

Events Driving Global Instability and Risk



US-Afghanistan: US troops to withdraw from Afghanistan in Apr-Jun 2021

- President Biden announced the withdrawal of all US forces from Afghanistan by September 11
- The withdrawal has led to a resurgent Taliban launching waves of offensives, against Afghanistan forces and civilians
- The exit is also expected to have potential security implications for neighbouring countries including India, Pakistan and Bangladesh



Israel-Palestine: Fears of new war as Israel-Hamas fighting Intensifies in May 2021

- Over 200 people killed and 1,400 were injured in escalating violence
- 1,000 rockets launched at Israel after days of violence between Israeli policemen and Muslim protesters in Jerusalem
- Targeted Israeli air strikes on senior Hamas commanders in the Gaza Strip led to collapse of several buildings in the area following the strikes
- The escalating clashes have increased the risk of a new Middle East war
- Subsequent national election in Israel sees B Netanyahu, the longest-serving prime minister, voted out of office



Colombia: 24 killed amid mass protests in April-May-2021

- 24 people killed and hundreds injured following brutal clashes between protesters and police over tax rises
- Protests have plunged the right wing Duque government into the worst crisis of its nearly three years in power



South Africa: Looting and rioting kills 72 people in July-2021

- Violence erupted following arrest of former President Jacob Zuma
- The resulting riots have seen widespread looting and over 70 people killed

Global: COVID-19 delta variant threatens global recovery as death toll crosses 4m and infections reach 200m in Apr-Jun 2021

Global Spread of Delta Variant

- The highly infectious Delta variant accounts for the majority of new cases in many European countries and other nations across the world and is driving infection rates up to their highest level for months

Vaccine Shortage Leaves Several Developing Nations at Risk

- Developing countries, many of which have fallen behind in vaccinating residents and have struggled to contain the spread of the virus, with some of them only expected to fully vaccinate the population by 2023

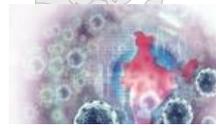
Covid Resurgence Slows Down Economic Recovery

- The lockdowns by various nations to counter the delta variant poses growing threat to world economic recovery



China: Increasing crackdown on US listed Chinese technology firms in June 2021

- Authorities are cracking down on overseas-listed Chinese tech companies over data security and anti-trust concerns
- Companies facing significant business interruptions as a result with key company IPOs at risk of being delayed
- Over two-thirds of US listed Chinese groups falling below their initial public offering price as a result



India: Healthcare infrastructure breakdown in deadly second wave in Apr-May 2021

- India crossed 400,000 daily new cases during the second wave
- Massive surge overwhelmed hospitals and doctors, resulting in shortages of beds and crucial supplies such as oxygen and medicines in various parts of the country
- Fresh lockdowns across many states risk further slowing the economic recovery this year



Saudi-UAE: Clash threatens OPEC unity as oil prices soar in June 2021

- Rivalry between the two nations intensifies Saudi Arabia imposing new tariffs on imports
- Oil prices rose to its highest level since late 2018 on fears that the UAE could leave the group
- The clash threatens the ability of OPEC to deliver oil market stability

Source: FT, NYT, WSJ, Vox

Events Driving Global Development and Progress

Politics, Economics and Society



Politics: US lifts the annual refugee cap in May 2021

- New figure of 62,500 replaces the 15,000 set by former President Trump
- President Biden stated that the program "embodies America's commitment to protect the most vulnerable,



Environment: BoFA to deploy US\$1 trillion for sustainable finance by 2030 in Apr 2021

- BoFA will deploy US\$1tn for its environmental business initiative to push for green finance by 2030
- Initiative part of bank's push to help low-carbon and other sustainable businesses.



Environment: G7 Commits to Net Zero at Summit in Jun 2021

- G7 nations commit to net zero emissions by 2050 and a 50% reduction by 2030
- Also increasing support for IMF by \$100bn

Science & Technology



Technology: SpaceX launches of 88 satellites to space in Jun 2021

- A reused Falcon 9 launched 88 satellites
- Second mission for SpaceX's SmallSat Rideshare Program, which offers tiny satellites rides to space for a starting price of US\$1 million



Technology: China's Zhurong rover lands on Mars in May 2021

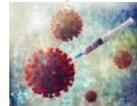
- China's Zhurong rover landed safely on Mars making it the first Mars-going nation to orbit, land and rover in its first mission
- Zhurong will probe Mars and search for water ice signs on the surface

Society: JP Morgan deploying US\$2.5tn to fight the climate crisis and inequality in June 2021

- JP Morgan will finance investments of US\$2.5tn over 10 years to address climate change and contribute to sustainable development
- Announcement underpins Wall Street's increasing commitment to clean energy

Environment: World Bank Group Increases support for climate action in developing countries in Jun 2021

- The action plan broadens efforts from investing in "green" projects to helping developing countries fully integrate their climate and development goals



Healthcare: Pfizer developing a Covid booster shot to target the delta variant in Jun 2021

- Pfizer is developing a Covid-19 booster shot intended to target the delta variant that has spread rapidly across the world



Technology: China artificial sun experimental fusion reactor sets world record in Jun 2021

- Reactor achieved a plasma temperature of 120 million C, a big step towards nuclear fusion
- The experiment aims to provide clean energy through controlled nuclear fusion



Society: Facebook expands vaccination efforts to help underserved communities in Jun 2021

- Facebook has been using mobile trucks and organising drives in cities where the company has offices to help underserved communities get vaccinated in the US

Politics: 130 Countries agree to global minimum corporate tax in Jul 2021

- The new rules aims to divide the right to tax profits of multinationals in a fairer way
- c.US\$150bn in additional global tax revenues annually expected



Technology: Flying car completes first flight as of Jul 2021

- The prototype completed the first-ever test flight taking to the skies and landing in 35 minutes
- The flight has started a "new era of dual transportation vehicles."



Environment: EU approve landmark climate change law in June 2021

- 55% reduction in EU emissions by 2030, approved by ministers from 27 EU countries



Society: India Imposes new ESG reporting on top listed companies in Jun 2021

- New sustainability-related reporting requirements for the top 1,000 listed companies
- Promotes transparent, standardized disclosures on ESG parameters



Healthcare: New treatment to boost functional recovery from spinal cord injury in Jun 2021

- The new drug targets cells that prevent tissue recovery following spinal cord injury
- The drug targets these cells to improve functional recovery capacity



Environment: Investors with US\$41 Trillion ask G7 to stop subsidizing Fossil fuels in June 2021

- A coalition of investors overseeing a combined US\$41t of assets have called on world leaders of G7 nations to set more ambitious greenhouse gas emission targets and end support of fossil fuels.