



**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*.

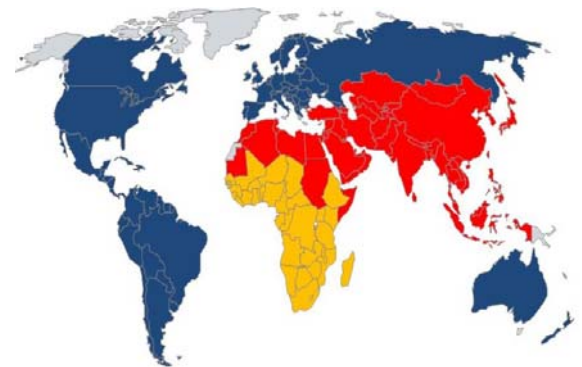
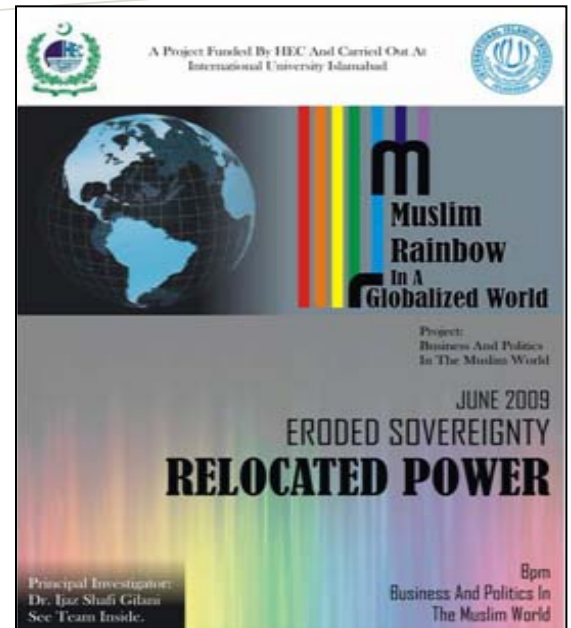
- ◆ We will make the e-letter a multi-layered presentation: in other words Friday on the Facebook will provide clicks to deeper levels of information; for comprehension (Maps and Data) as well as for elaboration



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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 '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.



1 This week's report consists of **24** surveys. **2** of these are multi-country surveys while the rest are national surveys. **14** polling organizations have been represented.

## Gallopedia Highlights Week # 121

Dated May23-29, 2010

**ASIA zone-1** national polls& **2** Multi National poll:

**GCC:** Bahrain

**Central Asia:** Azerbaijan, Armenia

**West Asia:** Afghanistan

**South Asia:** Bangladesh, Pakistan

**Northeast Asia:** Philippines

**South East Asia:** Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia

**Middle East & North Africa:** Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt

Zimbabwe, South Africa

**Central Africa:** Chad, Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania, DR Congo, Rwanda, Chad, Niger

**East Africa:** Kenya, Djibouti, Somaliland

**EURO-AMERICAS zone-21** national polls & **2**

Multi national polls:

**East Europe-** Russia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Moldova, Macedonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovenia, BiH, Belarus, Austria, Albania

**West Europe-** Ireland, UK

**North America-** U.S.A, Canada

**Latin America-** Brazil, Mexico, Nicaragua, Colombia, Chile, Bolivia, Argentina, Peru, Panama

**AFRICA zone- 2** Multi national polls:

**West Africa:** Nigeria, Ghana, Mauritania, Mali, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Senegal,

**Southern Africa:** Comoros, Malawi, Zambia,

*Commentary:*

### Russia's current Political landscape

<sup>1</sup>Most people in Russia would support the governing party in the next election to the State Duma, according to a poll by the **All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center**. **54 %** of respondents would vote for United Russia (YR) in the next ballot, up two points since April.

The Communist Party (KPRF) is a distant second with **8 %**, followed by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR) with **5 %**, and the opposition movement A Just Russia with **4 %**.

Earlier this month, Putin rejected accusations that Medvedev is a puppet president who is easily manipulated by him, saying, "Our actions are guided exclusively in the interests of our country and the Russian people. We divide up our competencies in accordance with the constitution and Russian legislation."

The next presidential election is scheduled for March 2012. Both Putin and Medvedev are eligible to run as candidates.

<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile according to another poll by the **Yury Levada Analytical Center** almost half of Russians would vote for current Prime Minister Vladimir Putin or current head of state Dmitry Medvedev in the next presidential election. **27 %** of respondents would support Putin in the next election, while **20 %** would re-elect Medvedev.

Communist Party (KPRF) leader Gennady Zyuganov is far behind with **5 %**, followed by Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR) leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy with **4 %**, and Russian Federation Council speaker Sergei Mironov of A Just Russia with **1 %**. **43 %** of respondents are undecided. §

#### Polling Data

If the presidential election took place this Sunday, who would you vote for? (Open-ended)

	Apr. 2010	Nov. 2009	Aug. 2008
Vladimir Putin	27%	27%	33%
Dmitry Medvedev	20%	18%	14%



Source: Yury Levada Analytical Center

Methodology: Interviews with 1,600 Russian adults, conducted from Apr. 16 to Apr. 19, 2010. No margin of error was provided.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/view/russians\\_want\\_to\\_stick\\_with\\_governing\\_party](http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/view/russians_want_to_stick_with_governing_party)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/view/putin\\_and\\_medvedev\\_top\\_presidential\\_list\\_in\\_russia](http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/view/putin_and_medvedev_top_presidential_list_in_russia)

## SUMMARY OF POLLS

### Zone 1- ASIA

#### SOUTHEAST ASIA

##### *Thais Majority Backs Government's Crackdown* [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Most people in [Thailand](#) agree with the way the government forced protesters out of a camp in Bangkok earlier this month, according to a poll by [Suan Dusit University](#). **51.3%** of respondents support the government's actions, but **40.2 %** reject them.

May 29, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Domestic Unrest](#)



### Zone 3- EURO-AMERICAS

#### EAST EUROPE

##### *Slovenians Disappointed with Government* [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Most people in [Slovenia](#) say the current government has been unsuccessful overall, according to a poll by [Ninamedia](#). **63.7 %** of respondents share this view, down **4.2** points since March.

May 28, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Approval Ratings](#)

##### *Russians Want to Stick with Governing Party* [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Most people in [Russia](#) would support the governing party in the next election to the State Duma, according to a poll by the [All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center](#). **54 %** of respondents would vote for United Russia (YR) in the next ballot, up two points since April.

May 27, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Elections](#)

##### *Social Democrats Lead as Czech Election Looms* [\(Click for Details\)](#)

The [Czech](#) Social Democratic Party (CSSD) is the most popular political organization in the country, according to a poll by [CVVM](#). **30.5 %** of respondents would vote for the main opposition party in this week's legislative election.

May 26, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Elections](#)

##### *Slovenians Split on Vote Over Dispute with Croatia* [\(Click for Details\)](#)

People in [Slovenia](#) are divided on whether a border dispute with Croatia should be brought before an international tribunal, according to a poll by [FUDS](#). **37.6 %** of respondents would vote in favor of the idea, while **32.9 %** would reject it.

May 24, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Geopolitical Disputes](#)

##### *Putin and Medvedev Top Presidential List in Russia* [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Almost half of [Russians](#) would vote for current Prime Minister Vladimir Putin or current head of state Dmitry Medvedev in the next presidential election, according to a poll by the [Yury Levada Analytical Center](#). **27 %** of respondents would support Putin in the next election, while **20 %** would re-elect Medvedev.

May 23, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Political perceptions](#)

#### WEST EUROPE

##### *Britons Ponder Scrapping 24-Hour Drinking Law* [\(Click for Details\)](#)

People in [England and Wales](#) favor rescinding the law that allows pubs and clubs to apply for 24-hour licenses to serve alcohol, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **51 %** of respondents agree with repealing the law, while **43 %** would like the regulation to remain in place.

