



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

India's External Affairs Minister Dr. Jaishankar, participated in Shanghai Cooperation Organisations (SCO) meeting in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on July 29. In his address, Dr. Jaishankar stressed the importance of "resilient and diversified supply chains", "reformed multilateralism", and "zero tolerance for terrorism". Further, he highlighted India's humanitarian support to Afghanistan, including the supply of wheat, medicines, vaccines, and clothing. Dr. Jaishankar also underlined the potential of Chabahar Port in SCO's economic future.

Amidst crippling Western sanctions, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov suggested that "SCO member states should decide whether they want to use the US Dollar for transactions". In another development, FM Lavrov told the Arab League that Russia is determined to topple the Zelenskyy regime in Ukraine. Amidst this, SCO is reportedly planning to expand its network and is likely to include Egypt, Qatar, Bahrain, Maldives, and Saudi Arabia as dialogue partners.

Continuing the deepening of relations with West Asia, India along with UAE and France held their first trilateral meeting exploring cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, including maritime security, blue economy, regional connectivity, and food and energy security. In another development, India and Oman began military exercise 'AL NAJAH-IV' in India's Rajasthan focusing on counter-terror cooperation. On the security front, Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) will supply 67 rotary-wing drones to the Indian Army for surveillance of the Line of Actual Control (LoC).

Regarding trade and investments, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved Blackrock and Mubadala's INR 4000 Cr stake acquisition in Tata Power Renewable Energy. In another development, Egypt signed an MoU with Indian company 'Renew Power Private Limited' to build a 'Green Hydrogen' factory worth USD 8 billion in the Suez Canal Economic Zone.

Kuwait's 'Haitham Al-Ghais' will begin his new role as the Secretary-General of OPEC beginning August 1. Ahead of chairing his first OPEC+ meeting, Haitham Al-Ghais stressed "Russia's key role in OPEC+". As the crude prices continue to hover around USD 100/barrel, in an effort to court Saudi Arabia in bringing down the oil prices, French President Macron hosted Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Paris.

Amidst growing US-China tensions on Taiwan, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi, in conversation with Chinese President Xi Jinping, reiterated Tehran's "support for

the one-China policy" while rejecting "Washington's destructive policy of unilateralism", which is turning into a "threat to international peace and security". As the Iran nuclear talks remain stalled, Tehran's lead negotiator Ali Bagheri Kani stressed that Iran was working closely with JCPOA partners, especially the EU, to give the US another chance to conclude the talks swiftly. In the meantime, responding to the Israeli Army Chief's warning that Iran was increasing its military presence in the Red Sea, the Iranian Navy Chief asserted that his country would be present not just in the Red Sea and the Mediterranean but anywhere it wished or deems necessary.

The US strongly rejected Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei's tweet claiming that the "West was being controlled by the Zionist [Jewish/Israeli] Merchants". US Antisemitism envoy described Ali Khamenei's tweet as "egregious", while pro-Israel advocates renewed calls to ban his Twitter account.

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

Bahrain

[Deputy Chief of Indian Naval Staff visits CMF Headquarters in Bahrain](#)

July 28, 2022, ANI

Deputy Chief of Naval Staff visited the headquarters of Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) in Bahrain, which marks the initiation of the Indian Navy's 'Associate Support' to CMF in keeping with India's commitment to the collective responsibility of maritime security in the Indian Ocean.

[Each SCO Country Should Decide on Its Own Whether to Use Dollar: Russian FM Lavrov](#)

July 29, 2022, The New Indian Express

During the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Foreign Ministers meeting in Tashkent, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov suggested that each SCO member should decide whether they want to use the dollar for transactions. SCO is expanding its network and is set to sign pacts to include Egypt, Qatar, Bahrain, Maldives, and Saudi Arabia as dialogue partners.

Egypt

[Russia Aims to Oust Ukraine's Zelenskyy, Lavrov Tells Arab League](#)

July 25, 2022, Daily Sabah

Speaking to envoys at an Arab League summit in Cairo, Russian FM Lavrov said Moscow is determined to help Ukrainians "liberate themselves from the burden of this absolutely unacceptable [Zelenskyy] regime."

