

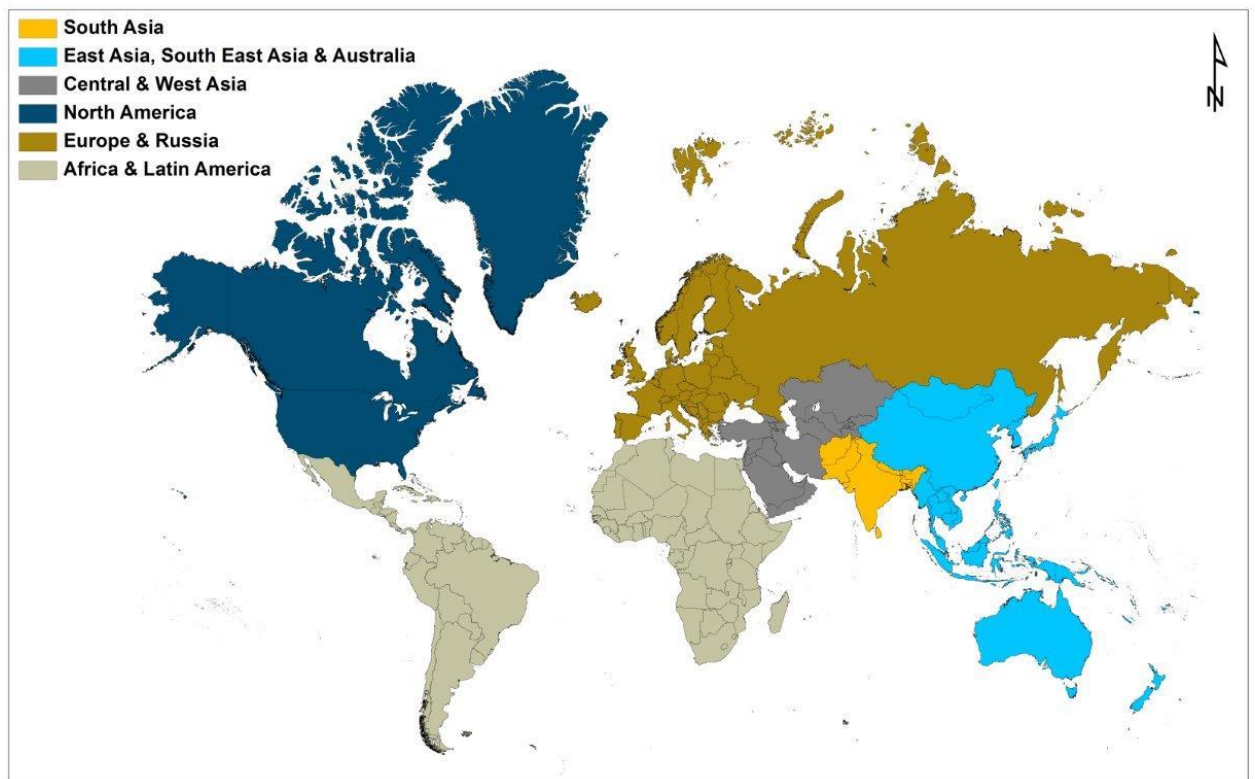


Delhi Policy Group

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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South Asia

India

['Responsibility, accountability of big tech firms must be debated': Jaishankar](#)

July 1, 2021, The Indian Express

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said that issues like responsibility and accountability of the big tech companies which enjoy huge power and influence must be debated and they cannot be brushed under the carpet.

['False, mischievous': India on reports claiming Jaishankar met Taliban leaders](#)

July 2, 2021, Hindustan Times

The Indian government on Friday denied the claims that suggested Union external affairs minister S Jaishankar met Taliban leaders during his stopover in Doha. In a weekly briefing, external affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said such reports are "false and mischievous."

[India has largest solar program in world: EAM S Jaishankar](#)

June 30, 2021, Deccan Herald

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in conversation with Former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair at the India Global Forum 2021 on June 30 said that India has been pushing a lot of green energy projects and now they have the largest solar program in the world.

[Green Pass: Jaishankar discusses Covishield with top EU official](#)

June 30, 2021, Hindustan Times

External affairs minister S Jaishankar tweeted on Tuesday that he has taken up the issue of inclusion of the Covishield anti-Covid vaccine in the European Union's (EU) Covid-19 vaccination passport with a top official of the bloc.

[S Jaishankar Discusses Bilateral Issues, Covid During Meet With Counterparts From US, Other Countries](#)

June 30 2021, NDTV

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday met his counterparts from the US, Britain, Japan, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Mexico, France, Spain, Singapore and the EU on the sidelines of the G20 ministerial meetings here and discussed with them the COVID-19 situation and global as well as regional issues of mutual interests.

[In big boost to connectivity in border areas, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates 63 bridges](#)

June 29, 2021, India Today

In a tremendous boost to connectivity in the border areas, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday inaugurated 63 bridges in six states and two Union Territories.

