

# *Southeast Asia* *News Review*

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## ***SOUTHEAST ASIA***

### ***GENERAL***

#### **India-ASEAN Trade to Reach US \$80 Billion: Official**

Giving more thrust to trade with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), India is expecting to clock \$75-80 billion trade with the ten-nation bloc at the end of this fiscal, a senior government official said on March 23, 2012.

“Our trade with ASEAN was US \$57-58 billion last fiscal. We expect that at the end of this financial year it would be at US \$75-80 billion,” said Siddharth, joint secretary in the commerce ministry of India. On the country’s trade deficit with ASEAN, Siddharth said: “Last year it was US \$30 billion. And it is decreasing.” “We have done trade in goods. On the trade in services and investment, the negotiations are going on,” Siddharth added.

### ***CAMBODIA***

#### **Cambodia Likely to Release Detained Thais; Hu Jintao to Visit Cambodia; Cambodian, Thai Army Chiefs Pledged to Improve Bilateral Military Relations**

Four Thai minors, who were detained in Cambodia for alleged illegal entry since March 23 are to be released soon.<sup>2</sup> The detained Thais were arrested by Cambodian troops in Banteay Meanchey province. The issue gathered prominence in Thai media, forcing the Thai authorities to work promptly to release the minors.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ‘India-ASEAN trade to reach \$80 bn: Official’, *IANS*, March 23, 2012, <http://en-maktoob.news.yahoo.com/india-asean-trade-reach-80-bn-official-111022268.html>

<sup>2</sup> ‘Four Thai Detainees in Cambodia likely to be freed soon’, *MCOT*, March 28, 2012, [http://www.mcot.net/cfcustom/cache\\_page/347238.html](http://www.mcot.net/cfcustom/cache_page/347238.html)

<sup>3</sup> ‘Authorities Seek freedom for four Thai detainees in Cambodia’, *BERNAMA*, March 28, 2012, <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v6/newsindex.php?id=655335>

According to a press release, the Chinese President Hu Jintao will pay an official visit to Cambodia from March 30 to April 2, 2012. Hu is scheduled to arrive in Pnom Penh after attending the BRICS Summit in New Delhi, India.<sup>4</sup>

On March 28, 2012, during a meeting in Phnom Penh, Gen Pol Saroeun (Commander-in- Chief of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces) and Gen. Thanasak Patimaprakorn (Chief of Defence Forces of the Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters) pledged to improve military ties and bilateral cooperation between the two armed forces. The Thai Chief paid the visit to Cambodia to attend the 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Chief of Defence Forces Informal Meeting on March 29, 2012.<sup>5</sup>

## ***EAST TIMOR***

### **East Timor President Lost in Election**

Jose Ramos Horta, the President of East Timor, has lost his bid for the by- election. As per the preliminary results shown on March 18, he has failed to make it to a run-off in the country's second presidential vote as a free nation. The second round for the Presidential elections will be held on April 16, 2012.<sup>6</sup>

## ***INDONESIA***

### **Indonesia, India to Fast Track FTA Talks; Indonesian Police Shot Five Suspected Militants Dead; Bomb Blast Near Indonesia's Paris Embassy; Chinese, Indonesian Presidents Pledge Stronger Links; Indonesian Sentenced Seventeen Years Term for Preaching Jihad**

India and Indonesia have agreed to speed up the negotiations for early conclusion of

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<sup>4</sup> 'Chinese President HU Jintao to visit Cambodia', *CBRE Cambodia*, March 29, 2012, <http://www.cbre.com.kh/2012/03/chinese-president-hu-jintao-visit-cambodia/>

<sup>5</sup> 'Cambodian, Thai army chiefs pledge to improve military ties', *People's Daily*, March 29, 2012, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90777/7772912.html>

<sup>6</sup> 'Ramos- Horta Out as East Timor Heads for Run- Off', *The Jakarta Globe*, March 19, 2012, <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/international/ramos-horta-out-as-east-timor-heads-for-run-off/505729>

the comprehensive market opening pact. This was decided on March 3, 2012, during the three day long visit of India's commerce and industry minister Anand Sharma. According to the reports, 'the two sides also deliberated on the widening the scope of free trade agreement between India- ASEAN, which would include services and investments. Indonesia is a member of ASEAN'.<sup>7</sup>

