



Asia

North East Asia

➔ **China/Japan** China's maritime presence in waters around Japan remained source of tension, Canada and Beijing blamed each other for aerial incident, and U.S. spotlighted China's "risky" military encounters.

Japan protested China's regional maritime presence. As of 29 Oct, Japan spotted 100 Chinese vessels in Japan's contiguous zone, while it detected eight vessels within Japan's territorial sea over three days. Japanese Coast Guard 16 Oct said two Chinese ships entered Japan's territorial waters off disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, south of Minamikojima Island; Japanese Coast Guard warned Chinese vessels to leave waters. Chinese and Japanese coast guards 17 Oct confirmed that their ships faced off in waters around islands. Tokyo next day lodged protest with Beijing after Chinese research vessel "Xiangyanghong 18" was suspected of conducting unauthorised marine survey about 129km north east of Japan-controlled Taisho Island. Two Russian Tu-95 bombers accompanied by two fighter aircraft 17 Oct flew over Sea of Japan, prompting Japan to scramble its fighter jets.

Canada and China traded barbs over mid-air incident. Canada 16 Oct claimed that Chinese military plane intercepted its aircraft in "aggressive manner" in international airspace off Chinese coast; China claimed that Canadian plane was flying over Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, which violated China's sovereignty and compelled China to take necessary measures.

U.S. highlighted trend of increasing Chinese coercive action in air. U.S. Defense Department 17 Oct released collection of declassified images and videos depicting fifteen recent cases of "coercive and risky operational behavior" by China's military against U.S. aircraft in East and South China Sea regions; U.S. claimed that it has recorded more than 180 such incidents since Autumn 2021. Japan's Maritime Self-Defence Force 9-10 Oct held joint exercise with U.S. and South Korean navies in East China Sea. Japan and Australia 19 Oct agreed to include Australian troops in large-scale joint command post drills with U.S. for first time.

➔ **Korean Peninsula** U.S. accused North Korea of supplying munitions to Russia, raising concern over pair's military cooperation, while U.S., South Korea and Japan held first ever trilateral aerial military drills.

U.S. unveiled evidence pointing to North Korean weapons supplies to Russia. After North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited Russia's Far East in Sept to meet Russian President Putin, fuelling speculation that Pyongyang was planning to supply

munitions to Russia's war effort in Ukraine, U.S. intelligence 13 Oct revealed it had observed between 300 and 1,000 shipping containers travelling by boat from North Korean port Rajin to Russian military port Dunay before containers were transported to ammunition depot closer to Russia-Ukraine border. After visiting North Korea for talks with Kim Jong Un, Russian FM Sergei Lavrov 20 Oct denied U.S. allegations, saying he "does not comment on rumours". North Korean ambassador to Russia next day criticised U.S. deliveries of ATACMS ground-to-ground missiles to Ukraine. Concerns mounted regarding how Russia may compensate Pyongyang, as Kim Jong Un is likely seeking modern fighter aircraft, surface-to-air missiles and assistance with satellite launch technologies banned under UN Security Council resolutions; military cooperation is likely to deepen Western antipathy toward dialogue and further sour relations on peninsula.

U.S., Japan and South Korea conducted military exercises. In their first ever trilateral aerial exercises, U.S., Japan and South Korea 22 Oct staged drill that involved U.S. strategic bombers and fighter aircraft from Japan and South Korea; exercises followed historic Aug summit between three allies where they agreed to deepen defence cooperation. U.S. and South Korea 25-27 Oct staged exercise to counter " Hamas-style " artillery attack on Seoul from North (see Israel-Palestine).

No diplomacy after release of U.S. private. After North Korea late Sept expelled U.S. military deserter Travis King, who returned to U.S. to face range of charges, U.S. State Dept 20 Oct said King's release "will not lead" to any diplomatic engagement with North Korea.

► **Taiwan Strait China maintained military activity around Taiwan, while Taiwan President Tsai struck conciliatory tone as she entered final months of presidency.**

Chinese jets and navy vessels continued operations around island. As of 29 Oct, Taiwan spotted 299 Chinese military aircraft around Taiwan, of which at least 100 either crossed unofficial "median line" or were detected in Taiwan's de facto air defence identification zone; 23 aircraft 26 Oct crossed median line while China aircraft carrier Shandong sailed through Bashi Channel into Western Pacific. Taiwan reported 152 sightings of Chinese navy vessels in surrounding waters. U.S. Navy P-8A Poseidon 12 Oct transited Taiwan Strait in international airspace.

