

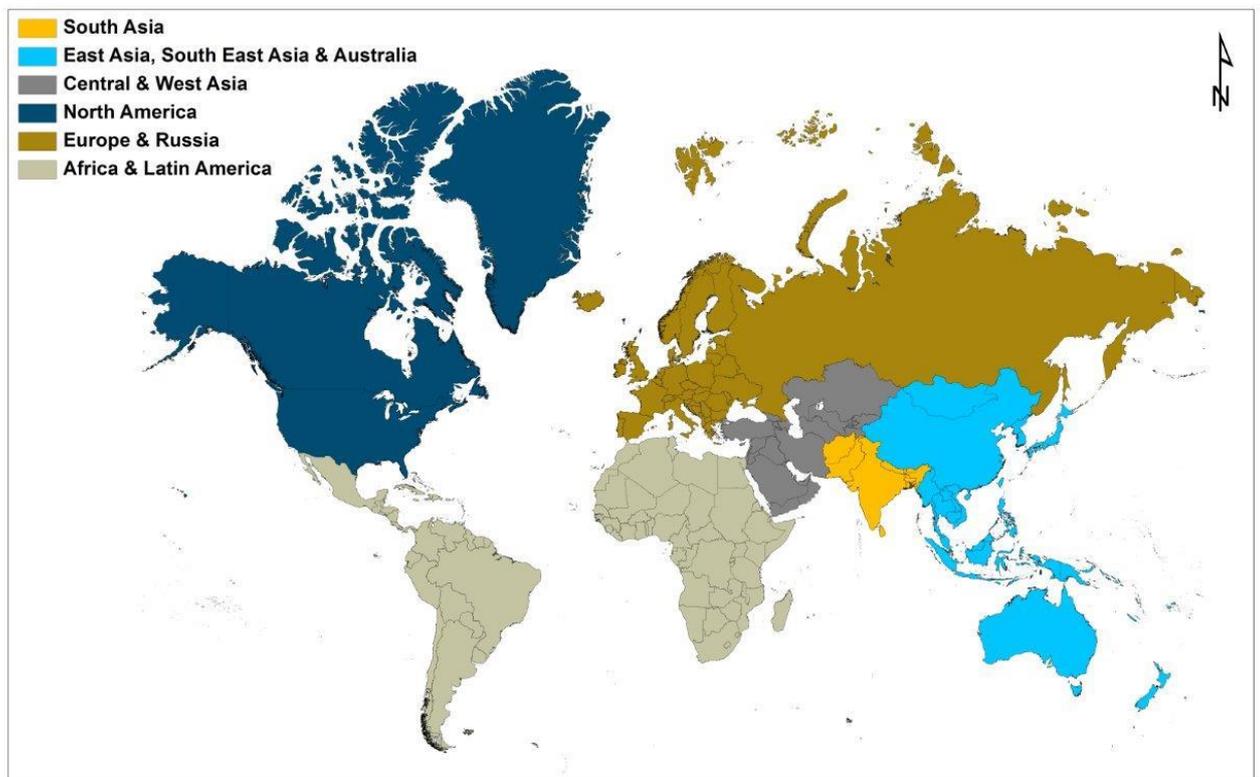


Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH



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Delhi Policy Group

Core 5A, 1st Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003

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ABOUT US

Founded in 1994, the Delhi Policy Group (DPG) is among India's oldest think tanks with its primary focus on strategic and international issues of critical national interest. DPG is a non-partisan institution and is independently funded by a non-profit Trust. Over past decades, DPG has established itself in both domestic and international circles and is widely recognised today among the top security think tanks of India and of Asia's major powers.

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DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH

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South Asia

India

[India tests Pralay missile second time in 2 days](#)

December 23, 2021, Hindustan Times

The twin flight tests came days after India tested an advanced variant of the Agni class of missiles from the Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island test facility on December 18.

[India, Russia could create regional security architecture for Indian Ocean Region stability](#)

December 22, 2021, The Economic Times

Russia's inclusion as a dialogue partner of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) has opened up a plethora of opportunities for collaboration with India including a possible maritime security architecture to create balance in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and on scientific and research endeavors.

[How Closer India-Indonesia Security Ties Can Promote a Stable Indo-Pacific](#)

December 22, 2021, The Diplomat

The two nations share a host of concerns and could potentially act as anchors of the regional security order.

[MEA played active role in Covid-combat efforts: S Jaishankar](#)

December 22, 2021, The Economic Times

Foreign Minister S Jaishankar noted how the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) helped out during the Covid-19 pandemic -- from launching vaccine Maitri to ensuring supply chains to evacuation of Indians and pushing economic partnership.