May 28, 2010

[Society](#) » [Social issues](#)

##### *Good Numbers for Cameron, Clegg in Britain* [\(Click for Details\)](#)

The main players in the new coalition government garner the support of more than half of [Britons](#), according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **54 %** of respondents approve of David Cameron's performance as prime minister.

May 26, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Approval Ratings](#)

##### *Britons Pleased with Brown's Work as Chancellor* [\(Click for Details\)](#)

People in [Britain](#) hold positive views on the tenure of Gordon Brown at 11 Downing Street, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **54 %** of respondents rate Brown's performance as Chancellor of the Exchequer as good.

May 25, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Approval Ratings](#)

**NORTH AMERICA**

### ***Managing Your Online Profile*** ([Click for Details](#))

A daily tracking survey on [Americans'](#) use of the internet reveals that online reputation-monitoring via search engines has increased – **57%** of adult internet users now use search engines to find information about themselves online, up from **47%** in 2006. [Princeton Survey Research Associates International](#)

May 22, 2010

[Society](#) » [Communication/Media](#)

### ***New Media, Old Media*** ([Click for Details](#))

News today is increasingly a shared, social experience. Half of [Americans](#) say they rely on the people around them to find out at least some of the news they need to know. Some **44%** of online news users get news at least a few times a week through emails, automatic updates or posts from social networking sites. In 2009, Twitter's monthly audience increased by **200%**. [Pew Research Center](#)

May 23, 2010

[Society](#) » [Communication/Media](#)

### ***Americans Divided on Increased Coastal Oil Drilling*** ([Click for Details](#))

[US](#) President Barack Obama's decision to extend a moratorium on new deepwater ocean drilling comes at a time when [Americans](#) are divided, with **50%** in favor and **46%** opposed, on increased drilling for oil and gas off U.S. coasts. However, most stop short of favoring a prohibition on drilling, as, on a follow-up question, **19%** of Americans say they are opposed to all drilling in U.S. coastal areas. [Gallup USA](#)

May 28, 2010

[Society](#) » [Environment](#)

### ***Americans Critical of Oil Spill Response; Keeping Close Tabs*** ([Click for Details](#))

With [US](#) President Barack Obama and BP taking their most aggressive steps yet in



Jeff Clark / AP

response to the massive oil spill in the *Gulf of Mexico*, the majority of [Americans](#) express clear displeasure with their efforts so far. **39%** of Americans earlier this week called BP's response "very poor" compared to **21%** for the federal government and **19%** for Obama. [Gallup USA](#)

May 27, 2010

[Society](#) » [Environment](#)

### ***Oil Spill Alters Views on Environmental Protection*** ([Click for Details](#))

Between March and today, with the Gulf of Mexico oil spill intervening, [Americans'](#) preferences for prioritizing between environmental protection and energy production have shifted from a somewhat pro-energy stance to an even stronger pro-environment stance. Now, the majority favor environmental protection, by **55%** to **39%** -- the second-largest percentage (behind the **58%** in 2007) favoring the environment in the 10-year history of the question. [Gallup](#)

**USA**

May 27, 2010

[Society](#) » [Environment](#)

### ***Americans' Acceptance of Gay Relations Crosses 50% Threshold*** ([Click for Details](#))

[Americans'](#) support for the moral acceptability of gay and lesbian relations crossed the symbolic **50%** threshold in 2010. At the same time, the percentage calling these relations "morally wrong" dropped to **43%**, the lowest in [Gallup's](#) decade-long trend.

May 25, 2010

[Society](#) » [Social Perceptions](#)

### ***Four Moral Issues Sharply Divide Americans*** ([Click for Details](#))

[Americans](#) generally agree about the morality of **12** out of **16** behaviors or social policies that sometimes spark public controversy, with sizable majorities saying each is either "morally acceptable" or "morally wrong." By contrast, views on doctor-assisted suicide, gay and lesbian relations, abortion, and having a baby outside of marriage are closely divided -- the percentage supporting and the percentage opposing are within **15** points of each other. [Gallup USA](#)

May 26, 2010

[Society](#) » [Social Perceptions](#)

**Poor Numbers for Congress Continue in U.S.** ([Click for Details](#))

Only one-in-four **Americans** are satisfied with the way the members of the House of Representatives and the Senate are doing their jobs, according to a poll by **Angus Reid Public Opinion**. **24 %** of respondents approve of the performance of Congress.

May 29, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Approval Ratings](#)

**Few Americans Are Satisfied with U.S. Economy** ([Click for Details](#))

People in the **United States** hold gloomy views on their country's financial standing, according to a poll by **Angus Reid Public Opinion**.

Only **11 %** of respondents rate the economic conditions in the U.S. as good or very good, down four points since April.

May 27, 2010

[Economy](#) » [Economic Perceptions](#)

**Feelings about Monarchy Split Canadians** ([Click for Details](#))

People in **Canada** are divided in their assessment of the current form of government, according to a poll by **Angus Reid Public Opinion**. **36 %** of respondents would prefer to have an elected head of state, while **33 %** want Canada to remain a monarchy.

May 26, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Political Systems](#)

**LATIN AMERICA**

**Half of Chileans Approve of Piñera** ([Click for Details](#))

**Chilean** president Sebastián Piñera's popularity has remained relatively stable, according to a poll by **Adimark Gfk**. **50 %** of respondents approve of the president's performance, down two points since March.

May 27, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Approval Ratings](#)

**Mexicans Would Elect a PRI President again** ([Click for Details](#))

A candidate running with the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) could secure the presidency in **Mexico**, according to a poll by **Consulta Mitofsky**. **39 %** of respondents would vote for the PRI nominee in the 2012 ballot, up **2.3** points since October.

May 26, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Approval Ratings](#)

**Brazilian Presidential Race Remains Tight** ([Click for Details](#))

This year's presidential election in **Brazil** could require a run-off, according to a poll by **Instituto Sensus**. **35.7 %** of respondents would vote for Dilma Rousseff of the ruling Workers' Party (PT) in the ballot, up **3.3** points since April.

May 25, 2010

[Politics](#) » [Elections](#)

**GLOBAL/MULTI-COUNTRY SURVEYS**

**Arab Opinion on U.S. Leadership Reverses in 2010** ([Click for Details](#))

Taking back some of the gains U.S. leadership enjoyed in 2009, four out of **six Arab League countries** **Gallup** has surveyed each year since 2008 are now less approving of U.S. leadership than they were in fall 2009. **Egyptians'** approval ratings have declined the most since last fall (**18 %** points), followed by **Algerians'** (**13** points). Approval did not decline significantly in **Iraq** or the **Palestinian Territories** as the changes are within the margin of error.

May 27, 2010

[Security/IR](#) » [Global Views](#)

**Sub-Saharan Africa Leads World in U.S. Approval** ([Click for Details](#))

Across 110 countries **Gallup** surveyed in 2009, median approval of U.S. leadership was **51%**, up from **34%** in 2008. Approval during President Barack Obama's first year in office topped **75%** in 20 **sub-Saharan African** countries, with **Kosovo, Ireland, and Albania** joining them as the countries or areas most approving.

May 25, 2010

[Security/IR](#) » [Global Views](#) §



## Zone 1- **Asia: Summary**

### *Asia, Middle East & North Africa*

#### **TURKEY**

##### **Political Front:**

**Turkish** warplanes have carried out strikes against a group of alleged 'terrorists' seen moving toward the **Turkish** border.

##### **Geo-strategic Front:**

**Turkish** Foreign Minister has warned **Israel** to end the blockade on *Gaza*.

A passenger ship carrying 500 supporters and \$20 million worth of humanitarian supplies for the **Palestinian** people was attacked by an **Israeli** commando force killing at least nine people and injuring dozens more. All of the victims were **Turkish**.

##### **Economic Front:**

**Turkish** businessmen have invested more than \$7 billion in **Turkmenistan**. In the meantime **Kuwaiti** government has invited Turkish contractors to participate in upcoming tenders for infrastructure projects totaling \$24 billion.

