

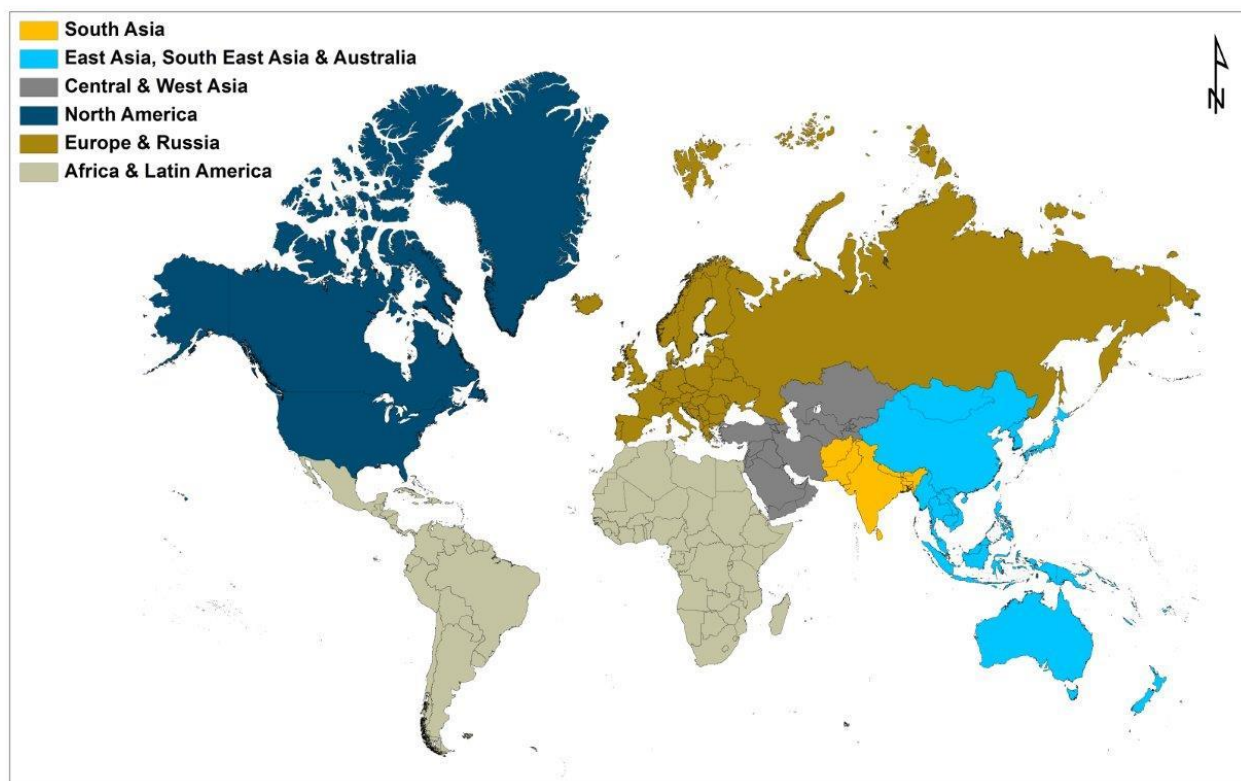


Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH



Volume VI, Issue 8 | February 21, 2022

Delhi Policy Group

Core 5A, 1st Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003

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ABOUT US

Founded in 1994, the Delhi Policy Group (DPG) is among India's oldest think tanks with its primary focus on strategic and international issues of critical national interest. DPG is a non-partisan institution and is independently funded by a non-profit Trust. Over past decades, DPG has established itself in both domestic and international circles and is widely recognised today among the top security think tanks of India and of Asia's major powers.

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DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH

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South Asia

India

[Indian Navy test fires BrahMos supersonic cruise missile](#)

February 18, 2022, The Economic Times

Indian Navy's warship INS Visakhapatnam carried out the test-firing of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile off the western seaboard today.

[A spectacular glimpse of what's to come at Indian Navy's two major events in Visakhapatnam](#)

February 18, 2022, The Hindu

The ships are lined up in columns along the Visakhapatnam coast; the Beach Road wears a sparkling new look with every nook and corner getting a makeover. It is a grand spectacle in the coastal city as Visakhapatnam gears up to host two major events — the Presidential Fleet Review (PFR) to be held on February 21 and MILAN Naval Exercise that will be held from February 24 to March 4.

[Indian Navy to showcase its might at Milan from Feb 25](#)

February 19, 2022, Deccan Chronicle

Indian Navy is getting set to showcase its technological prowess and indigenization forays at Milan, the high-profile international naval exercises beginning both onshore and offshore here from February 25 to March 4.

["Very Difficult Phase": External Affairs Minister On India-China Ties](#)

February 20, 2022, NDTV

On India-China ties, foreign minister S Jaishankar said that India had agreements with China not to bring military forces to the border, but China violated those agreements.

