



ASIA
 MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA; WEST ASIA; SOUTH ASIA; NORTH ASIA; EAST ASIA



AFRICA

WEST AFRICA; EAST AFRICA & HORN OF AFRICA; CENTRAL AFRICA; SOUTH AFRICA



EUROAMERICA

WEST EUROPE; EAST EUROPE; NORTH AMERICA; LATIN AMERICA



GLOBALIZED OPINION...



GLOBALIZED FINANCE...



GLOBALIZED ELECTIONS...

Friday on the facebook

WEEKLY NEWS MONITOR OF OPINIONS & EVENTS IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

Based on weekly reports produced by the project 'Globalized Business & Politics: a View from the Muslim World.'

Using a rich data-base of news reports and opinion polls from all over the world we analyze and compile papers on global trends and patterns in the sphere of economics, politics and society. These reports and analytical summaries are uploaded online for discussion and are accessible on the [BPM Blog Page](#).

WELCOME REMARKS for new readers What is FOF?

Dear Colleagues,

We are mailing to you the weekly e-letter of the project: Globalized Business and Politics: A View from the Muslim World". The e-letter is a snapshot of the detailed data gathering and analysis which our research team does each week.

Why should one add another e-letter to many similar exercises already underway? We have pondered this question and here is what we believe to be our possible contribution or *Competitive Advantage*.

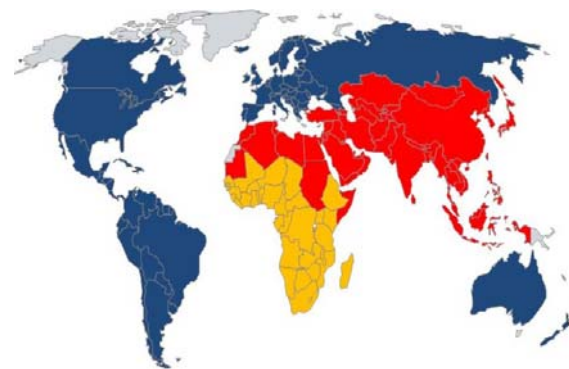
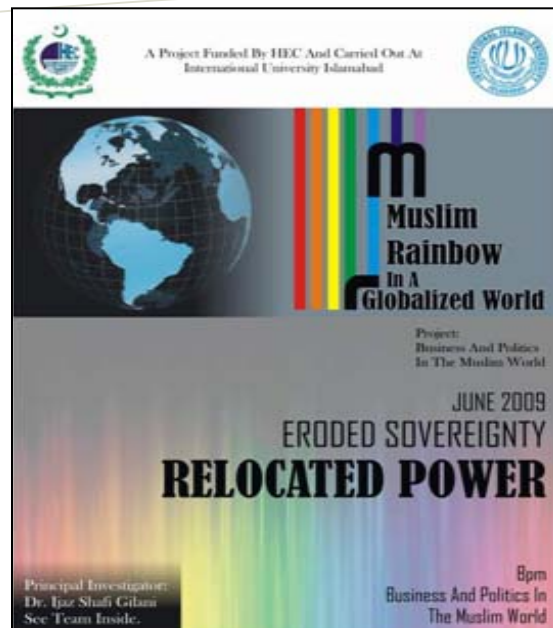
- ◆ We will make the e-letter a multi-layered presentation: in other words Friday on the Facebook will provide clicks to deeper levels of information; for comprehension (Maps and Data) as well as for elaboration



and analysis (complete weekly Events data, supplementary commentaries and related links).

- ◆ Our weekly e-letter will be grounded in a thorough Analytical framework of Relocation of Power in the 21st Century.
- ◆ Our weekly e-letter will be targeted to produce an annual synthesis of Global Trends. Each issue will serve as an input for the annual analysis.
- ◆ Our weekly e-letter will be designed to become a teaching tool for class-room instruction in courses dealing with global political sociology or related fields.
- ◆ Our weekly e-letter will also be designed to build a theoretically inclined community of political sociologists.

With best wishes and prayers we present our 'pilot weekly e-letter: *Friday on the Facebook*. - A Weekly Monitor of Global Opinions and Events. §



Business and Politics in the Muslim World (BPM) refers to a study funded by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, and is conducted at the International Islamic University (IIU), Islamabad.



Principal Investigator- DR. IJAZ SHAFI GILANI



Globalized Opinions

This week's report consists of 23 surveys. Four of these are multi-country surveys while the rest are national surveys.

Week # 110

Commentary on Gallopedia Polls

Dated 7-14 March 2010



Disapproval of Taliban: Disapproval of violence in Pakistan & Afghanistan?

Last week Gallup USA survey made headlines in newspapers regarding the increasing unpopularity of the Taliban in Pakistan and Afghanistan.¹ The survey shows that there is very little support left for the 'Taliban' among the populations of these two countries. This is especially true of Pakistan according where just 4 percent of the people still believed that the 'Taliban' have a positive impact in some areas of the country. Meanwhile almost 8 in ten said they have a damaging affect on the country. To what extent can this be considered a victory for U.S? is it depictive of a pro national sentiment in Pakistan that sides with the government and the military operations in the north and along the western borderlands.

