

# THE WEEK IN REVIEW

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## I. COUNTRY REVIEWS

### A. South Asia

#### Afghansitan

- **United States accords Afghanistan a 'Major Non-NATO Ally' status; International donors pledges \$16 billion aid for Afghanistan over the next four years at major donors' conference in Tokyo; Five NATO soldiers wounded by man wearing Afghan army uniform**

In a significant development, according to reports, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton arrived in Afghanistan July 7, 2012 on a surprise visit ahead of a key conference in Tokyo. "We are not even imagining abandoning Afghanistan," Clinton said in a press conference with Afghan President Hamid Karzai. To that point, the U.S. State Department announced on July 7, 2012 that President Barack Obama had signed a determination designating Afghanistan a "major non-NATO ally," a status accorded to a limited number of countries such as Israel, Egypt, Australia and Pakistan. The designation allows Afghanistan certain benefits, making it eligible to participate in a broader range of U.S. military training programs and giving it priority for receiving surplus U.S. military hardware.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, according to reports, international donors, on July 8, 2012 in Tokyo, pledged \$16 billion aid for Afghanistan over the next four years when most foreign troops will leave the war torn nation. Meanwhile, Afghan President Hamid Karzai urged the international community not to abandon his country. "I request Afghanistan's friends and partners to reassure the Afghan people that you will be with us," Karzai said in his opening statement. The major donors' conference in Tokyo, attended by about 70 countries and organizations, was aimed at setting aid levels for the crucial period through and beyond 2014, when most NATO-led foreign combat troops will leave and the war-torn country will assume responsibility for most of its own security. It would be worth noting that Afghanistan has received nearly \$60 billion in civilian aid since 2002. According to the World Bank, foreign aid makes up nearly the equivalent of the country's gross domestic product. Meanwhile, \$ 16 billion aid pledged during Tokyo Summit is expected to provide stability and better development for the war torn country.<sup>2</sup>

In other developments, according to reports, an individual wearing Afghan army uniform shot and wounded five NATO soldiers at a base in Wardak province, east of Kabul on July 03, 2012. The five, believed to be American, are receiving medical treatment. The extent of their injuries is not known. It is the latest in a series of so-called "green-on-blue" attacks, where Afghans in the police or army attack international forces. More than 20 foreign personnel have been killed in rogue shootings in Afghanistan this year.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "U.S. Names Afghanistan Major Non-NATO Ally", *The Wall Street Journal*, July 8, 2012 at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303962304577511834258197936.html>

<sup>2</sup> "Afghan donors meet, offer \$ 16 billion in development aid", *Dawn*, July 8, 2012 at <http://dawn.com/2012/07/08/afghan-donors-meet-offer-16b-in-development-aid/>

<sup>3</sup> "Man in Afghan army uniform wounds five NATO soldiers", *BBC*, July 4, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-18701210>

## Pakistan

- **Pakistan agreed to reopen the NATO supply lines to Afghanistan after the US apology; India-Pakistan foreign secretaries level talks held; Prime Minister Manmohan Singh looks forward to visiting Pakistan but stressed that there have to be “suitable outcomes” for such a trip; Afghanistan accused Pakistan’s army of launching rocket attacks on its territory**

According to reports, after months of talk and negotiations, Pakistan has finally agreed to reopen the NATO supply lines to Afghanistan. The recent move comes after the US apologised for killing 24 of its soldiers in November, 2011. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said, “We are sorry for the losses suffered by the Pakistani military.” However, the Pakistani Taliban has promptly threatened to attack the convoys. The routes are increasingly important as NATO prepares to withdraw all combat troops from Afghanistan in 2014. The row over the supply lines has been hugely damaging to relations between Pakistan and the US. The decision comes after US issued an apology over the killing of Pakistani soldiers last November.<sup>4</sup>

In another development, reports noted that India and Pakistan’s foreign secretaries met on July 4, 2012 to bolster the peace dialogue between the two countries. The round of peace talks between Pakistan’s Foreign Secretary Jalil Abbas Jilani and his Indian counterpart Ranjan Mathai in New Delhi comes after the recent arrest of a key suspect in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. Last month, India and Pakistan held inconclusive talks on resolving long-standing disputes over the Siachen glacier in the Himalayas and the maritime boundary of Sir Creek. The latest meeting is expected to prepare the agenda for talks between the foreign ministers of the two countries next month.<sup>5</sup>

According to reports, amid disclosures by 26/11 plotter Abu Jundal linking Pakistani state actors to the Mumbai carnage, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has said he was looking forward to visiting the neighbouring country but stressed that there have to be “suitable outcomes” for such a trip. “I am looking forward to visiting Pakistan. No dates have been finalised for the visit,” Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said on July 6, 2012. “As you know, there have to be suitable outcomes for such a visit,” he said. While India pressed Pakistan to act on information relating to Jundal’s disclosures and bring the perpetrators of 26/11 to justice, Pakistan’s Foreign Secretary Jalil Abbas Jilani rejected any insinuation of involvement of Pakistani state agencies in the Mumbai terror attack. Earlier, Manmohan Singh had accepted Pakistan’s President Asif Ali Zardari’s invitation to him to visit Islamabad during the latter’s daylong visit to New Delhi April 8, but had indicated that only concrete deliverables on important issues will make such a visit possible.<sup>6</sup>

In other developments, according to reports, on July 2, 2012, Afghanistan accused Pakistan’s army of launching rocket attacks on its territory and threatened to report Islamabad to the UN Security Council, straining already troubled ties between the neighbours. Kabul has regularly accused

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<sup>4</sup> “Pakistan to reopen supply lines to NATO Afghan forces”, *BBC*, July 3, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-18691691>

<sup>5</sup> “India, Pakistan Foreign secretaries hold talks”, *Dawn*, July 4, 2012 at <http://dawn.com/2012/07/04/india-pakistan-foreign-secretaries-hold-talks/>

<sup>6</sup> “Open to Pak visit but suitable outcomes needed: PM”, *The Hindustan Times*, July 06, 2012, at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NewDelhi/Open-to-Pak-visit-but-suitable-outcomes-needed-PM/Article1-884169.aspx>

elements in Islamabad's government and army of backing militants fighting the US-backed Kabul government, charges denied by Pakistan. But it was the first time Afghanistan has held Pakistan directly responsible for hundreds of rocket strikes on the heavily forested Afghan border province of Kunar that it says have killed four civilians since March. "We now have enough evidence that proves the rockets used in these attacks belong to the Pakistani army," the spokesman for Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security, Shafiqullah Taheri stated.<sup>7</sup>

## Bangladesh

(June 25-July 1)

- **Jatiya Sangsad passes the national budget for the fiscal year 2012-13; The World Bank cancels Padma Bridge project; Deputy Foreign Minister of Myanmar visits Dhaka**

The Jatiya Sangsad on June 28, 2012, passed the national budget for the fiscal year 2012-13 with the highest allocation for the defence ministry. The budget outlines a gross expenditure of Tk 2,83,599 crore, which is 22 percent more than the outgoing Financial Year.<sup>8</sup>

In another development, according to reports, the World Bank (WB) has cancelled its \$1.2 billion credit for the Padma bridge project with immediate effect, saying it has proof of corruption conspiracy involving Bangladeshi officials, executives of a Canadian firm and individuals.<sup>9</sup> Responding to WB's decision, Finance Minister AMA Muhith said that he thought the World Bank's statement cancelling the fund for the Padma bridge project was rather its outgoing President Robert Zoellick's statement and that it was unacceptable. The finance minister claimed that there was no corruption in the Padma bridge project even though about Tk 1,500 crore had already been spent. Muhith stated, "The World Bank's apprehensions are all about probable corruption that could have taken place if bidders had been selected."<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia held Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her family's "corruption" responsible for the World Bank's cancellation of Padma bridge funding.<sup>11</sup> Some economists in Bangladesh fear that cancellation of World Bank funding for the Padma bridge project over alleged corruption in it would have a negative impact on the global donors' perception of Bangladesh and it would put to question credibility of the government's project implementation process.<sup>12</sup>

In other developments, according to reports, Deputy Foreign Minister of Myanmar Maung Myint

<sup>7</sup> "Afghanistan accuses Pakistan army of rocket attacks", *Dawn*, July 3, 2012 at <http://dawn.com/2012/07/03/afghanistan-accuses-pakistan-army-of-rocket-attacks/>

<sup>8</sup> "Budget passed", *The Daily Star*, June 29, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=240267>

<sup>9</sup> "WB scraps Padma loan", *The Daily Star*, July 1, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=240475>.

