

Asia

North East Asia

➔ **China/Japan** **Japanese military monitored increased operations by Chinese and Russian vessels around Japanese territorial waters, while Tokyo condemned Beijing's construction activities in East China Sea.**

Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force 3 June sighted Chinese naval group sailing south east in area some 75 miles north west of Japan's Amami Oshima Island. China's largest destroyer Type 055 Lhasa 15 June held first long-range sea drills in Japan Sea since being commissioned in March 2021. As of 26 June, 102 Chinese vessels had entered Japan's contiguous zone, including 14 identified in Japan's territorial sea. Seven Russian warships 13-17 June passed near Izu Islands, south of Japanese capital Tokyo, in first such Russian presence since Oct 2021. Japanese defence ministry 17 June said it is on alert over increasing Russian and Chinese military activity near its territory. Japan 20 June confirmed China's completion of new platform — its 17th —linked to gas field development in East China Sea, after earlier in month protesting Beijing's moves to build 18th structure; Japan and China suspended negotiations on joint gas development in area in 2010. China and Japan foreign ministries 23 June held talks related to East China Sea. At annual Shangri-La Dialogue international summit held in Singapore, Japanese PM Fumio Kishida 10 June delivered keynote address outlining "Kishida vision of Peace" where Japan would boost regional defence and security role and commit to "realism diplomacy", said Japan was standing firm against "unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force" in East China Sea; Kishida also described Taiwan Strait stability as "of extreme importance" (see Taiwan).

➔ **Korean Peninsula** **North Korea (DPRK) tested ballistic missiles as U.S. again warned of potentially imminent DPRK nuclear test; Washington and Seoul signalled resolve with their own missile launches and drills.**

North Korea 5 June fired eight short-range ballistic missiles off east coast in largest-scale single test event to date. In response, South Korea and U.S. next day fired eight surface-to-surface missiles off east coast to demonstrate "capability and readiness to carry out precision strikes"; U.S. and South Korea 8 June conducted joint military drill involving 20 aircraft. U.S. continued warnings it ramped up in May of Pyongyang's seventh nuclear test; U.S. Special Representative Sung Kim 6 June cautioned test could be "at any time". International Atomic Energy Agency next day reported North Korean construction work expanding key facilities at main nuclear site in Yongbyon. U.S.-based Center for Strategic and International Studies 16 June said North Korea appeared to be expanding work at Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Facility ready for possible nuclear test. South Korea 21 June successfully launched first domestically-designed rocket Nuri-ho II following failed launch in Oct 2021; rocket ostensibly intended to facilitate low-cost commercial satellite launches but is perceived by North Korea as overt military threat. North Korean leader Kim Jong-un 22 June convened meeting of senior military officials to discuss national defence policies where he reiterated commitment to continuing arms build-up. During tripartite meeting, South Korean Vice FM Cho Hyun-dong, U.S. Deputy Sec State Wendy Sherman and Japanese Vice FM Takeo Mori 8 June called on North Korea to

cease actions that “escalate tensions” following “serious, unlawful” missile tests in May, stressing that “a path to serious and sustained dialogue remains open”. Chinese UN envoy Zhang Jun 9 June said “denuclearisation is one of the key goals of China” and warned not to “prejudge” Chinese response in event of seventh nuclear test; statement follows China’s 26 May veto alongside Russia of U.S.-led UN Security Council resolution authorising additional sanctions against North Korea. South Korean President Yoon 17 June called for coordinated UN Security Council response to Pyongyang’s provocations.

