

# Friday on the facebook

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## 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 **26** surveys. **2** of these are multi-country surveys, **1** is a cyber survey, & the rest are national surveys. **9** polling organizations have been represented.



## Topic of the week:

### **Migration Could Triple Populations in Some Wealthy Nations**

► 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: Migration Could Triple Populations in Some Wealthy Nations**

*Some poor nations could see adult populations reduced by half*

by Neli Esipova and Julie Ray

**Gallup USA-** WASHINGTON, D.C. -- **Gallup's** Potential Net Migration Index finds **Singapore, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Switzerland, Australia, and Kuwait** atop the list of countries that could see the highest net adult population growth from international migration. If all adults worldwide who desire to migrate permanently to other countries actually moved where they wanted today, each country would see their adult populations double or even triple.

A Potential Net Migration Index (PNMI) score is the estimated number of adults who would like to move permanently out of a country if the opportunity arose, subtracted from the estimated number who would like to move into it, as a proportion of the total adult population. The latest results include **148 countries** or areas surveyed through early 2010 and a total of about 350,000 interviews.

The higher the resulting positive PNMI value, the larger the potential net adult population gain. For example, in *Switzerland*, subtracting the estimated 800,000 Swiss adults who would like to move to another country if they had the opportunity from the 10 million adults who would like to move

#### Gallup Potential Net Migration Index

Countries with highest potential net adult population gain

	Index score
Singapore	+219%
New Zealand	+184%
Saudi Arabia*	+176%
Canada	+160%
Switzerland	+150%
Australia	+148%
Kuwait*	+127%

Based on aggregated surveys in 148 countries and areas conducted in 2007 through early 2010.

\*Note: In the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, only Arab nationals and Arab expatriates were surveyed.

GALLUP®

to *Switzerland* and dividing that number by the total Swiss adult population (6 million) results in a PNMI value -- or a net adult population gain -- of +150%.

Except for **Switzerland** and **Kuwait**, which are new to the index, the list of countries with the highest *positive* index scores remains relatively unchanged from the first release. The **United States**, the top desired destination among all potential migrants, continues to place farther down the list, after **Canada** and several other developed nations. It's important to keep in mind, though, that a country's population size affects how high or low its index score is and its ranking.

*Gallup Potential Net Migration Index*

Countries with highest potential net adult population loss

	Index score
Sierra Leone	-56%
Haiti	-51%
Zimbabwe	-47%
Nigeria	-46%
Somaliland region	-46%
Ethiopia	-46%
El Salvador	-45%
Liberia	-45%
Comoros	-45%

Based on aggregated surveys in 148 countries and areas conducted in 2007 through early 2010.

GALLUP

There are also few changes among countries with the highest *negative* PNMI values -- the ones that could potentially lose as much as half of their adult populations to migration. New additions **Comoros** and **Somaliland** join **Liberia**, **El Salvador**, **Ethiopia**, **Nigeria**, **Zimbabwe**, **Haiti**, and **Sierra Leone** at the bottom of the list.

While *Gallup's* findings reflect people's wishes rather than their intentions, the implications of what could happen if these desires become reality

are serious considerations for leaders as they plan for the future. §

**SOURCE:** <http://www.gallup.com/poll/142364/migration-triple-populations-wealthy-nations.aspx>

## SUMMARY OF POLLS



### Asia zone

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

*Multi Country Poll: Migration Could Triple Populations in Some Wealthy Nations* (Click for Details)  
 Society » Immigration/Refugees

*Multi Country Poll: Europeans Don't Think Schools Encourage Entrepreneurs; Americans, Chinese think their schools do better jobs* (Click for Details)  
 Society » Education



### Africa zone

▶ WEST AFRICA; EAST AFRICA; CENTRAL AFRICA; SOUTHERN AFRICA

▶ **SUB SAHARAN AFRICA**

**Multi Country Poll: Migration Could Triple Populations in Some Wealthy Nations** (Click for Details)

Society » Immigration/Refugees



**EUROPE**

► **EAST EUROPE**



**The State Of Russian Society: The June Edition** (Click for Details)

Russians' social optimism rose from **60** to **68** points during the month of June. At the same time the level of life satisfaction fell below the mean (**48**). **The Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VCIOM)**

August 18, 2010

Economy » Perceptions on Performance/ Well-Being

► **WEST EUROPE**



**Multi-tasking Britons consuming more media** (Click for Details)

Media consumption is on the up because **Britons** are increasingly using more than one type of communications device at the same time, according to a study. **Ofcom** says consumers are spending almost half their day (7 hours) watching television, surfing the internet, emailing or using their mobile phone.

August 19, 2010

Society » Media/ New Media

**One year on, more Scots disagree with the release of al-Megrahi** (Click for Details)

On the first anniversary of the release of the man convicted of the 1988 Lockerbie bombing, an **Ipsos MORI** poll for **Scottish Television** has revealed public opinion becoming more critical of the decision. Over half of Scots (54%) now think that the Scottish Justice Secretary, Kenny MacAskill, was wrong to release Abdelbasset Ali al-Megrahi and allow him to return to Libya on compassionate grounds, compared to 46% who disagreed with the decision when it was made last year.

20 August 2010

Foreign Affairs & Security » Terrorism

**Support for Afghan War Continues to Wane in Britain** (Click for Details)

Once again the number of **Britons** expressing support for the country's military engagement in Afghanistan has decreased, according to a poll by **Angus Reid Public Opinion**. 33 % of respondents back the operation in Afghanistan, down five points since June.

August 20, 201

Foreign Affairs & Security » Afghanistan War

**Sarkozy, Fillon Fail to Recover in France** (Click for Details)

**French** president Nicolas Sarkozy and his appointed Prime Minister François Fillon remain widely unpopular, according to a poll by **CSA** published in *Le Parisien*. 61 % of respondents express no confidence in the president's ability to face the country's issues, while 54 % feel the same way about Fillon.

August 17, 2010

Domestic Politics » Performance Ratings



## NORTH AMERICA

### **More Disapprove Than Approve of Obama Mosque Remarks** (Click for Details)

More [Americans](#) disapprove than approve of President Barack Obama's recent comments concerning the planned construction of a mosque near where the Sept. 11 terror attacks occurred in New York City, but **4 in 10** do not have an opinion on the matter. The vast majority of those with an opinion hold it strongly. [Gallup USA](#)

August 18, 2010

[Society](#) » [Religion](#)

### **In U.S., Slim Majority Says Iraq War Will Be Judged a Failure** (Click for Details)

More [Americans](#) believe history will judge the Iraq war as a failure (53%) rather than a success (42%). These views have varied little over the past few years even as Americans have become more positive in their assessments of how the war is going. [Gallup USA](#)

August 20, 2010

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

### **Americans Split on Support for Afghan Mission** (Click for Details)

People in the [United States](#) are divided in their assessment of the military mission in Afghanistan, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **47 %** of respondents support it, whereas **42 %** oppose it.

August 18, 2010

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

### **Americans Nix War Against North Korea** (Click for Details)

Many adults in the [United States](#) are not in favour of a military invasion of North Korea in the event of a war in the Korean Peninsula, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **46 %** of respondents oppose this course of action.

August 21, 201

[Foreign Affairs & Security](#) » [Regional Conflicts/ Issues](#)

### **Deployment Taking Greatest Toll on Young Service Members** (Click for Details)

Active duty [U.S.](#) military personnel who have been deployed to a foreign war are more likely to have been diagnosed with depression at some point in their lives than those service members who have never deployed, with the largest percentage of diagnoses among those aged 18 to 29. [Gallup USA](#)

August 18, 2010

[Foreign Affairs & Security](#) » [Military Issues/ Defence](#)

### **Obama Sees New Lows in Job Approval** (Click for Details)

In the [US](#) President Obama's job approval rating dipped to **44%** for the week of Aug. 9-15, the lowest weekly average of his administration by one percentage point. [Gallup USA](#)

August 16, 2010

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

### **Americans Divided About Future Gulf Drilling** (Click for Details)

With the BP oil well in the Gulf of Mexico seemingly capped, [Americans](#) are split down the middle over whether the federal government should maintain a moratorium on most offshore oil drilling in the Gulf, or lift it and allow drilling to resume before November. [Gallup USA](#)

August 18, 2010

[Society](#) » [Environment/ Disasters](#)

### **Americans Would Impose Term Limits on Lawmakers** (Click for Details)

Many people in the [United States](#) think members of the lower house should not be allowed to serve in office for an unlimited number of terms, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **47 %** of respondents

would limit members of the House of Representatives to serve a maximum of six-year tenures (or three terms). [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#)

August 16, 2010

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

***Growing Number of Americans Say Obama is a Muslim*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

A substantial and growing number of [Americans](#) say that Barack Obama is a Muslim, while the proportion saying he is a Christian has declined. More than a year and a half into his presidency, a plurality of the public says they do not know what religion Obama follows. Nearly one-in-five Americans (**18%**) now say Obama is a Muslim, up from **11%** in March 2009. [Pew Research Center](#)

