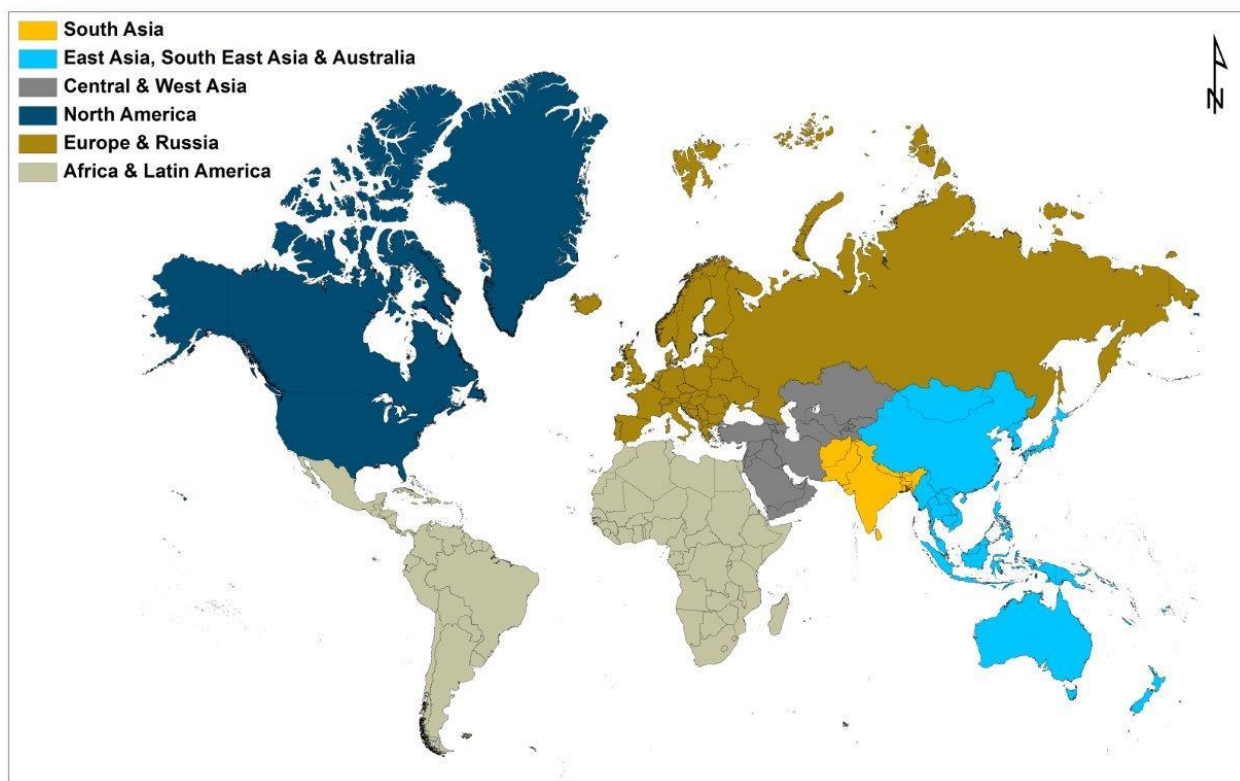




Delhi Policy Group

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

[China heightens activity along LAC in Uttarakhand, Indian Army on alert](#)

July 21, 2021, India Today

The Chinese military has increased its activities along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Barahoti area of Uttarakhand. The movement on the Chinese side in the area has reportedly been seen after a gap of over six months.

[Foreign secretary Shringla to begin 2-day UK visit, roadmap 2030 on agenda](#)

June 23, 2021, Hindustan Times

Foreign secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla is set to embark on a two-day visit to the United Kingdom (UK) on Friday to further India's bilateral ties with the nation as per Roadmap 2030, a 10-year diplomatic coordination strategy between New Delhi and London, the Union ministry of external affairs (MEA) said. According to an official release, the foreign secretary will discuss a host of issues with his counterparts in the UK, including the implementation of the said roadmap and the evolving situation in Afghanistan.

[Mekong region is of great importance to India: EAM Jaishankar](#)

July 22, 2021, The Hindu

India is seeking a multi-dimensional engagement with the Mekong region considering its great importance, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said.

[Maldives Foreign Minister Arrives In India, To Hold Talks With S Jaishankar](#)

July 21, 2021, NDTV

Foreign Minister of Maldives Abdulla Shahid on Wednesday arrived in New Delhi for his official visit, said External Affairs Ministry (MEA) spokesperson Arindam Bagchi.

[S Jaishankar, Iran foreign minister talk ties in context of Afghan conflict](#)

July 21, 2021, Mint

Indian foreign minister S Jaishankar spoke to his Iranian counterpart Javad Zarif on Wednesday against the backdrop of intense fighting raging between the Taliban and Afghan security forces in Afghanistan.

[Antony Blinken may meet PM Modi during India visit next week](#)

July 21, 2021, Hindustan Times

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is likely to visit India on his maiden trip next week since assuming charges under the Biden Administration in January,

according to news agency ANI quoting government officials familiar with the development.

