



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

As India assumed G20 Presidency for 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stressed that India will promote “human-centric globalisation” and a “universal sense of oneness under the theme one earth, one family, one future”. Deepening India – UAE space cooperation, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh addressed the ‘Abu Dhabi Space Debate’ on December 5.

Israeli President Isaac Herzog given his “love for India” visited an exhibition in Jerusalem featuring Indian deities. President Herzog described “India and Israel as natural allies united by a fundamental commitment to democratic ideals upon which the two nations were founded”. In India, Israel’s Ambassador Naor Gilon slammed Israeli filmmaker Nadav Lapid for his controversial remarks describing the film ‘Kashmir Files’ as “vulgar propaganda”. Tel Aviv expressed confidence that “the friendship between Israel and India is strong enough to survive the damage inflicted by Lapid. The film, Kashmir Files deal with the 1990 exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir Valley, owing to atrocities. Meanwhile, marking ‘International Day of Solidarity with the People of Palestine’, Prime Minister Modi reaffirmed India’s unwavering support for the Palestinian cause.

As the Ukraine conflict continues to rage, G7, Australia, and the European Union (EU) imposed a price cap of USD 60/barrel on Russian oil to curb Russia’s ability to finance the conflict. On its part, OPEC+ has decided to stick with its existing policy of reducing crude production by two million barrels per day from November 2022. Crude prices presently hover around USD 78/barrel.

Emphasising China’s growing engagement with the Middle East and the Arab world, President Xi Jinping is travelling to Saudi Arabia on December 7 for a two-day visit during which he will attend the ‘China-Arab Summit’ and ‘China-GCC conference’. As a prelude to the conference, China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a “Report on Sino-Arab Cooperation in a New Era”. Beijing denied that there was any power vacuum in the Middle East and stressed that the people of the region are the masters of their destiny. Adding, China will play a constructive role in the Middle East and will never seek geopolitical self-interest. Reacting to these developments, Pentagon has warned that, considering the sheer volume of oil and gas imports from Africa and the Middle East, China is planning military facilities that would allow the PLA to project and sustain military power in the region.

Amidst the ongoing women's rights protests in Iran, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian accused the U.S. of "causing chaos" to force Tehran to make concessions in stalled nuclear talks. Meanwhile, Iranian activists rejected reports that Tehran was disbanding morality police and considering changes in Hijab laws.

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

Bahrain

[Human-Centric Globalization The Focus of India's G20 Presidency](#)

November 30, 2022, Arab News

The previous 17 presidencies of the G20 delivered significant results – for ensuring macroeconomic stability, rationalizing international taxation and relieving the debt burden on countries, among many other outcomes. India will benefit from these achievements and build further upon them.

['Message of Peace': Herzog Lands In Bahrain For 1st State Visit By Israeli President](#)

December 4, 2022, The Times of Israel

President Isaac Herzog headed for Bahrain Sunday morning (December 4), kicking off a two-day visit to Israel's allies in the Persian Gulf region by meeting Bahrain's king and foreign minister.

Egypt

[Egypt, China Enjoy Strong Ties In Various Fields- Minister](#)

November 28, 2022, Egypt Independent

Finance Minister Mohamed Maait praised the Egyptian-Chinese ties as strong in various fields, especially in the economic domains, which have witnessed a remarkable development recently.

[Egypt Buys First Ukrainian Wheat Shipment Since Russian War Began](#)

December 3, 2022, AL-Monitor

Egypt's state grains buyer is believed to have bought 175,000 tons of Ukrainian wheat through private talks with suppliers. Trading sources said that the new wheat shipments include the General Authority for Supply Commodities' first purchases since the outbreak of Russia's war on Ukraine in February.

Iraq

[OPEC+ Agrees To Stick To Its Existing Policy of Reducing Oil Production Ahead of Russia Sanctions](#)

December 4, 2022, CNBC

OPEC and non-OPEC producers, a group of 23 oil-producing nations known as OPEC+, decided to stick to its existing policy of reducing oil production by 2 million barrels per day, or about 2% of world demand, from November until the end of 2023.

