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JAPAN

Digest

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PM Kishida visits Europe, West Asia

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida [visited](#) Vilnius, Lithuania to take part in the NATO Leaders' Summit held in that city between 11-13 July, followed by trips to Brussels, where he visited NATO headquarters. At Vilnius, Kishida committed to providing additional non-lethal support to Ukraine, particularly detection systems for unmanned aircraft, personal armour and transport vehicles. Kishida met separately with NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg to unveil Japan's new Individually-Tailored Partnership Program (ITPP), which replaces the earlier Individual Partnership and Cooperation Program (IPCP), last revised in 2020. The new ITPP expands the areas where Japan cooperates with the European security grouping to thirteen from a previous tally of nine domains. In addition to traditional areas of cooperation, such as maritime cooperation and anti-piracy, new areas such as military interoperability, climate change and destructive emerging technologies have been added. Kishida also met separately with Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, South Korean President Yoon Suk-Yeol and New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Hipkins on the sidelines of the summit.

Following his Europe tour, Kishida [visited](#) three countries in West Asia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. With an objective of stabilisation of energy

supplies from the region, and seeking cooperation in the fields of next-generation renewable energy technologies, Kishida first visited Saudi Arabia and met with Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman among other leaders, and the two countries agreed on cooperation in the field of green hydrogen extraction and other technologies. Kishida also declared that the free trade agreement Japan has on the anvil with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) would be expedited, and that Saudi Arabia and Japan would initiate a security dialogue with each other. In the UAE and Qatar, Kishida met with the respective leaders of both countries, and proposed turning West Asia into a "next-generation energy hub" focused on new technologies such as ammonia production and hydrogen transportation. Kishida also urged the leaders of all three countries to support the free and open international order based on the rule of law, in a move designed to counter China's inroads into the region.

India-Japan Strategic Dialogue

India and Japan organised a new round of their bilateral security dialogue with the visit of Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry Yasutoshi Nishimura to New Delhi on 20 July. Nishimura and Indian Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw [signed](#) a memorandum of understanding designed to strengthen supply chains for critical semiconductor components in order to

boost economic security, and reduce dependence on China. The new MoU covers components such as chips, batteries and minerals used in the manufacture of advanced semiconductors. Nishimura lauded India's human resource reserves after the signing, and expressed a desire to start practical cooperation in concrete areas as soon as possible. This agreement follows the recent agreement between India and the United States to also boost semiconductor supply chains along with key equipment and technology.

Following on from Nishimura's visit, Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs Yoshimasa Hayashi [met](#) his Indian counterpart, Dr. S. Jaishankar, and issued a statement jointly pledging to work towards a Free and Open Indo-Pacific in light of China's growing footprint in the region. The two sides also agreed to deepen collaboration in security domains, especially on defence technology and equipment transfers. Japan, as president of the G-7, also reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring that the upcoming G-20 Leaders' Summit hosted by India is successful. The two ministers also discussed issues of joint concern in the global arena such as Ukraine and East Asia, while they agreed on their readiness to assist a debt-ridden Sri Lanka to restructure its debt in a sustainable way to prevent its collapse.

Japan's population hits new lows

Japan's population statistics plumbed a new [low](#) in 2022, statistics from a survey by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Telecommunications revealed on 26 July. The survey recorded a decline of 801,000 Japanese citizens in 2022 due to death or emigration, leaving the total population at 122,423,038. The decline was recorded in all 47 prefectures, the first time in history. Including foreign residents, the total population of Japan stood at 125,416,877, a decline of 511,000 persons from the previous year. The number of births of Japanese nationals declined for the 14th consecutive year, with a record low of 772,000 births as against a record high 1.57 million deaths. The migrant population in Japan rose after a hiatus of three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, from 289,000 to 2,993,839 persons, due to which Tokyo became the only prefecture to record an overall population increase. Children aged 14 and under accounted for 11.82 percent of the population, a decline of 0.18 percentage points, while the elderly aged 65 and over accounted for 29.15 percent, an increase of 0.15 percentage points.