



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

[India Walked The Talk, Supplied Vaccines To Over 80 Nations: PM Modi At Raisina Dialogue](#)

April 14, 2021, NDTV

Pitching for global efforts to defeat COVID-19, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the pandemic has presented an opportunity to reshape the world order and create systems to address the problems of today and challenges of tomorrow, and highlighted India's efforts in protecting its people as also supporting pandemic response efforts of others in its own "humble way".

[Raisina dialogue: Indo-Pacific epicentre of strategic competition, says Australia PM](#)

April 16, 2021, The Indian Express

The Indo-Pacific region has become the epicentre of strategic competition and like-minded nations need to act more consistently and cohesively to protect their shared interests in the face of multiple challenges, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said.

[India, France, Australia share common ground on Indo-Pacific, differ on Myanmar situation](#)

April 15, 2021, Scroll

India, France and Australia on Wednesday underlined their common ground on the Indo-Pacific region days after Russia described the Quad grouping as an "Asian NATO". The countries, however, differed on their position about the situation in Myanmar, where the military took over after a coup on February 1.

['Huge potential for India, NATO to collaborate,' says NATO Secretary General](#)

April 14, 2021, The Hindu

There is huge potential for the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) to work with India, its Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said on Tuesday, while stating that without getting integrated in military operations, there are many ways for cooperation as the two share similar values for a "rules-based international world order" which are now being threatened.

[Foreign secretary Harsh Shringla says Covid-19 crisis has global dimensions, seeks cooperation](#)

April 14, 2021, The Hindustan Times

Speaking at the virtual Raisina Dialogue, Harsh Vardhan Shringla said India is taking a lead in international cooperation in dealing with Covid-19 as Prime Minister Narendra Modi was one of the first to see the pressing need for regional and international cooperation to deal with the crisis.

[India In Touch With Pak: S Jaishankar Over Safety Of Indian Sikh Pilgrims](#)

April 15, 2021, NDTV

India is in touch with authorities in Pakistan regarding safety of over 800 Indian pilgrims whose visit to the neighbouring country has been affected by violent protests in several cities, including Lahore.

[Not Surprising That China Is Operating In Indian Ocean: Navy Chief](#)

April 15, 2021, NDTV

Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh on Wednesday said it is not surprising that China has been making forays into the Indian Ocean region as its energy sources, markets and resources are located to the west. [India's maritime claims 'excessive', says Biden admin](#)

India and the United States are having a rare moment of disagreement in their burgeoning defence ties, with Washington accusing New Delhi of "excessive maritime claims" while asserting the right of navigation for its warships close to Lakshwadeep islands.

Pakistan

[US Secretary of State telephones army chief to discuss drawdown plan](#)

April 14, 2021, The Express Tribune

Just ahead of the formal announcement of US President Joe Biden regarding troops withdrawal from Afghanistan, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke to army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa, who called for "mutual consensus" among all the stakeholders for the peace process.

[PM Imran holds virtual summit with Uzbek president](#)

April 14, 2021, The Express Tribune

Prime Minister Imran Khan held a virtual summit with President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, signing multiple MoUs and agreeing to bolster ties in a myriad of sectors. During the wide-ranging talks, views were exchanged on bilateral, regional and international issues.

[MoU likely between Gwadar Port Authority, Suez Canal Authority](#)

April 14, 2021, The Express Tribune

Pakistan and Egypt discussed a joint working mechanism and for an MoU between Gwadar Port Authority and Suez Canal Authority. The Egyptian Ambassador H E Tarek Dahrough called on Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Ali Haider Zaidi.

[Gen Qamar welcomes US troops withdrawal from Afghanistan](#)

April 15, 2021, The Express Tribune

Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa has welcomed US President Joe Biden's announcement of troop withdrawal from Afghanistan by September this year. The statement comes after Angela Ageler, US Charge d' Affairs to Pakistan, called on General Bajwa.

[US sanctions Pak company working as Russian proxy](#)

April 16, 2021, The News

The US sanctioned a Pakistan-based organisation and six individuals for acting on behalf of Russian network that attempted to interfere in American presidential election. The sweeping action against the company, called Second Eye Solution, and six Pakistani nationals comes along with other similar sanctions imposed on 32 Russian entities and individuals who attempted to influence the 2020 US presidential election at the direction of the leadership of the Russian government.

