

Friday on the facebook

From: **Project BPM at International Islamic University, Islamabad**

Published with the collaboration of Gilani Research Foundation

July 2010, Week # **127**

Compiled on a weekly basis since January 2007



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.



Who are we?

Friday on the Facebook is 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 make the e-letter a multi-layered presentation: in other words Friday on the Face-book provides 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 is grounded in a thorough Analytical framework of Relocation of Power in the 21st Century.
- ◆ Our weekly e-letter is targeted to produce an annual synthesis of Global Trends. Each issue will serve as an input for the annual analysis.
- ◆ Our weekly e-letter is designed to become a teaching tool for class-room instruction in courses dealing with global political sociology or related fields.
- ◆ Our weekly e-letter is designed to build a theoretically inclined community of political sociologists.

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Global Opinions

For the week

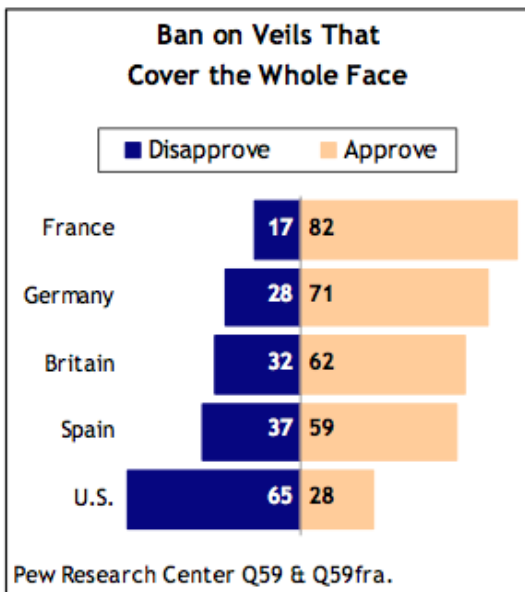
This week's report consists of 31 surveys. 2 of these are multi-country surveys. 14 polling organizations have been represented.



Topic of the week: Widespread Support for Banning Full Islamic Veil in Western Europe Most Americans Disapprove

► This page is devoted to opinions of countries whose polling activity is generally not known very widely or where a recent topical issue requires special attention .

Commentary: Widespread Support for Banning Full Islamic Veil in Western Europe Most Americans Disapprove



(Pew Research Center) :

On July 13, members of the lower house of the French parliament are expected to vote on a bill that would make it illegal for Muslim women to wear full veils – those that cover all of the face except the eyes – in public places. A survey by the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project, conducted April 7 to May 8, finds that the French public overwhelmingly endorses this measure; 82% approve of a ban on Muslim women wearing full veils in public, including schools, hospitals and government offices, while just 17% disapprove. ¹

Should Women Have Equal Rights With Men?

	Total %	Men %	Women %	Gap
Egypt	60	45	76	+31
Nigeria	45	35	56	+21
Kenya	73	63	83	+20
Indonesia	64	55	74	+19
Jordan	61	54	69	+15
Pakistan	79	72	86	+14

Only countries with a double-digit gender gap shown.

Pew Research Center Q80.

Majorities in Germany (71%), Britain (62%) and Spain (59%) would also support a similar ban in their own countries. In contrast, most Americans would oppose such a measure; 65% say they would disapprove of a ban on Muslim women wearing full veils in public places compared with 28% who say they would approve.

In the four Western European countries surveyed as well as in the U.S., support for a ban on Muslim women wearing a full veil is more pronounced among those who are age 55 and older, although majorities across all age groups in France, Germany and Britain favor a ban. For example, 91% of French respondents age 55 and older approve of restrictions on Muslim women covering their face, compared with 81% of those ages 35 to 54 and 72% of those younger than 35.

	<u>18-34</u>	<u>35-54</u>	<u>55+</u>
% Approve	%	%	%
Britain	52	61	71
France	72	81	91
Germany	58	71	77
Spain	49	55	70
U.S.	22	28	35

Pew Research Center Q59 & Q59fra.

In Spain, where 70% in the older group and a narrower majority (55%) of those ages 35 to 54 favor a ban on full veils, younger respondents are closely divided; 49% of those ages 18 to 34 approve of such measures and 47% disapprove. In the U.S., about one-third (35%) of those in the oldest age group say they would welcome a ban on veils that cover the whole face except the eyes, while 28% of those ages 35 to 54 and just 22% of those younger than 35 say the same.

Opinions about banning Muslim women from wearing a full veil do not vary along gender lines in any of the five countries where the question was asked. In France, Britain and the U.S., views on this matter are also similar across education and income groups.

However, in Spain and Germany, those in higher income groups are more likely than the less affluent to approve of such a ban; for example, a slim majority (51%) of low-income respondents in Spain favor a ban on full veils, compared with 62% of those in the middle-income range and 68% of those with high incomes.

	<u>Left</u>	<u>Center</u>	<u>Right</u>
% Approve	%	%	%
Britain	55	63	69
France	75	83	87
Germany	63	72	76
Spain	57	62	59
U.S.	24	26	31

U.S. respondents were asked if they consider themselves conservative, moderate or liberal. In Europe, they were asked to place themselves on a left-right spectrum.

Pew Research Center Q59 & Q59fra.

Ideologically, those on the right in France, Britain and Germany are more likely than those on the left to approve of a ban on women wearing the full Islamic veil in public places, but majorities across the political spectrum in these countries endorse such a ban. In France, 87% of those on the right support prohibiting women from wearing full veils in public, and 75% of those on the political left agree. Spain is the only Western European country surveyed where those on both ends of the ideology scale express nearly identical views; 59% of those on the right and 57% of those on the left approve of a ban on Muslim women wearing veils that cover the whole face. Ideological differences are also insignificant in the U.S.

¹ This question was asked in Western Europe and the U.S. as part of the Spring 2010 Pew Global Attitudes Survey, which included 22 nations. For more findings from this survey, see "Obama More Popular Abroad Than at Home, Global Image of U.S. Continues to Benefit," released June 17, 2010.

SOURCE: <http://pewglobal.org/2010/07/08/widespread-support-for-banning-full-islamic-veil-in-western-europe>

SUMMARY OF POLLS



Asia zone

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

▶ SOUTH ASIA

Two-Thirds of Indian Consumers Want Government to Enact Corporate Responsibility Laws (Click for Details)

Most **Indian** consumers want to see new laws enacted to force companies to act responsibly—even if this means higher prices and fewer jobs, according to a new poll of consumers across 29 countries. The poll reveals that nearly two-thirds of those surveyed in India— **63%** —said they wanted government to pass new laws to force companies to go beyond their traditional economic role and work to improve society, compared to just **31 %** who disagreed. **GlobeScan**

July 5, 2010

Economy » Consumer Confidence/Protection

▶ NORTHEAST ASIA

Ruling DPJ Still Strong before Japanese Ballot (Click for Details)

The ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) holds a commanding lead over the opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) just days before an upper house election takes place in **Japan**, according to a poll by **Mainichi**. **40 %** of respondents would support the DPJ in the proportional representation block of the House of Councillors election.

July 09, 2010

Domestic Politics » Political Parties



Euro Americas zone

▶ EAST EUROPE; WEST EUROPE; NORTH AMERICA;
LATIN AMERICA & AUSTRALASIA

EUROPE

▶ EAST EUROPE

Russians Reject Apology to Ukraine over Famine (Click for Details)

Most people in **Russia** think the government should not apologize to the Ukrainian people over the famine of the 1930s, according to a poll by the **Yury Levada Analytical Center**. **52 %** of respondent share this view, while **23 %** think Russia should apologize to the Ukrainians like it did with the Poles for the Katyn massacre.

July 06, 2010

Domestic Politics » National History

Society » Environment/ Disasters

► WEST EUROPE

Half of Britons Want More Nuclear Plants (Click for Details)

Many people in [Britain](#) are in favour of building more nuclear power plants in the country, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **51 %** of respondents agree with this course of action, while **31 %** are opposed.

July 10, 2010

[Economy](#) » [Energy/Nuclear Issues](#)

Steady Approval Rating for Cameron in Britain (Click for Details)

Public support for the [British](#) prime minister has not dwindled after his first month in office, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **54 %** of respondents approve of David Cameron's performance.

July 04, 2010

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

Few Dutch Expect New Government Soon (Click for Details)

A third of people in the [Netherlands](#) think that, following a recent election that resulted in no definitive winner, a new government will not be formed until the end of the summer, according to a poll by [Maurice de Hond](#). **32 %** of respondents say the new administration will take office in September.

July 10, 2010

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

SDP Closing in on Merkel's Conservatives in Germany (Click for Details)

The popularity of [Germany's](#) Social Democratic Party (SPD) is increasing, according to a poll by [Infratest-Dimap](#) released by ARD. **30 %** of respondents would vote for the opposition SPD in the next election to the Federal Diet, up two points since mid-May.

