



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](#).

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Abstract

India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations at the UNSC briefing on non-proliferation, called upon P5+1 and Iran to "continue dialogue and diplomacy for an early resolution of differences and return to full implementation of JCPOA" (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) aimed at curbing Iran's nuclear programme. The US, however, argued that the Iran nuclear program was "not on its agenda" as Tehran had "killed the opportunity for a swift return to mutual compliance with JCPOA".

India reiterated its call for direct negotiations between Israel and Palestine for a two-state solution that would lead to a lasting peace between the two sides. Meanwhile, UAE's Ambassador to India shed light on discussions between the two countries for trade settlement in Indian Rupee.

Ukraine's President Zelensky in an address to the US Congress slammed Iran for providing "hundreds of deadly drones" to Russia that are being used to target Ukraine's critical infrastructure. Iran rejected these "unfounded accusations" and called upon President Zelensky to "learn from the fate of some other US-supported political leaders" [a possible reference to Afghanistan's former President Ashraf Ghani].

Amidst the CIA's concerns over an emerging "full-fledged defence partnership" between Iran and Russia, open-source intelligence reports pointed to Moscow planning to supply 24 Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets to Iran. As the Ukraine conflict rages unabated, Turkish Defence Minister Hulusi Akar conceded that, despite Ankara's calls for a ceasefire, the conflict "will not end easily" and is "likely to continue in 2023".

On the energy front, in November 2022, Russia has reportedly overtaken Saudi Arabia as China's top crude supplier as importers secured more crude supplies ahead of the G7 Price Cap of USD 60 per barrel on Russian oil. Currently, crude prices continue to hover around USD 80 per barrel.

Among other regional developments, Jordan hosted high-level officials from France, the European Union, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Turkey, Egypt, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, and Iran for the second 'Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership'. Ahead of this conference, Washington reiterated its commitment to Iraq's stability.

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

Bahrain

[US is Building a Culture of Innovation in the Middle East](#)

December 23, 2022, The Daily Tribune - News of Bahrain

The importance of carrying out innovative efforts to maximize operations across Central Command (CENTCOM) by deploying new technology and concepts was highlighted by CENTCOM Commander Gen. Kurilla.

Egypt

[Egypt Said Stalling Implementation of Red Sea Island Transfer to Saudi Arabia](#)

December 23, 2022, The Times of Israel

Egypt is reportedly holding up the transfer of a pair of Red Sea islands to Saudi Arabia, months after the Biden administration was believed to have finalized a deal that included Riyadh opening up its airspace to Israeli airliners.

[Egypt Replaces Russia as Fertilizer Supplier to Europe](#)

December 23, 2022, Zawya (Refinitiv)

Egypt has replaced Russia's place as a supplier of fertilizers to the European markets, with exports worth €1.5 billion in the first 10 months of 2022.

Iraq

[Mideast, Europe Leaders Meet in Jordan on Security in Iraq](#)

December 20, 2022, Arab News

Leaders from the Middle East and Europe gathered in Jordan Tuesday (December 20) in a conference focused on bolstering security and stability in Iraq.

[Iraq Tells Visiting Italian PM It Seeks Closer Economic Ties](#)

December 24, 2022, Arab News

Iraq's Prime Minister appealed to visiting Italian counterpart Giorgia Meloni for closer economic ties with his country suffering from power cuts and decaying infrastructure.

[US Renews Commitment to Support Iraq's Stability](#)

December 19, 2022, Asharq Al-Awsat

The United States has renewed its commitment to support Iraq's stability ahead of the second Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership.

Iran

[India Reiterates its Support for Full and Effective Implementation of Resolution 2231 and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action](#)

December 19, 2022, Official Twitter Handle India at UN, NY

[Iran Warns Ukrainian President Zelensky To Stop Saying It Gives Russia Drones: 'Patience Not Endless'](#)

December 22, 2022, The Times of Israel

Iran hit out at Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky for his continued accusations – backed by the US and Europe – that the Islamic Republic is providing attack drones to Russia for mass use in strikes on Ukraine.

[Russia to Supply Iran With 24 Sukhoi Su-35 Fighter Jets - Western Intelligence](#)

December 25, 2022, i24 News (Israel)

Western intelligence sources who monitor security deals between Iran and Russia say Moscow will soon provide a full squadron of Sukhoi Su-35 Fighter Jets to the Islamic Republic.

[Mossad Chief: Iran Could Soon "Widen and Broaden" Weapons Shipments to Russia](#)

December 23, 2022, Axios

Mossad Director David Barnea said Israel has intelligence that shows Iran is secretly planning to soon "widen and broaden" its shipments of sophisticated weapons to Russia for the war in Ukraine.

[Iran Says Ready For Nuclear Agreement 'If Red Lines Are Respected'](#)

December 21, 2022, Anadolu Agency

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said the parties to the 2015 nuclear deal are "returning to realism," adding that Tehran will take a final step if its "red lines are respected."

[No Iran Deal While Tehran Kills Protesters, Sells Drones To Russia - US](#)

December 21, 2022, The Jerusalem Post

A nuclear deal with Iran is not possible as long as Tehran kills its own citizens and sells armed drones to Russia, US National Security Council Strategic Communications Coordinator John Kirby told reporters in Washington.

Israel

[Benjamin Netanyahu Forms New Government in Israel](#)

December 22, 2022, The Statesman

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu notified President Isaac Herzog that he had managed to form a government after 38 days of coalition negotiations.

