



# 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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## DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH Volume V, Issue 31

### 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.

Since 2016, in keeping with India's increasing global profile, DPG has expanded its focus areas to include India's regional and global role and its policies in the Indo-Pacific. In a realist environment, DPG remains mindful of the need to align India's ambitions with matching strategies and capabilities, from diplomatic initiatives to security policy and military modernisation.

At a time of disruptive change in the global order, DPG aims to deliver research based, relevant, reliable and realist policy perspectives to an actively engaged public, both at home and abroad. DPG is deeply committed to the growth of India's national power and purpose, the security and prosperity of the people of India and India's contributions to the global public good. We remain firmly anchored within these foundational principles which have defined DPG since its inception.

### DPG WEEKLY WORLD WATCH

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## South Asia

### India

#### [S Jaishankar to attend Iranian President-elect Ebrahim Raisi's oath ceremony](#)

August 5, 2021, Hindustan Times

India was represented by the external affairs minister S Jaishankar at the inauguration of Iran's president-elect Ebrahim Raisi on August 5, the external affairs ministry said.

#### [India Will Follow Up With China On Indian Students' Return: S Jaishankar](#)

August 6, 2021, NDTV

India has taken up with Chinese authorities the issue of Indian students not being able to return to China, according to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, who also said the authorities have repeatedly conveyed that foreign students should be advised that their studies are likely to continue through online means even for the next semester.

#### [Afghan foreign minister dials Jaishankar, calls for emergency UNSC session](#)

August 4, 2021, Hindustan Times

Afghan foreign minister Mohammad Haneef Atmar's phone call to Jaishankar evening coincided with a car bomb attack on the residence of defence minister Bismillah Mohammadi in Kabul that triggered an intense clash between the attackers and security forces.

#### [India prepared for long haul with China over Ladakh](#)

August 5, 2021, Hindustan Times

The Narendra Modi government is prepared for the long haul with China on resolving the East Ladakh situation post PLA May 2020 aggression even though the 12th senior commander meeting on July 31 at Chushul recorded an incremental movement at Gogra-Hot Springs friction point.

#### [India, China agree to speedy resolution of Ladakh border row](#)

August 2, 2021, Hindustan Times

Top Indian and Chinese commanders agreed to a speedy resolution of outstanding issues on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) at the 12th round of military talks held in the Ladakh sector last week, with the dialogue focusing on disengagement of rival troops from the remaining flashpoints on the contested border, said a joint statement issued.

## [Mauritius denies report that it allowed India to set up military base on Agalega island](#)

August 5, 2021, Scroll

Mauritius has denied a media report that it allowed India to build a military base on its island of Agalega.

## **Pakistan**

### [Pak, US NSAs discuss Afghan situation](#)

July 31, 2021, The News

Pakistan's National Security Adviser Moeed Yusuf met with his American counterpart Jake Sullivan here and discussed Afghanistan, regional security and issues of mutual concern. This was the second time the two men sat together since the Biden administration took charge in January this year. Before this, they had met in Geneva in late May.

### [Attack on Chinese national: Factory owner, manager released after brief detention](#)

July 31, 2021, The News

In violation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) with regard to security of foreigners, the owner and manager of the company – where Chinese outsourced their services – were arrested and released on personal surety bonds. However, the law enforcement agencies failed to make any breakthrough in arresting the culprits involved in the attack on Chinese nationals.

### [Pakistan wants refugees kept inside Afghanistan](#)

August 1, 2021, Dawn

National Security Adviser Moeed Yusuf said Pakistan was focused on ensuring that tensions in Afghanistan do not lead to more bloodshed. "But if a situation arises, it is the responsibility of the international community to create a secure area inside Afghanistan,".

### [Afghan, Taliban flags surprise visitors at park in Islamabad](#)

August 2, 2021, Dawn

Security agencies were put on alert after police learnt that a group of individuals were flying Afghanistan's national flag as well as that of the Taliban at Islamabad's Lake View Park. The Lake View Park, located near Malpur village and along Murree Road, is not far from important government buildings,

including the Parliament House, and is administered by the Capital Development Authority.

#### [UK court orders NAB to pay \\$1.2m to Broadsheet](#)

August 3, 2021, Dawn

A London High Court has ordered the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and Pakistan government to pay a sum of 1.2 million dollars to asset-recovery firm Broadsheet LLC by next week.

#### [Pakistan shelves plan to hold Afghan leaders' meet](#)

August 3, 2021, Dawn

Pakistan has given up its plan to host Afghan Peace Conference involving Afghanistan's political leadership. The conference, which was to be attended by the political leadership of Afghanistan, was originally planned to be held from July 17 to 19 to give a fresh impetus to the efforts for peace there.

