



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

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DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH

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South Asia

India

[Maritime, air defence theatre commands to be announced by June 2021](#)

March 23, 2021, The Hindustan Times

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Combined Commanders Conference at Kevadia in Gujarat on March 6, the first signs of jointmanship among the three services were more than evident. The Indian Air Force commanders were wearing Indian Army's combat disruptive camouflage uniform to signal joint spirit and Indian Navy commanders were in their dark grey disruptive camouflage gear.

[CDS' new defence import ban list to push indigenous ammunition and weapon systems](#)

March 24, 2021, The Economic Times

The next list of 101 defence-related items whose import would be banned to push 'Make in India' in the military hardware sector is expected to include ammunition for major weapon systems and integrated systems such as aircraft.

[India, Madagascar discuss maritime security and interoperability between navies](#)

March 25, 2021, Mint

Indian naval ship INS Shardul made a port call in Madagascar's Antsiranana as part of increasing patrols of the Indian Ocean in recent years given a surge in Chinese naval activity in these waters.

[For the first time India and Quad nations to join France for war games](#)

March 25, 2021, Financial Express

April is going to be a busy month for the French Navy in the Indian Ocean. It is deploying its Carrier Battle Group to the region and participating in two major exercises – La Perouse a French Naval war game which will have the Quad countries and the other Ex Varuna a trilateral exercise with India and the UAE in the western Indian Ocean.

[Jaishankar reassures India's commitment to maintain peace in Afghanistan](#)

March 24, 2021, Mint

Indian foreign minister S Jaishankar had underscored the importance of a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire for a successful Afghan peace

process during a meeting in New Delhi with his visiting Afghan counterpart Haneef Atmar, the Indian foreign ministry said.

[India important partner in rapidly shifting international dynamics, says US Defence Secy after talks with Rajnath Singh](#)

March 20, 201, The Indian Express

The United States Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin, following his meeting with Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, said India is an important ally in the rapidly shifting international dynamics and his visit to New Delhi conveys the Joe Biden administration's "strong commitment towards their partners in the region".

[India will continue to engage with Bangladesh to conclude Teesta agreement: Shringla](#)

March 24, 2021, ANI News

India will continue to engage with Bangladesh to conclude the Teesta agreement as soon as possible, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla said ahead of PM Narendra Modi's visit to the country.

Pakistan

[Pakistan Army greatly values close ties with Saudi Arabia: Gen Qamar](#)

March 25, 2021, The Express Tribune

Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa has said that the Pakistan Army greatly values its close brotherly ties with the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The army chief expressed these sentiments during a meeting with Commander Royal Saudi Land Forces Lieutenant General Fahd Bin Abdullah Al-Mutair on March 25.

[Govt to buy 7m doses of Chinese vaccines](#)

March 25, 2021, The Express Tribune

The government will buy 7 million more doses of two coronavirus vaccines from China as the country gears up for vaccination of people over the age of 50 years from next months.

[Pakistan pitches \\$2b Eurobonds to investors](#)

March 26, 2021, The Express Tribune

A day after revival of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme, Pakistan on March 25 pitched around \$2 billion worth of Eurobonds to the global investors, testing the international capital market after over three years.

[India shares information on two power projects](#)

March 26, 2021, Dawn

At the end of two-day hectic talks held in New Delhi on March 23 and 24 on two projects at the Chenab basin, India shared some information/documents related to 1,000MW Pakal Dul and 48MW Lower Kalnai hydropower projects with Pakistan under the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) 1960.

[IMF approves \\$500m for Pak budgetary support](#)

March 26, 2021, The News

After the promulgation of two Presidential Ordinances for withdrawal of corporate income tax exemptions to fetch Rs70 billion to 140 billion and imposition of 10 percent power surcharge on consumers, the IMF's Executive Board completed the second to fifth reviews under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and approved release of \$500 million tranche for Pakistan's budgetary support.

[UK military commander meets COAS](#)

March 25, 2021, The News

General Sir Patrick Nicholas Yardley Monrad Sanders, Commander Strategic Command, UK, called on Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at the GHQ here on March 24. During the meeting, matters of professional and mutual interest and regional security issues were discussed.

['UAE brokering secret Pak-India peace roadmap'](#)

March 23, 2021, The News

The US media noted "the Pakistan-India ceasefire marked a milestone in secret talks brokered by the UAE that began months earlier. "The ceasefire, one said, is only the beginning of a larger roadmap to forge a lasting peace between the neighbours [...]," the report also claimed.

