

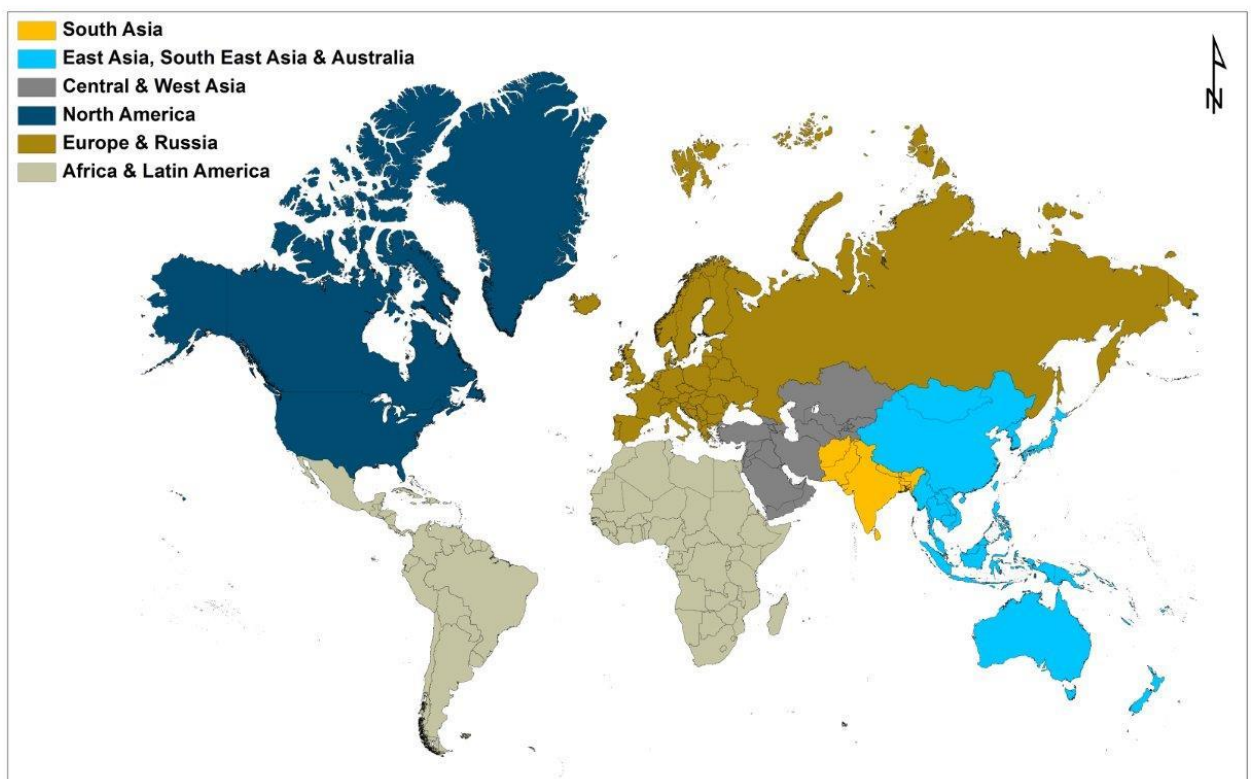


# Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



## DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH



Volume IV, Issue 26 | June 26, 2020

Delhi Policy Group

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## DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH Volume 4, Issue 26

### 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.

Since 2016, in keeping with India's increasing global profile, DPG has expanded its focus areas to include India's regional and global role and its policies in the Indo-Pacific. In a realist environment, DPG remains mindful of the need to align India's ambitions with matching strategies and capabilities, from diplomatic initiatives to security policy and military modernisation.

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### DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH

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## Contents

South Asia.....	1
East & South East Asia.....	11
Central & West Asia.....	11
United States.....	22
Europe & Russia.....	24
Africa & Latin America .....	27

## South Asia

### India

#### [LAC stand-off: Government warns China of 'consequences'](#)

June 26, 2020, The Times of India

India warned China on Thursday that failure to implement the disengagement understanding on the LAC in eastern Ladakh would have consequences as a continuation of the current situation would have a negative impact on development of the bilateral relationship.

#### [Moving troops from Europe to counter Chinese threat to India: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo](#)

June 26, 2020, DNA India

Pompeo said that the ruling Chinese Communist Party was posing a threat to India, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, adding that the "US military is postured appropriately to meet the challenges."

#### [Indian Army alert to PLA build-up in hotspot Depsang](#)

June 26, 2020, The Times of India

India is keeping a close watch on China's military mobilisation in the Depsang Plains region, a major hotspot after Pangong Tso, Galwan Valley and Hot Springs areas, which can conceivably threaten a vast swathe of Indian Territory in north-eastern Ladakh.

#### [India matches China's Himalayan border deployment](#)

June 26, 2020, Asia Times

India acknowledged for the first time that it has matched China in massing troops at their contested Himalayan border region after a deadly clash this month.

#### [China must recognise that India too has non-negotiable core concerns, aspirations, interests](#)

June 24, 2020, The Indian Express

The principle of equal and mutual security is fundamental. No country can have a veto on India's relations with any other country or group of countries.

## [To Stand Up to China, India Must First Boost Its Economy](#)

June 25, 2020, Carnegie

While last week's border skirmishes between India and China sent commentators rushing to Google Maps to locate obscure mountainous locales, the jousting in the Himalayas may prove to be a geopolitical inflection point. While India's foreign policy mandarins debate a reorientation of the country's strategic posture, it is the economy that demands priority attention.

