



Asia

North East Asia

➔ **China/Japan** China maintained naval activity in East China Sea amid tensions with Japan over disputed islands, while Tokyo and U.S. strengthened alliance with series of defence agreements.

Beijing continued maritime presence. As of 25 April, Japan reported 98 Chinese vessels in Japan's contiguous zone, while nine vessels were detected within Japan's territorial sea, representing slight increase from March. Chinese coast guard ships 5-6 April entered Japan's territorial sea off disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, which Japan claims as its territory, in East China Sea and attempted to approach Japanese fishing boat. Japanese coast guard 12 April requested four Chinese coast guard vessels to leave "our territorial waters" in disputed area off Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Japan 25 April detected one Chinese coast guard vessel that entered Japanese territorial waters off coast of Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. China's coast guard 28 April claimed it took law enforcement measures against inspection mission of Japanese lawmakers near Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands – reportedly marking first such mission since 2013. Japan 2 April detected Chinese military ships and surveillance aircraft active in waters between Taiwan and Japan, as well as Russian surveillance ship off Japanese coast.

U.S. and Japan struck agreements to boost alliance. U.S. President Biden 10 April hosted Japanese PM Fumio Kishida for official visit and state dinner, as leaders announced scores of agreements and initiatives for defence cooperation and to counter perceived threats from China in East and South China Seas, which Biden described as "most significant upgrade in our alliance since it was first established"; notably, pair agreed new joint military command structure in Japan, new air missile defence network with Australia, and Japanese participation in NASA moon missions, reflecting Japan's growing international role following changes to its pacifist constitution.

Japan, U.S. and South Korea held joint exercises. Japan, U.S. and South Korea 11-12 April conducted trilateral maritime exercise in East China Sea, including anti-submarine warfare drills and search and rescue operations, in bid to enhance deterrence vis-à-vis China and North Korea (see Korean Peninsula).

➔ **Korean Peninsula** North Korea tested ballistic missiles, including as part of "nuclear counterattack" drills, as Seoul warned of another spy satellite launch by Pyongyang; President Yoon suffered heavy setback in South Korea's election.

North Korea continued weapons testing, including nuclear-capable missiles. North Korea 2 April launched hypersonic intermediate range ballistic missile, as state media implied likelihood of further such launches to come. North Korean state media 20 April reported “a power test of a super-large warhead designed for ‘Hwasal-1 Ra-3’ strategic cruise missile”. Pyongyang 22 April launched several short-range ballistic missiles into East Sea, saying launches were part of “virtual comprehensive tactical training for a nuclear attack”; Pyongyang indicated targets in South Korea in event of “nuclear counterattack” in “clear warning signal to the enemy”, underscoring its intent to acquire ability to strike South Korea with nuclear weapons using multiple systems. South Korea 22 April claimed it had detected evidence that North Korea is preparing for its second spy satellite launch after first successful launch in Nov.

Evidence of Pyongyang’s ongoing nuclear armament surfaced. Media reports based on satellite imagery late March indicated North Korea continued to expand industrial site in Chollima county, widely believed to be used for uranium enrichment for nuclear weapons production, further illustrating its commitment to production of nuclear devices following collapse of talks with U.S. in 2019; leader Kim Jong Un in Dec 2023 called for “steadily increasing the production of nuclear weapons”.

South Korea’s President Yoon received stinging electoral rebuke. President Yoon, leader of People’s Power Party, suffered defeat in legislative election on 10 April, as main opposition Democratic Party secured 175 seats compared to ruling party’s 108; outcome underscores desire among electorate to introduce measure of balance to political landscape.

North Korean economic delegation visited Iran. North Korea dispatched economic delegation to Iran, state media reported 24 April; move follows trend of expanding economic exchanges with China and Russia, but also raises long-standing concerns over military cooperation between Pyongyang and Tehran.

➔ **Taiwan China continued its military activity around Taiwan and increased engagement with Taiwanese opposition, while U.S. demonstrated support to Taipei with military aid package.**

China continued military activity around Taiwan. As of 29 April, Taiwan detected 397 Chinese military aircraft around island, of which 212 crossed unofficial “median line” or were detected inside Taiwan’s air defence identification zone (ADIZ); notably, Taiwan 3 April spotted twenty planes in ADIZ, with total of 30 planes around Taiwan. Taiwan reported 260 sightings of Chinese navy vessels in surrounding waters. China 17 April confirmed it sent fighter jets to monitor and warn U.S. Navy patrol aircraft flying over Taiwan Strait, following call between Chinese and U.S. defence officials.

