



**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*.

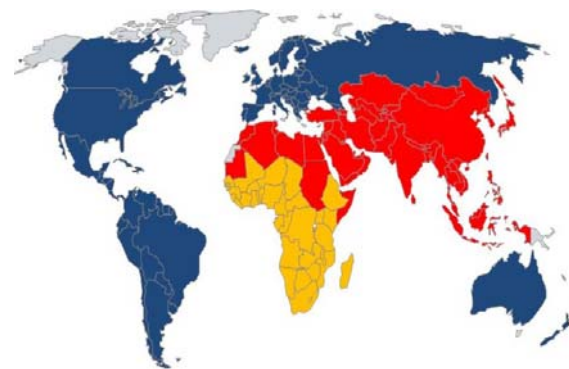
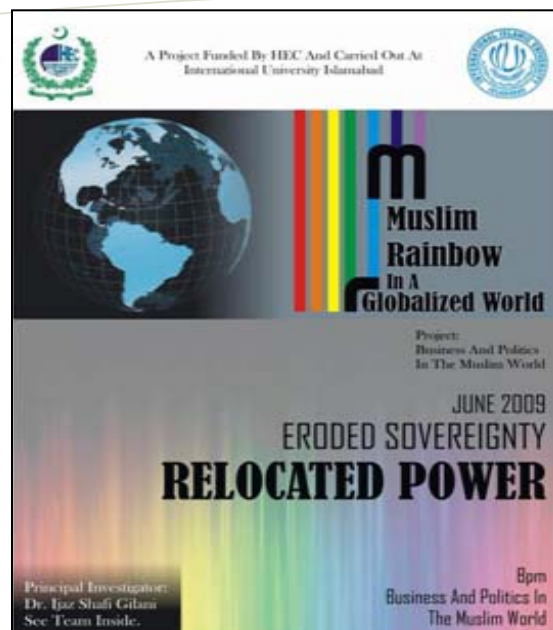
- ◆ We will make the e-letter a multi-layered presentation: in other words Friday on the Facebook will provide clicks to deeper levels of information; for comprehension (Maps and Data) as well as for elaboration



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.



## Globalized Opinions

This week's report consists of 30 surveys. 3 of these is a multi-country survey of **Sub Saharan Africa**. 12 polling organizations have been represented.

**ASIA zone**-4 national poll & 2 Multi National polls:

**West Asia:** Turkey

**Middle East & N Africa:** Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon

**Central Asia:** Kyrgyzstan

**South Asia:** India, Pakistan,

**Northeast Asia:** China, Japan, South Korea

**Southeast Asia:** Indonesia

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

**West Africa:** Nigeria

**Eastern Africa:** Kenya

**EURO-AMERICAS zone**-23 national polls & 3

Multi national polls:

**East Europe**- Czech Republic, Poland, Russia

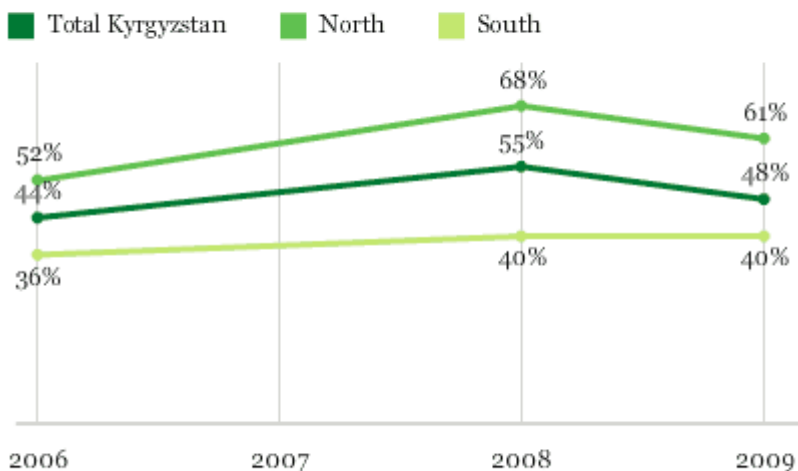
**West Europe**- UK, Spain, Netherlands, Germany, France

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

**Latin America**- Brazil, México, Colombia, Honduras, Argentina

*Is the city or area where you live a good place or not a good place to live for racial and ethnic minorities?*

Percentage "good place"



GALLUP®

### **Commentary: Ethnic Tensions Evident in Kyrgyzstan before Conflict**

*Perceptions of ethnic, racial tolerance relatively low in South*

By *Steve Crabtree*- WASHINGTON, D.C. -- **Gallup surveys** in *Kyrgyzstan* reflect the ethnic tensions that sparked recent deadly riots in the South, home to the country's Uzbek minority. In 2009, 40% of residents living in southern Kyrgyzstan said their city or area is a good place for racial and ethnic minorities, while 61% living in the North said the same. Nationwide, fewer Kyrgyzstanis perceived tolerance of ethnic minorities in 2009 than in 2008, with the deterioration coming exclusively in the North, while perceptions remained unchanged in the South.

Surveys were conducted well before rioters in the southern region killed more than 170 people and caused more than 75,000 Uzbeks to flee the country in the past several days, but Gallup data document the divisions between the country's ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks that have plagued the South for decades. The current violence comes more than a month after former President Kurmanbek Bakiyev was ousted and forced into exile, which has led some to suggest this was intended to disrupt the June referendum on constitution reform. Ethnic Uzbeks living in the South have supported the new government, while ethnic Kyrgyz have supported Bakiyev.

#### **Bottom Line**

The crisis in southern Kyrgyzstan is rooted in a complex mix of ethnic, political, and class-based divisions. Violence in the region has started to subside, leading Kyrgyz interim leader Roza Otunbayeva to drop her request for an external peacekeeping force. However, the question remains as to whether the Kyrgyz government will be able to handle the humanitarian disaster created by tens of thousands of displaced ethnic Uzbeks.

#### **Survey Methods**

Results are based on face-to-face interviews with approximately 1,000 Kyrgyzstani adults, aged 15 and older, conducted June 13-July 10, 2009. For results based on the total sample of national adults, one can say with 95% confidence that the maximum margin of sampling error is  $\pm 4$  percentage points. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

**Source:** <http://www.gallup.com/poll/140771/ethnic-tensions-evident-kyrgyzstan-conflict.aspx>

## SUMMARY OF POLLS

### Zone 1- ASIA

#### MIDDLE EAST

##### ***Israelis Reject Lifting Gaza Blockade*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Almost three quarters of people in [Israel](#) are against lifting their country's current blockade of Gaza, according to a poll by [New Wave Research](#) published in *Yisrael Hayom*. **73 %** of respondents would not end the blockade.

June 17, 2010

[Foreign Affairs & Security](#) » [Palestine/ Israel Conflict](#)

#### WEST & CENTRAL ASIA

##### ***Turks Have Mixed Views about Fate of the Reform Package*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

A recent poll of [Turkish](#) citizens conducted by [MetroPoll Ankara](#) shows that publics have a mixed view of the fate of the Constitutional Reform Package. Almost four in ten think that constitutional court will annul the package and roughly the same number think that it will approve it.