According to a March 19, 2012 media release by Indonesia's national counter- terrorism agency and police, five suspected militants were shot dead. The militants were planning attacks in Bali and are believed to be members of Jemmah Islamiah.<sup>8</sup>

On March 21, 2012, a bomb exploded outside the Indonesian embassy in Paris. However, no one is reported to have been hurt in the incident. Authorities are yet to find out the motive and the persons involved in the attack.<sup>9</sup>

Chinese President Hu Jintao and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono agreed on March 23 in Beijing to strengthen consultation and cooperation so to raise the bilateral strategic partnership to higher levels. This marks the second time the Indonesian president has paid a state visit to China. President Susilo paid his first visit to China in July 2005; several months after President Hu Jintao visited Indonesia and announced the establishment of a strategic partnership between the two countries.<sup>10</sup>

In Indonesia, an Islamic school principal is sentenced seventeen years in prison for preaching Jihad. Abrory bin Al Ayub was the principal of Umar bin Khattab Islamic boarding school in country's Nusa Tenggara province. He is accused of misleading students and colleagues and had allegedly ordered one of them to kill a police officer during a raid on the school.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> 'India, Indonesia agree to fast track FTA talks', *Rediff*, March 5, 2012, <http://www.rediff.com/business/report/india-indonesia-agree-to-fast-track-fta-talks/20120305.htm>

<sup>8</sup> 'Indonesia police shoot 5 suspected militants', *Hindustan Times*, March 19, 2012.

<sup>9</sup> 'Bomb explodes near Indonesia's Paris embassy; no casualties', *DNA India*, March 21, 2012.

<sup>10</sup> 'Chinese, Indonesian presidents eye stronger links', *Xinhua*, March 23, 2012, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-03/23/c\\_131485660.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-03/23/c_131485660.htm)

<sup>11</sup> 'Indonesian Jailed For Preaching Jihad', *DaijiWorld*, March 29, 2012, [http://www.daijiworld.com/news/news\\_disp.asp?n\\_id=132600](http://www.daijiworld.com/news/news_disp.asp?n_id=132600)

## LAOS

### **Laos May Join WTO by the end of 2012; Laos Gets the US Support for Its WTO Bid; Red Shirt Activists to Meet Thaksin Shinawatra in Laos**

Negotiations are on to include Laos in the World trade body- World Trade Organisation by the end of 2012. Laos, one of the world's poorest states, applied to become a member of the trade bloc in 1997, but negotiations only began in proper in 2004.<sup>12</sup>

Laos has gained the US support for membership bid in the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Laos and the US officials inked the agreement supporting Lao bid on March 14, 2012. The US support is considered crucial for Laos and its attempts to integrate with the global financial and trade system.<sup>13</sup>

A core member of the Red Shirt group of Thailand, Kwanchai Praipana, is likely to bring along a thousand members of the group to celebrate the Songkarn festival. It is believed that Thaksin invited his supporters to meet him in Laos.<sup>14</sup>

## MALAYSIA

### **Malaysia, India Sign Criminal Assistance Treaty; Malaysia- China Trade to Reach US \$ 100 Billion**

Malaysia and India signed a treaty on mutual assistance in criminal matters on March 12, 2012. It took the tow countries four years to arrive at a mutually agreeable terms and conditions. The treaty is seen as a major step in fighting transnational crimes including drug trafficking and smuggling of migrants.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> 'Laos poised for WTO membership by end- 2012', *Google News*, March 19, 2012, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iGosvE5rnWzotY9UW2VeHVQBxxmA?docId=CNG.bb3e00397964429f278e8d9bc89ba3ea.4d1>

<sup>13</sup> 'US backs bid by Laos for WTO membership', *The China Post*, March 20, 2012, <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/business/global-markets/2012/03/20/335153/US-backs.htm>

<sup>14</sup> '1000 red shirts to meet Thaksin in Laos' *Bangkok Post*, March 26, 2012, <http://www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/286111/1000-red-shirts-to-meet-thaksin-in-laos>

<sup>15</sup> 'Treaty with India to enhance cooperation in criminal matters: Malaysia', *Economic Times*, March 13, 2012.