Pakistanis witnessed the deadliest attacks in the year 2009 after the military launched its campaign against the 'Taliban' in South *Waziristan*. Hundreds of people lost their lives in suicide and car bomb blasts in almost all the major cities of Pakistan. North West Frontier province was the worst hit, where consequently the support for the Taliban has sharply fallen. *Baluchistan* was least affected by the wave of violence; as the survey depicts, still a quarter of the residents see some positive aspects of the *Taliban*.

Disapproval of the *Taliban* cannot perhaps be directly translated as approval of the U.S or the war on terror. Perhaps even the approval of Pakistani military offensive against the *Taliban* would be too ambitious an assumption. This is evident in surveys depicting a further decline in U.S. favorability ratings in Pakistan¹ and Afghanistan¹. These subtle dichotomies are relayed in the sentiment that disapproves of military offensive, by national as well as international forces, as the sole strategy in effect. The recent Afghanistan conference in the UK that outlined a tentative 'exit strategy' (if not exactly in those terms), perhaps shows an inclination towards softer strategy tools that perhaps would sit well with popular opinion among the domestic audience. §

Zone 1- ASIA
WEST ASIA

Taliban Increasingly Unpopular in Pakistan

The Taliban's presence on either side of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border is largely unwelcome, but increasingly so in Pakistan, where Gallup surveys show they have lost much of the little appeal they had.

March 12, 2010

Zone 3
EURO-AMERICAS
EAST EUROPE

Ruling United Russia Maintains Huge Lead

A majority of Russians would vote for the ruling party in the next legislative election, according to a poll by the All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center. 54 per cent of respondents would support United Russia (YR), down one point since January.



March 08, 2010

WEST EUROPE



Three-in-Five Germans Want New Foreign Minister

Many adults in Germany are dissatisfied with the performance of their current foreign minister, according to a poll by Forsa released by *Stern* and RTL. 60 per cent of respondents believe Free Democratic Party (FDP) leader Guido Westerwelle is not well-suited for the post.

March 08, 2010

France's Sarkozy Stuck in Negative Territory

French president Nicolas Sarkozy has not been able to re-build his charismatic brand, according to a poll by LH2. 56 per cent of respondents have a negative opinion of the president, up one point since January.

March 11, 2010

NORTH AMERICA

Americans' Global Warming Concerns Continue to Drop

Gallup's annual update on Americans' attitudes toward the environment shows a public that over the last two years has become less worried about the threat of global warming, less convinced that its effects are already happening, and more likely to believe that scientists themselves are uncertain about its occurrence.

March 11, 2010

U.S. Satisfaction Drops Below 20%

A new Gallup poll finds a continuing decline in Americans' satisfaction with the way things are going in the United States. Now at 19%, satisfaction has reverted to the levels seen in the first few months of the Obama presidency. Satisfaction was 13% when Obama took office in January 2009 but exceeded 30% during most of the summer.

March 10, 2010

In U.S., 45% Favor, 48% Oppose Obama Healthcare Plan

As President Obama begins a final push on healthcare reform, slightly more Americans say they would advise their member of Congress to vote against rather than for a healthcare reform bill similar to the one the president has proposed.

March 9, 2010

Dems Hold Slight Advantage in 2010 Election Preferences

Democrats lead Republicans by a slight 47% to 44% margin when registered voters are asked which party's congressional candidate they would support in their district "if the elections for Congress were being held

today." At the same time, Gallup's inaugural weekly tracking update on the 2010 elections shows Republicans with a distinct advantage over Democrats in terms of enthusiasm about voting this year.

March 9, 2010

Canadians Clearly Support MP Wage Freeze

Most adults in Canada are in favour of a proposal to freeze the wages for MPs, cabinet ministers and senators, according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 92 per cent of respondents support this idea, outlined in the latest Speech from the Throne.

March 09, 2010



LATIN AMERICA

Half of Mexicans Content with President Calderón

Public support for Felipe Calderón remains stable in Mexico, according to a poll by Consulta Mitofsky. 53.4 per cent of respondents agree with the way the president is governing, up one point since January.

March 07, 2010

Chile's Bachelet Leaves with Enviably Rating

A large proportion of adults in Chile are satisfied with the performance of their outgoing president, according to a poll by Adimark Gfk. 84 per cent of respondents approve of Michelle Bachelet's performance.

March 13, 2010

AUSTALASIA

Australians Say Country is too Crowded

Most people in Australia think their country cannot allow more inhabitants at this time, according to a poll by Essential Research. 75 per cent of respondents say the country lacks the infrastructure and proper services to support a larger population, and 61 per cent say the country's fragile environment cannot bear the burden of a growing population.