July 08, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Political Parties](#)

AMERICAS

► NORTH AMERICA

Republicans Less Positive Toward Supreme Court (Click for Details)

In [America](#) Republican's opinions of the Supreme Court have become less favorable during the Obama administration. As a result, more Democrats than Republicans now express a positive opinion of the Supreme Court -- the first time this has occurred since the Clinton administration. [Pew Research Center](#)

July 9, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Political Parties](#)

Americans Continue Post-Recession Emotional Recovery (Click for Details)

Maintaining the gains seen in May, [Americans](#) continued to rate their lives better in June than in any other month since Gallup and Healthways began tracking life evaluation. The [Gallup-Healthways](#) Life Evaluation Index was 50.8 in June, surpassing the 47.8 found in the same month one year ago, and showing significant recovery from the 39.2 in June of 2008.

July 9, 2010

[Economy](#) » [Perceptions on Performance/ Well-Being](#)

Blacks' Optimism about Their Standards of Living Tops Whites' (Click for Details)

In [America](#) Blacks' ratings on [Gallup's](#) Standard of Living Index continue to exceed those for whites, a pattern that has persisted since early 2009.

July 8, 2010

[Economy](#) » [Perceptions on Performance/ Well-Being](#)

Obama Job Approval Rating Down to 38% Among Independents [\(Click for Details\)](#)

38% of independents in [America](#) approve of the job Barack Obama is doing as president, the first time independent approval of Obama has dropped below **40%** in a [Gallup](#) Daily tracking weekly aggregate. Meanwhile, Obama maintains the support of **81%** of Democrats, and his job approval among Republicans remains low, at **12%**.

July 7, 2010

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

Americans Closely Divided Over Immigration Reform Priority [\(Click for Details\)](#)

As President Barack Obama renews his call for a comprehensive approach to addressing illegal immigration, [Americans](#) are about equally divided -- **50%** to **45%** -- over whether the government's main focus should be on halting the flow of illegal immigrants coming into the U.S., or on developing a plan to deal with those already here. [Gallup USA](#)

July 6, 2010

[Society](#) » [Immigration/Refugees](#)

Self-Reported Spending Declines in June; Still Tops a Year Ago [\(Click for Details\)](#)

[Americans](#) report spending an average of \$67 per day during June in stores, restaurants, gas stations, and online -- down \$5 from May 2010, but up \$6 from June 2009. Consumer discretionary spending thus remains at the upper end of the 2009 monthly new normal range (\$59 to \$67), but far below the 2008 spending range (\$81-\$114). [Gallup USA](#)

July 6, 2010

[Economy](#) » [Perceptions on Performance/ Well-Being](#)

Americans Oppose Federal Suit Against Ariz. Immigration Law [\(Click for Details\)](#)

[Americans'](#) initial reactions to the U.S. Justice Department lawsuit against Arizona's new illegal immigration law are more negative than positive, by a **50%** to **33%** margin. [Gallup USA](#)

July 9, 2010

[Society](#) » [Immigration/Refugees](#)

Army, Freedom and Flag Make Americans Proud [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Adults in the [United States](#) hold favorable views on three institutions and features, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). More than **80 %** of respondents are very or moderately proud of the U.S. Army, freedom and the American flag.

July 05, 201

[Domestic Politics](#) » [National Image/ Trust](#)

Reagan, Clinton Seen as Best Recent U.S. Presidents [\(Click for Details\)](#)

[Americans](#) pick two politicians as their best heads of state since 1969, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **32 %** of respondents think Ronald Reagan has been the best recent president, while **30 %** select Bill Clinton.

July 06, 2010

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

Americans Agree on Second Amendment's Meaning (Click for Details)

Most people in the [United States](#) interpret their Constitution's Second Amendment in the same fashion, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **81 %** of respondents believe the Second Amendment means that individuals have the right to keep and bear arms.

July 08, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [National History](#)

Canadians Demand Names in CSIS Controversy (Click for Details)

Many adults in [Canada](#) believe the names of the politicians who allegedly are under the influence of foreign governments should be revealed, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **67 %** of respondents think the names should be made public.

July 09, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [National Image/ Trust](#)

Canadians Would Keep Stanley Park Name (Click for Details)

Many [Canadians](#) believe Vancouver's Stanley Park should retain its name, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **61 %** of respondents agree with this notion.

July 07, 2010

[Economy](#) » [Infrastructure](#)

Trudeau Best, Mulroney Worst for Canadians (Click for Details)

Pierre Trudeau remains the favorite recent former head of government for [Canadians](#), according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **38 %** of respondents think Trudeau has been Canada's best prime minister since 1968.

July 05, 2010

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

Half of Canadians Perceive Economy as Good (Click for Details)

Fewer people in [Canada](#)—but still a majority—express positive views on the country's financial standing, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **51 %** of respondents rate the economic conditions in Canada today as good or very good, down seven points since May.

July 04, 2010

[Economy](#) » [Perceptions on Performance/ Well-Being](#)

► **LATIN AMERICA**

Peruvians Still Waiting for Stronger Candidates (Click for Details)

The race to become the next president of [Peru](#) still lacks a strong frontrunner, according to a poll by [Ipsos, Apoyo, Opinión y Mercado](#) published in *El Comercio*. **22 %** of respondents would vote for Keiko Sofía Fujimori—daughter of jailed former president Alberto Fujimori and candidate of Strength 2011—in next year's ballot, up four points since May.

July 09, 2010

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

Guatemalans Reject Same-Sex Marriage (Click for Details)

The vast majority of people in [Guatemala](#) oppose the notion of allowing homosexuals to marry, according to a poll by [Cid-Gallup](#). **85 %** of respondents disagree with same-sex marriage.

July 08, 2010

[Society](#) » [Morality, Values & Customs](#)

[Society](#) » [Family](#)

President Piñera Backed by Majority in Chile (Click for Details)

Most people in [Chile](#) support the performance of Sebastián Piñera, according to a poll by [CERC](#). **54 %** of respondents approve of the president's work so far, while **33 %** disapprove of it.

July 07, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Performance Ratings](#)**Colombians Say Santos Will Be Same as Uribe** (Click for Details)

The large majority of [Colombians](#) think the administration of president-elect Juan Manuel Santos will be very similar to that of outgoing head of state Álvaro Uribe, according to a poll by [Datexco](#) released by *El Tiempo* and W Radio. **74.8 %** of respondents expect the two presidents to lead very similar governments.

July 06, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Governance](#)**Peruvians Not Content With President García** (Click for Details)

A large majority of people in [Peru](#) continue to reject the leadership of Alan García, according to a poll by [Ipsos, Apoyo, Opinión y Mercado](#) published in *El Comercio*. **69 %** of respondents disapprove of the president's performance, unchanged since May.

July 05, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Performance Ratings](#)**Rousseff's Bid Grows Stronger in Brazil** (Click for Details)

Dilma Rousseff's bid to become the next president of [Brazil](#) is gaining momentum, according to a poll by [Ibope](#). **40 %** of respondents would vote for Rousseff of the ruling Workers' Party (PT) in this year's election, up three points since May.

July 05, 2010

[Domestic Politics](#) » [Elections](#)**GLOBAL/MULTI-COUNTRY POLLS****Widespread Support for Banning Full Islamic Veil in Western Europe** (Click for Details)

A survey by the [Pew Research Center's](#) Global Attitudes Project, conducted April 7 to May 8, finds that the French public overwhelmingly endorses this measure; **82%** approve of a ban on Muslim women wearing full veils in public, including schools, hospitals and government offices, while just **17%** disapprove.

July 8, 2010

[Society](#) » [Religion](#)**Two-Thirds of Indian Consumers Want Government to Enact Corporate Responsibility Laws reveals a new poll of consumers across 29 countries.** (Click for Details)

Most Indian consumers want to see new laws enacted to force companies to act responsibly—even if this means higher prices and fewer jobs, according to a new poll of consumers across 29 countries. The poll reveals that nearly two-thirds of those surveyed in India— **63%** —said they wanted government to pass new laws to force companies to go beyond their traditional economic role and work to improve society, compared to just **31 %** who disagreed. [GlobeScan](#)

July 5, 2010

[Economy](#) » [Consumer Confidence/Protection](#)**► CYBER WORLD****More Cell Phone Owners Use an App for That** (Click for Details)

Six-in-ten American adults are now wireless internet users, and mobile data applications have grown more popular over the last year. [Pew Research Center](#)

July 7, 2010

[Society](#) » [Media/ New Media](#)

Millennials' Likely Lifelong Online Sharing Habit (Click for Details)

In a survey about the future impact of the internet, a solid majority of technology experts and stakeholders said the *Millennial* generation will lead society into a new world of personal disclosure and information-sharing using new media. [Pew Research Center](#)

July 9, 2010

[Society](#) » [Media/ New Media](#)

The Future of Online Socializing (Click for Details)

The social benefits of internet use will far outweigh the negatives over the next decade, according to experts. They say this is because email, social networks, and other online tools offer "low friction" opportunities to create, enhance, and rediscover social ties that make a difference in people's lives. [Pew Research Center](#)

July 2, 2010

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

Events of the week in

Asia zone

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

TURKEY

Political Front:

In **Turkey** government officials have declared negotiations to be the prime means of dealing with the PKK terrorist issue. Meanwhile, the ruling AK Party has referred Mayor Halil Bakırcı to the party's disciplinary committee for expulsion for remarks that he made regarding ways to solve *Kurdish* issue at the end of June.