[State of border will determine relationship with China, says S Jaishankar](#)

February 19, 2022, India Today

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday said that India's relations with China are going through a "very difficult phase" and the state of the border will determine the state of New Delhi's relationship with Beijing.

Pakistan

[Army chief holds rare same-day talks with President Alvi, PM Imran](#)

February 15, 2022, Dawn

Chief of the Army Staff Gen Qamar Bajwa met President Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Imran. Although the army chief's meeting with the prime minister took place on the sidelines of the apex committee on Afghanistan's session, it is rare for an army chief to meet both heads of the state and the government on the same day.

[Pakistan, India agree on wheat supply to Kabul](#)

February 13, 2022, The News

Matters pertaining to supply of wheat and medicines to Afghanistan through Pakistan have been finalized. Transport of 50,000 tonnes of wheat from India to Afghanistan will start on Feb 22, 2022.

[Pakistan, Iran form joint working group on border issues](#)

February 15, 2022, Dawn

Pakistan and Iran established a joint working group of their interior ministries to deal with border-related matters. The group was set up during a daylong visit of Iranian Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi.

[There's no alternative to Taliban, Imran Khan tells US](#)

February 14, 2022, Dawn

Prime Minister Imran Khan urged the United States to recognise the Taliban government in Kabul, reminding American policy makers that "there's no alternative to the Taliban".

[UK court acquits MQM founder in terrorism case](#)

February 16, 2022, The News

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) leader Altaf Hussain has been found not guilty of encouraging terrorism in Karachi from London contrary to the UK's section 1(2) of the Terrorism Act 2006. In a huge relief and a massive personal victory for the exiled MQM leader, a jury of 12 declared that Altaf Hussain had not been involved in encouraging acts of terrorism.

[Lynching horror visits Khanewal](#)

February 13, 2022, Dawn

A middle-aged man was stoned to death by a mob over alleged desecration of the Holy Quran in a remote village of Khanewal district. The killing comes on

the heels of an identical incident in Sialkot, where a Sri Lankan engineer was lynched by factory workers on Dec 3 last year on blasphemy charges.

[CPEC body for vacating Gwadar land](#)

February 19, 2022, The Express Tribune

The Cabinet Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has conditioned the surrendering of 20 acres of prime land in Gwadar in favour of Pakistan Navy on the written consent of Chinese operators after the Navy refused to vacate the land due to "security reasons".

[Shehbaz Sharif, Jahangir Tareen secretly met to discuss ousting of PM Imran Khan](#)

February 19, 2022, The News

Opposition leader and PMLN President Shehbaz Sharif held a secret meeting with PTI's estranged but influential leader Jehangir Khan Tareen. The two leaders met a few days ago to discuss the Imran Khan government and its fate.

[Pakistan has one of lowest trade-to-GDP ratios in world: ADB](#)

February 13, 2022, Dawn

Pakistan exhibits one of the lowest trade-to-GDP ratios in the world showing at just 30 per cent. However, it is not all doom and gloom and the country has a lot of room for improvement, according to the Asian Development Bank (ADB). One viable strategy that Pakistan can adopt to boost its growth is to further open its economy to trade. At just 30pc, Pakistan exhibits one of the lowest trade-to-GDP ratios in the world, even when taking its size into account, the ADB says in its report titled 'Pakistan's Economy and Trade in the Age of Global Value Chains'.

Afghanistan

[Afghan funds cannot be released yet: US](#)

February 15, 2022, Dawn

The Biden administration cannot yet release half of the \$7 billion it has set aside for Afghanistan as it involves a lengthy judicial process, says a senior US official. US President Joe Biden issued an executive order, saying that half of this fund would go to a trust fund the administration would set up for humanitarian relief in Afghanistan. The other half would be kept for compensating the victims of the Sept 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States.

[Arab states stress women's rights to Taliban in aid talks](#)

February 15, 2022, Dawn

Gulf envoys stressed that women must be able to work and go to school, in talks with the Taliban foreign minister as Afghanistan's hard-line Islamic rulers made a new bid to unblock foreign aid.

[Taliban detain UNHCR staff, two foreign journalists](#)

February 12, 2022, Dawn

The Taliban have detained two foreign journalists on assignment with the UN refugee agency and a number of its Afghan staff working in the country's capital, UNHCR. The development in Kabul comes as President Joe Biden was expected to issue an executive order that would allow US financial institutions to facilitate access to \$3.5 billion of assets for Afghan aid.

[UK to host Afghan fundraising summit](#)

February 16, 2022, Dawn

Britain said it would co-host a virtual UN summit aimed at raising billions to avert a "devastating" humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan after the Taliban seized power.

[Wider ramifications of developments in Afghanistan to Central Asia: India at UN](#)

February 17, 2022, Hindustan Times

India warned about the developments in Afghanistan having wider ramifications in the Central Asia region. TS Tirumurti, India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, drew the UN Security Council's attention towards the threat of possible growth in international terrorism and drug trafficking following the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan.

