



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



DPG WEST ASIA REVIEW



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Delhi Policy Group

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

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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.

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Abstract

In an escalation of hostilities between Israel and Palestine, responding to Israel's killing of Palestinian Islamic Jihad's (PIJ) top Commander 'Tayseer al-Jabari' on August 5, the militant outfit PIJ fired almost 580 rockets from Gaza into Israel. After a few days of bloody conflict, Israel and the Palestinian militants agreed to a ceasefire beginning on the evening of August 7, brokered by Egypt. Earlier, Washington reiterated its support for Israel's right to defend itself and urged all sides to avoid further escalation; while Iran assured PIJ's leadership that Tel Aviv will "pay a heavy price for its crimes in Gaza".

In a major counter-terror success, the US killed 'Ayman al-Zawahiri', the leader of al Qa'ida in Afghanistan. As the Taliban sheltered al-Zawahiri, Washington questioned its adherence to the Doha agreement and repeated assurances to the international community that it will not allow Afghan territory to be used by terrorists to threaten the security of other countries.

Washington and Tehran resumed indirect nuclear talks in Vienna. "Iran's refusal to address the alleged unexplained uranium traces found at undeclared sites" and "demand of removing IRGC from US terror list" continue to be the sticking points in reaching a final agreement. Britain, France, and Germany (E3), on their part, called upon Tehran "not to make unrealistic demands" while stressing that the talks are "technical discussions" and "do not mark a new round of negotiations". Describing the US sanctions as a "show that has no effect", Iran is activating new and advanced centrifuges to enrich uranium.

Saudi Arabia's Permanent Representative to the UN, addressing the NPT Review Conference warned about the repercussions of Iran's nuclear program, Israel's non-accession to the Treaty on the Prohibition of nuclear weapons while underscoring the need to confront nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. Following President Biden's Middle East visit, Washington has cleared the sale of MIM-104E Patriot missiles to Saudi Arabia and sale of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defence System (THAAD) to the UAE. The proposed sale is likely to improve UAE and Saudi Arabia's respective ability to defend against ballistic missile and drone threats in the region while reducing dependence on the US forces.

Continuing the deepening Russia-Turkey partnership, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish counterpart Erdogan met in Sochi. The two leaders stressed "full adherence to the Istanbul grain deal between Moscow and Kyiv",

“enhanced energy and trade cooperation including Ankara paying for a part of Russian gas in Rubles”, as also “counter-terrorism coordination in Syria”.

Meanwhile, in the aftermath of the US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan (Republic of China), Russia, Egypt, UAE, Syria, Iran, and the Palestinian Authority reiterated their adherence to the “one-China policy”. In another development, US State Department’s top official for the Middle East told Senate Foreign Relations Committee that it is an “irony” that China is pushing to sell military drones to the Gulf Arab States, while it is doing nothing to stem the flow of Chinese drones to the Iranian proxies in the region.

On the energy front, OPEC+ has agreed to increase crude production by 100,000 barrels a day from September 2022. Analysts expect this to have minimal impact on crude prices, recession fears have already led oil prices to fall to around USD 90/barrel.

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

Bahrain

[India Begins Cooperation with Bahrain-based Combined Maritime Forces \(CMF\)](#)

August 08, 2022, The Hindu

CMF is a multi-national naval partnership to promote security, stability, and prosperity across approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters, which encompass some of the world's most important shipping lanes.

Egypt

[President El-Sisi: Egypt Has an Unchangeable Policy on Taiwan](#)

August 07, 2022, Arab News

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi has said that his country's policy remains consistent on Taiwan, with Egypt supporting the "One China" policy.

[Israel, Palestinians Agree to Egypt-brokered Truce from Sunday \(August 7\) Evening: Sources](#)

August 07, 2022, AL Arabiya

Israel and Palestinian militants have agreed to a truce in Gaza from Sunday evening as mediated by Cairo, sources said, after a weekend-long pounding of Palestinian targets by Israel triggered longer-range rocket attacks against its cities.

Iraq

[Iraq Discounts Heavily to Muscle Out Cheaper Russian Oil in India](#)

August 5, 2022, Business Standard

India is the last big market left for foreign crude oil suppliers where the door will probably be shut last. And that explains why West Asian crude suppliers led by Iraq are trying to muscle in to retain the market share that they have been losing to Russia over the past few months.

[Heatwaves Scorch Iraq as Protracted Political Crisis Grinds on](#)

August 6, 2022, AL Jazeera

Temperatures have soared to nearly 50 degrees Celsius in Baghdad on an almost daily basis amid a heated political crisis.

[Iraq Popular Mobilisation Forces Reject Sadr's Call to Dissolve Parliament](#)

August 5, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Iraq's Iran-backed Popular Mobilisation Forces (Hashd Al-Shaabi) rejected the call of the Iraqi Shia cleric and head of the Sadrist movement, Moqtada Al-Sadr, to dissolve Parliament and hold early elections.