China stepped up engagement with Taiwanese opposition. President Xi Jinping 10 April met with former Taiwan president Ma Ying-jeou in China in bid to demonstrate viability of peaceful unification to both domestic and international audiences. Taiwan’s opposition Kuomintang 26-28 April sent delegation to China, announcing that China was willing to lift some import bans and reopen some cross-strait travel as result of trip.

U.S. continued military support to Taiwan. After bipartisan U.S. congressional delegation 28 March met with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen and pledged continued support, U.S. President Biden 24 April signed \$1.2tn spending package containing \$8.1bn foreign military allocation for Taiwan and other Indo-Pacific countries to bolster their defences and counter Chinese influence in region. KMT Vice Chairman Andrew Hsia 4-14 April visited U.S. and met lawmakers and others to discuss KMT's foreign policy. Taiwan Naval Commander Admiral Tang Hua 8-10 April attended U.S. Navy Sea League conference in U.S., where he emphasised global implications of Chinese military action against Taiwan and advocated continued U.S.-Taiwan military exchanges.

In another important development. Senior U.S. State Dept officials 15 April met Deputy Director of China's Taiwan Affairs Office in rare meeting in Chinese capital Beijing to discuss Taiwan issue; U.S. reaffirmed its long-standing "One-China" policy and importance of maintaining peace and stability in Taiwan Strait.

South Asia

➡ **Afghanistan Islamic State's local branch continued attacks, Taliban authorities restricted space for political activism, and tensions with Pakistan persisted amid concern over new wave of deportations.**

Islamic State's local branch targeted minority groups and Taliban. Islamic State-Khorasan Province (IS-KP) claimed explosion of fuel tankers in capital Kabul on 9 April. Taliban forces 11 April reportedly killed two IS-KP members, arrested third, in Sawkay district, Kunar province (east). IS-KP 21 April claimed magnetic IED attack targeting bus carrying mostly Hazara civilians near security checkpoint in Kabul. IS-KP 30 April killed six worshippers at Shiite mosque in Guzara district, Herat province (west). Possible IS-KP gunmen 19 April killed senior Taliban figure and close advisor to Emir, Sheikh Omar Jan Akhundzada, in mosque in Pakistan's Quetta city.

Taliban authorities intensified crackdown on Islamist and social groups. After Taliban late March forced leader of Hizb-e Islami Hekmatyar – one of few prominent non-Taliban politicians to stay in country following Taliban takeover – to vacate his Kabul compound, son of leader 2 April claimed Taliban was protecting and supporting Al-Qaeda and Pakistani Taliban in Afghanistan. Ministry of Justice 7 April referred two political parties and 76 social and charitable institutions to security authorities for alleged illegal activism. Following months of pressure to stifle activities by Hizb ut-Tahrir – primarily consisting of young, urban and educated Salafist-leaning Islamists – Taliban 18 April reportedly arrested group's spokesman. Ministry of Information and Culture 16 April announced shuttering of two television stations owned by Islamist groups Hizb-e Islami and Jamiat-e Islami.

Tensions between Taliban authorities and Pakistan persisted. Following cross-border hostilities in March, Taliban 30 March claimed U.S. drones flew inside Afghan airspace in south west, allegedly entering from neighbouring countries; Taliban previously accused Pakistan of permitting U.S. drones to enter Afghanistan. Anticipation grew over Pakistan's announced intention to initiate Phase Two of the Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan, launched in Nov 2023 to forcibly deport

millions of Afghans in country; Phase One deported around 500,000, while Phase Two could target some 800,000 Afghan Citizen Card holders or 1.3m with Proof of Residence. Such moves could further fuel tensions between two countries.

↓ **Bangladesh Surge in ethnic armed group attacks in south east prompted major security operation and derailed fledgling peace talks; opposition announced boycott of local polls in May, as country felt spillover of Myanmar's conflict.**

In Chittagong Hill Tracts, ethnic armed group stepped up raids and attacks. Kuki-Chin National Front (KNF) – which claims to represent six Kuki-Chin subgroups, largest of which is Bawm – 2-3 April attempted three bank robberies in Bandarban district, two of which were successful; group 4 April reportedly fired on police station in Thanchi upazila and 5 April attacked checkpoint in Alikadam upazila; hundreds of KNF militants took part in operations across towns 20-30km apart, suggesting growing operational capacity. In response, security forces 5 April launched major operation against KNF, arresting in subsequent days up to 100 suspected members, including alleged KNF key leader; further raids 22 and 28 April killed three KNF members. KNF robberies and attacks derailed peace talks between group and govt delegation, which were scheduled for 22 April; some community leaders in Chittagong Hill Tracts called for renewed dialogue with KNF.