August 19, 2010

[Society](#) » [Religion](#)

***The Fading Glory of the Television and Telephone*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

After occupying center stage in the [American](#) household for much of the 20th century, two of the grand old luminaries of consumer technology -- the television set and the landline telephone -- are suffering from a sharp decline in public perception that they are necessities of life. Just **42%** of Americans say they consider the television set to be a necessity. Last year, this figure was **52%**. In 2006, it was **64%**. [Pew Research Center](#)

[Center](#)

August 19, 2010

[Society](#) » [Media/ New Media](#)

***Many Say Coverage of the Poor and Minorities Is Too Negative*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

In evaluating news coverage of different groups, pluralities of [Americans](#) say that coverage of poor people and Muslims is too negative, while somewhat smaller percentages say the same about coverage of blacks and Hispanics. [Pew Research Center](#)

August 19, 2010

[Society](#) » [Media/ New Media](#)

***One in Three U.S. Parents See Child's School Making Major Cuts*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

With many state and local governments facing crisis-level budget cutbacks in the [US](#), [Gallup](#) finds **32%** of parents saying their child's school is having financial difficulties and having to make major spending cuts, and **59%** saying their child's school has been able to avoid making such cuts. Of those who see their child's school making major cuts, the vast majority believe the cuts will harm their child's education.

August 19, 2010

[Society](#) » [Education](#)

***Americans Would Deny Citizenship to Some Born in U.S.*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Most people in the [United States](#) disagree with the current interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which grants automatic citizenship to all children born on American soil, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **55 %** of respondents would not grant citizenship to children born to foreigner tourists traveling with valid visas.

August 19, 2010

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

***Canadians Oppose Government Changes to Census*** [\(Click for Details\)](#)

Half of people in [Canada](#) reject recent changes to the national census survey introduced by the federal government, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **50 %** of respondents share this view, up three points since July.

August 17, 2010

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

***Almost Half of Canadians Would Deport Tamils*** (Click for Details)

Many adults in [Canada](#) believe that the Tamil migrants who arrived to the country on a ship last month should not be allowed to stay in the country even if they are not linked to terrorism, according to a poll by [Angus Reid Public Opinion](#). **48 %** of respondents believe the passengers and crew should be deported.

August 20, 2010

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



▶ **LATIN AMERICA**

***Mexicans Continue Support for Drug War*** (Click for Details)

As their country struggles with ongoing economic challenges and drug violence, [Mexicans](#) are unhappy with national conditions. Roughly eight-in-ten (**79%**) are dissatisfied with the way things are going in their country and **75%** say the economy is in bad shape. [Pew Research Center](#)

August 12, 2010

[Society](#) » [Social Problems](#)

***PT Candidate Rousseff Widens Lead in Brazil*** (Click for Details)

Dilma Rousseff holds a significant advantage over fellow presidential candidate Jose Serra just months before an election takes place in [Brazil](#), according to a poll by [Ibope](#). **43 %** of respondents would vote for Rousseff of the ruling Workers' Party (PT) in the October ballot, up three points since June.

August 21, 201

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

***Fujimori's Daughter is Strong Candidate in Peru*** (Click for Details)

Keiko Sofía Fujimori, the daughter of convicted former Peruvian president Alberto Fujimori, remains a favourite candidate in the early stages of [Peru's](#) presidential race, according to a poll by [Ipsos, Apoyo, Opinión y Mercado](#) published in *El Comercio*. **20 %** of respondents would vote for Keiko Fujimori of Strength 2011 in next year's ballot, down two points since July.

August 19, 2010

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

**GLOBAL/MULTI-COUNTRY POLLS**



***Migration Could Triple Populations in Some Wealthy Nations*** (Click for Details)

[Gallup's](#) Potential Net Migration Index finds [Singapore](#), [New Zealand](#), [Saudi Arabia](#), [Canada](#), [Switzerland](#), [Australia](#), and [Kuwait](#) atop the list of countries that could see the highest net adult population growth from international migration. If all adults worldwide who desire to migrate permanently to other countries actually moved where they wanted today, each country would see their adult populations double or even triple.

August 20, 2010

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

***Europeans Don't Think Schools Encourage Entrepreneurs; Americans, Chinese think their schools do better jobs*** (Click for Details)

One in four [EU](#) residents interviewed in December agreed their education made them interested in becoming entrepreneurs -- far fewer than said so in the [U.S.](#) and [China](#). [Gallup USA](#)

August 17, 2010

[Society](#) » [Education](#)

**CYBER WORLD**



***Blogs Not Neutral on Google*** (Click for Details)

A plan by two tech giants to regulate broadband topped the online conversation last week as bloggers roundly criticized Google for seemingly softening its support of network neutrality -- the concept of treating all internet traffic equally across a network. [Pew Research Center](#)

August 19, 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:**

The main pro-Kurdish party has announced to boycott the September 12 Constitutional Referendum in case government does not meet its demands.

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

A **Turkish** business group has launched a campaign to assist flood-hit *Pakistan*. Meanwhile government of **Turkey** has also given financial aid to *Moldova* to help her overcome flood disaster. **Turkey** has also announced to provide *Russia* with fire-fighting equipments to deal with wild-fire.

**Turkey** and *Azerbaijan* have recently signed a deal on strategic partnership. Meanwhile the **Turkish** government has reaffirmed that it would follow up on its demands regarding *Israel's* May 31 attack on a flotilla of ships bringing aid to the Gaza Strip that resulted in the death of eight Turks and one Turkish-American in international waters.

The *US* President has warned the **Turkish** PM that if he would not change his position regarding *Iran* and *Israel* then *US* would rethink its decision about arms-sale to the country. Meanwhile *Poland* has emphasized that **Turkey** should be granted the membership of EU.

### **Economic Front:**

**Turkey's** textile exports rose by **4.3 %** in the first five months of 2010. Meanwhile Domestic auto sales in **Turkey** reached at **16.1 %** in the first seven months in 2010 over the same period last year. **Turkey's** unemployment rate fell to **11 %** in May, with the number of jobless down by 536,000 compared to the same month last year. All these figures clearly indicate continuous economic growth in **Turkey**.

### **Social Front:**



In response to people trying to soften the smoking ban, the National Committee on Cigarettes and Health, or SSUK, has taken action, collecting 15,000 signatures over the past month from Istanbul and many Anatolian provinces. A recent survey has revealed that Internet is being used in **41.6 %** of homes in **Turkey**.

## **GCC**

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

Secretary General of the **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** has condemned the policies pursued by the *Israeli* occupation authorities against the *Palestinians* and their attempts to prevent them from entering occupied Jerusalem to perform Friday prayers at Al-Aqsa Mosque. Meanwhile **GCC** Secretary-General called the Security Council and the UN to take quick measures to combat measures forced by *Israel* against *Palestinians* to deport them from their territory.

**Saudi Arabia** has launched a nationwide fundraising campaign for *Pakistan's* flood victims. King Abdullah inaugurated the campaign by giving SR20 million while Crown Prince Sultan, deputy premier and minister of defense and aviation, donated SR10 million and Second Deputy Premier and Minister of Interior Prince Naïf SR5 million to the fund.

The **UAE** has announced to abide by the UN Security Council resolutions on sanctions against *Iran*. PM of the **Kingdom of Bahrain** has emphasized greatly the significance of his country's close ties with **Kuwait**. Meanwhile the Emir of **Qatar** has stressed the need to intensify efforts to resolve the Middle East crisis through dialogue and negotiation in accordance with the international resolutions; he also welcomed the position of *Paraguay* on the *Palestinian* cause during his visit to the former.



### **Economic Front:**

The Third meeting of the **Gulf** monetary council attended by governors of monetary institutes and central banks of member states was held last week. The meeting focused on several issues concerning coordination and joint cooperation among member states, to accelerate the establishment on the **Gulf** Central Bank. The meeting also discussed the executive steps to complete the establishment of the monetary union for member states that have signed the **GCC** monetary agreement, including **Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Bahrain**.

Director General of Foreign Trade Ministry of **UAE** held a meeting with *Chinese* delegation led by deputy director-general of Ningxia's Department of Commerce and discussed ways to develop trade and investment relations between both countries and to enhance communication between their business communities.

The political stability index (2009), published by the Economic Intelligence Unit ranked the Sultanate of **Oman** No 1 among the **GCC** and **Arab** countries and 17 among 165 other countries.

**Qatar** and the *Republic of Uruguay* held a session of official talks and discussed ways to improve economic ties. Meanwhile **Abu Dhabi's** integrated Educational developmental program has been regarded as a key driver for its vibrant economy.