#### [5 CPEC power projects face delays](#)

August 3, 2021, Dawn

The Pak-China Relations Steering Committee directed finalisation of a uniform policy framework within a month for extension in commercial operation dates (CODs) of five power projects of about 3,600 megawatts being set up under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). A number of projects under the CPEC, including those in the power sector, are currently facing delays for various reasons including the ongoing pandemic and surplus generation capacity.

#### [Cabinet asks Navy, PAF to vacate state land](#)

August 4, 2021, Dawn

The federal cabinet directed Pakistan's navy and air force to vacate state land that they had "encroached on", especially in the federal capital's National Park area. "Prime Minister Imran Khan has directed that action be taken against the influential and powerful people as well as organisations that had encroached state land and asked the naval and air force authorities to re-demarcate their boundaries," Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry said in a press conference after the cabinet meeting.

#### [Asim Bajwa quits as PM picks CPEC aide](#)

August 4, 2021, Dawn

Prime Minister Imran Khan appointed Khalid Mansoor as his special assistant on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) affairs after which CPEC Authority Chairman retired Lt Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa quit his position.

### [PN frigate launched in China](#)

August 4, 2021, Dawn

The launching ceremony of the third Type-054 Class Frigate ship constructed for Pakistan Navy, was held at Hudong Zhonghua Shipyard Shanghai, China.

### [Mob ransacks temple after minor boy gets bail in desecration case](#)

August 5, 2021, Dawn

Hundreds of people vandalised a Hindu temple in Bhong town and blocked the Sukkur-Multan Motorway (M-5) after a nine-year old Hindu boy, who allegedly urinated in a local seminary, was granted bail by a local court.

### [British govt rejects Nawaz Sharif's visa extension plea](#)

August 5, 2021, The Express Tribune

In a major blow to the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), the British government rejected a visa extension request of the party's supreme leader and former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

## **Afghanistan**

### [Afghans Rally Behind Troops With Cries of 'Allahu Akbar'](#)

August 4, 2021, Tolo News

Millions across Afghanistan's capital Kabul chanted the slogan "Allahu Akbar" (God is the greatest), in a show of support for Afghan forces fighting the Taliban. The rallying cry began earlier in Herat city and has been reported in other areas across the nation as well.

### [Attack on Acting Defense Minister's House Raises Questions](#)

August 4, 2021, Tolo News

Residents, lawmakers in Parliament and military strategists raised questions about the deadly car bomb attack on the residence of acting Defense Minister Bismillah Mohammadi in which at least eight people, including a woman, were killed and 20 more were wounded.

### [Taliban 'martyrdom' unit attacks Afghan defense minister's home in Kabul](#)

August 4, 2021, FDD's Long War Journal

The Taliban's "martyrdom battalion" attacked the home of Afghanistan's acting Defence Minister Bismillah Mohammadi in Kabul. Mohammadi survived the assassination attempt. The Taliban quickly claimed responsibility for the operation, which reportedly left at least eight people dead and wounded more

than 20 others. In a statement posted in several languages online, the group also threatened more attacks on Afghan officials in the near future.

### [First flight of Afghan refugees arrives in Canada](#)

August 5, 2021, Anadolu Agency

The first flight of Afghans who helped the Canadian military in Afghanistan landed in Canada. The government said it is the first of a number of flights scheduled for the coming days and weeks and shows that Canada is living up to its obligation to help the Afghans, who are being hunted by a resurgent Taliban.

### [Pakistan army completes 90% of fence along Afghan border](#)

August 3, 2021, Stars and Stripes

Pakistan's military said it has completed 90% of a fence being constructed along the border with Afghanistan, vowing to complete the project this summer. Pakistan says it is constructing the fence to prevent cross-border militant attacks.

### [Uzbek, Tajik Militaries Conduct Drills Close to Afghan Territory](#)

August 2, 2021, Tolo News

Uzbek military forces crossed the Tajik border, to take part in joint Russian-Tajik-Uzbek drills close to the territory of Afghanistan, Reuters reported. The military exercises are to take place from August 5 to August 10 according to Uzbekistan's Ministry of Defense.

### [Taliban attack Afghan district capitals](#)

August 1, 2021, DW

Afghan government forces are fighting to repel assaults by the Taliban on three major provincial capitals. The Islamist militants launched attacks on the cities of Herat, Lashkar Gah and Kandahar in the past few days.

### [Head of Govt's Media, Information Center Assassinated](#)

August 6, 2021, Tolo News

Dawa Khan Menapal, head of the Afghan government's media and information center, was killed in an attack by unknown gunmen in Kabul. Before his job as head of the media and information center, he worked as deputy presidential spokesman from 2016 to 2020.



## **Bangladesh**

### [India, Bangladesh resume freight services on Haldibari-Chilahati rail route after 56 years](#)

August 2, 2021, India Today

After almost 56 years, India and Bangladesh resumed regular operations of freight trains along the Haldibari-Chilahati rail route.

