

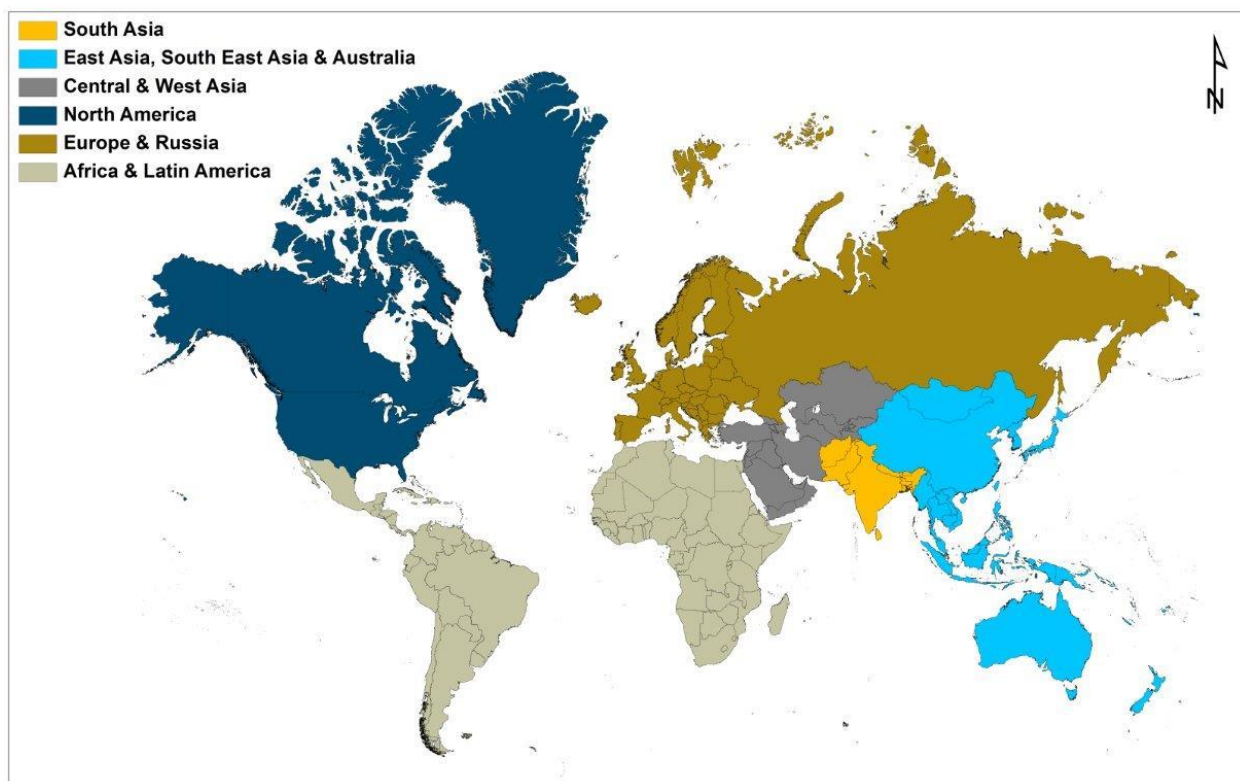


Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH



Volume V, Issue 48 | December 3, 2021

Delhi Policy Group

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

www.delhipolicygroup.org



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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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Contents

South Asia	1
East & South East Asia	7
Central & West Asia	12
United States.....	16
Europe & Russia	18
Africa & Latin America	21

South Asia

India

[Quad partnership has capacity to address contemporary global challenges: Shringla](#)

December 2, 2021, The times of India

The Quad partnership is one of the ways that could help address strategic competition and geopolitical challenges in the Indo Pacific region, foreign secretary Harsh Shringla.

[Indian President Ram Nath Kovind will attend the Victory Day celebrations on December 16](#)

December 3, 2021, Dhaka Tribune

Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla is likely to arrive in Dhaka on December 7 on a two-day visit.

[Mistakes by Indian PMs in foreign policy in past, listed by Jaishankar](#)

December 3, 2021, Hindustan Times

India's external affairs minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar listed foreign policy mistakes committed by Indian prime ministers in the past. Speaking at the 19th edition of the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit, the minister said that his priorities when it comes to foreign policy are national security, economic benefits, and improving India's brand value. Watch the full video for more.

[India working on more Quad groupings: Minister Jaishankar drops big hint](#)

December 2, 2021, Hindustan Times

External affairs minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar talked about the importance of Quad. Jaishankar said it is important for India as a Quad participant to be very clear that Quad is for something, it is not against somebody. "The cold war of two power dominance ended. The unipolar world ended. A certain kind of globalised world is now very much a question mark," Jaishankar said. The foreign minister spoke at the 19th edition of the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit.

[India has been careful about assessing Taliban: Jaishankar](#)

December 2, 2021, Hindustan Times

Jaishankar said the UN Security Council's resolution on Afghanistan represented what views countries across the world held about the Taliban.