[Jaishankar pitches for connectivity with Afghanistan via Chabahar, takes jibe at China, Pakistan](#)

July 16, 2021, The Print

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar made a strong pitch for connectivity with Afghanistan by leveraging the role of Iran's Chabahar Port, which will act as a hub for the joint use of India, Uzbekistan, Iran and Afghanistan. Speaking at the International Conference on Regional Connectivity of Central and South Asia, at the Uzbekistan capital of Tashkent, Jaishankar stressed that any form of connectivity efforts made by countries should adhere to international laws, territorial integrity and sovereignty, and that such initiatives should not create "debt burdens".

Pakistan

[Afghan peace conference postponed: Foreign Office](#)

July 17, 2021, Dawn

Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the Afghan Peace Conference being hosted by Pakistan had been postponed. "The new dates of the said conference will be announced later,". The conference was postponed after President Ashraf Ghani, reportedly in his meeting with Prime Minister Imran Khan, called for its cancellation. President Ghani, while speaking at a regional connectivity conference in Uzbekistan, also bitterly criticised Pakistan for its alleged support of Afghan Taliban.

[Beijing asks Islamabad to punish elements involved in bus blast](#)

July 17, 2021, Dawn

China asked Pakistan to punish perpetrators of the attack on Chinese workers' bus in Dasu and increase the security of Chinese citizens and organisations working in Pakistan. The demand was made by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang in a telephone call with Prime Minister Imran Khan as a group of Chinese officials arrived in Pakistan to investigate the incident and coordinate the repatriation of the dead and the injured.

[Chinese team wraps up probe into Dasu tragedy](#)

July 19, 2021, Dawn

Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi visited the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in Rawalpindi to inquire after the health of the Chinese

workers who were injured in last week's Dasu bus blast as the Chinese investigation team completed its initial task at the site.

[Kabul recalls ambassador, diplomats from Islamabad](#)

July 19, 2021, Dawn

Afghanistan called back its ambassador and senior diplomats from Pakistan after the reported abduction and release of the Afghan envoy's daughter in the federal capital.

[US urges tangible steps for supporting Afghan peace process](#)

July 20, 2021, Dawn

The United States emphasised the need for "tangible steps" for supporting the Afghan peace process. The call was made at the end of US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad's visit to Islamabad during which he met Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Bajwa.

[Food import bill surges by over 53pc](#)

July 20, 2021, Dawn

Pakistan's food import bill grew by 53.91 per cent to \$8.347 billion year-on-year during the previous fiscal year (FY21), mainly due to sugar, wheat, palm oil and pulses imports to bridge the shortfall in domestic production of agriculture produce. The rising food import bill also triggered trade deficit that may cause some uneasiness on the external side for the government.

[Senate passes FATF-related bill amid opposition protest](#)

July 17, 2021, Dawn

The Senate passed another FATF-related bill amid an outcry from the opposition which suffered back-to-back defeats in the house where it otherwise enjoys dominating numerical strength.

[Export of textiles soars to \\$15.4bn in FY21](#)

July 20, 2021, Dawn

Pakistan's exports of textile and clothing posted a 22.94 per cent growth in the outgoing financial year compared to the same period a year ago. In absolute terms, the total exports of textile and clothing were \$15.4 billion in 2020-21 against \$12.526bn of the previous year.

[Pakistan, Uzbekistan agree to acquire leased lands for export cargoes](#)

July 20, 2021, The News

Pakistan and Uzbekistan are planning to acquire leased lands on each other's countries, a measure the government says will help boost exports to untapped markets. Abdul Razzak Dawood, advisor to the Prime Minister on commerce and trade said Uzbekistan has asked for 25 acres of land on lease in Karachi or Gwadar to store and ship their cargoes for South East Asian and the Middle Eastern countries.

[FM Qureshi leaves for China on two-day visit](#)

July 23, 2021, The Express Tribune

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi will be visiting China as part of the high-level exchanges between the two countries, the Foreign Office has said. "On the invitation of the State Councilor and Foreign Minister Mr Wang Yi, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi will visit China from 23-24 July 2021".

[CPEC projects in Hazara: Security of Chinese nationals upped after Dasu incident](#)

July 20, 2021, The News

The police have enhanced the security of Chinese nationals working on various projects being executed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiatives in the wake of the Dasu bus explosion.

Afghanistan

[Russia says Taliban ready for 'compromise'](#)

July 21, 2021, Dawn

Russia said that the Taliban was prepared for political "compromise", even as the insurgents launch offensives against government troops to secure greater swathes of Afghanistan while US troops draw down. The Taliban have capitalised on the withdrawal of foreign troops to capture scores of districts, border crossings, and encircle provincial capitals.

[Four-nation group set up to restore peace in Afghanistan](#)

July 17, 2021, Dawn

The United States, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan have agreed in principle to establish a new quadrilateral diplomatic platform focused on enhancing regional connectivity.