June 16, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Governance](#)

##### ***Ethnic Tensions Evident in Kyrgyzstan Before Conflict*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

[Gallup](#) surveys in [Kyrgyzstan](#) reflect the ethnic tensions that sparked recent deadly riots in the South, home to the country's Uzbek minority. In 2009, **40%** of residents living in southern Kyrgyzstan said their city or area is a good place for racial and ethnic minorities, while **61%** living in the North said the same. Nationwide, fewer *Kyrgyzstanis* perceived tolerance of ethnic minorities in 2009 than in 2008, with the deterioration coming exclusively in the North, while perceptions remained unchanged in the South.

June 16, 2010

[Society](#) » [Ethnicity](#)

#### NORTHEAST ASIA

##### ***Kan Cabinet Backed by Three-in-Five Japanese*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

The new Prime Minister of [Japan](#) begins his tenure with high ratings, according to four recent public opinion polls. At least **60 %** of respondents approve of Naoto Kan's cabinet. [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#)

June 14, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Governance](#)

##### ***Multi-Country poll- Obama More Popular Abroad than at Home, Global Image of U.S. Continues to Benefit*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

[Foreign Affairs & Security](#) » [US image](#)

##### ***Multi-Country poll- Polling the World (Cup): Who Will Win in South Africa?*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

[Society](#) » [Media/ New Media](#)

#### AFRICA:

##### SUB SAHARAN AFRICA

##### ***Multi-Country poll- Obama More Popular Abroad than at Home, Global Image of U.S. Continues to Benefit*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

[Foreign Affairs & Security](#) » [US image](#)

##### ***Multi-Country poll- Polling the World (Cup): Who Will Win in South Africa?*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

[Society](#) » [Media/ New Media](#)

### Zone 3- EURO-AMERICAS

#### EAST EUROPE

##### ***Czechs Would Bring Back Capital Punishment*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Many people in the [Czech Republic](#) believe the death penalty should be allowed in the country, according to a poll by [CVVM](#). **60 %** of respondents share this point of view.

June 19, 2010

[Society](#) » [Crime](#)

##### ***Presidential Run-Off May Be Needed in Poland*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)



Bronislaw Komorowski remains ahead of his rivals but may not have enough support to secure a first round win in [Poland's](#) presidential election, according to a poll by [GfK Polonia](#) published in Rzeczpospolita. **42 %** of respondents would vote for the Civic Platform (PO) contender and former defence minister in this Sunday's ballot.

June 18, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Elections](#)

## WEST EUROPE

### ***Dutch Ponder Formation of Next Government*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

People in the [Netherlands](#) are divided on what their new administration should look like, according to a poll by [Maurice de Hond](#). **35 %** of respondents want the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), the Party for Freedom (PvdV) and the Christian-Democratic Appeal (CDA) to form the government.

June 19, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Elections](#)

### ***Justice System is Unfair for Majority of Britons*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Many adults in [Britain](#) hold negative views on their justice system, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **56 %** of respondents think the justice system in the UK does not treat every person fairly.

June 18, 2010

[Society](#) » [Justice](#)

### ***Support for Afghan Mission at 38% in Britain*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Public backing for the military mission in Afghanistan increased this month in [Britain](#), according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **38 %** of respondents support the operation involving UK soldiers, up six points since April.

June 16, 2010

[Foreign Affairs & Security](#) » [Afghanistan War](#)

### ***Wulff Trails Gauck Among German Voters*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

[Germans](#) do not elect the country's federal president in direct ballots but, if they could, they would support Joachim Gauck this year, according to a poll by [Forsa](#) released by *Stern*. **42 %** of respondents would vote for Gauck, who is backed by the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Green Party (DG).

June 15, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Performance Ratings](#)

## NORTH AMERICA

### ***U.S. Voters Split on Obama Re-Election in 2012*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

[U.S.](#) registered voters remain split on whether President Obama deserves to be re-elected in 2012, with 46% saying he does and **51%** saying he does not -- little changed from earlier this year. [Gallup USA](#)

June 18, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Performance Ratings](#)

### ***Gallup's Job Creation Index Hits 20-Month High*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

[U.S.](#) [Gallup's](#) Job Creation Index hit a 20-month high of +13 on Thursday -- up from +5 a week ago.

June 18, 2010

[Economy](#) » [Employment Issues](#)

### ***At 18.6%, Underemployment at Lowest Level of the Year*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

The underemployment rate, as measured by [Gallup](#) in [U.S.](#), fell from **19.2%** in mid-May to **18.6%** in mid-June, its lowest level of the year.

June 16, 2010

[Economy](#) » [Employment Issues](#)

### ***Many Americans Say Gulf Beaches, Wildlife Will Never Recover*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

From what they have seen of the Gulf of Mexico oil spill rolling onto [America's](#) shores, nearly half of Americans (**49%**) believe that at least some of the affected beaches will never recover. Even more, **59%** believe normal levels for some animal species will never be restored. [Gallup USA](#)

June 16, 2010



***Americans Now Divided on Who Should Lead Oil Spill Efforts*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

**Americans** are divided over whether BP should continue to be in charge of efforts to control the Gulf of Mexico oil spill or whether the federal government should assume responsibility for those efforts, according to a new **USA Today/Gallup poll**. Conservatives are more likely to say BP should be in charge, and liberals prefer that the government lead the efforts.

June 15, 2010

Society » Environment/ Disasters



***Americans Want BP to Pay All Losses, No Matter the Cost*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

The majority of **Americans (59%)** say BP should pay for all financial losses resulting from the Gulf Coast oil spill, including wages of workers put out of work, even if those payments ultimately drive the company out of business. Seven out of 10 Americans (**71%**) say Obama has not been tough enough in his dealings with BP. **Gallup USA**

June 15, 2010

Society » Environment/ Disasters

***In U.S., Economy, Oil Spill Rank as Most Important Problems*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

The ongoing oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has catapulted "natural disaster response and relief" into the top five of **Gallup's** monthly "most important problem" list. At **18%**, disaster response now trails only the economy and unemployment as the **United States'** most important problem. Dissatisfaction with government and healthcare are also cited by at least **10%** of Americans in the June 11-13 Gallup poll.

June 17, 2010

Society » Environment/ Disasters

Economy » Perceptions on Performance/ Well-Being

***Americans Back More Stimulus Spending to Create Jobs*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Among four pieces of legislation Congress could consider this year, **Americans** are most supportive of authorizing more economic stimulus spending. Specifically, according to a June 11-13 **USA Today/Gallup poll**, **60%** of Americans say they would favor "additional government spending to create jobs and stimulate the economy."

June 17, 2010

Economy » Employment Issues

***Some Americans Grow More Fond of Tea Party*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Some people in the **United States** are becoming more enthusiastic about the National Tea Party, according to a poll by **Angus Reid Public Opinion**. **29 %** of respondents expect the movement to have a positive effect on American politics, up six points since March.

June 16, 2010

Domestic Politics » Political Parties

***Half of Americans Back Mission in Afghanistan*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Public support for the military operation involving **American** soldiers in Afghanistan remains stable in the United States, according to a poll by **Angus Reid Public Opinion**. **50 %** of respondents back the mission, down one point since April.

June 17, 2010

Foreign Affairs & Security » Afghanistan War

***Americans Think Sanford Should Leave Office*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

A majority of adults in the **United States** believe Mark Sanford should abandon his post as Governor of South Carolina, according to a poll by **Angus Reid Public Opinion**. **56 %** of respondents think Stanford should resign after acknowledging an extra-marital affair.