[Maldives defends defence pact with India](#)

November 30, 2021, The Economic Times

Maldives has defended its defence pact and partnership with India notwithstanding the opposition protests.

Pakistan

[Twitter of Pakistan's embassy in Serbia criticises PM Imran over inflation, FO says account hacked](#)

December 3, 2021, Dawn

The official Twitter account of Pakistan's embassy in Serbia tweeted criticism targeting Prime Minister Imran Khan, citing rising inflation and alleged non-payment of salaries for three months. Two hours later, the Foreign Office issued a statement, saying social media accounts of the embassy had been hacked.

[Circular debt rising by Rs35bn a month](#)

December 3, 2021, Dawn

With gas shortfall estimated to peak closer to one billion cubic feet per day in January, the ministry of energy reported the power sector circular debt at Rs2.419 trillion at the end of October, rising at the rate of about Rs35 billion per month.

[Pak rupee losing against regional currencies](#)

December 2, 2021, The News

Pakistan rupee continued to decline in interbank market on December 1 as dollar rose by 10 paisa — Rs175.20 to Rs175.30. Even the Afghan currency gained against rupee as it rose to Rs54.71 against Pak Rs100. Indian rupee is also strengthening as it is Rs2.34 against one Pak rupee.

[Out of total revenue last fiscal year, Pakistan spent Rs85 out of 100 in debt servicing](#)

November 27, 2021, The News

Pakistan's net revenue receipts will only meet debt servicing requirements during the current fiscal year 2021-22 so the country's defense, development, subsidies, running of civil government including salaries and pensions of the federal government will be paid out through "borrowed" money.

[Pakistan, Russia discuss defence, cybersecurity cooperation](#)

December 2, 2021, Dawn

Pakistani and Russian national security advisers held wide-ranging talks in Moscow, what is being seen by both sides as an important step towards strengthening of bilateral relations. National Security Adviser Dr Moeed Yusuf and his Russian counterpart Nikolai Patrushev reviewed the whole gamut of Pak-Russia relations and held in-depth discussions on regional and international issues.

[Mob tortures Sri Lankan factory manager to death in Sialkot, burns his body over blasphemy allegations](#)

December 3, 2021, Dawn

A mob in Sialkot tortured a man to death before burning his body, while a heavy contingent of police has been sent to the area to bring the situation under control. The incident took place on Wazirabad Road in Sialkot, where reportedly the workers of private factories attacked the export manager of a factory and burnt his body after killing him.

[Women, children pour into Gwadar's streets to demand rights](#)

November 30, 2021, Dawn

A large number of women along with their children took to the streets of the port city in solidarity with the movement launched for the rights of the people of Gwadar and other areas of Makran. They kept chanting slogans against the provincial government and in support of their demands, with most of them carrying placards and banners inscribed with "Gwadar ko haq do" (Give rights to Gwadar).

[SBP signs agreement for \\$3bn Saudi fund](#)

November 30, 2021, Dawn

The State Bank of Pakistan signed an agreement with the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) to receive \$3 billion, which will be placed in the SBP's account with an aim to improve its foreign exchange reserves.

[Dhabeji Industrial Zone project hits snags](#)

November 29, 2021, Dawn

The recently awarded contract for the Dhabeji Industrial Zone (DIZ) project that falls under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is in the doldrums after being challenged before a court of law. The provincial government claims that since DIZ has not been given the status of SEZ so far, the rules of special economic zones do not apply to it. The CPEC Authority also had submitted an official statement to the high court, expressing satisfaction over the bidding

process and claiming that no irregularity had been committed in the award of the contract.

[Riots erupt in Charsadda amid allegation of Quran desecration](#)

November 29, 2021, Dawn

Riots broke out in Tangi tehsil of Charsadda district after alleged burning of the Holy Quran at a mosque as protesters destroyed the area's main police station, four posts and several residential quarters of police.

Afghanistan

[World Bank backs using \\$280m in frozen funds for Afghanistan](#)

December 3, 2021, Dawn

The World Bank's board has backed transferring \$280 million from a frozen trust fund to two aid agencies to help Afghanistan cope with a brewing humanitarian crisis after the US withdrawal. The 31 donors to the World Bank-administered Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) must approve the transfer before the funds could flow to the World Food Programme and Unicef.

[Taliban, Myanmar junta condemn move to deny their envoys seats at UN](#)

December 3, 2021, Dawn

Myanmar's junta and the Taliban authorities of Afghanistan slammed the United Nations for denying their chosen representatives seats at the world body. The committee responsible for approving nominations of ambassadors deferred a decision over rival claims to the seats for both countries.

[Afghan humanitarian crisis, drug trafficking alarm China, India, Russia](#)

November 30, 2021, Dawn

The foreign ministers of India, Russia and China expressed concern at the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan and the spread of drug trafficking in the country. Afghanistan has been plunged into crisis by the abrupt end of billions of dollars in foreign assistance, following the collapse of the Western-backed government and return to power of the Taliban in August.

