

Far and Wide

Every week we share selection of six news from six continents that we believe will impact our world in the near or distant future

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Another historic first: Aditya-L1, India's first solar mission, to lift off on September 2

Welcome to the newest edition of Far and Wide, where we bring a collection of interesting stories and developments from around the world.

Our lead story this week covers yet another space mission of India. After successfully landing a spacecraft near the south pole of the Moon, India's next cosmic quest is- the Sun. Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has announced that it will launch Aditya-L1: India's first solar mission on September 2 at 11:50 am from the Sriharikota Space Center using the PSLV-C57 rocket. The ISRO explained on its website that the spacecraft will be initially placed in a low earth orbit. Subsequently, the orbit will be made more elliptical and later the spacecraft will be launched towards the Lagrange point L1. The reason why it is named as L1 is because it would be stationed at Lagrange point 1. Lagrange points are points in space where the gravity of two planetary bodies balances out, maintaining equilibrium, and so the spacecraft stays in a fixed position on its own, conserving fuel. NASA's James Webb Space Telescope, the successor to the famous Hubble telescope, is stationed in L2. These points are named after Joseph-Louis Lagrange, a French mathematician who observed them in the 18th century. The advantage of such a positioning will also be seen in operations, as it will enable the spacecraft to get a continuous observation of the sun, without any interruptions. According to ISRO, The Aditya-L1 mission is intended to study the Sun's upper atmosphere (chromosphere and corona) and its relations with the solar wind. The mission is designed at studying the physics of the partially ionized plasma in the solar atmosphere. The spacecraft will investigate the mechanisms that heat the solar corona, since the corona is observed to have abnormally an large temperature, greater than some of the inner layers, despite being an upper layer of the Sun. The mission will collect information and observations about the initiation and development of coronal mass ejections (CMEs) and solar flares. It will study the in-situ particle and plasma environment in the vicinity of the Sun and describe the magnetic field in the solar corona. It will also study and assess the main drivers of space weather.

We hope this story and the others in this edition of our newsletter will provoke thought and discussion among our readers.

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Adani eyeing Greek ports to serve as gateway for Indian exports bound for Europe: Greek Media



The **Adani Group** is reportedly considering taking over a Greek port to establish it as a crucial gateway for Indian exports to Europe. During Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Greece, discussions centred around Adani's potential interest in acquiring one or more ports in Greece. The ports under consideration include **Kavala and Volos in northern Greece**, and possibly **Alexandroupoli**. Modi's visit highlighted Greece's significance as an economic, transport, and strategic gateway for India's access to the European Union (EU). **Greek City Times** reported that Modi expressed India's interest in acquiring Greek ports during talks with **Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis**. While there's talk about the possibility of using Greece's Port of **Piraeus** for Indian exports to Europe, it's noted that the Piraeus Port is primarily under **Chinese control**, with **COSCO Shipping** holding a majority stake. Kavala, which serves parts of the Balkans and is a ferry point to nearby islands, would require expansion to serve as a European gateway for Indian exports.

Source: The Telegraph

<https://www.telegraphindia.com/business/adani-group-eyeing-greek-ports-to-serve-as-gateway-for-indian-exports-bound-for-europe-greek-media/cid/1961916>

The leaders also discussed increasing tourism from India given the "huge middle class" and the potential for an **"interstate agreement" to address Greece's labour shortages** by bringing in skilled and unskilled personnel from India. The two sides aimed to elevate their relationship to a **"Strategic Partnership"** and double two-way trade by 2030. Current trade between India and Greece stands at **\$2 billion**. A business delegation accompanying Modi explored investment opportunities in various sectors, including **high technology, tourism infrastructure** like hotels and marinas, **heavy industry, and transport**. The **Hellenic-Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry** facilitated discussions between Indian businessmen and their Greek counterparts. The emerging "commercial corridor between India and Greece could radically reconfigure trade patterns between the Indian Ocean region, the Middle East, and Europe," said Professor Michael Tanchum. For India, this new connectivity constitutes a strategic paradigm shift of enormous geopolitical consequences that could **reshape its role** in the **Eurasian economic order**.



North America

Biden to visit India from Sept 7-10 for G20 summit

During Indian Prime Minister Modi's State visit to the United States in June, President Joe Biden expressed his anticipation for the **upcoming G20 summit scheduled for September in New Delhi**. This anticipation has now materialized as President Biden will visit India from **September 7-10**. During this summit, President Biden and his fellow G20 counterparts will engage in discussions centred around collaborative actions to address global challenges, including **transitioning to clean energy sources, combatting climate change, mitigating the economic and social impacts of the Ukraine war, and enhancing the capabilities of multilateral development banks**, to effectively combat poverty. The White House has highlighted the significance of these discussions in shaping a collective response to these pressing issues. President Biden will also use his visit to commend Prime Minister Modi's leadership of the G20 during India's presidency term, which spans from **December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023**. India has been actively hosting various meetings across the country as part of its G20 presidency.

