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Articles from subscriber only sites are available on request. *Révolutionnaire* is edited by Samuel Chan, with contributions from Bernard Loo and Joshua Ho. The Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS) is a key research component of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS). It focuses on security research to serve national needs. IDSS' faculty and research staff conduct both academic and policy-oriented research on security-related issues and developments affecting Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific. Its research agenda presently comprises the following programmes: Maritime Security, the Revolution in Military Affairs, Multilateralism and Regionalism, Contemporary Islam, Indonesia and China.

CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT

[Afghanistan foreign troop deaths in June exceed those in Iraq](#)

CNN – 21 June 2008

Five foreign troops were killed Saturday in Afghanistan, bringing the number of NATO and U.S.-led coalition troop deaths in June to 32 -- more than in Iraq. Foreign troop deaths in the Afghan war have been exceeding those in the Iraq conflict in recent weeks, according to figures compiled by CNN. The trend reflects a surge in attacks and clashes during the warmer months in Afghanistan, where U.S.- and NATO-led troops have been fighting tenacious Taliban militants. It also points to a decrease in violence in Iraq. Four service members assigned to the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan were killed Saturday by a roadside bomb and small-arms fire on a Task Force Phoenix convoy, said Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, spokesman for the U.S. military. The convoy was on a mission to train Afghan national police and soldiers when it was attacked, Fanning said. About three dozen nations have committed troops to that training effort, which includes more than 700 training teams and 8,000 trainers across Afghanistan. Two other troops were seriously wounded in the attack. Also early Saturday, a Polish soldier assigned to NATO's International Security Assistance Force was killed and four others were wounded by a roadside bomb while on patrol in the Dila district of Afghanistan's Paktika province, the assistance force said. Later Saturday, a NATO-led base and an Afghan military compound were attacked from across the border in Pakistan, the assistance force said. There were no reported casualties in the incident at 5:15 p.m. The Pakistan military was notified. At least 32 troops assigned to the U.S.-led coalition and NATO's International Security Assistance Force have died in Afghanistan in June. At least 12 Americans, nine Britons, two Canadians, one Pole, a Romanian and a Hungarian have died in Afghanistan in June. The nationalities of six other fatalities have not been released. In comparison, 19 coalition troops have died in June so far in Iraq, comprising 18 Americans and one from the Republic of Georgia. There are no NATO troops in Iraq. Aggressive military campaigns against Sunni and Shiite militants have helped reduce casualties in Iraq, as have efforts to bring Sunni militants into U.S.-backed militias and the cease-fire of the mainstream part of Muqtada al-Sadr's Mehdi army. During May, 23 coalition troops died in Afghanistan and 21 died in Iraq. The deaths last month in Afghanistan included 17 Americans, three Britons, a Canadian, a Lithuanian and an Estonian. In Iraq, there were 19 American and two Georgian deaths last month. The 19 American deaths in May represent the lowest monthly American total of the war. Overall, the Iraq conflict has been the deadlier war for foreign troops. More than 4,400 foreign troops have died in the Iraq war; more than 800 have died in Afghanistan. In both wars, the vast majority of fatalities are Americans. "It's a difficult time right now, but it's an extremely dangerous job," Fanning said after Saturday's attacks in southern Afghanistan's Kandahar province. "This is a combat theater. This is why we're here. The enemy's doing their best to thwart the progress we've made, but we're determined not to let them succeed." Much of the fighting has occurred across southern Afghanistan, where Taliban attacks tend to increase as the weather warms up. Afghan and NATO forces last week pushed Taliban militants out of several villages in the Arghandab district of Kandahar province after a huge prison break on June 13, Afghan President Hamid Karzai said. The

Afghan Ministry of Defense said 56 Taliban fighters had been killed in the operation. Officials said they had no firm figures on the number wounded. There is fighting in other parts of the country as well. The U.S.-led coalition said its forces on Saturday conducted precision airstrikes in Khost province targeting a Taliban commander involved with roadside bombings, foreign fighter operations and weapons smuggling. Khost is in the eastern part of the country. In the northeastern province of Kapisa, a coalition operation led to the deaths of several militants and the detention of three others on Friday, the coalition said Saturday. NATO's International Security Assistance Force on Saturday also reported the deaths of several militants in fighting Thursday in Helmand and Kandahar provinces in the south.

[Nigerian militants call ceasefire](#)

BBC – 22 June 2008

The militant group behind some of the worst attacks on Nigeria's oil infrastructure and the kidnap of oil workers has announced a ceasefire. The group, the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (Mend) said it followed an appeal made by elders in the region to give peace and dialogue another chance. It said that there would be no more attacks from midnight on Tuesday until further notice. Only last week the group launched the first attack on an offshore oil site. Nigeria's president ordered tighter security in the Delta after the attack on the Shell installation at Bonga, 120km (75 miles) out to sea, which cut Nigerian production by 10%. It was the first time militants had struck at Nigeria's hugely valuable offshore oil fields, far out to sea, which had previously been considered relatively safe from attack. Also, over the weekend, the US oil giant Chevron has halted onshore oil production at its Escravos oilfield after an attack on a pipeline. The Nigerian military said militants blew up the Niger Delta pipeline, but Mend said it had been contacted by "youths" who had said they were behind the attack. Disruptions to Nigerian output caused by militant attacks have been a significant driver in the soaring worldwide price of oil. The unilateral ceasefire, announced by Mend in an email to media outlets on Sunday, marked a sudden U-turn for the group, which earlier in the weekend had warned all foreign oil workers to leave the Niger Delta. With the government planning to hold a major summit of Niger Delta leaders and more money expected to flow to the Niger Delta, perhaps the armed groups there feel it is a good time to show how relevant they are to any chance of peace, says the BBC's Alex Last in Lagos. Nigeria's military is ill-equipped, while arms are proliferating in Nigeria's oil producing region, our correspondent says. Mend says it wants to secure more autonomy and control over resources for the Niger Delta, but the conflict now is a complex web involving armed gangs, political corruption and criminal rackets, he says.

[Officials: Iraqi councilman kills U.S. soldiers](#)

CNN – 23 June 2008

A member of an Iraqi city council shot at U.S. forces Monday outside Baghdad, killing at least three soldiers, two Iraqi Interior Ministry officials said. But the U.S. military said one coalition soldier and an "enemy" were killed and five others were wounded. The military said it is investigating. The Iraqi official fired an AK-47 at U.S. troops after they

entered the City Council building in al-Madaen, about 25 miles (40 kilometers) southeast of Baghdad, according to one Interior Ministry official. The councilman killed at least three people and wounded four, a ministry official said. U.S. forces returned fire, killing the councilman, according to two Interior Ministry officials. The shooting happened after U.S. soldiers and local officials had attended a ceremony to open a park in al-Madaen, also known as Salman Pak, an Interior Ministry official said. "The attacker came out of his car with an AK-47 rifle in his hand and started firing on the American soldiers until he was killed by the return fire," said Hussein al-Dulaimi, 37, who owns an agricultural machine shop across the street, according to The Associated Press.

[Donors agree \\$242m for Palestinians](#)

al-Jazeera – 25 June 2008

International donors at a conference on the Middle East in Berlin have committed \$242m for security projects that they hope will help in creating a viable Palestinian state. The money will be passed to the Palestinian Authority (PA) over the next three years to be spent on security measures such as more police stations and courthouses. The conference is being attended by more than 40 government delegation, including the Middle East Quartet of the US, the UN, the EU and Russia. The money comes out of \$7.4bn already pledged by donors in Paris in December, a month after peace efforts in the area were relaunched in Annapolis in the US. Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state, had urged donor countries at the opening of the conference to allocate uncommitted funds from their existing pledges to support the PA. She said: "Every link in what we call the chain of security must be intact and unbreakable. To... invest in a future state the Palestinians must have confidence that their police, courts, and penal system are dedicated to upholding the rule of law and respecting human rights." The PA presented a list of projects that it needed help on to the conference. Tony Blair, the Quartet's chief envoy, described the list as "proper and comprehensive". Blair said that a functioning criminal justice system was "fundamental for a two-state solution". "This is not just about forces with guns, it's about a proper functioning criminal justice system, it's about courts, the prosecution service, the prison service, it's about the whole infrastructure that goes to make up the criminal justice system and a state. "There will never be a two-state solution just by people sitting in a room negotiating... a state will only be created when people take the action to create the reality that allows a state to be credible, credible for the Palestinians... credible for the Israelis," he said. Salam Fayyad, the Palestinian prime minister, told the conference that while better security conditions were vital for the creation of a Palestinian state, such improvements must be accompanied by other measures such as an immediate freeze on new Israeli settlements and the dismantling of Israeli checkpoints. He said: "There needs to be progress not just on the security front but also on the political side." He also warned that the state of the PA's public finances were "critical". Tzipi Livni, Israel's foreign minister, said that the vast majority of the Israeli population saw the need for a two-state solution but that they needed to see evidence that the eventual Palestinian nation would be a "democratic, responsible state". "When we hand over the keys ... we need to know that our neighbour is a partner for peace. I need to know what is going on on the other side of the border," she said. Others attending the conference included Amr Mussa, the Arab League secretary-general, Javier Solana, the

EU foreign policy chief, and 23 foreign ministers. The conference is focused on helping the PA in the West Bank and does not cover the Gaza Strip, which has been controlled by Hamas since last year. Earlier, Al-Quds, the military wing of the Islamic Jihad movement, fired three rockets into southern Israel after Israeli troops killed two Palestinians in the West Bank city of Nablus. Following the violence, the Quartet said in a statement: "The Quartet urged that the calm be respected in full and expressed the hope that it would endure, and lead to improved security for Palestinians and Israelis alike, and a return to normal civilian life in Gaza."

[Iraq bombings kill at least 30; three marines dead](#)

IHT – 27 June 2008

Two insurgent bomb blasts struck at pro-American Iraqi targets in Anbar province just west of Baghdad and in the northern city of Mosul on Thursday, and the police said at least 30 people were killed and 80 wounded. Iraqi police officials said three American marines were among the dead in the Anbar attack, which came just as the American military command was preparing to hand control of the province, once considered the hotbed of the insurgency, over to Iraqi forces. The bombings extended a pattern of multiple-casualty attacks in recent days that are clearly intended to kill local Iraqi leaders, in particular those who are believed to have collaborated with American forces against insurgents. Both attacks on Thursday raised questions about assertions that Al Qaeda in Iraq and other Sunni extremist groups had been largely vanquished. Sheiks, who survived the suicide bombing in the Anbar attack on their weekly meeting in the city of Garma, accused Al Qaeda in Iraq, a home grown Sunni extremist group, of responsibility for the bombing. The marines killed in Garma, along with with two interpreters, had been attending the meeting, according to Iraqi police officers. In Mosul, the attack came on the heels of an announcement by the American military that its forces had killed the Al Qaeda in Iraq leader in Mosul, Abu Khalaf, a former associate Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who led Al Qaeda until he was killed by the Americans in 2006. In both places, there have been substantial military campaigns by American and Iraqi forces to try to root out the insurgency. The American pacification of Anbar — once considered the country's most dangerous province at the height of the Iraq war a few years ago — has been so successful that American forces there were preparing to hand control of the province back to the Iraqi government. The Garma attack was clearly aimed at participants at a weekly meeting of the leaders of the local Awakening Council, the Iraq police said. Initial reports from the police were that the bomb killed 12 people and wounded 27. The other bombing, in Mosul, targeted the provincial governor and killed 18 and wounded 61, according to local security forces. The governor was unhurt. Fifty people were at the Garma meeting which was attended by tribal sheiks, local dignitaries and members of the Awakening council in the area, who had been working with the Americans in fighting Al Qaeda in Iraq. The group was meeting in a tent when the bomb exploded at about 10 a.m. There were conflicting reports from people who were there about whether it was detonated by a man wearing a suicide belt or was an improvised explosive device. "As usual we entered the tent at 9 a.m.," said Hilal Abdullah Ali, a senior sheik from the Albu Alwan tribe. "At around 10:30 there was a big explosion. I heard the person sitting next to me say 'he exploded himself on us.' " The Garma bomb came on the eve of a

ceremonial American handover of security responsibility for Anbar to the Iraqis. The anticipated handover had been announced a few days earlier. The bombing in Mosul, which killed 18 people and wounded 61, occurred in a busy central area of the city, and was the second large bombing in the city in the past two days. One on Tuesday evening killed two people and wounded 73. The clear target of the Mosul attacker was the provincial governor, Duraid Kashmola, who toured the site of the blast later. Over the past week there has been a stream of attacks against local leaders both in small neighborhoods such as Abu Dshir on the southern edge of Baghdad and Madaen, which lies just southeast of the city, as well as an attack Tuesday on the Sadr City neighborhood council, which killed six Iraqis and four Americans and their Iraqi—Italian translator.

