



Asia

North East Asia

➔ **China/Japan** China continued its maritime presence in waters surrounding Japan, while Tokyo rejected Beijing's claim over disputed islands and voiced concern over its military build-up.

China continued regional maritime presence. As of 28 Sept, Japan spotted 92 Chinese vessels in Japan's contiguous zone during month and detected eight vessels within Japan's territorial sea. China 11-15 Sept conducted five-day military exercise in West Pacific during which its Shandong carrier strike group was spotted entering waters southeast of Taiwan and Bashi Channel, while eight additional Chinese navy warships passed through Miyako straits in East China Sea; during drill, Shandong launched around 40 fighter jet missions and 20 helicopter sorties.

Japan rejected China's claim over disputed islands. Japan 5 Sept protested new standard map published by China in late Aug, which depicted disputed Senkaku islands – known as Diaoyu islands to China – as part of China's territory. Japan 20 Sept asked China to remove buoy found by Japan's Coast Guard near Senkaku/Diaoyu islands believed to be collecting data related to weather and sea conditions.

Tokyo acknowledged strained ties and China's military development. After Japanese PM Fumio Kishida 13 Sept reshuffled cabinet, newly-appointed FM Yoko Kamikawa next day asserted it is important for Japan to maintain frank dialogue with China to improve strained ties, while newly-appointed Defence Minister Minoru Kihara 17 Sept expressed concern over China's rapid military build-up in East China Sea and South China Sea; Kihara also said Tokyo and U.S. will step up joint exercises as pair 14 Sept began Orient Shield 23 drills in Hokkaido prefecture.

➔ **Korean Peninsula** North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited Russia in quest for closer military cooperation, while Pyongyang directed harsh rhetoric at U.S. and expelled detained U.S. soldier held since July.

Kim Jong Un's trip to Russia signalled potential for deeper military cooperation. In first overseas trip since 2019, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un – accompanied by coterie of military and diplomatic officials – 10 Sept crossed border into Russia's Far East and 13 Sept met Russian President Putin; meeting came amid speculation over potential deal between pair on provision of North Korean munitions to Russia's war in Ukraine, as Russia strongly implied it would assist North Korea with its faltering satellite launch program. Pyongyang tried and failed on two occasions this year to launch satellites and vowed third attempt in Oct, which may be timed to

coincide with 10 Oct anniversary of founding of Korean Workers' Party. South Korean President Yoon 21 Sept declared any deal in which Russia assists Pyongyang's weapons development will be "direct provocation". U.S., Japan and South Korea 22 Sept called any cooperation "serious concern".

South Korea held military parade, Pyongyang slammed U.S. during UN address. After one of two regular large-scale U.S.-South Korea joint military exercises ended on 31 Aug, South Korea 26 Sept held major military parade on streets of Seoul for first time in decade. In address to UN General Assembly, North Korean ambassador Kim Song 26 Sept accused U.S. and allies of "reckless and continued hysteria of nuclear showdown" that made 2023 "extremely dangerous year" and accused U.S. of "a sinister intention to provoke a nuclear war."

North Korea expelled Private Travis King. U.S. soldier who fled across border into North Korea during tour of Panmunjom in July was transferred to American custody in China on 27 Sept; U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan thanked Sweden – U.S. protecting power in North Korea – and China for their roles. According to North Korean state media, King confessed that "he harbored ill feeling against inhuman maltreatment and racial discrimination within the U.S. army and was disillusioned about the unequal U.S. society".

➡ **Taiwan Strait** **Taiwan voiced concern over "abnormal" Chinese aerial and maritime presence around island, while U.S. maintained strong military and diplomatic support for Taiwan.**

Chinese aircraft around Taiwan set new daily record. As of 28 Sept, Taiwan spotted 512 Chinese military aircraft around island, of which at least 216 either crossed unofficial demarcation median line or were detected in Taiwan's Southwest air defence identification zone; Taiwan sighted 187 Chinese navy vessels in surrounding waters. Notably, 103 Chinese planes 18 Sept were detected around island – marking highest total for incursions in single day – with 40 crossing median line. After Taiwan's defence ministry 24 Sept announced it observed Chinese activities near Dacheng Bay in China's southern Fujian province, Taiwan's Defence Minister Chiu Kuo-cheng next day said China's drills and heightened activity are "quite abnormal"; Kuo-cheng 23 Sept said China's activity risk "getting out of hand" and expressed concern about accidental clash sparking wider conflict. U.S. guided missile destroyer Ralph Johnson and Canadian navy frigate *HMAS Ottawa* 9 Sept sailed through Taiwan Strait.

