DPG WEST ASIA REVIEW

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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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Delhi Policy Group
Core 5A, 1st Floor,
India Habitat Centre,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003.
www.delhipolicygroup.org
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Abstract

Continuing the deepening India-Egypt partnership, External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar during his two-day visit (October 15-16) to Egypt met President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry. The two sides reflected on their deep-rooted ties in areas such as “defence and security”, “capacity building”, economic and commercial domains including “IT, energy, pharma, agriculture, infrastructure, cyber security, and SMEs”. New Delhi and Cairo also plan to explore opportunities in “new and renewable energy”, “trade and investment”, “education”, “tourism”, and “connectivity”.

India’s Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on October 11 co-chaired the 10th meeting of the India-UAE high-level Joint Task Force on Investments. Underscoring the strong momentum in bilateral relations, the two sides agreed to set up an “India fast track mechanism in UAE to resolve the issues faced by Indian businesses and investors”. They also agreed to explore “single-window solutions and virtual trade corridors to reduce time and cost in trade”. In another development, reportedly a consortium led by India’s ‘ONGC Videsh Limited’ is planning to acquire a 10 percent stake in UAE’s ‘Abu Dhabi National Oil Company’ (ADNOC).

Amidst the US-led West’s attempts to isolate Russia for the invasion of Ukraine, UAE’s President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Saint Petersburg on October 11. The two leaders discussed issues of mutual concern including the importance of engaging in constructive dialogue for resolving the Russia-Ukraine conflict. On his part, President Putin welcomed the OPEC+ decision to cut oil production as a key to stabilizing the global energy market. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia rejected Washington’s accusations that OPEC’s crude production cut underlines Riyadh’s support for Moscow. Saudi Defence Minister Khalid bin Salman highlighted his surprise at such claims as “OPEC+ decision to cut production was unanimous and was taken purely out of economic motives”.

On US-Iran relations, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) seems unsalvageable as Washington reiterated that “Tehran’s demands are unrealistic going well beyond the scope of the JCPOA”. Strengthening Iran-Russia strategic partnership, reports claim Tehran committing to supply surface-to-surface ballistic missiles to Russia for use against Ukrainian cities. Iran, on its part, reiterated that it “has not and will not” supply arms to Russia for use in Ukraine.
Among other major regional developments, ending a year-long political deadlock, the Iraqi Parliament elected Kurdish leader Abdul Latif Rashid as the country’s President. President Rashid has named Mohammed Shia Al Sudani as Iraq’s Prime Minister. Welcoming this, the United States called upon all parties to “refrain from violence and resolve differences peacefully through the political process”.

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

**OPEC+ Members Line Up to Endorse Output Cut After U.S. Coercion Claim**

October 16, 2022, Reuters

OPEC+ member states lined up to endorse the steep crude production cut agreed upon this month after the White House, stepping up a war of words with Saudi Arabia, accused Riyadh of coercing some other nations into supporting the move.

**OPEC Secretary General Says Oil Markets Are Going Through ‘Great Fluctuations’**

October 16, 2022, AL Arabiya

OPEC Secretary General Haitham al-Ghais said that “oil markets are going through a stage of great fluctuations”. Al-Ghais added that the goal of OPEC and producers outside the organization is to maintain market stability.
Egypt

India, Egypt to Now Explore Opportunities in Renewable Energy, Trade: External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar

October 16, 2022, Hindustan Times

India and Egypt have stepped up defence and security cooperation and will explore opportunities in renewable energy, trade, tourism and connectivity, External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar said in Cairo.
Iraq

Iraq: MPs Elect New President, Abdel Latif Rashid, As Rockets Fall on Baghdad
October 13, 2022, Middle East Eye
Iraqi MPs elected politician Abdul Latif Rashid as the new President in the fourth attempt to end the year-long political deadlock that has seen deadly violence and protests across the country.

U.S. Welcomes End of Iraq Deadlock After Parliament Elects New President, PM Named
October 13, 2022, Reuters
The United States said it welcomed the end of a deadlock in Iraq as its parliament elected Kurdish politician Abdul Latif Rashid as President, who then immediately named Mohammed Shia al-Sudani Prime Minister-designate.
Iran

US State Department Says Iran Nuclear Deal ‘Not Our Focus Right Now’
October 12, 2022, CNN
The Iran nuclear deal is “not our focus right now,” US State Department spokesperson Ned Price said, noting the administration was instead focusing on supporting the protesters in Iran as efforts to restore the nuclear deal have hit yet another impasse.