##### **Social Front:**

The students association *WONDER* has announced to provide opportunity to study in *Vienna* to the students of *Imam-Hatip* schools, who want to take headscarf.

Meanwhile social inequality prevails as a major challenge in **Turkey**.

#### **GCC**

##### **Geo-strategic Front:**

**GCC** has extended support to the efforts of **Turkey** and **Brazil** to find a peaceful solution to **Iran's** nuclear standoff with the West. In the meantime it also emphasized the need to keep the Middle East - including *Israel* - free of nuclear and mass destructive weapons.

**German** Chancellor recently paid a visit to **Saudi Arabia** and discussed ways to enhance economic cooperation with the kingdom and other **Gulf** countries. She also asked King *Abdullah* to play his role in resolving *Middle-East* crisis as well as **Iranian** nuclear issue.

South *Korea* and the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** have signed a nuclear regulatory pact to set safety guidelines for the building of commercial reactors in the *Middle East*.

Sultan of **Oman** paid a visit to **Qatar**, **Saudi Arabia** and **Egypt** to discuss areas of further cooperation.

While talking about a large number of **Pakistani** workers who have been serving in **Oman**; **Pakistani** minister has appreciated **Oman's** role in protecting the rights of foreign manpower and defending their interests.

##### **Economic Front:**

The **GCC** seems to be quite close to concluding the much-awaited Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the *European Union* (EU).

Meanwhile the **German** Chancellor has expressed keenness to increase investments in **Gulf countries**.

##### **Social Front:**

According to Amnesty International, **Saudi Arabia** has made minor progress on its dismal human rights record. It further added that authorities have been using a wide range of repressive measures to suppress freedom of expression and other legitimate activities.

Education Ministry in **Oman** has taken various measures to improve the standard of education in the country. Civil society has launched a movement to curb violence against **Bahraini** women.

#### **IRAN**

##### **Geo-strategic Front:**

**Iran**, **Brazil** and **Turkey** have signed an accord for exchange of low-grade nuclear fuel. **Russia** has fully supported **Iranian** nuclear deal. Meanwhile



**Iran** and *Russia* have discussed areas of energy cooperation.

*German* Chancellor has also called on *Iran* to "carefully consider" an international offer on its nuclear program.

**Iranian** naval forces have detected a **U.S.** nuclear submarine in the Persian Gulf waters, amid growing concerns over the safety of one of the most important energy routes in the world.

#### **Economic Front:**

**Iran** has welcomed *China* to invest in the construction industry market. Meanwhile **Iran** and *Syria* have signed agreements to boost trade and cooperation in the spheres of banking, industry, technology, and energy. The latest statistical figures showed that despite the *United States'* growing pressure on European firms to cut trade with Tehran, EU countries have remained among the first ten large trade partners of the Islamic Republic.

#### **Social Front:**



**Askar Akaev**

*U.S.* translator Paul Sprachman claimed that the **Iranian** bestseller "Da" offers a true picture of **Iranian** women to the world.

### **CENTRAL ASIA**

#### **Political Front:**

**Kazakh** President Nursultan Nazarbaev's nephew has been named the secretary of the country's main political party, Nur-Otan; i.e. Shining Fatherland.

*Kyrgyz* Interim government has announced its plan to deprive the first president of independent **Kyrgyzstan**, Askar Akaev, of immunity from prosecution. About 100 protestors have demanded a detailed report on the interim government's activities for the last 45 days.

**Kyrgyzstan's** interim government has submitted a formal request to Interpol to assist in

locating and arresting ousted President Bakiev. Meanwhile the **Turkish** embassy has denied presence of Bakiev in *Turkey*.

#### **Geo-strategic Front:**

**Azerbaijan** and *Russia* have developed close ties in various areas. About 50 **Tajik** students and members of *Kyrgyzstan's Tajik Association* protested against the **Uzbek** Embassy to demand the full resumption of rail traffic between **Uzbekistan** and **Tajikistan**. The **Tajik-Uzbek** dispute has disrupted NATO supplies to *Afghanistan*.

**Turkmen** President held talks and signed inter-governmental agreements with the *Indian* PM.

Meanwhile the session of the Foreign Ministers Council of the *Shanghai* Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states was held in *Tashkent* on 22 May.

#### **Economic Front:**

*Russia*, **Belarus** and **Kazakhstan** have failed to reach agreement on some aspects of their joint customs union. In the meantime World Bank has approved \$1 billion in budget support for **Kazakhstan** to help the government implement its economic program.

Last week gasoline prices in **Tajikistan's** capital raised by almost 15%. Ashgabat hosted the **Turkmen-Kazakh** business forum organized by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of **Turkmenistan** and the National Agency for Export and Investment.

#### **Social Front:**

A regional leader of **Tajikistan's** Islamic Renaissance Party has been charged with human trafficking.

The World Bank has approved a \$2mln grant for the project aimed at modernization of **Tajikistan's** education system.

The prominent **Uzbek** sports journalist *Khairulla Khamidov* has been sentenced to six years in jail on charges of associating with a banned Islamic group.

### **EAST ASIA**

#### **Political front:**

In the **Philippines** Senator *Benigno Aquino III* has been declared the country's next president after elections earlier this month. Meanwhile Macapagal Arroyo has expressed regret over her government's inability to resolve the *Mindanao* issue by peaceful means despite the fact that her regime





initiated peace process between Muslims of south and the government.

The **Thai** PM has adopted a two way policy vis-à-vis Red-Shirt protestors. On one hand he has called for reconciliation while on the other hand he has ordered to detain key leaders of the anti-regime party. This would probably lead to further instability and chaos in the country. At the same time he also denied likelihood of holding elections this year.

#### **Geo-strategic Front:**

The US State Department, on its website, has announced that President Obama would pay visit to **Indonesia** on 14 June; However **Indonesian**

officials haven't confirmed the news so far.

The **Malaysian** Defense Industry has expressed interest in building military cooperation with their American counterparts.

#### **Economic Front:**

The World Bank has approved its first ever development policy loan, i.e. US \$ 200 dedicated to climate change mitigation and adaptation in **Indonesia**.

A Minister in the PM's department has asked the government of **Malaysia** to cut subsidies on areas such as fuel and food in order to avoid a debt crisis in the next 10 years. Member countries of **GCC** have expressed interest in **Malaysian** markets in terms of future investment. In this regard, *Qatar* Investment Authority has committed a US\$5 billion investment in **Malaysia**.

The unstable political situation in the country has adversely affected **Thai** economy. According to various reports recent situation in **Thailand** could deduct her GDP by **1.4 to 1.6%** this year.

The **Philippine** economy accelerated in the first quarter, underpinned by a rebound in exports and election-related spending. Meanwhile Gross domestic product rose by **3%**. Lastly, a recently conducted annual survey has placed **Singapore** and **Hong Kong** among the world's most competitive economies.

#### **Social Front:**

Authorities in an Islamic district of **Indonesia's** Aceh province have distributed 20,000 long skirts and prohibited



shops from selling tight dresses as a regulation banning Muslim women from wearing revealing clothing took effect.

The head of the **Philippine** government's peace panel has asked the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to be more patient with the peace talks. Meanwhile **Philippine** journalists, workers, students, professionals, business and church leaders and civil- society groups have started a series of mass-action in their vigorous final push for Congress to ratify the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act.

A **Thai** court has issued an arrest warrant for ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra on terrorism charges, accusing the fugitive former leader of fomenting

two months of unrest in *Bangkok* that left 88 people dead.

## **SOUTH ASIA**

#### **Political Front:**

Saidur Rahman, leader of the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen **Bangladesh** (JMB), was arrested in Dhaka last week. The *United States* congratulated the **Bangladesh** Government on his arrest.

The ruling **Maldivian** Democratic Party has terminated the coalition agreement with the Gaumees Iththihaad Party (GIP) of the Vice President – the latest move in an ongoing clash between President Nasheed and Vice President Dr.Mohamed Waheed.