[U.S. Army history slams post-invasion Iraq plan: report](#)

Reuters – 29 June 2008

A new Army history of the Iraq conflict faults the invasion's top U.S. commander for his sudden decision to overhaul the Baghdad-based military command, *The New York Times* said in its Sunday edition. The 696-page report, set for release on Monday, focuses on the 18 months after U.S. President George W. Bush announced in May 2003 that major combat operations in Iraq were over, the Times said. "On Point II: Transitions to the New Campaign" concludes that Gen. Tommy R. Franks' decision, opposed by the Army's vice chief of staff, led to a short-staffed headquarters led by a newly promoted three-star general. "The move was sudden and caught most of the senior commanders in Iraq unaware," the military historians concluded, according to the Times report. The unclassified study, based on 200 interviews conducted by military historians, also says the new headquarters "was not configured for the types of responsibilities it received." Gen. Franks, speaking through an aide, told the Times he had discussed the Iraq invasion in his book and that he had not yet seen the study. "On Point" says one major problem was a lack of detailed planning ahead of the invasion for the postwar period, in part reflecting White House and Pentagon optimism about the future of Iraq. "I can remember asking the question during our war gaming and the development of our plan, 'Okay, we are in Baghdad, what next?'" No real good answers came forth," Col. Thomas G. Torrance, the commander of the Third Infantry Division's artillery, said in the report.

[Fatal clashes in Mongolia capital](#)

BBC – 2 July 2008

At least four people have died in violent protests in the Mongolian capital over alleged electoral fraud, officials and state media say. At least 130 police and protesters were wounded, and hundreds are said to have been detained in Ulan Bator. The president has declared a state of emergency and on Wednesday parts of the city remained sealed off. Opposition supporters question early results from Sunday's poll, which give a clear victory to the ruling party. Preliminary returns suggest the ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) has taken at least 45 seats in the 76-seat parliament, but the opposition Democrats allege fraud. Several thousand people gathered on to the streets of the capital after the preliminary results emerged on Tuesday. The ruling party headquarters were set alight and government offices were looted. Paintings were

destroyed by a fire at the national art gallery, Mongolia's Montsame news agency said. Police used tear gas, rubber bullets and water cannon to force stone-throwing protesters back. At a news conference on Wednesday, the country's Justice Minister Munkhorgil said five people had died, though state television and a foreign ministry official put the toll at four. Late on Tuesday, President Nambaryn Enkhbayar announced a four-day state of emergency, to run from 2330. "Police will use necessary force to crack down on criminals who are looting private and government property," said Mr Munkhorgil. By Wednesday morning some areas were sealed off and roadblocks were in place, a AP writer in Ulan Bator said, but shops were open and transport was running. Lawmakers and officials will meet in the capital later in the day for emergency talks on the situation, Montsame said. Both the MPRP and international observers say the polls were free and fair. But Democratic Party leader Tsakhia Elbegdorj said his party was robbed of victory. "If most people voted for us why did we lose? We lost because... corrupt people changed the results," he said. This is the fifth election since Mongolia adopted wide-ranging economic and politic reform in 1990. Before that, its government was modelled on that of the neighbouring Soviet Union. The MPRP ruled Mongolia from 1921-1996, when it was beaten by the Democrats. In 2004 the two parties were forced into an uneasy coalition but broke apart two years later. The two parties disagree on how newly-found mineral reserves - copper, gold and coal - should be best exploited.

TERRORISM & COUNTER-TERRORISM

[U.S. trains Iraqi women to find female suicide bombers](#)

CNN – 24 June 2008

Female suicide bombers, who often slip through security checkpoints untouched because of cultural norms, are taking a more deadly toll than ever across Iraq. But the U.S. Army has created a solution with "Daughters of Iraq," a program that trains Iraqi women to find female suicide bombers. Women carried out eight bombings in all of 2007, according to the U.S. military. Halfway through 2008, the number of female suicide bombers is 20. A suicide attack carried out by a woman on Sunday in Baquba killed at least 16 people and wounded another 40. "Daughters of Iraq" is a spinoff of "Sons of Iraq," which employs Iraqi men to run checkpoints and is credited with taking much of the steam out of the insurgency. The goal of the women's program is twofold: to protect against female suicide bombers, and to provide much-needed income to Iraqi women with few chances for employment. In the town of Yusufiya, southwest of Baghdad, some 30 women are being trained to search other females at security checkpoints -- something men are forbidden to do under Iraqi cultural norms. In mid-May, a female suicide bomber killed an Iraqi army officer in this town. "When he came out to meet her to help her with a problem she was having, she detonated the vest and killed him and injured some of his soldiers," said Michael Starz, a U.S. Army captain. The women will work two or three days a month, making up to \$300, an Iraqi military officer explained to applicants. In a community, where families struggle to survive, that's good money. The women come from small farming communities. Many of them are widows with numerous children and almost no income. Such is the story of Fawzia, who has six children to support. Her

husband was shot to death when his car broke down. "I am ready (to work) as long as it helps me financially," she said. "I have five children in school." Having women work in this tradition-bound society is a social revolution, according to Fatima, a volunteer leader, told CNN's Jill Dougherty. "Many women would like to do it but their parents would not agree because it's a rural society and it's shameful for girls to go outside the home."

[UNSC renews sanctions against al-Qaida, Taliban](#)

Xinhua – 30 June 2008

The UN Security Council on Monday extended by 18 months the mandate of the monitoring team concerned with sanctions against al-Qaida and the Taliban. In the resolution, the 15-member body reaffirmed that "terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to peace and security and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivations." Tackling the scourge requires the cooperation of all states and international and regional organizations, the council stressed. It called on member states to continue their efforts to act vigorously and decisively to cut the flow of funds and other financial assets and economic resources to al-Qaida, Usama bin Laden and the Taliban and other individuals, group, undertakings and entities associated with them." The resolution also directed the council committee concerning al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions to review by June 30, 2010 the names of individuals and entities that it agrees are members of or associated with al-Qaida, Usama Bin Laden and the Taliban on the so-called Consolidated List. In the resolution, the council clarified how member states are to implement the sanctions measures that have been previously imposed on the individuals, groups and entities linked to al-Qaida and the Taliban. Britain's UN Ambassador John Sawers said the resolution "includes a number of very significant steps forward to ensure the procedures are fair and as open as possible." He said that in future, each additions to the list will need to be accompanied by detailed statement of the case which as far as possible will be made public.

[US fears Al Qaeda attack next year](#)

DAWN – 30 June 2008

The White House warned on Monday that Al Qaeda could launch a major attack on the United States in 2009, endorsing a similar warning by an independent senator Joe Lieberman. The warnings coincide with media reports that top Bush administration officials drafted a secret plan late last year to enable US forces to operate inside Fata, but Washington turf battles and the diversion of resources to Iraq have held up the effort. At a White House briefing, press secretary Dana Perino did not confirm or deny the reports – saying that she could not “comment either way” – but she assured US citizens that the Bush administration had never allowed a “let up” in the search for Osama bin Laden and other Al Qaeda leaders. Ms Perino, however, did not hesitate to confirm Mr Lieberman’s fears. “Unfortunately, he could be right,” she said. “We know there are people who are very dangerous and are trying to do that.” Mr Lieberman, who was a vice-presidential candidate in 2004, said in a television interview on Sunday that history shows the United States would likely face a terrorist attack in 2009. “Our enemies will test the new

president early," he said. "Remember that the truck bombing of the World Trade Centre happened in the first year of the Clinton administration. 9/11 happened in the first year of the Bush administration." At the White House, Ms Perino noted that the people who were planning to attack the United States were "very dangerous and very secretive," and operated from "a very dangerous terrain, hiding in caves." Explaining President Bush's strategy for dealing with this threat, she said the president was clear that "whenever we can we will take action" against such people. "We will not wait." She said that people hiding in this "dangerous terrain" were "plotting to kill innocent people not just in the US but in other countries as well, even Muslims like in Iraq." Mr Perino said that as part of its strategy to deal with this threat, the Bush administration was trying to help establish a better economic and political environment in Fata and elsewhere. "So Senator Lieberman could be right but we are doing anything we can" to prevent a terrorist attack on the United States, she said. President Bush, she said, was also doing all he could to ensure that Al Qaeda is routed out.

[Homes raided in UK terrorism probe](#)

Reuters – 1 July 2008

Police said on Tuesday they had raided five homes in central England as part of a terrorism probe into a group suspected of being involved in "promoting violent extremist views". Staffordshire Police said they had searched the houses in Stoke-on-Trent under the Terrorism Act following what they said was concern about the activities of a small number of people in the local community. This group was said to be promoting extremism and radicalising vulnerable members of the community. So far police said there had been no arrests. "We can only tackle the real and serious threat posed to us all by violent extremism if we all work together," said Chief Superintendent Jane Sawyers. The operation posed no direct risk to public safety, detectives said. Sawyers added that local officers would be meeting community leaders to keep them briefed on the situation. "However, I also fully understand that there may be concerns and feelings of vulnerability," she said. "We are working closely with our communities to support everyone by keeping them informed about today's operation."

[Britain facing terrorist threat for another three decades, Lord Stevens warns](#)

The Telegraph – 1 July 2008

The study, commissioned by David Cameron, warns that Britain's borders are insufficiently protected and that militants can enter the country undetected. "There is no doubt more attacks will be attempted against the UK and those involved are again likely to travel abroad for preparation. Others may travel to the UK for the sole purpose of carrying out attacks," said the author of the report, former Metropolitan Police Commissioner Lord Stevens. There is "no indication that the [terrorist] threat level will reduce significantly" for "at least 20 to 30 years," he added. He envisages a 35,000-strong Border Protection Service to combine the current authorities, dedicated to dealing with terrorism, organised crime, people trafficking, illegal immigration and fraud. "The lack of a clear border security strategy has resulted in a situation where agencies are unaware of where their shared priorities lie," he said. "This has resulted in key duties not being

carried out, resources not properly allocated, organisations not working together as they should and focus being placed on narrow border control issues, specific to each agency and not the overall border security picture of the UK." "Border Protection Service for the UK: Policy Proposals" highlighted some of the threats to the UK's border security, including fears that it is now easier to enter the UK's airspace by light aircraft. There are many small airfields within easy flying distance of continental Europe, thereby facilitating the movement of people or illicit goods, it found. There are an estimated 8,500 private aircraft and up to 500 "landing sites" in Britain. However, there is no formal vetting from security authorities about who is landing and taking off. Protection at some British airports is also poor, Lord Stevens said, pointing to the lack of armed police on duty when two suspects attempted to blow up Glasgow Airport last year. Measures to intercept suspicious foreign mail were "inadequate to provide sufficient border control and security as the current automated scanning and physical inspections cannot ensure all items are thoroughly checked". Lord Stevens added: "The air cargo system is vulnerable to security threats including potential plots to place explosives aboard aircraft; illegal shipments of hazardous materials; criminal activities such as smuggling and theft; and potential hijackings and sabotage by persons with access to aircraft." He also called for more "regulation of private security companies working at airports and sea ports" and said the screening of those who work for them is necessary. Overall, he said, "there can be no overall indication of whether or not the taxpayer is receiving value for money on the control of borders". Lord Stevens is also concerned that fake goods are "increasingly linked with other forms of serious organised crime and terrorism", with two thirds of the counterfeit goods seized by Customs officers coming from China. Lord Stevens' report will carry extra weight because he was appointed an adviser on international security to Gordon Brown's "government of all the talents" last June. His warning comes after the Government's terrorism adviser, Lord Carlile of Berriew QC, warned that private jets and light aircraft could be used by terrorists to launch attacks on crowds and buildings in Britain. Lord Carlile said that senior police officers had "real anxiety" about the possibility of terrorist missions launched from small airports amid fears over lax security. Jets could be hijacked and used as "vehicle bombs" to target the public. Such attacks would be "relatively simple" to orchestrate, he said in his annual review of terror legislation.