U.S. maintained military and diplomatic support for Taiwan. U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan 16 Sept met Chinese FM Wang Yi, raising cross-strait issues. U.S. Sec of State Antony Blinken and Chinese Vice Premier Han Zheng 18 Sept met in New York on sidelines of UN General Assembly, during which Blinken stressed importance of stability in Taiwan Strait. After U.S. late Aug approved \$80mn military package for Taiwan under program typically reserved for sovereign nations, Taiwan and U.S. 20 Sept announced new cooperation deal to build joint cybersecurity supply chain under U.S.-Taiwan Technology Trade and Investment Collaboration framework.

In other important developments. China's state council 12 Sept announced measures to encourage Taiwanese citizens to visit, study, work and do business in Fujian province to deepen cross-strait development. Kuomintang party presidential

candidate Hou You-ih 15 Sept kicked off eight-day visit to U.S., advocating “3D strategy” for managing cross straits relations that includes deterrence, dialogue and de-escalation. Taiwan 28 Sept launched its first indigenous defense submarine “Narwhal”.

South Asia

➡ **Afghanistan Tensions mounted between Taliban and Pakistan over Pakistani Taliban attacks and deadly border clashes, while de facto authorities tightened harsh governance policies.**

Taliban and Pakistan traded barbs and clashed at border. Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) 6 Sept launched major offensive in Chitral district in Pakistan’s northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, leaving four soldiers and dozen militants dead (see Pakistan); Islamabad issued demarche to Taliban authorities, claiming militants directed operation from Afghan soil and demanded Kabul stop the attacks. Pakistani and Taliban border forces same day clashed at Torkham border crossing, killing at least two Taliban soldiers, wounding several others and forcing crossing’s closure for nine days. Reports 18 Sept emerged Afghan authorities were constructing over 100 new border posts in Kunar, Nuristan and Nangarhar provinces purportedly aimed at preventing TTP cross-border movement.

Humanitarian appeal faced chronic under-funding. Ongoing humanitarian crisis continued to suffer funding shortages, prompting further cuts in humanitarian programs and external interventions. Notably, World Food Programme 5 Sept announced it cut rations to two million Afghans due to funding shortages; to plug gaps, Asian Development Bank 21 Sept announced \$400mn grant and EU 20 Sept announced €140mn. Afghanistan’s economy continued to remain vulnerable and aid-dependent, albeit there are signs it might be faring slightly better than in past.

Taliban continued to restrict women’s rights and political space. Authorities late Aug prohibited women from visiting Band-e-Amir national park – well-frequented tourist spot – marking latest restriction on women’s social rights. De facto authorities in Sept continued to restrict political and civil space: by mid-Sept, reports emerged that Ministry of Justice had closed provincial offices of Hizb-e-Islami party and were taking similar actions against other political parties, including Hizb-ul-Tahrir. UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan 20 Sept published report outlining human rights abuses against detainees, including excessive force and mistreatment during and after arrests.

In other important developments. Newly-appointed Chinese ambassador in Kabul 13 Sept presented credentials to de facto govt, signalling Beijing’s intent to explore avenues for normalisation with Kabul that might prompt regional countries to follow suit. Indications mid-Sept surfaced that security forces arrested major ISKP cell in Badakhshan province (northeast).

➡ **Bangladesh Opposition continued campaign to force PM’s resignation, govt’s human rights record fuelled international criticism and insecurity persisted in Rohingya refugee camps.**

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) mobilised against ruling Awami League. Ahead of elections in Jan 2024, BNP continued to organise mainly peaceful rallies,

marches and sit-ins to demand PM Sheikh Hasina's resignation, albeit at slower pace and with no sign of demonstrations reaching tipping point to bring country to standstill and dislodge govt; worsening economic crisis, resurgence of Islamist group Jamaat-e-Islami or death of detained BNP leader Khaleda Zia, however, could escalate tensions, or BNP could resort to violent tactics in coming months. Notably, rival supporters and police 1 Sept clashed in at least four districts, injuring more than 120, while attacks by Awami League supporters in Natore district 19 Sept injured 30 BNP members. Court 26 Sept ordered arrest of senior BNP member Ruhul Quddus Talukder Dulu and his wife.