March 09, 2010

GLOBAL POLLS

Largest European Countries, U.S. and China Agree With Full Body Scanners in Airports

A new Financial Times/Harris Poll of adults under 65 finds support for increased security measures after the attempted bombing of a plane on Christmas Day. Majorities of those surveyed in the United States (64%), Great Britain (62%), Italy (58%), France (58%), and Germany (53%) as well as 46% of Spaniards and 44% of Chinese all agree that body scanners that X-ray the fill body should be introduced at airports.

March 03, 2010

People in European Countries, U.S. and China Concerned Over Online Security

A new Financial Times/Harris Poll among those under age 65 finds there is a sense of concern over online security and while people are doing some things to help keep their data and privacy secure, they may not be doing everything.

March 04, 2010

Four in Five Regard Internet Access as a Fundamental Right: Global Poll

The poll of more than 27,000 adults conducted by GlobeScan found that 87 per cent of those who used the internet felt that internet access should be "the fundamental right of all people." More than seven in ten (71%) non-internet

users also felt that they should have the right to access the web.

March 07, 2010

Canadians, Americans Differ on Political Correctness

People in Canada and the United States do not see eye-to-eye when it comes to "political correctness", according to a poll by Angus Reid Public Opinion. 50 per cent of respondents in Canada support the concept, but only 41 per cent of Americans concur.

March 11, 2010

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Zone 1- Asia: Summary

Asia, Middle East & North Africa



TURKEY

Political Front: PM Erdogan has decided to hold meetings with artists from theatre and cinema in order to seek support for democratic initiative.

Meanwhile Sledgehammer revealed documents have indicated the involvement of some senior policemen in coup plotting along with army officers.

Geo-strategic front: Turkey has recently signed an agreement on Civil Aviation Cooperation with *New Zealand*. Meanwhile **Turkey** and *South Korea* have signed agreement to enhance cooperation in nuclear energy sector.

Turkish officials claimed that Israel has accepted Turkish role as mediator between *Syrian-Israeli talks*. **Israel** however denied these reports.

Meanwhile **Turkey** has expressed serious concerns regarding US resolution over World War I killings of *Armenians*.

Operations have been carried out in several European countries against the outlawed *Kurdistan Workers' Party*



(PKK) over the last two weeks, with a wide-ranging operation conducted in *Belgium* following anti-PKK operations in France, Germany and Italy.

Economic Front: The strategically crucial *Nabucco* pipeline got thumbs up from the **Turkish** Parliament, breaking legal ground in **Turkey** for the pipeline connecting the country's eastern neighbors to Austria.

Turkish Industry and Trade Minister that country's economy

has seen moderate recovery since the second quarter of 2009 after a stagnation caused by the global economic downturn. **Turkey's** industrial production was up 12.1 percent year-on-year in January 2010. However, industrial production was down 15.3 percent when compared to previous month.

Social Front: A strong, pre-dawn earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 6 struck eastern **Turkey**, killing 51 people.

A recent report by the National Police Department's Anti-smuggling and Organized Crime Bureau (KOM) has shown that a significant number of the bureau's operations in 2009 in **Turkey** have been launched in the field of health.

A middle school student was expelled from school in southeastern city for wearing hijab. Meanwhile **Turkey** came in 101st on a list of 109 countries on the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), which is calculated according to women's participation in economic and political life in their countries.

GCC

Geo-strategic Front: A **Georgian** has become the first woman ambassador to Saudi Arabia. It is unprecedented in

Saudi Arabia's 80 years history.

Economic front: Dubai World, the state-owned holding company seeking to renegotiate terms on \$26 billion of debt, made "some progress" in talks with creditors.

Social Front: Saudi border guards in Jazan foiled an attempt to smuggle quantities of hashish and ammunition.

FERTILE CRESCENT

Political Front: President Barrack Obama called parliamentary elections in Iraq a "milestone" event and vowed to keep his pledge to remove all U.S. troops from that country by the end of next year. One of the significant developments of elections has been the role of women in elections as voters and as participants.

Geo-strategic Front: Talks on implementing a new framework for the countries of the Nile basin are set to continue for another six months to sort out a working formula. A senior Palestinian official criticized the Arab League for offering **Israeli** Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu a four-month period to resume the indirect peace talks with the **Palestinian** Authority.

Social Front: Egypt rejected UN rights investigator Martin Scheinin's criticism of the government's use of emergency law. The investigator expressed his concern that **Egypt's** emergency law is applied within situations that have no link to terrorist activities such as detention of bloggers and politically motivated trials. He also pointed out the repeated use of the military courts and state security courts.

Israel has granted amnesty to a group of 77 **Palestinian** fighters from the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, an offshoot of Fatah movement.

CENTRAL ASIA

Political Front: Majilis, the lower house of **Kazakhstan's** parliament, ratified an agreement on Russia's use of the Baikonur Cosmodrome.

The **Kyrgyz** opposition Ata-Meken (Fatherland) party has demanded the resignation of President and his son. The head of U.S. Central Command, General David Petraeus recently paid a visit to **Kyrgyzstan**, a move that rivals Russian influence.