Bilateral trade volume between Malaysia and China is expected to reach US \$ 100 billion in 2012. That would make Malaysia the third Asian country to touch the 100 billion mark after Japan and South Korea. Statement in this regard was made by Chinese Ambassador to Malaysia, Chai Xi in a press briefing in Kuala Lumpur.<sup>16</sup>

## **MYANMAR**

**Aung San Suu Kyi Fell ill During Election Campaign; Myanmar President Visits Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos; Myanmar Invites Countries to Observe its April 1 Elections; US Welcomes the Invitation from Myanmar; Myanmar Postpones By-Elections in Restive North; 67<sup>th</sup> Armed Forces Day Celebrated in Myanmar; Myanmar to Float Currency in April; Jim Webb to Visit Myanmar After April Elections**

The pro-democracy leader of Myanmar, Aung San Suu Kyi fell sick on March 3, 2012, while campaigning for the election. Reports of Suu Kyi's frailing health have come out in public in the past few weeks, raising concerns about iconic leader and the democratic movement in Myanmar.<sup>17</sup>

Myanmar President Thein Sein left Naypyidaw on March 20, 2012 on state visits to Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Thein Sein's visits are respectively made at the invitation of Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang, King of Cambodia Norodom Sihamoni and Lao President Choummaly Sayasone.<sup>18</sup>

Myanmar has invited teams from twenty-five countries and the European Union to monitor the special elections for forth-eight seats in the six- hundred- sixty-four member parliament. The UN Secretary General Ban Ki- Moon commended Myanmar's leaders

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<sup>16</sup> 'China- Malaysia trade to touch US \$ 100 b', *The Star*, March 16, 2012, <http://biz.thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2012/3/16/business/10928397&sec=business>

<sup>17</sup> 'Myanmar Democracy Leader Falls Ill During Campaign Rally', *The New York Times*, March 3, 2012, [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/04/world/asia/daw-aung-san-suu-kyi-falls-ill-during-myanmar-rally.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/04/world/asia/daw-aung-san-suu-kyi-falls-ill-during-myanmar-rally.html?_r=1)

<sup>18</sup> 'Myanmar President leaves for State visits to 3 ASEAN States', *Xinhua*, March 20, 2012, <http://english.cri.cn/6966/2012/03/20/2982s687956.htm>

for allowing international election observers and offered assistance to provide a credible outcome.<sup>19</sup>

Myanmar government has sent invites for two election representatives and three journalists to be a witness to the April 1 elections in Myanmar. Appreciating Myanmar's steps towards greater political reforms, the US authorities have welcomed the invitation.<sup>20</sup>

Due to security concerns, Myanmar authorities have postponed voting in three out of forty-eight constituencies where elections are scheduled for April 1, 2012. All three constituencies are in the Kachin province in northern Myanmar.<sup>21</sup>

Myanmar celebrated the 67<sup>th</sup> armed forces day on March 27 in Naypyidaw. An over-10,000- strong military parade was held in the capital to mark the day.<sup>22</sup>

The Myanmar government has decided to adopt a managed floating exchange rate from April 1, 2012, which is widely considered as the 'first step toward unifying the nation's various exchange rates'. The move will allow market factors to determine the value of Myanmar currency- Kyat. The decision will be effective from April 1, 2012.<sup>23</sup>

American Senator Jim Webb is likely to visit Myanmar after the by-elections are held in the country. Web, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East

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<sup>19</sup> 'Myanmar Invites Nations to Observe By- Elections', *Business Week*, March 22, 2012, <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-03-22/u-dot-s-dot-welcomes-myanmar-invite-to-observe-suu-kyi-by-elections>