### [India gifts 30 ambulances to Bangladesh](#)

August 5, 2021, Dhaka Tribune

A total of 30 ambulances gifted by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived at India's Petrapole check post awaiting necessary clearance before entering Bangladesh.

## **Nepal**

### [Illegal crossing of Indo-Nepal border in Pithoragarh has forces worried](#)

August 3, 2021, Hindustan Times

The SSB personnel deployed in the area also said that they often intercept such illegal border crossing mechanisms at the border in Dharchula and have often raised concerns before their Nepalese counterparts.

### [Rs 687 Crore Worth Psychotropic Drugs Seized From Near India-Nepal Border In UP, One Arrested](#)

August 2, 2021, India Times

In a major drug bust, a joint raid by the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and local police, prohibited drugs worth around Rs 686 crore were recovered from a warehouse in a village on the Indo-Nepal border in neighbouring Maharajganj district of Uttar Pradesh.

## **Sri Lanka**

### [Debt-hobbled Sri Lanka risks running out of options](#)

August 3, 2021, Reuters

Sri Lanka paid a \$1 billion bond last week, but the alarming state of its finances suggests it may have been just another step towards its first sovereign default.

[Arrest SL Navy personnel who fired at Indian fishermen: Anbumani Ramadoss](#)

August 3, 2021, the News Minute

Anbumani Ramadoss said that there has been an increase in the attacks on Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy, adding that this was the seventh attack on Indian fishermen in the past two months.

## East & South East Asia

### China

#### [China to provide 2 billion COVID vaccines globally](#)

August 6, 2021, China Daily

President Xi Jinping said that China will provide a total of 2 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines to the world this year, in the latest effort to honour its commitment to make vaccines a global public good by ensuring vaccine accessibility and affordability.

#### [China's military has always been a promoter of world peace](#)

August 6, 2021, China Daily

At the recent G7, NATO and United States-European Union meetings, relevant countries and organizations issued joint communiques or declarations, which among other things, said that China posed a "systemic challenge" to the international order, and that they are "seriously concerned" about the situation in the East and South China seas and oppose any "unilateral attempts to change the status quo".

#### [Washington, Beijing need to 'head off clash'](#)

August 5, 2021, China Daily

It is vital for Washington and Beijing to engage each other to avoid conflict, as splitting allegiances would be "very hard" for countries that wish to preserve ties with both powers, Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said.

#### [Chinese, Russian militaries to hold joint drill in NW China](#)

August 6, 2021,

A joint military exercise by the Chinese and Russian armies will be held from Aug. 9 to 13 at a training base of the People's Liberation Army in northwest China's Ningxia Hui autonomous region.

#### [Lhasa-Nyingchi Railway hosts its first military transport mission](#)

August 4, 2021, Global Times

The newly opened Lhasa-Nyingchi Railway in Southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region recently hosted its first military transport mission, a move analysts said served as a boost to the capability of the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

### [China's first independent offshore oil project in full-capacity production](#)

August 2, 2021, Global Times

China's largest offshore oil producer China National Offshore Oil Corp (CNOOC) announced that Liuhua 16-2 oilfield cluster, China's first independent deepwater oil and gas project, is now in full-throttle production in the South China Sea.

## **Japan**

### [Activists in Japan hold rally against U.S.-South Korea exercises](#)

August 3, 2021, UPI

Japanese activists held a rally outside the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo to protest the upcoming U.S.-South Korea joint exercises, according to a South Korean press report.

### [Japan scraps plan to obtain U.S.-made anti-ship missiles for F-15 fighters](#)

August 6, 2021, The Japan Times

The Japanese Defense Ministry has scrapped a plan to obtain U.S.-made long-range anti-ship missiles with standoff capabilities for the Air Self-Defense Force's F15 fighter jets due to ballooning costs.

### [Japan, the US, and the Quest for Secure Supply Chains](#)

July 30, 2021, The Diplomat

Japan-U.S. cooperation is crucial for ensuring supply chain resilience and thus economic security.

### [Japan, U.S. defense chiefs agree to bolster deterrence](#)

July 30, 2021, Kyodo News

The Japanese and U.S. defense chiefs agreed over the phone to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the bilateral alliance in light of the increasingly severe security environment.

### [Japan-US ties must not harm China, Chinese envoy warns](#)

August 1, 2021, SCMP

Tokyo's alliance with Washington must not undermine Beijing's interests and Japan should take practical steps to show goodwill towards China, the Chinese ambassador to Tokyo has warned.

### [Japan ups the ante against China, plans to deploy nukes near Taiwan next year](#)

August 5, 2021, Hindustan Times

In a move that is expected to challenge China's dominance in the South China Sea, Japan has reportedly planned to deploy missile units next year on an island that is merely 300 kilometres off the coast of Taiwan. The move is aimed at countering Beijing's increasing naval presence in an area that carries a history of military disputes, reported Japanese media, adding that the nukes will also help defend against a potential Chinese attack.