The leader of Republican People's Party has announced the rejection of the upcoming referendum on the constitutional amendment law. Three opposition parties have already disagreed with the government's plan.

The 'terrorist' Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), in eastern Siirt



Mayor Halil Bakırcı

province attacked **Turkish** security forces in which two soldiers and three village guards died. Meanwhile, violence erupted in a district of the southeastern province of Hakkari between police and pro-*Kurdish* groups.

Geo-strategic Front:

The European Union has welcomed the decision of the **Turkish** Constitutional Court, which annulled several minor articles. Meanwhile, earlier this month the **Turkish** President and his *Iranian* counterpart were in **Nigeria** to attend the **Developing Eight**, or **D-8**, summit.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has praised the **Armenian** government for its willingness to move toward normalization with **Turkey** and suggested that the ball was in **Turkey's** court for revitalizing the rapprochement process. She urged **Turkey** to overcome its reluctance to reopen the border between the two countries, closed because of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. The **Israeli** aid organization Magen David Adom (MDA) has sent a letter to the **Turkish** Red Crescent thanking the group for its help in the transportation of injured activists who were on board a passenger ship which was part of a **Gaza**-bound aid flotilla which was attacked by the **Israeli** navy.

Meanwhile, **Turkey** has sent 10 tons of relief equipment to **Bosnia and Herzegovina** where heavy rains have caused floods. **Turkey** has also extended a 21 million USD financial aid package to **Kyrgyzstan**.

Economic Front:

Investment in Organized Industrial Zones (OSBs) across **Turkey** has been on the rise in these recent months. This indicates **Turkey's** high growth rate in the first quarter of this year. **Turkish** tourism sector has boasted a 10% growth rate per annum, which is above the global average. Also, **Turkey's** industrial production index has increased by 15.6 % from May 2009 to May 2010.

GCC

Geo-strategic Front:

The second meeting of the **GCC** security media committee drew up a list of recommendations in order to keep the **GCC** Secretariat up to date with the awareness activities taking place throughout the year.

The recent visit of King Abdullah to the **United States** has further cemented the existing relations between the two countries. During the meeting in Washington, the two leaders agreed upon the need to press for peace in the Middle East, and also the establishment of a **Palestinian** homeland. The signing of a number of bilateral agreements and memorandum of understanding between the two countries has broadened the areas of bilateral cooperation by creating 357 joint ventures in the Kingdom worth SR82 billion. The **United States** is the Kingdom's largest trade partner and the biggest investor too.

GCC Secretary-General has strongly praised **Kuwait's** commitment to and support for the Arab World Institute (IMA).

The **UK** has been actively involved in **Bahrain** with increased investment in arts and education. **British** officials have expressed hope in almost doubling the number of schools in **Bahrain** that are linked with those in the **UK**. Growing ties with the **Sultanate of Oman** have also remained significant.

During the recently held talks in Tokyo; **Kuwait** and **Japan** reaffirmed their commitment to conclude the bilateral investment deal as soon as possible in order to further promote economic ties between the two countries. The two sides also agreed to further discussion on the deal to resolve their outstanding issues.

Economic Front:

King of **Saudi Arabia** has ordered a halt to oil exploration operations to save the hydrocarbon wealth of the country for



future generations.

The **UAE** has recently signed an agreement on double taxation avoidance on income with the **Republic of Ireland** in an order to strengthen its ties and for developing a partnership in areas of common interest with **Ireland**. According to a report released by Arab Organization for Industrial Development and Mining, **Oman's** economic growth rate in 2010 may rise by about 7.3 % compared to 3 % in 2009 and the rate of inflation may reach 5.2 % against 5.3 % in 2008.

Qatar expects to become third largest economy in Gulf region by 2012. Beyond an 18.5% real GDP growth forecast for **Qatar** in 2010, the highest worldwide, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasts 14.3% in 2011 and 9.2% for the country in 2012.

Social Front:

In a renewed move to cut reliance on foreign workers, the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) has trained 139,461 **Saudis** for employment in different areas. The HRDF has spent more than SR584 million on training and employing Saudis during the first half of this year.

Dubai has denounced the use of full-body scanners at airports due to its customs and ethics.

FERTILE CRESCENT

Political Front:

Former **IAEA** head El Beradi has filed a petition demanding seven amendments in 3 different articles of the constitution. The Muslim Brotherhood (MB), **Egypt's** largest opposition group, has launched a campaign on its website for collection of signatures in support of the National Association for Change's petition calling for constitutional amendments. Meanwhile the MB is still debating upon whether to participate in the upcoming People's Assembly (PA) elections or to opt for a boycott, something ElBaradei has called for. Many other opposition groups have also been considering a boycott of the upcoming elections.

In his speech at the Council of Foreign Relations in New York, the Prime Minister of **Israel** Benjamin Netanyahu said that a peace deal with the **Palestinians** could be signed by next year. He stressed his own willingness to engage in dialogue, and repeated his call for direct negotiations with the Palestinians though he added that a partner was needed in order to make this happen. He later on met the US President and discussed various issues with him. A recent survey conducted in **Gaza**

and the **West Bank** showed that only a slim majority supports direct talks with **Israel** and that most **Palestinians** want Marwan Barghouti to succeed current president Mahmoud Abbas.

Geo-strategic Front:

Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda signed the Nile Basin Cooperative Framework that is meant to replace a 1959 accord between **Egypt** and **Sudan** that gave them control of more than 90 % of the water flow. **Ethiopia** however has reassured **Egypt** that the new pact it signed with four other countries on the sharing of water from the River Nile would not affect Egypt.

Economic Front:

Procter & Gamble has announced its plan to invest over LE 780 million (\$140 million) over the next three years for expanding its operations in **Egypt**. The Institute of International Finance (IIF) indicated that **Lebanese** authorities missed an opportunity to implement significant fiscal measures during the current favorable economic conditions, since the 2010 budget does not aim for a significant primary surplus through the implementation of long-delayed reforms.



Marwan Barghouti

Social Front:

Progressive Socialist Party leader questioned the reason behind granting Arab nationals the right to own property in **Lebanon** while denying it to **Palestinian** refugees. A group of democratic **Palestinian** organizations joined forces in a bid to pressurize the government into passing civil rights amendments to laws restricting the right to work and own property. Gathering outside of the UN headquarters in Downtown Beirut; **Palestinian** groups issued a memorandum calling for the right to work and own property, as well as for the increase in camp size and the reconstruction of Nahr al-Bared. The memorandum also called for an improvement in relations between the **Palestinian and Lebanese** people.

CENTRAL ASIA

Political Front:

Tajikistan's Supreme Court has reportedly sentenced two sons of slain Emergency Situations Minister to prison terms of up to 30 years over a charge of 'anti-government plot'.

Geo-strategic Front:

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has visited **Azerbaijan** to seek a restart of peace talks over Nagorno-Karabakh, to repair frayed bilateral ties, and to press the oil-rich Caucasus nation on human rights. **Azerbaijan** has denied **Armenian** claims that **Russian** President presented his **Armenian and Azerbaijani** counterparts with a new international plan last month to resolve the conflict over the breakaway **Azerbaijani** region of Nagorno-Karabakh. **Russian** President announced that a customs union joining **Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus** has come into effect after the presidents of the three countries signed documents. A delegation of specialists of the European Training Foundation (ETF) has expanded cooperation with **Turkmenistan**.

Economic Front:

Russia and Kazakhstan have signed agreements on cooperation in civilian nuclear power and hydropower projects in the **Kazakh** capital, Astana. According to **Kyrgyz** officials, recent ethnic violence in the south of the country caused some \$71 million worth of damage. **Russian** Duma has ratified agreement on Mutual Protection of Investments with **Turkmenistan**.

Social Front:

Some 200 protesters in the southern **Kyrgyz** city of Osh held a protest calling for the "internationalization" of the **Kyrgyz** army and law enforcement agencies.



IRAN

Political Front:

Iran has accused the US CIA for abducting an Iranian academic. They provided documents to the **Swiss** Embassy and asked them to hand them over to the **US**. A senior **Iranian** legislator has warned that any effort by the foreign countries to inspect Iran's vessels and cargos would be reciprocated. A senior parliamentarian has denied any claims regarding **Iran's** interference in the **Lebanese** domestic affairs. He made the remarks in response to allegations made by certain **French** diplomatic sources claiming that **Iran** was involved in recent conflicts between people of South **Lebanon** and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

Geo-strategic Front:

UAE's envoy to the **US** has recently claimed that in case of failure of sanctions, force should be used to halt Iranian nuclear program. **Iran's** MP condemned his stance and asked the government of **UAE** to elaborate whether that was his personal view point or he represented his country's official policy.

