



# 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 38

### 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

### [INS Tabar conducts maritime partnership exercise with Sudanese Navy in Red Sea](#)

September 12, 2021, India Today

Indian Navy and Sudanese Navy carried out a bilateral maritime exercise in the Red Sea off the Sudanese coast on September 10, the Indian Navy said. INS Tabar and two Sudanese Navy ships- Almaz and Nimer- participated in this maiden exercise with the Indian Navy.

### [UK Pursues New Free Trade Agreement with India](#)

September 16, 2021, Maritime Executive

The UK will meet with India in November in an effort to establish a free trade agreement to build new trade relationships following Britain's departure from the European Union.

### [Navy gives on lease Passenger Variant Dornier aircraft to Mauritius](#)

September 14, 2021, The Hindu

The Navy has handed over a Passenger Variant Dornier (PVD) aircraft on lease to the Maritime Air Squadron of the National Coast Guard, Mauritius.

### [Indian Navy Team Deployed To Assist Flood Relief Ops In Rajkot](#)

September 14, 2021, NDTV

A naval humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) team was dispatched for Rajkot as a part of the ongoing civil rescue efforts in flood-affected areas.

### [Jaishankar, Wang Yi meet in Dushanbe, say LAC issues must be resolved, call for further talks](#)

September 17, 2021, The Hindu

China must not view India through the lens of its ties with other countries, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar told Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, as the two leaders met on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Dushanbe.

### [Rajnath Singh urges US defence companies to transfer technology through joint ventures, invest in India](#)

September 16, 2021, India Today

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has urged US defence companies to invest in India, asserting that the country is a strong and reliable investment destination in terms of co-production and co-development.

## **Pakistan**

### [Imran, Putin agree to coordinate positions on Afghanistan](#)

September 15, 2021, Dawn

Pakistan and Russia emphasised the need for closely coordinating their positions on the developments in Afghanistan. The two sides underscored this during a conversation between Prime Minister Imran Khan and Russian President Vladimir Putin. The second call from President Putin to Mr Khan within three weeks came in the backdrop of the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Dushanbe on September 17.

### [Pakistan says no recognition till Taliban fulfil promises](#)

September 15, 2021, Dawn

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has told Congress that Washington wants Pakistan not to offer 'any legitimacy' to Afghanistan's new Taliban rulers until they fulfil their promises to fight terrorism and protect human rights.

### [Islamic Trade Finance Corporation to give \\$600m for commodity financing](#)

September 14, 2021, Dawn

The International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) – a subsidiary of the Islamic Development Bank – would make available this month about \$600 million of syndicated loan for commodity financing. This is part of the \$4.5bn new framework agreement signed by the two sides in June this year to finance oil, LNG and fertiliser imports over the next three years (2021-23).

### [PIA runs first flight to Kabul after Taliban takeover](#)

September 14, 2021, Dawn

In its first passenger flight to Kabul since the Taliban reclaimed power last month, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) took journalists to Afghanistan before bringing back those belonging to World Bank and international news agencies to Islamabad.

### [Talks with IMF for sixth tranche to start by month-end](#)

September 12, 2021, Dawn

Pakistan will start staff-level discussions with the International Monetary Fund by end of the current month for the release of sixth tranche under the \$6 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF).

### [Pakistan to attend 'Three Brothers' military drills](#)

September 12, 2021, Dawn

Azerbaijan, Turkey and Pakistan holding joint military drills from Sept 12 to 20 in Baku, Azerbaijan; the first such drills between the three countries.

### [Pakistan hosts meeting of regional states' spymasters](#)

September 12, 2021, Dawn

Pakistan hosted a meeting of spymasters of some countries in the region on the situation in Afghanistan. There was no official statement on the meeting, but an intelligence source privately confirmed that the session had taken place. The meeting was attended by the intelligence heads from Russia, China, Iran and some Central Asian states.

### [Slow pace of work on CPEC irks Chinese companies](#)

September 17, 2021, Dawn

A Senate panel expressed concern over the slow pace of development on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and dissatisfaction being expressed by the Chinese companies over the negligible progress over the past three years.

### [SCO leaders caution against abandoning Afghanistan](#)

September 17, 2021, Dawn

Prime Minister Imran Khan, who is in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on a two-day visit for attending the SCO summit, met the presidents of Belarus, Uzbekistan, Iran and Kazakhstan on the side lines of the event on the first day of his trip.

### [Pakistan extends olive branch to TTP members](#)

September 16, 2021, Dawn

Holding out an olive branch to members of the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has said if they promise not to get involved in terrorist activities and submit to the Constitution, the government will be 'open to giving' a pardon to them.

### [Seven soldiers martyred in S. Waziristan gunfight with terrorists](#)

September 16, 2021, Dawn

Seven soldiers were martyred and five terrorists killed during an intense exchange of fire in the Asman Manza area of South Waziristan tribal district. Security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation in Asman Manza area after reports were received that terrorists were present there.