Pakistan

[Pakistan to stay on FATF grey list for another year](#)

June 26, 2021, Dawn

After 'largely completing' 26 of the 27 targets, Pakistan will remain in the grey list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) for at least another year and deliver on seven new parallel action points to address deficiencies in its Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) regime.

[Pakistan Navy to take part in Black Sea drill](#)

June 26, 2021, Dawn

Pakistan Navy will participate in the upcoming naval exercise 'Sea Breeze 2021 (SB21)' as an observer. The exercise, being held from June 28 to July 10 in the Black Sea region, is being co-hosted by US Sixth Fleet and Ukrainian Navy.

[ECC meets to consider steps for reviving cotton crop](#)

June 28, 2021, Dawn

The government has called a meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) to consider allowing an intervention price of about Rs5,000 per 40kg for cotton, which has arguably been necessitated by a sharp decline in production, besides clearing a dozen supplementary grants so close to the passage of federal budget by parliament.

[Call for ban on foreign trawlers at Makran coast](#)

June 28, 2021, Dawn

National Party president Dr Abdul Malik Baloch demanded an immediate ban on all foreign fishing trawlers at Makran coast. While terming the Chinese and inter-provincial trawlers hunting at Balochistan coast 'illegal', the NP chief said they were depriving the local population of their livelihoods besides depleting marine resources.

[Govt obtains 63pc more foreign loans in 11MFY21](#)

June 27, 2021, Dawn

Pakistan borrowed over \$12 billion during the 11 months of the current fiscal year (11MFY21) – an increase of about 63 per cent compared to the same period in FY20 – reflecting the growing need for foreign exchange despite record remittances and higher exports.

[Shifting industries](#)

June 27, 2021, Dawn

Amid continuous gas crisis especially in Karachi, the textile exporters constituted a committee for due-diligence to shift their units elsewhere and correspond and negotiate with those countries who have much better business and export friendly policies and are offering most attractive incentives to their foreign investors as well as their local industries.

[Circular debt soars to Rs2.327 trillion in 2020-21](#)

July 2, 2021, Dawn

With power sector circular debt touching Rs2.327 trillion as of June 30, 2021, the Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCoE) ordered expeditious implementation on oil crisis report including transfer of additional powers to Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) to regulate oil marketing sector.

[US adds Pakistan, Turkey to child soldier recruiter list](#)

July 2, 2021, Dawn

The United States added Pakistan and Turkey to its Child Soldiers Prevention Act (CSPA) list, a designation that could lead to strict sanctions on military assistance and listed countries' participation in peacekeeping programmes.

[Can partner with US for peace, not war: Imran](#)

July 1, 2021, The News

Prime Minister Imran Khan maintained that there would be no compromise on the country's sovereignty giving a categorical message that Pakistan could be a partner with the United States in peace and but could never be a partner in conflicts.

[Pakistan will shut border if Taliban take over Afghanistan](#)

June 28, 2021, The News

Pakistan's foreign minister said that violence and lawlessness could reign in Afghanistan after the United States' withdrawal, and that Pakistan would shut its border to the country if the Taliban take control of it.

[‘IMF’s new SDR allocation to boost Pakistan’s reserves by \\$2.8bln’](#)

June 29, 2021, The News

Pakistan is expected to get \$2.8 billion from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under a new allocation of special drawing rights for frontier markets and improving external position reduces downside risks to the country’s credit ratings.

Afghanistan

[US assessing whether Taliban serious about peace: Blinken](#)

June 26, 2021, Dawn

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Washington was assessing whether the Taliban were serious about ending the conflict in Afghanistan, and that trying to take back the country by force was not consistent with peace efforts. Blinken, who was visiting Paris, acknowledged attacks on Afghan security forces were increasing before planned talks in Washington between US President Joe Biden, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Ghani’s former political opponent, Abdullah Abdullah.

[Security in Afghanistan Is Decaying, U.S. General Says as Forces Leave](#)

June 29, 2021, NYT

The commander of the U.S.-led mission in Afghanistan warned that the country could be on a path to chaotic civil war as American and other international troops prepare to leave in the coming weeks.

[Germany, Italy Complete Troop Exit From Afghanistan](#)

June 30, 2021, VOA

Germany and Italy have removed their last remaining soldiers from Afghanistan, ending almost two decades of deployment to the war-torn country alongside U.S. and other coalition troops. Germany announced its military withdrawal without much fanfare shortly after the last 250 German soldiers were airlifted out of their base in northern Afghanistan.

[Biden, Ghani discuss US troops withdrawal](#)

June 26, 2021, The News

US President Joe Biden and Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani discussed winding down of the Resolute Support Mission and with that the transition to a new relationship with Afghanistan and with the Afghan forces. Both sides reaffirmed the importance of ensuring that Afghanistan never again serves as a safe haven for terrorists.

[Taliban issuing 'new' laws in captured districts](#)

July 2, 2021, The News

Civil society activists in Afghanistan's northeastern province of Takhar have claimed that the Taliban have issued new laws and regulations in recently captured districts in the province. The development comes after the Taliban intensified attacks on district centers in a number of provinces in the past few weeks.