A **Canadian** court found a Toronto man guilty of attempting to export nuclear-related materials to **Iran** in violation of sanctions. Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, chairman of the Guardian Council, held meeting with Hezbollah Secretary General Syed Hassan Nassrollah in Beirut. A senior **Iranian** commander cautioned Moscow to be watchful of Washington's moves, warning that the plots hatched by the U.S. in the region would harm **Russia's** long-term interests.

As far as sanctions are concerned, **China** has strongly criticized recently imposed sanctions against **Iran** and called negotiations to be the only way to engage **Iranians**. Meanwhile **India** has also expressed serious concern regarding recently imposed sanctions against **Iran**. Iran has warned to quit talks if sanctions against it would be strictly implemented.

Economic Front:

The volume of trade between the Islamic Republic of **Iran** and **Uzbekistan** would reach from last year's 600 million dollars to one billion dollars by the end of current **Iranian** year (ending March 20, 2011). A member of the **Iranian** parliament warned the West about the heavy costs of the UN anti-Iran sanctions for the western firms. The Islamic Republic of **Iran** imported above 814,000 tons of wheat from **Russia** from July 2009 to May 2010. **India** and **Iran** held Joint Economic Commission last week to expand economic ties. The chairman of the **Iran-UAE** Joint Chamber of Commerce



stated that in reprisal for freezing 41 bank accounts of Iranian businessmen in the **UAE**, **Iran** would limit trade with the **United Arab Emirates**. The financial exchange between the Islamic Republic of **Iran** and eight South Asian countries stood at 5.6 billion dollars in the first half of 2010.

Social Front:

The Department of Labor and Employment of the **Philippines** has signed a bilateral agreement with **Iran** that provides for the **Iranian** recognition of the Filipino seafarers' certificates of competencies. **Iran's** Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance has released the "Journal of Iranian Hairstyles Approved by the Ministry" to assist discerning **Iranian** men in appropriate Islamic grooming.

AFGHANISTAN

Political Front:

Fragile security situation has impeded the process of election campaigns in **Afghanistan**. A number of Wolesi Jirga candidates have violated a regulation of the Independent Election Commission (IEC) regarding the display of campaign posters, billboards and materials.

A **Hazara** parliamentarian from Kabul has accused the president of lying to the Hazara community during his election campaign. Speaking at a gathering in Pul-i-Surkh locality, a predominated area of **Hazara** minority Shiite Muslims, Haji Muhammad Mohaqiq said Karzai had promised him during his last presidential campaign to appoint five ministers from the tribe in his new cabinet. He added the president had promised to give two **Hazara** districts the status of province.

The **Afghan** government has received no information so far from **Pakistan** regarding the capture of Taliban's supreme leader, Mullah Muhammad Omar. **NATO** and **Afghan** forces have captured a Haqqani network militant, responsible for supplying material for roadside bombs.

A **NATO** air strike killed three civilians, including a woman, in southern *Kandahar* province. Meanwhile nine foreign soldiers were killed and wounded when Taliban insurgents attacked their base in eastern Kunar province. Six Afghan soldiers were killed when their post came under fire from **NATO** aircraft in central **Afghanistan**.

Geo-strategic Front:

NATO has urged Muslim countries to put in more efforts to achieve stability in **Afghanistan** and help the war-torn country move forward in the reconstruction process. Expressing solidarity with the people of **Afghanistan**, the **Libyan** leader, Moammar Gaddafi, has supported the Karzai government's effort at a political solution to the ongoing conflict in that country. **Afghan** and **Japanese** officials have discussed various development plans prioritized by the **Afghan** government for funds being donated by the **Japanese** government.

Economic Front:

Government revenue has increased 22 % in the first three months of **Afghanistan's** New Year in comparison to the same period last year. **Afghanistan** and **Pakistan** have agreed to expand bilateral trade and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for laying a railways track between the two countries. The revenue of Herat customs surpassed 2.8 billion afghanis for three months ending June 21, an increase of more than 24 % over the same period last year.

Social Front:

Farmers in southern Helmand province claimed that foreign troops sprayed chemical on their fields, destroying up to 90 % of this years poppy crops. The provincial authorities in central province have directed people to keep their shops and markets shut during prayers timing. Unemployment has remarkably increased in the country.

Meanwhile the number of girls taking part in sports in the provincial capital of northern Balkh province seems to be on the rise. A total of 48 internally-displaced families, consisting of 264 individuals, have returned from the Mukhtar IDP camp in southern Helmand province to their places of origin in Jawzjan. Hundreds of protesting textile workers ended the blockade of a main highway in northern Baghlan province after an assurance from the authorities to consider their demands favorably. The Afghan government has planed to propose health, education and social projects worth \$2 billion at the Kabul Conference on July 20.

SOUTH ASIA

Political Front:

After two years of relative peace under the Awami League (AL) government, **Nepal** has again witnessed violent street protests in the last few days. Ruling regime and opposition party seem to be at the verge of collision which many analysts assume to be prompted from across the border. As soon as **Nepali** PM stepped down from his seat, the President gave a deadline to the political parties to form a “national consensus” government. **Nepal's** political leaders



however announced that they would seek to extend the deadline to form a new unity government set by the country's president. Amid the deadlock over government formation in **Nepal**, Terai-based Madhesi parties have claimed the right to lead a new coalition in a bid to meet the new deadline set by President. Meanwhile **Nepal's** communist former rebels reached out to other political parties to form a new coalition government. In **Srilanka**, getting the budget passed was an easy task for the ruling UPFA, having two third majority in

Parliament, but the committee stage debate was somewhat a stormy affair with a barrage of opposition criticism leveled at the government for mishandling the economy, curbing media freedom and bungling the country's foreign relations.

Geo-strategic Front:

Three East Asian countries - **Japan, South Korea and China** - have expressed their intent to enhance relations with **Bangladesh**.

Economic Front:

Policy makers in **Bangladesh** have been reiterating their goal about accelerating the growth rate of the economy from nearly **6% to 8%** at the fastest. The government has pledged Rs 800 million to **Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC)** to finance the import of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).of plugging the loss coming from LPG by revising its price. Meanwhile the Government of **Nepal** has launched a tourism promotion campaign called the "Nepal Tourism Year 2011" to revitalize its tourism industry.

Meanwhile according to media reports the **Sri Lankan** government has failed to understand the serious repercussions of its decision to not to accept the EU conditions that would have extended the GSP+ duty-free trade scheme for another six months.

Social Front:

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the government of **Nepal** have signed a loan agreement of 7.6 million U.S. dollars and a grant agreement of 7.6 million dollars aiming to reduce poverty and vulnerability of people living in the hills and mountains through agricultural diversification. Hundreds of **Sri Lankan** activists led by a Cabinet minister protested at the UN office against a world body panel set up to probe allegations of human rights abuses during the LTTE war.

INDIA

Political Front:

BJP has declared all-India strike called by opposition parties against rising fuel prices. In response, the Union finance minister said that the Centre would not roll back the fuel price hike as demanded by the Opposition and the UPA's key ally, the Trinamool Congress.

Himanshu Kumar, a social activist who is on cycle yatra from Delhi to spread awareness about the struggle of tribals in Chhattisgarh, regarded Naxal fight to be a reaction against government's injustice and discrimination with the community. Meanwhile Central government denounced to deploy army to fight the Naxals and said that Air Force would be used to provide non-combat assistance to Para-military and police personnel operating in the Maoist-hit regions.

Since the killing of civilians by **Indian** Security forces, protests have erupted in the valley of **Kashmir** and brought stalemate to normal activities of life. Army has been sent by Central regime at the request of the government of **Kashmir**. **Kashmiri** government has imposed restrictions against media and journalist to restore 'law and order'.

Normal life got disrupted in **West Bengal** as road and rail services were affected and government offices were closed following a 12-hour shutdown called by non-Congress parties in the country.

Geo-strategic Front:

The Shiv Sena has condemned Union Agriculture Minister and newly elected International Cricket Council (ICC) chief for favoring cricket matches with **Pakistan** on **Indian** soil. The Sena referred to Pawar's comment after becoming ICC chief that the visit of the **Indian** Home Minister to **Pakistan** was a good sign



for improving **Indo-Pak** relations and subject to approval of governments of both countries, the ICC would revive **Indo-Pak** cricket matches.

India has expressed "concern" over **China's** plans to have a rail link with **Pakistan** through the Karakoram ranges. Meanwhile **India** has signed six agreements, including air services and energy pacts, with **Iran** and both sides have also decided to cooperate closely in stabilizing the violence-torn **Afghanistan**.