[Taliban delegation meets Qatari officials in Doha](#)

November 29, 2021, The News

An Afghan delegation led by Acting Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi has met with officials from various Qatari ministries and discussed a wide range of issues, Taliban officials said.

[India reiterates Pakistan should not attach conditions to shipping aid to Afghanistan](#)

December 2, 2021, Hindustan Times

India said it is still engaged in discussions with Pakistan to work out modalities for supplying life-saving medicines and 50,000 tonnes of wheat to Afghanistan but insisted that no conditions should be attached to the shipment of relief materials.

[Iran and Taliban forces clash in border area](#)

December 1, 2021, Al Jazeera

Clashes erupted between Iranian soldiers and Taliban forces near the Afghanistan-Iran border, but appear to have led to no casualties and was later described as a "misunderstanding".

[Taliban unlikely to be recognized soon, Afghanistan's envoy to Russia says](#)

December 2, 2021, TASS

The Taliban movement that has seized power in Afghanistan is unlikely to be recognized soon, including by Russia, Afghanistan's Ambassador to Moscow Tayeb Jawad said in an interview.

[EU special envoy on Afghanistan Tomas Niklasson visits New Delhi](#)

December 1, 2021, Hindustan Times

India and the European Union (EU) had an opportunity to exchange notes and discuss the way forward in Afghanistan as EU special envoy Tomas Niklasson visited New Delhi.

[Dozens of former Afghan forces killed or disappeared by Taliban, rights group says](#)

December 1, 2021, BBC

More than 100 former Afghan security forces have been killed by the Taliban or have disappeared since the militants seized control, according to a new report by Human Rights Watch.

Bangladesh

[India, Bangladesh to observe Maitri Divas on December 6](#)

December 2, 2021, Hindustan Times

The two countries had decided during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh in March to commemorate December 6 as Maitri Divas as it was on this day in 1971 that India recognised the new country.

[India, Bangladesh to deepen trade and economic ties as partners: Piyush Goyal](#)

November 28, 2021, The Hindu

The India-Bangladesh CEO Forum will meet soon for the first time, even as the two countries work towards finalising a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) to deepen trade and economic ties as partners rather than competitors, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said.

Nepal

[Nepal seeks permit to conduct census in villages near border](#)

November 29, 2021, Hindustan Times

The development came during a meeting between the officials of Pithoragarh district and Nepal's Darchula district across the international border.

[Nepal faces significant fall in imports from China, traders bear the brunt](#)

December 3, 2021, Business Standard

Traders in Nepal are facing delays and inconsistencies in import orders from China, leading to unprecedented monetary losses. Despite China's assurances to increase the number of containers for imports, they have failed to execute the plan. China's withholding of trucks and containers at the Nepal-China border has become a concern for traders in Nepal, leading to delays and disruptions.

Sri Lanka

[India, Sri Lanka finalise four-point package for economic cooperation](#)

December 3, 2021, Hindustan Times

New Delhi and Colombo have framed a four-point package, including a line of credit to cover the import of food and medicines and a currency swap arrangement, to deepen economic ties.

[China suspends Sri Lankan solar plants after India protest](#)

December 3, 2021, The Times of India

China has decided to suspend a project for construction of Hybrid Energy Systems in Sri Lanka by Chinese firm Sino Soar Hybrid Technology.

East & South East Asia

China

[Putin saying no to 'China threat theory' shows his grand wisdom: Global Times editorial](#)

December 3, 2021, 2021

Russian President Vladimir Putin refuted on Tuesday during a videoconference the "China threat theory" from various angles. He said Russia is not worried about the topics hyped by the West, such as China's growing military strength, including the development of hypersonic weapons, and modernizing its nuclear arsenal. Putin believes China has the right to do so.

[China's rare emergency meeting 'a warning to Kishida govt over Abe's influence in extreme right-wing thought and militarism'](#)

December 2, 2021, Global Times

China's rare "emergency meeting" with the Japanese ambassador over erroneous remarks made by Japan's former prime minister Shinzo Abe on Taiwan question was powerful and necessary at a time when the shadow of Abe that went through the Yoshihide Suga cabinet is now reaching Fumio Kishida's administration, which aims to affect Kishida's policies with Abe's extreme right-wing thought and militarism, Chinese observers said.

[China, Myanmar resume rare-earth trade after border reopening, to ease prices shortly](#)

Myanmar resumed exporting rare earths to China after the reopening of China-Myanmar border gates in late November, sources told the Global Times, and analysts said that rare-earth prices are likely to ease in China as a result, although price rises are likely in the longer term because of China's focus on carbon emission cuts.

[China, Russia, India FM's hold video conference, reaching broad consensus on global affairs](#)

November 27, 2021, Global Times

China, Russia and India released a joint communique on Saturday following the 18th meeting of the foreign ministers of the three countries on November 26 that took place in the format of digital video conference. The ministers reached consensus on a broad range of international issues, including expressing support for the upcoming Beijing Winter Olympic Games.