### **Korea**

#### [Korea's carbon neutrality plans face backlash from business, environmental circles](#)

August 6, 2021, The Korea Times

The business circle and environmental advocates are casting doubts over both the feasibility and thoroughness of the government's plans, unveiled, to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Business representatives argue that the drastic plan will reduce the number of jobs and undermine the competitiveness of the nation's industries, which are centered on manufacturing. Meanwhile, environmental groups say the plans come up short in realizing full carbon neutrality.

#### [Kim Yo-jong causes internal conflicts in South over joint military drill with US](#)

August 3, 2021, The Korea Times

The government is experiencing an internal divide over the joint summertime military exercises between Seoul and Washington, following a warning from North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's powerful sister that they would damage inter-Korean relations.

#### [Moon's party wants bold action on N. Korea: report](#)

August 6, 2021, The Korea Herald

The South Korean government wants the US to endorse its initiative to rebuild ties with North Korea, the Washington Post said , citing the leader of South Korea's ruling Democratic Party.

[Activists charged with espionage for allegedly taking N. Korean orders to stage anti-weapons protests](#)

August 6, 2021, The Korea Herald

Four South Korean activists have been charged with espionage for allegedly taking orders from Pyongyang and staging a series of protests opposing Seoul's plan to procure US-built stealth fighter jets, sources said.

[Moon urges caution in planning South Korea-US military drills](#)

August 4, 2021, The Korea Herald

President Moon Jae-in directed the defense minister to discuss the S. Korea-US military drills "carefully" by taking into consideration multiple factors, a hint there could be possible changes ahead for the exercises.

[Samsung's presence in Middle East, Africa smartphone market falls in Q2: report](#)

August 6, 2021, The Korea Herald

Samsung Electronics Co. saw its market share decline in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) smartphone market in the second quarter of the year, a report showed as Chinese brands expanded their presence.

Southeast Asia

[Act East: India, ASEAN FMs meet ; US invites New Delhi for Mekong ministerial meeting](#)

August 3, 2021, WION

External affairs minister Dr. S Jaishankar will take part in the India-ASEAN foreign ministers meet virtually.

[India for speeding up connectivity projects with Asean](#)

August 4, 2021, Hindustan Times

India called for the speeding up of regional connectivity projects with members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including the trilateral highway with Myanmar and Thailand and the Kaladan transit transport project.

[Britain granted 'dialogue partner' status by Southeast Asian bloc](#)

August 4, 2021, Reuters

Britain has been granted "dialogue partner" status by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, a step forward in London's push to build stronger diplomatic ties in Asia following its exit from the European Union.

[India welcomes ASEAN's appointment of Brunei diplomat as envoy to Myanmar](#)

August 6, 2021, Yahoo News

India welcomed the appointment of Brunei's second Foreign Minister Erywan Yusof as special envoy to Myanmar by the ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and asserted that it will continue to support the restoration of the democratic process in Burma.

[US Dismisses Myanmar Junta's Election Promise, Urges ASEAN Pressure](#)

August 3, 2021, NDTV

The United States said that Myanmar's junta was playing for time with a two-year election timeframe as Secretary of State Antony Blinken prepared to encourage ASEAN to appoint an envoy.

[North Korea in spotlight as ASEAN Regional Forum convenes virtually](#)

August 6, 2021, Nikkei Asia

A virtual ASEAN Regional Forum ministerial meeting evening was expected to look at issues including Korean Peninsula security and, if North Korea sends a representative, provide an opportunity for the reclusive country to talk with the international community.

## Central & West Asia

### Central Asia

#### [Kyrgyz Ex-President Akaev Returns For Questioning Over Gold Mine At Center Of International Dispute](#)

August 02, 2021, RFE/RL

The ousted first president of independent Kyrgyzstan has returned from Russian exile to Bishkek for questioning in connection with an investigation into possible corruption around one of the world's biggest gold mines. It is ex-President Askar Akaev's first trip to the post-Soviet Central Asian republic since he fled peaceful pro-democracy rallies in 2005.

#### [Another Kyrgyz Ex-PM Detained Amid Growing Kumtor Mine Investigation](#)

August 03, 2021, RFE/RL

Former Kyrgyz Prime Minister Temir Sariyev has been arrested as part of a widening investigation into alleged corruption during the development of the Kumtor gold-mine project. The State Committee for National Security says Sariyev was detained for 48 hours on August 3 on corruption charges ahead of a court decision on pretrial custody.

#### [Two Uzbek Police Officers Arrested On Charges Of Beating Detainee To Death](#)

August 03, 2021, RFE/RL

Uzbek authorities have arrested two police officers in the southern Surxondaryo region for allegedly beating a detainee to death. Police brutality in the tightly controlled former Soviet republic has been an issue for decades.

