

8 outlaws held, 3 arms seized in Chuadanga

Daily Star, 1 January 2010

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested eight outlaws and recovered three firearms from their possessions in Chuadanga Thursday night. The outlaws were identified as Robiul Islam, 34, Tota, 40, Jihad, 25, Nesar Uddin, 45, Raha, 30, Mofiz, 30, Shamsuzzoha, 40, and Fozlur Rahman, 32, reports our Kushtia correspondent. All are operatives of outlawed Biplobi Communist Party (BCP). Of them Nesar was a regional leader of the outfit, Rab said.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21419

Muslims worst affected by terrorism -Minister

Daily News, 1 January 2010

LTTE terrorists attacked Muslim community and no any other community than Muslim in the Eastern and Northern Provinces was attacked during the last three decades said Healthcare and Nutrition Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva. The Minister said so at a mass rally held at the Al-Adhan Muslim Vidyalaya, Badulla, recently. The Health Deputy Minister Vadivel Suresh and several Provincial Council members also participated.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/01/news32.asp>

Quake hits east again

Kuensel, 1 January 2010

Eastern Bhutan 1 January, 2010 - Eastern Bhutan was shaken again yesterday afternoon, for the third time in four months, when a 5.5 magnitude earthquake, with its epicentre somewhere along the border of Sakteng gewog, Trashigang, and the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, hit around 3.57 pm causing damage to homes and properties in the region. No human casualties were reported as of yesterday, but two people in Drametse, Mongar, suffered minor injuries. The quake was also felt in Thimphu and several parts of the country, as well as in towns of the neighbouring Indian states.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14375>

C.I.A. Takes On Bigger and Riskier Role on Front Lines

NYT, 1 January 2010

WASHINGTON — The deaths of seven Central Intelligence Agency operatives at a remote base in the mountains of Afghanistan are a pointed example of the civilian spy agency's transformation in recent years into a paramilitary organization at the vanguard of America's far-flung wars. Even as the C.I.A. expands its role in Afghanistan, it is also playing a greater role in quasi-military operations elsewhere, using drone aircraft to launch a steady barrage of missile strikes in Pakistan and sending more operatives to Yemen to assist local officials in their attempts to roll back Al Qaeda's momentum in that country.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/01/world/asia/01khost.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print>

Gilani, Mukhtar to mediate between Zardari, Kayani
The News, 2 January 2010

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and Defence Minister Chaudhry Ahmad Mukhtar are trying to remove misunderstandings between the Army leadership and President Asif Ali Zardari, while, on the other hand, they are also ready to face any "extraordinary situation". It is learnt that Prime Minister Gilani will arrange a meeting between President Zardari and Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani in a few days. Both the president and the prime minister will discuss important security issues with General Kayani before the expected visits of US Commander in Afghanistan General Stanley McChrystal and US Defence Secretary Robert Gates.

http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=26426

Ship-breaking policy soon: PM
Daily Star, 2 January 2010

The prime minister also expressed her resentment over plundering of coastal green belt for setting up of ship-breaking yard at Sitakunda in Chittagong and concern over the accidents occurred very often at the ship-breaking yards causing loss of invaluable lives. "We are not against the ship-breaking industry. But, it should not be at the cost of environment. We are against disorderly activities," the prime minister said.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21439

Details of conspirators will be revealed soon
Daily News, 2 January 2010

We will soon tell the country details about a conspiracy of certain forces that are trying to bring discredit to the country and destabilize it. These are the same forces that were behind LTTE terrorist leader Prabhakaran, Foreign Employment Promotion Minister and Government Defence Spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella told the Daily News yesterday.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/02/sec01.asp>

Parties vow to end 'trust deficit'
Kathmandu Post, 2 January 2010

It appears like a heart-warming new year resolution. After protracted political impasse, senior leaders and members of the task force of the three major parties—UCPN (Maoist), Nepali Congress and CPN (UML)—discussed ways to end the political stalemate and move ahead. "The meeting concluded that we suffer from a crisis of confidence. Without bridging the communication gap among us, we will not be able to address any of the issues such as writing a new constitution and integration and rehabilitation of former combatants within the given timeframe," said Nepali Congress Central Committee member Ram Saran Mahat.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/01/top-stories/Parties-vow-to-end-trust-deficit/3609/>

Dhaka, New Delhi begin river water-sharing talks

The Hindu, 4 January 2010

Bangladesh and India on Monday began Secretary-level talks here on river water-sharing to lay the groundwork for the coming summit talks between their Prime Ministers. Bangladesh Water Resources Secretary Sheikh M. Wahiduzzaman, who leads the home side, said the sharing of the waters of the Teesta and Feni and the construction of embankments were on the agenda of the two-day discussion. The Indian team is led by Water Resources Secretary U.N. Panjiar.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article75216.ece>

Dhaka, Delhi stay upbeat

Daily Star, 4 January 2010

The first day of the secretary-level talks of the Joint Rivers Commission between Bangladesh and India ended yesterday with a positive note with both sides expecting a consensus on sharing water of the Teesta river. Besides sharing the Teesta waters, the delegations of the two countries have been discussing different related issues including dredging of the Isamoti river, small irrigation and drinking water project of the Feni river and making embankments on the bordering rivers.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=120540>

Frederica reconfirms Fonseka's allegation

Daily News, 4 January 2010

Editor Frederica Jansz in an article titled Her Story ... published yesterday in the Sunday Leader reconfirmed the authenticity of the interview given by former Army Commander and Chief of Defence Staff General Sarath Fonseka to the newspaper alleging that the Defence Secretary had ordered the killing of surrendering LTTE leaders. Excerpts from the article: "The interview proceeded as a series of questions and answers on major topics and issues and a transcript of the interview ... appeared in the Sunday Leader of December 13, 2009." ..I asked the General what really happened.... Fonseka made the allegation that would later appear in the newspapers.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/04/news02.asp>

Danger now from Mochu river

Kuensel, 4 January 2010

The threat from the nine glacial lakes in Lunana, the source of Phochu, have so far been the focus of a potential glacial lake outburst but geological experts are now saying that the Mochu also has five potentially dangerous glacial lakes at its source in Laya. Both rivers make up the Punatsangchu river. "Studies from satellite pictures show that five of the lakes are potentially dangerous because of the fast growth of these lakes, their large size and the fact that they have moraine dams," said the officiating director general of the department of geology and mines, Yeshi Dorji. An assessment team in collaboration with Keio University of Japan will be leaving for the source of the Mochu river in early 2010. The collaboration has been facilitated by the Asian Disaster Risk Reduction Center.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14392>

**PM seeks clarification from Sujata
Kathmandu Post, 4 January 2010**

KATHMANDU, JAN 03 - Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal has sought clarification from Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sujata Koirala over her statement that a referendum should be held on federalism. Koirala had opined that deciding on federalism was not the prerogative of some parties alone and it was necessary to take a decision on the issue after assessing public opinion at an interaction on Saturday.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/03/top-stories/PM-seeks-clarification-from-Sujata/3674/>

**Salaf condemns plans to revive "un-Islamic" cultural traditions
Minivan News, 4 January 2010**

Islamic NGO Salaf Jamiyyah has condemned plans to revive bodu maaloodh (big feast) in Thaa atoll Kadoodhoo, a tradition that was banned under the previous government. Bodu maaloodh was traditionally celebrated on the Prophet's birthday as a social event where people from neighbouring islands get together for a feast.

<http://minivannews.com/society/2010/01/04/salaf-condemns-plans-to-revive-unislamic-cultural-traditions/>

**Environmental Refugees Unable to Return Home
NYT, 4 January 2010**

DHAKA, BANGLADESH — Mahe Noor left her village in southern Bangladesh after Cyclone Sidr flattened her family's home and small market in 2007. Jobless and homeless, she and her husband, Nizam Hawladar, moved to this crowded megalopolis, hoping that they might soon return home. Two years later, they are still here. Ms. Noor, 25, and Mr. Hawladar, 35, work long hours at low-paying jobs — she at a garment factory and he at a roadside tea stall. They are unable to save money after paying for food and rent on their dark shanty in Korail, one of the largest slums in Dhaka. And in their village, more people are leaving because of river erosion and dwindling job opportunities.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/04/world/asia/04migrants.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print>

**Dhaka, Delhi conclude water talks amid optimism
The Hindu, 5 January 2010**

Bangladesh and India have agreed to resolve outstanding issues relating to water sharing and decided that they will jointly start work for the protection of banks of the common rivers. The consensus came at the end of the two-day crucial water talks at the Secretary level here on Tuesday.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article76205.ece>

No room for terror:PM says Bangladesh land can't be used for terrorism in another country

Daily Star, 5 January 2010

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said she would not invite trouble for the country by allowing militants and terrorists to use Bangladesh for carrying out terrorism in another country. "They [militants and terrorists] will use the land of Bangladesh to conduct their terrorism in another country and we will create enmity by harbouring them -- this cannot be," she said.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=120645>

Lease to conserve?

Minivan News, 5 January 2010

Blessed with an abundance of natural beauty, Gnaviyani atoll Fuvamulah is also geographically unique; an atoll and an island at the same time. One of the major attractions of the island are the two kulhi (freshwater lakes). The smaller Dhandigamu Kulhi is often used by the locals to go swimming, but Bandara Kulhi has fared worse, degrading to such an extent that few now venture near it.