[US military vehicles fall into Taliban hands](#)

July 2, 2021, The News

The Taliban has captured a staggering 700 trucks and Humvees from the Afghan security forces as well as dozens of armored vehicles and artillery systems in June alone. It emerged following an investigation of imagery posted on social media.

Bangladesh

[India exports first consignment of coal to Bangladesh](#)

July 2, 2021, The Hindu Businessline

India exported the first ever consignment of coal from Netaji Subhas Dock (NSD) of SMP (Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port) Kolkata to Bangladesh on July 2.

[India, Bangladesh facing new narco-terrorism threat with new drug smuggling routes: Report](#)

July 1, 2021, The Economic Times

North Eastern India and Bangladesh are facing a new threat from narco-terrorism as drug smugglers have changed their route for shipping in the popular narcotic, Yaba, and involved Islamic student organisations according to a report prepared by security and intelligence organisations.

[Why China and India are wooing Bangladesh](#)

July 3, 2021, The Daily Star

From India's perspective, the building of Chinese relationships—and the ports and other facilities that come with it—with key countries along the maritime route is a threat, with the likes of Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Maldives being part of a strategic "string of pearls" to encircle India and choke its power projection.

Nepal

[Former Nepalese ambassador to China highlights importance of BRI for Nepal](#)

June 26, 2021, WION

Former Nepalese Ambassador to China Leela Mani Paudyal on Saturday said that Nepal rejects Indo-Pacific Strategy and highlighted the importance of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in Nepal's foreign policy.

[Nepal-China rail link may go through protected Himalayan park](#)

June 28, 2021, India Blooms

A senior engineer has claimed that the railway, which will link China and Nepal, will run through the main protected area of the Himalayan mountains, media reports said.

Sri Lanka

[China's growing control over Sri Lanka infrastructure projects sparks concerns](#)

July 2, 2021, Mint

China's increasing control over high-profile Sri Lankan infrastructure projects has renewed fears that the country may soon become a Chinese colony. This comes after the China Harbor Engineering Company (CHEC) won a new development project last month for a 17-km elevated highway in Colombo.

[Lanka Defence Secretary asks China's embassy to 'educate' Chinese company employees not to wear military-style camouflage uniforms](#)

July 30, 2021, The Economic Times

In an unusual move, Sri Lanka's Defence Secretary has asked the Chinese Embassy here to "educate" a Chinese private company dredging a reservoir in Hambantota, the hometown of the ruling Rajapaksa family, not to wear military-style camouflage uniforms in future.

East & South East Asia

China

[Highlights of Xi Jinping's speech at grand gathering marking CPC centenary](#)

July 1, 2021, CGTN

Chinese President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, delivered an important speech in Beijing on Thursday at the grand ceremony celebrating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the CPC.

[New large military chopper debuts at CPC centenary event with CPC flag](#)

July 1, 2021, Global Times

A new type of large military transport helicopter, dubbed by military observers as the Z-8L, made its debut by hanging a flag of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and leading the aerial performance during CPC centenary celebrations.

[What China signals through Belt and Road](#)

July 1, 2021, China Daily

China is the poster child of the new rising world, consolidating its national strength and expanding its global influence.

[New railway line creates opportunities in Tibet](#)

June 26, 2021, China Daily

The Lhasa-Nyingchi Railway in the Tibet autonomous region has begun operations linking Lhasa, the regional capital, with Nyingchi and Lhokha, China State Railway Group said.

[China starts operating the world's largest hydropower station under construction ahead of CPC's centenary](#)

June 29, 2021, Global Times

Three days ahead of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC), China presents yet another super project with a major breakthrough of Southwest China's Baihetan Hydropower Station added to the national celebration of the CPC's centenary, demonstrating to the world the advantages of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

[Satellite images show China building 100 new missile silos that may help it reach US: WaPo](#)

July 1, 2021, The Print

China has begun construction of over 100 new silos for intercontinental ballistic missiles in a desert near its Yumen city.

Japan

[U.S. calls buildup of China's nuclear arsenal 'concerning'](#)

July 2, 2021, The Japan Times

The United States said on Thursday that China's rapid build-up of its nuclear forces was concerning and called on Beijing to engage with it "on practical measures to reduce the risks of destabilizing arms races."

[Japan, Philippines to hold first joint air force exercises](#)

July 1, 2021, The Economic Times

The air forces of Japan and the Philippines will hold their first-ever joint exercises next week, Japan's embassy in Manila said on Thursday, in a further sign of deepening defence ties between the two countries.

[Japan to use radar intended for land on new Aegis ships](#)

June 29, 2021, The Japan Times

The Defense Ministry plans to use U.S. defense giant Lockheed Martin Corp.'s SPY-7 radar system for its planned Aegis-equipped vessels, though the system is intended for use on land.

[Current challenges demand deeper India-Japan ties, says PM Modi](#)

June 28, 2021, The Times

Underlining the significance of ties with Japan, PM Narendra Modi said current challenges demanded that the India-Japan friendship and partnership get even deeper.