Economic Front:



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has hiked the short-term indicative interest rates by 25 basis points to mitigate rising inflation and inflationary pressures. The Central Government has been suffering an annual loss of Rs 1,800 crore on account of thousands of coal mafia, which involve themselves in illegal mining across different states. **Indian** Food and Agriculture Minister has expressed optimism regarding increase in crops production because of favorable weather conditions and rise in area under cultivation.

Social Front:

BJP has reiterated its stance on inclusion of caste counting in census despite the opposition of RSS on the issue. A recent study carried by the government has indicated that the largest number of NGOs have been working in **India**.

CHINA

Political Front:

A senior **Chinese** leader in charge of disciplinary and supervision work has stressed the need for higher-caliber anti-graft officials in the country's fight against corruption.

Geo-strategic Front:

A senior official of the Communist Party of China (CPC) held meeting with a delegation from the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) of **Germany** and Party of European Socialists respectively. The CPC official vowed to enhance inter-party communication and cooperation with CDU and discussed ways to strengthen ties with **Europe**.

China has expressed serious concern regarding restoration of stability in **Sudan**. Meanwhile **China** has extended full support to **Kyrgyzstan** in its efforts to maintain law and order in the country. In the meantime **China** has regarded **India** as one the key strategic partner. **China** has also condemned sanctions against **Iran**.

China seems to be seriously concerned about a scheduled joint naval drill between the **United States** and the **Republic of Korea (ROK)** in the Yellow Sea. **China** has called on the UN Security Council to address the root cause of the armed conflicts in order to better protect civilians in such conflicts. Also **China** has reaffirmed its stance on the sinking of the **Republic of Korea's** frigate "Cheonan," saying it will keep communicating with the parties concerned.

The **U.S.** Treasury Department has declined to label **China** a currency manipulator.

China's growing relations with **Pakistan, Newzeland, Britain, Canada, Russia, Myanmar, Tonga, Argentina and South Korea** in various sectors remained significant.

Economic Front:



Chinese economists seem to be keen on developing various marketing strategies to boost countries' economy. The central parity of the **China's** currency Yuan weakened to 6.7733 per **U.S.** dollar. **China's** coal imports surged 114.3 % year on year to 68.98 million tons in the Jan.-May period on the back of strong industrial demand. **China's** automobile sales surged 30.45 % year on year to 7.18 million in the first half of the year.

The European Commission has announced its investment of 10 million euros in **China's** energy efficiency-focused fund. **Chinese** vice Premier has called foreign trade companies and relevant government agencies to keep a close eye on the international market and take measures to ensure steady growth of **China's** foreign trade. The International Monetary Fund has lifted **China's** GDP growth forecast for 2010 to 10.5 % from the earlier projection of 10 %. **Taiwan's** exports to the **Chinese** mainland and **Hong Kong** have grown by 61.9 % year-on-year to a record 56.75 billion U.S. dollars during the first six months of this year. **China** has urged **India** to treat **Chinese** companies fairly in regard to **India's** ban on purchases of telecom equipment from **Chinese** vendors. **China's** trade surplus fell by 42.5 % in the first six months this year from a year earlier to 55.3 billion U.S. dollars. A delegation from south **China's** Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region ended a five-day visit to **Taiwan** after reaching investment and trade contracts worth 2.23 billion U.S. dollars.

Social Front:

The Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development has blamed agents for first-tier cities' soaring apartment rents amid intensifying public frustration. A senior **Chinese** official has called on joint and intensified efforts to investigate and remove public security risks and ensure the lasting social stability. Meanwhile The General Office of **China's** State Council, the Cabinet, and the General Office of the Communist Party of **China** Central Committee has recently issued a circular, calling for more progress in the nation's poverty alleviation work.

An online survey in **China** showed that three out of four people would no longer buy a McDonald's product as it reportedly contains two chemical additives that, if taken in excess, may cause nausea and vomiting.

The World Bank has approved loans totaling 260 million U.S. dollars to **China** for flood control and environmental improvement projects. **China** has renewed Google's license to operate its website, preserving the search giant's toehold in the world's most populous country after the company gave up an attempt to skirt Beijing's censorship practices. **Chinese** leaders have called for more efforts to develop the country's vast west regions and raise people's standards of living.

Hong Kong

Hong Kong and the *Republic of Korea (ROK)* have signed a deal to strengthen collaboration in education and promote educational exchange. The Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) of **Hong Kong** has suspended Godwin Chu Kwok Shing for 18 months from June 30, 2010 to Dec. 29, 2011 following the determination of the Securities and Futures Appeals Tribunal (SFAT).

KOREA

Political Front:

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak has called for a thorough investigation of an alleged illegal surveillance case involving an official



S Korea Illegal surveillance case: President Lee ordered aides to reveal the truth and to "sternly punish those responsible" (AFP)

of the Office of the Prime Minister. The opposition, Democratic Party has been facing challenge of split as sharp division has erupted among mainstream leadership and reform-minded young people.

Geo-strategic Front:

UN has condemned an attack leading to the sinking of **South Korean** ship but avoided blaming **North Korea** in this regard. **China** has appreciated UN's stance and expressed hope that it would diffuse tension between **North and South Korea**.

Economic Front:

South Korean based Samsung Electronics Co. has posted record earnings in the previous quarter, fueled by a recovery in demand for computer-memory chips that drove up prices. Second-quarter operating income rose 87 % to 5 trillion won (\$4.1 billion) from 2.67 trillion won a year earlier as sales surged by 14 %. Hyundai Engineering & Construction Co. has won a \$1.13 billion contract to build a port on **Kuwait's** Bubiyan Island.

The IMF has raised its 2010 economic growth forecast for **South Korea** by more than 1% age point, and recommended the country's central bank to gradually raise interest rates.

Social Front:

About one third of middle class families in Seoul suffered a drop in their income in the fallout of the 2008 global financial crisis, and more than half of them have been forced to reduce spending. Five **South Korean** websites including the website of the presidential office were attacked. Internet attacks on government Websites originated from some of the same zombie computers used in massive hacker attacks a year ago that were automatically reactivated on the same day.

JAPAN

Political Front:

Democratic Party of **Japan** kingpin Ichiro Ozawa has submitted a statement to an independent judicial panel denying involvement in any irregularities in connection with funding reports.

Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan's approval rating dropped by 5 % points to 45 % ahead of the July 11 upper house election.

Geo-strategic Front:

Russia has conducted a military drill on Etorofu, one of four **Russian**-held islands off Hokkaido claimed by **Japan**, despite a request by Tokyo not to do so.

Economic Front:

Bank of **Japan** Governor has said that exports demand would keep expanding **Japanese** economy. Toyota Motor Corp. filed with the transport ministry for a domestic recall of more than 90,000 cars spanning eight models, mostly the luxury Lexus brand, due to an engine defect. Along with simultaneous recalls abroad, some 270,000 vehicles would be affected. Sales of new imported vehicles, including those produced at **Japanese** automakers' overseas plants, increased 11.7 % from a year earlier to 97,282 vehicles in the first half of this year. Toyota Motor Corp. has announced its plan to expand production capacity in **China** over the next 12 months as rising demand outweighs concerns that labor costs in the nation would increase.

Social Front:

Suicide rate between January and June has dropped by 7.4 % from a year earlier to 15,906. About 57 % of homeless people have expressed a desire to vote in an election. §



Events of the week in

Africa zone

► WEST AFRICA; EAST AFRICA; CENTRAL AFRICA; SOUTHERN AFRICA

POLITICS OF SECURITY AND CONFLICT ISSUES

West Africa: Formal negotiations began last week on a new international treaty to control the trade of conventional weapons. More than 190 nations are taking part at U.N. headquarters in New York. Supporters of the treaty say it would save thousands of lives every year.

In **Nigeria** a senate panel has sought the Death Penalty for Terrorist acts. The Senate Joint Committee on Terrorism proposed the maximum penalty for anyone found guilty of engaging in terrorist acts as against five years imprisonment recommended in the bill for an Act to provide measures to combat terrorism at present before the National Assembly.

In a recent report UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has said that the progress made by **Guinea-Bissau** following last year's political crisis could be jeopardized unless major reforms in the areas of defence and security are carried out.

Meanwhile the government of **Mauritania** is putting 500 imams on its payroll, providing monthly "stipends" if they help stop the spread of religious extremism. The aim of the operation is to limit the recruitment of fundamentalist scholars to **Mauritania** and better regulate the mosques and their selection of imams, according to Ahmed Ould Mukhtar of the Nouakchott Ministry of Islamic Affairs.

In **Nigeria** some northern politicians in Abuja have raised a different view other than the one making the rounds on the contentious zoning issue, saying they neither support zoning nor the candidature of any particular candidate for the presidency but stress the need for generational change in the next dispensation, noting that a younger candidate is more desirable.