<http://minivannews.com/environment/2010/01/05/leasing-to-serve/>

JVP- new defender of corruption

Daily News, 6 January 2010

The JVP has now become the defender of corruption. The sacrosanct gentlemen of that party were carrying on their shoulders a Presidential Candidate who had used his position to award tenders for the purchase of equipment from a company owned by his son-in-law, JNP leader Wimal Weerawansa said in Parliament yesterday. Joining the debate on the extension of Emergency, Weerawansa said he had the vouchers, bills and amounts paid to the son-in-law's company and the account numbers in the US though the JVP was pulling a red herring across the public eye to say the company Hycop had no contract to supply goods to the Army.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/06/pol01.asp>

2011 deadline for Nu 250 mn project

Kuensel, 6 January 2010

The country's first medical college, Bhutan institute of medical sciences (BIMS), will be established within the scope of Nu 250 mn and expects to open for admission by February next year. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the two countries during His Majesty's recent state visit to India. "With the signing of MoU between the two countries, it'll accelerate the work on establishment of BIMS," said the health minister Lyonpo Zangley Drukpa. "We've been waiting for the MoU to be signed so that we can start work as per the plan drawn by the ministry. We're clinically equipped to establish the institute."

Opinion:Future of India-Bangladesh relations

The Hindu, 9 January 2010

Sheikh Hasina, who started her second term as Prime Minister of Bangladesh on January 6, 2009, is due to visit India from Sunday. This is her first visit to New Delhi

during this term, and it is expected to be a significant one. When Ms Hasina became Prime Minister in 1996 (she held office till 2001), her Awami League had a thin majority in Parliament, and her government had many limitations. She came to power after two decades that followed the bloody changeover of 1975. Despite those limitations, her government took some remarkable steps vis-à-vis India.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/article77850.ece>

Dhaka, Yangon narrow gap on sea boundary
Daily Star, 9 January 2010

Bangladesh and Myanmar yesterday decided to demarcate the maritime boundary of the two countries, accommodating the demands of both equidistance and equity of resources as the guiding principles. The decision came at a two-day high-level meeting that ended yesterday afternoon at a hotel in Chittagong. The meeting also decided to hold another round of talks by next April in Myanmar.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=121235>

Former president denies human rights abuses in 30-year rule
Minivan, 9 January 2010

Former President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom has denied that human rights abuses and torture in prisons occurred during his 30-year reign. Taking questions from listeners yesterday on DhiFM's "One-to-One" live call-in show, Gayoom categorically denied that he ordered anyone to be tortured.

<http://minivannews.com/politics/2010/01/09/former-president-denies-human-rights-abuses-in-30-year-rule/>

Bangladesh PM arrives on maiden Indian visit
The Hindu, 10 January 2010

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina arrived here tonight on her maiden visit, which India sees as "a path-breaking and historic opportunity" to forge a "new and forward-looking" relationship amid hopes that its security concerns would be addressed. Ms. Hasina was accorded a warm welcome at the Indira Gandhi International Airport here where she was received by Minister of State for External Affairs Preneet Kaur and Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/article78622.ece>

New Delhi, Maoists seem to drift further apart
Kathmandu Post, 10 January 2010

Nepal's Maoists are up against a hardened New Delhi. It only takes a quick chat with officials here to figure out that UCPN (Maoist) leaders have their task cut out: New Delhi expects them to initiate the rapprochement, or else there won't be one. Such suggestions as possible visits by Maoist leaders to disputed border points—Kalapani and Susta—have only hardened perception that the Maoists will never hesitate to take recourse to anti-India politics to gain populist points. Add to this India's national security concerns from its own mounting Maoist problem and glaring lack of political ownership to the faltering peace process and you will begin to despair that Nepal's

largest political party and its most important neighbour are not likely to find a common ground anytime soon.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/09/top-stories/New-Delhi-Maoists-seem-to-drift-further-apart/3878/>

**Custodial abuse sparks Cabinet clamp down on "culture of torture"
Minivan, 10 January 2010**

Cabinet has appointed a committee to reform the Maldives Police Service (MPS) after allegations that the institution continues to have a "culture of police torture". The committee includes the Attorney General Husnu Suood, Minister of Human Resources, Youth and Sports Hassan Latheef, and Minister of Tourism Arts and Culture, Dr Ahmed Ali Sawad, a human rights lawyer. The Cabinet also elected to appoint Minister of State Principal Collector of Customs Mohamed Aswan as Minister of State for Home Affairs, giving him a mandate to reform the police service.

<http://minivannews.com/society/2010/01/10/custodial-abuse-sparks-cabinet-clamp-down-on-culture-of-torture/>

**Korea ready to settle on new site in Afghanistan
JoongAng Daily, 11 January 2010**

Korea is poised to settle on a new site for the base camp of its provincial reconstruction team in Afghanistan, sources told the JoongAng Daily. Earlier, a Joint Chiefs of Staff document showed that clay soil in a region in the Charikar District in Parwan Province would make construction work difficult. The document was produced after the Korean military traveled to Afghanistan last month to evaluate security and other situations there. A diplomatic source said that the Afghanistan government had suggested another region, just north of Charikar, as a possible site for the PRT base and Korea will soon approve it.

<http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2915129>

**India, Bangladesh to sign security, power pacts
The Hindu, 11 January 2010**

India on Monday rolled out the red carpet for visiting Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as she began the official leg of her four-day visit during which the two neighbours will sign five agreements, including three security related pacts. Sheikh Hasina, who is on her first visit to India after assuming power last year, was accorded a ceremonial welcome at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in the morning. The Bangladesh leader later called on President Pratibha Patil and discussed a host of bilateral and regional issues.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article78871.ece>

**Pranab hints at duty-free access of Bangladeshi products
Daily News, 11 January 2010**

Indian Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee on Monday said India wanted that the tariff and non-tariff barriers on Bangladeshi goods be withdrawn to access Indian market. "We want many products from Bangladesh to enter Indian market without

any duty," Mukherjee told reporters after a meeting with Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in Delhi. India and Bangladesh have yawning trade gap and Dhaka was demanding that India lower tariff and non-tariff barriers to narrow the gap.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21584

70 loan and 30 grant for inter-govt. projects

Kuensel, 11 January 2010

11 January, 2010 - Apart from the ongoing Punatsangchhu I, all future inter-governmental projects to produce 10,000 MW by 2020 will be built on a 70 percent loan and 30 percent grant basis, Bhutan and India have agreed recently. The two governments have also estimated that the 10 projects for the 10,000 MW project would cost around Nu 500 bn. This figure is based on current costs and may go up with inflation. As a start, the 1,000 MW Punatsangchhu II (Nu 37.7 bn) and 720 MW Mangdechu (Nu 28.9 bn) projects will start on a 70-30 basis immediately after an agreement is signed in March.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14458>

TNA acts to destroy peace - Minister Devananda

Daily News, 11 January 2010

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) in the past had worked to destroy peace in the country and they are doing the same today, Social Services and Welfare Minister Douglas Devananda said. Addressing a public rally in support of President Mahinda Rajapaksa in Jaffna yesterday, the Minister said President Mahinda Rajapaksa was prepared even to meet Prabhakaran and hold talks to avert the war. But Prabhakaran did not agree to talks as he wanted war. "We did not follow the evil path but took the path that was in the interests of the people," he said.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/11/pol02.asp>

Hope good reason prevails upon ULFA: Manmohan

The Hindu, 12 January 2010

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Tuesday said the government wants to restore peace in Assam and hoped that good reason prevails upon the outlawed ULFA to end the decades-long insurgency problem in the State. On talks with the ULFA, which received a major setback last year with four of its top leaders arrested in Bangladesh, he said "Though we tried to bring them (ULFA) to the negotiation table in 2006, they backed out. I hope this time good reason prevails."

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article79576.ece>

Gilani deplores US doubts over Pak sincerity

The News, 12 January 2010

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani on Monday regretted the doubts emanating from the US over Pakistan's sincerity in the war against terror and asked as to which other country of the world has made more sacrifices than Pakistan in the campaign to eradicate terrorism. Talking to the US delegation, led by Senator Carl Levin, chairman of Armed Services Committee, at the Prime Minister House, Gilani

refuted the misperceptions about the existence of the Quetta Shura or the Afghan Taliban leadership in Pakistan. He reiterated Pakistan's desire to fence its border with Afghanistan in case the US could persuade the Afghan government to do so.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?id=26617

Manmohan allays worries over Tipai plan

Daily Star, 12 January 2010

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Tuesday said her Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh assured her that nothing will be done with regard to Tipaimukh Dam project, which will harm the interest of Bangladesh. "He (Manmohan) has assured me that nothing will be done which will harm the interest of Bangladesh in any manner," Hasina told The Daily Star immediately after having lunch with the leaders of Indian Industry at Hotel ICT Maurya Sheraton. Her reply came in response to a question about the assurance given by the Indian premier to her on the Tipaimukh project.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21595

One step further to final settlement

Kuensel, 12 January 2010

"A majority of the work is completed. What's left is minor," according to the assistant minister, ministry of foreign affairs, Hu Zhengyue, the head of the Chinese delegation, who is in the country for the 19th round of Bhutan–China boundary talks. "If we take one step further, we'll achieve the final settlement, a final settlement that's attractive to the people of both countries," said Hu Zhengyue, who arrived yesterday. He said that tremendous efforts have been made and the two countries should engage each other more frequently on the border discussions.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14467>

Fonseka has accepted 'Tamil Homeland' - Wickramabahu

Daily News, 12 January 2010

Sarath Fonseka has accepted that the North and the East is the homeland of Tamils by the agreement he signed with the TNA now, Left Front Presidential candidate Wickramabahu Karunaratne said. He asked those who called him a Tiger when he expressed the same view in 1974 what would they call Sarath Fonseka now. He made this observations at a media briefing held at his residence in Kiribathkumbura on Saturday.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/12/news11.asp>

Government sells 20% of MWSC to Hitachi at same price

Minivan, 12 January 2010

The ministry of finance has sold 20% of the Maldives Water and Sanitation Company (MWSC) to Japanese company Hitachi Plant Technology. The deal was signed by Minister of Finance Ali Hashim and President of the Hitachi Company Masaharu Suvikawa in Male' yesterday.