## [India vs China defense budget and equipment comparison](#)

June 24, 2020, Business Insider

India is currently embroiled in a border dispute with China after forces from the two countries clashed in the Galwan Valley region earlier this month. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) gives out a comparison between the two.

## [India requests quick delivery of missiles, ammo from Russia; Amethi factory to launch before summit](#)

June 25, 2020, The Economic Times

It is learnt that India has requested in particular for Igla S anti air missiles, assault rifles and ammunition for various Russian origin systems – things that would be needed if the border conflict with China is extended over the coming weeks.

## [There is a pressing need for India to develop a comprehensive Underwater Domain Awareness strategy](#)

June 23, 2020, The Indian Express

This will need coordination between our national security agencies, the navy, and the government departments responsible for the marine environment and disaster management, but also collaboration with like-minded countries who share our concerns.

## [India Is Paying the Price for Neglecting its Neighbors](#)

June 23, 2020, Foreign Policy

Narendra Modi came to power promising to prioritize relations with countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. China is taking advantage of his failure to do so.

### [US shifting military to India, Southeast Asia to counter Chinese Army: Pompeo](#)

June 26, 2020, Live Mint

The threats from China to India and countries in Southeast Asia and the challenges in the South China Sea are going to dictate the allocation of defence resources.

### [At Russia-India-China Meet, India Talks of Need to Respect Legitimate Interest of Partners](#)

June 23, 2020, The Wire

At the trilateral meeting, Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov ruled out the possibility of Moscow acting as a mediator between India and China.

## **Pakistan**

### [\\$1.5bn loan agreements signed to fight virus](#)

June 20, 2020, Dawn

Prime Minister Imran Khan witnessed the signing ceremony of \$1.5 billion loan agreements with three international financial institutions for combating the Covid-19 crisis. The agreements were signed with the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Asian Infrastructure Development Bank.

### [Western border reopened for trade](#)

June 20, 2020, Dawn

Interior Ministry of Pakistan notified opening of three border crossings on Pakistan's western border for trade traffic late on Friday night. The border crossings had been closed on May 1 as part of the larger lockdowns being implemented across the country.

### [Pakistan's fiscal deficit to widen in FY21: Fitch](#)

June 20, 2020, Dawn

Economic shock and health crisis associated with Covid-19 will challenge Pakistan's ability to narrow the fiscal deficit to seven per cent in the FY21, said Fitch Ratings. The rating agency's commentary comes a week after the government announced the FY21 budget in which it projected a 28pc increase in tax revenues and expects to collect Rs4.963 trillion. The agency said it is skeptical of the government's ability to meet these targets due to the prevalent economic slowdown and absence of new taxes in the budget.

### [PPIB approves documents to execute hydropower projects under CPEC](#)

June 20, 2020, The News

The Board of Private Power and Infrastructure Board recommended “Standardised Security Package Documents for Hydropower Projects” for submission to Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) for final approval. With the implementation of these two major hydropower projects under CPEC, more than 8,400 GWH of clean and green energy would be added to the national grid every year.

### [Balochistan APC warns govt against touching 18th Amendment](#)

June 21, 2020, The News

The All Parties Conference of opposition parties in Balochistan announced to resist any changes if made by the federal government in the 18th Amendment and the National Finance Commission Award.

### [\\$10 bn TAPI gas pipeline project fails to achieve financial closure](#)

June 22, 2020, The News

The Turkmen Gas Company on the much touted trans-nations (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) TAPI gas pipeline project of worth \$10 billion even after the lapse of 4 years has so far failed to achieve financial closure as earlier it was scheduled to be attained in December 2016. Now the authorities concerned in Pakistan are saying that Turkmenistan Gas Company is now tasked to complete the financial closure in next year 2021 which is why the project will come on stream in 2023 which was earlier due to be operational in 2020 under its original plan.

### [Govt to raise \\$700m for National Space Programme](#)

June 24, 2020, The News

Pakistan government has decided to increase the use of Pakistani satellite services in the country by limiting foreign satellite services which will enable the country to raise the amount up to \$700 million to be used for the National Space Programme. To this effect, the federal cabinet accorded approval to the policy guidelines which, when implemented, will raise \$600-700 million for the National Space Programme till 2030.

## [Pakistan Remains 'Safe Haven' for 'Terrorist Groups': US Report](#)

June 25, 2020, Tolo News

In an annual report released on June 24, the US State Department said Pakistan continued to serve as a “safe haven for certain regionally focused terrorist groups.” “It allowed groups targeting Afghanistan, including the Afghan Taliban and affiliated HQN (Haqqani network), as well as groups targeting India, including LeT (Lashkar-e-Taiba) and its affiliated front organizations, and JeM (Jaish-e-Mohammed), to operate from its territory,” it said.

## **Afghanistan**

### [Diplomats, contractors at US Embassy in Kabul battling COVID-19 infections](#)

June 20, 2020, Al Arabia

The US State Department says COVID-19 infections have been reported at its embassy in the Afghan capital and the staff who are affected include diplomats, contractors and locally employed staff.

### [Pakistan Special Representative for Afghanistan met with Taliban leaders at Doha](#)

June 20, 2020, Daily Times

Special Representative for Afghanistan, Ambassador (R) Muhammad Sadiq visited Doha. During the visit, he met Taliban leaders including Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar to discuss peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan.