[LTTE days numbered: Fonseka](#)

The Hindu – 1 July 2008

Sri Lanka's Army chief Sarath Fonseka said on Monday the LTTE had "lost the capability to fight as a conventional force" due to the relentless "overall military strategy" since August 2006. In an interactive session with members of the Sri Lanka Foreign Correspondents Association (FCA) at the Army Headquarters here, Lt. Gen. Fonseka said the Tigers would be reduced to nothing more than a "rag-tag terrorist outfit" in a year's time. He made the observation in response to questions on the assertion he made in December last year that the military would "wipe out" the LTTE by June 2008. Since August 2006, the military had killed an estimated 9,000 LTTE cadre, and lost 1,700 soldiers. He attributed the success to "overall military strategy" of eliminating the Tiger cadres and the full backing of President Mahinda Rajapaksa. Now, the strategy is

not about capturing territories, but eliminating LTTE cadres. "We do not just go for terrains, but we go for the kill. This is the difference between the military operations in the past and the present," he said. When the current phase of war started in August 2006, the Tigers had a fighting force of 8,000. "As per the intelligence reports, the current cadre of the LTTE in the worst-case scenario is 5,000. Most of the new recruits in the past two years are underage conscripts," he said. On the forthcoming SAARC summit and security arrangements, Lt. Gen. Fonseka said ongoing operations would not come in the way of providing foolproof security. Asked about speculation on the possibility of Indian troops taking over the security operations, Lt. Gen. Fonseka said Prime Minister Manmohan Singh would be here with his security contingent. "If there is a requirement of help from the Indian Navy and Air Force for a specific purpose, we would seek help from New Delhi," he said. He said it would be ideal for Sri Lanka to procure all its military requirements from India. However, given the Indian political sensitivities, Sri Lanka does depend on other friendly countries like China and Pakistan for its defence needs.

[SE Asian terror groups pose 'very real' threat: think tank](#)

AFP – 2 July 2008

Southeast Asian terror groups still pose a "very real" and strategic threat requiring vigilance from regional governments, despite a drop in attacks, an Australian think-tank said Wednesday. The Australian Strategic Policy Institute report said groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) of Indonesia, responsible for the 2002 Bali bombing that killed more than 200 people, were still capable of launching major terror attacks. The report, which also examined Muslim radical movements in the Philippines and southern Thailand, warned policymakers against complacency after a successful police crackdown on JI in Indonesia since 2002. The group was now split between a fanatical hardcore that still believed in violence and a less extreme wing, but it could muster about 900 militants, including at least 15 "first generation leaders." "Despite these changes, however, JI continues to represent a significant threat to both Australian and regional security interests," the report said. "The strategic threat from terrorism remains multifaceted and real" especially in the region's "ungoverned spaces" such as southern Thailand and Mindanao in the Philippines, where religious conflicts fester, it said. "It is essential therefore that Australian and Southeast Asian governments remain vigilant in the face of evolving political developments in these areas and work conscientiously to make these ungoverned spaces less hospitable to terrorist exploitation." The report, titled "Neighbourhood Watch: the Evolving Terrorist Threat in Southeast Asia," was written by Peter Chalk, a senior policy analyst with the Rand Corporation in the United States, and former Australian Labor Party national security advisor and academic Carl Ungerer. Its release comes two weeks after Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd pledged to boost security ties with Indonesia during his first state visit to Jakarta since taking office in November. Three men convicted of plotting the Bali attacks, which killed more than 80 Australians, are awaiting execution in a Java prison. Other top suspects remain at large. These include one of Southeast Asia's most wanted men, Malaysian-born Noordin Mohammad Top, who is believed to still be in Indonesia, and Aris Sumarsono, otherwise known as Zulkarnaen, who reportedly acts as Al-Qaeda's point man in Southeast Asia, the report said. Several other hardcore JI extremists, including bomb experts, are believed

to be hiding in the southern Philippines with the Abu Sayyaf Islamic militant group, it said. Indonesian police have killed or arrested more than 200 members of Jemaah Islamiyah since 2002 but just one year ago senior officers were still describing the group's structure as intact. The independent Australian institute warned officials across the region, but especially in Australia, Indonesia and the Philippines, against complacency. "There are already some signs of this in Indonesia," the researchers said. "According to one Indonesian analyst, elements of the political leadership in Jakarta believe that the terrorist problem has diminished and that further counter-terrorism initiatives against JI are unwarranted or, at the very least, are unnecessary. "Similarly, Philippine government officials now believe the Moro Muslim terrorist threat is in its last throes," it said, even though any breakdown of ongoing talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front was likely to lead to a "major return to violence."

[France terror laws 'flout rights'](#)

BBC – 2 July 2008

France violates human rights in the way it handles terrorism-related cases, a Human Rights Watch report says. The pressure group says France uses a catch-all offence to charge suspects even when they have only a vague link to an alleged terrorist organisation. The report also says suspects can face long periods of detention before trial, and some have suffered physical violence during interrogation. HRW says ministers need to take action or risk alienating some communities. The BBC's Hugh Schofield, in Paris, says France prides itself on having perhaps the most effective anti-terrorist system in Europe. The country has a team of specialist magistrates operating in close contact with the intelligence services, and an armoury of finely-honed laws to tackle the threat of terrorism, our correspondent says. Since the mid 1990s there has been no serious terrorist attack. But according to HRW, that level of security comes at the cost of some important breaches of natural justice. The prime focus of the group's displeasure is the catch-all criminal charge under which the vast majority of terrorist suspects are held and tried. The offence of "criminal association in relation to a terrorist undertaking" is excessively vague, HRW says. It means that people face prosecution because of the flimsiest of links to an alleged terrorist operation. The other main criticism concerns the way suspects are treated once in custody. They cannot see a lawyer for three days, and then for only 30 minutes. After being presented before a judge, they can be locked away in pre-trial detention for months or even years as the case against them is compiled. HRW also says it has evidence of mistreatment of prisoners, including sleep deprivation, psychological pressure and physical abuse. It urges the French government to take steps to address these problems, or risk alienating the communities from which future terrorist groups could emerge.

[36 wounded as bulldozer driver goes on rampage in capital](#)

J-Post – 2 July 2008

At least four people were killed and 36 were wounded - two seriously, four moderately and 30 lightly - on Wednesday afternoon when a bulldozer driver went on a rampage in downtown Jerusalem. Police said that the driver plowed his vehicle into two public buses,

toppling them over, and slammed into several cars. The driver was shot dead by an elite policeman, police said, adding that the incident was a terror attack. Police emphasized that the terrorist was carrying an Israeli identity card and was a resident of east Jerusalem. Witnesses said the driver was killed after a brief struggle with two policemen. One of the elite policemen was lightly wounded, apparently by gunfire, indicating that the terrorist was armed. The attack, on the junction of Jaffa and Sha'arie Yisreal streets, set off a panic in the area. Dozens of people ran through the streets to flee the scene of the attack and a car was still stuck under the bulldozer. Police said it was unclear how many people were in the trapped vehicle. The bulldozer was apparently being used for construction work on the Jerusalem light rail project.

[Colombia hostage Betancourt freed](#)

BBC – 3 July 2008

French-Colombian politician Ingrid Betancourt and 14 other hostages have been freed after rebels were fooled by an undercover military operation. Ms Betancourt had been held for more than six years by the rebel FARC group and was their highest-profile captive. President Alvaro Uribe of Colombia has congratulated the army on its success, and urged FARC to release its remaining hostages and seek peace. The FARC has been fighting to overthrow the Colombian government for 40 years. Wearing military fatigues, a pale Ms Betancourt smiled as she emerged with other hostages from a military plane in the Colombian capital Bogota to be greeted by her mother and husband. "God, this is a miracle... There is no historical precedent for such a perfect operation," she told media at the air base. Breaking into tears, she appealed to FARC to free the other hostages and make peace. French President Nicolas Sarkozy, who had made the rescue of Ms Betancourt a foreign policy priority, was joined by her family at the Elysee Palace in Paris. The freed hostage's son, Lorenzo Delloye-Betancourt, told the news conference it was "the best moment of my life". His sister Melanie said it was like "emerging from a bad dream". The siblings are flying to Colombia to be reunited with their 46-year-old mother. Colombian Defence Minister Juan Manuel Santos said no-one had been hurt in Wednesday's operation in the southern province of Guaviare and that the 15 hostages were in relatively good health. The rescued captives included three US defence department contract workers captured after their light aircraft crashed in the Colombian jungle in 2003. The trio - Marc Gonsalves, Thomas Howes and Keith Stansell - have now arrived back in San Antonio, Texas, where they will undergo medical tests and be reunited with their families. The other 11 people freed were members of the Colombian security forces who had been captured in various rebel attacks. Mr Santos said the FARC rebels had been tricked into handing over the hostages by soldiers posing as members of a fictitious non-government organisation that supposedly would fly the captives to a camp to meet rebel leader Alfonso Cano. "The helicopters, which in reality were from the army, picked up the hostages in Guaviare and flew them to freedom," he said. Intelligence agents had infiltrated the guerrilla ranks and duped the local commander in charge of the hostages, alias Cesar, the defence minister said. Cesar and another rebel who boarded the helicopter had been quickly overpowered and would now face justice, he added. Ms Betancourt later told a press conference she at first had had no idea she was being rescued until she found her captor himself captive naked and blindfolded on the

floor of the aircraft. "I saw this guerrilla commander, who had so often been cruel to us, on the floor," she said. "But I did not feel happiness. I felt sad." Armed forces chief Gen Freddy Padilla said: "We wanted to have it happen as it did today. Without a single shot. Without anyone wounded. Absolutely safe and sound, without a scratch." US ambassador to Colombia, William Brownfield, said there had been "close cooperation" from the Americans, including sharing of intelligence, equipment and training advice. World leaders welcomed the news and celebrations erupted on the streets of Colombian cities as crowds hailed the jungle rescue in a country plagued for decades by kidnappings. The BBC's Jeremy McDermott in Medellin says the successful operation by Colombian security forces is a political and military coup for the country's government. As such, it will relieve the pressure on President Uribe to negotiate with the FARC - the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia - allowing him to continue with his US-backed military offensive against the group, our correspondent says. The FARC had hoped to exchange some 60 political hostages for hundreds of rebels held by the Colombian government, he says, but with Ms Betancourt's rescue they have lost a powerful negotiating tool. The news is yet another blow to the once-mighty FARC, our correspondent adds, following the death of its legendary leader Manuel Marulanda in March, along with two other members of the guerrilla group's seven-man ruling body. The FARC still holds more than 40 high-profile hostages, among up to 700 other captives. Video pictures released last November had shown Ms Betancourt looking gaunt and frail. Accounts from freed hostages that she was in danger of dying had heightened the sense of urgency surrounding her fate, our correspondent adds. Ms Betancourt has dual citizenship as the result of marriage to a French diplomat - since dissolved - which produced two children, who worked hard to keep her captivity in the spotlight. The politician was kidnapped in February 2002 while campaigning in territory controlled by the FARC.