Iran

[The Death of Ayman al-Zawahiri](#)

August 1, 2022, US Department of State

The world is a safer place following the death of Zawahiri, and the United States will continue to act resolutely against those who threaten our country, our people, or our allies and partners.

[Iran Reiterates Support for the one-China Principle](#)

August 7, 2022, China Daily

Iran firmly adheres to the one-China principle and would continue to support China's just position, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said during a phone call with State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

[Israel Will 'Pay a Heavy Price' After Gaza Attack, Iran Warns](#)

August 6, 2022, AL Jazeera

Amidst Israeli air strikes, the Head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) told the Palestinian Islamic Jihad leader in Gaza "we are with you on this path until the end".

[US, Iran to Resume Nuclear Talks; U.S. Expectations 'in check'](#)

August 3, 2022, Reuters

Top Iranian and U.S. officials will resume talks in Vienna this week on reviving the 2015 nuclear pact, officials from both countries said, though they played down chances of a breakthrough and placed the onus on each other to compromise.

[Iran Urges 'realistic' U.S. Response to Revive Nuclear Deal](#)

August 6, 2022, AL Monitor

Iran's foreign minister called for a "realistic response" from the United States to Iranian proposals at indirect talks in Vienna aimed at reviving Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal.

[Iran Reaffirms Demand for Removing IRGC from US Terror List: Report](#)

August 5, 2022, CGTN

Iran reaffirmed its demand for the removal of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) from the U.S. terrorist list in talks on reviving the 2015 nuclear deal.

[Drones Used by Iran-backed Militias are Coming from China, US Says](#)

August 5, 2022, AL Monitor

Unmanned drones fired by Iran-backed militias at targets across the Middle East in recent years, sometimes with lethal effect, are being supplied from China, a senior US official revealed.

[Iran Prepares Hundreds of Centrifuges in Response to US Sanctions, Says Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian](#)

August 3, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Iran has started to pump gas into hundreds of new generation centrifuges in response to new sanctions imposed by the US, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said. He described the new sanctions as a "show that has no effect", and stressed that they will not force Iran to make concessions in the nuclear negotiations.

[Iran Rejects Reports Russia Will Control Its Satellite](#)

August 7, 2022, Press TV (Iran)

Iran has denied media reports suggesting that Russia will briefly maintain control of an Iranian satellite that will be sent into space next week from a Russian space station in Kazakhstan.

Israel

[Who Was Tayseer al-Jabari, the Top Islamic Jihad Commander Killed by Israel?](#)

August 6, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

Tayseer al-Jabari, the top Islamic Jihad commander killed in the Israeli bombing of an apartment in Gaza, was in charge of the terrorist group's rocket arsenal and was its primary coordinator with Hamas.

[Iron Dome at 97 Percent Success Rate After 580 Rockets Fired from Gaza into Israel Since Friday \(August 5\)](#)

August 7, 2022, The Times of Israel

Israeli military highlighted that 'The Iron Dome missile defence system' has achieved a 97 percent success rate intercepting incoming rockets, amid almost non-stop barrages launched by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad terror group.

[The US Says it Supports Israel's Right to Defend Itself, Urges No More Escalation](#)

August 6, 2022, Reuters

The United States fully supported Israel's right to defend itself, the State Department said, and it urged all sides to avoid further escalation as Israeli air strikes pounded Gaza while the militant Islamic Jihad group fired rockets into Israel.

[Iran 'almost certainly' To Blame for Escalation - Former Israeli General](#)

August 8, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

The current escalation between Israel and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) in Gaza is the result of Iranian orders, Israeli Brig. Gen. (res.) Amir Avivi said.

[UN Security Council to Hold Emergency Meeting Monday \(August 8\) to Discuss Gaza-Israel Violence](#)

August 7, 2022, The Times of Israel

The UN Security Council will hold an emergency closed-door meeting to discuss the latest escalation between Israel and Palestinian Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian Ambassador to the UN Riyad Mansour said.

Jordan

[Jordan Calls for International Action to Stop Israeli Attacks on Gaza](#)

August 7, 2022, The Times of Israel

Jordan called on international powers to stop Israel's "aggression" in the Gaza Strip after at least 32 Palestinians were killed in attacks that started two days ago with the assassination of an Islamic Jihad commander.

Kuwait

[New Kuwait Government Sworn in](#)

August 2, 2022, Middle East Monitor

The new Kuwaiti government, led by Prime Minister Ahmed Nawaf Al-Ahmad, was sworn in on Tuesday (August 2).

Lebanon

[First Ukraine Grain Shipment's Arrival in Lebanon 'Postponed'](#)

August 8, 2022, AL Arabiya

The first shipment of Ukrainian grain since Russia's invasion will no longer arrive in the northern Lebanese port city of Tripoli on Sunday (August 7) as planned, Ukraine's embassy in Beirut said.

