

Asia

North East Asia

➔ **China/Japan Chinese vessels and aircraft continued incursions into Japanese waters and airspace, while U.S. and Japan held joint exercises.**

China maintained naval and aerial incursions. As of 29 Oct, 75 Chinese Coast Guard vessels entered Japan's contiguous zone over 25 days, including six in Japan's territorial waters; notably, Chinese Coast Guard 7 Oct announced patrol had been conducted near contested Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Chinese state media 13 Oct reported Chinese fighter jets had carried out combat patrols over East China Sea to "drive away foreign aircraft". Japan's Joint Staff Office 17 Oct said Air Self-Defence Force scrambled fighters 446 times in first half of 2022, up from 390 in same period last year, chiefly over increased Chinese aircraft activities. Japan 3 Oct lodged protest with China over gas sea development in East China sea, in area where Beijing and Tokyo in 2008 agreed to jointly development resources; China unilaterally proceeded with development and has installed 18 structures.

Japan held joint exercises with U.S. and signed accord with Australia. Japanese and U.S. fighter jets 4 Oct conducted bilateral exercises over Sea of Japan following same day North Korean ballistic missile test for first time since 2017 (see Korean Peninsula). Japanese Ground Self-Defence Force and U.S. Marine Corps 10 Oct held joint drill in Hokkaido as part of 14-day joint exercises, simulating defence of remote islands. Japan and Australia 22 Oct signed joint declaration on security cooperation, where both countries committed to deepen and expand their comprehensive engagement, which include military, cyber defences and intelligence cooperation, in decade ahead.

➔ **Korean Peninsula North Korea continued to ratchet up tensions with missile flight over Japan, U.S. and South Korea signalled close cooperation, and North and South traded warning shots at sea.**

North Korea conducted provocative launch over Japan. North Korea 4 Oct launched intermediate range ballistic missile over Japan, in most serious provocation since first quarter of 2022 and first such flight over Japan since 2017; missile flew some 4,500km, well within range of U.S. territory of Guam. North Korea 16-23 Oct paused further missile testing, lasting for duration of Chinese Communist Party Congress; prior to pause, Pyongyang launched 15 missiles 21 Sept-14 Oct. North resumed missile testing schedule post-Congress, with two short-range ballistic missiles fired 28 Oct. International Atomic Energy Agency chief 27 Oct said "Everybody is holding its breath" over possible seventh nuclear test as U.S., South Korea and Japan warned of "unparalleled response"; probability of nuclear test likely to rise in lead up to Dec, which will see anniversary of Kim Jong Il's death 17 Dec.

U.S. and South Korea demonstrated strong, united front. U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Sung Kim 3 Oct met South Korean counterpart Noh Kyu-duk in U.S. capital Washington, pledging to pursue strong measures against any

North Korean testing, including new UN Security Council resolution and U.S. treasury sanctions. In sign of heightened pace of joint military exercises, South Korea and U.S. held several small drills in South Korea, including on border with North, following late August Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises; South Korean navy, army, air force, and coast guard 24-27 Oct participated with U.S. in two-week Hoguk Exercises beginning 17 Oct; U.S. and South Korea 31 Oct began large-scale air drills.

North and South Korean vessels traded shots at sea border. In incident underscoring risk of future maritime escalation, North and South Korea 23 Oct traded warning shots after what appeared to be North Korean merchant vessel crossed disputed maritime border Northern Limit Line (NLL) 27km northwest of South Korea's Baengnyeong Island. North Korea denied involvement, issuing counterclaim that South Korean navy sent two ships to "intrude" some 5km over NLL; South acknowledged crossing, said it was necessitated by pursuit of North Korean vessel.

➔ **Taiwan Strait** **China's President Xi reiterated goal of reunification, if necessary by force, as Beijing continued high level of aerial activity around island.**

China and Taiwan stated respective positions on island's status. In his speech at opening of 20th Party Congress, Chinese President Xi 16 Oct said China will strive for peaceful reunification with Taiwan, but it will never promise to renounce use of force and it reserves option of taking all necessary measures; he warned of "interference by external forces". In response, Taiwan's President Tsai same day reiterated Taiwan's "territorial sovereignty, independence and democracy cannot be compromised" and "military conflict is not an option". U.S. Sec State Antony Blinken 26 Oct said Beijing had decided "status quo was no longer acceptable". Earlier, Tsai's 10 Oct expressed willingness to work with Beijing "to find a mutually agreeable arrangement", potentially signalling Taipei's goodwill to improve cross-straits relations. As of 30 Oct, 425 Chinese aircraft entered Taiwan's air defence identification zone (ADIZ); 97 aircraft crossed unofficial demarcation known as median line. Chinese naval vessels were sighted 104 times during month.