Geo-strategic Front: Former Russian oligarch Boris Berezovsky, living in self-imposed exile in Britain, has claimed that **Armenia** and **Azerbaijan** should not look to Moscow to help solve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict Berezovsky.

Azerbaijan President strongly condemned decision of U.S. House of Representatives committee on foreign affairs, to pass a resolution on WWI killings of **Armenians by Turkey**.

Tajikistan's Central Commission for Elections and Referenda (CCER) has released the list of members of the Majlisi Namoyandagon (**Tajikistan's** lower chamber of parliament) of the fourth convocation elected through a proportional, party list system from a single nationwide constituency.

Economic Front: The Government of **Tajikistan** has endorsed the short list of companies that would compete for the contract for development of the Konimansuri Kalon silver deposit in the **Tajik** northern Sughd province.

Japan has allocated US\$457,679 to six projects within the no-string aid of the Government of Japan to grass-root projects in **Uzbekistan**.

Social Front: Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner Thomas Hammarberg has expressed concern that some journalists in **Azerbaijan** have been imprisoned on fabricated charges of hooliganism.

A former **Kazakh** banker has accused President Nursultan Nazarbaev's son-in-law of prompting a strike by several thousand workers at an oil facility in southwestern **Kazakhstan**. Meanwhile thousands of people have been evacuated and some killed in **Kazakhstan** after severe floods destroyed several dams.

Kyrgyz Rights Group has strongly condemned authorities' attack against Freedom of Press. About 150 people in northeastern **Uzbekistan** have held a rally to protest the arrest of a local activist.

EAST ASIA

Political Front: Resignation of few members of Opposition party in **Malaysia**; has brought uncertainty about party's future position. Meanwhile **Thailand's** weekly cabinet has decided to impose the Internal Security Act (ISA) during March 11- 23 to ensure law and order in a mass anti-government rally by the united front for Democracy against



Dictatorship (UDD) group.

The **Cambodian** parliament has passed a controversial anti-corruption bill that aims to further enhance transparency in government while opposition parties staged a walkout, saying the new law would stifle criticism and foster corruption.

Geo-strategic Front: Malaysia has expressed keenness to revive the Look East policy with **South Korea** by broadening areas of co-operation in capacity-building.

Economic Front: Indonesia's central bank raised its 2011 economic growth forecast to as much as 6.5 percent from an earlier forecast of as much as 6 percent as consumer spending has accelerated.

Thailand and **Japan** have signed new agreements to further boost their existing economic ties.

Social Front: The US report that was compiled by the US State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor reported that challenges for **Brunei** include the "inability of citizens to change their government; arbitrary detention; limits on freedom of speech, press, assembly, and association; restrictions on religious freedom; discrimination against women; restricted labor rights; and exploitation of foreign workers."

INDIA

Political Front: The disputed women reservation bill (33% seats for women legislature in both houses) has been passed in Rajya Sabha after fourteen years long struggle. RJD, LJP, SP and some other opposition parties opposed the bill. Mulayam Singh Yadav of SP alleged that it was a conspiracy to prevent Muslims, backwards and dalits from entering Parliament and state assemblies. He contended that when not a single Muslim MP was elected to Parliament from several states including Gujarat, MP, Maharashtra, Punjab and Haryana, how Muslim women could



be elected without reservation. "

Meanwhile Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad declared that the Women's Reservation Bill was 'a political blunder' and a conspiracy hatched by the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party to suppress representation of women from the backward classes. All the while Muslim community decided to reach out the eminent political parties for their support against the reservation of 33% women seats in parliament. The groups, led by Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Jamiat-Ulama-i-Hind, All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat and the All India Milli Council have decided to reach out to as many parties as possible barring the BJP

and convey to them that those supporting the Bill could face a Muslim "backlash".

While talking about Maoists Union Home Secretary G.K. Pillai said the objective of the Maoists engaged in an armed 'liberation struggle' is to overthrow the Indian state by 2050, as indicated by documents seized from them. In order to counter their move government has already launched military operation. Human Rights activists in India, however, have strongly condemned government's use of force against Maoists.

Geo-strategic Front: Indian government "has conveyed to the U.S. government that sanctions on Iran have proved to be counter-productive and that all differences with Iran should be resolved peacefully through dialogue and negotiation."

While responding to *Pakistan's* allegations regarding Indian violation of Indus Basin treaty; Indian government claimed that water problem in Pakistan is because of its own inability to handle it properly and has nothing to do with India.

Economic Front: India continued to be the most optimistic nation in terms of hiring plans for the next three months, driven by strong job opportunities across all sectors including finance and realty sectors.

Social Front: According to a report prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) **India** has the maximum number of women dying in the Asia-Pacific region because of discriminatory treatment in access to health and nutrition.

CHINA

Continued...

Political Front: **Chinese** lawmaker has proposed single system to protect people's equal rights to vote. One of the political advisor claimed that **China** should use the Internet as an important platform of diplomacy to boost the country's online voice and lift its international image.