### [Afghanistan, Iran to Form Strategic Cooperation Pact](#)

June 23, 2020, Tolo News

Afghanistan and Iran in a joint statement agreed to finalize a comprehensive document on strategic cooperation between the two countries within the next three months. The joint statement was issued after acting Foreign Minister Mohammad Haneef Atmar completed his two-day visit to Tehran June 21.

### [Nearly 340,000 Afghans Repatriated from Iran Since January: IOM](#)

June 23, 2020, Tolo News

Numbers from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) indicate that nearly 340,000 Afghan nationals who were lacking legal documents have repatriated from the Islamic Republic of Iran since the start of the current year.



### ['25 Taliban' Killed in Balkh Airstrike: Officials](#)

June 25, 2020, Tolo News

At least 25 Taliban were killed in an Afghan air force airstrike in northern Balkh province on June 24. The airstrike took place in Dawlat Abad village of Balkh district as the Taliban were gathered.

### [New World Drug Report: Opium production in Afghanistan remained the same in 2019](#)

June 25, 2020, AAN

According to the United Nations Drugs and Crime Office's (UNODC) World Drug Report, opium cultivation in Afghanistan decreased in 2019 following price falls after the bumper years in 2017 and 2018. However, in 2019 when weather conditions were optimal for growing poppy and plant disease absent, yields were high. Overall, that meant production figures were the same as in 2018. With almost no eradication and diminishing alternative livelihoods initiatives, government actions had almost no effect on illicit farming.

## Bangladesh

### [Bangladesh rejects criticism of China deal](#)

June 22, 2020, The Hindu

Bangladesh Foreign Minister A.K. Abdul Momen said that Indian commentators who described the zero-tariff bilateral agreement for 97% of exports to China as "charity" for "least developed" Bangladesh are revealing their "narrow-mindedness". This was the Minister's second comment in two days after certain Indian publications said China was using the deal to get Bangladesh on its side as tension with India simmers along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) near Ladakh.

### [5,161 more Bangladeshi products to enjoy zero tariff to Chinese markets from July 1](#)

June 19, Dhaka Tribune

Chinese government has granted duty-free access to 97% Bangladeshi products to its market from July 1 while Dhaka termed it as a success of Bangladesh's economic diplomacy.

## [Bangladesh Minister Says 'India Our Biggest Friend', Hopes China Issue Will Be Solved Diplomatically](#)

June 23, 2020, News 18

Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said on Tuesday that India is his country's biggest friend as he expressed hope that the border tensions between India and China will be solved diplomatically.

## **Nepal**

### [Nepal also has boundary issues with China](#)

June 25, 2020, Nepali Times

Pressure is mounting on Nepal to deal with boundary issues with China on a similar level as it did with India over its claim of Limpiyadhura, after media reports that several of its Himalayan villages are now in Chinese territory.

### [Govt refutes reports on China encroaching Nepali territory](#)

June 25, 2020, The Himalayan Times

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) today refuted media reports on Nepal-China border issues and Chinese encroachment of Nepali territory.

### [India reiterates cultural linkages with Nepal](#)

June 25, 2020, The Hindu

India reiterated cultural links with Nepal in response to the upcoming amendments to the Citizenship Act of Nepal which is likely to affect a large number of families that have cross-border kinship with India.

### [India, Nepal coordinating to minimise damage due to flooding this monsoon: MEA](#)

June 25, 2020, The Print

Earlier, Bihar's Water Resources Minister had said that repair of embankments along the state's India-Nepal border was affected due to obstructions by the neighbouring country.

### [Nepalese FM radio stations start giving weather bulletins of Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura](#)

June 21, 2020, Hindustan Times

Locals living in the bordering areas, especially in Dharchula, said that Nepalese FM channels have unleashed propaganda in between songs by including speeches of Nepali politicians and leaders regarding these areas belonging to Nepal.

### [India evaluating if Oli government of Nepal gifted territory to China](#)

June 25, 2020, The Economic Times

New Delhi is evaluating the exact location of the Chinese encroachment in Nepal and its proximity to the Indian border and whether the move was made in connivance with a section of the political leadership in Kathmandu or by taking the KP Sharma Oli Oli government for a ride, ET has learned.

### ['Nepal should be careful of China': Central Tibet Administration warns](#)

June 26, 2020, Hindustan Times

Central Tibetan Administration President Lobsang Sangay warned Nepal on China. Lobsang said Nepal should be careful of China's tactics. "Our country was occupied and you could be next," Lobsang said.

## **Bhutan**

### [Assam: Baksa farmers resent Bhutan's decision to stop irrigation water](#)

June 24, 2020, Northeast Now

Hundreds of farmers from 25 villages of Assam's Baksa along the Indo-Bhutan border have strongly resented the Bhutan government's decision to not allow farmers from the Indian side to channelize water from Bhutan's side for irrigation.

### [Bhutan not blocking water, rather clearing blockage: Assam CS](#)

June 26, 2020, Northeast Now

Assam chief secretary Kumar Sanjay Krishna has refuted recent media reports about Bhutan blocking water supply to India particularly in Assam. In a tweet on his official Twitter handle, Krishna claimed that it has been incorrectly reported. He went on to state that the actual reason is the natural blockage of informal irrigation channels into Indian fields.

### [Bhutanese authorities pitch to ensure smooth flow of water to India](#)

June 26, 2020, WION

The Bhutanese officials and local communities stepped in to maintain the irrigation Channels which is usually done by the farmers from Assam. The flow of water from Bhutan to the Indian state of Assam continues with locals pitching in to make sure irrigation channels are maintained. The irrigation channel is usually maintained by the farmers from Assam who cross the border for the work. However, due to the COVID-19 situation and restrictions on movement across the border, the irrigation channel was not being maintained, thus interrupting the supply at the crucial sowing time of Kharif crops. The Bhutanese officials and local communities then stepped in to maintain the irrigation Channels.