DIPLOMACY & DEFENCE STRATEGY

[Iran discounts 'attack by Israel'](#)

BBC – 21 June 2008

Iran has said it considers a military attack on its nuclear facilities by Israel as "impossible". "Such audacity to embark on an assault against the... territorial integrity of our country is impossible," said spokesman Gholam Hoseyn Elham. The statement follows reports in the US media that Israeli aerial manoeuvres over the eastern Mediterranean were a possible test-run for a strike on Iran. Iran insists that its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes. It has repeatedly rejected demands to halt enriching uranium, which can be used as fuel for power plants or material for weapons if refined to a greater degree. The head of the UN's nuclear watchdog, Mohammed ElBaradei, meanwhile said an attack would put Iran on a "crash course" to building nuclear weapons and would turn the region "into a fireball". He said he did not believe there was any "imminent risk" of proliferation by Iran given the current status of its nuclear programme. In an interview with Al Arabiya television, Mr ElBaradei said that if any military action was taken against Iran he would find it impossible to continue as the head of the IAEA.

Iran's defiant message follows a report in the New York Times on Friday. The newspaper cited US Pentagon officials as saying that the Israeli exercise - involving more than 100 Israeli fighter jets - was intended to demonstrate the seriousness of Israel's concern over Iran's nuclear activities, and its willingness to act unilaterally. It said helicopters and refuelling tankers flew more than 1,400km (870 miles), roughly the distance between Israel and Iran's main uranium enrichment plant at Natanz. The New York Times reported that Israeli officials declined to discuss the details of the exercise. The US state department would not comment on the Israeli exercise. Iran is said to be considering an offer from six world powers of preliminary talks, which would be used to agree a framework for formal negotiations and incentives. The talks are on the condition that Iran freeze its current levels of enrichment for six weeks in exchange for the powers putting a halt on their push for new sanctions. EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana put forward the proposal - made by the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council the US, China, Russia, France, Britain plus Germany - during talks in Tehran last week. He said the six powers were ready to fully recognise Iran's right to have a civilian nuclear energy programme.

[ElBaradei warns against strike on Iran](#)

CNN – 22 June 2008

A military strike on Iran would turn the Middle East "into a ball of fire," said Mohamed ElBaradei, the head of the United Nations' nuclear watchdog agency. ElBaradei made the remarks in an interview aired on Saturday by Al Arabiya TV. The interview comes a day after reports emerged that Israel conducted a large-scale military exercise that the United States believes is in part a message to Iran that Israel has the capability to attack its nuclear program. "In my opinion, any military strike -- as I mentioned -- is the worst thing that can happen now," said ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency. "It will make the Middle East turn into a ball of fire. It is a lot worse than having sanctions. A military strike will lead Iran, even if it plans today to manufacture a nuclear weapon, to establish a crash course to speed the process to have the weapon with the blessing of all Iranians, even those living in the West." A U.S. military official confirmed to CNN on Friday that Israel conducted a major aerial military exercise over the eastern Mediterranean Sea on June 2. The exercise was first reported in the New York Times. The United States believes the maneuvers were in part an Israeli effort to send a public message that it has the capability to attack Iran's nuclear program, the official said. The exercise involved dozens of Israeli warplanes, including F-15s, F-16s and aerial refueling tanker aircraft, the official said, adding that the size and scope of the exercise ensured it was seen by both the United States and other nations in the region. The planes flew several hundred miles into the eastern Mediterranean. The U.S. military calculates the distance was roughly the same Israel would have to fly into Iranian airspace if it were attacking the Natanz enrichment plant, the official acknowledged. The Israeli military said its air force regularly trains for various missions in order to confront and meet the challenges posed by the threats facing Israel. Israel attacked and destroyed the Osirak nuclear facility in Iraq in 1981 and attacked a target in Syria that the United States believes was a nuclear reactor. Israel and Iran long have been arch-enemies. Israel has long felt threatened by Iran's hard-line Islamic regime. The Islamic Republic doesn't

believe in the existence of the Jewish state, and Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has called for Israel to be wiped off the map. The Iranian regime for years has criticized Israel's policies in the Palestinian territories. Israel, like the United States and other nations in the West, believes Iran has aspirations to create a nuclear arsenal. Iran says it wants to develop nuclear power for peaceful purposes, namely energy for power lines, and denies it wants to produce nuclear weapons. Israel and the United States have said they want to deal with Iran's nuclear program diplomatically, but the countries haven't ruled out military options. Recently, Israel Deputy Prime Minister Shaul Mofaz said the Jewish state "will attack" Iran if it doesn't halt its efforts to develop nuclear weaponry. Iran's United Nations delegation has sent a letter to the U.N. secretary-general and Security Council protesting the threat. ElBaradei said in the interview that if a military strike would occur, "then I do not think there will be any need for my work at all. I will have no way to continue my job if a military force is mobilized (against Iran)."

[Taiwan practices for Chinese invasion](#)

CNN – 23 June 2008

Taiwan Monday began its annual computer-simulated war game which anticipates an invasion by China, despite warming ties between the island and its mainland rival. Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense Spokeswoman Lisa Chi said the Hankuang war game would last five days, but she declined to offer further details. Hankuang means Chinese glory. Major General Huang Kun-tsung, director of military training affairs, said in March the computer-simulated war game, like past ones, would focus on the Chinese military threat to Taiwan. He said there would also be extensive military exercises in September. Taiwan's United Daily News and Apple Daily both reported Monday that the computer simulation this year presents a scenario, set in 2009, in which Taiwan loses its air and naval defense to Chinese troops one day after the invasion. The scenario envisions the Taiwan military battling Chinese invaders on the ground, according to the reports. The newspaper reports also said President Ma Ying-jeou would participate in the war game for the first time as commander-in-chief. According to Taiwan's defense ministry, the 2007 scenario simulated a sudden invasion in 2012, with the attack led by the Chinese air force. That war game focused on air and naval encounters between the two sides in which Taiwan managed to preserve most of its personnel and military equipment while having difficulties deterring Chinese submarines. The 24th annual war game begins one month after Ma's inauguration, who has promised to improve long-strained ties with rival China and seek the signing of a peace accord. Under Ma, Taiwan has resumed formal talks with China earlier this month after a hiatus of almost 10 years. During the talks, the two sides have reached an agreement on expanded charter flights and tourism. Taiwan and China split during civil war in 1949. Beijing continues to claim Taiwan as part of its territory, and threatens to attack if the island moves to make the break permanent. The tense relations were especially strained in the past eight years when former President Chen Shui-bian was in power in Taiwan. Chen often enraged China with his strong support for formal independence.

[U.S. escalating covert operations against Iran: report](#)

Reuters – 29 June 2008

U.S. congressional leaders agreed late last year to President George W. Bush's funding request for a major escalation of covert operations against Iran aimed at destabilizing its leadership, according to a report in The New Yorker magazine published online on Sunday. The article by reporter Seymour Hersh, from the magazine's July 7 and 14 issue, centers around a highly classified Presidential Finding signed by Bush which by U.S. law must be made known to Democratic and Republican House and Senate leaders and ranking members of the intelligence committees. "The Finding was focused on undermining Iran's nuclear ambitions and trying to undermine the government through regime change," the article cited a person familiar with its contents as saying, and involved "working with opposition groups and passing money." Hersh has written previously about possible administration plans to go to war to stop Tehran from obtaining nuclear weapons, including an April 2006 article in the New Yorker that suggested regime change in Iran, whether by diplomatic or military means, was Bush's ultimate goal. Funding for the covert escalation, for which Bush requested up to \$400 million, was approved by congressional leaders, according to the article, citing current and former military, intelligence and congressional sources. Clandestine operations against Iran are not new. U.S. Special Operations Forces have been conducting crossborder operations from southern Iraq since last year, the article said. These have included seizing members of Al Quds, the commando arm of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, and taking them to Iraq for interrogation, and the pursuit of "high-value targets" in Bush's war on terrorism, who may be captured or killed, according to the article. But the scale and the scope of the operations in Iran, which include the Central Intelligence Agency, have now been significantly expanded, the article said, citing current and former officials. Many of these activities are not specified in the new finding, and some congressional leaders have had serious questions about their nature, it said. Among groups inside Iran benefiting from U.S. support is the Jundallah, also known as the Iranian People's Resistance Movement, according to former CIA officer Robert Baer. Council on Foreign Relations analyst Vali Nasr described it to Hersh as a vicious organization suspected of links to al Qaeda. The article said U.S. support for the dissident groups could prompt a violent crackdown by Iran, which could give the Bush administration a reason to intervene. One of the Democratic leaders in Congress would comment on the finding, the article said. The White House, which has repeatedly denied preparing for military action against Iran, and the CIA also declined comment.

The United States is leading international efforts to rein in Iran's suspected effort to develop nuclear weapons, although Washington concedes Iran has the right to develop nuclear power for civilian uses.

[Five myths about Israeli prisoner swaps](#)

Haaretz – 29 June 2008

It is going to be a dramatic, maybe even crucial, week for Israel in terms of dialogue. Sunday the government will review, and probably vote on, the deal with Hezbollah for Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser, the Israel Defense Forces soldiers abducted by the

group in July 2006. Meanwhile, negotiations with Hamas over kidnapped soldier Gilad Shalit, who was taken in June 2006, resumed on Thursday. Soon we will see whether the tahadiyeh (cease-fire) is indeed furthering the chances of the corporal's release, as government officials suggested in defending the truce. That same cease-fire was put to an extreme test last week, and it will continue this week, after Palestinian militants launched missiles and mortars at towns around the Gaza Strip, and Israel responded by shutting down the crossings into Gaza. This is a good chance to reexamine some recent claims by Israeli officials - ministers, officers and spokesmen. In some cases, what they are saying is quite detached from reality.

1. "Releasing live prisoners for bodies would constitute a dangerous precedent."

Though the risks are debatable, doing so would by no means form a precedent. Israel already released 45 live prisoners for the bodies of IDF soldiers Yossi Fink and Rahamim Alshayach in 1996. It released another 60 Lebanese prisoners in exchange for the body of naval commando Itamar Ilya.

2. "The decision on the prisoner exchange with Hezbollah is a security issue."

Inaccurate. The ministers are facing a moral and emotional issue. They will be asked to weigh the government's commitment to bringing home Israel Air Force navigator Ron Arad against its commitment to the Goldwassers and the Regev. Security issues are measured by risks, and Samir Kuntar, whom the government is considering releasing in exchange for Regev and Goldwasser - despite his potential importance in a future deal for Arad - poses little risk. He is a child killer, and many say he should rot in prison for life, but he is not an arch-terrorist.

3. "Palestinian prisoners from the West Bank can be released into the Gaza Strip."

Maybe. While Israel debates the question, Hamas on Saturday said it would not consider it - potentially rendering the doubts and discussions in Jerusalem irrelevant.

4. "Opening the Rafah crossing depends on Shalit's release."

Opening this crossing depends on Egypt as much as Israel. But it is doubtful whether Egypt wants the crossing opened, since such a move would immediately lead to thousands of Palestinians flooding into the Sinai Peninsula. The last time this happened, when Hamas broke through the border fence between Gaza and Egypt, it was a traumatic experience for the Egyptians.

5. "Hamas can control all the other factions in Gaza."

So far, reality has proven this assumption to be erroneous. Since the tahadiyeh came into effect, Islamic Jihad and Fatah's militias have fired rockets at Israel - even though this goes against Hamas' interests - making a complete cease-fire an unrealistic goal at this point.