[France asks its citizens to leave Pakistan](#)

April 16, 2021, The News

The French Embassy in Pakistan advised all of its nationals and companies to temporarily leave the country after anti-France violence erupted in the country over the arrest of a son of the founder of Tehreek-e-Labiak Pakistan Allama Khadim Hussain Rizvi (Late).

[UK adds Pakistan to 21 high-risk states list](#)

April 12, 2021, The News

The UK government has added Pakistan to the list of undesirable 21 high-risk countries with unsatisfactory money laundering and terrorist financing controls. This list of 21 countries – released by the UK Government – replicates the list of countries named by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as high-risk or under increased monitoring. Pakistan shares the list at number 15 with conflict-ridden countries such as Syria, Uganda, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

[Verification of 1.4m Afghan refugees begins](#)

April 16, 2021, Dawn

The government, with the support of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, has launched a nationwide verification exercise for 1.4 million Afghan refugees.

[Law enforcers restore normality in Punjab after uprooting last of TLP strongholds](#)

April 16, 2021, Dawn

Life returned to normal in Punjab after the police and the paramilitary forces early on Thursday uprooted another mega protest camp of the recently proscribed Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) at Shangi Chowk of Ferozpur Road, the stronghold of the organisation.

[Germany to enhance economic ties with Pakistan](#)

April 13, 2021, Dawn

Germany expressed its intent to increase investment in Pakistan's diverse sectors and boost trade relations. German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas and Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi at a joint press conference in Berlin agreed to strengthen bilateral ties with focus on increasing trade and investments.

Afghanistan

[Time To Come Home: Biden To Pull U.S. Troops From Afghanistan](#)

April 15, 2021, Business Times

U.S. President Joe Biden will pull out the remaining U.S. military forces from Afghanistan by September 11, 2021. The withdrawal of around 3,000 American service members is in line with the 20th anniversary of the September 11, 2001, terror attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

[Blinken Meets Afghan Leaders in Kabul, Discusses Troop Pullout](#)

April 15, 2021, Tolo News

The US Secretary of State Antony Blinken arrived in Kabul on April 15 and met with President Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah, the chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation and discussed the new relationship with the US following President Joe Biden's announcement.

[Afghanistan respects US troop withdrawal, says Ghani](#)

April 15, 2021, Yenisafak

Afghanistan respects the US decision to withdraw troops and will work with American partners to ensure a smooth transition, President Mohammed Ashraf Ghani said after a telephone conversation with his American counterpart late on April 14.

[Istanbul Conference on Afghanistan to Start April 24: Statement](#)

April 13, 2021, Tolo News

The UN-led conference on Afghanistan will begin on April 24, amid intensive diplomatic efforts to put an end to the ongoing conflict in the country. "The Republic of Turkey, the State of Qatar, and the United Nations are co-convening a high level and inclusive conference from 24 April – 4 May 2021 between representatives of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban. Turkey is hosting the conference in Istanbul," the statement said.

Bangladesh

[India's Ties With Bangladesh Are Thriving – for Now](#)

April 15, 2021, WPR

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day visit to Bangladesh last month may not have led to any big-ticket announcements, but it was high on symbolism. Both Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart, Sheikh Hasina, Mujibur Rahman's daughter, used the visit as an opportunity to commemorate India's role in supporting Bangladesh's war of liberation from Pakistan in 1971 and highlight the deep cultural and historical linkages between the two countries. The fact that it was Modi's first foreign visit since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic underlined the importance of bilateral ties.

[China's plan for super-dam risks water security for India and Bangladesh](#)

April 15, 2021, TRT World

Chinese encroachment into Tibet has finally yielded a trump card, and it's one India can seemingly do little about.

[India, Bangladesh Boost Counter-Terror Cooperation As 10-Day Military Drills Conclude](#)

April 15, 2021, Eurasian Times

The military drills, which concluded on Monday, marked the golden jubilee of the Bangladesh liberation war fought with India's military assistance.

Nepal

[Nepal battles worst forest fires in years as air quality drops](#)

April 16, 2021, My Republica

Nepal is battling its worst forest fires in years, officials said on Friday, with smoke wafting across its mountains and souring the air as it settles into the bowl that holds capital city Kathmandu.

[In his address to nation, Oli counts, once again, his government's achievements](#)

April 14, 2021, The Kathmandu Post

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli addressed the nation on Wednesday on the occasion of Nepali New Year 2078. In the televised address, Oli spent much of time counting the achievements and work of his government.