[Fear runs through Afghanistan's 'hazardous' media landscape](#)

February 17, 2022, Hindustan Times

Fear accompanies reporter Banafsha Binesh from the moment she leaves her Kabul home each morning for the newsroom at Afghanistan's largest television station. It starts with the Taliban fighters, who roam the streets of the capital with weapons slung over their shoulders. Binesh, 27, says she is frightened by their reputation of harshness toward women, rather than any unsavoury encounter. Dread and uncertainty mount with every new report of a fellow journalist having been detained, interrogated or beaten by Taliban fighters.

[After protest in UAE: US officials meet Afghans to discuss potential resettlement](#)

February 14, 2022, The News

US officials in the United Arab Emirates met with Afghans after a protest in Abu Dhabi this week and discussed their "potential" transfer to the United States.

Bangladesh

[India, Bangladesh stress on improving bilateral ties](#)

February 20, 2022, Hindustan Times

India and Bangladesh have stressed strengthening the bilateral ties by amplifying the water transport and also lifting curbs on cross-border movement by road.

[India and Bangladesh officials inspect Feni river project](#)

February 20, 2022, The Hindu

A joint committee comprising officials from India and Bangladesh conducted an on-the-spot inspection of irrigation and drinking water projects linking the Feni river in south Tripura. A section of the river demarcates the border and demands intervention from both governments, should there be a development initiative and dispute.

[Bangladesh foreign secretary to visit India soon for talks, opening of Chennai mission](#)

February 14, 2022, Hindustan Times

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, Bangladesh had emerged as the largest source of foreign tourists for India, with some 2.5 million people visiting the country in 2019. Tens of thousands of Bangladeshi visitors travel to south India for medical treatment, and this was one of the key reasons behind the decision to open the new mission in Chennai.

Nepal

[Nepal has adopted the digital payment platform backed by the Indian government](#)

February 18, 2022, Quartz

The popularity of India's digital payment platform Unified Payment Interface, or UPI, has got another country hooked.

[US believes China behind delay of \\$500m grant project in Nepal](#)

February 14, 2022, Hindustan Times

Washington has warned top Nepalese leadership that the failure to meet commitments on the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) compact could affect bilateral relations

Sri Lanka

[Sri Lanka's fertiliser sell out to China](#)

12 February 2022, East Asia Forum

Sri Lanka teeters on the edge of a grim economic precipice, entering 2022 with foreign currency reserves sufficient only for a single month of imports. Domestic inflation rose to a decade-high record in 2021 following a surge in food prices triggered by import restrictions, a significant drop in the Sri Lankan rupee value and the government's decision to print more money.

[Sri Lankan HC clears police, defence chiefs over Easter bombings](#)

February 18, 2022, The Hindu

They allegedly failed to act on Indian warnings that local jihadists were planning suicide bombings in April 2019. Sri Lanka's High Court on Friday acquitted two top officials accused of "crimes against humanity" for failing to prevent the 2019 Easter Sunday bombings that killed 279 people.

East & South East Asia

China

[China opposes 'coercive diplomacy' of US in pushing MCC compact in Nepal](#)

February 18, 2022, Global Times

Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin said China opposes "coercive diplomacy," during a press conference on Friday, commenting on news that the US urged Nepal to endorse the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) by February 28.

[US urged to evaluate Chinese companies' efforts in IPR after releasing Notorious Markets List](#)

February 18, 2022, Global Times

We urge the US to stop politicizing economic and trade issues, and evaluate Chinese companies' efforts and achievements in intellectual property rights (IPR) in a comprehensive, objective and fair manner, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said, a response after the US added sites operated by Alibaba and Tencent to its "Notorious Markets List."

[China concerned with India's suppression of Chinese companies: ministry](#)

February 17, 2022, Global Times

China has serious concerns over India's recent suppression of Chinese firms and their products, and India is urged to improve business environment and treat all foreign investors in a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory manner, the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) said.

[India's ban on Chinese apps is a self-destructive move](#)

February 16, 2022, Global Times

India reportedly issued a new ban on 54 Chinese apps and directed top app stores to block them in the country, recklessly remaining down the wrong path of escalating economic tensions with China.

[Tunisia, China sign 4-year implementation plan for cultural cooperation](#)

February 19, 2022, Xinhua

Tunisia signed a four-year implementation plan with China to promote cultural cooperation in areas such as cinema and cultural digitalization.

[China remains Germany's most important trading partner in 2021](#)

February 18, 2022, Xinhua

For the sixth year in a row, China was Germany's most important trading partner in 2021, the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis) said.