[India's stature on the global stage has grown significantly, says EAM Jaishankar](#)

December 21, 2021, The Hindu

The External Affairs Minister made these remarks at an event organised to mark 'Good Governance Week'.

[Stalin urges Jaishankar to secure release of 68 TN fishermen arrested by Sri Lankan naval forces](#)

December 21, 2021, The Times of India

Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin on Tuesday urged external affairs minister S Jaishankar to secure the immediate release of 68 fishermen and 75 fishing boats in the custody of the Sri Lankan government.

[Afghanistan meet: India, Central Asian nations seek peace and stability](#)

December 20, 2021, The Indian Express

Addressing the foreign ministers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, Jaishankar stated that an inclusive government, unhindered humanitarian aid and preservation of rights were key concerns in Afghanistan.

Pakistan

[Freight train launched to link Istanbul with Tehran, Islamabad](#)

December 22, 2021, Dawn

A freight train service was inaugurated with an aim to boost trade between Pakistan, Iran and Turkey. According to Pakistan Railways, the first train from Islamabad to Istanbul was inaugurated on August 14, 2009. Similarly, the first train from Istanbul reached the Islamabad dry port on August 13, 2010. So far eight trains have been dispatched from Pakistan to Turkey, with the last leaving the Lahore dry port on November 5, 2011. Since the launch of the service in 2009, Turkey has sent six trains to Pakistan, with the last one reaching here on December 9, 2011. ITI freight train will be operated regularly on Tuesday of every week. The freight train had nine wagons initially.

[Enhanced version of cruise missile tested successfully](#)

December 22, 2021, Dawn

Pakistan tested the enhanced version of Babur cruise missile called the 1B variant. The earlier 1A missile variant had a range of up to 450km. It is believed that the 1B version could have a range of 700-800km.

[OIC pledges money, food aid for Afghanistan amid fears of chaos](#)

December 20, 2021, Dawn

Amidst calls for urgent help for Afghanistan that is faced with a dire humanitarian situation, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) set up a Humanitarian Trust Fund and Food Security Programme for dealing with the rapidly aggravating crisis. The 57-member Muslim bloc, which is also the world's second-largest multilateral forum, in a communiqué adopted at the end of the extraordinary session of its Council of Foreign Ministers said it "will play a leading role in the delivery of humanitarian and development aid to the people of Afghanistan".

[Taliban stop Pakistani troops from fencing border](#)

December 23, 2021, Dawn

Taliban soldiers in Afghanistan disrupted the erecting of a security fence by the Pakistani military along the border between the two countries. Pakistan has fenced most of the 2,600km border despite protestations from Kabul, which has contested the British-era boundary demarcation that splits families and tribes on either side.

[\\$1.54bn ADB loan for energy sector reforms, uplift projects](#)

December 23, 2021, Dawn

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed six agreements with Pakistan to extend \$1.543 billion worth of loans for energy sector reforms, social protection, roads and water resource.

[Pakistan relies on global commercial banks for dollar inflows](#)

December 24, 2021, The News

Amid the lingering stalemate over the revival of the IMF programme, Pakistan continues to rely heavily upon international commercial banks to generate dollar inflows to avoid depletion of foreign exchange reserves. Islamabad has obtained \$663.2 million foreign loans from international commercial banks out of the total loans of \$802.3 million raised during November 2021

[US thanks Pakistan for hosting OIC summit on Afghanistan](#)

December 23, 2021, The News

The United States thanked Pakistan for hosting an Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit on Afghanistan, as the country faces a severe financial crunch due to sanctions. "The OIC Extraordinary Session on Afghanistan is a prime example of our collective determination and action to help those most in need," US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a tweet.

[China's engineering giant strikes agriculture cooperation deal with HBL](#)

December 22, 2021, The News

China Machinery Engineering Corporation (CMEC) has struck an agreement with Habib Bank Ltd (HBL) for agricultural cooperation, inked towards the end of the CPEC Industrial Cooperation B2B Investment Conference in Lahore.

[Pak-Oman navies conduct joint exercise in Arabian Sea](#)

December 20, 2021, The News

The Pakistan Navy and Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) participated in a bilateral naval exercise Thamar Al Tayyib 2021 (TAT-21) in North Arabian Sea. The Oman Navy Task Group comprised RNO ships AL DHAFERAH and AL SEEB. In

addition, Maritime Patrol Aircraft of Royal Air Force of Oman also participated in the exercise.