Sri Lanka

[India has finalised air bubble pact with Sri Lanka: Aviation Ministry](#)

April 10, 2021, The Hindu

India has established a bilateral air bubble arrangement with Sri Lanka for operation of special international passenger flights between the two countries, the Civil Aviation Ministry said.

[China extends \\$500 million loan to Lanka](#)

April 12, 2021, The Hindu

China on Monday signed a \$500 million loan agreement with Sri Lanka, in a move that Colombo hopes would boost its foreign reserves that are under severe strain since the pandemic struck last year.

East & South East Asia

China

[China tried to wage 'undeclared war' against India through cyberattacks, military chief Bipin Rawat says](#)

April 15, 2021, SCMP

China tried to wage an "undeclared war" against India through cyberattacks and indicated that it was "my way or no other way", New Delhi's most senior military official said on Thursday about the drawn-out border stand-off between the neighbouring countries that is believed to have brought the countries to the brink of open conflict.

[Targeted by US, China has to do three things: Global Times editorial](#)

April 15, 2021, Global Times

The latest report issued by the US Office of the Director of National Intelligence has put China's push for "global power" first on the list of threats to the US, followed by Russia, Iran and North Korea. Such an assessment is not surprising at all. The report is not alone in term of the hype over challenges China poses in various fields including military, technology, global influence, and intelligence operations. Exaggerations of the so-called China threat can be found almost everywhere in the US and have become a common mentality and way of speaking by the American elites.

[Chinese, U.S. climate envoys to hold talks in Shanghai](#)

April 15, 2021, Global Times

A foreign ministry spokesperson Wednesday confirmed the U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry's visit to China. The spokesperson said that Xie Zhenhua, China's special envoy for climate change affairs, will hold talks with him in Shanghai.

[Soaring China-US trade points to 'political chill, economic heat'](#)

April 14, 2021, Global Times

There is a high likelihood that China and the US will post a bilateral trade record this year, experts said, as their industries and economies are closely intertwined and cannot be decoupled, despite ongoing geopolitical spats and some US politicians' hue and cry intended to stem China's rise.

[China sets up new national security research center](#)

April 14, 2021, China Daily

A research center dedicated to the systematic study of the holistic approach to national security was inaugurated in Beijing.

[Xi reiterates commitment to upholding multilateralism during meeting with envoys](#)

April 15, 2021, China Daily

President Xi Jinping reiterated China's commitment to firmly uphold multilateralism and safeguard the international system with the United Nations at its core and the international order based on international law.

[China summons Japanese ambassador to lodge representations over Japan's decision to dump nuclear wastewater](#)

April 16, 2021, Xinhua net

China's Assistant Foreign Minister Wu Jianghao summoned the Japanese ambassador to China Tarumi Hideo. Wu lodged solemn representations against the Japanese government's decision to dump the wastewater from the Fukushima nuclear plant into the sea.

[Chinese FM calls for greater progress in China-EU relations in post-pandemic era](#)

April 15, 2021, Xinhua net

China and the European Union (EU), as comprehensive strategic partners, should work together to maintain the political foundation for bilateral cooperation and achieve greater progress in their relations in the post-pandemic era, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said.

[China firmly opposes any form of official ties between U.S., Taiwan: spokesperson](#)

April 14, 2021, Xinhuanet

China has lodged solemn representations with the United States over the U.S. government sending a delegation to the Taiwan region, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said.

[Chinese Economy Grew More Than 18% in First Quarter](#)

April 16, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

China's economy surged 18.3% in the first quarter from a year earlier, a record rate of growth that reflected the recovery from a deep coronavirus-induced trough in early 2020 and the continued momentum of the world's second largest economy. The rate of gross domestic product growth in the first three

months of 2021 was sharply higher than the 6.5% year-over-year growth recorded in the final quarter of 2020, though it fell short of the 19.2% growth expected by economists polled by The Wall Street Journal.

[China raising tensions in the Strait](#)

April 15, 2021, Taipei Times

Then-US ambassador to the UN Kelly Craft originally planned to visit Taiwan on Jan. 12, but the plan was called off after drawing a fierce reaction from Beijing. On March 26, Taiwan and the US signed a memorandum of understanding to establish a coast guard working group. Beijing responded by dispatching 20 military aircraft to breach Taiwan's air defense identification zone (ADIZ), setting a new record for the highest number of incursions in a single day since the Ministry of National Defense began publishing information on the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) aircraft movements.