➡ **Taiwan Strait China conducted third-largest aerial incursion into Taiwan’s air defence zone this year and vowed to fight at all costs if Taiwan pursued independence.** Chinese incursions into Taiwanese airspace continued through month, totalling 81 planes as of 27 June. Notably, 29 aircraft 21 June entered air defence identification zone in third largest sortie this year; Taiwan same day scrambled jets to warn off Chinese aircraft. U.S. Navy P-8A Poseidon aircraft 24 June flew over Taiwan Strait. Earlier, China’s Eastern Theatre Command 1 June conducted “joint combat-readiness patrol” around Taiwan, following large-scale exercise around island one week prior. U.S. 9 June approved \$120mn arms deal to Taiwan in fourth such sale under U.S. Biden administration; China same day strongly condemned deal as violation of past U.S.-China agreements. U.S. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin 10-12 June affirmed Biden administration’s unchanged Taiwan policy at Shangri-La Dialogue international summit held in Singapore and accused China of growing coercion; Austin also committed to strengthening “guardrails against conflict” by maintaining communication with Beijing. During meeting with Austin on sidelines of summit, Chinese Defence Minister Wei Feng reportedly said China would not hesitate to commence war if Taiwan pursued independence; Wei also publicly warned Chinese military will fight at all costs against Taiwan’s pursuit of independence. Chinese foreign ministry 13 June said “China enjoys sovereign rights and jurisdiction over the Taiwan Strait” and “there is no such thing as ‘international waters’ in [UN Convention on the Law of the Sea]”; U.S. same day affirmed Taiwan Strait is “international waterway”, while Taiwan next day rebuffed Beijing’s statement as “false claim”. Leader of Taiwan’s opposition Kuomintang (KMT) party Eric Chu during visit to U.S. 6 June said that “1992 consensus” remains key to KMT engagement with Beijing, but both sides are free to interpret what “one China” means.

South Asia

➡ **Afghanistan Intra-Taliban debate over social policies continued, World Bank announced new economic projects, and fighting between Taliban and opposition groups persisted.** Video 6 June surfaced showing Kabul governor stating current situation regarding women is not acceptable and urged ministry for promotion of virtue and prevention of vice to implement decrees in capital. Deputy FM Abbas Stanikzai 19 June criticised govt’s decision not to reopen girls’ secondary schools. Meanwhile, World Bank 3 June approved three projects totaling \$793mn to support essential food, livelihood and health services for Afghans. Taliban govt continued measures in attempt to resuscitate economy, including launching “Afghan Invest” enterprise mid-month and hosting trade show for female entrepreneurs in Kabul 9 June. Media reports early month indicated

country's exports to Pakistan have increased during financial year, from \$550mn last year to more than \$700mn. Groups opposing Taliban rule continued attacks. Fighting between National Resistance Front (NRF) fighters and Taliban security personnel persisted in Andarab district in Baghlan province (north) and Panjshir province (north). Notably, NRF fighters 17 June downed helicopter operated by Taliban and captured four prisoners in Panjshir. NGO Human Rights Watch 10 June accused Taliban security forces of war crimes in Panjshir, claims which UN Special Rapporteur Richard Bennett tentatively endorsed same day; NGO Amnesty International 16 June accused Taliban of "torture, extrajudicial executions and arbitrary arrest of civilians" in Panjshir. Standoff persisted between Maulawi Mehdi, Shia Hazara Taliban commander, and Taliban security personnel in Balkhab District in Sar-e Pol province (north), raising prospect of first instance of significant intra-Taliban clashes; central authorities removed Mehdi as local intelligence chief in Nov 2021. Taliban forces 28 June launched attack on Balkhab district, capturing district capital following day; residual fighting likely in coming days. Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) 18 June claimed attack on Sikh temple in Kabul, killing at least two people and injuring seven; group said attack was retaliation for derogatory comments made by India's ruling party (see India).

➡ **Bangladesh Protests in multiple districts erupted over senior Indian officials' anti-Islamic remarks, while govt continued crackdown on critics.** Protests erupted after members of India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) 6 June made anti-Islam remarks (see India). In Dhaka capital, thousands of protesters led by coalition of around dozen Islamist organisations 10 June demanded govt boycott Indian products and issue formal condemnation; protests organised by Islami Andolan Bangladesh, one of country's largest Islamist parties, 16 June continued in Dhaka. In Bagerhat district, Muslim mob 12 June attacked Hindu house following altercation between Hindu man and local Muslims over BJP remarks. In Naranganj district, protesters 13 June attacked police station, prompting authorities to arrest 31 for assaulting police officers. Separately, opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) 12 June held protest rallies demanding BNP leader Khaleda Zia be granted medical treatment abroad after suffering heart attack day before; home minister 11 June called Zia "convict" and said court approval needed for overseas treatment. Court in Satkhira district 16 June indicted 49 BNP members for August 2002 attack on then-opposition leader Sheikh Hasina's convoy. Authorities continued clampdown on dissent. Govt 7 June deregistered country's leading human rights group, Odhikar, claiming it published "misleading information" and tarnished country's global image; UN Human Rights Council 10 June urged govt to "immediately reconsider" decision, noting "intimidation and reprisals appear to have intensified". Police in Rangamati district 7 June arrested prominent journalist Fazel Elahi for violating controversial Digital Security Act; following protests, he was released on bail next day. In Cox's Bazar Ukhiya refugee camp, armed police 10 and 13 June arrested four persons, including Rohingya cleric, for murder of leader of Rohingya boatmen on 9 June. Police same day pressed charges against 29 Rohingyas for killing of Rohingya community activist Mobin Ullah in Sept 2021. Clashes between groups in Ukhiya camp 16 June killed one member of Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army. In talks with Myanmar authorities, FM Masud Bin Momen 14 June called for early repatriation of Rohingyas; he said list of 830,000 individuals containing biometric data had been handed to Myanmar.