### **Sri Lanka**

#### [Sri Lanka suspends crew change in Colombo as Indian seafarers test Covid-positive](#)

June 24, 2020, The Hindu Business Line

Ship managers and manning agents using Colombo as a hub for crew change involving Indian seafarers received a setback after 29 crew who flew there tested positive for coronavirus, forcing the Sri Lankan government to ban crew arrivals by air.

#### [Sri Lanka, Afghanistan FMs discuss enhancing ties](#)

June 26, 2020, Daily News.lk

Acting Afghanistan Foreign Affairs Minister Mohammad Haneef Atmar and Foreign Relations Minister Sri Lanka Dinesh Gunawardena held a telephone conversation to discuss bilateral relations between Afghanistan and Sri Lanka and other issues of mutual interest and concern.

#### [Between India and China: Sri Lanka's choices and challenges](#)

June 25, 2020, Daily FT

It was hardly a textbook example of the "correct handling of contradictions" (Mao). Future historians may conclude that the achievable dream of the 21st century as an Asian Age in a multipolar world order, died in mid-June 2020 in the Himalayas, in the Galwan valley in Ladakh.

## [China's Art of War in Sri Lanka](#)

June 21, 2020, The National Interest

China's amplified efforts to bolster relations with Sri Lanka have shifted the global order and left the United States grasping for straws to maintain its global prestige and relationship with the island nation.

## **Maldives**

### [Maldives foreign minister condoles Indian soldiers killed in face-off with China](#)

June 19, 2020, ANI News

Maldives foreign minister extended his condolences to India for the lives of its Army personnel who were killed in the recent clash with China at Galwan Valley area in eastern Ladakh.

## East & South East Asia

### China

#### [India knows US won't help it achieve its goals](#)

June 23, 2020, Global Times

When military commanders from China and India sat at the negotiating table on Monday night in an attempt to de-escalate border tensions, Gideon Rachman, a columnist for the Financial Times, published an article entitled "India picks a side in the new cold war," arguing "it is folly for China to drive its rival into America's arms."

#### [India retreats from deals with China: Global Times editorial](#)

June 22, 2020, Global Times

The Indian government on Sunday gave "complete freedom of action" to Indian troops deployed along the China-India Line of Actual Control. This means Indian commanders will not be restricted in using firearms. If this new approach is implemented and Indian troops shoot Chinese soldiers in the first place in future encounters, then the China-India border dispute will turn into a military conflict. This is not what most Chinese and Indian people wish to see.

#### [Indian nationalists should stop using 'boycott Chinese products' to please themselves: Global Times editorial](#)

June 19, 2020, Global Times

After a serious skirmish between Chinese and Indian troops along the border, the Indian public has been clamoring for nationalism. "Boycott Chinese products" is the most prominent slogan. Indian cricketer Harbhajan Singh tweeted on Tuesday, calling people to "ban all Chinese products." Retired Indian army Major Ranjit Singh told people to throw Chinese goods out, saying "we can break China's backbone economically."

#### [Top diplomats' meet expected to yield results: Global Times editorial](#)

June 18, 2020, Global Times

Amid deteriorating China-US relations, Yang Jiechi, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee, held a closed-door meeting with US State Secretary Mike Pompeo on Thursday (Beijing local time) in Hawaii. The meeting was seen as a sign that the two countries want to do something to ease tensions between them.

### [Border peace basis for healthy China-India ties: Global Times editorial](#)

June 17, 2020, Global Times

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Wednesday talked to Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on the phone. The two sides agreed to fairly deal with the serious clashes between Chinese and Indian troops at the Galwan Valley, and adhere to the consensus reached by their military leaders to cool the situation down.

### [US' attempt to smear China through Uygur bill will not succeed](#)

June 19, 2020, China Daily

It is a shame that so-called Uygur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020 was signed into law on Wednesday by US leader after being passed earlier by the US Congress and Senate in a bid to smear China's counterterrorism and deradicalization measures. Not to speak of their deliberate interference in China's internal affairs, do they have the slightest idea about what kind of terrorists they support?

### [Imperative no escalation of border clash: China Daily editorial](#)

June 17, 2020, China Daily

In what has been the most deadly military confrontation between the two neighbors in more than four decades, Chinese and Indian border troops engaged in a deadly clash in the Ladakh region, a yet-to-be-demarcated area between the two countries high in the Himalayas, on Monday, resulting in heavy casualties on both sides.

### [Chinese Defence Ministry: India betrayed accords](#)

June 25, 2020, China Daily

India was completely responsible for this month's clash on the Sino-Indian border and China always wishes to safeguard the peace and stability of border regions, Defense Ministry spokesman Senior Colonel Wu Qian said on Wednesday. Wu told a regular ministry news conference in Beijing that the June 15 clash happened because India's front-line border force violated accords and consensuses reached by both sides and made provocations by trespassing into territory on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control in the Galwan Valley.

### [China urges Japan to faithfully implement "exclusively defense-oriented policy"](#)

June 25, 2020, China Daily

China urges Japan to faithfully implement its "exclusively defense-oriented policy" and stay committed to peaceful development by taking real actions, a

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said Wednesday. Spokesman Zhao Lijian made the remarks at a press briefing while commenting on reports of a Japanese national conference on revising the current national security strategy.