#### [Turkmenistan's air force operating new M-346FA, C-27J, and A-29 aircraft](#)

August 04, 2021, Janes

Video footage released by Turkmenistan's state-owned media indicates that the country's air force is operating three newly acquired aircraft types: the Leonardo M-346FA light attack aircraft, the Embraer A-29B Super Tucano turboprop trainer/light attack aircraft, and the Leonardo C-27J Spartan tactical airlifter.

#### [HRW urges Kyrgyzstan president to veto 'false information' law, protect media freedom](#)

August 05, 2021, The Times of Central Asia

Human Rights Watch has called on Kyrgyzstan's President Sadyr Japarov to veto the new law on "false information" when it reaches him for signature. The law authorizes the government to block certain types of information without a



court order, in violation of the right to freedom of expression, Human Rights Watch said.

#### [China assuming new dominance in Turkmenistan](#)

August 05, 2021, The Times of Central Asia

With the latest developments in Afghanistan, China is expanding security and military cooperation with Turkmenistan, to add to its extensive economic influence on Ashgabat.

#### [EU provides relief to victims of drought in Kazakhstan](#)

August 06, 2021, The Times of Central Asia

In response to the drought that has affected large parts of Kazakhstan since June, the European Union is providing €200,000 in humanitarian funding to provide crucial support. The aid will benefit close to 6,000 people in some of the hardest hit areas in the provinces of Mangystau and Turkestan.

### **West Asia**

#### [Indian Air Force Chief RKS Bhadauria Reaches Israel on Official Visit](#)

August 4, 2021, Business Standard

Indian Air Force chief RKS Bhadauria reached Israel on an official visit on the invitation from his counterpart Major General Amikam Norkin.

#### [Blinken Says US 'Confident' That Iran behind Attack on Israeli-linked Ship](#)

August 01, 2021, The Times of Israel

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken says the Biden administration is "confident" that Iran was behind a deadly attack on an Israeli-operated merchant ship near Oman, joining Israel and Britain in blaming Tehran for the strike.

#### [Saudi Arabia Invites PM Modi to Participate in the Middle East Green Initiative Summit](#)

August 01, 2021, DNA

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been invited to Saudi Arabia to participate in the Middle East Green Initiative Summit, which will take place in October. The country aims to acknowledge and promote regional efforts in combating climate change.

### [Saudi Arabia's Oil Exports Climb 147 Per Cent to USD 16 Billion in May](#)

July 28, 2021, Reuters

The value of Saudi Arabia's oil exports in May increased 147% to just over 60 billion riyals (\$16 billion) from a year earlier while non-oil exports rose by 70%, official data showed.

### [Saudi Arabia Imposes Three-year Travel Ban for Citizens Visiting 'Red List' Countries, Including India](#)

July 30, 2021, The Economic Times

Saudi Arabia has announced a three-year travel ban and hefty penalties on citizens who visit countries on the kingdom's COVID-19 red list, including India.

### [First Consignment of Vegetables from Uttarakhand Exported to UAE](#)

July 26, 2021, Mint

In a major boost to agricultural exports from Uttarakhand, the first shipment of vegetables, sourced from farmers of Haridwar, was exported to Dubai, UAE.

### [Subdued Demand From Iran, Russia Hit Leaf Tea Prices at Kochi](#)

July 30, 2021, The Hindu BusinessLine

Traders attribute the decline in export due to the surging Covid cases in Russia and Iran sanctions.

### [Agri Exporters from India Connects to International Buyers from USA, UAE, Japan](#)

July 31, 2021, The Economic Times

For the first time, Agri Exporters from the remote districts of India were connected to international buyers from USA, UAE, Japan through a virtual outreach event organised by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) under the Department of Commerce in partnership with the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).

### [Middle East Economic Outlook Hinges on Vaccinations](#)

July 30, 2021, AL-Monitor

The IMF is projecting world economic growth of 6% this year and 4.9% in 2022, after a downturn of 3.2% in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Middle East looks likely to lag, with regional growth projections of 4.1% in 2021 and 3.7% in 2022, following a downturn of 3% in 2020.

### [Senior Russian Official Confirms Moscow Thwarting Israeli Attacks on Syria](#)

July 28, 2021, Israel Hayom

Moscow has been acting of late to change the rules of the game and limit Israeli strikes inside Syria on territory controlled by Syrian President Bashar Assad's regime, a senior official with close ties to the Russian Defense Ministry confirmed.

### [Turkey and India Do Not Need a Reset - Turkish Ambassador](#)

July 28, 2021, Ahval

Turkey and India do not need a diplomatic reset because partners can share opposing views, said the new Turkish ambassador to New Delhi.

### [Islamic State Resilient as Ever in Iraq, Syria](#)

July 26, 2021, Voice of America

Intelligence agencies studying the fate of the Islamic State in Iraq fear the terror group is not going anywhere, even as U.S. combat forces in the country prepare to "recede deep into the background" and leave the brunt of the work to Iraqi forces.

