

ENVIRONMENT SCAN 01-15 JUN 2018

PAKISTAN

Col Arvinder Singh

Officer among 4 BSF personnel killed in Pak Rangers firing.¹ Four Border Security Force (BSF) personnel, including an assistant commandant rank officer, were killed and three others injured in unprovoked firing by Pakistan Rangers along the International Border (IB) in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir on 13 Jun 18. The firing from across the border in Chamliyal post area of Ramgarh sector started around 10.30pm on 12 Jun 18 and continued till 4.30am.

Comments This is the second cross border firing along the IB this month and came despite Director General Military Operations (DGMO) of the two countries agreeing, on 29 May 18, to implement the ceasefire pact of 2003 in letter and spirit. On 03 June 18, two BSF personnel, including an assistant sub-inspector, were killed and 10 persons, mostly civilians, injured in heavy shelling and firing by Pakistan Rangers along the IB in Pragwal, Kanachak and Khour sectors. The latest casualties take the number of those killed in ceasefire violation by Pakistan along the IB and the Line of Control (LoC) this year to 50, including 24 security personnel.

Pakistan devalues its currency for third time since December² Pakistan's central bank devalued the rupee for a third time since December amid a worsening economy and speculation that the country will need support from the International Monetary Fund. The currency dropped 3.7 percent to close at 119.84 per dollar on 11 Jun 18. The rupee is Asia's worst-performing currency this year. Some analysts expect the currency to drop further to 125 per dollar by year-end and saying the IMF may request the authorities to weaken it even further.

Comments. This also makes Pakistan the most competitive currency in South Asia. The decision should support the country's export. Analysts say Pakistan's economic growth will slow in 2018 for the first time in six years. The nation's foreign-exchange reserves have dropped to the lowest in more than three years, the current-account deficit has widened, and external debt and liabilities as a percentage of gross domestic products climbed to the highest in almost six years in the first quarter.

SCO can bridge India-Pakistan distance: China³ China expects the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to play a key role in resolving the differences between India and Pakistan, which joined the organization last year by providing them platform and opportunities for resolving their historical conflicts.

Comments. The statement is significant because Prime Minister Narendra Modi had indicated on 10 Jun 18 that Pakistan was a major stumbling block in the improvement of relations between India and China.

Pak Elections 2018: A Bhutto Makes Debut, Imran Khan Goes All Out and what it means for India.⁴ In a month-and-a-half Pakistan will vote its next government to power. The elections will have bearing not just on future of terrorism, economy and

¹ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>

² <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com>

³ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>

⁴ <https://www.news18.com>

democracy in Pakistan, but on its neighbors, including India Pakistan will go to the polls on 25 Jul 18 and the results are expected to be announced within a couple of days of polling. In the 342-member House, 172 is the halfway mark broaching which makes a political party the single largest and qualifies it to stake claim to form the government by itself. In case no party comes out with overwhelming numbers, a coalition of smaller parties, which are likely to be more extremist in their views, could behave more unpredictably and aggressively towards India. Going by the popular opinion, PML-N, the party that just finished its term at the centre, has a strong chance to being re-elected. A recent poll has put PML-N with around 38% approval ratings, ahead of its rivals by a lead of 13%. Though the party patriarch Nawaz Sharif has been barred from holding an elected office or a position in a political party, following a Supreme Court ruling in light of the ongoing investigations in the Panama-papers disproportionate assets case, he is still very much the face of the party and has been campaigning for it. The chief challenger to Nawaz Sharif led PML-N is the former captain of Pakistani cricket team and the supremo of Pakistan-Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan. In the last general elections held in 2013, his party secured the second highest voter percentage. Building on an anti-corruption campaign, Khan's popularity has only been increasing of late. The last big player in these elections will be Bilawal Bhutto Zardari-led Pakistan People's Party Son of former, assassinated, Prime Minister of Pakistan - Benazir Bhutto and Asif Ali Zardari, Bilawal is making his debut in these elections, leading what perhaps is the only mainstream left-leaning political party in Pakistan. Apart from these three big players, some other notable participants are former military chief of Pakistan - Pervez Musharraf, the chief of terror group Lashkar-e-Toiba - Hafiz Saeed through a little known political entity known as Allaha-u-Akbar Tehreek (AAT).