[Tokyo and Beijing can pave way for global trust](#)

December 3, 2021, China Daily

Japan and China are to observe the 50th anniversary of the normalization of their diplomatic relationship in September 2022.

Japan

[Japan defense spending tops 1% of GDP for fiscal year](#)

November 27, 2021, Nikkei Asia

Japan boosted its defense spending for the current fiscal year to 6.1 trillion yen (\$52.8 billion) after the government approved a supplementary budget on Friday to expedite the acquisition of new patrol planes, transport aircraft and other hardware with an eye on Chinese maritime activity. The 773.8 billion yen in defense spending was the largest such allocation under any extra budget in Japan before.

[Former PM Abe says Japan, U.S. could not stand by if China attacked Taiwan](#)

December 1, 2021, The Asahi Shimbun

Japan and the United States could not stand by if China attacked Taiwan, and Beijing needs to understand this, former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said on Wednesday. Tensions over Chinese-claimed Taiwan have risen as President Xi Jinping seeks to assert his country's sovereignty claims against the democratically ruled island. Taiwan's government says it wants peace but will defend itself if needed.

[New CDP leader brings youth and a fresh face but still faces old problems in rebuilding party](#)

December 1, 2021, The Japan Times

Kenta Izumi, the new leader of the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, was elected on promises to rebuild the party with more younger representatives, especially at the local level, in an attempt to win over a new generation of voters. But Izumi's relative youth and lack of deep government experience could make dealing with older, more experienced politicians in the ruling and opposition parties more difficult as the party seeks to become a stronger force in parliament.

[Japan starts to extend range of its missiles to over 1,000 km](#)

December 1, 2021, The Japan Times

Japan is planning to upgrade and extend the capability of its cruise missiles to hit objects over 1,000 kilometers away. The defense ministry aims to deploy

such missiles by the second half of the 2020s. These missiles, to be developed by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, can be launched from land and also fitted on fighter planes and warships. Japan's missiles are now only capable of reaching 100 km to 200 km from launch point.

[Japan's unicorns gain foothold from AI to materials: Nikkei survey](#)

December 3, 2021, Nikkei Asia

Japan's roster of startups worth more than 100 billion yen (\$884.4 million) doubled to six in 2021, according to estimates in Nikkei's 2021 "NEXT Unicorn Survey." Novel companies backed by advanced technology, such as artificial-intelligence-assisted data analysis and new eco-friendly materials, did particularly well. Overseas investors have also stepped up funding of new players, fueling growth and valuations.

[What Japan needs to do to boost its economic security?](#)

December 3, 2021, The Japan Times

A significant feature of Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's administration is the creation of a new ministerial post for economic security and the appointment of Takayuki Kobayashi, a young Lower House lawmaker, to the post. Boosting economic security has been one of the top items advocated by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

Korea

[North Korea to hold major meeting around Kim Jong Un's 10-year anniversary](#)

December 2, 2021, NK News

North Korea will hold a major party meeting called a plenum in "late December," state media announced Thursday, falling around the official 10-year anniversary of Kim Jong Un coming to power. The DPRK leader reportedly said at a Politburo meeting on Wednesday that the economy is currently being "stably managed," according to the party-run Rodong Sinmun newspaper, and suggested that the upcoming plenum will review this year's economic activity and set plans for 2022.

[Unification ministry budget for inter-Korean cooperation rises 2% in 2022](#)

December 3, 2021, The Korean Herald

The unification ministry's next year budget for inter-Korean cooperation slightly increased despite chilled cross-border exchanges in the face of deadlocked nuclear negotiations and the North's prolonged border lockdown, according to officials. Under the budget plan approved by the National Assembly earlier in the day, the 2022 budget for the ministry handling inter-

Korean relations was set at 1.5 trillion won (\$1.3 billion), up from this year's 1.48 trillion won.

[Moon says S. Korea-US alliance 'linchpin' of Northeast Asian peace](#)

December 1, 2021, The Korean Herald

President Moon Jae-in stressed Wednesday that the alliance between South Korea and the United States serves as a key pillar in maintaining peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. At a dinner reception celebrating the bilateral alliance in Seoul, Moon said that the alliance served as the foundation for "South Korea's security and diplomacy" while describing it as the "linchpin of peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia."

[Yoon leads Lee by 9.4% points in presidential race: survey](#)

November 29, 2021, The Korean Herald

Presidential candidate Yoon Seok-young of the main opposition People Power Party is leading his ruling Democratic Party rival Lee Jae-myung by 9.4 percentage points in a hypothetical multicandidate race, a survey showed Monday. Yoon had 46.3 percent support against Lee's 36.9 percent in the survey of 3,023 adults conducted last Monday to Friday by Realmeter.

[Koreans pick material well-being as top source of meaning in life: survey](#)

December 2, 2021, The Korea Times

Koreans pick "material well-being" as the number one factor that makes their lives meaningful, a survey showed. According to a survey by the U.S.-based Pew Research Center, which posed an open-ended question about the meaning of life in 17 advanced economies, people in 14 countries picked "family" as the most significant source of meaning in their lives, more than any other factor. In Korea, "material well-being" emerged as the top answer, with 19 percent of respondents picking it. "Health" ranked second, picked by 17 percent, while "family" came in at third with 16 percent of respondents. "Material well-being" was among the top five in most of the countries, but Korea was the only country where it ranked first.