Central Africa: AU Peace and Security Commissioner Ramtane Lamara has said that the deadly bomb attacks in Kampala, **Uganda** have strengthened the continent's resolve to root out al-Qaida-linked elements in **Somalia**. A spokesman for the U.S. National Security Council called the Kampala attacks 'cowardly and deplorable', and said Washington is ready to assist **Uganda** in any way possible. Meanwhile the recorded death toll of the two Kampala bomb blasts rose to 74.



In **Sudan**, tension over the future of Abyei, a flashpoint region roughly the size Lebanon on the north-south border, erupted into armed violence and street demonstrations last week. Gunmen mounted an attack near the village of Tajalei, about 30km northeast of Abyei town, killing five people, a police officer and four civilians.

Rwanda's Kagame is to face 3 challengers in election. **Rwanda's** electoral commission said that four candidates, including the incumbent, are cleared to run in the August 9 ballot. The commission says some people who were expected to run, including opposition figure Victoire Ingabire, did not submit applications. Critics have accused President Kagame of stifling opposition and freedom of expression ahead of the poll. **Rwandan** authorities arrested Ingabire in April and accused her of working with rebels to destabilize the country.

East & the horn of Africa: Heavy fighting in the northern areas of the **Somali capital, Mogadishu**, has trapped many residents in their homes, with some unable to bury their dead, civil society sources said on 6 July. The fighting has rendered the areas inaccessible to those who could provide help to the affected families.



African Union peacekeepers at a guard post in Mogadishu

Kenya was under heightened security after terrorist bombs killed 74 people in Kampala. 'Our thoughts are with relatives and friends of the victims, and at this tragic moment the people of **Kenya** stand with their brothers and sisters in **Uganda**,' the President of **Kenya** said in a statement.

Southern Africa: In **Zimbabwe** a team of consultants has been sent out as part of a parliamentary outreach programme to find out what people would like included in a proposed new constitution. But for the past two months the members of the youth militia aligned to President Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF party - have been warning villagers to either shut up or support ZANU-PF's view on the new constitution, which includes no limit on the number of presidential terms that can be served. They have dubbed their operation "Vhara Muromo", or Shut Your Mouth.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN DOMESTIC POLITICS

West Africa: A former **Sierra Leonean** rebel leader – released from his jail cell in **Rwanda** to testify on behalf of Charles Taylor – last week distanced the activities of his rebels from the former **Liberian** President. Mr. Taylor did not control the rebels' actions, receive diamonds from them, nor provide assistance to them during **Sierra Leone's** bloody civil conflict, he said.

Ghanaian Government last week lashed at the negative perception against women and other socio-economic barriers that continue to work against gender mainstreaming in governance. "These negative trends have eroded confidence and created fear on the part of most women to take up political or decision making position," Mrs. Juliana Azumah-Mensah, Minister of Women and Children's Affairs stated in Accra.

Although about 90 % of **African** constitutions endorse gender equality and affirmative action, only 11 countries have achieved parity in secondary education, a new study shows. Abdoulie Janneh of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) presented these disappointing numbers at seminar in New York.

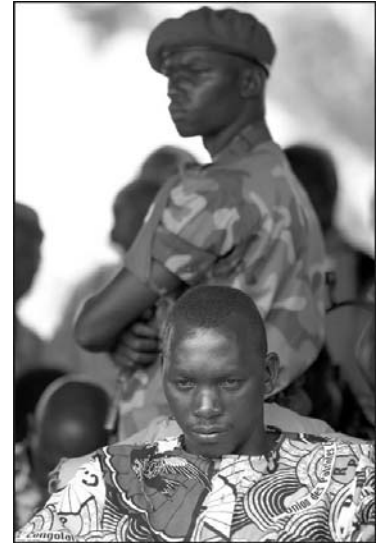
Central Africa: The International Criminal Court (ICC) has suspended proceedings in the case of a **Congolese** warlord, Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, the founder and leader of the *Union of Congolese Patriots* in the Ituri region of the eastern **Democratic Republic of the Congo** (DRC) accused of recruiting child soldiers, saying that prosecutors have refused orders to disclose information to his defence.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has begun the distribution of seed, agricultural and fishing tools to some 35,000 people in Equateur province, a remote region in northern **Democratic Republic of Congo**. The aid will allow tens of thousands of people in the town of Dongo and the surrounding area to plant their crops in time for the next harvest in November. Almost the entire town of Dongo, some 100,000 people, fled ethnic clashes that erupted in October.

A former senior official in Kigali City **Rwanda** has been sentenced to life by a Gacaca court for Genocide crimes. The Court found Sophanie Rutayisire responsible for, among others, the death of 80 Tutsis who had sought refuge at B.G.M. Rubirizi College in Kanombe, Kicukiro District, and the disappearance of several others shortly before the Genocide.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued a second arrest warrant for **Sudanese** President Omar al-Bashir, adding genocide to the list of charges for crimes he has allegedly committed in the war-ravaged Darfur region.

International peacekeepers said last week that 221 people have been killed in **Sudan's** volatile Darfur region in June. The United Nations - African Union peacekeepers in Darfur said most of the deaths were due to inter-tribal clashes. The death toll was significantly less than May, when nearly 600 people died in rebel and tribal fighting.



Congolese warlord, Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, the founder and leader of the **Union of Congolese Patriots**

Southern Africa: In South Africa some recent xenophobic attacks and memories of countrywide attacks on foreign nationals two years ago have combined to create an exodus of people from the coastal city of Cape Town to their home countries or **South Africa's** rural areas. A **Somali** trader was killed just over a week ago on the outskirts of Cape Town, and on 6 July a **Zimbabwean** national, Reason Wandu, was thrown from a moving train by passengers and suffered serious injuries.

HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

West Africa: The European Commission is seeking to dismantle the drug cartels that use **West Africa** as courier channel to funnel illicit drugs to **Europe**. The Commission therefore urged leaders in the region to increase funding for drug control stressing that funding is a reflection of political will to stop drug barons.

Nigeria's Federal Government and the United Nations agency, the United Nations Development Programme last week commenced efforts to check forest destruction with the inauguration of the National Technical Committee on Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Abuja.

Nearly 17 % of **Niger's** children younger than five suffer acute malnutrition, a 5 % increase over the same period last year, according to a national survey released by the government. More than 15 % acute malnutrition is classified as a critical emergency by the UN World Health Organization (WHO). The report links this increase to the poor 2008-2009 harvests.

Ghana has achieved 96 % reduction in *Guinea Worm* cases and is expected to hit the 100 % reduction mark towards completion, Dr Siedu Korkor, Guinea Worm Eradication Programme Manager said last week.

The **Ghana** Health Service (GHS) last week gave the assurance that as far as available evidence indicates, the Influenza 'A' (H1N1) vaccine is safe. However, it was following up and monitoring reports on

all adverse reactions following the vaccinations, just as being done after all vaccinations, to inform policy decisions.

Staffs from NGOs and the health authorities are going house-to-house to distribute thousands of bottles of bleach to residents in the Bafata area of central **Guinea-Bissau**, to prevent another cholera outbreak. An epidemic in 2008 claimed at least 225 lives and infected more than 13,000 people.

Recent reports suggest an imminent threat of hunger in several countries of the **West African** sub-region. Persistent drought in the region partly accounts for this. Because of the resulting poor harvests and soaring food prices, some West African countries are already experiencing the hunger crisis. According to its 2010 report, the British charity Oxfam, said that it had already launched emergency appeal for seven million pounds sterling to help about 800,000 people threatened by hunger in different countries of the sub-region.



Central Africa:

East & the horn of Africa: An initiative by the **Tanzanian** government hopes to reduce HIV transmission along the country's expanding road network by targeting construction crews and the communities that surround them.

Southern Africa: Another year with a surplus harvest of maize, the staple food, is good news for **Malawi**, but dry spells in the south have left around 700,000 people in need of food assistance.

In a bid to ease pressure on **South Africa's** over-burdened public health sector, the government has given hospitals and clinics permission to give patients on HIV/AIDS treatment a three-month supply of their antiretroviral medication (ARVs). An estimated 700,000 patients are currently receiving ARV treatment through monthly visits to public health facilities.

POLITICAL ECONOMY

West Africa: the Federal High Court in Asaba, Delta State, **Nigeria** has ordered multi-national oil giant, Shell Petroleum Development Company Limited (SPDC) to pay the people of Ejama-Ebubu Community in Tai Eleme local government area of Rivers State the sum of N15.4billion as special and punitive damages for oil spill in community in 1970.

Nigeria last week threw its investment window open to all member countries of the D-8 business community to avail themselves of the abundant opportunities that abound in the country in the areas of industrial development, power sector, agriculture, communication technology, oil and gas.

Gold production in **Ghana**, Africa's largest producer of the metal after *South Africa*, rose 3.1 % to 696,172 ounces (19,736 kilograms) during the first quarter from a year earlier, the Chamber of Mines said. Compared with the previous three months, gold output fell 8.1 %

Meanwhile according to **Ghana's** energy minister **Ghana** will definitely pump its first barrel of oil in 2010 but it will take four to six months to reach its planned output of 120,000 barrels per day (bpd).