['Heart of Asia' Conference: 'Pak, India FMs likely to meet in Dushanbe'](#)

March 21, 2021, The News

Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi and his Indian counterpart S. Jaishankar are likely to hold a meeting on the sidelines of the 'Heart of Asia' Conference in Tajikistan capital Dushanbe. The conference is part of the Istanbul Process – a regional initiative on security and cooperation for a stable and peaceful Afghanistan – that was launched on 2 November, 2011 in Turkey.

Afghanistan

[Surprise move after Moscow moot: Afghan president replaces security ministers](#)

March 20, 2021, The News

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani dismissed two leading ministers charged with the country's faltering security, in a surprise announcement a day after a major conference in Russia called for a reduction in fighting.

[Taliban reject Afghan president's proposal for election](#)

March 25, 2021, Dawn

The Taliban rejected a proposal by Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to hold elections later this year, after months of peace talks between the two warring sides have made little progress.

[Pentagon chief meets Ghani in unannounced visit to Kabul](#)

March 22, 2021, Dawn

United States Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin met Afghan President Ashraf Ghani during an unannounced visit to Kabul, just weeks before Washington is due to withdraw the last of its troops under a deal struck with the Taliban last year.

[Visit of H.E. Mohammad Haneef Atmar, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to India](#)

March 24, 2021, MEA India

E. Mohammad Haneef Atmar, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, successfully concluded an official visit to New Delhi from March 22-23, 2021. He was accompanied by a senior delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Afghanistan. This was first visit of H.E. Haneef Atmar to India after assuming his current charge. External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and H.E. Haneef Atmar held delegation level talks on March 22.

[No Easy Choices on Afghanistan: NATO Chief](#)

March 22, 2021, Tolo News

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, ahead of a meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers on March 23 and 24, announced that "allies will continue consultations on the situation in Afghanistan" and will take stock of NATO's support for key partners in the Middle East and North Africa.

Bangladesh

[India, Bangladesh will deepen defence & security ties: Foreign secy ahead of Modi's visit](#)

March 24, 2021, The Print

India will continue to add "more depth and momentum" in the defence and security aspect of the bilateral relationship between New Delhi and Dhaka, Foreign Secretary Harsh V. Shringla has said.

[We're part of China's BRI but India our 'most important partner': Bangladesh foreign advisor](#)

March 24, 2021, The Print

Bangladesh has said it is "not going to choose" between India and China as it expressed desire to join the "Indo-Pacific relationship", though it is part of Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Nepal

[Great game: India-Nepal ties](#)

March 23, 2021, Telegraph India

The prime minister of Nepal, K.P. Sharma Oli, is having a hard time in office; he not only dissolved Parliament but also called for early elections in April. These decisions have alienated the Nepali people and led to a deterioration in Oli's ties with Pushpa Kamal Dahal, former prime minister and a key member of the Nepali communist party, as well as the former deputy prime minister, Madhav Kumar Nepal. Oli has been expelled from the party and has been asked to resign, but he remains defiant. To make matters worse, Oli's political legitimacy has been undermined by the massive pro-monarchy protests and the vociferous calls to declare Nepal a Hindu country. These led the beleaguered premier to shun his atheist image and embark on temple hopping.

[Nepal Cabinet approves rail line project linking Kathmandu with India](#)

March 25, 2021, India Blooms

Nepal's Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport will sign a MOU with India's Konkan Railway Corporation which has already conducted a pre-feasibility study of the project.

Sri Lanka

[Explained: India at UN, on Sri Lanka](#)

March 26, 2021, The Indian Express

India abstained from voting on a resolution in the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) that makes a wide-ranging and damaging commentary on the human rights situation in Sri Lanka. This is the eighth resolution on Sri Lanka at the Human Rights Council since the end of the war against the LTTE in 2009. India's record of voting on these resolutions shows the ups and downs of New Delhi-Colombo relations, the pressures on coalitions in India, the influence of politics and parties in Tamil Nadu, and the ebb and flow of regional and international geopolitics.

[Sri Lanka Navy arrests 54 Indian fishermen, seizes 5 trawlers](#)

March 25, 2021, India Today

The Sri Lankan Navy has arrested at least 54 Indian fishermen and seized five trawlers for allegedly poaching in the country's territorial waters, an official statement said here.