[Japanese official warns US of potential surprise attack on Hawaii – from Russia and China](#)

June 30, 2021, Washington Examiner

Russia and China are coordinating military exercises to threaten not only Taiwan but also Hawaii, according to a senior Japanese defense official who warned the United States to beware of a Pearl Harbour-style surprise attack.

[Japan's defense chief concerned over Russia's military activity in the Kuril Islands](#)

June 30, 2021, TASS

Japanese Defense Minister Nobuo Kishi voiced concerns over Russia's military drills in the Southern Kuril Islands during his visit to the Chitose military base in the island of Hokkaido.

Korea

[US names new deputy chief of mission to South Korea](#)

July 1, 2021, The Korea Times

The United States has appointed a new deputy chief of mission to South Korea who will also serve as its acting ambassador, an informed source said.

[North Korea increases cyberattacks on South Korea](#)

July 1, 2021, The Korea Times

Several major South Korean facilities have fallen victim to cyberattacks originating from North Korea in recent months, as the reclusive state has been ramping up its cyberterrorism campaign against its southern neighbour.

[South Korea to develop Iron Dome-like interceptor system against North Korea's artillery](#)

June 28, 2021, The Korea Times

South Korea decided Monday to develop its own interceptor system like Israel's Iron Dome to defend the country's key infrastructure against long-range artillery threats from North Korea.

[Cheong Wa Dae faces growing doubts on vetting ranking officials](#)

July 2, 2021, The Korea Times

Cheong Wa Dae is subject to unrelenting criticisms over its system of vetting candidates for official positions to serve as President Moon Jae-in's aides, as a series of controversies has continued over the true qualifications of many of those selected.

[US shortlists N. Korea among worst nations in trafficking of humans](#)

July 2, 2021, The Korea Herald

The United States has again shortlisted North Korea as a nation complicit in human trafficking and forced labour, an annual US report said.

[South's key defense firms hacked by N. Korea: lawmaker](#)

July 1, 2021, The Korea Herald

North Korea hacked key South Korean defense firms, including Korea Aerospace Industries, which is building the country's first homegrown fighter jet, Rep. Ha Tae-keung of the main opposition People Power Party said.

Southeast Asia

[Vietnam's strategic interests in the South China Sea: Challenges and options](#)

June 27, 2021, The Times of India

According to the National Institute for South China Sea Studies, Vietnam is strengthening its maritime militia. Though the figures appear to be exaggerated, Vietnam's action is propelled by the escalating Chinese aggressive activities. In fact, Vietnam has very high stakes in the South China Sea (SCS), which is its life-line.

[India and Vietnam: Strengthening of defence relations](#)

July 2, 2021, The Times of India

India and Vietnam continue to strengthen defence ties between the two countries. In yet another move in this direction, on the 1st July, Indian Defence Minister Sri Rajnath Singh and Minister of National Defence of Vietnam Sr Lt Gen Phan Van Giang interacted to review the progress in this context.

[India, Vietnam to expand defence cooperation](#)

July 2, 2021, The Shillong Times

India and Vietnam vowed to further enhance military-to-military ties and agreed to speed up cooperation in the defence industry and technology domains, officials said.

[China Flyby Prompts Malaysia to Modernize Air Force](#)

June 28, 2021, VOA

Pressure from China over a festering maritime sovereignty dispute has added momentum to Malaysia's drive for a more modern air force including the purchase of 36 new aircraft, analysts believe.

[Why Indian Businesses View Singapore as a Preferred Investment Base in Asia](#)

June 22, 2021, India Briefing

India Singapore trade ties received a boost when the two countries signed their bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) in 2005. Over the years, the bilateral trade relationship has steadily grown and

complimented by commercial and business partnerships through multiple treaties and agreements.

[Cambodia cut from US military scholarship programme due to China ties](#)

July 2, 2021, South China Morning Post

Cambodia is no longer included in a United States programme providing scholarships to study at elite American military academies, the US said amid its concerns over China's military presence in Cambodia which have led to strained relations between Washington and Phnom Penh.

[China might break international law to dominate South China Sea: Analyst](#)

July 3, 2021, The Times of India

China's designs to dominate the South China Sea might involve breaking international law of the seas in the region.

[US Clears F-16 Sale to Philippines as South China Sea Tensions Brew](#)

June 30, 2021, The Diplomat

The U.S. State Department last week cleared billions of dollars in potential arms sales to the Philippines, the latest indication that Washington is ready to back its treaty ally against Chinese aggression in the South China Sea.

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[Uzbekistan, Tajikistan report fresh Afghan troop crossings](#)

June 28, 2021, Eurasianet

The isolated cases of Afghan government troops seeking refuge across the border in neighbouring Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are now becoming a commonplace occurrence, according to officials in those two countries. Tajiks are offering the troops a haven, but the Uzbeks are taking a firmer line.

[Kyrgyz, Turkmen Leaders Agree On Energy, Business, Education Cooperation](#)

June 28, 2021, RFE/RL

The leaders of Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan agreed on new financial and energy deals, as the two met for talks in the Turkmen capital. The June 28 meeting was the first stop of the Kyrgyz President's travels to his Central Asian neighbours. Japarov and his Turkmen counterpart, Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, agreed to set up a \$100 million Kyrgyz-Turkmen Fund to support joint business projects.

[Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan leaders talk, but produce little of note](#)

June 30, 2021, Eurasianet

A much-anticipated meeting between the presidents of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan that took place on June 29, weeks after bloody clashes on their shared border, produced little of note other than renewed commitments to avoid more hostilities in future.

[All Style and No Substance? Uzbekistan's Rebranding Is Hollow Without Human Rights](#)

July 01, 2021, The Diplomat

Uzbekistan's foreign minister, Abdulaziz Kamilov, embarked on a week-long trip to the United States to change the image of the country in the eyes of American leaders and policymakers. Kamilov's main goals during the annual bilateral consultations are to sell the story of a dynamic "New Uzbekistan" that is open for business and to shed the country's reputation as an authoritarian state where human rights abuses are common.

[Kazakh Police Detain Activists Involved In Xinjiang Protests Outside Chinese Consulate](#)

July 01, 2021, RFE/RL

Police in Kazakhstan's largest city, Almaty, have detained several activists who have been involved in ongoing pickets in front of the Chinese Consulate to demand the release of their relatives held in China's Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous Region.

[Blinken meets FMs of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, with Afghanistan in sharp focus](#)

July 02, 2021, The Times of Central Asia

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with the top diplomats of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan on July 1, with Afghanistan high on the agenda as U.S. forces prepare to exit the war-torn country and Washington seeks Central Asian partners. Tajik officials are preparing for a possible influx of refugees, while Uzbekistan last month announced military drills along the border.

[U.S. and Tajikistan agree to jointly address regional security threats](#)

July 02, 2021, AKIpress

The U.S. State Department hosted Foreign Minister Sirojiddin Muhridin and a delegation from the Government of Tajikistan for the eighth U.S.-Tajikistan Annual Bilateral Consultations on July 1, following 30 years of bilateral partnership between the United States and Tajikistan.

West Asia

[India's Reliance to Invest \\$2 Billion in UAE's ADNOC Chemical JV, its First Deal in Gulf Region](#)

June 29, 2021, S&P Global

Reliance Industries Ltd. plans to invest \$2 billion in the UAE's TA'ZIZ chemical joint venture between Abu Dhabi National Oil Co. and sovereign wealth fund ADQ.

[India Cuts Middle East Oil Imports as it Seeks to Diversify Energy Sources](#)

June 24, 2021, Khaleej Times

India, the world's third-biggest oil importer, has significantly reduced its imports from the Middle East as part of a drive to diversify crude sources. The share of Middle Eastern crude in India's oil imports fell to a 25-month low in May, tanker data provided by trade sources showed, as refiners tapped alternatives in response to the government's call to diversify supplies.

[India Arrests Four Suspects in Iran-Linked January Bombing Outside Israeli Embassy in New Delhi](#)

June 24, 2021, The Algemeiner

Indian police have arrested four suspects in a January bombing outside the Israeli embassy in New Delhi. The four suspects are students from Kashmir in northern India.

[Qatar Envoy Says Indian officials Met 'Taliban'](#)

June 23, 2021, The Indian Express

Even as a senior diplomat from Qatar has said that there has been a "quiet visit" by Indian officials "to speak with the Taliban", External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Tuesday underlined the intra-Afghan talks have not resulted in a reduction of violence in Afghanistan.

[Enforcement Directorate \(ED\) Freezes INR 88 Lakh Assets of Indian Man on Qatar Government's Request](#)

June 18, 2021, The Economic Times

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has frozen Rs 88 lakh worth assets of an Indian man, working in a leading retail store chain of Qatar, under the anti-money laundering law acting on a legal request made by the Gulf nation, the central probe agency said.

[Indian Petroleum Minister Renews Call for OPEC to Phase out Production Cuts](#)

June 24, 2021, S&P Global

In a virtual meeting with OPEC Secretary General Mohammed Barkindo on June 24, Indian oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who has sparred with Saudi counterpart Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman over supplies of crude, flagged his country's concerns over increasing oil prices, which were adding significant inflationary pressure.

[No Justification for Terror: India, Greece Message](#)

June 28, 2021, The New Indian Express

"Both countries recognised the threat posed by radicalisation, violent extremism, as well as terrorism, including cross-border terrorism. They emphasised that there can be no justification for these in any form or manifestation," a joint India-Greece statement stated.

[Indian Economy Expected to Rebound Stronger: Indian Ambassador to UAE](#)

June 26, 2021, Khaleej Times

The Indian economy is expected to rebound stronger with the potential for rebuilding on a scale not seen for a long time, said Pavan Kapoor, Ambassador

of India to the UAE, at the 39th Annual International Conference of ICAI in Dubai.

[US Airstrikes Target Iran-backed Militia Groups in Iraq, Syria](#)

June 27, 2021, The Times of Israel

The Pentagon announced Sunday (June 27) it had conducted targeted airstrikes against “facilities used by Iran-backed militia groups” on the Iraq-Syria border, which it said were authorized by US President Joe Biden following ongoing attacks on US interests.

