



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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ABOUT US

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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

Indian External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, met his Emirati and Saudi counterparts on the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Minister's meeting in Indonesia underscoring the "upward trajectory" in relations. Meanwhile, Israel's Ambassador in New Delhi reiterated his country's interest in the 'Make in India' initiative, while flagging Tel Aviv's concerns over the violation of Intellectual Property (IP) norms in India.

Ahead of this week's "I2U2 Summit" comprising India, Israel, US, and UAE, reports pointed toward the forum intending to build on the 'Abraham Accords' "expanding regional partnerships specifically on energy, technology, and economic issues". Commenting on the Summit, former Israeli Ambassador to the United States, Danny Ayalon stressed that "Iran and China's threat is bringing the 'I2U2' countries closer; Washington is essentially combining the Chinese and Iranian threats in one forum, without paying for any assets such as deploying troops".

President Biden penned an article elaborating the objectives of his upcoming visit to the Middle East, promising a new chapter of engagement in the region advancing vital US interests. Underscoring Washington's emphasis on diplomacy, President Biden asserted that "he will be the first President to visit the Middle East without US troops engaged in a combat mission in the region, and he intends to keep it that way". Amidst reports of the Biden administration's push for an air-defence alliance between Israel and the Gulf states, Tehran warned that such a move will increase regional tensions.

As the final outcome of JCPOA talks remains uncertain, Iran has reportedly switched to the use of advanced centrifuges for uranium enrichment of up to 20 percent. Reacting to the development, Israeli Prime Minister, Yair Lapid asserted that expanding joint action to counter Iran will top President Biden's agenda during his visit to Israel. Signalling the warming of ties between Israel and Saudi Arabia, PM Lapid "extended his hand to all the countries in the region calling on them to establish relations with Israel that will change the history of the region". Ahead of President Biden's visit to Saudi Arabia, open-source intelligence reports pointed toward Washington discussing the possibility of resuming offensive arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

On the energy front, as the crude prices remain above USD 100/barrel heightening global concerns of a recession, the message from Saudi Arabia for President Biden is likely to be that the country has very little additional capacity to increase its crude output and that the US should not count much on Riyadh to help replace Russian oil. In another development, as per reports, India is unlikely to accept the G7 plan to cap Russian oil prices.

After a decade of conflict in Syria, marking Eid al-Adha, President Bashar al-Assad made his first visit to the war-torn northern city of "Aleppo" which his forces recaptured in 2016 with the help of Russia.

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

Bahrain

[Middle Eastern Nations Condemn Assassination of Former Japanese PM Shinzo Abe](#)

July 10, 2022, Middle East Monitor

A number of Middle Eastern states have condemned the assassination of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, hailing his contribution to the strengthening of Japan's relations with the region.

[Bahrain's King Praises Strong Ties with Russia](#)

July 08, 2022, Gulf Daily News

Bahrain's King Hamad has praised historical relations between Bahrain and Russia and expressed keenness to further develop bilateral relations at all levels.

Egypt

[India Working Towards Deeper Cooperation with Egypt; Builds Military-To-Military Cooperation](#)

July 09, 2022, The Financial Express

India is keen on keeping its geopolitical options open in a shifting global security landscape. New Delhi and Cairo are working towards deeper cooperation, especially in maritime security and defence.

[UN Warns of 'Looming Hunger Catastrophe' Due to Russian Blockade](#)

July 08, 2022, The Guardian

A looming hunger catastrophe is set to explode over the next two years, creating the risk of unprecedented global political pressure, the executive director of the UN World Food Programme has warned.

[Soaring Food Prices Put Damper on Eid Al-Adha in the Middle East](#)

July 08, 2022, Middle East Monitor

The Eid Al-Adha festival should be the busiest time of the year for Mahmoud Abu Holy, a livestock merchant in the Gaza Strip. But, soaring prices have driven away many of the people who would usually buy a sheep or goat to sacrifice on the Muslim holiday.

Iraq

[US Senator Lindsey Graham Meets Iraqi PM Mustafa Al Kadhimi in Baghdad](#)

July 05, 2022, The National News

The Iraqi Prime Minister's office said that during the meeting, Mr Al Kadhimi "welcomed the delegation and expressed willingness to strengthen bilateral relations and ways to develop the relations in economic, cultural and educational areas, in such a way that serves the interest of the Iraqi and American peoples".

[India Not Inclined to Accept G7 Plan to Cap Russian Oil Price](#)

July 06, 2022, The Hindu Business Line

India is not inclined to accept the G7 leaders' plan of placing a cap on the price of Russian oil as a means to limit the country's ability to fund the Ukrainian war, as the move could hurt its interests in case Moscow refuses to sell at the capped price due to possible losses.