<http://minivannews.com/business/2010/01/12/govenment-sells-20-of-mwsc-to-hitachi-at-same-price/>

**Maoist top guns fan across disputed border areas
Kathmandu Post, 12 January 2010**

After inspecting the disputed border in Susta, Nawalparasi, on Monday, Maoist Vice Chairman Baburam Bhattarai said Indian intervention had increased due to 'reactionary elements' within the country. Addressing a mass meeting at Beltari, Bhattarai said Nepalis had to fight against foreign intervention and internal reactionary forces together. He said his party had taken the expansionists who encroached border with the help of internal reactionary elements, comprador capitalism and world feudalism as the great foe.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/11/top-stories/Maoist-top-guns-fan-across-disputed-border-areas/3949/>

**China, Bhutan hold 19th border talks
People's Daily, 13 January 2010**

China and Bhutan held from Jan. 11 to 13 their 19th border talks in the Bhutan capital Thimphu. Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Hu Zhengyue held talks with head of Bhutan delegation, Minister of Economic Affairs Khandu Wangchuk in a friendly and frank atmosphere. Hu also met with the 4th King of Bhutan Jigme Singye Wangchuk and Prime Minister Jigme Thinley during his stay in Bhutan.

<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90883/6866946.html>

**India, Bangladesh working on Extradition Treaty: Hasina
The Hindu, 13 January 2010**

After signing three pacts to combat terrorism and organised crime, India and Bangladesh are working on an Extradition Treaty, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina asserted on Wednesday. The Bangladesh premier added that her government would go to "any extent" curb the menace, in cooperation with India. Winding up her three-day India visit, she said the two countries need to stand against terrorism and can work together in a "friendly atmosphere".

<http://beta.thehindu.com/incoming/article79867.ece>

**Another infiltration bid foiled
Daily Excelsior, 13 January 2010**

JAMMU : BSF troops today foiled two infiltration bids after a brief encounter with militants along the Indo-Pak border in Akhnoor sector of Jammu division, the seventh such attempt by ultras from across the border this month. A group of five militants entered Indian territory around 1200 hours and their movement was picked up by the patrolling party of BSF at Tent Border Out Post in Akhnoor sector, a senior BSF official said.

<http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/10jan13/newsupdate.htm#1>

Afghan war should stay out of Pakistan: FM

The News, 13 January 2010

ABU DHABI: Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said on Tuesday that the war against Taliban militants in Afghanistan must be fought inside the country itself and not spilled over into Pakistan. "The Afghan war has to be fought within Afghanistan. The challenges within Afghanistan cannot be resolved in Pakistan," Qureshi told reporters on the sidelines of the Meeting of Special Representatives for Afghanistan and Pakistan here. "The challenge that we have in Pakistan is being faced very bravely and courageously by the people of Pakistan," he said. "On our side of the border, Pakistan is capable of looking after the problem."

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?id=26638

Afghanistan problem

The News, 13 January 2010

The international community's failure against the insurgency in Afghanistan is breeding violence and instability in the region. The US involvement in Afghanistan is pushing radical elements across the border into Pakistan, and is destabilising this nuclear-armed country. The US should change its policy on the global war against terrorism and try to bring peace by adopting a policy that must stress on economic, educational, food, healthcare and security assistance. Only the deployment of troops throughout Afghanistan will not defeat Al-Qaeda or the Taliban. India's participation in this global peace effort against terror and extremism remains eyewash. Countless complaints against Indian troops and intelligence operators in Afghanistan substantiate the fact that there is an Indian hand behind the recent troubles inside Balochistan and FATA. It is an open secret now that the Balochistan Liberation Army, a well-organised Kabul-based movement inside Pakistan, receives monetary and other assistance from Indian defence and intelligence circles.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=218379

PM defends move to allow port use

Daily Star, 13 January 2010

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina wrapped her four-day official visit to India yesterday describing it as 'totally successful'. She also justified the decision to allow India to use Chittagong and Mongla ports saying, "In the present day world you cannot live with doors closed." In her opening remarks at a crowded media briefing attended by Bangladeshi and Indian journalists, she said, "India is our natural friend. India is a big country and it has a very strong economy. It should look after all neighbours -- whether they are big or small -- on the basis of respect for their sovereignty and equality."

<http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=121785>

Delhi's Nepal Policy: 'Officials at the helm'

Kathmandu Post, 13 January 2010

Acute absence of political leadership in New Delhi in dealing with Nepal has made the security apparatus and bureaucracy the determining factors of Nepal policy, according to a former envoy to India. "Political leaders who were engaged with Nepal are no longer in policy making positions in New Delhi," said Durgesh Man Singh. Though New Delhi's position on Nepal hasn't failed, there has been a shift in

approach because the security apparatus and bureaucrats now control Nepal policy, he said. However, India's concerns on Nepal's long-term stability have been loud and clear since the signing of the 12-point agreement between the Maoists and non-Maoist parties.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/12/top-stories/Delhis-Nepal-Policy-Officials-at-the-helm/3991/>

People will tell world they are against terrorism
Daily News, 13 January 2010

On January 26, the people of this country will tell the world they are against separatism, President Mahinda Rajapaksa said yesterday addressing the massive UPFA election rally at Ambalangoda. He emphatically stated that he would not allow anyone to betray the hard earned freedom won. The President said the people of this country should teach a lesson to those who attempt to betray the country and its unity. President Rajapaksa questioned the democratic credentials of the Opposition who had threatened a senior journalist for revealing in the newspaper Lankadeepa agreements signed between the TNA and the NDF candidate.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/13/pol01.asp>

Call to resume dialogue
The Hindu, 14 January 2010

Pakistan said its Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi stressed the need to restart the composite dialogue process during a telephone conversation with his Indian counterpart S.M. Krishna on Wednesday. A statement from the Foreign Ministry said Mr. Krishna called Mr. Qureshi to greet him on the new year. The telephone conversation between the two Ministers took place as the U.S. special envoy on Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke, began a three-day visit to Pakistan.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/international/article80410.ece>

Editorial: Seizing the moment
The Hindu, 14 January 2010

For most of the past four decades, India and Bangladesh have been distant neighbours, separated by distrust and suspicion despite their visceral connections of geography and ecology, language and culture, economics and politics. There have been periods of acute stasis and also moments of hope, when a basic transformation in the relationship seemed possible. But never before has the overall situation been quite as propitious as it is now.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/article80347.ece>

India interfering in Balochistan: Malik
The News, 14 January 2010

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rehman Malik on Wednesday categorically said that India was interfering in Balochistan while missing Baloch were forcibly taken to training camps in Afghanistan. He was making a statement in the Senate in response

to points of order raised by some members from Balochistan about missing persons. "Pakistan has identified terrorists training camps established inside Afghanistan for interference in Balochistan," Malik said.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?id=26664

PM okays 5 rental power projects

Daily Star, 14 January 2010

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Thursday approved bids of five rental power projects totalling 330 megawatts power that was previously okayed by the cabinet's purchase committee on December 23. Agreements with the bidders are expected to be signed within the next few days, sources said. But as this approval has been delayed by two months, the government's purpose of installing costly rental power projects to minimise power crisis during the upcoming irrigation period will be severely compromised. The irrigation period will not be benefited by any of these plants.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21652

UPFA campaign office attacked

Daily News, 14 January 2010

A group of about a thousand UNP and JVP supporters armed with clubs, iron rods and swords came in procession and attacked the Polonnaruwa election campaign office of the UPFA causing severe damage to it. They also made efforts to attack SLFP General Secretary and Agriculture and Mahaweli Development Minister Maithripala Sirisena but Police and members of the Ministerial Security Division brought the group under control.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/14/pol01.asp>

Joint field survey next on agenda

Kuensel, 14 January 2010

The 19th round of boundary talks between the governments of the People's Republic of China and Bhutan, which concluded yesterday in the capital, resolved to direct the expert group of the two governments to meet and discuss the modalities for a joint field survey. The joint field survey aims to harmonise reference points and names of places in areas in the western sector, which are now the focus of the talks. The disputed areas in the western sector comprise the four pastures of Doklam, Charithang, Sinchulumpa and Dramana. A press release from the foreign ministry stated that the two governments reaffirmed their commitment to resolve the boundary issue at the earliest possible through mutual consultation, understanding and accommodation on the basis of the four guiding principles agreed in 1988 and the 1998 Agreement on Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility in the Bhutan-China Border Areas.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14485>

Visit of great value: Nepal

Kathmandu Post, 14 January 2010

India's External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna will on Friday start his three-day visit to Nepal. The visit is being seen here as New Delhi's effort to address Nepal's call for reciprocity in high-level bilateral visits. The visit, which begins on Jan. 15, will be his first to Nepal since he assumed office in May. Accompanying him will be senior South Block officials, including Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao and Joint Secretary Satish Mehta.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/13/top-stories/Visit-of-great-value-Nepal/4024/>

**"Politics" behind attack on Adhaalath party president
Minivan, 14 January 2010**

President of the Adhaalath Party Sheikh Hussain Rasheed Ahmed was attacked on Monday night in an incident he believes "was politically motivated." The attack occurred near Masjidhul Sulthaan Mohamed-bin-Abdulla at around 12.30 am.