[US admiral urges caution on Iran](#)

BBC – 2 July 2008

America's top military officer has said opening up a third front in the Middle East through a strike on Iran would be "extremely stressful" for US forces. Adm Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was commenting on the likelihood of US or Israeli military action over Iran's nuclear programme. Tensions have risen amid reports Israel could be planning a possible strike against Iran's nuclear facilities. Iran denies its nuclear programme is anything other than peaceful. The BBC's Justin Webb in Washington says

it has been clear for some time that Adm Mullen does not want to attack Iran. But his latest remarks suggest he is fighting hard behind the scenes for both the US and Israel to think carefully about the consequences of an attack before considering mounting it, he says. At a US defence department news conference, Adm Mullen refused to say what Israeli leaders told him during meetings last week about any plan to strike Iran. But he warned that opening up a third front, after Iraq and Afghanistan, would be "extremely stressful, very challenging, with consequences that would be difficult to predict". Asked if he was concerned Israel would strike before the end of the year, he said: "This is a very unstable part of the world and I don't need it to be more unstable." The admiral said that if a conflict began, he believed Iran would have the capability to disrupt ship traffic through the strategic Strait of Hormuz, a waterway near the Persian Gulf, but he would not say if the US Navy was stepping up its patrols in the region. He said: "I believe [Iran is] still on a path to get nuclear weapons and I think that's something that needs to be deterred." He added: "My position with regard to the Iranian regime hasn't changed. They remain a destabilising factor in the region. "But I'm convinced that the solution still lies in using other elements of national power to change Iranian behaviour, including diplomatic, financial and international pressure." He called for dialogue between the US and Tehran. Adm Mullen's boss, US President George W Bush, has also been asked about recent speculation that there might be a military strike on Iran. The president has said all options were on the table but that military action would not be his first choice. His senior soldiers will be pleased to hear it.

[U.S., Poland strike missile deal while Russia objects](#)

CNN – 2 July 2008

The United States and Poland have reached a tentative deal to place part of a ballistic missile defense system on its territory, a plan that has drawn sharp objections from Russia, a senior administration official said Wednesday. Poland's political establishment still has to sign off on the deal and determine the next steps, the official said. The agreement came after several days of negotiations and less than a week before a planned visit by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Defense Secretary Robert Gates. The Bush administration has long pushed to base missile interceptors in Poland. The interceptor rockets would be linked to an air-defense radar system in the Czech Republic, where officials agreed in April to take part in the system. The interceptors in the Czech Republic could identify and shoot down missiles fired by Iran at Europe or the United States. Russia fervently opposes basing the interceptors right across its border and says the system's real target would be Russian missiles, according to Time magazine. The Czech Republic and Poland are former Soviet satellites, now members of the U.S.-led NATO alliance. The United States has said the system is intended to defend Europe from a possible missile attack from the Middle East. There was no immediate response from Moscow about the deal. But Assistant Secretary of State Dan Fried said the United States has taken to heart Polish concerns over more U.S. cooperation with Russia and NATO on the missile defense shield. The United States has also agreed to help Poland modernize its military, which it requested as a condition of its support for housing the missile defense system. Fried told reporters earlier that Polish negotiators were tough and came to the table with "serious suggestions and positions," but that the U.S. was "quite satisfied" with

the status of the negotiations. Fried called Poland a "magnificent ally" who has sent troops to Iraq and Afghanistan. He said the talks have been "strenuous" but that the United States understood that this was important to Poland.

DEFENCE ACQUISITION AND TECHNOLOGY

[US Navy's newest submarine christened](#)

CNN – 21 June 2008

The Navy's newest attack submarine, the New Hampshire, was christened Saturday, delivered eight months ahead of schedule and \$54 million under budget. The New Hampshire was christened by the widow of a pilot killed in the September 11 terrorist attacks. "I believe I'm looking at heroes," said Cheryl McGuinness of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, looking at the ship's crew. "You all are my heroes." Thomas McGuinness was co-pilot of American Airlines Flight 11, which was flown into the World Trade Center's north tower. Navy officials, members of Congress and shipyard workers were among the thousands who gathered to celebrate the christening of the 7,800-ton, 337-foot nuclear-powered submarine, which will have a crew of 134. "She's a living, breathing soul who will provide a home to her crew," said Rep. Joe Courtney, D-Connecticut. The submarine, built by General Dynamic's Electric Boat and Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, is the third Navy vessel to carry the name of the Granite State. "Now it's time for this New Hampshire to continue the seafaring legacy of the ships before," said Adm. Kirkland Donald, director of naval reactors. "We'll soon depend on this crew to take this submarine into harm's way." The submarine is scheduled to begin sea trials this summer and is expected to be delivered to the Navy in October, in a ceremony at the Naval shipyard in Kittery, Maine.

[Lockheed Martin Awarded Contract To Produce Multi- Function Towed Arrays For U.S. Navy](#)

Lockheed Martin News Release – 23 June 2008

Lockheed Martin received a \$10 million contract to produce and support Multi-Function Towed Arrays (MFTAs) for the U.S. Navy's AN/SQQ-89 Antisubmarine Warfare Combat System. The work will be performed at Lockheed Martin's Syracuse, NY facility. The MFTA is the next generation passive and active sonar receiver configured as a long three inch diameter array that can be towed behind surface ships. It provides several enhancements to the legacy AN/SQR-19 Tactical Towed Array System (TACTAS) enabling greater coverage and increased capability and reliability. The MFTA significantly contributes to the capability of surface ships to detect, localize and prosecute undersea threats, and is a critical sensor for the ship's combat systems suite. "We're proud to provide the U.S. Navy the largest, most experienced towed array design and production workforce with the best-equipped towed array production facility in the world," said Denise Saiki, vice president & general manager of Lockheed Martin's Undersea Systems business. "We have leveraged the lessons-learned from the Navy's prototype array to simplify construction, improve reliability and reduce life cycle costs."

The MFTA is the first new surface ship array to be built for the U.S. Navy in twenty five years. This array will be integrated with AN/SQQ-89A(V)15 systems installed aboard guided missile destroyers and cruisers. More than fifty U.S. Navy ships are equipped with the AN/SQQ-89 system. The MFTA is also slated for use on DDG-1000 and the Littoral Combat Ship. For this contract, Lockheed Martin is collaborating with Chesapeake Science Corporation in Millersville, MD. Headquartered in Bethesda, MD, Lockheed Martin employs about 140,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The Corporation reported 2007 sales of \$41.9 billion.

[Raytheon ATFLIR Targeting Pod Captures First International Orders](#)
[Raytheon News](#)

Raytheon News Release – 23 June 2008

Raytheon Company has received a \$62 million U.S. Navy order to provide the Advanced Targeting Forward Looking Infrared pod to the air forces of Australia and Switzerland. The foreign military sale award calls for the delivery of 18 ATFLIR systems to Australia to equip its new F/A-18 F Block II+ Super Hornets. Raytheon will also provide one ATFLIR pod to Switzerland as part of an upgrade program for its F/A-18C Hornets. The order allows the nation to purchase up to 14 more pods in 2009. "Australia and Switzerland will benefit from a combat-proven targeting pod that is performing strongly as the program of record for the Navy with a hot production line," said Joe Studer, ATFLIR international business development manager for Raytheon Space and Airborne Systems. "The pods they receive will include engineering improvements and spiral technology advancements made previously under the Navy program without any additional development cost to our first international customers." The contract also includes delivery of ATFLIR spare parts to the Navy and the two foreign air forces. "Like many foreign military sales, this ATFLIR award will greatly contribute to coalition force interoperability," said Capt. Mark Darrah, Navy program manager for the F/A-18 and E/A-18G aircraft. "The value of participating in a program such as ATFLIR is substantial as we continue to advance system technology and mission capabilities."

[IDF 'robot hospital' treats machines wounded in action](#)

Haaretz – 30 June 2008

In Warrant Officer Ilanit Finkelstein's workshop, a black robot that gave up the ghost during an operation in the West Bank has been lying on the table for several weeks. The electrical short circuit from which it suffers was particularly deadly, and the suitcase from which soldiers can give it orders was burned. Finkelstein, who is in charge of the electronics department at the Julis base, finds it difficult to recall a robot that came to her in such bad shape, at least recently. "We are waiting for replacements parts to come from the manufacturer in the United States," she says. "We will do a few experimental activities with it in laboratory conditions and afterward we will hand it over to the unit that has to operate it." The Israel Defense Forces robot fleet now numbers several dozen, which are used by IDF units in the West Bank and the Gaza area. Their main aim is to

minimize the chances of soldiers getting hurt in combing buildings and tunnels that could be booby-trapped. The robots, which are less than a meter tall, know how to climb staircases quickly, photograph what is standing in front of them and transmit the live picture to a distant command position. Given an order from afar, they are also capable of opening fire on terrorists and suspicious objects. A robot that is wounded in action is brought to the "robot hospital" - a workshop of the armaments unit of the Central Command (Regional Armaments Unit 650), which is located at the Julis base in Lachish. During an average week about three robots that have been damaged in the line of duty are brought in. Only three soldiers, in the career army, have the know-how and credentials to repair the robots. The repairs are not carried out only at the workshop. "Sometimes we are sent into the field in order to solve problems that arise in the functioning of the robots during the course of operational actions," says Finkelstein. "We don't have the time to linger over the treatment of hitches because the robots are very essential for operational action, and we definitely are saving human lives." The creative solutions that the workshop people have been able to come up with for repairing robots have saved about NIS 50 million for the defense establishment. "Before we order an important part for a robot, we sit and think what we can do in order to avoid the huge expenses," relates another member of the robotics team at Unit 650, Warrant Officer Yitzhak Yahana. "We don't have any professional literature on the subject. We have accumulated all the knowledge we have from experience in the field and experience of hitches that have occurred. And we are constantly improving our ability to solve problems and decreasing the amount of time until the robots are once again fully fit."

[UK declares Eurofighter Typhoon ready for multirole use](#)

Flight Global – 1 July 2008

The UK Royal Air Force has formally cleared some of its Eurofighter Typhoons as ready to perform air-to-surface operations, following the 1 July declaration of the type's multirole employment date. Achieved through a so-called "austere capability" upgrade to some of the RAF's Tranche 1 Typhoons, the ground-attack mission will be performed using 455kg (1,000lb) Raytheon Paveway II laser- and Enhanced Paveway II laser/GPS-guided bombs (test release pictured below) and the Rafael Litening III targeting pod. The modifications were successfully demonstrated during 11 Sqn's participation in a recent Green Flag West close-air support exercise at Nellis AFB, Nevada. "This latest capability upgrade gives the Royal Air Force the most operationally flexible aircraft it has ever had," said Air Chief Marshal Sir Clive Loader, commander-in-chief Air Command, during a ceremony at RAF Coningsby, Lincolnshire.

NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY

[Oil summit calls for supply boost](#)

BBC – 22 June 2008

Leading oil exporters have acknowledged the need to boost supplies to curb soaring prices but stopped short of specific commitments on extra output. Following their crisis

summit in Saudi Arabia, officials noted price levels were "hostile" and more investment was needed to ensure "adequate" supplies. Saudi Arabia blamed speculation, not lack of supply, for surging prices but said it was willing to raise output. Earlier, Gordon Brown said more supply was needed to ease price "instability". The US, UK and other major consumers of oil have urged producers to boost supply, blaming lack of capacity for the recent price surge. In a statement issued at the end of the meeting in Jeddah, officials from Opec oil exporters and consumers said "an appropriate increase in investment" in production was needed to ensure that the markets were "well supplied in a timely and adequate manner". The final communiqué made no reference to immediate action to cool prices, which have surged more than 40% this year alone. But Saudi Arabia said it would be prepared to pump more oil "if demand for such quantities materializes and our customers tell us they are needed". The world's largest oil producer has already announced plans to lift daily quotas to 9.7 million barrels by the end of July, an increase of about 500,000 barrels since May. Saudi officials also indicated they could raise its oil "cushion" - the spare production capacity it maintains - above the current 12.5 million barrels per day planned for the end of 2009. "We are very concerned for consumers in all countries," Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz told the meeting in Jeddah, convened after prices rose 40% this year to close to \$140. "And we declare our readiness to meet any additional needs." King Abdullah proposed that members of the Opec producers body could contribute \$1bn to a fund to help poorer countries deal with spiralling energy costs. The BBC's Paul Wood in Jeddah said the Saudi measures would be welcomed but that it would be naive to assume they would have an instant impact on prices. The meeting, attended by energy ministers from more than 30 countries as well as senior executives from the world's largest oil companies, took place amid fears that recent record oil prices are helping tip the US and other major economies towards recession.