<sup>10</sup> "It's Zoellick's statement, not WB's: Muhith also says govt did its best to dispel lender's fears", *The Daily Star*, July 1, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=240482>.

<sup>11</sup> "Khaleda slams PM, family for corruption", *The Daily star*, July 1, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=240485>.

<sup>12</sup> "Ties with Lenders, Future Projects: Economists fear negative impact", *The Daily Star*, July 1, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=240488>.

arrived in Dhaka on June 30, 2012 on a three-day trip to lay the groundwork for the upcoming visit by its president.<sup>13</sup>

(July 2-8)

- **Dipu Moni attends conference on Afghanistan in Japan and meeting of the ARF in Cambodia; Myanmar President postpones his visit to Bangladesh; Growth in inward remittances and FDI; UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon: Bangladesh is rapidly advancing towards development with successes in several sectors; Improvement in country's Human Rights situation; Former Indian President APJ Abdul Kalam visits Bangladesh**

Reports noted that Foreign Minister Dipu Moni left Dhaka on July 7, 2012 for a week to attend the second International Conference on Afghanistan in Japan and the Nineteenth Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in Cambodia.<sup>14</sup>

However, according to reports, Myanmar President Thein Sein's visit to Bangladesh has been deferred to a later date after Ramadan due to sectarian violence in the northern Rakhine state.<sup>15</sup>

Reports noted that Bangladesh's Inward remittances grew 10.26 percent to \$12.85 billion as of June 30, 2012 from a year ago, according to data from the central bank. A strong dollar and transfer of money through formal channels helped the country attain good growth of remittance in fiscal 2011-12 despite the global financial crisis, bankers said. In June, the last month of the concluded fiscal year, inward remittances stood at \$1.07 billion, down by 7.2 percent from \$1.16 billion in May.<sup>16</sup> Further, Foreign direct investment in Bangladesh in 2011 rose by 24.42 percent to \$1.13 billion, the highest in its history, according to Unctad's World Investment Report-2012. The country received \$1.08 billion as its second highest FDI in 2008.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon has said Bangladesh is rapidly advancing towards development with successes in several sectors. "In overall consideration, Bangladesh is marching towards development in women's empowerment, women's development, unemployment mitigation, employment generation and rural development," the UN chief said adding that the recent appointment of Bangladeshi citizen Ameerah Haq as the Under-Secretary-General bore the testimony of another success of the South Asian country. Ban made these remarks on July 5, 2012 while addressing a reception accorded to Ameerah Haq at the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the UN in New York.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup> "Myanmar deputy FM in town", *The Daily Star*, July 1, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=240499>.

<sup>14</sup> "Dipu Moni leaves for Japan, Cambodia", *The Daily Star*, July 8, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=241227>.

<sup>15</sup> "Myanmar president's visit deferred", *The Daily Star*, July 2, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=240606>.

<sup>16</sup> "Full-year remittance grows 10.26pc", *The Daily Star*, July 4, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=240797>.

<sup>17</sup> "FDI rises to \$1.13b: Unctad report on 2011 says textile, banking, energy, telecoms sectors attract most of the amount", *The Daily Star*, July 7, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=241083>.

<sup>18</sup> "Bangladesh making rapid progress: Ban", *The Daily Star*, July 7, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=241090>.



In other developments, according to Mizanur Rahman, chairman of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of Bangladesh, the human rights situation of the country has improved significantly though it is yet to reach a satisfactory level.<sup>19</sup>

According to reports, former Indian president Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam visited Bangladesh on July 4, 2012 on a two-day visit during which he delivered a lecture on rural development and met Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Dr. Kalam shared his ideas of rural development coinciding with the 33rd founding anniversary of Dhaka-based Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific.<sup>20</sup>

## Sri Lanka

(June 25-July 1)

- **Sri Lankan Government turns down India's offer to develop the Palali airport; India's NSA Shiv Shankar Menon visits Sri Lanka; US decides to continue GSP concession to Sri Lanka; Sri Lanka met all June target set by the IMF**

According to reports, Sri Lankan Government has turned down India's offer to develop the Palali airport and instead decided to handle it under the Sri Lankan Ministry of Civil Aviation.<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile, reports noted that Indian National Security Advisor Shiv Shankar Menon accompanied by the Joint Secretary (BSM) Harsh Vardhan Shringla went to Colombo on June 29, 2012 to discuss issues arising out of Sri Lanka's reluctance to fulfil its promises, more than three years after the crushing defeat of the Tamil Tigers. During his short visit, NSA Menon met Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa, External Affairs Minister Prof. GL. Peiris, Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa and TNA leader R. Sampanthan.<sup>22</sup> Menon reportedly raised India's concerns over the failure on the part of the government and the TNA to find a way forward to break the deadlock in the process of evolving a political solution to the national question, to address land issues in the north and to scale down the presence of military. After the meeting, he briefed Indian journalists based in Colombo and said, "I discussed recent developments, bilateral relations and areas of common concern. I was also briefed about steps being taken by the Government of Sri Lanka on political reconciliation and settlement. While this is a Sri Lankan issue and something that Sri Lanka has to do, we will continue to remain engaged with all concerned and offer any support required in this regard."<sup>23</sup>

Reports noted that United States has decided to continue the Generalized System of Preferences

<sup>19</sup> "HR situation improved: Says NHRC chief", *The Daily Star*, July 4, 2012 at <http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=240842>.

<sup>20</sup> "Kalam in Bangladesh", *Business Standard*, July 04, 2012 at <http://www.business-standard.com/generalnews/news/kalam-in-bangladesh/28329/>.

<sup>21</sup> "Govt. turns down India's offer", *Daily Mirror*, June 25, 2012 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/19703-govt-turns-down-indias-offer.html>

<sup>22</sup> "Menon arrives in Colombo", *Daily Mirror*, June 29, 2012 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/19848-menon-arrives-in-colombo.html>.

<sup>23</sup> "India expresses displeasure over SL's failure", *Daily Mirror*, June 30, 2012 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/19880-india-expresses-displeasure-over-lankas-failure.html>.