Concerns persisted over govt's human rights record. Govt 8 Sept fired Deputy Attorney General Imran Ahmed Bhuiyan after he told reporters that Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus – who faces almost 200 charges in case widely seen as govt retribution – is subject to judicial harassment. Court 14 Sept sentenced two members of human rights group Odhikar to two years imprisonment for report published ten years ago on alleged police massacre of members of Islamic organisation Hefazat-e-Islam; European Parliament same day expressed concern over deterioration of human rights, referencing sentencing.

Violence in Rohingya camps continued as govt sought repatriation. Gunmen 11 Sept shot dead man in camp 2. Clashes between Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army and Rohingya Solidarity Organisation in camp 7 killed two on 14 Sept. Armed Police Battalion 17 Sept engaged in gunfight with criminal gang. Meanwhile, govt 4 Sept sent delegation to Myanmar's capital Naypyitaw for talks with regime on "technical issues" related to Rohingya repatriation; while both sides agreed to start repatriation by Dec, few are expected to return absent guarantees for citizenship. UK 12 Sept announced £3mn in aid for refugee response, while U.S. 21 Sept announced \$116mn in aid to support Rohingya in Myanmar, Bangladesh and region.

➔ **India Ethnic conflict in Manipur state showed no signs of ebbing, while major diplomatic row erupted with Canada after govt hosted G20 summit in boost for PM Modi ahead of 2024 elections.**

Instability and attacks plagued Manipur state in north east. Meiteis continued to demand withdrawal of paramilitary forces Assam Rifles, as hundreds of protesters 10 Sept sought to storm chief minister's secretariat; Chief Minister assured forces will be replaced this month. Heavy exchange of fire along border of Kuki-dominated Churachandpur and Meitei-dominated Bishnupur districts late Aug killed six. Suspected sniper 13 Sept shot dead Kuki policeman beyond buffer zone in Churachandpur district. Photos of two murdered Meitei students, missing since July, 25 Sept went viral; protesters angry with govt for slow pace of investigation tried to attack houses of Manipur's Chief Minister and State President.

Modi govt faced its biggest international crisis to date. Canadian PM Justin Trudeau 18 Sept announced "credible allegations" that India was involved in killing of Sikh independence leader and Canadian citizen Hardeep Singh Najjar in June in Canada. India furiously rejected allegations and 21 Sept suspended visas for Canadian nationals. Allegations pose challenge for India to navigate international opprobrium and risk giving Sikh separatist Khalistan movement in Punjab state new lease of life.

India exhibited diplomatic skill while hosting G-20 summit. At G20 gathering in New Delhi, PM Modi 9 Sept welcomed African Union as group's latest member and claimed central role in delivering joint declaration amid fraught international

environment. Although Indian analysts noted absence of Chinese leader Xi Jinping may reflect sour bilateral relations, summit was seen as political triumph for Modi who seeks third term next year.

Govt sought airfield near disputed China boundary, Maoist violence continued. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh 12 Sept announced construction of Nyoma airfield, located 23km from Line of Actual Control (LAC), calling it “game changer”; airfield could become new friction point with China. Meanwhile, Maoists mid-Sept issued death threats against Maharashtra state minister for supporting six new mining projects and steel plant. Security forces 19 Sept killed two female Maoists in Dantewada district in Chhattisgarh state (centre).