[Xi Jinping congratulates meeting marking 65th anniversary of China-Sri Lanka diplomatic ties](#)

February 17, 2022, CGTN

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday sent a congratulatory letter to a meeting of Chinese and Sri Lankan political parties, marking the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries and the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Rubber-Rice Pact.

[MOFCOM: India's suppression of Chinese firms seriously harms their legitimate rights, interests](#)

February 17, 2022, CGTN

India's suppression of Chinese firms caused serious harm to their legitimate rights and interests, the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) said.

[China urges European Parliament to stop political stunts over Hong Kong](#)

February 18, 2022, CGTN

The Office of the Commissioner of the Chinese Foreign Ministry in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) on Friday strongly disapproved of and firmly rejected the 2021 annual report on the implementation of the common foreign and security policy released by the European Parliament.

Japan

[Japan is India's 5th largest investor, 114 Japanese companies currently operate across India](#)

February 14, 2022, The Print

Japan, India's fifth-largest investor, has contributed over USD 36.2 billion in cumulative investments since 2000, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry informed.

[Japan Calls for Tough Response on Ukraine, Saying China Is Watching](#)

February 15, 2022, The Wall Street Journal

Japan said democratic nations should take a tough line if Russia invades Ukraine, because a failure to do so would embolden others, such as China, that want to exert control over their neighbours. "If something happens on the

Ukraine border, that outcome might affect other people's calculations in Asia," Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi said in an interview. "We have to be very solid on this issue."

[Japan venture to build country's first nuclear fusion power plant](#)

February 14, 2022, Japan Today

A western Japan venture plans to build the first experimental plant in the country to generate power through nuclear fusion, the company said, as the technology is drawing attention as a new way of producing energy without emitting carbon dioxide.

[Kishida urges Putin to stick with diplomacy to end Ukraine crisis](#)

February 17, 2022, The Japan Times

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Thursday urged Russian President Vladimir Putin to find a diplomatic solution that is "acceptable" to the countries concerned amid fears that Russia may invade neighbouring Ukraine.

[Japan PM Kishida hints at invoking 'trigger clause' to cut gas taxes amid sky-high prices](#)

February 19, 2022, The Mainichi

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has hinted that the government could invoke a trigger clause to temporarily cut gasoline taxes and reduce Japan's soaring pump prices.

[Japan's ruling party pushes to lift entry ban for foreign students](#)

February 15, 2022, Nikkei Asia

Members of Japan's ruling party on Monday crafted a resolution urging the government to allow foreign students to enter again, warning that the country will be left out of the global race to secure talent. The document, drawn up by the Liberal Democratic Party's education division, calls for easing border controls imposed in response to the omicron variant of the coronavirus. It will be submitted Tuesday to the prime minister's office and Education Minister Shinsuke Suematsu.

[Japan GDP rebounds to annualized 5.4% rise in October-December](#)

February 15, 2022, Nikkei Asia

Japan's economic growth rebounded 1.3% in October-December from the preceding three-month period, or an annualized rate of 5.4%, data from the Cabinet Office showed on Tuesday, recovering from a slump caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. For 2021, the data on gross domestic product -- the broadest measure of a nation's economic activity -- showed that the world's

third-largest economy grew 1.7%, marking the first expansion in three years. The economy contracted 4.5% in 2020 and 0.2% in 2019.

[Japanese economy on edge over possible commodity hikes due to Ukraine crisis](#)

February 20, 2022, The Japan Times

Moscow's military build-up around Ukraine's border is stoking fears about its potential impact on the economy of import-reliant Japan amid speculation a Russian invasion may further pressure elevated crude oil and commodity prices. The Ukraine crisis has also brought uncertainties to Tokyo's stock market, with some brokers expecting a Moscow-led offensive would send the benchmark 225-issue Nikkei stock average below the 26,000 mark from recent levels of around 27,000.

[Approval rate for Kishida's Cabinet falls to 43.4% amid omicron coronavirus wave](#)

February 18, 2022, The Japan Times

Amid an unprecedented nationwide surge of COVID-19 cases, the approval rate for Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's Cabinet dropped 8.3 percentage points from the previous month to 43.4% in February, a monthly opinion poll by Jiji Press showed. The disapproval rate rose 6.6 points to 25.3%, while the proportion of respondents who said that they did not know came to 31.2%, up 1.6 points, according to the survey, conducted over four days through Monday.

Korea

[U.S., Japan, South Korea urge North Korea to cease 'unlawful activities'](#)

February 13, 2022, Nikkei Asia

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met his Japanese and South Korean counterparts Saturday in Hawaii to discuss the threat posed by nuclear-armed North Korea after Pyongyang began the year with a series of missile tests. Blinken said at a news conference after the meeting that North Korea was "in a phase of provocation" and the three countries condemned the recent missile launches.

