



Weekly Review of Select International Events

(19–25 September, 2016)

Central Asia

Kyrgyzstan's President Cancels Visit to US Due To Illness

President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev cancelled a visit to the US on September 19 for addressing the 71st UN General Assembly after he complained of chest pains on the plane that was enroute from Bishkek to New York. He discontinued his journey in Istanbul, Turkey. He went Russia for treatment on September 23.ⁱ

President Atambayev is 60 years of age and the doctors after initial medical examination suggested that he displayed signs of heart problems.ⁱⁱ He has been president of the country since 2011 and has reportedly said he would not seek re-election after completing the first term in office in 2017.ⁱⁱⁱ

In recent years, Kyrgyzstan seems to have come closer to Russia. It has joined the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) in August 2015 and hosts a Russian air base in the country. On the other hand, the country saw some differences in its relations with the US. Kyrgyzstan closed the US military base in the country in 2014. For more than twelve years, the facility remained main air transit and supply hub for the ISAF's operations in Afghanistan. The Kyrgyz government also cancelled a treaty on cooperation with the US in July 2015 over the US State Department giving human rights prize to a jailed dissident Azimjon Askarov. The agreement provided no taxes on the US aid to Kyrgyzstan.^{iv}

China – Domestic and PLA, Southeast Asia

1. As China takes greater stake in Central Asia, rewards bring their own risk¹

The recent attack on the Chinese embassy in Kyrgyzstan has underscored the security threats Chinese interests face in Central Asia, where growing investment links present a double-edged sword, analysts say. Mainland companies are taking a bigger, more visible stake in the region, becoming targets for militants in the process. But the money these firms bring is also pushing national governments to ensure stability, even during potentially rocky transitions of power, they say.

Last month an apparent suicide bomber drove a car into the Chinese embassy in Bishkek, killing himself and wounding at least three others. According to the Kyrgyz authorities, the attack was ordered by Uyghur militants based in Syria and carried out by a member of the East Turkestan Islamic Movement. China has long been a major driver of infrastructure and construction in Central Asia, a role set to intensify under Beijing's "One Belt, One Road" scheme. One landmark project is the Central Asia-China gas pipeline.

Already three pipelines are pumping natural gas from Turkmenistan to Xinjiang and a fourth pipeline passing through Kyrgyzstan is under construction, part of a vast system feeding energy to an estimated 500 million people on the mainland. One person in charge of gas projects in Central Asia, who did not want to be named, said his company had been negotiating with local governments to seek support from army to protect facilities and staff.

2. Bomb Blast Kills County Police Chief in Xinjiang's Hotan²

A county police chief was killed and three officers are believed to have died in China's restive region of Xinjiang on Sept. 10 when a bomb exploded in a house they were searching, local police told RFA's Uyghur Service. The police were raiding homes in a village in Guma (in Chinese, Pishan) County of Hotan (Hetian) Prefecture when a bomb exploded in the basement of a house they were searching that belonged to a family suspected of radical behavior, police from neighboring districts told RFA.

"What I know is that Gheyret Mamut was leading a group of four officers in a house-to-house search of No.23 Village of Kokterek Township. The house they were searching belonged to a blacklisted family and there was nobody in the house," said Turup Abbas, deputy chief of Guma County Police Department. "When they entered the cellar at the center of the house, suddenly a bomb exploded, and Gheyret Mamut died on the spot. Three of the officers were heavily injured," said Turup Abbas.

¹ Laura Zhou, "As China takes greater stake in Central Asia, rewards bring their own risk", *South China Morning Post*, 23 September 2016, at <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2022129/china-takes-greater-stake-central-asia-rewards-bring> (accessed 26 September 2016).

² Shohret Hoshur, "Bomb blast kills county chief in Xinjiang's Hotan", *Radio Free Asia*, 18 September 2016, at <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/uyghur-hotan-09182016105401.html> (accessed 26 September 2016).

3. China's Li Keqiang warns against protectionism in UN address³

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on Wednesday warned against the rise of protectionism and assured that China will press ahead with its opening-up policy during a speech given at the United Nations General Assembly. "In the course of economic globalisation, there may be certain groups and sectors that have been hit and affected," he said. "But we cannot give up eating for fear of choking," he added in alluding to a Chinese proverb. "Economic globalisation is in the long term interest of all countries," he said, "All parties must resolutely oppose all kinds of protectionism, and to uphold the free trade system of the World Trade Organisation."

After finishing his speech, Li had a brief exchange with Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who appeared at the corridor as Li took the exit. Li, who arrived in New York on Sunday for his first attendance to the global summit as a Chinese Premier, called on world leaders to uphold free trade. Li's statement came at a time of increasing concerns over the rise of anti-globalization following Britain's shock vote to re leave the European Union.

4. U.S., China agree to counter North Korea's nuclear tests⁴

President Obama and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang pledged in a meeting Monday to cooperate more fully to pressure North Korea to cease its nuclear weapons activity. The White House said the two leaders condemned North Korea's nuclear test on Sept. 9 and "resolved to strengthen coordination" to halt Pyongyang's nuclear work. The statement said those efforts would include work in the U.N. Security Council "and in law enforcement channels." A group of 19 Republican senators wrote to Mr. Obama last week, urging him to expand sanctions against North Korea and punish Chinese entities aiding Pyongyang.

5. PLA colonel who oversees quality control for aircraft carriers placed under corruption probe: sources⁵

China's military graft-busters are investigating the colonel in charge of quality control for its aircraft carriers on suspicion of corruption, two separate sources say. Chen Wenchao was placed under *shuanggui*, a form of interrogation, in recent days, with investigators looking into his handling of 170 million yuan (HK\$197 million) over several years, one source told the *South China Morning Post*. Chen, a senior colonel, is the chief quality control officer at the 048 Office, which handles new projects for China's aircraft carriers. He was previously an assistant in the navy's logistics department tasked with managing barracks construction.

³ Catherine Wong, "China's Li Keqiang warns against protectionism in UN address", *South China Morning Post*, 22 September 2016, at <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/policies-politics/article/2021408/chinas-li-warns-against-protectionism-un-address> (accessed 26 September 2016).

⁴ Dave Boyer, "U.S., China agree to counter North Korea's nuclear test", *The Washington Times*, 19 September 2016, at <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/sep/19/obama-chinas-li-keqiang-agree-counter-north-korea/> (accessed 26 September 2016).

⁵ Minnie Chan, "PLA Colonel who oversees quality control for aircraft carriers placed under corruption probe", *South China Morning Post*, 21 September 2016, at <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2021399/pla-colonel-who-oversees-quality-control-aircraft> (accessed 26 September 2016).

He was promoted to head of the navy's general hospital affairs department after finishing two major projects in Beijing's Fengtai district, one source said. Two years ago he was moved to the aircraft carrier office. "Chen's key problem is probably his involvement in barracks and dormitory projects," the source said, adding Chen's wife was a general manager of a building materials company. The second source told the *Post* that the investigation into Chen had been confirmed by the carrier office. "It's suspected that his fast promotion could be related to the buying and selling of military ranks in the army," he said. "It's risky to let such a person monitor quality control for China's home-made aircraft carrier construction."

European Union

Scorpene Data Leak

It was reported that the Scorpene submarine data leak might have happened at the office of the naval defence contractor DCNS in France. A preliminary inquiry shows that leak might have taken place in France and not in India. Both India and France are conducting inquiry of the data leak. The Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Sunil Lanba, reportedly said, "A high-level committee is inquiring into the leak from our side, and similarly, DCNS and the French government have also launched an inquiry. Based on this inquiry, we will see what needs to be done - whether any mitigation measures are required or not."

Tensions between Residents and Asylum Seekers Rise in Bautzen

Tensions between people and asylum seekers have been reported in Germany. It was reported that around 80 locals quarrelled with 20 young asylum seekers in Bautzen. Incidences of clashes are occurring in the country. As anti-immigrants sentiment is rising, far-right groups have received increased political and social support in Germany. Far-right and anti-immigrants parties have increased their electoral support in the country.

European Union Praises Myanmar on Human Rights

The European Union has recognized progress on human rights in Myanmar under the leadership of Aung San Suu Kyi. Federica Mogherini noted that Suu Kyi's progress from political prisoner to government powerful testimony to the incredible change Myanmar is going through. She also acknowledged that Myanmar government has taken measures to improve human rights and strengthen the peace process. It has also released political prisoners.

European Union

Developing countries set to dump controversial trade agreements with the EU following Brexit

Leading academics Christopher Stevens and Jane Kennan, from the Overseas Development Institute have estimated that developing countries in Africa and the Caribbean have increasingly become wary of Europe's situation post-Brexit vote and will hence no longer see any worth in being tied to dictatorial Brussels policies, now that the UK is no longer part of the bloc. This means that the EU's roll-out of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA), which are designed to create a free-trade zone between Europe, Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific might be at stake.

