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# SYLLOGE ON WEST ASIA

**FOCUS, NUCLEAR, MISSILES & OTHER  
SECURITY ISSUES IN WEST ASIA**

16 August - 31 August 2021



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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

## IRAN

### China's special envoy for Afghanistan meets with Zarif in Tehran

Islamic Republic News Agency, 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021

China's special envoy for Afghanistan affairs meets with Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in Tehran on Monday. Mohammad Javad Zarif held talks on Monday at Iran's Foreign Ministry with China's special envoy for Afghanistan Yu Shiang Yung on the latest developments in Afghanistan. Taliban, yesterday claims victory over Afghanistan, and the former president of Afghanistan left the country. Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani said on Monday in a Twitter message that "As in last 40 years, we support the people of Afghanistan and their will".

<https://en.irna.ir/news/84438953/China-s-special-envoy-for-Afghanistan-meets-with-Zarif-in-Tehran>

### President Raisi: Iran to help restore stability in Afghanistan

Islamic Republic News Agency, 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi said on Monday that Iran will help restore stability in Afghanistan and invites all groups to reach a national agreement as a neighbouring and brotherly country. Pointing out that the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the rule of the will of the oppressed people of Afghanistan has always been security-making and stabilizing, President Raisi noted that Iran is committed to neighbouring relations with Afghanistan by observing the developments in this country.

The military defeat and the US withdrawal from Afghanistan should become an opportunity to revive life, security, and lasting peace in the country, he underscored.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/84439063/President-Raisi-Iran-to-help-restore-stability-in-Afghanistan>

### Spokesman: Iran in Contact with All Involved Parties in Afghanistan

Fars News Agency, 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said that his country is in contact with all parties in Afghanistan to pave the ground for dialogue and reconciliation. In a Sunday tweet after Taliban forces entered the Afghan capital and the country's President Ashraf Ghani left for a yet uncertain destination, the Iranian foreign minister rejected war and violence as a solution to the existing problems in the neighbouring Afghanistan, reiterating Iran's support for the establishment of sustainable peace in the war-hit country. "The Islamic Republic of Iran will continue its efforts to [help realize] reconciliation in Afghanistan," the top diplomat added.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14000526000195/Spkesman-Iran-in-Cnac-wih-All-Invlved-Paries-in-Afghanisan>

### Half-century cooperation, credit for reinforcing Iran-China ties

Islamic Republic News Agency, 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Iran and China marked the 50th anniversary of establishing diplomatic ties on August 16, which is a credit for reinforcing bilateral relations in various fields. President Xi Jinping said in his message to Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi that he is ready to

strengthen cooperation between the two states in various fields with the cooperation of President Raisi. He pointed out that since the establishment of diplomatic ties half a century ago, the relations between China and Iran have developed steadily and the traditional friendship between the two countries has grown stronger with time. Meanwhile, President Raisi described Iran and China as ancient civilizations, saying Iran's commitment for establishing high-level relations with China is still underway. China has always supported Iran nuclear deal and has urged the US to lift sanctions against Iran and Iran has offered its support for China with regard to issues like Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Xinjiang.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/84439866/Half-century-cooperation-credit-for-reinforcing-Iran-China-ties>

### **Pres. Raisi discusses Afghanistan, JCPOA with Russia's Putin**

Islamic Republic News Agency, 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021

President Ebrahim Raisi discussed situation in Afghanistan with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on phone on Wednesday. During the conversation, he also raised the issue of revival of Iran's nuclear deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with President Putin. The two presidents also voiced their readiness to help restore peace and stability in Afghanistan. They further discussed the prospect of resuming talks to implement the UN Security Council. Negotiations to revive the P5 + 1 between Iran and Iran, which have been held in Vienna for several rounds, have stalled since June 20 and are expected to resume in September.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/84442092/Pres-Raisi-discusses-Afghanistan-JCPOA-with-Russia-s-Putin>

### **Pres. Raisi calls expanding ties with China a foreign policy priority**

Islamic Republic News Agency, 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi called improving the level of cooperation and expanding relations with China a priority in his foreign policy. He made the remarks in a phone conversation with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping on Wednesday afternoon when he described a number of China's strategic plans including the "One Belt-One Road" initiative in line with Iran's interests. He said that the full implementation of the Iran-China comprehensive cooperation plan should be on the agenda of both countries. President Raisi voiced Iran's readiness to cooperate with China in establishing security, stability and peace in Afghanistan and striving for its development and progress.

He believed the departure of foreigners, as well as past experiences in this country, has highlighted the need for the support and participation of all Afghan groups to ensure the security and development of Afghanistan more than ever before. Turning to the situation in Afghanistan, President Xi Jinping noted that China and Iran have common interests and demands in this issue and have had good cooperation in recent years.