### [Tribesmen demand reversal of Fata-KP merger](#)

September 15, 2021, The News

Hundreds of people from tribal districts left for Islamabad to stage a protest seeking reversal of the merger of the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Chanting slogans against the merger, the tribal people boarded vehicles to hold a jirga in the federal capital.

### [Journalists picket Parliament House to protest PMDA, curbs](#)

September 13, 2021, The News

Journalists staged a sit-in outside the Parliament House against the Pakistan Media Development Authority and the media restrictions. The sit-in was staged on the call of Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists and Rawalpindi Islamabad Union of Journalists.

## **Afghanistan**

### [Taliban issue new rules for female university students](#)

September 13, 2021, Dawn

Women in Afghanistan will be allowed to study in universities as the country seeks to rebuild after decades of war but gender segregation and Islamic dress code will be mandatory, the Taliban's minister for higher education said.

### [Donors pledge \\$1.1bn for 'collapsing' Afghanistan](#)

September 14, 2021, Dawn

Donors have pledged more than \$1.1 billion to help Afghanistan, where poverty and hunger have spiralled since the Taliban took power, and foreign aid has dried up, raising the spectre of a mass exodus.

### [Afghan interim govt not inclusive, says Iran](#)

September 14, 2021, The News

Iran charged that the Taliban's interim government announced in Afghanistan is not representative of the country's population. It "is certainly not the inclusive government that the international community and the Islamic Republic of Iran expect," said Foreign Ministry Spokesman Said Khatibzadeh.

### ['Brother of Amrullah Saleh executed by Taliban'](#)

September 11, 2021, The News

The Taliban have executed the brother of Amrullah Saleh, the former Afghan vice president who became one of the leaders of anti-Taliban opposition forces in the Panjshir valley.

### [Putin says Russia needs to work with the Taliban](#)

September 17, 2021, Reuters

Russia needs to work with the Taliban government in Afghanistan, President Vladimir Putin said at a meeting of a China- and Russia-led security bloc, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

## [Shanghai Cooperation Organization Leaders Meet In Dushanbe With Afghanistan In Focus](#)

September 17, 2021, RFERL

Leaders of the Russia and China-led Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) are holding talks in the Tajik capital with their attention centered on the regional fallout from the U.S.-led international military withdrawal from Afghanistan and the Taliban's return to power.

## **Bangladesh**

### [Bangladesh-India relationship is role model for neighbours](#)

September 17, 2021, Dhaka Tribune

Terming India a good friend of Bangladesh, State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury said the Bangladesh-India relationship is a role model for any neighbouring country.

### [Bangladesh, UK enhancing defence-security cooperation](#)

September 15, 2021, Dhaka Tribune

Bangladesh and the United Kingdom recently held the Fourth Strategic Dialogue in London to strengthen the entire gamut of bilateral ties including in areas of defence and security cooperation.

### [Bangladesh Air Force reaches for the skies](#)

September 16, 2021, Dhaka Tribune

No matter what happens after much drama, tension, and delay -- it is assured that one of the finest multirole combat aircraft in the world; either the Eurofighter Typhoon or Dassault Rafale is arriving to defend the skies of Bangladesh.

### [Bangladesh purchases air defence radar systems](#)

September 16, 2021, Dhaka Tribune

French defence equipment manufacturer Thales has reportedly sold two long range air defence radar systems to the Bangladesh Army to enhance its battlefield surveillance network.

### [Bangladesh files protests at UN](#)

September 17, 2021, New Age

Bangladesh has registered two protests to the United Nations against the claims of India made on some of the geographical coordinates concerning the straight baselines for measuring the breadth of the territorial sea and setting outer limits of the continental shelf.



## Nepal

### [India hands over newly-constructed school building to Nepal](#)

September 16, 2021, Tribune India

A newly-constructed double storey school building built with India's financial assistance of 8.97 million Nepalese rupees after it was damaged by the devastating 2015 earthquake in the country was inaugurated in Nepal's Makwanpur district.

### [Indo-Nepal joint military exercise to begin in Uttarakhand](#)

September 18, 2021, The Himalayan

The 15th edition of "Surya Kiran", a joint training exercise between the armies of India and Nepal, will start at Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand with a focus on counterinsurgency operations, the defence ministry said today, according to a report in rediff.com.

## Sri Lanka

### [Sri Lankan Tamil refugees continue to demand Indian citizenship](#)

September 17, 2021, India Today

Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu demand Indian citizenship as their current situation has put them in a situation where they can't vote or hold any properties in India.

### [Sri Lanka Navy detains another boat with heroin in international waters](#)

September 18, 2021, Colombo Gazette

The Sri Lanka Navy has seized another foreign fishing vessel carrying a large consignment of narcotics in international waters, and arrested nine suspects.

## East & South East Asia

### China

#### [India warned not to be 'poison' for SCO cooperation, as it seeks influence on Afghan issue](#)

September 17, 2021, Global Times

Chinese experts warned India not to be "poison" for cooperation under the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), as New Delhi has shown a keen interest in using the SCO, which has become the most important platform on the Afghan issue, to maintain its interests in Afghanistan.