[Sri Lanka signs three-year \\$1.5 billion currency swap deal with China](#)

March 23, 2021, Business Standard

Sri Lanka will exchange currency with China under a 10 billion yuan (about USD 1.5 billion) agreement aimed at promoting trade and investment between the two countries, the island nation's central bank said.

East & South East Asia

China

[Chinese Defense Minister visits Europe to boost military ties, 'future joint military drills, exchanges likely'](#)

March 25, 2021, Global Times

Chinese State Councilor and Defense Minister Wei Fenghe is currently on a visit to four European countries to boost cooperation with their militaries, at a time when some other European countries are sending warships to the South China Sea.

[China's top legislator attends conference of six nations' parliamentary speakers](#)

March 25, 2021, Xinhua

China's top legislator Li Zhanshu said legislative bodies of Turkey, Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Russia and China should cooperate on promoting public health, green development and the high-quality joint building of the Belt and Road.

[China experts sign joint declaration demanding end to anti-China campaign](#)

March 26, 2021, Xinhua

Dozens of experts with "direct experience" with China are calling for an end to an anti-China campaign by some Western countries, and urging them to respond to China's offer of cooperation.

[China rejects U.S. allegations of militarizing South China Sea](#)

March 25, 2021, Xinhua

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying refuted U.S. allegations of militarizing the South China Sea and undermining the international system.

[Putting Sino-Indian ties back on track](#)

March 26, 2021, China Daily

US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin's visit to India last week, his first foreign visit after assuming office, was preceded by the first "Quad" summit. And Austin's visit will be followed by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's visit to India to herald the United Kingdom's post-Brexit foreign policy to be centred around the Indo-Pacific. Together these events not just endorse but also reflect India's intensifying engagement with the United States-led Indo-Pacific strategy.

[China fears no challenge and threat: Defense Spokesperson](#)

March 25, 2021, China Military

Though China does not intend to challenge anyone, it is not afraid of facing challenges; though China does not want to threaten anyone, it is not afraid of any threat, said the Chinese defense spokesperson at a regular press conference

[PLA Navy holds consecutive support exercises in S.China Sea; 'crucial to combat'](#)

March 24, 2021, People's Daily

The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy recently held consecutive support exercises in the South China Sea including maritime re-supply, minesweeping, and search and rescue, with analysts saying that such capabilities are crucial to combat and could decide the outcome of a war.

Japan

['Japan to work with India to tackle water-related challenges'](#)

March 22, 2021, ANI

Japan is committed to working with India to tackle water related challenges in the world, Japanese Ambassador Satoshi Suzuki said.

[Line cuts off access from China to protect personal data in Japan](#)

March 24, 2021, Nikkei Asia

Japan's messaging app Line has stopped its Chinese affiliates and contractors from accessing the personal information of Japanese users, the company said, in response to growing scrutiny over its data management practices.

[China sanctions inspire push for Japan's own Magnitsky Act](#)

March 25, 2021, Nikkei Asia

Japanese lawmakers will launch a cross-party alliance to craft legislation to enable sanctions over human rights abuses, pushing Tokyo to follow the lead of the U.S. and Europe in punishing China for its alleged mistreatment of its Uyghur Muslim minority.

[The era of the Japan-Australia alliance is here](#)

March 21, 2021, The Japan Times

Newly appointed ambassadors from Japan to Australia are the envy of their colleagues: "How nice to be appointed to a country where there are no real

outstanding issues to resolve," they often say. The same is true of their Australian counterparts in Japan.

[Japan, U.S. defence chiefs affirm cooperation on Taiwan: Kyodo](#)

March 21, 2021, Reuters

Japanese and U.S. defence chiefs agreed in their meeting last week to closely cooperate in the event of a military clash between China and Taiwan, Kyodo News reported, citing multiple government sources.

[Suga and Biden to affirm Senkakus fall under Japan-U.S. security pact](#)

March 26, 2021, The Japan Times

Japan and the United States plan to put out a joint statement by Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and President Joe Biden at a summit next month saying the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea fall under the scope of their security treaty, a Japanese government source said.

Korea

[North Korea says it test-fired new tactical guided missiles](#)

March 26, 2021, The Korea Times

North Korea said it test-fired new tactical guided missiles a day earlier, confirming the launch of ballistic missiles for the first time in about a year.