Constitutional crisis has led to political deadlock in **Nepal** that ultimately compelled PM to bow down in front of Maoists as he has agreed to resign within 24 hours. Prior to that the PM held closed door meeting with Maoist leader in order to settle ongoing crisis in the country.

**Sri Lanka's** government has stepped up diplomatic pressure against UN attempts to investigate its conduct in the war against Tamil Tiger rebels. Meanwhile **Sri Lankan** President has rejected demands from the global



community for an independent probe into the alleged human rights violations during the last phase of the civil war.

**Geo-strategic Front:**

**Bangladesh** and *Russia* would soon finalize a deal on the first nuclear power plants in the energy-starved South Asian nation.

*South Korea* has announced to provide \$ 200 million soft loan for **Bangladesh** over three years.

*Kosovo* has thanked **Maldives** for being one of the first countries to recognize independent Kosovo.

**Economic Front:**

**Bangladesh** has claimed that its economy has observed a slow pace during last seven years because of global economic downturn as well as droughts and floods in the country.

**Social Front:**

Amnesty International has claimed that human rights situation in **Nepal** has further deteriorated. Ahead of **Sri Lankan** President's visit to **India** next month, hundreds of protesters took to the streets against a proposed comprehensive bilateral trade pact, claiming it would benefit the neighboring country at the expense of domestic industry. United Nations agencies have announced to provide assistance to the Government of **Sri Lanka** in giving relief to over 600,000 people affected by the heavy flooding brought on by torrential pre-monsoon rains.

**INDIA**

**Political Front:**

While holding first press conference as executive head of UPA's second tenure in government, Pm Man Mohan Singh dismissed notions of any gaps in his equation with Congress president Sonia Gandhi, saying they met every week to discuss major issues.

79 people were killed and nearly 150 were injured in a train crash in *West Bengal*. The government has voiced its suspicions regarding the involvement of *Maoists* in the accident.

A survey carried out across both Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, shows that only 2% of the respondents on the **Indian** side favor joining *Pakistan*. Most of the respondents on both sides opted for independence however 58% expressed acceptability for LON as permanent border but with more liberty of mobilization.

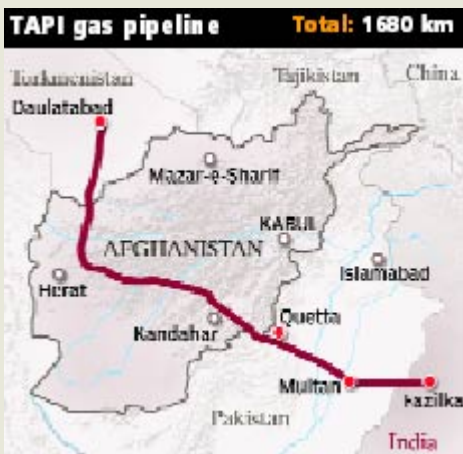
**Regional Front:**

The movement for a separate state of *Gorkhaland* in the *Darjeeling* hills took an ugly turn when Madan Tamang, the outspoken veteran who headed the *All India Gorkha League (AIGL)*, was hacked to death, allegedly by cadres of the rival Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM). The killing of Tamang shut down *Darjeeling* and police contingents were back on the streets after months.

**Geo-strategic Front:**

**India's** complaint against the European Union on the unjust seizure of cheap generic drug consignments meant for *Latin America* and *African* nations has received a boost, with the World Health Organization.

**India** and *Turkmenistan* have discussed energy cooperation and signed several agreements signaling the desire of both countries to strengthen bilateral ties. In a sign of continuing interest in the *Turkmenistan-*



*Afghanistan-Pakistan-India* (TAPI) gas pipeline, New Delhi has offered to host a technical meeting of experts under the aegis of the *Asian Development Bank*.

*Canadian* high commission's allegation that **Indian** security agencies are involved in human rights violation that's why they denied visa to security personnel provoked the **Indian** government which has demanded an apology from *Canada*.

**Economic Front:**

Bilateral growth between **India** and *Turkmenistan* has been increasing at constant pace. In the meantime the **Indo-Indonesian** joint study group has

recommended discussions for negotiating a pact that could increase bilateral trade to \$20 billion by 2020. For the fifth consecutive year, *Gujarat* has registered the highest cotton production in the country.

#### **Social Front:**

The Supreme Court of **India** has said in a verdict that it is the fundamental right of minorities to establish educational institutions without the government imposing any unreasonable restrictions.

#### **Regional Front:**

Fresh clashes have been witnessed between members of two communities in *Shahpur* in which one woman was injured.

## **CHINA**

#### **Political Front:**

Political analysts have claimed that holding high-level talks between European political parties and the Communist Party of **China** (CPC) had helped the CPC's understanding of the continent's political systems. **Chinese** President has called for the creation of a more competitive and innovative workforce in the country.

#### **Geo-strategic Front:**

**Chinese** Minister of Commerce has called for close communication and coordination among **China**, *South Korea* and *Japan* to further strengthen three-way economic and trade cooperation. All the while **Chinese** President has called for closer *China-U.S.* coordination on regional hot-spot and global issues. Despite various areas of confrontation *China-US* ties seem to be back on track as round of talks has recently started between Chinese President and the US officials. Chances of improvement in *Indo-Sino* ties have also emerged as *Indian* President has recently paid visit to **China**. Besides all that constant growth has been evident in **Chinese** ties with *Pakistan*, *Latvia*, *Egypt*, *Canada*, *Mexico*, *Turkmenistan*, *Turkey*, *Sweden*, *Ireland*, *Finland*, *Denmark* and *Kazakhstan*. **China** has urged that various issues like that of *Iran*, *Darfur* and *North-South Korea* should be resolved soon.

#### **Economic Front:**

Economists have claimed that the macroeconomic control policies adopted by the **Chinese** government since mid-2008 have been proven successful. **China** has pledged to push ahead with currency reforms but only at its own pace, and pressed for an end to US curbs on high-tech exports. Fast growth of *India's* automobile sector has captured the investment interests of the **Chinese** auto industry. Meanwhile **Chinese** GDP is expected to exceed **11 %** this year. The **Chinese** government has cut taxes on rural financing to back development of rural finance and lending to farmers.

#### **Social Front:**

**China's** top political advisor has called for more efforts from political advisors for the development and stability in *Xinjiang* and **Tibet**.

**China** and the *United States* have signed agreements on climate change, energy and healthcare on the sidelines of the Strategic and Economic Dialogues.

Police in *Beijing* has launched a crackdown on drugs, gambling and prostitution.

## **HONG KONG & MACAU**

**Hong Kong's** Department of Health and the Chinese Mainland's State Food and Drug Administration have signed an agreement to enhance cooperation and communication on the control of drugs and medical devices. **Hong Kong's** total exports and imports value showed significant year-on-year increases in April, at **21.7 %** and **28.8 %** respectively. Increase in HK stock exchange has been observed.

**Macao's** unemployment rate for the period of February to April this year stood at **3 %**.

## **JAPAN**

#### **Political Front:**

**Japanese** Prime Minister has fired a Cabinet minister for opposing a U.S. military accord, risking a rupture in the ruling coalition two months before an election that would help determine his legislative agenda.

#### **Geo-strategic Front:**



**Japan** and the US have agreed on a fresh pact that effectively states that U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in Okinawa will be relocated to the coast of the Henoko district of Nago. The PM of **Japan** has ordered the Cabinet to study additional sanctions against **North Korea** to punish the hermit state over its sinking of a **South Korean** warship in March.

**Economic Front:**

**Japan's** net foreign assets grew in 2009 to a record **¥266.22 trillion** at the end of the year as investments in stocks and bonds abroad expanded and the yen's weakening helped increase the value of overseas investments.

**Japan** has tightened controls on sending money to **North Korea** and authorized the Coast Guard to search the communist regime's ships in response to the deadly attack on a **South Korean** naval vessel.