[7 of 10 most dysfunctional states in sub-Saharan Africa](#)

AP – 24 June 2008

Seven of the world's 10 most dysfunctional countries are in sub-Saharan Africa, an annual survey released on Monday says. The state of most of the seven is due largely to continuing mayhem either in Somalia or in Sudan's Darfur region. Somalia was at the top of the listing of states most at risk of failure. 'In many ways, Somalia has failed already as the unpopular transitional government lacks control of the streets of Mogadishu - much less the rest of the country,' the list's compilers wrote. The only non-African country in the first 5 of the 'Failed States Index' was No. 5, Iraq. The compilers said Iraq ranked so high because of the US military surge in 2007. 'The gains that one might hope for - those that reflect fundamental, long-term changes - did not occur,' the compilers said. Also, for the first time, Israel and the Israeli-occupied West Bank slipped into the index's top 60 at No. 58, just behind Angola and Georgia. Israel itself is stable and strong, but it remains responsible for the Palestinians, and 'deep divisions still linger under the surface,' the authors wrote. The index uses 12 social, economic, political, and military indicators to rank 177 states in order of their vulnerability to violent internal conflict and the deterioration of their civil society. It is compiled annually by the independent magazine Foreign Policy and Fund for Peace, an independent research organisation. Somalia, at the tip of the Horn of Africa, has been without a functioning central government since

warlords overthrew former dictator Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991. Their ensuing conflict remains unsettled, and conditions have slipped steadily downward. While the index found Somalia the state nearest to disassembling, many of its neighbours were close behind. The top 10, in order, are Somalia, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Chad, Iraq, Congo, Afghanistan, Ivory Coast, Pakistan and the Central African Republic. Other African countries in the top 20 are Guinea, 11; Ethiopia and Uganda, tied for 16; and Nigeria, 18.

[Europe targets human smugglers](#)

al-Jazeera – 25 June 2008

Police across Europe have detained 75 people suspected of smuggling illegal immigrants, mainly Iraqi Kurds, into northern Europe, French and German officials say. The largest number of arrests happened on Monday in France. The sweep, dubbed Operation Baghdad, was the result of a broad investigation into a complex people-smuggling ring, the officials said. The network believed to have brought hundreds of people from Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere to Scandinavian countries, Britain and Ireland in recent years. Paris prosecutors said in a statement that police had uncovered a "well-structured transnational cell" and arrested 24 people in the capital and other French towns and cities. The French interior and immigration ministries said in a joint statement that at least 1,300 police officers from 10 European countries were mobilised for the probe. The would-be immigrants paid between \$9,300 and \$21,000 to be brought to Europe, French and German authorities said. In Belgium, police detained 10 people during raids in the capital, Brussels, and in nearby city of Leuven. Some of those detained are believed to be ring leaders, Belgian police officials said. Seven people were arrested in Germany. Horst Hund, a German prosecutor spokesman, said the seven people were among 15 individuals that authorities have been investigating since the beginning of the year. In Sweden, 12 people were detained in connection with Operation Baghdad. In the Netherlands, border police in the northern city of Leeuwarden arrested three men "suspected of involvement in a European network of human smugglers", the Dutch national prosecutor's office said.

[Oil hits \\$142, analysts foresee \\$150](#)

CNN – 27 June 2008

Oil prices rose to a record high above \$142 a barrel Friday on a weak dollar and supply concerns, prompting many analysts to predict \$150-a-barrel oil sometime soon. Light, sweet crude was up \$2.60 to \$141.68 a barrel in pre-market electronic trading. The contract set an all-time high of \$142.26 earlier in the session. Crude surged in Thursday's session after OPEC's president said crude prices could rise as high as \$170 a barrel this year and Libya said it may cut oil production. "We are of the opinion that if the bears cannot stem the bleeding now, then who is going to prevent this market from going to \$150... and beyond," oil industry analyst Stephen Schork wrote in his daily newsletter The Schork Report. Meanwhile, the euro fell slightly against the dollar early Friday morning, but the greenback remains near an all-time low. The 15-nation euro bought \$1.5755 in morning European trading, down from \$1.5760 late Thursday in New York. The euro hit a record high of \$1.6018 in April. A weaker dollar can push the price of oil higher as many investors buy oil to hedge against inflation. Also, the currency imbalance

makes oil, which is traded in dollars, more attractive for overseas investors. The dollar was pushed lower Thursday by a government report showed sluggish economic growth in the first quarter and an analyst downgrade of some key financial institutions. Separately, retail gas and diesel prices eased overnight. The national average price for a gallon of regular gas fell one-tenth of a cent to \$4.066, according to AAA. Diesel prices shed four-tenths of a cent to a national average price of \$4.763 a gallon.

[Blair urges G8 2050 climate pact](#)

Reuters – 27 June 2008

Former British prime minister Tony Blair urged the Group of Eight rich nations on Friday to agree to a global goal of halving greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, despite signs top carbon emitter the United States would not back the target. "What we should do this year is to establish the workplan necessary so that we can get an interim target next year that is realistic," Blair told a news conference. "For this year's Japan G8, the essential thing is -- get the global 2050 target agreed, and then get the elements that will go into the package for next year." Blair, who is in Tokyo to present a report by the non-profit Climate Group, said an agreement at the G8 summit in Hokkaido, northern Japan, from July 7-9 would be key to kick-starting discussions for an interim emissions reduction target next year. Pressure is mounting from environmentalists for the G8 to come up with medium-term targets, even before 2050. But a wide gulf exists within the group and between richer and poorer nations over how to share the burden of fighting climate change, which many experts link to droughts and changing weather patterns, and expect to bring rising sea levels. Japan has yet to persuade the United States to agree to the mid-century goal, a Japanese government source said on Thursday, reigniting doubts as to how far the G8 will be able to go beyond its agreement last year to "seriously consider" the goal. Tokyo wants the G8 meeting and an expanded meeting with eight other major economies including China to build momentum for U.N.-led talks on a climate framework to succeed the Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2012. The Kyoto pact's first phase obliges many industrialized nations to curb emissions between 2008-12, and the aim for the next stage is to bind all nations to reductions. Part of the solution to cutting future emissions would be a renaissance in nuclear power, Blair said, although he noted that the world's long aversion to nuclear energy meant technology was not readily available. "There is going to be a renaissance in nuclear power, partly to do for reasons with climate change, and partly to do for reasons with energy security," he told Reuters. "But here's the problem -- because of the way we've turned away nuclear energy in the past couple of decades, we've got a situation where we don't have the expertise frankly to develop nuclear power in the way that it needs to and at the speed we need to."

[World oil market in fear of terror attack in Saudi Arabia](#)

AFP – 3 July 2008

An attack - or even an attempted attack - by Islamic extremists on Saudi Arabia's oil sector would have disastrous consequences on the world market and the price per barrel, analysts warn. Of more than 700 people arrested in the course of the last six months in Saudi Arabia, dozens had been part of cells charged with preparing attacks against oil

sites, according to authorities in Riyadh. With the price per barrel rising constantly and the capacity to increase global production almost non-existent, apart from in Saudi Arabia, the world market has never been so vulnerable to an offensive by Jihadists in the kingdom, they said. Mr Michael Klare, head of the University of Massachusetts's peace and world security programme and author of the book 'Resource Wars', said that even if an attack caused little damage, the impact would still be enormous. 'There would be a tremendous psychological effect because the market is already prepared to expect terrorist events like this. It would have an immediate effect on prices,' he said. 'And if an attack actually damaged production or exploration, the effect would be even greater. The rise would be astronomical,' he added. Mr Klare believes that a less significant attack would result in a price hike of no more than ten dollars a barrel. '(But) if they managed to destroy a major refinery or a major loading facility and cut production that would have a dramatic impact. Prices would go to US\$200 (S\$261) a barrel,' he said. The Saudi oil sector, which spends considerable sums on security, has been an Al-Qaeda target for years. Osama bin Laden in December 2004 called on followers in an audio message to 'aim your operations at oil production in Iraq and in the Gulf.' In February 2006 assailants using two booby-trapped cars tried to enter the huge Abqaiq complex, the biggest in the world, in the east of the kingdom. When challenged they detonated the explosives, killing themselves and two guards. Mr Francis Perrin, editor-in-chief of Arab Oil and Gas magazine, said the current price of oil revealed the concern over the fragility of world supplies and the danger that in future supply will no longer satisfy demand. 'In such a context, an attack against oil installations in Saudi Arabia would have a considerable impact,' he said, adding that Saudi Arabia played a unique role in the world market which was on a 'knife-edge.' 'It is the country possessing a bit less than a quarter of the reserves, it is the leader at the heart of Opec (the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries), the number one in terms of unused capacity... It's the only country in the world of capable of producing more in the short term, in weeks,' he said. If an attack was carried out against minor installations, the impact would be significant, he said. But if an attack succeeded against more important installations, 'the effect would be absolutely incalculable in terms of price,' added Perrin. Against this background Israeli threats of an air offensive against Iranian nuclear installations only add to the market's nervousness, said Mr Klare. 'If such an attack is conducted, I think the Iranians will try to engineer terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain. They would do everything they can to create chaos in the international oil market... Prices would skyrocket,' he said.

MILITARY / PEACEKEEPING / HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS

[First female four-star U.S. Army general nominated](#)

CNN – 23 June 2008

America's first female four-star general has been nominated, the Pentagon announced Monday. President Bush nominated Lt. Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody to serve as head of the Army's supply arm. By law women are excluded from combat jobs, the typical path to four-star rank in the military. "This is an historic occasion for the Department of Defense and I am proud to nominate Lt. Gen. Ann Dunwoody for a fourth star," said Defense

Secretary Robert Gates. "Her 33 years of service, highlighted by extraordinary leadership and devotion to duty, make her exceptionally qualified for this senior position." The Senate must approve the nomination. Dunwoody, a native of New York, was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1975 after her graduation from the State University of New York in Cortland. She also holds graduate degrees in national resource strategy and logistics management. She became the Army's top-ranking woman in 2005 when she received her third star and became deputy chief of staff for Army logistics. "I am very honored but also very humbled today with this announcement," said Dunwoody. "I grew up in a family that didn't know what glass ceilings were. This nomination only reaffirms what I have known to be true about the military throughout my career ... that the doors continue to open for men and women in uniform." The Army Material Command handles all material readiness for the Army. During her career, Dunwoody has been assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division, 10th Mountain Division and the Defense Logistics Agency. She served with the 82nd Airborne in Saudi Arabia during the 1991 Persian Gulf War. She has been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, Master Parachutist Badge and the Army Staff Identification Badge. The first woman to become a general officer in the U.S. armed services was Brig. Gen. Anna Mae Hays, chief of the Army Nurse Corps, who achieved the rank in 1970 and retired the following year. Elizabeth Hoisington, the director of the Women's Army Corps, was promoted to brigadier general immediately after Hays. She also retired the following year. Maj. Gen. Jeanne M. Holm, the first director of Women in the Air Force, was the first woman to wear two stars, attaining the rank in 1973 and retiring two years later. In 1996, Marine Lt. Gen. Carol A. Mutter became the first woman to wear three stars. Mutter retired in 1999. Currently, there are 57 active-duty women serving as generals or admirals, five of whom are lieutenant generals or vice admirals, the Navy's three-star rank, according to the Pentagon.