Tanzania has already ditched a proposed deal between Brussels and the East Africa Community (ECA) countries, citing the 'turmoil' engulfing the EU following the Brexit vote and the skewed terms of the agreement. The country's Foreign Affairs permanent secretary Aziz Mlima remarked, "Our experts have established that the way it has been crafted, the EPA will not benefit local industries in East Africa. Instead it will lead to their destruction as developed countries are likely to dominate the market."⁶ The two trade experts have predicted that a number of other African and Caribbean countries will follow suit, because for most Commonwealth countries Britain is by far the biggest market for their exports.

Even though Britain is no longer considered a 'dominant EU importer' from Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries, it does still 'absorb a significant share' of the goods those countries sell, they added.

UK will defend its own military interests and NATO against any EU army

In response to France and Germany's proposal last week of setting up a permanent defence structure for the EU, Britain recently remarked that it will resist new European Union defence proposals if it feels the new defence structure undermines NATO. Britain had been opposing establishment of a common defence plan for a long time. Now that Britain has voted to leave the EU, Paris and Berlin both decided to give the bloc a sense of purpose after the Brexit vote and also to counter the loss of the union's biggest defence spender.⁷

The new defence plans include a joint and permanent EU headquarters for civilian and military missions, possibly in Brussels, which London says will drain away finite resources when NATO already has its military command centre, also in Belgium.

Most EU members, including Britain, France and Germany, are also NATO allies. While not proposing an EU army, Paris and Berlin see security and defence cooperation as one of the few areas where the 27 EU governments could find common ground and show that the EU is still relevant after a British departure.

⁶ Gutteridge, Nick, "Not worth it anymore! Hammer blow for Juncker as nations dump EU trade deals post Brexit", *The Daily Express*, September 22, 2016, <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/713260/European-Union-EU-trade-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific-EPAs-TTIP-CETA-Brexit> accessed September 23, 2016.

⁷ "UK will defend its own military interests and NATO against any EU army", *The Daily Express*, September 22, 2016, <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/713453/Britain-defend-military-interests-against-EU-army> accessed September 23, 2016.

Meanwhile, Secretary of Defence, Michael Fallon, told The Times last week, that London would resist any attempts to duplicate infrastructure that already existed in NATO, also saying there could be no 'rival' to NATO.

British diplomats have also stressed their EU colleagues that London would oppose 'ideas that would hamper the relationship with NATO and Britain'. London supports working with EU militaries in some areas, such as in disaster relief or confronting cyber attacks. It welcomes more efficient security coordination between governments, which the EU proposals also seek to promote.

EU-India joint drug inspection may take off

The drug regulators of EU and India have in principle agreed to conduct joint inspections of pharmaceutical manufacturing units in India to 'avoid misunderstandings' as was in the case of GVK Bio.⁸ It must be remembered here that in July 2015, the EU had banned the marketing of around 700 generic medicines for alleged manipulations of clinical trials conducted by India's contract research from GVK Biosciences, after which the Indian government suspended the EU Free Trade Agreement (EUFTA) talks that were to resume in August. The move of agreeing to joint inspections is expected to help the Indian regulators learn about the international best practices.

Rafale Deal for 36 fighter jets finally sealed between India and France

India recently signed a 7.8 billion Euro deal with France to acquire 36 Rafale fighter jets. The deal was signed by Defence Minister of India Manohar Parrikar and French Defence Minister Jean Yves Le Drian. The Rafale fighter jets come equipped with cutting edge long-range missiles such as 'Meteor' and 'Scalp'. The deal comes with a saving of nearly 750 million Euros than the one struck during the previous UPA government, which was scrapped by the Narendra Modi government. The features that make the Rafale a strategic weapon in the hands of IAF is its Beyond Visual Range (BVR) Meteor air-to-air missile with a range in excess of 150 km. Its integration on the Rafale jets will mean IAF can hit targets inside both Pakistan and across the northern and eastern borders while staying within India's territorial boundary. 'Scalp', a long-range air-to-ground cruise missile has a range in excess of 300 km. The acquisition of this weapon is expected to give India an edge over its adversaries. Currently, neither India nor Pakistan possesses a weapon of this standard.⁹

Hungarians likely to vote 'No' on next week's referendum on migrant quotas imposed by the EU

The Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orban has spoken against the EU migrant policies calling for a referendum on October 2. Speaking ahead of the

⁸ Kulshreshtha, Ashish, "European Union-India joint drug inspection may take-off", *The Economic Times*, September 22, 2016,

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/healthcare/biotech/pharmaceuticals/european-union-india-joint-drug-inspection-may-take-off/articleshow/54467880.cms> accessed September 23, 2016.

⁹ "Rafale Deal: India sign agreement with France to acquire 36 jets", *The Indian Express*, September 23, 2016, <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/rafale-deal-france-india-sign-agreement-36-fighter-jets-3045870/> accessed September 23, 2016.

referendum, Mr. Orban said, “We have to be very clear. We will never, never, ever accept the mandatory quota for migrants.”

According to latest opinion polls at least two-thirds of the electorate will vote ‘no’. Billboards across Hungary proclaiming that Brussels plans to relocate a city’s worth of potential terrorists to the country may have an even stronger influence on Hungarians after a bomb recently exploded in Budapest. The EU had demanded Hungary take 1,294 refugees but the country refused to oblige to the quota system from the start and voted against it. Hungary has accepted no refugees under the plan. However, thousands of refugees trying to reach Germany flooded the streets of Budapest and had set up make-shifts camps. Meanwhile, Orban’s government built fences on its southern borders with Serbia and Croatia to tackle the issue. Initial fears over voter’s turnout on the referendum have now been dismissed as Mr Orban’s campaign has gained strong support across Hungary.

According to the Hungarian Free Press, Orban has framed the debate around the issue of national sovereignty. The argument is that Hungary needs to resist against decisions taken abroad, as it has done throughout its history.¹⁰ Ministers and lawmakers from the ruling right-wing Fidesz party are calling on supporters to go to the polls on October 2 to make sure Orban gets the answer he wants to the following referendum question: “Do you want the European Union to be able to order the mandatory settlement of non-Hungarian citizens in Hungary without Parliament’s consent?”¹¹

South Asia

I. Afghanistan: Internal

- **Gov’t, HIA Ink Peace Agreement**

The much-awaited peace agreement between Afghan government and the Hekmatyar-led Islamic party the Hizb-e-Islami was inked here on Thursday to boost peace process and national reconciliation in the insurgency-ridden country. The agreement was signed by Mohammad Amin Karim, head of Hizb-e-Islami delegation and Pir Sayed Ahmad Gilani, chief of the government-backed peace body the High Peace Council, at a ceremony attended by ranking officials and supporters of Hizb-e-Islami in Kabul.¹² The deal is “the first step towards achieving durable

¹⁰ Piet, Remi, “Hungary is free to follow the British road and leave the European Union”, *Hungarian Free Press*, September 24, 2016, <http://hungarianfreepress.com/2016/09/24/hungary-is-free-to-follow-the-british-road-and-leave-the-european-union/> accessed September 26, 2016.

¹¹ Lebor, Adam, “Hungary likely to reject European Union refugee quota”, *The Independent*, September 25, 2016, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/hungary-likely-to-reject-european-union-refugee-quota-a7327661.html> accessed September 26, 2016.

¹² “Gov’t, HIA Ink Peace Agreement”, *Outlook Afghanistan*, 24 September 2016. URL: http://www.outlookafghanistan.net/national_detail.php?post_id=16258 accessed on 25 September 2016.

peace and security across the country," Amin Karim said after signing the agreement.¹³ He said the peace deal with Hizb-e-Islami is based on the country's constitution and the Hizb-e-Islami has committed to working for peace, stability and reconstruction of the war-ravaged country. However, Amin Karim noted that the Hizb-e-Islami would continue its struggle until the expulsion of all foreign forces from Afghanistan. Expressing his support to intra-Afghan dialogue, Amin Karim also called on other armed groups fighting against the Afghan government to join the peace process and solve their problems through negotiation and peaceful means.

This is the first peace agreement inked by Afghan government with an armed opposition group since the overthrowing of Taliban regime in late 2001. The agreement would come into effect after putting signature by President Ashraf Ghani and leader of his own faction Hizb-e-Islami party Gulbudin Hekmatyar. They are expected to ink the agreement within days.

- **ADB Approves Grant For Salang Corridor Project¹⁴**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$31.37 million USD grant to prepare the Salang Corridor rehabilitation project to improve the efficiency and safety of movement of goods and people in Afghanistan and across Central Asia. In a statement issued by the ministry of finance on Saturday, it said the grant includes \$15.92 million USD from the government of Japan through the ADB-administered Afghanistan Infrastructure Trust Fund (AITF). AITF is a donor-financed fund established in 2010 that aims to improve livelihoods of the Afghan people through infrastructure development. The Salang Corridor is the only route that permits year-round north to south passage of goods and people across the Hindu Kush Mountains. With no alternative routes, the vast majority of goods shipped to Kabul from the north come through the Salang Corridor and it is estimated that over 5,500 vehicles transit the corridor every day.