### [China urges India to implement consensus to restore peace in border areas](#)

June 24, 2020, Xinhua

China hopes India can strictly observe and implement the consensus reached with China, work with China and take real actions to restore peace and stability in the border areas, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said Wednesday. Speaking at a regular press conference, Zhao said that recently the incident in the Galwan Valley in the western section of the China-India boundary has received much attention.

### [U.S. "salami slicing" attempts to undermine China's sovereignty "sheer pipe dream": spokesperson](#)

June 24, 2020, Xinhua

A Chinese military spokesperson Wednesday said the "salami slicing" attempts made by the United States to undermine China's sovereignty are a "sheer pipe dream." Wu Qian, a spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defense, made the remarks at a press conference in response to a question about the recent frequent interactions between the United States and China's Taiwan.

### [India bears entire responsibility for border conflicts with China: military spokesperson](#)

June 24, 2020, Xinhua

A Chinese military spokesperson on Wednesday said the responsibility for the China-India border conflicts rests entirely with the Indian side. Wu Qian, a spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defense, expressed the hope that peace and stability are maintained in the border areas.

### [Chinese foreign minister calls on China, Russia, India to work together](#)

June 23, 2020, Xinhua

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Tuesday held a video conference with Russian and Indian foreign ministers, calling on the three countries to send positive signals to the rest of the world by jointly combating COVID-19, promoting economic development and safeguarding international justice.



[China, India hold second commander-level meeting, agree to maintain dialogue for peace in border](#)

June 23, 2020, Xinhua

Chinese and Indian border troops held a second round of talks at the level of corps commanders in the border area on June 22, and both agreed to keep up dialogue and work together for peace and tranquility on the ground along the border, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said Tuesday.

## Japan

[Abe: Japan to bolster defense after scrapping missile system](#)

June 19, 2020, The Asahi Shimbun

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said that his country needs to bolster its security posture amid threats from North Korea and should consider acquiring preemptive strike capability after having to scrap the planned deployment of two new land-based missile defense systems.

[Japan to revise security strategy with halt to Aegis Ashore system](#)

June 20, 2020, The Asahi Shimbun

Japan's decision to withdraw from a U.S.-developed land-based ballistic missile system will herald the first rewriting of its National Security Strategy, according to a high-ranking government source.

[Japan: U.S. hasn't requested more money to host troops](#)

June 23, 2020, The Asahi Shimbun

The United States has not asked Tokyo to pay more to keep its troops in the country, Japan's defense minister said, after a report cited former National Security Adviser John Bolton as saying he conveyed U.S. President Donald Trump's demand for an \$8 billion (857 billion yen) annual payment.

[Japan protests China's seabed names related to disputed islands](#)

June 26, 2020, Japan Today

Japan said it has protested to China that a set of names it recently gave to seabed zones in the East China Sea included those related to a Japanese-administrated group of islets, claimed by Beijing.

### [The 2020 post-Abe leadership race](#)

June 25, 2020, The Japan Times

Heading into 2020, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe seemed poised for a strong, stable year atop Japan's government. Many observers were debating whether the Liberal Democratic Party would change its rules to grant him a fourth term as party president, which on paper could have extended his run until 2024.

### [Japan's struggle to reimagine the post-pandemic world](#)

June 24, 2020, The Japan Times

When it comes to dealing with the pandemic, South Korea and Taiwan have been heralded as models of effective governance. Decisive actions by Taiwan in particular to shut down borders, and the extensive use of data technology by both Taipei and Seoul have been seen as examples for others to emulate.

### [A moment of truth for New Delhi and Beijing](#)

June 24, 2020, The Japan Times

China and India earlier this month experienced the worst clash between their armed forces since 1967. The two nuclear-armed neighbors share a 4,056-km border that has not been fully demarcated, triggering military confrontations virtually since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. That enduring flashpoint has assumed new significance as the two countries battle the COVID-19 outbreak and their political leaders steer two deeply nationalist publics through multidimensional crises. The current crisis could prove to be a defining moment for Asia.

## **Korea**

### [North Korean leader suspends military actions against South Korea](#)

June 24, 2020, The Korea Times

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has suspended envisaged military action against South Korea, the North's state-run media reported Wednesday, a move seen as diffusing rapidly escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula "temporarily."

### [North Korea seen removing loudspeakers from border areas: sources](#)

June 24, 2020, The Korea Times

North Korea was seen removing about 10 propaganda loudspeakers reinstalled recently along the border with South Korea, military sources said Wednesday, after leader Kim Jong-un ordered the suspension of military action plans against the South.

### [US remains focused on denuclearizing North Korea: Pentagon official](#)

June 25, 2020, The Korea Times

The United States remains focused on denuclearizing North Korea amid Pyongyang's increased provocations against Seoul, a senior Pentagon official said. David Helvey, acting assistant secretary of defense for Indo-Pacific security affairs, said the North's recent actions underscored the importance of maintaining a strong readiness posture between Washington and Seoul, with Pyongyang threatening to take military action before suspending such plans.

### [NK propaganda outlet resumes anti-Seoul criticism over 'subservient' attitude to US](#)

June 26, 2020, Korea Herald

A North Korean propaganda outlet on Friday accused South Korea of being subservient to the United States in inter-Korean policy, resuming anti-Seoul criticism that state media abruptly halted earlier this week after weeks of bellicose rhetoric and threats.