Comments. PML-N led by Nawaz Sharif is seen to be the most moderate political entity in these elections. According to several reports, the BJP-led Indian government, which has experience in dealing with him already, may be most comfortable with a PML-N government for the little changes it would have to make it to its foreign policy. The other two parties have been racking up Kashmir fiercely in their political campaigns. Imran Khan is seen as a hardliner by India. This is because he has at several public fora vowed to solve the Kashmir issue and promised to raise Indian aggression in Kashmir at every international forum. He has also been opposing India's interventionist role in Afghanistan. Bilawal Bhutto, the other contender, has also made his stance on Kashmir clear by criticising Nawaz Sharif for being too soft" on India vis-a-vis Kashmir. He has been a vocal critic of Modi-Sharif ties and, in an attempt to go one-up against Imran Khan, promised to take back Kashmir, all of it, and not leave behind a single inch of it because, like the other provinces, it belongs to Pakistan.

AFGHANISTAN

Col Arvinder Singh

Kabul blast: At least 13 killed in Afghan ministry attack⁵ At least 13 people have been killed and 31 wounded in a suicide bombing at a government ministry in Afghanistan on 11 Jun 18. Workers at the Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development in Kabul had left early for Ramadan and were waiting for a bus when the blast hit. The Islamic State group (IS) said it was behind the attack, which came just days after the Taliban agreed to its first-ever truce with the government. The ceasefire is due to run for three days during the Muslim festival of Eid al-Fitr this week.

⁵ <https://www.bbc.com>

Comments Both IS and the Taliban have carried out deadly attacks in Kabul in recent months. A BBC study from January found the Taliban were openly active in 70% of Afghanistan and now control or threaten more territory than before foreign troops left.

Taliban Announce First Cease-Fire in Afghanistan⁶ The Taliban on 09 Jun announced its first cease-fire since the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, saying it would stop military operations against government forces to mark the Muslim observance of Eid al-Fitr. The proposed temporary lull in fighting comes after Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on 07 Jun 18 announced an eight-day unilateral cease-fire in offensive operations against the Taliban to coincide with the conclusion of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and the three-day Eid festival that celebrates its end.

Comments The Taliban didn't explain the move, but it appeared to be an effort to regain some political initiative after Mr. Ghani's cease-fire announcement and his offer in late February to recognize the Taliban as a political entity and enter reconciliation talks without conditions if the Islamist movement ended fighting. The Taliban hasn't responded formally to the Afghan president's peace proposal and have exempted U.S.-led NATO forces from their plan to suspend fighting for Eid. Since President Donald Trump announced a fresh strategy in Afghanistan in August, the U.S. has stepped up the air war and deployed several thousand additional U.S. ground forces it hopes to divide the Taliban and force it to the negotiating table. Indeed, whether the Taliban's cease-fire is observed by its plethora of factions will be seen by U.S. and Afghan officials as a test of its coherence and the new strategy. Still, the moves by the government and the Taliban have inspired in some Afghans a faint glimmer of hope that the two sides might take bolder and more enduring steps toward peace. For the Ghani government, which recognizes that outright military victory over the Taliban isn't possible, the cease-fire announcements serve to differentiate the Taliban from Islamic State's Afghan affiliate and other more radical Islamist militant groups. For the Taliban, that distinction is politically important, too, especially after a week that saw a suspected Islamic State suicide bomber strike a meeting of Afghanistan's top clerics and religious scholars in Kabul. At least 14 people were killed in the shocking attack, which occurred after the gathering had declared such suicide attacks a sin and the country's 17-year war illegal under Islamic law.

IRAN

Col Arvinder Singh

After North Korea, Trump now wants a 'real deal' with Iran⁷ After meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, President Donald Trump said that he'd soon like a "real deal" with Iran. His comments come after North Korea appeared to commit to denuclearization. Speaking to reporters following a historic meeting with Kim, at which the regime's leader signed an agreement that appeared to commit to the "complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," Trump said he hoped relations could also improve, in time, with Iran.