### **Social Front:**

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) has announced plan to implement specific regulations in the near future on labor and expatriate workers' issues. This has been done in order to improve **Kuwait's** international image on human rights issue. The Cabinet has also expressed keenness towards promoting the establishment of exclusive residential areas for bachelor laborers while ensuring that security is maintained there.

More than 1,200 young **Omanis** would receive training in various disciplines under agreements signed between the government and private institutes in the country. Meanwhile **Bahrain's** political societies have urged to help stamp out acts of sabotage and violence.

## CENTRAL ASIA

### Political Front:

The ruling New **Azerbaijan** Party (NAP) has prepared a list of candidates for the upcoming parliamentary elections. Meanwhile the observation mission of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) has announced to monitor upcoming parliamentary elections in **Azerbaijan**. In other news a former US Senator Tom Daschle has extended full support to **Kyrgyz** Democracy-Building Efforts.

### Geo-strategic Front:

**Turkish** President has paid a visit to **Azerbaijan** and discussed cooperation between the two nations and efforts to bring peace to the *Southern Caucasus* region.

**Kazakh**, *British* and *U.S.* troops have started teaming up for 10 days of joint military exercises. Meanwhile **Kazakh** President held meeting with a working group to discuss preparations for the OSCE summit in Astana.



**Kyrgyz** Foreign Ministry officials held a meeting with **Uzbek** authorities in an effort to secure the release of 11 **Kyrgyz** citizens detained in **Uzbekistan** while transporting explosives used for mining work.

**Tajik** President held a bilateral meeting with his *Russian* counterpart, on sidelines of a quadrilateral summit in Sochi and discussed ways of cooperation between the two countries. **Turkmenistan** has proposed to create a system of regular high-level political consultations between the Central Asian and Caspian countries under the auspices of the United Nations in order to strengthen peace and security in the region.

### Economic Front:

**Kazakhstan** has officially introduced its new export duties on oil and oil products. **Tajik** authorities have banned the export of grain and potatoes to *Afghanistan* and **Uzbekistan** until spring 2011 because of price rise.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has announced to provide 252 million U.S. dollars to **Tajikistan** for 2010-2012. Also in **Tajikistan**, inflation for July 2010 stood at 0.9 %.

### Social Front:

**Azerbaijan's** Supreme Court has upheld the November 2009 sentences given to jailed bloggers Emin Milli and Adnan Hajizada, who got arrested over hooliganism charges.

Smoke from *Russia's* deadly wildfires has spread into northern regions of **Kazakhstan** but poses no immediate danger to residents. On the human rights front, following a lengthy investigation, the New York-based group Human Rights Watch declared that the government of **Kyrgyzstan** played a vital role in facilitating the violent attacks against ethnic **Uzbeks** this past June. Members of a **Kyrgyz** National Commission investigating the deadly ethnic clashes in the southern regions of Osh and Jalal-Abad in June however challenged the findings of the recent report on the issue while warning to hold protest against HRW Report.

Meanwhile the media watchdog *Reporters Without Borders* (RSF) has expressed concern over two ethnic **Uzbek** journalists held in detention since the ethnic clashes in **Kyrgyzstan's** southern city of Jalal-

Abad. Also according to reports **Turkmen** authorities have reportedly allowed some university students to return to **Kyrgyzstan** to continue their studies.

**Tajikistan's** Religious Affairs Committee has introduced age restrictions on those wishing to make the pilgrimage to Islam's holy city of Mecca.

## **IRAN**

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

On one hand U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has warned against a military strike against **Iran** over its nuclear program, saying it would be "incredibly destabilizing." While on the other hand US also asked **Iran** for talks on *Afghanistan* but Majilis Speaker blasted U.S. call as "unacceptable" and deceitful. **Iranian** Supreme leader has also denied any chances of holding talks with the *US* unless sanctions and military threats are lifted. In the meantime **Iran** has taken its case against the *United States* to the United Nations and strongly condemned the top US military chief for saying military action remains a possibility if the country develops nuclear weapons. **Iran** has claimed to respond if *Israel* attacks its first nuclear power plant, which will begin loading fuel Aug. 21. Meanwhile the Obama administration has assured *Israel* that **Iran's** process of converting nuclear material into a working weapon would take at least a year.

*Pakistani* Ambassador to Tehran has recently stated that sanctions have not affected process of Peace Pipeline construction with **Iran**. Meanwhile the government of *India* has asked for meeting between **Iranian** and *Indian* working groups on the imports of natural gas from **Iran** under the multi-billion-dollar pipeline project for the export of **Iran's** gas to *Pakistan*.

*Cambodia's* diplomatic chief has criticized anti-**Iran** sanctions and emphasized on the need to resolve **Iranian** nuclear issue via peaceful negotiations. Also **Iranian** President and his Turkish counterpart have stressed the two countries' resolve to continue their talks and consultations on regional issues and international developments.

### **Economic Front:**

*Turkmenistan* has expressed willingness to ink a new contract to increase gas export to **Iran** to 20 billion cubic meters per annum while *Pakistan* is interested to receive more gas from **Iran**. **Iran** has imported 23 tons of gold in the four months ending July 22. Meanwhile the US has asked all governments to step up their vigilance against dealings with **Iran's** shipping sector. New penalties have been kicked in against foreign banks doing business with institutions that Washington has designated as supporting **Iran's** nuclear program or terrorist activities.



**Iran** and *India* have called for boosting joint ventures by the two countries and increasing investments in **Iranian** refineries and power plants by a number of Indian companies.

### **Social Front:**

A car bomb exploded in a town northeast of the *Iraqi* capital while a bus full of **Iranian** Shi'ite pilgrims was passing, killing five people and wounding nine.

## **AFGHANISTAN**

### **Political Front:**

More than 376,000 voting cards have been distributed to **Afghans** over the past two months.

More than 2,000 foreign soldiers have been killed in **Afghanistan** over the past nine years however 1,271 **Afghan** civilians had been killed in the first six months of this year. Many **Afghans** blame foreigners for this growing violence in their country. Meanwhile President Hamid Karzai has set a four-month deadline

for the dissolution of private security companies. In response to his decree the United States has backed President Hamid Karzai's call but said a four-month deadline to close all such companies in the country would be hard to meet.

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

President Hamid Karzai and his US counterpart, Barrack Obama, have vowed to keep up the pressure on the Taliban.

**Afghanistan** has provided Pakistan with \$1 million to help fund relief efforts for victims of unprecedented floods that have affected millions of people.

### **Economic Front:**

**Afghanistan** has discovered an oilfield with an estimated 1.8 billion barrels in the north of the war-ravaged country, where U.S. and other foreign forces are trying to tame a Taliban-led insurgency.

### **Social Front:**

In eastern **Afghanistan**, hundreds of people have taken to the streets to protest against the mounting civilian death toll in US-led raids in the war-torn country. The Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled announced that 800 people would be provided vocational training in five provinces as part of efforts to alleviate poverty in the country. The war-torn **Afghanistan** has been ranked top for having the world's least-secure food supplies, according to a survey of 163 nations.

## **INDIA**

### **Political Front:**



सत्यमेव जयते

The Cabinet has approved almost all the key recommendations made by the Parliamentary Standing Committee that examined the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Bill, 2010. However, it rejected a recommendation for addition of a word "and" between Clause 17(A) and (B) which talks about the nuclear power plant operator's right to recourse for compensation from supplier in the event of an accident. The recommendation for addition of the word had triggered objections from BJP and Left parties which said it would dilute the operator's right to seek compensation from the supplier. Left parties, the RJD and the SP accused the Congress of striking a deal with BJP on support for the Civil Nuclear Bill in lieu of giving a clean chit to Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi in the Sohrabuddin Sheikh Encounter case.

**Indian** PM has expressed his readiness to go for dialogues in order to tackle various issues like Maoist insurgency, Kashmir issue or conflicts with *Pakistan*. Two days after his proposal for dialogue and urge to the Maoists to abjure violence, top Maoist leader suggested a three-month ceasefire by both sides and talks for a peace process. In the meantime the chairman of the

moderate faction of the Hürriyet Conference, Mir Waiz Umer Farooq, has called for withdrawal of the troops and release of political prisoners as a pre-condition for talks with *New Delhi*. A suspended policeman hurled a shoe at Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at the Independence Day function.

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

**Indian** PM called up his *Pakistani* counterpart and offered assistance over and above the initial proposal of \$5 million. *Pakistan* initially refused to accept **Indian** grant but accepted it later.

### **Economic Front:**

**India's** exports grew by 13.2 % in July to \$16.24 billion compared with the corresponding month of the previous fiscal. Indian economists seem to be satisfied with tremendous growth in the manufacturing, banking and services sectors in **India**.

**Social Front:**

A day after getting the August 31, 2010 deadline from the Centre to resolve security-related issues attached to Black Berry smart phone, its maker Research In Motion (RIM) reportedly agreed to provide some technical solution to allow access to its encrypted services to **Indian** security agencies. But Home Ministry sources said it would deem the matter resolved only after a technical evaluation. The West Bengal government has declared 11 districts of the state as drought-hit and allocated Rs 50 crore to tackle the situation caused by a rain deficit of 30 %.