Iran

[India, Iran to Activate New Shorter Corridor to Russia](#)

July 05, 2022, The Tribune

Indian Foreign Secretary, Vinay Kwatra, spoke to Ali Bagheri Kani, Iran's Deputy Minister for Political Affairs, the latest in a series of high-level talks in order to activate a shorter and sanctions-proof route between Russia and India. Almost a dozen countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus will benefit from the route.

[Iran Says US, Israeli Plan For Defence Pact With Arabs Will Raise Tensions](#)

July 09, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

Iran's Foreign Ministry said that plans by the United States and Israel for a joint defence pact with Arab states to counter the threat of Iranian drones and missiles would only increase regional tensions.

[Iran Switches to Advanced Centrifuges for Uranium Enrichment – IAEA](#)

July 09, 2022, Deutsche Welle

Iran has informed the UN agency that the country is using IR-6 centrifuges with "modified subheaders,". Tehran's declared purpose of the enrichment process is to create uranium isotopes enriched up to 20 percent.

[U.S. Tightens Sanctions on Iran, Targets Chinese, Emirati Firms Over Oil](#)

July 07, 2022, Reuters

The United States imposed sanctions on a network of Chinese, Emirati and other companies that it accused of helping to deliver and sell Iranian petroleum and petrochemical products to East Asia, pressuring Tehran as it seeks to revive the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

Israel

[Here's What to Expect from Virtual Summit of US, Israel, India and the UAE](#)

July 10, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

The idea behind I2U2 Summit is to build on the Abraham Accords to expand regional partnerships beyond the Middle East, specifically on energy, tech, and economic issues. But aside from the regional partnerships, former officials note, there are two countries in particular that are bringing the forum together – China and Iran.

[Want to Support 'Make in India', Says Israel, But Flags IP Concerns](#)

July 01, 2022, Business Standard

As India and Israel prepare for a Free Trade Agreement, Israel's envoy to India has expressed his country's desire "to share" technology and know-how for the success of Make in India, but at the same time expressed concerns over violation of Intellectual Property norms.

[Israeli PM Lapid Says Countering Iran Will Top Biden Visit Agenda](#)

July 10, 2022, AL Arabiya

Expanding joint action to counter Iran will top the agenda during US President Joe Biden's upcoming visit to Israel, Prime Minister Yair Lapid said, urging a "decisive" response to Tehran's nuclear ambitions.

[Israeli PM Lapid in Message to Saudi Arabia: 'We Reach Out for Ties with All Nations in Region'](#)

July 10, 2022, The Times of Israel

"Israel reaches out to all the countries in the region and calls on them to build ties with us, to establish relations with us and to change history for the sake of our children," he said.

[Israel Invokes French President Macron's 2018 Proposal on Iran, Wants Tougher Nuclear Talks](#)

July 05, 2022, Reuters

Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid urged French President Emmanuel Macron to revisit a 2018 proposal for a new Iran deal, saying the current diplomatic stalemate threatened a Middle East arms race.

[Israeli PM, Palestinian President Speak Ahead of Biden's Visit](#)

July 08, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Israeli Prime Minister, Yair Lapid, spoke over the phone with Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, first such call in five years.

[Busting Myths About the 'Israel Lobby,' US-Israel Alliance in a New Book by Walter Russel Mead](#)

July 08, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

A new book by Walter Russel Mead debunks myths about the American Left and Right's roles in supporting Israel and argues that Christians in the US played a more instrumental role in drumming up support for Zionism than American Jews did.

Jordan

[Lapid, Jordan's King Abdullah Discuss Ties, Upcoming Biden Trip in Phone Call](#)

July 10, 2022, The Times of Israel

Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid spoke by phone with Jordan's King Abdullah II to discuss the need for increased cooperation between the two countries and the upcoming trip to the region this week of US President Joe Biden.

[Amman Never Considers Iran as Threat, Welcomes Amicable Bilateral Relations: Jordan PM](#)

July 11, 2022, Press TV

Jordanian Prime Minister Bisher al-Khasawneh says his country has never regarded Iran as a threat to its national security and that it welcomes bilateral relations with Tehran.

Kuwait

[Arab-Israeli Alliance Faces Resistance from Iraq, Qatar, and Kuwait Amid Tel Aviv Push for Cooperation: Report](#)

July 07, 2022, Press TV (Iran)

Amid a push by the US and the Israeli regime to build an anti-Iranian coalition in the region, a report suggests that a number of Arab countries including Kuwait are against such an alliance.

Lebanon

[UNSC Calls for Swift Formation of Government in Lebanon](#)

July 08, 2022, Middle East Monitor

The United Nations Security Council called to expedite the formation of a new government in Lebanon, to implement the necessary reforms.

Oman

[ACME Group to Invest INR 1.5 Trillion in Green Hydrogen Over 7 Years; Seeks Tie-ups](#)

July 06, 2022, Business Standard

At a time when India is set to bring out a comprehensive green hydrogen mission, Gurugram-based ACME Group has said it is planning to invest about INR 1.5 trillion in green hydrogen and ammonia over seven years, for its upcoming units in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Oman.