Tsai urged "peaceful coexistence", Beijing reiterated preconditions for talks. Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen 10 Oct urged "peaceful coexistence" with island and called on Beijing to develop a "mutually acceptable foundation" for interactions; she stressed that her administration had maintained cross-strait status quo since 2016, which was critical to ensuring peace. In response, China's Taiwan Affairs Office said that acceptance of the "1992 consensus" is precondition for both sides to engage in political dialogue. After opposition party Kuomintang (KMT)'s vice chairman Andrew Hsia late Sept said that KMT should not be labelled as "pro-China party" nor "unification party", China's Taiwan Affairs Office 11 Oct responded that remarks "undermine mutual trust between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait".

In other important developments. Speaking in New York city during his U.S. visit, former Taiwan president Ma Ying-jeou 16 Oct said that U.S. should play role of peacemaker and broker talks between Taiwan and China; in response, Taiwan's FM Joseph Wu slammed comments as having undermined Taiwan's diplomacy. Former

Australian PM Scott Morrison 11-12 Oct visited Taiwan to participate in gov-sponsored Yushan forum, in which he expressed his personal support for Taiwan to participate in international organisations, including “Quad” grouping of U.S., India, Japan and Australia, and called for “modernisation” of Australia’s “one China” policy.

South Asia

➔ **Afghanistan Islamic State staged deadly attacks in north and capital Kabul, defying Taliban crackdown, while earthquakes in west compounded suffering and Taliban wrestled for control of embassies.**

Islamic State’s local branch conducted attacks despite ongoing Taliban raids. After Taliban security forces early Sept dismantled Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) cell, Taliban-affiliated media Al Mirsad 3 Oct published confessions from the cell, which is purportedly responsible for some of largest attacks in Badakhshan province (north). Dismantling this network will likely represent blow to ISKP’s strong presence in Badakhshan, although group remains active and capable of attacks. Notably, in one of its largest attacks in months, ISKP 13 Oct assaulted mosque in Baghlan province (north), killing around seventeen Shia worshippers. ISKP claimed bomb attack 26 Oct in Kabul that killed at least four in sports club in Shia area.

Earthquakes and aftershocks in west aggravated humanitarian crisis. Powerful earthquake 7 Oct struck Herat province (west), levelling entire villages before series of shallow earthquakes and aftershocks in subsequent weeks hit region, killing over 2,000 people and destroying 2,500 homes. While humanitarian actors quickly provided \$18mn in assistance, many affected communities are likely to remain in desperate need as winter fast approaches.

Taliban reportedly clamped down on anti-Pakistan militants and rival group. Following deadly militant attacks in Pakistan in Sept, reports emerged that Afghan security forces arrested hundreds of Pakistani militants and Afghan nationals involved in activities against Pakistan. Taliban forces reportedly also began clampdown on rival group Hizb ut-Tahrir countrywide, arresting dozens of members in multiple provinces.

Taliban intensified efforts to rein in Afghan embassies abroad. Afghan embassy in India 1 Oct stated it would be shutting down operations amid reports of infighting among embassy staff, pressure from Indian govt, and attempts by Taliban to takeover. In subsequent days, Afghan embassies in Netherlands and Spain announced their cooperation with de facto govt. Taliban-run foreign ministry 8 Oct issued notice advising services by Afghan embassies in London and Vienna were invalid; both posts have been most critical of Taliban govt; London embassy rejected notice.

↓ **Bangladesh Govt intensified repression ahead of Jan 2024 elections as opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) held large rally in capital Dhaka, leading to clashes that killed several civilians and police officer.**

BNP held large-scale rally in defiance of govt crackdown. As party sought to mobilise supporters ahead of Jan 2024 elections, BNP 28 Oct held “grand rally” in Dhaka to build momentum for demanding caretaker govt ahead of Jan 2024 polls, with estimated 200,000 BNP supporters in attendance despite efforts to stop them gathering. Sporadic clashes, mainly between BNP supporters and police, prompted police to break up rally, firing rubber bullets and tear gas. Street fighting subsequently erupted across city, leaving one police officer and one civilian dead, and hundreds more injured. Violence was also reported in other major cities, with several civilians killed and scores injured. Awami League govt 29 Oct arrested de facto BNP leader and around 100 others, including senior officials, charging them with police officer’s murder; BNP claimed nearly 3,000 party officials were arrested 21-29 Oct. BNP and other opposition forces announced nationwide “hartal”, shutting down streets across Dhaka on 29 Oct, and three-day shutdown 31 Oct-2 Nov, making further clashes likely.