<https://en.irna.ir/news/84442116/Pres-Raisi-calls-expanding-ties-with-China-a-foreign-policy>

### **FM Reiterates Peaceful Nature of Iran's N. Program**

Fars News Agency, 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021

The Iranian foreign ministry underlined the peaceful nature of the country's nuclear program, saying that the scaleback

measures are adopted in response to the violation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) by other signatories, specially the US. Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said on Tuesday that Iran's nuclear activities are fully in line with its commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and JCPOA. He added that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has been supervising Iran's nuclear sites and that Iran's reduction of its nuclear curbs has been done according to mechanisms within the JCPOA. Khatibzadeh said Iran's scaleback measures have been taken within the framework of the JCPOA and in response to the widespread violation of the landmark deal. Reaffirming the civilian and peaceful nature of the Islamic Republic's nuclear program, the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman said Tehran will fully reverse its remedial measures if all the signatories honor their commitments and the US verifiably removes all its sanctions.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14000527000133/FM-Reieraes-Peacefl-Nare-f-Iran's-N-Prgram>

### **Tehran, Moscow Confer on Restart of N. Deal Talks in Vienna**

Fars News Agency, 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Iranian and Russian envoys in a meeting discussed resumption of nuclear deal talks in Vienna which were suspended for the transition of power in Iran after presidential election. Russian Ambassador to International Organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov in a post on his Twitter account on Tuesday said that he met with his Iranian counterpart Kazzem Qaribabadi. He said the two sides discussed a restart of the talks on the revival of the Iran deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Action (JCPOA), which has been in crisis

since the US's unilateral withdrawal in May 2018, as well as issues on the agenda of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the body tasked with monitoring the technical aspects of the agreement's implementation.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14000527000179/Tehran-Mscw-Cnfer-n-Resar-f-N-Deal-Talks-in-Vienna>

### **Iran to Upgrade Homemade Bavar 373 Soon**

Fars News Agency, 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Deputy Defense Minister Brigadier General Mahdi Farahi announced that Iran's homemade Bavar-373 missile system will soon receive upgrades. "New editions of the Bavar 373 are coming and soon, a new edition that may be at the same or higher level than S400 will be unveiled," Brigadier General Fallahi said.

He pointed out that sanctions over the past 40 years were the most important incentive for the country's self-sufficiency in the defense field. It is a mobile missile defense system designed to intercept and destroy incoming hostile targets. The system employs missiles that have a maximum range of 300 kilometres. The system is capable of simultaneously detecting up to 300 targets, tracking 60 targets at once and engaging six targets at a time.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14000601000993/Iran-Upgrade-Hmemade-Bavar-33-Sn>

### **Int'l Sea Cup Competitions Kick Off in Northern Iranian Anzali Port**

Fars News Agency, 25<sup>th</sup> August 2021

The international military competitions named 'Sea Cup' started with participation of about 400 military forces from Russia,

Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Iran in the port of Anzali in Northern Iran. The opening ceremony of the event was held with a military parade of Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan on Tuesday evening. The event includes stages of surface shooting, aerial shooting, buoyant control in the sea, and harm control.

The competitions are aimed at reinforcing naval forces' skills.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14000603000456/In'l-Sea-Cp-Cmpeiins-Kick-Off-in-Nrthern-Iranian-Anzali-Pr>

### **Presence of Iran's Navy Flotilla Fleet in Atlantic Ocean Challenging for US**

Fars News Agency, 25<sup>th</sup> August 2021

A senior Iranian Navy commander underlined that the country's naval forces' presence in the Atlantic Ocean during recent months has been quite challenging for the US Navy. "Today the mighty Iranian Navy is not only the guardian of the regional peace and stability, but also it has a strong presence in the Southern seas, in the Northern parts of the Indian Ocean and in the other international waters, and the mighty Iranian Navy and IRGC Navy have appeared mightily in the region," Rear Admiral Hamzeh Kaviani who was speaking on the sidelines of the opening ceremony of a competition among the Navy ships of Iran and the Caspian Sea littoral countries, the Sea Cup, in Anzali Port in Northern Iran. "We are now present in the North Sea, the Gulf of Finland, and by the side of the Russian Navy, and this is proving our strength and grandeur in such regions as the Mediterranean Sea to the whole world," he added.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14000603000757/Presence-f-Iran's-Navy-Flilla-Flee-in-Alanic-Ocean-Challenging-fr-US>

### **New Iranian DM Prioritizes Exports of Defense Products**

Fars News Agency, 28<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Iran's new Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani announced that he plans to bolster the country's combat power and increase exports of home-made defense products. Improving combat capability by upgrading defense systems against possible hard- and semi-hard threats posed by enemies against the country coupled with exporting defense products will be prioritized in the defense ministry, General Ashtiani said on Saturday. Strengthening combat capability through upgrading defense systems against hard and semi-hard threats is one of the main missions of the Ministry of Defense, General Ashtiani emphasized. Benefiting from high capabilities and capacities of both public and private sectors and also knowledge-based companies is of the other priorities that will be followed up strictly at the Ministry of Defense, he highlighted.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14000606000377/New-Iranian-DM-Pririizes-Exprs-f-Defense-Prdcs>