➡ **India-Pakistan (Kashmir) Security operation in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) highlighted threat of underground militancy, authorities clamped down on media and Supreme Court concluded hearing on region’s status.**

Security forces continued operations against militants. Security forces 13 Sept started six-day major operation with heavy weapons against militants of The Resistance Force – affiliated to Lashkar-e-Tayyaba – in forested areas of Anantnag district, leaving four security personnel and two militants dead; operation underscored new militant strategy utilised since 2021 to lure security personnel to dense forests to inflict maximum damage and countered New Delhi’s narrative of normalcy in Kashmir. Militant strikes could pick up before onset of winter weather. Elsewhere in J&K, security forces 4-5 Sept killed militant in Jammu’s Reasi district; security forces 6 Sept killed two militants from Pakistan infiltrating Jammu’s Poonch district; clashes in Jammu’s Rajouri district between security forces and militants 12-13 Sept killed two militants and security member; security forces 16 Sept killed three militants during alleged infiltration attempt in Baramulla district along Line of Control. Security forces 18 Sept thwarted attack by militant with pistol in Srinagar.

Authorities continued crackdown on press. Police 1 Sept issued statement threatening legal action against BBC for publishing story on India’s crackdown on Kashmiri journalism. Police 14 Sept arrested journalist Majid Hyderi under stringent Public Safety Act; though seen as pro-govt, Hyderi was likely arrested for raising sensitive questions on social media regarding corruption allegations against Lieutenant Governor and another top official. Former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti 15 Sept said “This is how journalists who expose scams are accused of intimidation and defamation”.

Supreme Court concluded hearings on J&K’s status. Supreme Court 5 Sept reserved judgment, opting to give decision at later date, in petitions challenging constitutionality of govt’s decision in 2019 to revoke Article 370 (which offered J&K semi-autonomous status); Court appeared to urge govt to restore statehood and hold elections but hearings are seen in Kashmir as mere formality.

↓ **Pakistan Twin suicide bombings in provinces bordering Afghanistan killed scores amid spate of militant assaults, while Pakistani and Taliban forces clashed on border.**

Suicide attacks killed dozens in Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Two suicide bombers targeting Islamic procession in Baluchistan province’s Mastung district and Mosque in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province’s Hangu city 29 Sept killed at least 59 people and injured dozens; Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) reportedly denied

responsibility, as suspicions centred on local Islamic State affiliates. Earlier in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, TTP 6 Sept launched major offensive on two checkpoints in Chitral district that killed four soldiers and dozen militants; army alleged attack was coordinated from Afghan soil, leading Islamabad to issue demarche to Afghan Taliban authorities (see Afghanistan). Security forces 9 Sept clashed with militants in Chitral, killing seven and injuring six. Security forces 26 Sept arrested four alleged Islamic State-affiliated militants in provincial capital Peshawar. In Baluchistan province, bomb attack 14 Sept injured at least eleven in Mastung district; police suspected Islamic State of targeting Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) leader, Hafiz Hamdullah.

Hostilities flared between Islamabad and Taliban. Pakistani and Taliban forces 6 Sept clashed at Torkham border crossing between Pakistan and Afghanistan, killing at least two Taliban militants and forcing crossing's closure for nine days.

Election Commission continued preparations for polls. Amid talks with political parties on timing of election – which according to constitution must be held by 9 Nov – Election Commission 1 Sept announced that it aims to complete process of delimiting new constituency boundaries, following census conducted this year, by 30 Nov; Commission 21 Sept announced elections will be held in last week of Jan 2024. Reuters 14 Sept reported that Election Commission had privately written to caretaker PM Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar expressing concerns about “a general perception that the caretaker government is a continuation of the previous government”. Meanwhile, former PM Imran Khan's lawyer 13 Sept revealed court had extended Khan's judicial custody related to charges of publicising state secrets until 26 Sept; Court 26 Sept extended Khan's custody until 10 Oct.

➡ **Sri Lanka New allegations of govt involvement in 2019 Easter bombings took centre stage, UN Human Rights chief lamented country's poor accountability and ethnic tensions grew more severe.**

New claims surfaced alleging govt involvement in 2019 attacks. UK news outlet Channel 4 on 5 Sept broadcast documentary with eyewitnesses alleging military intelligence officials were involved in organising 2019 Easter Sunday suicide bombings and obstructed police investigations before and after attacks, accusing current head of State Intelligence Service Suresh Salley of meeting directly with bombers. In response, Catholic Church reiterated calls for international investigation, while main opposition party called for international support to domestic probe; Salley, former president Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Defence Ministry rejected accusations, while President Wickremesinghe 10 Sept announced two separate committees to investigate claims.

