

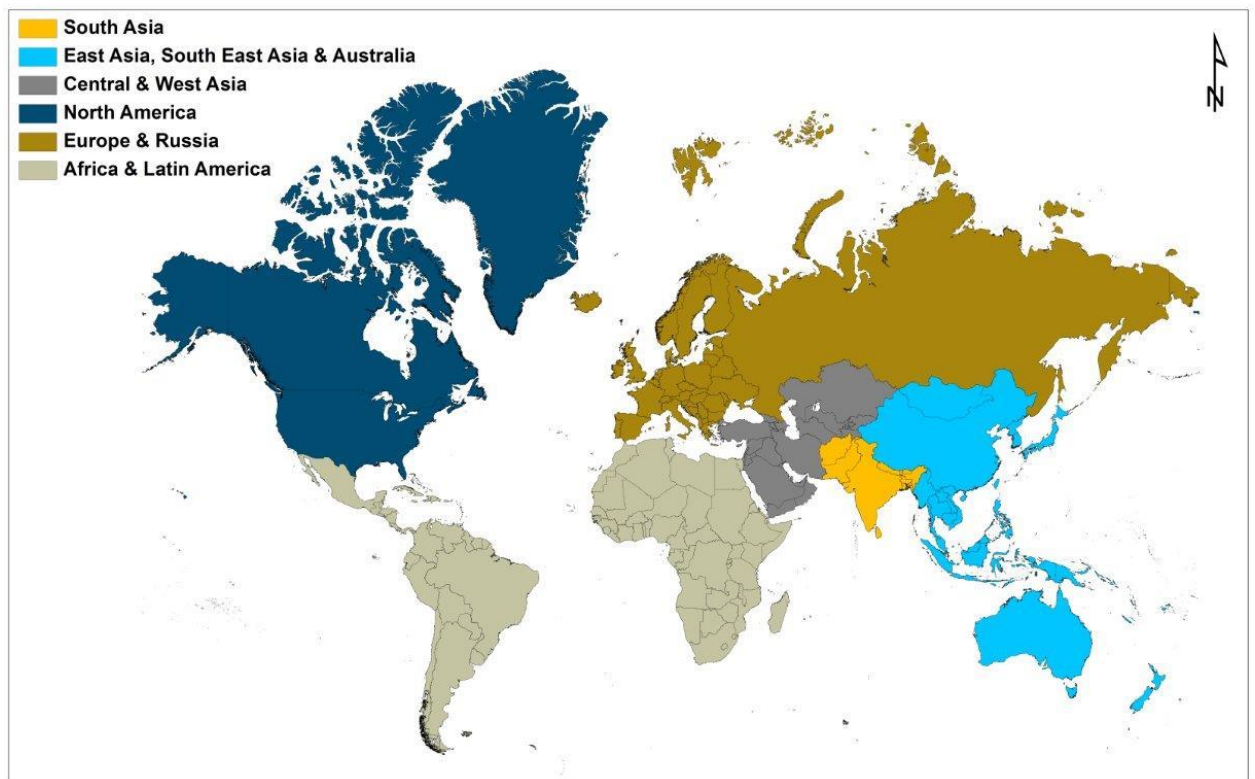


Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH



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Delhi Policy Group

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

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ABOUT US

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

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DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH

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South Asia

India

[South-South Cooperation: High-level defence delegation from Brazil to visit India in 2021](#)

December 10, 2020, Financial Express

Production of ammunition under the joint venture between Companhia Brasileira de Cartuchos (CBC) Brazil, the world's second-largest ammunition manufacturer, and Stumpp Schuele & Somappa India (SSS defence) will take off in August 2021. Sharing this information, Fernando Saim, of CBC, said, "The SS-CBC India Ammunition project is set to start operations in August 2021, in Andhra Pradesh. The joint venture will focus on not only the Indian market but will also reach out to the region."

[India's weapons procurement from US jumps to \\$3.4 billion in 2020](#)

December 9, 2020, Business Standard

India's weapons procurement from the United States jumped from a meagre USD 6.2 million to a whopping USD 3.4 billion in the final year of the Donald Trump's administration, according to official data.

[Indian Army chief begins visit to UAE, Saudi Arabia](#)

December 8, 2020, Andolou Agency

The Indian Army chief has proceeded on a historic visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia, according to an official statement issued.

[India, Uzbekistan to hold Virtual Summit](#)

December 11, 2020, DD News

"The leaders will discuss the entire spectrum of the bilateral relationship, including strengthening of India-Uzbekistan cooperation in the post-COVID world," said a press release from the Ministry of External Affairs.

[Jaishankar calls out China, cites its 5 differing explanations for Ladakh violations](#)

December 9, 2020, Hindustan Times

China has offered "five differing explanations" for its deployment of thousands of soldiers on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) that pushed bilateral ties into their most difficult phase ever, external affairs minister S Jaishankar said.

[Rajnath Singh's message at Asean meet aims at China, advocates self-restraint](#)

December 10, 2020, Hindustan Times

In a thinly veiled reference to China, defence minister Rajnath Singh called on members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its dialogue partners to exercise self-restraint and avoid actions that complicate the situation.

[Indian Navy carries out exercise with Russia on Navy Day](#)

December 5, 2020, India Today

The Indian and Russian navies carried out a two-day passage exercise (PASSEX) in the Eastern Indian Ocean Region (IOR) on December 4 and 5. A similar exercise was carried out by the US Navy earlier as part of Indian Navy's outreach programme to work closely with friendly nations.

