



# Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



## India's Proximity Archives

July 31, 2024



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**Delhi Policy Group**

Core 5A, 1st Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003

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### ABOUT US

Founded in 1994, the Delhi Policy Group (DPG) is among India's oldest think tanks with its primary focus on strategic and international issues of critical national interest. DPG is a non-partisan institution and is independently funded by a non-profit Trust. Over past decades, DPG has established itself in both domestic and international circles and is widely recognised today among the top security think tanks of India and of Asia's major powers.

Since 2016, in keeping with India's increasing global profile, DPG has expanded its focus areas to include India's regional and global role and its policies in the Indo-Pacific. In a realist environment, DPG remains mindful of the need to align India's ambitions with matching strategies and capabilities, from diplomatic initiatives to security policy and military modernisation.

At a time of disruptive change in the global order, DPG aims to deliver research based, relevant, reliable and realist policy perspectives to an actively engaged public, both at home and abroad. DPG is deeply committed to the growth of India's national power and purpose, the security and prosperity of the people of India and India's contributions to the global public good. We remain firmly anchored within these foundational principles which have defined DPG since its inception.

### India's Proximity Archives

India's Proximity Archives covers major developments in South Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, West Asia, Central Asia and Indian Ocean Region of strategic relevance to India, compiled from open-source media. The research team includes Shreyas Deshmukh, Sanket Joshi, Anshita Shukla, Jayantika Rao T.V, and Divya Rai, Research Associates. Your comments and feedback can be addressed to Sanket Joshi at [sanket@dpg.org.in](mailto:sanket@dpg.org.in).

### Cover Image:

**Southeast Asia:** Dr. S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India, along with foreign ministers of representatives of ASEAN member states for the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference with India in Vientiane, Lao PDR on July 26, 2024.

(Source: [Dr. S Jaishankar/Official X Account](#))

**East Asia:** US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, along with Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs Australia; Ms. Kamikawa Yoko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan; and Dr. S. Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs of India at the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Tokyo, Japan on July 29, 2024. (Source: [Anthony Blinken/Official X Account](#))

**West Asia:** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed the US Congress on July 24, 2024. Source: [Official X Handle/Benjamin Netanyahu](#)

**Indian Ocean Region:** INS Tabar, arrived at St Petersburg, Russia to participate in 328th Russian Navy Day celebration. Source: [Official Twitter handle / Embassy of India, Russia](#)

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## South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

The Sri Lankan Election Commission officially announced the date for [Presidential elections](#) which will be conducted on September 21, 2024. The Gazette Notification said that the nominations would be accepted till August 15. Four [candidates](#) have officially submitted their nominations for the Presidential Election including Ranil Wickremesinghe (Independent) Sarath Keerthirathne (Independent), Oshala Herath (Abhinawa Niwahal Peramuna), ASP Liyanage (Sri Lanka Workers Party). Field Marshal Sarath Fonseka has also [declared his candidacy](#). Meanwhile, 92 of the 225 Members of Parliament [pledged their support](#) to President Ranil Wickremesinghe.

Mobile [internet connection](#) in Bangladesh was restored on July 28, ten days after being restricted by the government to prevent the spread of fake news amid student protests against quota reforms. The Bangladesh government on July 29, [officially acknowledged](#) that 150 people were killed across the country during the students' unrest. Student group has vowed to [resume protests](#) unless several of their leaders are released from custody. Police official said they have [mobilised forces](#) to prevent fresh violence. More than [6700 Indian students returned](#) from Bangladesh with the help of the Indian and Bangladeshi governments followed violent protests.

Pakistan is reeling under unrest in different parts of the country. [Jamaat-e-Islami](#) is protesting against the massive hike in electricity prices while Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) and other religious parties have announced countrywide protests. The leadership of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf has also announced to stage demonstrations to press for the release of Imran Khan. As security concerns rise, Section 144 has been imposed across Punjab and Islamabad, prohibiting assemblies, processions and protests. Death toll of [tribal war](#) in Kurram district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa reached 49, and hundreds of people injured. The clashes started on July 24, between members of two tribes in the Kurram tribal district over a land dispute. A soldier was killed as violent mob [assaulted security forces](#) in Gwadar district July 29.