[With strategic momentum, Taliban offensive far from assured: US general](#)

July 22, 2021, The News

The Taliban appear to have the "strategic momentum" in their sweeping offensives across Afghanistan, but their victory is far from assured, the chairman of the US joint chiefs of staff General Mark Milley said. Nearly 20 years after the US toppled the Taliban regime in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, and with the withdrawal of American-led foreign forces all but complete, the resurgent militants now control about half of Afghanistan's roughly 400 districts.

[Russia to reinforce military base in Tajikistan - report](#)

July 21, 2021, Reuters

Russia will reinforce its military base in Tajikistan with 17 infantry fighting vehicles, amid conflict in neighbouring Afghanistan. The base will receive new BMP-2 vehicles this month, Interfax quoted Alexander Lapin, commander of Russia's Central Military District, which will "significantly boost the combat capacity" of its units.

[Afghan rivals agree to meet again after inconclusive Doha talks](#)

July 18, 2021, Al Jazeera

Delegations from the Afghan government and the Taliban said in a joint statement that they will meet again and plan to expedite peace negotiations after two days of inconclusive talks in Doha. The negotiators from the rival sides, said "the two sides committed to continue negotiations at a high level until a settlement is reached".

Bangladesh

[How economic integration could help India and Bangladesh fulfil the expectations of their people](#)

July 19, 2021, Scroll

Bangladesh's economic growth means that New Delhi needs a new approach. Media narratives that describe foreign power and influence over Dhaka gaslight Bangladeshis. Those narratives don't speak to their experience.

[Bangladesh could acquire Istanbul-class frigates from Turkey](#)

July 23, 2021, Navy Recognition

According to a report published by Defseca on 20 July 2021, the Bangladesh Navy, which is looking for new frigates, may finally acquire Istanbul-class

frigates from the Turkish company STM, despite the offers from China, Netherlands and Italy.

Nepal

[Chinese professor says China-Nepal ties intact even if Deuba sways towards India](#)

July 23, 2021, Khabarhub

Zhang Jiadong, professor at the Center for American Studies, Fudan University, has observed that the Nepali Congress (NC) President and Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba is likely pro-Indian and might tilt to India for a while but that would not have a drastic effect on Nepal-China ties.

[PM Modi congratulates new Nepal PM Deuba, discusses bilateral ties](#)

July 19, 2021, Mint

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to his new Nepalese counterpart Sher Bahadur Deuba and congratulated him on taking charge, a statement said.

Sri Lanka

[Sri Lanka Navy seizes another haul of Kerala cannabis worth over Rs. 41 million in northern waters](#)

July 20, 2021, Colombo Page

During a special operation conducted in the in northern waters off Thondamanaru, Jaffna on Monday (19) a Sri Lanka Navy team has seized a stock of over 139 kilograms of Kerala Cannabis.

East & South East Asia

China

[China rejects WHO plan to audit labs in COVID origins probe, terms it 'arrogant'](#)

July 23, 2021, New Indian Express

China said a WHO proposal to audit Chinese labs as part of further investigation into the origins of the coronavirus pandemic showed "disrespect" and "arrogance towards science".

[US Afghan resources too trivial to contain China](#)

July 18, 2021, Global Times

US troop withdrawal from Afghanistan is scheduled to be completed on August 31. When US President Joe Biden defended his decision to put a final end to the two-decade-old US military mission there earlier this month, he delivered three main messages.

[UK warships' South China Sea tour 'threatens China politically more than militarily'](#)

July 21, 2021, Global Times

Despite a COVID-19 outbreak on the HMS Queen Elizabeth aircraft carrier, the UK on Tuesday reaffirmed that it will sail the carrier task force through the South China Sea in August in a direct challenge to China and announced it will permanently deploy warships to the region. But leading Chinese military experts said on Wednesday that the move threatens China politically more than militarily, and China is capable of dissolving the threat.

[US sanctions on Chinese officials just 'waste paper': FM](#)

July 17, 2021, Global Times

US sanctions on seven Chinese officials over Hong Kong is just waste paper; China has issued strong counterattacks against US sanctions in the past few years, so if Washington insists on playing such tricks, China will play along until the end, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said, while also strongly opposes and condemns such sanctions.

[Chinese President makes surprise visit to Tibetan city near India border](#)

July 23, 2021, Hindustan Times

Chinese President Xi Jinping has made an unannounced visit to the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), official media said, adding that the visit started in Nyingchi close to the Sino-India border in Arunachal Pradesh two days earlier.

[India, China likely to hold 12th round of military talks very soon: Sources](#)

July 22, 2021, India Today

India and China are likely to hold the 12th round of military talks on the situation in eastern Ladakh and the Line of Actual Control (LAC) "very soon", sources in the Army have said.

Japan

[India, Japan can shape multipolar world, says Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla](#)

July 21, 2021, DNA

India's Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla has said that "growing convergence" between India, Japan on "strategic and economic issues" has the "potential to shape a multi-polar world that is more peaceful, secure and sustainable."

[China threatens to nuke Japan over Taiwan in video: Report](#)

July 20, 2021, Hindustan Times

A video where the Communist Party of China (CCP) is threatening Japan with a nuclear bomb for interfering in its handling of Taiwan has gone viral on social media, Fox News reported. The US channel carried a report which claimed that the video was aired on a channel approved by the CCP.