[India Reiterates Support for Two-State Solution for a Lasting Peace Between Israel and Palestine](#)

December 20, 2022, Official Twitter Handle India at UN, NY

[Israel Grounds 11 F-35 Jets After US Fighter Crashes During Test](#)

December 25, 2022, The Times of Israel

The Israeli Air Force said it had grounded 11 of its F-35 stealth jets after a similar model of the plane crashed during a test flight in the United States earlier this month.

[UAE-Israel Trade More Than Doubles In 11 Months of 2022](#)

December 21, 2022, Zawya (Refinitiv)

Bilateral trade between the UAE and Israel has more than doubled in the first 11 months of this year, helped by the signing of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

Jordan

[Jordan's King Asserts Importance of France's Support of Two-State Solution](#)

December 22, 2022, Asharq Al-Awsat

The Jordanian monarch, King Abdullah II, stressed the importance of the supporting positions of France and the European Union for peace efforts based on the two-state solution between Israel and Palestine.

Kuwait

[Chinese Ambassador to Kuwait Zhang Jianwei Gives an Exclusive Interview to Kuwait's Al-Jarida Newspaper on China-Arab States Summit and China-GCC Summit](#)

December 21, 2022, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs

China's Ambassador to Kuwait Zhang Jianwei elaborates on the first China-Arab States Summit and China-GCC Summit as well as other matters including China-Kuwait relations.

Lebanon

[French President Emmanuel Macron Urges Lebanon To 'Get Rid' of Leaders Blocking Reforms](#)

December 23, 2022, Arab News

French President Emmanuel Macron called on Lebanon to "get rid" of its political leaders who have for months blocked reforms vital to save its stricken economy.

Oman

[Houthis: Oman Delegation In Sanaa To Convey Saudi Truce Proposals](#)

December 22, 2022, Middle East Monitor

Chief negotiator of Yemen's Houthi group, Muhammad Abdul Salam, said an Omani delegation visited the capital Sanaa to convey proposals put forward by Saudi Arabia and international parties.

Qatar

[Qatar Reinstates Visa-On-Arrival For Indian Travellers](#)

December 25, 2022, The Economic Times

Qatar has reinstated its visa-on-arrival policies, replacing the Hayya card it had introduced for the FIFA World Cup.

[Qatar Expresses "Extreme Concern" Over Taliban Bar On Female Staff](#)

December 26, 2022, Moneycontrol

Qatar expressed "extreme concern" over the order by Afghanistan's Taliban-run administration to stop female employees from working, calling on the administration to review its decision, a foreign ministry statement said.

Saudi Arabia

[Suhel Ajaz Khan Appointed India's Ambassador To Saudi Arabia](#)

December 24, 2022, Mint

Suhel Ajaz Khan, presently India's Ambassador to Lebanon has been appointed as the next envoy to Saudi Arabia.

[Russia Overtakes Saudi Arabia As China's Top Crude Supplier In November 2022](#)

December 20, 2022, Arab News

China's crude oil imports from Russia rose 17 percent in November from a year earlier, as Chinese refiners rushed to secure more cargoes ahead of a price cap imposed by the Group of Seven nations on Dec. 5.

[Iran's Foreign Minister Holds 'Friendly Talks' with Saudi Arabia](#)

December 21, 2022, Financial Times

Iran's foreign minister said that he held talks with his Saudi counterpart at a regional conference in a sign that Tehran is seeking to ease tensions with its arch-rival as it cracks down on months of protests in the Islamic republic.

[Oil Prices Jump After Russia Says It May Cut Production](#)

December 23, 2022, Oilprice.com

After two weeks of silence in detailing how it would react to the G7 oil price cap, the Kremlin raised the stakes for the west when state-run TASS news service quoted Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak as saying that Russia may reduce output by 500,000 to 700,000 barrels a day in response to the cap.

Syria

[U.S. Steps Up Raids Against Islamic State Militants in Syria](#)

December 25, 2022, The Wall Street Journal

The Pentagon said it has stepped up raids against Islamic State in Syria, conducting nearly a dozen risky helicopter and ground operations to kill or capture top militant operatives.

[US Calls On Syria Regime To 'Constructively' Participate In Constitutional Committee Meetings](#)

December 23, 2022, Middle East Monitor

The United States Alternate Representative for Special Political Affairs to the United Nations Robert Wood has called on the Syrian regime of Bashar Al-Assad to "constructively" participate in the Syrian Constitutional Committee meetings.

Türkiye

[Turkey Says Ukraine War 'Will Not End Easily, Likely to Continue in 2023'](#)

December 25, 2022, News 18

Turkey conceded that Russia's war on Ukraine "will not end easily", despite Ankara's repeated efforts to arrange peace talks between Kyiv and Moscow.

[Turkey in Talks With Russia About Using Syrian Airspace In Potential Operation](#)

December 25, 2022, WION

Turkish Defence Minister Hulusi Akar said that Turkey is in talks with Russia to use the airspace above northern Syria. The talks are for a potential cross-border operation against the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia.

UAE

[India, UAE in Talks To Trade In Rupee, Partner on Defence Tech: UAE Envoy](#)

December 23, 2022, Mint

India and UAE are discussing using the rupee settlement mechanism for trade, UAE's Ambassador to India Abdalnasser Alshaali said.

[India, UAE Announce Top University IIT Will Come To Abu Dhabi: Report](#)

December 21, 2022, Arabian Business

Abu Dhabi will soon be home to one of India's most prestigious universities – the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT).

Yemen

[Saudi Arabia Signs \\$20 Million Agreement With WFP To Support Food Security in Yemen](#)

December 24, 2022, AL Arabiya

Saudi Arabia's humanitarian arm signed a \$20 million agreement with the World Food Program (WFP) to enhance food security in Yemen. The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief) aid is expected to benefit 524,849 people, according to a report by the Saudi Press Agency.



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