#### [With AUKUS, US picks up stone to smash its own feet: Global Times editorial](#)

September 18, 2021, Global Times

The US, the UK and Australia suddenly announced the establishment of a trilateral security partnership called AUKUS. This is like forming an Indo-Pacific version of a "small NATO" and has caused a series of shocks. France reacted most strongly because it was robbed of the A\$90 billion submarine contract it reached with Australia. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian publicly criticized the deal as a "stab in the back."

#### [China urges World Bank to conduct full probe in issues related to business report](#)

September 17, 2021, Global Times

China's Foreign Ministry called on the World Bank to conduct a full investigation into relevant issues to protect both the credibility of its business environment report and reputation of its members, after the World Bank ended its "Doing Business" report citing "data irregularities."

#### [Chinese, Indian FMs agree to safeguard border peace, tranquility](#)

September 17, 2021, Xinhua

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar highlighted the importance of maintaining peace and tranquility in the border areas.

#### [China aims for 'civilised' internet with focus on 'socialist values' - Xinhua](#)

September 14, 2021, Reuters

China will step up efforts to promote a "civilised" internet by strengthening oversight over the likes of news sites and online platforms and encouraging them to promote core socialist values, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

### [SCO countries pledge closer cooperation in various areas](#)

September 18, 2021, Xinhua

The member countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) vowed to further boost cooperation in political, security, economic, cultural and other fields.

### [China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran to strengthen coordination on Afghan issue](#)

September 18, 2021, Xinhua

Senior officials from China, Russia, Pakistan and Iran agreed to step up communication and coordination on the Afghan issue.

### [China's Bid to Join TPP Trade Group Puts Members in an Awkward Spot](#)

September 17, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

A decade ago, it was a trade club led by the U.S. seeking to limit the influence of China's economic model. Now Washington is out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and Beijing wants in—as the group's biggest member. That led to some awkward discussions among the American allies leading the TPP on Friday, a day after Beijing handed in its application to join. Members said anyone was welcome to apply, but some said the newcomer might not be a good fit for the club.

### [China's Economic Recovery Is Looking Gloomier](#)

September 15, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

Growth across a range of Chinese economic indicators pulled back sharply in August, as a new outbreak of the Covid-19 Delta variant and tighter government regulations on the property market hit consumer spending and the housing sector. Retail sales, a key gauge of China's consumption, rose just 2.5% in August from a year earlier, down sharply from July's 8.5% year-over-year growth, according to data released Wednesday by China's National Bureau of Statistics.

### [U.N. rights chief regrets lack of access to Xinjiang](#)

September 13, 2021, Reuters

The United Nations' rights chief lamented on Monday that efforts to gain access to China's Xinjiang region to probe reports of serious violations against Muslim Uyghurs have not succeeded, adding that she was finalising a report on the situation.

### [With tighter grip, Beijing sends message to Hong Kong tycoons: fall in line](#)

September 17, 2021, Reuters

As Beijing seeks to tighten its grip over Hong Kong, it has a new mandate for the city's powerful property tycoons: pour resources and influence into

backing Beijing's interests, and help solve a potentially destabilising housing shortage.

[China vows to resist 'interference' as Taiwan welcomes support from Aukus allies](#)

September 17, 2021, The Guardian

China's president, Xi Jinping, has vowed to resist "interference from external forces" as Taiwan welcomed support from major allies after a US-Australia ministerial forum pledged stronger ties with the island and the European parliament called for a bilateral trade deal.

## **Japan**

[Japan PM contender Kono wants renewable energy, 5G to be focus of stimulus package](#)

September 16, 2021, Reuters

Japan's vaccine minister Taro Kono, a contender to replace Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, said any new economic stimulus measures should prioritise spending on renewable energy and expansion of 5G networks nationwide.

[Japan condemns North Korea's ballistic missile launch as 'outrageous' and a 'threat' to the region](#)

September 15, 2021, CNBC

North Korea launched ballistic missiles off its east coast, prompting condemnation from Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga.

[Japan, US, South Korea urge North Korea to return to arms talks](#)

September 14, 2021, Business Standard

Senior diplomats urged North Korea to return to talks over its missile and nuclear development, a day after it announced it successfully tested new long-range cruise missiles.

[Japan's defense minister draws red line in island dispute with China](#)

September 16, 2021, CNN

Japan is drawing a red line around an island chain also claimed by China, pushing back at Beijing's increasingly aggressive military posturing, and setting the stage for a potential showdown between the region's two biggest powers.

### [Japan detects suspected China submarine near southern island](#)

September 12, 2021, Hindustan Times

The submarine remained submerged, but the ministry said in a statement that it believes the submarine is Chinese because a Chinese Luyang III-class guided missile destroyer is near the submarine.

## **Korea**

### [Human rights organizations call for 'prudent review' of 'fake news' bill](#)

September 17, 2021, The Korea Times

Human rights watchdogs in Korea and abroad have expressed concerns over the controversial "fake news" bill, saying that it could limit the voice of the media and freedom of expression.