<http://minivannews.com/politics/2010/01/14/politics-behind-attack-on-adhaalath-party-president/>

**Deaths at Hands of Militants Rise in Pakistan
NYT, 14 January 2010**

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — The number of Pakistani civilians killed in militant attacks rose by a third in 2009 over the previous year, according to a new research report, a toll that exceeded even the number of civilian deaths in Afghanistan. The report, released this week by the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, an independent research group based in Islamabad that tracks security issues, found that 3,021 Pakistanis were killed in insurgent attacks, 33 percent more than in 2008.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/14/world/asia/14pstan.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print>

**Taliban Leader May Have Been Target of Drone Strike
NYT, 14 January 2010**

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — At least 10 people were killed in an American drone attack in northwest Pakistan on Thursday morning, Pakistani security officials said. The leader of the Pakistani Taliban, which took credit for the suicide attack that killed eight people at a C.I.A. base in Afghanistan late last month, was one of the targets, Pakistani officials said. A Taliban spokesman, however, denied that the leader, Hakimullah Mehsud, was among the casualties. Several Pakistani security officials said there was no word on the Taliban leader. "The important thing for us is whether Hakimullah is among those killed," said a Pakistani official in South Waziristan. A Pakistani intelligence official added that he believed Mr. Mehsud was "definitely targeted" on Thursday.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/15/world/asia/15pstan.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print>

**Nepal vows not to allow its soil to be used against India
The Hindu, 15 January 2010**

Seeking to address India's concerns with regard to fake currency being smuggled from here, Nepal on Friday promised not to allow its territory to be used for any anti-India activity as the two countries discussed ways to step up cooperation in security and other issues. External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna held delegation-level talks with Nepalese Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sujata Koirala here on a wide range of subjects that also covered developmental assistance and projects to be undertaken by India.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article80669.ece>

Holbrooke happy with successes in Swat
The News, 15 January 2010

MINGORA: The United States Special Envoy to Pakistan and Afghanistan, Richard Holbrooke, on Thursday visited Swat and expressed satisfaction over the achievements made by the Pakistan Army in the operation Rah-e-Raast in the Malakand Division. Talking to local Nazims and a delegation of hotels association, he said his government would not leave Pakistan alone at this critical juncture and would help in the reconstruction of the area and rehabilitation of the victims of militancy. The US envoy said the US government had provided \$175 million for rehabilitation and reconstruction of the damaged infrastructure, especially the schools and roads.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=26679

Joint chiefs discuss internal security situation
The News, 15 January 2010

RAWALPINDI: A meeting of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC) was held at the Joint Staff Headquarters, Chaklala, on Thursday. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) General Tariq Majid chaired the meeting. It was attended by General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, Chief of the Army Staff, Admiral Noman Bashir, Chief of the Naval Staff, Air Chief Marshal Rao Qamar Suleman, Chief of the Air Staff, director general Inter-Services Intelligence, director general Strategic Plans Division, acting secretary Defence, secretary Defence Production, director general Joint Staff and other senior military officials from the three services. The committee undertook a comprehensive review of the national security scene, taking stock of the evolving internal and external challenges and the contemplated response. The deliberations focused on reshaping the regional dynamics, implications of the revised US strategy for Afghanistan, impact of increased instability in Afghanistan, the situation along the eastern borders, developments in the Indian Ocean Region and the tenuous spectre of regional strategic balance.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=26680

80 injured as students clash in Khulna, Meherpur
Daily Star, 15 January 2010

At least 80 students were injured in clashes between Bangladesh Chhatra League and Islami Chhatra Shibir at Khulna Government BL University College and Meherpur Government College on Friday. Our Khulna correspondent reports: 50 students were injured in a clash between the student wing of ruling Awami League and Islami Chhatra Shibir at BL college in Khulna.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21662

**Kutshab goes to Vienna
Kuensel, 15 January 2010**

Yeshey Dorji, presented his credentials to the federal President of Austria, Dr Heinz Fischer, on January 11. Kutshab Yeshey Dorji is concurrently accredited to Vienna, Austria. Kutshab Yeshey Dorji also called on the foreign secretary of the Austrian foreign ministry, Dr Johannese Kyrle, and other senior officials of the Austrian government.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14487>

**Solution during second term - President
Daily News, 15 January 2010**

President Mahinda Rajapaksa said he will present his own solution to the problem of the people of the North and East during his second term. He said they have seen a number of All Party Committees appointed to find a solution with no agreement reached on a solution. "Therefore, I would present my own solution so that all parties and groups could discuss it and arrive at a solution accepted to all groups in the country," the President said. Addressing the print media at Temple Trees on Wednesday, President Rajapaksa said no one should play politics with the problems of the people and he was determined to ensure that the people, mostly the younger generation could live in a country without division and conflict. "We have to ensure that all ethnic or religious groups enjoy equal rights in an undivided country".

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/15/pol01.asp>

**Maoists set treaties on fire, lift Tarai banda
Kathmandu Post, 15 January 2010**

UCPN (Maoist) activists, as part of their fourth phase struggle for the establishment of civilian supremacy and national sovereignty, torched copies of treaties signed with India, in various parts of the country on Thursday. Demanding annulment of unequal treaties signed with India, the Maoists burned copies of Koshi, Mahakali and the Peace and Friendship treaties in Sunsari, Nuwakot and Sindhuli districts. They shouted slogans against foreign intervention and demanded that national sovereignty be maintained.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/14/top-stories/Maoists-set-treaties-on-fire-lift-Tarai-banda/4062/>

**India to undertake Rs. 837 crore developmental projects in Nepal
The Hindu, 16 January 2010**

Giving a boost to bilateral ties, India will undertake developmental activities worth over Rs 837 crore in Nepal, under four pacts signed between the two countries in fields like infrastructure, power and science and technology. One of the major projects that India will undertake entails construction of a 680-km long highway in Terai region of Nepal at the cost of Rs 810 crore.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article81150.ece>

Halt drone attacks, screening to win over Pakistanis: Zardari
The News, 16 January 2010

LAHORE: Branding drone attacks and the new US screening regime for the Pakistani citizens a "cause of great concern", President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday called for an urgent review by the Obama administration. Talking to the US special envoy for Pakistan and Afghanistan, Richard Holbrooke, at the Governor House here, the president expressed reservations and said it had generated resentment in the country and needed to be reviewed.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=26695

Indo-US civil N-deal altered balance
The News, 16 January 2010

ISLAMABAD: Senator Raza Rabbani on Friday presented the report of the National Security Committee of parliament in the Senate, which contains recommendations to the Foreign Office for the January 28 meeting in London on Afghanistan. Raza Rabbani, who heads the committee, informed the House that the recommendations were sent to the Foreign Office on Thursday evening. The London meeting, which would focus on Barack Obama's new policy on Afghanistan, would be attended by foreign ministers from the US, the UK, Pakistan, Afghanistan and other stakeholders.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=26701

BSF kills 1
Daily Star, 16 January 2010

Indian Border Security Forces (BSF) shot dead a Bangladeshi national at Kazipur border in Gangni upazila of Meherpur on Saturday. The dead was identified as Sahidul Islam, 36, son of Sher Ali of Kazipur village in the upazila. According to Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), BSF opened fire on Sahidul while he was working at a field near the border point about 10:30am. Sahidul died on the spot.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21681

To join Fonseka's Deveni Meheyuma:
Daily News, 16 January 2010

National Freedom Front Member of Parliament Mohamed Muzzamil producing several bundles of thousand rupee notes at a press conference yesterday said it was part of a bribe offered to him by a Muslim Member of Parliament to join the DNF presidential candidate Sarath Fonseka's election campaign. Addressing a press conference at the National Freedom Front head office, Battaramulla, he said he was given an offer to stay abroad and live a luxurious life and was also told that he would be given thirty million rupees.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/16/pol01.asp>

UN report misses the mark: Koirala

Kathmandu Post, 16 January 2010

One day after the UN warned that Nepal's peace process was "largely stalled" and "plagued" due to mistrust among political parties, Nepali Congress (NC) President Girija Prasad Koirala said the UN observation had failed to see the true picture and did not represent ground realities. Koirala made this remark on Friday during a meeting with envoys of European Union (EU) member countries, who, concerned over the UN report, had gone to his residence in Maharajgunj to take stock of the situation.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/15/top-stories/UN-report-misses-the-mark-Koirala/4099/>

**India, Nepal discuss cooperation to check cross-border crimes
The Hindu, 17 January 2010**

India said it looked forward to cooperation from Nepal in addressing its security concerns as the two sides explored ways to control cross-border crimes, such as smuggling of fake Indian currency and human trafficking, and agreed to combat terrorism jointly. "I brought to notice of Nepalese leadership that the territory of Nepal is being used for anti-India activities, fake note smuggling and drug trafficking and we want government of Nepal to prevent such unhealthy activities," External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna said on Sunday, wrapping up his three-day visit here.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article81545.ece>

**Krishna meets Nemwang, enquires about Constitution drafting
The Hindu, 17 January 2010**

India on Sunday said it wanted to see a stable and democratic Nepal and expressed confidence that the country would be able to meet the deadline of drafting its new Constitution by May 2010. This was stated by External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna when he met Nepal's Constituent Assembly chairman Subhash Nemwang here.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article81482.ece>

**Holbrooke to visit India to discuss meet on Afghanistan
The Hindu, 17 January 2010**

U.S. Special Envoy for Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke will arrive here on Sunday evening for a brief visit to mainly discuss the international conference on Afghanistan later this month in London. On Monday, Mr. Holbrooke will meet External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna. A meeting with the National Security Advisor is also included in his brief list of engagements. Mr. Holbrooke is expected to brief his Indian interlocutors about the contours of the new policy on Afghanistan prepared by the new Obama administration, especially the surge in troops.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article81450.ece>

**Joint Pak, Iran, Afghanistan declaration
The News, 17 January 2010**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran committed on Saturday that they would not allow their territories to be used for activities detrimental to each other's

interests. For quite some time now all three countries have complained that there has been interference and acts of militancy from across each other's borders.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?id=26720