Financial strains persisted. Media 18 Oct reported Central Bank’s net foreign exchange reserves fell to below \$17bn, equivalent to around three months of imports, and are declining by as much as \$1bn per month. Govt 19 Oct reached staff-level agreement with International Monetary Fund (IMF) to proceed with disbursement of additional \$681mn (still subject to IMF board approval).

Violence continued in Rohingya refugee camps. Paramilitary Rapid Action Battalion 2 Oct detained “financial coordinator and personal assistant” of Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) chief. Gunfight with armed group 4 Oct killed member of ARSA. Suspected member of rival Rohingya Solidarity Organisation 9 Oct killed two ARSA members. Paramilitary forces 5 Oct arrested local council member in Cox’s Bazar for allegedly trafficking drugs from Myanmar and 15 Oct arrested alleged ARSA member for suspected murder of Rohingya leader in Sept 2021. Meanwhile, UN High Commissioner for Refugees 17 Oct requested more funding for Rohingya response to avert looming disaster.

➡ **India Ethnic conflict in Manipur continued to simmer, diplomatic row with Canada escalated further and talks with China on disputed border ended without progress; bombing targeted Christians in south.**

Instability and attacks plagued Manipur state in north east. Death toll of conflict that erupted in May reached at least 176 with 67,000 displaced, as sporadic violence continued. Central Bureau of Investigation 1 Oct arrested four for alleged role in abduction and killing of two Meitei students. Video 8 Oct circulated on social media, showing tribal Kuki man lying in trench with face bludgeoned and body set on fire. Armed assailants and security forces 7 Oct exchanged fire and suspected insurgents 8 Oct hurled grenade at state minister’s house, injuring security forces member. Ten opposition parties 13 Oct submitted memorandum to governor expressing concern over lack of initiative to facilitate peace talks, criticising state and central govt for “path of non-intervention”.

Diplomatic spat with Canada deepened. After Canada in Sept alleged India had a hand in killing Sikh separatist leader, Canada 20 Oct announced withdrawal of 41 diplomats for being “in danger of having immunity stripped on an arbitrary date” by govt, which would risk their personal safety; Canadian PM Justin Trudeau same day blamed India for “making it unbelievably difficult for life as usual to continue”. U.S.

and UK 21 Oct expressed concern at India's decision to reduce staff and urged New Delhi to engage with Canadian investigation.

Talks with China ended without breakthrough. India and China 9-10 Oct held 20th round of corps commander-level talks at Chushul-Moldo border meeting point on Indian side but failed to make progress on stand-off along Line of Actual Control (LAC); both sides agreed to continue dialogue. U.S. Pentagon 19 Oct released report assessing negotiations had "made minimal progress" and noting China's ongoing efforts to "develop military infrastructure" along LAC.

Deadly explosion targeted Christians in south. Suspected improvised explosive device 29 Oct targeted prayer meeting of Jehovah's Witnesses in Ernakulam district, Kerala state (south), killing at least three and injuring dozens.

➔ **India-Pakistan (Kashmir) Opposition parties won first local election in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) since 2019, while India and Pakistan exchanged fire amid ongoing anti-militant security operations.**

Kargil region of Ladakh Union Territory held council elections for first time since 2019. Coalition of Kashmir-based National Conference and national opposition Congress party 8 Oct won 22 seats on 26-member Kargil hill development council, while ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) secured only two seats; election was first to be held since BJP reorganised J&K into two union territories in 2019. National Conference claimed victory sent verdict that people remain opposed to reorganisation, while party leader Omar Abdullah questioned why regional elections had not been held in J&K, accusing Election Commission of "taking decision at the behest of the BJP".