### [Seoul, Tokyo still remain far apart over historical issues](#)

September 17, 2021, The Korea Times

Korea and Japan have once again found that they remain "parallel" over historical issues during senior-level talks held. With Japan scheduled to pick a new prime minister on Sept. 29, questions are rampant over whether the new leader can resolve the diplomatic disputes between Seoul and Tokyo.

### [North Korea's major women's union calls for eradication of anti-socialist practices](#)

September 17, 2021, The Korea Times

A major North Korean women's union called on its members to wage a battle against anti-socialist practices as it convened a workshop for local leaders, state media reported.

### [S. Korea, Vietnam vow to boost defense ties during vice-ministerial talks](#)

September 16, 2021, The Korea Herald

South Korea and Vietnam agreed to strengthen cooperation in defense affairs and the arms industry during annual vice-ministerial talks, Seoul officials said.

### [North Korea says it tested rail-launched ballistic missiles](#)

September 16, 2021, The Times of India

North Korea said it successfully launched ballistic missiles from a train from the first time and was continuing to bolster its defences after the two Koreas test fired missiles hours apart in duelling displays of military might.

### [Aimed at Joe Biden, a new act in North Korea's nuclear drama](#)

September 17, 2021, Hindustan Times

At the end of August, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reported that it had detected suspicious activity from North Korea's Yongbyon nuclear plant. Yongbyon had been temporarily shuttered in 2018 in the heyday of Kim's bonhomie with the then President Donald Trump

## **Southeast Asia**

### [India-ASEAN must announce review of FTA in goods by year-end: Anupriya Patel](#)

September 14, 2021, The Hindu Businessline

Non-tariff measures faced by Indian exporters of auto, agri in ASEAN need to be removed, the Minister of State for Commerce and Industry said.

### [What Does the New AUKUS Alliance Mean for Southeast Asia?](#)

September 17, 2021, The Diplomat

The new partnership is likely to be greeted with ambivalence in a region that has little appetite for a new Cold War.

### [Chinese FM in Singapore in pushback against U.S.](#)

September 14, 2021, The Hindu

China's Foreign Minister held talks with Singaporean leader Lee Hsien Loong during a Southeast Asian tour seen as a pushback against Washington's efforts to reassert its influence in the region.

### [With New Law, Singapore Takes Aim at 'Foreign Interference'](#)

September 14, 2021, The Diplomat

The Ministry of Home Affairs argues that foreign interference poses a serious threat to Singapore's "political sovereignty and national security."

### [China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Singapore's PM Lee affirm 'excellent' relations](#)

September 14, 2021, Channel News Asia

China's Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi called on Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, the second and final day of his working visit to Singapore.

### [Indonesia adds patrols after detecting ships in South China Sea](#)

September 17, 2021, Al Jazeera

Jakarta deploys five navy vessels, assisted by an air patrol in North Natuna Sea after Chinese and US vessels were detected in nearby international waters.

## Central & West Asia

### Central Asia

#### [Uzbekistan Completes Deportation Of Hundreds Of Afghan Pilots And Family](#)

September 13, 2021, RFE/RL

Uzbekistan has deported all Afghan military pilots and members of their families who illegally flew to safety in the Central Asian state. Uzbek Foreign Ministry's spokesman Yusup Kobuljonov said that the deportation of the Afghan nationals -- hundreds of people who flew to Uzbekistan aboard Afghan military aircraft -- was carried out in the last two days.

#### [Tajikistan Accepts Around 100 Afghans Fleeing The Taliban, But Sends 100 Back](#)

September 13, 2021, RFE/RL

Tajik authorities say they have accepted around 100 Afghan nationals from a group of more than 200 people, including many women and children, who crossed the border overnight to flee Afghanistan because of the Taliban's takeover of the country.

#### [Tajikistan and Uzbekistan Take Different Approaches to Afghanistan](#)

September 13, 2021, The Diplomat

Of the three Central Asian countries bordering Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan have been actively dealing with the consequences of Afghanistan's fallout. While Tashkent is more in a wait-and-accept mode toward the Taliban, Dushanbe has been vocal about its opposition to the group.

#### [Three Kyrgyz, Two Tajik Nationals On Trial Over Deadly Ethnic Clashes](#)

September 13, 2021, RFE/RL

Three Kyrgyz and two Tajik citizens have gone on trial in Kyrgyzstan over deadly ethnic clashes that erupted earlier this year near a disputed segment of the Kyrgyz-Tajik border. The Leilek district court in Kyrgyzstan's southern Batken region started the trial on September 13.

#### [Ahead of Kyrgyz Parliamentary Elections, Elections Official Arrested on Fraud Charges](#)

September 14, 2021, The Diplomat

A Kyrgyz election official was arrested over the weekend on a fraud charge after a person who attempted to bribe him complained that his money hadn't been returned in full. Akylbek Eshimov, a member of Kyrgyzstan's Central Election

Commission (CEC), was arrested on September 11 by the State Committee for National Security (SCNS).