Main opposition party announced boycott of local elections in May. Opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) 15 April opted to boycott upcoming local elections, which will take place in 150 of 495 upazilas (sub-districts) on 8 May; delayed decision signalled likely internal BNP divisions, with some activists seeking to participate to revitalise grassroots mobilisation. BNP refrained from launching major anti-govt activities since end of Ramadan in mid-April.

War in Myanmar spilt over border, raising prospect of new refugee influx. Heavy fighting in Myanmar's Rakhine state – where Arakan Army continued its offensive against military – prompted increasing numbers of military personnel and Rohingya civilians to cross border into Bangladesh. Bangladesh 25 April repatriated 288 regime officials, mainly Border Guard Police members, to Myanmar. Additionally, communal tensions rose significantly between Rakhine and Rohingya communities over military's alleged forced recruitment of Rohingya and collaboration with Rohingya armed groups Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army and Arakan Rohingya Army, both of which are predominately based in refugee camps in Bangladesh (see Myanmar).

➡ **India Govt's inflammatory rhetoric stoked religious and political tensions as national polls commenced, ethnic conflict in Manipur state in north east derailed voting and security forces killed dozens of Maoists in centre.**

Amid govt's divisive electoral rhetoric, concern grew over new ruling party term. First phase of election for national parliament 19 April began, with voting scheduled to run until 1 June, against backdrop of mounting tensions over arrest of opposition leaders and allegations of electronic voting manipulation. Addressing rally in Rajasthan state (north west), PM Narendra Modi 21 April deployed Islamophobic rhetoric by referring to Muslims as "infiltrators" and asserting that opposition Congress party would seize wealth of Hindus and redistribute it among community

with “more children”; remarks prompted outrage. With ruling Bharatiya Janata Party seeking to implement range of Hindu majoritarian policies, critics such as historian Ramchandra Guha fear another BJP term could weaken India’s status as secular republic; Guha warned “stigmatisation of Muslims will continue, and perhaps even sharpen” with BJP’s third term.

In Manipur state, insecurity prevented free and fair polls. As voting in national polls commenced in Manipur state (north east), extremist Meitei militia Arambai Tanggol 19 April captured polling stations, damaged voting machines and tampered with votes, forcing Election Commission to void results of at least seventeen of 3,000 polling stations across state. In sign of unending conflict, gunmen in camouflage 13 April killed two Kuki men at border of Kangpokpi and Imphal East districts before mutilating bodies; gunfight between gunmen of Kuki-Zo and Meitei communities 28 April killed one in same location. Suspected militants 27 April killed two central security forces personnel and injured two others in Bishnupur district.

Security forces launched large-scale anti-Maoist operation in centre. In Chhattisgarh state (centre), security forces 2 April killed thirteen Maoists in Bijapur district. Security forces during operation 16 April killed 29 Maoists in Bastar region, which marks state’s most lethal anti-Maoist operation ever; Maoists claimed that seventeen of 29 were slain in cold blood, which security forces rejected. Maoists 26 April killed opposition Congress member Joga Podiyam in Bastar region. Security forces 30 April shot dead ten Maoists in Bastar region.

➔ **India-Pakistan (Kashmir) PM Narendra Modi promised to restore statehood and hold elections in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) during visit ahead of national elections, while militant attacks and security operations resumed after winter lull.**

Modi visited J&K and promised to restore statehood and hold regional polls. PM Modi 12 April visited Udhampur area of J&K and addressed rally, announcing that “people will soon have their ministers and legislators” and promising to restore statehood in first direct reference since Aug 2019. Ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) 16 April indicated that it decided not to take part in general election in three predominantly Muslim constituencies in Kashmir, preferring to support regional parties perceived as BJP proxies; former Chief Minister of J&K Omar Abdullah 19 April asserted “the [party’s] 2019 decisions have made people angrier and more alienated”.