This leadership has been instrumental in strengthening international cooperation and multilateral institutions to address critical global issues such as climate change, pandemics, conflict, and the pursuit of sustainable development goals. US officials, including **Donald Lu, the Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia**, emphasized the significance of this year for India-US relations, with both countries hosting major international gatherings (G20 and APEC) and playing prominent roles within groups like the QUAD. The **QUAD**, comprising countries such as the US, India, Japan, and Australia, presents opportunities for these nations to draw closer. Further reinforcing the robust India-US engagement, US Secretary of State **Antony Blinken** participated in the G20 foreign ministers' meeting in India. Additionally, other high-ranking US officials, such as Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, traveled to India and participated in the India-US Forum in the capital.



Source: Hindustan Times

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/joe-biden-us-president-to-visit-india-from-sept-7-10-for-g20-summit-101692722915698.html>



South America

India's Strategic Shift: Amplifying Global Defence Reach with South America as the New Frontier

For the first time, the **India-LAC Conclave** took place in **New Delhi in August**, featuring a session focused on defence and security industry collaboration. The session, titled "**Forging Security and Defence Industry Collaboration**," aimed to explore joint ventures, co-development of weapon systems, and the prospects of enhancing Indian defence exports to the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region. **Captain Gerald Richard Gouveia**, the National Security Advisor of the **Cooperative Republic of Guyana**, was the primary guest on the second day of the conclave. India is **strategically expanding** its defence exports to South America, seeking opportunities in **Argentina, Brazil, and Chile**. The region's **demand for modern protective equipment** and defence solutions presents a potentially lucrative market for Indian defence companies. These companies offer a range of military equipment, including artillery systems, protected vehicles, electronic warfare systems, naval combat management systems, military communication solutions, small arms, and night vision devices. Countries in the LAC region, such as **Argentina** and **Chile**, have shown interest in acquiring Indian defence systems, including **BrahMos** missiles. **India's defence collaborations go beyond sales**, encompassing **specialised training for officers** and the potential for **cross-deputation** of instructors at training establishments in these countries. This cooperative approach contributes to **fostering deeper bilateral relations**. India's engagement with the South American defense sector aligns with its **goal of achieving \$5 billion in defence exports by 2025**. Participation in events like **LAAD 2023 in Brazil** underscores India's strategy to position itself prominently in the global defence sector. By showcasing its advanced defence systems and technologies, India aims to **reinforce its position as a significant global defence collaborator**, potentially reshaping the dynamics of the international defence trade.

Source: Financial Express

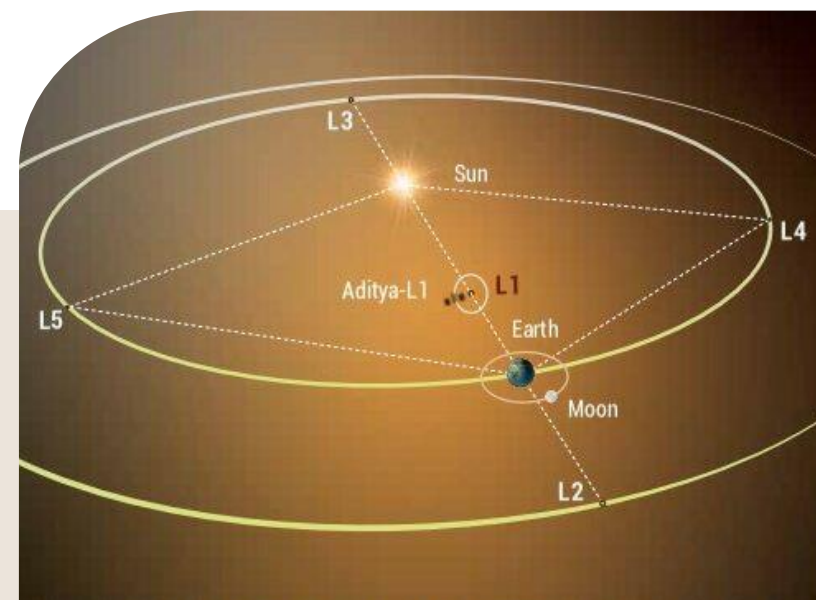
<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/defence-indias-strategic-shift-amplifying-global-defence-reach-with-south-america-as-the-new-frontier-3195618/>