#### [Tajik Foreign Ministry Issues Verbal Note Of Protest Over Biden Comments](#)

September 14, 2021, RFE/RL

Tajikistan's Foreign Ministry summoned the U.S. ambassador to the Central Asian nation, John Pommersheim, to make a verbal protest over President Joe Biden's recent comments about the Central Asian nation in relation with the U.S. troops withdrawal from Afghanistan.

#### [Kazakhstan: MPs sell IT registration law as child-protection measure](#)

September 16, 2021, Eurasianet

Lawmakers in Kazakhstan have backed legislation designed to force social media and messaging software companies to register in Kazakhstan or face being blocked. Supporters of the bill say the move is intended to protect children from online bullying, although critics suspect something more sinister may be afoot.

### **West Asia**

#### [Telephone Conversation between PM Narendra Modi and Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan](#)

September 03, 2021, Ministry of External Affairs Government of India

The two leaders positively assessed the continued progress in bilateral cooperation in various areas under the India-UAE comprehensive strategic partnership. PM appreciated UAE's support for the Indian community during the Covid-19 pandemic. He also conveyed best wishes for Expo-2020 to be held in Dubai from October 1, 2021.

#### [Air Defence Boost: Indian Air Force Gets First Indo-Israeli Missile](#)

September 10, 2021, Business Standard

In a significant boost to India's air defence capabilities, the Indian Air Force (IAF) was handed over its first Medium Range Surface to Air Missile (MRSAM) system, in the presence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. It has been designed and developed by India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in partnership with Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI).



### [Egyptian, Indian Naval Forces Conduct Drills in the Mediterranean Sea](#)

September 11, 2021, Egypt Today

Egyptian and Indian naval forces have carried out joint drills involving India's ship "INS TABAR" and Egypt's frigate "Alexandria", a front-line frigate of the Egyptian Navy, in the Mediterranean Sea to ensure maritime security and stability in the region.

### [Indian Army Orders Over 100 Indo-Israeli Kamikaze Drones Amid Active LAC and Precarious LoC](#)

September 03, 2021, The Print

In a first, the Army has ordered over 100 tactical kamikaze Israeli drones, used in the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict, to beef up its operational capability along the borders with Pakistan and China.

### [SABIC in Indian Deal to Help Cut Diesel Emissions](#)

September 12, 2021, Arab News

SABIC is working with Indian Oil Corp. to provide technical grade urea that will ultimately help in reducing India's nitrogen dioxide emissions from diesel vehicles by up to 70 per cent, the Saudi chemical giant said in a statement.

### [Iran to Allow IAEA to Service Nuclear Monitoring Cameras after Talks](#)

September 12, 2021, Middle East Monitor

Iran is to allow the UN nuclear watchdog to service monitoring cameras at Iranian nuclear sites after talks with IAEA head Rafael Grossi, according to the head of Iran's atomic energy body and a joint statement.

### [Israeli Defence Minister Gantz Reveals Iranian Drone Base, Says It Is Used to Train Terror Groups](#)

September 12, 2021, The Times of Israel

Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz revealed the location of an Iranian air-base that he said is being used to train Tehran's regional proxies to operate advanced drones. The UAV base is located north of the city of Isfahan in central Iran and serves as "a linchpin of the Iranian effort to export aerial terror to the region."

### [Russian, Israeli Militaries to Continue Exchanging Information on Syria: Russian FM Lavrov](#)

September 09, 2021, TASS (Russian News Agency)

According to the Russian foreign minister, the situation in Syria remains challenging in many respects due to the fact that many countries' interests are intertwined in that process. The practice of exchanging information on the

situation in Syria between Russia and Israel has proven its usefulness and will be continued.

### [Saudi Arabia, UAE Hold Talks as Regional Rivalry Threatens Split](#)

September 07, 2021, Middle East Monitor

Saudi Crown Prince Mohamed Bin Salman held talks with his Emirati counterpart Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, in what looks to be an attempt to pull the handbrakes on the two neighbour's deteriorating relations. Reportedly, they discussed "the prospects of further consolidating the strategic cooperation" between the countries.

### [US Pulls Missile Defences in Saudi Arabia Amid Yemen Attacks](#)

September 11, 2021, AL Jazeera

The United States has removed its most advanced missile defence system and Patriot batteries from Saudi Arabia in recent weeks, even as the kingdom faced continued air attacks from Yemen's Houthi rebels.

### [Unprecedented Demand Pours in For Turkey's Combat Drone](#)

September 10, 2021, Daily Sabah

The Bayraktar TB2 armed unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) has been seeing unprecedented demand from around the world following its deployment in military operations.

### [Cutting-edge Akinci Combat Drone Joins Turkey's Defence Offerings](#)

August 29, 2021, TRT World

Turkey's Bayraktar Akinci PT-2 TIHA (unmanned aerial vehicle) has completed stringent testing and has been delivered to the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) in a ceremony attended by Turkey's president.

### [Houthi Envoy to Iran Confirms Israeli Presence on Yemeni Islands](#)

September 06, 2021, Middle East Monitor

The Houthi-led Yemeni government's Ambassador to Tehran, Ibrahim Mohamed Al-Dailami, has confirmed previously made claims about Israel's alleged presence on Yemeni territory, specifically on its strategically located islands including Hanish, Mayun, and Socotra Island in the Arabian Sea.