U.S. reportedly sought deeper defence cooperation with Taiwan. Nikkei Asia media outlet 19 Oct announced U.S. was considering plan for joint weapons production with Taiwan as part of broader move towards greater security assistance; announcement came after Taiwan 1 Oct commissioned largest locally built ship, 10,600-ton amphibious vessel Yu Shan, in significant milestone in govt's effort to boost indigenous defence production. German-Taiwan Parliamentary Friendship Group Chairman Klaus-Peter Willsch 2 Oct commenced five-day visit to Taiwan; members of Bundestag's Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid 23 Oct also visited.

South Asia

➔ **Afghanistan** **National Resistance Front (NRF) expanded activities in north, while U.S. announced financial initiative to ease country's economic isolation as humanitarian crisis persists.**

NRF stepped up activity in north east, as Taliban targeted Islamic State's local branch. Badakhshan province (north east) witnessed rising insecurity, due to inroads made by National Resistance Front (NRF) fighters and recent defections of Taliban-aligned groups in area. Notably, NRF 3 Oct published video showing capture of Taliban's governor for Badakhshan's Shekay district, marking first significant activity by NRF in Badakhshan and suggesting expansion of group's presence in north; group also announced capture of Shekay district, although this claim was rejected by local residents. Taliban 6 Oct appointed former head of air force, Mawlawi Amanuddin, as province's governor; Amanuddin appeared to have launched major offensive in province in order to subdue resistance forces. Meanwhile, Taliban forces continued raiding Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) hideouts countrywide, including in capital Kabul, and 4 Oct announced capture of group's foreign liaison head; ISKP maintains high level of activity, primarily in east.

Taliban sent mixed signals on girls' tertiary education. In early month, girls in many provinces took part in kankor, or university entrance exams, suggesting that despite closure of girls' secondary schooling, tertiary education remains open to female students. Reports 14 Oct emerged that de facto authorities had expelled some female Kabul University students, possibly due to involvement with protests. Following replacement of Education Minister in late Sept, Taliban Emir 17 Oct replaced Minister of Higher Education; ramifications of appointment on girls' tertiary education remain unclear.

U.S. announced new financial initiative amid engagement with Taliban. With Afghanistan's harsh winter fast approaching, international focus centred on country's humanitarian and economic crises. Senior U.S. delegation 9 Oct met with Taliban delegation in Qatar's capital Doha to discuss security and economic issues. U.S. Special Envoy Tom West 22 Oct stated U.S. and other countries would facilitate priority transactions to overcome banking challenges in initiative aimed at permitting authorities to spend tax revenues on vital supplies.

➡ Bangladesh Govt and opposition supporters violently clashed, insecurity gripped Myanmar border areas, and targeted attacks continued in Rohingya refugee camps.

Clashes between rival camps fed political tensions. Opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) supporters held protests at divisional headquarters countrywide against rise in fuel and commodity prices, aimed at culminating in mass protest in capital Dhaka on 10 Dec and galvanising support ahead of general elections late 2023-early 2024. Notably, parallel BNP and ruling Awami League demonstrations in Mymensingh city 15 Oct led to clashes; police filed charges against 300-400 BNP members, who accused police of disrupting demonstrations. Dhaka court 10 Oct sentenced seven BNP leaders and activists to death, and three to life imprisonment, for 2020 murder of leader of ruling party's volunteer wing. Police 10, 22 Oct arrested dozens of members of Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh— proscribed Islamist party – for allegedly plotting against state.

Insecurity along Myanmar border continued, as police targeted militant groups. Security forces mid-Oct launched operation against Kuki-Chin National Front (KNF), Myanmar-based separatist group, in two sub-districts of Chittagong Hill

Tract's Bandarband district; home minister 16 Oct accused group of creating unrest in border areas and asserted Bangladeshi militant groups "were stationed next to KNF camp". Tensions also continued between govt and Myanmar as firing from latter's side 3 Oct resumed; FM Abdul Momen next day claimed country would not fall prey to Myanmar's "provocations". Meanwhile, police arrested scores of suspected members of new militant organisation, Jama'atul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya, in several cities countrywide, including 12 persons 6-10 Oct; 26 Oct arrested 5 in Chittagong Hill Tracts, claiming some 70-80 persons had joined group.