China's Supreme Court and procuratorate vowed to step up anti-corruption efforts after a string of high ranking officials fell in last year's clean-up campaign.

Geo-strategic Front: **China** has strongly opposed *Israeli* plan to build new Jewish settlements. **Chinese** FM has declared 2010 to be very significant for **Chinese** diplomacy. **China** has pointed out the need to mend ties with the US after some controversial issues.

Meanwhile *Russia* has expressed satisfaction with Russo-Chinese ties.

The **Chinese** mainland and Taiwan have cooperated in dealing with more than 5,000 criminal cases since a cross-Strait agreement on judicial assistance took effect on June 25, 2009.

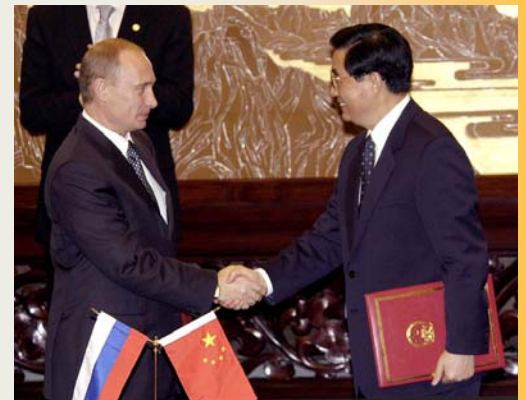
Economic Front: **China's** gold reserve amounts to 1,054 tons, ranking fifth in the world. Meanwhile **China's** exports grew for the third straight month in February, up 45.7 percent year on year to 94.52 billion U.S. dollars, which indicated a rebound in global demand. Chinese labor unions have made great contributions to ease the country's employment pressures during the global economic crisis.

Social Front: A senior official emphasized that the **Chinese** government should exert more effort to reform the income distribution mechanism and bridge the nation's income gap. A total of 64 people from the **Chinese** mainland made the Forbes magazine list of the world's richest billionaires.

country. **China** has started considering overturning the ban that prohibits HIV-positive foreigners from entering the

For a second straight year, the **Chinese** government has increased security across parts of the vast *Tibetan* plateau to dissuade any Tibetans from holding protests this week to mark the anniversaries of ethnic uprisings.

At environmental front **China** has urged more efforts from U.S. to tackle climate change. Meanwhile **China** is heading to achieve its task of cutting pollutants by 10% from 2006-2010. §



Zone 2- Africa:

POLITICS OF SECURITY AND CONFLICT ISSUES

West Africa: Last week President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of **Congo** met with Ma Xiaotian, deputy chief of the General Staff of the *Chinese* People's Liberation Army, to discuss the development of bilateral ties and military cooperation.

Nigeria's former Head of State, Gen. Muhammadu Buhari, has joined the growing number of Nigerians calling for the removal of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, maintaining that the only viable option out of the present political logjam in the country is for the Executive Council of the Federation (EXCOF) to declare the President incapacitated and have him impeached.

Moreover in a recent opinion poll conducted by the Alliance for Credible Election (ACE) in **Nigeria**, on who

between President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua and the Nigerian Judicial Council (NJC) should appoint Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), has indicated preference for NJC.

Meanwhile despite the fresh crisis that erupted in **Nigeria's** Doko Na Hauwa in Jos last week, former Heads of State, Alhaji Shehu Shagari and Chief Earnest Shonekan were hosted to a peace conference in Jos where they called for peace. Meanwhile following the Jos crisis which led to the death of about 400 people, has led to the sacking of the National Security Adviser, Sarki Mukhtar, by the Acting President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan. A former top spymaster Lt. Gen. Aliyu Mohamed Gusau (rtd) replaced Mukhtar.

Meanwhile last week protesters marched down the streets of



Abuja to protest what is seen as a leadership vacuum in Nigeria. They demanded the sacking of the cabinet and a public appearance of President Umaru Yar'Adua.

Authorities have stated that **Nigeria** may seek the assistance of the United Nations to compel **Cameroon** to implement the Green Tree Agreement which set the implementation of the judgement of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ceding the Bakassi Peninsula to **Cameroon**.

The Security Council last week extended the mandate of the UN peacekeeping mission in the **Central African Republic** and **Chad** until 15 May, as discussions continue on the future of the operation. Meanwhile **Chad's** prime minister, Youssouf Saleh Abbas, whose government has been rocked by a series of embezzlement scandals, has stepped down and been replaced by a former oil minister, Emmanuel Nadingar.

An opposition leader in **Gambia** has criticized a wave of arrests in the country, saying detainees - including a former minister - are being held without charge. High-ranking military and police officials are also reportedly among those detained.

Meanwhile **Guinea's** rulers have said they country will hold a presidential election on June 27, the first since a military coup in December last year.

According to police and opposition leaders in **Togo**, riot police used a water cannon and tear gas to attack the headquarters of the main opposition party last week as its leaders huddled inside following a disputed presidential election, in which the son of the country's former dictator was declared winner.