June 13, 2010

Domestic Politics » Performance Ratings

***Canadians Troubled by Summit Security Costs*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Many adults in **Canada** believe the cost of security for the G8 and G20 summits that will take place this month is unjustified, according to a poll by **Angus Reid Public Opinion**. **78 %** of respondents share this view.

June 17, 2010

## LATIN AMERICA

### ***Few Hondurans Satisfied with Lobo Sosa*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Just over a third of people in [Honduras](#) hold positive views on the performance of Porfirio Lobo Sosa, according to a poll by [CID-Gallup](#) published in *La Prensa*. **38 %** of respondents say the president has done a good or very good job so far.

June 19, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Performance Ratings](#)

### ***Santos Would Win Comfortably in Colombia*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Juan Manuel Santos is poised to become the next President of [Colombia](#), according to a poll by [Invamer Gallup](#). **66.5 %** of respondents would vote for Santos of the U Party (U) in this Sunday's run-off, while **27.4 %** would support Antanas Mockus of the Green Party (PV).

June 16, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Elections](#)

### ***Rousseff Ties Serra in Brazil's Presidential Race*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Dilma Rousseff has gained support and is now tied for first place with Jose Serra in [Brazil's](#) presidential race, according to a poll by [Ibope](#). **37 %** of respondents would vote either for Serra of the Brazilian Party of Social Democracy (PSDB) or Rousseff of the ruling Workers' Party (PT) in the October election.

June 15, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Elections](#)

### ***Peña Could Become Mexico's Next President*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Enrique Peña Nieto is the early favourite in [Mexico's](#) presidential race, according to a poll by [Reforma](#). **40 %** of respondents would vote for the current State of Mexico governor in the 2012 ballot.

June 13, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Elections](#)

## MULTI-COUNTRY POLLS

### ***Low Support for Iraq War in U.S. and Britain*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Many [Americans](#) and [Britons](#) are no longer supporting the war in Iraq, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **55 %** of respondents in the U.S.—and **61 %** in Britain—oppose the conflict.

June 14, 2010

[Foreign Affairs & Security](#) » [Iraq War](#)

### ***Obama More Popular Abroad than at Home, Global Image of U.S. Continues to Benefit*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

As the global economy begins to rebound from the great recession, people around the world remain deeply concerned with the way things are going in their countries. Less than a third of the publics in most nations say they are satisfied with national conditions, as overwhelming numbers say their economies are in bad shape. And just about everywhere, governments are faulted for the way they are dealing with the economy. President Obama is more popular abroad than at home. [Pew Research Center](#)

June 17, 2010

[Foreign Affairs & Security](#) » [US image](#)

### ***Polling the World (Cup): Who Will Win in South Africa?*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Of the 22 nations polled in this year's Pew Global Attitudes survey -- completed prior to the kickoff of the famous international soccer tournament -- a plurality in **14 countries** predicted that five-time champion Brazil would win the 2010 World Cup.

[Pew Research Center](#)

June 16, 2010

[Society](#) » [Media/ New Media](#) §



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

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



#### **TURKEY**

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

A civilian woman was killed and 11 soldiers wounded in an attack reportedly by *Kurdistan Worker's Party* groups on **Turkish** military in southern and eastern **Turkey**.

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

**Turkey** cancelled three military exercises with Israel after Flotilla incident due to Israel's refusal to apologize for the killings or pay compensation. **Turkey** has also

prepared a roadmap to cut off all ties with *Israel*. The nation has also expressed an absolute lack of confidence in a commission set up by *Israel* to probe the deadly raid on Gaza-bound aid ships.

**Turkey** and *Iraq* have signed a preliminary agreement extending to 15 years the period of the accord on transport of *Iraqi* oil from *Kirkuk-Ceyhan* oil pipeline.

Meanwhile **Turkey** has announced to assist *Kyrgyzstan* in these difficult times. Lastly, **Turkey** reportedly has the second largest absolute increase in military spending compared to other European countries.

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

Despite a small contraction of tourists from *Israel*, large numbers of people have been coming from Arab countries helping **Turkish** tourist industry to flourish.

**Turkey** has resumed economic ties with *Ukraine*. Meanwhile unemployment rate in **Turkey** has remarkably dropped.

The 2010 World Cup has increased the turnover of **Turkey's** ready-wear clothing industry up to 15%.

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

According to reports *Drug* trafficking has increased in **Turkey**.

#### **CENTRAL ASIA**

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

An Almaty court has ruled out accusations of embezzlement against a son-in-law of **Kazakh** President Nursultan Nazarbaev. Meanwhile **Kazakhstan's** state media outlets have printed the text of a law giving President Nursultan Nazarbaev special powers for life. The President has neither signed the law nor has he vetoed it so far.

Exiled former **Kyrgyz** president Bakiev has denied any involvement in a wave of ethnic violence in the south of **Kyrgyzstan** that has killed at least 124 people. Meanwhile former **Russian** Foreign Minister has asked regional security organization to send peacekeeping troops to intervene in the ethnic conflict in **Kyrgyzstan**. CSTO however showed reluctance in sending peacekeeping troops to **Kyrgyzstan**. The United Nations has urged **Kyrgyzstan** to take "swift and decisive action" to end indiscriminate ethnic killing and to protect people in the southern part of the country near the border with **Uzbekistan**.

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

*British* humanitarian organization has cleared land mines from *Nagorno-Karabakh*. Meanwhile the OSCE has announced to monitor line of contact between **Azerbaijan** and **Armenia**.

The **Azerbaijani** Defense Minister discussed cooperation with the NATO Secretary General's special representative Robert Simmons. Also **Azerbaijani** and *Russian* border guards have conducted joint exercises in the Caspian Sea.

*Russia* and **Kazakhstan** have made plan to sign agreements on cooperation in *space* and *nuclear energy* during the *Eurasian Economic Community* (EurAsEC) summit in Astana.

**Kazakhstan** has signed energy deal with *China*. A Pakistani air force plane has brought some 130 Pakistani nationals back to their home country from the embattled **Kyrgyz** city of Osh. Meanwhile *Belarus* has officially



refused to extradite former **Kyrgyz** President Bakiev.

The **Tajik** Foreign Ministry has rejected allegations that people from **Tajikistan** have been involved in the ethnic unrest in **Kyrgyzstan**. EU has expressed concern regarding ongoing violence in **Kyrgyzstan**.

The **Uzbek** state railroad company has sent a letter to **Tajik** authorities notifying them that it wants to close a 44-kilometer stretch of railroad connecting the two countries.

**Tajikistan** has sent humanitarian aid to **Kyrgyzstan**. Also the first round of the bilateral **Turkmen-American** political consultations

started in Ashgabat on June 14. also the President of **Uzbekistan** held telephone talks with the US Secretary of State and the UN General Secretary.

#### **Economic Front:**

**Ukraine** has announced plan to purchase nearly 5 billion cubic meters of **Azerbaijani** gas. Meanwhile **Turkmenistan** and Iran have signed agreement for additional gas supplies.

#### **Social Front:**

Residents of villages in central **Azerbaijan** still flooded from last month's heavy rains have been asking for help from the government to lower the water level.

