



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, Australia sign document to boost naval ties](#)

August 19, 2021, The Indian Express

Australia and India, along with the US and Japan are members of the four-nation Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, or the Quad, which has irked China.

[India and Qatar conduct joint naval exercise in Persian Gulf](#)

August 17, 2021, India Today

The second edition of the joint naval exercise, Zair-Al-Bahr, between the Indian Navy and Qatar Emiri Naval Force (QENF) was conducted between August 9 and 14 in the Persian Gulf. The second edition of the joint naval exercise, Zair-Al-Bahr, between the Indian Navy and Qatar Emiri Naval Force (QENF) was conducted between August 9 and 14 in the Persian Gulf.

[Afghan Crisis: Jaishankar to chair UNSC briefing; India-UN launch tech platform](#)

August 19, 2021, Hindustan Times

After chairing UNSC debate on 'tech & peacekeeping, EAM Jaishankar set to lead a counter-terrorism meet. The UNSC briefing on counter-terrorism will discuss situation in Afghanistan. India is currently the president of the United Nations Security Council. After chairing UNSC debate on 'technology & peacekeeping, EAM Jaishankar set to lead a counter-terrorism meet. The UNSC briefing on counter-terrorism discussed situation in Afghanistan. India is currently the president of the United Nations Security Council.

[Our focus is on ensuring safe return of all Indians from Afghanistan: EAM Jaishankar](#)

August 16, 2021, Money Control

With the Taliban now in control in Kabul, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on August 18 said that the Government of India is very carefully following the developments in Afghanistan and India's focus is on ensuring the security and safe return of all Indian nationals still in the war-torn country.

[Jaishankar speaks to Blinken, gets US support for evacuation](#)

August 17, 2021, Hindustan Times

External affairs minister S Jaishankar will meet UN secretary general and UN Security Council members later today to evolve a broader consensus on Afghanistan after the Taliban seized the country.

[Rajnath launches Defence India Startup Challenge 5.0](#)

August 19, 2021, The Hindu

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday launched the 5th edition of the Defence India Start-up Challenge (DISC) under Innovations for Defence Excellence - Defence Innovation Organisation (iDEX-DIO) meant to achieve self-reliance and foster innovation and technology development in the defence and aerospace sectors.

Pakistan

[Pakistan's FATF panel ranking gets better](#)

August 14, 2021, Dawn

The Asia Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering has improved Pakistan's rating on four more of the 40 technical recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) against money laundering and terror financing (AML/CFT) but retained it on 'Enhanced Follow up' to meet the outstanding requirements.

[PM stresses closer cooperation with Beijing](#)

August 14, 2021, Dawn

Prime Minister Imran Khan stressed the need for closer cooperation between Beijing and Islamabad for early completion of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

[12 killed in grenade attack on mini-truck in Karachi](#)

August 15, 2021, Dawn

Twelve members of an extended family, all women and young boys, lost their lives and several others suffered burn injuries in a grenade attack on a mini-truck on the outskirts of Karachi night.

[Warship for Pakistan Navy launched in Istanbul](#)

August 16, 2021, Dawn

The presidents of Pakistan and Turkey participated in the launch of the first Milgem Class Corvette for Pakistan Navy at the Istanbul Naval Shipyard (INSY).

[Region can't afford continued instability in Afghanistan: FM](#)

August 17, 2021, Dawn

Observing that the region could not afford continued instability in Afghanistan, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has asked all parties in Afghanistan

to grasp the historic opportunity for finding an inclusive and comprehensive political solution to the crisis.

[Single National Curriculum launched](#)

August 17, 2021, Dawn

Prime Minister Imran Khan officially launched the Single National Curriculum (SNC) for primary level, saying the initiative will end disparity in society and provide equal chance to all students to excel.

[Pakistan won't unilaterally recognise Taliban govt](#)

August 18, 2021, Dawn

Pakistan decided that it would not recognise the Taliban government unilaterally but with consent of regional and international powers and urged all Afghan leaders to take all stakeholders on board for sustainable peace and stability in Afghanistan.

[Johnson, Merkel call PM Imran on Afghan issue](#)

August 18, 2021, Dawn

Prime Minister Khan received telephone calls from his British counterpart Boris Johnson and German Chancellor Angela Merkel and they exchanged views on the latest situation in Afghanistan.

[National outrage over attack on woman at Minar-i-Pakistan](#)

August 19, 2021, Dawn

Politicians, entertainment personalities and members of civil society have expressed outrage over the sexual assault of a woman by around 400 men at Minar-i-Pakistan on Independence Day. Police have identified 11 suspects involved in the assault, while videos viral on social media have been sent to the National Database and Registration Authority (Nadra) for identification of the remaining suspects.

[Afghan situation satisfactory, says Qureshi](#)

August 19, 2021, The News

The Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said all attempts to alienate and scapegoat Pakistan for the Afghan situation have been defeated and now the world was contacting Pakistan. He said that he has spoken to the Foreign Ministers of China, US and UK and told them that Pakistan is Afghanistan's neighbor and they have been the most affected by its instability.