[Circular debt may rise Rs50b](#)

December 23, 2021, The Express Tribune

Pakistan State-owned companies are paying the price of overcoming the gas crisis in winter season, which adds billions of rupees to the circular debt due to diversion of expensive liquefied natural gas (LNG) to residential consumers without any legal framework. The provision of LNG to the domestic sector is going to hit the public gas utilities hard, as the imported gas supply will add another Rs50 billion to the circular debt.

Afghanistan

[China sends aid to Afghanistan as Taliban grapples with winter crisis](#)

December 18, 2021, SCMP

China is sending winter supplies to Afghanistan, which is facing an acute financial and humanitarian crisis. The aid and infrastructure would help build ties with the Taliban.

[Taliban recruits flood into Afghanistan from neighboring Pakistan as the group works to consolidate control](#)

December 18, 2021, Washington Post

Thousands of Taliban fighters and supporters have poured into Afghanistan from Pakistan over the past four months, answering the calls of influential clerics and commanders eager to consolidate control of the country, according to interviews with half a dozen current and former Taliban members in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Senior Taliban leadership urged fighters, Afghan refugees and madrassa students in Pakistan to come to Afghanistan to help the group maintain security as it made a string of sudden territorial advances this summer that created an urgent need for reinforcements, the current and former Taliban members said.

[Turkey may operate 5 airports in Afghanistan in right conditions](#)

December 20, 2021, Daily Sabah

Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu said that Turkey may jointly operate five airports in Afghanistan with Qatar after talks in Doha and Kabul. Speaking at a joint news conference with his Malaysian counterpart Saifuddin Abdullah, Çavuşoğlu said a delegation consisting of experts will first travel to Doha then to Afghanistan to discuss operating Kabul Hamid Karzai International Airport.

[U.N. Plans \\$8 Billion Fund to Restart Afghanistan's Economy](#)

December 23, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

The United Nations is planning an \$8 billion program of aid and services in Afghanistan for next year, taking on many government functions at a time when the Taliban regime remains under economic sanctions and lacks diplomatic recognition, according to international officials.

[40% of Afghan Media Outlets Closed Since August](#)

December 22, 2021, Tolo News

Since the fall of the former Afghan government on the 15th of August, media in Afghanistan has been facing new challenges that has led to the closing of many outlets, and has caused many women reporters to lose their jobs.

[Kabul Municipality Forbids Images of Women on Advertising](#)

December 21, 2021, Tolo News

The Kabul municipality in a new effort has taken steps to remove the photos of women on storefronts in Kabul city. The spokesman of Kabul municipality, Nematullah Barakzai, said the government has ordered the municipality's officials to remove all photos of women on the signboards of shops and business centers in Kabul.

[Former Military Officer Detained by Islamic Emirate: Family](#)

December 21, 2021, Tolo News

A senior military official of the former government was detained by the Islamic Emirate. Adam Khan Matin served as a deputy commander of the 2017 Pamir Corps in northern Kunduz province under the previous government. According to his relatives, the Islamic Emirate forces broke into Matin's home in PD 12 of Kabul.

[Taliban prepare Afghanistan budget free of foreign aid](#)

December 18, 2021, Dawn

Afghanistan's finance ministry under the Taliban government has prepared a draft national budget that, is funded without foreign aid. Finance ministry spokesman Ahmad Wali Haqmal did not disclose the size of the draft budget – which runs until December 2022 – but said it would go to the cabinet for approval before being published.

[TTP leader escapes drone strike in Afghanistan](#)

December 18, 2021, Dawn

A top leader of the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) escaped unhurt from a suspected drone strike on a safe house in eastern Afghanistan. The strike came

a week after a ceasefire between the banned TTP and the government collapsed, with militants accusing Islamabad of killing its fighters.

Bangladesh

[US Slaps Sanctions on Bangladeshi Officials](#)

December 19, 2021, The Diplomat

Concerns over Dhaka's growing ties to China may underpin Washington's decision.

[Chinese companies linked to CPEC projects evade tax commitments in Bangladesh](#)

December 18, 2021, Economic Times

China which is already suffering from a poor image in corporate ethics, has hit another blow as Chinese companies have violated the laws of the land in Bangladesh causing loss to the exchequer.

Sri Lanka

[Sri Lanka detains 13 more Indian fishermen](#)

December 21, 2021, The Hindu

Thirteen Indian fishermen belonging to Mayiladuthurai and Pudukottai districts of Tamil Nadu were arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy on Monday evening on the charge of crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL). With this, the number of fishermen arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy in the last three days has gone up to 68. In two separate incidents, it arrested 55 fishermen of Rameswaram and Mandapam on Sunday and seized 19 mechanised trawlers.