Comments Relations between the U.S. and Iran started to sour as soon as Trump was elected to the presidency in November 2016, having called an accord to limit Iran's nuclear capabilities a "terrible deal." Penalties to be re-imposed by 06 Aug 18 include sanctions on Iran buying or acquiring U.S. dollars, trading gold and other precious

⁶ <https://www.wsj.com>

⁷ <https://www.cnbc.com>

metals, sanctions on its sale, supply or trade of metals such as aluminum and steel, as well as sanctions on issuing Iranian debt and its auto sector. Further sanctions to come later this year will affect Iran's shipping, financial and oil sectors. Needless to say, the sanctions are expected to damage Iran's economy, with Trump himself describing the sanctions as "brutal" and he added that a decline in confidence might make the country's officials think about negotiating another deal with the U.S.

Indian Oil Major Starts Cutting Oil Imports From Iran⁸ One of the biggest Iranian oil customers among India's refiners, Nayara Energy formerly known as Essar Oil started scaling back oil purchases from Iran this month. Nayara Energy usually buys around 6 million barrels of Iranian oil per month. Nayara will be lifting about 40-50 percent less than the average volumes; limiting its intake of Iranian oil to about 3-4 million barrels in a month. The Indian refiner expects that it would continue to buy Iranian oil in the near future, but it is already looking to have a Plan B for sourcing oil from other suppliers, if it's unable to keep current import levels from Iran because of the returning U.S. sanctions. Nayara is not the first Indian refiner that is said to be planning or already starting to cut oil imports from Iran. Another big Indian refiner, Reliance Industries, which owns the world's largest refining hub and has significant exposure to the U.S. financial system, plans to stop importing oil from Iran in October or November. Reliance Industries is a conglomerate and deals with banks with huge exposure to the United States, where it also operates subsidiaries, including in the oil business.

Comments The Indian company's plans to halt crude oil imports from Iran signal that buyers in Asia could be forced to cut or stop imports from Tehran, due to concerns that they may come under secondary U.S. sanctions.

Iran's economy hit harder than expected after US quits nuke deal: Israeli intel⁹ The pressure on Iran's economy since US President Trump withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal on 08 May18 has been more severe than originally forecast. Haaretz reported that Israeli leaders have been presented with intelligence which shows that the effects of the US withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal have also caused a greater rift between Iranian moderates and hardliners. The Iranian regime's support to Hezbollah, Assad, the Houthi rebels in Yemen, Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Gaza and Shi'ite militias in Syria and Iraq is estimated to cost some \$1 billion annually which Iranians have begun protesting in street demonstrations across the country in light of the crippling economy. The US sanctions against companies doing business with Iran will go into effect in November and several companies doing business with the Islamic Republic have already reacted to Trump's withdrawal, causing even greater stress to Iran's economy. The world's largest aerospace company Boeing announced last week that it will not deliver aircrafts to Iran in light of US sanctions, effectively aborting a pair of large contracts with Iranian carriers. In December 2016 the company announced an agreement to sell 80 aircraft valued at \$16.6 billion to Iran Air. Boeing also announced a contract in April 2017 to sell Iran Aseman Airlines 30 Boeing 737 MAX aircraft for \$3 billion, with purchase rights for another 30 aircraft. Nike also announced that it was cancelling a deal with Iran's national soccer team to deliver cleats to the team before the World Cup in Russia. In Europe, a partnership to deep-sea drill off the Scottish coast between an Iranian oil company and British Petroleum was also cancelled following the US withdrawal from the nuclear deal.

⁸ <https://oilprice.com>

⁹ <https://www.i24news.tv>

Comments France, Germany, Britain issued a joint official request to the US last week demanding that their firms be exempt from sanctions and expected that the United States will refrain from taking action to harm Europe's security interests. The European firms which have rushed to invest in Iran after the lifting of sanctions over the past three years have the most to lose from the renewed sanctions. Iran is still hoping to save the nuclear deal with the remaining signatories, but it has also warned that it will start enriching uranium again soon if an agreement is not reached.

NORTHEAST

Brig HS Cheema

After Assam, NRC issue now simmers in Tripura as Indigenous Parties Agitate.