**EAST ASIA****Political Front:**

**Indonesian** President has signaled his support for raising the number of votes a party needs to earn a seat in the House as it would make the presidential system more compatible with a simplified multiparty system.

**Vietnamese** Prime Minister has called on police to ensure no alternative political parties are formed that might threaten the control of the communist government. Reports from recent **Thai-Cambodian** Joint Boundary Committee (JBC) meetings were not considered by MPs in Parliament after pressure from a nationalist group protesting over the border dispute.

**Geo-strategic Front:**

**Malaysian** Ambassador to **Indonesia** said that it would be up to the foreign ministers of both nations to decide on the best time to negotiate **Indonesia-Malaysia** border disputes following a recent flare-up in the Tanjung Berakit waters of Riau Island province.

**Malaysian** Relief Agency (MRA) has launched 'Pakistan Flood Relief Fund', to help millions of victims displaced by the worst floods in the country.

**Philippine** Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo said that he has already recommended to the Malacanang presidential palace the immediate review of the controversial bilateral defense pact between the **Philippines** and the *United States*. The review will be conducted to particularly look into the jurisdiction for offenses that have been committed by the U.S. troops in the Southeast Asian country, and not necessarily to terminate the agreement. Meanwhile the **Thai** government has asked other ASEAN countries not to intervene in the Preah Vihear conflict and allow **Cambodia** and **Thailand** to settle the matter themselves. However the **Cambodian** government has asked the chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to mediate **Cambodia's** border dispute with **Thailand**.

**Economic Front:**

**Indonesia's** equity index has increased to 22-%. Meanwhile the government-owned Krakatau has formalized a \$6 billion joint venture with *South Korea's* Pohang Iron and Steel, known as Posco, to build a steel mill in Cilegon, Banten. **Indonesian** President said that his country should aim to hit growth of 7.7 % in four years, which he said would create 10.7 million new jobs and slash poverty by 8-10 %.

In **Malaysia** Deputy President of UMNO has said that good economic management was the best recipe for Muslims to move ahead economically. Penang Inter-national Halal Hub (PIHH) Malaysia has announced to provide technical advice and consultancy on establishment of Halal industrial parks in *Pakistan*.

**Cambodia** has started looking into nuclear power as a future energy source to meet rising domestic demand, although construction of a plant is still years away. **Singaporean** President has expressed commitment to stay a close partner in China's development process, as both countries celebrate 20 years of diplomatic ties this year.



**Social Front:**

**Malaysian** PM has called upon *Chinese* community to play a leading role in helping the country to become a high-income economy.

A total of 27 provinces nationwide are experiencing severe dry conditions with damages on a vast expanse of farmland in **Thailand**. Meanwhile two months of rainy season have left many places of **Vietnam** in drought.

A senior leader of the *Moro Islamic Liberation Front* (MILF) said that they don't see a possibility of any solution to the decade-old conflict in southern **Philippines** if President Benigno Aquino III would do nothing with the Constitution.

**CHINA****Political Front:**

**China's** top political advisor has called for members from the country's advisory body to come up with more innovative proposals to promote the country's social and economic development. A senior official of the Communist Party of **China** (CPC) has urged greater efforts to make the training of officials more pertinent to and effective in raising their skills at governing. The Political Bureau of the Communist Party of **China** (CPC) Central Committee has instructed CPC local branches to be more open in Party affairs. A senior official of the Communist Party of China (CPC) has urged greater efforts to implement democratic management in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries.

**Geo-strategic Front:**

**China** enjoys cordial ties with *Cambodia* particularly in economic terms. **Chinese** Defense Minister and his *Serbian* counterpart have agreed to enhance personnel and medical exchanges to further deepen bilateral military ties. *Singapore*, *Mongolia* and *Chili* have expressed willingness to enhance economic collaboration with **China**.

The *Indian* government has expressed its desire to double bilateral trade with **China** within four years. Meanwhile trade between **China** and *Russia* has returned to the fast track in 2010, as bilateral trade volume reached 30.7 billion U.S. dollars from January to July.

**China** has sent second batch of humanitarian aid worth 50 million Yuan to *Pakistan*. **China** has also delivered equipment worth 20 million Yuan to **Russia** to help fight a series of menacing fires.

**China** has opened a research center dedicated to the studies of *Sino-African* economic and trade cooperation. Meanwhile **China** and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have been working on signing an agreement on nuclear safety.

**Chinese** Vice President has called for more efforts to boost *Sino-Japanese* exchanges and cooperation among local governments and sister cities. Meanwhile **China** has proposed setting up a maritime emergency hotline with *Japan* to prevent civilian and military clashes in the East China Sea and other waters.

The U.S. Defense Department has released a delayed annual report on **China's** military, with a slight change to the title indicating increased coverage of security developments in addition to its assessment of **China's** military power. **Chinese** experts declared it to be an “unprofessional” report.

An annual survey has indicated that more **Chinese** and *Japanese* people hold favorable impressions about each others' countries.

**Economic Front:**

**China's** Supreme People's Court (SPC) has issued a set of regulations providing a detailed ruling basis for cases involving foreign investment companies regarding share transfer, anonymous investment and other

procedures. Most **China**-related merger and acquisition deals have rebounded strongly in the first half of the year, and set the scene for robust activities for the remainder of 2010 and into 2011. The People's Bank of **China** (PBOC) has announced to allow overseas financial institutions to invest in the country's inter-bank bond market on a trial scheme as an effort to further promote Yuan cross-border trade settlement. **China's** foreign direct investment (FDI) for July has surged by 29 % from a year earlier. The figure represents the second highest monthly growth this year and highlights the confidence of foreign businesses operating in **China** despite recent suggestions about a challenging investment climate. Meanwhile business revenues of **China's** state-owned enterprises rose 38.8 % in the first seven months from the same period last year. Increase in **Chinese** stock exchange index has also been observed.

World-wide floods and destruction of wheat crop has not affected the price of grain in **China** as the country has got large reserve of grain. Chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in **China** has appreciated **Chinese** business climate for being more open and transparent than that of the West. Meanwhile companies from the **Chinese** mainland manufacturing hub of Guangdong have signed deals worth 2.99 billion U.S. dollars with *Taiwanese* counterparts.

### **Social Front:**

**China** has recorded more than 26,000 geological disasters in the first seven months of this year, nearly 10 times the number in the same period last year. **Chinese** vice Premier has stressed the importance of preventing major workplace accidents after mass casualties were reported in a series of disasters around the country.

The rapidly aging population in **China** has been regarded as a great threat to the sustainability of the health insurance fund. **China's** top political advisor has called a local economic aid project a model for boosting the development of areas inhabited by ethnic minorities. **Chinese** experts have refuted Pentagon report claiming that **China** has been trying to develop cyber warfare capabilities.

**Tibet** has received 3.3 million domestic and overseas tourists this year to July, 21.9 % more than a year earlier. Meanwhile a senior publicity official of the Communist Party of **China** (CPC) has called for continuing efforts to fight against vulgarity in cultural products and stressed that social benefits of cultural products should always be placed before economic benefits.

### **HONGKONG & MACAU**

Three world-class planning teams unveiled their conceptual plans for **Hong Kong's** West Kowloon Cultural District, where hope has been placed to put the city further into the center of the international art map.

**Hong Kong** Monetary Authority has welcomed the People's Bank of China's approval of Renminbi Clearing Bank and other eligible institutions outside the **Chinese** mainland to invest in the mainland's inter-bank bond market. **Hong Kong's** unemployment rate fell to 4.3 % in the May to July period, from 4.6 % in April-June, and recorded the lowest figure since the November 2008 to January 2009 quarter.

Results of an official survey released recently showed that the total value of **Macao's** retail sales for the second quarter of 2010 amounted to 6.84 billion patacas (855 million U.S. dollars), increasing by 32 % year- on-year.

### **KOREA**

#### **Political Front:**



A **South Korean** pastor has been arrested for making an unauthorized trip to North Korea where he criticized his country's president for causing "dark clouds of a war" to hang over the divided peninsula.

**Geo-strategic Front:**

*Japanese* Prime Minister has apologized for suffering his nation caused in World War II at an annual memorial for the war dead held at Tokyo's Budokan arena. **South Korea** has been repeatedly asked to make a choice whether or not to join the international effort to put more pressure on **Iran** for refusing to suspend its nuclear program.

**North Korea** said it has reached a consensus with *China* concerning the resumption of international talks on ending its nuclear arms program.

**Economic Front:**

**South Korean** President has called for a special tax to cover the costs of eventual **Korean** unification as **North Korea** threatened to respond to a U.S.-**South Korea** military drill with "the severest punishment." Samsung Heavy Industries Co. has started manufacturing wind turbines in **South Korea** that can generate 500 mega watts.