Meanwhile at least 56 houses have been damaged by floods in **Kazakhstan**. About **60 %** of the nearly 250,000 citizens of the southern **Kyrgyz** city of Osh have left the city since ethnic clashes began.

## **IRAN**

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

**Iran** denounced the June 9 UN Security Council resolutions by claiming that it was issued based on “false accusation” and contrary to global community expectations. **Brazil** too blamed the US and other mega powers for imposing sanctions against **Iran** without taking into consideration the opinion of emerging powers. Meanwhile

the **Russian** President also condemned US for imposing sanctions against **Iran** and declared negotiations to be the only way to resolve this issue.

Meanwhile according to reports U.S. intelligence has shown that **Iran** could launch an attack against **Europe** with "scores or hundreds" of missiles, prompting major changes to **U.S.** missile defenses. **Iranian** Majilis Speaker has warned **EU** not to adopt hostile stance against **Iran** as it would adversely affect European firms.

**Iran** has also called on **Geneva** Disarmament Conference to begin serious disarmament talks, asking for devising a chronological plan for total global nuclear disarmament. **Iran** has also claimed that sanctions would lead its youth towards self-sufficiency.

#### **Economic Front:**

**Iran** has announced to increase gas imports from **Turkmenistan** to 40 million cubic meters. **Iran's** oil exports to

different world countries have reached 2.3 million barrels per day and the country exported more than 844 million barrels of oil in the last **Iranian** year. **Russia** is the main trade partner of **Iranian** Northern provinces with 900 million dollars worth of goods exported to the country every year from these provinces.

**Pakistan's** businessmen have welcomed the finalization of 7.5 billion dollars **Iran-Pakistan (IP)** gas pipeline project according to which **Iran** would start supplying gas to **Pakistan** from 2014.

#### **Social Front:**

**Iranian** intelligence ministry announced that its forces have disbanded two teams affiliated to the anti-Iran terrorist **Mujahideen-e Khalq** Organization (MKO) before they could stage their planned sabotage and terrorist operations in the capital city of **Tehran**.

## **EAST ASIA**

#### **Political Front:**

Various analyses indicate that after 2008 **Malaysian** elections popularity of PAS has remarkably grown among

non-Malay voters.

The recent digital balloting in the **Philippines** has made the country a role model in the world on automating elections.

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

The **Indonesian** government denied claims of establishing nuclear power facilities as a substitute to fossil fuels used to generate electricity over the next five years.

#### **Economic Front:**

**Indonesia** expects a six % rise in its milled rice harvest this year, leading to a two million tones surplus, and aims to attract *Gulf Arab* investors to develop “sleeping land”.

The Export-Import Bank of the *United States* (Ex-Im Bank) announced that it has given initial approval to 11 banks in **Indonesia** to receive financing as part of the banking facilities amounting to US\$1 billion to support US exports to **Indonesia**. Meanwhile **Indonesia** has removed double taxation on Islamic finance transactions to give the industry a level playing field with conventional banking.

The number of jobless **Filipinos** hit a two-year high in April despite the better-than-expected economic growth in the first quarter. The **Philippines** has raised this year’s gross domestic product growth target to a range of 5 % to 6 % while keeping the deficit-to-GDP ratio at 3.6 %.

A delegation of Chinese businessmen met with **Cambodian** business people for investment opportunities and local business partners, aimed at strengthening trade cooperation between the two countries. meanwhile **Thailand’s** exports rose the most since July 2008 as the global recovery boosted orders, helping to offset the economic fallout from the political unrest in April and May.

**Vietnamese** government inked a deal to boost the country’s infrastructure growth via US\$500 million in American funds set aside for the purchase of US goods and services.

#### **Social Front:**

**Indonesian** government has blamed *Iranian* smugglers for their involvement in drug trafficking. Meanwhile police has arrested many *Iranian* smugglers as well.

Corruption still persists as major challenge being faced by **Thai** government. An independent United Nations expert has urged **Cambodian** authorities to strengthen the country’s judiciary and improve human rights.

Tourists have been banned from a misty, picturesque island in a crater lake south of *Manila*, **Philippines** because volcanic activity detected there could precede an eruption.

## **SOUTH ASIA**

#### **Political Front:**

**Bangladesh's** ruling Awami League party suffered an unexpected blow when an opposition candidate won a crucial mayoral election in the port city of Chittagong.

**Sri Lanka's** top defense official challenged international rights groups to produce evidence of war crimes

allegedly committed in the final months of the country's civil war.

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

*Chinese* Vice President has recently paid visit to **Bangladesh** and held meetings with key political leaders of the country. **Bangladesh** and *China* have made a plan to construct a road link via **Myanmar** to boost connectivity between the two nations as they seek to deepen bilateral relationship, including space cooperation.

**India's** Border Security Force (BSF) has rejected a meeting with the **Bangladesh** Rifles (BDR) at the commandant level over the recent firing along the **India-Bangladesh** border in southern Meghalaya, instead demanding a meeting at the sector commandant level. Meanwhile **Indian** border guards have asked their **Bangladeshi** counterparts to maintain status quo in "areas of adverse possession" until a solution is found to boundary dispute between the two



**Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) candidate M. Manzur Alam waves to supporters**

countries.

**Sri Lanka** showed off its military hardware during a victory parade to celebrate the first anniversary of the defeat of Tamil Tiger rebels, amid growing criticism over alleged rights abuses in the last phase of the quarter-century civil war. Meanwhile the **Sri Lankan** President has recently paid visit to **India**.

**Economic Front:**

The export-oriented garment industries and manpower export have been regarded as the two main pillars of strength of **Bangladesh** economy.

The *Asian Development Bank* (ADB) has approved \$72 million, which includes \$ 60.4 million loan and \$12.1 million in grants, to **Nepal** for programs aimed at providing access to poor and isolated rural communities to credit and financial services. **Nepali** stock exchange has remarkably grown from mid-May to mid-June. Work on a controversial high dam by **India** and **Nepal** in collaboration continued under tight security in eastern **Nepal** even as the opposition Maoist party intensified its protests against the mega power project, calling it '*anti-people*'.

**Social Front:**

**Myanmar** floods and landslides triggered by incessant monsoon rains in Myanmar and Bangladesh have killed more than 100 people.

**INDIA**

**Political Front:**

**Indian** National Congress has decided that the government, not the party, would have to clarify on the various aspects of the Bhopal gas Tragedy case, as the facts lie only with the government. Left wing has failed to hold

trust of Muslim community as it hasn't been able to implement recommendations made by *Sachar Report* for the betterment of Muslims in the region. Keeping this in mind a Senior leader of *Communist Party of India* claimed that his party should be restructured and be brought closer to people in order to play significant role in **Indian** politics. He further regretted that despite several years at the helm in West Bengal, apart from a few initiatives such as land reforms and the strengthening of the Panchayat Raj system, the Left had not been able to reflect an alternative line. All the while the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) launched



a broadside against the United Progressive Alliance government over the Civil Nuclear Liability Bill and accused it of working for U.S. interests.

**India** has strongly protested the inclusion of *Naxal issue* under the realm of an "armed conflict" in a UN report that deals with 'Children and armed conflicts' saying the violence being perpetrated by these groups does not make it a zone of armed conflict as defined by international law.