### [Moon urges N. Korea to formally end Korean War, warns of firm response to threats](#)

June 25, 2020, The Korea Herald

South Korean President Moon Jae-in called on North Korea Thursday to join a bold move to formally end the Korean War in peace overtures, coupled with a clear warning message, commemorating the conflict that started seven decades ago, with the fragile Korea peace process at stake.

### [Most S.Koreans Believe N.Korea Will Never Abandon Nukes](#)

June 26, 2020, Chosun Ilbo

Some 89.5 percent of South Koreans believe that North Korea will never abandon its nuclear weapons, a poll suggests. The poll of 1,003 adults was published by the Korea Institute for National Unification.

### [US names North Korea worst human trafficking nation for 18th year](#)

June 26, 2020, The Korea Times

The U.S. State Department designated North Korea as one of the worst human trafficking nations for the 18th consecutive year.

### [70 years of Korean War: India's lesser-known role in halting it](#)

June 26, 2020, The Indian Express

India played a unique role throughout the Korean War, having no specific geopolitical interests in the Korean Peninsula and maintaining a neutral position before and during the war years, yet believing in the reunification of the peninsula.

## **Southeast Asia**

### [India, China Should Exercise Restraint, Not Complicate Situation Amid Covid: Vietnam Envoy](#)

June 22, 2020, The Print

Vietnam believes India and China should exercise restraint and not complicate matters further at a time when the world is reeling under the coronavirus pandemic compounded with economic challenges.

### [China Sends Ship as Warning to Vietnam: No Court Case, No Oil Drilling](#)

June 22, 2020, Voice of America

China sent a survey vessel through waters claimed by its maritime sovereignty rival Vietnam this month to warn Hanoi against starting new energy exploration projects and filing any motions in an international court, observers say.

### [China, Cambodia Sign Off On \\$7 Million Mlc Projects](#)

June 23, 2020, Phnom Penh Post

Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Minister Prak Sokhonn and Chinese ambassador to Cambodia Wang Wentian on Tuesday signed an agreement covering 20 cooperation projects worth more than \$7 million.

### [Ambassador Highlights Trust In Vietnam-US Relations](#)

June 23, 2020, Vin Express

Trust and mutual respect play a key role in supporting the relationship between former foes Vietnam and the U.S., its ambassador to Hanoi said.

### [Indonesia Seeks To Attract Firms Departing China](#)

June 23, 2020, The Jakarta Post

The government has established a special task force to attract businesses leaving China and facilitate their relocation to Indonesia. American, Japanese and South Korean companies are reportedly in discussions with the Investment Coordinating Board (BKPM) over their potential relocation to the Batang and Brebes industrial districts in Central Java, which are currently under development.

### [Naval Ships Perform Drill To Boost Surveillance, War Capability](#)

June 24, 2020, Antara News

Three Indonesian naval ships participated in a military drill in the Makassar waters, South Sulawesi Province, on Wednesday to strengthen their maritime surveillance and coordination capability in warfare.

### [Indonesia, 8 IORA Countries Form Working Group To Protect Fisheries Sector](#)

June 24, 2020, The Jakarta Post

Indonesia and eight other countries grouped under the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) established on Tuesday a regional working group on fisheries management that aims to sustain marine welfare around the world's third-largest ocean amid and post COVID-19 pandemic.

### [US Watching If Beijing Declares Air Defense Zone In South China Sea](#)

June 24, 2020, Benar News

The United States is closely watching reports that Beijing is planning to declare a so-called Air Defense Identification Zone in the skies above the disputed South China Sea, the American Air Force Commander in the Pacific said.

### [Resumption Of South China Sea Code Of Conduct Negotiations To Be Determined Soon: Vietnamese Diplomat](#)

June 24, 2020, Eleven Myanmar

ASEAN and China expect to set the time and date for resumption of delayed negotiations on the highly anticipated Code of Conduct (COC) for the South China Sea as part of their discussions on cooperation issues.

## [Negotiations On South China Sea Rules Should Resume Soon: Indonesia](#)

June 25, 2020, ANS CBN

Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi said Wednesday that negotiations with China on a code of conduct in the South China Sea, delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, should resume soon to ease tensions in the region.

## Central & West Asia

### Central Asia

#### [Russia delivers anti-drone systems to Central Asia](#)

June 22, 2020, Tass

Negotiations with five more countries on the deliveries of anti-drone systems are underway, according to the provider. Avtomatika Group (part of Russia's state hi-tech corporation Rostec) has started the deliveries of anti-drone systems to Central Asia, the company's press office said.

#### [The China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan Transport Corridor Stretches Further Into China](#)

June 22, 2020, The Diplomat

The transport corridor is in use and has great potential, but the middle section through Kyrgyzstan still transports cargo via trucks and not railcars.

#### [Vande Bharat Mission: 148 Indian nationals return from Kyrgyzstan](#)

June 25, 2020, One News Page

Vande Bharat Mission: 148 Indian nationals return from Kyrgyzstan. Total number of 148 Indian nationals from Kyrgyzstan arrived at Indore airport on June 25.

#### [Kazakhstan taking steps for transition to a green economy](#)

June 25, 2020, The Times of Central Asia

Kazakh Prime Minister Askar Mamin on June 24 chaired a meeting of the Council on the Transition to Green Economy under the President of Kazakhstan, which largely focused on measures in the agriculture sector, primeminister.kz reported.

### West Asia

#### [Iraq's Prime Minister to Visit Washington Next Month for Talks on US Troops Withdrawal](#)

June 24, 2020, Arab News

PM Al-Kadhimi's visit to Washington will begin the second round of talks between the US and Iraq – which will be the first of their kind in more than a decade.