After winter respite, militant attacks and security operations resumed in J&K. In Jammu’s Rajouri district, security forces 2 April busted suspected module of militant group Lashkar-e-Tayyaba, arresting three. In Kashmir’s Baramulla district, security forces 5 April killed two militants allegedly infiltrating from Pakistan. Security forces 11 April killed militant in Kashmir’s Pulwama district and arrested three alleged member associates linked to Lashkar-e-Tayyaba in Baramulla town. Militants 17 April shot dead non-local worker in Kashmir’s Anantnag district. Security forces 26 April killed two militants in Baramulla district.

Authorities detained Kashmir’s chief cleric and prohibited congregational prayers. Authorities 6 April again placed Kashmir’s chief cleric and moderate party Hurriyat

leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq under house arrest, despite J&K administration in March declaring him “free man”; Farooq 7 April accused authorities of “spiritual oppression” and of attacking “religious freedom and rights of Kashmiri Muslims”. Authorities 10 April disallowed congregational prayers at Srinagar’s Jamia Masjid for fifth time in row.

Protests in Ladakh continued. Protestors continued relay hunger strike in Leh city to demand statehood for union territory and inclusion in Sixth Schedule of the Constitution to regain protections and privileges lost after reorganisation of J&K’s constitutional status in 2019.

➡ **Pakistan** **Fallout of disputed Feb polls continued as opposition parties reignited nationwide anti-govt protests, while insecurity plagued provinces bordering Afghanistan amid tensions with Kabul.**

Political polarisation persisted. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), led by imprisoned former PM Imran Khan, continued to oppose Election Commission’s refusal to allocate seats reserved for women and minorities to its proxy party Sunni Ittehad Council. In protest, PTI-dominated legislature in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province delayed administering oath to members on reserved seats, thereby disrupting 1 April election of 48 Senate seats; in response, Election Commission put on hold elections for eleven Senate seats until oath was administered. PTI called commission’s decision continuation of “mandate theft plot”. Increasing pressure, PTI 13 April announced countrywide anti-govt protest by coalition of six opposition parties to denounce alleged rigging of 8 Feb election and “illegal” govt; first protests next day commenced in Balochistan province’s Pishin city. During series of by-elections 21 April, violent clashes between PTI and PLN-N supporters at polling stations killed one in Punjab’s Narowal district; PTI launched countrywide protest against electoral irregularities after PML-N gains.

Militancy and security operations continued in provinces bordering Afghanistan. Militants early April attacked police targets across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Militants 13 April killed two soldiers during operation in Buner district and two others in suicide bombing in Dera Ismail district, where seven customs officers were killed in two attacks 21 and 24 April. In Balochistan province, Balochistan Liberation Army militants 13 April abducted and shot dead nine people from Punjab province near Noshki district. Suspected Baloch suicide attack in Sindh province’s capital Karachi 19 April appeared to target Japanese citizens, possibly mistaking them for Chinese nationals.

Tensions lingered with Afghanistan’s Taliban authorities. Following escalation in hostilities in March, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif 1 April accused Taliban of being source of resurgence of militancy in Pakistan. After senior Afghan Taliban leader 4 April urged Islamabad to negotiate peace with Pakistani Taliban, foreign ministry next day ruled out such talks. Tensions could mount further should militancy continue to surge and Islamabad follow through on threats to forcibly deport Afghan nationals (see Afghanistan).

➡ **Sri Lanka** **Govt lobbied International Monetary Fund (IMF) and creditors to secure loan disbursement amid rising poverty, while fifth anniversary of 2019 Easter bombings fuelled political tensions and calls for justice.**

Govt sought to secure next tranche of IMF loan. Govt officials sought to convince IMF enough progress was being made to approve second review of Extended Fund Facility and disburse third tranche of roughly \$335mn. Govt 16 April stated that main stumbling block in reaching deal with commercial creditors was “baseline parameters” for bondholders, whose payout will depend on nation’s economic growth; bondholders think IMF calculations underestimate growth potential and ability to repay bonds. Campaigning for presidential election, which is due by mid-Oct, may complicate negotiations or delay debt restructure deal into 2025. Meanwhile, Asian Development Bank mid-April projected moderate growth of 1.9% in 2024 and 2.5% in 2025. World Bank 2 April reported devastating increase in poverty from 11% of population in 2019 to almost 26% in 2024.