Ethnic tensions escalated. Tamil district judge T. Saravananarajah 23 Sept resigned his position in northern district of Mullaitivu and fled country, after receiving threats apparently linked to recent rulings that had angered prominent Sinhala nationalist monks and govt parliamentarians. Stick-wielding Sinhala nationalists 17 Sept attacked Tamil parliamentarian Selvarajah Kanjendran in Trincomalee, Eastern Province, during march commemorating death of Tamil nationalist hunger striker; organisers cancelled another commemoration event in capital Colombo amid threats.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) criticized “accountability deficit”. UN Human Rights Council 11 Sept commenced session following High Commissioner's 6 Sept report that found “lack of accountability at all levels remains

the fundamental main human rights problem”; report urged international community “to play an important complementary role”. Govt reiterated its rejection of resolutions that set up OHCHR “accountability project” and criticised OHCHR’s “increasing mandate”. Govt 15 Sept published revised draft of Anti-Terrorism Act, followed on 19 Sept by release of draft Online Safety Act; activists and opposition politicians expressed strong criticism of both, arguing they posed major threats to democratic rights.

In another important development. International Monetary Fund officials 27 Sept announced they had failed to reach agreement with govt to unlock next \$330mn tranche of funding; officials expressed concern at lower-than-projected govt revenue and announced completion of first six-month review also depends on foreign debt restructuring.

South East Asia

➔ **Myanmar Regime and resistance forces battled in several regions as tensions rose with Arakan Army in Rakhine state; junta confirmed election delay and regional bloc ASEAN condemned regime’s inaction.**

Regime and resistance forces continued hostilities across multiple parts of country. In Kachin state (north), clashes continued between Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and military: fierce fighting 6 Sept erupted south of Namsan Yang village and KIA 9-12 Sept assaulted military convoy seeking to reinforce positions by road from state capital, forcing convoy’s retreat. In northern Shan State (east), hostilities intensified between Ta’ang National Liberation Army and military, notably around Sei Lant village on border with China and between Kuktai town and Namhpatkar village on Mandalay-Muse highway. In Rakhine state (west), tensions rose between Arakan Army and military as both sides staged tit-for-tat arrests of other’s members. In Kayah state (centre-east), regime forces made slow progress towards rebel-held southern areas amid fierce opposition after resistance forces in June seized large parts of Mese township on Thai border. In Kayin state (centre-east), Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and allied forces waged attacks on isolated regime outposts: notably, KNLA 1 Sept seized post in Kyaukkyi township, sparking fierce fighting, and allied forces 3 Sept launched drone strike on administrative office in Myawaddy border town, killing five.

Regime signalled election delays and signed confidential agreement with minor groups. Regime leader Min Aung Hlaing 1 Sept reiterated that election will be held only after Oct 2024 national census; data of census is unlikely to be finalised before mid-2025 and conducting count is likely to trigger violence. Meanwhile, regime delegation and five signatories of 2015 Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement 31 Aug signed “final comprehensive peace agreement”, although terms were not revealed; groups are relatively minor players in country’s conflicts.

ASEAN adopted new response mechanism. ASEAN leaders 5 Sept revealed formation of “troika” comprising former, current and upcoming bloc chairs to manage response to crisis; in group’s strongest condemnation to date, leaders said they “were gravely concerned by the lack of substantial progress”; bloc decided Myanmar will not take up rotating chair in 2026.

➡ **Philippines Political and criminal violence persisted in south, while security forces continued to battle Communist insurgents.**

Insecurity persisted in Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. In Maguindanao del Sur province, unidentified individuals 4 Sept fired two M-79 grenades in residential areas of Buluan town, injuring one. Gunfight 12 Sept erupted between Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) militants and members of Islamic State-inspired Dawlah Islamiyah in Datu Hoffer Ampatuan town, killing three Dawlah Islamiyah members and displacing 70 families of local indigenous community. Clashes between army and Dawlah Islamiyah 23 Sept killed one militant and injured three others in Ampatuan town, Maguindanao. Rival members of MILF's 106 Base Command 19 Sept clashed in Datu Abdullah Sangki town, killing one civilian. In Maguindanao del Norte province, assailant 18 Sept killed local candidate for village polls in South Upi municipality. Sulu province's local govt 11 Sept declared Sulu free of Abu Sayyef Group.