(GSP) concession to Sri Lanka as the government of Sri Lanka has taken significant steps to improve the worker rights environment in the country.<sup>24</sup>

In other developments, Central Bank of Sri Lanka's Governor Ajith Nivard Cabraal has said that Sri Lanka has met all June-end targets set by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the last tranche of a \$2.6 billion loan.<sup>25</sup>

(July 2-8)

- **Sri Lankan Air force Personnel will be trained in Bangalore; 21<sup>st</sup> IMBL meeting held in Kankasenthurai; Diplomatic relations with 15 African countries; Indian Fishermen were arrested by Sri Lankan Navy; French Naval Ship made a goodwill visit; Sri Lanka earns 18.4 billion Sri Lankan rupees from its peacekeeping operations**

According to reports, due to the heavy pressure from Tamil Nadu, the Indian Defense Ministry has decided to end the training for the Sri Lankan Air Force personnel at the Tambaram Air force Base near Chennai in Tamil Nadu. Reportedly, Indian authorities have moved the nine Sri Lankan airmen to the Yalahanka base in Bangalore. The central government has justified the move saying that the phase of the training program at the Tambaram Air force Base has been completed and a new phase will begin at the Bangalore base. However, the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa has vehemently opposed the Central government's decision to move the Sri Lankans to a different base in India saying that the Lankan airmen should not be trained anywhere in India.<sup>26</sup>

Meanwhile, reports noted that the Navies of Sri Lanka and India discussed a range of maritime issues at the 21<sup>st</sup> International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) meeting held between Sri Lanka and India onboard the Sri Lanka Naval Ship Sagara at the Indo-Sri Lanka Maritime Boundary Line off Kankasanthurei on July 6, 2012. During this meeting, matters of mutual interests related to naval operations and fishing activities were discussed. The Sri Lankan delegation headed by Commander Northern Naval Area, Rear Admiral Ravindra Wijegunaratne, consisted of Sri Lanka Navy and Sri Lanka Coast Guard officials. The Indian delegation consisted of Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard officials.<sup>27</sup>

According to reports, acting on a proposal made by the External Affairs Minister, Prof. G. L. Peiris, the cabinet of ministers has approved establishing diplomatic relations with Mauritania, Malawi, Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Central African Republic, Gabonese Republic, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Cape Verde, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Niger. A Sri Lankan mission in Nigeria is expected to be opened during the latter part of this year.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> "US to continue with GSP concession", Daily Mirror, June 30, 2012 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/19881-us-praises-sl-continue-with-gsp-concession.html>.

<sup>25</sup> "SL meets all IMF loan targets", Daily Mirror, July 1, 2012 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/19895-sl-meets-all-imf-loan-targets-.html>.

<sup>26</sup> "India moves training of Sri Lankan airmen to Bangalore", *Colombo Page*, July 6, 2012 at [http://www.colombopage.com/archive\\_12A/Jul06\\_1341592298CH.php](http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jul06_1341592298CH.php).

<sup>27</sup> "Sri Lanka, India navies discuss maritime issues of mutual interest", *Colombo Page*, Jul 6, 2012 at [http://www.colombopage.com/archive\\_12A/Jul06\\_1341581879CH.php](http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jul06_1341581879CH.php).

<sup>28</sup> "Sri Lanka to establish diplomatic relations with 15 African countries", *Colombo Page*, July 5, 2012 at [http://www.colombopage.com/archive\\_12A/Jul05\\_1341493101CH.php](http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jul05_1341493101CH.php).



According to reports, ten Indian fishermen and two fishing trawlers with fishing equipment were taken into custody by the Sri Lanka Navy in Mannar. They were handed over to the Talaimannar police for further action.<sup>29</sup>

Reports noted that the French Naval Ship 'Dupay De Lome' arrived at the Port of Trincomalee on July 2, 2012 for a goodwill visit. The Navy Headquarters said that the visit is the first of its kind by a French naval ship to the Trincomalee Harbour.<sup>30</sup>

In other developments, according to reports, Sri Lanka has earned a considerable income from United Nations peacekeeping operations in other countries, Army Media Spokesman Brigadier Ruwan Wanigasekara has said. According to Wanigasekara, Sri Lanka has earned in excess of 18.4 billion Sri Lankan rupees from its peacekeeping operations around the world since 2004. Sri Lanka is a committed partner for UN peacekeeping operations with a total of 1,215 men and women from the three Armed Forces and the Police currently serving in seven different peacekeeping missions.<sup>31</sup>

## Maldives

(June 25-July 1)

- **President returns back from Rio+20; Maldivian Ambassador to the UN speaks at the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in New York; President's congratulatory message to the President-elect of the Arab Republic of Egypt**

According to reports, on his arrival back to the country from Rio+20, President Waheed said that Rio summit had brought renewed attention to the challenges faced by smaller countries, noting that the protection and the preservation of the seas were highly emphasised at the summit. The President said that discussions at the summit were focused on ways to achieve sustainable development in a way that took into account the economic, social and environmental factors. The President also revealed the decision made at the summit, to hold a sustainable development conference for smaller countries, in the year 2014.<sup>32</sup> President Dr Mohamed Waheed then briefed the cabinet on June 28, 2012 on his recent visit to Rio de Janeiro to attend the United Nations conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20. Speaking at the meeting, the President noted that Heads of State from over 120 countries took part at this conference, and shared their sustainable development plans. The President especially underlined the great cooperation from world leaders at the summit, on certain challenging areas.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> "Indian fishermen, trawlers in custody", *Daily Mirror*, July 3, 2012 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/19959-indian-fishermen-trawlers-in-custody.html>.

<sup>30</sup> "French navy ship in SL", *Daily Mirror*, July 2, 2012 at <http://www.dailymirror.lk/news/19948-french-war-ship-in-sl.html>.

<sup>31</sup> "Sri Lanka earns over 18 billion rupees from UN peacekeeping", *Colombo Page*, July 8, 2012 at [http://www.colombopage.com/archive\\_12A/Jul08\\_1341762311CH.php](http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Jul08_1341762311CH.php).

<sup>32</sup> "President Waheed arrives back in Male' following conclusion of Rio+20", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, June 27, 2012 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=7592>.

<sup>33</sup> "President Waheed briefs the Cabinet on Rio+20", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, June 28, 2012 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=7600>.

In another development, speaking at the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in New York, the Maldives' Ambassador to the United Nations Ahmed Sareer pledged his country's continued dedication to the ongoing fight against terrorism.<sup>34</sup>

In other developments, President Dr Mohamed Waheed has sent a congratulatory message to the President-elect of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Mohammed Mursi, following his election as the President of Egypt.<sup>35</sup>

(July 2-8)

- **President's Office responds to the article written by Former President Mohamed Nasheed; Vice President Mohamed Waheed Deen thanks the US**

According to reports, President's Office Spokesperson Masood Imad has written in the the Financial Times in response to a recent article in which former President Mohamed Nasheed in which he had called for a tourism boycott. "It is hugely irresponsible and deeply concerning that a former head of state and current presidential candidate for the elections taking place in 2013 is attempting to destroy the heart of the Maldivian economy - tourism," writes Imad. "The Maldivian people make their living through the success of the tourism industry and Mr Nasheed is seeking to devastate their livelihood." Imad has also emphasised that Nasheed's claims of "Talibanisation" are in their entirety completely false, inflammatory and offensive. According to Imad, such accusations accentuate his misunderstanding of Islam, the Maldives and the Maldives people.<sup>36</sup>

In another development, Maldives Vice President Mohamed Waheed Deen has thanked the United States government for its continuous support and assistance to the Maldives, at the reception held to mark the 236th Independence Day of the US. Underlining the many areas of partnership between the two countries, the Vice President especially noted the Maldives-USA defense cooperation, which has been vital in enhancing the national defense capabilities of the Maldives.<sup>37</sup>

## B. East Asia

### Japan

- **Japanese government decides to buy Senkaku islands offsets Tokyo metropolitan government's plan to do the same; Japan to contribute 3 billion dollars in aid to Afghanistan;**

<sup>34</sup> "Maldives' ambassador supports UN counter-terror strategy", *Minivan News*, July 1, 2012 at <http://minivannews.com/category/news-in-brief>.

<sup>35</sup> "President congratulates the New Egyptian President", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, June 25 2012 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=7579>.

<sup>36</sup> "Nasheed's claims of military coup, talibanisation false, Masood tells FT", *Minivan News*, July 5, 2012 at <http://minivannews.com/category/news-in-brief>.

<sup>37</sup> "Vice President thanks US Government for continuous support and assistance", *The President's Office, Republic of Maldives*, July 8, 2012 at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/Index.aspx?lid=11&dcid=7629>.