## United States

### United States

#### [Biden Announces Defense Deal With Australia in a Bid to Counter China](#)

September 15, 2021, The New York Times

The Biden administration took a major step in challenging China's broad territorial claims in the Pacific, announcing that the United States and Britain would help Australia to deploy nuclear-powered submarines, adding to the Western presence in the region.

#### [Australia agrees to increased U.S. air deployments after sub deal](#)

September 17, 2021, Reuters

Australia and the United States announced expanded military cooperation, including rotational deployments of all types of U.S. military aircraft to Australia, a day after announcing a submarine deal denounced by China as intensifying a regional arms race.

#### [Blinken calls France vital partner in Indo-Pacific in apparent bid to calm French fury](#)

September 17, 2021, Reuters

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken called France a vital partner in the Indo-Pacific, comments that appeared aimed at calming French anger after the United States, Australia and the UK clinched a deal to supply Australia with submarines.

#### [U.S., China Jockey for Position in Pacific With Moves on Security, Trade](#)

September 16, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

China moved quickly to counter an effort by the U.S., U.K. and Australia to contain its ambitions in the Pacific, saying it would apply to join a regional economic pact the U.S. had eschewed, as Washington and Beijing maneuvered for economic and military position in the theater that will define their great power competition.

#### [No Change in 'One China' Policy, U.S. Says After Antony Blinken's Taiwan Comments](#)

September 15, 2021, Newsweek

The United States' "One China" policy remains unchanged, a U.S. official has told Newsweek after Secretary of State Antony Blinken appeared to elevate the diplomatic status of Taiwan by referring to the island as a country earlier this week.

### [US general called China over fears Trump could order war: Report](#)

September 15, 2021, Al Jazeera

The top US general secretly called his Chinese counterpart twice over concerns then-President Donald Trump could trigger a war with China as his potential election loss loomed and, in its aftermath, according to the Washington Post newspaper.

### [Biden bids to break U.S.-China deadlock](#)

September 16, 2021, Politico

President Joe Biden faces daunting challenges in building upon his Sept. 9 phone call to Chinese President Xi Jinping to reset bilateral ties made toxic by disagreements across the U.S.-China relationship.

### [The U.S.-China Trade War Has Become a Cold War](#)

September 16, 2021, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

What began as a trade war over China's unfair economic policies has now evolved into a so-called cold war propelled by differing ideologies. U.S.-China bilateral relations took a nosedive in 2018 when then U.S. president Donald Trump's obsession with trade deficits led him to impose punitive tariffs on China.

### [Blinken faces criticism in US Senate over Afghanistan](#)

September 14, 2021, Al Jazeera

US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken faced bipartisan anger and criticism from senators unhappy with the Biden administration's handling of the United States' withdrawal from Afghanistan.

### [Blinken defence of Afghan policy clouded by al-Qaida warning](#)

September 15, 2021, Associated Press

Secretary of State Antony Blinken sought to parry bipartisan congressional criticism of the Biden administration's Afghanistan withdrawal, as new intelligence estimates warned that al-Qaida could soon again use Afghan soil to plot attacks on the United States.

### [Blinken says U.S. will assess Pakistan ties over Afghanistan's future](#)

September 14, 2021, Reuters

The United States will be looking at its relationship with Pakistan in the coming weeks, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said, to formulate what role Washington would want it play in the future of Afghanistan.

### [US Enquires For Northwest India's 'Over-The-Horizon' Capability For Afghanistan](#)

September 15, 2021, NDTV

Secretary of State Antony Blinken has reportedly sought to explore the possibility of over-the-horizon capabilities in northwest India for counter terrorism capabilities in Afghanistan. However, the Biden Administration has preferred not to make specific comments on this issue publicly.

### [Partnership with US could help India meet renewable energy targets](#)

September 15, 2021, The Indian Express

The threat of being asked to assume more climate responsibility looms. India shouldn't take on more commitments that could end up undercutting its legitimate developmental goals.

### [Two upcoming documents will reveal how the US Navy should fight in a great power competition](#)

September 15, 2021, Defense News

An ongoing Global Posture Review and a 2022 update to the National Defense Strategy will provide the U.S. Navy more clarity on what its roles and expectations are in the future, as the maritime space increasingly sees activities that the service considers aggressive but under the threshold of war.

### [Biden approval drops to lowest of presidency - Reuters/Ipsos poll](#)

September 17, 2021, Reuters

Public approval of U.S. President Joe Biden has dropped to the lowest level of his presidency, with Americans appearing to be increasingly critical of his response to the coronavirus pandemic, according to the latest Reuters/Ipsos opinion poll.

### [American Global Leadership Is in Retreat](#)

September 13, 2021, The Wall Street Journal

Two alternative visions of American grand strategy are gaining prominence in U.S. politics as globalism fades. Restrainers, who include both progressives and conservatives, want to reduce America's footprint abroad...On the other hand, global nationalists—mostly more hawkish Republicans and independents—have little regard for global multilateral institutions, free trade and visionary human rights goals, but believe that U.S. security requires an active American presence in key theaters around the world.