Attacks targeted Rohingya camp-based community leaders and volunteers. In Cox's Bazar Ukhiya camp, attacks on volunteer's home 4 Oct killed child and 15 Oct killed two community leaders; two refugees were shot dead 27 Oct. Two Rohingya community leaders were hacked to death 15 Oct. Armed police 28 Oct launched operation in Cox's Bazar's camps, arresting 56 Rohingyas, including 24 persons suspected of murdering seven community leaders, attributing most killings to Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army and "ongoing conflict in Myanmar".

➔ **India Govt and China continued talks on disputed Line of Actual Control (LAC), while security forces targeted militant outfits in north east amid ongoing Maoist violence.**

China and India pledged further talks on disputed LAC. In first meeting of bilateral mechanism on border affairs since May, Chinese and Indian delegations 14 Oct failed to reach agreement on remaining friction points along LAC but pledged to "continue discussions through diplomatic and military channels". Meanwhile, one day after abstaining from draft resolution on China's Xinjiang province in UN Human Rights Council, Indian foreign ministry 7 Oct made first public comments on human rights situation in China's Xinjiang region, saying "the human rights of the people of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region should be respected and guaranteed". China 18-19 Oct blocked fourth joint U.S.-India bid to designate individuals accused of procuring funds and recruiting for Pakistan-based anti-India jihadist groups on UN Security Council's 1267 terror list.

Police targeted militant leaders in north east. In Assam state, police 5 Oct arrested seven cadres of militant organisation Dimas National Liberation Tigers, claiming it had "neutralised" group, which reportedly formed last month after splintering from other militant outfits in Dima Hasao and Karbi Anglong districts.

Maoist violence continued in centre and east. In Chhattisgarh state (centre), Maoists 17 Oct killed two people in Bijapur district and set four vehicles on fire at mine in Kanker district; 26 Oct killed farmer in Mohla-Manpur-Ambagarh Chowki district. Security forces 31 Oct killed two Maoists in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district. In Jharkhand state (east), Maoists 21 Oct shot three people working at railway construction site in Latehar district. In Orissa state (east), Maoists 24 Oct killed youth suspected of working with police in Kandhamal district.

In other important developments. Govt continued to walk diplomatic tightrope on Ukraine: speaking with Ukrainian President, Indian PM Narendra Modi 4 Oct said "there can be no military solution to the conflict", while India's FM S. Jaishankar 10 Oct underscored New Delhi's long-standing relationship with Russia had "certainly served [its] interests well".

➡ **India-Pakistan (Kashmir) Harsh rhetoric persisted between New Delhi and Islamabad over Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), where deadly localised violence continued amid visit by India's Home Minister.**

India and Pakistan traded tit-for-tat diplomatic barbs. Indian FM Subrahmanyam Jaishankar 1 Oct asserted “No country practices terrorism in the manner that Pakistan does”; Pakistani’s foreign ministry 3 Oct replied “India has been involved in supporting terrorism against Pakistan from its own territory and from other countries in the region”. Pakistani PM Shehbaz Sharif 13 Oct said India “trampled the will of the people of Jammu and Kashmir” and accused New Delhi of holding elections in J&K by power of “the bullet not the ballot”; India responded that Pakistan is “the global epicentre of [militancy]”. India 7 Oct objected to visit by U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan to Pakistan-administered Kashmir, which ambassador referred to as “AJK” – Azad (Free) Jammu Kashmir. In media report published 12 Oct, security agencies claimed 191 drones had entered Indian territory this year, of which seven were shot down.