[South Korean, Chinese nuclear envoys hold phone talks over North Korea](#)

February 18, 2022, The Korea Times

South Korea's top nuclear envoy held phone talks with his Chinese counterpart Friday and called for Beijing's "constructive" role to resolve the North's nuclear issue, according to Seoul's foreign ministry. Noh Kyu-duk, special representative for Korean Peninsula peace and security affairs, and China's Liu

Xiaoming shared their assessments on the situation surrounding the Korean Peninsula and agreed to continue close cooperation to keep it under control, the ministry said.

[Yoon leads Lee 41% to 34%: poll](#)

February 18, 2022, The Korea Times

Main opposition presidential candidate Yoon Suk-yeol is leading his ruling party rival Lee Jae-myung with support of 41 percent to Lee's 34 percent, a survey showed Friday. Yoon of the conservative People Power Party gained 4 percentage points from last week, while Lee of the liberal Democratic Party of Korea lost 2 percentage points, according to the poll conducted on 1,007 adults from Tuesday to Thursday by Gallup Korea.

[S. Korea to urge New York City officials to take actions against anti-Asian crimes](#)

February 15, 2022, The Korean Herald

The South Korean government plans to call formally on the New York City authorities to step up actions to counter a surge in crimes there against Asians in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, officials here said Tuesday. Chung Byung-hwa, South Korea's consul general in New York, will meet with Edward Mermelstein, New York City's commissioner for international affairs, on Friday to convey concerns over unprovoked attacks on Koreans and those of Korean descent.

Southeast Asia

[ASEAN Summit: Should India grab this new opportunity to challenge China?](#)

February 18, 2022, Money Control

It's a good time for India to increase its influence in ASEAN, according to former diplomats and experts in international relations. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) recently concluded its meeting, which was held between February 15 and 17.

[Myanmar Crisis Overshadows Meeting of ASEAN Foreign Ministers](#)

February 18, 2022, The Diplomat

The informal gathering took place without the involvement of the junta's appointed foreign minister, but a path forward on the crisis is hard to see.

[ASEAN Envoy to Attempt Meeting with Shadow Govt in Myanmar](#)

February 17, 2022, Benar News

Cambodian Foreign Minister Prak Sokhon said Thursday that he would travel to Myanmar next month and attempt to meet with the country's shadow government in a bid to resolve the political crisis there.

[ASEAN a Source of Arms, Investment for Myanmar Junta: Report](#)

February 18, 2022, The Irrawaddy

Despite its souring relationship with the Myanmar junta, some governments and businesses from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have supplied arms, funds and investments to the Myanmar military.

[Solidarity, unanimity remain key factor in ASEAN activities](#)

February 19, 2022, Khmer Times

ASEAN foreign ministers shared the view that solidarity and unanimity remain the key factor in the bloc's activities while attending their meeting retreat (AMMR), held in Phnom Penh on February 16 – 17.

[Myanmar junta, ousted government fight for recognition at top U.N. court](#)

February 18, 2022, Reuters

Myanmar's military junta is to take part in hearings at the top United Nations court in The Hague next week despite a complaint from political opponents that this could give it international recognition without legal standing.

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Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[Hundreds Gather In Almaty To Honor Victims Of January Unrest, Call For Toqaev's Impeachment](#)

February 13, 2022, RFE/RL

Hundreds of people staged an unsanctioned demonstration in the centre of Kazakhstan's largest city, Almaty, to honor the memory of those killed in last month's wave of unrest in the Central Asian nation.

[Kyrgyzstan struggling to refill Toktogul reservoir](#)

February 14, 2022, Eurasianet

A senior government official in Kazakhstan has warned that neighbouring Kyrgyzstan is struggling to restore viable water levels at its Toktogul reservoir. Failure to restore depleted water supplies at Toktogul, whose hydropower generator acts as the source of around 40 percent of Kyrgyzstan's power, may spell trouble for farming downstream in Kazakhstan.

[Uzbek Justice Ministry Sounds Alarm Over Divisive Religious Messaging](#)

February 15, 2022, The Diplomat

The Uzbek Justice Ministry is alarmed about religious figures whose teachings blur the line between religion, their personal moral views, and the law. In the latest statement, the ministry said that religious organizations continued propagating divisive ideas by judging certain segments of the society who are not aligned with their view of what is morally good or bad.

[Turkmenistan: Transition process finally gets underway](#)

February 15, 2022, Eurasianet

Turkmenistan will have a new president next month. But he will still be a Berdymukhamedov. The trigger was finally pulled on the transition mechanism at an extraordinary session of the People's Council on February 11, when President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov announced in typically self-aggrandizing and circumlocutory manner that he was stepping down.

[Former Political Prisoner Says He Wants To Run In Turkmenistan's Presidential Election](#)

February 16, 2022, RFE/RL

A former political prisoner and outspoken critic of Turkmenistan's government has announced he would like to take part in an early presidential election to

fight the "dictatorship" in the tightly controlled Central Asian nation after the current leader's son was nominated as a candidate.