[Saudi Chief of General Staff calls on PM, COAS separately](#)

August 17, 2021, The News

Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia General Fayyadh bin Hameed Al-Rowailly called on Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa separately.

Afghanistan

[China says ready to deepen friendly ties with Taliban](#)

August 17, 2021, Dawn

China is ready to deepen “friendly and cooperative” relations with Afghanistan, a government spokeswoman said, after Taliban seized control of the country. Beijing has sought to maintain unofficial ties with the Taliban throughout the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, which spurred an advance by the militants across the country that saw them capture the capital Kabul.

[Mullah Baradar back in Afghanistan after 20 years](#)

August 18, 2021, The News

The Taliban’s co-founder returned to Afghanistan following the group’s stunning takeover of the country, hours after they told government staff to return to work.

[Taliban Says Governing Structure May Include Council](#)

August 19, 2021, Tolo News

Wahidullah Hashemi, a member of the Taliban leadership, said there is a possibility that Afghanistan will be led by a council that will govern under the authority of the Taliban's top leader Mullah Hibatullah Akhundzada.

[IMF Blocks Afghanistan’s Access to Emergency Reserves](#)

August 19, 2021, Tolo News

The International Monetary Fund has suspended Afghanistan’s access to IMF resources, including around \$440 million in new monetary reserves, due to a lack of clarity over the country’s government after the Taliban took control of Kabul.

[Taliban Takeover: Panjshir Valley Holdouts Offer Peace Deal to Taliban](#)

August 19, 2021, The National Interest

Mahdi Housaini, an assistant to Massoud, announced that the group had made contact with the Taliban and offered a peace agreement. While the precise terms of the agreement were not disclosed, the outline was that the Taliban

would remain outside of the valley and would agree to a multi-party system of government.

[Protests Spread to Kabul as Taliban Struggle to Govern](#)

August 19, 2021, The NYT

Protesters took to the streets to rally against Taliban rule, this time marching in Kabul, including near the presidential palace. At one demonstration in the city, about 200 people had gathered before the Taliban broke it up violently.

[Taliban killed relative of Deutsche Welle reporter, German broadcaster says](#)

August 20, 2021, Reuters

Taliban fighters hunting a journalist from Deutsche Welle have shot dead one member of his family and severely injured another, the German public broadcaster said, adding that three more of its journalists had had their homes raided.

[Ghani, Family 'Welcomed' in UAE: Statement](#)

August 18, 2021, Tolo News

The UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in a statement said that "the UAE has welcomed President Ashraf Ghani and his family into the country on humanitarian grounds."

[Afghan Sikhs in Delhi welcome Centre's decision to give emergency visas, seek safe passage for Hindus, Sikhs](#)

August 18, 2021, India Today

Afghan Sikhs living in Delhi have welcomed the Indian government's announcement on providing emergency visas to Afghan nationals fleeing the country after the Taliban took over Kabul. The community also hailed the government's move to prioritise the evacuation of minority Sikhs and Hindus in Afghanistan.

Bangladesh

[Bangladesh Remains Main Source of Infiltrations Into India](#)

August 18, 2021, The Diplomat

India's multipronged approach to reducing infiltration from Bangladesh includes the construction of a border fence.

[Bangladesh opposition spills beans on its anti-India policy amid revelation of plans to oust Hasina](#)

August 19, 2021, The Economic Times

Former BNP-Jamaat Government's Energy Advisor and BNP ideologue Mahmudur Rahman has spilt the beans on the 'Ten-Trucks Arms Case' of 2004 in Bangladesh's Chittagong port. The sensation smuggling operation was allegedly planned by ISI with support of key insurgents from India's Northeast and even D-gang.

[India-Bangladesh relation excellent, can reach new high if Teesta water agreement is signed: Veteran journalist](#)

August 19, 2021, India Today

In a web seminar by the Centre for Research and Information (CRI), veteran journalist Sir Mark Tully spoke on Bangladesh's amazing economic turnaround, secularism and inclusive growth achievements.

Nepal

[Afghan lessons for Nepal](#)

August 20, 2021, The Annapurna Express

Many argue that as Afghanistan is not even South Asia proper the recent spate of events there are unlikely to have any direct impact on Nepal, a fellow SAARC member state. Of course there is the question of the fate of around 10,000 Nepalis who are believed to be working in Afghanistan, both legally and illegally. Thankfully, their repatriation is in full swing. Other than that, there will be limited direct impact. But that does not mean events there will have no bearing on Nepal whatsoever.

[Nepal faces deep domestic, foreign policy challenges](#)

August 20, 2021, Menafn.com

The political landscape in Nepal took a turn last month when the president of the Nepali Congress (NC), Sher Bahadur Deuba, replaced Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist Leninist) chairman K P Sharma Oli as prime minister.