**Geo-strategic Front:**

**India** has conveyed its concerns to US for Pak-China nuclear cooperation. After failing to persuade **Pakistan** to resolve the *Kishenganga* hydel project dispute at the government level, **India** has named a judge of the Geneva-based International Court of Justice Peter Tomka and a Swiss international law expert Lucius Caflisch to represent it. **India's** greatest effort would go into ensuring that Pakistan should not get a veto on forthcoming water projects in **India**. **India** has successfully test-fired its nuclear-capable, ballistic missile Prithvi-II from a launch complex of the Integrated Test Range (ITR).

**Economic Front:**

ADB has projected an 8.2 % growth and for 2011 the projection is 8.7 % for **India**. ADB also claimed that India would easily combat the impact of Euro-zone crisis as **India's** exports to the European Union as a %age of GDP (gross domestic product) was only 3.4 %. Despite remarkable increase in *Bombay Stock exchange* this month, overall stock shares remained fluctuating. The inflation rate surged into double digits as it touched 10.16 % in May, the highest in the last 19 months.



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

*Britain* has launched an inquiry into reports that millions of pounds of aid for education has disappeared into the depths of corruption without any benefit to the poor children in **India** the aid was intended for. According to 2010 Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP) compiled by the *United States State Department*, **India** has been ranked among those countries whose governments do not fully comply with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's (TVPA) minimum standards.

## **AFGHANISTAN**

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

The independent election commission has launched a two-month voters' registration process for the upcoming parliamentary election, scheduled for September 18. President *Hamid Karzai* said foreign troops would play a supporting role in the upcoming *Kandahar* operation to uproot Taliban movement. President Hamid Karzai has agreed to form a peace council that would mediate between his government and the Taliban. *Baghlan* provincial council members have warned of falling all the districts into the hands of Taliban, who have already got control of almost 11 districts in the Northern Province. Acting Interior Minister has declared nine out of **Afghanistan's** 364 districts to be safe, with the rest under some degree of security threat.

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

*Poland* has asked **NATO** to plan an operation to withdraw troops from **Afghanistan**. The *Turkish* Armed Forces has donated more than \$3 million in weapons and equipment to the *Afghan National Army*.

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

Afghanistan has decided to invite 200 international companies to bid for

the extraction of its \$1 trillion worth of minerals. According to a US survey **Afghanistan's** untapped mineral wealth is worth at least \$3 trillion. The Afghan government has started looking at *India* and *China* to help it in sustainable use of its vast natural resources, which is estimated to be worth \$1 trillion. **Afghan** President has also invited *Japan* to invest in mines.

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

More than 5,900 **Afghan** children were smuggled into *Europe* last year, with most of them escaping their homeland due to worsening living conditions. People from different walks of life at a gathering in central capital demanded an immediate action against foreign aid groups allegedly involved in proselytizing activities.



## **CHINA**

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

**China's** Cabinet has announced the appointments of a host of new high-level officials. **Chinese** Premier has called for improving the urban living conditions for migrant workers who left their rural hometowns and are significantly contributing to the country's urbanization.

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

**Chinese** President has paid a visit to Central Asia in order to boost ties with the Republics. China has pledged to enhance military relations with *Zimbabwe*. Meanwhile Chinese growing ties with *Ireland*, *Lithuania*, *Bangladesh*, *Laos*, *Mozambique*, *New Zealand*, *Australia*, *Austria* and *Mongolia* also remained significant.

**China** has strongly opposed a declaration issued by the European Union on a **Chinese** human rights case. *North Korea* has paid thousands of dollars in compensation to the relatives of three **Chinese** nationals shot dead by its border guards this month. A noted U.S. foreign policy expert said that **China** and the *United States* should open more channels of communication to solve problems facing the two countries. In response to US concern regarding **Chinese** offer to sign a nuclear deal with Pakistan; **Chinese** officials declared it to be a peaceful nuclear deal.



### *Economic Front:*

The **China** National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) has signed an agreement with the **Kazakh** gas company Kaz Munay Gas to jointly build the second phase of a gas pipeline in a bid to tap gas reserves in southern **Kazakhstan**. **Chinese** export growth remained faster than expected. **China** has diversified its methods of importing energy from neighbor countries in Central Asia.

**China** has urged the *United States* political figures to stop blaming others for U.S. economic problems and to solve the problems

themselves. Meanwhile **Chinese** Communist party called on employers to raise *salaries* and improve training for workers, as **Toyota** became the latest foreign firm to be hit by a wave of high-profile strikes. Prices of farm produce and producer goods in **China's** 36 large and medium-sized cities have remarkably dropped. Chinese entrepreneurs' confidence about the macro economy has lowered in the second quarter than the first, on concerns of rising production costs and shrinking demand. **China's** central bank has moved to head off resurgent international criticism of its currency policies with a pledge to make its tightly-controlled exchange rate more flexible. Foreign trade in economically-developed Jiangsu Province in eastern **China** totaled 174.29 billion U.S. dollars in the first five months of the year, a 50 % year-on-year increase.

### *Social Front:*

A senior **Chinese** publicity official has urged the government to mobilize the public to boost the development of the nation's cultural industries. **China's** top auditor has pledged to strengthen environmental audits in a bid to achieve sustainable economic and social development.

The **Chinese** government is to continue a project -- sending computers to the country's western rural areas in a bid to close the digital divide. Representatives of U.S. fast-food chain KFC in northeast **China's** Shenyang City has signed the company's first collective labor contract on the **Chinese** mainland, agreeing to raise workers' wages and meeting the demands of a local trade union.

## **JAPAN**

### *Political front:*

Public support for the Cabinet of Prime Minister Naoto Kan hit 64.8 %, rising 3.3 %age points from the previous survey conducted right after its launch. **Japan** will hold an upper house election on July 11, the outcome of which could determine how smoothly the ruling Democrats can forge ahead with plans to raise the sales tax and cut huge public debt.

Taliban rebels have demanded that the Afghan government pay a ransom for a **Japanese** journalist who was believed taken captive in late March in northern *Afghanistan*.

### *Economic Front:*

*Saudi Arabia's* state-run oil giant has agreed in principle with **Japan** to store 3.8 million barrels of oil in the Asian nation by the end of the year. **Japan's** crude steel output rose 50.2 % in May from a year earlier to 9.73 million tones. **Japan's** finance ministry has welcomed *China's* announcement on foreign exchange reform and its strengthening of a more flexible Yuan.

### *Social Front:*

Police has arrested a **Japanese** man suspected to be the ringleader of a group that has helped hundreds of *Thais* enter **Japan** illegally.

Meanwhile on the health front, administration has decided to cover the cost of all measures to tackle foot-and-mouth disease among livestock in *Miyazaki* Prefecture under a special law.

## **KOREA**

### *Political Front:*

Lawmakers of the governing Grand National Party (GNP) have urged law-enforcement authorities to seek legal

punishment on a civic group that sent a letter to the U.N. Security Council (UNSC). President Lee Myung-bak called on the military to have an open mind in working together with the civilian sector to find ways to improve its defense capabilities.