Asia

Aditya-L1, India's first solar mission, to lift off on September 2

Indian Space Research Organisation has announced the launch date for its Aditya-L1 solar mission, set for September 2. The mission aims to study the Sun and will be **the first Indian space-based observatory-class solar mission**. Aditya-L1 is planned to be positioned in a **halo orbit around the first Lagrangian point (L1)** of the Sun-Earth system, located approximately **1.5 million kilometers** away from Earth. Placing a satellite at the L1 point offers the advantage of uninterrupted solar observation, as it can **continuously view the Sun** without any eclipses or occultations. This provides an exceptional opportunity to study solar activities in a continuous manner. The spacecraft will carry **seven payloads** fitted with **electromagnetic and particle detectors**, allowing observation of various layers of the Sun, including the **photosphere, chromosphere, and the corona** (outermost layers). With the special vantage point of the L1 point, four payloads on the spacecraft will directly observe the Sun, while the remaining three payloads will conduct in-situ studies of particles and fields at that location. The information gathered from Aditya-L1's payloads is expected to provide critical insights into several solar phenomena, such as **coronal heating, coronal mass ejections, pre-flare and flare activities, and the dynamics of space weather**. It will also contribute to the understanding of **particle propagation** and fields in the interplanetary medium. ISRO's Aditya-L1 mission is designed to meaningfully advance our understanding of the Sun's behaviour and its impact on space weather and related phenomena.



Source: Times of India

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/isro-to-launch-solar-mission-aditya-l1-on-september-2/articleshow/103134380.cms?from=mdr>



Australia

Australian minister supports swift economic talks with India, endorses New Delhi's call for WTO reforms



Tim Ayres, the **Assistant Minister for Trade** and focusing on the India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA), has expressed optimism about the growing economic ties. Ayres highlighted the **rapid ratification of the ECTA agreement** and its **immediate impact on businesses**. He noted that Australian businesses are already using the agreement to enhance engagement with Indian firms. He **emphasised the remarkable pace of the ongoing discussions for a more comprehensive economic agreement between the two nations**. He highlighted key sectors such as **critical minerals, digital economy, higher education, agribusiness, and Agri tech as priorities**. Ayres expressed gratitude for India's hosting of the G20 trade ministers meeting in Jaipur, emphasising its role in rebuilding confidence in **rules-based trade** and addressing global challenges. He also **echoed India's call for reforms at the World Trade Organization (WTO)** and emphasised the shared responsibility of G20 ministers in leading the reform effort.

Source: Wion

<https://www.wionews.com/india-news/australian-minister-supports-swift-economic-times-with-india-endorses-new-delhis-call-for-wto-reforms-629485>

He highlighted the **determination of both Prime Ministers** to conclude these agreements for mutual benefits. He expressed excitement about the pride the civic population is taking in national achievements. According to him, the vitality in the Indian economy is palpable. Ayres sees **"Make in India"** as an opportunity for Australia. He emphasised the **positive impact of India's growth on the global economy**. Ayres also mentioned ongoing efforts to work through trade issues with China in a systematic manner, aiming to return trade to normalcy based on agreed-upon rules.



Africa

India in talks for UPI expansion in Africa



India is engaging in discussions with several African nations, including **Namibia, Mozambique, and Kenya**, to **assist in developing their own versions of the Unified Payment Interface (UPI)** and establish commercial partnerships between payment platforms. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), the organisation behind UPI, aims to expand UPI's global presence by partnering with countries facing similar challenges that India addressed through UPI, such as financial inclusion, rural economy support, fintech incubation, and transparency. **Ritesh Shukla, International CEO of NPCI**, mentioned that the **number of countries where UPI is active is expected to double over the next 12-18 months**. Today, there are about 30 million Indians who live outside India and send about \$100 billion every year. Today, this experience is very fragmented, and needs to be standardized. India follows a two-pronged approach to enhance UPI's global reach. **First**, the country **assists partner nations in building digital platforms for UPI**.

Source: Live Mint

<https://www.livemint.com/news/world/india-expanding-unified-payment-interface-upi-to-african-countries-for-commercial-partnerships-and-financial-inclusion-11693155015557.html>

Second, India seeks **commercial partnerships with existing platforms** in foreign countries to **simplify financial interactions for Indian travellers and migrants**. The move is part of India's larger effort to represent the interests of developing nations on the global stage. In June, India signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Sierra Leone, and Suriname** to share its **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** solutions. India is also in discussions with other developing countries in Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia to extend similar partnerships. India's neighbouring countries, such as Nepal, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka, have also adopted UPI recently. Additionally, India and Singapore connected their payment systems to facilitate smoother remittance flows. The initiative reflects **India's aspiration to foster financial inclusion and digitisation in developing economies** while positioning itself as a leader advocating its interests in international forums.