### **Commander: Sanctions Unable to Block Iran's Efforts to Upgrade Missile Systems**

Fars News Agency, 29<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Commander of the Iranian Army's Air Defense Force Brigadier General Alireza Sabahi Fard said the cruel sanctions imposed by the US against Iran have failed to prevent progress of the country's missile industries. "Today, we have been able to upgrade and localize missile systems and turn the oppressive sanctions of the enemy into an opportunity," General Sabahi Fard said while visiting the manufacturing site of S200 missiles in Fordow on Saturday. He

expressed content that Iranian defensive sites have grown and expanded very well and the country has been able to upgrade its air defense operational capability.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14000607000183/Cmmander-Sancins-Unable-Blck-Iran's-Effrs-Upgrade-Missile-Systems>

### **Iran Ranks First in Int'l 'Sea Cup' Contest**

Fars News Agency, 29<sup>th</sup> August 2021

The Iranian naval forces have ranked first so far in the international military competitions named 'Sea Cup' with participation of about 400 military forces from Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Iran in the port of Anzali. The opening ceremony of the event was held in Anzali port in Northern Iran with a military parade of Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan last Tuesday evening. The event includes stages of surface shooting, aerial shooting, buoyant control in the sea, and harm control. The competitions are aimed at reinforcing naval forces' skills. In terms of total points, the Iranian team is the leader of the contest with 94 points, Kazakhstan is second with 85 points, Russia is third with 84 points, and Azerbaijani seamen are fourth with 80 points so far.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14000607000665/Iran-Ranks-Firs-in-In'l-'Sea-Cp'-Cnes>

### **Iran Successfully Test-Fires New Generation of Mersad 16 Missile System**

Fars News Agency, 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021

Iran's Air Defense Force on Tuesday successfully test-fired the country's home-made Mersad 16 missile system with the capability to intercept cruise missiles in the Central desert of the country. "Mersad 16

missile system is fully indigenous and benefits from new technologies to confront electronic warfare and simultaneously intercept several hostile targets," Deputy Commander of the Army's Air Defense Force for Operations General Mohammad Khoshqalb said. He added that Mersad 16 missile system was controlled for the first time by the country's integrated defense network, adding that the Vali-e Asr Command and Control Center detected, intercepted and destroyed the targets.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14000609000434/Iran-Sccessflly-Tes-Fires-New-Generain-f-Mersad-6-Missile-Sysem>

### **Pakistan Calls for Broader Naval Cooperation with Iran**

Fars News Agency, 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021

Chief of Pakistan's Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi in a meeting with Iranian Ambassador to Islamabad Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini voiced satisfaction with his recent visit to Iran, and underlined the importance of widening cooperation between the two countries' navies. "We need to enhance maritime cooperation between the two countries," Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi said during the meeting and while referring to his meeting with Commander Iran's Navy Rear Admiral Shahram Irani.

The Iranian ambassador appreciated the cooperation of the Pakistani side in releasing the seized Iranian ships and expressed hope that other problems in this area would be resolved with more cooperation between the two sides.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14000609000249/Pakistan-Calls-fr-Brader-Naval-Cperain-wih-Iran>

## IRAQ

### Electrical towers again become targets in Iraq

Al-Monitor, 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Water supply plants stopped operations entirely Aug. 14 in the Karkh neighborhood of Iraq's capital Baghdad after the power plants supplying it with electricity were bombed. The incident falls within a series of organized attacks on power plants across Iraq. In response, Iraqi President Mustafa al-Kadhimi stated Aug. 14, "The terrorists and chaos spreading forces are behind these events as they do not want stability for the country." On Aug. 13, Kadhimi tweeted, "Terrorists and fundamentalists do not want anything good to happen in Iraq. They are trying to change the situation by targeting the power plants." Since Aug. 9, the Qayyarah-Mosul Dam supply line in the north of the country has been targeted with explosives leading to the collapse of three towers. The attacks spread from the center to the south of Iraq. On Aug. 12, power supply lines in Karbala center were hit with explosives impacting two towers. These attacks have been an ongoing issue in the country, with incidents often being attributed to the Islamic State (IS).