<sup>20</sup> 'US invited to send observers to Burma's elections', *The Nation*, March 22, 2012, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/breakingnews/US-invited-to-send-observers-to-Burmas-elections-30178501.html>

<sup>21</sup> 'Myanmar postpones by-election in restive north', *The Mainichi Daily News*, March 24, 2012, <http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/international/news/20120324p2g00moino48000c.html>

<sup>22</sup> 'Myanmar marks 67<sup>th</sup> Armed Forces day', *Xinhua*, March 27, 2012, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/photo/2012-03/27/c\\_131492894.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/photo/2012-03/27/c_131492894.htm)

<sup>23</sup> 'Burma to float currency next month', *The Telegraph*, March 28, 2012, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/burmamyanmar/9170725/Burma-to-float-currency-next-month.html>



Asian and Pacific Affairs and a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, is an early advocate of lifting sanctions that are imposed on Myanmar.<sup>24</sup>

## ***THE PHILIPPINES***

### **Philippines, Vietnam Agree to Hold War Games in South China Sea; Philippines Must Accelerate Reforms: World Bank; EU Supports the Philippines on the South China Sea Dispute**

According to the media reports, an agreement was forged between the Philippine Navy Flag- Officer- in- Command, Vice Admiral Alexander Pama and Vietnam People's Navy Chief Admiral Nguyen Van Hien to hold joint war games in the South China Sea. The meeting, held from March 11 to 14, also involved the Vietnam People's Army Chief General Do Ba Ty. The two countries will also hold joint patrols along common maritime borders in South China Sea where the two countries have overlapping claims. The two navy heads also discussed the establishment of a communication hotline between the operations center of the Philippine Navy and the Vietnam People's Navy; sharing of shipbuilding expertise.<sup>25</sup>

The World Bank on March 19 said that to catch up with its Southeast Asian neighbours, Philippines must accelerate economic reforms. It was also said that sustained economic growth above five percent a year is required to improve the lives of weaker sections of the society. The report forecast economic growth of 4.2 percent in 2012 and 5 percent in 2013, up from 3.7 percent in 2011.<sup>26</sup>

The European Union on March 27 said that it continues to support a peaceful resolution to the South China Sea. The European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso

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<sup>24</sup> 'U.S. Sen. Jim Webb to visit Burma after by-election', *Mizzima*, March 29, 2012, <http://www.mizzima.com/news/world/6856-us-sen-jim-webb-to-visit-burma-after-by-election.html>

<sup>25</sup> 'Philippines and Vietnam agree to hold joint war games in the South China Sea', *Gulf News*, March 28, 2012, <http://gulfnews.com/news/world/philippines/philippines-and-vietnam-agree-to-hold-joint-war-games-in-the-south-china-sea-1.1000875>

<sup>26</sup> 'Philippines urgently needs reforms: World Bank', *Khaleej Times*, March 19, 2012, [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle11.asp?xfile=data/business/2012/March/business\\_March387.xml&section=business](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle11.asp?xfile=data/business/2012/March/business_March387.xml&section=business)



and European Council President Van Rompuy assured Philippine Vice President Jejomar Binay of EU's support. Both sides agreed that United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea should be taken as major basis of resolving the dispute.<sup>27</sup>

## **SINGAPORE**

### **Singapore – Thailand - US Trilateral Air Exercise Concluded; Singapore Ship Suspected of India's Boat Accident; Singapore, India Conduct Annual Military Exercise**

Exercise Cope Tiger- the annual trilateral air exercise by Singapore, Thailand and the US was concluded on March 23, 2012. The exercise was held from March 12 to 23, 2012 at the Korat Air Base, Thailand.<sup>28</sup>

The Singaporean ship MV Prabhu Daya is suspected to be involved in the Kerala boat accident in which two Indian fishermen were killed. As per media report, the Indian authorities suspect that MV Prabhu Daya may have been involved in the collision which happened on March 1, 2012, in the Arabian Sea, twenty nautical miles off the Kochi Harbour entrance.<sup>29</sup>