[Tajikistan: President's son adopts growing role on center stage](#)

February 17, 2022, Eurasianet

There was a time when trouble-stricken citizens in Tajikistan turned to the president, Emomali Rahmon, with public appeals for help. No longer. It is now Rahmon's 34-year-old son, Rustam Emomali, the oldest of at least nine offspring and the presumed successor to the presidency, that is targeted with those petitions.

[Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan: Billions vanish into black hole on border with China](#)

February 17, 2022, Eurasianet

As customs officials from Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan sat down with their Russian colleagues this week to explore ways of stemming a torrent of smuggled Chinese goods flowing into their trading bloc, some embarrassing data came to light. A Bishkek-based news outlet discovered that many dozens of billions of dollars in goods may have been smuggled across the Sino-Kyrgyz border over the past couple of decades.

West Asia

[PM Modi, UAE Counterpart To Hold Virtual Meet; Trade Pact To Be Signed](#)

February 13, 2022, WION

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the UAE counterpart are expected to hold a virtual meeting in the coming week with the key outcome being the signing of the much-awaited free trade pact.

[Commander of Oman Navy Al Rahbi on India Visit from Monday \(February 14\)](#)

February 13, 2022, WION

The Commander of Royal Navy of Oman (CRNO) Rear Admiral Saif Al Rahbi will be on India visit from 14 to 18 February even as both sides increase military engagement.

[Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar Meets Qatari Counterpart; Holds Productive Talks](#)

February 09, 2022, The Economic Times

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held productive talks with his Qatari counterpart Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani and discussed the broad-based political, economic, digital and security partnership.

[India-Israel-US-UAE 'West Asian Quad' Crucial To Address Complex Global Threats, Says UAE Envoy](#)

February 10, 2022, The Print

"Signing of the historic Abraham Accord has not only opened up new opportunities for our own bilaterals with the state of UAE but also the trilateral strategic cooperation between the UAE, the US, India and Israel," Albanna said, adding that this 'West Asian Quad' will focus more on technology and security.

[India's Basmati Rice Exports Hit 4-Year Low as Iran Trims Buying](#)

February 11, 2022, The Economic Times

India's basmati rice exports plunged a fifth from a year ago to the lowest level in four years in 2021 as top buyer Iran slashed purchases after its rupee reserves dwindled, government and industry officials said.

[US Republicans Call for Review, Vote on Any Iran Nuclear Deal](#)

February 08, 2022, AL Jazeera

Thirty-three Republicans in the United States Senate have pledged to thwart a new Iran nuclear deal if the administration of President Joe Biden does not present its terms to Congress for approval.

[U.S. Sees Iran's Nuclear Program as Too Advanced to Restore Key Goal of 2015 Pact](#)

February 03, 2022, The Wall Street Journal

The Biden administration expects a restored nuclear deal would leave Iran capable of amassing enough nuclear fuel for a bomb in significantly less than a year, a shorter time frame than the one that underpinned the 2015 agreement.

[Israel Puts Iran Nuclear Breakout Time at 4–6 Months With Deal](#)

February 09, 2022, Axios

Israeli government experts believe that a U.S. return to the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran will set the amount of time Tehran needs to produce the amount of highly enriched uranium needed for a nuclear bomb to four to six months.

[Iran Unveils New Missile Said To Put Israel, US Regional Bases Within Range](#)

February 09, 2022, The Times of Israel

Iran unveiled a new missile named "Khaibar-buster", with a reported range that would allow it to reach both US bases in the region as well as targets inside its arch foe Israel.

[Saudi Arabia Transfers 4 Percent of Oil Giant Aramco to Investment Fund](#)

February 13, 2022, Business Standard

Saudi Arabia said it will transfer 4 percent of the stock in the state-run oil giant Aramco to a sovereign wealth fund, an infusion valued at nearly \$80 billion as the kingdom tries to overhaul its energy-dependent economy.

[United States F-22 Raptor Fighter Jets Arrive in UAE After Yemen's Houthi Attacks](#)

February 13, 2022, South China Morning Post

United States F-22 fighter jets arrived in the United Arab Emirates, part of an American defence response to recent missile attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels targeting the country.

[Russia Cites 'Deep Concern' Over Ongoing Israeli Strikes in Syria](#)

February 11, 2022, The Times of Israel

Russia has expressed "deep concern" over Israel's ongoing strikes in Syrian territory, saying they could escalate tensions in the area and endanger commercial flights.

United States

United States

['Not just about COVID': Lawmakers warn China bashing in Congress could spur new wave of anti-Asian hate](#)

February 19, 2022, USA Today

Some Asian American lawmakers warn that disparaging language framing China as a top economic competitor may spur a new wave of anti-Asian violence in the U.S. Their concerns have grown in recent weeks as Congress has turned its focus to a bill, known as the COMPETES ACT, aimed at strengthening America's supply chain amid a shortage of goods.

