



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

WEST ASIA DIGEST

Monthly Compilation of News Items from West Asia

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India and the UAE advance defence cooperation

On 24 June 2026, India and the UAE held a meeting in New Delhi to further advance defence cooperation under the Strategic Defence Partnership Framework. India's Ministry of Defence informed that the meeting was co-chaired by Joint Secretary (International Cooperation) Amitabh Prasad and Brigadier Staff Jamal Ebrahim Mohamed Ebrahim Almar-Zooqi from the UAE. The discussions focused on strengthening defence industry collaboration, promoting innovation, leveraging niche and emerging technologies, and enhancing maritime security. Both sides reviewed progress under the strategic partnership and reaffirmed their commitment to deepening defence ties through closer institutional cooperation and mutually beneficial initiatives.

India–Oman CEPA comes into force

On 1 June 2026, the India–Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) came into force, marking a significant milestone in strengthening bilateral economic and strategic ties. The agreement granted immediate duty-free access for all Indian textile, apparel, and handicraft exports to Oman by eliminating the existing 5 per cent MFN duty and introducing a fully digital Certificate of Origin framework to facilitate trade. It will also enhance cooperation on intellectual property rights and the recognition of Geographical Indications (GIs), benefiting Indian handloom and handicraft products. The CEPA is expected to boost bilateral trade, deepen supply chain

linkages, expand opportunities for Indian exporters, artisans, and MSMEs, and reinforce Oman's role as a strategic gateway to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Iran and US sign MoU to end the war

On 17 June 2026, the United States and Iran signed a 14-point MoU to formalise a ceasefire, end the conflict, lift the US naval blockade on Iran in exchange for reopening the Strait of Hormuz, and establish a 60-day window for negotiating a broader peace settlement. The agreement emphasised de-escalation and confidence-building, with Iran committing to remove military obstacles, including naval mines, and restore secure, unrestricted navigation through the strait. The first round of US–Iran talks in Switzerland on 21–22 June produced a preliminary roadmap for conflict resolution, including a temporary sanctions waiver, plans to establish a Lebanon de-confliction mechanism, and a maritime communication hotline to maintain transit through the Strait of Hormuz. The US also introduced limited sanctions relief by easing restrictions on Iranian oil exports and releasing frozen assets. The peace talks remain fragile after US strikes on 26–27 June targeted ten Iranian coastal and military facilities in response to Iran's attacks on commercial shipping. Iran retaliated against US bases in Kuwait and Bahrain. Both sides eventually decided to de-escalate agreeing to resume technical talks in Doha.

Lebanon-Israel-US Trilateral Framework

The Trilateral Framework signed by Lebanon, Israel, and the US on 26 June 2026 outlines a pathway toward ending

conflict and establishing lasting peace, security, and normalised relations between Lebanon and Israel. Both sides affirmed mutual recognition, respect for sovereignty, and their intention to formally conclude the state of war through direct negotiations facilitated by Washington. The agreement's core security provision requires the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) to gradually assume full authority across Lebanese territory through phased deployment and verified arrangements. Lebanon committed to restoring the state's monopoly over the use of force by disarming non-state armed groups and dismantling their military infrastructure. In return, Israel agreed to progressively redeploy its forces and reiterated that it has no territorial ambitions in Lebanon. The framework also includes US-supported verification, reconstruction, and economic assistance. However, Hezbollah rejected the agreement, while continued Israel–Hezbollah clashes in June 2026 have raised doubts about implementation.

Marco Rubio visits Gulf

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, and Bahrain between 23 and 25 June following the US–Iran ceasefire framework and ongoing negotiations. Rubio, speaking at the GCC Foreign Ministers' meeting in Manama, reassured Gulf States that while the US is seeking an enduring peace with Iran, it would not be at the expense of the security of its allies. The joint statement by the US and the six GCC member states noted that lasting peace would address Iran's ballistic missiles, drones, and support for proxy groups. The statement also emphasised on free, unconditional, and

unrestricted navigation in the Strait of Hormuz without any tolls, fees, or attempts to assert control. The statement also addressed Gaza, calling for a technocratic Palestinian committee to oversee reconstruction; Lebanon, backing disarmament of non-state armed groups; and Iraq, condemning drone attacks by Iran-aligned factions on GCC infrastructure.

US notified Congress of the jet engine sale to Türkiye

On 24 June 2026, the United States formally notified Congress of its intention to approve the sale of more than US\$700 million worth of General Electric jet engines to Türkiye for its indigenous KAAN fighter aircraft programme. The proposed sale, viewed as a gesture of support ahead of the NATO Summit in Türkiye, proceeded despite objections from several Democratic lawmakers over Ankara's continued possession of the Russian S-400 air defence system, which had led to its removal from the F-35 programme in 2019. While the State Department stated that the sale had been cleared after considering political, military, economic, human rights, and arms-control factors, members of Congress warned against any future F-35 sales to Türkiye and reserved the option to introduce a joint resolution of disapproval within the statutory review period.

BRICS NSAs meeting takes place in New Delhi

On 23 June 2026, the 16th BRICS National Security Advisers (NSAs) Meeting was held in New Delhi, where the NSAs and Heads of Delegation discussed global and

non-traditional security challenges, including energy, food and supply chain security, cyber threats, climate-induced instability, and the misuse of emerging technologies by terrorist networks. The participants reviewed the outcomes of the BRICS Joint Working Groups on Counter-Terrorism and on Security in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies, reaffirming their commitment to strengthening capacity-building, intelligence sharing, law enforcement cooperation, and collective efforts against terrorism and cyber risks. On 22 June, India's NSA held a bilateral meeting with his Iranian counterpart on the sidelines. Both sides reviewed the evolving security situation in West Asia, exchanged views on recent regional developments, and discussed strengthening cooperation under the BRICS framework and broader India–Iran bilateral relations.

IMO launches Strait of Hormuz seafarer evacuation plan

On 23 June 2026, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) announced the implementation of a large-scale evacuation plan for more than 11,000 seafarers stranded in the Strait of Hormuz region following the signing of an MoU between the USA and Iran. The operation was to be conducted in close coordination with Iran, Oman, other regional coastal states, the USA, and the maritime industry after safety guarantees and navigational conditions had been verified.

Somaliland President visits Israel

Somaliland President Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi visited Israel on 14 June 2026. Israel became the first state to

recognise Somaliland's independence in December 2025. During his visit, Abdullahi met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Isaac Herzog, signalling the beginning of a new phase in bilateral relations. Both sides signed Strategic Declaration on Cooperation aimed at strengthening collaboration in maritime security, freedom of navigation, trade, and regional stability, particularly in the Red Sea region. On 15 June, Abdullahi and Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar inaugurated Somaliland's embassy in Jerusalem rather than Tel Aviv. Somaliland had appointed Mohamed Hagi as ambassador to Israel in February 2026, while Israel appointed Michael Lotem as ambassador to Somaliland in April. Abdullahi also attended the inaugural Somaliland–Israel Business Forum to promote trade and investment.

UAE and France deepen strategic defence partnership

On 15 June 2026, UAE-based EDGE Group and France's Safran signed a Strategic Cooperation Agreement at the Eurosatory 2026 defence exhibition in Paris, establishing a framework to expand collaboration across aerospace and defence technologies. Building on their existing cooperation in defence electronics and smart weapons, the agreement broadened the partnership to include advanced equipment, unmanned systems, electronic warfare, and other critical defence capabilities. Both sides have reaffirmed their commitment to combining technological expertise to develop innovative and resilient defence solutions, reflecting the evolving requirements of modern warfare.