[India, US gear up to share maritime military intel](#)

December 7, 2020, The Times of India

India and the US are gearing up to actively share maritime military intelligence through a recently concluded pact, even as New Delhi has also inked 'while shipping' agreements with 21 countries to enhance "situational awareness" in the Indian Ocean Region(IOR).

[Maritime security, cyber-related crimes, terrorism main challenges for ASEAN: Rajnath Singh](#)

December 10, 2020, The Indian Express

Sharing platform with his Chinese counterpart, defence Minister Rajnath Singh Thursday said that maritime security, cyber-related crimes and terrorism and threats to the rules-based order are some of the main challenges that ASEAN as a forum has to address. Singh also asked for a collective and collaborative effort to fight against Covid-19.

[Indo-Pacific approach based on cooperation, collaboration: India tells UN](#)

December 10, 2020, Deccan Herald

India has said its concept of the Indo-Pacific is "inclusive" in nature and is based on cooperation and collaboration, given the need for shared responses to the shared challenges in the strategically important region.

Pakistan

[Opposition MPs will submit resignations to party heads by 31st](#)

December 9, 2020, Dawn

Hours after Prime Minister Imran Khan declared that he would go for by-elections in the country if the opposition members resigned from the assemblies, the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) announced that all the national and provincial lawmakers belonging to its constituent parties will hand over their resignations individually to the heads of their parties by Dec 31.

[Ministry asked to provide data on income, assets of senior military officers](#)

December 9, 2020, Dawn

In a landmark move, the Pakistan Information Commission (PIC) has informed the defence ministry that information about income, income tax, assets, perks, privileges, post-retirement benefits and plots allotted to officers of the armed forces is public information and not sensitive information. The commission issued these guidelines to the defence ministry while deciding 34 appeals filed by Women's Action Forum (WAF) activists and some concerned citizens who had sought the afore-mentioned information from the defence ministry which refused to provide the data.

[Pakistan, nine other countries placed on US religious freedom blacklist](#)

December 9, 2020, The Express Tribune

The United States announced that Pakistan, along with nine other countries, has been categorised as "countries of particular concern" (CPC) under its International Religious Freedom Act. Iran, Saudi Arabia, China, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Nigeria, Myanmar, Eritrea and North Korea have also been designated as "countries of particular concern".

[Russia to join drills with NATO member ships off Pakistan](#)

December 10, 2020, The Express Tribune

Russia said that it would take part in drills involving more than 30 countries off the coast of Pakistan, in rare joint exercises with Russian and NATO member ships. The AMAN-2021 anti-piracy drills are set to be held in waters near Karachi in February 2021 and will involve British, US, Turkish, Chinese, Japanese and other forces, the Russian defence ministry said in a statement.

[World Bank approves \\$300m loan](#)

December 10, 2020, The Express Tribune

The World Bank has approved a \$300 million loan to help Pakistan address issues of climate change, health emergency and manage solid waste to reduce

flooding chances in Karachi. The Washington-based lender approved \$200 million for the Sindh Resilience project and \$100 million for the Solid Waste Emergency and Efficiency project.

[LNG spot market cold-shoulders Pakistan](#)

December 11, 2020, Dawn

In a major setback to gas-starved consumers, Pakistan could not get even a single bid for three LNG (liquefied natural gas) cargoes meant for the first half of January and attracted the highest price for the second half of the month mainly because of delayed tenders amid rising international prices.

Pakistan LNG Limited (PLL) had issued tenders for six cargoes for delivery between Jan 8 and Feb 1. In response, no supplier or trader bid for the first three slots between Jan 8 and Jan 18. This is the first time that the country did not get a bid since it entered the spot market five years ago.

Afghanistan

[Belgian troops to exit Afghanistan next year](#)

December 6, 2020, Pajhwok

Belgium says its contingent in Afghanistan would return home next year in coordination with allies and partners. defence Minister Ludivine Dedonder said in an interview on Saturday: "We are preparing our withdrawal from Afghanistan."

[Taliban Expect Release of Their Prisoners by Mid-December: Wilson](#)

December 6, 2020, Tolo News

US Chargé d'Affaires Ross Wilson in a chat with reporters said that the Taliban is expecting the release of thousands of their prisoners under their agreement with the United States by mid-December. "The specific provision relating to another 7,000 Taliban prisoners is contained in the US-Taliban agreement," Wilson said.

[U.S. and Afghan forces target Al Qaeda in the south](#)

December 8, 2020, Long War Journal

The U.S. military and Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security (NDS) have launched two raids against Al Qaeda's network in Helmand and Nimroz province over the past several days, killing at least eight operatives and capturing three more. The Taliban continues to maintain that Al Qaeda does not have a presence in Afghanistan, despite multiple raids against the terror group.

[US-based group: Dramatic increase in Afghan gov't airstrikes](#)

December 8, 2020, Mail Online

A U.S.-based institute warned that there has been a dramatic increase in airstrikes conducted by Afghan government forces from July to September this year, attacks that have led to a sharp rise in civilian casualties. According to the report 70 Afghan civilians have been killed in the third quarter of this year, compared to 86 killed in the first six months of 2020.

[Fuel Quality Testing Project Faces Corruption Charges](#)

December 9, 2020, Tolo News

A fuel quality testing project for the country's ports is facing corruption charges by lawmakers who say the Indian company that has the contract lacks the required capacity for the task. TSRC Corporation, the lawmakers said, was referred to the Attorney General's Office by President Ghani because of a lack of capacity and for forgery.