['Shields up': Biden administration moves to protect U.S. targets from Russian cyber attack](#)

February 18, 2022, USA Today

The Biden administration is going full "shields up" to protect key parts of U.S. critical infrastructure – such as pipelines, banks, commercial aviation and hospitals – from a potential Russian cyberattack, top U.S. security officials said Friday. Anne Neuberger, the deputy national security advisor for cyber and emerging technology, said at a White House briefing that Russia was behind this week's widespread cyberattacks on Ukrainian banks and military websites, suggesting that it was part of a broader cyber offensive that could be a prelude to a full-scale military invasion.

[Biden Shifts Inflation Message to Show He Feels Americans' Pain](#)

February 18, 2022, Wall Street Journal

President Biden is shifting his message on inflation to show he understands Americans' economic woes, in the midst of mounting public frustration over rising prices and after pleas from worried Democrats to change his tune.

[Judge says Trump could be culpable for January 6 and says lawsuits against the former President can proceed](#)

February 19, 2022, CNN

Civil lawsuits seeking to hold Donald Trump accountable for the January 6, 2021, insurrection can move forward in court, a federal judge said Friday in a ruling outlining how the former President could conceivably be responsible for inciting the attack on the US Capitol. Trump's statements to his supporters before the riot "is the essence of civil conspiracy," Judge Amit Mehta wrote in a 112-page opinion, because Trump spoke about himself and rally goers working "towards a common goal" of fighting and walking down Pennsylvania Avenue.

[Biden says Putin has decided to invade Ukraine](#)

February 19, 2022, Nikkei Asia

President Joe Biden said on Friday that Russia President Vladimir Putin has decided to invade Ukraine, and that he continues to spread false information to try to build a pretext for a military strike that could happen in days. "As of this moment I am convinced that he has made the decision (to invade)," Biden told reporters in Washington. "We have reason to believe that," he added, citing U.S. intelligence assessments.

[U.S. housing-market bubble could burst this year: AEI's Lachman](#)

February 15, 2022, Nikkei Asia

With inflation barging ahead, the US Federal Reserve is set to raise interest rates at its policy meeting in March. What are the risks of such moves? Nikkei asked Desmond Lachman, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and former deputy director in the International Monetary Fund's Policy Development and Review Department. According to him, in 2022, the United States economy will be having tighter monetary policy and slower economic growth, but China will be slowing down at the same time.

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Europe & Russia

Europe

[EU launches reset with AU after pandemic disruption](#)

February 17, 2022, Al Jazeera

The European Union will offer several packages of support at the summit to bolster health, education and stability in Africa.

[Ukraine crisis is a litmus test for all – US, EU, UN, and also for India](#)

February 19, 2022, The Print

After the chaotic end to the US-led war in Afghanistan, the Ukraine crisis is now proving to be the real test for countries and for multilateral bodies like the UN.

[EU launches WTO dispute against China over telecom patents](#)

February 18, 2022, Money Control

The European Union argued at the World Trade Organization that Chinese courts were preventing European companies from protecting their telecom technology patents.

[US, EU say Nuclear deal possible soon if Iran 'shows seriousness'](#)

February 19, 2022, Hindustan Times

The Vienna talks, which involve Iran as well as Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia directly, and the US indirectly, resumed in late November with the aim of restoring the 2015 deal.

[European Union lays out \\$6.8 billion satellite communication plan in space race](#)

February 18, 2022, India Today

The move comes amid growing concerns over Russian and Chinese military advances in outer space and a surge in satellite launches. The EU proposal aims to [build and operate a space-based state-of-the-art](#) connectivity system, help to counter cyber and electromagnetic threats and improve the resilience of EU telecommunication infrastructures.

[In a first, France joins China to build \\$1.7 billion global infra projects](#)

February 18, 2022, Business Standard

France has become the first country to join China to jointly build seven infrastructure projects worth over USD 1.7 billion in Africa, South East Asia and Eastern Europe, in a boost for Beijing in the face of its growing hostility with the US.

[Foreign Minister S Jaishankar Holds Talks With German Counterpart](#)

February 19, 2022, NDTV

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar also met his Iranian counterpart H. Amirabdollahian and held productive discussions on bilateral economic cooperation.

Russia

[Russia hands note to US military attache over submarine incident near Kuril Islands](#)

February 12, 2022, TASS News Agency

Russia has handed a note to US military attache in connection with the US nuclear-powered submarine's incident in Russia's waters near the Kuril Islands, the Defense Ministry said. The representative of the US Department of Defense was informed that the US submarine's actions are assessed as a blatant violation of international law.

[White House speculates on Russian 'invasion' date](#)

February 13, 2022, Russia Today

Russian forces could be invading Ukraine in a matter of days, according to Jake Sullivan, national security advisor to US President Joe Biden. However, contrary to earlier reports, citing US intelligence, placing the 'invasion' date on February 15 or 16, he refused to confirm any specifics.