[Nepal-India Oversight Mechanism meeting held](#)

August 17, 2021, The Himalayan

The meeting, which was held under the co-chairmanship of Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal and Ambassador of India to Nepal Vinay Mohan Kwatra, discussed the status of implementation of all ongoing projects. Projects being built under bilateral cooperation such as Tarai roads, cross-border railways,

Arun-III hydropower project, petroleum products pipelines, Pancheshwar multipurpose project, post-earthquake reconstruction, irrigation, power and transmission lines, construction of Nepal Police Academy, integrated check posts, Ramayana circuit, HICDPs, motorable bridges over Mahakali River, agriculture and cultural heritage, among others, were discussed.

Sri Lanka

[Sri Lanka Signs \\$308 Million-Loan Agreement With China](#)

August 18, 2021, NDTV

Sri Lanka on Tuesday signed a loan agreement with China worth 2 billion Renminbi (USD 308 million) to support its COVID-19 response, economic revival and financial stability, the Chinese embassy said.

[Sri Lanka Navy ship SLNS Shakthi leaves for India to bring consignment of medical oxygen](#)

August 17, 2021, Colombo Page

Sri Lanka Naval Ship (SLNS) Shakthi left the Trincomalee harbor for the Port of Chennai, India Tuesday morning to bring a shipment of medical grade oxygen to Sri Lanka.

East & South East Asia

China

[China, Arab states eye more cooperation](#)

August 20, 2021, China Daily

China is ready to work with the Arab states to promote peace, cooperation and development for mutual benefit and win-win results, President Xi Jinping said.

[China approves three-child policy with sops to encourage couples to have more children](#)

August 20, 2021, The Hindu

China's national legislature on Friday formally endorsed the three-child policy mooted by the ruling Communist Party, in a major policy shift aimed to prevent a steep decline in birth rates in the world's most populous country.

[Nonfinancial ODI in BRI economies up](#)

August 20, 2021, China Daily

China's nonfinancial outbound direct investment (ODI) in economies participating in the Belt and Road Initiative soared 9.9 percent year-on-year to \$11.29 billion in the first seven months of this year, the Ministry of Commerce announced.

[China, Iran to enhance bilateral ties](#)

August 19, 2021, China Daily

China remains committed to developing friendly relations with Iran no matter how the international and regional landscapes change, President Xi Jinping said.

[China, Pakistan push for regional security as Taliban announces new state amid lingering uncertainty](#)

August 19, 2021, Global Times

As the Taliban declared the formation of the "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan" on Thursday, the 102nd anniversary of the country's independence from British rule, observers believe the power struggle in the country will continue for a while, and China and Pakistan, the two important neighbors of the war-torn country, are coordinating closely to facilitate a smooth transition in Afghanistan for regional stability.

[China to strengthen coordination with Pakistan on Afghan issues: FM](#)

August 19, 2021, Global Times

China and Pakistan need to strengthen communication and coordination to support a stable transition in Afghanistan, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said.

[China, Tajikistan conduct joint anti-terrorism drill amid regional changes after Afghan political reshuffle](#)

August 18, 2021, Global Times

China and Tajikistan started a two-day joint anti-terrorism drill in Dushanbe, aiming to strengthen coordination of anti-terrorism forces of the two countries in the face of terrorism threats in the region.

[China adopts new law to protect personal information](#)

August 20, 2021, Xinhua

China's top legislature voted to adopt a new law on personal information protection, which will take effect on Nov. 1.

[As Chinese Vaccines Stumble, U.S. Finds New Opening in Asia](#)

August 20, 2021, The New York Times

The arrival of the Chinese vaccines was supposed to help stop the spread of the coronavirus in Southeast Asia. Instead, countries across the region are quickly turning elsewhere to look for shots. Residents in Thailand vaccinated with one dose of China's Sinovac are now given the AstraZeneca shot three to four weeks later. In Indonesia, officials are administering the Moderna vaccine as a booster to health care workers who had received two doses of Sinovac.

[China Sees Risks in Stepping Into Afghanistan After U.S. Withdrawal](#)

August 17, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

Chinese state media has mocked the U.S.'s chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan as the latest sign of America's declining global prestige, but China is approaching its own plans for engaging with the country under Taliban rule with caution. Still, after largely being a bystander during two decades of heavy U.S. presence in its Western neighbor, China's leadership appears to be wary of stepping into a volatile political situation where it has little experience, experts say.

[Unease over COVID, Fed tapering and China's economy grips markets](#)

August 19, 2021, Al Jazeera

Iron ore, luxury stocks and the dollar are all sending the same message across markets: investors are getting uneasy. That anxiety was on display on Thursday

as global markets shuddered in the wake of concerns stretching from China's economy, Covid and the tapering of Federal Reserve stimulus. While the pain was sharpest in commodities and cyclical, even defensive tech stocks slumped.

[China economy under pressure as factory output, retail sales growth slow sharply](#)

August 16, 2021, Reuters

China's factory output and retail sales growth slowed sharply and missed expectations in July, as new COVID-19 outbreaks and floods disrupted business operations, adding to signs the economic recovery is losing momentum. Industrial production in the world's second largest economy increased 6.4% year-on-year in July, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed on Monday. Analysts had expected output to rise 7.8% after growing 8.3% in June.