Editorial: The US equation
The News, 17 January 2010

The questions that surround Pakistan-US relations continue to play a big part in the shaping of our political reality. At his meeting in Islamabad with the US special envoy to Pakistan and Afghanistan, the president has reportedly emphasised the extent to which the war on terror was holding back development in Pakistan. There are all kinds of other issues too floating in the background: drone attacks, Blackwater presence, delays in aid coming in under the Kerry-Lugar Bill and, most recently, the stepped-up searches for Pakistanis travelling to the US. But despite the tensions over these matters, the fact is that the relationship between Washington and Islamabad is likely to continue, on the same plane, for some time to come. Both countries need each other. Washington cannot make any headway in the effort against militancy in the region without the support of Pakistan; for now, at least, the financial backing of the US is vital to keep the economy stable for Islamabad. There are many complexities in the equation.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=219218

India visit not only a failure, harmful too: Khaleda
Daily Star, 17 January 2010

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia on Sunday said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's India visit was not only a failure, but also a harmful event for the country. In her formal reaction to the visit, Khaleda Zia at a press conference at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office said the prime minister returned home empty-handed. Khaleda rejected the joint communiqué signed during the prime minister's visit and urged the people to wage vigorous movement against the anti-people moves.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21698

Contractors' number doubles in 5 years
Kuensel, 17 January 2010

With emphasis on infrastructure development, the number of private Bhutanese contractors in the country has almost doubled in the last five years. As of December 2009, 2,688 contractors registered with the construction association of Bhutan (CAB), up from 1,608 in 2004. Typical of the Bhutanese construction industry, 90 per cent were family owned and operated. CAB executive director, Wangdi Gyaltsen, in his presentation on the country's construction scenario, said that the total number of contractors in the country was superficial, as most of them fell under class 'D' category.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14503>

A good start in ties with India: Maoists
Kathmandu Post, 17 January 2010

UCPN (Maoist) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Minister for External Affairs of India S.M. Krishna held an hour-long meeting on Saturday evening, making way for "a good beginning" for the Maoists to reach out to New Delhi. "I would not call it a breakthrough but it has certainly paved the way for a good beginning with India," Dahal told reporters after the much-anticipated talks held at Hotel Dwarika's. According to Dahal, he told the Indian team how "various sections" in Nepal were trying to isolate the Maoists and that "as a neighbour, India should find out the motive behind such an isolation.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/16/top-stories/A-good-start-in-ties-with-India-Maoists/4127/>

**Police arrest 19 suspects in Campus Didi stabbing case
Minivan, 17 January 2010**

Police have arrested 19 people in connection with the stabbing of Ahmed Ibrahim 'Campus' didi on 27 December. Didi was badly injured in the attack and was flown to India for medical treatment, while the attackers escaped with almost US\$250,000 and Rf1 million in cash.

<http://minivannews.com/society/2010/01/17/police-arrest-19-suspects-in-campus-didi-stabbing-case/>

**Army Chief on Nepal visit from tomorrow
The Hindu, 18 January 2010**

Indian Army Chief Deepak Kapoor will be arriving here on Tuesday on a three-day visit, during which he will meet the country's top civilian and military leadership and will be conferred the honorary rank of a General of the Nepal Army. Gen. Kapoor is paying a visit to Nepal at the invitation of Nepal Army Chief Chhatra Man Singh Gurung.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article81938.ece>

**US not mediating between Pakistan, India: Holbrooke
The News, 18 January 2010**

KABUL: Easing tension between India and Pakistan would help the Western efforts in Afghanistan, but it is up to Islamabad and New Delhi to find their own path towards better ties, the US envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan said on Sunday. Richard Holbrooke, who was due to fly to India later on Sunday after visiting Pakistan and Afghanistan, said Washington would welcome better relations between Islamabad and New Delhi, but he had no plans to act as a mediator between the two foes.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?id=26735

**12 'militants' held with arms in Ctg
Daily Star, 18 January 2010**

Twelve suspected militants were arrested with seven firearms and 26 bullets in Chittagong early Monday. Acting on a tip-off, police captured them raiding a house at Mistiripara under Double Mooring Police Station in the port city at about 2:00am, sources said. Seven firearms -- three homemade guns, four revolvers-- 26 bullets

and 11 cartridges were recovered from their possession, reports our staff correspondent in Chittagong.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21710

**Bird flu in West Bengal
Kuensel, 18 January 2010**

People entering Phuentsholing town are being searched for chickens or eggs, after Bhutan declared an indefinite ban on import of poultry and its products from India, starting yesterday morning, in response to an outbreak of avian influenza (H5N1) or bird flu in the neighbouring Indian state of West Bengal. The ban comes almost six months after the last ban was lifted in July 2009. Mobile users were also notified about the bird flu with a joint sms from agriculture and health ministry on Saturday evening, which asked for cooperation to prevent the flu from entering the country.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14509>

**Maoists offer talks with Delhi
Daily News, 18 January 2010**

If all goes well, UCPN (Maoist) leadership could be offered a visit to New Delhi if they drop the Fourth Phase of their nationwide protest, which is taking a stridently anti-Indian pitch. According to a senior Maoist leader, party Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal made the offer for "high-level talks" with New Delhi during his meeting with the visiting Minister for External Affairs S. M. Krishna on Saturday.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/17/top-stories/Maoists-offer-talks-with-Delhi/4156/>

**Lack of local cardiologists forces NGO to fly in doctors
Minivan, 18 January 2010**

Maldivian infants with suspected congenital heart defects (CHD) are being flown to India for corrective surgery because of the lack of a pediatric cardiologist at Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH). In one Indian hospital alone, over a two year period 40 Maldivian babies have undergone surgery for CHD claimed Maldives NGO 'Tiny Hearts Maldives', which is advocating early screening within the country.

<http://minivannews.com/society/2010/01/18/lack-of-local-cardiologists-forces-ngo-to-fly-in-doctors/>

**India discusses cross border criminal activities with Nepal
The Hindu, 19 January 2010**

India on Monday discussed with Nepal the issue of cross border criminal activities and the need to strengthen immigration points. The issues were discussed at a meeting between Union Home Minister P Chidambaram and his Nepal counterpart Bhim Rawa here. After the meeting, Mr. Rawa told reporters that the two sides exchanged views on mutual security, cross border criminal activities and organised crime and on the need to strengthen immigration points to ensure that no criminal element and potential terrorists cross the border.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article82091.ece>

**India out of tune with realities: FO
The News, 19 January 2010**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has accused India of 'darkening' South Asia's horizons by living in an unreal world devoid of ground realities. In a hard-hitting rejoinder, it also rejected the allegations that Pakistan was involved in state-sponsored terrorism. The Foreign Office spokesman was constrained to react after Indian Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao said in a TV interview: "It has been clear that militancy had been an instrument of state policy, which has been pursued by agencies within Pakistan." In a statement, the FO spokesman reacted by saying that vitriolic remarks against Pakistan yet again revealed that the Indian government persisted with its propaganda campaign that only vitiated the atmosphere, darkened the horizon and dampened the hopes for peace and tranquillity in South Asia.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?id=26752

**Moriarty eyes 20,000 Bangladeshi students going to US each year
Daily News, 19 January 2010**

US Ambassador James F Moriarty hopes to see 20,000 students from Bangladesh in his country each year over the next decade, as the diplomat disclosed some new initiatives for bolstering cooperation. Addressing the monthly luncheon of the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, Moriarty said 2,000 students are now going to the United States from Bangladesh a year while 14,000 students are going from Nepal and 40,000 from India.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21743

**Maoists boycott House over Indian Army chief remarks
Kathmandu Post, 19 January 2010**

A day before Indian Army Chief Gen. Deepak Kapoor's four-day "goodwill visit", the main opposition UCPN (Maoist) boycotted Monday's Legislature-Parliament session demanding that the government clarify its position on Kapoor's views opposing bulk integration of Maoist combatants into Nepal Army last month. Maoist lawmaker Dev Gurung announced that his party had decided to boycott the session because the government failed to "respond" to the Indian Army chief's remarks. Gurung said the Maoist party considers Gen. Kapoor's statement as "interference in the sovereignty of Nepal".

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/18/top-stories/Maoists-boycott-House-over-Indian-Army-chief-remarks/4187/>

**TNA sticks to separatist manifesto
Daily News, 19 January 2010**

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) had not withdrawn their 2002 and 2004 Election Manifestos, and what has the JVP and Sarath Fonseka got to say, asked Media and Information Minister Anura Priyadarshana Yapa at a press conference held at the Government Information Department yesterday. The Minister pointed out that the TNA in its elections manifestos put forward four important points: Recognition of

Tamils as a distinct nationality, establishing a Tamil homeland, rights to self-determination and fundamental rights etc. They did not withdraw the above demands. Therefore, the Minister said the JVP and Fonseka should answer whether the TNA withdrew their demands.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/19/pol01.asp>

**"Syndicate of terror" threat to the region: Gates
The Hindu, 20 January 2010**

The United States on Wednesday characterised "syndicate of terror" operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan as a threat to the region with the Lashker-e-Taiyba, being part of the Al-Qaeda-Taliban nexus, targeting India and Pakistan. "The syndicate of terror [is] operating to destabilise the region and it for each one to understand its magnitude and engage to reduce and eliminate [these threats] ...requiring high degree of cooperation", U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates said here at a press conference.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article82974.ece>

**India's concerns taken seriously, says Nepal PM
The Hindu, 20 January 2010**

Amid India's concerns over use of Nepalese soil by ISI and other anti-India elements, Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal has said such apprehensions are being taken seriously but made it clear that an Extradition Treaty would have to wait for political stability here. He asserted that his government will not allow Nepal to be used for activities against India and would act whenever there is information about it. "Sensitivity of India is being taken seriously by Government of Nepal," he told PTI in an interview here.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/international/article82957.ece>

**'Nepal and Indian armies enjoy exemplary ties'
Kathmandu Post, 20 January 2010**

Indian Army Chief Gen. Deepak Kapoor, who arrived here on a four-day goodwill visit on Tuesday, has described the relationship between the national armies of the two countries as "exemplary." "Nepal Army and the Indian Army have traditional linkages and this will not be affected by political changes and whoever leads the government in the two countries," said Gen. Kapoor, addressing the Principal Staff Officers of Nepal Army at Army Headquarters. "We enjoy a special military relationship and we should try to make it exemplary for the rest of the world in the days ahead," said an NA general, quoting Kapoor.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/19/top-stories/Nepal-and-Indian-armies-enjoy-exemplary-ties/4214/>

"Not long" before police arrest remaining four top dealers, says police drugs chief

Minivan, 20 January 2010

The head of the police drug enforcement unit Mohamed Jinah has claimed "it won't

be long" before police arrest the remaining four of the top six drug dealers identified by President Mohamed Nasheed. "Two of the top six drug dealers have been arrested. We will arrest the remaining four as soon as possible," he promised.