The International Monetary Fund has said that debt relief will open a new financial front and opportunities for **Liberia**. IMF First Deputy Managing Director John Lipsky said concessional financing from donors should be available giving the hope that critical infrastructure projects could be properly financed. Mr. Lipsky hopes that such investment in infrastructure would lead to more jobs creation, enhance growth and help reduce poverty.

The European Union has offered to make available 6.5 billion Euros for financing programme initiatives in **West African** countries under the Economic Partnership Agreement Development Programme over a four-year period (2010-2014).

East & the horn of Africa: China's Ministry of Commerce (MOC) announced last week that the country will cease levying tariffs on 60 % of imports from 26 least developed African nations, including **Ethiopia** and **Liberia**. This policy went into effect July 1, an MOC spokesman said. §

Events of the week in

Euro Americas zone

▶ WEST EUROPE; EAST EUROPE; NORTH AMERICA; LATIN AMERICA & AUSTRALASIA

WESTERN EUROPE

French prosecutors have opened a preliminary investigation into allegations that the country's richest woman secretly funded President Nicolas Sarkozy's election campaign, an allegation Sarkozy has rejected as libel aimed only to smear, without the slightest basis in reality.



European Central Bank head Jean-Claude Trichet has welcomed European leaders' pledge to publish the results of "stress tests" on banks and indicated that the need to calm markets by buying troubled government bonds appears to be diminishing.

The Bank of **England** kept its key interest rate at a record-low level of 0.50%, where it has stood for 17 months, as it remained on wait-and-see mode over the fragile economic recovery. The *BoE* added that it will not change its so-called quantitative easing policy, under which it had already pumped 200 billion pounds of new money into the economy.

The **Greek** government claims it has outmatched **40%** deficit cut by cutting upto 42% since the beginning of the year. Thus, according the **Greek** Central Bank, the deficit is now **4.9%** of GDP, or 11.45 billion euros, compared to 19.685 billion euros a year ago.

As the **Greek** government pushes on with austerity measures so does the discontentment of many **Greeks** remains, showcased by nationwide strikes.

French justice minister Michele Alliot-Marie is championing the cause to see that the **French** parliament enacts the law to forbid covering one's face in public. She believes the law has nothing to do with stigmatization, religion or security, rather argued that life in the **French** Republic "is carried out with a bare face." "It is a question of dignity, equality and transparency," If the law is enacted violators of the law will be fined euro150, but the question remains where lies religious freedom.

Meanwhile, according to recent Pew survey (Pew Global Attitudes Project) an overwhelming 82 % of **French** respondents support a ban. The poll found 71 % support in **Germany**, 62 % in **Britain** and 59 % in **Spain**. The poll shows that **Americans** are against the ban and **European** supportive of a ban.

Londoners celebrated the fifth anniversary of the July 7, 2005 terrorist attack last week, an event that rekindled the scar of the dastard events. The anniversary was however celebrated with praise of gradual defeat of terrorism, since 2005 many terror plans have been ruptured.

Meanwhile according to reports terrorist suspects apprehended and arranged before the court, by the **Norwegian** authority might most likely be set free. The **Norwegian** judiciary system prioritizes action more than intention. Hence, mere accusation or evidence placed against suspects might fail to get them sentenced.

The **European** highest court has asked a **British** court to get the assurance of the *United States* that four suspected terrorists will not end up in maximum security prisons for the rest of their lives without parole. The **European** Court of Human Rights wants to ascertain the cruelty and violation of human rights before sending the suspect to the US. Europeans disagree with the U.S over the merit of life sentence in maximum security prisons and dealt penalty.



Binyam Mohamed claims he was subjected to torture during a period when he was questioned by **British** and **US** agents. Photograph: Shaun Curry/AFP/Getty Images

Prime Minister David Cameron has set up an Inquiry Committee headed by a **British** judge that will investigate the complicity of **British** spy agency in the maltreatment of **British** citizens in the U.S. Cameron hopes to use the investigation to compensate the affected and cleanse the dented image of M15.

Turkey remains adamant that relations with Tel Aviv will remain sever until an apology and responsibility for a deadly raid on a Gaza aid flotilla is made. Meanwhile, the **British** government holds that its support for *Turkey-EU* membership remains unwaived and for EU turning down Ankara's membership will be strategic mistake.

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Fugitive **Bosnian** Serb general Ratko Mladic's diaries seized during a raid of his wife's Belgrade home in February unveiled details of the secret deals between Serbs and Croats to wipe out Muslims (militarily and by expulsion) from Bosnia in order to create a larger **Croatian** and **Serbian** nations. The diaries have become useful in understanding and dealing with other criminal cases with the **Yugoslav** war crimes tribunal in The Hague.

The level of progress in **Albania** and **Kosovo** came under the radar of the *European Parliament* (EP). The parliament urged both Tirana and Pristina to intensify effort on curbing corruption and organized crimes. EP although recognizes Tirana's progress yet wants solution to the **Albanian** political stalemate and as well moved the motion to include **Kosovo** in the EU visa liberalization scheme.

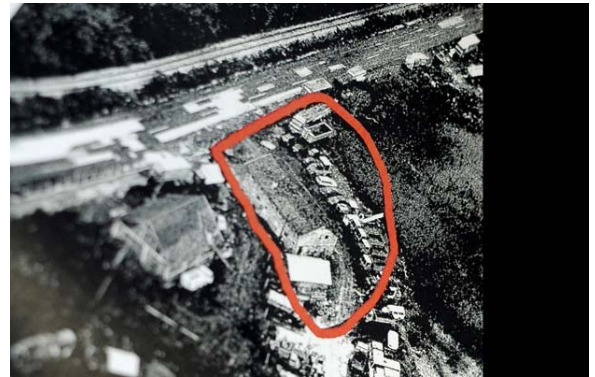
Meanwhile with the intention of protecting the national, cultural and religious identity of Serbs around the world, **Serbian** President Boris Tadic convened a Diaspora Assembly in the parliament, which includes 45 delegates from around the globe. Around 3-4 million Serbs are estimated living outside their homeland.

Recently a total of **84** experts comprising **60** journalists and **24** NGO representatives specializing in justice and anti-corruption participated in a survey, outlining that none of the four main objectives assumed by **Romania** through an EU supervisory mechanism, the Co-operation and Verification Mechanism (MCV) for justice and internal affairs has been accomplished so far. However according to IMF, **Romanian** government is making significant steps to recover the country's macroeconomic stability and is taking ambitious measures to lay the groundwork for improvement of state finances. Hence IMF has agreed to extend a 913.2m-euro tranche of **Romania's** 13.6 billion-euro anti-crisis loan

the European Commission has set an end of 2011 deadline for **Bulgaria** to bring its budget deficit below 3% of GDP, in line with the EU's Stability and Growth Pact. Subsequently, **Romanian** government announced its plans to cut the number of state secretaries within the various ministries as part of the effort to reduce budget deficit.

Former **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (BiH) presidency member Ejup Ganic is wanted by **Serbia** in connection with a May 1992 attack in Sarajevo against a Yugoslav National Army convoy, which left more than 40 soldiers dead. Ganic is stranded in London and **Serbia** is demanding his extradition, which is pending a decision by a London court. Ganic denies the charges and has challenged the extradition request.

Serbian investigators have started work at a possible mass grave in Raska, southern Serbia. An investigative judge and EULEX representatives visited the site and started analyzing the ground. **Serbia's** war crimes prosecution office ordered an investigation into the possible mass grave in mid-May.



A handout aerial photo of a Kosovo war mass grave

Photograph by: Andrej Isakovic, AFP/Getty Images

Croatia has almost completed its required EU chapters and that could not be disconnected from Vesna Pusic's view, the president of parliament's national committee for monitoring EU accession negotiations, predicting that the negotiation process should be completed by February 2011, which would allow the country to sign the accession treaty during the EU summit in March.

Meanwhile **Malta** has seconded **Spain** in ratifying **Serbia's** Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU. The ratification process started with Spain holding the rotational EU presidency. It is expected that other EU members will follow the step of Spain and Malta.

Bulgarian defence minister Anyu Angelov has said that it is important for **Bulgaria** to be part of the US anti-missile defence shield in Europe. **Bulgaria** will not only benefit but will contribute to the shield.

The **Polish** general election ended with a victory of Bronislaw Komorowski, officially declared the winner of the presidential election. Komorowski defeated rival Jaroslaw Kaczynski by 53.01% to 46.99% votes. Polish electoral laws approve 50% vote before a winner can be declared. Komorowski's election victory was followed by congratulatory greetings from world leaders.

Hungarian government will seek a two-year precautionary deal with IMF and EU for 2011-2012 in the range of 10-20 billion Euro, and hopes to agree with lenders on a higher budget gap than 3 % of GDP for next year. Meanwhile, the government remains economically cautious upon the hard times facing the Eurozone.

