



# Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



## DPG WEST ASIA REVIEW



Volume IV, Issue 27 | July 4, 2022

**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.

Since 2016, in keeping with India's increasing global profile, DPG has expanded its focus areas to include India's regional and global role and its policies in the Indo-Pacific. In a realist environment, DPG remains mindful of the need to align India's ambitions with matching strategies and capabilities, from diplomatic initiatives to security policy and military modernisation.

At a time of disruptive change in the global order, DPG aims to deliver research based, relevant, reliable and realist policy perspectives to an actively engaged public, both at home and abroad. DPG is deeply committed to the growth of India's national power and purpose, the security and prosperity of the people of India and India's contributions to the global public good. We remain firmly anchored within these foundational principles which have defined DPG since its inception.

### DPG WEST ASIA REVIEW

DPG West Asia Review contains major developments in West Asia of strategic relevance to India, compiled from open source media. To subscribe please [click here](#).

Your comments and feedback can be addressed to Sanket Joshi at [sanket@dpg.org.in](mailto:sanket@dpg.org.in).

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## Abstract

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Yair Lapid for becoming the 14th Prime Minister of Israel and looked forward to further deepening the India-Israel strategic partnership. PM Modi also met UAE's President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi and conveyed condolences on the passing away of UAE's former President, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan while congratulating Sheikh Mohamed on his election as the Gulf country's President.

Russian President Vladimir Putin addressed the 6<sup>th</sup> Caspian Sea Summit. In his address, he reiterated the importance of the 7,200 Km long International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) as a key connectivity link between Russia and India via Iran. In a historic first, Russia could emerge as India's largest supplier of crude in June 2022, pushing Iraq to the second position. Amidst Russian exploitation of its energy muscle, G7 agreed to explore a "price cap" on Russian oil in such a way that Moscow will be "allowed to recover production costs while earning a very small profit from petroleum products". Even as the contours of this plan remain undecided, US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan stressed that Washington and its allies had "begun talks with India about how a price cap would work and what the implications would be".

Meanwhile, OPEC+ once again failed to meet its oil production target for June 2022 and remains in a weak position to tame high crude prices as its spare production capacity is shrinking. Reports held the US responsible for surging crude prices and inflation as the Biden administration has repeatedly warned against oil and gas investments while favouring green energy.

As India considers several venues including its Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir to host G20-related meetings in 2023, Pakistan is reaching out to China, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia to boycott the G20 meet. China, meanwhile, refrained from commenting whether it would attend a G20 meeting held in Kashmir.

In the aftermath of the Doha talks on reviving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), open-source intelligence reports pointed toward "prospects of a deal getting worse day by day". Iran, on the other hand, maintained that the talks were positive while blaming the US for failing to provide guarantees that a new US administration would not again abandon the JCPOA. It is highly unlikely that the Biden administration can provide any such legal guarantee to Tehran.

Ahead of President Biden's visit to the Middle East in July, officials from foreign ministries of the US, Israel, UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Egypt attended a meeting of the 'Negev Summit Steering Committee' in Bahrain to present a united front on countering Iran. Meanwhile, in the wake of forthcoming visit to the Middle East, President Biden declared, he will aim to "deepen Israel's integration in the Middle East". Even as some regional leaders attempted to float the idea of a "Middle East NATO", Egypt and Jordan stressed that such a military alliance is not likely to happen anytime soon and the issue is not on the agenda of President Biden's visit to the Middle East.

In a major boost to NATO's expansion, Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg announced that the military alliance has reached an agreement with Turkey to admit Finland and Sweden. The two Nordic countries vowed to control support for Kurdish terrorism against Turkey. As President Erdogan lifted his NATO veto, the Biden administration is reportedly backing the potential sale of F-16 fighter jets to Turkey.

Links to major developments in West Asia of strategic relevance to India, compiled from open-source media, can be found below.

## Bahrain

### [Abraham Accords Success Continues in Bahrain Negev Forum Meeting - Jerusalem Post Editorial](#)

June 27, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

Despite the current political turmoil in Israel, all states involved in the meeting plan to present President Biden with a united front promoting regional cooperation and countering a nuclear Iran.