### [Iran Plans Oil Exports from the Gulf of Oman to Secure Crude Flow](#)

June 25, 2020, The Economic Times

Iran plans to export oil from a port on its Gulf of Oman coast by March, the president said on Thursday, a shift that would avoid using the Strait of Hormuz shipping route that has been a focus of regional tension for decades.

### [Iran Investigates Large Explosion Near Key Military Site](#)

June 26, 2020, The Wall Street Journal

Iranian authorities said they were investigating an explosion on June 26 at a Defense Ministry facility east of Tehran, near a site that has been crucial for Iran's development of missiles and munitions.

### [India Increases Tech Surveillance on Ladakh LAC with Israeli Heron Drones](#)

June 23, 2020, Hindustan Times

In a stand-off with a belligerent Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) at four points in East Ladakh, India has increased technical drone surveillance of the area even as the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has inducted more battalions into the sector to support army along the 3,488 km Line of Actual Control (LAC).

### [UN Chief Urges Israel to Abandon West Bank Annexation Plans](#)

June 24, 2020, UN News

The UN Secretary-General has called on Israel to scrap plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank, a move that could occur as early as next week.

### [Indian Pilgrims Will Not Travel to Saudi Arabia for Haj 2020](#)

June 23, 2020, Hindustan Times

The government has decided that Muslims from India will not travel to Saudi Arabia for Haj 2020 after the kingdom conveyed that pilgrims should not be sent this year in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said.

### [Saudi Oil Exports Down By \\$12 Billion Year on Year in April 2020](#)

June 25, 2020, The Economic Times

The value of Saudi Arabia's oil exports dropped by 65.4 per cent in April when compared to the same month a year earlier, or a fall of about \$12 billion, official data showed.



## United States

### United States

#### [US shifting military to face Chinese threat to India and Southeast Asia: Mike Pompeo](#)

June 25, 2020, Hindustan Times

The Chinese threat to India and Southeast Asia is one of the reasons the United States is reducing its troop presence in Europe, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Thursday in response to a question at the Brussels Forum virtual conference.

#### [Trump Says He Will Move Some U.S. Troops To Poland From Germany](#)

June 24, 2020, NPR

President Trump on Wednesday said he would remove some U.S. troops from Germany and relocate them to Poland and other European and U.S. locations, a reaction to his long-standing complaint that Germany falls short on defense spending obligations to NATO.

#### [U.S. and EU must face down China together, Pompeo says](#)

June 25, 2020, Reuters

The United States and European Union need a shared understanding of China to resist it, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Thursday, calling Beijing a threat and accusing it of stealing European know-how to develop its economy.

#### [Trump administration claims Huawei 'backed by Chinese military'](#)

June 25, 2020, BBC

The US Defense Department has determined that 20 top Chinese firms, including Huawei, are either owned by or backed by the Chinese military.

#### [Senate advances \\$740 billion defense bill, stage set for Confederate battle](#)

June 26, 2020, Reuters

The U.S. Senate voted 90-7 on Thursday to debate the annual National Defense Authorization Act, or NDAA, setting the stage for a battle between Democrats and President Donald Trump's Republicans over changing the names of military bases named after Confederate generals.

[Trump Suspends Visas Allowing Hundreds of Thousands of Foreigners to Work in the U.S.](#)

June 22, 2020, The New York Times

President Trump on Monday temporarily suspended new work visas and barred hundreds of thousands of foreigners from seeking employment in the United States, part of a broad effort to limit the entry of immigrants into the country.

## Europe & Russia

### Europe

#### [Four years after Brexit, support for the EU surges in Britain](#)

June 25, 2020, CNN

According to the European Social Survey (ESS), a pan-European poll carried out every two years, 56.8% of respondents in the UK indicated that they would vote to remain inside the bloc, an increase from 49.9% the last time the survey was published in 2018.

#### [U.K. Rejects Mooted Brexit Compromise in Setback to EU Talks](#)

June 25, 2020, Bloomberg

The U.K.'s chief Brexit negotiator rejected a potential compromise in its trade negotiations with the European Union, saying Britain isn't prepared to accept tariffs if the country makes laws in its own interests.

#### [Germany pushes for a common EU stance on threats to the bloc](#)

June 25, 2020, Defense News

Germany will use its turn at the helm of the European Council to launch the first-ever common threat analysis for the European Union, as well as broker a deal allowing non-member countries access to defense cooperation projects.

#### [Huawei's new chip research facility in Britain gets the green light](#)

June 25, 2020, CNBC

A new Huawei research and development center has been approved by a local council in the U.K., despite the nation's ongoing security concerns around the Chinese company.

#### [Germany Weighs Measures Against U.S. Over Nord Stream Sanctions](#)

June 25, 2020, Bloomberg

Germany is preparing to strike back against the U.S. if President Donald Trump follows through on his threat to kill off the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline with additional sanctions.

### [Germany gears up for EU presidency as bloc navigates coronavirus pandemic](#)

June 26, 2020, Yahoo News

When Germany takes over the rotating presidency of the European Council on 1 July, it will be tasked with shepherding a 27-state bloc still battling the human and economic cost of the coronavirus pandemic.

### [France and Germany Are Working Together to Build a New Super Tank](#)

June 25, 2020, Yahoo News

The Main Ground Combat System, as the tank project is known, is intended to replace the French Leclerc and Leopard 2 main battle tanks.

### [Germany And France Promise New Financial Support To World Health Organization](#)

June 25, 2020, NPR

Less than a month after President Trump vowed to stop funding the World Health Organization, Germany and France say they will contribute financial backing to the agency in its fight against the coronavirus.