The burning issue of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam is gradually spreading in Tripura as well, with indigenous parties agitating to for an NRC updation exercise in the state with 1951 as the cut-off year. Tripura's three indigenous parties — Indigenous Nationalist Party of Tripura (INPT), Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT) and National Conference of Tripura (NCT) — have started holding rallies and demonstrations to press their demand that the NRC be updated. "We would again organise a five-hour sit-in demonstration on June 28 in Agartala to press for our demands. A similar demonstration would be held in New Delhi in September," INPT President Bijoy Kumar Hrangkhawl told IANS. The INPT, IPFT and NCT have also been demanding withdrawal of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2016, which is currently under review by a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2016, introduced in the Lok Sabha in 2016, seeks to enable Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians, who have fled to India from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh without valid travel documents or those whose valid documents expired in recent years, to acquire Indian citizenship through the process of naturalisation. These parties are also demanding introduction of an inner line permit to protect indigenous tribal's, giving more power to the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC), restoration of alienated tribal lands and inclusion of tribals' Kokborok language in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution. The Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M)-led Left Front, the Congress and the Trinamool Congress are also opposed to the Centre's citizenship Bill. "The CPI-M is also opposed to the Bill and supports the Indira-Mujib pact which determined March 24, 1971, as the cut-off date to detect illegal infiltration into India from Bangladesh," CPI-M's Chief Whip in the Lok Sabha and senior tribal leader Jitendra Chaudhury told IANS. The second draft of the Supreme Court-monitored NRC in neighbouring Assam would be published on June 30, while the first NRC draft was made available to the people on December 31, after inclusion of names of 1.9 crore people of the total 3.29 crore applicants in the BJP-ruled state.

The NRC Assam, the register containing names of Indian citizens in the state, was prepared in 1951 as a non-statutory process by recording of all the persons enumerated during the 1951 census. The Assam agitation (1979-85) against the illegal foreigners led to the signing of Assam Accord on August 15, 1985, between the Centre, the state government, the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP), which stipulated March 24, 1971, as the cut-off date for

identification and deportation of illegal migrants from East Pakistan (Bangladesh). Accordingly, the Citizenship Act, 1955, was amended by inserting Section 6A as a special provision for Assam.

The article was first published in IANS written by Sujit Chakraborty. He can be reached at sujit.c@ians.in

Comments. National Register of Citizens (NRC) implementation will be the litmus test for the center and state Govts. In times to come this could again become the burning issue and a security threat if not handled in a mature way by the policy makers, judiciary and Political parties.

Mob lynches Guwahati youths on suspicion of being child lifters. In a tragic incident, on 9 Jun 18 two youths hailing from Guwahati were beaten to death in Karbi Anglong. The deceased were identified as Nilotpal Das and Abhijit Nath. The two youths from Guwahati went to Karbi Anglong for sightseeing and also to promote tourism but unfortunately the villagers thought that they were child lifters (xopadhora) and started beating them. The Scorpio in which they were traveling on was also badly damaged in the attack by the mob. According to the sources, the two became victims of fake social media reports on child-kidnapping in Karbi Anglong.

TNT-The Northeast Today News with Inputs from G-plus/TNN.

Comments. This incident clearly brings out how a fake social media reports can create law and order problem. Two innocent lives lost but who will be accountable for this Govt has to bring in strict rules on usage of social media.

Manson Danger Looms in Rohingya Camps. Spokesperson of UNHCR Caroline Gluck on 9 June said heavy and continuous shower in the Rohingya settlements puts millions of Rohingyas at a major risk. Over 700,000 Rohingyas, who crossed over into the coastal district fleeing persecution in Myanmar since August, are dwelling in shacks made of thin bamboo and plastic sheets which are too weak to stand heavy rains and storms. According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD), a total of 108 milli metres of rain was recorded in Cox's Bazar in the last 24 hours. The BMD weather forecast said that heavy shower was likely to continue for the next two to three days. Local authorities and international aid agencies have long been warning of a looming natural disaster during the monsoon in the densely populated camps. In this context, The Daily Star spoke to the UNHCR about the overall situation in the squalid shanties in the uncovered hills of Cox's Bazar. We need to find more shelter options. We need flatlands to move people to -- even if this is a temporary option."Before the rains, all agencies, working closely with the government, had been engaged in ensuring the safety of the settlements. They were stabilising slopes, reinforcing pathways, building bridges, and providing stronger, waterproof shelters for refugees. But these measures will not be enough. "The only way we can really protect people at the highest risk is to move them out of danger," she said, adding that they were advocating with the government the urgent need for more flatlands.

Daily Star 11 June18.

Comments. The man-made crisis in term of Rohingya Refugee exodus has further got aggravated due to inclement weather, if urgent measures are not taken will further result in human losses.