[G7 Price Cap On Russian Oil: All You Need To Know](#)

December 5, 2022, The Times of India

The Group of Seven nations, Australia, and the 27 European Union countries imposed on December 5 a price cap on Russian crude oil transported by ships, aiming to reduce Moscow's ability to finance its war in Ukraine and preserve stability on the global oil market.

[G7 Price Cap On Russian Oil Will Not Affect India: Hardeep Puri](#)

December 5, 2022, Mint

As the price cap on Russian seaborne crude oil comes into effect, union minister for petroleum and natural gas Hardeep Singh Puri has said that the move will not affect India as the country's exposure to Russian oil is not significant.

[Pentagon: China 'Significantly' Increased Efforts To Engage With Middle East In 2021](#)

November 29, 2022, AL Arabiya

China and its military "significantly" increased efforts to engage with Middle Eastern countries, according to a Pentagon report. The report on China's military, released annually, also warned that Beijing was on track to have 1,500 nuclear warheads by 2035.

[Iraq's Christians Were Victims of ISIS War Crimes, UN Report Finds](#)

December 2, 2022, The National News

Christians in Iraq were persecuted by ISIS, which forcibly transferred them, seized their property and subjected them to sexual violence and other "inhumane acts", a UN report has found.

Iran

[Iran No Longer Importing Tea and Basmati Rice From India, Says Report](#)

December 5, 2022, Business Standard

Iran has stopped signing all contracts to import tea and basmati rice from India. There is no clarification from Iran for the stoppage, but exporters believe that it is due to widespread anti-hijab protests in the country.

[Iran Locked Into 'Vicious Cycle' Over Protests and Arming Russia, Says US](#)

December 4, 2022, The Guardian

Iran's leadership has locked itself into a "vicious cycle" that has cut it off from its own people and the international community, US special envoy Rob Malley said, adding that Washington was more focused on Tehran's decision to arm Russia in Ukraine and the repression of its internal protests than on talks to revive the nuclear deal.

[Iran Accuses the US of Seeking to Cause Chaos to Force Concessions In Nuclear Deal](#)

December 5, 2022, Business Standard

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has accused the US, along with some other Western countries, of "seeking to cause chaos" in Iran to force its concessions in the talks on reviving a 2015 nuclear deal.

[Iran Disbands Morality Police, Considers Changing Hijab Laws, Official Says](#)

December 4, 2022, The Wall Street Journal

Iran's attorney general said the country had disbanded its so-called morality police and is considering altering the requirement that women cover their heads in public, a move that analysts said was aimed at peeling away support for anti-government protests.

[Iran Says Hijab Law Is Under Review, As State Media Dismisses Claims Morality Police Has Been Abolished](#)

December 4, 2022, CNN

A top Iranian official has said that the nation's mandatory hijab law is being reviewed, as state media played down the same official's claim that the country's much-feared morality police force had been "abolished" amid ongoing protests.

[Anti-Hijab Activists Deny Iran's Claim of Abolishing Its Morality Police](#)

December 5, 2022, NDTV

Campaigners backing Iran's protest movement dismissed a claim that the Islamic republic is disbanding its morality police, insisting there was no change to its restrictive dress rules for women.

[Iran Says Won't Resume Nuclear Talks 'Under Threat'](#)

December 5, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Iran said it will not accept the resumption of nuclear negotiations with the West under pressure or threat.

[Tehran, Moscow Develop Mechanisms To Boost Ties: Iranian Official](#)

December 5, 2022, Global Times

A senior Iranian diplomat said that Tehran and Moscow have developed frameworks and mechanisms for improving bilateral relations, according to the official news agency IRNA.

[Chinese Firm Selling Surveillance Tech To Iran Comes Under Scrutiny](#)

December 2, 2022, NBC News

As Iran tries to stifle anti-regime protests, human rights advocates and lawmakers are concerned Iranian authorities can draw on sophisticated video surveillance technology provided by a Chinese company that uses U.S. manufactured chips.