**Social Front:**

**North Korea** has opened a Twitter Inc. account as the communist country turns to new technology to spread statements denouncing the U.S. and **South Korea** previously made through state media. Fake marriage has become a vehicle being used by ineligible foreigners to get legal residential status in **Korea**, challenging the most popular method of document fabrication. The population of Seoul has increased 4.3 times and the size of the capital has doubled over the last half a century.



**JAPAN**

**Political Front:**

All 59 newly elected members of the Upper House have offered to give back part of their salaries for the month of July covering the days before they began working as lawmakers. **Japanese** PM has clearly stated that he would not reinstate veteran politician Ozawa, to his old post of secretary-general of the Democratic Party of **Japan** even if he wins the party's leadership election next month. A 19-year-old U.S. Marine has been arrested on suspicion of stealing and a 33-year-old U.S. airman for an alleged traffic violation in separate cases in Okinawa Prefecture.

**Geo-strategic Front:**

A 68-year-old **Japanese** man kidnapped in March by leftist guerrillas in *Colombia* was freed after a fierce gun battle and aerial bombardment.

**Economic Front:**

A recently conducted survey revealed that nearly 80 % of 107 major companies expect **Japan's** economy to weaken soon, although 70 % see it expanding at the moment. **Japan** and *India* are expected to reach a free-trade agreement by the end of this year. The pace of recovery of the **Japanese** economy slowed substantially in the April-June period, dragged down by lackluster consumer spending. Mazda Motor Corp (7261.T) expects to recall more than half a million vehicles worldwide due to power-steering flaws.

**Social Front:**

Local governments have launched a drive to create natural habitats for two birds species namely; oriental storks and **Japanese** crested ibises. **Japan's** Labor Ministry has announced plans to expand an employment

assistance program for new graduates to more than 10,000 individuals a year from 2,400 currently. The number of heatstroke victims rushed to hospitals since May 31 totaled 31,579 nationwide. §

*Events of the week in*

## Africa zone

▶ WEST AFRICA; EAST AFRICA; CENTRAL AFRICA; SOUTHERN AFRICA

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

**West Africa:** The head of **Benin's** parliament has rejected a request by lawmakers to impeach President Boni Yayi, saying they failed to follow procedures.

**Guinea-Bissau's** President Malam Bacai Sanha has said his citizens are ashamed of being thought incapable of solving the coup-ridden nation's problems.

**In Nigeria** FBI Begins Training of EFCC Operatives Next Month, as officials of United States and **Nigerian** government met behind closed doors in Washington DC to explore ways to help the nation effectively tackle the problem of corruption, especially as it involves politically exposed persons (PEP).

**Nigerian** Federal Government has raised alarm over influx of illegal arms and expressed concern over the flooding ahead of next year's general elections.

After months of rumors and intense speculations, **Nigerian** President Goodluck Jonathan will formally declare his interest in the 2011 presidential race early next month. Meanwhile in Abuja the raging controversy over whether or not President Goodluck Jonathan should sign the amended constitution before it becomes operational is set to be settled as the Federal Government has decided to ask the Supreme Court to make a pronouncement on the matter.

**Elections: In Liberia** 2011 Elections Calendar is set to be released; **Liberians** and the political leaders, some of whom are desirous of contesting various positions next year, will know how the process will proceed and what they need to be doing.

**In Nigeria** Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Chairman Prof. Attahiru Jega has warned over the January elections, saying the commission is falling behind schedule in its preparations. Meanwhile President Goodluck Jonathan has said the Federal Government would put all machinery in motion to ensure that **Nigerians** in Diaspora can vote during elections that follow next year's general election.

**Central Africa: Congo-Kinshasa:** UN Secretary-General has condemned killing of three peacekeepers, and has called on the Government to swiftly bring perpetrators to justice.

Soldiers have arrested **two suspects** in the killings of three United Nations peacekeepers in the eastern **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**, a military spokesperson said.

**Rwanda:** Community Policing Will Make a Difference with a Report Released by Police Recently, With Statistics Covering Five Years (2005-2010) indicates that crime across the country has significantly gone down. The report shows the breakdown of the cases as murder, armed robbery; theft, corruption, etc.

**Elections: Rwandan** President Paul Kagame won another seven-year term in elections on 9 August, after already being in power for 15 years. He captured 93 percent of the vote by banning opposition parties and eliminating critical domestic news coverage, reports Human Rights Watch. Obama too has criticized **Rwanda's** Government saying he is "concerned" by disturbing acts by the **Rwandan** government in the run up to the country's elections that President Paul Kagame won.

**Southern Africa** : Troop request for *Somalia* is likely to fall on deaf ears as **South Africa** is unlikely to deploy soldiers in support of the **African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)**, as it did "not believe" in the political direction being followed to resolve the conflict, and there was no exit strategy.

**Southern African** leaders have put off confronting Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe for his refusal to abide by a regional court's ruling that rejected controversial land reforms in favor of a group of white farmers.

Related news to The Hague court, a trustee of Nelson Mandela's charity has resigned after revealing that he accepted diamonds from British supermodel **Naomi Campbell** in 1997.

The strikes of **South African** public servants for higher wages have taken a violent shape preventing some senior health workers and volunteers, from going to work and surgical procedures. The Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi warned strikers that are interrupting medical operations are committing murder.

Over a million teachers, nurses and other government workers have downed tools across **South Africa**, suspending public education and healthcare while their demands for better pay go head-to-head with government's reluctance to accede.

**Elections: South Africa's** largest Democratic Alliance (DA) party said last week it would merge with the small Independent Democrats (ID) party to challenge the ANC in the elections of 2014.



## HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN DOMESTIC POLITICS

**West Africa: In Ghana** a founding member of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Mr. Kofi Mintah, has commended President John Atta Mills and his government for maintaining their focus despite attempts to detract them.

In **Niger** in April, the United Nations World Food Programme estimated it would need 190 million dollars to respond to a food crisis threatening more than 7 million people in **Niger**. By July, the WFP had revised the amount needed upwards to \$371 million: a month later, the U.N. agency has been forced to scale back aid for lack of funds.

Also millions **Nigerians**, residents of Bagga village, in the central region of Tahoua, have been struggling to find enough food to eat. Granaries are empty and harvests are not due for another two months.

And the government revealed that this year again, **Niger** is short of food. Nearly half of the country's 15.2 million inhabitants are facing hunger due to failed harvests in 2009.

Human Rights Watch (HRW), released a report in which it identified the **Nigerian** Police as the most corrupt government institution, the effects of which a community of civil society organizations said, would undermine the 2011 General Elections.

**Central Africa:** **The Republic of Congo** celebrated 50 years of independence Sunday with a parade and ceremony in the capital, Brazzaville.

**Rwanda:** FEDERAL officials in Germany have charged Onesphore Rwabukombe over his alleged involvement in the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi in **Rwanda**. The 53-year old Rwabukombe, a former Bourgmestre (Mayor) of Muvumba Commune, now in the eastern province, is accused of Genocide and murder, as well as inciting killings.



As many as 58 people, most of them Rebel and members of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of **Rwanda** (FDLR) returned home voluntarily from the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, the **Rwandan** media reported.

A privately-owned broadcaster based in Kananga, capital of West Kasai Kasai province in **central DR Congo**, was evacuated from Kananga by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo (MONUSCO) after receiving multiple anonymous death threats.

**Southern Africa:** **Southern Africa** Development Community (SADC) Heads of State meeting in Namibia have been challenged to sign and ratify a protocol facilitating movement of persons by all SADC member states.

There is widespread and deep concern in **South Africa** that the ruling party and the government are seeking to introduce measures that will severely curtail the media freedoms guaranteed in the country's constitution.

## **HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND DOMESTIC POLITICS**

**West Africa:** The Energy Commission of **Ghana**, last week, played host to their **Nigerian** counterparts, the Energy Commission of **Nigeria** (ECN), who are in the country to collaborate with them in order to map out strategies for the efficient management of the energy sector in their respective countries and the sub-region.

**In Ghana** foreigners using cyanide in galamsey and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have cautioned communities to report any foreigners engaged in illegal gold mining in their communities to the nearest EPA office and the police.

While a team of 14 medical experts from **Cuba** have arrived in the country to augment the efforts of an eight member Cuban team already in the country to eradicate malaria which is a collaboration between **Ghana** and **Cuba** that begun in 2007.

The Western Regional Office of the **Ghana** Health Service (GHS) last week assured the general public that, the HINI vaccines injected against contracting the HINI swine flu is very safe.

**In Senegal** many women refuse to take mentally disabled children on public transport; families hide children with mental or neurological disorders, and some parents disown them outright. Such is the stigma of having a child with these widely misunderstood illnesses.

Aid agencies in **Niger and Chad** have begun giving tens of thousands of malnourished children a product called Plumpy'doz to save them from sliding into often-fatal severe malnutrition.