## Europe & Russia

### Europe

#### [EU priorities in Indo-Pacific shift to counter China](#)

September 16, 2021, Reuters

The European Union set out a formal strategy to increase its presence in the Indo-Pacific and counter China's rising power, although Australia's decision to cancel an arms contract with France may complicate cooperation.

#### [European Union pushes for deeper Indo-Pacific ties in face of China concerns](#)

September 14, 2021, Reuters

The European Union will seek new digital partnerships with Japan, South Korea and Singapore, and closer trade and investment relations with Taiwan, in an effort to build influence in Asia, Nikkei reported.

#### [France accuses Biden of sinking Australia submarine deal](#)

September 16, 2021, Al Jazeera

France has accused US President Joe Biden of acting like his predecessor Donald Trump after Paris was pushed aside from a lucrative defence deal that it had signed with Australia.

#### [Why Britain Has Been Eager to Join the U.S. Deal with Australia – And France Hasn't](#)

September 16, 2021, NPR

The new deal between the U.S. with the U.K. and Australia counters China but it's viewed differently by key allies. Britain is eager to get on board but France's trust in the U.S. has diminished.

#### [Britain spends \\$850 million on C-17 upgrades, Typhoon training tech](#)

September 13, 2021, Defense News

Britain's Ministry of Defence has announced contracts to enhance capabilities and support for its Boeing-built C-17 Globemaster airlifter and CH-47 Chinook fleets just ahead of the opening of the DSEI defense equipment show at London's Excel Exhibition Centre on Sept 14.

#### [India, U.K. to begin trade talks from November 1](#)

September 14, 2021, The Hindu

Formal negotiations for a proposed India-United Kingdom Free Trade Agreement (FTA) would begin on November 1, with an interim 'early harvest' agreement to be completed by March 2022, the government stated.

### [Taiwan Calls for Quick Start to Trade Talks With EU](#)

September 16, 2021, US News

Taiwan's government called on the European Union to quickly begin trade talks after the bloc pledged to seek a trade deal with the tech-heavyweight island, something Taipei has long angled for.

### [EU chief calls for more military independence amid new 'era of regional rivalries'](#)

September 15, 2021, CNBC

There is a new international order, where competition is fierce and some nations "stop at nothing to gain influence," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said.

### [EU earmarks 30 billion euros for health crisis agency](#)

September 16, 2021, Local12

The European Union said that it will fund its new health preparedness and rapid response agency to the tune of 30 billion euros (\$35 billion) over the next six years, even pushing it higher if individual efforts from the member nations and private sector are taken into account.

### [Slovenia's PM urges EU to stand with Lithuania against Chinese pressure](#)

September 15, 2021, Reuters

The European Union must stand with Lithuania against Chinese pressure and not give in to trade threats, Slovenia's prime minister said in a letter to fellow EU leaders, according to a copy seen by Reuters.

### [Germans see Russian meddling in tight election intensifying](#)

September 17, 2021, The Straits Times

Government officials in Berlin have repeatedly warned Kremlin counterparts to stop a spate of cyberattacks that's intensified ahead of the German election.

### [In Germany's election, the fate of the EU is at stake](#)

September 15, 2021, The Guardian

After Merkel, the incoming coalition will have to prove that democracy can meet Europe's great challenges.

## Russia

### [War on Russian mass media declared by West – Lavrov](#)

September 11, 2021, TASS News Agency

Western countries have practically declared a war on the Russian mass media, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told journalists on September 10. He noted that Russia had to take tit-for-tat measures and did not extend the visa of BBC journalist Sarah Rainsford after a TASS employee had faced similar problems.

### [Russia Summons U.S. Ambassador Over 'Election Interference'](#)

September 13, 2021, The Moscow Times

Russia's foreign ministry said it summoned the US ambassador in Moscow over the interference of US tech giants in elections in Russia, which is set to hold parliamentary polls later this month. Russia has recently ramped up control of its segment of the internet.

### [Russia pursuing launch of talks on banning arms race in space, senior diplomat says](#)

September 13, 2021, TASS News Agency

Moscow has been calling for the launch of talks on developing an international tool which would prohibit the deployment of any kind of armaments in space, according to Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov's welcoming address to the audience of the international "Gagarin" conference.

### [Putin, Assad Meet For First Time In Over A Year](#)

September 14, 2021, RFE/RL

Russian President Vladimir Putin has met with Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad in Moscow to discuss military cooperation against the remaining rebel-held areas in Syria, state media in Damascus reported on September 14.

### [Putin will self-isolate due to COVID cases in his inner circle – Kremlin](#)

September 14, 2021, TASS News Agency

Russian President Vladimir Putin said in conversation with Tajik President Emomali Rahmon that he would have to self-isolate due to COVID-19 cases in his inner circle, the Kremlin reports. In this light, the Russian leader will attend the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) events this week via videoconference.