**Social Front:**

A Maritime Self-Defense Force vessel left port to become the first **Japanese** ship to join an annual U.S. Navy-led medical aid program in the Asia-Pacific region.

**KOREA**

**Geo-strategic Front:**

The **United Arab Emirates** has agreed to buy K11 rifles from **South Korea**, becoming the first export customer for the weapon. **North Korea** has warned to break ties with **South Korea** over their allegations regarding ship issue.

**Chinese** President has recently paid a two days visit to **South Korea** in order to discuss trade related issues.

UN has alleged **North Korean** companies for exporting nuclear technology to various countries.

**Economic Front:**

**South Korean** manufacturers' confidence held near a seven-year high as the nation's economic growth accelerates.

**Social Front:**

**Japan** and **South Korea** agreed to exchange information on a proposed emissions-trading mechanism. **South Korea** has been well-known as the world's most wired and Internet-friendly nation, with nearly all businesses and households linked to high-speed broadband networks. Meanwhile smoking at public places has been banned in **Korea**. §



Zone 2- **Africa:**

*Sub Saharan Africa*

**POLITICS OF SECURITY AND CONFLICT ISSUES**

**West Africa:** US President Barack Obama said last week that **Liberia** has overcome most its difficulties due to the heroism of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and her commitment to democracy. Obama also pledged more US cooperation and aid for the country.

Meanwhile Football star George Weah, who once accused Mr. *Charles Taylor* of plotting to eliminate him, has now endorsed the *National Patriotic Party (NPP)*, the offshoot of the National Patriotic Front of **Liberia** (NPFL) that the now former rebel leader then president created.

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf expressed utmost dismay and total dissatisfaction with the action taken by NSA Director Fombah Sirleaf, in an attempt to arrest a staff of the General Auditing Commission (GAC). She reaffirmed that her Government does *not* and will *not* resort to the infringement of human rights or arrest of anyone without due process.

The Security Council met last week to discuss the United Nations peacekeeping in **Côte d'Ivoire** amid ongoing concerns about the stalled electoral process and the political impasse affecting the country.

**Ghana** while celebrating 50 years participation in UN Peacekeeping last week renewed its commitment to



continue cooperating with the United Nations in peacekeeping to improve on the current level of international peace and security.

The Security Council today voted to extend for one month the United Nations Operation in **Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)**, and the French forces supporting it, while the 15-member body continues to consider possible revisions to the mission's mandate.

The President of the *ECOWAS* Commission, His Excellency *James Victor*

*Gbeho* has commended the military government in **Niger** for releasing a 12-month transition timetable that will culminate in the inauguration of a civilian President on 1st March 2011.

A power struggle in **Nigeria's** PDP has grabbed attention this week- Former President of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP's) Board of Trustees (BOT) Ogbulafor has alleged that his arm of the party was sidelined by the Prince Vincent Ogbulafor-led National Working Committee (NWC) and the National Executive Committee (NEC).

Consequent upon a major reduction from the 2010 budget in Lagos State, **Nigeria** Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola (SAN) recently sent a supplementary budget of N74.777 billion to the Lagos State House of Assembly to aid the implementation of some provisions in the 2010 Appropriation Law, which was ultimately rejected by the house.

Former Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, returned to **Nigeria** on June 6, this year, returning from self imposed exile. He fled the country on January 3, 2009 after complaining of "serious" threats to his life. Meanwhile the EFCC, said last week that it was doing everything possible to extradite the former Governor of Delta State, Chief James Ibori, to **Nigeria** to face corruption charges. Also After being released for lack of evidence, the (EFCC) re-arrested five officials of the Oyo State government over alleged diversion of N8.2 billion local government funds. The officials had initially been granted bail by the anti-graft agency.

A complications thrown up by the death of the late **Nigerian** president Umaru Musa Yar' Adua is the debate on the political future of his successor, Dr Goodluck Jonathan. The debate has to do with whether he should run for president in the 2011 general elections or give way to a presidential candidate from the Northern part of the country in line with the zoning arrangement of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP). Senate president, David Mark, allayed fears last week that President Jonathan will run in the 2011 presidential election, saying he is certain Jonathan will respect the zoning arrangement.

A former **Niger Delta** militant has said **Nigeria's** President Goodluck Jonathan is the best person to solve the crisis in the oil-producing region.

In the meanwhile **Nigeria** and the *United States* signed a pact to fight corruption and also see to the conduct of free and fair elections in 2011.

Even before the committee set up by the **Nigerian** Federal Government to review the salary of federal civil servants completes its assignment, the Senate, last week, approved a **100 %** salary increase for workers of the National Assembly, to be implemented over eight years.

About three persons are feared killed in Jos city, **Nigeria**, following reports of the death of three Fulani headsmen in Barkin Ladi Local Government Area last week. Meanwhile a backlash led to the death of another two.

At the beginning of an official visit to the *African* nation last week the United Nations relief chief said that **Chadian** forces must ensure security in the troubled east of the country so that aid workers can continue to

assist the region's vast population of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Meanwhile **Chadian** President Idriss Déby reiterated assurances that his Government will take responsibility to protect civilians, including the humanitarian community, as the United Nations prepares to end its peacekeeping mission there by the end of the year.

**Southern Africa:** Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai said last week that **Zimbabwe** elections will go ahead next year, despite infighting that continues to hamper the government's power-sharing agreement. Meanwhile a meeting aimed at launching a process of national reconciliation was aborted after chaos erupted over delegate accreditation.

**Zambia's** information minister has dismissed accusations that a former president and the electoral commission will rig next year's general elections to keep the ruling party in power.

Negotiations between **Comoros'** leader and opposition parties on a date for presidential elections have stalled with President Mohamed Abdallah Sambi's rivals accusing him of illegally clinging on to power.

**Madagascar's** leader Andry Rajoelina named 10 new ministers, including five military officials, in a cabinet reshuffle the opposition said fell way short of creating a neutral government.

**South African** Special Forces troops have begun a six-month deployment along the troubled border with **Zimbabwe**, where rape, robbery and other crimes are commonplace, and the flow of desperate migrants continues unabated.

**Central Africa:** Peter Erlinder, the American lawyer who is in **Rwanda** to defend *Victoire Ingabire*, the embattled leader of the yet-to-be-registered political party, FDU-Inkingi has not yet received official approval from the relevant authorities, to practice in the country.

Through a unanimously adopted resolution the Security Council extended the current mandate of the *United Nations* peacekeeping force in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** by one month and agreed to transform the operation making it a stabilization mission.

The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) is expected to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **African Union** (AU) aimed at harmonizing peace and security approaches.

**Burundi's** major opposition parties have demanded a re-vote of last week's local-level elections, which have so far given an extraordinary landslide victory to the ruling party. Meanwhile **EU** Observers have praised **Burundi's** Election despite opposition complaints.

The **Rwandan** government has told off the *United States* over the human-rights situation in the country, saying that *America's* understanding of **Rwanda** had to be "contextualized." Earlier last week, top American diplomat *Johnny Carson* warned that the **Rwanda** government was tightening political expression in the country, and criticized the arrest of an opposition politician.

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN DOMESTIC POLITICS

**West Africa:** The controversial TRC Report in **Liberia** recommending punishments for serious perpetrators of war crimes, and bans for those deemed as backing the war is to be scrutinized by a Geneva-based Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.

The United Nations refugee agency is rushing aid to about **3,500 Ghanaians** who have fled into neighboring **Togo** after their homes and belongings were destroyed in an ongoing land dispute between two villages in the northeast of the country. Meanwhile the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO), in the Northern Region also dispatched relief items to the victims of the *Bunkrugu/Yunyoo* conflict.

In **Nigeria** two different women groups have protested against the quizzing of Senator Ahmad Sani Yarima over his marriage to an under-aged Egyptian girl. A spokesperson for the first group said the attack on Yarima is an attack against Islam and Hausa-Fulani culture. Meanwhile the second group led by President of the widows and less-privileged empowerment association Abuja, Mrs Rita Audu said Yarima has been the benefactor of widows in the country. She added that the moral bankruptcy in the society today makes it a good thing for girls to marry very early.

