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Delhi Dialogue on Afghanistan Calls for Inclusive Government in Kabul

Third Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan was held on 10 November, 2021 in New Delhi. Attended by the National Security Advisers / Secretaries of the National Security Councils of India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, the highlight of the dialogue was a clarion call that Afghanistan's soil shouldn't be used by anyone for [sheltering, training, planning or financing](#) terrorist acts. The dialogue reiterated an open and inclusive government in Kabul representing all sections of Afghan society. The statement issued during Delhi Dialogue invokes all stakeholders to reach a regional consensus on Afghanistan through an inclusive government.

Taliban Backs TAPI Gas Pipeline Project

Turkmenistan's leadership has often aligned with the thought that the [Taliban-led government](#) in neighbouring Afghanistan would warm up to its ambitious TAPI gas pipeline project which on completion will transfer Turkmen natural gas to Pakistan and India through Afghanistan. The completion and security of the TAPI gas pipeline project has attracted a lot of attention after the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. The Taliban has assured security for the pipeline in the meeting held with Turkmenistan's Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov in Kabul on 30 Oct 2021.

Turkmenistan has already built its segment of the pipeline, but it remains unclear when the remaining length of the pipeline will be built. An issue of [financing](#) has acted as a stumbling block for the project. The successful execution of TAPI project can

perhaps act as the catalyst for stabilizing frayed geopolitics in the region.

Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan Conduct Joint Drills

Qalqon-2021, a [joint tactical and special drill](#) involving special units of the armed forces of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan was held from 2-5 November 2021 in Kazakhstan.

This was followed by "Khamkorlik-2021" an Uzbek and Kazakh [joint military drill](#) at the Termez district training ground from 17-24 November 2021. The purpose of joint drill was to increase the compatibility and the level of cooperation between the armed forces of the two states. The exercise presumably aims to protect the countries from any spill over of instability from Afghanistan.

Kazakhstan Pledges Military Aid to Central Asian Allies

Kazakhstan has pledged to provide [military-technical support](#) to Central Asia allies amid security threats emanating from neighboring Afghanistan. According to Ruslan Shpekbayev Kazakhstan Deputy Defence Minister, military assistance to neighboring countries will not affect Kazakhstan's armaments and defense capabilities since it will be provided from its excess reserves. Kazakhstan military assistance can be seen as an attempt to establish a greater role for the country which geographically is located farthest from Afghanistan in Central Asia.

Russian Troop Build-Up on the Ukrainian Border

There have been reports of a large build-up of Russian troops along the Ukrainian border. This has set alarm bells ringing with fears of an imminent confrontation between Moscow and Kiev. By Ukrainian estimates,

Russia has deployed more than 1,14,000 servicemen along the northern, southern and eastern borders.

Kremlin has denied any offensive motivation behind the accretion. Notwithstanding the general concerns, President Putin has called for 'establishing long-term guarantees to ensure Russia's security'. The simmering confrontation and recent developments in the region raises the sceptre of a deteriorating security situation in Eastern Europe.

Russia Successfully Test-Fires 'Tsirkon' Hypersonic and 'Kupol' Anti-Missile

Russia has carried out a test-fire of its [Tsirkon hypersonic](#) cruise missile in the Arctic on 29 November 2021. Calling the tests a success, the Russian Defence Ministry stated that the tests were a part of the series of tests for Russia's hypersonic missile weapons. Notably, the missile has undergone a number of recent tests, with Russia planning to equip both its warships and submarines with the Tsirkon. The missile can hit targets at sea and on land with a range of 1,000 kilometres and a speed of Mach 9. Meanwhile, Russia has [also placed into orbit](#) a military satellite believed to be part of the Kremlin's early warning anti-missile system called Kupol. According to reports, this could be a Tundra satellite. Russia had recently also launched [a missile that destroyed a satellite](#).

Russia and South-East Asian Nations Conduct Naval Drills

Russia and Southeast Asian states [conducted their first naval exercises in Indonesia on 01 December 2021](#). The naval drills along the Strait of Malacca on the north-eastern coast of Sumatra involved all the ten members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Russia dispatched its anti-submarine ship Admiral

Panteleev for the marine phase of the two-part virtual and marine exercises. ASEAN has previously held drills alongside the U.S. and Chinese navies as well.

On the sidelines of the drills, [Russian President hosted his Vietnamese counterpart](#) for bilateral discussions. The interactions covered issues pertaining to Russian-Vietnamese cooperation in politics, trade, defence industry cooperation, science and technology, people-to-people contacts, and regional issues.

Russia Hosts the Armenian and Azerbaijan Heads of States

In a Russia-led trilateral meeting between Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in Sochi, [President Vladimir Putin urged](#) Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev on 26 November 2021. The purpose of the meeting was to ease tensions and resolve remnants of disputes carried over from last year's war over Nagorno-Karabakh. The meeting was held against the backdrop of the recent flare-up in fighting between Baku and Yerevan.

Germany's First Traffic Light Coalition

After more than one and a half decades, Germany is going to see a change in [Chancellorship](#), from Angela Merkel to Olaf Scholz, the current finance minister. The Social Democrats are set to form what is being mentioned in jest as the traffic light coalition after The Greens and FDP, secured a narrow win in the general elections on 26 September 2021.

The new government's agenda will largely focus on climate protection, modernization, digitalization and making the industry climate neutral. It plans to boost investment- public and private- to fulfill its goals, rather than increase taxes. Along

with Chancellorship, SPD will get the Ministry of Defence. The Ministries of Economics and Energy will go to the Greens whereas the FDP is expected to take charge of the Ministry of Finance.

Channel Crisis Tests French British Ties

British PM Boris Johnson's hopes of striking a deal with France over the migrant crisis across the English Channel has hit rough weather. His Interior Minister's invitation for a meeting with the French was cancelled after Johnson published a letter on twitter, listing London's demands regarding action on refugees.

French Interior Minister, [Gerald Darmanin](#) ruled out a speedy bilateral solution, saying that any migration rule changes would have to be discussed between EU and UK. He called Johnson's letter on Twitter as "a mockery", and insisted that France could "not be held hostage to British domestic politics".

To make matters worse, a [large settlement](#) of migrants in the suburbs of Dunkirk in northern France was dismantled on 16 and 30 Nov 2021. President Emmanuel Macron has reportedly told Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson to 'get serious' in the effort to curb migrant flows, as post-Brexit and post AUKUS relations between their governments have deteriorated.

Denmark Views Nord Stream as a Stop-Gap Measure in Transition to Renewable Energy

Denmark's minister for [Climate, Energies and Utilities](#) Dan Jorgensen, has stated on 18 November 2021 that Nord Stream 2 is not a sustainable answer to solve Europe's energy crisis. It might help to remedy the situation in short term but the future will depend on lessening dependence on gas and other fossil fuels and make a transition to renewable sources. This would be encouraged by giving subsidies to renewable energy sources, especially off shore wind energy. The nation, which already gets almost half of its power from wind, has pledged to cut its emissions by 70% compared with 1990 levels by 2030 and to be carbon neutral by 2050.