Nepal delegation in China to seal transit, transport deal; The Nepali side is proposing opening of at least nine more trading points bordering Tibet. Nepal and China agreed in 2015 to open seven new trading points between Nepal and Tibet.

A Nepali delegation is in China to seal a deal for linking more border points of the land-locked country with highways in Tibet, ahead of Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's visit to the country next week. The team comprising officials of Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport will hold talks with the Chinese side to link more border points with Tibetan highways so that people living in northern parts of Nepal have better access to supplies, the Kathmandu Post reported. Nepal currently uses three border points—Kerung, Kimathanka and Tatopani—linked with Tibetan highways, for transportation of goods from China. The Tatopani border point has remained closed since the 2015 earthquake. The Nepali side is proposing opening of at least nine more trading points bordering Tibet. Nepal and China agreed in 2015 to open seven new trading points between Nepal and Tibet, the daily said. Another team comprising officials from Commerce Ministry will visit China within a day or two to pursue a deal on the transit and transport agreement, it reported. Nepal and China signed the agreement in 2016 for using Chinese sea and land ports for Nepal's third country trade. Due to some technical differences, the two sides have yet to reach an agreement on a common text. The two sides are planning to sign more pacts related to connectivity, trade, investment, energy and tourism, among others, during the prime minister's visit scheduled to begin on June 19, the daily said

PTI 12 Jun 18

Comments. China and Nepal are fast forwarding their trading routes. Nepal is a land locked country and presently relies mainly on India for its needs. Now Nepal is trying to bargain and get alternative access with China to reduce the Indian monopoly and arm twisting technique adopted in the past. India need to take note of such fast developments in its neighbourhood and rework its strategy for better relations.

ASEAN

Col Shyamji Yadav

India and Indonesia signed 15 MoUs India and Indonesia have signed 15 MoUs as part of PM Modi's visit to the ASEAN nation Indonesia .On May 30,2018 , India and Indonesia signed to develop strategic Indian Ocean Port and develop infrastructure and economic zone at **Sabang**, in Sumatra.

The MOUs were signed by the two countries in the following fields:

1. **Agreement between India and Indonesia for cooperation in the field of Defence:** Regular bilateral dialogue and consultation on strategic defence and military issues of common interest, exchange of strategic information, military education, training and exercise, cooperation among the Armed Forces including Army, Navy, Air Force and Aerospace, humanitarian aid, disaster relief, peace-keeping and medical services among others.

2. **Framework Agreement between India and Indonesia on cooperation in the exploration and uses of outer space for peaceful purposes:** Space sciences, exploration of outer space, use of space technology, monitoring of Earth's environment from outer space and remote sensing, use of Integrated Biak Ground Stations for mutual benefit, hosting of Indian ground station in Indonesia, support for launch services of LAPAN made satellites; joint research and development activities in space technology etc.
3. **MOU between India and Indonesia on Scientific and Technological Cooperation:** Information and Communication Technology, Marine Science and technology, energy research, disaster management, geospatial information, applied chemistry etc.
4. **MOU between India and Indonesia on Technical Cooperation in Railways sector:** Exchange of knowledge, technology, institutional cooperation including capacity building, modernization of rolling stock, signaling, communication system, operations in railways; development of inter-modal transport, exchange of construction and maintenance technologies for tracks, bridges, tunnel, overhead electrification, etc.
5. **MOU between India and Indonesia on Health Cooperation:** Research and development - Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API) and IT-based medical equipment, Exchange of health and medical experts, Training in the mutually agreed identified areas.
6. **MoU between Indian and Indonesia on Pharmaceutical, Biological and Cosmetics Regulatory Functions:** Cooperation in the field of regulatory functions related to Pharmaceutical products, including Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients, Biological products, including vaccines, biotechnology/biosimilar and also Cooperation with each other in multilateral fora.
7. **MOU between India and Indonesia on Policy dialogue between Governments and Interaction between Think Tanks:** Establishing Joint Secretary / Director General level Policy Dialogue Forum; exchange of information, experiences and best practices on regional studies, security and economic issues; establish joint studies in areas of mutual interest.
8. **MOU between Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration of India and National Institute of Public Administration of Indonesia (NIPA):** Exchange of working or study visits, trainers, lecturers etc. with a view to sharing respective knowledge and experience; organization of customized capacity building programmes in the area of public governance and leadership, public administration, innovation of public service, joint courses, joint research activities, exchange of best practices etc.
9. **Exchange of plan of activities:** Plan of Activities to celebrate 70 years of diplomatic relations between India and Indonesia in the year 2019-20.
10. **MOU between Kite Museum Ahmedabad and LayangLayang Gujarat:** Organization / participation in Annual Kite Festivals, kite exhibitions, kite designing workshops, seminars etc., promoting and popularizing the art of kite designing, kite making and kite flying.