↓ **India Anti-Islam remarks by ruling party officials sparked widespread unrest and international condemnation, while gov't's new military recruitment scheme triggered backlash across country.** After ruling party Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s national spokesperson Nupur Sharma and Delhi-based party leader Naveen Kumar Jindal made derogatory comments about Prophet Muhammad late May, large-scale protests erupted across country. Notably, massive protests 3 June broke out in capital New Delhi, Uttar Pradesh (north), West Bengal (east), Telangana (south), Jharkland (east) and Jammu and Kashmir (north) states; police shot dead at least two protesters in Ranchi, Jharkland, while police in Uttar Pradesh arrested 421 people and demolished houses of alleged protest organisers. United Arab Emirates, Oman, Indonesia, Iraq, Maldives, Jordan, Libya, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iran and Qatar all lodged protests over comments; BJP 5 June suspended spokesperson and expelled regional leader. Video 28 June posted online showed two Muslims claiming responsibility for murder of Hindu in Rajasthan state (north west) in retaliation for remarks, triggering further protests in various parts of country. In another episode of unrest, gov't 14 June announced new scheme of recruiting soldiers on short-term contracts in bid to slash salary and pension payments that consume half of defence budget, triggering demonstrations in Bihar (north east), Haryana (north), Madhya Pradesh (centre), Uttar Pradesh (north), Uttarakhand (north), Rajasthan (north), Telangana (south), West Bengal (east), Odisha (east), Punjab (north) and Kerala (south); protesters clashed with police, injuring many, and burnt gov't property, public transport vehicles, trains and railway stations in most of aforementioned states. In Telangana, police 17 June fired shots at mob ransacking railway station, leaving one dead and several injured. Overall, police arrested over 1,000 people, including 800 in Bihar alone. Maoist violence continued. Notably, Maoists 19 June killed villager in Kondagaon district of Chhattisgarh state (centre) on suspicion of being police informer. Security forces next day killed three Maoists during security operation in Balaghat district, Madhya Pradesh. Relations with China remained tense. FM S. Jaishankar 18 June blamed China for border crisis, stating: "We will not allow any unilateral attempt by China to change the status quo or alter the [Line of Actual Control]".

➡ **India-Pakistan (Kashmir) Tensions remained high in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), where militants launched targeted attacks, notably on Hindu minority community, and clashed with security forces.** J&K's Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha 6 June claimed that militancy in Kashmir was in its last stage, blaming recent increase of targeted killings on Pakistan. During two-day visit to J&K, India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh 16 June said "Pakistan continuously tries to disturb peace in the country" by "bleeding India with a thousand cuts". China 18 June blocked proposal by U.S. and India to list militant group Lashkar-e-Tayyaba's deputy chief under UN Security Council's ISIL (Da'esh) Al-Qaida and Sanctions Committee. In J&K, Hindus continued to be at high risk of violent attacks. Notably, militants 2 June killed Hindu employee at bank in Kulgam district, while killing three other Hindus that week; gov't 3 June rejected demand of Kashmiri Pandit employees to be relocated outside Kashmir Valley until region is stable but allowed for postings to relatively safer districts under same division. Meanwhile, militant attacks and security operations continued in J&K. Notably, militants 1 June shot civilian in Shopian district; 2 June killed one security personnel in bomb blast in Shopian district and killed one migrant labourer in Budgam district;

18 June killed off-duty senior Kashmiri police in Pulwama district. Security forces 4 June killed alleged Hizbul Mujahideen commander in Anantnag district; 6-7 June killed three suspected Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militants in Baramulla and Kupwara districts; in Shopian, 7 June arrested four militants allegedly responsible for bomb blast and killed suspected Hizbul Mujahideen militant; 11 June killed four alleged militants in Kulgam and Pulawama districts; 12-13 June killed three LeT militants in Srinagar regional capital; 14-27 June killed 15 alleged militants in Kulgam, Anantnag, Kupwara, Pulwama and Sopore districts, including two alleged Pakistanis who security forces claimed were sent to attack annual Hindu pilgrimage. Outraged by anti-Muslim remarks made by India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) officials (see India), Kashmiri Muslims 10 June protested across Kashmir valley. Govt 14 June announced more than 300 educational institutions run by Falah-e-Aam Trust, affiliate of banned Jamaat-e-Islami, had been shut down.