[China is pushing Japan to take on a growing military role in Indo-Pacific](#)

July 21, 2021, Financial Times

The invocation of the famed warrior caste is no accident: Japan is putting stronger emphasis on defence and taking on a bigger role in regional security. Front and centre is China, the giant neighbour on which Japan's economy depends heavily but which the country's politicians have also identified as its primary security threat.

[Suga, Moon must move mountains to heal bilateral relationship](#)

July 22, 2021, The Asahi Shimbun

South Korea dropped plans for President Moon Jae-in to visit Japan for the Opening Ceremony for the Tokyo Olympics on July 23. The two countries failed to agree on some issues in preliminary talks for Moon's meeting with Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga during his planned visit to Japan.

[How Japan chose where to base its F-35s](#)

July 21, 2021, Defense News

Japan's defense minister has confirmed that the U.S. ally will base its Lockheed-Martin F-35B Lightning II Short Take off and Vertical Landing or STOVL fighter jets at the southernmost of Japan's four main islands.

Korea

[North Korea food shortage turns into new Asia humanitarian crisis](#)

July 21, 2021, Nikkei Asia

North Korea's food shortages have reached crisis levels, and inequalities have sharply widened ever since the COVID-19 pandemic forced the country to close its borders in January last year.

[N. Korea is one area US and China share 'aligned' interests: State Dept.](#)

July 23, 2021, The Korea Herald

The United States and China may share similar interests when it comes to the issue of denuclearizing North Korea despite their sometimes competitive and even adversarial relationship, a State Department spokesman said.

[US urges North Korea to return to negotiating table](#)

July 23, 2021, The Korea Times

Washington is seeking to build reliable and constructive relations with Pyongyang, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman said Friday, pressuring the reclusive regime to come back to the negotiating table.

[South Korea, US, Japan agree to up cooperation over NK, pandemic](#)

July 21, 2021, The Korea Herald

South Korean, US and Japanese envoys on Wednesday stressed cooperation in their approach toward the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and other global issues, including the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.

Southeast Asia

[Philippines-China tussle continues in South China Sea](#)

July 20, 2021, WION

For several months, Philippines and China have been locking horns in South China Sea. In the recent development, the Philippines Coast Guard said it drove

away a Chinese warship in the waterway. The tension between the two countries has been rising in the disputed waters.

[China, Thailand to enhance parliamentary cooperation](#)

July 20, 2021, CGTN

China's top legislator Li Zhanshu held talks with Chuan Leekpai, president of the Thai National Assembly and speaker of the House of Representatives, via video link on Tuesday, with both sides pledging to enhance exchanges between their legislative bodies.

[China's illegal businesses along Myanmar-Thai border prosper following coup](#)

July 21, 2021, The Economic Times

China's illegal business operations along Myanmar-Thai border continue to prosper notwithstanding the severity of pandemic with the Chinese conglomerate seeking to revive a city project that was earlier suspended.

[Cambodia to chair ASEAN in choppy waters](#)

July 17, 2021, East Asia Forum

Cambodia will be ASEAN chair next year — its third time since joining the regional group in 1999. The last time Cambodia chaired ASEAN was in 2012, when it was fiercely criticised for siding with China at the expense of other ASEAN states over territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

[Give ASEAN Diplomacy a Chance in Myanmar](#)

July 19, 2021, The Diplomat

Brunei's adherence to the "ASEAN way" seeks a diplomatic solution to the crisis that also preserves the unity and continued relevance of the organization.

[US moves to increase its engagement with ASEAN](#)

July 21, 2021, Menafn

After a disappointing start, the Biden administration is now increasing its diplomatic engagement with the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN).

Central & West Asia

Central Asia

[Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan To Hold Military Maneuvers Near Afghan Border In August](#)

July 19, 2021, RFE/RL

Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan will hold joint military maneuvers near the Tajik-Afghan border in early August amid increasing security concerns in Central Asian nations over Taliban offensives against government troops in northern Afghanistan. The commander of Russia's Central Military District, Aleksandr Lapin, said that the drills will be held on Tajikistan's Harb-Maidon military field on August 5-10.

[Turkmenistan Continues Military Buildup Near Border Amid Deteriorating Afghan Security](#)

July 19, 2021, RFE/RL

Turkmenistan continues to send heavy weaponry, helicopters, and other aircraft to areas along the Turkmen-Afghan border to allay security fears as Taliban fighters engage in major offensives nearby in northern Afghanistan. Local officials, police, prosecutors, and military commanders have started sending their families inside the country -- adding to concerns among local residents.

[Eighteen Military Personnel Die In Turkmenistan, Circumstances Unclear](#)

July 20, 2021, RFE/RL

Eighteen military personnel, including a major and a lieutenant, have died in Turkmenistan amid reports about rising tensions along the border with Afghanistan, where Taliban militants have been on an offensive to capture districts in the region.