**In Nigeria**, Out of a population of about 140 million Nigerians, only 17.2 per cent have access to pipe borne water, a United States government report has said.

The UN Office for Outer Space Affairs and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) have agreed to promote the use of scientific information obtained from space-based facilities to better manage **disasters in Africa**, during a three-day meeting in Addis Ababa last month (6-9 July).

**Southern Africa:** In **southern Africa**, multiple concurrent partnerships (MCPs) prevention campaigns highlighting the **HIV risks** of having more than one partner at the same time have largely targeted heterosexuals and ignored the fact that men who have sex with men also have multiple partners.

Aids activists in **Swaziland** have criticized a top adviser to King Mswati III for saying the country's **HIV epidemic** is being exaggerated for the benefit of pharmaceutical firms.

## POLITICAL ECONOMY



**West Africa: Ghana:** Oil firm **Kosmos Energy** announced last week it had cancelled a deal to sell its stakes in **Ghana's** Jubilee oilfield to ExxonMobil, an accord that met fierce resistance within the West African state.

**Ghana** has 1.2 trillion cube feet of gas in the Jubilee field, which could meet the requirement of 15,000 barrels of crude oil needed to operate the Aboadze Thermal Plant.

**Liberia:** President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has sent a new concession agreement that will provide at least 35,000 direct jobs for **Liberians** to the National Legislature for ratification. The investment which is put at US\$1.6 billion covers an area of 500,000, and will run through five South-eastern Counties of Sinoe, Grand Kru and Maryland as well as Rivercess and River Gee.

**Ivory Coast** eyes position as top cocoa grinder Investments, cocoa processing facilities in the country, already the No. 1 grower of the main ingredient in chocolate, have pushed its share of the global grind up sharply since 2008 and could allow it to overtake the *Netherlands* for the top spot as early as next season.

That has interest Singapore commodities firm Olam International said that it will invest \$43.5 million in **Cote d'Ivoire** to set up a greenfield cocoa processing facility in Abidjan as well as for a warehousing facility.

**Nigeria's** crude oil export, which had stabilized at 2.5 million barrels per day in the last three weeks, has declined as Shell declared force majeure on the export of Bonny Light following production deferment that resulted from a recent attack on its pipelines in Rivers State.

While NATIONAL Economic Management Team, NEMT, and the World Bank, last week, endorsed a pact with stakeholders in the public and private sector to stem youth unemployment in the country.

**China** has supported **Ghana's** Energy Commission with \$300 million grant to extend electricity to rural communities in Upper West, Upper East and Northern Regions.

The Ministry of Commerce in China has launched the **China-Africa Research Center**, a think-tank focused on the economies of the two regions, to further bolster trade relations with **Africa**.

**SUB-Saharan Africa** is weathering the global downturn better than most other parts of the world and is projected to grow by 3.8% and 4.5% this year and next year respectively, faster than *Latin America, Europe and Central Asia*.

**Central Africa: Gabon: France** can no longer rely on its cozy relationship with **Gabon**, announced the country's President, Ali Bongo Ondimba. His statement comes just days after the West African nation signed huge contracts with *India and Singapore*.

**Rwanda's** coffee has earned \$ 23.5 million from exporting 8707 tons of green coffee an official has said. This is higher than 7810 tons valued at \$ 19 million that were exported in the corresponding period last year to earn a record of \$ 68 million dollars from its coffee exports. §

*Events of the week in*

## Euro Americas zone

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

### WESTERN EUROPE

#### *Political Issues*

Elections are over but mutual understanding of creating a government is yet to happen in **Belgium**. The struggle evolves around the lack of compromises between the two ends of the country. For the Flemish parties, who are keen to see more powers devolved to the regions, are pushing for more conditions to be included such as a reward and punishment system for entities depending on whether they manage to achieve certain pre-defined objectives. French-speaking parties, for their part, are demanding that the state reform, which would be the sixth in the country's history, does not touch the subsidies that flow into their poorer region from richer Flanders and that no part of the population is left less well off by the reforms.

Throw in your support or face the judgment of voters was the strong signal sent by **Italian** Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi to the members of his coalition that recently slipped away. **Italian** ruling coalition government has been at chaos as coalition partner failed to support certain legislation.

The **Greek** government has reassured Arab friends that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visit only aimed at improving *Greek-Israeli* relations for the good of **Greece** and all countries in the Middle East and does not exclude our close co-operation with the Arab world.

Whether or not **French** President Sarkozy wants to use his new campaign on Roma as political stunt should be judged by the people. The campaign though geared at sanitising the street of **France** from delinquency will fall short of target because expelled Roma can with ease and legally return to **France**. EU said the expulsion case is under its radar and watching closely if **France** is violating EU law of free movement of citizens.

### **Economic Issues**

**Europe** is facing a general austerity syndrome, characterized by budget and deficit cut, the syndrome was triggered by the **Greek** financial crisis. If EU countries must reduce budget, Brussels should be no exemption. There has been call for reducing EU mushrooming institutions because that in itself increases spending.

According to the **German** central bank, **Germany's** economy is on course to grow by about 3 percent this year after a spectacular second-quarter growth spurt. The growth has been spurred by strong export, prudent financial policies and better way of handling economic crisis as compared to other giant economies.

According to the new **British** government, saving the economy from a wrong direction should be the responsibility of all **Britons**. Thus, according to suggestion posted on the Treasury ministry website, abolishing the monarchy, opening Parliament for just four days a month, adjusting legislators' pay accordingly and to have prisoners generate cheap electricity by hooking up gym equipment to the power grid are ways of solving the problem.

Called the generous state where the unemployed can still survive, **Denmark** is taking a new turn by slashing unemployment benefits from four to two years. The new rule requires people to stick to job at their disposal than being laid off with the hope of getting government's benefit.

### **Social/Humanitarian Issue**

The humanitarian crisis in *Pakistan* is brewing accusation of negligence among developed nations expected to be more benevolent amid the critical situations. The EU is rejecting the misinformation about its humanitarian aid, rather defended itself as the first on spot and has expended than any on ground. An unnamed Taliban group is reported to have donated more than what **Germany** the EU largest economy donated.

The concern of **EU** over the wildfire accidents across *Russia* is an indication that in a Globalized world, calamities are mutually attended to. The European Commission has granted €9,589 to help *Russia* as part of its humanitarian aid. *Russia* however is not dependent on EU mechanism but relied on bilateral help from **EU** friendly states.

**German** court has charged a former *Rwandan* mayor living in **Germany** for massacre and inciting killings the country's 1994 genocide. It more likely the first of its kind for Germany to exercise universal jurisdiction on crime committed elsewhere.

The **British** government warns *Libyan* authority to respect the feeling of relative of victims of 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 above Lockerbie, **Scotland**. It is believe that Libya is set to celebrate one year to the release of Abdel Baset Al-Megrahi. His release continues to fan diplomatic rattle within London, Dublin and Washington.

A study says female managers in **Britain** earn 10,000 pounds (\$15,600) a year less than their male counterparts, and at current rates will wait 57 years to achieve parity.

### **Food, Environment and Energy Issue**

The **European** General Court has ordered a suspension of the **EU's** seal product ban just as the regulation was due to enter



into force. *Canadian* Inuit sent a petition to the court against the **EU** ban, arguing that the ban will affect their economy. For the **EU** the ban is more to protect wildlife and preservation of animals affected.

### **Geostrategic Issues**

The **EU** has again reminded its member of Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) less expensive and more timely than allowing cross border dispute to always end in the court, which is not only costly and time-consuming, but potentially equipped to destroy profitable business relationships.

The **EU** an integral of Quartet is geared up to bring Palestinians and Israelis back to the negotiation table. Although there is skepticism for the new talks as conditions from both sides are still unsettled.

The office of the **EU** foreign policy headed by Chief Catherine Ashton is yet to gained full status as **EU** representation in international organization like the UN. Chief Catherine Ashton could not speak at the UN on *EU-Pakistan* humanitarian effort because her office is yet to have full speaking rights at the international forum.

## **SOUTHEAST EUROPE**

### **Political Issues**

If **Albania** must overcome its political stalemate then there is no option than electoral reforms. This is the suggestion from the opposition parties to the ruling party. **Albania** parliament has long been unsettled due to the political doubt between opposition and ruling parties. The political standoff is not just affecting the domestic politics but also endangering **Albania-EU** integration.

Meanwhile, **Albanian** President Topi has returned property law to parliament for review, a development welcomed by the opposition. While on a separate development, the government decided to increase incomes for the unemployed by 3.5%, to about 60 euros a month.

The international community is demanding **Bosnia** to create a common and concerted police force that will be forceful enough to combat corruption and crime. This demand came amid the report of the US State Department's annual report jettisoning the current structure in the country as not worthwhile to meet the challenges, especially of a global threat, such as terrorism and drug trafficking. Such a common police force is rejected by Republika Srpska Prime Minister Milorad Dodik.