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/08/electrical-towers-again-become-targets-iraq#ixzz75nJyhUNL>

### Turkish airstrikes claim Yazidi lives in Iraq's Sinjar

Al-Monitor, 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021

At least five people were killed and numerous others wounded in Turkish airstrikes on a makeshift hospital in the predominantly Yazidi Sinjar region of Iraq on Tuesday, according to local and diplomatic sources on the ground. The

attacks are part of Ankara's broader military campaign against the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) across Iraqi Kurdistan that has displaced thousands of villagers and claimed dozens of civilian lives. The clinic in the village of Skiniya at the southwestern foot of Sinjar Mountain was totally destroyed in the airstrikes, according to medical workers cited by Agence France-Presse.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/08/turkish-airstrikes-claim-yazidi-lives-iraq-sinjar#ixzz75nKOY03G>

### Turkey strikes PKK targets in Iraq's Kurdistan region

Al-Monitor, 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021

The Turkish military rained bombs on suspected hideouts of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Iraqi Kurdistan early Tuesday, hitting ammunition depots, caves and other hideouts, Turkey's National Defense Ministry announced in a statement. More than 20 aircraft took part in the sorties, which hit 28 separate targets in the Asos mountain range along the Iranian border. The attacks mark a further expansion of Turkey's ongoing offensive against the rebels well beyond the areas bordering Turkey and moving 200 kilometers (124 miles) deep into Iraqi territory. The mayor of Penjwin, a nearby district scarred by Iraq's long war with Iran, said the strikes commenced at around 6:30 a.m. local time and continued for around 20 minutes. He told the local news outlet Rudaw that Turkish drones likely carried out the attacks.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/08/turkey-strikes-pkk-targets-iraq-s-kurdistan-region#ixzz75nKts4rk>

### **Macron visits Erbil and Mosul, vows to stay the course against IS**

Al-Monitor, 30<sup>th</sup> August 2021

French President Emmanuel Macron on Aug. 30 visited the former "capital" of the Islamic State (IS), Mosul, a day after taking part in the Baghdad Conference, involving several high-level leaders from the region, in the Iraqi capital. He had flown to Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, on the night of Aug. 29, where he met with Yazidi Nobel Peace Prize laureate and IS torture survivor Nadia Murad as well as senior Kurdish officials. Macron had notably stressed during the Baghdad conference that no matter whether the United States pulled out of Iraq or not, France would remain. "Fighting against terrorism, supporting structured regional projects and responding to challenges in the Middle East can only be done together," Macron wrote on Twitter.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/08/macron-visits-erbil-and-mosul-vows-stay-course-against#ixzz75nLu4ZJg>

### **Baghdad conference to establish cooperation, partnership in region**

Al-Monitor, 30<sup>th</sup> August 2021

The Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership, held Aug. 28 in the Iraqi capital, provided great support for Iraq in terms of political, economic and security developments. The final statement stressed the necessity of regional cooperation in dealing with the common challenges. "The participants acknowledged that the region faces common challenges," the statement read, emphasizing the need to build a "basis of joint cooperation and mutual interests in

accordance with the principles of good neighborliness." The conference was attended by French President Emmanuel Macron, Jordanian King Abdullah, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emirati Vice President and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Rashid, and Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah. Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran were represented by their foreign ministers.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/08/baghdad-conference-establish-cooperation-partnership-region#ixzz75nMluEXd>

### **ISRAEL**

### **Bennett meets Egyptian intel chief in Jerusalem for discussions**

Jerusalem Post, 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett met with Egyptian Intelligence head Abbas Kamel in Jerusalem on Wednesday. Kamel is the first senior Egyptian official to meet with Bennett since he entered office. A statement from the Prime Minister's Office said they "discussed diplomatic, security and economic aspects of Israel-Egypt relations. "In addition, they discussed Egyptian mediation in the security situation with Gaza," the PMO stated.

Kamel also invited Bennett to visit Cairo in the coming weeks, in the name of Egyptian President Abdel Fatah el-Sisi. The meetings took place two days after Hamas once again shot rockets into Israel, and amid the Gazan terrorist group's threats to start another war.

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/bennett-meets-egyptian-intel-chief-in-jerusalem-for-discussions-677051>

### **Bennett Says Has Achieved All Goals as He Returns From Biden Meeting**

Haaretz, 29<sup>th</sup> August 2021

The prime minister says he has agreed with U.S. President Biden on 'a joint strategic effort' to stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, as he heads back after a first Washington visit since assuming office. Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, speaking on Sunday before boarding a return flight to Israel, said he has achieved all of his goals during his visit to Washington this week to meet with U.S. President Joe Biden and other senior U.S. officials. Bennett said his Friday meeting with Biden was "very warm and effective," noting that a "direct and personal bond based on trust," formed between them. He also said that the two leaders agreed to "a joint strategic effort" to stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-bennett-says-has-achieved-all-goals-as-he-returns-from-biden-meeting-1.10161729>

### **Gantz Says Agreed With Abbas on Confidence-building Measures, Including \$155m Loan**

Haaretz, 30<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Israel's defense minister, who met with the Palestinian president in first for a cabinet member in over a decade, also said they agreed on residency rights for thousands of people living in the West Bank with no legal status. Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas have agreed to several steps aimed at easing the Palestinian Authority's financial woes and improving security coordination with Israel, Gantz said on Monday. The two agreed at their meeting Sunday night to grant residency rights to thousands of people living in the West Bank with no

legal status. They also agreed that Israel will give the Palestinian Authority 500 million shekels (\$155 million) as an advance on the taxes Israel collects on the PA's behalf.