Fifth anniversary of Easter bombings spurred political attacks and justice campaigns. Ahead of anniversary of 2019 Eastern attacks on 21 April, main opposition party Samagi Jana Belawegaya 4 April promised within two months of gaining power to appoint Special Investigative Commission on attacks to be served by special team of investigators, pledging to establish special court to expedite prosecutions. Delegation of opposition National People’s Power (NPP) 18 April presented its seven-point action plan, including promise to establish special investigative commission. Gen Sec of President Wickremesinghe’s United National Party, Palitha Range Bandara, 19 April attacked both NPP and Archbishop of Colombo Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, accusing NPP of having links to bombers and Cardinal of “associating” with former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa. Commemorating attacks, Cardinal Ranjith 21 April delivered scathing attack on Gotabaya Rajapaksa, accusing him of obstructing investigation and failing to pursue new revelations about attack, while also accusing Attorney General of failing to take legal action against govt and security officials found negligent by multiple inquiries. Rajapaksa 25 April issued detailed statement rejecting allegations.

South East Asia

📌 Myanmar Ethnic armed groups in south east, west and north dealt regime further battlefield defeats, highlighting its weakness amid risk of intensifying hostilities; communal tensions in Rakhine state foreshadowed potential violence, including against civilians.

In south east, regime temporarily lost control of important border town. In Kayin state (south east), Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and allied resistance groups 11 April overran last military base in key trading town Myawaddy on Thai border, which handles billions of dollars of annual trade. KNLA did not occupy town, which is being patrolled by armed group Karen National Army (KNA) that was formerly allied with regime; KNA subsequently facilitated return of regime forces to one base in town. Regime reinforcement convoy attempted to fight its way to Myawaddy, but faced repeated ambushes. Regime efforts to repel KNLA and allied forces from around Myawaddy could fuel fighting and displacement, including into Thailand, where hundreds have already fled (see Thailand); Thailand’s PM Srettha Thavisin 8 April asserted regime was “losing” and ought to “make a deal”.

In west, Arakan Army (AA) advanced in Rakhine state amid communal tensions. AA effectively encircled regime forces in Ann township, home to military's Western Command headquarters, and late April captured tactical command base near headquarters, raising prospect of surge in fighting if group seeks to overrun headquarters. Meanwhile, communal tensions rose significantly in state's north between Rakhine and Rohingya communities over military's alleged forced recruitment of Rohingya and collaboration with Rohingya armed groups, particularly Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army. Underscoring risk of communal violence or atrocities against civilians, two Rakhine men were found dead 11 April in Buthidaung town, as hundreds of homes were torched over subsequent days in town; AA accused military and Rohingya armed groups of targeting homes of Rakhine and Hindu residents who had fled; Rohingya similarly accused AA of attacks against civilians.

In north, Kachin forces continued offensive. In Kachin state (north), Kachin Independence Army (KIA) attacked road running east from Bhamo to Loije town, which is one of five official trade gates with China; last remaining regime troops in Loije 8 April fled into China. KIA thereafter made progress toward capturing Hpakant township, home to lucrative jade mines.

➡ **Philippines Security operations, clan feuds and rebel infighting persisted in south, while govt forces continued to battle Communist militants.**

Insecurity persisted in Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). In Maguindanao del Sur province, individuals associated with Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) commander 7 April clashed with supporters of commander of 106 Base Command of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Shariff Saydona municipality. In apparent clan feud, ambush 14 April killed four members of MILF's 118th Base Command in Satan village. Gunfight between military and militants of Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) 23 April killed twelve militants, including key local commander, and wounded seven soldiers near Datu Saudi Ampatuan town. In Lanao del Norte province, army during security operation 13 April clashed with militants of Dawlah Islamiya-Maute Group in Munai town, killing three. Army 29 April engaged band of militants led by new leader of Dawlah Islamiyah in Lanao, Nasser Daud, in two encounters in Munai town, killing five militants and leaving three soldiers injured. In Pigcawayan province, clan feud rooted in political competition 16 April triggered clashes between MILF commanders from 104 and 105 Base Commands, supported by respective relatives from MNLF and local officials, killing at least two and injuring three.

Hostilities persisted between security forces and Communist rebels. Clashes between govt forces and Communist militants in Luzon (Abra) in north, Mindanao (Bukidnon) in south, and Visayas (Northern Samar, Negros Occidental) in centre during April killed five combatants and civilians and injured three. Anti-Terrorism Council 21 April renewed its designation of Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) as terrorist organisation despite commitment to pursue dialogue with group.