South Africa: A leading member of **Malawi's** opposition United Democratic Front (UDF) party has said that President Bingu Wa Mutharika's government acted irresponsibly when it "secretly" purchased a multi-million dollar presidential jet.

Last week **Zimbabwe's** unity government has suffered its worst blow since its formation a year ago when President Robert Mugabe stripped effective power from three ministries, and assigned them to ZANU-PF ministers.



Central Africa: The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Dr. William F. Shija, has officially invited the **Rwandan** Parliament to join the association. Also last week **Rwandan** President Paul Kagame joined celebrations in England as **Rwanda** was formally welcomed into the Commonwealth Club of Nations.

Meanwhile **Rwanda's** upcoming presidential elections have cast a spotlight on its democratic credentials, with observers warning that allegations of intimidation of opposition leaders could mar the process.

According to a United Nations official Democratic Republic of **Congo**

army troops have killed 90 Rwandan Hutu rebels during recent operations in Congo's North and South Kivu provinces.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN DOMESTIC POLITICS

West Africa: A recent wave of arrests, negative media coverage, and announcements by political and religious leaders targeting **Senegal's** gay community has raised concerns of homosexuals in the mainly Muslim country. According to the penal code homosexuality is punishable by law.

African Union Peace and Security Council Chairman Ramtane Lamamra has said that former **Niger** President Mamadou Tandja should be freed on humanitarian and reconciliation reasons. The 71 year-old Tandja, who was overthrown in a February 18 coup d'état is being held in a presidential building in the capital, Niamey.

Over 10,000 residents in **Lagos State** have been displaced following the demolition of their houses and shops by men of the Lagos State Task Force on Environment and Special Offences.

Christian villagers in **Nigeria** fled their homes fearing new attacks last week even as a senior official accused the country's military chiefs of ignoring warnings about the previous week's massacre. Meanwhile the Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) has advised **Nigerians** to channel their grievances to the appropriate authority rather than take the laws into their hands. Meanwhile an archbishop of the area has termed the real issues as not religious rather political and ethnic in nature. Thousands of women protested the massacre of mostly Christian villagers by a Muslim clan last week. The demonstration coincided with the start of a three-day fast declared by the authorities in central Plateau State as a mark of reconciliation.

South Africa: Aid agencies in **Zimbabwe** are appealing to donors to support the \$378 million appeal launched last December to support humanitarian and early recovery efforts in the country.

A report by the UN's top official on indigenous rights has called for urgent action because of the

Botswana government's denial of water and services to the Bushmen and Bakgalagadi tribes in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve.

Central Africa: With at least 67,000 refugees in southwest **Uganda**, the government and aid workers are still battling inadequate resources in what a UN official described as a "silent emergency".

Meanwhile the United Nations last week started to airlift urgent food aid for tens of thousands of people who have fled ethnic violence in the **Democratic Republic of Congo** (DRC) and are seeking refuge in neighboring **Republic of Congo** (ROC).



According to US and UN reports detailing war crimes Government troops - the FARDC - in the **Democratic Republic of Congo** (DRC) are to blame for much of the epidemic of sexual violence in the east of the country. Meanwhile one of the nation's cabinet ministers said that the administration is forming a competent national army to take over after the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission (MONUC) withdraws by the end of next year.

HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

West Africa: According to the Central Bank of **Nigeria** (CBN) Governor, More than 200 million people in Africa are malnourished and the continent requires \$620 billion to feed its people in the next 40 years. The number represents 26 percent of the entire population of the continent. Annually, Africa requires \$6.5 billion to develop the sector.

In an international forest conference in Paris hosted by the French government President Nicolas Sarkozy has proposed that 20 percent of the \$30 billion in climate change funds pledged by rich countries during the next three years go to fighting deforestation particularly in the **Congo** and *Amazon River* basins in Africa and Latin America.

About 30 years into the HIV/AIDS epidemic, a new strategy is being launched called 'Asking the Right Questions', to better respond to the needs of women and children.

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria reports nearly 5 million lives have been saved since 2002 through programs it has supported for the treatment of these three killer diseases.

This year there are less than half the reported meningitis infections than in the same period in 2009, but more

patients are dying - 13 percent in 2010 versus 8 percent in 2009 - according to the World Health Organization (WHO) Multi-Disease Surveillance Centre in Ouagadougou, **Burkina Faso**, which tracks 14 countries prone to meningitis outbreaks between **Senegal** and **Ethiopia**.

Reportedly a team from World Health Organisation(WHO) is in **Ghana** to assess the outbreak of Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis (CSM) in the country.

Niger says it needs \$123 million of international assistance to make up for food shortages this year. Poor rains across Africa's Sahelian region have brought below-average harvests in **Niger**, northern **Nigeria**, central **Chad**

and northeastern **Mali** and **Burkina Faso**. **Niger** is grappling with an acute food crisis and nearly a million children in the country are malnourished of which at least 200,000 are on the brink of starvation.