### [Iraq Troop Withdrawal Deal Marks Latest Phase in US Shift to Asia-Pacific](#)

August 01, 2021

The agreement to pull all combat soldiers out of the country comes as the Biden administration focuses on China. The Middle East will still play an important role in Washington's strategic thinking and the armed forces maintain a large presence in other parts of the region.

### [Lebanon: Najib Mikati Named New Prime Minister-Designate](#)

July 26, 2021, AL Jazeera

Billionaire businessman Najib Mikati was appointed as Lebanon's new prime minister-designate following binding parliamentary consultations with President Michel Aoun.'

## United States

### United States

#### [Blinken presses Afghan president to accelerate peace talks, condemns Taliban attacks](#)

August 3, 2021, The Hill

Secretary of State Antony Blinken urged Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to accelerate peace talks with the Taliban and condemned recent attacks by the militant group, which is quickly making gains in the region.

#### [US ready to take in more Afghan refugees – but won't help them leave](#)

August 2, 2021, The Guardian

The United States has said it is ready to take in thousands more Afghans whose US links put them at risk from the Taliban as western troops leave, but the asylum-seekers will face an arduous journey to safety.

#### [US approves \\$270 million deal for Greek F-16 upkeep](#)

August 5, 2021, Defense News

The U.S. State Department has greenlighted a \$270 million support package for Greece to keep the country's F-16 fleet current, according to an Aug. 4 announcement.

#### [U.S. ships over 110 million COVID-19 vaccine doses abroad; India does not take any due to liability issues](#)

August 4, 2021, The Hindu

The U.S. has shipped more than 110 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to middle- and low-income countries, U.S. President Joe Biden announced. India did not appear on an official list of countries that had received U.S. vaccines, a consequence of unresolved liability issues between the government of India and vaccine manufacturers.

#### [US, Mekong states reaffirm ties](#)

August 4, 2021, The Phnom Penh Post

Cambodia and the other Mekong countries have all reaffirmed their commitment to work with the US to end the Covid-19 pandemic and begin the region's economic recovery from the crisis. The consensus on cooperation was reached at the second Mekong-US Partnership Foreign Ministers' Meeting on August 3, held via video conference.

### [U.S., Indonesia commit to South China Sea defense in 'strategic dialogue'](#)

August 4, 2021, Reuters

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced the launch of a "strategic dialogue" with Indonesia, and Washington said the two countries committed to working together on issues that include defending freedom of navigation in the South China Sea.

### [US accuses Myanmar generals of 'stalling', urges ASEAN pressure](#)

August 3, 2021, Al Jazeera

The United States has accused Myanmar's military generals of playing for time after coup leader Min Aung Hlaing extended the deadline for new elections, with Secretary of State Antony Blinken urging the Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) to step up efforts to resolve the political turmoil triggered by the power grab.

### [Lloyd Austin's Philippine Progress](#)

August 2, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

Manila announced it would officially restore the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) that makes it easier for American troops to operate on the archipelago. That's a blow to China's strategic ambition to push America's military out of the Western Pacific.

### [Biden offers 'safe haven' to Hong Kong residents in U.S. after China crackdown](#)

August 6, 2021, Reuters

President Joe Biden offered temporary "safe haven" to Hong Kong residents in the United States, allowing what could be thousands of people to extend their stay in response to Beijing's crackdown on democracy in the Chinese territory.

### [Biden administration approves its first arms sale to Taiwan](#)

August 5, 2021, South China Morning Post

The US State Department notified Congress of a proposal to sell some US\$750 million of weapons to Taiwan, all but finalising what will be the first arms sale to the self-governed island by US President Joe Biden's administration.

### [U.S. struggles to unite democratic European allies against China](#)

August 3, 2021, NBC News

Where the White House adopts a bullish tone, some European countries try to walk a far more delicate line. They have criticized China over human rights, but also expressed eagerness to continue cultivating its lucrative trade opportunities – all the while adopting neutral language on the intensifying geopolitical maelstrom between Washington and Beijing.

### [U.S.'s Blinken, Sudan's prime minister discuss Ethiopia's Tigray conflict](#)

August 4, 2021, Reuters

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok about the conflict in Ethiopia's northern region of Tigray and agreed to press for negotiations leading to a ceasefire, the U.S. State Department said.

### [U.S. Business Groups Urge Biden to Restart China Trade Talks](#)

August 6, 2021, The New York Times

A group of the most influential American business groups is urging the Biden administration to restart trade talks with China and cut tariffs on Chinese-made goods that had remained in place after the start of the bruising trade war between the two countries.

### [Biden Breaks Some More China](#)

August 5, The Wall Street Journal

The sad reality for any President watching Beijing dismantle a free and vibrant Hong Kong is that the outside world has few options to stop it. So kudos to President Biden for finding one that at least delivers relief to those in personal jeopardy.