[Tsvangirai wants armed peacekeepers in Zimbabwe](#)

CNN – 24 June 2008

Zimbabwean opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai called Wednesday for armed international peacekeepers to secure a new presidential election in the country where violence has marred a runoff set for this week. Tsvangirai won the most votes in the March 29 election but failed to gain a majority. He formally withdrew Tuesday from the runoff against President Robert Mugabe, who said Friday's vote would take place as planned. "We do not want armed conflict, but the people of Zimbabwe need the words of indignation from global leaders to be backed by the moral rectitude of military force," Tsvangirai wrote in Wednesday's edition of the British newspaper *The Guardian*. "Such a force would be in the role of peacekeepers, not troublemakers. They would separate the people from their oppressors and cast the protective shield around the democratic process for which Zimbabwe yearns." The U.N. Security Council unanimously condemned the Zimbabwean government Monday for its campaign of violence and intimidation but stopped short of calling for a postponement of the runoff or for a new election. Tsvangirai, however, was clear. "The next stage should be a new presidential election," he wrote. "The reality is that a new election, devoid of violence and intimidation, is the only way to

put Zimbabwe right." Meanwhile, Mugabe said Tuesday that the runoff will happen as planned. "We will proceed with our election; the verdict is our verdict," he said at a rally in Bankent. "Other people can say what they want, but the elections are ours. We are a sovereign state, and that is it. "They can shout as loud as they like from Washington or from London or from any other quarter. Our people, only our people, will decide, and no one else." The Movement for Democratic Change hand-delivered a letter signed by Tsvangirai to the electoral commission Tuesday, saying it will not participate in the runoff with Mugabe, spokesman Nelson Chamisa said. "The situation ... now is very different from what has been experienced in this country since independence," Tsvangirai wrote in the letter. "The violence, intimidation, death, destruction of property is just too much for anyone to dream of a free and fair election, let alone expect our people to be able to freely and independently express to free themselves. For this reason, my party and I have resolved that we cannot be part to this flawed process." Tsvangirai spoke to CNN on Tuesday from the Dutch Embassy in Harare, where he has been since Sunday, seeking protection. "This is total war, and we cannot be part of that war. This is not an election," he said. "The conditions are just horrendous." "I've been arrested, I've been brutalized; this is not exaggeration. This is reality here," he added.

[Pakistan troops 'enter volatile tribal region'](#)

CNN – 25 June 2008

Pakistan on Wednesday moved about 3,000 troops into a tribal region where 20 local tribesmen were slain by Taliban militants, an army spokesman told CNN. The forces cleared the Jandola region of militants loyal to Pakistani Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud, according to Gen. Athar Abbas. Mehsud's forces have been engaged in turf wars with the rival Bhattani tribe, which had formed a committee to work toward peace in the lawless region. The bodies of 20 tribesmen -- including at least 12 tribal elders who were kidnapped Tuesday -- were recovered near the town of Jandola, which adjoins the South Waziristan tribal district where Mehsud is based, police said. The Associated Press of Pakistan said the victims included members of the Bhattani tribal peace committee. In recent months, Mehsud's militants have been fighting tribesmen loyal to the government in and around South Waziristan, even as Pakistan's new government negotiates a deal with the Mehsud tribes. The deal involves the exchange of prisoners and the withdrawal of Pakistani forces from the area. Abbas said Wednesday that the recent clashes will not affect the government's negotiations with militant groups in the tribal region. Mehsud had been identified by Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf's administration as the mastermind behind last year's assassination of former prime minister. The CIA reached the same conclusion.

[Pakistani secure militant area in Khyber region](#)

Reuters – 29 June 2008

Pakistani security forces have secured an area in the Khyber region, where a key supply route passes into Afghanistan, a day after launching an offensive to push back militants threatening Peshawar. The offensive is the first major military action the new government has launched against militants since it took power after February elections, and comes

after growing alarm about the consolidation and spread of militant influence in the northwest. A senior government official in the region told Reuters there had been no violence since Saturday night. "The situation is under control. We have destroyed at least three militant hideouts and Frontier Corps soldiers are patrolling and controlling the area," said the official, who declined to be identified. The Khyber region is home to the Khyber Pass through which vital supplies for Western forces in Afghanistan pass. It had been virtually free of militant violence until this year but security has deteriorated in recent months as Islamist militants ganged up with the criminals. Major-General Alam Khattack said on Saturday his forces were focused on Bara town, about 15 km (10 miles) southwest of Peshawar. He said the offensive was expected to last four or five days but could be extended. A security official said one militant was killed on Saturday. Paramilitary troops fired mortar bombs at militants and later blew up several of their positions, including the house of militant commander, Mangal Bagh. Roads in and out of Bara have been closed and a curfew imposed. In recent weeks, Islamist vigilantes loyal to Bagh began roaming into some Peshawar neighborhoods. Riding on the back of pick-up trucks, fighters wielding Kalashnikovs threatened music and video shop owners, and ordered barbers to stop shaving men's beards.

[Troops use live ammo instead of blanks](#)

AFP – 30 June 2008

Seventeen people, including a child left in a critical condition, were injured when soldiers fired live bullets instead of blanks during an open day display in Carcassone, France, regional officials said. Fifteen civilians and two soldiers were injured in the incident, of which the details remained unclear, involving a demonstration by members of a marines parachute regiment of hostage liberation exercises, the regional authority said. Four of the 17 were seriously injured, with two described as critical following "incomprehensible" scenes at the barracks near Carcassone, in the country's south-west. According to local authorities, five children were among the injured. Five helicopters, 11 firefighters' first-aid vehicles and two ambulances rushed to the scene to help the injured. One soldier had been detained, although no explanation was immediately forthcoming for why the wrong ammunition was loaded into weapons. "All hypotheses are being considered," said a national police spokesman tonight, adding that the weapons had been "seized and placed under lock and key". Hospitals in the southern cities and towns of Toulouse, Narbonne, Montpellier and Perpignan, as well as Carcassone, were treating the wounded. Colonel Benoit Royal, head of the army's information unit, said a number among the injured were from military families. French President Nicolas Sarkozy urgently awaited the results of a top-level military probe into the incident, according to a presidential statement. Sarkozy said he "shares with the families the pain caused by this drama. My first thoughts are with the victims. Everything will be put in place to care for them". Lemaire added that investigators believed the deadly ammunition was loaded by mistake. "The question being asked is 'Did the soldier engage in a criminal act or not?'," Lemaire said. "For now, no one can answer that, but the theory being worked on is one of error." France's Defence Minister Herve Morin went "immediately" to Carcassone tonight, he said in a statement.

New UN Peacekeeping Chief Faces Growing Challenges

VoA – 1 July 2008

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has appointed seasoned French diplomat Alain Le Roy to head the organizations' peacekeeping operations. From Paris, Lisa Bryant takes a look at the man at the helm of a very difficult department. Alain Le Roy was most recently in charge of a Euro-Mediterranean project spearheaded by France, but he is no stranger to troubled regions. He has held U.N. jobs as special coordinator and regional administrator in Bosnia and Kosovo. He has also been the European Union's special representative in Macedonia and the French ambassador to Mauritania. Now he presides over a huge department. The number of U.N. troops around the world has grown from 50,000 to more than 100,000 during the past eight years. About 120 countries today contribute military and police to U.N. peacekeeping operations. Analyst Philippe Moreau Defarges of the French Institute for International Relations, in Paris, says a good manager is first and foremost what is needed to lead U.N. peacekeeping operations. "I am not sure it is a question of personality," he said. "It is mostly a question of organization. Today the peacekeeping forces are a huge bureaucracy - very complicated. And you need a good manager, a good administrator. Maybe you might need a charismatic person, but you need more a good manager." Le Roy takes charge at a time when U.N. peacekeepers are grappling with huge demands and with sometimes negative reputations. "First, there are almost 20 operations all over the world - in Africa, in Asia and it is why it is so complicated," said Defarges. "Second point, these operations are very difficult. These U.N. peacekeepers who come with good will and are often there to help people, often look like occupying forces. That is why the relationship between these forces and the local populations can be very difficult." U.N. peacekeepers have been under the cloud of sex abuse and corruption scandals in countries like Ivory Coast and Congo. And one of the biggest challenges now facing them - and Le Roy - is how to stabilize Darfur - a vast and desolate region in Sudan that has been torn apart by war.

African Union urges UN to take over Somalia peacekeeping

AFP – 1 July 2008

The African Union announced on Tuesday that it was extending the mandate of its force in Somalia for another six months but urged the United Nations to take over the peacekeeping mission. The bloc's 15-member Peace and Security Council underlined the new opportunities for peace in the Horn of Africa country created by a June 9 agreement signed in Djibouti by the transitional government and the main opposition coalition. The council -- Africa's top conflict prevention body -- called on the United Nations to find the replacement peacekeeping mission for the current Ethiopian-dominated force foreseen by the Djibouti agreement. The council "decides to extend the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for an additional period of six months, with effect from 17 July 2008," a statement said. But it "expresses hope that, with the agreement of 9 June, the international community will provide increased support to the efforts aimed at bringing to a definite end the violence that has plagued Somalia for about two decades." In particular it called for the "early deployment, in accordance with... the 9 June agreement, of a United Nations peacekeeping operation that would take over AMISOM

and support the long-term stabilisation and reconstruction of the country." According to the agreement, Ethiopians would withdraw after the UN deployed peacekeepers within 120 days of an armistice taking effect, a key demand of the opposition. The council noted that the existing AU force remained massively under strength, with just 2,600 of the 8,000 troops pledged actually on the ground. It urged member states to "provide the required troops and other personnel to enable AMISOM to reach its authorised strength" and called on "member states and partners to provide financial and logistical support to facilitate the completion of the deployment of the mission and the sustenance of its operations." Somali Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein and the opposition umbrella group the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) reached a series of agreements at the UN-sponsored talks in Djibouti, including a three-month truce which is to come into force within a month. But Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, an influential radical cleric whom Washington accuses of links to Al-Qaeda, has rejected the deal signed by ARS chief Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, saying it fails to set a clear deadline for the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops. Aweys and his allies stayed away from the talks, saying they would not take part unless Ethiopian troops backing government forces since late 2006 pulled out of Somalia. Since their ouster early last year by the joint Somali-Ethiopian force, the Islamists have waged a guerrilla war, which according to international rights groups and aid agencies, has left at least 6,000 civilians dead and displaced hundreds of thousands. The 1991 ouster of dictator Mohamed Siad Barre paved the way for a breakdown in the state machinery and a rise in factional warfare that has seen most of Somalia beyond the control of any recognised central government ever since.

[IDF head of planning: People's army becoming a myth](#)

J-Post – 1 July 2008

Just 52 percent of teenagers are drafted into the army and 16% of those serve for just one year, said IDF Col. Tziki Sela, head of the planning branch of the army's manpower department at Israel Teachers Union education conference "Creating a Future" on Tuesday. He said 43% of religious girls do not enter the army at all. "Drafting means to draft both the strong and the weak in society, as opposed to the US Army where just the weak are enlisted. The universal draft is a crucial ingredient for Israel's survival," Sela said. "A dangerous situation of extremes has been created in Israeli society: on the one hand, a group which is knowledgeable and ready to volunteer, and on the other hand, a sizable group with no motivation to give. There is no middle. Israel needs to rely on those who serve." He added that serving included both those who have enlisted and those doing national service. Sela sarcastically attacked the law that permits girls who declare they are religious to receive an automatic exemption from army service. "In the current situation, a girl could arrive at a draft center on Yom Kippur in a car, eat a non-kosher sandwich there and declare that she is religious, and that is enough from a legal perspective not to be able to draft her," Sela charged. According to him, 7,000 teens dodge the draft each year. Sela defined draft dodging as referring to anyone the draft law applies to, but chooses not to enlist. Sela also lamented the neglect of technical education in Israel, which, according to him, lowers Israel's capabilities and resilience to defend itself. He said to make up for the education gaps, the army trained 2,500 people a year in

technical professions. Orna Beri, head of the Israel Union of capital risk investors, also noted at the conference that just 2% of Israeli pupils were considered exemplary. Moreover, Beri charged, the Education Ministry does not know how to deal with them and help them reach their potential. "The best way to close gaps in Israeli society is to invest in education. Moreover, it will be the top pupils who will help Israel deal with its enemies and dictate future trends," she said. It was also revealed at the conference that there has been a 4% rise in the number of women learning electronics and computers in the last decade, with a concurrent decrease of 5% among men studying the same subject. The two-day conference seeks to address the most important issues on the national agenda with a special focus on the impact of education upon them.