[Navalny's Wife Demands To Attend His 'Illegal' Trial Inside Penal Colony](#)

February 14, 2022, RFE/RL

The wife of jailed Russian opposition leader Aleksei Navalny has demanded to be allowed to be present at her husband's "illegal and shameful" trial inside the penal colony where the outspoken Kremlin critic is being held.

[Russian official warns US challenging Moscow's Arctic rights](#)

February 16, 2022, TASS News Agency

The United States is expanding its military presence in the Arctic and it is seeking to challenge Russia's rights in this region, Deputy Secretary of Russia's Security Council Mikhail Popov said in an interview with Rossiyskaya Gazeta.

[Putin Hosts Brazilian President Amid Crisis Over Russian Military Buildup Near Ukraine](#)

February 16, 2022, RFE/RL

Russian President Vladimir Putin hailed ties between Russia and Brazil on February 16 as he hosted Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro for talks at the Kremlin. Bolsonaro snubbed U.S. calls to call off his trip, his first to Russia as Brazil's leader. The visit came at a point of heightened tensions between Moscow and the West fuelled by fears that Russia plans to invade Ukraine.

[Spies announce new Russian invasion timeframe](#)

February 17, 2022, Russia Today

Russia's fearsome forces will be ready to launch an invasion of Ukraine in the second half of February, Estonia has claimed, pushing back estimates from Western officials and media outlets that an incursion could be expected earlier this week.

[Russia welcomes India's stand on eastern Ukraine situation](#)

February 18, 2022, The Hindu

The Russian Embassy in India welcomed "India's balanced, principled and independent approach" in response to India's statement at the United Nations Security Council welcoming the implementation of the Minsk agreements which, it said, provided a basis for a "negotiated and peaceful settlement of the situation in eastern Ukraine."

[Russia Test-Fires Missiles in Strategic Drills – Kremlin](#)

February 19, 2022, The Moscow Times

Russia successfully test-fired its latest hypersonic, cruise and nuclear-capable ballistic missiles as part of "planned exercises," the Kremlin said, as tensions soar over Ukraine. "All the missiles hit their targets, confirming their performance objectives," the Kremlin said in a statement, adding that the drills included Tu-95 bombers and submarines.

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Africa & Latin America

Africa

[Africa and the EU seal a "renewed partnership" in Brussels](#)

February 19, 2022, Africa News

The meeting was an opportunity for the 27 countries to launch a global investment strategy with at least 150 billion euros over seven years to "help projects wanted and carried by Africans", with priority given to transport infrastructure, digital networks and energy. All this while ensuring "accountable, transparent and inclusive governance", according to the declaration.

[DRC reiterates on youths, vaccine inclusivity at the EU-AU summit](#)

February 19, 2022, Africa News

The Democratic Republic of Congo has reiterated the need to recognize and better the lives of youths on the African continent during the just-concluded EU and African Union summit.

[France, African partners commit to new security plans beyond Mali](#)

February 17, 2022, Africa Times

President Emmanuel Macron of France, joined by the leaders of Ghana and Senegal, made the long-awaited announcement on pulling out troops from Mali.

[Madagascar, Mozambique see impacts of Indian Ocean storm](#)

January 22, 2022, Africa Times

Authorities in Madagascar have posted red warnings for much of the country's north, as heavy rains and wind from a tropical weather system crossed the island late..

Latin America

[Petrópolis: Nearly 200 still missing in flood-hit Brazil city](#)

February 20, 2022, BBC

Bad weather has hampered the search for survivors in the Brazilian city of Petrópolis, four days after devastating flash floods and mudslides. Emergency teams had to suspend their work several times on Saturday because of torrential rains. They say there is little hope of finding anyone alive.

[Brazil: Climate change, neglect contribute to deadly mudslides](#)

February 18, 2022, Al Jazeera

Little done in response to repeated warnings of risks of mountainside construction, researchers and public servants say.

[Brazil Floods Death Count Rises To 146 With More Bodies Retrieved](#)

February 20, 2022, NDTV

Brazil floods: In a dense fog, workers dug with spades and shovels through the rubble and muck as the search churned through its fifth day with little hope of finding more survivors.

[China-Argentina mark 50 years of diplomatic relations](#)

February 19, 2022, CGTN

2022 has been declared the "Year of Friendly Cooperation" between China and Argentina as the two countries celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations.

[Why has the UK objected to China backing Argentina's claim to the Falkland Islands?](#)

February 19, 2022, The Indian Express

Four decades after the Falklands War between the United Kingdom and Argentina ended bitterly for Buenos Aires, a statement from China on the side lines of the Winter Olympics, that affirmed Beijing's support for Argentina's claim to the Falkland Islands, had stirred discussions around the long-standing dispute.