Senegalese children were among the 85 million African children vaccinated against polio this week, as part of an international campaign to halt an ongoing wave of the disease in West and Central Africa.



South Africa: According to an industry official **Zambia** is lobbying for support to sell its ivory stockpile to Japan and China and use the funds towards conservation.

Namibia has become one of the first African countries to launch the climate change adaptation programme, supported by the United Nations Development Programme –UNDP. It focuses on improved planning to help **Namibia** deal with climate change aspects such as, floods and drought risks. Meanwhile flooding in **Mozambique** and **Angola** has displaced thousands of families, prompting both governments to step up rescue operations

South Africa, **India** and **Indonesia** are vying to win the U.N.'s top climate change job, a key post to build trust between poor and rich in 2010 after the U.N.'s Copenhagen summit which set few binding targets.

An outbreak of Rift Valley Fever (RVF) in two **South African** provinces has killed one person, while five were reported dead in **Zimbabwe's** capital as a result of typhoid.

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has said that a world where all children are born free of HIV infection is possible in only five years if donors continue to fund global efforts to combat the virus.

Central Africa: The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) commended **Rwanda's** efforts to combat deforestation and promote forest conservation.

Meanwhile during the launch of "K-Light in **Rwanda** Project", a solar powered lantern project it was revealed that the use of environmentally unfriendly Kerosene to light homes, especially in rural areas, is set to reduce following the introduction of solar powered lanterns on the **Rwandan** market.

POLITICAL ECONOMY

West Africa: Two multi-national oil field service providers- Africa Oilfields Service Limited (AOS) and Orwell International (Oil & Gas) Limited, have committed \$ 5million worth of equipment to **Ghana's** oil and gas industry. The two corporate entities plan to grow the investment to \$ 15million, subject to demand expansion in Ghana.

The recent discovery of oil off the coast of **Ghana** has elicited claims on portions of the discovery by neighboring **Ivory Coast**.

President Goodluck Jonathan ordered a probe into the controversies surrounding communication Company, NITEL, to a new generation telecom outfit at the cost of



\$2.5 billion.

South Africa: According to Finance Minister Tendai Biti, Zimbabwe will have to rely on its own resources to revive its economy because foreign donors are unlikely to provide nearly enough help. Meanwhile 3 **South African** businessmen, Nicky Oppenheimer, Patrice Motsepe and Johann Rupert, have been included in Forbes magazine's annual list of billionaires.

Central Africa: Advocacy group Global Witness has voiced concerns that former rebels now integrated into the **Congolese** army have asserted "mafia-style" control over lucrative mining sites. The rich mineral resources of the eastern **Democratic Republic of Congo** have long helped fuel conflicts in the lawless area. §

Zone 3- Euro-America: *Transatlantic Community*



WESTERN EUROPE

A **British** court has barred a far right, anti-immigrant political party from accepting new members until it stops discriminating against nonwhite people. The **British** National Party was ordered last year to scrap its whites-only membership rules to comply with race relations laws. The party voted last month to change its constitution so that black and Asian people could join, but critics said the changes were too vague.

Meanwhile a **British** Airways computer expert was charged Thursday with plotting suicide bombings — including one he allegedly planned to carry out himself. Prosecutor Colin Gibbs alleged that Bangladesh-born Rajib Karim deliberately sought a job with the airline in order to further an unspecified terrorist conspiracy.

The foreign ministers of Turkey and **Sweden** condemned last week a vote in the **Swedish** parliament that defined the early 20th-century killing of Armenians by Ottoman Turks as genocide.

Irish police have released three of the seven people arrested last week in connection with an alleged plot to murder a **Swedish** cartoonist over a drawing depicting the Prophet Mohammad.

The **Vatican** rallied around Pope Benedict last week, dismissing suggestions he had tried to cover up priestly child abuse in **Germany**.

RUSSIA & THE BALKANS

The situation in Afghanistan and NATO-Russia relations dominated last week's talks in Warsaw between **Polish** President Lech Kaczynski and visiting **NATO** Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen. While commenting that NATO was crucial for the safety of the region and the world, Kaczynski also supported the view that **Russia** should not be admitted to NATO.

The European Parliament has condemned the recent imprisonment of activists of a **Polish** minority organization (Union of Poles) in Belarus. Parliament has also demanded that all independent internet news sites and forums closed by the authoritarian regime of President Aleksander Lukashenko be allowed to function.

The **Czech** Social Democrats (CSSD), the leading opposition Parties, have been running a campaign promising a comprehensive tax reform according to which ordinary people will not have to pay for the Global Economic crisis, and companies and the rich should be taxed to maintain a generous welfare system.

Slovakia's language law has generated a new debate regarding the status of minority languages in Europe. "A Challenge for Europe" conference, at the Parliament's Brussels premises was intended to highlight the issue. According to estimates, around 40m people regularly speak over 60 non-recognized European languages in the

EU. The question of **Ukraine** giving official status to the **Russian** language has become a matter for heated debate since Viktor Yanukovich was elected president in February on the back of strong support in the mainly Russian-speaking east of the country.