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-gantz-says-agreed-with-abbas-on-confidence-building-measures-including-155m-loan-1.10165751>

## **JORDAN**

### **Turkey, Jordan will work together for voluntary return of Syrians**

Middle East Monitor, 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Turkey and Jordan will work together to help Syrians voluntarily return to safe parts of their country, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu stated during his visit to Jordan today, Turkish newspaper *Daily Sabah* reports. During a joint press conference with his Jordanian counterpart Ayman Safadi, Cavusoglu stated that the Syrian crisis was one of the most important topics on the agenda among other regional issues including Libya and Afghanistan. Safadi said that the burden of hosting Syrians cannot be placed only on the countries in the region. "The international community must assume its responsibility towards neighbouring countries in order to provide adequate conditions for Syrian refugees," he said.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20210817-turkey-jordan-will-work-together-for-voluntary-return-of-syrians/>

### **Russian president, Jordan's king discuss Afghanistan, Syria, Palestine**

Middle East Monitor, 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021

Russian President Vladimir Putin met with Jordan's King Abdullah II on the sidelines of military-technical forum Army-2021

held in the suburbs of the capital Moscow on Monday, *Anadolu Agency* reported.

Opening the meeting, Putin said relations between Russia and Jordan have been developing in all directions of mutual interests. He said they will also discuss bilateral cooperation as well as the situation in Afghanistan and Syria.

For his part, Abdullah said he believes Russia and Jordan can play a stabilizing role in Syria. He also stressed the need to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"I must mention your important role in the settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And I think that now it really is time for the Palestinians to start a new life," he said.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/2021/0823-russian-president-jordans-king-discuss-afghanistan-syria-palestine/>

## LEBANON

### Hariri opposes shipment of Iranian fuel to Lebanon

Ya Libnan, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Lebanon's former Prime Minister Saad Hariri on Thursday slammed the announcement of an Iranian fuel ship sailing to Lebanon, saying it will pose more risks and cause isolation of Lebanon by the international community.

"Is what we heard this morning [from Hezbollah's head Hassan Nasrallah] on the arrival of Iranian ships is a good news to the Lebanese people or a dangerous announcement where Lebanon will be involved in internal and external conflicts," Hariri said on Twitter.

Hariri said the ship was sent without Hezbollah's coordination with the

Lebanese government. He also said the fuel crisis in Lebanon is due to the smuggling of fuel from Lebanon to the Syrian regime. "The [Hezbollah] party also knows that the Iranian support ships will pose additional risks and penalties to the Lebanese, similar to the sanctions to which Venezuela and other countries are subject," Hariri said. He also accused Iran of hindering the formation of the Lebanese government.

<https://yalibnan.com/2021/08/20/hariri-opposes-shipment-of-iranian-fuel-to-lebanon/>

### Hizbullah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah: U.S. Withdrawal From Afghanistan Is A Lesson For American Allies In Lebanon, Region – America Would Rather Suffer A 'Historic And Humiliating Defeat' Than Fight On Behalf Of Others

MEMRI TV, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Hizbullah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah reacted to the aftermath of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, saying the U.S. left Saigon in the same way. He made these remarks in a public address that was aired on Al-Alam TV (Iran) on August 17, 2021. Nasrallah went on to say that U.S. President Joe Biden told the American people, who were "astonished to see these humiliating images of failure and defeat," that it is the duty of the U.S. to send forces to other countries on the behalf of anyone. He that this should serve as a lesson for American allies in Lebanon and the region, because the U.S. would rather suffer a "historic and humiliating defeat" than fight on behalf of the Afghan people.

<https://www.memri.org/reports/hizbullah-secretary-general-hassan-nasrallah-us-withdrawal-afghanistan-lesson-american>

### **Syria under attack by Israel after Hezbollah secured a shipment of Iranian fuel**

Ya Libnan, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Hours after Lebanon's Hezbollah said it had secured a shipment of Iranian fuel for the struggling Mediterranean nation, neighboring Syria has reported that it was under attack by Israel, which has sought to disrupt supply networks among its three foes. "At approximately 23:03 this evening, the Israeli enemy carried out an aerial aggression with rockets from the direction southeast of Beirut, targeting some points in the vicinity of the city of Damascus and the vicinity of the city of Homs," the Syrian Ministry of Defense said in a statement Thursday. "Our air defense systems intercepted the enemy missiles and downed most of them."

"The results of the aggression are now being assessed," it added.

<https://yalibnan.com/2021/08/20/syria-under-attack-by-israel-after-hezbollah-secured-a-shipment-of-iranian-fuel/>

### **Hezbollah chief says Iranian fuel vessels setting off soon**

Ya Libnan, 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021

The leader of the Iranian-backed Hezbollah group, Hassan Nasrallah, said on Sunday that vessels carrying Iranian fuel will be setting sail soon followed by others to ease fuel shortages in Lebanon. The Iranian fuel shipments to Lebanon were purchased by a group of Lebanese Shi'ite businessmen, Iran's semi-official Nournews said on Thursday. The report came hours after Nasrallah said an Iranian fuel shipment would set sail on Thursday.