## Japan reacts sharply to Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's visit to the Northern Territories

According to reports, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda recently announced his government's intention to buy the Senakaku Islands in the Okinawa Prefecture. He also said that the government has already contacted the owner of those islands in this regard. While taking a firm stance on the territorial dispute over Senkaku islands, Noda reiterated "There can be no doubt that the Senakaku Islands are part of Japanese territory, both under international law and from historical point of view." He further stated that the islands "are under the effective control of our nation and there is no territorial issue with any other country with any other country over the islands."<sup>38</sup>

However, reports noted that Noda Administration's plan is bound to offset Tokyo Metropolitan government's plan to purchase the disputed islands. It is worth noting that Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara, about two months ago, announced the planned move in that direction. Tokyo has also collected more than 1.3 billion yen in donations from all over the country to purchase the islands. While reacting to national government's plan, Ishihara has stated that Tokyo will proceed with its plan regardless of the central government's policy.<sup>39</sup>

In another development, according to reports, Japan has recently decided to offer about 3 billion dollars in aid to Afghanistan over the next five years till 2016. The aid will basically be used to help the war-torn country to develop its economy and maintain security. It is worth noting that on July 8, 2012, Japan hosted and chaired an international conference that was to offer assistance on Afghanistan. The meeting was attended by representatives from about 80 countries and organizations. Japan has already set the goal of 15.5 billion dollars in aid for Afghanistan between 2012-2013 from the participant countries and organizations.<sup>40</sup>

In the meantime, reports noted that Japanese government has strongly reacted to Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's visit on July 3, 2012 to Kunashiri Island, one of the four Russian-held northern Islands claimed by Japan. While stating that the visit was nothing more than the Russian Prime Minister's presence on a Russian territory, Medvedev indicated that he would continue to make such visit in the future. It is worth noting that it was Medvedev's second visit to Kunashiri as part of his tour of the Russian Far East. In November 2010, he paid his first visit to Kunashiri as Russian President. While reacting to Medvedev's visit, Japanese Foreign Minister Koichiro Gamba stated that the Russian PM's move counters Tokyo's stance on the Northern Territories and "throws cold water on efforts to create a favorable environment fore better bilateral ties." The Japanese government has apparently summoned Russian Ambassador to Japan and filed a protest.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> "Govt looks to buy Senkakus/Noda says talks with islands' owner have already begun", Yomiuri Daily, July 8, 2012, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T120707002597.htm>

<sup>39</sup> "Tokyo will fight for Senkakus", Yomiuri Daily, July 8, 2012, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T120707002529.htm>

<sup>40</sup> "Japan to offer 3 bil. dollars in aid to Afghanistan", Yomiuri Daily, July 7, 2012, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T120706004771.htm>

<sup>41</sup> "Medvedev 'indifferent' to Japan over island visit", Yomiuri Daily, July 6, 2012, at <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T120705003874.htm>

## South Korea

- **South Korea and China agree to submit a joint maritime claim against Japan**

According to reports, both South Korea and China have recently agreed to submit a joint claim to an extended portion of continental shelf to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf. They have apparently made this move to counter Japan's increasing assertiveness in the maritime area. It is worth noting that both the states submitted their respective preliminary reports in May 2009, arguing that their continental shelves stretch to the Okinawa Trough in the East China Sea, which is known for rich reserves of natural gas and oil.<sup>42</sup>

## C. West Asia

### Iran

- **Iran's Oil Minister Rostam Qasemi: Iran ready for new set of sanctions; Iran elected deputy for UN Arms Trade Treaty Summit**

According to reports, Iran's Oil Minister Rostam Qasemi has said that the Iranian government is ready to confront the new set of sanctions, and that the price of oil will differ from the current one if Iran's exported oil is not in the market. He stressed Iran's position that the oil market should not be politicised and the citizens of importing countries will have to pay the price for such political decisions.<sup>43</sup> Meanwhile, a Foreign Ministry spokesperson has advised the P5+1 group to enter negotiations with Iran "seriously and based on the Non-Proliferation Treaty".<sup>44</sup>

In another development, reports noted that Iran has been elected as one of the deputies for drafting a bill to regulate the international arms trade treaty during the fourth day of the UN Arms Trade Treaty Summit held in New York with representatives of 193 countries. Representatives have one month to draft and get approval on the bill to regulate current uncontrolled arms trade.<sup>45</sup>

### Syria

- **Chinese Foreign Ministry: US criticism of China over Syria "unacceptable"; Turkey calls for transition period in Syria without al-Assad**

According to reports, China's Foreign Ministry has said that it finds "unacceptable" US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's criticism of China at the most recent Friends of Syria meeting. The ministry's spokesperson Liu Wiemin said that China is not impeding the process of resolving the

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<sup>42</sup> "Korea, China agree on joint maritime claim against Japan", Korea Herald, July 8, 2012, at <http://view.koreaherald.com/kh/view.php?ud=20120708000284>

<sup>43</sup> "Iran completely ready for new set of sanctions - oil minister", Mehr news agency, July 1, 2012

<sup>44</sup> "Sanctions are 'threat' against security of oil supply says Iran official", Interview with Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Ramin Mehmanparast by Sadeq Salmani headlined: "P5+1 should enter the negotiations based on NPT" by Iranian newspaper Iran on July 3, 2012

<sup>45</sup> "Iran elected as deputy for UN Arms Trade Treaty Summit", Islamic Republic News Agency, July 7, 2012

Syrian crisis. The response followed the third Friends of Syria meeting held on July 6, 2012 in Paris at which Clinton said that Russia and China are “holding up progress” in finding a settlement to the crisis, and that their stances were “no longer tolerable”. Liu added that China’s impartial and constructive stance, and its diplomatic efforts have been widely recognised and supported by the international community, and that any efforts to “blemish” China’s image would “end in vain”.<sup>46</sup> It would be worth noting that China has not attended the three meetings of the group held this year in Tunisia, Turkey and France.<sup>47</sup>

In another development, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has urged that the international community act more determinedly towards a transition period in Syria without President Bashar al-Assad. He stressed that Turkey has been careful not to intervene in other countries’ internal affairs but the situation in Syria has created tensions for Turkey, especially along its shared border.<sup>48</sup>

## Jordan

- **Instability in Syria affecting Jordanian economy, say trade experts**

According to reports, Jordanian trade experts have said that conditions in Syria are adversely affecting the Jordanian economy, particularly the private sector. Syria is the main land route for exports to and imports from Turkey, East Europe and Lebanon. Syria is seen as a strategic economic partner of Jordan, with exports and imports including food, animal and farming products, electrical appliances, and cotton textiles. The bilateral trade volume between the two countries amounts to more than US\$ 1 billion annually.<sup>49</sup>

## Israel/Palestine

- **Palestinian leaders hail UN decision to place Bethlehem on World Heritage List; Israel not to cooperate with UNHRC probe of settlement activity; Russia to provide US\$ 1.5m worth aid to PNA**

According to reports, the Palestinian President’s office has welcomed a decision by the UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee to include the West Bank city of Bethlehem and its holy sites on its World Heritage List. The spokesperson added that the vote was a “recognition of the rights of our people and their independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.” Palestinian leaders see the decision as one step towards international recognition of a Palestinian state.<sup>50</sup>

Meanwhile, according to reports, Israel has said it will refuse to cooperate with a UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) fact finding mission on Israeli West Bank settlement activity and building

<sup>46</sup> “Clinton’s criticism of China over Syria “unacceptable” - Foreign Ministry”, Xinhua news agency, July 7, 2012

<sup>47</sup> “China not to attend Friends of Syria meet in Paris - Foreign Ministry”, Xinhua news agency, July 5, 2012

<sup>48</sup> “Turkey calls for transition period in Syria without Al-Asad”, Anadolu (also known as Anatolia) news agency, July 7, 2012

<sup>49</sup> “Trade experts say instability in Syria adversely affecting Jordan’s economy”, Al-Hayat website, June 29, 2012

