

This Week's Developments

August 22 - 28, 2021

- China and Russia poised to step into Afghanistan gap
- America's flight from Afghanistan will embolden jihadists
- The fiasco in Afghanistan is grave blow to US standing
- Biden meets with new Israeli prime minister
- Palestinians in Gaza resume protests against Israel
- Melting ice fuels Putin's dream of Arctic trade route
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China and Russia poised to step into the Afghanistan gap

Financial Times, August 18, 2021



EVENT

The Taliban's takeover in Afghanistan redraws Asia's geopolitical map and hands China and Russia — two of America's staunchest strategic rivals — an opportunity to project their power in the wake of Washington's chaotic withdrawal, analysts in several countries said. "China has benefited from the irresponsible behaviour of [the US], which has deeply undermined the international image of the US and the relationship between Washington and its allies," said Zhu Yongbiao, a Chinese government adviser on central Asia and professor at Lanzhou University. Arkady Dubnov, a political analyst and central Asia expert in Moscow, had a similar take. "We can align our interests [with China] in opposing the US," he said. "What is good for us is bad for Americans, what's bad for us is good for Americans. Today the situation is bad for Americans and so it is good for us."

COMMENT

The ramifications of the sudden takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban will reverberate around the world. Not for one minute did America believe their sworn enemy would be back in power even before they had fully withdrawn. American adversaries are seeking to take advantage of this situation – especially Russia and China. They have both said they will support the Taliban economically. Putin said Russia was willing to "closely communicate" with China to "crack down on terrorism, cut off drug smuggling and prevent the spill over of security risks from Afghanistan" to safeguard stability in the region. The Bible is clear that Russia (at the time of the end) is a nation that the US / UK cannot contain. The removal of Western powers from Afghanistan only strengthens Russia's resolve to increase its sphere of influence and to look south...

BIBLE QUOTE

And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me,
(Ezekiel 38:15-16)

America's flight from Afghanistan will embolden jihadists around the world

The Economist, August 28, 2021



EVENT When a new American president takes office, the leaders of other countries compete to be the first to speak to him. When the Taliban took over Kabul, there was a similar rush to speak to Abdul Ghani Baradar, the public face of the Afghan militant group's leadership. The winner was Ismail Haniyeh, the leader of Hamas, the Islamist group which controls the Gaza Strip. The read-out of the call posted on Hamas's website has Mr Haniyeh congratulating Mr Baradar on his victory against the "American occupation" of Afghanistan. It would, he said, be "a prelude to the demise of all occupation forces, foremost of which is the Israeli occupation of Palestine". Mr Baradar responded in kind, wishing Hamas "victory and empowerment as a result of their resistance".

COMMENT Shortly after this article was published, two explosions outside Kabul airport killed dozens, including both Afghan civilians and American troops. This followed warnings that a group affiliated to Islamic State might carry out bombings at the airport. This article may well express the major Biblical development from events happening in Afghanistan. Militant Islamists may well see the demise of US power and the Taliban victory as a sign that now is the time to rise up. This is exactly how Hamas see it. They are also militant Islamists whose number one goal is to see the demise of Israel. Hamas is allied therefore to the Taliban and to ISIS. In Syria Muslim extremists took to the streets to celebrate. On social media jihadists from all over the world shared memes celebrating the Taliban's victory. All of this could massively embolden those who hate Israel. This in turn could very easily lead to the initial inner ring war with Israel immediate enemies – Hezbollah, Hamas, Syria. God's plan is reaching a conclusion.

BIBLE QUOTE "On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot in a woodpile, like a flaming torch among sheaves. They will consume all the surrounding peoples right and left, but Jerusalem will remain intact in her place. Surrounding peoples = nearby people = Psalm 83 tribes. NOT the outer ring of nations like Russia / Iran etc
(Zechariah 12:6 NIV)

The fiasco in Afghanistan is a grave blow to America's standing

The Economist, August 22, 2021



EVENT

If the propagandists of the Taliban had scripted the collapse of America's 20-year mission to reshape Afghanistan, they could not have come up with more harrowing images. As insurgents swept into Kabul, desperate Afghans, terrified about what the victorious zealots might do, chased departing American cargo planes down the runway, trying to clamber into the landing gear and inevitably falling to their deaths. The American-backed government had surrendered without a fight—something that American officials were insisting would not happen only days before. Afghans were left in such a horrifying bind that clinging to the wheels of a hurtling aircraft seemed their best option. America has spent \$2trn in Afghanistan; more than 2,000 American lives have been lost, not to mention countless Afghan ones. And yet, even if Afghans are more prosperous now than when America invaded, Afghanistan is back to square one. The Taliban control more of the country than they did when they lost power, they are better armed, having seized the weapons America showered on the Afghan army, and they have now won the ultimate affirmation: defeating a superpower.