11. **MOU between Archaeological Survey of India and PT Taman Wisata Candi Borobudur, Prambanan & Ratu Boko concerning World Cultural Heritage of Prambanan Temple and Taj Mahal:** Joint promotion and organizing events, exchange of experts, implementation of technical guidance etc.

12. **MOU between PT Pindad (PERSERO) & Bhukhanvala:** To discuss possibilities for collaboration and use of products and related technical discussions, exchange of data of the project.

13. **MOU between Confederation of Indian Industry and KADIN:** To promote economic, trade and technological cooperation, exchange of information / visits on economic and commercial cooperation, support activities for trade promotion, suggest and recommend possible partners etc.

14. **MOU between International Institute of Information Technology, Bangalore and Agency for Human Resources Development and Research on Communications and Informatics of Ministry of Communications and Informatics of Indonesia:** Scholarship cooperation programme to facilitate study and research at IIIT Bangalore.

15. **MOU between Himalaya Drug Company and PT Kalbe Farma:** To work towards establishing joint venture company in marketing, establish research center and local manufacturing.

There were certain announcements made during the delegation level talks:

- Tata from India and PT Pindad in Indonesia to collaborate for supply of TATA trucks.
- Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) to open its first overseas Office in Jakarta, Indonesia with its representative from India.
- Letter of intent signed earlier in April 2018 for twinning of Bali and Uttarakhand – under sister province arrangement.

India, Indonesia to set up task force to enhance connectivity between Andaman and Sabang. On May 30, 2018, India and Indonesia set up a task force to enhance connectivity between Andaman and Sabang.

Comments. It is capable of hosting submarines as its waters reach forty metres in depth. That makes Sabang an ideal location for sustaining and resupplying Indian maritime operations in the region it could pave the way for closer maritime co-operation between both countries which will also serve Indonesian strategic interests. The port would grant the Indian Navy a well-positioned logistics and resupply node to sustain operations in the eastern Indian Ocean and the Malacca Strait. In particular, the port at Sabang could boost the Indian Navy's ability to respond to humanitarian emergencies, provide disaster relief, and conduct anti-piracy patrols.

Connectivity between Andaman and Sabang would promote trade, tourism, people-to-people contact and would facilitate business growth and economic cooperation.

Bilateral Exercise with Indonesia in the Java Sea. Later this month, the Navies of India and Indonesia will hold their first bilateral exercise in the Java Sea. India will stage a new trilateral exercise with Thailand and Singapore soon.

The bilateral with Indonesia is in addition to the Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) that the two sides conduct. The 31st edition of CORPAT concluded on June 9 in which India had deployed *INS Kulish*, a Kora class missile corvette, and one Dornier maritime patrol aircraft.

Comments. India is instituting a series of bilateral and multilateral naval exercises with Association of South East Asian Nations (**ASEAN**) countries as part of the increasing military-to-military cooperation. This is in addition to assisting the countries in capacity-building and sale of military hardware. The visit of the *INS Kulish* seeks to underscore India's peaceful presence and solidarity with friendly countries towards ensuring good order in the maritime domain and to strengthen existing bonds between India and Indonesia.

Visit to Singapore. The meeting of the head of states emphasized on the strengthening bilateral defense ties between India and Singapore. Agreement was signed between Singapore and India on defence cooperation. The agreement provides for defence ministers dialogue joint exercises between armed forces, cooperation between defence industries to identify areas of coproduction and co development. In total eight MOUs were signed between the two countries.