[US House Passes Bill to Block Afghanistan Withdrawal](#)

December 9, 2020, Tolo News

The Senate passed a \$741 billion defence policy bill that would take steps to slow or block US President Trump's planned drawdown of American troops from Germany and Afghanistan. The bill contains a provision that would require the Trump administration to submit a comprehensive, interagency report and certification prior to obligating or expending funds to draw down US military personnel in Afghanistan "below troop levels of 8,000 and 4,000."

[COVID-19 Deaths Increase in Afghanistan: Ministry](#)

December 10, 2020, Tolo News

The Ministry of Public Health raised alarms over the 46% increase of COVID-19 deaths this week compared to the previous week, saying that each day deaths have increased from 5-10 to 10-20. The ministry said that 1,678 people tested positive for the coronavirus in Afghanistan last week, which is higher than in previous weeks.

[Afghanistan, Iran open first rail network](#)

December 11, 2020, Dawn

An Iranian goods train carrying tonnes of agricultural products chugged into a western Afghan province as the two countries marked the opening of their first shared railway network. The train route so far links the Iranian city of Khaf with the Afghan town of Rozanak about 150 kilometres away, but is scheduled to be expanded to reach Herat, Afghanistan's third largest city.

Bangladesh

[Narendra Modi, Sheikh Hasina to virtually re-launch India-Bangladesh cross-border rail route after 55 years](#)

December 10, 2020, Live Mint

The rail route between Haldibari in West Bengal and Chilahati in neighbouring Bangladesh is all set to reopen after a gap of 55 years on December 17 and prime ministers of the two countries will inaugurate the programme, an official of the Northeast Frontier Railway said

[Bangladesh: Chinese defence Minister visit change raises eyebrows](#)

December 9, 2020, ORF

The last-minute postponement of Chinese defence Minister Wei Fenghe's visit to Bangladesh, after going to Nepal, in November, has raised curiosity about the state of the relations between the two countries. Since no specific reason has been cited, a host of speculations have surfaced, with no tangible conclusion.

[Indian envoy meets Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina as Dhaka, Islamabad look to revive ties](#)

December 10, 2020, The Print

India is "closely monitoring" the recent developments in the bilateral ties between Dhaka and Islamabad, with New Delhi also reminding Bangladesh about the horrors of the 1971 Liberation War.

[China-Bangladesh rate surge delaying non-critical imports](#)

December 7, 2020, Joc.com

A surge in freight rates between China and the main Bangladeshi port of Chittagong has prompted shippers to reduce or delay the import of lower-demand items into Bangladesh.

Nepal

[India, Nepal to start flights under air bubble arrangement](#)

December 10, 2020, Hindustan Times

India and Nepal have decided to start flights under a bilateral air bubble arrangement, people familiar with developments said, marking another step by the two sides to normalise ties hit by a border row earlier this year.

[Nepal, China in 'new era' of strategic ties, vow to strengthen trans-Himalayan connectivity](#)

December 8, 2020, The Print

Nepal and China Tuesday vowed to make progress on the trans-Himalayan connectivity projects under Beijing's mega Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as both countries jointly announced a new height for Mount Everest, the tallest peak in the world.

[India has a China-sized problem in Nepal but must capitalise on current momentum](#)

December 10, 2020, Firstpost

China has not let this ball drop, and Beijing's growing activism through a mixture of chequebook diplomacy and political interference has got India worried and on the defensive. While China has gone about reshaping the regional and even international order, exerting intense gravitational pull over smaller states around India's periphery, India has remained complacent and insulated. That is changing now.

Bhutan

[China setting up villages on borders with India and Bhutan, satellite imagery shows](#)

December 7, 2020, Hindustan Times

Satellite imagery has emerged of China setting up villages in hitherto uninhabited stretches on its disputed borders with India and Bhutan, particularly in Arunachal Pradesh, with experts saying the move could be aimed at buttressing Beijing's territorial claims.

[China's claim on the last Shangri-La?](#)

December 10, 2020, ORF Online

Recent reports and satellite imagery show that the Chinese have constructed a new village inside two kilometres of Bhutanese territory. The village lies on the eastern periphery of the disputed Doklam plateau where, in 2017, India and China were involved in a standoff.

Sri Lanka

[Sri Lanka to get \\$300 mn Chinese tyre factory](#)

December 8, 2020, The Hindu

Sri Lanka announced the first large-scale Chinese investment in manufacturing in the country, a \$300-million tyre factory near a strategic deep-sea port.

[Understanding the maritime domain vital to unleashing Sri Lanka's growth potential - State Minister](#)

December 6, 2020, Colombo Page

State Minister for Regional Co-operation Tharaka Balasuriya reiterated that Sri Lanka's maritime domain is a vital component that can unleash the island nation's growth potential and achieve the priority areas outlined in President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's manifesto 'Vistas of Prosperity and Splendor'.

East & South East Asia

China

[China imposes reciprocal sanctions on certain U.S. individuals](#)

December 10, 2020, Xinhua Net

China decided to impose reciprocal sanctions on some U.S. administration officials and congressional and NGO staff who have behaved badly and borne major responsibilities over Hong Kong-related issues, and on their immediate family members as well.

[Chinese FM calls for new growth areas for China-New Zealand cooperation](#)

December 10, 2020, Xinhua Net

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Thursday called on China and New Zealand to sign the protocol to upgrade the free trade deal at an early date, speed up the consultation and signing of concrete plans for Belt and Road cooperation, and actively foster new growth points of cooperation in emerging areas.

[Xi Jinping Thought on the Rule of Law guides law-based governance in China](#)

December 10, 2020, Xinhua Net

The first central conference on work related to overall law-based governance in the history of the Communist Party of China (CPC) from Nov. 16 to 17, 2020, marked the establishment of Xi Jinping Thought on the Rule of Law and its status as the guiding thought for law-based governance in China.