Southeast Asia

['Dramatic rise' in reprisals against opposition MPs in ASEAN](#)

December 2, 2021, Al Jazeera

On the morning of February 1, Myat Thida Htun and hundreds of others were waiting to be sworn in as members of parliament in Myanmar's capital Naypyidaw when the military took control of the country.

[An Optimistic Outlook for ASEAN and China](#)

November 30, 2021, The Diplomat

A conversation with a longtime Asian economic trend watcher.

[First Russia-ASEAN naval exercise begins in Indonesia](#)

December 1, 2021, TASS

The first-ever military exercise of Russia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) opened in Indonesia.

[China not a 'bully', does not seek 'hegemony', Xi Jinping tells Asean leaders](#)

China would never seek hegemony nor take advantage of its size to coerce smaller countries, and would work with ASEAN to eliminate "interference", Xi, was quoted by Chinese official media as saying.

[Top US Asia Diplomat Embarks on Swing Through Southeast Asia](#)

November 30

Daniel Kritenbrink trip will seek regional support for the U.S.-led "rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific.

[E.U., China race to secure green projects in Southeast Asia](#)

December 2, 2021, Frontline

The European Union launched a new green partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that will see €30 million (\$34 million) donated to the region's green investment fund — the ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility. Days later at the annual China-ASEAN summit, Beijing vowed to step up its investment in green projects in the region and announced a new Action Plan on China-ASEAN Green Agriculture, according to a summary issued by China's Foreign Ministry.

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[Kazakhstan: Energy shortages push crypto miners to the exit](#)

November 26, 2021, Eurasianet

Kazakhstan's crypto-mining industry boomed on the back of favorable legislation and China's de facto ban this summer, but an electricity bust is now sending some operations toward the exits. Industry players were warning as early as the summer that the country's energy system did not have the capacity to satisfy so many power-hungry miners vacating China.

[Kyrgyzstan Holds Elections Once Again Amid Concerns Of Voter Burnout](#)

November 27, 2021, RFE/RL

Voters in Kyrgyzstan return to the polling stations on November 28 for the fourth time in less than 14 months, this time to vote for a new parliament. The elections are a repeat of the failed parliamentary vote held in October 2020, that was quickly annulled by the Central Election Committee amid protests over campaign violations and unfair voting practices on election day.

[Turkmenistan To Make It More Difficult For People To Get Subsidized Food](#)

November 29, 2021, RFE/RL

A lifeline for many people in Turkmenistan is about to be cut off, as the family members of Turkmen migrant workers and prisoners will lose access to subsidized food amid growing poverty, inflation, and food shortages in the authoritarian Central Asian country.

[Standoff in eastern Tajikistan ends peacefully](#)

November 29, 2021, Eurasianet

A standoff in eastern Tajikistan between local communities and the central government came to a close over the weekend with pledges of further mediation in future. The crowds that had occupied a central square in Khorog, the capital of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region, or GBAO, for four days dispersed on November 28.

[Almaty Police Detain Demonstrators Demanding Relatives' Release From Detention In China's Xinjiang](#)

November 29, 2021, RFE/RL

Police in Kazakhstan's largest city, Almaty, have detained six protesters who were demanding the release of relatives they say are being illegally held in China. The rallies in front of the Chinese Consulate in Almaty were the latest in

a series of demonstrations in Kazakhstan linked to the massive detention of Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other mostly Muslim ethnic groups in the neighboring Chinese province of Xinjiang.

[Kyrgyzstan: Opposition leader assaulted by busloads of men](#)

December 1, 2021, Eurasianet

An opposition politician in Kyrgyzstan was surrounded and assaulted on the street by a large group of men in an attack his allies have described as a “political hitjob.” Omurbek Tekebayev, the leader of the Ata-Meken party, told Eurasianet that he was due to meet representatives of other parties at the Park Hotel in Bishkek when the mob forced its way into the premises.

[Nazarbayev to Step Down From Nur Otan Party Leadership](#)

December 2, 2021, The Diplomat

Last week, Kazakhstan’s glacial political transition slid forward again with the announcement that Nursultan Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan’s first president, had decided to transfer leadership of his ruling Nur Otan party to current President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

West Asia

[IAF Chief VR Chaudhari To Embark on 5-Day Visit To Egypt](#)

November 27, 2021, India Today

IAF Chief VR Chaudhari will visit Egypt to attend the Egypt Air Power Symposium and Egyptian Defence Exposition (EDEX) which is scheduled to take place in Cairo from November 28 to December 2.

[US To Release Oil From Strategic Reserves, In Joint Plan with India, Other Nations](#)

November 23, 2021, Mint

US President Joe Biden has authorised the release of 50 million barrels of oil from strategic reserves to cool down oil prices and address lack of supply around the world, a move that could draw the ire of OPEC.