**South Africa:** Last week **Zimbabwe** licensed four private daily newspapers, including the banned Daily News,

a sign the new unity government is following through on promises to open up the media to non-state run publications.

**South Africa's** leader Zuma, in a rare rebuke of a fellow African nation condemned **Malawi's** sentencing of a gay couple to 14 years in jail but said he would not press the country to change its laws. Meanwhile **Malawi** President Bingu wa Mutharika pardoned the couple earlier last week after he held a meeting with U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. Also a **Zimbabwean** court has freed two gay activists on bail after they were arrested on allegations of possessing indecent material and writings seen as insulting to President *Robert Mugabe*.

Two ex-officers in **Zambia's** air force have been awarded damages following claims they were tested and treated for HIV without their knowledge. Mandatory HIV screening is not legal in the military and is a contentious issue in **Zambia**. Some think forced screening is an invasion of privacy - others say it is needed to fight the virus.

On 25 May Africans celebrated Africa Day and marked the diversity and richness of African culture. However as **South Africa** prepares to “welcome the world” for the World Cup some are concerned about the possibility of post-event *xenophobia*. Meanwhile *Amnesty International* too has said that **South Africa's** government must do more to protect African migrants from persistent xenophobic violence.

## HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

**West Africa:** Mental Health Associations in the Upper East Region of **Ghana** have appealed to the **Ghana** Health Service, to improve the supply of Mental Health drugs to the various Psychiatric Units in the area, to enable patients get a regular supply.

Health workers fanned out across **Liberia** last week to vaccinate children against polio as the third round of a synchronized regional immunization campaign aimed at eradication the paralyzing disease in **West Africa** began, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported.

Meanwhile in line with its new thinking in bilateral relations with **Nigeria**, the *United States* government is embarking on a joint HIV/AIDS vaccine research effort.

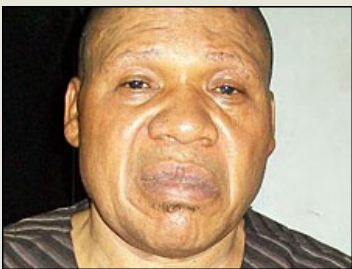
The German Federal Ministry of economic, collaboration and development wants to invest from the year 2010 to 2012 a total of three milliard US dollars in rural development and food protection in **Ghana**. Meanwhile Mr. Kurt Cornelis, head of operations of the *European Commission* (EC), has said that the Commission would continue to support the development of developing countries including **Ghana**, to reduce poverty by half by 2015.

A new report by humanitarian aid group Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) warns that backtracking by international donors in funding HIV/AIDS risks undermining years of positive achievements and will cause many more unnecessary deaths.

In *Nasarawa*, **Nigeria** one of the states which prides itself as the food basket of the nation, this year's harvest is at risk of being poor due to fertilizer scarcity.

Two Nordic countries, *Sweden* and *Finland*, are exploring opportunities for green businesses in **Nigeria**, as part of efforts to step up their trade and investment promotion activities in the country.

A **Nigerian** politician has been arrested on suspicion of smuggling cocaine at Lagos airport, purportedly to fund his election campaign for the local House of Assembly in Edo state.



**Nigerian** politician Arrested on charges of Cocaine smuggling

**South Africa:** As the World Cup prepares to kick off, fears are growing activities surrounding the event could further spread the HIV/AIDS epidemic in **South Africa**. A national HIV/AIDS effort is being mounted to raise awareness of the risks.

U.N. agencies report some five million children in **Zimbabwe** are at risk of getting measles while hundreds have died from this preventable disease.

**Central Africa:** **Rwanda** Environment Management Authority (REMA) has released new guidelines in environmental education and training in a paper titled '**Rwanda** Environmental Education for Sustainable Development Strategy', that

also include a five-year action plan for 2010-2015.

## POLITICAL ECONOMY

**West Africa:** **Ghana** and **Nigeria** are to renew talks in August, this year to find lasting solution to the stand-off in trade and commerce between them.

Transit reforms initiated by Government of **Ghana** to streamline activities in the import and transit sector have attracted applause from the World Bank Group while WB has also recommended for replication by other ECOWAS members.

**Ghana's** mining sub-sector grew at a remarkable rate of **8 %** in 2009 compared to **5.5 %** recorded in the previous year. According to Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning the country has also maintained its position as the ninth highest gold producer in the world, closing the year (2009) at an increased yearly output of **9 %**.

Meanwhile Cocoa purchases in **Ghana**, the world's second-biggest producer of the beans, fell **10 %** in the first 30 weeks of the season, according to an industry official.

**Nigerian** mobile investor *Globacom* is threatening to withdraw from **Ghana** amid claims that its infrastructure is being sabotaged. Meanwhile rLG Communications, Ghana's first mobile phone assembling company, has started operations in the country with a promise to give jobs to 30,000 youth from the National Youth Employment Programme by the close of the year.

Meanwhile **Ghana** has been losing a larger chunk of its import revenue through numerous leakage



**Liberia's Finance Minister**  
*Augustine Ngafuan*

points, mostly systemic failure and administrative lapses, along the import processing chain, Financial Intelligence (FI) investigations have revealed.

London-listed oil and gas exploration company *Afren* has said that it's **Ghana** offshore oil development costs rose by **7-8 %** due to regulatory changes following BP's oil spill off the *Gulf of Mexico*.

**Liberia's** Finance Ministry officials have intensified their search for missing financial documents to justify over US\$134m allotments issued during the 2006/07 fiscal period after the General Auditing Commission (GAC) threatened a Supreme Court action against Finance Minister *Augustine Ngafuan* for failing to submit those allotment documents for audit.

Meanwhile the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Board of Directors, chaired by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, last week

approved an approximately \$15 million threshold program grant for **Liberia** to support the country's ongoing efforts at reform.

a joint Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and African Development Bank study has urged that African states should consider renegotiating unfavorable contracts with multinationals to ensure they get a fair return on their natural resources.

**South Africa:** **South Africa's** UNIOR miner Wesizwe Platinum has said that it has secured an \$877m (R6,6bn) financing package from Chinese investors, in a deal that will see the investors gaining a majority stake in the company.

**South Africa's** state-owned logistics group Transnet signed a wage deal with a transport union last week, ending a three-week rail and ports strike. **South Africa** faces more protests ahead of the World Cup. A fresh stoppage looms after a miner's union said 3,000 workers would down tools at diamond producer De Beers.

The IMF has urged **Zimbabwe** to take corrective measures to repair its economy, warning that without them economic growth could slow significantly this year and undermine progress made so far.

**Central Africa:** **Rwanda** is *East Africa's* best destination for investment, says a new report released by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the World Bank. Meanwhile intensive marketing of **Rwanda's** tourism products and a steady recovery in the global economy have helped the country register a **5 %** rise in tourism revenues to **\$44.4m** in the first quarter of 2010. §

## Zone 3- Euro-America: *Transatlantic Community*

### WESTERN EUROPE

The run up to the forthcoming **Dutch** election is showing a slide from anti-Muslim and immigration sentiment to economic concern. Wilder the conservative anti-Muslim and Islam politician is facing a challenge from other contestants taking up economic agenda, a popular priority issue to rally around.

The newly formed **British** coalition government is struggling with the carryover issue of illegal public spending that characterized the Brown's government. PM Cameron has vowed to purge out irresponsible conduct of cabinet members.

The *International Criminal Court* is geared at taking the challenge of criminalizing state aggression on other states, a move that has received mixed reactions. Critics say it will portray the court as political.

The **Spanish** parliament has approved austerity measures similar to those introduced by **Greece**. The move is likely to be met with resentment as has been the case across Europe.