COMMENT

America has left behind more than 2,000 armoured vehicles, including U.S. Humvees, and up to 40 aircraft potentially including UH-60 Black Hawks, scout attack helicopters, and ScanEagle military drones. All of which are now in the Taliban hands. It is the very worst outcome for the world's No1 superpower. It looks as if the Taliban have defeated them! America is weakened in the eyes of its enemies and its allies. Its foes are emboldened and its allies dismayed. The time of trouble could soon be at hand...

BIBLE QUOTE

Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD. Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces. America is one of the "young lions" of Ezekiel 38:13

(Psalm 58:6-7)

Biden meets with new Israeli prime minister: 'We've become close friends'

CNN, August 27, 2021



EVENT

When Israel's prime minister visited the White House on Friday, for the first time in 12 years it was someone other than Benjamin Netanyahu. That alone lent the talks a sense of renewal, even though stark differences remain between President Joe Biden and his new Israeli counterpart Naftali Bennett. "I bring with me a new spirit," Bennett said in warm remarks from the Oval Office as the meeting was getting underway, "a spirit of good will, a spirit of hope, a spirit of decency and honesty, a spirit of unity and bipartisanship, of folks who -- as you suggested -- harbour very different political opinions, even opposing, yet we all share the deep passion to work together to build a better future for Israel." "We've become close friends," Biden said, though he'd just met the new prime minister for the first time an hour earlier.

COMMENT

Friday's meeting between Biden and Bennett had originally been scheduled for a day earlier but was postponed in the wake of a deadly terrorist attack in Kabul that killed 13 American service members. Biden cleared his schedule for meetings with top national security officials. The delay by a day means Bennett, an Orthodox Jew, will remain in Washington until Saturday evening after the Sabbath ends, his office said. This meeting was primarily to discuss Iran. U.S. nuclear negotiations with Iran are at a crossroads and Israel is extremely concerned that Iran is stalling for time so it can speed up its path to create a nuclear weapon. Biden said "We're putting diplomacy first. If diplomacy fails, we're ready to turn to other options." He also spoke about there being an "unshakeable partnership between our two nations." However the Bible tells us that America will NOT defend Israel when Russia descends. Israel will have to turn to God.

BIBLE QUOTE

Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all her young lions will say to you, "Have you come to plunder? Have you gathered your hordes to loot, to carry off silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods and to seize much plunder?" This sounds like the US can only ask Russia what it is doing – it doesn't sound like they are defending Israel militarily. (Ezekiel 38:13 NIV)

Palestinians in Gaza resume protests against Israeli blockade

Al Jazeera, August 25, 2021



EVENT

Hundreds of Palestinians have demonstrated near the Israeli fence in the besieged Gaza Strip, calling on Israel to ease a crippling blockade days after a similar weekend gathering ended in deadly confrontations with the Israeli army. The Israeli military, which had beefed up its forces in advance of the demonstration on Wednesday, said it was using tear gas and live fire to disperse the crowd in southern Gaza. Palestinian medics reported at least nine people were wounded. An Israeli soldier who was critically wounded when a Palestinian shot him in the head through a hole in the wall at point-blank range remained in hospital on Wednesday. After the shooting, Israel's military bombed Hamas weapons sites in the Gaza Strip early on Sunday. Hamas has organised the protests to put pressure on Israel to ease its blockade of Gaza.

COMMENT

Israel keeps Gaza under a blockade, tightly restricting movement out of the territory which is home to 2 million Palestinians. Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett told the New York Times this week that there would be no peace with the Palestinians and the Israeli siege on Gaza will continue as long as Hamas rules the coastal enclave. "This government is a government that will make dramatic breakthroughs in the economy," Bennett said. "Its claim to fame will not be solving the 130-year-old conflict here in Israel." Interesting that Bennett just wants to make Israel prosper and not deal at all with the Palestinian issue. However as one British prime minister said when asked what was most likely to knock a government off course he replied "Events, dear boy, events." Despite Bennett not wanting to deal with the pricking briers of Hamas he may well have to in the very near future when the inner ring war around Israel begins.