II. Afghanistan: External

- **Pakistani transport vehicles restricted to Torkham Town**

Pakistan traders would not be able to transfer their commercial goods in their own vehicles to parts of Afghanistan with effect from Sunday, an official said. The eastern Nangarhar governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, told Pajhwok Afghan News¹⁵, the decision was jointly reached by the Customs Department and the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI)'s Nangarhar chapter. He said according to the decision from now on Pakistani cargo vehicles could only bring goods to Torkham Township not far from it. According to him, commercial goods from Pakistan would be further transferred to other provinces of Afghanistan from Torkham Township in Afghan trucks. Nangarhar customs department officials

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ "ADB Approves Grant For Salang Corridor Project", *Outlook Afghanistan*, 24 September 2016. URL: <http://www.toloneews.com/en/afghanistan?start=20> accessed on 24 September 2016.

¹⁵ Yousuf Zarifi, "Pakistani transport vehicles restricted to Torkham Town", *Pajhwok Afghan News*, 25 September 2016. URL: <http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2016/09/25/pakistani-transport-vehicles-restricted-torkham-town> accessed on 25 September 2016.

said the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation and ACCI's officials had agreed to allow Pakistani vehicles till Torkham Township and to be unloaded there and then Afghan vehicles would move the goods to other parts of the country. The decision comes as Pakistan does not allow Afghan traders to transfer their commodities' loaded vehicles to India through Pakistan. President Ashraf Ghani a few days earlier warned Pakistan that if the country didn't let Afghan vehicles transfer goods via Wagah Port to India then Pakistan wouldn't be allowed to transport goods to central Asian countries through Afghanistan.

Afghanistan

- **Afghanistan in talks with UAE companies for \$6b infrastructure projects**

Negotiations are underway between the Afghan government and some companies in United Arab Emirates to attract an investment of \$6 billion in infrastructure projects, it has been reported. The officials in the Ministry of Energy and Water of Afghanistan have said Afghanistan requires a total of \$9 billion investment in the energy sector. Water and Energy Minister Ali Ahmad Osmani told reporters in UAE that the donor partners of Afghanistan including the United States Agency for International Development have made a commitment of \$2 billion.

“The fund gap is about \$5-6 billion in all infrastructure projects,” Osmani told reporters after the conclusion of a summit in Dubai. Osmani further added that Afghanistan is also in discussions with a few UAE companies for some of its gas, solar and hydro projects.

According to the officials, the power generated from Afghanistan could be even exported to neighbouring countries like India and Pakistan, home to a 1 billion-plus population.¹⁶

- **Ghani calls Modi after militants attack left 18 soldiers dead in Kashmir**

The Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani called the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi following a deadly attack by militants that left 18 Indian soldiers dead in Indian administered Kashmir. According to a statement released by the Prime Minister Office of India, President Ghani condemned the “cross border attack” in Uri while expressing solidarity with India to eliminate the threat of terrorism.

“Mr. Ghani strongly condemned the cross-border terror attack and conveyed Afghanistan's solidarity and support with India for all actions to eliminate the threat of terrorism,” the statement said.¹⁷

- **NUG Leaders Likely to 'Resolve Disputes' Before Brussels**

¹⁶ Khaama Press, September 20, 2016. <http://www.khaama.com/afghanistan-in-talks-with-uae-companies-for-6b-infrastructure-projects-01912>

¹⁷ Khaama Press, September 21, 2016. <http://www.khaama.com/ghani-calls-modi-after-militants-attack-left-18-soldiers-dead-in-kashmir-01915>

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah's office on September 21, 2016, confirmed that some key elements of the political accord, based on which the National Unity Government (NUG) was formed in 2014, have not been implemented over the past two years.

However, the CEO's office has expressed optimism that the two leaders will resolve their issues before signing off for the Brussels Summit next month. Based on the NUG accord, the CEO has to report back on its undertakings to the president, something the critics believe has not happened over the past two years since they formed the NUG.

"It is regrettable to say that the political agreement has not been implemented effectively over the past two years. Many items mentioned in the accord have not been put into practice," said Jawed Faisal, deputy spokesman for the CEO. As the key summit on Afghanistan looms, calls for the resolution of disputes between the political establishments has gathered momentum.¹⁸

- **Stop harassment of Afghan refugees, says Pashtun leader Asfandiyar Wali Khan**

The Awami National Party (ANP), led by a Pashtun-nationalist politician Asfandiyar Wali Khan, has called for an immediate end to the harassment of Afghan refugees in different parts of Pakistan. At a meeting of ANP's Central General Council, chaired by Asfandiyar Wali Khan, the party leader stressed the need for sorting out dispute with neighbours, particularly Afghanistan, on a priority basis.

"Confrontation and disputes with neighbouring countries have damaged the international image and internal situation of the country. The government's claims of regional economic cooperation have become a mere dream," the participants said. Forced repatriation of Afghan refugees was a flagrant violation of international laws, the meeting said, recommending the issue should be resolved through talks with the government in Kabul.

The party denounced terrorism as the root cause of the problems being faced by Pakistan and the region at large. It warned against the wave of anti-Pakhtun terrorism, saying the nation was specifically targeted by terrorists in Pakistan and Afghanistan.¹⁹

- **Forced repatriation of Afghan refugees worst example of cruelty: Fazal-ur-Rehman**

A prominent Pakistani politician and religious scholar Maulana Fazlur Rehman has slammed the Pakistani government for its hard stance against the Afghan refugees, saying forced repatriation of Afghan refugees is the worst example of cruelty. Questioning the government's stance against the Afghan refugees, Rehman said the situation in Afghanistan still remains hostile, emphasizing that there would be no

¹⁸ *Tolo News*, September 21, 2016. <http://www.tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/27387-nug-leaders-likely-to-resolve-disputes-before-brussels>

¹⁹ *The Pashtun Times*, September 22, 2016. <http://thepashtuntimes.com/stop-harassment-of-afghan-refugees-says-pashtun-leader-asfandiyar-wali-khan/>

need for the US and allied forces to stay in Afghanistan if there was peace in the country.

Rehman further added that the Afghan nationals must be treated well and should be repatriated with dignity and respect, calling the Afghan refugees as 'guests' and 'brothers'. Pakistan started crackdown against the Afghan refugees following a deadly attack on an army-run school in Peshawar city of Pakistan. The United Nations refugee chief urged Pakistanis asked the Pakistani authorities late in June not to blame Afghan refugees for terrorism in their country.²⁰

- **Hezb-e-Islami apologizes to victims of devastating Afghan civil war**

The Hezb-e-Islami party led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar has apologized to the victims of the devastating war the party was involved in 1990s, hours after the party signed the draft peace agreement with the Afghan government.

A senior member of the party Qarib-ur-Rehman Syed told VOA's Afghanistan service that "Hezb-e-Islami considers itself a member and party of the people. Hezb-e-Islami belongs to the people and people belong to Hezb-e-Islami. In every and every second, we apologize from those who were hurt." Syed further added "We have in the past tendered apologies to the people since this is our home, village and people."

He said a special tribunal should be established to try those who have been involved in war crimes, including any member of Hezb-e-Islami.²¹

- **U.S. Accuses Afghanistan's Neighbours of Backing Taliban**

John McCain, Chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services has said that the support by Afghanistan's neighbours to the Taliban has increased the scale of violence in the country.

He expressed concerns over a recent survey on violence in Afghanistan, criticizing the President Barack Obama's administration for reducing the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan which he believes has contributed to the surge in violence. But, the US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter has reiterated that the U.S. will not allow Afghanistan to be changed into a terror hideout and safe haven again.

"A process which has been underway for some years to try to build the Afghan security forces to appoint where they can maintain the security of their country and Afghanistan doesn't become again a place from which terrorists arrive in the United States that is our program, that is what we have been trying to accomplish," said Carter.

²⁰ Khaama Press, September 22, 2016. <http://www.khaama.com/forced-repatriation-of-afghan-refugees-worst-example-of-cruelty-fazal-ur-rehman-01926>

²¹ The Pashtun Times, September 23, 2016. <http://thepashtuntimes.com/hezb-e-islami-apologizes-to-victims-of-devastating-afghan-civil-war/>

On September 22, 2016, Carter and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford appeared before the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services to talk about issues in the world. In the session, McCain said that support provided to the Taliban by Afghanistan's neighbours have increased the violence in the country.²²

- **ISIS fighters in Afghanistan mainly ex-Pakistani Taliban members: Gen. Nicholson**

The ISIS loyalists fighting in Afghanistan are mainly ex-Pakistani members and are receiving support from the main group leaders based in Syria, the top US commander in Afghanistan General John Nicholson has said.

General Nicholson who is also the commander of the NATO-led Resolute Support (RS) mission in Afghanistan has said there are up to 1,300 ISIS loyalists in Afghanistan. He said the loyalists of the terror group receive money, guidance, and communications support from the main group in Syria.

General Nicholson further added that the U.S. and Afghan military have killed many IS leaders and members in recent months and that they are in fewer Afghan areas than they previously were.