Israel

['Deterrence the American Way': The New B-21 Bomber Debuts](#)

December 3, 2022, Defence News

For the first time in a generation, the U.S. Air Force revealed a new stealth bomber: B-21 Raider.

[India, Israel 'Natural Allies', Share Democratic Ideals: President Herzog](#)

December 3, 2022, The Indian Express

India and Israel are "natural allies" who are united by a fundamental commitment to the democratic ideals upon which they were founded, Israeli President Isaac Herzog has said, as he made a rare appearance at an exhibition here featuring Indian deities and temple rituals.

[Kashmir Files: Israeli Envoy Naor Gilon Slams Lapid For Hurting Ties With India](#)

November 29, 2022, Hindustan Times

Israeli Ambassador Naor Gilon slammed Nadav Lapid for damaging their country's ties with India, saying he should be ashamed a day after the latter stoked a controversy by calling The Kashmir Files movie "vulgar propaganda".

[PM Narendra Modi Reaffirms India's 'Unwavering' Support To Palestinian Cause](#)

November 30, 2022, The Indian Express

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the people of Palestine, said in an official statement, "We have always supported the Palestinian people in their pursuit of economic and social development with dignity and self-reliance."

[US Warns PM Netanyahu; Vows To Oppose Israeli Settlements, Annexation In West Bank](#)

December 5, 2022, The Tribune

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken vowed to oppose Israeli settlement expansion or moving toward annexation of the West Bank and added that they will "gauge Israel's government by the policies rather than personalities".

[Iran Says It Has Executed 4 Alleged Mossad Agents Accused of Spying For Israel](#)

December 4, 2022, The Times of Israel

Iranian authorities executed four people accused of working for Israel's Mossad, the state-run IRNA news agency said. Three others received lengthy prison sentences.

[Israeli Security Minister Warns of New Palestinian Intifada](#)

December 2, 2022, Middle East Monitor

The Israeli Minister of Internal Security, Omar Barlev, warned the next government that changing the status quo of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in East Jerusalem will lead to a new "Intifada" (uprising) in Palestine.

[Alibaba Founder Said Living In Japan After China Tech Crackdown, Often Visits Israel](#)

December 1, 2022, The Times of Israel

Alibaba founder Jack Ma has been living in Tokyo for almost six months after disappearing from public view following China's crackdown on the tech sector. He makes "regular" trips to Israel and the US, as Alibaba Group has invested in over two dozen Israeli startups.

Jordan

[Jordan, India Explore Economic Cooperation](#)

December 4, 2022, Ammon News

Jordan's Minister of Investment Kholoud Saqqaf received the Indian Ambassador in Amman Anwar Haleem for a discussion on ways to cement trade ties between the two countries.

Kuwait

[NOC Issue: Thousands of Indian Engineers Face Job Loss In Kuwait](#)

December 1, 2022, The Hindu

A section of Indian engineers working in Kuwait has sought help from the Indian government over problems they have been facing in acquiring a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Kuwait Society of Engineers (KSE), which is mandatory to work there if the employee has graduated from a college that has not been accredited by the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) in India.

[Kuwait's Oil Minister: OPEC+ Decisions Based On Oil Market Data and Ensure Market Stability](#)

December 4, 2022, Reuters

OPEC+'s decisions are based on oil market data and ensure the market's stability, Kuwait's oil ministry said in a statement on state news agency KUNA, following a meeting where the group decided to continue its existing policy.

Lebanon

[Lebanon's Mikati Calls For 'Political Will' To Elect New President](#)

December 4, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Lebanon's caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati said that "political will" is required to end an impasse on the election of a new president.

[US Envoy Slammed For Wearing Hijab In Meeting With Hezbollah Supporters](#)

December 3, 2022, Iran International

Lebanese media have recently published a photo of Dorothy Shea wearing hijab during a meeting with Lebanon's Higher Shia Islamic Council members. One senior diplomatic source told the Washington Free Beacon that the act undermines the U.S.' efforts to support Iranian protesters who are against the clerical regime.