### [Ministerial Panel to Fast-Track India's FTA Plans](#)

July 04, 2022, Financial Express

The government is weighing a proposal to set up an inter-ministerial panel comprising senior officials to iron out differences across various ministries and departments on proposals relating to free trade agreements (FTAs) with the GCC, EU, UK, Canada, and Australia.

## Egypt

### [Egypt's FM: 'NATO Middle East' Not Currently on The Table](#)

July 01, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

Despite reports circulating in the media of the imminent formation of a military alliance in the Middle East similar to NATO, this is not likely to happen anytime soon, Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said during a press conference in Bahrain.

### [US\\$ 500 Million Project Will Help to Strengthen Egypt Food and Nutrition Security](#)

June 29, 2022, The World Bank

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved a US\$500 million loan to bolster Egypt's efforts to ensure that poor and vulnerable households have uninterrupted access to bread, to strengthen Egypt's resilience to food crises and to support reforms in food security policies, including to improve nutritional outcomes.

## Iraq

### [Oil Prices Remain around USD 110/barrel as Recession Fears Rumble On, Tight Supply Stems Losses](#)

July 04, 2022, Reuters

Oil prices fell on Monday (July 4), paring gains from the previous session, as fears of a global recession weighed on the market even as supply remained tight amid lower OPEC output, unrest in Libya and sanctions on Russia. WTI Crude stood at USD 108.09/barrel, while Brent crude at USD 111.27.

### [Russia May Be India's Biggest Crude Supplier in June, a Historic First](#)

July 01, 2022, Business Standard

India is turning away from its favourite crude—Iraqi Basrah, a staple for state-run refiners led by IOC. Displacing Iraq is Russia, which may become India's biggest crude supplier in June for the first time, pushing Iraq to the second position.

### [G7 Bid to Cap Russian Oil Price Faces Hurdle of Global Enforcement](#)

June 28, 2022, The Wall Street Journal

The Group of Seven major economies want to impose a price cap on Russian oil exports. The challenge is enforcing it on buyers worldwide.

### [OPEC, Allies Struggle to Meet Oil Production Targets](#)

June 29, 2022, The Wall Street Journal

As President Biden prepares to go to Saudi Arabia in July, OPEC members say the cartel and its allies have fallen far behind on their oil-production targets and are in their weakest position in recent years to help tame high crude prices.



## Iran

### [Russian President Putin Pushes INSTC To Connect India; Describes it as a 'Truly Ambitious Project'](#)

July 01, 2022, The Economic Times

Russian President Vladimir Putin has strongly pushed the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) as the key connectivity link between Russia and India via Iran by describing it as a truly ambitious project notwithstanding China hard pressing BRI as a mega connectivity initiative in the Eurasian region.

### [Chances for Iran Nuclear Deal Worse after Doha Talks: US official](#)

July 01, 2022, Reuters

The chances of reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal are worse after indirect U.S.-Iranian talks in Doha that ended without progress, a senior U.S. official said.

### [Iran Urges US to Act Realistically, Says It Seeks 'Full Economic Benefits' of JCPOA](#)

July 01, 2022, Press TV (Iran)

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said the talks to revive the 2015 agreement can succeed if the United States acts realistically and provides Tehran with robust guarantees that it will be able to fully reap the economic benefits of the deal.

### [Iran Tests Zuljanah Satellite Launcher for Second Time](#)

June 26, 2022, Reuters

Iran has carried out a second test of its Zuljanah satellite launcher, Iranian state TV reported, in a move likely to irk Washington.

### [Iran Purges Security Apparatus Amid Israeli Espionage Fears](#)

July 03, 2022, Arab News

The Iranian regime has purged senior leaders in its security apparatus, including a general in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, amid fears that Israeli espionage has caused a recent spate of blunders and assassinations.

[Israeli Defence Minister Gantz Orders Probe After TV Reports Hint IDF Behind Iran Steel Plant Cyberattack](#)

June 30, 2022, The Times of Israel

Defence Minister Benny Gantz ordered his ministry's security department to conduct an investigation into recent media leaks that harmed Israel's "ambiguity policy," shortly after Hebrew-language television strongly hinted that a Military Intelligence unit was responsible for a cyberattack in Iran.