[Chinese state media sets sights on Taiwan as US' Afghan retreat stokes nationalism](#)

August 18, 2021, CNN

The chaotic US withdrawal from Afghanistan has presented Beijing with a propaganda boost, with Chinese state media capitalizing on the crisis to trumpet the supposed decline of America and taunt Taiwan with threats of invasion. The jingoistic rhetoric coincided with air and naval drills launched Tuesday by the Chinese military, which sent fighter jets and warships near Taiwan in response to what it called the "repeated collusion in provocation" by Washington and Taipei.

Japan

[Most major Japanese firms want Suga out of power](#)

August 20, 2021, The Japan Times

A majority of Japanese firms want Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga to lose office after a general election that must be held this year due to apparent frustration with a lack of leadership over COVID-19 and its economic fallout, a Reuters poll showed.

[Calls grow for Japan to provide assistance to Afghans amid Taliban rule](#)

August 20, 2021, The Japan Times

While the world watches with a mix of shock and concern as the Taliban takes control of Afghanistan, a prominent Afghan doctor who has practiced

medicine in Japan for decades is calling on Tokyo to lead the Group of Seven in providing assistance to his homeland.

[Japan's imports, exports grow on overseas economic rebound](#)

August 18, 2021, Japan Today

Japan's exports in July jumped 37% from a year ago, the government said Wednesday, highlighting an overseas recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

[IAEA, Japan Agree to Begin Implementing Project to Monitor and Review Water Release at Fukushima Daiichi](#)

August 19, 2021, IAEA

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Japan today agreed to begin implementing the on-site safety review of the water release at Fukushima Daiichi in September. IAEA officials will travel to Japan for on-site meetings to discuss the plans and activities for the water discharge, as agreed today during a meeting of IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi and Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Hiroshi Kajiyama.

[Chaotic Afghan exit compels Japan to rethink reliance on US security](#)

August 20, 2021, Nikkei Asia

The U.S., the U.K., Germany and other nations dispatched military planes to Kabul's international airport on Monday in a mad rush to evacuate their nationals following the Taliban's swift takeover of Afghanistan, but Japan never sent its own aircraft -- the only Group of Seven nation not to do so.

[Japan worries it could be left behind as U.S. pours billions into chip industry to fend off China](#)

August 17, 2021, CNBC

Japan is worried that U.S. plans to pour billions of dollars into chip manufacturing to fend off China could finish off what's left of a Japanese semiconductor industry that once dominated the world.

Korea

[Biden says Korea, Taiwan fundamentally different from Afghanistan](#)

August 20, 2021, The Korea Times

U. S. President Joe Biden said that allies like South Korea and Taiwan are fundamentally different from Afghanistan when it comes to U.S. commitment to keeping its troops.

[North Korea holds conference on technology, construction amid prolonged virus measures](#)

August 20, 2021, The Korea Times

North Korea held a series of technology conferences on construction, information technology and the power industry this week, state media said Friday, in a move seen as aimed at tackling economic challenges with science and education.

[Japan warns of 'serious' impact of Korea court ruling on forced labor](#)

August 19, 2021, The Korea Times

Japan warned on Thursday of "serious" ramifications if a South Korean court ruling against Mitsubishi Heavy Industries over forced colonial labour is enforced.

[Biden reaffirms commitment to S. Korea's defence amid Afghan withdrawal](#)

August 20, 2021, The Korea Herald

US President Joe Biden said Thursday in the US that his country is committed to the mutual defense treaty with South Korea, noting the situation in South Korea is different from Afghanistan, where the Taliban swiftly took over the government after the withdrawal of US troops.

[Tokyo protests to Seoul over South Korean lawmaker's visit to Takeshima](#)

August 18, 2021, Kyodo News

The Japanese government lodged a protest Tuesday with South Korea over a visit by a South Korean lawmaker to Takeshima, a group of islets in the Sea of Japan controlled by Seoul but claimed by Tokyo.

[Afghanistan shows need for U.S. to give S.Korea control of troops, lawmaker says](#)

August 18, 2021, Reuters

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan underscores the need for South Korea to quickly secure wartime operational control of its troops from the United States, a leader of the ruling Democratic Party said.

[Analysis: What Does Fall of Kabul Mean for North Korea?](#)

August 19, 2021, Voice of America

Experts are split on how the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan could affect North Korea. Some argue that the collapse of Kabul, triggered by the withdrawal of U.S. forces, could encourage North Korea's nuclear ambitions, while others suggest the fall of Kabul may work against Pyongyang because getting

Washington's attention would be harder given the complex aftermath of the withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Southeast Asia

[As Chinese Vaccines Stumble, U.S. Finds New Opening in Asia](#)

August 20, 2021, The New York Times

Several Southeast Asian nations are raising doubts about the efficacy of China's vaccines. The Biden administration has recently offered to provide shots, "no strings attached."

[Navies of India, Vietnam undertake bilateral maritime exercise in South China Sea](#)

August 18, 2021, India Today

The Indian Navy on Wednesday carried out joint drills with the Vietnamese Navy in the South China Sea as part of maritime cooperation between the two countries.