➡ **South China Sea Tensions persisted in South China Sea (SCS) amid maritime encounters between China and Philippines, while U.S. and**

Manila held military drills and deepened security ties to regional partners.

Maritime tensions persisted between China and Philippines. In call with U.S. counterpart, Philippine National Security Advisor 1 April discussed China's "coercive, aggressive and deceptive actions" in SCS; China's foreign ministry same day urged Manila to immediately stop violating China's sovereignty and its provocations at Second Thomas Shoal. Philippine National Security Council 3 April said it will not relinquish its position in Second Thomas Shoal, adding country's measures against China will be "multi-dimensional". Philippine President Marcos 8 April called on China to hold talks on recent SCS incidents. Underscoring persistent tensions between Beijing and Manila, China Coast Guard vessels 13 April blocked two Philippine govt ships for eight hours 35 nautical miles from Philippine coastline, as latter sought to conduct hydrographic survey in near contested Scarborough Shoal. China Coast Guard ships 30 April fired water cannons at Philippine vessel near Scarborough Shoal, damaging equipment.

U.S. & Philippines held series of military drills, including with regional partners. Coinciding with first combined military exercises between Australia, Japan, Philippines and U.S. in form of patrol 7 April in Manila's Exclusive Economic Zone, China's military same day announced it conducted "joint naval and air combat patrols" in SCS. U.S. and Philippines 8-19 April conducted combined air force exercise Cope Thunder north of capital Manila and 8 April commenced annual Salaknib exercises. U.S. Army 15 April announced it had deployed ground-based missile launcher to northern Luzon of Philippines for drills, marking first time U.S. had deployed mid-range missile system capability to Indo-Pacific; China 18 April said it "firmly opposed" it. U.S. and Philippines 22 April commenced annual Balikatan exercises, running until 10 May, which are second-largest ever and for first time will take place beyond Philippine territorial waters.

U.S., Japan and Philippines deepened trilateral cooperation. U.S. President Biden, Japan's PM Fumio Kishida and Marcos 11 April held first-ever trilateral summit in U.S. capital Washington, DC; joint statement expressed "serious concerns" about China's behaviour in East and South China Seas.

➡ Thailand Constitutional Court considered case to ban election-winning Move Forward Party (MFP), militant attacks continued in deep south and hundreds fleeing Myanmar's war crossed into Thailand.

Election-winning party faced prospect of dissolution. Constitutional Court 3 April accepted petition from Election Commission seeking dissolution of Move Forward Party (MFP), which won May 2023 elections, and 10 April said it would afford MFP more time to prepare, likely pushing decision to May; in March, Election Commission had found evidence that MFP's policy to amend lèse-majesté law was tantamount to seeking to overthrow democratic system with king as head of state. MFP's dissolution would disenfranchise 14.4m voters who opted for party in last election, raising risk of street protests.

Militant attacks continued in deep south. In Narathiwat province, militants 7 April ambushed truck carrying rangers in Rueso district, killing two and wounding eight. Some twenty militants 28 April ambushed police on patrol in Sungai Kolok, with IEDs, pipe bombs and small arms, wounding four. In Pattani province, roadside IED

attack 5 April wounded two rangers in Thung Yang Daeng district. Gunman 13 April shot dead Muslim soldier in Panare district. Assailant 14 April shot and killed sergeant in Saiburi district. In Yala province, gunmen shot and killed Muslim soldier in Than To district. Militants 19 April ambushed police patrol in Bannang Sata district, wounding officer. Gunmen 25 April killed defence volunteer in Bannang Sata district; soldiers responding were targeted by IED, wounding three.

War in Myanmar spilled over Thai border. Amid heavy fighting in south east Myanmar as ethnic armed group early April sought to dislodge military forces from Myawaddy, key town on Thai border, PM Srettha Thavasin 7 April assessed “the current regime is starting to lose some strength” (see Myanmar). Govt 9 April announced task force to deal with fallout from conflict and willingness to accept up to 100,000 people seeking temporary shelter. Ministry of Public Health 20 April revealed 1,686 people had crossed border seeking refuge. Foreign ministry 24 April said it urged ASEAN chair Laos to form “troika” with Indonesia and Malaysia to engage Myanmar junta on easing crisis.