The Indian Army is conducting a joint bilateral armour exercise, codenamed Exercise Bold Kurukshetra 2012, with the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) at Babina Field Firing Range in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh. The 8th month long bilateral exercise, which commenced on 1 March 2012, involves participation from more than 750 personnel as well as infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) and main battle tanks (MBTs) from SAF's 46th armoured regiment and Indian army's 27th Armoured Brigade. The two armies

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<sup>27</sup> 'EU backs Phl in South China Sea', *The Philippine Star*, March 29, 2012, <http://www.philstar.com/Article.aspx?articleId=792144&publicationSubCategoryId=63>

<sup>28</sup> 'S'pore, Thailand and US conclude trilateral air exercise', *Asia One*, March 24, 2012, <http://news.asiaone.com/News/Latest%2BNews/Singapore/Story/A1Story20120324-335397.html>

<sup>29</sup> 'Singapore ship suspected in Kerala boat accident' *DNA*, March 4, 2012, [http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report\\_singapore-ship-suspected-in-kerala-boat-accident\\_1658240](http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_singapore-ship-suspected-in-kerala-boat-accident_1658240)

are conducting joint planning and training, as well as executing integrated manoeuvres, as part of the exercise in addition to integrated live-firing drills.<sup>30</sup>

## THAILAND

### **Delhi Police Team to Visit Thailand, Malaysia for Investigations; Emergency Extended in Southern Thailand**

An investigating team of Delhi Police will visit Thailand and Malaysia in late March to find out if the Delhi and Bangkok blasts are linked. According to the reports, the investigating team wants to interrogate Sedaghatzadeh Masoud- an Iranian believed to have links with planning and execution of the terror plot.<sup>31</sup>

The Thai government extended the state of emergency in Southern Thailand for another three months. The decision in that regard was taken on March 13, 2012. The provision gives security forces powers of arrest and detention in Yala, Narathiwat and Pattani provinces of Southern Thailand, which is affected by armed insurgency.<sup>32</sup>

## VIETNAM

### **Vietnam Opens Hotline with China; Vietnam, Laos Sign Gold Mining Deal; China Detains Vietnamese Fishermen; Vietnam Defends India's Oil Exploration Efforts off Its Coast**

On March 2 2012, Vietnam and China opened a hotline between the foreign ministries of the two countries. Officials from the two sides pledged to coordinate closely to

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<sup>30</sup> 'India, Singapore conduct Exercise Bold Kurukshetra 2012', *Indiadefence.com*, March 27, 2012, <http://www.indiandefence.com/forums/f6/india-singapore-conduct-exercise-bold-kurukshetra-2012-a-16524/>

<sup>31</sup> 'Cops may visit Thailand to Quiz Bangkok 'bomber'', *Hindustan Times*, March 18, 2012.

<sup>32</sup> 'Thailand extends state of emergency in violence- prone southernmost provinces', *Washington Post*, March 13, 2012, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\\_pacific/thailand-extends-state-of-emergency-in-violence-prone-southernmost-provinces/2012/03/13/gIQATOSz8R\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/thailand-extends-state-of-emergency-in-violence-prone-southernmost-provinces/2012/03/13/gIQATOSz8R_story.html)

boost bilateral cooperation and take steps to strengthen Vietnam- China comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership.<sup>33</sup>

On March 15, Vietnam and Laos signed a gold mining deal. As per the deal, the gold exploration will be carried out in an area of twenty-four square kilometer in Xangthong district of Vientiane city. The contract was signed by Lao Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment Bounthavi Sisouphanthong and representative of Global South Joint Stock Company Cu Thanh Tien.<sup>34</sup>

On March 22, 2012, China announced that it had detained twenty-one Vietnamese fishermen for illegally fishing in the disputed zones of South China Sea. However, Vietnam claimed that fishermen were detained by China in Vietnamese territory and therefore should be released unconditionally. The fishermen issue has once again flared up the disagreement between China and Vietnam on the South China Sea issue.<sup>35</sup>