## Other Developments

[Pakistan Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb visited Beijing for talks on power sector debt relief alongside structural reforms](#)

[Iran begins major border sealing project to secure Northeast frontier with Afghanistan](#)

[Chinese engineers, Taliban break ground on Afghanistan's copper mining project after 16-year delay](#)

[Maldives President thanks India for debt relief, hopes for Free Trade Deal](#)

## Southeast Asia

by

Anshita Shukla

The [ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers Meeting](#) was convened in Vientiane, Lao PDR on July 26, 2024. The meeting was co-chaired by the Minister of External Affairs of India Dr. S. Jaishankar and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore, Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan. The representatives underscored priority areas of cooperation - digital, defence, maritime, connectivity, security, health, traditional medicine and cultural heritage preservation. The Ministers also exchanged views on a number of regional and international issues of common interest such as the situation in Myanmar and the conflict in Gaza. [Dr. Jaishankar](#) reiterated India's commitment to keeping the Sea Lines of Communication open and free and shared Quad's outlook on ASEAN and AOIP.

The [31st ASEAN Regional Forum \(ARF\)](#) and the [14th East Asia Summit \(EAS\) Foreign Ministers' Meeting](#) were convened in Vientiane, Lao PDR on July 24, 2024. The External Affairs Minister of India, Dr. S. Jaishankar, participated in both the meetings. At ARF, [Dr. Jaishankar](#) spoke about economic, political, technological and connectivity cooperation, and reiterated India's support for ASEAN unity, centrality and the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP). During the EAS meeting, [Dr. Jaishankar](#) underscored the need for a substantive and effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea. He also expressed India's support for ASEAN's efforts on the Myanmar issue, the need for de-escalation and restraint in Gaza and the pursuit of dialogue and diplomacy in the Ukraine conflict.

The Philippines and United States convened the fourth [2+2 Ministerial Dialogue](#) in Manila on July 30, 2024 – the first to be held in Manila. The meeting witnessed the participation of Philippines Secretary for Foreign Affairs Enrique A. Manalo, Philippines Secretary of National Defense Gilberto C. Teodoro, Jr., US Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, and US Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III. The United States has agreed to provide the Philippines with US\$500 million to boost Manila's military capabilities.

### Other Developments

[Malaysia says BRICS chair Russia backs its bid to join bloc](#)

[Singapore does not pitch itself as a model for other nations: Vivian](#)

[Vietnam Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh arrived in India for a three-day state visit](#)

## East Asia

by

Anshita Shukla

The United States, Japan, Australia, and India convened the [Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting](#) in Tokyo, Japan on July 29, 2024. The meeting was attended by Antony Blinken, US Secretary of State; Penny Wong, Minister for Foreign Affairs Australia; Ms. Kamikawa Yoko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan; and Dr. S. Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs of India. In the joint statement, the four leaders expressed concern about the situation in the East China Sea and the militarization of disputed features and coercive and intimidating manoeuvres in the South China Sea. Addressing the post meeting press conference, [Dr. S. Jaishankar](#) underscored the numerous areas of cooperation of Quad countries in critical and emerging technologies, cyber and health security, climate action, infrastructure, capacity building and training, STEM education, maritime domain awareness and counter-terrorism.

On the sidelines of the ASEAN- ministerial meetings, the [US Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken held a meeting with China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi](#) in Vientiane, Laos, on July 27. The two sides held "open and productive discussions" on bilateral, regional, and global issues. Blinken raised concerns regarding China's destabilizing actions in the South China Sea, including at Second Thomas Shoal and its support for Russia's defence industrial base. The leaders also discussed North Korea's nuclear program, the situation in Myanmar and the need to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza. On the other hand, [Wang Yi stated](#) that the "U.S. side holds a wrong perception of China" and accused the US of "doubling down on its containment and suppression of China".

The [Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee \(SCC\)](#) (Japan-U.S. "2+2") was convened in Tokyo, Japan on July 28, 2024. The meeting was attended by Kamikawa Yoko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, and Mr. Kihara Minoru, Minister of Defense of Japan, Antony Blinken, US Secretary of State, and Lloyd Austin, US Secretary of Defense. The leaders announced the decision to establish a joint force headquarters that would answer to the American commander in the Indo-Pacific and increase the co-production of air-to-air missiles and air defense interceptor missiles.

### Other Developments

[Taiwan says it has reached an agreement with China over fishermen's deaths](#)

[China rebukes US, Japan for 'false accusations' on maritime issues, military expansion](#)



## West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

Hamas' Political Bureau Chief [Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated](#) in Iran's capital Tehran on July 31. Iranian state media informed that Haniyeh's residence in northern Tehran had been [struck by an airborne projectile](#) and that further investigation was underway to determine the details of the attack. Hamas accused Israel of killing Ismail Haniyeh. Meanwhile, the [Israeli town of Majdal Shams](#) situated in the Golan Heights was attacked by rockets from Lebanon on July 27, killing 12 Druze youngsters. Israel and the US accused [Hezbollah of attacking the Golan Heights](#) and the IDF killed Hezbollah's [military commander Fuad Shukr](#) in an airstrike in Lebanon's capital Beirut.