<sup>50</sup> “Palestinian leaders hail UN decision to include Bethlehem on World Heritage List”, Palestinian news agency Wafa website, June 30, 2012



in East Jerusalem. The UNRC appointed three international jurists to the mission on July 6, 2012. An Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesperson has said that members of the mission will not be allowed entry into Israel and occupied territories. He added that the mission embodies “the inherent distortion that typifies the UNHRC treatment of Israel and the hijacking of the important human rights agenda by non democratic countries”.<sup>51</sup>

In other developments, reports noted that Russia will provide aid worth more than US\$ 1.5 million to the Palestinian National Authority during this year.<sup>52</sup>

## D. Africa

- **South Africa calls for national dialogue on social cohesion; African companies emerging as leading investors on the continent; Experts warn over rise in Islamic extremism in Africa; West African leaders discuss situation in North Mali; India and West African cooperation to attract FDI**

According to reports, during a summit on social cohesion, South African President Jacob Zuma called for national dialogue on social cohesion. The “social cohesion summit”, the first event of its kind since the end of white minority rule, aims at getting citizens of all races to confront social inequalities and challenges. Zuma clarified that it was through dialogue and reaching out to one another that South Africa was able to produce what is now fondly referred to as the “South African miracle”.<sup>53</sup>

According to a report on foreign direct investment released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), as the U.S. and European companies withdraw from their efforts to bankroll projects across Africa, other African investors are quickly emerging to pick up the task. As per the report, investment between African countries has almost doubled in the past five years, to 13 per cent of new projects started on the continent in 2011.<sup>54</sup>

According to analysts, a rise in Islamic extremism from east to West Africa has led to a surge in deadly attacks and kidnappings by groups linked to Al-Qaeda, sparking fears of a new “arc of terror” on the continent. They further observed that while these groups are mostly occupied with domestic issues, their anti-western rhetoric and targeting of foreigners pose a wider challenge. There is also growing evidence of ties between armed groups from the Sahel and east Africa and Nigeria. According to them, the three main Al Qaeda-linked groups are Somalia’s Shebab in the Horn of Africa; Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) which is active across the Sahel; and Boko Haram, which has sharply increased its attacks in Nigeria since 2010.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>51</sup> “Israel refuses to cooperate with UNHCR probe of settlement activity”, The Jerusalem Post website, July 6, 2012

<sup>52</sup> “Russia to provide Palestinian National Authority with 1.5m dollars of aid in 2012”, Interfax news agency, July 4, 2012

<sup>53</sup> “S.Africa’s Zuma calls for dialogue to mend divisions”, *AFP*, July 5, 2012, at [http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jcNMVHazyhZIPN\\_FgKeG7j6VwB\\_Q?docId=CNG.3d4dfb998642cb4dc07e4b704572326d.a21](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jcNMVHazyhZIPN_FgKeG7j6VwB_Q?docId=CNG.3d4dfb998642cb4dc07e4b704572326d.a21)

<sup>54</sup> Patrick MCGroarty (2012), “Emerging Investors in Africa: Africans”, *The Wall Street Journal*, July 5, 2012, at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304830704577496371147637932.html>

<sup>55</sup> “Africa facing sharp rise in Islamic extremism”, *Hindustan Times*, July 06, 2012, at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/Africa/Africa-facing-sharp-rise-in-Islamic-extremism/Article1-884045.aspx>

During a conference in Burkina Faso on recent developments in Mali, the leaders of West Africa said that the international war crimes court should probe abuses committed in the country's Islamist-held desert north. The leaders also urged Malian civil leaders to secure a national unity government that could address the crisis that hit their country since a March 22 military coup accelerated a northern rebel advance. The leaders also asked for an end to hostilities between all parties in Mali before the Ramadan Muslim month of fasting. However, Mali's president and prime minister were absent at the summit, northern representatives walked out, and supporters of the military coup staged a counter demonstration in Bamako.<sup>56</sup>

Earlier, reports noted that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is willing to send about 3000 troops to Mali to improve the situation. According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNCHR), nearly 200,000 people have fled Mali and sought refuge in neighbouring countries, while another 155,000 people have been displaced within Mali itself.<sup>57</sup>

In other developments, according to Adrienne Diop, ECOWAS Commissioner for Gender and Human Development, renewed partnership between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and India is expected to attract much needed foreign direct investment (FDI) into the West African sub-region and create fresh business opportunities for the mutual benefit. Diop opined that strengthening south-south cooperation in the area of trade is a crucial way to speed up development and create jobs. Director for Private Sector of ECOWAS, Alfred Braimah noted that unlocking the huge potential of India for the benefit of West Africa was central to ECOWAS agreeing to enter into partnership. Representing the India side, Ram Prasad, Head of Chancery for the Indian Commission in Nigeria called ECOWAS partnership as an endorsement of the synergy which the south-south cooperation represents.<sup>58</sup>

## II. DEFENCE REVIEW

### National

- **DRDO developing robotic soldiers; Indigenous attack helicopter LCH undergoing sea-level trials off Chennai**

According to reports, DRDO is in the process of developing robotic soldiers, which would take a final shape soon. V K Saraswat, Director General, Defence Research and Development Organisation, told that these soldiers are capable of sensing and clearing mines, which would

<sup>56</sup> Romaric Ollo Hien (2012), "West African bloc urges 'war crimes' probe in north Mali", *AFP*, July 8, 2012, at [http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hrWSuC7fx5LOVfSdM\\_u4zTsgCi\\_Q?docId=CNG.e4d5b41f955562fb3331009f291ad83b.951](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hrWSuC7fx5LOVfSdM_u4zTsgCi_Q?docId=CNG.e4d5b41f955562fb3331009f291ad83b.951)

<sup>57</sup> Katrin Gaensler (2012), "Africa ponders as Mali crisis deepens", *The Australian*, July 7, 2012, at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/breaking-news/africa-ponders-as-mali-crisis-deepens/story-fn3dxix6-1226419742517>

<sup>58</sup> "West Africa to gain from Indian foreign direct investment", *Business Day*, July 8, 2012, at <http://www.businessdayonline.com/NG/index.php/news/76-hot-topic/40767-west-africa-to-gain-from-indian-foreign-direct-investment>

benefit and help all forces and works are going on in Bangalore and Pune units. DRDO is also building a robot mule to carry heavy luggage up to 400 KG to high altitudes. Since soldiers develop many physical problems, the organisation has now started working on high altitudes and carrying out research on how to mitigate these problems, Saraswat said. "We are also developing medicine for them and also working on high altitude agriculture," he added.<sup>59</sup>

In another development, according to reports, the Light Combat Helicopter (LCH), which was developed by the Hindustan Aeronautical Limited (HAL), is currently undergoing sea-level trials off Chennai. The trials commenced last week and will last for about 10 more days. The trials will evaluate effects of flying the chopper at sea-level. The Indian Air Force and the Army together are looking at inducting 150 LCHs in the future. The trials are overseen by Wing Commander Unni Pillai, chief test pilot, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). He said the second prototype or Technology Demonstrator (TD-2) of the LCH was being subjected to various tests at the sea-level conditions. Sea trials are part of the process of testing the effectiveness of the aircraft at various altitudes and temperature conditions. Pillai stated, "All the earlier trials were carried out in and around Bangalore which is about 3,000 feet above sea level. Now we are testing the helicopter at the altitude at about 500 feet above sea-level. The performance of the helicopter has been good and so far there have been no surprises."<sup>60</sup>

## International

- **European Union foreign policy Chief to visit Beijing to boost coordination on foreign affairs and security; Donor countries pledge \$16B Afghan aid at Tokyo meet**