[Senior legislator calls for positive role of American firms in China](#)

December 11, 2020, Xinhua Net

China will ease market access and ensure that companies registered in China are treated equally, a senior legislator said Thursday, adding this will bring new opportunities for enterprises from all over the world to develop in China.

[China not aggressive nor servile: FM](#)

December 10, 2020, Global Times

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying responded to accusations from some Western media and politicians who recently used the term "wolf warrior" to describe China's diplomacy. Hua stressed that China has no tradition of being aggressive, but will also not flinch in the face of bullying and provocations.

[China's Commerce Minister honored by Pakistan for improving bilateral friendship](#)

December 11, 2020, Global Times

Chinese Commerce Minister Zhong Shan was awarded the prestigious "Hilal-i-Pakistan" by Pakistan's top diplomat in China on behalf of Pakistani President Arif Alvi at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing.

[China-Russia jointly developed airplane making good progress](#)

December 10, 2020, Global Times

The development of the Chinese-Russian wide-body CR929 passenger aircraft is going well, and the plane could spawn several variants for special missions in the future, media reports said making good progress.

[China Wants to Be the World's Banker](#)

December 09, 2020, The Wall Street Journal

China lags behind the advanced financial centers, but it has belatedly begun to open up and attract best-in-class foreign financial institutions. Its markets have governance and accounting issues to overcome, but Beijing is working to enhance its regulatory structure to meet global standards and provide greater transparency and better enforcement. China's relatively quick recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic without a major fiscal stimulus has also allowed it to maintain higher interest rates and a stronger currency.

[China Sticks with Tough Line on Hong Kong After U.S. Bolsters Sanctions](#)

December 8, 2020, The Wall Street Journal

The U.S. announced sanctions Monday against 14 of the 175 members of China's top legislative body, the National People's Congress Standing Committee, which officials in Washington said was central to China's efforts to rein in freedoms in Hong Kong. Hours after the U.S. move, Hong Kong police arrested eight activists, including opposition legislators and protest organizers, in dawn raids across the city, the latest in a series of arrests of prominent figures accused of crimes over their roles in last year's anti-government uprising.

[China vaccine: impetuous immunisations](#)

December 7, 2020, The Financial Times

Belief is outweighing scepticism as nations rush to vaccinate. Indonesia has begun shipping in Chinese-produced shots that have not even completed phase 3 clinical trials. Haste is understandable. Infections, while hard to assess in a populous nation with little testing, appear to be spiralling. The shipment of up to 1.2m doses from an initial order of 40m is a coup for Sinovac. Its CoronaVac jab appears better-suited to hot, developing countries than some

western alternatives. That could bolster Chinese influence, while helping to reinvigorate a troubled business.

[China uses big data to select Muslims for arrest in Xinjiang: HRW](#)

December 09, 2020, Al Jazeera

A big-data program in China's Xinjiang "arbitrarily selects" Muslims for detention, flagging behaviour such as wearing a veil, studying the Quran or going on the Hajj pilgrimage as reasons for arrest, according to Human Rights Watch (HRW). In a new report on Wednesday, the rights group said it analysed a leaked list of more than 2,000 detainees in Xinjiang's Aksu prefecture and found that the programme – known as the Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP) – also flagged people for their relationships, their communications, their travel histories, or for being related to someone the authorities consider suspicious.

[The Party That Failed: An Insider Breaks with Beijing](#)

December 2020, Foreign Affairs

When Xi Jinping came to power in 2012, I was full of hope for China. After a decade of stagnation, the CCP needed reform more than ever, and Xi, who had hinted at his proclivity for change, seemed like the man to lead it. I should not have been surprised when it turned out that Xi was no reformer. Over the course of his tenure, the regime has degenerated further into a political oligarchy bent on holding on to power through brutality and ruthlessness.

Japan

[ASEAN defence chiefs and partners agree to promote peace in Asia](#)

December 10, 2020, The Japan Times

defence ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and its eight partners, including the United States and China, wrapped up their one-day virtual meeting Thursday, with all members reaffirming "the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety, and freedom of navigation and overflight" in the region.

[Japan OKs one-year extension of MSDF intelligence mission in Middle East](#)

December 11, 2020, The Japan Times

The Cabinet approved Friday a one-year extension of a Maritime Self-defence Force mission to the Middle East for intelligence-gathering activities to help ensure the safety of a key oil shipping lane.

[Can Japan keep up in the 21st-century space race?](#)

December 10, 2020, The Japan Times

Japan is a pioneer in space technology, having been the fourth nation in the world to launch a satellite. But it has banned the use of space for military purposes and has faced a hard battle since the 1990s in expanding its commercial use as well.

[Australia and Japan edge toward an alliance](#)

December 9, 2020, The Japan Times

Australia and Japan's close relationship is based on common political values, market economies, open trade policies and overlapping security interests. The deepening bilateral security relationship includes taking part in joint humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, anti-piracy operations, as well as naval and coast guard exercises.

[Japan to build 2 ships equipped with Aegis missile defence system](#)

December 9, 2020, Japan Today

Japan will build two ships equipped with Aegis missile interceptors after public opposition forced the government to scrap deployment of a costly land-based system, the country's defence minister said.

[Japan to put new Aegis radars on warships after cancelling ground stations: report](#)

December 11, 2020, Japan Today

Japan will put new powerful Aegis radars on warships to upgrade its defences against possible ballistic missiles fired by North Korea after it cancelled plans to deploy them at two ground-based stations.