[Iran Won't Give Nuclear Sites' Data to IAEA as Monitoring Deal Expires: Parliament Speaker](#)

June 27, 2021, Press TV (Iran)

The speaker of Iran’s Parliament says Tehran will not hand the images and files related to its nuclear sites and facilities over to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) following the expiration of the country's monitoring agreement with the agency.

[US, France Warn Iran Time Running out to Revive Nuclear Deal](#)

June 25, 2021, AL Jazeera

The United States and France have warned Iran that time is running out to return to a nuclear deal, voicing fears that Tehran’s sensitive atomic activities could advance if talks drag on. Secretary of State Blinken warned that the US still had “serious differences” with Iran.

[Iran Nuclear Centrifuge Facility Substantially Damaged in Attack - Sources](#)

June 24, 2021, The Jerusalem Post

A sabotage operation against one of the buildings of Iran’s Atomic Energy Organization (IAEO) caused major damage – despite Iranian denials.

[Iran in Possession of Drones with 7,000 Km Range, Says IRGC Chief](#)

June 27, 2021, Press TV (Iran)

Chief Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Major General Hossein Salami has hailed Iran’s achievements in different fields, saying the country is in possession of drones that have a range of 7,000 kilometers.

[Muslim-majority Countries Cooperated with Beijing to Surveil, Detain, Repatriate Uighurs: Report](#)

June 26, 2021, The Times of India

The Muslim-majority countries across the Middle East and Asia have cooperated with Beijing to surveil, detain, and repatriate Uighurs to China.

United States

[US forces leave Afghanistan's Bagram airbase after 20 years](#)

July 2, 2021, Al Jazeera

After nearly 20 years, the United States military has left Afghanistan's Bagram airbase, the epicentre of its war to remove the Taliban and hunt down the al-Qaeda perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks, two US officials have said.

[A 'gut decision': Inside Biden's defense of Afghanistan withdrawal amid warnings of country's collapse](#)

July 2, 2021, CNN

The grim consequences of the withdrawal from Afghanistan are only just starting to become clear. And while the White House remains united behind the decision, across the government concerns are rising about the deteriorating security in Afghanistan, the pace of withdrawal and the many questions that are still unanswered about America's long-term strategy.

[Biden Faces Intense Cross Currents in Iran Policy](#)

June 28, 2021, The New York Times

The airstrikes the president ordered on Iranian-backed militias show how he has to navigate between using force and pursuing diplomacy to revive the nuclear deal.

[US, France warn Iran time running out to revive nuclear deal](#)

June 25, 2021, Al Jazeera

The United States and France have warned Iran that time is running out to return to a nuclear deal, voicing fears that Tehran's sensitive atomic activities could advance if talks drag on.

[Blinken: 'Untenable' for 10,000 IS fighters still to be held in Syria](#)

June 29, 2021, Reuters

U. S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Monday that 10,000 Islamic State fighters continue to be held in detention in camps run by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), and that this situation was "untenable".

[After Biden Meets Putin, U.S. Exposes Details of Russian Hacking Campaign](#)

July 1, 2021, The New York Times

Two weeks after President Biden met President Putin and demanded that he rein in ransomware attacks on U.S. targets, American and British intelligence agencies on Thursday exposed the details of what they called a global effort by

Russia's military intelligence organization to spy on government organizations, defense contractors, universities and media companies.

[Blinken's charm offensive in Europe highlights a key US concern: China](#)

July 1, 2021, The Guardian

Blinken's rhetoric rarely deviates from the standard diplomatic playbook, but his language about China is revealing about the possible direction of nascent US foreign policy.

[130 countries agree to Biden-backed 15% global minimum tax for companies](#)

July 2, 2021, Business Standard

Some 130 countries have agreed on a global minimum tax backed by US President Joe Biden as part of a worldwide effort to keep multinational firms from dodging taxes by shifting their profits to countries with low rates.

[Support for Biden erodes among Democrats as U.S. looks past pandemic](#)

July 1, 2021, Reuters

U. S. President Joe Biden has seen an erosion in support since April, mainly from fellow Democrats, as his administration wrestles with Congress to make good on campaign promises and more Americans worry about an uneven economic recovery, Reuters/Ipsos polling shows.

[Swiss pick U.S. F-35 jet and Patriot missiles for defence needs](#)

June 30, 2021, Reuters

Switzerland has chosen Lockheed Martin's (LMT.N) F-35A Lightning II as its next-generation fighter jet, the government said on Wednesday. It came alongside a \$2.1 billion agreement to buy the Patriot surface-to-air missile system from U.S. group Raytheon, with European competitors losing out on both deals.

Europe & Russia

Europe

[India's Bharti invests \\$500m in UK space start-up OneWeb](#)

June 30, 2021, BBC

UK-based space start-up OneWeb has received a cash injection of \$500m (£361m) from Indian firm Bharti Global. The deal means Bharti will now take a 39% stake, making it the biggest shareholder in the satellite provider.