[Massive Mudslides Kill At Least 10 In Tajikistan](#)

July 20, 2021, RFE/RL

Massive mudslides caused by heavy rains have killed at least 10 people, including four children, in Tajikistan's northwestern district of Pejikent. Officials at the Emergency Ministry said that the mudslides hit the villages of Dashti Kozi and Kishtudak late on July 19, with rescue and recovery operations running through July 20.

[Kazakhstan: Activists tracked by Pegasus angered but not surprised](#)

July 21, 2021, Eurasianet

Activists in Kazakhstan tracked by the Israeli surveillance firm NSO Group, apparently at the behest of their country's authoritarian government, have expressed indignation but little surprise that they too have been targeted for snooping. In a more surprising turn of events, however, it appears that the communications of the uppermost layers of the country's elite – including men who would go on to become president and prime minister – have been surveilled as well.

[Despite Taliban Advances, Central Asia Eyes Trade Ties With South Asia](#)

July 22, 2021, RFE/RL

Central Asia has long advertised itself as the crossroads of the Eurasian continent -- a region that, with development, could be an important transit hub for shipping goods from east to west and from north to south. Calls for trade routes via Afghanistan that would connect Central Asia to Pakistani and Indian ports on the Arabian Sea are not forgotten. Judging by the attendance at a July 15-16 conference in Tashkent, regional players still see potential in the proposed routes.

[Tajikistan Holds Massive Combat-Readiness Check Amid Rising Instability In Neighboring Afghanistan](#)

July 22, 2021, RFE/RL

Tajikistan says it has put its entire armed forces on high alert for a combat-readiness check and relocated thousands of troops to the border with Afghanistan amid increasing security concerns in Central Asia over the Taliban's territorial gains in the northern part of the war-torn country. Tajikistan has mobilized 100,000 active servicemen, 130,000 reserve officers and soldiers, and law enforcement agencies for the exercise on the orders of President Emomali Rahmon.

West Asia

[India Begins Talks on Free Trade Agreement with UAE](#)

July 13, 2021, The Hindu Businessline

New Delhi has begun discussions with the UAE about an FTA that could help India increase exports in goods, services, leading to a possible FTA with GCC.

[OPEC+ Agrees to Boost Oil Output After Saudi Arabia, UAE End Standoff](#)

July 18, 2021, Mint

OPEC will boost output by as much as 400,000 barrels a day each month from August until all of its halted output has been revived, delegates said. The deal will also give the UAE, Iraq and Kuwait higher output quotas from May 2022.

[Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri Vows to Work with Saudi Arabia, UAE to Calm Oil Markets](#)

July 15, 2021, Hindustan Times

"I conveyed my desire to work with His Royal Highness Prince Abdulaziz to bring greater predictability and calm in the global oil markets, and also to see hydrocarbons become more affordable", Puri tweeted after a telephonic conversation with his Saudi counterpart.

[Don't Allow OIC to be Subverted by 'Vested Interests' like Pakistan, Says India](#)

July 08, 2021, Hindustan Times

The Indian position was articulated by the External Affairs Ministry spokesperson while responding to questions on the OIC's offer to arrange a meeting between India and Pakistan and the organisation's proposal to send a delegation to Jammu and Kashmir.

[Israel Demonstrates First-ever Airborne Laser Interceptor for Drones](#)

June 23, 2021, Jewish News Syndicate

In a groundbreaking demonstration of a new capability against aerial threats, the Israeli Defense Ministry and Elbit Systems held a trial in recent days in which a high-power airborne laser system placed on board an aircraft shot down multiple unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) over the Mediterranean Sea.

[IDF Launches First-of-its-kind International Drone Exercise](#)

July 12, 2021, The Times of Israel

The drone drill involving Israel, US, UK, France, and Germany called Blue Guardian, is scheduled to last two weeks, during which the foreign teams will fly Israeli Air Force Hermes-450 unmanned aerial vehicles. "The teams will simulate various scenarios, including ground troop support, reconnaissance and intelligence collections missions and cooperation with various forces in the air".

[Israel Embassy Blast Case in New Delhi: Bail to 4 Kargil Students, Court Says Blemish-free](#)

July 16, 2021, The Indian Express

Four Kargil-based students, arrested by the Delhi Police Special Cell for alleged conspiracy in a case relating to a low-intensity explosion near the Israeli embassy in the Capital on January 29, were granted bail by a city court which noted that nothing incriminating had been found against them.

[Chinese FM's 2nd visit to Middle East in Half a Year Highlights Significance of China-Middle East Ties](#)

July 18, 2021, Global Times

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited Syria on Saturday (July 17) and is scheduled to visit Egypt as well as Algeria this week, underscoring China's independent foreign policy, again striking a sharp contrast from the West, while also unleashing a positive message to the Middle East in countering the negative influence of the US.

[Iran Accuses US, UK of Holding Prisoner Exchange Talks 'Hostage'](#)

July 17, 2021, AL Jazeera

Iran's top nuclear negotiator has accused the United States and the United Kingdom of holding prisoner exchange talks "hostage" after Iran said nuclear talks should be delayed until after its new government comes into office.