Insecurity persisted in J&K amid visit by India's Home Minister. Two bomb blasts late Sept preceded India’s Union Home Minister Amit Shah’s 4-6 Oct visit to J&K, which police 10 Oct attributed to Pakistan-based militant group Lashkar-e-Tayyaba; during visit, Shah announced reservation for mountainous Pahari community and accused region’s three most politically-prominent families (Abdullahs, Muftis and Gandhis) of monopolising power without bringing development; he also emphasised abrogation of Kashmir’s semi-autonomous status ushered in era of peace and development. Meanwhile, security forces 2 Oct killed Lashkar-e-Tayyaba militant in Shopian district; 4 Oct killed three Jaish-e-Mohammad and one Lashkar-e-Tayyaba militants in two operations in Shopian district; 9 Oct killed two Lashkar-e-Tayyaba militants in Anantnag district. Militant attack on security check post in Pulwama district 2 Oct killed one security personnel member; killed Kashmiri Hindu in Shopian district 15 Oct, and two non-local labourers in Shopian district 18 Oct.

➡ **Nepal Ahead of general elections in Nov, ruling and opposition parties continued jostling as new electoral alliances were formed.**

Parties finalised seat-sharing agreements amid defections and new pacts. Ahead of 20 Nov federal and provincial elections, ruling coalition 8 Oct agreed on dividing up electoral constituencies between coalition’s members, with Nepali Congress getting 90 electoral contests and Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) getting 45; opposition Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) will contest 35 federal and 70 provincial seats. Citing dissatisfaction over allocation of electoral seats, Janata Samajbadi Party (JSP) 8 Oct split from five-party ruling coalition and joined opposition alliance led by Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist); as per agreement, JSP will receive UML’s support for 17 federal and 42 provincial contests. UML 8 Oct struck electoral alliance pact with right-wing pro-monarchist Rastriya Prajatantra Party. PM Sher Bahadur Deuba 13 Oct dismissed four JSP ministers from cabinet following party’s defection. Following JSP’s departure from ruling coalition, Loktantrik Samajbadi Party (LSP) – regional party based in southern Madhesh plains – joined Nepali Congress-led electoral alliance after it was guaranteed seven federal and 16 provincial constituencies.

➡ 🌟 **Pakistan Political tensions heightened as former PM Imran Khan began protest march toward capital Islamabad, raising prospect of further violent unrest and aggravating instability.**

Khan maintained anti-govt campaign, vowing massive protests in capital. In parliamentary by-elections held 16 Oct for seats vacated by Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lawmakers, PTI secured six out of eight seats, while ruling Muslim League failed to obtain any; Khan reiterated boycott of parliament, demanding early polls. In blow to Khan, Election Commission 21 Oct ruled former PM was guilty of "corrupt practices" for "false statements" on his assets and gifts from foreign govts or dignitaries, and declared his National Assembly seat vacant. Khan's supporters same day held violent protests in major cities, including Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar and Karachi. Khan 25 Oct announced beginning of rally on 28 Oct to reach Islamabad on 4 Nov, raising risk of further unrest; Interior Minister 29 Oct released audio tape allegedly by top PTI leader speaking of protestors bringing arms to Islamabad, as authorities next day declared much of Islamabad off-limits to protestors. In first ever press conference by Inter-Services Intelligence chief, General Nadeem Anjum accompanied by head of military's publicity wing 26 Oct rejected Khan's U.S-backed conspiracy narrative as "far from reality" and denounced Khan's attacks on army chief.

Insecurity and local protests continued in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Military 4 Oct killed four militants in Tank district, as firefight on Peshawar outskirts killed three militants and two soldiers; 8 Oct killed two militants near Swat city; next day killed two militants in North Waziristan district. In Swat, locals held seventh protest against militant groups and threatened to take law into own hands if govt failed to act amid surge in attacks. National Security Council 14 Oct vowed to strengthen counter-terrorism infrastructure; defence minister called resurgence of "a few terrorists" in Swat "an expected spillover from Afghanistan". After cross-border militant attack 23 Oct killed soldier in North Waziristan, military condemned "use of Afghan soil by terrorists"; last month, militants killed eight soldiers in districts bordering Afghanistan.

In other important developments. Food ministry 12 Oct reported monsoon had wiped out 40% of standing crops. Terrorism financing watchdog Financial Action Task Force 21 Oct removed Pakistan from so-called "grey list" after four years.

➡ **Sri Lanka Govt maintained crackdown on protests and sought international support with goodwill gestures and constitutional amendment, as UN Human Rights Council passed critical resolution.**

Govt repressed dissent and adopted measures to signal liberal credentials. Inter University Student Union 18 Oct held large, peaceful and legal march to protest detention of three of its leaders held for two months under Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA); police dispersed marchers with tear gas and water cannons and arrested eight activists. President Wickremesinghe 1 Oct revoked his previous order declaring large area in capital Colombo "High Security Zones" and 19 Oct pardoned eight Tamils convicted of terrorism charges. Supreme Court 20 Oct ruled govt's "Bureau of Rehabilitation Bill" – permitting compulsory detention in "rehabilitation" centres – unconstitutional.