[UN sanctions committee to meet at US request over North Korea missiles](#)

March 26, 2021, The Korea Times

The United Nations Security Council North Korea sanctions committee is due to meet, at the request of the United States, over Pyongyang's launch of two suspected ballistic missiles into the sea near Japan, a spokesperson for the U.S. mission to the United Nations said.

[Biden warns North Korea against escalation](#)

March 26, 2021, The Korea Times

U.S. President Joe Biden said that the United States will respond appropriately should North Korea continue to escalate tension, but that it is also prepared for diplomacy with the recalcitrant regime.

[Kim calls for stronger relations in messages to Cuba, Vietnam, Laos](#)

March 24, 2021, The Korea Times

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un sent verbal messages to the leaders of Cuba, Vietnam and Laos and called for stronger relations, state media reported, in a

move apparently intended to strengthen ties with socialist countries amid stalled nuclear talks with the United States.

[Defense minister visits UAE, India to expand ties](#)

March 22, 2021, The Korea Herald

South Korean Defense Minister Suh Wook is visiting the UAE and India this week to expand exchanges, the Ministry of National Defense said.

Southeast Asia

[Philippines, Vietnam press China over vessels massing in South China Sea](#)

March 25, 2021, Reuters

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte expressed concern to China's ambassador about Chinese vessels massing in the South China Sea, his spokesman said, as Vietnam urged Beijing to respect its maritime sovereignty.

[Singapore Calls U.S.-China Talks 'Step in the Right Direction'](#)

March 22, 2021, Bloomberg

Singapore's deputy prime minister praised the renewed but rocky dialogue between U.S. and China under the Biden administration and called on the competitors to chart a constructive way forward.

[Duterte Outplayed By China](#)

March 25, 2021, The Asean Post

The deployment of 220 Chinese vessels to the Julian Felipe Reef (aka Whitsun Reef), which lies in the Spratly Islands, well within the Philippines' 200-nautical-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), has once again alerted Southeast Asian nations to China's ever-growing assertiveness in the South China Sea (SCS).

[Bleak chances of progress on ASEAN-China on Code of Conduct in 2021: Implications for Vietnam](#)

March 24, 2021, The Times of India

The Indian Foreign Minister in the East Asia Conference in November 2020, stated that 'the Code of Conduct (CoC) negotiations should not be prejudicial to legitimate interests of third parties and should be fully consistent with UNCLOS'.

[China's Myanmar dilemma grows deep and wide](#)

March 25, 2021, Asia Times

China, along with Russia, has also blocked attempts led by Western nations at the UN Security Council to take collective action against Myanmar's military coup makers and their deadly crackdown on unarmed protesters. That stance, some suggest, lit the flames that attacked and torched several Chinese-owned factories and properties in Yangon earlier this month.

[China awaits clarity on Indonesia Ni ore export policy](#)

March 25, 2021, Mysteel Global

Chinese nickel market sources suggest that Indonesia probably won't relax its ban on nickel ore exports anytime soon, given that any relaxation would impact operator of nickel refineries here.

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[Kyrgyz-Uzbek Talks On Border Open In Tashkent](#)

March 24, 2021, RFE/RL

Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have started talks on border delimitation, a major bone of contention in bilateral ties since 1991, when they gained independence from the Soviet Union. The talks in the Uzbek capital on March 24 are being held by a Kyrgyz delegation led by the chief of the State Committee for National Security, and a group of Uzbek officials led by Prime Minister Abdulla Aripov, the Kyrgyz government website said.

[Uzbekistan to start mass coronavirus vaccination from April 1](#)

March 24, 2021, Reuters

Uzbekistan will start the first stage of mass vaccination against coronavirus with the AstraZeneca vaccine from April 1, an Uzbek Health official said. Elderly and disabled people, employees of the healthcare and education systems, as well as members of law enforcement bodies will be vaccinated in the first place, the deputy head of sanitary and epidemiological welfare and public health service told the local media.

[Turkmenistan preparing to launch second national satellite](#)

March 24, 2021, Trend News Agency

Turkmenistan is preparing to launch the second Türkmen Älem 52°E national satellite. The country's president noted that in order to ensure the further harmonious development of the national economy of Turkmenistan, it is necessary to use satellite communication systems at full capacity, which provide new communication opportunities.

[Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan agree on power swap to restore reservoir levels](#)

March 25, 2021, Eurasianet

Water at a key hydropower-generating facility in Kyrgyzstan has dropped to levels unseen for more than a decade, requiring a makeshift arrangement to import electricity from neighboring Uzbekistan. Kyrgyzstan's Energy and Industry Ministry said in a statement on March 25 that the countries have struck a deal on the mutual delivery of up to 750 million kilowatt hours of electricity at nominal rates.

[Analysis | Can Central Asian gas exporters rely on China](#)

March 25, 2021, Central Asia News

Central Asia's natural gas producers have only one eager buyer: China. And though China has a growing appetite, it has signaled intentions to source more energy domestically. What does this mean for Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan?

West Asia

[India Welcomes Saudi Arabia's Peace Initiative in Yemen](#)

March 23, 2021, Outlook

India welcomed Saudi Arabia's peace initiative for Yemen that entails a comprehensive ceasefire in the war-torn country under the supervision of the United Nations.

[Saudi Arabia Confirms Mediating Between India & Pakistan to Reduce Tensions](#)

March 20, 2021, Eurasian Times

Saudi Arabia is trying to reduce tensions between India and Pakistan, Deputy Foreign minister of the Gulf nation, Adel al-Jubeir said.

[Turkey Raises Uyghur Rights at Meeting with China FM](#)

March 25, 2021, Middle East Monitor

Turkey raised the issue of Uyghur Muslims during talks with China's foreign minister in Ankara, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said, as hundreds of Uyghurs protested against the treatment of their ethnic kin in China.

[Saudi Aramco to Prioritise Energy Supply to China for 50 Years, says CEO](#)

March 21, 2021, Middle East Monitor

Saudi Aramco will ensure China's energy security remains its highest priority for the next 50 years and beyond as new and existing energy sources run in parallel for some time, CEO Amin Nasser told the China Development Forum.

[Jordan Publicizes Defense Deal that Allows US Forces Free Entry Into the Kingdom](#)

March 21, 2021, The Times of Israel

Jordan made public a defense agreement with the United States that allows free entry of US forces, aircraft, and vehicles onto the kingdom's territory. The agreement was signed in January and the government approved it last month, but, in an exceptional move, it bypassed parliament.

[US Slams Houthi Attack on Saudi Aramco Refinery as Bid to 'Disrupt Global Energy Supplies'](#)

March 20, 2021, The Economic Times

The United States condemned the drone strike on a Saudi oil refinery claimed by Yemen's Houthi rebels, calling it an attempt to "disrupt global energy supplies."

United States

United States

[Biden's First Press Conference Tackles Filibuster, Immigration, Afghanistan](#)

March 25, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

President Biden signaled support for changes to the legislative filibuster, said the U.S. was unlikely to meet a May deadline to withdraw troops from Afghanistan and defended his approach to the southern border in his first press conference since taking office.

[Biden says China won't surpass U.S. as global leader on his watch](#)

March 26, 2021, Reuters

S. President Joe Biden said he would prevent China from passing the United States to become the most powerful country in the world, vowing to invest heavily to ensure America prevails in the race between the world's two largest economies.

[Biden administration signals India is an important partner in tackling China](#)

March 22, 2021, CNBC

S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin met with India's Defense Minister Rajnath Singh over the weekend on his first foreign trip in the role as the two sides concluded talks on defense cooperation.

[In signal to China, U.S. raised India ties during Alaska talks](#)

March 26, 2021, The Hindu

The Joe Biden administration highlighted the strength of U.S.-India ties in its March 19 meeting with Chinese officials in Alaska, underlining how it has increasingly come to view India as central to its broader objectives in dealing with China in the Indo-Pacific region.

[India, US agree to re-establish Homeland Security Dialogue discontinued by Trump](#)

March 24, 2021, The Indian Express

This comes a day after Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas spoke with India's Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu and expressed his desire to further strengthen the partnership between India and his department.

[US Secretary of State Blinken calls on NATO allies to help counter 'aggressive and coercive' China](#)

March 24, 2021, Deutsche Welle

Antony Blinken has told allies that the US will not force them to make "us-or-them" decisions, but called for action against aggressive Chinese behavior. He reiterated US support to its allies.

[Blinken's show of unity with NATO and Europe shadowed by disagreement over gas pipeline](#)

March 24, 2021, CNN

Secretary of State Antony Blinken repeated his warning that the US will consider sanctions if work on a gas pipeline between Russia and Germany is completed and certified -- a sole note of discord in an extended display of unity with European allies and NATO states.