Korea

[North Korea wasted chance to improve relations under Trump, U.S. envoy says](#)

December 10, 2020, Reuters

Pyongyang squandered an opportunity to fundamentally reinvent its relationship with the United States during Donald Trump's presidency, Washington's top North Korea envoy said on Thursday, adding he will urge his successors to continue engagement.

[Full text of President Moon Jae-in's statement on South Korea's 2050 carbon neutrality vision](#)

December 10, 2020, Yonhap News Agency

Please click on the link to find out the unofficial translation of President Moon Jae-in's declaration of South Korea's 2050 carbon neutrality vision. It was provided by his office, Cheong Wa Dae.

[Moon's special envoy to Russia stirs speculations of political comeback](#)

December 11, 2020, The Korea Times

Cheong Wa Dae's announcement to send ruling party heavyweight Woo Yoon-keun as a presidential envoy to Moscow next week is raising speculations that the former three-term lawmaker could soon be making a political comeback, possibly as the next presidential chief of staff. Woo has stayed out of politics following his service as Moon's first ambassador to Russia from October 2017 through June 2019.

[China drawing Northeast Asia strategy without US](#)

December 8, 2020, The Korea Times

China's foreign ministry stated that Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi's visit to Seoul has achieved "rich results"(fengfu chengguo). China's most important achievement is that it has secured an opportunity to advance a China-led regional cooperation mechanism in Northeast Asia without U.S. involvement. This will stimulate intra-East Asian economic integration, centered on China.

Southeast Asia

[COVID-19: A Regional Response Is Key for ASEAN](#)

December 8, 2020, The Diplomat

Globally, the nations of the world continue to focus inward on their response to COVID-19. The national impact of the pandemic, experience, and policy responses have dominated airwaves throughout 2020. Yet despite so much attention on local action, regional responses will prove to be the key to recovery as countries attempt to reopen their borders to the movement of people and reinvigorate global supply chains.

[India, Singapore officials discuss ASEAN-India engagement](#)

December 11, 2020, Malaysia Sun

Senior officials from India and Singapore held virtual meeting on Thursday in which they discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations and post COVID economic growth.

[Vietnam, China co-chair 18th East Asia Forum](#)

December 11, 2020, Nhan Dan

Vietnam and China co-chaired the 18th East Asia Forum which was held via video conference on December 10 under the theme of "Strengthening the ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation for Economic and Financial Resilience in the face of Emerging Challenges".

[FTA upgrade to boost China-Singapore trade](#)

December 11, 2020, China.org.cn

The upgrade of the China-Singapore Free Trade Agreement will further improve the level of services and investment, and create a better business environment for companies from both countries, the Ministry of Commerce said.

[Covid-19: Know vaccine plans of India, Philippines and others](#)

December 11, 2020, Khaleej Times

Trial data from Pfizer Inc with partner BioNTech SE, Moderna Inc and AstraZeneca Plc has shown their experimental vaccines are effective in preventing novel coronavirus infection.

[Donald Trump's parting gift to Philippines: defence equipment worth US\\$29 million](#)

December 8, 2020, SCMP

The Philippines received an unexpected parting gift from the outgoing administration of US President Donald Trump: US\$29 million worth of defence equipment.

[Japan plays peacemaker in Myanmar to keep China at bay](#)

December 9, 2020, Morung Express

Japan has taken up the difficult task in strife-torn Myanmar, of brokering peace between the military and the Arakan Army (AA), amid spiralling rivalry with China in the Indo-Pacific.

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[India, Uzbekistan standing firmly against terrorism: PM Narendra Modi](#)

December 11, 2020, The Indian Express

India and Uzbekistan are standing together firmly against terrorism and have similar concerns over separatism, extremism and fundamentalism, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday at a virtual summit with Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

[Kyrgyzstan can access markets from Gwadar, Karachi ports](#)

December 11, 2020, Nation

The Lahore Centre for Peace Research is hosting a two-day conference on “Re-Imagining the Silk Road- Pakistan Kyrgyzstan Relations in the Age of Connectivity” at the Sheraton Hotel in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

[Russia Eyes Stronger Presence in the Arctic](#)

December 10, 2020, Caspian News

Russian President Vladimir Putin has stressed the strategic importance of the Arctic to Russia as 70% of the territory lies in northern latitudes.

[UN, EU Launch Spotlight Initiative for Central Asia, Afghanistan to Support Women](#)

December 10, 2020, Astana Times

The United Nations (UN) Office and the European Union (EU) have launched a multi-year Spotlight regional programme for Central Asia and Afghanistan designed to eliminate all forms of violence against women. The EU will fund the programme with an initial budget of \$4.3 million.

[FDI to Central Asia Reached 378.2 billion Over Past 13 years](#)

December 9, 2020, The Astana Times

The Central Asian region has been swiftly developing between 2007 and 2019 thanks to foreign direct investments (FDI), the gross inflow of which totaled \$378.2 billion. The countries of the European Union (EU) invested 40 percent of total FDI in Central Asia.

[Kyrgyzstan pleads for more Chinese help in building key infrastructure](#)

December 9, 2020, Eurasianet

Even as Kyrgyzstan appears uncertain how to cope with the massive weight of its dues to China, it has embarked on a fresh charm offensive to remind Beijing of the role it plays in developing vital infrastructure.

West Asia

[Task Force to be Set Up to Boost Qatari Investments into India: PM Modi](#)

December 08, 2020, Livemint

India and Qatar on Tuesday discussed the creation of a special task force to facilitate investments by Qatar Investment Authority into India. The two countries also "resolved to explore Qatari investments in the entire energy value-chain in India,".