According to General Nicholson, the terror group loyalists are currently holding only three to four districts compared to 10 one year ago. The Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) launched a major operation in Nangarhar to suppress the activities of ISIS loyalists in mid-July this year.²³

- **Election Reforms Deadlock Ends After Ghani Approves Law**

Deputy presidential spokesman Shahussain Murtazawi announced on September 24, 2016, at a media briefing, that President Ashraf Ghani has approved the election law and that it will be published in the government gazette within a week. He said the election reforms process deadlock is over.

According to Murtazawi, the selection committee will now be convened and will start work soon.

He said that government departments will be informed of this so as to appoint representatives to the committee. Murtazawi also stated that there was no rift between the two leaders and said Ghani and his CEO Abdullah Abdullah will meet on September 24, 2016, to discuss the census law. Meanwhile, he officially launched the Access to Information Campaign at the press conference and said government was committed to the continued freedom of press in the country.²⁴

²² *Tolo News*, September 23, 2016. <http://www.tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/27418-us-accuses-afghanistans-neighbors-of-backing-taliban>

²³ *Khaama Press*, September 24, 2016. <http://www.khaama.com/isis-fighters-in-afghanistan-mainly-ex-pakistani-taliban-members-gen-nicholson-01933>

²⁴ *Tolo News*, September 24, 2016. <http://www.tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/27433-election-reforms-deadlock-ends-after-ghani-approves-law>

- **Convening Loya Jirga is Govt's Top Priority**

The National Unity Government (NUG) said on September 24, 2016, that convening the constitutional amendment Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) is its top priority, but both the Presidential Palace and the Chief Executive's Office said it will still take some time. The president's deputy spokesman Shahussain Murtazawi said at a press conference that they believe parliamentary and provincial council elections should be held ahead of the Loya Jirga.

"It is difficult to organize the constitutional Loya Jirga before district council elections. Therefore, the way for Loya Jirga will be paved after the parliamentary and district council elections," he said. Meanwhile, a number of MPs said they will not approve a new budget for the CEO's office once the two-year agreement ends next week.²⁵

- **Afghanistan launches \$1 billion Citizens Charter program**

The Afghan government on September 25, 2016 inaugurated the \$1 billion Citizens Charter program in a bid to implement reconstruction and development projects across the country. The program was inaugurated during a ceremony attended by high level government officials including President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah.

Calling the inauguration of the program one of the unity government's commitments to the Afghan people, Abdullah said the program aims to bring State services to the most deprived parts and citizens of the country.

Abdullah further added that the launch of the program is a record for the government considering the preparations and launch of it within a period of 6 months, insisting that the cooperation of the local residents would be key for its implementation.²⁶

- **MoI Detains 11 Drug Kingpins in Past Year: Official**

Senior officials from the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said on September 25 that they have arrested at least 11 drug smugglers over the past year who ran international drug trafficking networks.

Deputy Head of MoI's counter-narcotics directorate, Baz Mohammad Ahmadi, said in the seventh session of a Quintet Ministerial Counter-Narcotics Conference, attended by representatives of regional countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Russia, said that most terrorist groups support drug smuggling networks and that some Taliban and other terrorist group leaders have a direct role in this scourge.

According to him, the suspects arrested in the past year include Juma Khan, Haji Watan, Sayed Haji Lal Jan, Mir Wali, Haji Ghulam Sakhi, Ahmad Khan, Mohammad

²⁵ *Tolo News*, September 24, 2016. <http://www.tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/27440-convening-loya-jirga-is-govts-top-priority>

²⁶ *Khaama Press*, September 25, 2016. <http://www.khaama.com/afghanistan-launches-1-billion-citizens-charter-program-01943>

Afzal, Mistari Akram, Nematullah, Assadullah and Abdullah. "Drugs and smuggling is a big threat to the region and the region has turned into a hub for big and dangerous smuggling rings," Ahmadi said.²⁷

Nepal

India Proposed a Survey for Two New Cross-Border Railways

India and Nepal are discussing the former's proposal to conduct a technical survey of two new cross-border railways—Barahani (Uttar Pradesh)-Kathmandu and Kushinagar-Kapilvastu. The two countries had already been in agreement to develop five other cross border rail line. As Kathmandu Post reported, Ruby Jaspreet Sharma, spokesperson for the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu, said "There have been talks about conducting a survey of these projects between us (India) and Nepal. The ultimate target is to establish connectivity with railway after conducting survey and DPR."²⁸

In the railway budget of 2016-17, government of India proposed direct link between Barahani and Kathmandu and for the feasibility study of the same project government of India allotted Rupees (Indian) 5.4 million.²⁹ The new proposed Indian plan to connect Barahani with Kathmandu is being perceived as a counter to Nepal's plan to connect Kerung-Kathmandu with Chinese support.

No Constitution Implementation without Amendment

Denying the possibility of implementation of the constitution without amendment, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs Bimalendra Kumar Nidhi on September 14, 2016 said that the constitution could not be implemented without having it amended.³⁰ Hence, the government of Nepal has already begun preparations for the amendment, he further said.³¹ According to him, the government was planning to put the amendment proposal before PM Prachanda's visit to India in September 2016, but, could not process it due to various reasons. He was of opinion that the next amendment will be able to address concerns of Madhesis.

²⁷ Tolo News, September 25, 2016. <http://www.tolonews.com/en/afghanistan/27458-moi-detains-11-drug-kingpins-in-past-year-official>

²⁸ India tables proposal to conduct survey for 2 cross-border railways, <http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-09-26/india-tables-proposal-to-conduct-survey-for-2-cross-border-railways.html>, 26 September 2016.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Constitution can't be implemented if no amendment, says Nidhi, <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/no-constitution-implemented-no-amendment-bimalendra-nidhi/>, 24 September 2016.

³¹ Ibid.

Major Three Parties to Use Existing Division of Areas for Local Body Restructuring

Major three political parties “agreed to use existing divisions of areas (ilakas) and their numbers as bases for local body restructuring.”³² On 25 September 2016, PM Prachanda called a meeting of senior leaders of three major parties. In the meeting, the leaders of Nepali Congress, CPN-UML and CPN Maoist agreed ‘in principle’ to finalise the number of local bodies on the basis of the existing areas (Ilakas). Parties had disagreement over the number of local bodies. PM and CPN-MC Chairman Pushpa Kumar Dahal, Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba and UML senior leader Madhav Kumar Nepal were among the key leaders present in the meeting.

NRA Need More Money for Reconstruction Work

According to National Reconstruction Authority (NRA), Rs. 410 billion is not sufficient for rebuilding houses, schools, and other infrastructures. “Rs. 410 billion is not even half the money required for rebuilding houses, schools, health institutes, temples and infrastructures. We need to manage more resources either internally or from donors”,³³ the NRA CEO Sushil Gyewali said during the NRA’s Advisory Committee meeting under the leadership of Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal on 25 September 2016. The amount was pledged by donors during International donor conference in Kathmandu. The conference was organised by Nepal to mobilise funds for earthquake reconstruction work. As Nepali Times reported, “according to a report presented by Gyewali to the NRA Advisory Committee, the money pledged by donors is just 47 per cent of the actual need of Rs 938 billion”.³⁴ There is deficit of Rs. 595 billion.

Pakistan

- **Civil Military Relations and CPEC** - Plans for operationalising the Special Security Division (SSD) for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have been held up by civil-military wrangling. The military had announced the raising of the SSD soon after Chinese President Xi Jinping’s visit to Islamabad last year for the groundbreaking of CPEC projects. The division was to provide security to the Chinese personnel working on the CPEC projects throughout the country. But, a year and a half later there are no agreed terms of reference (ToR) that would govern the working of the SSD. The role envisaged by the military for the SSD is to advise, guide and ‘indirectly’ control the civilian law enforcement agencies in issues related to the security of CPEC projects. Besides, the SSD can act as ‘first responders’ in cases of threats to critical projects. The government’s apprehension is that such “wide-ranging ToR” could expand military’s influence on law enforcement agencies at the cost of civilian

³² Big 3 agree to use existing division of areas for local body restructuring, <https://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/big-3-agree-use-existing-divisions-local-body-restructuring/>

³³ More money for reconstruction, <http://www.nepalitimes.com/blogs/thebrief/2016/09/25/more-money-for-reconstruction/>, 25 September 2016

³⁴ Ibid.

administration's authority. Two wings of the SSD – North and South – are to be set up. As per the planning, the northern wing's jurisdiction covers the area between Khunjerab Pass on the Pakistan-China border and Rawalpindi, while the remaining stretch will be the southern wing's responsibility. Though the army has established the SSD-North, the government is reportedly holding back the executive and financial approval for the SSD-South. It is estimated that creation of a new wing could take about 12 to 18 months. This implies that even if the approval is given now, the SSD-South will not be functional by the end of 2017.³⁵