ICJ's ruling over **Kosovo** is becoming a precedent for other seeking independence. **Bosnia and Herzegovina's** (BiH) Prime Minister Nikola Spiric said now that the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has ruled in favour of **Kosovo's** independence, this would open the path for RS's independence.

**Croatian** President Josipovic announced he would strip Glavas's rank of major-general. The move came after the Supreme Court upheld his conviction for war crimes committed against **Serbian** civilians during the 1991-1995 conflict.

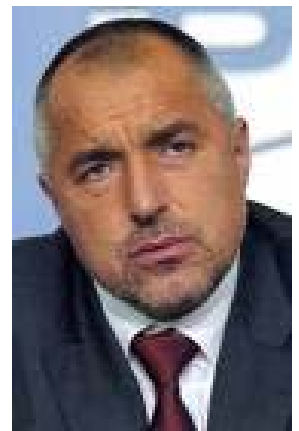
**Kosovo** Prime Minister Hashim Thaci has made a strong statement that for no reason will Serb-dominated northern **Kosovo** becomes autonomous and claim of independence is simply a hoax. The region has been problematic and backed by **Serbia**, a situation often irritating Pristina. Nevertheless, tussle continues between **Serbia** and **Kosovo** even after the ICJ's rulings that cleared **Kosovo** from violation of international law.

### **Economic Issues**

In **Bulgaria**, Prime Minister Boyko Borisov announced that the country will absorb at least 50% of the EU funds set aside in the 2007-2013 budget frameworks.

### **Geostrategic Issues**

Becoming an integral of the EU visa liberalization scheme is not far fetch, but only attainable if **Bosnia** must institute a viable structure to prevent corruption and co-ordinate to fight



against corruption.

**Russia** is gotten itself another spy roll with **Romania**, at first *Russia* expelled **Romanian** first secretary in Russia before Bucharest did same to Russia first secretary in **Romania**. Time will tell if the diplomatic clash will not exacerbate.

Hastily written resolution by **Serbia** sent to UN could be diplomatically catastrophic for Belgrade as the resolution has fell short to garner support of UN members and even offended the EU. On this backdrop comes the debate in **Serbia** over the slow pace of the country's EU accession. The fact is that **Serbia** has been jumping from one trouble to another and **Kosovo** has been a major determinant issue associated with **Serbia**-EU accession.

## RUSSIA & ITS NEIGHBORS

### *Political Issues*

**Russians** should be having just one president instead of presidents across the country. President Ramzan Kadyrov of Chechnya is asking for an approval from lower house of the **Russian** parliament, the State Duma to change the status of president to head of region, doing this will give prestige to the president sitting in Moscow.

**Poland** and **Hungary** lead other nine EU members challenging the way their public debt is calculated and demanding for a reform. The countries want that the bloc's members be allowed to account for the cost of overhauling their pension systems.

The **Polish** Prime Minister Donald Tusk is rolling out a reform package covering amendments to anti-corruption, lobbying legislation and rules on responsibility for public finance discipline. Meanwhile, Warsaw is firm at protecting EU's Cohesion Policy that helps countries like **Poland** to revive their economies.

Even though 70% of **Czechs** have rejected the idea of placing another U.S. early-warning system component in the country, the government is defying the public say. The rejection idea is supposedly spearheaded by the Communist Youth Union (KSM)

On a separate development, **Czech** new Prime Minister, Petr Necas is set to normalize relations with Brussels and more importantly with neighbors like **Germany**

**Hungarian** Prime Minister Viktor Orban whose centre-right party, Fidesz won the last elections and now forms the government is under watchful eye of Transparency International. The organization is voicing numerous concerns over the cabinet's legislative practice and staffing policies.

### *Economic Issues*

**Russian** energy giant, Gazprom recorded 42 percent profit hike, estimated around \$1.501 billion as compared to U.S. GAAP. The record slightly exceeded analysts' expectations.

In comparison to other BRIC members, according to **Russia's** statistical agency Rosstat, **Russian** economy recorded the lowest GDP rise. Brazil's GDP rose by 11.3 percent, China's by 10.3 percent, India's by 8.9 percent and Russia's GDP stood at 5.2 percent.

**Polish** economy continues to experience a soar as GDP rises by 3%.

**Poland** is credited at the sole EU nation to have avoided the recent recession.

On top of that, **Poland** hopes to benefit from hosting the next Euro 2012 soccer championship expected to generate some 28 billion zlotys (\$9.1 billion) for Poland's economy.



Economic growth will also be true for **Ukraine** with a GDP boost of 3.9%.

The **Czech** government's borrowing costs dropped to an all-time low at a sale of 15-year bonds as the country's pledge to halve the size of its budget deficit and a plan to sell bonds in Euros boosted demand for its koruna debt. Meanwhile the new centre-right government is moving at fulfilling its election promises of fiscal responsibility and rooting out corruption in state administration and in the awarding of public contracts.

**Slovak** government has reiterated and defended its position for not supporting the EU's €10 billion in bilateral loans over the next three years for Euro zone countries.

**Latvia's** economy is enjoying a good financial incentive atmosphere as World Bank and EU rebound the economy with another loan tranche of 105.8 million euros (135.6 million US dollars). The fund is geared at walking the small Baltic state out of recession, while its GDP rise of 13.4 per cent, suggesting recession is subsiding.

Despite the political hubbub, **Belarusian** and the **Russian** railway enterprises are coordinating east-west-east freight traffic, including trans-shipment in Belarus, with the participation of privately-licensed **Polish** carriers.

### *Social/Humanitarian Issue*

**Russian** securities hopes to start an operation in southern **Russia** after massive bomb wound security agents. Fighting extremism has become a serious concern for the **Russian** government.

The extent and impact of **Russian** mafia became more highlighted by a report that shows how jobs in police department and judiciary are bought by **Russian** mafia for more than £30,000. Thus, this could buttress the view that **Russian** system is enveloped in corruption.

UN's report has it that **Russia** is already the third largest country in the world in terms of the number of drug addicts among citizens, but a recent poll conducted by Public Opinion Research centre suggests that almost three quarters of respondents said they know no-one around them on drug.

Authorities in Moscow have shortened the period during which shops may sell hard alcohol in line with the Kremlin-led campaign to crack down on alcohol abuse.

The **Slovak** government under the banner of NATO is expected to send relief goods to *Pakistan* flood areas.

**Belarusian** media houses still face government censorship and interference and such is becoming more elaborate as the nation prepares for next presidential election.

In **Hungary**, government is also defending the new media overhaul as non-infringement on the freedom of the press. The state wants all media body responsible for frequency tenders under one umbrella.

### *Food, Environment and Energy Issue*

**Russia's** recent natural disaster received international attention with different form of humanitarian assistance. But as the wildfire get subverted foreign volunteers as fire-fighters have started leaving **Russia**, their effort was gratified by Moscow authority. Meanwhile, **Russia's** liberal opposition is shouldering the blame of the outbreak of the fire on Prime Minister Putin.

**Russia** at last will be fulfilling its responsibility and thus regain its good image before the *Iranian* authorities if the Bushehr nuclear plant gets fuelled. The plant is expected to become operative soon and it has become another avenue of debate in the west over *Iranian* nuclear dilemma.

**Ukraine**, the world's sixth largest exporter of wheat and barley is set to join its Russia neighbor by limiting wheat and barley exports to 3.5 million tons till end of the year. Like **Russia**, Kiev's farmlands were hit by a severe drought.



### **Geostrategic Issues**

The summit held at the **Russian** Black Sea resort of Sochi gave ample opportunity to **Russia** to discuss issues of mutual concern. The countries at the summit agreed on co-operation in trade, fighting terrorism, drug trafficking and international crimes. Similarly, Moscow hope to revive its Soviet-era projects in the region as in the provision of energy such as electricity which is crucial to *Pakistan* and *Afghanistan*.

Recognition of Abkhazia is becoming important for **Russia** and Moscow worries over **Belarus** nonchalant attitude to this issue. Moscow is set to publish **Belarusian** President Lukashenko's promise on Abkhazia during the last Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) summit. Lukashenko ties his reluctance to **Russia's** disturbing pressure. There has been an up and down in **Russia-Belarus** relations recently and diplomatic calmness is necessary for the two members of a trilateral Custom Union.

**Russia** is expected to get its military presence in Armenia extended for another twenty four (24) years. *Armenia* tends to strengthen its ties with Russia and such prolong presence of **Russia** might be far-reaching for (*Azerbaijan* and *Turkey*) in the neighborhood.

**Slovak** President Ivan Gasparovic is reassuring the Israel's new Ambassador Alexander Ben-Zvi of good relations based on international policy and the Mideast peace process amid international condemnation of Israel over its assault on Turkish flotilla

### **US/CANADA**

#### **Political Issues**

Obama's rating could be plummeting and Congress not on public good book, yet the democrat party believes there are chances for them to perform better than expected in the midterm election contrary to the projected rightist views of the republican tea party conservatives. Democrat claims Americans are moderate and not necessarily ready for fringe politics.