[China's Message to America: We're an Equal Now](#)

April 12, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

It quickly became obvious in Anchorage, Alaska, last month that Chinese President Xi Jinping's diplomatic envoys hadn't come carrying olive branches. Instead they brought a new world view. As Biden administration officials expected in their first meeting with Chinese counterparts, Yang Jiechi, Mr. Xi's top foreign-policy aide, and Foreign Minister Wang Yi asked them to roll back Trump-era policies targeting China. Beijing wanted to restore the kind of recurring "dialogue" Washington sees as a waste of time, say U.S. and Chinese officials briefed on the Alaska meeting. Now Mr. Xi is reshaping the relationship. As far as he is concerned, China's time has arrived.

Japan

[Taiwan to be included in joint statement when Suga, Biden meet](#)

April 16, 2021, The Asahi Shimbun

Japan and the United States will present a united stance on Chinese activity around Taiwan when Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga meets with U.S. President Joe Biden in their first summit on April 16.

[Japan, Germany hold 1st security talk to deter China](#)

April 14, 2021, The Asahi Shimbun

Japan and Germany agreed in security talks Tuesday to expand their military cooperation as the two nations shared concern about China's increasing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region.

[Outcry erupts in and out of Japan over Fukushima water decision](#)

April 13, 2021, The Asahi Shimbun

Japan's neighbors and local fishermen blasted the government's decision April 13 to release treated water from the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant into the sea.

[Japan to compile action plan for Fukushima water discharge this year; IAEA to be involved](#)

April 16, 2021, Japan Today

The Japanese government decided Friday to compile by the end of this year an action plan for discharging treated radioactive water from the crippled Fukushima nuclear plant into the Pacific Ocean.

[Japan backpedals on cooperation with China in Beijing Olympics](#)

April 16, 2021, Japan Today

Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi backpedaled on a previous pledge to cooperate in making the Beijing Winter Olympics a success during a telephone call with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi earlier this month, government sources said.

[S Korea aims to fight Japan's Fukushima decision at world tribunal](#)

April 15, 2021, Japan Today

South Korea's president ordered officials on Wednesday to explore petitioning an international court over Japan's decision to release contaminated water from its wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant into the sea, amid protests by fisheries and environmental groups.

[Japan, U.S. trade ministers agree to bolster chip supply chains](#)

April 11, 2021, Japan Today

Japan's trade minister Hiroshi Kajiyama and his U.S. counterpart Gina Raimondo have agreed to work closely to bolster semiconductor supply chains in the face of a global shortage.

Korea

[Climate groups urge S. Korea to declare coal phaseout at US-led climate summit](#)

April 16, 2021, The Korea Herald

A coalition of South Korean environmental groups urged the government to declare its intention to go coal-free by 2030 at the upcoming US-led climate summit of world leaders, with a two-day campaign featuring a blue-spotted giraffe mascot.

[Moon replaces senior secretaries for political affairs, social policy, Cheong Wa Dae spokesperson](#)

April 16, 2021, The Korea Herald President Moon Jae-in replaced some of his senior secretaries at Cheong Wa Dae, a move coupled with a major Cabinet shake-up to name a prime minister.

[Satellite imagery indicates activity at NK's nuclear reprocessing facility: think tank](#)

April 16, 2021, The Korea Herald

North Korea may have resumed the operation of its reprocessing facilities at Yongbyon to produce nuclear materials, a US think tank suggested, citing recent satellite imagery.

[North Korea policy, Seoul-Tokyo ties to top Moon-Biden summit agenda](#)

April 16, 2021, The Korea Times

The denuclearization of North Korea is expected to top the agenda during the first summit between President Moon Jae-in and U.S. President Joe Biden, which will be held late next month, a Cheong Wa Dae official said.

Southeast Asia

[Vietnam to become hotspot for high-tech investment](#)

April 16, 2021, Nhan Dan

With expectation to develop into a leading digital economy in Southeast Asia over the next decade, Vietnam is also witnessing a strong inflow of high-tech investment swelling performance in the region.