[India expresses concern at detention of fishermen by Sri Lanka, seeks early release](#)

December 21, 2021, Hindustan Times

India on Tuesday expressed concern at the detention of 68 Indian fishermen and 10 boats by Sri Lankan authorities since the weekend and said steps are being taken for their early release.

East & South East Asia

China

[China's manufacturing outlook up in the air as supply-chain issues threaten to take shine off roaring exports in 2022](#)

December 24, 2021, South China Morning Post

Raw-material prices may keep rising next year, but experts say shipping cost pressures could gradually wind down after reaching meteoric highs in recent months. China's weak consumption means 'export orders are still much more profitable than domestic sales', supply-chain specialist says.

[Intel Apologizes After Asking Suppliers to Avoid China's Xinjiang Region](#)

December 24, 2021. The Wall Street Journal

U.S. semiconductor giant Intel Corp. apologized following a social-media backlash over a letter it sent suppliers asking them to avoid sourcing from the Chinese region of Xinjiang, where the Chinese government has conducted a campaign of forcible assimilation against religious minorities

[China-Peru relations maintain steady development despite global changes: Chinese FM](#)

December 24, 2021, Xinhua

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Thursday that no matter how the international situation changes, China-Peru relations have maintained a momentum of steady development and become the "front-runner" in China-Latin America relations.

[China calls for joint efforts to combat terrorism](#)

December 23, 2021, Xinhua

The international community should strengthen solidarity and join hands in fighting terrorism, a senior Chinese diplomat said.

[Putin applauds Russia-China cooperation at annual press conference](#)

December 24, 2021, Xinhua

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday highly praised Russia-China relations and voiced firm support for the two countries to intensify their cooperation in a broad range of spheres.

[Myanmar, China sign semi-finished vaccines supply agreement](#)

December 23, 2021, Xinhua

Myanmar's Ministry of Industry and China National Biotec Group, affiliated with China National Pharmaceutical Group (Sinopharm), signed a supply agreement on Wednesday for semi-finished vaccine products.

[China sounds concerns over politicizing counterterrorism measures](#)

December 23, 2021, CGTN

A senior Chinese diplomat on Wednesday said a few countries have turned counterterrorism into a political tool, making groundless accusations against the legitimate counterterrorism and deradicalization measures taken by the international community.

[China approves major rare-earth merger to stabilize supply chain](#)

December 22, 2021, Global Times

China's state asset administration has approved a major merger of rare-earth assets under various state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to form a new company, according to a filing from one of the SOEs involved, marking a significant step toward the country's efforts to optimize the management of the key resources.

[Lithuania sees unaffordable fallout by trampling on One China principle](#)

December 20, 2021, Global Times

Lithuania's economic reliance on China has been on the rise in recent years, with its China-bound exports ranging from farm produce and beer to lasers, but analysts have sounded the alarm over the unaffordable fallout on Lithuania's economy from its dangerous provocation against China by trampling on the One China principle.

Japan

[Japan's Osaka Gas enters India's urban gas distribution market](#)

December 20, 2021, The Times of India

Japan's Osaka Gas Co said on Monday it has entered India's urban gas distribution market by investing in the local unit of Singapore based AGP Internationals Holdings as part of its overseas expansion drive.

[US and Japan draw up joint military plan in case of Taiwan emergency – report](#)

December 24, 2021, The Guardian

Japanese and US armed forces have drawn up a draft plan for a joint operation for a possible Taiwan emergency, Japan's Kyodo news agency has reported, amid increased tensions between the island and China.

[Japan to revise its National Security Strategy](#)

December 23, 2021, ORF

The growing threats have propelled Japan to reconsider its existing National Security Strategy under the new leadership of Kishida Fumio.

[Amid escalating Chinese threats, Japan passes a record defence budget](#)

December 24, 2021, WION

Japan's cabinet approved a record defence budget of 5.4 trillion yen (\$47.2 billion) for the fiscal year beginning in April on Friday, bolstering the country's capabilities to counter challenges from China.

[Japan will not send government delegation to Beijing Olympics](#)

December 24, 2021, Reuters

Japan will not send a government delegation to February's Winter Olympics in Beijing, it said on Friday, a move likely to deepen tension with China.

Korea

[South Korea holds talks with China amid spat with Taiwan](#)

December 23, 2021, Reuters

Senior South Korean diplomats held talks with Chinese counterparts on Thursday after a diplomatic spat with Taiwan over Seoul's cancellation of an invitation to a senior Taipei official to take part in a business forum last week.