- **Military in Civilian Administration** - PPP Senator Farhatullah Babar stated that claims that the military does not want to interfere in the government's matters are false and in fact, politicians and the judiciary have always supported the military in intervening in matters of governance. Speaking at a seminar titled 'Civil Military Relations: Challenges and Way Forward' on September 19, which was hosted by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), the senator said claims of the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) and the PM Office being on the same page are also untrue. He said there is a deficit of trust between the two and that the military is making constant invasions in civilian matters. Pakistan is a security state and the security is also defined by the security establishment, he said. Talking about the way forward, Senator Babar said that public discourse should be broadened and their opinions heard. Defence analyst Imtiaz Gul said that when elected representatives come to power, politicians run the government via a kitchen cabinet. They should understand that democracy requires responsibility. SDPI Head Abid Qayyum Suleri said that the dictators of Pakistan act like they are democratic leaders while democratic leaders behave like dictators, which he said was the reason why there has never been neither the perfect democracy nor the perfect dictatorship in the country.³⁶
- **NGO's in FATA** - Authorities have asked the non-governmental organisations to inform the directorate of health, Fata, before starting any project for the assistance of tribal population being repatriated to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas from the nearby Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Over 25 NGOs had applied for NOC to work in the Fata and KP a few months ago, but due to security reasons extreme care was being taken in selection of organisations willing to work in areas from where militants had been evicted in a full-scale operation. They said so far only one organisation, which had been deployed for giving assistance to the hospital in Jamrud, Khyber Agency, had fulfilled the formalities while cases of few others were being processed. Last year, the European Union pledged \$22 million to extend support to the returning population in health, nutrition, livelihood, water, rehabilitation, education and

³⁵Baqir Sajjad Syed, "Civil-military differences hold up CPEC security plan", *Dawn*, September 19, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1284724>

³⁶Tauqeer Riaz Utmanzai, "Politicians, judiciary support military intervention in civil matters", *National News Pakistan*, September 20, 2016, <https://nationalnewspakistan.com/2016/09/20/politicians-judiciary-support-military-intervention-in-civil-matters/>

sanitation sectors, but the partner organisations supposed to utilise the funds through UN clusters were yet to get NOCs. The NGOs had applied to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) to seek permission for Fata in December last year, but none of them had been allowed to begin activities so far. Recently, the directorate of health, Fata, was asked to select NGOs to work in hospitals and provide diagnostic and treatment facilities to the people going back after staying in adjacent Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the military campaign. They said that the UN agencies had approved project proposals of the NGOs and were ready to start operations as soon as they completed documentation. They said that the Central Emergency Relief Fund of the United Nations was required to spend the amount within six months, but it had not yet decided to terminate the funds despite prolonged delay.³⁷

- **Achakzai, Pakhtuns and Afghanistan** - Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) chief Mehmood Khan Achakzai said on September 19 that Pakhtun leaders of the country could resolve all issues with Afghanistan and restore peaceful relations if the government gave them the mandate and powers to hold negotiations with the Afghan leadership and ensured that there would be no interference in the affairs of the war-torn country. He claimed that over 100,000 Pakhtuns, including a number of tribal elders had been killed at the hands of militants in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during this period, adding that their only sin was that they were peace-loving people and raised their voice against militants. He said that now the Pakhtun leaders had decided to launch a joint struggle for bringing peace to the region and for the purpose they would ask the government to give them the mandate to hold talks with the Afghan leadership. Besides himself, Achakzai presented names of three other Pakhtun leaders — Awami National Party (ANP) Chief AsfandyarWali Khan, QaumiWatan Party Chief Aftab Ahmad Sherpao and Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman — who he claimed could resolve all disputes with Afghanistan. Achakzai said a dangerous game was being played in the region and the Pakhtun leadership needed to understand that their people were the biggest victim of it. He said the federation of Pakistan could be strengthened only by accepting the rights of all federating units and by giving them their due share. Unjust distribution of resources created misunderstandings among the federating units, he added, and called upon all political forces to understand each others' points of views.³⁸
- **Education System in Pakistan** - Pakistan is lagging behind other South Asian countries in education and has a poor Adjudged Net Enrolment Rate (ANER) and a high school dropout rate, said Nasir Amin, the in-charge of National Education Management Information System (NIMS). Pakistan has a 72 pc ANER rate, 69 pc of students in the country remain in schools and that the

³⁷AshfaqYusufzai, "NGOs asked to inform Fata health directorate before starting projects", *Dawn*, September 19, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1284668>

³⁸SaleemShahid, "Achakzai emphasises Pakhtun leaders' role to repair ties with Afghanistan", *Dawn*, September 19, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1284929>

effective transition ratio from class five to six is 81 pc, which, is not satisfactory. All South Asian countries, except Nepal, had made visible progress with regards to education and that Pakistan was lagging behind with 24 million children still out of school. Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training Engr Balighur Rehman stated that a lot remains to be done as 44 pc of schools do not have electricity supply, 34 pc do not have drinkable water, 30 pc do not have boundary walls and 28 pc do not have bathroom facilities, among other things.³⁹

- **Pakistan and Turkey** - Commander of the Turkish Land Forces General Salih Zeki Colak on September 20 visited the General Headquarters and called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Raheel Sharif. During the meeting, a wide range of issues of mutual interest including defence, security cooperation, training and measures contributing towards regional stability came under discussion. General Salih Zeki Colak was given a detailed briefing on operational, intelligence and training aspects of Pakistan Army. The visiting dignitary appreciated the achievements of Pakistan Army and sacrifices made in the fight against terrorism. General Salih Zeki Colak also called on Minister for Defence Khawaja Asif in his office on September 20 and discussed matters of mutual interest. The minister appreciated the exemplary and historic brotherly relations between Pakistan and Turkey and expressed Pakistan's strong desire to deepen, broaden and strengthen Pakistan-Turkey relations in the field of defence. Italian Defence Minister Roberta Pinotti also called on the COAS and lauded successes and achievements of operation Zarb-i-Azb.⁴⁰ Later President Mamnoon Hussain conferred Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) on Turkish Land Forces Commander Gen Salih Zeki Colak at a special investiture ceremony held at the Aiwan-i-Sadr on September 21.⁴¹
- **Jamaat and Pakistan Foreign Policy** - The chief of Jamaat-i-Islami, Senator Sirajul Haq, called upon the Pakistani government to revisit its foreign policy, including the policy on Afghanistan, adding that the present policy has been framed to serve US interests, but presently needed a review. The JI chief said that the government had never taken the national leaders into confidence in framing its Afghan policy and due to Pakistan's imprudent Afghan policy, India's influence in Afghanistan was increasing. He stated that there was no wisdom in handing over Afghan refugees to Kabul authorities with their hands and feet tied as it would nullify Pakistan's services to Afghan refugees for the last 35 years. The JI chief said that Pakistan had no choice except to have friendship with Afghanistan, adding that expulsion of Afghan students from educational institutions was having a negative effect. He said the government's

³⁹ 'Pakistan lags behind South Asia in education', *Dawn*, September 20, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1284872>

⁴⁰ "Turkish land forces commander calls on COAS", *Dawn*, September 21, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1285127/turkish-land-forces-commander-calls-on-coas>

⁴¹ "Turkish armed forces commander awarded Nishan-i-Imtiaz", *Dawn*, September 22, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1285330>

present policy about Afghan refugees had multiplied their problems and it was sowing seeds of hatred against the country.⁴²

- **Pakistan Satellite Program** - As space technology is being used in the planning and monitoring of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects, the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmo-sphere Research Commission (Suparco) will launch the country's first remote-sensing satellite in March 2018. President Mamnoon Hussain stated "Effective use of space technology is vital for national development and being a developing country Pakistan is striving to improve living standards of its masses and utilising space technology in various sectors like communication, agriculture, infrastructure, development, environmental monitoring, hazards warning and education...Our ongoing cooperation and collaboration with international and regional agencies such as UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organisation, COSPAS Search and Rescue Satellite-Aided Tracking, Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum and International Telecommunication Union in the areas of space science and technology is a testimony to the values we attach to collaboration and knowledge-sharing in this important sector".⁴³
- **US Bill and Pakistan** - Two US lawmakers, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Terrorism Ted Poe, and co-sponsor, Congressman Dana Rohrabacher, known on Capitol Hill for their obsessive dislike for Pakistan, have moved a bill in Congress seeking to designate Pakistan a 'state sponsor of terrorism'. They want the United States to sever its ties with Pakistan. They also actively campaigned for blocking all US military sales to Pakistan. The move succeeded when the US Senate refused to subsidise an F-16 deal for Pakistan, thus preventing Islamabad from buying the planes. The Senate also blocked \$300 million of military assistance to Pakistan. The bill requires the Obama administration to formally convince Congress why the United States should continue to consider Pakistan an ally in the war against terrorism. The president must issue a report within 90 days of the passage of the bill, detailing whether or not Pakistan has provided support for international terrorism. Thirty days after that, the US Secretary of State must issue a follow-up report containing either a determination that Pakistan is a state sponsor of terrorism or a detailed justification as to why Pakistan does not meet the legal criteria for designation. Usually, legislations introduced by these two lawmakers do not get enough votes and are defeated and this move may also face the same fate.⁴⁴ However, Senator John McCain has assured former president Asif Ali Zardari