[Now, Vietnam begins buying higher grade rice from India](#)

April 12, 2021, The Hindu Business Line

Vietnam, which resumed rice imports from India after decades purchasing lower priced 100 per cent broken variety, has now begun to buy better quality grades to meet its other domestic needs.

[Vietnam's new PM to expand Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with India](#)

April 14, 2021, The Economic Times

Vietnam has a new Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh and he has assured to continue accelerating the reform process to bolster the country's economy and also expand Hanoi's global profile.

[Russia, China thwarting response to Myanmar coup: EU foreign policy chief](#)

April 12, 2021, Business Standard

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said on Sunday it was "no surprise" that Moscow and Beijing were blocking efforts at the UN Security Council to impose an arms embargo as the international efforts to halt the violence in Myanmar is yet to yield results.

[We hope India will reassess stand on trade pacts, says Singapore Foreign Minister](#)

April 14, 2021, The Hindu

Singapore's Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan said he hoped India would 'reassess' its stand on regional trading agreements such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) pact that India withdrew from in 2019.

[Philippines Summons Chinese Ambassador Over South China Sea Tensions](#)

April 15, 2021, The Diplomat

After several weeks of filing daily diplomatic complaints, the Philippine's Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) this week summoned Beijing's ambassador to discuss the "illegal lingering presence" of Chinese ships in areas of the South China Sea claimed by Manila.

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[Kazakhstan's COVID-19 vaccine to be bottled in Turkey](#)

April 10, 2021, Anadolu Agency

Bottling and packaging of Kazakhstan's homegrown coronavirus vaccine will be carried out in a factory in Turkey, Kazakh officials said. Deputy Prime Minister Yerali Tugjanov told reporters the decision on the QazVac vaccine was made because the construction of the production plant has not yet been finalized in Kazakhstan.

[Kyrgyz Voters Approve Constitutional Changes To Strengthen Presidency](#)

April 11, 2021, RFE/RL

Voters in Kyrgyzstan have approved a new constitution that expands the power of the president in a referendum, according to preliminary results. The Central Election Commission (BShK) said results from 90 percent of ballots showed that around 79 percent of voters backed the constitutional amendments. The BShK said turnout was around 35 percent, just above the 30 percent threshold required to make the referendum valid.

[Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan Break Ground On Trade Hub](#)

April 12, 2021, RFE/RL

Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have broken ground for a giant trade and economic-cooperation hub, the largest of its kind in Central Asia, along the border of the two neighbors. The Uzbek government's press service said a groundbreaking ceremony with the prime ministers of the two countries was held on April 10 at the Gisht Kuprik-Zhibek Zholy border checkpoint.

[Kyrgyzstan: Former PM pays \\$12 million in compensation, released from pretrial detention](#)

April 14, 2021, The Times of Central Asia

Former Kyrgyz Prime Minister Kubanychbek Jumaliev, who was charged with corruption, has been released from pretrial detention after he paid the equivalent of almost \$12 million in compensatory damages to the state treasury, RFE/RL's Kyrgyz Service reported.

[Turkmenistan's Authoritarian Leader Expands Grip On Power](#)

April 15, 2021, RFE/RL

Turkmenistan's authoritarian president, Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, who is also the head of the government in the tightly controlled state, has added

another title to his name: the speaker of the newly established upper chamber of parliament, the Halk Maslahaty (People's Council). State media in the extremely isolated former Soviet republic reported on April 14 that Berdymukhammedov was "elected to the post by secret ballot" by the chamber's members.

West Asia

[UAE is Mediating between India and Pakistan, Says Senior Emirati Diplomat](#)

April 15, 2021, AL Jazeera

The United Arab Emirates' (UAE) envoy to Washington has confirmed that the Gulf state is mediating between India and Pakistan to help the nuclear-armed rivals reach a "healthy and functional" relationship. Top intelligence officers from India and Pakistan held secret talks in Dubai in January in a new effort to calm military tension over the disputed region of Kashmir.

[Israel Sends Message to President Biden with Iran Attack](#)

April 13, 2021, Arab News

Whether it was a cyber-attack or a deliberately planned explosion that caused a serious power outage at Iran's underground Natanz uranium enrichment plant, it was most likely carried out by Israel. Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif blamed Tel Aviv for the sabotage and vowed to "take revenge on the Zionists," while also promising to replace the damaged centrifuges at the site with even better ones.