[Egypt: Muslim Brotherhood Rejects 'Struggle for Power,' Exiled Acting Leader Says](#)

July 31, 2022, Middle East Eye

Egypt's outlawed Muslim Brotherhood will not launch a new struggle for power with authorities (Egypt's military) which toppled it from government nine years ago, even though the movement still claims wide support, its acting leader Ibrahim Munir said.

[Indian Ambassador: India to Invest \\$700m in Egypt](#)

July 27, 2022, Arab News

India looks forward to pumping additional investments into Egypt amounting to about \$700 million in the coming few years, New Delhi's ambassador in Cairo has said.

[Egypt and India sign MoU to Build a Green Hydrogen Factory Worth \\$8 bn](#)

July 27, 2022, Reuters

Egypt has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with an Indian company to build a green hydrogen factory in the Suez Canal Economic Zone, a cabinet statement said.

Iraq

[Hundreds of Protesters Camp at Iraqi Parliament for a Second Day](#)

July 31, 2022, AL Jazeera

Supporters of Iraqi Shia leader Muqtada al-Sadr have erected tents and are preparing for a long sit-in at Iraq's parliament, deepening a months-long political standoff.

[Iraq Protests: 'De-Escalate' Urges UN Chief, Rise Above Differences](#)

July 31, 2022, UN News

In a statement, the UN chief appealed to all relevant actors "to take immediate steps to de-escalate the situation, avoid any further violence, and ensure the protection of peaceful protesters and state institutions".

Iran

[India, Iran Making Efforts for Linking Chabahar With INSTC](#)

July 31, 2022, Tribune India

The regional vision to make Shahid Beheshti Port at Chabahar a transit hub was reflected in the presence of diplomats of all five Central Asian Countries, Iran and Afghanistan along with a strong Indian contingent led by Ports Minister Sarbananda Sonowal at 'Chabahar Day' in Mumbai.

[India Welcomes Iran at the SCO Meet, Addresses Afghanistan Food Crisis](#)

July 29, 2022, Financial Express

At the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Foreign Ministers' meeting in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, India highlighted the importance of joint efforts in confronting global and regional challenges and expanding the forum.

[Iran to Sign SCO Commitments in Next Summit: Uzbekistan](#)

July 30, 2022, Tehran Times

The Uzbek acting foreign minister, Vladimir Norov, said that planning is underway for Iran to sign the documents needed for its full membership in the SCO at the next summit of the organization, which will be held soon.

[President Raisi Tells Xi Jinping: Iran Fully Backs 'One China' Policy against 'Destructive' US Unilateralism](#)

July 29, 2022, Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Islamic Republic of Iran

"Support for the One China policy is a definite and principled policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran," Raisi said in an hour-long phone conversation with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

[Iran, Russia Take Major Step Toward De-Dollarizing Mutual Trade](#)

July 30, 2022, Tehran Times

Iran's Integrated Forex Market launched the Ruble/Rial currency pair earlier this month, following a visit of Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Governor Ali Saleh-Abadi to Moscow.

[U.S. Eyes Sanctions Against Global Network It Believes is Shipping Iranian Oil](#)

July 31, 2022, The Wall Street Journal

The U.S. is considering sanctions that would target a United Arab Emirates-based businessman and a network of companies suspected of helping export Iran's oil,

part of a broader effort to escalate diplomatic pressure on Tehran as US officials push to reach a deal on Iran's nuclear program.

[Iran Says it Responded to EU Proposal Aimed at Salvaging 2015 Nuclear Deal](#)

July 31, 2022, Reuters

Iran has responded to top European Union diplomat Josep Borrell's proposal aimed at salvaging Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, and seeks a swift conclusion to negotiations, the top Iranian nuclear negotiator said.