[President Biden Seeks to Reset US Relations with Middle East Countries](#)

July 11, 2022, Times of Oman

US President Joe Biden's first official visit to the Middle East this week clearly shows that, in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the big energy crisis created for European countries, he has realised that Washington must reverse the US strategy of withdrawal from the Middle East and try to recalibrate his relations with regional leaders.

Qatar

[Israeli Military Officials Sent to Qatar as US Works To Bolster Security Cooperation](#)

July 08, 2022, Middle East Eye

Israeli military officials have secretly been dispatched to Qatar as part of a security reshuffle that places Israel in US Central Command's area of responsibility, current and former US and Gulf officials said.

Saudi Arabia

[Saudi Arabia's FM Prince Faisal Meets Indian Counterpart on G20 Sidelines](#)

July 07, 2022, AL Arabiya

The two leaders reviewed "aspects of Saudi-Indian relations in many areas of joint cooperation, and ways to support and enhance them," the Saudi Foreign Ministry said in a Twitter thread.

[Joe Biden: Why I'm Going to Saudi Arabia](#)

July 09, 2022, The Washington Post

President Biden writes about his upcoming visit to the Middle East promising a new chapter of America's engagement in the region advancing vital US interests.

[U.S. Weighs Possible Resumption of Offensive Arms Sales to Saudis](#)

July 11, 2022, Reuters

The Biden administration is discussing the possible lifting of its ban on U.S. sales of offensive weapons to Saudi Arabia, but any final decision is expected to hinge on whether Riyadh makes progress toward ending the war in neighbouring Yemen.

[With World in Energy Shock, Saudi Oil Cushion Gets Very Thin](#)

July 08, 2022, Middle East Monitor

When French President, Emmanuel Macron, whispered in Joe Biden's ear last month that top global oil exporter, Saudi Arabia, has very little additional capacity to increase output, the US President looked surprised. President Biden is likely to hear the same sobering message – do not count much on Saudi Arabia to help replace Russian oil.

[Shihana Alazzaz, First Female Deputy Secretary General of Saudi Cabinet](#)

July 03, 2022, Saudi Gazette

In another first, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, Saudi King Salman appointed Shihana Alazzaz as the Deputy Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers. Alazzaz has been serving as secretary general and general counsel of the PIF Board of Directors since August 2018.

Syria

[Syria's Assad Makes First Visit to Aleppo Since Recapture](#)

July 09, 2022, Reuters

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad marked the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha in Aleppo, his first visit to the northern city since his forces recaptured it in 2016 with help of Russia and other allied forces.

[Russia Vetoes UN Resolution Extending Cross-Border Aid to Syria](#)

July 08, 2022, AL Jazeera

Russia has vetoed a UN Security Council resolution that would have extended cross-border aid to Syria by one year without Damascus's backing.

Türkiye

[Turkey Stuck Between Iran and Israel](#)

July 09, 2022, Daily Sabah

Iran is unable to attack Israelis on Israeli land. To compensate for this, Tehran attempts to carry this war to third parties, most recently, Turkey.

[Israeli PM Lapid and Turkish President Erdogan Talk as Rapprochement Continues](#)

July 10, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan spoke on the phone, as relations between Tel Aviv and Ankara continued to improve.

[President Biden Willing to Work with Congress on F-16 Sales to Turkey: Official](#)

July 07, 2022, Daily Sabah

President Joe Biden is willing to cooperate with the US Congress on the renewal and modernization of Turkey's F-16 fighter jet fleet, according to a statement made by a State Department official.

UAE

[UAE, India Foreign Ministers Discuss Bilateral Relations on The Sidelines of G20 Ministers Meet in Bali](#)

July 09, 2022, Arabian Business

The Foreign Ministers of UAE and India have discussed ways of strengthening the historic relations between the two countries under the framework of the comprehensive strategic partnership.

[India-UAE CEPA Could Lead to Future Deals Between GCC and Delhi](#)

July 11, 2022, The Economic Times

Ahead of the maiden West Asian Quad (I2U2) Summit scheduled for July 14, UAE has noted that its Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with India could lead to new deals between New Delhi and the rest five GCC countries.

[UAE President Meets Senior Chinese Diplomat Yang Jiechi on Bilateral Ties, Cooperation](#)

July 01, 2022, Xinhua

Yang said that China regards the UAE, a comprehensive strategic partner, as the priority in its diplomacy in the Middle East.

Yemen

[Foreign Ministry Rejects UK Claim of Intercepting Yemen-Bound 'Iranian Arms Shipment'](#)

July 08, 2022, Press TV (Iran)

The Iranian Foreign Ministry strongly rejected the UK's claim of intercepting an Iranian arms shipment that was heading for Yemen earlier this year.



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