[Benjamin Netanyahu Had Urged Trump to Attack Iran after He Lost the Presidency](#)

July 16, 2021, The Times of Israel

General Mark Milley, the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, battled to prevent Trump from ordering a strike against Iran, while the president was circled by hawks, including Netanyahu, pressuring him to execute such a strike.

[Tanzania to Revive \\$10bn Indian Ocean Port Project with China](#)

June 27, 2021, Nikkei Asia

The port project on the East Coast of Africa was planned to be a three-way collaboration between China Merchants Holdings, Oman's State General Reserve Fund and the Tanzanian government is likely to be revived according to Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

United States

United States

[Secretary Blinken to meet PM Modi, Afghanistan, Quad and Indo-Pacific on agenda](#)

July 22, 2021, Hindustan Times

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval in New Delhi on July 27-28 with Af-Pak, Indo-Pacific and vaccines on top of the agenda.

[Blinken meets with Qatari leader, who pledges to help US in Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Yemen](#)

July 23, 2021, Fox News

Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with the prime minister of Qatar Thursday to discuss regional crises in Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Yemen. The Qatari prime minister pledged to support peace talks in Afghanistan as the Taliban gains in strength.

[U.S. sanctions Cuban officials over crackdown on protests as Biden warns: 'This is just the beginning'](#)

July 22, 2021, CNBC

The Biden administration-imposed sanctions on Cuba's defense minister and the communist nation's special forces brigade for the suppression of peaceful protests that broke out on the island last week.

[Biden's China Policy Borrows from Trump and Adds Allies to Raise Pressure](#)

July 22, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

The Biden administration is raising the pressure on China, confronting it on cyberattacks and human rights and making tentative progress rallying allies to its side, while so far avoiding deep engagement with Beijing.

[Cybersecurity is the latest front in the escalating US-China cold war](#)

July 20, 2021, Fortune

On Monday, the Biden administration, joined by a broad coalition of U.S. allies, accused the Chinese government of rampant skulduggery in cyberspace. The White House, in coordination with the European Union, NATO, Australia, Britain, Canada, Japan, and New Zealand, condemned China's Ministry of State Security (MSS), the nation's secretive civilian intelligence agency, for colluding with "criminal contract hackers" who sought to extort "millions of dollars" by

conducting ransomware operations against private companies around the world.

[Low-key US-China meeting will address high tensions in relationship](#)

July 23, 2021, The Guardian

Amid escalating diplomatic tensions, the US deputy secretary of state, Wendy Sherman, will travel to China this Sunday to meet with senior Chinese diplomats in the highest-level visit since the US climate envoy John Kerry's trip to Shanghai in April.

[U.S.-China Trade Booms as if Virus, Tariffs Never Happened](#)

July 22, 2021, Bloomberg

China and the U.S. are shipping goods to each other at the briskest pace in years, making the world's largest bilateral trade relationship look as if the protracted tariff war and pandemic never happened.

[Caught in the middle of US-China rivalry, Asian countries are stockpiling powerful new missiles](#)

July 20, 2021, South China Morning Post

Asia may be sliding into dangerous arms race as smaller nations that once stayed on the sidelines build arsenals of advanced long-range missiles, following in the footsteps of powerhouses China and the United States.

[Delivery of 3 more advanced US-made sub-hunting aircraft boosts India's plans to take on China at sea](#)

July 22, 2021, Business Insider

On July 13, Boeing announced the delivery of another P-8I Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft to India, the 10th since India became the first non-US buyer more than a decade ago. On July 16, India's navy inducted the first two of 24 MH-60R Seahawk helicopters in a ceremony with US Navy officials in San Diego on July 16.

[DoD would see a big budget boost, military justice overhaul under Senate proposal](#)

July 22, 2021, Defense News

Senate Armed Services officials on Thursday unveiled plans for a \$740 billion defense authorization bill which includes billions more in equipment purchases than the White House requested and a massive change in how serious crimes are handled by military officials.

[Biden grappling with immigration and travel restrictions as pandemic worsens](#)

July 22, 2021, CNN

President Joe Biden is facing increasing pressure from US allies and the travel industry to lift pandemic-era restrictions barring entry to the country, leading to tense conversations among administration officials over the health and political risks of opening up too soon.

[U.S. welcomes formation of Haiti's interim government, Blinken says](#)

July 21, 2021, Reuters

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Tuesday the formation of Haiti's interim government is a positive and necessary step, nearly two weeks after President Jovenel Moise was gunned down in a murder plot.

Europe & Russia

Europe

['Mini trade war' imminent? EU rejects the UK's attempts to overhaul the Brexit deal](#)

July 22, 2021, CNBC

The European Union rejected a call from the British government to overhaul the Northern Ireland Protocol, a key tenet of the agreement that saw the U.K. leave the EU in 2020.

[UK tells EU to think again over bloc's plan for Gibraltar talks](#)

July 21, 2021, Reuters

Britain told the European Union to "think again" after the bloc published a plan for post-Brexit negotiations over the future of Gibraltar that London said seeks to undermine British sovereignty over the territory.