The Spanish city of Lleida that has a **3 %** Muslim population out of which only a handful of Muslim women wear face-covering niqab garments, the city hall recently baned the veil within its premises. The ban is historic, the first of its kind in **Spain** and a reminder that the *veil* issue is snowballing across Europe.

A **German** High Court has dismissed allowing a separate room to a Muslim student for worship. The court overturned the ruling of a lower court granting a private room as guarantee for religious freedom. The high court holds that a single student's right should not override public good.

Meanwhile more reports are unfolding on scandalous practices in Catholic Church's schools across **Europe**. The latest development unveiled that about 205 former students claim to have been sexually or otherwise abused in *Jesuit* schools in **Germany**.

### CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Political impasse lingers on between the **Albanian** ruling and opposition parties. The latter accuses the former of electoral irregularities in June 2009 election. The opposition insists that the June ballot boxes be reopened, an option unaccepted to the government. Meanwhile U.S Ambassador to Tirana John Withers said the problem in the country is not political but governmental.

After a long parliamentary debate, **Croatian** ruling and opposition parties have reached compromise to allow **Croats** in diaspora (particularly in **Bosnia**) to cast their votes only at diplomatic and consular missions, and the diaspora will be entitled to three representatives in the **Croatian** parliament. Meanwhile Croats parties in **Bosnia** regret the compromise as discriminatory.

EULEX, UNMIK and the **Kosovo** authority have all rejected election planed to be held in the north of **Kosovo**. **Serbian** leaders have been campaigning in the Serb populated north with the hope of strengthening Serbia rule there. The act irked Kosovo authority and has requested EULEX to stop **Serbian** leaders and their political campaign in this supposedly parallel structure. Serbia is also threatening to slash its cooperation with EULEX on the premise that the latter is taking side with **Kosovo**.

Meanwhile, both *Belgrade* and *Pristina* expect to hear the ICJ nonbinding ruling on the legality of **Kosovo's** independence by end of July.

**Montenegrins** went to the polls for municipal elections that came out favorable for the ruling coalition government. Meanwhile, the country celebrated its fourth year independence after a referendum that separated **Montenegro** from the state union with **Serbia**.

**Romanian** government risks a no vote of confidence in the parliament on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June amid a protest by the public against government's plan to implement tough austerity measures, which the government thinks will expedite the economy.

**Kosovo** has reached an agreement of 110m-euro loan from the IMF. Similarly, the financial institution has given conditional consent to disbursing the next 380m-euro tranche of its 2.9 billion-euro standby loan to

**Serbia** as well.

The Public International Law & Policy Group (PILPG) has observed that **Kosovo** enjoys one of the best legislations for minorities, but the implementation of these documents remains a challenge. The group has urged that the non-Serb minority should also be given equal representation.

Meanwhile people generally in the region and **Serbia** in particular celebrated the birthday of *Josip Broz Tito*, the **Yugoslavian** communist leader; who despite his communist ideas and stronghold on power, is still remembered for the level of freedom he permitted as compared to other communist dictators.

**Serbs** are reacting with mixed feelings over a new legislative declaration by the **Serbian** parliament which condemned crime committed against Serbs during the 1990s war. Some Serbs hold that separating crime against *Bosniak* and Muslim from that of Serbs is inappropriate and shows disparity of concern. However, others agree on the distinction. The parliament wants the governments in the region to acknowledge the crime against *Serbs* as the basis for final reconciliation in the **Balkans**.

**Bosnia** and **Albania** are closing up their bid for the EU visa liberalization scheme upon the approval of the European Council recommendations. The recommendation, though positive, is conditional, and requires both countries to address a number of unresolved issues. **BiH** will have to boost efforts against corruption and crime, create an electronic police database and harmonize domestic criminal codes with those in the region. The **EC** is requiring **Albania** to spell out a reintegration strategy for returning refugees, ensure effective application of the 2009 law on confiscating criminal assets, and boost efforts against organized crime and corruption.

**Croatia** is expected to open more EU chapters that will drive the long standing country to the door of EU. The judiciary chapter is expected to be open amid the cooperation between **Croatia** and the UN war crimes tribunal.

**Serbia** is also optimistic of EU enlargement process in the Balkan and hopes the Sarajevo submit will give a new momentum on *EU-Balkan* integration.

**Serbia** and **Bosnia** have called on *Ankara* to help in softening their separate stiff stances. **Serbia** does not want the cancellation of the historic visit of **Bosnian** Presidency Chairman Haris Silajdzic to Belgrade, on the other end, Silajdzic insists on seeing wartime criminal Ilija Jurisic in prison, a plea not satisfactory to **Serbia**.

NATO has downsized its troops in **Kosovo** from about 14,000 to 10,000 in January and hopes to reduce it to just 2000, a move that might indicate the recognition of *Pristina's* independence.

**Macedonia** government reiterates its intention to continue talks with **Greece** on settling name dispute, but recent poll in the country suggests that 60% of **Macedonians** believe that their country could join the EU and NATO without changing its name and should abandon the talk. Although 79% **Albanian Macedonian** believes talks should continue.

It is yet unknown whether **Montenegrin** authorities will release former *Thai* Prime Minister *Thaksin Shinawatra* holding a **Montenegrin** passport to *Thailand*. *Shinawatra* is charged with terrorism and suspected of involvement in recent violent anti-government street protests that left more than 80 people dead.

A widely respected former **Polish** prime minister, *Marek Belka*, has been nominated to head the country's central bank — six weeks after its former chief was killed in a plane crash along with the nation's president.

Also in **Poland** bridges across the Vistula River, which runs through the heart of Warsaw, were packed last week with sightseers coming to get a look at the most serious flood in more than a century, part of a widespread natural disaster that has inundated parts of the south of **Poland** and is now moving north.

Meanwhile the Home Office figures show that more European migrants, from countries including **Poland** and the **Czech Republic**, are leaving the *UK* than arriving. It marks a reversal in movement for the first time since large-scale immigration in Europe began.

A group of politicians and experts from **Poland** were in *Tbilisi* as observers of local elections in **Georgia** last week, the first local election since the end of the **Russian-Georgian** conflict over *Southern Ossetia*. Meanwhile **Georgian** President Mikheil Saakashvili celebrated his country's independence day last week with the first military parade since **Russia** routed **Georgia** in a brief 2008 war and a new round of verbal cannonade



against *Moscow*.

The **Czechs** elected a new parliament on May 28-29.

**Slovakia** passed a law May 26 that will revoke the Slovak citizenship of anyone who is granted citizenship by another country. The law comes on the heels of a **Hungarian** law which eases citizenship requirements for ethnic Hungarians living abroad wherein applicants for **Hungarian** citizenship will not need to have permanent residency in **Hungary** and will only be asked to demonstrate proficiency in the **Hungarian** language and evidence of **Hungarian** ancestry. The citizenship dispute is at the center of rising tensions in *Central Europe*. EU members **Slovakia** and **Romania**, as well as non-EU member **Serbia**, have significant **Hungarian** minority populations and are wary that the new citizenship law could lead to increased influence from *Budapest* on their domestic affairs.” While **Slovakia’s** new law could endanger the citizenship of its roughly 520,000 **Hungarians**.

Meanwhile **6** EU states have offered assistance to flood-hit **Hungary**. *Germany* has offered **1,270,010** sand bags to increase its flood containment capacity of the country. The **Czech Republic** has offered **100,000** additional sand bags, the same amount offered by the **Netherlands** and **Croatia**; **Austria** has offered **250,000** and **Denmark** too offered **300,000** additional bags.

**Russian** Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and his **Kazakh** colleague agreed last week to launch a customs union as their **Belarusian** counterpart failed to show up at a trilateral summit. **Russia**, **Belarus** and *Kazakhstan* were in talks to create a customs union that collapsed last week when the prime ministers said they could not resolve sticking points like car duties.

**Belarusian** President Aleksandr Lukashenko says his country is willing to give **Russia** full control over **Belarusian** pipelines in exchange for cheap gas and oil.