⁴² "JI for reviewing foreign policy", *Dawn*, September 21, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1285119/ji-for-reviewing-foreign-policy>

⁴³ Amin Ahmed, "Pakistan to launch remote-sensing satellite in 2018: president", *Dawn*, September 21, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1285114/pakistan-to-launch-remote-sensing-satellite-in-2018-president>

⁴⁴ "US bill seeks to designate Pakistan state sponsor of terrorism", *Dawn*, September 22, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1285340>

that a bill currently before the US Senate for branding Pakistan a “sponsor of terrorism” will not succeed.⁴⁵

- **Chabahar and Gwadar Ports** - Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on September 22 dispelled the impression that Iran had built the Chabahar port to prevent Gwadar from becoming a major international trade centre. Sharif met the Iranian leader in New York on September 21 on the sidelines of the ongoing UN General Assembly session. On the Kashmir issue, the prime minister said that Turkey, Saudi Arabia and China strongly supported Pakistan’s position and Turkey offered to send a team to held Kashmir to probe India’s actions.⁴⁶
- **Pakistan, Terrorism and Money Laundering** - In the recent dispute over whether state institutions have the authority to deal with cases of money laundering and financial crimes following the revelations contained in the Panama Papers, the Anti-Money Laundering Act (AMLA) 2010 has often been cited as the operative law in this regard. The law, which was first introduced as an ordinance in 2007 and made an act of parliament in 2010, envisioned the constitution of a high-powered National Executive Committee (NEC) to combat money laundering. Under the law, the NEC should have been constituted within 30 days of the commencement of the act and would have consisted of the ministers for finance, foreign affairs, law and justice and interior, as well as the State Bank governor, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) chairman and “any other member to be nominated by the federal government”. It was also tasked with framing a national policy to combat money laundering and financing of terrorism, framing the rules under the AMLA and making recommendations for its effective implementation. But former interior minister Rehman Malik stated that at the time, it was the PML-N-led opposition that had opposed the formation of the NEC. He explained that the law was necessary to fulfil Pakistan’s international obligations with regards to stemming terrorists’ financial networks, but was not clear on why the committees mandated under the law were not formed. Former FIA DG Tariq Khosastated that according to the law, the NEC should have been constituted to address money laundering issues. However, no such committee had been formed thus far.⁴⁷
- **Dasu Dam Project, World Bank and Pakistan** - The government seemed reluctant to drag the World Bank in the controversy related to the ouster of a Chinese firm from the Dasu dam project as its senior law officer on September 22 informed the Supreme Court that the government would oppose impleading the bank in the case. Additional Attorney General (AAG) Mohammad Waqar Rana, during the hearing of an appeal filed by M/S Power Construction Corporation of China against its disqualification from the Dasu dam project,

⁴⁵ Amir Wasim, “Small minority behind anti-Pakistan bill”, *Dawn*, September 25, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1285963>

⁴⁶ Anwar Iqbal and Masood Haider, “Chabahar port not to rival Gwadar, Rouhani tells PM”, *Dawn*, September 23, 2016, http://epaper.dawn.com/?page=23_09_2016_001

⁴⁷ Syed Irfan Raza, “Body to combat money laundering ‘never formed’”, *Dawn*, September 23, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1285504/body-to-combat-money-laundering-never-formed>

told the apex court that the “federal government in view of its repercussions and international commitments will oppose impleading the World Bank as party in the case”.⁴⁸

- **Drugs, Prostitution and Gambling in Lahore** – Lahore City Police Division ranks high in the list followed by the Cantonment Division in terms of housing gambling, prostitution and drug selling dens in the provincial capital. Out of total 447 dens in the Cantonment City Police Division, 153 are related to gambling, 71 to prostitution and 223 to drug peddling. The Lahore provincial capital is housing at least 1,906 “safe heavens” in the three categories of crime, posing a potential threat to the peace of the second largest city of the country. Of them, 1,123 dens deal in drug selling, 318 in prostitution and 465 in gambling. The PML-N’s dominated area -- the City Police Division -- is ‘notorious’ especially for housing big drug sellers.⁴⁹
- **Pakistan and China** - In the wake of rising tensions at borders with India, China has assured in unequivocal terms its support in case of any foreign aggression and also supported Pakistan’s stance on the Kashmir dispute, as per the Punjab Chief Minister’s Office. Beijing conveyed the message during a meeting of its top diplomat in the provincial capital with Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif. Consul General of China in Lahore Yu Boren stated that “In case of any (foreign) aggression our country will extend its full support to Pakistan”. Yu, who called on Shahbaz Sharif to felicitate the latter on his 65th birthday, discussed with the chief minister the situation developing in held Kashmir and the progress being made on various projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).⁵⁰
- **Consumer to Bear the Burden of Forthcoming Power Projects** - The government on September 23 decided to recover the cost of security required for upcoming power projects from consumers through monthly bills for entire 25-30 years life of the projects. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet presided over by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar. The meeting also decided to float the Islamic Sukuk bond in the international market. Depending on market response and pricing, the size of the bond will range between \$500 million and \$1 billion, although the government has set a target of \$750m in the budget for Sukuk. The government proposes to direct the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Neptra) to allow one per cent increase in capital cost of all upcoming power projects, mostly under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), for recovery from consumers. The government is already charging at least four special surcharges of about Rs. 3.50 per unit in consumer tariff to cover low recoveries, high losses, special debt servicing, and tariff equalisation across

⁴⁸ “Dasu dam project: govt against impleading WB”, *Dawn*, September 23, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1285501>

⁴⁹ Asif Chaudhry, “1,906 prostitution, gambling and narcotics dens running in Lahore”, *Dawn*, September 24, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1285791>

⁵⁰ Amjad Mahmood, “China to support Pakistan against foreign aggression”, *Dawn*, September 24, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1285774>

various distribution companies and so on. The prime minister had originally allowed the Planning Commission to allow one per cent additional cost of all CPEC projects to meet the expenditure of a Special Security Division of the army being raised to protect CPEC. The government had allocated about Rs30bn in the budget to meet initial expenditure and then allow one per cent increase in capital cost of all projects under the Public Sector Development Programme. The prime minister is reported to have highlighted the importance of CPEC and termed it vital for future sustainability of the national economy. However, despite an early decision to include a security cost of 1pc at the time of regulatory approval of the CPEC projects, no arrangements have been made to make necessary adjustments in tariff. As a result, a number of projects in power and communication sectors have gone into the implementation phase without actually having any solid arrangement for recovery of even recurrent expenditure of special security on these projects. The prime minister was of the view that apart from provision of cost of establishment of separate forces, including the Special Security Division, the projects when completed would require expenditure on recurrent annual basis for maintaining these forces which would have a notable strain and impact on the federal budget. Therefore, the prime minister directed the water and power ministry to ensure that the remaining sponsors of power projects where the financial close had not yet been achieved must add 1pc of the actual capital cost on account of security to the projects. This should also include the early harvest projects where the financial close is still pending, as well as new additions to the projects already under implementation. The prime minister is also reported to have ordered that for the projects which are already under implementation, the ministries of water and power and finance “will immediately carry out an exercise” for an increase in tariff through Neptra to cover for recurring security of the projects for their entire period of operation.⁵¹

Saudi Arabia and GCC

News reports that Saudi Arabia has enrolled around 1,58,000 Syrian students in different schools and universities across the Kingdom. According to Saudi Arabia’s National Campaign to Support Syrians director, Mubarak Al-Bakr, around 1,50,000 Syrian students are enrolled in general schools, while 8,400 are pursuing their education in colleges and universities.⁵² Under the 2012 royal order, the Kingdom has offered a variety of facilities, including free tuitions, free books and medical coverage to these students. They are also allowed to search jobs in Saudi labour market and are treated liberally if they don’t have proper papers. Legally, they are not treated as refugees; rather allowed to mingle in society and economy like others. Saudi Arabia also recognizes their degrees, both professional and non-professional and allows them

⁵¹ Khaleeq Kiani, “Consumers to bear security cost of power projects”, *Dawn*, September 24, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1285777>

⁵² Fahd Al-Zayabi, ‘158 Thousand Syrian Students Enrolled in Saudi Schools, Universities’, *Ashraaqat al-Aswat*, 20 September 2016, <http://english.aawsat.com/2016/09/article55358602/158-thousand-syrian-students-enrolled-saudi-schools-universities>, (Accessed on 26 September 2016).

to search jobs in the Kingdom. In addition, the Kingdom has also provided financial support to the Syrian population, which has reached around \$226.6 million since the crisis erupted in Syria in 2011. Besides hosting around 50,000 Syrians in the country, the Kingdom also helps the Syrian refugee camps located in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, etc. The Kingdom provides medical and humanitarian helps to the refugees living in these.⁵³

One of the major criticisms of Saud Arabia is that the Kingdom along with other Arab Gulf monarchies has not accepted the Syrian refugees; whereas the afar European countries such as Germany, Greece, France, Italy etc have allowed them to enter their respective countries. Although the Kingdom has provided financial support to them, it has avoided granting them refugee status. According to the Saudi Foreign Ministry, the Kingdom has spent approximately \$700 million on the welfare of Syrian refugees. According to a new estimate, the Saudi Foreign Ministry the Kingdom has received more than 4 million Syrian and Yemeni refugees without any conditions. Legally, they are treated equal to others.⁵⁴

The experts such as Jamal Khshoghi, say that Syrians do not want refugee camps; they want better prospects of life, which is only available in Western countries. Besides, Saudi Arabia also does not have enough resources such as Germany, which can grant and sustain better life for them.⁵⁵

The enrolment of the Syrian students in Saudi educational institutions raises some concerns, especially what kind of education these institutors would impart; these students should not be wholly enrolled into seminaries; they need modern career-oriented education. So they can market their skills and earn livelihoods. This will benefit both, the recipients as well as the Saudi economy, which needs skilled and better educated workforce. These Syrian students can sever their interest.