BIBLE QUOTE

Let the whole world fear the Lord, and let everyone stand in awe of him. For when he spoke, the world began! It appeared at his command. The Lord frustrates the plans of the nations and thwarts all their schemes. But the Lord's plans stand firm forever; his intentions can never be shaken. (Psalm 33:8-11 NLT)

Melting ice fuels Vladimir Putin's dream of Arctic trade route

The Times, August 27, 2021



EVENT For Russia, the rapidly melting ice sheets signal new opportunities for lucrative commercial shipping along the Northern Sea Route, a passageway from northern Europe to Asia that the Kremlin is touting as a faster alternative to the Suez Canal. The route, which stretches for thousands of miles along Russia's Arctic coastline, can cut almost two weeks off a journey from Hamburg to Tokyo via the canal. The project received a boost in March when the Egyptian canal was blocked for six days by a huge container ship. The Northern Sea Route is a key element in Russia's broader bid to develop the Arctic. The receding ice means that voyages that once seemed like the stuff of science fiction are now a reality. In 2017 a Russian-owned tanker, became the first ship to travel the Northern Sea Route without the help of icebreaking vessels.

COMMENT Putin is obsessed by oil and gas. Energy is the one area that Russia makes money. Russia's economy is entirely dependent on it. The Northern Sea Route transports cargo from Russia to China and beyond. Much of the cargo consists of oil, liquefied natural gas and other fuels. Cargo volumes on the route have already increased tenfold over the past decade, reaching 32 million tonnes last year. President Putin wants that figure to almost triple by 2024. Climate change is helping him do this. We see here several elements of Bible prophecy. The Bible calls Russia the "king of the north". We see Russia dominating the far reaches of the north. The Bible also says that Russia comes south into Israel to take a spoil. Putin wants Russia to be a superpower again and he needs wealth to do this – and one day he will take it by force....

BIBLE QUOTE You [Gog] will say, "I will invade a land of unwalled villages; I will attack a peaceful and unsuspecting people—all of them living without walls and without gates and bars. I will plunder and loot and turn my hand against the resettled ruins and the people gathered from the nations, rich in livestock and goods, living at the centre of the land [of Israel]. (Ezekiel 38:11-12 NIV)

ADDITIONAL AND SUPPORTING ARTICLES

DebkaFile Review (world events through the bi-focals of Israeli military intelligence)

2021-08-25 Israel WARNS Iran Close to a Nuclear Bomb & Afghanistan Crisis Update - YouTube

2021-08-17 Timeline of U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan

2021-08-13 Israeli Archaeologists Find Evidence of Ancient Biblical Earthquake in Jerusalem – YouTube 8:20 min

2021-08-07 Israel's Iron Dome BLOCKS Hezbollah's Rocket "Response" to Israeli Airstrikes – YouTube 11:46 min

2021-08-06 Israel Ready to STRIKE Iran, Defense Minister Confirms; Raisi Takes Presidency - YouTube 12:18 min

2021-08-05 Rockets Launched at Israel as Tensions with Iran Reach Boiling Point - YouTube 13:41 min

2021-08-04 Israel WARNS Iran Over Attacks and Slams EU Appeasement - YouTube 11:15 min

2021-08-03 Israel Vows Response to Iran Drone Attack as U.S. & UK Pledge Support - YouTube 10:32 min