According to reports, European Union foreign policy Chief Catherine Ashton will visit Beijing on July 9 -10, 2012 for talks aimed at boosting coordination on foreign affairs and security. The third round of the high level EU-China Strategic Dialogue will see Ashton meet Premier Wen Jiabao, as well as State Councillor Dai Bingguo, who is in charge of foreign policy, and Defence Minister Liang Guanglie. The first Strategic Dialogue was attended by Ashton and Dai in September 2010 in the southwestern Chinese province of Guizhou. The second meeting was held in Hungary in May 2011. At the last EU-China summit, which was delayed from October 2011 to February 2012 because of the European sovereign debt crisis, China renewed its support for the euro. The third Strategic Dialogue will help prepare the ground for the next EU-China summit in Brussels in the autumn. The EU is the largest market for Chinese exporters, who are suffering the effects of the European economic crisis. After Beijing, Ashton will visit Hong Kong on July 11 before traveling to Cambodia for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) regional forum.<sup>61</sup>

In another development, according to reports, donor nations on July 8, 2012 pledged \$16 billion for Afghanistan to prevent the country from sliding back into turmoil when foreign combat troops

<sup>59</sup> "DRDO in the process of developing robotic soldiers," PTI, July 5, 2012, at [http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-07-05/science/32550397\\_1\\_k-saraswat-brahmos-defence-research](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-07-05/science/32550397_1_k-saraswat-brahmos-defence-research)

<sup>60</sup> "Light Combat Helicopter undergoing sea trials off Chennai," TNN, July 6, 2012, at [http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-07-06/bangalore/32565197\\_1\\_light-combat-helicopter-sea-level-trials-lch](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-07-06/bangalore/32565197_1_light-combat-helicopter-sea-level-trials-lch)

<sup>61</sup> "EU Foreign Policy Chief to Discuss Defense With China," July 7, 2012, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120707/DEFREG01/307070002/EU-Foreign-Policy-Chief-Discuss-Defense-China?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|FRONTPAGE>

depart. A statement at the closing of a conference in Tokyo confirmed donors would stump up \$16 billion in civilian aid through 2015, with the pledge expected to come with several pre-conditions including reforms to clamp down on corruption. Afghan President Hamid Karzai was in the Japanese capital along with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for a gathering focused on the “transformation decade” after the NATO drawdown. “In the initial stage of the transformation decade, the international community committed to providing over \$16 billion through 2015, and sustaining support, through 2017, at or near levels of the past decade to respond to the fiscal gap estimated by the World Bank and the Afghan government,” the statement said.<sup>62</sup>

### III. INTERNAL SECURITY REVIEW

#### Jammu & Kashmir

- **Cops shot dead in South Kashmir; Four injured in Ganderbal clashes; AFSPA to be revoked in Jammu and Kashmir by December this year; Militants killed in North Kashmir; Militants attack army patrol near Pampore; LeT claims responsibility for the attack near Pampore**

According to reports, two policemen were shot dead by suspected militants in two separate attacks at busy markets in Pulwama and Kulgam districts of South Kashmir on July 3, 2012. The assailants also decamped with the service rifle of one of the cops.

Police sources said that the two constables were killed when some unidentified gunmen, suspected to be militants, shot at them at close range while the duo was on duty. Barely three hours after the shootout at Pulwama, unidentified gunmen again struck at Yaripora area of Kulgam district killing another police constable. The assailants also snatched the service rifle of the constable.<sup>63</sup>

In another development, according to reports, four persons were injured after clashes broke between police and students of Government Degree College at Ganderbal. The clashes broke out after the students of Degree College staged protests against the college authorities for allegedly beating a girl student for not being in college uniform. Eyewitness said that the students agitated against the incident and marched towards the main road and where they were intercepted by the police. At the main chowk, students refused to give up the protests and instead started sloganeering. The students pelted stones at the cops who retaliated with lathis to disperse them.<sup>64</sup>

According to reports, Army seems to have finally agreed to the withdrawal of controversial Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from two districts of Jammu and Kashmir. According to media reports, AFSPA would be revoked from Srinagar and Jammu districts by December this year and

<sup>62</sup> “Donors Pledge \$16B Afghan Aid at Tokyo Meet,” July 8, 2012, at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120708/DEFREG03/307080004/Donors-Pledge-16B-Afghan-Aid-Tokyo-Meet?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|FRONTPAGE>

<sup>63</sup> “2 Cops shot dead in South Kashmir”, *Greater Kashmir*, July 3, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Jul/4/2-cops-shot-dead-in-south-kashmir-67.asp>

<sup>64</sup> “4 injured in Ganderbal clashes”, *Greater Kashmir*, July 3, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Jul/4/4-injured-in-ganderbal-clashes-37.asp>

a “corresponding” note from the Army is being sent to the Defence Ministry in this regard soon. This development is believed to be the outcome of one-to-one between J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and the new Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Bikram Singh during last month here, when the General was on two day visit to the state.<sup>65</sup>

According to reports, three unidentified militants were killed while a soldier and Special Operations Group (SOG) personnel sustained injuries in two separate encounters in Nowgam and Zachaldara areas of Handwara in Kupwara district of North Kashmir on July 5, 2012. The GOC said that three AK 47 Rifles, One Pistol, One Under Barrel Grenade Launcher (UBGL), some Indian currency, two compasses, one Global Positioning System, grenades and some other ammunition were recovered from the slain militants.<sup>66</sup>

In another incident, according to reports, militants attacked Army’s Corridor Protection Party (CPP) on Srinagar-Jammu highway near saffron town Pampore, killing a Rashtriya Rifles (RR) soldier on the spot and injuring another. Militants fled from the spot alongwith the AK-47 assault rifle of the deceased soldier. Army and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) carried out searches in the area; however, police said nobody was arrested.<sup>67</sup>

In other developments, according to reports, militant outfit Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) on July 7, 2012 claimed that its cadres killed two Army personnel at Pampore and decamped with a rifle. Meanwhile, the LeT spokesman Dr Abdullah Gaznavi said in a tele-statement that cadres from LeT attacked Army personnel at Pampore on July 7 afternoon and killed two of them. They also decamped with a rifle of a killed force personnel. The LeT spokesman dispelled the police claim that cadres of the outfit are only active in Sopore area.<sup>68</sup>

## North East India

- **Prime Minister announces Rs. 500 crore flood relief grant to Assam; ULFA militant held in Jorhat, Assam; Ultras nabbed; Tripura militants surrender with weapons; Peace talks with National Democratic Front of Bodoland soon; NSCN (K) sets term for peace; Demand for Inner Line Permit (ILP) gaining momentum in Manipur; Maoists’ bid for base in lower Assam**

According to reports, Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh admitted that Assam has been suffering one of the worst ever flood in recent years and announced a Central grant of Rs 500 crore to the State to tide over the crisis. He also assured that additional funds would be given to Assam after receiving the report from the Central team, which is assessing the damages. Addressing media persons at the Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport in Guwahati, after assessing

<sup>65</sup> “Srinagar, Jammu to get Azadi from AFSPA”, *Greater Kashmir*, July 5, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Jul/6/srinagar-jammu-to-get-azadi-from-afspa-54.asp>

<sup>66</sup> “3 militants killed in Zachaldara gunfight”, *Greater Kashmir*, July 5, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Jul/6/3-militants-killed-in-zachaldara-gunfight-41.asp>

<sup>67</sup> “Militants attack army patrol near Pampore”, *Greater Kashmir*, July 7, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Jul/8/militants-attack-army-patrol-near-pampore-28.asp>

<sup>68</sup> “LeT claims responsibility”, *Greater Kashmir*, July 7, 2012 at <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2012/Jul/8/let-claims-responsibility-26.asp>



the flood situation in the Assam, Dr Singh said that the Centre would take medium and long term measures for the solution of the problems of flood and erosion.<sup>69</sup>