Non-Traditional Security Threats

HDP delegation asks Barzani to relaunch Turkey-PKK peace process.⁵⁶ A delegation from Turkey's pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party (HDP) has asked the President of the Kurdistan Region Masoud Barzani to "relaunch the peace process" in Turkey, a statement from the Kurdish presidency's office said. "Demirtas...said they are looking for president Barzani to start his efforts again to relaunch the peace process," read the

⁵³'2.5m Syrians hosted by KSA since uprising', *Arabnews*, 12 September 2015, <http://www.arabnews.com/saudi-arabia/news/805236>, (Accessed on 26 September 2016).

⁵⁴Faisal Al-Saadi, 'Saudi Arabia Receives 4 Million Syrian and Yemeni Refugees', 20 September 2016, *Ashraaqat al-Aswat*, 20 September 2016, <http://english.aawsat.com/2016/09/article55358626/saudi-arabia-receives-4-million-syrian-yemeni-refugees>, (Accessed on 26 September 2016).

⁵⁵Jamal Khashgi, 'Syrian refugees don't want to camp in Saudi Arabia. They want a future', *Al Arabiyya*, 15 September 2015, <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/views/news/middle-east/2015/09/15/Syrian-refugees-don-t-want-to-camp-in-Saudi-Arabia-They-want-a-future.html>, (Accessed on 26 September 2016).

⁵⁶<http://rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/210920162>

statement, referring to the co-chair of HDP Selahattin Demirtas, who led his party's delegation and met with Barzani on Wednesday in Erbil.

Barzani told the delegation he is ready to play his role regarding the peace process in Turkey, according to the statement from his office. The war between Ankara and the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) was reignited last summer, ending two years of peace negotiations aimed at finally resolving the decades-old conflict.

Demirtas said the Kurdish nation has suffered tremendously for the last 100 years at the hands of their respective countries, he said in a press conference following the meeting. But he warned that the Kurdish nation cannot place all the blame on their enemies alone.

"We should criticize ourselves, too," he said while complaining about the lack of unity between Kurdish parties in all four parts of Kurdistan, referring to the Kurdistan Region in northern Iraq, East Kurdistan or Rojhelat in Iran, West Kurdistan or Rojava in Syria, and North Kurdistan in Turkey. Demirtas also said that his party does not represent only Kurds, but maintained that they would work to achieve the "full rights" of the Kurdish people.

In Sulaimani, Demirtas had also held meetings with the KRG opposition parties including the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Goran Movement. An HDP MP, Imam Tascier, who is in the delegation but was not present at the second meeting, told Kurdistan24 in a phone call that Demirtas was carrying "a message" from Sulaimani, referring to the opposition parties.

Both the PUK and Goran are at odds with the ruling Kurdistan Democratic Party (PDK) over various issues. One of the concerns is the question of whether voters or their representatives at the Regional Parliament should elect the next president.

Turkey-PKK Peace on Agenda

The first meeting between President Barzani and the Demirtas-led HDP delegation was held on Wednesday. At a press conference after the first meeting, Demirtas spoke of the importance of Kurdish unity, calling for closer cooperation between the Kurdistan Region and the Federation of Northern Syria-Rojava (Syrian Kurdistan).

Demirtas also said the struggle for Kurdish nation's rights in Iranian Kurdistan (Rojhilat) needed more attention from all parties.

A press release on the website of the Kurdistan Region Presidency the same day stated President Barzani hoped the now collapsed peace process between the government of Turkey and the Kurds would resume. Additionally, the statement revealed Demirtas demanded from President Barzani "to take a role in the renewal of the process."

German military carried out first foreign cyber-attack in Afghan hostage op – report⁵⁷

⁵⁷ <https://www.rt.com/news/360436-german-military-cyber-attack/>

A special cyber security unit of the German Armed Forces (Bundeswehr) conducted its first offensive cyber operation abroad when it broke into an internal network of an Afghan mobile operator while assisting in a hostage release operation, it has emerged. Personnel from the Bundeswehr's Computer Network Operations Unit (CNO) hacked the network of the Afghan mobile operation to pinpoint the location of kidnappers after a German development assistance expert was abducted in Kabul, Der Spiegel daily reported, citing its sources.

The German military's cyber operation took place in autumn last year, after the expert, identified only as Kaethe B., who worked in the Kabul office of the German Association for International Cooperation (GIZ), was kidnapped on August 17, 2015. German authorities started to negotiate the hostage's release with the kidnappers. The CNO was tasked by the German crisis staff with monitoring the kidnappers' phone conversations and pinpointing their location to ensure that they intended to comply with the negotiated deal.

The cyber unit was also tasked with providing data to the German Special Forces Commando (KSK), which would have launched a hostage extraction operation if the negotiations had failed. The CNO managed to hack into a local internet provider's network and establish a real-time surveillance over the kidnappers. In 2015, the Defense Ministry also issued a new strategy paper that reportedly envisaged tasks for cyber security units that go beyond providing protection for the German military infrastructure and involve offensive operations.

Suspected Russian Cyberattack Targets German Political Parties⁵⁸

Hackers sought to infiltrate the computer systems of several German political parties this summer, officials said Wednesday, raising fears of foreign interference in the country's politics ahead of national elections next year. A senior German counterespionage official informed two political parties and the lower house of parliament earlier this month that some of their email inboxes had been targeted by hackers with apparent ties to a foreign intelligence agency, according to a letter to one of the parties that was reviewed by The Wall Street Journal.

There was evidence a Russian hacker group known as APT28 carried out the attack, two officials familiar with the investigation said. Investigators have tied APT28 to cyberattacks last year on a French-language TV broadcaster and the German lower house of parliament, which forced the legislature to shut down its computer system for several days. Germany's domestic intelligence agency has said the hacking group appears to be "steered by the Russian state."

A spokesman for the Russian Embassy in Berlin rejected the German officials' accusations, describing them as lacking evidence and as "stupidities born in the inflamed imagination of politicians." "We have no information that would, even in the slightest measure, prove the involvement of Russian hackers in the described attacks," the spokesman, Sergey Belyaev, said in an email.

⁵⁸ <http://www.wsj.com/articles/german-parties-targeted-in-cyberattack-1474470695>

Officials said the cyberattack targeted the national headquarters of the opposition Left Party Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats in a state holding a regional election in March, and several dozen members of the lower house of parliament, the Bundestag. The attack took place on Aug. 15 and 24, officials said, when emails that looked like they came from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization arrived in politicians' inboxes. The emails contained links to malicious websites that, if accessed, could have allowed the hackers to infiltrate the users' computer networks.

German officials see this summer's disclosure of hacked Democratic National Committee emails in the U.S. as an example of how foreign hackers could seek to interfere with elections. U.S. officials believe the attacks were also carried out by Russian hackers. The German government's information security specialists have urged political parties to increase their cyberdefenses.

Turkey

Man shot attempting to attack Israeli Embassy in Ankara, Turkey⁵⁹

The Turkish man, named as Osman Nuri C. by state-run news agency Anadolu, approached the embassy just after noon local time carrying a bag and a 30-centimeter (11-inch) knife. The statement from Ankara authorities did not give his last name.

The man started chanting slogans while walking closer to the embassy. When police asked him to stop, he did not -- at which point an officer shot near his legs, Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Emmanuel Nahshon told CNN. The man then began waving his knife in the direction of the officer, who shot him in the leg. "According to initial reports Osman Nuri C appears to be (suffering from) mental illness," Ankara authorities said in a statement to Anadolu. "He does not have (a) previous police record and no organizational link (was) detected. The investigation continues." The man was treated at Ankara Numune Hospital, according to Anadolu.

UN chief praises Cyprus leaders for reunification efforts, pledges help for talks⁶⁰

The United Nations secretary-general promised Sunday to lend his personal support to rival Cypriot leaders who are locked in complex talks aimed at reunifying the ethnically divided island nation. Ban Ki-moon said he and the U.N. will personally do "our utmost" to assist Greek Cypriot leader Nicos Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akıncı resolve the decades-old problem. Following the 15-hour meeting with the leaders of the divided island, Ban praised the two men for their decision to intensify negotiations with a view to reaching a deal on reunifying the island in 2016.