According to the media reports, Vietnam has once again approved of India undertaking oil exploration in Vietnamese blocks and said that it was in accordance with UN norms, Vietnam's Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Thien Nhana, on his visit to India, made statements in this regard on March 30, 2012.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> 'Vietnam- China hotline opens', *BAOMOI*, March 3, 2012, <http://en.baomoi.com/Info/VietnamChina-hotline-opens/2/239623.epi>

<sup>34</sup> 'VN, Laos sign gold mining deal', *Viet Nam News*, March 16, 2012, <http://vietnamnews.vn/vnnet.vn/Economy/Business/222177/vn-laos-sign-gold-contract.html>

<sup>35</sup> 'China detains Vietnamese fishermen in disputed South China Sea', *Times of India*, March 22, 2012.

<sup>36</sup> 'Indian exploration in oil blocks within norms: Vietnam', *DNA*, March 30, 2012, [http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report\\_indian-exploration-in-oil-blocks-within-norms-vietnam\\_1669286](http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report_indian-exploration-in-oil-blocks-within-norms-vietnam_1669286)

## **OCEANIA**

### **AUSTRALIA**

#### **Australia May Allow US to Setup A New Spy Drone Base; Australia Rejects Chinese Plea**

Australia is likely to allow the US to use its territory as a base for long-range American drones to carry out surveillance over South China Sea. According to media reports, the Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard has said that “a range of matters” were being looked at but no agreement was signed, which came in response to reports stating that Pentagon wanted to use the Australian territory to launch its unmanned Global Hawk surveillance drones.<sup>37</sup>

Responding to the media, the Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard defended the government’s decision to ban Huawei in Australia from tendering for major government contracts. The Chinese company is banned from tendering government contracts due to security reasons. Gillard’s comments are seen as a response to the China’s Foreign Ministry’s concerns, which called on the Australian government on March 28, 2012 to provide fair market access for Chinese companies.<sup>38</sup>

### **NEW ZEALAND**

#### **Indian Promoted Aviation Company Designs UAV for Cloud Seeding; New Zealand Diplomats to Observe Myanmar Elections**

An Indian promoted aviation firm in New Zealand is developing world’s first Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) for cloud seeding. Auckland-based Apeiron Aerospace, an innovative aerospace company focused on delivering technology to the global UAV

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<sup>37</sup> ‘S China Sea issue: Oz may allow US spy drone base on its territory’, *The Indian Express*, March 28, 2012.

<sup>38</sup> ‘Australia rejects Chinese plea on Huawei’, *Times of India*, March 29, 2012.

sector, has designed a tactical UAV system for cloud seeding as the existing process involving manned aircraft endangers the lives of pilots.<sup>39</sup>

Two New Zealand diplomats have also joined other international observers for Myanmar by-elections. Foreign Affairs Minister Murray McCully said on March 31, 2012 that the deputy head of the New Zealand Embassy in Bangkok, Todd Cleaver, and one other diplomat arrived in Myanmar on March 28 after a surprise invitation to monitor the elections.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> 'Indian- run NZ firm designs UAFV for cloud seeding', *Zee News*, March 26, 2012, [http://zeenews.india.com/news/technology/indian-run-nz-firm-designs-uav-for-cloud-seeding\\_766190.html](http://zeenews.india.com/news/technology/indian-run-nz-firm-designs-uav-for-cloud-seeding_766190.html)

<sup>40</sup> 'NZ to help monitor Burma byelections', *NZ Herald*, March 31, 2012, [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=10795721](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10795721)

## **ABOUT US**

The South East Asia and Oceania Centre focuses on policy-relevant research in respect of the ten ASEAN states, East Timor and Oceania, including Australia and New Zealand. The Centre studies India's bilateral and multilateral relations with states of the region with a view to providing contemporary relevance to India's Look East policy. It has a futuristic approach and examines the emerging trends in the regional security architecture. The Centre studies the potential for India's enhanced defence cooperation (including maritime issues) and cooperation in non-traditional security issues with the region. It examines internal developments of countries in this region, especially political transition and the role of the military, and their implications for India. The Centre seeks to promote Track-II institutional linkages with the region.

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