According to most recent opinion polls, **Hungary's** Socialists will face a crushing defeat in an election to be held in April the two right-wing political parties will gain majority votes. According to analysts this sharp decline in support for the Socialists, who have ruled **Hungary** for eight years, is mainly because of their inconsistent economic policies and corruption scandals. Their fate may mirror the near demise of the **Polish** left in 2005.

Russia has signed an agreement with India to build up to 16 nuclear reactors for power stations. In striking this deal, Asia's third largest economy is reaffirming old cold war ties.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev held talks with King Abdullah II of Jordan on the Middle East settlement and the implementation of joint economic projects. The wide range of bilateral relations is swinging from defense cooperation to humanitarian interaction.

Poland's Finance Minister has criticized the International Monetary Fund for advising European governments last year to expand their borrowing and spending because due to that IMF advice, some European governments had increased their public debt burden to unsustainable levels.

Hungarian industrial output increased from a year earlier in January for the first time since the global economic crisis hit the country in the autumn of 2008. **Hungary**, which was the first European Union country to secure International Monetary Fund support during the crisis, saw its deepest economic decline last year for nearly two decades. Meanwhile Standard and Poor's on Friday lifted **Ukraine's** debt ratings from a level deemed vulnerable to default.

The proposed law aiming at mandatory displays of love for the nation and elevating the nation's patriotic spirit have been met with resistance in Slovakia. The law, if signed by the president, requires students in state-run schools to listen to the national anthem before class each and each classroom to be fixed with a slide of state symbols ranging from **Slovakia's** flag, the coat of arms, and the text of the constitution's preamble and the words of the national anthem.

Hungarian President Laszlo Solyom signed last week the amendment to the criminal code that now considers holocaust denial illegal.

US/CANADA

An indictment against a suburban *Philadelphia* woman accused of recruiting jihadist fighters online and moving to Europe to try to kill a *Swedish* artist has surfaced as a rare case of an **American** woman aiding foreign terrorists, authorities say, and shows the evolution of the threat of terrorism.

Meanwhile **U.S.** Defense Secretary Robert Gates raised the possibility that some of the U.S. forces involved in the Afghanistan surge could leave the country before President Barack Obama's announced July 2011 date to begin withdrawal.



The White House last week announced a "summit on entrepreneurship" to build economic ties with the Islamic world, as part of President Barack Obama's outreach to Muslims.

According to activists, the rate of tuberculosis among **Canada's** 55,000 Arctic Inuit people is catastrophically high and much more must be done to combat the lung disease.

LATIN AMERICA

Last week **Argentina** President Cristina Kirchner lost her Senate majority. Senators switched allegiance and voted to put anti-government lawmakers at the heads of 13 of the Senate's 25 committees, giving them effective control of both houses of Congress for the first time since 2005. Also her choice to head the central bank was rejected by a key committee.

Spain, current EU presidency holder, has sent **Argentina** a strong message it doesn't want the European Union involved in any kind of mediation initiative over the British drilling for hydrocarbons in the waters of Falklands.

US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton's one-day visit to **Brazil** last week was dominated by the *Iranian* nuclear program. President Lula said he did not want Iran to develop nuclear weapons and would raise the issue in a visit to Tehran in May.

Brazil's economy may overheat as too much foreign investment flows into the country, said Luciano Coutinho, president of state development bank BNDES.

Mexico's capital city handed out its first licenses for same-sex marriage, allowing gay couples to marry legally, and also adopt children and receive government benefits—changes that pit the city's progressive government against a more conservative country that surrounds it.

According to recent reports **Venezuelan** State-run Oil Company Petróleos de Venezuela (Pdvs), in association with a Belarus company, is searching for new fields for the production of hydrocarbons in an area of 1,930.5 square miles in the state of Apure, southwestern **Venezuela**.

Venezuela's highest court has reinstated an opposition mayor, just one week after it annulled his election and replaced him with a supporter of President Hugo Chavez.

Meanwhile the number of homicides in **Venezuela** rose last year to 16,047, compared with 14,589 in 2008, according to a report by the **Venezuelan** Observatory of Violence, or OW, which names impunity and corruption as the chief causes.

Venezuela ranked 174 among 183 countries in the 2010 Index of Economic Freedom, a product of the Heritage Foundation and The Wall Street Journal. The study found that domestic economy decreased by 2.8 points since last year, and entered the category of "restricted" economy, while it remains in the same ranking.

AUSTRALASIA

Royal Dutch Shell and PetroChina joined forces for a 2.96 billion US dollar bid for **Australia's** Arrow Energy last week, hoping for a bigger slice of the country's booming liquefied natural gas (LNG) sector. §



Business and Politics in the Muslim World (BPM) refers to a study funded by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, and is conducted at the International Islamic University (IIU), Islamabad.

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