India and Pakistan traded fire as security operations continued. In ceasefire violation on 17 Oct, Pakistani and Indian border troops exchanged fire at Arnia sector of Jammu region, injuring two Pakistani guards; gunfire 27 Oct wounded four Pakistani civilians. Meanwhile, security forces 4 Oct killed two Hizbul Mujahideen militants in Kulgam district. Militant group The Resistance Front in Anantnag district same day fatally wounded teenager. Security forces 10 Oct killed two suspected Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) militants, who allegedly killed Kashmiri pandit recently in Shopian district. Security forces 26 Oct killed five LeT militants in Kupwara district.

Authorities sought to prevent rallies to support Palestinians. Following outbreak of war between Israel and Hamas (see Israel-Palestine), authorities 13 Oct closed largest mosque in J&K summer capital Srinagar to prevent pro-Palestine protests; citing security concerns, authorities also placed Kashmir's chief cleric and separatist leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq under house arrest after releasing him in Sept. Former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti 21 Oct led protest in Srinagar against Israel's offensive in Gaza. The Resistance Front 18 Oct vowed to attack Israeli interests.

In another important development. Govt 5 Oct banned pro-independence Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom (JKDF) party for five years under Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, citing its "anti-India" and "pro-Pakistan" activities; govt statement alleged JKDF was involved in terror activities with intention of creating "reign of terror".

➡ **Pakistan** Former PMs Imran Khan and Nawaz Sharif sought to overturn disqualifications ahead of elections, sectarian clashes roiled Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and govt sought forced returns of Afghan refugees.

Political parties intensified jockeying ahead of elections. Parties prepared for Jan 2024 elections, set to be one of most contested polls in Pakistan's history; participation of two of main contenders – Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Imran Khan and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Nawaz Sharif – depends on series of cases before courts. Khan, who is serving three-year prison sentence, 5 Oct approached Islamabad High Court to overturn his conviction in “Toshakhana” case for false statements and incorrect declarations on gifts received during his premiership, which disqualified him from contested elections; Islamabad High Court 27 Oct rejected Khan's 11 Oct appeal against special court's indictment in cipher case, relating to alleged unauthorised disclosure and illegal retention of diplomatic cable, as well as his bail plea. Caretaker provincial govts, particularly in Khan strongholds of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, placed curbs on PTI from holding public rallies. Meanwhile, Nawaz Sharif 21 Oct returned to Pakistan after four-year exile in London in hope of becoming party's candidate should he overcome legal hurdles, which include appeals against his corruption convictions in 2018. Islamabad High Court, which had given Nawaz protective bail, 26 Oct restored pending appeals.

Sectarian violence erupted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Shia-Sunni clashes 24-29 Oct involving heavy weaponry roiled Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Kurram district, killing at least twenty, before trial elders reportedly struck ceasefire. Meanwhile, amid counter-insurgency operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces, clashes 8-9 Oct killed two soldiers in Zhob district, 16 Oct killed two soldiers in North and South Waziristan district and 18-19 Oct killed three soldiers in two districts.

Govt announced plan to forcibly deport “illegal immigrants”. Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti 3 Oct set 1 Nov deadline for all illegal immigrants to leave Pakistan or face forcible deportation, with clear signals policy was aimed at Afghans. As thousands headed to Afghan border, Amnesty International 31 Oct warned 1.4m Afghan refugees at risk of “being uprooted” ahead of harsh winter months, putting women and girls in particular “in grave danger”.

➡ **Sri Lanka** Govt unlocked International Monetary Fund (IMF) support and introduced, then withdrew, controversial bills aimed at boosting executive powers; ethno-religious tensions simmered in northeast.

IMF and govt agreed next steps in economic reform program. Following three-week delay, govt and IMF 19 Oct reached new agreement to complete first six-month review of four-year Extended Funds Facility bailout program, paving path to further \$330mn financial support pending approval of IMF's Executive Board; deal came after China 11 Oct announced one of its two main creditors had reached tentative deal to restructure \$4.2bn worth of debt (over half of what govt owes Beijing).

Govt pursued bills expanding executive power. Govt 3 Oct presented – but later in month quietly withdrew – new draft of Anti-Terrorism Act to parliament, which immediately drew domestic and international criticism for over-broad definition of

terrorism and dangerously expansive powers afforded to executive and security agencies. Ten UN Special mandate holders 18 Oct argued that bill “does not go far enough to remedy the defects of [...] draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act”. Govt 3 Oct also introduced Online Safety Act to parliament that generated strong criticism for its intent to create “Online Safety Commission”, appointed by and answering to president, with sweeping powers to determine that a statement is “false” and remove online content; more than 40 petitions were registered at Supreme Court challenging bill.