[Saudi Arabia: Iran Must be Prevented from Obtaining Nuclear Weapons](#)

April 14, 2021, Arab News

Saudi Arabia issued its strongest warning yet that Iran must never be allowed to have a nuclear weapon or the ability to build one. The Kingdom spoke out on the eve of the resumption of talks aimed at reviving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

[Suez Canal Authority Detains Ever Given Ship amid Compensation Negotiations](#)

April 14, 2021, Egypt Independent

An anonymous source in the Suez Canal Authority said that an Egyptian court has issued an order to detain the Ever Given container ship in the Suez Canal amid compensation negotiations with the ship's owner.

[US Eyes Tactical Withdrawal from Middle East to Focus on China](#)

April 10, 2021, The Arab Weekly

Experts say that the United States views China as a top strategic threat and therefore the Americans can reduce their presence in parts of the Middle East, even if such a move could be to the benefit of Iran.

[Blackout Hits Iran Nuclear Site in What Appears to be Israeli Sabotage](#)

April 11, 2021, The New York Times

A power failure that appeared to have been caused by a deliberately planned explosion struck Iran's Natanz uranium enrichment site on Sunday (April 11), in what Iranian officials called an act of sabotage that they suggested had been carried out by Israel.

[US Sees Possible 'impasse' in Clash with Iran on Sanctions](#)

April 10, 2021, Mint

US and Iranian officials clashed over what sanctions the United States should lift to resume compliance with the 2015 nuclear deal, with Washington predicting an impasse if Tehran sticks to a demand that all sanctions since 2017 be removed.

[Fire at Saudi Arabia's Jizan University after Yemen Missile Attack](#)

April 15, 2021, Mint

A Saudi university near the country's border with Yemen caught fire early Thursday (April 15) after the kingdom's air defences intercepted a barrage of ballistic missiles and bomb-laden drones.

United States

United States

[US expels Russian diplomats, imposes sanctions for hacking](#)

April 16, 2021, Associated Press

The Biden administration announced Thursday the U.S. is expelling 10 Russian diplomats and imposing sanctions against several dozen people and companies, holding the Kremlin accountable for interference in last year's presidential election and the hacking of federal agencies.

[Biden says he is ready to 'take further actions' if Russia escalates against U.S., opens door to cooperation](#)

April 15, 2021, CNBC

"If Russia continues to interfere with our democracy, I'm prepared to take further actions to respond. It is my responsibility as president of the United States to do so," Biden said from the White House.

[NATO to Cut Forces in Afghanistan, Match US Withdrawal](#)

April 14, 2021, Voice of America

NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg, after meeting Wednesday with U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, announced at a news conference that about 7,000 NATO troops would be withdrawn.

[U.S. Signals Support for Ukraine and Will Add Troops in Germany](#)

April 13, 2021, The New York Times

The United States and NATO, anxious about a major Russian troop build-up on Ukraine's border, signalled strong support for the Kyiv government .

[Pentagon chief declares 'ironclad' US commitment to Israel](#)

April 11, 2021, Associated Press

U. S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Sunday declared an "enduring and ironclad" American commitment to Israel, reinforcing support at a tense time in Israeli politics and amid questions about the Biden administration's efforts to revive nuclear negotiations with Israel's archenemy, Iran.

[Biden puts his stamp on foreign policy with series of momentous decisions](#)

April 15, 2021, CNN

A string of recent foreign policy decisions adds up to the clearest view yet of how Biden sees his role as commander in chief. Having spoken again and

again about proving to the world that democracy still works, officials say Biden is taking steps to free up the time and money needed to actually make his case.

[Can Biden's Resolve Weather Putin and Xi?](#)

April 12, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

The question for Americans is what all this means. Is Mr. Putin merely attempting to divert domestic attention away from his falling poll numbers and the ravages of Covid? Is Xi Jinping playing the nationalism card to assuage restless public opinion at home? Is this all a move to frighten the Biden administration away from its hard-line rhetoric and to drive it toward what China and Russia hope is its real agenda: looking dignified, purposeful and concerned while retreating from global leadership?

[How the Quad Can Match the Hype](#)

April 15, 2021, Foreign Affairs

The Quad will need to deepen existing security cooperation, economic partnerships, and multilateral coordination. If it succeeds, the group can help ensure a "free, open, inclusive, and resilient Indo-Pacific," as its leaders have promised. If it fails, though, the Quad risks a world characterized by territorial insecurity, economic coercion, impotent international organizations, and authoritarian technology.