[U.S. Defense Secretary Makes Secret Visit to Afghanistan](#)

March 21, 2021, The New York Times

Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III landed in Afghanistan's capital, becoming the first member of President Biden's cabinet to set foot in the country that is home to America's longest war.

[Lloyd Austin's human rights, S-400 remarks struck jarring note to US SecDef's largely successful India visit](#)

March 25, 2021, First Post

As the Pentagon chief on a mission to strengthen bilateral security and defence partnership, Austin could have done better than raising an issue that feeds into political partisanship in India.

Europe & Russia

Europe

[EU summit to tackle vaccination drive, receive Joe Biden](#)

March 25, 2021, Deutsche Welle

The European Union heads of state and government are meeting to talk pandemic strategies and diplomacy. They are also set to welcome Joe Biden at the videoconference.

[US and Canada follow EU and UK in sanctioning Chinese officials over Xinjiang](#)

March 22, 2021, The Guardian

Sanctions over treatment of Uighurs mark first time for three decades UK or EU has punished China for human rights abuses.

[China sanctions UK entities, individuals for Xinjiang 'lies'](#)

March 26, 2021, Reuters

China sanctioned organisations and individuals in the United Kingdom over what it called "lies and disinformation" about Xinjiang, days after Britain imposed sanctions for human rights abuses in the western Chinese region.

[France summons Chinese envoy over 'unacceptable' insults](#)

March 23, 2021, Reuters

France summoned China's ambassador to underscore the unacceptable nature of insults and threats aimed at French lawmakers and a researcher, and Beijing's decision to sanction some European officials, a French foreign ministry source said.

[EU climate policy risks sidelining nuclear power, seven countries say](#)

March 25, 2021, Reuters

France, Poland and five other countries have written to the European Commission, warning that EU climate change policies could hamper nuclear power's role in cutting CO2 emissions.

[Erdogan Pulls Turkey from European Treaty on Domestic Violence](#)

March 20, 2021, The New York Times

In two surprise midnight decrees, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has withdrawn Turkey from an international treaty on preventing violence against women and removed the head of the central bank, moves likely to please his followers but further estrange him from Western partners.

[Germany's long military mission in Afghanistan](#)

March 25, 2021, Deutsche Welle

The German Parliament has extended the Afghanistan mission by 10 months – likely for the last time. It is the bloodiest deployment of the Bundeswehr in Germany's postwar history.

Russia

[Russia's LNG production capacity to grow three-fold in 15 years, says PM](#)

March 22, 2021, TASS News Agency

Russia's government has greenlighted the long-term program for development of liquified natural gas (LNG) production, which envisions a three-fold increase in respective production capacity in 15 years, Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said at a meeting with deputy prime ministers on March 22.

[Russia Floats Arctic Shipping Route as 'Viable' Suez Canal Alternative](#)

March 25, 2021, The Moscow Times

Russia has proposed its strategic Arctic shipping route as an alternative to the Suez Canal after a 400-meter cargo ship got stuck in the canal, blocking one of the world's key shipping routes and sparking fears of a rise in oil prices.

[Inflation in Russia is at its peak, Economy Minister says](#)

March 25, 2021, TASS News Agency

Inflation in Russia has reached its peak and the consumer price index will start declining soon in annual terms, Minister of Economic Development Maxim Reshetnikov told reporters. "We have reached the inflation peak at the moment; [it] stabilized at the level of 5.8% as early as a week ago," Reshetnikov said.

[Russia opposition leader Navalny's health worsens in prison](#)

March 25, 2021, AP News

Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny has accused prison authorities of failing to provide proper treatment for his back pain and leg problems, saying in a letter that his physical condition has worsened in prison and he now has trouble walking. Navalny blamed his health problems on prison officials failing to provide the right medicines and refusing to allow his doctor to visit him behind bars.

[Russia Rolls Out 3rd Coronavirus Vaccine](#)

March 25, 2021, The Moscow Times

Russia has introduced its third registered coronavirus vaccine for general use, according to developers and the Education and Science Ministry. CoviVak, developed by the state-run Chumakov Research Center, is a two-dose, whole-virion vaccine that uses complete, but inactive, particles of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes Covid-19.

Africa & Latin America

Latin America

[China-backed rail projects gain momentum in Chile and Argentina](#)

24 March 2021, MercoPress

The government of Chile unveiled 15 brand new railway units made in China, with which the South American country intends to revamp its train service both for passengers and cargo.