[Korean defense minister emphasizes cooperation](#)

December 23, 2021, The Korea Times

South Korean Defense Minister Suh Wook on Thursday emphasized the need for close defense cooperation with China and Japan to maintain peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and the region, the defense ministry said.

[S. Korea's vice minister talks with Iranian envoy over 'pending' issues](#)

December 24, 2021, The Korea Times

South Korea's Vice Foreign Minister Choi Jong-kun had discussions with Iran's top envoy here on "pending" bilateral issues Friday, his ministry said.

[Defense chiefs of S. Korea, Singapore discuss security cooperation](#)

December 23, 2021, The Korea Herald

South Korea's Defense Minister Suh Wook held talks with his Singaporean counterpart to discuss regional security cooperation, including joint efforts to fight terrorism, his office said.

Southeast Asia

[Role of natural gas in advancing low-carbon energy transition in ASEAN](#)

December 24, 2021, The Jakarta Post

Despite an urgent need to reduce carbon emissions, the reality of the situation is that the ASEAN region is still relying on fossil fuels, while the region is pursuing an energy transition to renewable energy.

[Cambodia's 'cowboy diplomacy' in Myanmar isolates ASEAN](#)

December 22, 2021, Al Jazeera

Incoming ASEAN chair has been pressing for greater engagement with the Myanmar military despite pushback.

[RCEP Will Drive ASEAN Economic Recovery](#)

December 17, 2021, The Diplomat

On January 1, 2022, RCEP will take effect and should serve as a key engine of trade and economic recovery for the entire region.

[ASEAN-India relationship deepens](#)

December 20, 2021, Bangkok Post

Scholars from Southeast Asia and India have been gaining a deeper understanding of ASEAN-India strategic relations this year by taking part in the ASEAN-India Development Partnership Programme, organised in August by the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute in Singapore and the New Delhi-based Research and Information System for Developing Countries.

[China-ASEAN ties add to growth: Cambodian experts](#)

December 24, 2021, Khmer Times

Close relations between China and the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have significantly contributed to maintaining peace, stability and sustainable development in the region, experts in Cambodia said.

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[Uzbekistan Sends Technicians To Repair Afghanistan's Mazar-e Sharif Airport](#)

December 18, 2021, RFE/RL

Uzbekistan has sent experts to the northern Afghanistan city of Mazar-e Sharif to help repair its airport equipment and restart operations. The Uzbek special presidential envoy for Afghanistan, Ismatilla Ergashev, said on December 17 that the technicians would complete their work on the airport early next year.

[Charges Against Kyrgyz Ex-President In Kumtor Case Dropped, Says Associate](#)

December 18, 2021, RFE/RL

Charges in the high-profile Kumtor gold-mine case against the ousted first president of independent Kyrgyzstan, Askar Akaev, have been dropped, his associate says.

[Taliban accidentally wires money to Tajikistan-based opposition](#)

December 20, 2021, Eurasianet

The Taliban regime in Afghanistan has accidentally transferred around \$800,000 into the bank account of the Afghan Embassy in Tajikistan and is now asking for it to be returned. The mission, whose head has professed his allegiance to the deposed government and firm opposition to the Taliban, is declining the request.

[Kyrgyzstan: China-born MP's seat in the balance amid scandal, confusion](#)

December 22, 2021, Eurasianet

A businesswoman who was set to become only the second Chinese-born lawmaker in Kyrgyzstan's history is facing a battle for her seat, as well as scrutiny over her ties to President Sadyr Japarov and his wife.

[Kyrgyzstan Accuses Tajik Border Guards Of Opening Fire On Truck Driver Near Disputed Border](#)

December 22, 2021, RFE/RL

Kyrgyz authorities say Tajik border guards opened fire on a truck and attempted to abduct the driver near a disputed sector of the border between the two Central Asian states where ethnic-related incidents have been frequent in recent years.

[Kazakhstan ratifies updated military coop agreement with Russia](#)

December 22, 2021, Eurasianet

Lawmakers in Kazakhstan have ratified an updated military cooperation deal with Russia that replaces a previous emphasis on issues like nuclear disarmament in favor of regional security, anti-terrorism and cybersecurity.

[Kazakh Lawmakers Approve Law On Abolishing Death Penalty](#)

December 23, 2021, RFE/RL

The upper chamber of Kazakh's parliament has approved a bill on abolishing the death penalty in the Central Asian nation. The Senate's December 23 approval of the bill comes almost a year after President Qasym-Zhomart Toqaev signed off on parliamentary ratification of a UN human rights protocol aimed at abolishing the death penalty worldwide.