Ethno-religious tensions persisted in eastern province. Monk-provocateur Ampitiye Sumanaratna 15 Oct led small procession of Sinhalese to install Buddhist statue on disputed land in Batticaloa district, at site of long-running dispute over land used by Tamil dairy farmers now taken over by Sinhalese farmers. Police, on orders of president, 19 Oct removed Buddhist statue. Sumanaratna 25 Oct was filmed threatening to kill Tamils.

In other important developments. Wickremesinghe 21 Oct announced intention to hold presidential election in 2024, followed by parliamentary elections due by mid-2025; 16 Oct appointed controversial commission to advise on changes to electoral law. Wickremesinghe 3 Oct angrily rejected possibility of international commission to investigate 2019 Easter bombings after UK’s Channel 4 in Sept broadcast allegations that military intelligence facilitated attack and obstructed investigations.

South East Asia

⚡ Myanmar **Ethnic armed group in Shan state launched one of largest offensives in years, which may provoke further clashes with regime in coming weeks; explosion near internally displaced camp in Kachin state killed dozens.**

Ethnic armed group launched large-scale offensive in north. In Shan state (north), Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) – ethnic Kokang armed group – and allies 27 Oct launched seemingly one of its most significant offensives in several years: forces made series of pre-dawn raids on twelve towns across north of state, including Chin Shwe Haw town on Chinese border, in bid to take over Kokang Self-Administered Zone, which it controlled until 2009 when military offensive ousted it and installed rival Kokang faction. Military responded with airstrikes across northern Shan State, with hostilities likely to escalate in coming weeks.

Blast at IDP camp killed dozens amid hostilities in several areas. Huge explosion close to Munglai Hkyet IDP camp in Kachin state (north) 9 Oct killed 29 people and left more than 50 injured; Kachin Independence Army blamed “high-tech” drone strike, but military denied responsibility. Rights group Amnesty International 13 Oct said damage “is consistent with the largest aerial-delivered bombs” possessed by military, while International Institute for Strategic Studies 23 Oct said blast likely caused by regime artillery strike on stored ammonium nitrate or munitions. In central Myanmar, fighting continued between military and People’s Defence Forces and other resistance forces; among heaviest clashes were hostilities in Kantbalu Township in northern Sagaing region, forcing as many as 10,000 people to flee. In

Kayah state (south east), 60-vehicle military convoy deployed to recapture territory in Mese township reached its destination in nearby Bawlake after weeks of heavy fighting.

Regime celebrated 2015 nationwide ceasefire. Regime 15 Oct held ceremony marking eighth anniversary of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, but only seven of ten signatories attended as three groups have since aligned with anti-coup resistance forces.

Parallel govt addressed allegations of abuses. Amid growing reports of abuses and infighting among resistance forces, National Unity Govt 3 Oct said “they must be conducted fairly and transparently”; days later, video footage emerged purportedly showing resistance forces in Sagaing region carrying out extrajudicial killings late Sept.

➡ **Philippines South witnessed ongoing political and criminal violence, while security forces battled Communist insurgents.**

Insecurity persisted in Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. In Maguindanao del Sur, two unidentified motorcycle-borne gunmen 10 Oct ambushed and killed Saudi national. Police 12 Oct foiled attempt by suspected illegal gun dealer to transport eight M16 assault rifles from Datu Piang, Maguindanao del Sur, to Sultan Kudarat province. Incidents related to village elections also surfaced: notably, authorities 13 Oct arrested mayor of Datu Salibo town in Maguindanao del Sur, Solaiman Sandigan, with four others over their alleged links to killing of two barangay officials. Military 17 Oct clashed with suspected Daulah Islamiyah armed group in Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao del Sur, injuring two soldiers and four militants.

Hostilities persisted between security forces and Communist militants. Fighting between govt security forces and Communist rebels of New People’s Army (NPA), in Luzon Island (Abra province) in north, Mindanao Island (Sultan Kudarat province) in south, and Visayas Islands (negros and Panay islands) in centre, killed at least eight combatants and civilians.