**Geo-strategic Front:**

The top diplomats of **Korea** and *India* have



agreed to start working-level talks that would ultimately pave the way for signing a nuclear energy treaty. **South Korea** and *Turkey* have agreed to boost ties. **South Korea** and the *United States* have agreed to stage joint naval drills later this month in waters off the *South's* west coast in a show of force against **North Korea's** torpedo attack on a Seoul warship.

**Social Front:**

**Korea** has launched a global think tank tasked to promote green growth and tackle climate change. §

## Zone 2- **Africa:** *Sub Saharan Africa*

### **POLITICS OF SECURITY AND CONFLICT ISSUES**

**West Africa:** In **Ghana** the Electoral Commission is expected to register about 180,000 new voters during the 10-day Revision of the Voters Register in the Western Region. Meanwhile the Volta Regional Executives of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and their Constituency Chairmen have disengaged themselves from a group purporting to propose former first lady, Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings as a NDC flag bearer for the 2012 Election. In a statement released they deemed the proposal as premature and likely to create unnecessary tension and division within the party. They also reaffirmed the region's total 'unflinching' support for President John Evans Atta Mills towards actuating the "Better Ghana" agenda.

The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) reports that disarmament and demobilization of 600 former combatants has begun in the northern, rebel-held town of Korhogo.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) dispatched 200 Election Observers to Guinea Conakry where the presidential elections were held on June 27, 2010.

**Liberia's** President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has said that although the nation may not meet the deadline set for achieving the Millennium Development Goals in 2015, she is grateful to the World Bank and its partners for positively helping to alleviate poverty on the African continent.

**Central Africa:** An official of **Burundi's** national police has dismissed as "rumor" reports that security agents want to arrest Agathon Rwaswa, leader of the main opposition National Forces of Liberation (FNL) party. But, Jean Bosco Habyarimana, spokesman of the FNL, said agents of the intelligence police in civilian clothes went to the opposition leader's house, sealed it off and then attempted to enter it by force. This comes a day after leaders of a coalition of opposition parties called on their supporters to boycott the 28th June presidential election. Several opposition groups, including the FNL, pulled out of the upcoming presidential election after accusing the Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) of being biased towards incumbent President Pierre Nkurunziza's ruling CNDD-FDD party – a charge both the ruling party and CENI deny.

Meanwhile in **Rwanda** Lawmaker, Francis Kaboneka, has urged members of all religious groups to massively participate in the forthcoming presidential elections slated for August 9.

The top United Nations envoy in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)** paid tribute to a group of **Senegalese** blue helmets last week who were the first batch of peacekeepers to leave the country in line with the recent decision by the Security Council to alter the UN mission there. The Council last month

agreed to transform the UN peacekeeping mission in DRC (MONUC) into a stabilization mission in the coming weeks, authorizing the withdrawal of up to 2,000 UN military personnel - from an existing strength of 19,815 - by 30 June from areas where security has improved enough to allow their removal. It also authorized the new operation, which will be known as the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), to stay in the country until 30 June 2011.

The **Ugandan** army says at least 10 of its soldiers were killed in the **Central African Republic** last month while chasing *Lord's Resistance Army* rebels. **Ugandan** newspapers report the army chief has ruled out an attack by



the LRA, placing the blame instead on **Sudanese** militiamen. **Ugandan** forces have been pursuing LRA fighters across the **CAR**, southern **Sudan**, and the **Democratic Republic of Congo** since December 2008.

**Southern Africa:** The former chief of staff of the **Rwandan** army and a leading critic of President Paul Kagame was shot and wounded last week in **South Africa**, where he lives in exile. His wife called the incident a *Rwandan*-backed assassination attempt, a charge the Kigali government dismissed as "preposterous."

According to a **Zimbabwean** political analyst, **Zimbabweans** appear cynical following the announcement that President Robert Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai initiated a joint drive to draft a new constitution last week. However, Rejoice Mgwanya predicted **Zimbabweans** will go to the polls to choose their leaders in a democratic vote after the constitution is finalized.

Meanwhile according to an official of **Zambia's** National Constitutional Conference (NCC) the group will soon conclude an initial draft constitution ahead of next year's general elections.

No individual or group in **Swaziland** has admitted responsibility for a spate of recent bombings against government and opposition party targets, but their actions are creating a sense of instability in the aid-dependent **southern African** state.

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN DOMESTIC POLITICS

**West Africa:** Agents of National Security are investigating a case of cruelty on the high seas in which three **Ivorian** nationals are alleged to have been thrown into the ocean by the captain of a Chinese vessel. The incident happened in **Ghanaian** waters. One of the three stowaways drowned, while the other two were rescued by a **Ghana** Navy ship after 12 hours in the sea.

A **Sierra Leonean** woman who helped top **Sierra Leonean** rebels in recruiting and training fighters in **Liberia**, last week told Special Court for **Sierra Leone** that as far as she knew, Charles Taylor's name was never mentioned as one of those helping to recruit and train rebels to invade **Sierra Leone** in 1991. The witness also told the court that West African peacekeepers and **Guinean** military officers were involved in trading diesel, and arms and ammunition with **Sierra Leonean** rebel commanders during the West African country's 11 years civil war.

The *World Food Program (WFP)* says it is shutting down the UN humanitarian air service in **Sierra Leone, Guinea** and **Liberia** due to lack of cash to continue with the operation. Ending the humanitarian air service will have terrible consequences for about one-quarter of a million people in **West Africa** who rely on the service for essential needs. The UN agency said the West African coastal service needs some \$2.5 million to stay



in operation until the end of the year.

Meanwhile *Amnesty International* has welcomed UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's efforts to improve maternal health and his focus on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in his visit to **Sierra Leone**.

**Sierra Leone's** President Ernest Bai Koroma while stressing that there should be no discrimination in the use of the **Sierra Leone** Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) facilities and equipments, has commended the United Nations *Peacebuilding Office* in **Sierra Leone** (UNIPSIL) for donating the sum of US\$800,000 in addition to the US\$2

million that the government provided to ensure the broadcaster covers the entire country.

**Benin** has made significant gains in reducing poverty and expanding primary education, Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon observed on a visit to the West African nation, while pledging United Nations support for a range of challenges such as food security and the environment. The country's efforts to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - eight targets to slash poverty, fight hunger and tackle other key social and economic problems by 2015 - were the focus of Mr. Ban's visit, part of a five-nation African tour.



**Central Africa:** With fighting in the **Central African Republic** displacing thousands of civilians, some people are setting up self-defense forces to protect their families. Civilians fleeing fighting in surrounding areas have doubled the population of the town of Obo, near the border with **Congo** and **Sudan**.

The *United States*, *United Kingdom* and *France* backed a demand last week in the United Nations Security Council for **Kenya** to cooperate in the hunt for a **Rwanda** genocide fugitive. The three donor states aligned themselves with charges by the UN's **Rwanda** Tribunal prosecutor that **Kenya** is withholding information on the whereabouts of the fugitive, Felicien Kabuga.

American defence lawyer, Peter Erlinder has immunity from prosecution as a defence lawyer at ICTR, but that applies only when he is in **Rwanda** on work related to the tribunal, the Arusha based court has emphasized. Meanwhile Erlinder, 62, has been granted bail due to medical issues, but will continue to face charges of Genocide denial and revisionism.