<http://minivannews.com/society/2010/01/20/not-long-before-police-arrest-remaining-four-top-dealers-says-police-drugs-chief/>

**Japanese support for Phase II
Kuensel, 20 January 2010**

The Japanese government will support Bhutan in procuring a range of machinery and equipment to build more than 1,500 km of farm roads and power tiller tracks in the dzongkhags. The 597 million yen (USD 6 mn) two-year project, called 'Improvement of machinery and equipment for construction of rural agricultural road (Phase II)' was formalised yesterday with the signing and exchanging of three documents between officials of Bhutan and Japan.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14524>

**Sinister plan on polls eve
Daily News, 20 January 2010**

There was a move to rob or buy National Identity Cards of voters on January 24 or 25 to prevent voters exercising their franchise. We have informed the Elections Commissioner and the Inspector General of Police to take action to deploy mobile police patrols to prevent miscreants resorting to the same tactics adopted by subversive elements during the spate of violence in 1988-90 period, UPFA General Secretary and Education Minister Susil Premajayanth said yesterday. Addressing the UPFA press conference at the Mahaveli Centre he said the same elements that were experienced in this violation of the law and human rights were now members of a registered political party.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/20/pol01.asp>

**Gates, in India, Warns of Regional Militant Threat
NYT, 20 January 2010**

NEW DELHI — Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates warned Wednesday that the interconnected extremist groups on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border were working to destabilize the entire region and that "a victory for one was a victory for all." Speaking in New Delhi at a news conference after meetings with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India and the country's defense and external affairs ministers, Mr. Gates said that Taliban groups and other militant groups operating under the umbrella of Al Qaeda intended to destabilize not just Afghanistan and Pakistan but India as well. Mr. Gates, who was in the middle of a two-day visit to India's capital, said the groups could provoke conflict between India and Pakistan, and that focusing on only one extremist group for elimination was not the solution.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/21/world/asia/21gates.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print>

Terrorists can trigger Indo-Pak war: Gates

The News, 21 January 2010

NEW DELHI: US Defence Secretary Robert Gates said on Wednesday India may lose its diplomatic restraint with Pakistan after any repeat of Mumbai-style attack and militants in the region may use this to provoke the two rivals to war. "I think it's not unreasonable to assume Indian patience would be limited were there to be further attacks," Gates told reporters on a trip to New Delhi aimed at broadening the US ties with the emerging Asian giant. "What we talked about at some length is the syndicate of different terrorist groups and how they put all of the countries in the region — Afghanistan, Pakistan, India — at risk," Gates said.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=26792

Meghnaghat-2 power bidding process starts Daily News, 21 January 2010

The Power Development Board (PDB) yesterday floated pre-qualification (PQ) document seeking qualified power developers to install a dual fuel 300 to 450 megawatt power plant in Meghnaghat. The floating of PQ document coincides with a government expert team's upcoming visit to Singapore and New York on January 25-26 and January 28-29 to attract investors in some large-scale energy projects. These projects include the Meghnaghat project dubbed as Meghnaghat 2.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=122910>

Army deserters used to incite violence - NPOC Daily News, 21 January 2010

National Polls Observation Center's National Organizer Rasanga Harischandra said that some presidential election candidates used under world gangs and Army deserters to incite violence. Speaking at a press conference held at the NPOC, Harischandra said from November 23 to January 17, 457 incidents had been reported. The UPFA reported 141 incidents while the UNP and its allies 137, New Democratic Front 66, JVP 82 and others 31. He said that out of 457 incidents 16 were serious including three murders.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/21/news02.asp>

Defence Minister sparks Maoist fire Kathmandu Post, 21 January 2010

The UCPN (Maoist) on Wednesday took exception to Defence Minister Bidhya Bhandari's statement that her ministry and Nepal Army (NA) could not be compelled to abide by the decision of the Special Committee for the Supervision, Integration and Rehabilitation of Maoist combatants. "The defence minister's statement is against the spirit of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). It is clear that her remarks are part of the conspiracy hatched by reactionary forces trying to derail the peace process and incite civil war," said a UCPN (Maoist) press statement on Wednesday. "If the government is committed to the peace process, why can't it dismiss the minister for such acts?"

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/20/top-stories/Defence-Minister-sparks-Maoist-fire/4247/>

Pakistan Resists Call by U.S. to Root Out Militants
NYT, 21 January 2010

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan — The Pakistani Army indicated Thursday that it would not launch any new offensives against extremists in the mountainous region of North Waziristan for at least six months, pushing back against calls by the United States to root out militants staging attacks along the Afghan border. An Army spokesman described Pakistan's position as the United States secretary of defense, Robert M. Gates, arrived here for an unannounced two-day visit. Mr. Gates said that he planned to urge top Pakistani military officials to pursue extremist groups along their border, and that ignoring "one part of this cancer" would threaten the entire country's stability.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/22/world/asia/22pstan.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print>

Bangladesh, India to form joint committee
Daily Star, 23 January 2010

Bangladesh and India will form a joint coordination committee, in light of the recently signed three security-related agreements, with representatives of their law enforcement and intelligence agencies to combat international terrorism, organised crimes and cross-border drug trade. The committee will be constituted under the aegis of the home ministries of the two countries as per the terms of an agreement signed during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent visit to New Delhi, Foreign Secretary Mijarul Quayes yesterday said after making the official announcement about the committee.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=123231>

All set for free and fair poll
Daily News, 23 January 2010

All arrangements have been made to ensure the voting rights of all on January 26 and hold a free and fair poll, Elections Commissioner Dayananda Dissanayaka told the media yesterday. "Establishment of polling stations and providing other facilities for internally displaced voters in the North and East have also been made to allow them to exercise their right to vote satisfactorily," Dissanayaka added. He said he accepted 45,732 applications of IDP voters who will be facilitated at 89 cluster polling stations in eight administrative districts in Northern and Eastern Provinces.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/23/pol01.asp>

First joint venture bank ready for business
Kuensel, 23 January 2010

23 January, 2010 - Bhutan's first joint venture bank and the third bank in the country, Druk PNB Bank Ltd., which opens for business in Thimphu on January 27, says it will change the lending culture in Bhutan. "When we lend we'll focus on the appraisal of the project, collateral requirements will not be a major factor," said the bank's chief executive officer, N K Arora as employees moved behind brand new counters and construction workers on scaffoldings gave finishing touches to the façade of its Thimphu office.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14550>

TIA on high alert

Kathmandu Post, 23 January 2010

Security at Tribhuvan International Airport has been beefed up to foil any possible security risks after the Indian government sensitized all Air India planes operating to and from India's neighbouring countries. The Indian government move followed 'intelligence inputs that terrorist groups with allegiance to al-Qaeda, Lashker-e-Toiba and Jamat-ul-Dawa were planning to hijack an Air India plane, especially operating to or from SAARC countries.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/22/top-stories/TIA-on-high-alert/4320/>

Whale shark researchers threatened at knife point, lose research permit

Minivan, 23 January 2010

The Maldives Whale Shark Research Programme (MWSRP) has had its research permit suspended by the ministry of fisheries and agriculture after complaints about the organisation's research methods.

"The Divers' Association and segments of the community complained to us that they were unhappy with the way the research was being conducted," said Minister of State for Fisheries and Agriculture Dr Hussain Rasheed Hassan.

<http://minivannews.com/environment/2010/01/22/whale-shark-researchers-threatened-at-knife-point-lose-research-permit/>

C.I.A. Deaths Prompt Surge in U.S. Drone Strikes

NYT, 23 January 2010

WASHINGTON — Since the suicide bombing that took the lives of seven Americans in Afghanistan on Dec. 30, the Central Intelligence Agency has struck back against militants in Pakistan with the most intensive series of missile strikes from drone aircraft since the covert program began. Beginning the day after the attack on a C.I.A. base in Khost, Afghanistan, the agency has carried out 11 strikes that have killed about 90 people suspected of being militants, according to Pakistani news reports, which make almost no mention of civilian casualties. The assault has included strikes on a mud fortress in North Waziristan on Jan. 6 that killed 17 people and a volley of missiles on a compound in South Waziristan last Sunday that killed at least 20.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/23/world/asia/23drone.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print>

Pak reluctant to plunge into war with Afghan militants'

The Hindu, 25 January 2010

Suspicious of deepening ties between India and the United States, Pakistan is reluctant to plunge into war with Afghan militants and even high-profile visits of U.S. officials have failed to win over a military and civilian establishment in Islamabad, a media report said. The recent visit of U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates and U.S.