Iran Accuses ‘Great Satan’ US of ‘Inciting Chaos, Terror’
October 16, 2022, AL Jazeera
Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi accused United States President Joe Biden of “inciting chaos” after he expressed support for demonstrations against the death of Mahsa Amini, a woman who died in Iranian government custody.

Iran Plans to Send Missiles, Drones to Russia for Ukraine War, Officials Say
October 16, 2022, The Washington Post
Iran is strengthening its commitment to supply arms for Russia’s assault on Ukraine, according to U.S. and allied security officials, secretly agreeing to send not only attack drones but also what some officials described as the first Iranian-made surface-to-surface missiles intended for use against Ukrainian cities and troop positions.

EU Ministers To Discuss Potential Iran Sanctions for Lethal Drone Supply to Russia
October 15, 2022, The Times of Israel
Ministers from European Union countries will discuss potential future sanctions on Iran over its supply of suicide drones to Russia.

Haven't and Will Not Provide Weapons to Russia to be Used in Ukraine, Iran Says
October 15, 2022, Hindustan Times
Iran has once again rejected allegations that it has supplied Russia with weapons "to be used in the war in Ukraine", its foreign ministry said.

US President Reiterates Support for Iran Protests, Says ‘We Stand with Brave Women’
October 15, 2022, Times Now
US President Joe Biden reiteratd support for mass protests in Iran after the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in the custody of Iranian morality police.
Israel

5 Ways The Israel-Lebanon Maritime Deal Matters
October 12, 2022, CNN

Amid decades of hostility, Lebanon and Israel reached a historic maritime border deal, finally demarcating a disputed area in the Mediterranean Sea that is believed to be rich in oil and gas.

Palestinian Leader Abbas Meets Russian President Putin, Rules out US Mediator Role
October 13, 2022, AL Jazeera

Abbas voiced his support for the so-called “Quartet” of international mediators – Russia, the US, the United Nations and the European Union – but said the US could not be left a free hand to act alone to resolve the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Benjamin Netanyahu Reveals New Details on Mossad's Operations in Iran
October 16, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

Although significant aspects of Mossad's 2018 operations to seize Iran’s secret nuclear files were already previously revealed, there are some fascinating new reveals in former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s new book.

As the West Works on Ukraine’s Missile Defense Needs, Israel Shows No Sign of Pitching in
October 14, 2022, The Times of Israel

As the United States presses allies, including Israel, to hastily build for Ukraine a patchwork air defence network, there does not appear to be any change in the Yair Lapid government’s policy of refusing to provide military aid to Ukraine.

Palestinian Factions Agree to End Division Through Elections
October 13, 2022, Middle East Monitor

The announcement came as the factions met in Algeria to discuss ways to overcome the Palestinian division. However, there was scepticism back home that they would deliver any concrete changes after previous such promises of elections failed to materialise.
Hamas: 'To Maintain Palestinian Reconciliation, Fatah Should Not Listen to the US, Israeli Advice'

October 15, 2022, Middle East Monitor

The Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas recommended that Fatah should not listen to the US or Israeli advice in order to maintain an internal Palestinian reconciliation.
Jordan

**Jordan Campaign Warns of Deepening Gas Dependence on Israel**
October 10, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Jordanian National Campaign Against the Gas Agreement with the “Zionist Entity” (Israel) rejected the government’s retention of “deepening gas dependence” on Israel.

**Jordanians Take to the Streets in Solidarity with Al-Aqsa Mosque**
October 15, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Thousands of Jordanians staged a protest in downtown Amman in solidarity with Al-Aqsa Mosque and denounced Israeli provocations against worshippers at the Islamic compound.
Kuwait

Adarsh Swaika Appointed India's Next Ambassador to Kuwait

October 13, 2022, Business Standard

Dr. Adarsh Swaika, a joint secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, has been appointed India's next Ambassador to Kuwait.
Lebanon

**Lebanon’s President Approves Historic Israel Maritime Border Deal**

October 13, 2022, AL Jazeera

Lebanese President Michel Aoun has announced his country’s acceptance of the US-brokered maritime border deal with Israel, saying talks had come to “a positive end”.
Oman

India to Host UAE and Oman in All G20 Related Meetings in Run-up to Summit
October 13, 2022, The Economic Times

In a unique move, India has invited its close Gulf partners, the UAE and Oman to participate in all G20 meetings during its Presidency of the Group of Twenty major developed and developing economies in the world.
Qatar

Qatar’s Emir, Putin Discuss Ukraine Conflict’s Impact on Energy Markets  
October 13, 2022, Reuters

Qatar’s Emir and Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed the Ukraine crisis and its impact on energy markets during a meeting on the sidelines of a summit in Kazakhstan.