**Ukraine** shelved its bid for NATO membership last week. Since taking power three months ago, Mr Yanukovich and his allies have conducted intense negotiations with *Moscow* on a wide range of issues, signaling the new president’s determination to reverse his predecessor’s policy of aligning **Ukraine** with the European Union and United States. However **Ukrainian** President Viktor Yanukovich has said that European integration remains among priority directions in the country’s foreign policy.

**Estonia's** unemployment rate leapt to an all-time high of **19.8 %** in the first quarter from **15.5 %** in the previous quarter.

## RUSSIA

*Iranian* President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has said that **Russian** support for new UN sanctions against *Iran* is unacceptable and called on President Dmitry Medvedev to rethink his support for Washington’s stance. *Iran* was snubbed by **Russia** and *China* last week when, just hours after it offered to ship some of its enriched uranium abroad, Washington announced that all five members of the UN Security Council backed a new sanctions draft. Meanwhile the *US* administration has dropped sanctions against the **Russian** state arms export agency and three other **Russian** entities previously found to have transferred sensitive technology or weapons to *Iran*.

According to reports the **Russian** government has studied the new strategic arms reduction treaty (START) and proposed **Russian** President Dmitry Medvedev to submit the document to parliament for ratification.

Meanwhile the Foreign Ministry broke its silence last week about the United States' deployment of Patriot missiles in *Poland*, criticizing the move as not helping security or trust. **Russia** is wary about the deployment of



U.S. troops and military hardware near its borders, though its Defense Ministry in January denied suggestions that it might boost its Baltic Fleet in response to the Patriot deployment in **Poland**.

A US federal court has ordered the Pentagon to set free from *Guantánamo* a former Russian Army ballet dancer turned devout Muslim, Ravil Mingazov, 42, an ethnic Tartar, captured in *Pakistan* in 2002 and

turned over to U.S. forces.

Amnesty International unveiled its annual global report on rights abuses last week, which states that President *Dmitry Medvedev* has failed to deliver on his promise to uphold civil society and protect human rights activists.

The government forecast of **Russia's** GDP predicts a growth of **3-6%** annually from 2011.

The Shuttle *Atlantis* has completed its mission and delivered the **Russian** Rassvet (MIM-1) research module and spare parts to the International Space Station (ISS).

**Russia** is sending warships for drills in Far East, during which warships of the three **Russian** fleets will conduct live firing at naval and aerial drones and practice combat interoperability and repelling simulated attacks by hostile submarines and aircraft. Meanwhile President *Dmitry Medvedev* is to send a group of **Russian** experts to *South Korea* to examine the results of a probe into the sinking of a *South Korean* warship.

An ammunition plant being built by **Russia** in *Venezuela* will have the capacity to produce over 50 million rounds for Kalashnikov assault rifles per year. Under the contract, **Russia** is building an assembly line for AK-103 assault rifles and an ammunition plant to produce 7.62-mm ammunition for the rifle.

**Russia** has inked a deal to extend waterway lease for *Finland*, under which **Russia** will continue leasing its stretch of the 43-kilometer Saimaa Canal that connects *Finnish* lakes to the Gulf of *Finland* after the current 50-year contract expires in 2013.

## US/CANADA

Few jobless **American** could still avail jobless benefits as the **U.S** House extends the expiring date, though leaving millions losing out from the benefit. The final say is though expected from the Senate which it is on recess.

On the defensive more than five weeks into **Americas** worst-ever oil spill, President Barack Obama insisted last week that his administration, not oil giant BP, was calling the shots in the still-unsuccessful response. "I take responsibility. It is my job to make sure that everything is done to shut this down," Obama declared at a news conference.

A leaked letter which shows the understanding reached between *Obama, da Silva* and the *Turkish* leader over *Iran's* nuclear swap has been in the news lately. The Obama administration has dismissed the issue, which some believe to be a face saving tactic. The letter showed a different White House that has persistently called for a tougher sanction on Iran. Also the letter was reportedly released in *Brazil*, because the *Brazilian* leader was angered that his diplomatic effort on the Iran issue was snubbed by the White House.

In its summer reliability assessment, North **American** Electric Reliability Corp has said the weak economy would result in reductions of **2.2 %** in peak demand this summer from last year in the **USA** and **Canada**.

**Canadian** leaders are jammed in debate over the security arrangement and spending for the forthcoming G20/G8 summit. The ruling party deems it necessary to provide adequate security for both **Canadians** and visitors, contrary to the liberal opposition stance that **Canada** cannot afford to spend \$1 billion in 72 hours for the summits.

Recent polls have been showing the fluctuation in **Canadians'** view for the ruling and opposition parties. The minority ruling government is facing opposition yet opposition parties have not been able to outpace it in public support.

**Canadian** government is moving towards having a single national securities regulator that will oversee stock and bond markets, replacing the existing agencies overseeing the 13 provinces. **Canada** currently is the only industrialized country that does not have a single regulator. According to Finance Minister Jim Flaherty it would cut costs and make it easier to crack down on white-collar crime.





## LATIN AMERICA

**Argentina** has celebrated the 200th anniversary of its revolution, which brought independence from **Spain**, with lavish parades in *Buenos Aires* and a phalanx of visiting heads of state and dignitaries.

**Brazilian** President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has launched TV Brasil, a new Portuguese-language network based in *Mozambique's* capital Maputo and tasked with "saying good things" about **Brazil**. The channel will be

broadcast to more than 40 countries, mostly in Africa and Latin America.

Meanwhile **Brazil's** ruling party presidential candidate Dilma Rousseff rose to a dead heat with opposition hopeful Jose Serra in the latest Datafolha poll released last week. Rousseff, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's former chief of staff, climbed 7 points from Datafolha's April voter survey, to win 37 % of the 2,660 voters' questioned across the country

A **Chilean** court has again sent the *Pakistani* Mr. Saifur Rahman to jail, labeling him a danger for the society. Mr. Saif was released after the US embassy's investigation did not find any links between his case and the Time Square's incident; however later a local court of **Chile** reversed the ruling.

**Mexican** police has arrested the mayor of Cancun state on the charge of supporting drug cartels and money laundering. The mayor belongs to the leftist Party of the Democratic Revolution and was set to contest the election for the governorship from a Caribbean state. Meanwhile president Obama is spending US \$500 million on **US-Mexico** border for its security along with deploying 1,200 National Guards troops on the border. Also **US** government has pledged to give \$1.4 million to **Mexico** which will be spent on new equipments and to train Mexican forces to counter drug related cartels.

**Mexican** government has asked *Canadian* diplomats to get visa permission before coming to *Canada*, in retaliation to a similar move on part of the Canadian authorities. Officials have called it a temporary change. The immigration issues are to be discussed in the next NAFTA meeting in August in **Mexico**.

**Venezuelan** President Hugo Chavez has threatened to nationalize a private food company Polar if it continues the practice of hoarding food. Meanwhile **Venezuelan** government has started crackdown against illegal currency traders who are accused of causing inflation in the country.

Industrial production plunged 9.9 % in **Venezuela** amid power shortages and inflation raised much as compare to the last 7 years.

## AUSTRALASIA

**Australian** Archbishop Mark Coleridge believes the recent scandal in the Catholic Church was engineered by multiply reasons. He linked the cause of the crisis to the Catholic culture of prioritizing sin and forgiveness rather than crime and punishment.



**Australian** minister of information has taken on *Google* for its breach of customer's privacy. The search engine giant was accused of storing private data through its Street View campaign. Google is pitted in similar case in Europe, where *German* and *British* governments challenged Google for privacy violation.

**Australian** government has expelled an *Israeli* diplomat from the country linked with the passport forgery used in the killing of Hamas leader in *Dubai*. The action was similarly to what the British did, and the expulsion remains indefinite and damages *Australia-Israel* relations. .§

### Assassinated Hamas Leader

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



BPM- Business & Politics  
In the Muslim World