Special Representative for Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke could not convince Pakistan to go ahead full throat in its war against terrorism.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article94428.ece>

Taliban kill seven on spying charges in NWA
The News, 25 January 2010

MIRAMSHAH/PESHAWAR: Taliban militants in North Waziristan killed seven people on charges of spying for the US-led occupation forces in Afghanistan and threatened spies with similar punishment if they didn't stop working for their enemy. It was the biggest number of people killed by the militants on charges of spying for the US forces in North Waziristan so far. Four of the slain people were stated to be local Wazir tribesmen while the three others were said to be Afghan nationals, all residents of Afghanistan's troubled Khost province, which borders North Waziristan.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?id=26865

50,535 get primary scholarship
Daily Star, 25 January 2010

Some 50,535 students across the country will get the Primary Terminal Examinations Scholarship this year, according to the results published on Monday. Among the recipients, 19,995 students would get the scholarship in talent pool category while 30,540 in general category. The government, in place of the existing scholarship examinations, introduced the public examinations for the class V students this year. In the previous system, only 40 percent of primary school students across the country used to sit for the scholarship examinations.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21843

Bhutanese competing for SDF's top job
Kuensel, 25 January 2010

Two Bhutanese will compete with 14 other applicants from the SAARC region for the post of Chief Executive Officer of the soon to be operationalised SAARC Development Fund (SDF) office in Thimphu. The post will be paid a monthly salary of USD 6,000 (tax free), which is about Nu 276,000 making it one of the highest paying jobs in the country. This is excluding the free accommodation, transport and "other admissible allowances and benefits".

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14560>

Gayoom bows out of politics ahead of DRP congress
Minivan, 25 January 2010

Leader of the Dhivehi Rayyithunge Party (DRP) and former president of the Maldives, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, today announced his resignation from politics ahead of the party's national congress in February. Gayoom apologised to the DRP and its members but said it was time for the "younger generation" to take over the party's helm.

<http://minivannews.com/politics/2010/01/25/gayoom-bows-out-of-politics-ahead-of-drp-congress/>

Let's prevent violence before and after Presidential election
Daily News, 25 January 2010

The following appeal has been made to the people and the Government by the Most Venerable Agga Maha Panditha Kotugoda Dhammawasa Anunayaka Thera, President of the Sri Lanka Amarapura Maha Sangha Sabha with the approval of the Most Venerable Davuldena Sri Gnanissara Mahanayake Thera, Supreme Patriarch of the Sri Lanka Amarapura Sect and other Mahanayakas and Lekhakaadikari Theras of the Chapters. "Sri Lanka is a country with a very long history dating back to pre-Buddhist times. Evidence of it is found in ancient Indian literature and Jataka tales.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/25/Pol02.asp>

Pakistan's Rebuff Over New Offensives Rankles U.S.
NYT, 25 January 2010

WASHINGTON — The Pakistani Army's announcement last week that it planned no new offensive against militants for as long as a year has deeply frustrated senior American military officers, and chipped away at one of the cornerstones of President Obama's strategy to reverse the Taliban's gains in Afghanistan and Pakistan. When Mr. Obama announced his decision in December to send 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan, he and his aides made clear that the chances of success hinged significantly on Pakistan's willingness to eliminate militants' havens in its territory, including in the tribal region of North Waziristan. United States officials described the American and NATO surge of troops as a hammer, but they said it required a Pakistani anvil on the other side of the border to prevent the Taliban from retreating to the mountains.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/25/world/asia/25waziristan.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print>

General Puts Up a Fight in Sri Lanka's Election
NYT, 25 January 2010

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka — When President Mahinda Rajapaksa announced late last year that he would move the presidential election up by two years and seek a fresh mandate from Sri Lanka's war-weary electorate, he seemed like a shoo-in. Having vanquished the fearsome Tamil Tiger insurgency in May with a no-holds-barred assault on its last stronghold, Mr. Rajapaksa enjoyed widespread adulation. The opposition parties were fractured and in disarray. No one, it seemed, could match the president's popularity, despite deep unease about what seemed to be the increasing concentration of power in the hands of his family and rising corruption.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/25/world/asia/25lanka.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print>

Polls today
Daily News, 26 January 2010

It is all systems go as the nation elects its sixth Executive President today, the first Presidential poll to be held in post war Sri Lanka. A total of 14,088,500 eligible

voters will cast their ballot in 11,098 centres throughout the country. Colombo District has the largest number of voters (1,521,854) and Trincomalee the smallest (241,133). Polling will commence at 7 a.m. and end at 4 p.m. Special arrangements have been made for the displaced persons in the North to cast their votes. Elections Commissioner Dayananda Dissanayake has appealed to voters to cast their vote early.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/26/pol01.asp>

**McKinsey projects 70 % rise in health care cost
Kuensel, 26 January 2010**

McKinsey's diagnostic finding on Bhutan's health care system projected a 70 percent increase in health care cost in the next five years if the country's health system standards remained the same. McKinsey explained that global experiences showed improving health services at this stage was more costly because of changing patterns of diseases. "Bhutan is at the cusp where further improvement in health outcomes requires higher cost," stated the findings.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14571>

**Comment: A New Era of Maldivian Politics
Minivan, 26 January 2010**

Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, for good or ill, will probably be remembered as one of the most dominant figures of our modern history. With his withdrawal from active political involvement, he has given rise to new fractions, new political players, and a completely new dynamic. Yesterday we entered a new era of Maldivian Politics.

<http://minivannews.com/politics/2010/01/26/commnt-a-new-era-of-maldivian-politics/>

**Blanket ban on foreign employment via India
Kathmandu Post, 26 January 2010**

In a bid to curb the use of Indian routes for foreign employment, the Foreign Ministry has decided to write to the Government of India not to permit Nepalis to use Indian routes to go to Gulf countries, Lebanon and Malaysia for jobs. Nepali missions based in Gulf countries had complained that many Nepalis who reached there for blue collar jobs found themselves in trouble as they did not have prior approval of the government. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sujata Koirala decided to this effect on Monday. The ministry will be writing to the New Delhi mission on Tuesday asking Indian authorities to take strict measures against Nepalis who want to go to third countries with ordinary passports.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/25/top-stories/Blanket-ban-on-foreign-employment-via-India/4413/>

**Clock Ticks for Nepal to Settle Its Future
NYT, 26 January 2010**

For anyone living in a country where reforming health care is regarded as an insurmountable challenge, consider the political calendar in the struggling Himalayan

republic of Nepal. By May 28, or roughly four months off, the entire country must be reorganized. First, a new constitution has to be drafted to reaffirm fundamental rights for Nepalese citizens, restructure the national government and create states in a country where none previously existed. The positions of president and prime minister (the king has been deposed) must be clarified: Should the country have a directly elected, powerful executive? Or should a parliamentary system prevail?

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/26/world/asia/26nepal.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print>

Krishna to meet Australian counterpart, discuss attacks

The Hindu, 27 January 2010

External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna will take up the issue of attacks on Indian students in Australia with his Australian counterpart Stephen Smith on the sidelines of a conference on Afghanistan here. In his bilateral meeting with Mr. Smith, likely on Thursday, Krishna is expected to convey deepening concern in India over the continuing attacks on Indian students that are widely seen in India as "racist" in character despite Canberra's repeated disclaimers, sources said.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article95491.ece>

Bangabandhu killers walk to gallows by Jan 31

Daily Star, 27 January 2010

Five convicted killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman would be executed any day by January 31, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed said on Wednesday. Five convicts, now behind the bars, are Syed Farooq Rahman, Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan, Mohiuddin Ahmed, Bazlul Huda and AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed. After a meeting at the law ministry, Shafique told reporters that the government would execute them as per the jail code.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21877

Quiet poll

Daily News, 27 January 2010

The election to elect the Sixth Executive President of Sri Lanka was peaceful in all parts of the country. Polling started at 7.00 a.m in all 22 electoral districts and concluded by 4.00 p.m yesterday. Polling was brisk in most districts except in the North that was experiencing an election under peaceful conditions after a lapse of over three decades. Opposition Leader Ranil Wickremesinghe told the media that the polling was quite peaceful everywhere including Jaffna, Vanni and Vavuniya.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/27/pol01.asp>

India gives Nu 250 mn towards earthquake relief

Kuensel, 27 January 2010

The ambassador of India to Bhutan, Pavan K Varma, met prime minister Lyonchhoen Jigmi Y Thinley last evening in Thimphu to hand over a Nu 250 million (25 crore) contribution cheque towards the government's disaster relief fund. Presenting the cheque the ambassador said that the contribution is a small token of deep concern

and assistance to reinforce the effort for the rehabilitation and reconstruction caused by the September 21 earthquake. He also stated that India has been closely watching and appreciating the great efforts made by the government officials in trying to rehabilitate and succor the victims.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14580>

**Special Committee readies structure to take over PLA
Kathmandu Post, 27 January 2010**

The Special Committee for the Supervision, Integration and Rehabilitation of Maoist combatants has finalised the organisational chart of the new chain of command that will bring Maoist combatants under government control. The committee meeting held on Tuesday evening agreed on the structure of the secretariat of the special committee which will replace the existing chain of command of the Maoist party over combatants living in UN-monitored cantonments. The UCPN (Maoist) has demanded agreement on the numbers and criteria for combatants to be integrated before enforcing the new chain of command.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/26/top-stories/Special-Committee-readies-structure-to-take-over-PLA/4436/>

**Maldives to ease trade barriers with India
Minivan, 27 January 2010**

The government will ease trade barriers with India to promote trade between the two countries and accelerate foreign investment. Foreign Minister Ahmed Shaheed is currently leading a delegation in India to facilitate trade. Indian financial newspaper Business Standard claimed Indian companies, including Tata, Suzlon, GMR, Apollo Hospitals and Oberoi, could invest as much as US\$1 billion in the Maldives and significantly boost the country's economy.