[UK should be concerned at Chinese gene data harvesting, lawmaker says](#)

July 22, 2021, Reuters

Britain should be concerned about the harvesting of genetic data from millions of women by a Chinese company through prenatal tests, a senior British lawmaker told Reuters.

[E.U. Slams Poland and Hungary on Rule of Law, but to Little Effect](#)

July 20, 2021, The New York Times

Poland and Hungary were criticized sharply Tuesday by the European Commission in a set of reports that said recent actions by the countries threatened judicial independence and undermined the rule of law.

[India raises concerns with EU, Russia over tea exports](#)

July 23, 2021, The Economic Times

India has raised concerns at the European Union's decision to classify dye-making chemical anthraquinone as a pesticide, calling it a non-tariff barrier that has hit tea exports to the trade bloc.

[Navies of India, U.K. hold Passage Exercise](#)

July 23, 2021, The Hindu

Navies of India and the U.K. participated in a two-day bilateral Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with the Royal Navy Carrier Strike Group (CSG-21) led by HMS Queen Elizabeth in the Bay of Bengal from July 21 to 22.

[Foreign secretary Shringla to begin 2-day UK visit, roadmap 2030 on agenda](#)

July 23, 2021, Hindustan Times

Foreign secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla is set to embark on a two-day visit to the United Kingdom (UK) on Friday to further India's bilateral ties with the nation as per Roadmap 2030, a 10-year diplomatic coordination strategy between New Delhi and London, the Union ministry of external affairs (MEA) said.

[Germany's Merkel says pipeline deal with US good for Ukraine](#)

July 23, 2021, Associated Press

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Thursday that a compromise deal that will allow the completion of a Russian gas pipeline to Europe without the imposition of further U.S. sanctions is "good for Ukraine."

[German railway: floods caused \\$1.5 billion damage to network](#)

July 23, 2021, ABC

Germany's national railway operator has estimated that last week's flooding caused 1.3 billion euros' (\$1.5 billion) worth of damage to its network, offering another glimpse of the extent of the devastation.

[Pegasus: Macron changes phone, weighs government response](#)

July 22, 2021, Deutsche Welle

French President Emmanuel Macron has changed his cellphone and number after a French media report said he was potentially targeted by Israeli Pegasus spyware, a presidency official said Thursday.

Russia

[Russian Human Rights Association Shuts Down Amid Fears Of Criminal Investigations](#)

July 18, 2021, RFE/RL

An association of Russian human rights lawyers linked to jailed Kremlin critic Aleksei Navalny's group says it has suspended its work to protect its members and supporters from criminal prosecution amid a government pressure campaign. Komanda 29 announced on July 18 that it was liquidating, the latest independent civil-society organization to fold under new, repressive "foreign agent" laws.

[Russia Shows Tentative Willingness to Let U.S. Use Central Asia Bases](#)

July 19, 2021, The Moscow Times

Russia has reportedly consented to allow the United States to use its bases in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan for limited security operations in Afghanistan, according to a newspaper report over the weekend, although mutual suspicions may scupper any cooperation before it can begin. The countries in question, meanwhile, are not known to have been consulted directly about the idea and have so far issued no public comment.

[Weapon of the Future, Today: Russia Unveils 'Checkmate', New 5th-Generation Lightweight Stealth Fighter, Unmanned Version in Works](#)

July 20, 2021, Russia Today

Sukhoi and the Russian military-industrial conglomerate Rostec have revealed a single-engine supersonic stealth fighter. Dubbed 'Checkmate', the new design resembles the US F-35, but is intended to be superior – and far cheaper. Unveiled at the MAKS 2021 Air Show in Moscow on July 20, the Checkmate uses technologies tested under real-world combat conditions. Digital design helped Sukhoi develop it in record time.

[China Upped Russian Oil Acquisitions in June](#)

July 20, 2021, Sputnik News

China bought 22.24 percent more Russian oil in June than it had in May, according to data from the General Administration of Customs in China. Russia sent about 6.65 million tonnes (or 1.62 million bpd) of oil to the People's Republic of China last month, which was 1.21 million tonnes more than it shipped to the country in May.

[Moscow Paves Way For Russian Passport Holders In Eastern Ukraine To Vote In September Elections](#)

July 21, 2021, RFE/RL

Moscow says Russian passport holders in parts of eastern Ukraine that are controlled by Russia-backed separatists will be able to vote online in upcoming Russian parliamentary elections. According to a resolution adopted by Russia's Central Election Commission on July 20, Russian passport-holding residents in separatist-controlled areas of Ukraine's Luhansk and Donetsk regions will have to register and cast their vote online.

[Russia Files First-Ever Inter-State Complaint With ECHR Against Ukraine](#)

July 22, 2021, Sputnik News

The Russian Prosecutor General's Office has filed the first inter-state complaint in the country's history with the European Court of Human Rights against

Ukraine. Russian prosecutors' request that ECHR apply temporary measures "to oblige Ukraine to immediately end flagrant violations", such as blocking of fresh water supplies to Crimea, restricting the rights of national and linguistic minorities, banning Russian-language broadcasters, or restricting access to Russian-language media.