Oman

[Oman: India's Jindal Shadeed Plans \\$3bn Green Steel Plant](#)

December 4, 2022, Arabian Business

Jindal Shadeed will invest more than \$3bn to set up a green steel plant in Oman that will produce high-strength automotive products for customers in the Middle East, Europe and Japan.

[Remittances To India Set To Hit A Whopping \\$100 Billion Milestone This Year](#)

December 5, 2022, NDTV Profit

India is expected to receive a whopping \$100 billion in remittances in 2022, according to the World Bank's latest 'Migration and Development Brief'.

Qatar

[U.A.E. President Visits Qatar in Sign of Regional Thaw](#)

December 5, 2022, The Wall Street Journal

United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahyan visited Qatar for the first time since launching a three-year boycott of its Gulf neighbour, a sign of thawing regional tensions as the FIFA World Cup is held there.

Saudi Arabia

[China's Xi to Visit Saudi Arabia, Sources Say, Amid Frayed Ties With The U.S.](#)

December 5, 2022, CNN

Chinese President Xi Jinping is set to arrive in Saudi Arabia on Thursday (December 8) for a two-day state visit amid high tensions between the United States and the two countries, according to a source with knowledge of the trip, an Arab diplomatic source and two senior Arab officials.

[China Looks To Strengthen Arab Ties As U.S. Pivots From Middle East](#)

December 3, 2022, South China Morning Post

In an official document entitled "Report on Sino-Arab Cooperation in a New Era", China's foreign ministry stated the principles of China's policies towards the region.

Syria

[Turkey Asks For Understanding After US Warning Against Syria Incursion](#)

December 3, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

Turkey has told Washington that it should “understand” its NATO ally over a possible land operation into northern Syria to combat Kurdish forces after the US warned against such a move.

[Russia Requests Israel Not To Obstruct Equipment Transfer From Syria To Ukraine](#)

December 5, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Russia has reportedly requested Israel not to obstruct its transfer of military equipment from Syria to Ukraine, as Tel Aviv continues to strike areas in Syria and sits on the fence regarding Moscow's ongoing invasion.

Türkiye

[Pentagon Issues Warning After Turkish Airstrikes Threaten American Troops In Syria](#)

December 3, 2022, Fox News

The Pentagon has urged Turkey to stand down on its plan to invade Syria as the operation could endanger U.S. troops in the country.

[US Forces Resume Joint Patrols With SDF In North-East Syria, Amid Looming Turkish Operation](#)

December 5, 2022, Middle East Monitor

U.S. Forces have resumed joint operations and patrols with the Kurdish militias in northern Syria, after a short period in which they were halted due to an air bombardment campaign by Turkey.

[Pakistan PM Sharif, Turkish President Erdogan Jointly Inaugurate New Warship for Pakistani Navy](#)

November 26, 2022, The Indian Express

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan have jointly inaugurated a corvette warship built by Turkey for the Pakistani Navy under a strategic cooperation project.

UAE

[India, UAE Space Pacts To Take Big Leap In Arabian Peninsula: Jitendra Singh](#)

December 4, 2022, Mint

Union minister of state (independent charge) for science and technology Jitendra Singh has said that the joint space cooperation between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is on the verge of taking a big leap in the Arabian peninsula.

[UAE's President Sheikh Mohamed Receives President of Israel](#)

December 6, 2022, AL Arabiya

The two leaders discussed areas of collaboration between the UAE and Israel and their interest in promoting progress and stability across the region.

Yemen

[US Navy Says Trawler Carrying Arms Haul Was Bound for Yemen](#)

December 4, 2022, AL Jazeera

The United States Navy says it has intercepted a fishing trawler smuggling more than 50 tonnes of ammunition – including more than 1 million bullet rounds, thousands of rocket fuses, and a large amount of propellant for rocket-propelled grenades – in the Gulf of Oman.



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