In another development, according to reports, in a jolt to the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) faction opposed to peace talks, a cadre of the outfit and a surrendered militant were arrested in Jorhat district and a cache of arms seized. ULFA anti-talks faction cadre Raju Saikia and surrendered militant Rajat Dutta were arrested on July 4, 2012 and arms and ammunitions were recovered. Some other cadres of the outfit managed to escape, taking advantage of the darkness. The seized arms and ammunition included nine landmines, one M81 rifle, one AK-47 rifle and 90 rounds of ammunition, magazines, six bombs and five remote controls.<sup>70</sup>

Meanwhile, Guwahati city police on July 3, 2012 arrested Manjit Phanglo alias Main Dimasa, the self-styled deputy c-in-c of the Dimasa National Revolutionary Front from Ananda Nagar under Noonmati Police Station. Police recovered a .32 pistol from his possession. Later, based on his revelations, the self-styled vice-chairman of the outfit, Nilesh Thousen alias Thairang Dimasa, was also nabbed.<sup>71</sup>

According to reports, three militants of a banned separatist outfit have surrendered to the Indian security forces in Tripura after a crackdown on their training camp in Bangladesh. The three top leaders of the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) - Kashirai Reang, Debadanta Reang and Brikhu Reang - surrendered to the para-military Assam Rifles at Khedachara in northern part of the state. The guerrillas surrendered an AK-56 rifle and some China-made arms and ammunition. So far, around 85 militants of the banned NLFT and All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) have surrendered with arms this year.<sup>72</sup>

Reports noted that Central Government is hoping to start the process of talks with the Ranjan Daimary faction of the National Democratic Front of Boroland (NDFB) within this month. However, no final decision has yet been taken on the release of Daimary, the chairman of the outfit on bail to facilitate the peace process. The outfit has made it clear that formal talks could start only after the release of Daimary, while, a delegation of the Bodo National Conference (BNC) recently met the Union Home Minister to demand release of the NDFB chief.<sup>73</sup>

According to reports, the NSCN-K Ceasefire Supervisory Board (CSB) supervisor Lincoln has stated that the group is willing to stop all forms of factional violence provided the Khole-Kitovi faction also agrees to totally stop it. He stated this while interacting with media persons after the closed-door meeting of the Ceasefire Supervisory Board in Kohima. On the other hand, Lincoln

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<sup>69</sup> "PM announces Rs 500-cr grant to State", *The Assam Tribune*, July 2, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0312/at05>

<sup>70</sup> "ULFA militant held, a cache of arms seized in Assam", *The Assam Tribune*, July 5, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0512/at044>

<sup>71</sup> "Top ultras nabbed", *The Assam Tribune*, July 4, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0512/at09>

<sup>72</sup> "Three Tripura militants surrender with weapons", *The Assam Tribune*, July 4, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0512/oth07>

<sup>73</sup> "Peace talks with NDFB ® soon", *The Assam Tribune*, July 5, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0612/city06>

also revealed that the NSCN-K leadership is willing to sit across the table with Government of India to find a solution to the vexed Indo-Naga problem if the latter extends a formal invitation.<sup>74</sup>

In other developments, according to reports, the demand for implementation of Inner Line Permit (ILP) system in Manipur is gaining momentum with the advisor of Federation of Regional Indigenous Societies (FREINDS) launching a fast unto death agitation. KB Sharma, advisor of FREINDS and theatre artiste is observing the hunger strike on the demand for introduction of ILP in Manipur. The protest has been taken up to enable the future generations to protect the identity of the people of Manipur and to maintain the rule of law. Sit-in-protests are being held in most parts of the State capital Imphal for the last several days demanding for implementation of ILP system in Manipur.<sup>75</sup>

According to reports, after the formation of the upper Assam leading committee, the Maoist rebels have started making efforts to strengthen the lower Assam leading committee and to set up bases in the Barak Valley districts. On the other hand, the main aim of the central committee of the Maoists in the North East region is procurement of sophisticated weapons available with the militant groups of the region.<sup>76</sup>

## IV. UNITED NATIONS (UN) REVIEW

(June 18-24)

- **UN Security Council welcomes resumption of talks between the two Sudans; Rio+20 draft document seen as mere beginning, UN manages to obtain pledges worth \$513 billion; India's concern of giving eradication of poverty the priority upheld, HCC became the only Indian company featured in climate report; UN report says that Maoists recruit children; UNSC examines request for UN deployment in Mali; Kuwaiti and Iraqi governments urged to step up engagements with UN envoys; Challenges faced by UN peacekeepers discussed in Security Council**

According to reports, the UN Security Council welcomed the resumption of negotiations between Sudan and South Sudan but simultaneously expressed concern over the implementation of measures that were aimed to reduce tensions. The Council also voiced 'strong concern' about delays and the unresolved elements of resolution 2046 and urged the resolution of outstanding issues within the time-frame laid out by the AU Roadmap.<sup>77</sup>

In another development, the UN conference on sustainable development held at Rio de Janeiro witnessed the participation of leaders from around the globe. Contentious issues such as technology

<sup>74</sup> "NSCN-K sets term for peace", *The Assam Tribune*, July 5, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0612/oth05>

<sup>75</sup> "Demand for ILP gaining momentum in Manipur", *The Assam Tribune*, July 6, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0712/oth06>

<sup>76</sup> "Moists' bid for base in lower Assam", *The Assam Tribune*, July 8, 2012 at <http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=jul0912/at07>

<sup>77</sup> "Security Council welcomes resumption of talks between Sudan and South Sudan", *UN News Centre*, June 19, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42269&Cr=Sudan&Cr1=>

transfers from rich to poor nations and new financing for developing countries were set aside. There was widespread agreement among diplomats who saw the summit as a mere beginning. The draft document placed before the leaders was criticized on the grounds that the language used turned demands into goals that the individual nations should aspire for. The absence of US President Barack Obama, Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron and German leader Angela Merkel suggested that the action taken in Rio was not getting the global spotlight.<sup>78</sup> However, UN managed to obtain pledges worth \$513 billion from governments and companies for projects that aimed at reducing the strain on the planet's resources.<sup>79</sup>

Meanwhile, India's concern of giving the eradication of poverty the highest priority was agreed to by the other 192 nations. The Rio+20 document noted that the eradication of poverty was the greatest global challenge and was an indispensable requirement for sustainable development.<sup>80</sup> Separately, Hindustan Construction Company became the only Indian company to be featured in the climate report issued by the UN Global Compact and UN Environment Programme.<sup>81</sup>

According to the UN Secretary General's annual report on children and armed conflict, the Maoists recruit and indoctrinate children for squads and associations in Chattisgarh and in adjoining states. The report also noted that vigilante groups like the Salwa Judum also recruit children.<sup>82</sup>

Following a request for a UN mandate for the deployment of an African stabilization force to Mali, the UNSC took it up for further examination. The African Union and the ECOWAS requested the mandate to ensure the protection of the state institutions in Mali and provide assistance in upholding the territorial integrity of the country.<sup>83</sup>

In other developments, according to reports, Kuwaiti and Iraqi governments were urged by the Council to step up their engagement with the UN envoy that is currently helping the countries resolve issues since the 1990 Iraqi invasion. It also urged the countries to begin exploring other arrangements to consolidate and ensure continued cooperation in the search for missing persons and property.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>78</sup> "Big UN environmental summit opens in Rio", *The Times of India*, June 21, 2012 at [http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-06-21/developmental-issues/32351820\\_1\\_sustainable-development-earth-summit-german-leader](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-06-21/developmental-issues/32351820_1_sustainable-development-earth-summit-german-leader)

<sup>79</sup> "UN reaps sustainability pledges of \$513 billion in Rio", *Business Standard*, June 24, 2012 at <http://www.business-standard.com/india/news/un-reaps-sustainability-pledges513-billion-in-rio/478312/>