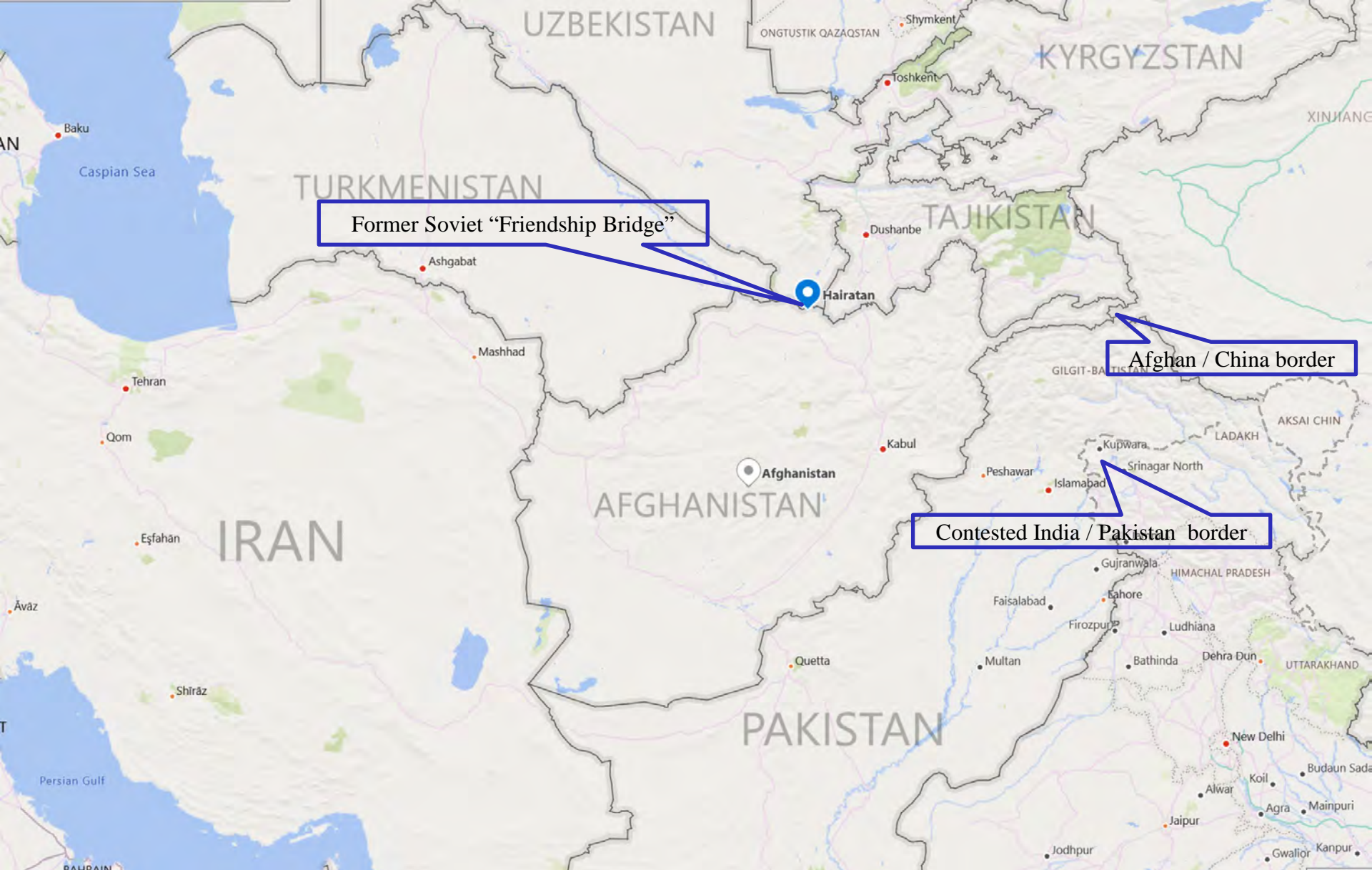
2021-07-31 Israeli Airstrikes in Syria Escalate Tension w- Russia; Prophetic Implications- - Watchman Newscast

2021-07-25 Iran 2.11 Water crisis spurs violence in Khuzestan, anti-govt protests rage - Oneindia News - YouTube

2021-07-25 Iran 3.24 Violence escalates in water-shortage protests in Iran's Khuzestan - Drought - YouTube

2021-07-25 Iraq 3.53 Why Iraq's great rivers are dying - Climate Change - West Asia water crisis - YouTube

2021-07-25 Iraq 9.56 Vox - Why Iraq's great rivers are dying - YouTube



Former Soviet "Friendship Bridge"

Afghan / China border

Contested India / Pakistan border

China's New Silk Road



Source: Chinese government



Advantages of the Northern Sea Route

Rotterdam to Yokohama	-3,840NM	9.0 days
to Shanghai	-2,361NM	5.5 days