Parliament passed govt's constitutional reforms. In vote seen as political win for Wickremesinghe, two-thirds of parliament 21 Oct approved 21st constitutional amendment, which slightly increases independence of various oversight commissions, establishes new parliamentary committees and "National Council", and reimposes ban on dual citizens holding public office; while govt advertised proposal as reducing presidential powers enshrined in 20th amendment, amendment does not constitute significant revision of governance structures demanded by protest movement.

UN Human Rights Council called on govt to address past abuses. In 6 Oct vote, 20 member states of Human Rights Council passed resolution urging govt to adopt wide range of reforms related to past abuses and "economic crimes" to prevent further deterioration of democratic and human rights; seven states, led by China and Pakistan, voted against, while 20 abstained. Notably, resolution extended and reinforced "capacity of the Office of the High Commissioner to collect, consolidate, analyse and preserve information and evidence and to develop possible strategies for future accountability processes" related to rights or international law violations.

In other important developments. World Bank early Oct estimated country's poverty rate doubled to 25% of population in 2022, with urban poverty tripling to 15%. Govt 11 Oct announced revisions to tax code – designed to expand very small tax base and generate desperately-needed revenue – which were widely criticised for placing most of burden on middle class taxpayers.

South East Asia

↓ **Myanmar Resistance groups in centre staged deadly attacks on regime, which clashed heavily with Arakan Army in Rakhine state and Karen armed groups in south east; regime killed scores in deadliest air attack on record.**

Resistance forces launched several lethal attacks in centre. In Sagaing region, combined people's defence forces (PDFs) for second time since April 2 Oct attacked strategic locations comprising police post and five army bunkers in Kyadet village, Salingyi township. Military next day retaliated, looting and torching villages, displacing thousands. PDFs 2 Oct attacked police station in Sagaing's Monywa township, killing at least ten soldiers, while resistance forces same day killed six soldiers in Myingyan township. PDFs 2 Oct attacked police training camp in Magway's region's Pauk Township, killing at least 17 police/soldiers and capturing 53 trainee prisoners.

Arakan Army (AA) attacked military as tensions surfaced with Rohingya community. In Rakhine State, AA 10 Oct seized Border Guard Police post in Maungdaw township, killing some 30 soldiers/police. AA 15 Oct ambushed military vehicles in Maungdaw's Kodan Kauk village, killing four soldiers. Meanwhile, gunmen 6 Oct killed Rohingya community leader from Buthidaung township; local regime administrator blamed Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), which in turn blamed military and indirectly AA. Gunmen, likely AA fighters, 8 Oct killed another prominent Rohingya community leader in Buthidaung; his relative, activist Wai Wai Nu, accused AA.

Regime and Karen ethnic armed groups clashed in south east. In Karen state from 18 Oct, Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and aligned PDFs launched attack on Kawkaik town on main trade route with Thailand. In Mon State, regime blamed both for 12 Oct attack on bus terminal in Kyaikto township that killed three. In Kayin State, KNLA and allied resistance group 13-16 Oct launched attacks in Kyainseikgyi township, killing six regime soldiers and capturing 16. State media 4 Oct accused Karenni Nationalities Progressive Party for shooting commercial plane 30 Sept.

In north, regime forces struck Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) celebration. Regime forces 23 Oct conducted deadly airstrikes on crowded anniversary event in Kachin state's Hpakant Township, killing at least 60 people – both KIO fighters and civilians – and possibly more than 100.

➡ **Philippines Local officials and community members in Marawi urged govt to accelerate rehabilitation amid ongoing insecurity in south.**

Local calls for Marawi's rehabilitation five years on continued. In Marawi city, Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), Lanao del Sur provincial officials and multisectoral group of Maranaos 11 Oct urged President Marcos, Jr. to speed up activation of Marawi Compensation Board, aimed at compensating survivors of 2017 siege, and called on Marcos to appoint only qualified Maranaos and survivors of siege to nine-seat board. Task Force Bangon Marawi Assistant Secretary Felix Castro 13 Oct said 5,000 families remain in temporary shelters in Marawi city.