[Iran Hits Back at Israel: We're Not Just Present in the Red Sea but Anywhere We Wish](#)

July 29, 2022, Iran Front Page

Iran's Navy commander responds to the Israeli army chief's comments on the Islamic Republic's increasing military presence in the Red Sea, saying the country will definitely be present not just in the Red Sea and the Mediterranean but anywhere else that it wishes or deems necessary.

Israel

[Israel Aerospace Industries \(IAI\) To Supply 67 Rotary Wing Drones to Indian Army for Deployment Along LoC](#)

July 14, 2022, Firstpost

Israel Aerospace Industries will supply 67 rotary-wing drones to the Indian Army for deployment along the Line of Control.

[US Calls Out Iran's Supreme Leader Khamenei for Claiming West Controlled by 'Zionist Merchants'](#)

July 29, 2022, The Times of Israel

Washington's antisemitism monitor tore into Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei after he tweeted that Western powers are a mafia controlled by "Zionist merchants."

[The US Says It Is Keeping Eye on Israel-Russia Spat Over Jewish Agency](#)

July 29, 2022, The Times of Israel

The US hopes that Israeli and Russian authorities will be able to reach an agreement that "preserves the ability of Jews in Russia to travel to Israel," a US State Department spokesperson told The Times of Israel.

[Senior US Official Admits Iran Nuclear Deal 'Highly Unlikely': Report](#)

July 28, 2022, AL Arabiya

Brett McGurk, the White House coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa, said that reaching a deal with Tehran was now "highly unlikely".

[Israel Sees Nuclear Deal with Iran as Inevitable](#)

July 29, 2022, AL Monitor

The working assumption according to which the Mossad is currently operating is that eventually, P5+1 will reach an agreement with Iran.

[Israel Slams UN Commission of Inquiry into Gaza Offensive](#)

July 30, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid announced that the comments of Miloon Kothari, a member of the United Nations (UN) Commission of Inquiry into the Israeli offensive on Gaza in 2021, "echo the darkest days of antisemitism".

Jordan

[Israel to Advance Joint Industrial Zone with Jordan](#)

July 31, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

Israel will accelerate the process of establishing the Jordan Gate, a shared industrial zone with Jordan, the cabinet decided.

Kuwait

[Haitham Al-Ghais Set to Start Role as First Kuwaiti OPEC Chief](#)

July 31, 2022, Arab News

Haitham Al-Ghais will begin his new role as secretary-general of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) on Monday (August 1).

[OPEC Secretary General Says Russia's Membership in OPEC+ is Vital](#)

August 01, 2022, The Economic Times

OPEC's new secretary general said that Russia's membership in OPEC+ is vital for the success of the agreement on crude production.

Lebanon

[Hezbollah Airs Video of Israeli Barges in Disputed Gas Field](#)

July 31, 2022, ABC News

Lebanon's Hezbollah aired drone footage of Israeli ships in a disputed gas field in the Mediterranean Sea, highlighting the tension at the centre of U.S.-mediated maritime border talks between Lebanon and Israel.

Oman

[Indian Army to Hold Exercises with Oman and Vietnam in August](#)

July 31, 2022, The New Indian Express

In its bid to bolster military ties, the Indian Army is scheduled to hold exercises with the Army personnel of Oman and Vietnam, the two countries which are strategically significant for India.

Qatar

[Iran, Qatar Hold Talks on Issues Surrounding Nuclear Deal](#)

July 31, 2022, Tehran Times

The foreign ministers of Iran and Qatar held a phone conversation during which they exchanged views on issues of mutual interest, including the situation around the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

Saudi Arabia

[French President Macron Hosts Saudi Crown Prince with Oil, Iran, Human Rights on Agenda](#)

July 28, 2022, Reuters

French President Emmanuel Macron hosted Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman as part of increased Western efforts to court the major oil-producing state amid the war in Ukraine and faltering talks to revive a nuclear deal with Iran.

[Integrated Middle East Defense System Still Only an Idea, Says US Official](#)

July 28, 2022, AL Arabiya

A senior US administration official said that there was no framework yet for an integrated Middle East air and missile defence system but that the US believes there is potential for a multilateral regional approach for security.