[Indian Army Chief Embarks on 'Historic' Trip to UAE, Saudi Arabia](#)

December 09, 2020, AL Jazeera

The visit by General Naravane, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), is aimed at "strengthening the country's strategic and defence cooperation" with the major Gulf nations, a statement from the Indian army said on Tuesday (December 08), adding that it is an "historic" trip.

[India is Looking West: Relations between New Delhi and the Gulf Nations Have Undergone a Fundamental Reset](#)

December 06, 2020, The Times of India

The Gulf region is a reliable partner for energy security for India while India augments food security in the region. However, our relationship has moved beyond mere transactional value. Prime Minister Modi and the Gulf leadership are recreating a civilisational connect that had rusted over the years.

[UAE Investors Look to Move into India-UAE's \\$7b Food Corridor](#)

December 08, 2020, Khaleej Times

The proposed UAE-India food corridor initiative is projected to draw investments of up to \$7 billion from the Emirates to the Subcontinent. The corridor is expected to benefit two million farmers and create 200,000 jobs in India by managing food supply chains and through the establishment of logistics infrastructure and major agricultural projects.

[UAE's Lulu Group to Set Up Food Processing Centre in Jammu and Kashmir](#)

December 11, 2020, The Economic Times

The UAE-based Lulu Group International has announced a plan to set up a food processing centre in Srinagar for sourcing a wide range of agriculture products from Jammu and Kashmir.

[Bahrain's Investcorp Sets \\$1.5bn Medium-Term Investment Target in India](#)

December 02, 2020, Arabian Business

Investcorp, the Bahrain-based global alternative asset management fund, has set a medium-term target of reaching \$1.5 billion assets under management (AuM) in India, top executives of the fund have recently said.

[Indian Nationals Can Now Enjoy Visa Free Travel to Oman](#)

December 09, 2020, Times of Oman

Indian citizens who wish to travel to Oman can stay in the country for up to 10 days without the need for an entry visa.

[Presence of ISIS, Al-Qaeda in Parts of Yemen Needs to be Addressed: India](#)

December 04, 2020, The Economic Times

India has said the presence of terrorist elements like ISIS and Al Qaeda in parts of Yemen and their continued attacks on civilian population needs to be addressed, stressing that the international community must unite to fight the "dark forces of terror" globally and hold those who support and shelter such terror groups accountable.

[Senate Fails to Block Trump-backed Arms Sale to United Arab Emirates](#)

December 10, 2020, CNN

The U.S. Senate on Wednesday (December 09) failed to pass two disapproval resolutions pushed by a bipartisan group of senators to block a \$23 billion US arms sale to the United Arab Emirates that was approved by the Trump administration. The first procedural measure failed to advance on a 46-50 vote and the second procedural vote failed to advance by 47-49.

[Morocco Latest Country to Normalise Ties with Israel in US-brokered Deal](#)

December 11, 2020, BBC News

Morocco has become the latest Arab League country to agree to normalise relations with Israel in a deal brokered with US help. As part of the deal, the US has agreed to recognise Morocco's claim over the disputed Western Sahara region.

[China Prepares to Sign a Multi-billion Dollar Oil Deal with Iraq](#)

December 10, 2020, TRT World

China's state-run Zhenhua Oil is set to sign a multibillion-dollar contract with the Iraqi government for long-term oil supply. Iraq will export 4 million barrels a month, or about 130,000 per day, under the deal. Zhenhua Oil will pay more than \$2 billion to Iraq in advance.

[Joe Biden to Name Former CENTCOM Commander General Lloyd J. Austin Who Oversaw Iraq War as Pentagon Chief](#)

December 08, 2020, The Arab Weekly

US President-elect Joe Biden will nominate former 'CENTCOM' Commander General Lloyd J. Austin to be secretary of defence, according to four people familiar with the decision. If confirmed by the Senate, Austin would be the first Black leader of the Pentagon.

[To Deter Iranian Attacks on U.S. Troops, Pentagon Orders B-52 Flights to Middle East](#)

December 10, 2020, The New York Times

Two American B-52 bombers flew a show-of-force mission in the Persian Gulf on Thursday (December 10) that military officials said was intended to deter Iran and its proxies from carrying out attacks against United States troops in the Middle East amid rising tensions between the two countries.

United States

United States

[Team of Rivals? Biden's Cabinet Looks More Like a Team of Buddies](#)

December 9, 2020, The New York Times

For all the talk that Mr. Biden is abiding by a complicated formula of ethnicity, gender and experience as he builds his administration — and he is — perhaps the most important criterion for landing a cabinet post or a top White House job appears to be having a longstanding relationship with the president-elect himself.

[Climate Finance May Foul the Economy](#)

December 07, 2020, The Wall Street Journal

When Barack Obama clinched the Democratic presidential nomination in June 2008, he said he hoped future generations would look back and say, “This was the moment when the rise of the oceans began to slow and our planet began to heal.” Not exactly. While the Obama administration helped negotiate the Paris Climate Accords, the effects of those voluntary pledges to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions has been as minimal as their harshest environmentalist critics predicted. According to the Climate Action Tracker site, only two countries—all hail Morocco and Gambia—are living up to their Paris commitments.

[Trump announces Israel and Morocco to normalize relations](#)

December 11, 2020, CNN

Morocco has become the fourth country in the Middle East and North African region to agree to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel, as the Trump administration seeks to shore up regional support for Israel as a countermeasure to Iranian aggression.