According to central bank Governor Marek Belka, **Polish** economy may grow by 3 % this year and possibly accelerate to 3.5 % or more in 2010. The government also plans to tighten its public spending in the next budget and certain workers would have to face salary freeze.

Czech central bank board agreed last month that risks to its macroeconomic forecast were broadly balanced although uncertainties were relatively high. The board unanimously agreed to leave rates unchanged at record low.

Ukraine like others in the neighbourhood is adopting a budget cut, geared at bringing deficit down to the requirement of IMF. Thus, helps to understand why Kiev was able to reach agreement with the International Monetary Fund for a new \$14.9 billion loan.

In **Slovakia** even though the designated Prime Minister Iveta Radicova has said that her centre-right party did not want to block the EU/IMF deal, it is still unclear when her incoming government would sign the plan. The **Slovakia** new government has also announced a savage austerity programme, like neighbouring **Hungary** and the **Czech Republic**, **Slovakia** would makes its population share in the burden of the economy.

Belarusian central bank said it will cut the refinancing rate by 50 basis points to 11.50 %, extending an easing cycle aimed at boosting the economy and stimulating loan growth as inflation falls.

Currency devaluation in the **Baltic States** will hamper the region's economies and delay Eurozone membership. Devaluation could also be responsible for a jump in debt service, causing even more defaults and negative equity in real estate.

Lithuania's minority government has given up the plan to hike the retirement age after some of its own members voted against the reform in parliament. Under the pension reform package the retirement age would have been gradually lifted over 15 years commencing from 2012.

A **Polish** court has ordered the extradition of a suspected Israeli secret agent to Germany to face charges of forging a German passport used in the January assassination of a Hamas commander in Dubai.

Hungary's parliament is due to vote in less than a week on proposed media reform which opposition parties and journalists have warned constitutes a throwback to the dark days of free media repression in the former Soviet satellite state.

The tension between **Slovakia** and **Hungary** could be enhance if EU's top court in Luxembourg ruled against **Slovakia** for depriving Hungarian President Laszlo Solyom from attending a ceremonial function in **Slovakia**, a development **Hungary** believes violated the EU law for freedom of movement.

Five representatives of **Turkmenistan's** Interior Ministry and Police Academy exchanged information and best practices in police education and curriculum development during a three-day study visit to **Lithuania** that concluded last week.

Accessibility to affordable energy is the growing interest of many states and **Ukraine** is not an exemption. Kiev hopes to formalise a proposal that will create a new gas pipeline venture jointly managed by **Russia** and **Ukraine**, geared to transport gas Europe.

The disputed unilateral maritime border created by **Ukraine** in the 1990s is now on the verge of mutual agreement between Moscow and Kiev. The border has been one of the political tensions between the two countries in recent past.



Israeli citizen *Uri Brodsky*, Center, is being escorted by anti-terrorists to a court session in **Warsaw, Poland**, 07 Jul 2010

Belarus's obstinacy not to extradite former *Kyrgyz* President Kurmanbek Bakiyev troubles the interim *Kyrgyz's* government. The latter is reiterating its demand for an extradition of Bakiyev taking refuge in **Belarus**, who is charged with misuse of office and murder in *Kyrgyzstan*.

Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich is urging the EU to expedite the EU-**Ukraine** association agreement and to begin a visa-free regime for **Ukrainians**.

Strengthening their traditional friendship and economic cooperation, **Estonian** President Thomas Hendrik paid Israeli President Shimon Peres a visit at Beit Hanassi. Hendrik hopes the visit will enhance the existing relations.

Israel's Foreign Affairs Minister Avigdor Lieberman lauded in Riga the balance position of the Baltic state towards his country. Lieberman said Israel was glad at the resolve of the **Lithuania's** efforts to return Jewish property.



RUSSIA

The **Russian** Central Bank saw an improvement in the economy as total lending rose 2 % on the month after a 2.6 % gain in May, with retail loans increasing 1.2 % from 1 % a month earlier.

Reiterating the exigency for economic development in the *Caucasus*, Prime Minister Putin announced that government has invested \$27 billion into developing the North Caucasus in the past decade and 400,000 jobs should be created in the region over the next 10 years.

President Dmitry Medvedev confirmed in Astana at a summit of the Eurasian Economic Community that **Russia**, *Kazakhstan* and *Belarus* have signed a declaration enforcing the Customs Code for the three countries. Medvedev expressed confidence that with the Customs Union "an advantageous and interesting enterprise" will be shared among the signatories. Nonetheless, debris of disagreement over gas payment between **Russia** and *Belarus* still hangs on.

Japan and **Russia** have agreed to jointly build a liquefied natural gas plant in Vladivostok, with five million tones of output to be shipped to Japan annually.

Chevron and Rosneft signed an agreement to jointly explore and develop the Val Shatsky field on the Black Sea shelf. The agreement offers Chevron 33% share, allowing it to jointly explore the deep-water region that analysts say presents major geological difficulties.

Russian Gazprom gas giant said it has no plans to raise its stake in the **Latvian** gas monopoly. Gazprom already holds a 34-% stake in Latvijas Gaze, which is the only natural gas transmission, storage, distribution, and sales operator in the Baltic republic.

U.N. Security Council chairman refers to **Russia's** effort as constructive and responsible. The statement was the upshot of **Russia's** stance on the sinking of *South Korea's* Cheonan corvette in the Yellow Sea on March by North Korea.

US/CANADA

Marine Corps Gen. James Mattis has been picked to take over **U.S.** Central Command. His appointment replaces Gen. David Petraeus, who now serves in *Afghanistan* as the U.S. and NATO's top military officer.

The Obama administration is adopting auditing strategy to purge illegal immigrants from work place, a different strategy from that adopted by the Bush administration that scout out for illegal immigrants and then deported. The new approach keeps a check on employers, even though critiqued by some as too lax. Meanwhile employers complain the new approach deprives them of workers for low paid jobs that could not be replaced by legal workers.

At the economic front, during his speech at the University of Nevada, President Obama fired back at republicans, who he believed had driven the economy into a 'ditch' and are now asking for a 'rapid recovery'. According to him his administration has saved the economy from freefall and his policies are positioning things where they belong.

LATIN AMERICA

Argentine opposition party in the congress has repeatedly request the government to run a trial against the ex president of **Argentina** and the current deputy of Buenos Iris province in the court. The ex president and the husband of the current president of **Argentina** are accused of taking bribe from **Argentine** exporters.

Results of gubernatorial elections held in 12 **Mexico** states showed the victory of PRI in 9 states and success of PAN in 3 states. The defeat of PAN is associated to the war launched by the PAN government against drug lords. The result could be bad omen for PAN in 2012 elections.

As a starting point for good relations, recently elected president of **Colombia**, Juan Santos has sent invitations to both President Hugo Chavez and President Rafael Correa of **Ecuador**. **Venezuela** and **Ecuador** have had cold relations with **Colombia** under former President Uribe.

Recent food products tension between **Argentina** and the EU could be potential factor to exacerbate EU and Mercosur rancour. **Argentina** banned food products unofficially from EU last month and thus created controversy between the two blocs. The food product tension was not the first of its kind; **Brazil** had once refused to import food stuff from the EU. Hence, EU's trade minister plans to take this case to WTO.

Mexican government said the trade between **Mexico** and **China** is very low but it is expected to grow. Also **Mexico's** export of pork meats and poultry to China and other Asian countries is expected to pick pace.

After seven years of debate, the **Brazilian** congress approved the Statute of Racial Equality last month. *The Guardian* reports that the measure promotes equal opportunities for black **Brazilians** and guarantees equal access to health, education, and employment. However, critics say the statute fell short of mandating quotas for admission to higher education institutions or political parties. The black community constitute 45% of the whole population with 80% low wage workers.

As part of the august visit of President Lula to Africa and renewal of ties with African regional blocs, **Brazil** is set to provide Kenya with biodiesel technology to make the environment clean.

AUSTRALASIA

The resignation of the *Defence Minister John Faulkner* was a new development for the **Australian** labour government. Faulkner quitting the cabinet is believed to be another blow to new Prime Minister Julia Gillard. Faulkner's resignation came after popular Finance Minister Lindsay Tanner tendered his resignation. It is unclear whether the labour party will suffer from such resignation as election draws in.



Australian new political leadership is bent at reverting back to the previous immigration practices that camps immigrants seeking asylum in **Australian** territory of Christmas Island. The new practice hopes to send the asylum seeker to the neighboring East Timor. The new proposal is facing huge criticism both within **Australia** and among neighboring states. New PM Julia Gillard wants a sustainable not an over blown population, a view challenging previous Kevin Rudd's futurist view of **Australia**.

The Internet giant, Google has been in the news for privacy breach in **Australia** and a few European countries. After much pressure on the Internet giant's Street View that allegedly violated privacy right, Google agreed and has published apology to that effect. §