[Iran Applies to Join China and Russia in BRICS](#)

June 28, 2022, Reuters

Iran, which holds the world's second largest gas reserves, has applied to join the BRICS group of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa that Beijing and Moscow cast as a powerful emerging market alternative to the West.

## Israel

### [PM Modi Congratulates Yair Lapid for Assuming Israeli Premiership](#)

July 01, 2022, The Indian Express

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Yair Lapid for assuming the premiership of Israel and said he looks forward to furthering the bilateral strategic partnership as the two countries celebrate 30 years of full diplomatic relations.

### [President Biden Says He'll Aim to 'Deepen Israel's Integration in Region' During Visit](#)

June 30, 2022, The Times of Israel

US President Joe Biden said that one of the purposes of his upcoming trip to the Middle East is to "deepen Israel's integration in the region." US President said the trip was not about Saudi Arabia, even though Riyadh will be hosting the summit; makes no mention of Palestinian issue.

### [Palestinians to Hand Over Bullet That Killed Journalist Shireen Abu Akleh to U.S.](#)

July 02, 2022, Haaretz

The Palestinian Authority has agreed to hand over the bullet that killed journalist Shireen Abu Akleh in May to the United States, Palestinian sources said, adding that American representatives are expected to arrive in Ramallah to conduct their investigation.

## Jordan

### [Jordan Denies Plan to Build Military Alliance with Israel](#)

June 30, 2022, Middle East Monitor

"This issue is not on the agenda of the US President Joe Biden's visit to the region," Jordanian Foreign Minister Al-Safadi said, stressing: "there is no Arab alliance that Israel will be part of. There have been no proposal for such a thing."

## Kuwait

### [No More Oil is Available, Mr. President – OPEC+ Says](#)

July 03, 2022, Arab Times

The message sent by 23 members of OPEC+ in anticipation of the expected visit of the US President to the Middle East this month is very clear. It affirms that there is neither any extra volume of oil available nor any ability to increase the oil production. They also cannot displease their strongest ally outside OPEC, which is Russia.

## Lebanon

### [Hezbollah Opposes Maritime Border Deal with Israel That Would Save Lebanon from Bankruptcy](#)

July 04, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

The Israel Defence Forces said that it shot down three drones launched by Hezbollah toward Israel's Karish offshore gas field. "The immediate objective should be to prevent the enemy from extracting oil and gas from the Karish gas field," Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said in a televised statement.

### [Lebanon Minister Sees Deal with Israel Over Sea Dispute in Few Months](#)

July 04, 2022, TRT World

Lebanon's top diplomat has said that he expects his country and Israel to reach a sea demarcation agreement in September.

## Oman

### [After Price Cap Talks, Russian Oil to Get Expensive, Should India Be Worried?](#)

June 29, 2022, Mint

After the United States, Germany and Japan agreed to explore a price cap on Russian oil exports, eyes are now on India which imports 10% of its oil from Russia. "We have begun talks with India about how a price cap would work and what the implications would be," White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said.

## Qatar

### [Qatar to Demand EU Sign Long-Term LNG Deals If It Wants More Gas](#)

June 23, 2022, Bloomberg

Qatar plans to insist on terms that will lock EU countries in for two decades of liquefied natural gas purchases, a move that will complicate the bloc's goal to cut emissions while also reducing its dependence on Russian fuel.

### [US, Taliban Discuss Earthquake Aid, Foreign Reserves in Qatar](#)

July 02, 2022, AL Arabiya

Talks between the United States and the Taliban continued in Doha earlier this week to discuss earthquake aid, the State Department said, months after the two parties last met in the Qatari capital in March.

### [Pakistan Seeks Qatar Gas on Deferred Payment](#)

July 04, 2022, Dawn

Amid severe energy crunch and unprecedentedly expensive fuel imports, Pakistan is seeking more gas imports on deferred payments from Qatar, which is irritated by roadblocks to its infrastructure investment plans, particularly in import terminals.



## Saudi Arabia

### [Pakistan Wants China, Turkey and Saudi Arabia to Boycott G20 Meet in J&K](#)

June 29, 2022, Mint

The Indian government's decision to host the influential G-20 summit in Jammu and Kashmir has miffed Pakistan. The country has launched a diplomatic offensive and is now reaching out to its close allies - China, Turkey and Saudi Arabia to boycott the meeting.