[Argentina quits anti-Maduro Lima Group](#)

25 March 2021, MercoPress

The Argentine government of President Alberto Fernández confirmed the country had decided to withdraw from the so-called Lima Group to isolate the Venezuelan administration headed by Nicolás Maduro. Argentina's move is to be viewed as a gesture of support for Maduro as well as a rejection to opposition leader Juan Guaidó. Argentina had joined the Group in 2017 under then-President Mauricio Macri to seek a democratic solution to the social, political, and economic crisis in Venezuela.

[Andy Keeling: New Chief Executive to arrive in the Falklands](#)

23 March 2021, MercoPress

Andy Keeling, the new Chief Executive for the Falkland Islands Government is due to arrive in the Islands next week to start the transition of power following a month-long handover with current Chief Executive Barry Rowland.

[Mexico-Bolivia for a strategic partnership](#)

25 March 2021, Prensa Latina

Both presidents, who led their respective delegations in the talks, undertook to reactivate permanent mechanisms and set up a roadmap for consular and immigration; economic, commercial; technical, scientific and cultural cooperation matters, and for fighting drug trafficking and drug addiction.

[Bolivia-Chile coordinate relaunch of bilateral commercial ties](#)

25 March 2021, Prensa Latina

The Bolivian government announced that it is coordinating with Chile to hold a virtual meeting so as to reactivate commercial ties amid the bilateral debate over Bolivia's sea access. Bolivian-Chilean commission in charge of supervising the document in force since 1993 stopped meeting about 10 years ago, so next gathering will relaunch economic and commercial relations between the two states.

[Argentina to join world caravan against US blockade on Cuba](#)

24 March 2021, Prensa Latina

The Argentine Movement of Solidarity with Cuba, Cuban residents in Buenos Aires and diverse social organizations will join a world caravan against the US blockade imposed on that country.

[Bolivian MPs calls on President Biden to lift blockade against Cuba](#)

20 March 2021, Prensa Latina

Bolivian representatives at international parliaments condemned the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba and called on US President Joe Biden to end that policy. The legislators are part of the Andean and Latin American Parliaments of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and the Indigenous and Afro-Descendant Inter-parliamentary Union of America.

Africa

[Suez Canal blocked by traffic jam after massive container ship runs aground](#)

24 March 2021, CNN

Eight tug boats are working to free a large container ship stuck in Egypt's Suez Canal, halting marine traffic through one of the busiest and most important waterways in the world. The 224,000-ton vessel, sailing under a Panama flag, was en route to the port of Rotterdam in the Netherlands when it was knocked off course.

[150+ ships waiting amid Suez Canal complications](#)

25 March 2021, Africa Times

The news comes amid increasing concern about supply chain and financial impacts, as the shutdown of the critical global trade route begins what will be its fourth day since the MV Ever Given, a 400-meter-long container ship, became wedged in the canal with its bow buried into the eastern wall.

[Sassou N'guesso win expected as COVID claims main opposition candidate in Republic of Congo](#)

22 March 2021, Africa Times

Authorities in the Republic of Congo say Denis Sassou N'guesso, the country's longtime ruler, is set for victory in elections held. Opposition leaders boycotted the election while alleging fraud and manipulation, leaving Guy Brice Parfait Kolélas as the only viable opposition candidate. But Kolélas would never see the

results of this year's election because he died while taking an emergency flight to France for medical treatment.

[COP-26, a golden opportunity for UK in Africa](#)

23 March 2021, The Africa Report

London is yet to unveil a clear strategy ahead of the UK-Africa Investment Summit scheduled for November in Glasgow, even though the new environmental technology sector is one a key asset of British companies, particularly in Africa.

['Turkish and Russian forces must leave Libyan soil ASAP,' Macron tells Libyan President'](#)

25 March 2021, The Africa Report

French President Emmanuel Macron backs new Libyan transitional President Mohamed Al Menfi in a 23 March meeting in Paris, saying Turkish and Russian forces should leave the country. France sees instability in the Sahel and migration as linked to the Libyan crisis, and wants December's elections to bring peace to the country.

[Why India is banking on health diplomacy to grow African footprint?](#)

25 March 2021, The Conversation

India has stepped up its global ambitions and foreign policy re-engagement with African countries in recent years. Its bilateral trade increased from \$7.2 billion in 2001 to \$63 billion in 2017/18. India is now the third largest export destination and the fifth largest investor on the continent.



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