[India's weapons procurement from the US jumps to USD 3.4 billion in 2020](#)

December 9, 2020, Hindustan Times

India's weapons procurement from the United States jumped from a meagre USD 6.2 million to a whopping USD 3.4 billion in the final year of the Donald Trump's administration, according to official data.

[Role reversal: India offers US fighter jet trainer in 1st major defence sales pitch](#)

December 9, 2020, The Economic Times

In a reversal of roles, India has offered the United States of America a fighter jet trainer required by its navy for pilot training on aircraft carriers, marking the first major weapons sales pitch by New Delhi to Washington.

[USA raised religious tolerance issues with India in private conversations](#)

December 10, 2020, The Economic Times

The US administration has raised issues related to religious freedoms in India in private discussions with the government and will continue to raise such matters, US ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom Sam Brownback has said.

[China open to reset in relations with US as Washington announces fresh sanctions over Hong Kong](#)

December 8, 2020, CNN

China's foreign minister says Beijing is open to restarting its relationship with the US, declaring the two countries are at a "critical historical juncture" after a year of escalating tensions.

[No reset in sight for U.S.-China relations, economist says](#)

December 10, 2020, CNBC

Hope is fading for a significant change in U.S.-China relations under President-elect Joe Biden, Alicia Garcia-Herrero, Natixis' chief economist for Asia-Pacific, said on Thursday.

[Trump finalizes sweeping asylum restrictions in last-minute immigration push](#)

December 10, 2020, Reuters

The Trump administration finalized a regulation on Thursday that greatly restricts access to asylum in the United States, part of a last-minute immigration crackdown that incoming President-elect Joe Biden will likely try to reverse.

[Exclusive: U.S. set to sanction Turkey over Russian defence system - sources](#)

December 11, 2020, Reuters

The United States is poised to impose sanctions on Turkey over its acquisition last year of Russian S-400 air defence systems, five sources including three U.S. officials told Reuters on Thursday, a move likely to worsen already problematic ties between the two NATO allies.

[What America's biggest-ever defence bill of \\$740bn means for Middle East](#)

December 10, 2020, Middle East Eye

The bill contains many provisions that will have significant consequences for the Middle East, whether it is continuing to aid certain countries or mandating sanctions on others.

[Donald Trump's parting gift to Philippines: defence equipment worth US\\$29 million](#)

December 8, 2020, South China Morning Post

The Philippines on Tuesday received an unexpected parting gift from the outgoing administration of US President Donald Trump: US\$29 million worth of defence equipment.

[Biden's pick for defence chief unlikely to change China policy, analysts say](#)

December 8, South China Morning Post

US President-elect Joe Biden's choice of Lloyd Austin, a retired four-star army general, to head the Pentagon is unlikely to affect military policy on China and the region, according to Chinese analysts.

[Amid veto threat, Senate rejects ban on Trump's big UAE arms sale](#)

December 10, 2020, defence News

The Senate narrowly rejected two measures Wednesday to block President Donald Trump's plan to sell roughly \$23 billion in weapons to the United Arab Emirates.

Europe & Russia

Europe

[Europe prepares for its first batches of covid-19 vaccines](#)

December 11, 2020, The Economist

Even as Europe prepares for its first batches of the vaccine, supplies and uptake are both uncertain.

[E.U. Reaches Deal on Major Budget and Stimulus Package](#)

December 10, 2020, The New York Times

European Union leaders reached a landmark budget agreement Thursday after weeks of fraught negotiations, unblocking \$2.2 trillion in funds crucial to some of the bloc's weakest economies that have been decimated by the coronavirus pandemic.

[Here's Why the Stimulus Deal Is Such a Big Deal for Europe](#)

December 11, 2020, Bloomberg

After a hard-fought battle, the European Union's landmark 1.8 trillion euro (\$2.2 trillion) budget and stimulus package has finally got over the line. It's quite the achievement.

[As Poles and Hungarians, we urge the EU to stand firm on the rule of law](#)

December 10, 2020, The Guardian

Democracy is seriously under threat in our countries. The EU must stand up to the bullying tactics of Orbán and Morawiecki

[Europe, U.S. should say 'no' to China's 'wolf-warrior' diplomacy - EU envoy](#)

December 10, 2020, Reuters

The European Union and the United States should work together to stand up to coercive Chinese diplomacy and coordinate with other countries in the region on the disputed South China Sea, the EU ambassador to China said on Thursday.

[With Time Running Out, E.U. Reveals Openness to a No-Deal Brexit](#)

December 10, 2020, The New York Times

With little progress in negotiations with Britain over its future relationship with the European Union, the European Commission published some contingency measures on Thursday to help prepare for a possible no-deal Brexit.

[Johnson says 'strong possibility' of no-deal split in EU trading ties](#)

December 10, 2020, Reuters

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Thursday there was “a strong possibility” Britain and the EU would fail to strike a new trade deal but vowed to do whatever he could to avoid a tumultuous split in three weeks.

[EU Commission says conditions for UK access to EU market still not there](#)

December 10, 2020, Reuters

The European Union wants to give Britain access to its single market of 450 million consumers, the head of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen said on Thursday, but conditions for that access must be fair and are still not met.

[France Takes on Islamist Extremism with New Bill](#)

December 9, 2020, The New York Times

The French government says draft legislation aimed at combating the extremist ideology that has taken many lives on French soil in recent years is a “law of freedom” necessary for peaceful coexistence.

[France's Macron says expects to finalise a compromise on EU budget](#)

December 10, 2020, Reuters

French President Emmanuel Macron said on Thursday that he hoped to finalise a compromise on the European Union’s budget in the coming hours.