The MOUs were signed by the two countries in the following fields:

1. Joint Statement on the conclusion of the second review of CECA.
2. Mutual Recognition Agreement on Nursing.
3. **Implementation agreement between Indian Navy and Republic of Singapore** Navy concerning Mutual Coordination, Logistics and Services Support for Naval Ships', Submarines and Naval Aircraft (including Ship-borne Aviation Assets) visits.
4. Extension of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-IN) Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India and the Singapore Computer Emergency Response Team (SINGCERT), the cyber-security agency of the Republic of Singapore on cooperation in the area of cyber-security.
5. Memorandum of Understanding between the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) of the Republic of India and the Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) of the Republic of Singapore on Cooperation to Combat Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and their Precursors.
6. Memorandum of Understanding between The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions of the Republic of India and the Public Service Division of the Republic of Singapore on Cooperation in the field of Personnel Management and Public Administration.
7. Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and the Monetary Authority of Singapore on the constitution of a Joint Working Group (JWG) on Fintech between Indian and Singapore.

8. Memorandum of Understanding between the NITI Aayog and Singapore Cooperation Enterprise (SCE) on Cooperation in the Field of Planning.

Comments. This will help India and Singapore to elevate their bilateral relations to strategic partnership and deepen and broaden engagement in existing areas of cooperation and new ones ranging from political, defence and security cooperation to economic, cultural and people to people contact. This will also contribute to greater regional stability and growth.

<https://www.affairscloud.com/prime-minister-narendra-modis-3-nation-visit-to-indonesia-malaysia-and-singapore/>

<https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/south-asia-news/on-pm-modis-visit-india-and-indonesia-sign-15-mous-heres-all-you-need-to-know>

<http://www.futuredirections.org.au/publication/port-sabang-key-takeaway-modis-indonesian-visit/>
<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/rise-in-india-asean-naval-games/article24130015.ece>

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Gp Capt G D Sharma, VSM (Retd)

Kim and Trump Summit on 12 Jun 18 its implications. U.S. did an unthinkable, with U.S. President having a summit with President of North Korea. U.S. in the past was not willing for a bilateral meet with the North Korean regime due its atrocious human rights record. There existed a technical halt to the hostilities between North Korea and the South Korea with the declaration of Armistice in 1953 North Korea demanded a peace treaty from United States which U.S. was unwilling Cessation of hostilities suited China, U.S. and North and South Korea. Both Koreas followed different model of governance with North Korea under dictatorial communist regime and South Korea democracy. US maintained a large military presence in South Korea to secure it from North Korean hostilities. Chinese interest lay in the status quo Unification of Koreas would have brought US influence next to Chinese border.

North Korea suffered UN/Western sanctions due to its flagrant human rights violations. Its journey towards nuclearisation and missile proliferation further hardened the multilateral sanctions regime which brought it closer to China United States sought meeting with Kim only after North Korea developed a credible capability to hit mainland US in Nov 2017 with test of ICBM Hwasong-15 missile with estimated range of 13000km. This development goes onto prove the cold war concept of Nuclear Deterrence. U.S. now could not have militarily handled North Korea with latter's threats of nuclear strike if attacked

North Korea agreed to meet U.S. leadership on account of hard sanction regime which in its wake brought poverty to its masses. A condition, which could in future become a cause for a local revolt against the North Korean ruler. The other most speculated reason is that, maybe North Korean wanted get out of their heavy dependence on China for their survival and want to interact with the other states. The third reason possibly is about getting a security assurance from US in the form of a peace treaty.

United States, Japan and South Korea fearing the rouge nuclear North Korean regime sought to denuclearize North Korea. Towards this, South Korean leader, President Moon, Chinese leadership (They are unsure of unpredictable Kim Jong Un) and U.S Secretary of State John Pompeo have played positive roles U.S. aimed to achieve a complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization deal or else call off the meeting. Finally, after the meeting, U.S. has got assurance of phased denuclearization only

which could take long time. U.S. has however; set a target of 2 to 2half year and after denuclearization only the North Korean sanctions will be lifted. This deal has led to a U.S. domestic criticism for promising security to North Korea by a peace treaty, stopping of US bilateral defense exercises with South Korea and removal of US forces from the Korean peninsula, without getting much in return Japan and South Korea will benefit from non-aggressive North Korean stance.

Chinese have gained the most in the deal. They would see less of U.S. military presence in the region. This will help them to further consolidate their position in the South and East China Sea. The North Korean leader displayed at Singapore Chinese dexterity (thus proof of their guidance) and their stamp of approval. Therefore, Willy-nilly the Chinese have become formidable military and diplomatic force who will always play a role in any strategic summit in the region even without being present.