[British PM Johnson welcomes Germany's Merkel for swansong UK trip](#)

July 2, 2021, Reuters

Outgoing German Chancellor Angela Merkel will address Prime Minister Boris Johnson's cabinet of top ministers during a visit to Britain on Friday, the first time a foreign leader has done so in nearly 25 years.

[Bennett, Rivlin Welcome Germany's Steinmeier as Ally Against Antisemitism](#)

July 1, 2021, Haaretz

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett met with German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier on Thursday. The two leaders discussed the threat of a nuclear Iran, and Bennett noted Israel's goal to prevent Iran from gaining military nuclear capabilities, the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement.

[France and U.S. Agree on the Perils of a Rising China, Blinken Says](#)

June 25, 2021, The New York Times

Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, speaking in an interview after a meeting with President Emmanuel Macron of France, said the United States and France were "on the same page" in their determination to resist the possibility of a Chinese-led world order that would be "profoundly illiberal in nature."

[Digital vaccination cards go into effect in Europe, with some turbulence](#)

July 1, 2021, The New York Times

Digital Covid-19 certificates aimed at facilitating free movement in the European Union came into force across the bloc on Thursday, a long-awaited milestone for countries hoping to boost their ailing tourism industries — but also a point of friction over the number of vaccines that do not qualify.

[Give Africa greater access to buy vaccines, a special envoy urges the European Union.](#)

July 1, 2021, The New York Times

The African Union's special envoy on Covid-19 urged Europe to relax restrictions on vaccine makers' exports so that African countries could buy more doses and try to stem a fast-surging third wave of the pandemic driven mainly by the more contagious Delta variant.

[Italian Navy aircraft carrier to get first F-35B 'within a few days'](#)

July 1, 2021, Defense News

The Italian Navy aircraft carrier Cavour will receive its first F-35B this month after the vessel started certification work in the U.S. earlier this year to host the aircraft.

[EU agrees military training mission for Mozambique](#)

July 1, 2021, Macau Business

EU ambassadors on Wednesday gave the green light to setting up a military mission in Mozambique to help train its armed forces battling jihadists in the north of the country, diplomats said.

Russia

[Russia, China Extend Treaty, Hail Ties](#)

June 28, 2021, The Moscow Times

The leaders of China and Russia on Monday announced the extension of a 20-year-old friendship treaty, hailing increasingly close ties and the "stabilizing role" of their relationship. The Kremlin published a joint statement from Russia and China to mark two decades since the treaty was signed, as Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping held a televised meeting by video link.

[Russia Adds Navalny Associate Zhdanov To International Wanted List](#)

June 29, 2021, RFE/RL

Russia has placed Ivan Zhdanov, the director of jailed Russian opposition politician Aleksei Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation, on an international wanted list and shared the details of his case with Interpol. Zhdanov's lawyer, Vladimir Voronin, tweeted on June 29 that Russian authorities added his client, who currently resides in Lithuania, to a wanted list on June 18 but never informed him of the move.

[Russia Checking S-400 Systems in Crimea Amid NATO's Sea Breeze Drills](#)

June 29, 2021, Sputnik News

Russia has carried out target detection training to test the readiness of its S-400 air defence systems deployed in Crimea against the backdrop of NATO's Sea Breeze drills in the Black Sea, spokesman for the Black Sea Fleet Capt. 2nd Rank Alexei Rulyov said on June 29. The annual military exercise Sea Breeze kicked off in the northwestern part of the Black Sea on June 28, with the Russian Navy monitoring the movement of participating ships.

[Putin Signs Law Criminalizing Links To 'Undesirable' Organizations](#)

June 29, 2021, RFE/RL

Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed into law a bill that criminalizes participation in the activities of foreign nongovernmental organizations recognized as "undesirable" in Russia. Under the law, Russian citizens may face up to six years in prison if found guilty of organizing the operations of "undesirable" international organizations on Russian territory.

[Rosatom starts building fifth power unit of Kudankulam NPP](#)

June 29, 2021, TASS News Agency

Rosatom initiated concreting of the foundation plate for the fifth unit's reactor of the Kudankulam nuclear power plant (NPP) in India, the engineering division of the Russian state nuclear corporation said on June 29.

[Russian President Vladimir Putin Holds Annual Q&A Session](#)

June 30, 2021, Sputnik News

Russian President Vladimir Putin held his 18th annual Q&A session, talking to citizens across the country. This year, in addition to traditional avenues (SMS, phone calls, or website) people were able to submit their questions via text messages on a special mobile app, which, according to the Kremlin, allows them to contact the president without any mediators.

[Putin Reveals He Took Russia's Sputnik V Coronavirus Vaccine](#)

June 30, 2021, The Moscow Times

President Vladimir Putin said on June 30 that he was vaccinated against the coronavirus with Russia's Sputnik V jab, lifting the veil on a months-long secret that did little to quell Russians' vaccine hesitancy. The Kremlin said in spring that it would keep the name of the Russian-made vaccine that Putin had received on March 23 and April 14 a "secret."