### [The U.S. is considering \\$3.1 billion in new tariffs on products from France, Germany, Spain and the UK](#)

June 24, 2020, CNBC

The United States is studying the possibility of slapping \$3.1 billion in additional tariffs on goods from the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Spain — in another step that's likely to exacerbate tensions between both sides of the Atlantic.

## **Russia**

### [The Sino-Indian Clash: Russia in the Middle](#)

June 25, 2020, The Diplomat

In the midst of a border crisis with China, Indian Defense Minister Rajnath Singh is away in Moscow. At the same time, India's foreign minister joined his Russian and Chinese counterparts online for an Russia-India-China (RIC) meeting. The Sino-Indian crisis potentially puts Russia in a difficult position, having to choose between its traditional partners in India, which also represents a lucrative arms market, and its new but much more powerful friend in the east, China.

### [Explained: Why Russia has emerged a key player amid India, China tensions](#)

June 23, 2020, The Indian Express

Russia has emerged a key player amid tensions between India and China. A look at how Russia's ties with China have grown over the decades, and how New Delhi and Moscow have engaged over the current crisis.

### [Russia, US agree to meeting of experts on military doctrines](#)

June 26, 2020, TASS

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova also pointed towards the issue of verification and transparency, saying that Russia and the US have yet reconcile their approaches and to find the way to conjugate them.

### [In Russia's constitutional referendum, Putin seeks 16 more years](#)

June 26, 2020, AXIOS

Russians began voting Thursday on the most significant package of constitutional changes since the fall of the Soviet Union.

## Africa & Latin America

### Latin America

#### [Mexico's López Obrador plans first trip abroad to meet Trump](#)

June 25, 2020, Politico

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador will meet with President Donald Trump in Washington early next month to celebrate the new North American trade deal taking effect.

#### [Trump takes his first 2020 trip to the US-Mexico border](#)

June 23, 2020, CNN

President Donald Trump took his first 2020 trip to the US-Mexico border Tuesday amid ongoing concerns about an uptick in coronavirus cases and on the heels of his foray back on the campaign trail in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

#### [Argentina's economic crisis poised to go from bad to worse](#)

June 24, 2020, Al Jazeera

Already in a third year of recession - pre-pandemic, Argentina may see a record contraction in 2020, some analysts warn.

#### [Venezuela's top diplomat says partnership with Russia develops despite complications](#)

June 25, 2020, Tass

He noted that the strategic alliance of the two nations was the main talking point during his June 24 meeting with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov.

#### [Venezuela Oil Crisis Deepens With India Refiners Halting Imports](#)

June 26, 2020, Bloomberg

India's largest private refinery halted purchases of Venezuelan oil, putting additional pressure on the Latin American country's beleaguered oil industry.

#### [Venezuela calls US warship presence 'a provocation'](#)

June 25, 2020, Wion

Venezuela accused the United States on Wednesday of "an act of provocation" after a US warship steamed close to the South American country's territorial waters the day before.

### [U.S. urges Russia, China to give Venezuela more aid in COVID fight](#)

June 25, 2020, Reuters

The United States called on Russia and China on Thursday to provide more humanitarian aid to their ally Venezuela in its fight against the growing COVID-19 epidemic.

### [US navy ship sails near Venezuela after arrival of Iranian cargo](#)

June 24, 2020, Al Jazeera

An American warship in the Caribbean Sea navigated into waters the US Navy says are illegitimately claimed by Caracas.

## Africa

### [Coronavirus: How Africa's Supply Chains Are Evolving](#)

June 26, 2020, BBC

Africa Rising has seen a new trend of businesses trying to import more machines into African nations to set up local production centres, instead of importing finished products. "This is a very positive development for small and mid-sized companies - international firms who are investing in African countries are actively looking for local components that they can use in their factories on site," says Mr Demissie.

### [China's Palace Diplomacy In Africa](#)

June 25, 2020, War on the rocks

A central element of palace diplomacy is lavishing African rulers with personal benefits, such as grand new workplaces that serve little purpose other than to curry favor with recipient governments. In a recently published report – which so irked the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs that its spokesman attacked it during a press conference.

### [India and Africa: Charting a Post-COVID19 Future](#)

June 25, 2020, ORF

Devastating consequences on developing nations like India and the countries of Africa are being witnessed as they emerge as hotspots, owing to the double burden of large populations and weak healthcare infrastructure. Worryingly for both regions, the pandemic has come at a time when they were making appreciable

progress towards meeting their Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). COVID-19 threatens to undermine those achievements.

### [South Sudan: UN Security Council Renews Mandate of Peacekeepers in South Sudan](#)

June 22, 2020, All Africa

The UN Security Council has extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). In a resolution seen by The East African, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said the Council renewed the mandate up to March 15, 2021.

### [African Union Sanctions South Sudan for Nonpayment](#)

June 23, 2020, Voice of America

Representatives of South Sudan have been banned from taking part in an African Union meeting after their government failed to pay overdue fees totalling more than \$9 million.

### [Uganda's leader slams WHO over handling of virus crisis](#)

June 23, 2020, Andolou Agency

President says organization has been inconsistent and has issued impractical instructions.

### [Kenya court rejects China's multi-billion dollar BRI rail project](#)

June 25, 2020, WION

Kenya's appeals court has ruled that the contract between the Kenyan government and China Road Bridge Corporation (CRBC) failed to comply with its laws.





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