[How China and Japan are Competing Over Indonesia's Car Industry](#)

August 18, 2021, The Diplomat

Chinese carmakers are making quick inroads into Japan's long-standing dominance of the Indonesian auto market.

[Wang Yi Speaks with Special Envoy of ASEAN to Myanmar and Bruneian Second Minister of Foreign Affairs Erywan bin Pehin Yusof on the Phone](#)

August 18, 2021, MFA, China

On August 18, 2021, State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi had a phone conversation with Special Envoy of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to Myanmar and Bruneian Second Minister of Foreign Affairs Erywan bin Pehin Yusof at request.

[Kamala Harris is set to visit Southeast Asia as U.S.-China tensions rise. Here's what to expect](#)

August 19, 2021, CNBC

U. S. Vice President Kamala Harris is expected on Sunday to start her official visit to Southeast Asia – a region where China's economic and political influence has grown in recent years.

[Chinese Media's Conflicting Narratives on the Myanmar Coup](#)

August 14, 2021, The Diplomat

The difference in reporting on the situation in Myanmar between Chinese state media facing international audiences (in English) and Chinese domestic media (in Chinese) reflects the dual political agenda of the Chinese government.

[India welcomes ASEAN consensus on Myanmar](#)

August 18, 2021, The Hindu

India chaired a closed UN Security Council meeting on Myanmar and welcomed the ASEAN five-point consensus on Tuesday, August 17, 2021.

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[Uzbekistan Says It Detained 84 Afghan Soldiers Who Crossed Border](#)

August 15, 2021, RFE/RL

Uzbekistan has detained 84 Afghan soldiers who crossed the border, the government said on August 15, adding that another group of soldiers had amassed near a border checkpoint on the Afghan side. Uzbekistan provided the detained Afghan soldiers with food, temporary accommodation, and medical treatment, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

[Central Asia scrambles for clear response as Afghanistan crisis spills over](#)

August 16, 2021, Eurasianet

Governments across Central Asia appear as stunned as the rest of the international community in the face of the rapid disintegration of order in neighboring Afghanistan. Some leaders have held snap consultations with security officials and defence allies. Others are choosing to remain mute in the face of rapidly unfolding events.

[Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan experiment with vaccines amid lack of public confidence](#)

August 16, 2021, Eurasianet

Months into the global vaccination effort, as rich Western countries debate the merits of booster shots, and the world's poorest struggle to secure enough doses to slow the pandemic, two Central Asian nations are trying to fill the vaccination gap at home, even if it means taking shortcuts: Both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are distributing vaccines with limited clinical trial data.

[Turkmenistan: Out at sea](#)

August 17, 2021, Eurasianet

Despite all the action at the moment being on Turkmenistan's eastern border, in Afghanistan, the president ventured last week to the west, to open a new defensive outpost on the shores of the Caspian Sea.

[New Legislation Allows Tajik Men To Pay To Avoid Army Service](#)

August 17, 2021, RFE/RL

Tajik men will be able to legally avoid serving their mandatory two-year stint in the country's armed forces by paying a fee to the Defense Ministry. A government resolution enforcing legislation allowing Tajik men between the

ages of 18 and 27 to pay the equivalent of \$2,200 in order to avoid conscription was made public on August 16.

[Turmoil In Afghanistan Spills Into Central Asia](#)

August 18, 2021, RFE/RL

The events that the governments of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan have been increasingly dreading in recent weeks have begun to happen. The Afghan government has fallen to the Taliban and despite the Central Asian governments having had years to contemplate and plan for such an occurrence, the initial shock waves from south of the border seem to have particularly caught Tajikistan and Uzbekistan off guard.

[Interview: Afghanistan's ambassador to Tajikistan rejects Taliban rule](#)

August 18, 2021, Eurasianet

Afghanistan's ambassador to Tajikistan, Zahir Aghbar, posted a message to his Facebook account on August 18 pledging allegiance to the de jure Afghan First Vice President Amrullah Saleh, who has said he is assuming the role of "legitimate caretaker president" following the flight from Kabul of deposed President Ashraf Ghani.

[Tajikistan and China hold joint anti-terrorist exercises](#)

August 20, 2021, The Times of Central Asia

The Chinese Ministry of Public Security and the Tajik Ministry of Internal Affairs held joint anti-terrorist exercises on August 18 and 19 in the Tajik capital Dushanbe. The Anti-Terrorist Coordination-2021 drills were conducted to cope with terrorist and extremist threats facing the two countries and increase the level of cooperation between law enforcement departments.

India-Central Asia

[Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal participates in Shanghai Cooperation Organization \(SCO\) Culture Ministers' meeting hosted by Tajikistan](#)

August 18, 2021, PIB

MoS, Culture cited India's initiatives of online exhibition on 'Shared Buddhist Heritage' and translation of Indian Classics in official languages of SCO (Russian and Chinese). Shri Meghwal appreciated the efforts of Tajikistan for their proposals for Agreements on cooperation in the field of Protection of Cultural Heritage. The Regulations on Gala Concert of the Arts Festival of SCO Member States were agreed upon at the meeting.