### [Capitalist Solution to a Globalist Pandemic](#)

August 02, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

What's worked in the pandemic so far has been the dog everyone wants to kick: Big Pharma. Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson succeeded where the internationalists failed. Scientists in free societies working with the resources that capitalism provides have given the world hope. The WHO, Covax, the Chinese and Russian vaccines, and the "global community," not so much.

## Europe & Russia

### Europe

#### [Polish minister: Poland should not stay in the EU 'at any cost'](#)

August 6, 2021, Politico

Poland should not be part of the European Union at any cost, Polish Justice Minister Zbigniew Ziobro said in an interview published, as he complained against what he considers "blackmail" from the EU over judicial reforms in Poland.

#### [Italy hikes 2021 defense spending, finds cash for Tempest](#)

August 5, 2021, Defense News

Italy has hiked defense spending with a new budget that includes the first 20-million-euro Italian funding for the Tempest fighter. The 2021 budget includes 16.8 billion euros (\$19.9bn) in defense ministry spending, up five per cent over 2020, which was in turn an increase on the previous year, putting an end to serious of annual falls.

#### [Biden picks diplomat with Polish ties to manage key NATO relationship](#)

August 5, 2021, Reuters

President Joe Biden picked Mark Brzezinski, a Democratic-aligned foreign policy official with ties to Poland, as his ambassador to the European country regarded as a key Western bulwark against Russia.

#### [Chinese Applicants Overtake EU as Brexit Raises U.K. Student Fees](#)

August 3, 2021, Bloomberg

Chinese applicants to U.K. universities now outstrip the total number of would-be students from the European Union, highlighting the impact of Brexit and the sector's growing reliance on China even as relations cool between London and Beijing.

#### [Jaishankar Speaks To British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab](#)

August 5, 2021, Business World

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar spoke to his British counterpart Dominic Raab and took stock of bilateral relations.

### [Britain tells UN 'highly likely' Iran behind deadly tanker attack](#)

August 4, 2021, Reuters

Britain, Romania and Liberia told the United Nations Security Council that it was "highly likely" that Iran used one or more drones to carry out a deadly tanker attack last week off the coast of Oman.

### [Russia touts Britain, France for wider nuclear talks](#)

July 29, 2021, Reuters

Russia said that it wanted Britain and France to be included in wider nuclear arms control talks with the United States, while it said that Washington wanted China to be included.

## **Russia**

### [Russia to Invest \\$1M in Independent Media in Developing Countries](#)

August 02, 2021, The Moscow Times

Russia has allocated \$1 million to an international program that promotes free media in developing countries over the next five years. The investment comes amid criticisms that Russia is stifling dissent at home in the lead-up to this fall's parliamentary elections by blacklisting independent news sites and raiding and detaining journalists with increasing frequency.

### [Russian Court Convicts Ukrainian For Trying To Smuggle Missile-Defense Parts](#)

August 02, 2021, RFE/RL

A court in central Russia has sentenced a Ukrainian citizen to more than three years in prison after convicting him of trying to smuggle parts from a Russian missile system to Ukraine. Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) alleged on August 2 that the man has "links to the Security Service of Ukraine."

### [U.S., Russia Clash Over Embassy Staff Levels Again](#)

August 02, 2021, The Moscow Times

The United States and Russia clashed over the staffing allowed at their respective embassies despite the latest talks aimed at bringing more stability to a turbulent relationship. The Russian ambassador in Washington, Anatoly Antonov, deplored what he called "expulsions" of Moscow's diplomats, saying the United States had become "persistent and creative in this business" by uniquely limiting Russians to three-year visas.



### [OSCE Will Not Send Election Observers To Russia Following 'Major Limitations'](#)

August 04, 2021, RFE/RL

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe will not send observers to Russia's upcoming elections for the first time in nearly three decades due to "major limitations" imposed by Russian authorities. The OSCE said that Russian authorities restricted the number of election observers the intergovernmental body could send, ostensibly due to the coronavirus pandemic.

### [Indra 2021: Joint Russian & Indian counter-terrorism military drills kick off near Volgograd](#)

August 05, 2021, Russia Today

Joint Russian-Indian military exercises have kicked off in Russia's southern Volgograd Region. The militaries of the two nations will hone their skills in fighting terrorists and facing mock enemies in various combat environments. The Indra 2021 joint exercise was officially launched on August 04 at the Prudboi military testing grounds.

### [U.S. Investor Calvey, Six Co-Defendants Found Guilty Of Embezzlement By Russian Court](#)

August 05, 2021, RFE/RL

A Moscow court has found U.S. investor Michael Calvey and six co-defendants guilty of embezzlement in a high-profile case followed closely by the international business community. Calvey, the founder of Russia-focused private equity group Baring Vostok, was detained along with other executives in early 2019 on charges he and the other executives deny.