[OPEC Weighs Shift in Oil Policy After Crude Release](#)

November 24, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

Top oil producers Saudi Arabia and Russia are considering a move to pause their recent efforts to provide the world with more crude, according to people familiar with those discussions, after Washington and other countries said they would release a slug of stored oil in an effort to lower prices.

[Pressure Likely To Be Exerted On Iran If It Uses Talks To Boost Nuclear Programme - U.S. Envoy](#)

November 28, 2021, Reuters

The United States and its partners are likely to exert pressure on Iran if it uses talks scheduled to resume in Vienna as pretext to accelerate its nuclear programme, the U.S. special envoy to Iran said.

[U.S. Faces a Diminishing Range of Choices in Vienna](#)

November 28, 2021, Tehran Times

Iran's chief negotiator, Ali Bagheri outlined that the only viable option for the U.S. is to revive the JCPOA and redress its past blunder in abandoning the deal. Of course, this needs to be done in a new spirit.

[UN Nuclear Agency Reports No Progress in Talks With Iran](#)

November 24, 2021, Middle East Monitor

The head of the UN's nuclear watchdog said that the agency was unable to reach an agreement with Iran in recent talks on its role monitoring the country's atomic program.

[Israel Worries Iran Will Get Sanctions Relief Without Capping Nuclear Projects](#)

November 28, 2021, Arab News

Israel worries Iran will secure a windfall in sanctions relief in renewed nuclear negotiations with world powers but will not sufficiently roll back projects with bomb-making potential, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said.

[Ex-Mossad Chief Tamir Pardo: Israel Should Think Twice Before Attacking Iran](#)

November 24, 2021, Middle East Monitor

Former Director of the Mossad Tamir Pardo warned that a military strike on Iran's nuclear programme would be far more complicated than the Israeli Air Force's successful attacks on Iraq and Syria reactors.

[UK Officially Bans Hamas in Its Entirety as a Terrorist Group](#)

November 26, 2021, The Times of Israel

Britain designated all of Hamas an "Islamist terrorist group," warning that its members and those who support the group could face stiff jail terms.

[Australia Lists Hezbollah as 'Terrorist Organisation'](#)

November 24, 2021, Middle East Monitor

Australia listed all of Hezbollah – a political party and an armed wing, which has considerable power in Lebanon – as a terrorist organisation.

[Middle East States Seek 'Mechanism' To Bring Syria Back to Arab League](#)

November 29, 2021, The National

Regional countries driving to re-engage with Syria are seeking a mechanism and consensus to readmit Damascus to the Arab League, senior Middle East diplomats and officials said.

[MBZ Visit and a Fresh Start in UAE-Turkey Relations](#)

November 29, 2021, Daily Sabah

The UAE crown prince's trip to Turkey is the first in nine years since relations were frozen in 2012. Turkey and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have been on opposing sides in regional conflicts and have distanced themselves from each other.

United States

United States

[Russian and Chinese Ambassadors: Respecting People's Democratic Rights](#)

November 26, 2021, The National Interest

The Russian and Chinese Ambassador to the United States voiced their reactions to the upcoming Summit for Democracy being organised by the US. They argue that "The upcoming American-led online Summit for Democracy will stoke ideological confrontation. Faced with an array of global challenges, countries urgently need to strengthen coordination and cooperation for common progress."

[White House Considering Richard Cordray as Top Fed Banking Regulator](#)

November 30, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

President Biden is considering Richard Cordray, the first director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, to serve as the Federal Reserve's top banking regulator, according to people familiar with the matter. If nominated and confirmed by the Senate, Mr. Cordray would become the government's most influential overseer of the U.S. banking system.

[Biden to Toughen Testing for International Travelers to Slow Omicron](#)

December 2, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

President Biden on Thursday announced plans to tighten up Covid-19 testing timelines for travelers entering the U.S. and extend a mask mandate on airplanes and other public transportation as part of a broad administration effort to combat the Omicron variant.

[Low Initial Jobless Claims Reflect Tight Labor Market](#)

December 2, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

The number of people filing new claims for unemployment benefits remained near pandemic lows last week as employers continued to hold on to their workers in a tight labor market. Initial jobless claims, a proxy for layoffs, totaled a seasonally adjusted 222,000 for the week that ended Nov. 27.

[Tough politics around oil and gas are preventing Joe Biden from being a climate hero](#)

December 2, 2021, CNN

A long-awaited Department of Interior report on federal oil and gas leasing, tellingly released on Black Friday, is drawing criticism from multiple fronts. The review, which was expected in June, recommended an increase in leasing fees

for companies seeking to drill for oil and gas on federal land and water. But while it mentioned climate change as an important factor to consider in the leasing process, it did not suggest how the federal government should weigh the crisis in its decisions.