West Asia

[India Will Fast Track Trade Deals With Six Nations: Commerce Secretary](#)

August 11, 2021, Business Standard

India will fast-track free trade agreements (FTAs) with at least six nations – including the UAE, the UK, Australia, Canada, and the EU – over the next few months, in line with its revamped foreign trade strategy, Commerce and Industry Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam said. The earliest one may be inked with the UAE.

[Premier Explosives Begins Shipping Rocket Motors to Israel](#)

August 14, 2021, The Times of India

In a major leg-up for aerospace and defence manufacturing in India, Hyderabad-based Premier Explosives Ltd said it has emerged as the first private player in India to export rocket motors to Israel.

[Turkey to Exert Every Effort for Afghanistan's Stability: Erdoğan](#)

August 15, 2021, Daily News

Turkey will make every effort to ensure the stability of Afghanistan and the region, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has said, vowing to intensify cooperation with Pakistan to stop a potential refugee influx from the country.

[The White House Calls on OPEC to Boost Oil Production As Gasoline Prices Rise](#)

August 11, 2021, CNBC

The White House is calling on OPEC and its oil-producing allies to boost production in an effort to combat climbing gasoline prices, amid concerns that rising inflation could derail the economic recovery from Covid.

[President Biden Plans Shift in US Arms Policy to Add Weight to Human Rights Concerns](#)

August 05, 2021, Reuters

U.S. President Joe Biden's administration is preparing an overhaul of arms export policy to increase the emphasis on human rights, a departure from former President Donald Trump's prioritization of economic benefits to U.S. defense contractors.

United States

United States

[Blinken reaches out to China and Russia on Afghanistan](#)

August 16, 2021, The Hill

Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Monday spoke with his counterparts in China and Russia about the security situation in Afghanistan. The calls come as both Beijing and Moscow have signalled an openness to recognizing and working with the Taliban, which over the weekend swiftly ousted the Western-backed government in Kabul.

[A Defensive Biden Argues There Was No Exit From Afghanistan 'Without Chaos Ensuing'](#)

August 18, 2021, NPR

President Biden largely reiterated his defense of the Afghanistan withdrawal in an interview with ABC News on Wednesday, saying that some chaos was inevitable. He added that U.S. troops will stay in Afghanistan until all American civilians are out.

[US diplomats sent cable warning of potential catastrophe in Afghanistan last month](#)

August 20, 2021, CNN

A group of US diplomats wrote a classified cable to Secretary of State Antony Blinken in mid-July warning that swift action needed to be taken because they believed the situation in Afghanistan could rapidly deteriorate and they feared a catastrophe.

[What is the 'Biden doctrine'? Afghanistan pull-out offers clues](#)

August 20, 2021, NBC

The chaotic end to the war in Afghanistan, Biden's first defining foreign policy decision alone in the driver's seat, offers a window into how he believes the U.S. should wield its power: sparingly, when U.S. lives are at stake.

[U.S.'s Blinken speaks to European counterparts on Afghan situation](#)

August 17, 2021, Reuters

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken held separate discussions on Monday with counterparts in Britain, the European Union, Turkey and NATO on the situation in Afghanistan and U.S. efforts to bring back their citizens, State Department spokesperson Ned Price said in a statement.

[U.S. top diplomat Blinken discusses Afghanistan with Pakistani foreign minister](#)

August 17, 2021, Reuters

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke on Monday with Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on the situation in Afghanistan, the U.S. State Department said in a statement.

[Jaishankar, Blinken agree to continue coordination](#)

August 20, 2021, The Hindu

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Thursday, August 19, 2021. over the chaotic situation in Afghanistan for a second time this week and agreed to continue their close coordination over the matter.

[India's Bharat Petroleum scoops up U.S. oil as demand rebounds](#)

August 17, 2021, Reuters

India's state-run Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL.NS) is scooping up rising volumes of U.S. crude, people familiar with the matter said, as fuel demand in the Asian country recovers and weak U.S. crude prices make purchases attractive.

[U.S. not interested in trade pact: Piyush Goyal](#)

August 19, 2021, The Hindu

Hopes of an India-U.S. trade pact are off the table for now, with the Joe Biden administration conveying to India that it is not interested in a free trade agreement (FTA), Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Thursday.

[Kamala Harris is set to visit Southeast Asia as U.S.-China tensions rise. Here's what to expect](#)

August 19, 2021, CNBC

U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris is expected on Sunday to start her official visit to Southeast Asia — a region where China's economic and political influence has grown in recent years.

[U.S. position on Taiwan unchanged despite Biden comment - official](#)

August 20, 2021, Reuters

A Biden administration official said on Thursday that U.S. policy on Taiwan had not changed after President Joe Biden appeared to suggest the United States would defend the island if it were attacked, a deviation from a long-held U.S. position of "strategic ambiguity".