⁵⁹ CNN Turk, 21 September 2016 <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/09/21/europe/israel-embassy-attack-turkey/>

⁶⁰ The Daily Sabah, 26 September <http://www.dailysabah.com/diplomacy/2016/09/25/un-chief-praises-cyprus-leaders-for-reunification-efforts-pledges-help-for-talks>

Both Anastasiades and Akıncı have said they aimed to reach a deal by year's end. Anastasiades said Sunday the target for a 2016 deal still stands, although he called it "ambitious." After meeting with Ban on Saturday, Akıncı said he expected a "road map" to be agreed during the trilateral meeting to turn recent progress in the talks into a "real success story." Akıncı also said he told Ban that talks should take on a new "format" where key aspects of a deal — including how much territory would be administered by either side would be hammered out.

Negotiations have centered on creating a new bi-communal Cyprus federation, but there have been differences over the issues of property and territorial adjustments that could see a number of Turkish Cypriots displaced from their homes.

Any agreement the two leaders reach will have to be put to simultaneous referendums on either side of the island. Reunification talks between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities on the island resumed in May 2015 when newly-elected Akıncı met with Greek Cypriot leader Nicos Anastasiades. Previous negotiations were stalled in October 2014 in a row over gas exploration.

A previous peace deal brokered by then-UN chief Kofi Annan in 2004 was backed by a significant majority of Turkish Cypriot voters but overwhelmingly rejected by their Greek Cypriot counterparts. The island has been divided into a Turkish Cypriot government in the northern third and Greek Cypriot administration in the south since a 1974 Greece-backed military coup on the island was followed by Turkey's military intervention as a guarantor power.

Erdogan: US arming PYD/YPG source of concern for Turkey⁶¹

The United States arming the PYD/YPG is a source of concern for Turkey as these terrorist organizations pose a threat to Turkey, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Thursday. "It is a source of concern," Erdogan told Bloomberg in New York in an interview, speaking about U.S. cooperation with those terrorist groups. "Three days ago, America landed two planes loaded with weapons. Where? In Kobani. For whom? For the PYD and YPG," Erdogan said, referring to a Syrian city within sight of Turkey's southern border.

"A very serious mistake is being committed before the world's eyes," he added. Erdogan went on to slam the rationalization that the PYD and YPG are being armed since they are fighting Daesh.

"Now, Al-Nusra is a terror organization. Al-Nusra in the same way is fighting Daesh. If those who fight Daesh are not terrorists then Al-Nusra too, is not terrorist." Erdogan said that PYD and YPG are affiliates of the PKK terrorist organization that is fighting Turkey. "They are together. They are the same," he said.

⁶¹ <http://aa.com.tr/en/americas/erdogan-us-arming-pyd-ypg-source-of-concern-for-turkey/651204>

Erdogan called once more for the international anti-Daesh coalition – made up of 65 countries – to “bring down Daesh” without the help of terrorist groups. “Don’t worry about that. We can do that together,” he said. Erdogan said that trying to distinguish between “good” and “bad” terrorist groups constitutes “wrongdoing against Turkey”. “Because right now we are worried by the organizations you defend. These pose a threat to our country,” Erdogan said, adding that those who give weapons to the PYD/YPG terrorist groups are strengthening future threats to Turkey.

On a possible safe zone in northern Syria, Erdogan said that world leaders such as U.S. President Barack Obama, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Francois Hollande, and even Russian President Vladimir Putin had previously agreed to the proposal. “But once we say let’s move forward on this, unfortunately this step was somehow not taken,” he added.

Erdogan said they want infrastructure and residences to be built in the proposed safe zone so Syrians need not leave their country to flee the war.

Cyber attacks on satellites could spark global catastrophe, experts warn⁶²

The world is dangerously unprepared for a global disaster sparked by cyber attacks on space infrastructure, experts have warned. Authorities are not doing nearly enough to stop space assets being hacked and used maliciously, according to a warning from security experts. The consequences of such a hack could be disastrous – anything from damage to trade and financial services to terrorists taking over strategic weapons.

Much of the world’s infrastructure is dependent on space machinery – almost every important business or technology on the ground is powered by space assets. And while governments have done a great deal in looking to secure those technologies on Earth, they could easily be threatened from space. Those weaknesses could be exploited by people and groups including states, criminal syndicates, terrorists and hackers to create a potential global catastrophe on Earth, according to a new report from Chatham House.

The think tank suggested that authorities should commit to a “radical review” of cyber security in space. There’s currently no global organisation looking at the issue and the situation may advance so quickly that governments soon won’t be able to do anything about it, argued Dr Patricia Lewis, director of the international security department at Chatham House, and her co-author David Livingstone, an associate fellow at the institute.

That is because space is quickly becoming somewhere that isn’t dominated just by a few privileged countries. Instead, it is becoming a domain “ruled by market forces”, and this is likely to intensify in future. As such, the authors fear that isolated governments could do little about any specific cyber threat, and that countries must work together to respond to them.

⁶² <http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/cyber-attacks-on-satellites-could-spark-global-catastrophe-experts-warn-a7321361.html>

West Asia and North Africa

Jordan Fears Sectarian Strife after Killing of Christian Journalist

The government in Amman fears that killing of one of its journalists, Mr. Nehed Hattar, just before his trial in front of the court building might lead to communal and sectarian strife in the country. On its part government has condemned the act, terming it a heinous crime and said that culprit would be brought to justice. Government also claimed that no one would be spared if any one tried to exploit the situation to spread the hatred or divide the people on sectarian line.

It is worth mentioning that Mr. Nehed Hattar was earlier accused of blasphemous writing in the Jordanian news papers and later killed by a Jordanian citizen, Riyad Abdullah, just before his trial was to begin in Amman court. Mr. Hattar was released in early September after paying the judicial bond after he was put under detention on the charges of humiliating the Divine figure thorough the caricature in national Daily which is a crime under the national law of Jordan. There are media reports that the killer had just come back after pilgrimage to Mecca and once he had also served as an Imam in a mosques in Amman. Mr. Hattar could ne be saved and on the way top hospital, he succumb to the bullet injury. It is also reported that he had earlier received a series of threat and it was conveyed to the local authority but it was not heeded. The security has been beefed up in the Christians dominated locality in Amman and nearby towns. One of the parliament members said that issues are not resolved in a country governed by law and order in such a way and the danger of sectarian strife is looming over the country. The Islamic Shariah committee of the country has also condemned the act and has called upon the people to be united against the heinous crime and stand unified to deter all dangers to the unity of the people.

Al-Hayat, Arabic Daily (The Life)

MBH in the Jordanian Election: Trends and Development

In a national representative election held in Jordan recently, the MBH won only ten seats in addition to five seats won by its political ally, National Coalition for Reform out of total 130 seats in the parliament. The outcome seems to be the perfect and positive given the prolonged year of absence of any election in the country. The seats gained by the MBH has revived the party in Jordan and accorded the legitimacy to it despite the deep rooted ideological division the organization has witnessed over five years after the Arab uprising. The election has brought about many changes in the country as far as the future of the MBH is concerned. It has enabled the party to forge a bigger alliance and be the part of the main stream national politics. Of late, the MBH has moved away from the religious rhetoric, "The Islam is the Solution" and in its recent convention, it focused more on the national political issues instead of its traditional religious sloganeering.

The MBH has strengthened its presence in the capital town of Amman which represents the biggest population pocket in the country. But what is more surprising is the complete rout of the MBH in few governorates and this was already reflected in

last two decades since its presence started waning because of state's deliberate policy. The weakening position of the party may also be attributed to the ideological and generational division within the leadership of the MBH. What is also noteworthy here is that out of total ten successful candidates, there are three women which will no doubt impact the future face of the MBH. This election has manifested one thing that despite the modification in the ideological underpinning of the MBH, its ally like National Coalition for Reform was still captured in the its past of religious rhetoric and did not touch much upon the economic and other pressing issues in the country. What has been noticed in the election that most of the female candidates during their campaign were focusing more on legislations which prohibits the introduction of Islamic Shariah which shows that there are no uniformity among the different section of the MBH and females are still not ready to accept democracy and seemingly for them democracy is a temporary mean to achieve the power and not the end game in itself.

Al-Arabi Al-jadeed, Arabic Daily (New Arab)

ⁱ BBC Monitoring, "Ailing Kyrgyz president taken to Russian clinic," 23 September 2016, <https://monitoring.bbc.co.uk/#/product/c1d7e10h>

ⁱⁱ Olga Dzyubenko, "Kyrgyz president cancels U.N. trip due to chest pains: office," Reuters, 19 September 2016, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-kyrgyzstan-president-health-idUSKCN11P1TT>

ⁱⁱⁱ 24.kg, "Almazbek Atambayev says that he is not going to run for second term as president," 2 December 2014, <http://www.eng.24.kg/politic/173477-news24.html>

^{iv} Reuters, "Kyrgyzstan cancels cooperation treaty with United States," 21 July 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-kyrgyzstan-idUSKCN0PV20U20150721>