"Based on information we have received the Iranian fuel shipments that...(Hezbollah's leader Hassan) Nasrallah mentioned today were all bought by a group of Lebanese Shi'ite businessmen," Nournews reported. "The shipments are considered their property from the moment of loading" said the news website, which is close to Iran's Supreme National Security Council.

<https://yalibnan.com/2021/08/23/146361/>

### **Lebanese Prime Minister-Designate Najib Mikati Pleads For Help From The Arab League: Lebanon Is In Existential Danger; We Will Not Allow Iranian Fuel Ships To Unload Their Cargo If This Leads To Further Sanctions On Lebanon**

MEMRI TV, 27<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Lebanese Prime Minister-Designate Najib Mikati called on the Arab League to send aid to Lebanon, saying: "Please, do not give up on Lebanon." He made his remarks in an interview that aired on Al-Arabiya Network (Saudi Arabia) on August 27, 2021. Mikati said that Lebanon will always be part of the Arab world, and that if the Arab world wants to help Lebanon prevent further sanctions, it must provide aid to the country. He said that if the Iranian tanker arrives in Lebanon and unloads its cargo in the country, Lebanon will be subject to additional sanctions from the West, and that for this reason, Lebanon cannot allow the ship to unload. Mikati explained that Lebanon is in a dire situation and that Lebanese citizens lack fuel for their cars and their electric generators.

<https://www.memri.org/tv/lebanon-prime-minister-designate-najib-mikati-will-not-allow-iranian-fuel-ships>

### **Fuel crisis sparks sectarian violence in Lebanon**

Ya Libnan, 30<sup>th</sup> August 2021

A dispute over fuel supplies ignited sectarian tensions between neighbouring Shi'ite Muslim and Christian villages in southern Lebanon over the weekend, forcing the army to intervene, according to media reports. Clashes over the crippling gasoline and diesel shortages have become a daily occurrence in Lebanon, prompting growing concern about a descent into chaos after two years of financial meltdown. Around six people were wounded in a dispute involving the Christian village of Maghdouche and Shi'ite village of Ankoun according to media reports

<https://yalibnan.com/2021/08/30/fuel-crisis-sparks-sectarian-violence-in-lebanon/>

## **SAUDI ARABIA**

### **Saudi Arabia, Russia ink agreement to develop joint military cooperation**

Saudi Gazette, 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Saudi Arabia and Russia signed on Monday an agreement to develop joint military cooperation between the two countries, Saudi Arabia's Deputy Defense Minister Prince Khalid Bin Salman announced. Prince Khalid who is visiting Moscow as part of efforts to strengthen bilateral relations, said on Twitter: "I signed an agreement with the Russian Deputy Minister of Defense Colonel General Alexander Fomin between the Kingdom and the Russian Federation aimed at developing joint military cooperation between the two countries." Prince Khalid met with Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoygu earlier to "explore ways to

strengthen the military and defense cooperation" between the two countries.

<https://www.saudigazette.com.sa/article/610166/SAUDI-ARABIA/Saudi-Arabia-Russia-ink-agreement-to-develop-joint-military-cooperation>

### **Saudi air defenses intercept Houthi drone launched towards Khamis Mushait**

Alarabiya, 25<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Saudi air defenses on Wednesday intercepted a booby-trapped drone launched by the Iran-backed Houthi militia towards the Kingdom's Khamis Mushait, according to the Arab Coalition. "Houthi militias continue their attempts to target civilians and civilian objects," the Arab Coalition said in a statement. "We are taking operational measures to protect civilians and civilian objects from hostile attempts," the statement added.

<https://english.alarabiya.net/News/gulf/2021/08/25/Saudi-air-defenses-intercept-Houthi-drone-launched-towards-Khamis-Mushait>

### **Saudi defense forces intercept, destroy Houthi ballistic missile targeting Jazan**

Alarabiya, 30<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Saudi Arabia's defense forces on Monday intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile launched by the Iran-backed Houthi militia towards Jazan, according to a statement. The Arab Coalition in a statement said Saudi air defense forces "thwarted the militias' futile attempts" to target the Kingdom.