[U.S. Tightens Focus on China after Afghanistan Withdrawal](#)

August 19, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

As the Taliban overran Afghanistan last week, 25,000 Marines and other U.S. Navy personnel held exercises in part to simulate the capture and control of islands in the Western Pacific. One of the largest military drills since the Cold War—involving dozens of ships and submarines, and held with Japanese, British and Australian forces—shows how far the American military’s focus has shifted since the invasion of Afghanistan two decades ago.

[The Return of ‘America Held Hostage’](#)

August 18, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

One thing, however, is clear: The Taliban hold the lives of thousands of U.S. citizens—and the future of the Biden administration—in their hands. The collapse of the Ghani government left as many as 15,000 Americans and permanent residents along with an unknown number of other Westerners and foreigners trapped behind Taliban lines.

Europe & Russia

Europe

[Europe left exposed as Biden walks America away from the world stage](#)

August 20, 2021, CNN

A crisis like the one unfolding in Afghanistan has, for some, hammered home the bleak reality that, without America, Europe's immediate ability to control its own destiny is limited. From London to Paris, Brussels to Berlin, the sudden fall of Kabul shone a light on Europe's limited diplomatic heft, military capacity, and political stability.

[Russia's Putin, Italy's Draghi and France's Macron discuss Afghanistan](#)

August 19, 2021, Reuters

Russian President Vladimir Putin, Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi and French President Emmanuel Macron discussed Afghanistan in separate phone calls on Thursday, highlighting the importance of addressing humanitarian issues in the country.

[As Afghanistan crisis worsens, Europe adopts less welcoming stance towards refugees](#)

August 19, 2021, CBS News

Amid scenes of frantic Afghans clinging to airplanes to try to escape the Taliban, some European leaders said this week that they would work to prevent migrants and refugees from journeying to the continent without permission.

[Erdogan says Turkey will not be "Europe's migrant storage unit" amid Afghanistan turmoil](#)

August 19, 2021, Reuters

President Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday urged European countries to take responsibility for migrants coming from Afghanistan, adding Turkey had no intention of becoming "Europe's migrant storage unit" amid turmoil in the country after the Taliban's takeover.

[Biden, Johnson agree to hold G-7 talks on Afghanistan next week](#)

August 18, 2021, Kyodo News

The US President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Tuesday agreed to hold a virtual Group of Seven summit next week to discuss how to approach the Taliban's recent takeover of Afghanistan, the White House said.

[Biden, Macron discuss close cooperation on Afghanistan](#)

August 20, 2021, TASS

Presidents of the United States and France Joe Biden and Emmanuel Macron discussed the situation in Afghanistan, including the Kabul airport evacuation process, in a phone call on Thursday, the White House said in a statement following the call.

[After Afghanistan: What the UK and Europe should do next](#)

August 20, 2021, Politico

The West must rethink the fundamentals of foreign policy and improve its collective ability to act.

[UK announces plan to resettle 20,000 refugees from Afghanistan](#)

August 18, 2021, Reuters

The United Kingdom says it will welcome as many as 20,000 Afghans under a new resettlement programme that will give priority to women, girls and religious and other minorities, according to reports in British news outlets.

[France, Germany, UK very worried about Iran's uranium enrichment](#)

August 19, 2021, Reuters

France, Germany and Britain voiced grave concern on Thursday about a report that Iran had accelerated its enrichment of uranium to near weapons grade, saying this was a serious violation of its commitments.

[UK aims to start trade talks with India this year](#)

August 18, 2021, Reuters

The United Kingdom said on Tuesday it aims to start negotiations for a trade agreement with India by the end of the year.

Russia

[Putin Calls Siberian Wildfires 'Unprecedented,' Calls For Stronger Response](#)

August 14, 2021, RFE/RL

Russian President Vladimir Putin has called the wildfires ravaging parts of northern Siberia "absolutely unprecedented" and called for a better response by firefighters. Putin's comments, in an August 14 video call with government officials, came as the total area burnt reached nearly 1.3 million hectares in Yakutia alone.

[Russia Hails 'Positive Signal' From Taliban](#)

August 17, 2021, The Moscow Times

Russia said that the Taliban's initial assurances since completing their military takeover of Afghanistan have been a "positive signal" and that the militants are behaving in a "civilized manner." Moscow has been cautiously optimistic of the new leadership in Kabul and is seeking contact with the militants to avoid instability spilling over to neighboring ex-Soviet states.

[Bridge over Amur between Russian and China finished](#)

August 17, 2021, TASS News Agency

Construction workers completed the laying of rails on the bridge between Russia and China across the Amur River and connected the Russian and Chinese sections of the railroad tracks, China Central Television reported.

[Russia Offered Cooperation With CSTO on Afghanistan, But NATO Showed No Interest, MFA Says](#)

August 17, 2021, Sputnik News

Russia earlier suggested to NATO that an algorithm be created for interaction on Afghanistan in case of evacuation in crisis situations, but the alliance showed no interest, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko told Sputnik. The developments in Afghanistan amid the withdrawal of US and NATO troops are a natural result, the diplomat added.