In the wake of escalating tensions between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah, President Biden reaffirmed the [US' unwavering commitment to Israel's security](#). During his meeting with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, on July 25, President Biden also stressed the importance of securing a hostage deal and ending the conflict in Gaza in a durable manner.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed a [joint session of the US Congress](#) on July 24, making him the first foreign leader to address Congress four times in his lifetime. During his speech, PM Netanyahu promised to achieve a "total victory" against Hamas and denounced Hamas sympathisers in the US as "idiots". Netanyahu urged the US Congress to oppose false accusations of war crimes levelled against him by the International Criminal Court (ICC). He also maintained that Israeli forces would retain control over post-war Gaza.

### Other Developments

[Chinese investors pile into Saudi ETFs as two countries grow closer](#)

[Italy to return ambassador to Syria after decade-long absence](#)



## Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [July 25](#), Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexey Overchuk and Kazakh Deputy Prime Minister Serik Zhumangarin, co-chairs of the bilateral intergovernmental commission on economic cooperation between the two countries, met in Kazakhstan's capital, Astana. The ministers reviewed the progress of projects in tourism and prospects for deepening integration processes within the Eurasian Economic Union. [During the bilateral meeting](#), they discussed the possibility of increasing cargo flow from Russia on the eastern branch of the "North-South" corridor through the "Bolashak" railway station. Deputy Prime Minister Overchuk [emphasised](#) the importance of also developing transportation routes to connect with the People's Republic of China. He highlighted that Russia-Kazakhstan interaction, as part of the EAEU integration, plays a significant role in strengthening bilateral relations.

On [July 29](#), Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov held a telephone conversation with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Jeenbek Kulubayev. The parties discussed key issues of bilateral relations in the political, diplomatic, trade, economic and cultural and humanitarian spheres. Issues related to mutual visits at the highest state level were discussed. During the interaction, the heads of the foreign policy departments noted with satisfaction the high level of cooperation between Turkmenistan and the Kyrgyz Republic, including constructive interaction on international platforms.

On [July 29](#), a meeting was held between the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov and the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) Robert Floyd. During the meeting, the parties discussed the key sectors of cooperation between Turkmenistan and the CTBTO. Speaking about the importance of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the parties highlighted the importance of the permanent neutrality policy of Turkmenistan aimed at the maintenance of peace and stability. The interlocutors discussed the prospects of collaboration, including personnel preparation, ensuring participation of national experts in seminars and trainings organized by the CTBTO, as well as rendering technical assistance.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Secretariat said that it received [compensation plans](#) from Iraq, Kazakhstan and Russia for their overproduced oil volumes in the first half of 2024 on July 24. In the statement,

OPEC said that the combined overproduction from the three countries totalled 2.28 million barrels per day (bpd). Iraq overproduced 1.18 million bpd, Kazakhstan 620,000 bpd, and Russia 480,000 bpd. The three countries will fully compensate for their overproduction by September 2025, with their respective compensation cuts varying from month to month.

### **Other Developments**

[Kyrgyzstan: Presidential Decree Ties Kyrgyz Statehood To Soviet Legacy](#)

[Regionalism Trends Reshape Future for Central Asian States, Says Expert](#)

[Turkmenistan Determined to Bolster Political Dialogue, Trade With Pakistan](#)

[Azerbaijan's President Pledges to Help French Territories Secure Independence](#)

## Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

[INS Tabar](#) visited St. Petersburg from July 25 to 30, 2024 to participate in celebrations of the 328th anniversary of the Russian Navy. During this event, Russia's President Vladimir Putin greeted Indian Navy personnel aboard INS Tabar and reviewed the parade on the Neva River, which included 20 Russian surface ships, gunboats, four sailing vessels, and a submarine.

On July 29, at the QUAD meeting in Tokyo, foreign ministers announced plans to [expand the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness \(IPMDA\)](#) to the Indian Ocean region. The meeting addressed enhancing coordination for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, with plans to utilize digital technologies to improve food security and initiate projects like the deployment of Open Radio Access Networks (Open RAN) in Palau.

During the [4<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of BIMSTEC security chiefs](#) in Naypyidaw, Myanmar National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval called for increased cooperation among BIMSTEC nations in counter-terrorism, combating drug trafficking, arms smuggling, and organized crime. Ajit Doval, leading the Indian delegation, met with his Myanmar counterpart Admiral Moe Aung and the BIMSTEC Security Chiefs called on Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing. He delivered India's national statement emphasising the need to strengthen collaboration.

### Other Developments

[India to host first-ever BIMSTEC Business Summit](#)

[Australia launched Cable Connectivity and Resilience Centre in the Indo-Pacific](#)



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India

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