➡ **Nepal Manoeuvring within ruling coalition accelerated ahead of general elections expected in winter 2022; protesters rallied in capital Kathmandu against fuel price hikes amid growing economic strains.**

Buoyed by strong showing in local elections in May, ruling coalition member Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal 1 June threatened to reconsider alliance with Nepali Congress; observers saw Dahal's remarks as aiming to secure power-sharing arrangement, including potential sharing of prime minister post with current PM and Nepali Congress chair Sher Bahadur Deuba in next govt. Dahal piled pressure on PM Deuba to not immediately approve reshuffling of ministerial portfolios that had been designated to Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Socialist) after party 5 June recalled its four cabinet representatives; new ministers were eventually sworn in 26 June following weeks of discord that roiled Unified Socialist party. Meanwhile, signs of discontent over economic situation emerged. Protesters 21-23 June took to streets in Kathmandu – including outside federal parliament – against fuel price hikes as some threw stones and damaged police vehicle, prompting govt to announce decrease in prices 25 June; devaluing Nepali rupee contributed to foreign debt liability rising by over \$155mn in third quarter of current fiscal year. Central bank 27 June announced it only had enough foreign exchange reserves to sustain imports for little over six months.

➡ **Pakistan Political tensions continued as former PM Khan threatened protests and warned of country's split if no election held, while Pakistani Taliban and military continued to clash despite "indefinite ceasefire".**

Political polarisation remained at all-time high. Khan 1 June asked why military had not defended country against "foreign conspiracy" that allegedly ousted his govt and warned that without "right decisions", army would be destroyed and Pakistan could split "into three parts" and face "civil war"; Khan same day insisted rally demanding snap elections would be held despite abrupt cancellation in May. In response, Major General Babar Iftikhar 14 June stated National Security Council had been "informed categorically in detail by [intelligence] agencies that there was no evidence of any conspiracy". Amid declining currency value and dwindling foreign exchange reserves, govt ended fuel subsidies, leading to 29% price growth on 15 June. Govt talks with International Monetary Fund progressed toward unlocking \$6bn bailout; govt 24 June received \$2.3bn Chinese loan. Khan 25 June called for protests on 2 July against rising inflation and legislation clipping anti-corruption body's powers.

Threat of political violence remained high, particularly in Punjab province and Karachi city, Sindh province, ahead of 17 July by-elections; vote in 20 Punjab constituencies will determine whether Chief Minister Hamza Sharif retains post. Separate by-election in Karachi 16 June saw clashes between supporters of Barelvi hardline Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) and Pakistan Sarzameen Party (PSP), killing one and injuring ten. Violence 26 June killed two during first phase of polls in Sindh province. Meanwhile, Pakistani Taliban 2 June formally announced “indefinite ceasefire” with govt; information minister 3 June welcomed ceasefire, but Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), key partner in govt, 12 June expressed concern over exclusion of parliament and political parties in talks. Indicating lack of support among some Taliban factions, separate attacks in North Waziristan 2, 3, 12 and 18 June killed three soldiers; exchange of fire 26 June killed two soldiers and seven militants. Govt grew closer to exiting global terror financing watchdog Financial Action Task Force’s grey list as watchdog 17 June announced govt’s compliance with all action plan items.