### [International Investigative Consortium OCCRP Exits Russia](#)

September 15, 2021, The Moscow Times

The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), which has authored several high-profile investigative reports into fraud in Russia and the post-Soviet world, has announced its closure in Russia on September 15.

### [Kremlin Regrets European Parliament's Russia Report](#)

September 16, 2021, Sputnik News

The Kremlin regrets the European Parliament's report on Russia which contains no plans for a dialogue with Moscow, spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on 16 September, mentioning that the document is only a recommendation.

### [WHO Suspends Sputnik V Approval Process Over Manufacturing Breaches](#)

September 16, 2021, The Moscow Times

The World Health Organization (WHO) has suspended its approval process for Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine, pending a fresh inspection of at least one Russian factory manufacturing the shot.

### [Navalny's 'Smart Voting' App Disappears From Apple, Google Stores In Russia](#)

September 17, 2021, RFE/RL

An election-guide app created by opposition activist Aleksei Navalny to erode the dominance of the ruling United Russia party disappeared from Apple and Google stores on the same day that Russians began voting in national parliamentary elections.

### [Moscow launches probe into foreign cyberattacks on online voting systems](#)

September 17, 2021, TASS News Agency

Head of the Russian Investigative Committee Alexander Bastrykin has instructed a probe into cyberattacks conducted from abroad on Russian online voting systems, committee spokeswoman Svetlana Petrenko said.

## Africa & Latin America

### Latin America

#### [Paraguayan Government seeks to deepen Mercosur trade agreement with Egypt](#)

September 16, 2021, MercoPress

Paraguay's Finance Ministry sought to deepen the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Mercosur and Egypt when the II Meeting of the accord's Joint Committee convened. During the encounter, the parties set up mechanisms for the exchange of commercial data between the parties and the updating of the coding and nomenclature of the lists of offers of goods encompassed by the FTA to carry out negotiations involving products currently excluded from the FTA.

#### [Paraguayan Ambassador in Cuba dies of COVID-19](#)

September 14, 2021, MercoPress

Paraguay's Ambassador to Cuba Bernardino Cano Radil died of COVID-19 in Havana, it was reported. He was 65.

#### [Demonstrations in Sao Paulo call for dismissal of Brazil's president](#)

September 13, 2021, MercoPress

Protesters marched along Sao Paulos Avenida Paulista demanding the removal from the office of President Jair Bolsonaro, whom they perceive to be a threat to the rule of law. The demonstration was called for by the Free Brazil Movement (MBL) and by the Vem Pra Rua Movement just five days after a massive mobilization of anti-democratic groups nationwide in support of the retired Army captain.

#### [Record level of funding for Argentine startup companies despite pandemic](#)

September 13, 2021, MercoPress

Argentine startup companies have obtained a record level of funding during the first semester of 2021, a study has shown. A total of 45 operations have involved investments worth US \$ 210.7 million, five times more than in the same period of 2020, according to the "Study of the private equity, entrepreneur and seed industry in Argentina".

#### [Bolsonaro says he will attend UN General Assembly despite not being vaccinated against COVID-19](#)

September 17, 2021, MercoPress

Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro insisted he will attend the UN General Assembly next week in New York despite not having taken a COVID-19 vaccine.

### [Mass resignation in Argentina's Government after electoral loss](#)

September 16, 2021, MercoPress

Last defeat at the Open, Simultaneous and Mandatory Primary (PASO) elections finally seem to have taken its toll on Argentina's Frente de Todos (FdT) ruling coalition as members of cabinet loyal to Vice President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner handed in their resignations to President Alberto Fernández, it was reported.

## **Africa**

### [World Bank takes a look at Africa's climate-driven internal migration](#)

September 17, 2021, Africa Times

A new World Bank report on climate migration begins, in part, in Morocco. The authors of "Groundswell" point to water challenges in the life of a village teen who thinks of moving to Rabat because the decreasing water supply is putting too much pressure on his family farm. 19 million people are expected to move within their own countries across the MENA states; that number soars to 86 million in sub-Saharan Africa by 2050.

### [Ghana must not falter in fight against illegal tobacco trade](#)

September 15, 2021, Africa Times

Ghana is set to complete its ratification of the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, an international treaty under the aegis of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

### [Mali-Russia: Bamako to sign contract with Wagner Group](#)

September 17, 2021, The Africa Report

The contract between Mali and Russia's Wagner Group stipulates that 1,000 Russian mercenaries will be deployed. Paris is trying to prevent it from being finalised.

### [DRC – China: Tshisekedi to revisit working relationship with Beijing](#)

September 17, 2021, The Africa Report

Kinshasa wants to review its relationship with Beijing, as only a few projects have been launched ever since the two capitals signed their 2008 cooperation agreement, which provided for the construction of public buildings and roads worth \$9bn.

### [South Africa: Zuma's early release from prison sparks doubts about Ramaphosa](#)

September 15, 2021, The Africa Report

Former president Jacob Zuma's sudden release on medical parole has sparked questions over whether President Cyril Ramaphosa has enough political support in the governing African National Congress for his reform agenda.



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