Europe & Russia

Europe

[EU, India seek closer ties to fight coronavirus pandemic](#)

April 14, 2021, Deutsche Welle

Europe wants to enhance its partnership with India against COVID-19 and climate change. Delhi is pushing for an intellectual property waiver to facilitate vaccine production.

[European powers warn Iran over 'dangerous' uranium enrichment move](#)

April 15, 2021, Reuters

The United States and the European countries party to the Iran nuclear deal pushed back on Wednesday against Tehran's decision to enrich uranium at 60% purity, with the top U.S. diplomat calling the move "provocative" and questioning Iran's seriousness about talks.

[EU agrees to sanction two companies close to Myanmar military, diplomats say](#)

April 15, 2021, Reuters

The European Union has agreed to impose sanctions on another 10 individuals linked to the Feb. 1 coup in Myanmar and to target two businesses run by the armed forces for the first time in protest at the military takeover, two diplomats said.

[EU mulls end to extradition treaties with China over Hong Kong electoral reform, but not every member state agrees](#)

April 15, 2021, South China Morning Post

Under pressure from the United States and reeling from a blitz of Chinese sanctions, the European Union is preparing new measures to punish Beijing for sweeping electoral reform that will marginalise opposition voices in Hong Kong.

[EU and China tussle for clout in Montenegro over road project](#)

April 16, 2021, Nikkei Asia

The European Union will not shoulder the \$1 billion debt Montenegro owes China for a still-to-be-built highway, a move that adds a wrinkle to the contest for influence being waged in the Balkans.

[European Parliament gives initial backing to UK trade deal](#)

April 16, 2021, Reuters

The European Parliament's committees on relations with Britain on Thursday voted overwhelmingly in favour of the post-Brexit trade and cooperation agreement, clearing the path to its final ratification.

[EU, UK set meeting over Northern Ireland trade rules](#)

April 14, 2021, Buffalo News

The vice president of the European Union's executive arm and the United Kingdom's Brexit minister will hold talks Thursday in Brussels to discuss Northern Ireland trade rules, the EU said Wednesday.

[EU rules out imposing sanctions on Russian debt on the heels of US, says source](#)

April 16, 2021, TASS

The European Union currently rules out introducing restrictions against Russia's national sovereign debt to follow suit of the US, a diplomatic source in a permanent mission of an EU member in Brussels told TASS Thursday.

[Russia's Sputnik vaccine injects divisions into EU](#)

April 14, 2021, Politico

The Russian jab hasn't yet been approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) — where it's currently under rolling review — and the European Commission says the bloc won't need it. It's also not clear whether it will arrive in time to make a difference in some countries. But that hasn't stopped a number of governments breaking away from the EU's common approach to cut their own deals.

[Germany, United States call on Russia to pull back troops from Ukrainian border](#)

April 15, 2021, Reuters

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and U.S. President Joe Biden called on Russia to pull back troops from the Ukrainian border to de-escalate the situation in the region, a German government spokesman said on Wednesday.

[Zelensky to meet with France, Germany on Russia tensions](#)

April 15, 2021, The Hill

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky will huddle with the leaders of France and Germany on Friday to discuss increasing tensions with Russia.

[Japan seeks German help to counter China's clout in Indo-Pacific](#)

April 14, 2021, Deutsche Welle

Germany and Japan held a high-level security dialogue Tuesday, as Tokyo tries to encourage more European nations to help contain China's ambitions in East Asia and beyond.

Russia

[Russia vows to ensure its citizens' safety if situation deteriorates in Ukraine](#)

April 13, 2021, TASS News Agency

Russia will do everything possible to guarantee its security and the safety of its citizens, should the crisis in Ukraine drastically deteriorate. However, Kiev and its Western patrons will bear full responsibility for any escalation, Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told reporters on April 13.

[Dollar, euro down on Moscow Exchange](#)

April 13, 2021, TASS News Agency

The dollar moves down by 1.98% to 75.85 rubles on the Moscow Exchange. The euro loses 1.76% to 90.55 rubles, according to trading data. The ruble strengthens its position on the back of the telephone conversation between Russian and US Presidents.