Qatar Shares ‘similar views’ to Turkey on Regional Issues  
October 15, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Qatar’s Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani shared that his country has “similar views” to Turkey regarding different regional issues.
Saudi Arabia

**Saudi Defence Minister Khalid bin Salman Rejects Accusations of Saudi Siding with Russia**

October 16, 2022, Saudi Gazette

“We are astonished by the accusations that the Kingdom is standing with Russia in its war with Ukraine. It is telling that these false accusations did not come from the Ukrainian government,” Saudi Defence Minister said in a statement on his Twitter account.

**Ukraine Thanks Saudi Arabia for UN Vote Against Russia Annexations**

October 13, 2022, AL Arabiya

Ukraine’s Ambassador to Saudi Arabia praised the Kingdom for voting in favour of a UN resolution that condemned the purported Russian annexation of Ukrainian territories.

**Saudi Arabia Announces $400m Humanitarian Aid to Ukraine**

October 14, 2022, Arab News

Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has announced $400 million in humanitarian aid for Ukraine.

**Saudi Arabia Said It Rejected US Demand to Delay Oil Production Cut**

October 13, 2022, India Today

Days after US President Joe Biden warned of consequences over an oil production cut, Saudi Arabia said it was "pressurised" by the Biden administration to delay the production cut. The US has not yet responded to Saudi Arabia’s claim.

**Biden Administration to 'Reassess' Relationship with Saudi Arabia, But not China**

October 12, 2022, Fox News

President Biden’s administration plans to "reassess" America’s relationship with Saudi Arabia, a move that could spark historic and global ramifications after the Saudis joined Russia in limiting oil exports last week.

**Biden Likely to Halt US Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia Amid OPEC Row**

October 14, 2022, Middle East Monitor

"I think you’ll see both the administration and the Senate take action, and one of the most likely actions is to stop any future arms sales," Sen. Chris Coons, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations and Appropriations Committees.
Syria

Russian Warplanes Hit Targets in Northwest Syria

October 15, 2022, AL Monitor

Russia has recently escalated its attacks in areas of Syria’s north-western province of Idlib, coinciding with clashes between Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and Syrian government forces in the area.
Türkiye

President Erdogan Says Turkey and Russia to Study Putin’s Gas Hub Proposal
October 14, 2022, AL Jazeera

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan says his government and that of Russia have instructed their respective energy authorities to immediately begin technical studies on a Russian proposal that would turn Turkey into a gas hub for Europe.
Russia’s Putin Hails Ties as He Meets UAE President

October 11, 2022, AL Jazeera

Russian President Vladimir Putin has hailed his country’s ties with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during a meeting with the Gulf state’s leader and welcomed a recent decision by oil-producing nations to limit production as a key to stabilising the global energy market.

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal: India, UAE Offer Numerous Prospects for Investments

October 11, 2022, Mint

Piyush Goyal and Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, a member of the Executive Council of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, co-chaired the 10th meeting of the high-level Joint Task Force on Investments between India and the UAE.

Consortium of Indian Oil Companies to Acquire 10 Percent Stake in UAE’s ADNOC

October 14, 2022, Business Standard

A consortium comprising several oil companies in India is reportedly eyeing a stake in a hydrocarbon asset of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC). The consortium is led by ONGC Videsh Ltd and includes companies like Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL), Bharat PetroResources (BPRL) and Oil India (OIL).

China, UAE Witness Fruitful Achievements Under BRI

October 13, 2022, Global Times

Ever since the UAE joined the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the two countries have witnessed their partnerships extend into many fields, ranging from trade and financial services to education and culture, and now to space cooperation.
Yemen

Yemen: End of Nationwide Truce Heralds ‘Heightened Risk of War’, Security Council Hears

October 13, 2022, UN News

New uncertainty and “a heightened risk of war” now prevails across Yemen, following the end of a long truce which brought significant dividends, the UN Special Envoy Hans Grundberg told the Security Council.