[Russia advocates standardizing approaches to vaccines on global scale – Kremlin](#)

July 22, 2021, TASS News Agency

Russia advocates cooperation between countries on coronavirus vaccines and standardization of approaches to such medications on a global scale, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. On July 21, Vladimir Putin said during the meeting with the government that he has hard times understanding his foreign counterparts who separate the pandemic into "ours" and "theirs" and inhibit the registration of Russian vaccines.

[With Cutting-Edge Hypersonics, Russia Leads in New Arms Race](#)

July 22, 2021, The Moscow Times

The Avangard, the Kinzhal and now the Tsirkon – Russia is leading the race to develop a range of new hypersonic weapons that President Vladimir Putin has dubbed "invincible." Moscow's latest step came this week with another successful test of the Tsirkon, a ship-launched hypersonic missile.

Africa & Latin America

Latin America

[Bolsonaro discharged from hospital, will still require outpatient care](#)

19 July 2021, MercoPress

Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro was discharged from the Vila Nova Star Hospital in São Paulo where he had been admitted four days before to treat an intestinal obstruction linked to the stab wound he sustained during an attack while campaigning for office.

[Paraguay needs maximum security correctional facilities for women, Justice Minister says](#)

19 July 2021, MercoPress

Paraguayan Justice Minister Cecilia Pérez considered maximum security wards for imprisoned women were necessary after ammunition was found near the Buen Pastor correctional facility. women's prison and the work they did to prevent them from entering the prison.

[OPEC and Russia+10 will increase output, 400,00 bpd, as of August first](#)

19 July 2021, MercoPress

The world's leading oil-producing countries agreed on to continue with the gradual increase of output, 400,000 barrels per day, beginning August first, to help global economic recovery following the pandemic, according to a release from the group's meeting in Vienna.

[Argentina and Bolivia have bills in Parliament to boost transitioning to e-cars](#)

20 July 2021, MercoPress

Just as the European Commission sent a bill last week to the European Parliament regarding electric vehicles, the Governments of Argentina and Bolivia are also taking similar paths. The Argentine government said last week it shall need to boost local production of electric cars because it foresees a lack of US dollars to import them

[Forgotten Latin America; EU can ill afford to ignore its strategic importance](#)

20 July 2021, MercoPress

The EU well knows that when it comes to expanding its influence within a country or region, China plays the long game. But China is also adept at identifying opportunities to make rapid progress, and Latin America's escalating crises represent a golden one.

[Indian-made vaccines still not cleared for shipment to Paraguay](#)

21 July 2021, MercoPress

India's laboratory Bharat Biotech is still waiting for clearance on the part of the Asian country's Government for the shipment of the 2 million doses of anti-coronavirus vaccines purchased by Paraguay.

[Demonstrators back to the streets of Colombia on Independence Day to push for reforms](#)

21 July 2021, MercoPress

Colombian demonstrators took once again Tuesday to the streets of the country's biggest cities such as Bogotá, Cali, Medellín, Barranquilla, Cartagena and Manizales to step up their demands against the Government of Iván Duque during the Independence Day holiday.

Africa

[African nations implicated in Pegasus spyware inquiry](#)

21 July 2021, Africa Times

Morocco, Egypt and Rwanda are three of the nations where governments and their leaders are named in an ongoing investigation into the use of Pegasus spyware supplied by Israeli tech company NSO Group. The Pegasus Project, coordinated by the Paris-based NGO Forbidden Stories, looks at how the technology is used to monitor data and, in repressive countries, to target political opposition leaders, journalists and activists. It is a collaboration of 80 journalists from 17 media organizations in 10 countries, according to partner Amnesty International.

[Will Europe's moves to ensure timely Libyan elections be enough?](#)

19 July 2021, Africa Times

On the eve of the second Libyan peace conference, which took place in Berlin on June 23, the EU finally took a strong stance on the elections which the troubled North African country is slated to hold this December 24th: Brussels threatened to impose sanctions on anyone attempting to delay the elections.

[Biden to announce US vaccine doses for Cameroon, CAR, Gambia, Lesotho, Niger, Senegal, Zambia](#)

21 July 2021, The African Report

The US is making the donation through the COVAX facility, co-run by the World Health Organisation, CEPI and GAVI. It will consist of the Johnson &

Johnson (J&J) single shot vaccine. The countries included are: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Gambia, Lesotho, Niger, Senegal, and Zambia.

[Ghana is becoming a 'disguised dictatorship', say worried activists](#)

22 July 2021, The African Report

Africa's most respected democracy is showing worrying signs of backsliding. From protests against election-rigging being closed down by pliant courts, to violence from police against activists pushing for change, activists claim the second term of President Nana Akufo-Addo has taken an authoritarian turn.

[Pegasus spying scandal: Rwanda targeted South Africa's President Ramaphosa](#)

23 July 2021, The African Report

South Africa has publicly expressed its displeasure about reports that President Cyril Ramaphosa's phone was placed on a list by Rwanda to be targeted by Israeli-manufactured Pegasus spyware. But privately, officials are baffled and somewhat less outspoken, as the revelations came at a time when the two countries have been trying to restore relations.