[Lavrov Says Russia-U.S. Arms Control Talks To Start 'By Mid-July'](#)

June 30, 2021, RFE/RL

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov says he expects the United States and Russia to launch new arms control talks by mid-July. "Within days -- I hope by mid-July -- we plan a meeting of delegations, which are to discuss tasks set forth by the presidents in the area of strategic stability, arms control, and reduction," Lavrov said on June 30, according to Russian news agencies.

[Putin vows support for Belarus amid external attempts to rock the boat](#)

July 01, 2021, TASS News Agency

Russia will keep providing fraternal Belarus with comprehensive support amid the challenging domestic political situation in that country and the external attempts to fuel tensions, Russian President Vladimir Putin told an online forum of Russian and Belarusian regions. Putin vowed that Russia would further support its "Belarusian friends in countering sanctions-related restrictions, recently imposed by the EU."

Africa & Latin America

Latin America

[Bolsonaro critical of Chinese-developed Sinovac vaccine](#)

June 26, 2021, MercoPress

Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro has once again raised doubts about the efficacy of covid-19 vaccines and defended early treatment against the disease with controversial medicines such as chloroquine.

[Biden calls Duque to make sure Colombia remains US top ally in the region](#)

June 29, 2021, MercoPress

US President Joseph Biden telephoned his Colombian colleague Iván Duque in what the first direct talk between the two leaders since the 78-year-old Democrat took office on January 20. During their conversation, Biden announced the donation of 2.5 doses of the Janssen vaccine against covid-19, making Colombia the second Latin American country to receive such a contribution from Washington, after Brazil got 3 million doses of the same drug.

[Brazil commits armed forces to protecting Amazonia yet again](#)

June 29, 2021, MercoPress

Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro ordered the armed forces to be involved for the third time in the protection of the Amazon basin from deforestation and other man-caused calamities.

[Brazilian industry and unions request suspension of Mercosur talks on reducing the Common External Tariff](#)

July 1, 2021, MercoPress

The Brazilian Confederation of Industry, CNI and the IndustriALL-Brasil (which represents industry unions) have officially requested that in the next Mercosur meeting, scheduled for early this month, Brazilian representatives withdraw the proposal for a reduction of block trade tariffs with other countries. However, both institutions also backed the current flexibilization of current trade talks with third countries, such as South Korea.

[Brazil: Fudgy deal to purchase Indian covid-19 vaccine raises doubts about Bolsonaro's knowledge of the case](#)

July 1, 2021, MercoPress

The State Attorney's Office in Brasilia launched an inquiry into the alleged mishandlings by government officials regarding the acquisition of a supply of

the Indian-made anti-coronavirus Covaxin immunizer. Although the case is already under investigation by the Office of the Comptroller General of the Union, the representative of the General Prosecutor's Office in Brasilia, Luciana Loureiro, decided to extend the investigation to criminal matters in light of the possible crime of lack of administrative integrity in the purchase.

[Argentina elected to the Executive Council of the World Tourism Organization](#)

July 2, 2021, MercoPress

Argentina was chosen to represent the Americas block at the Executive Council of the World Tourism Organization and will formally take the seat next October in Morocco for the next four years. Argentina's Tourism minister Matias Lammens participated in the 66th WTO commission for the Americas, virtual meeting, which was headed by WTO chairman Zurab Pololikashvili and the current president of the Council, Edmund Bartlett, Jamaica's tourism minister.

Africa

[Defiant Zuma expected to address South Africa](#)

July 2, 2021, Africa Times

The clock is ticking on former South African president Jacob Zuma, who was given five days to report to police after he was sentenced to 15 months in prison on Tuesday for contempt of court. But he's filing an appeal of the Constitutional Court decision, and supporters say it's unlikely he'll turn himself in.

[eSwatini denies Mswati departure, imposes curfew amid protests](#)

June 29, 2021, Africa Times

The southern African nation of eSwatini has denied reports that its controversial monarch, King Mswati III, has left the country as protesters demand pro-democracy government reforms.

[Coronavirus: The IFC has raised \\$711m to produce vaccines in Africa](#)

July 2, 2021, The African Report

Makhtar Diop, the head of International Finance Corporation (IFC), has raised money to accelerate production of Covid-19 vaccines on the continent. The aim is to avoid a repeat of recent events in which some of the most developed countries claimed more than their fair share of Covid-19 vaccines, at the expense of poorer countries, which were forced to take a back seat.

[Zimbabwe is a world tobacco super producer... but farmers struggle to survive](#)

June 29, 2021, The African Report

Zimbabwe is one of the largest producers of tobacco in Africa, exporting \$782m in the 2020 season. But while tobacco is making some people rich, the farmers sucked into contract farming at the bottom of the pile are losing money.

[Sudan: How PM Hamdok is securing state-owned enterprises](#)

June 30, 2021, The African Report

Sudan's former president Omar al-Bashir put vast chunks of the economy under the control of his regime's security services: police, army and intelligence. The army controls irrigation projects, meat-processing plants, import-export activities, retail operations and manufacturing units. The police turned every service they deliver – from passports to identity cards to number plates – into a company.



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