West Asia

[FTA Talks With Canada Next Year; GCC Wants Trade Pact With India: Piyush Goyal](#)

December 17, 2021, The Economic Times

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said that India will launch talks for a free trade agreement with Canada next March or April and that all countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have approached New Delhi to begin negotiations on behalf of the grouping.

[Highly Favourable Outcomes Can Be Expected From India-UAE FTA: Goyal](#)

December 19, 2021, Mint

"There is a lot of good news coming up, across several sectors, as we negotiate and finalize the FTA with the UAE," the minister said during an interaction with the captains of Indian industry and heads of export promotion councils in Mumbai.

[UAE, India Will Be Looking To Strike Deals in Fintech Space, Says Indian Official](#)

December 13, 2021, Gulf News

The next set of business agreements between the UAE and India will be in the emerging technology space, according to Indian foreign secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla.

[Iran Nuclear Talks To Resume 'Soon' After Modest Gains in Vienna](#)

December 17, 2021, AL Jazeera

The seventh round of talks in Vienna to restore Iran's 2015 nuclear deal has ended and while it appears progress was made, the negotiating world powers are not close to an agreement.

[Agreement in Vienna At Hand Only If The West Shows The Will](#)

December 18, 2021, Tehran Times

The latest round of Vienna talks came to an end with Iran underlining progress made in Vienna and the western side cautiously voicing optimism about the road ahead.

[Ex-officials Urge President Biden: 'Restore Iran's Fear' To Boost Chances of Nuclear Diplomacy](#)

December 18, 2021, The Times of Israel

A group of former US senior officials urged President Joe Biden to arrange high-profile military exercises or other actions to strike fear into Iran, amid stalled diplomatic talks on restoring the nuclear deal limiting Tehran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief.

[China Ramps Up Iran Oil Purchases After Getting New Quotas](#)

December 17, 2021, Bloomberg

China ramped up its buying of cheap Iranian crude last month after independent refiners were granted additional import quotas for 2021.

[On Iran, Russia is Closer to Israel Than 'What's Publicly Exposed,' Former Top Official Says](#)

December 08, 2021, Haaretz

Russia shares Israel's view that Iran is a destabilizing force in the Middle East, former National Security Adviser Meir Ben-Shabbat said at INSS, adding that Moscow's position on Iran is closer to Israel's than "what is publicly exposed."

[Security, Strategic Ties Top Agenda At 42nd GCC Summit in Riyadh](#)

December 14, 2021, Arab News

The final communique, read by Nayef Al-Hajraf, the GCC general-secretary, said further teamwork would be necessary to meet future challenges and highlighted the importance of strengthening opportunities for women and young people and for digital transformation in the GCC countries.

[OIC Nations Pledge Fund To Prevent Afghanistan's Economic Collapse](#)

December 19, 2021, AL Jazeera

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has pledged to set up a humanitarian trust fund for Afghanistan as millions face hunger and poverty.

[US Sees Iran Nuclear Breakout Time As Really Short, Claims Senior Official](#)

December 18, 2021, Middle East Monitor

The United States believes Iran's breakout time to producing enough highly enriched uranium for one nuclear weapon is now "really short" and alarming, a senior Biden administration official told reporters.

[United Arab Emirates Threatens to Pull Out of \\$23 Billion F-35, Drone Deal With U.S.](#)

December 14, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

The Emirati government told U.S. officials that it intended to halt the deal because Abu Dhabi thought security requirements the U.S. had laid out to safeguard the high-tech weaponry from Chinese espionage were too onerous, and the country's national sovereignty was in jeopardy.

[U.S. Says It Is Ready To Move Forward With Fighter Jet Sale To UAE](#)

December 15, 2021, Reuters

The United States said it was ready to move forward with the sale of F-35 fighter jets and drones to the United Arab Emirates after Abu Dhabi told Washington it would suspend talks on the \$23-billion deal that also includes munitions.

United States

United States

[U.S. counters China with new Indo-Pacific framework](#)

December 19, 2021, Nikkei Asia

Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo and U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai embarked on Asian tours in November to sell the planned "Indo-Pacific economic framework." Secretary of State Antony Blinken laid groundwork as well during his visit to Southeast Asia this month, though he cut the trip short when a journalist in his delegation tested positive for COVID-19.