[Russia Labels Independent Election Monitor 'Foreign Agent' Ahead Of September Elections](#)

August 18, 2021, RFE/RL

The independent election monitoring group Golos says Russia's Ministry of Justice has designated it a "foreign agent," a move that is likely to hamper the monitor's work during next month's parliamentary and local elections. The Russian Ministry of Justice said it entered the Golos movement in the register of "foreign agents" to protect the rights of voters.

[Thirty-five delegations to attend Army-2021 military forum in Russia – arms exporter](#)

August 19, 2021, TASS News Agency

Russia's Rosoboronexport state arms exporter will receive 35 delegations, 17 of them high-level, at the Army-2021 international military-technical forum that kicks off on August 22, the head of the exporter's marketing department Vladimir Goncharov said.

[Germany's Merkel Makes Farewell Trip To Moscow With Tensions High](#)

August 20, 2021, RFE/RL

German Chancellor Angela Merkel is traveling to Moscow to meet with President Vladimir Putin at a time of numerous tensions between the two countries, in what will be her last official visit to Russia before retiring from politics after German elections next month.

Africa & Latin America

Latin America

["I will use force to defend the Falklands", Boris Johnson to the UK media](#)

August 16, 2021, MercoPress

The United Kingdom confirmed that it will maintain a military presence in the Falkland Islands, whose sovereignty is claimed by Argentina, to "protect it from state and non-state threats," according to an advance of the strategic review of security, defense and foreign policy that prime minister Boris Johnson presented.

[Departure of foreign companies from Argentina and also from Brazil on the rise and with no end in sight](#)

August 16, 2021, MercoPress

Foreign companies keep leaving Argentina and claiming those moves are part of global strategies. Local analysts are reluctant to believe these explanations, but perhaps they would reconsider their stance if they see a similar exodus also taking place in Brazil.

[Bolivia no longer needs Sputnik V and AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines](#)

August 17, 2021, MercoPress

Bolivian authorities Monday announced that with the last purchase of COVID-19 Sinopharm vaccines, the country was fully supplied with immunizers and would no longer need to import any more doses of Sputnik V and AstraZeneca despite contracts already signed.

[Brazil tempted by the success of the Suriname and Guyana oil basin developments](#)

August 17, 2021, MercoPress

Exploration and development of oil and gas resources in the ex Dutch colony of Suriname, now an independent country, was the main point of the agenda addressed by Brazilian foreign minister Carlos Franca and his Surinamese peer Albert Randim, during a meeting held in Brasilia.

[São Paulo city to vaccinate teenagers aged 12 to 17, while all restrictions lifted statewide](#)

August 19, 2021, MercoPress

São Paulo, South America's largest city, is to begin vaccinating teenagers aged 12 to 17 after 100% of its adult population has been given at least one dose of a COVID-19 immunizer.

[Hong Kong emerges as destination of meat exports from Paraguay, Uruguay](#)

August 20, 2021, MercoPress

While Uruguay's National Meat Institute (INAC) eyes China, Saudi Arabia and Hong Kong as the clients to target, the latter has already recorded an increase of 13% in both volume and revenues in purchases from Paraguay, according to a Central Bank (BCP) report.

Africa

[Rwanda: From Mozambique to CAR, Kigali is beginning to 'police' Africa](#)

August 17, 2021, The Africa Report

The images quickly made the rounds on social media: members of the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) in Mozambique, proudly posing on the coast of Mocimboa da Praia with some of their counterparts from the Mozambican army, wearing camouflage uniforms adorned with the Rwandan flag.

[USA: From Tunis to Tigray, African crises test Biden's commitment to democracy](#)

August 18, 2021, The Africa Report

President Joe Biden came into office promising to make democracy in Africa a priority. However, is the light-touch approach of his administration working? Crises such as the Tunisia coup, Ethiopia's civil war, and Nigeria's security emergency will test the commitment to human rights of the Biden team.

[Chinese diplomats in Africa use Twitter to promote anti-US propaganda](#)

August 18, 2021, The Africa Report

Like many of his peers across the continent, he's turning to Twitter to relay anti-US propaganda produced by Chinese state media. On 10 August, Ambassador Chen picked up on the "#FortDetrick" meme that Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian sparked last month, when he called on the WHO to investigate the Chinese-led allegation that the US military's biomedical facility in Maryland, not Wuhan, is the true origin of Covid-19.

[UN counterterrorism chief calls for renewed focus on Africa](#)

August 20, 2021, Africa Times

All eyes have been on Afghanistan as the Taliban takes control, but the United Nations Security Council was focused Thursday on the threat of Islamic extremism on the African continent. UN counterterrorism chief Vladimir Voronkov, presenting his report on Islamic State and related groups to the council, called for a coordinated global response to turn back the tide for Africa.

[Hichilema, USAID's Power discuss Zambia's future](#)

August 18, 2021, Africa Times

Samantha Power, head of the USAID agency in the United States, pressed for Zambia's commitment to democratic values during a congratulatory call to president-elect Hakainde Hichilema. Power and Hichilema also focused on Zambia's fight against corruption, and the role of civil society in delivering a peaceful and credible election that put the longtime opposition leader into power on August 12.



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