➔ **Sri Lanka Amid risk of “full-blown humanitarian crisis”, tensions mounted as authorities sought to address widespread hunger and shortages and Supreme Court dashed opposition’s hopes for root-and-branch political reform.** Economic prospects worsened during month as lack of hard currency to purchase fuel increasingly strained productivity across country, raising risk of economic depression on top of skyrocketing inflation. UN 9 June launched global appeal to raise \$47.2mn in assistance by Sept 2022; UN’s humanitarian office next day warned economic crisis is deteriorating rapidly and is at risk of tipping into a “full-blown humanitarian crisis”, while UN Resident Coordinator in capital Colombo same day said estimated 4.9mn people, or 22% of population, were currently in need of food assistance. Govt closed schools and ordered workers to stay at home for two weeks beginning 20 June, while queues for cooking gas and petrol extended miles in many places, leading to violent incidents at gas stations. Notably, army 18 June fired live ammunition over heads of Tamils waiting in line in northern town of Vishvamaadu. Sri Lanka Bar Association 18 June called on police to “act with restraint and caution in dealing with the public”. Police made series of arrests of protest leaders and social media activists throughout month. PM Ranil Wickremesinghe 7 June urged citizens to be patient and not hoard fuel or essentials; said govt would request \$6bn in support from International Monetary Fund (IMF), including \$5bn for daily needs in next six months, along with another billion to stabilise rapidly depreciating rupee. IMF representatives 20 June visited Colombo in effort to complete staff level agreement on economic reforms and bailout. On political front, hopes for passage of opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB)’s proposal for 21st Amendment to constitution to abolish executive presidency were dashed after speaker 21 June announced amendment would require both two-thirds parliamentary majority and approval through referendum. Cabinet 20 June approved separate amendment proposed by Justice Minister Wijeyadasa Rajapakshe, which would reportedly limit president’s power only modestly. SJB and opposition National People’s Power (NPP) 21 June announced boycott of parliament in protest at govt’s failure to address crises.

South East Asia

➔ **Myanmar Regime announced plans for first judicial executions in decades, fighting continued in Sagaing region amid reports of serious abuses at hands of Tatmadaw, and tensions ran high in Chin State.**

Tatmadaw 3 June confirmed regime would execute four people, including National League for Democracy legislator Phyto Zeyar Thaw and 88 Generation leader Kyaw Min Yu, for their involvement in armed resistance movement in Yangon city, in what would be first judicial execution since 1988. Decision sparked domestic and international outcry: Cambodia 10 June warned executions would undermine South East Asia regional bloc ASEAN and Cambodian efforts to end crisis; regime 6 June rejected criticism from France, UN and U.S. In Sagaing region (centre), regime forces appeared to carry out serious abuses targeting civilians amid ongoing fighting with local people's defence forces (PDFs). Notably, PDF in Kani township 4 June found four bodies allegedly killed by military 31 May and next day found two bodies apparently tortured before being shot; charred remains of 78-year-old woman found 4 June in Khin-U township after military torched 70 homes. Soldiers 6 June reportedly massacred civilians in Kanphyar village, Myinmu township, killing at least five. Resistance force in Gangaw township 4 June attacked 100-vehicle military convoy, claiming at least ten military casualties and sparking retributive attacks. In Chin State (west), tensions between military and Arakan Army (AA) remained high following late May clashes, with both sides detaining each other's personnel. Regime soldiers 1 June allegedly fired mortars at displacement camps near neighbouring Kyauktaw township. AA 11 June detained two soldiers in Kyauktaw township, triggering search by military. In central Shan State (east), Shan State Progress Party 4 June rejected military's ultimatum to withdraw from three outposts in Mong Hsu township. As part of peace initiative, regime early June met two major ethnic armed groups linked to China, United Wa State Army and National Democratic Alliance Army; regime also met signatories of 2015 ceasefire – Arakan Liberation Party, Pao National Liberation Organisation, Karen Peace Council and Democratic Karen Benevolent Army later in month. Defence Minister Mya Tun Oo 22 June attended ASEAN defence ministers' meeting despite calls from many civil society groups to exclude regime.

➔ **Philippines Insecurity persisted in south amid election-related violence and security operations against Islamist armed groups, while clashes with communist rebels continued at lower lethality.**

Tensions and violence linked to polls on 9 May continued during month in Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, largely concentrated in Datu Odin Sinsuat town and municipality, Maguindanao province; notably, unknown shooters 6 June killed two civilians in Taviran village. Also in Maguindanao, unknown assailants same day killed two and injured four in Kalanganan village, Cotabato city. Two partisan armed groups linked to politicians from warring clans in Datu Odin Sinsuat town same day clashed in Benolen district. Unidentified gunmen 17 June ambushed govt militia fighters in Makir village, killing one and injuring three militia fighters. In General Salipada K. Pendatun town, armed groups associated with rival local politicians, including Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) elements, clashed 12 June; local govt, MILF and military intervened and temporarily stemmed violence. In Marawi province, Mayor Majul Gandamra 7 June said Marawi city