[U.S. bans imports from China's Xinjiang region, citing human rights abuses](#)

December 23, 2021, CNBC

President Joe Biden signed a bill Thursday that bans imports from Xinjiang and imposes sanctions on individuals responsible for forced labor in the region. The Biden administration has previously described the abuse of Uyghurs and members of other Muslim minorities in the Xinjiang region as "widespread, state-sponsored forced labor" and "mass detention." Beijing denies that it has abused religious and ethnic minorities in Xinjiang.

[Where is the US-China relationship headed in 2022?](#)

December 23, 2021, The Indian Express

The US and China are increasingly locked in a serious economic and geopolitical competition and the rivalry looks set to escalate next year.

[Biden Administration Says U.S. Prepared for Russia Talks Next Month](#)

December 23, 2021, US News

The United States is prepared to hold talks with Russia as early as January, a senior Biden administration official told reporters on Thursday, though no specific date or location has been set yet.

[Japan plans record defence spending in 2022 with 10th straight annual increase](#)

December 2, 2021, The Hindu

The higher spending plan comes against a backdrop of China's rapid military expansion and North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes.

[US To Boost French Aircraft Carriers with Hi-Tech Fighter Jet Launch System: Cements Ties after AUKUS Setback](#)

December 23, 2021, Eurasian Times

The US has approved the sale of a sophisticated system to France after months of disenchantment between the two traditional partners. Their ties have hit a rough patch owing to France's exclusion from the AUKUS (Australia-UK-US) arrangement, a move seen as a diplomatic and military snub to Paris.

[Joint Statement on Meeting of the U.S.-Israel Strategic Consultative Group](#)

December 22, 2021, White House

U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and Israeli National Security Advisor Dr. Eyal Hulata led a December 22 meeting in Jerusalem of the U.S.-Israel Strategic Consultative Group. The U.S. and Israeli delegations included senior officials from across their respective foreign policy, defense, and intelligence agencies.

Europe & Russia

Europe

[EU takes legal action against Poland over rule-of-law dispute](#)

December 22, 2021, Al Jazeera

The EU has launched legal action against Poland for ignoring the bloc's law and undermining judicial independence while Poland says the EU's decision reflects a trend towards 'bureaucratic centralism' in Brussels that 'has to be stopped'.

[Poland refers EU rule of law issue to Constitutional Court](#)

December 23, 2021 Al Jazeera

The court will decide whether a mechanism linking EU funds to rule of law is compatible with Poland's constitution.

[Italy may play role in Russia-NATO, Russia-EU talks – Putin](#)

December 23, 2021, TASS

The Russian president called the relations between Russia and Italy "good and stable.

[EU to impose extra tariffs on China aluminium foil over subsidies](#)

December 22, 2021, Reuters

The European Union will place extra tariffs on aluminium foil coming from China after the European Commission found that producers there benefited from excessive and unfair subsidies, the EU official journal said.

[Europe's ideological tug-of-war with Beijing](#)

December 23, 2021, Politico

The European Union is ceding the war of ideas to the Chinese government. Even as Beijing promotes its norms and values in the international arena, Europe's politicians are failing to defend and promote EU values – despite the obligation to do so stated in the Treaty of Lisbon.

Russia

[Crisis in Ukraine is a Winner for Putin](#)

December 13, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

Vladimir Putin is having a good crisis in Ukraine. True, the Russian army hasn't entered Kyiv, but Mr. Putin doesn't need to achieve his maximum objectives to

put some points on the board. At minimal cost, the Russian president's Ukraine moves have increased his political standing and promoted his agenda at home.

[Moscow Bans 7 Britons From Russia Over Navalny Sanctions](#)

December 20, 2021, The Moscow Times

Moscow said Friday it will ban seven British "representatives" from entering its territory in retaliation over UK sanctions sparked by the near-fatal poisoning of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny. In August, Britain sanctioned seven Russian officials on the first anniversary of the poisoning of President Vladimir Putin's most vocal domestic critic.

[Russian Navy sub strikes coastal target with Kalibr cruise missile from Sea of Japan](#)

December 21, 2021, TASS News Agency

The Pacific Fleet's diesel-electric submarine Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky struck a coastal target at a range of 1,000 km with a Kalibr cruise missile from the Sea of Japan, the Fleet's press office reported.

[Russian Navy gets three subs, four surface ships in 2021 – defense chief](#)

December 21, 2021, TASS News Agency

Three submarines, four surface ships and three coastal defense missile systems entered service with the Russian Navy in 2021, Russian Defense Minister Army General Sergey Shoigu said at the ministry's enlarged board meeting on December 21.