<https://english.alarabiya.net/News/gulf/2021/08/30/Saudi-defense-forces-intercept-Houthi-ballistic-missile-targeting-Jazan>

### Several wounded in a drone attack on Saudi airport: Coalition

Aljazeera, 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021

A drone attack on Saudi Arabia's Abha airport has wounded eight people, said the Saudi-led coalition battling Houthi rebels in neighbouring Yemen. Following an earlier reported attack, "a second drone attempting to attack Abha International Airport was intercepted and shot down," on Tuesday the coalition said in a statement carried by the kingdom's official Al-Ekhbariya television channel. "Eight people were wounded and a civilian aircraft was damaged, according to initial information," it added. The coalition said the second attack on the airport "constitutes a war crime" after it intercepted a booby-trapped drone earlier in the day. The coalition also said it launched a military operation targeting a launchpad used in Yemen's capital Sanaa – under rebel control since 2014 – that was used to carry out the Abha attack.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/8/31/several-wounded-drone-attack-saudi-airport-houthis-yemen>

## SYRIA

### Russian Defense Ministry: Al-Nusra terrorists launched 26 attacks in de-escalation zone, Idlib

Syrian Arab News Agency, 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021

The Russian Defense Ministry announced on Tuesday that Jabhat al-Nusra terrorists carried out 26 attacks in the de-escalation zone of Idlib during the past 24 hours. The Ministry said in a statement posted on its website that 26 attacks were observed from the sites of the terrorist organization of Jabhat al-Nusra in the de-escalation zone in Idlib , including 14 attacks in Idlib

province and 12 attacks in Lattakia, Aleppo and Hama.

<http://www.sana.sy/en/?p=245672>

### Nebenzya: some sides try to hinder Syrian Arab Army's efforts in eliminating terrorism

Syrian Arab News Agency, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Russia's permanent representative to the United Nations, Vasily Nebenzya, affirmed that some parties are trying to hinder the efforts of the Syrian Arab Army and the Russian forces in eliminating the remaining of terrorist organizations, affirming his country's support to Syria in the fight against terrorism. Nebenzya added "Thanks to the continuous and tireless efforts of the Syrian and Russian armies, the capabilities of terrorist organizations on Syrian territory, especially Daesh, have been largely weakened, but some terrorist cells continue their attacks and still pose a serious threat."

<http://www.sana.sy/en/?p=245925>

### Turkish airstrike kills members of US-backed Kurdish force in Syria

Al-Monitor, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Four members of a US-backed Syrian Kurdish force were killed in a Turkish air attack on the town of Tal Tamar Thursday, according to the Syrian Democratic Forces, part of an escalating multi-pronged campaign against Kurdish militants in Syria and Iraq. The SDF said the attack occurred at 6 p.m. local time and targeted the Tal Tamer Military Council headquarters. Ankara insists the male and female Kurds fighting within the SDF ranks pose an existential threat to Turkey because

of their connections to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which is fighting for self-rule in Turkey. The insurgency that was launched in 1984, initially for Kurdish independence, has claimed at least 40,000 lives, most of them rebels.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/08/turkish-airstrike-kills-members-us-backed-kurdish-force-syria#ixzz75oKQnoYk>

### **President Putin: Western sanctions on Syria are illegitimate**

Syrian Arab News Agency, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Russian President Vladimir Putin stressed on Friday that the Western sanctions imposed on Syria are illegitimate and complicate the economic and social situation in the country. “ We have informed the German partners of our vision of the situation in Syria, where the cessation of hostilities agreement is still applied in most of its territory and the destroyed economy and infrastructure are being rebuilt, but the terrorist threat still remains there .” President Putin said during a press conference with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Moscow. Putin added “We attach great importance to Resolution 2585, which stipulates providing comprehensive humanitarian assistance to Syria, and this matter was largely a result of the agreements during the Russian-American summit in Geneva last June and we hope that European countries, including Germany, will join efforts exerted to help the Syrian people.”

<http://www.sana.sy/en/?p=245971>

### **Russian Defense Ministry Jabhat al-Nusra terrorists carry out 28 attacks in de-escalation zone of Idlib**

Syrian Arab News Agency, 21<sup>st</sup> August 2021

Terrorist organizations deployed in the de-escalation zone of Idlib continued their attacks on safe regions and villages in the countryside of Hama, Aleppo, Lattakia and the liberated part of Idlib countryside.

The Russian Defense Ministry said in a statement posted on its social media page that terrorist organizations in Idlib carried out 28 attacks during the last 24 hours, including 14 attacks in Idlib province, 10 in Lattakia and two ones in each of Aleppo and Hama provinces.

