's is expected to start decreasing.⁶⁰

In other developments, according to reports, during the shelling of the logistics headquarters of the UN mission in Abyei, one UN peacekeeper was killed and two others were injured. The UN

⁵⁶ "Security Council extends mandate of panel monitoring Iran sanctions", *UN News Centre*, June 05, 2013 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45088&Cr=iran&Cr1=#.UcFA4ucbCwp>

⁵⁷ "India adds more goods to list of items prohibited to trade with North Korea", *The Economic Times*, June 03, 2013 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-06-03/news/39714983_1_north-korea-gems-and-jewellery-dgft

⁵⁸ "General Assembly elects UN Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda as President of 68th session", *UN News Centre*, June 14, 2013 at http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45177&Cr=general+assembly&Cr1=#.UcE_ROcbCwp

⁵⁹ "India to support UN probe into Syrian use of chemical weapons", *The Indian Express*, June 12, 2013 at <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/india-to-support-un-probe-into-syrian-use-of-chemical-weapons/1127972/>

⁶⁰ "India to become world's most populous nation around 2028: UN", *The Times of India*, June 14, 2013 at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-06-14/india/39975710_1_population-division-population-growth-world-population-prospects

Secretary-General and the UNSC condemned the attack on the headquarters. The Council called on the Sudanese government to immediately investigate the incident and bring the perpetrators to justice.⁶¹

Reports noted that following the tough stance against the European Union's emission norms for airlines, the Indian Environment Ministry will approach the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the International Civil Aviation Organisation to resolve the issue. The Environment minister has already written to the EU Commissioner for Climate Change demanding a reversal of carbon tax.⁶²

⁶¹ "UN peacekeeper killed in disputed Sudanese region", *The Times of India*, June 15, 2013 at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-06-15/rest-of-world/39992434_1_south-sudan-abyei-peacekeeper

⁶² "India to take carbon tax issue to UN panel", *Business Standard*, June 10, 2013 at http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-to-take-carbon-tax-issue-to-un-panel-11306100009_1.html