[UN Experts and Rights Groups Call for International Probe into Beirut Port Explosion](#)

August 4, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Independent UN experts and human rights groups have called on the UN Human Rights Council to launch an international investigation into the 2020 Beirut Port explosion. The call has been made on the second anniversary of the massive blast that killed more than 200 people and wounded thousands more.

Oman

[Oman Posts \\$2 Billion Surplus in First Half on High Oil, Gas](#)

August 7, 2022, Bloomberg

Oman recorded a budget surplus of 784 million rials (\$2 billion) in the first half, driven by higher sales of oil and natural gas.

Qatar

[Qatar Condemns Israel's Aggression on Gaza](#)

August 6, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Qatar condemned the Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip which has so far led to ten deaths and 65 injuries.

[Qatar Holding LLC Gets Income Tax Break for Infrastructure Investments](#)

August 6, 2022, Mint

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has granted income tax exemption to the earnings that Qatar Holding LLC., a sovereign wealth fund, will make from its infrastructure investments in India.

Saudi Arabia

[OPEC, Allies Agree to Modest Increase in Oil Production](#)

August 3, 2022, The Wall Street Journal

OPEC and its allies agreed to a small increase in oil production following calls by the U.S. and other major consumers for more supply, but the symbolic move is expected to have a minimal impact on crude prices.

[Saudi Arabia's Budget Witnesses Surplus After 2021 Deficit](#)

August 5, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Saudi Arabia's budget has witnessed a fiscal surplus of 135.4 billion riyals (\$36.1 billion) during the first half of 2022 amid a rise in crude oil revenues.

[Saudi Arabia Leads Condemnations of Israel's Storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque](#)

August 7, 2022, Arab News

Saudi Arabia condemned Israeli settlers for storming the Al-Aqsa Mosque courtyard, in what the Kingdom called a "serious violation of international law."

[US State Department Clears Weapons Sales to Saudi Arabia, UAE](#)

August 3, 2022, Defence News

The U.S. State Department cleared possible foreign military sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, according to a statement from the Defence Security Cooperation Agency.

[Saudi Arabia Warns of Iran and Israel's Nuclear Practices](#)

August 4, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Saudi Arabia's envoy to the United Nations has warned of the repercussions of "Iran's nuclear practices" and Israel's non-accession to the Treaty on the Prohibition of nuclear weapons.

[Russia Becomes Second-Biggest Crude Oil Supplier to India, Surpasses Saudi Arabia](#)

August 7, 2022, News 18

From April-June 2022, Russian crude was cheaper than Saudi Arabia with the discount widening to almost \$19 per barrel in May. Russia surpassed the kingdom as the second-biggest supplier to India in June, ranked just behind Iraq.

Syria

[Israeli Defence Minister Gantz Warns Islamic Jihad Leadership in Iran, Syria, Lebanon](#)

August 6, 2022, The Times of Israel

"The leadership of Islamic Jihad, who sit abroad in restaurants and stay in hotels in Tehran, Syria, and Lebanon, are disconnected from their people," Gantz said during a tour of an Iron Dome air defence battery in southern Israel.

[Russia Announces Elimination of Opposition Fighters Trained by US Special Forces in Syria](#)

August 4, 2022, Middle East Monitor

The Russian Defence Ministry announced that its air force had "eliminated" a group of opposition fighters trained by the US in Syria on August 4.

Türkiye

[Putin and Erdogan in Sochi: What the Two Leaders Discussed and Agreed Upon](#)

August 5, 2022, Russia Today (RT)

Russian President Vladimir Putin welcomed the Turkish leader, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, to Russia's southern city of Sochi. The two leaders spent over four hours discussing a broad range of issues, ranging from grain exports to bilateral trade and counter-terrorism efforts.

[China Invites Turkey to Visit Xinjiang, the Ground Zero of the Uyghur Muslims Genocide](#)

August 6, 2022, WION

In an attempt to show the world that its treatment of Uyghur Muslims is not as barbaric as the world media reports it to be, China has allowed a Turkish delegation to visit the Xinjiang province, the ground zero for the genocide of the minority group.

UAE

[UAE Voices Support for China's Sovereignty](#)

August 4, 2022, AL Jazeera

In a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the UAE said it "affirmed its support for China's sovereignty and territorial integrity" and stressed the importance of the "One-China" principle.

[After the US, Pak Army Chief 'Begs' UAE and Saudi Arabia to Help Secure IMF Bailout Package](#)

August 06, 2022, Hindustan Times

After seeking U.S. help in securing an early release of a crucial USD 1.7 billion instalment from the International Monetary Fund to Pakistan, Army chief General Bajwa has now reached out to Saudi Arabia and the UAE as part of his efforts to ensure financial assistance for the cash-strapped nation.

Yemen

[Yemen's Warring Sides Agree to Renew Existing Truce: UN](#)

August 2, 2022, AL Jazeera

The United Nations says Yemen's warring parties have agreed to renew an existing truce for another two months, despite international pressure for an extended and expanded deal.



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