[Didi Global Plans to Delist From New York Stock Exchange](#)

December 3, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

Didi Global Inc. plans to delist its shares in the U.S. and pursue a listing in Hong Kong, a dramatic reversal just months after the Chinese ride-hailing group's ill-fated initial public offering in New York. The move, which Didi said Thursday was supported by its board, comes as authorities in Beijing wrap up a cybersecurity probe into the company. It would mark an escalation in the financial decoupling between the U.S. and China, which has already seen several Chinese companies expelled from American exchanges.

[Blinken and Lavrov meet amid tensions over Russia's intentions in Ukraine](#)

December 3, 2021, CNN

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met Thursday in Stockholm, Sweden, amid growing concern among Western powers that Russia is seeking to invade Ukraine. Blinken said he and Lavrov would report the details of their meeting back to President Joe Biden and President Vladimir Putin and that the two presidents "may have the opportunity to speak directly in the near future."

[Amid COVID-19 challenges, historic milestones set in India-US ties: Ambassador Taranjit Sandhu](#)

December 3, 2021, MoneyControl

"Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, there have been some historic milestones. We saw Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi's landmark visit to the US in September for the in-person leader-level Summit with President (Joe) Biden, and the first in-person Quad Summit," Ambassador Taranjit Singh Sandhu said in his address to the 5th edition of the India-US Forum.

Europe & Russia

Europe

[US, EU, UK and Canada announce new sanctions on Belarus](#)

December 2, 2021, Al Jazeera

The United States, United Kingdom, European Union and Canada have imposed sanctions on Belarus, accusing the government of President Alexander Lukashenko of human rights violations and “orchestrating” irregular migration at the EU’s border.

[Hope India, Pakistan resolve issues over humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan: EU envoy](#)

December 3, 2021, India Today

The European Union’s envoy to Afghanistan Tomas Niklasson said he “hopes” that India and Pakistan resolve the issue of sending humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

[India-EU work towards deeper cooperation in Climate Partnership and Clean energy](#)

December 2, 2021, Financial Express

Representing India, Reenat Sandhu, Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs led the delegation of officials from Ministry of Power, New and Renewable Energy and Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

[EU Gets Boost in Bid to Rein in Renegades Poland, Hungary](#)

December 2, 2021, Bloomberg

The European Union’s threat to hit renegade nations Poland and Hungary in the pocket for backsliding on democratic standards got a boost after an adviser to the bloc’s top court backed the legality of the crackdown.

[Strengthening EU-wide cybersecurity and resilience – Council agrees its position](#)

December 3, 2021, Council of the EU

The EU is constantly working to build resilience to ever-increasing cyberthreats, and to keep our digital society and economy safe and secure.

[Hungary Sinks EU's Joint Role in Biden's Democracy Summit](#)

December 2, 2021, Bloomberg

Hungary is blocking the European Union from formally participating in U.S. President Joe Biden’s Summit for Democracy later this month because Viktor Orban, the leader of the eastern member country, wasn’t invited.

Russia

[Russia Says Latest Tsirkon Hypersonic Missile Test Successful](#)

November 29, 2021, The Moscow Times

Russia said it had carried out another successful test of its Tsirkon hypersonic cruise missile, as world powers race to develop advanced weaponry. Russia, the United States, France and China have all been experimenting with so-called hypersonic glide vehicles — defined as reaching speeds of at least Mach 5.

[Lukashenka Says Belarus Willing To Host Russian Nuclear Weapons](#)

November 30, 2021, RFE/RL

Belarus's authoritarian leader, Alyaksandr Lukashenko, has said that his country would be willing to host Russian nuclear weapons if NATO moved similar U.S. equipment from Germany to Eastern Europe. He also for the first time recognized Moscow-occupied Crimea as part of Russia, adding that he planned to visit the peninsula with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

[Putin Calls for Mutual Approval of Covid Vaccines](#)

November 30, 2021, The Moscow Times

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday called for mutual recognition of vaccines against the coronavirus to help curtail the pandemic, as concern grows around the world about the fast-spreading Omicron variant. Speaking at a Russian investment forum by video link, Putin said that countries can "effectively battle" the coronavirus only by coordinating their actions.

[Russia, China may expand cooperation in third countries — Putin](#)

November 30, 2021, TASS News Agency

Moscow and Beijing may expand cooperation in third countries, Russian President Vladimir Putin said at a plenary meeting of the 'Russia Calling!' VTB Capital Investment Forum. He pointed out that Moscow supported Beijing's efforts to create a global infrastructure of trade routes.

[Putin Says Yet To Decide On Running In 2024 Amid Constitutional Changes](#)

November 30, 2021, RFE/RL

Russian President Vladimir Putin says he has yet to decide whether to run for election again when his current term ends in 2024 -- an option that was opened for him after the Kremlin pushed through controversial constitutional amendments last year. Putin has been president or prime minister since 1999 and critics say the constitutional amendments, which paved the way for him to stay in the presidency until 2036, are an effort to keep in power for life.