### [Russian Strategic Forces to Receive First Batch of New Sarmat Missile in 2022, Shoigu Says](#)

August 06, 2021, Sputnik News

Flight tests of Russia's new intercontinental ballistic missile Sarmat will begin later this year and should be completed in 2022, and the country's strategic missile forces should get the first batch in 2022 as well, Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said on August 06.

### [The Right Way to Split China and Russia](#)

August 04, 2021, Foreign Affairs

As Washington searches for an effective strategy to manage China's rise, U.S. President Joe Biden is right to lean heavily on one of the United States' clearest advantages: its global network of alliances. But even as Biden builds a coalition to tame Beijing, he also needs to work the other side of the equation by

weakening China's own international partnerships. He can't stop China's rise, but he can limit its influence by trying to lure away from China its main collaborator: Russia.

## Africa & Latin America

### Latin America

#### [Venezuela talks resuming as regional tide turns](#)

August 5, 2021, Argus

Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro's government is set to renew negotiations with his domestic political foes just as another Latin American country flips to his side and the US begins to chip away at sanctions.

#### [Colombia's ex-armed group leaders apologise for war atrocities](#)

August 4, 2021, Al Jazeera

Two of Colombia's most prominent ex-rebel and paramilitary group leaders apologised to victims as part of a commission designed to unravel the complicated truths behind the country's decades-long civil war.

#### [Voting Change Sought By Jair Bolsonaro Defeated In Brazil Congress](#)

August 6, 2021, NDTV

A Brazilian congressional committee voted against a constitutional amendment to adopt printed ballots, in a major defeat for far-right President Jair Bolsonaro.

#### [Brazil Court Orders President Bolsonaro Probed For Electoral Fraud Claims](#)

August 5, 2021, NDTV

A Supreme Court justice ruled President Jair Bolsonaro should be investigated for unproven claims Brazil's voting system is riddled with fraud, adding the far-right leader to an ongoing probe on the spread of fake news by his government.

#### [US disappointed by new Guatemala anti-corruption investigator](#)

August 5, 2021, France 24

The United States voiced disappointment over Guatemala's quick naming of a controversial new anti-corruption investigator, whose predecessor's dismissal drew protests from Washington.

#### [In Guatemala, Will Old Foreign Policies Bring New Results?](#)

August 3, 2021, NACLA

For the Biden administration, U.S. policy toward Central America is a centerpiece of its international agenda. Both Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris have stressed the importance of improving economic conditions in Central American countries to reduce the number of migrants heading north

to Mexico and the United States. Yet U.S. business interests have traditionally driven U.S. foreign policy, not concern for migrants.

### [EU sanctions 8 Nicaraguan officials amid wide-reaching crackdown](#)

August 2, 2021, Al Jazeera

The European Union has imposed sanctions on eight Nicaraguan officials, including Rosario Murillo, the country's vice president and wife of President Daniel Ortega, amid a crackdown on opposition leaders and presidential hopefuls in the Central American nation.

### [Explained: Why Mexico is suing US gun companies for fueling a drug war](#)

August 6, 2021, The Indian Express

The legal action, initiated in Massachusetts state, is reportedly the first of its kind in which a foreign government is using the American judicial system to bring American gun makers to justice.

## **Africa**

### [Jihadi rebels kill 30 in north Burkina Faso, says official](#)

August 6, 2021, The Indian Express

At least 30 people, including members of the military, were killed by jihadi rebels in northern Burkina Faso, the government said.

### [Tigray rebels reject calls to leave neighbouring regions](#)

August 6, 2021, France 24

Rebel forces from Ethiopia's war-torn Tigray rebuffed US calls to leave neighbouring regions, one day after they seized famed UNESCO heritage site Lalibela.

### [Kenya Forecasts Economy to Expand at Fastest Pace in Decade](#)

August 6, 2021, Bloomberg

Kenya expects a strong economic recovery this year as the nation's coronavirus vaccination program gains momentum and the services industry rebounds from a brutal pandemic fallout.

### [Amnesty says Nigeria security forces killed at least 115 in southeast this year](#)

August 5, 2021, Reuters

Security forces killed at least 115 people in southeast Nigeria this year and arbitrarily arrested or tortured scores of others, in response to violence from separatists agitating for autonomy, Amnesty International said.

### [The African Union, Israel and the futility of appeasement](#)

August 4, 2021, Al Jazeera

For decades, African countries have supported the Palestinian liberation struggle against Israel, seeing in it parallels with their own anti-colonial movements. Likewise, the African Union has not hesitated to criticise Israeli international law violations and occupation of Palestinian lands.

### [More than dozen people killed by rebels in east DR Congo](#)

August 3, 2021, Al Jazeera

At least 16 people were killed in an attack in the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) conflict-plagued east, believed to be the work of rebels, military and local sources said.



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