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INDIA EYEING LARGER PRESENCE IN ANDAMANS

India plans to gradually increase military presence in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC), India's first unified theater command, is composed of just one infantry brigade, 20 ships, and a few helicopters and patrol aircraft. In the coming years India is expected to add approximately 15,000 troops, a fighter squadron, and major warships to the area. The islands, 572 in total, are strategically located near the Malacca Strait, one of the world's vital maritime trade choke-points. (*Times of India*, May 7, 2015)

SRI LANKA TO LAUNCH WAR CRIMES INVESTIGATION

Facing pressure from the international community, Sri Lanka will launch its own internal investigation of alleged war crimes committed during the domestic war against the Tamil Tigers (Eelam War IV). The domestic investigation was promised during a recent presidential election and is part of the new president's first 100-day plan. Sri Lanka may seek assistance from the United States as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Investigation on Sri Lanka. The previous government of Majinda Rajapaksa was criticized by the international community for downplaying human rights violations uncovered during international investigations of the war. (*The Hindu*, May 8, 2015)

MALDIVES PRESIDENT VISITS PAKISTAN

In his first visit to Pakistan as Maldives president, Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom is expected to meet with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and President Mamnoon Hussain. Pakistan and the Maldives will sign agreements tackling drug trafficking, enhancing cooperation in education, and strengthening the health sectors of both countries. The Muslim-majority Maldives has close ties to India, but enjoys a working relationship with Pakistan. (*The Hindu*, May 4, 2015)

BEIJING WANTS COOPERATION FROM DELHI ON INDIAN OCEAN MINING

After discovering rich deposits of gold and silver in the Indian Ocean, China has indicated its enthusiasm in partnering with India on deep seabed mining. Chinese State Oceanic Administration director Chen Lianzeng expressed China's willingness to cooperate and "share the costs, the risks, and the benefits" of the costly mining endeavor in the Indian Ocean. The price tag for a deep seabed mining site runs over \$1.6 billion and involves a substantial degree of risk. China's announcement comes after its manned submersible, Jiaolong, returned from an 118-day trip in which it conducted 13 dives to gather scientific data and prospect the ocean for minerals. (*The Hindu*, May 7, 2015)

TALIBAN LAUNCHES ATTACKS ON BADAKHSHAN

Taliban attacks in Badakhshan have killed at least 18 Afghan policemen. The fighters assaulted 13 police checkpoints in the province. In retaliation, provincial police are launching operations in the area, notably without air support or help from the provincial capital. Additionally, the Taliban also claimed responsibility for an attack on a bus owned by the office of the attorney general. The bombing left one dead and 13 injured. The attacks come a month after the start of the spring fighting season. (*Al Jazeera*, May 4, 2015)