[Russian, Vietnamese defence chiefs ink military cooperation deal](#)

December 1, 2021, TASS News Agency

Russian Defense Minister Army General Sergey Shoigu and his Vietnamese counterpart Army General Phan Van Giang signed an intergovernmental agreement on December 1 on bilateral military-technical cooperation, the Defense Ministry of Russia reported.

[Russia, Southeast Asian States Kick Off First Naval Drills Off Indonesia](#)

December 1, 2021, The Moscow Times

Russia and Southeast Asian states have kicked off military exercises in Indonesia as part of a "new page" in the countries' strategic partnership, Moscow said. The Dec. 1-3 drills along the Strait of Malacca on the northeastern coast of Sumatra involve all 10 members of ASEAN. Russia dispatched the large anti-submarine ship Admiral Panteleev for the marine phase of the two-part virtual and marine exercises.

[Russian Foreign Ministry: US Embassy Staff Deployed in Moscow for Over 3 Years Must Leave by 31 Jan](#)

December 1, 2021, Sputnik News

US Embassy staff who have been in Moscow for more than three years must leave Russia by 31 January 2022, the Russian Foreign Ministry said. If Washington fails to compromise on the issue of Russian diplomats, another group of US diplomats will have to leave Russia by 1 July, the ministry warned.

[Russia Deploys 3rd Coastal Defense System on Island Chain Claimed by Japan](#)

December 2, 2021, The Moscow Times

The Russian military said it has deployed its third Bastion coastal defense missile system on the Kuril Islands, a Pacific territory that Japan claims as its own. The Russian Navy previously deployed Bastion systems with their counterparts called Bal on the Kuril's Iturup and Kunashir islands in 2016.

Africa & Latin America

Latin America

[Barbados becomes a republic and parts ways with the Queen](#)

December 1, 2021, BBC News

Barbados has officially removed Queen Elizabeth II as its head of state and become the world's newest republic.

[US and Mexico to restart Trump-era 'Remain in Mexico' policy](#)

December 2, 2021, BBC News

The US and Mexican governments said that they will reinstate the Trump-era policy known as Remain in Mexico.

[Argentina ex-President Mauricio Macri charged in sub families spying case](#)

December 2, 2021, BBC

Argentina's former President Mauricio Macri has been charged with ordering the secret services to spy on relatives of 44 sailors who died when the Ara San Juan submarine sank in 2017.

[Mexico threatens legal action on US electric vehicle subsidy](#)

December 2, 2021, AP News

The Mexican government threatened legal action Thursday over provisions of U.S. President Joe Biden's Build Back Better Act that would give subsidies of up to \$12,500 for purchases of union-made, American-made electric vehicles, that would violate the U.S.-Mexico-Canada free trade pact.

[Mexico, US announce plan for aid to Central America](#)

December 1, 2021, AP news

Mexico announced a joint plan with the United States Wednesday to send development and agricultural aid to Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador, to stem the wave of migration from those Central American countries.

[After historic protests, Biden 'hit the pause button' on Cuba policy, senior official says](#)

December 1, 2021, NBC News

Washington's policy toward Cuba, which has been under review for close to a year, "hit the pause button" after the historic protests that rocked the communist-run island July 11, a senior U.S. official said.

[Venezuela's opposition party, after major election defeat, turns to rebuilding](#)

November 24, 2021, NBC News

Venezuela's opposition needs to rebuild and reflect on its strategy after suffering a heavy defeat in regional elections at the weekend, its leader Juan Guaidó said on Monday, calling for unity among the fragmented movement's leadership.

[Ecuador's president extends state of emergency to fight crime](#)

November 20, 2021, NBC Newsy

The renewal will keep military patrols on the streets in areas with high rates of homicide and other crimes associated with the drug trade.

Africa

[Uganda troops step up deployment in DRC anti-rebel operation](#)

December 2, 2021, Africa News

Ugandan troops stepped up their deployment in eastern DR Congo on Wednesday, witnesses said, on the second day of an operation against the notorious ADF rebel group launched in cooperation with Kinshasa.

[First ferry between Turkey and Libya sets sail after four decades](#)

December 2, 2021, Africa News

The restoration of the ferry service has come as a welcome news to many including passengers. "We are looking forward during the coming period to a number of other trips. We have approvals for Alexandria and Tunisia." Said Taha Hadid, commercial director of Misrata Marine Terminal.

[Gambia seeks way out of economic crunch \[Business Africa\]](#)

December 2, 2021, Africa News

Gambians are voting on Saturday but with their attention away from the politics. The West African country had traditionally depended on tourism as its major source of foreign exchange until the pandemic hit, costing the sector hundreds of millions of dollars.

[DR Congo assembly ousts governor for poor governance](#)

December 3, 2021, BBC

The governor of Sud Kivu province in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo has been dismissed by the assembly.

[Ethiopia shuts schools to support war effort](#)

December 3, 2021, BBC

Ethiopia's education ministry has announced a temporary closure of all secondary schools to allow students to help in harvesting crops for Ethiopians on the war front, state-affiliated Fana Broadcasting Corporation (FBC) has reported.



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