Hostilities persisted between security forces and Communist militants. Clashes between security forces and Communist rebels in Luzon island (Quezon province) in north, Mindanao Island (Surigao and Bukidnon) in south, and Visayas Islands (Negros and Panay) in centre killed at least 23 combatants and civilians.

➡ **South China Sea Standoff continued between China and Philippines over disputed Scarborough Shoal, while regional countries conducted naval drills across South China Sea (SCS).**

Dispute continued between Beijing and Manila over shoal. After escalation in tensions in Aug, China and Philippines 8 Sept were embroiled in another standoff over Second Thomas Shoal as Chinese Coast Guard attempted to block entry of Philippine vessels on resupply mission to grounded BRB Sierra Madre; Philippine Defence Secretary Gilbert Teodoro 13 Sept said resupply missions would continue despite "harassment" and called for forging new alliances. Philippines 26 Sept removed 300-metre "floating barrier" erected by Beijing in part of Scarborough Shoal that blocked its fishermen's activities, calling it "clear violation of international law" and asserting "Filipino people will not back down". Philippine President Marcos Jr. 29 Sept said "We are staying away from fiery words, but our resolve to defend Philippine territory is strong".

Military activity in region remained high. Philippines and U.S. 4 Sept conducted joint sail in waters west of Palawan Island; Philippines and Canada 25 Sept conducted joint sail in same area. China's aircraft carrier *Shandong* 15 Sept returned to SCS, along with five navy surface ships. Regional bloc ASEAN 19 Sept held its first joint military drill involving ten member states plus Timor-Leste near Indonesia's Batam Island. Chinese state media 20 Sept reported China had built two ground stations for its BeiDou satellite system on two disputed reefs in Paracel Islands, which are also claimed by Vietnam and Taiwan. China 28 Sept issued navigation warning for planned exercises in SCS.

U.S. and Vietnam boosted ties. During President Biden's historic visit to Vietnam, pair 10 Sept called for peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law without threat or use of force; Vietnam and U.S. upgraded their diplomatic ties to Comprehensive Strategic partnership, a special category that Vietnam hitherto reserved for Laos and Cambodia. During visit to China, Malaysia's PM Anwar Ibrahim 17 Sept said Malaysia and China agreed to have continuous and open communication over SCS to ensure situation remains peaceful.

➔ **Thailand New cabinet entered office focused on economic improvement, while peace dialogue in deep south awaited new govt delegation amid ongoing insurgent attacks.**

King approved new cabinet. After Pheu Thai Party nominee Srettha Thavisin, a real-estate mogul and political novice, was elected Thailand's 30th prime minister in late Aug, King Vajiralongkorn 2 Sept endorsed new cabinet that is intended to focus on economy; its policy statement issued 11 Sept included controversial 10,000 baht (\$280) digital wallet scheme, energy costs and amending constitution to make it more democratic. Supreme Court 20 Sept issued lifetime ban on holding public office for Pannika Wanich, former MP and founding member of Future Forward Party, after National Anti-Corruption Commission accused Pannika of breaching ethical standards for Facebook posts in 2010 deemed disrespectful to monarchy. Court 26 Sept convicted human rights lawyer and activist Anon Nampa of lèse-majesté for Oct 2020 speech, sentencing to four years in prison.

Deep south dialogue remained in abeyance while insurgent attacks continued. Dialogue between govt and main separatist armed group Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) awaited appointment of new delegation by incoming govt. Meanwhile, in major attack late Aug, militants ambushed police patrol in Yarang district, Pattani province, with small arms and improvised grenades, killing four police officers and two defence volunteers; militants simultaneously bombed five power poles at three nearby locations, hampering response of security forces. Elsewhere in Pattani, assailant 1 Sept threw pipe bomb into army base in Thung Yang Daeng district. Motorcycle-borne militants 12 Sept shot and wounded defence volunteer in Saiburi district. In Narathiwat province's Sungai Padi district, roadside IED 4 Sept injured two military personnel and IED 7 Sept killed ranger at shooting range. Militants 30 Sept-1 Oct staged shooting and grenade attacks on 11 security outposts across three provinces, wounding one ranger and one civilian.