[India deploys first battery of S-400 air defense systems in western Punjab state – media](#)

December 21, 2021, TASS News Agency

India deployed the first battery of Russian-made S-400 medium-to-long range anti-aircraft missile systems on the territory of its western Punjab state bordering on Pakistan, the ANI news agency reported, citing its own sources.

[U.S. Claims Russia 'Moving Away' From Commitments Made To Join WTO](#)

December 22, 2021, RFE/RL

The U.S. Trade Representative's (USTR) office says that Russia is continuing to move away from commitments it made a decade ago to join the World Trade Organization (WTO). In its annual report to Congress on Moscow's WTO compliance, the USTR on December 21 criticized Russia's agricultural import restrictions and import-substitution policies.

[Putin's End-of-Year Press Conference: What He Discussed](#)

December 23, 2021, The Moscow Times

Russian President Vladimir Putin held his annual end-of-year press conference in Moscow on Thursday as soaring tensions with the West over Ukraine have sparked fears of an all-out war. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, media outlets were not able to apply for accreditation to the event for the first time since it was first held in 2001.

[Russian parliament could vote on worst catastrophe of 20th century](#)

December 24, 2021, Russia Today

A group of Russian MPs has moved to officially designate the fall of the Soviet Union, which happened 30 years ago this month, as the biggest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century.

[Russia Will Respond With 'Adequate Military Measures' to Hostile Actions by the West, Moscow Warns](#)

December 24, 2021, Sputnik News

At his annual end-of-year press conference, President Vladimir Putin warned that Russia's future policy would depend "on the unconditional guarantees of Russian national security", and stressed that Moscow has "made it clear that NATO's expansion to the east is unacceptable".

[U.S. 'Ready' for Talks With Russia From Early January: U.S. Official](#)

December 24, 2021, The Moscow Times

The United States is preparing for talks with Russia that could start within weeks, a senior official said, as Western powers accuse Moscow of continuing a major troop build-up on the border with Ukraine. "The U.S. is ready to engage in diplomacy as soon as early January," both bilaterally and through "multiple channels," the US official said.

Africa & Latin America

Latin America

[Chile's next president to govern historic transition](#)

December 23, 2021, Al Jazeera

Gabriel Boric may be hindered by deeply fragmented Congress, where negotiations will be necessary to advance his agenda.

[Chinese Hydropower Project in Argentina Is Stuck in Limbo](#)

December 23, 2021, The Diplomat

Suspended financing has put a joint project to build dams in Patagonia on hold. The two sides need to act quickly to resolve the issue.

[Canada to Join Mexico in Complaint on U.S. Car-Origin Rules](#)

December 23, 2021, Bloomberg

Canada plans to formally join Mexico in calling for an arbitration panel to resolve a dispute with the U.S. over how to interpret rules governing the origin of vehicle parts.

[Brazil shuts illegal timber schemes, sheds light on Amazon logging](#)

December 22, 2021, India Today

The environmental agency will place embargoes on the companies this week to prevent them from selling wood and will hand out more than 50 million reais (\$8.76 million) in fines.

Africa

[Niger: Thousands flee homes following threats from jihadist groups](#)

December 16, 2021, Africa News

Only 7 months after their return to their lands under the supervision of the defense and security forces and the guarantees of the president of the republic Bazoum Mohamed, the people of Anzourou are again leaving their villages.

[Mozambique seeks first IMF loan in five years](#)

December 21, 2021, Africa News

Mozambique is on the verge of securing the first loan in five years from the International Monetary Funds. The IMF stated that discussions will begin next year on an extended credit facility, the first since it suspended the southern African country in 2016.

[Rwanda, DRC organize trade fair, seek to boost trade cooperation](#)

December 21, 2021, Africa News

Business representatives from the Democratic Republic of Congo's Private sector attended the Rwandan National trade fair for the very first time on Monday. The event presents an opportunity to the two countries not just to make sales and exhibit the new products, but also to sign a trade agreement with the Rwandan Private Sector Federation that will facilitate trade and boost business cooperation between the countries.

[Mali: West condemns Russian mercenaries 'deployment'](#)

December 24, 2021, BBC

France and its 15 allies in Europe and Canada have condemned what they say is the deployment of Russian mercenaries to Mali. They said it could "further deteriorate the security situation in West Africa", which is battling Jihadist groups.

[Madagascar shipwreck death toll rises to 85](#)

December 23, 2021, Al Jazeera

Maritime authorities say 50 people have been rescued after boat sank with 138 people on board.

[Ethiopia gov't says army will not go deeper into Tigray, for now](#)

December 24, 2021, Al Jazeera

Federal troops ordered to maintain the areas they have won back recently from Tigrayan forces, government says.



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