officials are identifying key tourism and investment options as post-siege reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts near completion. Military combatted Islamist armed groups in south. Notably, military 1 June killed suspected Dawlah Islamiyah Maguindanao Group bomber and arrested his companion in M'lang town, Cotabato province; 7 June reported killing previous day alleged Islamic State of Iraq and Syria – East Asia spokesperson in operation in Maguindanao province. Two wanted Abu Sayyaf suspects accused of beheading foreign nationals in 2015-2016 17 June surrendered to military in Sulu province. Military and police same day killed Norodin Guimad, leader of unnamed “armed lawless group”, and follower in Matanog town, Maguindanao. Meanwhile, clashes between armed forces and communist New People’s Army continued at lower levels compared to May; violence in Mindanao Island in south, Visayas Islands in centre and Luzon Island in north claimed at least four fatalities and six injuries among combatants and civilians. U.S. Deputy Sec State Wendy Sherman 9 June met President-elect Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in capital Manila, and pledged to deepen economic ties and preserve “a free and open Indo-Pacific.”

➡ **South China Sea Australia accused Chinese aircraft of dangerous interception in South China Sea (SCS), while U.S. and China traded barbs during international Shangri-La summit.** Australia 5 June reported Chinese J-16 fighter conducted “dangerous manoeuvre” close to Australian P8 military surveillance plane flying near Paracel Islands in SCS; China 7 June said Australian aircraft “seriously threatened China’s sovereignty and security” and Chinese countermeasures were “professional, safe, reasonable and legitimate”. Chinese Eastern Theatre Command 6 June announced beach landing exercises conducted by three landing ships in SCS waters. Philippines 11 June protested Chinese actions in Ayungin (Second Thomas) Shoal, including illegal fishing, shadowing Filipino vessels on rotation and resupply mission, and blocking shoal entrance with buoys and fishnets. Outgoing Philippines FM 23 Jun said talks over joint energy exploration with China in SCS were terminated. Philippines 28 June protested Taiwan’s live-fire drills near Itu Aba in Spratly Islands. SCS emerged as central topic during international summit Shangri-La Dialogue held in Singapore 10-12 June. Notably, U.S. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin 11 June called out China for building “outposts on man-made islands bristling with advanced weaponry to advance its illegal maritime claims”; Chinese Defence Minister Wei Feng He 12 June called for SCS to be “sea of peace, friendship and cooperation” while condemning “some big power” who practised “navigation hegemony”; Singaporean Defence Minister Ng Eng Hen same day compared SCS situation to currently blockaded Black Sea, while Malaysian Defence Minister Hishammuddin Hussein cautioned tensions could degenerate into deadly conflict.

➡ **Thailand Pro-democracy demonstrators demanded PM Prayuth Chan-ocha’s resignation as opposition tabled no-confidence vote, while militant attacks resumed in deep south.** Some 200 pro-democracy protesters in capital Bangkok 11 June marched from Democracy Monument to Victory Monument, demanding PM Prayuth Chan-ocha’s resignation. Following march, several dozen protesters pressed on to Din Daeng district toward Prayuth’s residence at 1st Infantry Regiment base; police confronted protesters who threw bottles, fireworks and set fire to police vehicle near Din Daeng intersection. Pro-democracy protesters 19 June held march on same route, calling for release of people jailed

under lèse-majesté law and for law to be revoked; few dozen youths clashed with police at Din Daeng intersection, with no injuries reported but one person hospitalised following seizure, while police arrested two protesters aged 17 and 18. Meanwhile, opposition parties 15 June filed no-confidence vote against PM and ten cabinet ministers; censure debate expected mid-July; vote comes in wake of 22 May Bangkok governor election in which Chadchart Sittipunt — independent candidate and former member of Pheu Thai Party — won landslide victory; result widely interpreted as signal of declining electoral prospects for ruling Phalang Pracharat Party. In deep south, after Ramadan Peace Initiative expired mid-May, unknown attackers 1 June killed Malay-Muslim man in orchard in Bannang Sata district, Yala province; authorities did not draw direct link to insurgency. IED hidden in garbage truck 20 June exploded near police checkpoint in Panare district, Pattani province, wounding three police officers; assailant same night tossed hand grenade at sub-district security operations base in Raman district, Yala. Patani United Liberation Organization (PULO) leader Kasturi Makhota 20 June said PULO likely to join peace dialogue process between main separatist group Barisan Revolusi Nasional and govt.