[Russia Building World's 'Most Powerful Fleet of Icebreakers,' Putin Says as Race for Arctic Heats Up](#)

April 14, 2021, Sputnik News

Moscow is building "the most powerful fleet of icebreakers in the world," and will continue its research activities in the Arctic no matter what other international problems Russia and the planet face, Russian President Vladimir Putin has said. Russia has committed significant resources to the Northern Sea Route – the transport artery it hopes will one day allow for sea-based cargos to be shipped en masse between Europe and Asia in as little as 19 days.

[Putin gets his second COVID-19 jab](#)

April 14, 2021, TASS News Agency

Russian President Vladimir Putin announced on April 14 that he has received his second COVID-19 vaccine dose. Putin hopes that the COVID-19 pandemic will recede soon, in particular due to the vaccination drive.

[Russia Summons U.S. Envoy for 'Harsh Talks' on New Sanctions](#)

April 15, 2021, The Moscow Times

Russia has summoned U.S. Ambassador to Moscow John Sullivan for "harsh talks" after Washington widened economic sanctions and ordered diplomatic expulsions in retaliation to what it calls Moscow's malign behavior, Russia's Foreign Ministry announced, less than an hour after President Joe Biden ordered restrictions on U.S. banks buying new Russian government debt, sent home 10 diplomats who include alleged spies and sanctioned 32 people with alleged ties to 2020 election interference.

[Russia develops world's first light drone with hybrid engine](#)

April 15, 2021, TASS News Agency

Russia's ZALA Aero (part of the Kalashnikov Group within the state tech corporation Rostec) has developed the world's first light unmanned aircraft ZALA 421-16E5G outfitted with a hybrid power plant combining an electric motor and an internal combustion engine, ZALA Aero Special Projects Head Nikita Khamitov told TASS during the drone's presentation.

[Ukraine Accuses Russia of Shutting Off Black Sea Access, Harassing Ships](#)

April 16, 2021, The Moscow Times

Russia has shut off access to the Black Sea and is harassing Ukrainian warships amid Moscow's wider military buildup in the area, Ukraine said. Ukraine's foreign ministry statement said that Russia will close from next week until October parts of the Black Sea toward the narrow Kerch Strait, which connects southern Russia to annexed Crimea, for military drills.

Africa & Latin America

Africa

[In Libya, Tunisia and Egypt hope to work hand in hand](#)

10 April 2021, The Africa Report

Tunisia's President Kaïs Saïed will visit Cairo between April 9 and 11 at the invitation of his Egyptian counterpart Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.

[DRC: President Tshisekedi finally forms a government](#)

14 April 2021, The Africa Report

After two months of waiting and negotiations, the DRC finally has a new government composed of member parties of President Félix Tshisekedi's coalition called the 'Union Sacrée'.

[IMF: COVID hampers Sub-Saharan Africa's economic recovery](#)

15 April 2021, Africa Times

There are at least 32 million more people living in extreme poverty across sub-Saharan Africa because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and countries in the region will need about \$425 billion in additional external funding over the next five years, the IMF said.

[EU/Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Partnership Agreement concluded](#)

16 April 2021, Africa News

The European Union and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States have formally concluded negotiations on the new partnership agreement. "The new agreement modernises and deepens the partnership between the EU and the 79 members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States. Together we are a population of 1.5 billion people and we represent more than half of the seats at the United Nations."

Latin America

[Argentina strongly opposes UK's firing of missiles in the Falklands](#)

10 April 2021, MercoPress

Argentina expressed its government's utmost rejection of the announcement by British authorities that missiles were to be launched at the Falkland Islands. The Foreign Ministry warned that the "alleged defensive condition of the British military base in the South Atlantic is not only totally unjustified, but also represents a threat to the entire region."

[Venezuela: Money scam by opposition leaders unveiled by Maduro's Government](#)

14 April 2021, MercoPress

Venezuela's National Assembly Speaker, Jorge Rodríguez – recognized by Nicolás Maduro's Government – denounced opposition leaders who were behind a scam plan to "steal" more than 53 million dollars of Venezuela's money frozen in the United States.

[Argentine President says US envoy that there will be no new Chinese base](#)

14 April 2021, MercoPress

Argentine President Alberto Fernández Tuesday told US National Security Council advisor Juan Gonzalez that "there will be no foreign bases," it was reported. Gonzalez visited Fernandez at the Olivos presidential residence but was not allowed to meet him face to face due to his covid-19 condition.



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