Japanese SDF's peacekeeping role limited by weapons rules

The Yomiuri Shimbun – 2 July 2008

The number of Self-Defense Forces personnel slated to be dispatched to Sudan to assist with U.N. peacekeeping operations there is small. But Japan's direct involvement in peace-building efforts in the troubled African nation far from Japan is loaded with significance. On Monday, Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda, in a meeting with U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, announced Japan would send a handful of Ground Self-Defense Force members to southern Sudan to assist with peacekeeping activities. The GSDF personnel likely will be dispatched to the command center of the U.N. Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) in Khartoum from August or later. Under UNMIS and following the 2005 comprehensive peace agreement between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army, about 10,000 personnel provided by 69 countries have been assisting with the care and repatriation of refugees and monitoring the ceasefire. Security appears stable in southern Sudan, a far cry from the situation in Darfur, in the west of the country, where another peacekeeping mission is under way. Many in the Defense Ministry strongly cautioned against the dispatch of the GSDF personnel to Sudan, saying it would be difficult to explain the purpose of the dispatch, including why GSDF personnel should travel to a nation so remote from Japan. The fierce heat and difficult living conditions, including poor hygiene, also were raised as potential problems. It is understandable that Japan should attach prime importance to peacekeeping activities carried out in other Asian nations. However, most peacekeeping activities currently are concentrated in Africa and the Middle East. Many African nations are capable of robust economic growth, but have been wracked by continual strife. These nations should not be abandoned. At the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development in Tokyo in May, the government pledged to double its official development assistance to African countries over the next five years. The government aims to establish strategic and cooperative relationships with every African state. Japan would not be fulfilling its responsibilities as a member of the international community if it only provided financial assistance to African nations in need but failed to send personnel. Only 36 Japanese personnel are involved in peacekeeping activities around the world, which ranks Japan 82nd as a provider of such personnel. The number appears far too small when considering that in January 2007 the government redefined the role of the 250,000-strong SDF, making international peace cooperation activities "a main duty" of the force, rather than a subordinate one. The dispatch of GSDF personnel to the UNMIS command center

could provide an opportunity for Japan to determine whether there are other peacekeeping activities in southern Sudan that would be suitable for GSDF units to be involved with. Peacekeeping activities of the GSDF are limited to logistical support, including transportation of materials, humanitarian and reconstruction assistance such as road repair, and ceasefire-monitoring activities. In the future, Japan should consider expanding the scope of the GSDF's remit, allowing it to take on new roles such as guarding areas that need to be protected. If the GSDF's remit were to be expanded, new laws would be needed. At the same time, the relaxation of a set of rules on the use of engagement by SDF personnel, which has been postponed, would need to be put back on the table. Under the current rules governing engagement by SDF personnel, the use of weapons is limited to actions carried out in self-defense, and the safety of SDF personnel remains uncertain. The current rules of engagement must be changed to meet international norms by allowing SDF personnel to use weapons for the execution of their duties. Responsible political policymaking demands such a change be made.

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

[Nuclear inspectors head to Syria](#)

BBC – 22 June 2008

UN nuclear inspectors are beginning a visit to Syria to investigate claims that it was building a nuclear reactor. The International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) four person team will spend three days examining the al-Kibar site in the desert in northern Syria. The site was bombed by Israeli jets in September 2007. The ruins were bulldozed after the attack. Israel and the US have said the installation was a nuclear plant in the making - a charge denied by Damascus. The report of the IAEA inspectors will be eagerly awaited, but their visit is likely to be kept well away from the press, the BBC's Jim Muir reports. In April, Washington released pictures purporting to show North Korean experts inside the construction, which it said closely resembled a North Korean reactor at Yongbyon. Syria has repeatedly denied it has any nuclear weapons programme, or any such agreement with North Korea. Syrian officials have said the bombed site was an unused military facility under construction, but deny that it had anything to do with a nuclear programme. IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei has criticised both what he saw as a US delay in releasing information on the Syrian site and Israel's bombing of the site before his agency could inspect it. Ahead of the visit, Mr ElBaradei called on Syria to show "absolute transparency" and to give the inspectors access to all sites they wished to see. Syria has agreed to allow the IAEA access the al-Kibar site, but not another three the nuclear watchdog is said to be interested in visiting.

[N. Korea invites media to nuclear plant blast](#)

CNN – 23 June 2008

North Korea is to blow up a key part of its controversial Yongbyon nuclear reactor on Friday. The destruction of the plant's cooling tower is part of an agreement with the United States aimed at denuclearizing the Korean peninsula in exchange for loosening

some restrictions on the highly secretive Communist country. The North Korean government has invited news organizations, including CNN, to witness the event. Earlier this year, Pyongyang agreed to disable its nuclear reactor and provide a full accounting of its plutonium stockpile, "acknowledge" concerns about its proliferation activities and its uranium enrichment activity, and agree to continue cooperation with a verification process to ensure no further activities are taking place. North Korea has been taking Yongbyon's main reactor apart, but imploding the cooling tower is an exceptionally important psychological step given that the highly recognizable shape of the structure is synonymous with nuclear power plants. The United Nations' nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, says it would take a year to rebuild if North Korea decided to go back on its agreement, and that the construction could not be done in secret. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice defended U.S. diplomacy toward North Korea last week, saying the deal with Pyongyang made Asia and the U.S. safer. Speaking at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative Washington think tank, Rice said that "North Korea will soon give its declaration of nuclear programs to China." China is the host of the six-party talks aimed at ending North Korea's nuclear program, along with Russia, South Korea, Japan and the United States. Rice spoke in advance of her upcoming trip to Asia where she will be attending a meeting of G8 foreign ministers and meeting with her Asian counterparts. Rice said once North Korea submits its declaration, President Bush will notify Congress he intends to remove North Korea from the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism and scrap some sanctions levied against North Korea because of nuclear concerns. But she noted that there would be no practical effect to loosening the restrictions because North Korea still was under the same sanctions because of other areas of U.S. law. Rice said a 45-day review would then begin to see if North Korea is telling the truth and living up to its end of the deal struck in the six-party talks. "Before those actions go into effect, we would continue to assess the level of North Korean cooperation in helping to verify the accuracy and completeness of its declaration," she said. "And if that cooperation is insufficient, we will respond accordingly." The United States softened its demand that North Korea publicly admit to having a highly enriched uranium program and to providing Syria with nuclear technology, key unanswered questions that have left negotiations stalled for months. North Korea has already handed over about 18,000 documents on its nuclear past to the U.S., which the U.S. says are critical to verify North Korea's claims. Rice said that the deal with North Korea wasn't perfect but offered the U.S. the best chance to learn about North Korea's nuclear history. "We must keep the broader goal in mind: the elimination of North Korea's nuclear weapons and programs, all of them," she said. "North Korea has said that it is committed to this goal. We'll see." Rice said that "no final agreement can be concluded" unless the U.S. verifies North Korea's claims.

[N Korea demolishes reactor tower](#)

BBC – 27 June 2008

North Korea has demolished the cooling tower at its Yongbyon nuclear reactor, in a symbol of its commitment to talks on disarmament. International television crews were invited to witness the tower being blown up. The move comes a day after the isolated state handed over long-awaited details of its nuclear programme, but no account of its

weapons stockpile. In return, the US has removed it from a list of states sponsoring terrorism. State media reported North Korea's Foreign Ministry had welcomed the state's removal from the list, regarding it as a "positive step". The Yongbyon reactor was shut in July last year as part of a six-party agreement reached 16 months ago, when the North said it would scrap its nuclear ambitions in return for aid and diplomatic concessions. Analysts say that while the destruction of the tower is not, in itself, a huge step forward, it is still being seen as an important gesture. "It was a significant and very important step," said US State Department official Sung Kim, who witnessed the event. "As I saw it, it was a complete demolition." America has agreed to scrap some sanctions as well as removing the state from its list of terrorist sponsors. "We assess this as a positive step and welcome it," a foreign ministry spokesman told the North's official Korean Central News Agency. The reactor, 96 km (60 miles) north of Pyongyang, produced plutonium for the North's nuclear weapons test in 2006. The BBC's world affairs correspondent said that blowing up the cooling tower meant it would take North Korea about a year to revive its plutonium production, and it would be obvious if it was doing so. However, he added that "bigger hurdles remain" - including the critical issue of actual weapons stockpiles, as well as suspected North Korean proliferation activities - particularly the supposed Syrian connection. South Korea said on Friday it hoped a new round of six-party talks - which also include North Korea, Japan, Russia, China and the US - could begin next month. Meanwhile, the negotiating team has been poring over Pyongyang's 60-page declaration, submitted on Thursday. Six months overdue, the account is expected to cover the North's plutonium production activities. But the dossier omits any tally of its nuclear arsenal, any mention of a suspected uranium enrichment programme or claims it helped Syria build a nuclear facility, all denied by Pyongyang. Mr Bush has emphasised moves to take the North off the US terror list would not begin for 45 days, and only if its nuclear declaration was verified. But former US envoy to the UN John Bolton labelled the decision "shameful" and the "final collapse of Bush's foreign policy".

[North Korea declaration 'verifiable,' if not 'complete'](#)

CNN – 2 July 2008

When U.S. officials spoke in the past of the need for North Korea to declare the extent of its nuclear program, everyone from President Bush down said it must be "complete" and "verifiable." But since Pyongyang released details of its program last week, U.S. officials aren't using the word "complete" any longer. "We think that this declaration is verifiable," State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said Wednesday. He declined to say whether it was "complete." On June 26, North Korean officials turned over to China a 60-page declaration, written in English, that details several rounds of plutonium production at the Yongbyon plant dating back to 1986. In the report, North Korea acknowledges producing roughly 40 kilograms of enriched plutonium -- enough for about seven nuclear bombs, according to the U.S. State Department. But the document doesn't detail North Korea's suspected uranium enrichment program or its nuclear cooperation with Syria. In an addendum to the document, North Korea acknowledges those concerns and says it will cooperate to work out differences to mutual satisfaction. On Tuesday, U.S. envoy Chris Hill, who has led the U.S. delegation at the six-party talks, said the declaration is a good first step. The Bush administration is stressing the ability to verify North Korea's claims

on its nuclear past rather than publicly shame them, officials have said, noting that North Korea has already handed over 19,000 documents on its nuclear history. Hill said it was significant that last year North Korea was producing plutonium but isn't able to any longer because it has disabled its reactor. For months, North Korea has been disabling its nuclear facility at Yongbyon under the watchful eyes of representatives of the five other nations, including the United States, that have been involved in talks aimed at ending Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program. On Friday, North Korea destroyed a water cooling tower at the facility, where officials acknowledge they extracted plutonium to build nuclear weapons. McCormack said the United States paid North Korea roughly \$2.5 million to implode the cooling tower. During negotiations, the United States softened demands that North Korea admit in the declaration to having a highly enriched uranium program and supplying Syria with nuclear technology -- sticking points that had stalled the talks for months. U.S. officials said the final deal isn't perfect, but it offers the United States its best chance yet to learn about North Korea's nuclear activities, and officials say that is more important than having North Korea publicly admit to the uranium or proliferation activities. In response to North Korea's declaration and its disabling of Yongbyon, Bush said he would lift some U.S. sanctions against North Korea and remove the country from the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism. In doing so, he said, there are still "a number of issues of serious concern to the United States and the international community." "To end its isolation, North Korea must address these concerns. It must dismantle all of its nuclear facilities, give up its separated plutonium, resolve outstanding questions on its highly enriched uranium and proliferation activities, and end these activities in a way that we can fully verify," Bush said.