➡ **South China Sea Maritime collision between Philippine and Chinese vessels in South China Sea (SCS) further fuelled tensions, as U.S. spotlighted China’s “risky” military encounters.**

Philippines slammed China for dangerous maritime collision near disputed shoal. Philippines 4 Oct announced it had successfully shipped fresh supplies to personnel stationed at *BRP Sierra Madre* at Second Thomas Shoal, despite “significant number” of Chinese coast guard and maritime militia vessels seeking to “block, harass and interfere” with resupply mission. China’s coast guard 10 Oct claimed it drove away Philippine navy ship near contested Scarborough Shoal; Manila acknowledged its ship was conducting maritime patrol and engaged in brief encounter but rejected assertion it was chased away. Philippines 16 Oct slammed China for “dangerous and offensive manoeuvres” after Chinese vessel shadowed Philippine ship southwest of Thitu Island – Manila’s largest outpost in SCS – and came within 320m of ship. In sign of further heightening of tensions, Philippines 22 Oct accused China’s coast guard of “dangerous blocking manoeuvres” that caused it to collide with Philippine resupply boat about 25km from Second Thomas Shoal,

while another Chinese maritime militia vessel “bumped” Philippine Coast Guard vessel; U.S. condemned Beijing’s actions and reiterated its defence treaty obligations extend to “armed attacks” on Philippine Coast Guard “anywhere in the South China Sea”. President Biden 25 Oct said U.S. defence commitment to Philippines is “ironclad”; China responded that U.S. has “no right to get involved”.

U.S. highlighted trend of increasing Chinese coercive action in air. U.S. Defense Department 17 Oct released collection of declassified images and videos depicting fifteen recent cases of “coercive and risky operational behavior” by China’s military against U.S. aircraft in East and South China Sea regions; U.S. claimed that it has recorded more than 180 such incidents since Autumn 2021. China reciprocated by releasing footage accusing U.S. of “closed-in harassment”. U.S. 24 Oct claimed Chinese fighter jet executed an unsafe intercept of U.S. aircraft.

► **Thailand Authorities convicted several individuals on lèse-majesté charges and condemned killing of Thai nationals in Israel, while violence persisted in deep south.**

Courts handed down spate of convictions for lèse-majesté. Notably, Provincial court in Phitsanuloke 4 Oct convicted graduate student of lèse-majesté for Facebook posts, deferred sentencing for two years. Chiang Mai Provincial Court found activist Wanwalee Thammasattaya guilty of lèse-majesté, sentenced to two years and eight months in prison. Ratchapisek Criminal Court 11 Oct convicted man of lèse-majesté for post criticising COVID-19 vaccine production by Siam Bioscience company, which is owned by King Maha Vajiralongkorn; court gave suspended sentence of one year and six months. Activist Saharat Sukkhamla 19 Oct convicted of lèse-majesté for speech at protest Nov 2020, sentenced to two years and granted bail. Meanwhile, parliament 25 Oct voted to reject motion proposed by Move Forward Party to hold referendum on election of Constitution Drafting Assembly.

Govt condemned killing of Thai nationals in Israel. Following outbreak of war between Israel and Hamas (see Israel-Palestine), PM Srettha Thavisin 8 Oct condemned Hamas attack, which killed 29 Thai workers and saw at least eighteen taken hostage; some 30,000 Thai nationals work in Israel.

Insurgents continued attacks across deep south. Militants 30 Sept-1 Oct attacked security outposts in eleven locations across Pattani, Narathiwat and Yala provinces, causing no casualties. In Yala province, IED 3 Oct wounded two workmen in Yaha district. In Pattani province, two motorcycle-borne gunmen 5 Oct threw IED at security post in Nongchik district, lightly injuring two soldiers. Motorcycle-borne gunmen 6 Oct shot and killed chief of Don Sai subdistrict in Mai Kaen district. In Narathiwat, militants 21 Oct staged coordinated attacks in Tak Bai district, including three separate bombings and assault on checkpoint that wounded four police officers. Deputy PM Somsak Thepsutin 12 Oct announced govt would extend emergency decree for three months from 20 Oct but lifted decree in three districts – Krong Pinang in Yala, Thung Yang Daeng in Pattani and Yi-ngo in Narathiwat.