[Merkel pleads with Germans to avoid a 'last Christmas with the grandparents,' as country smashes daily death record](#)

December 9, 2020, CNN

Speaking in the German parliament Wednesday, Chancellor Angela Merkel warned that nationwide restrictions brought in on November 2 had not proven effective enough, with too many people now dead or in intensive care units with Covid-19.

Russia

[New US anti-Russian sanctions are contrived, Foreign Ministry says](#)

December 11, 2020, TASS

New US sanctions against Russian people and companies, connected to head of Chechnya Ramzan Kadyrov, are contrived, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

[Germany, France must push Kiev to implement Paris summit decisions, says Russian diploma](#)

December 9, 2020, Tass

Russia hopes that France and Germany will help persuade Ukraine to implement the Normandy Quartet's decisions made at the Paris summit a year ago and the Minsk Accords, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said in a commentary in connection with the summit's anniversary.

[India 'object' of anti-China policy of the West, Russia minister says](#)

December 10, 2020, The Indian Express

In a scathing comment on the Quadrilateral (Quad) grouping, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has described India as an "object" of the West's "persistent, aggressive, and devious" policy against China in the Indo-Pacific.

[Russia gives new twist to India-China standoff at LAC](#)

December 9, 2020, WION

The Indian government has launched a direct attack on Beijing until now New Delhi was sticking to the diplomatic code of conduct. In public the statements were non-confrontational, however, in private, India has been direct.

[Putin signs law allowing Russian legislation to trump international treaties](#)

December 8, 2020, Reuters

President Vladimir Putin signed a law on Tuesday allowing Russia's national legislation precedence over international treaties and rulings from international bodies in cases when they conflict with the Russian constitution.

[Western Sanctions Have Had 'Outsized Impact' On Russian Companies, Economist Says](#)

December 8, 2020, Rferl.org

Western sanctions have had an "outsized impact" on targeted Russian companies but may have actually strengthened President Vladimir Putin's grip on the country's tycoons, an economist and former State Department official says.

Africa & Latin America

Latin America

[Brazilian and Argentine beef exports to China suspended after Covid-19 in packaging](#)

December 11, 2020, Merco Press

Two beef producers from Brazil and one from Argentina have had their exports to China suspended for one week after packaging of their products tested positive for traces of COVID-19, customs said. China's General Administration of Customs (GAC) made the announcement.

[The Pacific Alliance will hold its virtual presidential summit in Chile, next week](#)

December 7, 2020, Merco Press

The 15th Presidential Summit of the Pacific Alliance, a bloc made up of Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru, will be held on December 11th in Santiago de Chile, albeit via videoconference due to Covid-19.

[Venezuela's Guaidó: Time to revise international sanctions](#)

December 10, 2020, The Washington Post

Opposition leader Juan Guaidó is vowing to stay in Venezuela and press for an end to President Nicolás Maduro's rule despite threats, while working with the administrations of U.S. President-elect Joe Biden and other world leaders to revise sanctions aimed at forcing a transfer in power.

[Latin America and the Caribbean's Contribution to World's Stability and Security](#)

December 11, 2020, Valdai

The world needs an urgent reset. It has been continuously changing in volume and configuration, with an increasing shift of power from the centre to the periphery. We are no longer in a unipolar world, not even in a bipolar one: the scenery is rapidly changing into a multipolar distribution of power and capabilities among several national and multinational powers, with a decreasing influence of multilateral organizations on matters of global interest.

[Cuba attracts \\$1.9bn in foreign investment despite US sanctions](#)

December 8, 2020, Al Jazeera

Trade Minister Rodrigo Malmierca told an online news conference that Cuba continues to reduce internal obstacles to investors, adding that the 34 investments approved on the island since October 2019 were no small feat

given the “economic war” being waged by the administration of outgoing United States President Donald Trump.

[Iran sends biggest ever fleet of oil tankers to Venezuela](#)

December 6, 2020, Al Jazeera

Iran is sending its biggest fleet yet of tankers to Venezuela in defiance of U.S. sanctions to help the isolated nation weather a crippling fuel shortage, according to people with knowledge of the matter.

Africa

[US Kills 8 al-Shabab Fighters in 2 Airstrikes Amid Troop Reduction in Somalia](#)

December 10, 2020, VOA

The U.S. military killed eight al-Shabab fighters and wounded two others in airstrikes Thursday in Somalia, Lt. Cmdr. Christina Gibson, U.S. Africa Command spokeswoman Amid Troop Reduction in Somalia.

[Morocco: Israel, Morocco Agree to Normalize Relations 'With Minimal Delay'](#)

December 11, 2020, All Africa

Moroccan King Mohammed VI said his country would "resume official contacts... and diplomatic relations with minimal delay" with Israel, according to a statement from the royal palace.

[Africa: 'Atoms 4 Development' In Africa - Experts Weigh In](#)

December 11, 2020, All Africa

Sixty years after the first nuclear weapons tests were conducted in Africa, many countries on continent are exploring how nuclear energy could be used for socio-economic development.

[Kenya, United Kingdom sign trade agreement](#)

December 10, 2020, Africa News

Kenya and the United Kingdom formally signed a trade agreement in London. Trade cabinet secretary Betty Maina signed on behalf of Kenya while international trade minister Ranil Jayawardena signed on behalf of the UK.

[Uganda elections: Army, police chiefs face US sanctions over protestor killings](#)

December 11, 2020, Africa News

The United States has warned Uganda to ensure free and fair elections.



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