The coordinator of GCAP **Rwanda** said during the celebrations to mark this year's International Day of the African Child that the United Nations' Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) **Rwanda** is soon to embark on a campaign to provide education to vulnerable children.

**Southern Africa:** Nelson Mandela joined hundreds of mourners last week at the funeral of the former **South African** president's great-granddaughter who was killed in car crash last week.

Much to the frustration of gender activists, **Swaziland's** Supreme Court has reversed a February 2010 High Court ruling that allowed a married woman to register property in their own name.

*Argentina* has become the first team to virtually clinch a berth in the second round of the World Cup. *Greece* has won its first World Cup football match with a 2-1 decision against *Nigeria* that keeps the *Greeks* in contention. *Mexico* has defeated France 2-0, in the second match for each in the opening group stage of the **South African** World Cup.

## HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

**Central Africa:** An eight member delegation from UNITAID, an international organization dedicated to provision of affordable HIV/Aids therapy in developing countries arrived in **Rwanda** last week to assess progress in anti HIV programs. The President of UNITAID said the team will be assessing the achievements registered by institutions involved in the HIV fight, particularly in the areas of mother-to-child HIV prevention, and provision of pediatric care and treatment.

**Southern Africa:** A study by the **South African** Medical Research Council has found that women in abusive relationships are more likely to become infected with HIV.

## POLITICAL ECONOMY

**West Africa:** In **Ghana** the DANQUAH Institute in collaboration with Imani Centre has condemned moves by Parliament to approve a US\$1.5 billion Supplier's Credit Financing Agreement between STX Engineering and Construction **Ghana** Limited as Lender and the Government of **Ghana** in relation



to the financing of the 30,000 housing units under the Security Services Housing Project.

Concerns are being raised about how **Ghana** will manage its oil revenues as the Jubilee field, its first major offshore deposit, prepares to start producing and exporting in the fourth quarter of this year. Meanwhile **Ghana** is set to begin oil exploration off the Tema coast.

WASH United **Ghana**, a sanitation oriented non-governmental organization (NGO) was launched in Accra last week with a new innovative approach to the promotion of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in the country. **Ghana** needs at least US\$ 200 million per annum over time to tackle head-on sanitation-related problems the country is saddled with.

**Central Africa:** The *United Kingdom's* Minister for International Development, Stephen O'Brien, held discussions with **Rwanda's** President Paul Kagame the nation's road to achieving Vision 2020. The discussion focused mainly on the programs that his government funds as well as how both countries can work towards a better future. §

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

### WESTERN EUROPE

In **Germany** coalition partners are divided, resignation of top officers, the loss of a crucial regional election and the lack of foresight on how to react to recent financial crisis that gripped Europe. There is speculation that **Germans** are likely to go for another election less than a year after Merkel won re-election. According to a German ARD television poll a record low 86 % of **Germans** are dissatisfied.

During the last week, a group of experts from the **IMF**, the **European Commission (EC)** and the **European Central Bank (ECB)** were in *Athens* to assess the recent bailout package. The review went well with satisfactory remark on Greece's economic progress.

In **France**, police banned a party organised by a group who intended to serve pork and alcohol on the street where Muslims offer their *Friday* prayer. The police said it was tailored to offend and cause trouble, though a counterparty organised by Muslim groups was also banned.

Meanwhile **Ireland** has followed the track of **Britain** and *Australia*, by expelling the *Israeli* diplomat accused of complicity in the passport forgery used in the assassination of Hamas leader in *Dubai*.

The **EU** has added more heat to the recent sanctions placed on Iran by the UNSC. The unilateral sanction includes the prohibition of new investment, trade insurance, financial transactions, technical assistance and transfers of technologies. The sanction also affects *Iran's* shipping and air cargo companies, new visa bans and asset freezes imposed on *Iran's* Revolutionary Guard.

### CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

The Council of **Europe** has urged the **Albanian** opposition to take its case of election irregularities to court. Meanwhile as part of the prerequisites for induction in the *Schengen* visa liberalization scheme **Albania** has to ensure the repatriation of its citizens from **Europe**. This condition has forced *Tirana* to establish a special structure to deal with repatriated citizens.

Regardless of the awaited ICJ ruling on the legality of **Kosovo** independence, the International Steering Group (ISG) under the International Civilian Office head Pieter Feith has opined that **Kosovo** independence is irrevocable.

*European parliament* members are urging the **EU** to start accession talks with *Skopje*, due to the improvement in its reforms, though **Macedonia** remains entangled in the name dispute with **Greece**.

Effort by the **Romanian** government to regulate the economy by reducing deficit, slashing salaries, pensions and hiking taxes has thrown the



government into hot water. Many **Romanians** are against the austerity measures and the cabinet now faces vote of no confidence from the opposition Social Democratic Party (PSD) which it survived. Meanwhile the opposition has shown its readiness to further pursue the case in court.

According to reports **Romanian** deputy Foreign Minister Bogdan Aurescu has announced that *Bucharest* and *Washington* have begun talks on deploying elements of the proposed US missile shield in **Romania**.

The **Macedonian** government too is geared at cutting salaries of some government officials, including Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski.



**Croatian** labour unions are gathering signatures for a referendum for amending labour law. Laborers are wrestling with government over whether or not the union should continue with collective bargaining or individual agreement with employers.

Similarly in **Serbia**, Alliance of Independent Unions of **Serbia** President Ljubisav Orbovic has warned that the workforce situation has become critical where at least 1 million citizens are subsisting below the poverty line.

**Albanian** government has declared two groups, Islamic Jihad and al-Qaeda, illegal in **Albania**. During a meeting, the cabinet also announced a list of 62 businessmen and nine commercial companies believed to be connected with al-Qaeda and the Taleban, groups that the UN considers sponsors of terrorism.

High Representative *Valentin Inzko* has urged **Bosnian** lawmakers to adopt a law on population census, calling for a compromise so that the headcount could be conducted next year.

EULEX officials want **Belgrade** to take the next step in collecting information regarding the Raska mass grave, believed to contain the bodies of 250 **Albanians**.

The family of the fugitive **Serb** commander Ratko Mladic wants the government to declare Mladic dead since Mladic's whereabouts have been unknown. The **Serbian** government however insists on continuing with the search.

Meanwhile **Serbia** has strengthened its ties with rich European countries by opening its border to citizens of EU countries and **Switzerland, Norway** and **Iceland**. Also the bloc's foreign ministers have kicked off ratifying the bloc's *Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA)* with **Serbia**, two years after it was signed. Meanwhile the **Kosovar** government has planned not to invite **Serbian** president to a regional mini-summit to be held in **Kosovo**.

Regional and foreign observers have been closely monitoring the stance of the **Bulgarian** government, whether the latter will maintain undivided ties with *U.S* or seek an economic and energy friendship with *Russia*. The proposed *Burgas-Alexandroupolis* pipeline has been the cause of the unclear stance. For clarity Prime Minister Boyko Borisov holds that the government will wait for an environmental impact assessment before making a final decision on its participation in the *Burgas-Alexandroupolis pipeline*.

Polls for the upcoming **Polish** election suggest a tight outcome between the late president's identical twin brother, *Jaroslaw Kaczynski* (skeptical of the benefits of adopting the Euro) and *Bronislaw Komorowski*, the pro-business parliament speaker with a market-friendly policy.