<sup>80</sup> "India's eradication of poverty ground sweeps the day at Rio", *Zeeneews.com*, June 21, 2012 at [http://zeeneews.india.com/news/rio-summit-2012/indias-eradication-of-poverty-ground-sweeps-the-day-at-rio\\_783031.html](http://zeeneews.india.com/news/rio-summit-2012/indias-eradication-of-poverty-ground-sweeps-the-day-at-rio_783031.html)

<sup>81</sup> "HCC only Indian firm featured in UN climate report", *Business Standard*, June 19, 2012 at <http://www.business-standard.com/india/news/hcc-only-indian-firm-featured-in-un-climate-report/175261/on>

<sup>82</sup> "Maoists recruiting child soldiers: UN report", *The Times of India*, June 20, 2012 at [http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-06-20/india/32334420\\_1\\_school-buildings-maoists-radhika-coomaraswamy](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-06-20/india/32334420_1_school-buildings-maoists-radhika-coomaraswamy)

<sup>83</sup> "Security Council examining request for UN mandate for African troops in Mali", *UN News Centre*, June 18, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42266&Cr=+mali+&Cr1=>

<sup>84</sup> "Security Council urges greater efforts by Iraq, Kuwait to resolve post-invasion issues", *UN News Centre*, June 20, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42291&Cr=kuwait&Cr1=iraq>

In the interim, the UNSC met to discuss the challenges that UN peacekeepers face. Among other issues discussed, the Force Commander of the UN Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Lt Gen. Chander Prakash noted that the peacekeeping environment is becoming increasingly complex and challenging and is being increasingly scrutinized.<sup>85</sup>

(JUNE 25-JULY 1)

- **Regional strategy to tackle threats from LRA endorsed by UN Security Council; India calls for ‘concerted action’ to root out terrorism; India demands for uniform implementation of the principle of ‘protection of civilians’; Mandate of UN force in Golan Heights extended; Term of UN Rwanda tribunal staff extended, increase in size of 1540 committee**

According to reports, the regional strategy developed by the UN to tackle the threat posed by the rebel Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) was endorsed by the UN Security Council. The Council also called for the necessary support to ensure its successful implementation. The strategy focuses on five key objectives to address the threat from the LRA and protect civilians of South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo.<sup>86</sup>

In another development, at a UN Security Council debate on Afghanistan, India called for concerted action to isolate and root out terrorism including al Qaeda, Taliban and Lashkar-e-Taiba. India’s representative, H S Puri argued that principal problem in Afghanistan was the existence of terrorism that drew upon ‘ideological, financial and logistical support from beyond Afghanistan’s borders’. India expressed its full support for an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned inclusive and transparent process of reconciliation against an internationally led process.<sup>87</sup>

Meanwhile, in the UNSC’ debate on ‘protection of civilians’, India demanded that the principle be applied in an uniform manner to all parties to a conflict. India also pointed out that the Council’s responsibility does not end with a military or police response. India further added that when the principle is applied, it must respect the fundamental aspects of the UN Charter including sovereignty and integrity of member states.<sup>88</sup>

In other developments, the mandate of the UN force monitoring the ceasefire in the Golan heights, the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was extended until December 31, 2012. The Council also called on all parties to cooperate fully with the operations of UNDOF and the terms of the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>85</sup> “Security Council discusses challenges facing UN peace operations”, *UN News Centre*, June 20, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42284&Cr=Peacekeeping&Cr1=>

<sup>86</sup> “Security Council endorses UN regional strategy to combat LRA threat”, *UN News Centre*, June 29, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42363&Cr=LRA&Cr1=>

<sup>87</sup> “India calls for ‘concerted action’ to uproot terrorism in Afghanistan”, *Hindustan Times*, June 28, 2012 at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/Europe/India-calls-for-concerted-action-to-uproot-terrorism-in-Afghanistan/Article1-879982.aspx>

<sup>88</sup> “Protection of civilians must be uniform: India”, *Zeeneews.com*, June 26, 2012 at [http://zeeneews.india.com/news/nation/protection-of-civilians-must-be-uniform-india\\_783915.html](http://zeeneews.india.com/news/nation/protection-of-civilians-must-be-uniform-india_783915.html)

<sup>89</sup> “Security Council extends UN force in Golan Heights for six more months”, *UN News Centre*, June 27, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42336&Cr=golan&Cr1=>

According to reports, four judges of the UN tribunal trying serious crimes committed during the 1994 Rwanda genocide were given permission to serve beyond the expiry of their terms. Separately, the Council adopted a resolution which requested the Secretary-General to increase the size of the group of experts assisting the 1540 committee from eight to nine. The committee monitors a UN resolution seeking to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>90</sup>

(July 2-8)

- **UN mission's mandate in South Sudan extended; India calls for early UNSC reforms; UNSC demands immediate cessation of hostilities in Mali; UNSC condemns death of Indian soldier in Congo; Western Ghats listed as world heritage site; UNSC welcomes progress made by Tribunal trying cases on Rwanda**

According to reports, the UN Security Council extended the mandate of the UN mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and also stressed on the need for the mission to focus on capacity-building efforts. The Government of South Sudan was called on to take greater responsibility for the protection of civilians and encouraged its cooperation with the mission.<sup>91</sup>

In another development, at the Eighth Round of Intergovernmental Negotiations on Equitable Representation on the Increase in the membership of the Security Council, India made a case for early reform of the Council to make it reflective of contemporary reality. India also argued that the demand for a reform model that encompasses expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories is a fundamental one and therefore should be the starting point of real negotiations.<sup>92</sup>

Meanwhile, the UNSC demanded the immediate and unconditional cessation of hostilities in the Mali's northern areas and also expressed its willingness to consider the deployment of a stabilization force in the country. The Council also expressed concern about the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation and the increased terrorist threat due to the presence of members of al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb.<sup>93</sup>

In other developments, the UNSC strongly condemned the killing of an Indian soldier in an attack by rebel groups against UN peacekeepers in Congo and asked the Congo government to bring the perpetrators to justice.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>90</sup> "Security Council extends terms of service of UN Rwanda genocide tribunal staff", *UN News Centre*, June 29, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42360&Cr=rwanda&Cr1=tribunal>

<sup>91</sup> "Security Council extends UN mission in South Sudan for another year", *UN News Centre*, July 05, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42406&Cr=South+Sudan&Cr1=>

<sup>92</sup> "Clamour for UNSC reform is growing by the day: India", *The Economic Times*, July 03, 2012 at [http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-07-03/news/32523948\\_1\\_unsc-round-of-intergovernmental-negotiations-new-permanent-members](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-07-03/news/32523948_1_unsc-round-of-intergovernmental-negotiations-new-permanent-members)

<sup>93</sup> "Mali: Security Council demands end to hostilities, open to considering force deployment", *UN News Centre*, July 05, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42404&Cr=+Mali+&Cr1=>

<sup>94</sup> "Indian soldier killed in Congo, UN condemns act", *The Times of India*, July 08, 2012 at [http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-07-08/us/32587821\\_1\\_monusco-indian-soldier-bunagana](http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-07-08/us/32587821_1_monusco-indian-soldier-bunagana)



In the interim, the World Heritage Committee's decision to include the Western Ghats in the list of world heritage sites by the UNESCO was welcomed by India.<sup>95</sup>

According to reports, the Council welcomed the beginning of work at the Arusha branch of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. The Council also emphasized the importance of ensuring no impunity to those who committed serious crimes in Rwanda.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> "India welcomes UN's recognition of Western Ghats", *ZeeNews.com*, July 03, 2012 at [http://zeenews.india.com/news/eco-news/india-welcomes-uns-recognition-of-western-ghats\\_785152.html](http://zeenews.india.com/news/eco-news/india-welcomes-uns-recognition-of-western-ghats_785152.html)

<sup>96</sup> "Security Council welcomes start of work at branch of Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals", *UN News Centre*, July 05, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?42402&Cr=Criminal&Cr1=Tribunal>