Operations targeting jihadist militancy persisted in south. In Maguindanao province of BARMM, military in first week of Oct launched operations on outskirts of Shariff Saydona town in SPSM-Box (area consisting of Shariff Aguak, Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Mamasapano, and Shariff Saydona towns), overrunning camp of militants and recovering bombs. Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) 13 Oct clashed with govt forces in Patikul town, Sulu province, killing one ASG member. Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) members same day attacked military post in Datu Salibo town, killing one soldier and injuring another. Meanwhile, militant surrenders continued: in Maguindanao, ten BIFF members 7 Oct surrendered in Ampatuan town, while three ASG members affiliated to deceased commander Isnilon Hapilon 18 Oct surrendered in Zamboanga city. In Basilan province, two ASG members 19 Oct surrendered in Isabela city.

Security forces and communist militants clashed. Military operations or militant ambushes in Mindanao Island in south, Visayas Islands in centre and Luzon Island in north claimed at least seven combatant and civilian fatalities, with 17 injured. Notably, clashes between military and communist New People's Army (NPA) 6 Oct flared up in Negros Occidental, displacing 18,236 residents in Himamaylan city.

➡ **South China Sea U.S. and allies held naval drills in South China Sea (SCS), while Chinese hospital ship sailed to more than dozen Chinese-occupied islands.**

U.S. conducted joint exercises with allies and announced new initiative. U.S., Japan, and Canada maritime forces 1 Oct concluded "Noble Raven 22" joint exercises in SCS. U.S., Japan, and Australia 7 Oct held manoeuvres, while all four countries 19 Oct participated in joint exercises for first time, including surface, subsurface, and

air defence exercises. U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas 18 Oct announced \$60mn investment in new maritime initiatives in Indo-Pacific, with aim to increase presence involving Coast Guard assets and personnel capable of rapid deployment on request of partner.

Chinese naval vessel visited SCS islands. Chinese state media 11 Oct reported naval hospital ship Youhao had completed 18-day voyage, including visit to 13 Chinese-occupied islands in Paracel and Spratly archipelagos, providing “medical services to more than 5,000 people” located on islands. Chinese oil company 20 Oct claimed to find first “deep-deep” gas field in western SCS, with gas reserve exceeding 50bn cubic metres.

In another important development. Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Sec Gen Dato Paduka 19 Oct said regional body and China were currently working on second draft of SCS Code of Conduct.

➡ **Thailand Peace process in deep south remained fragile as separatist group Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) condemned murder of member and deadly attacks persisted.**

BRN condemned murder of member amid ongoing violence in deep south. Main southern separatist group BRN 18 Oct issued statement on torture and murder of BRN member Zahri Bin Abdullah whose body was recovered 29 Sept on Thai side of Kolok River, which marks Thailand-Malaysia border, after he had been “picked up in Rantau Panjang” in Kelantan, Malaysia; group said murder would adversely affect dialogue process and decried failure to provide security guarantees to BRN delegation members. BRN 30 Oct issued statement via Twitter that reiterated commitment to peace process, sharing relevant documents such as “General Principles of the Peace Dialogue Process”. Meanwhile, in Pattani province, gunmen 4 Oct ambushed police officer driving in Saiburi district, wounding officer. In Yala province, gunman 15 Oct killed assistant village chief in Bannang Sata district as victim arrived at mosque. In Narathiwat province, IED 21 Oct targeted vehicle carrying rangers and defence volunteers in Chanae district, wounding five patrol members.

Thailand abstained from UN vote condemning Russian invasion of Ukraine. Govt 12 Oct abstained on UN General Assembly resolution condemning Russian invasion of Ukraine as other members of regional body ASEAN except Laos and Vietnam voted in favour; govt had approved similar resolution in March. Thai Ambassador and UN Permanent Representative Suriya Chindawongse justified abstention with reference to “an extremely volatile and emotionally charged atmosphere”, while observers pointed to govt’s desire for Russian President Putin to attend Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation’s summit in capital Bangkok next month.

Pacific

➡ **Papua New Guinea Violent clashes erupted, killing dozens.**

Clashes 24 Oct surged between Kulumata and Kuboma peoples on Kiriwina Island, Milne Bay province (east), reportedly killing 32 people with over dozen missing;

police next day deployed to island to maintain order, as unrest followed reports of communal violence in recent weeks.