Before going for his personal recess, Obama lashed out at republican for baiting voters with untrue promises, which according to him will further ditch the economy.

The political jiggles being played by republicans along side the tea party suggests that race is not an oblivious issue on **American** political landscape. The recent Ethics troubles facing Democrats Congressmen is believed to have been accentuated because of the race of the culprits and more deeply to demonise democrat party and Obama's government as a failed administration.

Young Senators or new elected members of the Senate are demanding for change against the establishment. They project the view that the establishment is out of touch from the reality and their retrogressive ideas should be buried for new initiatives. Another issue of concern is earmark for Senators believe to be a waste and should be banned.

Obama administration wants a thorough review of offshore water drilling, as a measure to caution against the repetition of Gulf of Mexico oil spill. Even though sizeable number of Americans will want drilling to continue despite huge criticism of BP, yet the industry experts fear a moratorium would be worrisome for the economy.

It is increasingly becoming evident that the construction of a mosque at Ground Zero is taking a political posture, drawing American president into a local issue. Despite the huge criticism by the right and republican, President Obama stood his ground that construction of the mosque is legal and he holds no



apology to his critics. The mosque debate has however divided democrats, and muddy particularly for Senators seeking re-election.

The fluctuation in **Canadian** party rating has become a persistence phenomenon guarded by issue and circumstance. The latest poll by EKO shows that conservatives have clawed back lead after drop in approval over census issue.

### **Economic Issues**

Economic uncertainty is brewing **Americans'** ire against the government, characterised by lower approval for Obama's handling of the economy. **Americans** are disillusioned that Obama could not fulfil his promise of revitalising the economy. The disenchantment could be hideous during the midterm election.

**Canadian** economy like other giant economies is facing daunting situation as wholesale and housing sector gets affected, generally the economy is experiencing a slow motion growth.

Amid a final stage of inking over 8 billion euros free trade agreement between **Canada** and EU, Ottawa has petitioned EU before WTO for its new law banning seal. **Canada** says it is defending Atlantic communities that rely on the seal trade for survival, while the European Parliament has sided with radical animal rights lobbyists.



### **Social/Humanitarian Issue**

The fact that Obama approved the construction of mosque at Ground Zero has further awakened the erroneous view that the president is a Muslim and hiding his identity as a Christian. According to PEW survey, the view is largely due to media misinformation.

### **Food, Environment and Energy Issue**

President Obama might be having a bad rating for his handling of the economy, but not for the oil spill at the Gulf of Mexico. Sizeable number of Americans believe the spill was a national problem and approved of the president handling. Meanwhile, confidence in BP is recovering slowing after the seal, though scepticism over safety of seafood remains. Meanwhile the number of people petitioning BP and other major defendants involved with the spill, for compensation has increased for contributing to joblessness and environmental degradation.

For many it is no more sensational that global warming and climate change are responsible for the world unfolding natural disasters. This however does not bury sceptics from arguing that massive emission of carbon dioxide is in no way accountable for the woes the world now faces.

**Canadian** opposition party accuses the ruling minority government of defying environmental warning about the oil sand exploration. The opposition reports that the exploration is sensitive to fresh water and could be hazardous to health.

### **Geostrategic Issues**

The flood in *Pakistan* is giving a new direction to **US-Pakistan** relations. Washington is forced by the natural disaster to be more focused on humanitarian assistance than being concern on security issue. It is true that circumstance can also change strategic alliance and policy at any given time. **American** top civilian officer in the region hopes that the humanitarian assistance will help re-brand U.S image among disenchanted *Pakistanis*

The exit of **US** from *Iraq* is expected to create a void, which the Obama administration would rather fill with private civilian officers instead of military. The administration believes *Iraqi* government can now shoulder security responsibility though with helping hand from the United States which will be done by the private civilian officers.

Pentagon is raising caution flag over the increasingly military expansion of *China* in the Pacific, increase military budget and development of advanced military hardware. The concern is not just an issue for Washington but equally worrisome for Washington's allies in the region.

## LATIN AMERICA

### *Political Issues*

Although it is suitable for the economy at the moment, yet **Argentina's** lower house has passed an opposition backed bill to increase pensions till 82 percent, expected to be on same page as the country's minimum wage.

**Brazilians** are expected to have a new president by October after a tight election between President Lula's candidate Ms. Rousseff and a veteran politician Mr. Serra. Several polls suggest different ratings, but the bottom-line is that Ms. Rousseff is expected to replace Lula, on whose popularity she is garnering support.

Observers of the country might see the latest development in **Colombia** as a wrong start, while President Santos welcomes dialogue with FARC upon renunciation of violence, **Colombian** defense minister rejected negotiation as tantamount to approving the rebel's atrocity. Meanwhile, a **Colombian** court has rejected having US military base in **Colombia** on the ground that it lacks parliament's approval.

Legalization of drug is the on-going debate in **Mexico** after ex-President Fox suggested legalizing drug in bid to destabilize the drug economy. President Calderon however holds that such permission will further induct youth to drug addiction and he has also requested the help of the 31 **Mexican** governors for combating the menace of drug cartel.

**Venezuela's** international standing could make it difficult for Caracas to seek the repatriation of a **Venezuelan** serving jail sentence in *France* for terrorism. **Venezuelans** share dissimilar views on what Chavez's 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism is. Most argue it is geared at bettering their lives, while others believe it is a confused and vague concept invented by Chavez.

### *Economic Issues*

**Argentina** economy is recorded doing well than expected and according to polls, President Fernandez Kirchner is regaining favorite rating due to her reformed economic policies, thus distinct herself from unwise policies that ditched her husband, the former president.

Further growth of **Mexican** economy will depend on foreign investment but translating that into reality could be impaired by **Mexico's** political trouble. The government expects a 5% economic growth next year and GDP increase by 4.1% this year. Meanwhile, **Mexico** and **Turkey** enters a new phase of bilateral relations after both countries ink agreement on several sectors.

Is free trade zone a workable arrangement, as NAFTA members often move from one problem to another. **Mexico** a NAFTA member will be taxing U.S goods as retaliation for the rejection of **Mexican** trucks into the U.S.

### *Social/Humanitarian Issue*

In order to keep abreast with the increasingly science and technology growth, **Brazilian** government is set to invest \$23.4 billion US dollars in technological fields to boost this sector.



**Chile-China** relation is open for progress, trade ties has increased by 31% from \$17.42 billion in 2009. Upon expending around \$1 billion in rebuilding **Chile's** earthquake affected areas, *Chinese* businessmen have been invited to be integral of the hefty reconstruction.

Despite the **Colombian** court's ruling, Obama government has announced that it will continue its assistance to the **Colombian** government to combat drug trafficking and fighting rebel groups.

**Mexican** conservative and ruling National Action Party and the Catholic Church community were thrown into a tight corner after a majority Supreme Court ruling legalized same-sex marriage and adoption of children. **Mexico** will be second in the neighborhood upholding such law which to the Church undermines the fabric of the society.

### **Food, Environment and Energy Issue**

They are both members of BRIC and growing economies; this is an open truth for **Brazil** and *China*. **Brazil** being *China's* tenth largest trading partner is more interested to increase agricultural exports to *China* in due course. **Brazil** exchanges pork for Chinese fish.

### **Geostrategic Issues**

**Argentina** got the kudos of Washington for her effort over regional co-operation and attempt for resolving **Colombia-Venezuela** brawl.

In an effort to forge a new beginning between **Colombia** and **Venezuela**, both countries are at verge of inking trade and defense agreements as **Colombian** defense and trade ministers pay visit to Caracas

**US-Mexico** troublesome border might have to face a new reality as the US Congress increases the budget for militarization of the border, with the intention of replicating the drone offensive as being used in *Pakistan-Afghan* border.

**Venezuela** remains obstinate against U.S ambassador-nominee to Venezuela, Mr. Palmer is accused of unnecessarily interference in **Venezuela's** affair and thus he is non grata.

## **AUSTRALASIA**

### **Political Issues**

The battle for the seat of premier in on-going in **Australia** and elections outcome will determine if Aussies are ready to continue with a female prime minister or a male politician from a conservative Liberal party.

Whether to retain or drop monarchical heritage for a republic has been a long discourse for the **Australian** government and public. As elections roll to a close, the Labour party that has long wanted **Australia** to cease being under the *British* monarch, wants monarchy retained till the death of the current Queen of England. This view is not shared by monarchist conservative Liberal party having no qualms with the monarch.

### **Economic Issues**

A merger between **Australian** major iron ore company BHP Billiton and mining giant Rio Tinto has been reported abortive. The merger will have been a great financial success for **Australia** though a big concern for *EU* and *China*. §