### [Saudi Aramco Targets Investments in China's Downstream Business](#)

June 22, 2022, Zawya (Refinitiv)

Saudi Aramco is planning to invest in China's future economic growth by building a large, integrated downstream business across the country with Chinese partners, the oil major said in a statement.

### [Marshall Plan for the Middle East: Ronald Lauder](#)

July 02, 2022, Arab News

US President Joe Biden is about to embark on what might be the most important trip of his presidency so far. He will visit the oil-rich Middle East, in particular Saudi Arabia, to convey to the Kingdom the fact that it remains a strong ally and that the entire region is still vital to US strategic interests.

### [Officials Ironing Out Deal Between Israel, Saudi Arabia, Egypt on Red Sea Islands](#)

June 29, 2022, Axios

Diplomats and lawyers from the US, Israel, Saudi Arabia and Egypt are working on a complex choreography of agreements, understandings and letters that will allow a deal around two strategic Red Sea islands to be inked ahead of President Biden's visit to the Middle East.

## Syria

### [Alleged Israeli Strike in Syria Targeted 'Game Changing' Iranian Air Defences – TV](#)

July 03, 2022, The Times of Israel

An airstrike Saturday (July 02) in Syria that was attributed to Israel targeted Iranian attempts to bring “game changing” air defence systems to Syria, Israeli television reported.

### [In Damascus, Iran FM Claims Israel Seeking to Destabilise Syria with Alleged Strike](#)

July 02, 2022, The Times of Israel

“We strongly condemn the actions of the Zionist regime and their encroachment on the territorial integrity of Syria,” said Iranian FM Amir-Abdollahian, according to the Islamic Republic News Agency.

### [Iran Ready to Offer a Political Solution to Ease Syria-Turkey Tension, Foreign Minister Says](#)

July 02, 2022, Reuters

Iran is working towards a political solution to keep Turkey from invading northern Syria, Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said during a visit to Damascus.

## Türkiye

### [NATO Reaches a Deal with Turkey to Admit Sweden and Finland, Secretary-General Says](#)

June 28, 2022, CNBC

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said the military alliance had reached a deal to admit Sweden and Finland after resolving the concerns of holdout Turkey.

### [President Erdoğan Gains from Lifting Sweden and Finland NATO Veto with US Fighter Jet Promise](#)

June 29, 2022, The Guardian

The Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, immediately started to reap the rewards for lifting the block on allowing Sweden and Finland to join NATO when the Biden administration said it backed the potential sale of F-16 fighter jets to Turkey.

### [Turkish Combat Drone Akıncı Undergoes 1st Laser-Guided Firing Test](#)

July 03, 2022, Daily Sabah

Turkey's landmark combat drone has undergone a successful firing test with a laser-guided missile, achieving yet another milestone in the integration process of domestically manufactured ammunition.

## UAE

### [After Prophet Row, Indian PM Meets UAE President, Both Underline Ties](#)

June 29, 2022, The Indian Express

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and conveyed condolences on the death of the former president of the Gulf nation, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The two leaders also reviewed bilateral ties.

### [UAE-India Ties: Commemorative Stamp Celebrates 50 Years of Historic Relations](#)

July 03, 2022, Khaleej Times

Emirates Post Group, in collaboration with India Post, has issued a commemorative stamp to celebrate the UAE's 50 years of union and India's 75 years of independence. The stamp highlights the "strong and historic relations" between UAE and India, Emirates Post said.

### [UAE Approves 22 Policies to Accelerate Shift to Circular Economy](#)

July 03, 2022, Arabian Business

The UAE Circular Economy Council met to approve the policies, which focus on the four main sectors of manufacturing, food, infrastructure and transport.

### [Israeli Radars to Be Used in UAE To Detect Iran Missiles, Drones - Report](#)

June 28, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

Israeli radars, possibly along with other aircraft detection systems, could be part of the regional defence network Israel is attempting to establish with the US and its Gulf allies against Iran.

## Yemen

### [Houthis Criticised Over Refusal to Open Main Roads in Yemeni city of Taiz](#)

July 02, 2022, Arab News

Yemen will not begin discussing other issues with the Houthis under a UN-brokered truce until the militia accepts a proposal to open roads in Taiz, a government official has said.



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