**Poland's** finance minister has made a request to International Monetary Fund for a renewal of flexible credit line of \$20 billion dollars for his country. Meanwhile the *UAE* has become **Poland's** largest trading partner in the Arab world. A few years back *Saudi Arabia* occupied that position.

The outcome of the recent **Slovakia** election shows that despite the success of the ruling centre-left SMER-SD party, the current coalition parties will not likely be part of the team as they failed to garner sufficient votes. Hence, a centre-right government is more likely expected.

EU has approved **Estonia**-Eurozone membership as the 17<sup>th</sup> member, following consent among EU leaders that **Estonia** had met the conditions to join the Euro area.

**Ukraine** borrowed \$2bn from **Russia** last week to bridge its budget deficit since talks for IMF loan are dragging. Meanwhile dependency on *IMF's* loans has been articulated by **Latvian** President Valdis Zatlers who cautioned against excessive optimism and holds that despite the signs of recovering from deep recession; his

country is still in need of international financial assistance.

**Hungarian** government has thrown its support for a possible change in European Union regulations on private pension fund systems. The change will help the newly formed government to significantly narrow budget deficit and lower public debt. The government is also geared at central price regulation, a reminiscent system of communist-era price controls.

The **Czech Republic's** nascent three-party centre-right government has agreed to expand the controversial Temelin nuclear power plant and upgrade the atomic plant in Dukovany.

**Belarusian** government has refused the request of *Kyrgyz* government to extradite deposed President Kurmanbek Bakiyev who is wanted over the charges of murder and abuse of power.

## RUSSIA

Amendments to **Russia's** 2010 budget have triggered concern for The International Monetary Fund (IMF). The concern could also be linked to the **Russians'** plan to borrow less from foreign market in 2011.

Meanwhile joint WTO membership of **Russia-Khazakistan-Belarus (RKB)** may put additional obstacles for these countries, but the membership is expected to force **Russia** to readjust its protectionist policy.

The European Parliament has welcomed the "constructive" nature of the first EU-**Russia** summit since the *Lisbon Treaty* was approved held earlier this month.

A few weeks back, **Belarus** expressed its willingness to offer **Russia** gas pipeline passage in exchange for cheap gas. However according to recent reports **Russia** has given an ultimatum to **Belarus** to pay off its \$200m gas debt.

**Russian** state-owned hi-tech corporation Rostekhnologii (**Russian** Technology) is organizing Eurosatory 2010, wherein over 30 **Russian** defense industry setups will be exhibiting.

A recent visit of **Russian** leader to Paris has spotlighted the economic concern between the the two countries. meanwhile *France* has signed to be part of the *South Stream* gas pipeline project, that will transport **Russian** gas to the rest of Europe.

**Russian** parliament has welcomed the signing of an agreement that will establish an early-warning mechanism on energy security between the *EU* and **Russia**. **EU-Russia** energy co-operation must be based on the principles of the Energy Charter.

The *French* are handing over night vision technology to **Russia**; as the city of Vologda in central **Russia** will start assembling the Thales-developed thermal imaging cameras. The local production of the camera will reduce production cost and is hoped to be affordable for civilian purposes in the future.

**Russian** parliament endorsed the visa-free travel regime between the EU and **Russia** and believes the negotiation should be based on a step-by-step approach.

Meanwhile **Russia** and China will be relieved from the British yearly £2.9bn bilateral aid. *Britain* is reviewing its policy and believes the aid should go to most needy countries.

As ethnic tension mounts in *Kyrgyzstan*, *Kyrgyz* public has requested external intervention particularly from **Russia**, although the government is not totally consenting to such a proposal. Yet the *Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO...Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan)* are contemplating offering emergency aid. Meanwhile, **Russian** President Dmitry Medvedev warns that ethnic clashes in **Kyrgyzstan** could lead to Taliban-style forces taking advantage of the unrest to seize power.



The signing of 'wide range' of nuke documents between **Russia** and *Kazakhstan* is expected to move the two countries to a new level of relations and cement the new custom agreement between them.

Meanwhile Statement of **Russian** president that U.S should quit its *Kyrgyzstan's* base once NATO-led operations end in nearby Afghanistan indicates a futurist thinking. It also shows the concern of Moscow about U.S presence in what is traditionally seen as **Russia's** sphere.

While **Russia** might be supporting the new UNSC round of sanctions on Iran, seen as diplomatic success by the Western powers, President Medvedev has cautioned against unilateral sanctions by the United States and the EU, which according to him will worsen the situation.

## US/CANADA

US President Obama's repeated visit to the *Gulf of Mexico* has been a show of commitment towards finding a solution. His latest visit was stepped up to reassure American consumers that seafood from the *Gulf of Mexico* is safe and promoting tourism in the region; meanwhile his administration is accelerating efforts for cleanup. The president has also reiterated his plea for alternative energy and less



dependence on oil.

In a show of being in-charge, President Obama was able to broker an understanding with BP executive following which BP compensates all those affected by the oil spill. The oil giant is expected to create a \$20 billion fund to pay damage claims to thousands of fishermen and others along the Gulf Coast. The fund will be administered by Kenneth R. Feinberg, the lawyer and mediator who ran the fund for victims of the Sept. 11 attacks.

## LATIN AMERICA

In **Brazil** PSDB party candidate Mr. Serra and Ms. Rousseff of the Workers' Party (PT) have been nominated formally to run for the forthcoming election.

Chavez believes **Venezuela** is democratic while no country is more democratic than his nation. Rejecting criticism against his government, *Chavez* holds that foreign support and meddling are behind the political condemnation he faces.

**Argentine** economy is picking up better than expected. Previous forecast of the economy puts growth at around 4.1%, but the economy is witnessing a 5.2 % growth.

**Brazil's** economic clout in the region and across the globe is also on rise, yet the central bank of **Brazil** warns that Brazil must equip itself with improved economic institutions in order to avoid the kind of financial crisis seen in Europe. President Lula believes the forthcoming election result will not halt the country's economy path as predicted. Meanwhile the U.S Congress is debating whether or not to continue with *ethanol* trade with **Brazil**, if the latter insist on trading its ethanol with *Iran* regardless of the UNSC's sanctions.

**Brazil** and **Peru** have reached agreement which will allow Peru to provide hydroelectric power to Brazil.

As drug related money and other source of laundering get heightened, **Mexican** government has launched a new policy regarding money transactions through banks and limiting the amount of transaction in dollars. Meanwhile 15 federal security officers were recently ambushed at two different places, the largest attack on federal security officers since president Calderon took office. Also President Calderon has accused US government of not making enough effort to control its drug addicts who fuel the Drug supply.

**Venezuelan** economy remains at a stooping direction due to nationalization and lack of good performance by the major (oil) sector of the economy. Even though *Caracas* is now ranked as the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest reservoir of oil after *Saudi Arabia*, yet the nation's oil company is reported to have shown low performance this year as compared to the previous year.

Meanwhile the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) reports that human rights record in **Venezuela** is worsening due to the high rate of political crackdown on opposition candidates and ban on opposition media. President Hugo Chavez has injected a new rule into his 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism that deems alcohol consumption as anti socialist, hence Venezuelans have been told to abstain from it. §

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Principal Investigator- DR. IJAZ SHAFI GILANI



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