[Saudi Arabia Plans \\$1 Trillion Mirrored Skyscraper in Neom](#)

July 25, 2022, AL Jazeera

The structure, known as the Mirror Line, will be comprised of two glass reflective buildings measuring up to 488 metres (1,600 feet) high, running parallel for 120 kilometres (75 miles) across coastal, mountain and desert terrain.

[Saudi Crown Prince Says Neom Mega-Project to List in 2024](#)

July 26, 2022, Reuters

Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said his \$500 billion flagship project NEOM, a huge economic zone eventually meant to house nine million people, will be partly financed through a flotation expected in 2024.

[President Biden's Adviser: Saudi Arabia and UAE Have "More to Give" on Oil Production](#)

July 27, 2022, Axios

The White House Middle East coordinator Brett McGurk told a group of think tank experts last week that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are capable of increasing oil production even more.

[Former US Presidential Adviser Jared Kushner Reveals Rare Details About Ties with Saudi Crown Prince](#)

July 28, 2022, The Wall Street Journal

New memoir offers look at how the two men forged a friendly political alliance that deepened into a post-White House business partnership.

Syria

[Russia Fired S-300 at Israeli Jets Over Syria in a 'one-off' Incident, Defence Minister Gantz Confirms](#)

July 26, 2022, The Times of Israel

Defence Minister Benny Gantz confirmed that Russian forces opened fire on Israeli jets in May using advanced S-300 anti-aircraft missiles, at the end of an Israeli Air Force attack on targets in northwestern Syria.

[Alarm Bells' in Israel Over China Aid That Could Up Syria's Intel Capabilities](#)

July 31, 2022, Jewish News Syndicate

A new aid deal between China and Syria that will include the delivery of communications equipment to Damascus has set off "alarm bells" within the Israeli security establishment.

Türkiye

[Doubts Grow Over Turkey's Huge Discovery of Rare-earths](#)

July 27, 2022, Deutsche Welle

Turkey has announced the world's second-largest deposit of critical metals needed to build electric cars and wind turbines. But is the grade good enough and can Ankara end China's dominance? These are some of the key questions.

[First Shipment of Ukraine Grain to Leave Odessa Under Türkiye-brokered Deal](#)

August 01, 2022, TRT World

As part of a recent deal brokered by Türkiye, the first ship carrying Ukrainian grain is set to depart from the port of Odessa to Lebanon.

UAE

[India-UAE-France Hold Their Maiden Trilateral Meet](#)

July 28, 2022, The Economic Times

India-UAE-France held their maiden trilateral meet to explore potential cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region including in maritime security, blue economy, regional connectivity, and food and energy security.

[CCI Okays Blackrock and Mubadala's INR 4,000 cr Stake Acquisition in Tata Power's Renewable Energy Arm](#)

July 26, 2022, Mint

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved stake acquisition in Tata Power-backed renewable energy subsidiary, Tata Power Renewable Energy by BlackRock Real Assets-led consortium, including UAE's Mubadala Investment Company ("Mubadala").

[Now, UAE Residents Can Apply for Visas to Israel](#)

July 30, 2022, Khaleej Times

Residents in the UAE can apply for visas to travel to Israel starting from August 1, announced VFS Global, an outsourcing and technology services specialist for governments and diplomatic missions worldwide.

[More Indians Seeking a Home in UAE After Ease in Golden Visa Rules](#)

July 26, 2022, The Economic Times

The recent overhaul of the golden visa rules in the UAE has led to an increase in demand for luxury residences, as more Indians opt for a second home in Dubai and other emirates, according to property consultants.

Yemen

[Yemen Truce Extension Likely But 'War is Coming' Again, Southern Official Says](#)

July 29, 2022, Reuters

Yemen's warring parties are likely to agree on an extension of a truce but all sides are warily preparing for fresh hostilities, an official from southern Yemen's political leadership said.



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