<http://minivannews.com/business/2010/01/27/maldives-to-ease-trade-barriers-with-india/>

**Sri Lanka's President Wins Re-election but Is Challenged
NYT, 27 January 2010**

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka — Mahinda Rajapaksa, Sri Lanka's president, declared victory in his race for a second term Wednesday, but his main challenger, a retired army general who had been a close ally until a few months ago, rejected the tally and demanded a new vote. Official results gave Mr. Rajapaksa, who ran on his victory against the Tamil Tiger insurgency, an 18-point advantage over his nearest opponent, Sarath Fonseka, the general who carried out the successful military operation against the Tigers. Independent Sri Lankan election monitors said that there was no evidence of major fraud in the voting but left open the possibility of problems in the counting. More broadly, election observers and advocacy groups have questioned the fundamental fairness of the campaign, accusing Mr. Rajapaksa of using state resources to run his campaign. State-owned news media all but shut out opposition candidates.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/28/world/asia/28lanka.html?ref=asia&pagewanted>

d=print

**Gates discussed Afghan policy with Indian leaders: Pentagon
The Hindu, 28 January 2010**

US Defence Secretary Robert Gates has discussed with the Indian leaders the need to have transparency with Pakistan on its activities in Afghanistan, the Pentagon said on Thursday. "We did discuss Afghanistan with the government in Delhi and discussed the need for the Indian government to be as transparent as they can be with the Pakistani government about their activities in Afghanistan," Department of Defence spokesman Geoff Morrell told reporters at a news conference.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/international/article95906.ece>

**India, China to be engine of global growth: WEF experts
The Hindu, 28 January 2010**

Led by India and China, Asia will not only become the global engine for growth but will also increasingly exercise its influence on the rest of the world, experts at the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting here have said. "As their economic might grows, the region's (Asia) various societies will become more assertive and influential," WEF said in a statement, summing up the discussions on a session on 'The Rise of Asia' on Wednesday.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/business/Economy/article96313.ece>

**COAS asks Nato to understand Pak perspective
The News, 28 January 2010**

BRUSSELS: Top officers from Nato, Russia and Pakistan gave unanimous backing on Wednesday to the new international strategy in Afghanistan, the head of the alliance's military committee said. "There was a feeling in the room that we are getting it right," Admiral Giampaolo Di Paola told reporters after talks in Brussels with chiefs of military staff from more than 60 countries. Di Paola said Russian chief of staff Nikolai Makarov and his Pakistani counterpart Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani had underlined that Nato's success in defeating the insurgency would have important repercussions for their nations. "We have a greater interest than you that you succeed, that's what he said," Makarov had told the meeting of top brass at the Nato headquarters, Di Paola said.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?id=26924

**Good neighbours?
The News, 28 January 2010**

Unless there is lasting peace between Pakistan and India, there is no hope for hundreds of millions in the two countries. The Jang Group and The Times of India had the vision and the courage to launch "Aman ki Asha." The prime prerequisite of good-neighbourliness is a "live and let live" policy. Unfortunately, India has a marked inclination for the latter in dealing with the nations on its periphery, particularly Pakistan. Vast tracts of Bangladesh will become desert if India goes through with its plans to harness upstream the two great rivers that flow through the delta country. The India-friendly Hasina Wajed government notwithstanding, why does Bangladesh field almost seven Infantry divisions, not including division plus paramilitary

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), double the fighting strength of the Pakistani armed forces in East Pakistan in 1971?.

http://thenews.jang.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=221111

Nation rids itself of stigma 5 executed killers of Bangabandhu buried at their village homes

Daily News, 28 January 2010

The five executed killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were buried yesterday following the hangings in Dhaka Central Jail in the first hour of the day. They were buried at their ancestral village homes. Five ambulances, escorted by Rapid Action Battalion and police, transported the bodies to the burial sites.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/29/sec01.asp>

Liberalised tariff+ highend tourism

Kuensel, 28 January 2010

28 January, 2010 - The Tourism Council of Bhutan says that the new liberalised tariff system is meant to not only increase the number of tourists to 100,000 in the next three years but also have more high-end tourists. TCB officials said that the current USD 200 dollars was supposed to be a minimum price introduced in 1989 but in reality most tour operators provided everything within or lower than the package.

<http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=14593>

Minority Rights: Unsettling crisis for religious groups

Kathmandu Post, 28 January 2010

With rapid unplanned urbanisation and mounting population pressure in Kathmandu Valley, religious minorities like Muslims, Christians, Bahá'í and others, who don't cremate dead bodies, are facing serious burial space crunch. Muslims in Kathmandu, for instance, have almost run out of burial space. The only cemetery in Swoyambhu was build decades ago when Kathmandu was a very small town and the Muslim population was negligible. "After we ran out of burial space, we have been compelled to dig older graves and bury new corpse in them," says Taj Mohammad Miya, coordinator of the United Muslim National Struggle Committee (UMNSC), which successfully led the Muslim movement last March.

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/27/top-stories/Minority-Rights-Unsettling-crisis-for-religious-groups/4475/>

Maldives hosts secret Taliban talks

Minivan, 28 January 2010

A group of Afghan MPs, "a government official" and seven people linked to the Taliban met in the Maldives last weekend for secret talks, according to a report by Al Jazeera in Afghanistan. According to the report, the talks were part of an ambitious plan to bring peace to the war-torn country by offering cash, jobs and incentives to Taliban fighters in exchange for laying down their arms.

<http://minivannews.com/politics/2010/01/28/maldives-hosts-secret-taliban-talks/>

**Militants Strike Convoy With NATO Supplies in Karachi
NYT, 28 January 2010**

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — A convoy of trucks carrying supplies destined for NATO forces in Afghanistan came under attack on Thursday in the southern port city of Karachi, leaving three people wounded, police officials said. The attack came as the convoy left Port Qasim for Kandahar Province in Afghanistan. Gunmen on motorcycles intercepted three trucks southwest of the city and threw a grenade inside a vehicle, wounding three Pakistani civilian employees. There were no immediate claims of responsibility.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/29/world/asia/29pstan.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print>

**Chinese foreign minister makes proposals on Afghanistan
People's Daily, 30 January 2010**

Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi made four proposals Thursday on the Afghan reconstruction at the London Conference on Afghanistan. "Afghanistan's reconstruction process had gone through twists and turns," Yang said in a speech. "The successful elections held by the Afghan people opened a new chapter in the history of the country."

<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90883/6882249.html>

**Police on defense over DhiFM coverage of Muleeage mob
Minivan, 30 January 2010**

Police have denied asking DhiFM to cease broadcasting live coverage of a protest that took place outside the president's official residence on Thursday night, instead claiming officers requested the station stop airing interviews featuring people calling for the government to be toppled. A large mob of protesters marched on Muleeage just before midnight, after rumours of a police death in custody circulated around a DRP rally being held at the artificial beach.

<http://minivannews.com/politics/2010/01/30/police-on-defense-over-dhifm-coverage-of-muleeage-mob/>

**Start work now - President
Daily News, 30 January 2010**

President Mahinda Rajapaksa yesterday emphasized that proposals contained in his second manifesto Mahinda Chintana Idiri Dekma should be implemented without any delay starting from now. The President made this observation at Temple Trees when he met the distinguished persons of the think tank who made proposals on different sectors to him in drawing up his policy program. While thanking them for the contribution they made, President Rajapaksa said that the time to start work was now and there should not be any delay.

<http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/01/30/pol01.asp>

**Sri Lanka Police Arrest Staff of Election's Loser
NYT, 30 January 2010**

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka — The police raided the office of Sri Lanka's defeated presidential candidate on Friday and arrested 15 of his staff members, after officials accused him of plotting to overthrow the government and assassinate his victorious rival. The candidate, Sarath Fonseka, a general who carried out the successful military operation against the Tamil Tiger insurgency last year, called the allegations fabricated and vowed to challenge President Mahinda Rajapaksa's party in coming parliamentary elections.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/30/world/asia/30lanka.html?ref=asia&pagewanted=print>

**NSA meets Karunanidhi, discusses Sri Lankan Tamils issue
The Hindu, 31 January 2010**

India is working with the Sri Lankan government for resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced Tamils and devolution of powers in the political arrangement that will satisfy all sections, National Security Adviser Shiv Shankar Menon said on Sunday. Talking to reporters after meeting Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi at the Secretariat, Mr Menon said it was a courtesy call and both of them discussed various issues of concern.

<http://beta.thehindu.com/news/national/article97907.ece>

**Govt unleashes intelligence agency to smear BNP: Mosharraf
Daily Star, 31 January 2010**

Main opposition BNP on Sunday accused the Awami League-led alliance government of using the administration and an intelligence agency to smear the opposition party and its leaders. At a press briefing at BNP's headquarters at Nayapaltan, Standing Committee Member Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain also alleged that the intelligence agency was forcing journalists to publish reports the way it wants.

http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/latest_news.php?nid=21950

**Maldives to cut carbon emissions '100%' by 2020, pledges president
Minivan, 31 January 2010**

The Maldives has informed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that it will completely eliminate its net carbon emissions by 2020, currently the most ambitious emissions target to be submitted by a country following the Copenhagen Accord. Deputy Environment Minister Dr Mohamed Shareef acknowledged that the promise to reduce net emissions by 100% was misleading.

<http://minivannews.com/environment/2010/01/31/maldives-to-cut-carbon-emissions-100-by-2020-pledges-president/>

**Rawal China trip in Feb
Kathmandu Post, 31 January 2010**

Home Minister Bhim Rawal is paying a six-day official visit to China, beginning Feb. 6. According to Home Ministry sources, Nepal and China will sign two separate

security related Memoranda of Understanding during the visit. Both are security related MoUs, said a senior official. "The Nepali side will seek Chinese assistance for strengthening Nepal Police and Armed Police Force."

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2010/01/30/top-stories/Rawal-China-trip-in-Feb/4579/>