<http://www.sana.sy/en/?p=246014>

### **Syrian jihadis hail Taliban ‘conquest’ despite their own effort to rebrand**

Al-Monitor, 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021

Islamists of various shades have hailed the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan as a major victory for global jihad. Leaders of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the powerful extremist Sunni group that rules over broad swathes of the northwestern province of Idlib and used to pay fealty to al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS), are no exception, airing hope that a similar scenario will unfold in Syria with the ouster of President Bashar al-Assad and his “criminal regime.” “With utmost joy and delight, we received the news of the conquest of our people in Afghanistan and their land’s [liberation] from the occupation and its agents at the hands of the Taliban,” HTS said in an Aug. 18 statement.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/08/syrian->

[jihadis-hail-taliban-conquest-despite-their-own-effort-rebrand#ixzz75oL7TitD](#)

## TURKEY

### **IDEF 2021: Self-sufficient Turkey's latest arms take the stage**

Daily Sabah, 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021

One of the largest global defense events kicked off Tuesday, and the spotlight was on the latest military and technology products produced by Turkish contractors, showcasing what President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said was the ground the nation gained over the last two decades. Addressing the event, Erdoğan said Turkey was not only self-sufficient in terms of its defense industry but that it was also pleased to share its know-how with its friends and allies. "We have managed to reduce our external dependency in the defense industry to 20% from 80%," Erdoğan said. The number of projects in the industry has exceeded 750, compared to just 62 in 2002, lifting the budget of the projects up to \$75 billion from \$5.5 billion, he added.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/idef-2021-self-sufficient-turkeys-latest-arms-take-the-stage>

### **Turkey launches new Coast Guard Command unit on Lake Van against illegal migration**

Anadolu Agency, 21<sup>st</sup> August 2021

The Turkish Coast Guard Boat Command, which was launched to prevent smuggling activities over Lake Van and to ensure security on the lake, will play an active role in preventing irregular migrants from being taken to other provinces by boat, according to officials on Saturday. Due to the recent developments in Afghanistan, measures have been taken to prevent irregular migrants from trying to enter Turkey

illegally through Iran. The Boat Command elements currently deployed in the eastern Van province's Edremit district will keep Lake Van -- which has an area of 3,713 square kilometers (1,433 square miles) -- under surveillance 24/7.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/turkey/turkey-launches-new-coast-guard-command-unit-on-lake-van-against-illegal-migration/2342235>

### **Turkey may sign new S-400 deal soon, Russian official says**

Daily Sabah, 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021

Turkey and Russia are in the process of signing a new contract for the purchase of additional S-400 missiles in the near future, the Interfax news agency cited the head of Russia's Rosoboronexport arms exporter as saying Monday. Ties between NATO allies Turkey and the United States were badly strained over Ankara's acquisition of the advanced S-400 Russian air defense system, prompting Washington to remove Turkey from its F-35 Lightning II jet program.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/turkey-may-sign-new-s-400-deal-soon-russian-official-says/news>

### **'Turkey is not at final stage to purchase 2nd S-400 unit:' Report**

Daily Sabah, 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021

A senior Turkish official speaking to Middle East Eye (MEE) Tuesday dismissed the Russian side's claims on the purchase of a second unit of the S-400 air defense system, saying Ankara is not in the final stages of signing such a deal. There has been no change in the status of the negotiations with Moscow, the official said. "And in the near future we will go out with partners to formalize and sign a contract,"

he told Russian state media. According to the Turkish official, whose identity wasn't revealed, the report is part of a Russian perception operation whereby it releases misleading statements against Turkey amid its unsolved issues with the American side.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkey-is-not-at-final-stage-to-purchase-2nd-s-400-unit-report>

### **Turkish jets hit PKK terror hideouts in N.Iraq, destroying dozens of targets**

Anadolu Agency, 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Turkish fighter jets destroyed dozens of PKK terror targets in northern Iraq, Turkey's National Defense Ministry said on Tuesday. The effective and comprehensive counter-terrorism operation of the Turkish Armed Forces against the PKK terror group continues with determination, the ministry said in a statement. The Turkish Armed Forces, in coordination with the National Intelligence Organization, detected terror targets in the Asos region in northern Iraq, it said. A total of 28 targets used by PKK terrorists as shelters, ammunition depots, caves, and the so-called headquarters were destroyed in an air operation with the participation of more than 20 aircraft, it noted.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkish-jets-hit-pkk-terror-hideouts-in-niraq-destroying-dozens-of-targets/2344327>

## **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

### **UAE's Barakah nuclear power plant starts up Unit 2**

Saudi Gazette, 27<sup>th</sup> August 2021

The Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC) on Friday announced that its operating and maintenance subsidiary,

Nawah Energy Company (Nawah) has successfully started up Unit 2 of the Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant, located in the Al Dhafra Region of Abu Dhabi Emirate, United Arab Emirates (UAE). ENEC and Nawah are continuing to define the UAE's success story with this milestone, which has been achieved within 12 months of the start-up of Unit 1, and within four months of commercial operations of Unit 1. This highlights the significant progress being made in bringing the four units of the Barakah Plant online, in a safe and timely manner, to quickly decarbonize the UAE's energy sector. "Operations started at Unit 2 at the Barakah nuclear energy plant," said Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed, the Ruler's representative in the western region of Abu Dhabi. "This is a new achievement in the energy sector that reflects UAE's ability to develop strategic mega projects and its commitment to sustainability and economic growth."

<https://www.saudigazette.com.sa/article/610289/World/Mena/UAEs-Barakah-nuclear-power-plant-starts-up-Unit-2>