

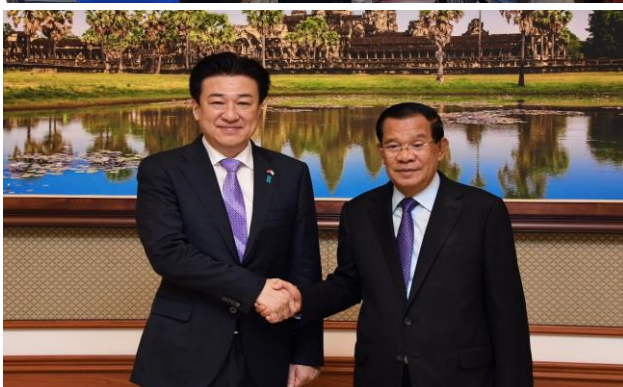


Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



India's Proximity Archives August 7, 2024



Volume II, Issue 32 | August 7, 2024

Delhi Policy Group

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

www.delhipolicygroup.org



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

India's Proximity Archives

Vol. II, Issue 32

August 7, 2024

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.

Cover Image:

South Asia: People cheering in front of the prime minister's office after Sheikh Hasina's resignation on August 5, 2024. Source: [By Md Joni Hossain](#)

Southeast Asia: Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, with the Prime Minister of Vietnam, Pham Minh Chinh, in New Delhi, India on August 1, 2024. Source: [PM Modi/Official X account](#)

East Asia: Japan's Defence Minister Minoru Kihara paid a courtesy call on Cambodian President Hun Sen in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on August 6, 2024. Source: [Ministry of Defence/Official Website](#)

Indian Ocean Region: INS Shalki arrived at the port of Colombo on a formal visit on August 2, 2024. Source: [Sri Lanka Navy official Twitter Account](#)

© 2024 by the Delhi Policy Group

Delhi Policy Group

Core 5A, 1st Floor,

India Habitat Centre,

Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003.

www.delhipolicygroup.org

India's Proximity Archives

Vol. II, Issue 32

August 7, 2024

Contents

South Asia

Shreyas Deshmukh 1

Southeast Asia

Anshita Shukla 3

East Asia

Jayantika Rao T.V. 4

West Asia

Sanket Joshi..... 5

Central Asia

Jayantika Rao T.V. 6

Indian Ocean Region

Divya Rai..... 8

South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

After a month of intense protests and the death of over 300 students and security personnel, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina stepped down from her position and left the country on August 5. She arrived in India temporarily and reportedly plans to seek asylum in the UK, US, or Finland. A series of developments unfolded in Bangladesh, starting with General Waker-Uz-Zaman, the Chief of Army Staff, announcing the formation of an interim government. This was followed by President Md Shahabuddin [dissolving the parliament](#) and ordering the [release](#) of BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia.

There has been a significant [reorganisation](#) in the highest ranks of the Bangladesh Army, resulting in the departure of Maj Gen Ziaul Ahsan from his duties. Dr Muhammad Yunus, a Nobel laureate, has been appointed as the [interim government's](#) leader on August 6. Sajeeb Wazed Joy, the son of Sheikh Hasina, has [categorically stated](#) that his mother will not be reentering the political arena. There have been reports of Awami League leaders being [detained](#) at airports while attempting to escape the country.

Indian [national security advisor](#) Ajit Doval met with Sheikh Hasina after her plane landed at Hindon Airbase near Delhi. Dr. S. Jaishankar, India's Minister of External Affairs, [made a statement](#) on August 6 regarding the situation in Bangladesh, acknowledging the significant tensions, deep divides, and increasing polarization in the country's politics since the January 2024 election. During a briefing at an [all-party meeting](#) in Parliament, EAM S. Jaishankar acknowledged the possibility of "external forces" playing a role in the events that led to the removal of Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He also stated that the Indian government will allow her sufficient time to determine the next steps.

The 1st [BIMSTEC Business Summit](#) held in New Delhi from August 06-08. Summit aimed to foster greater regional collaboration through robust trade and investment relations among the member countries. Over 300 key stakeholders from across the Bay of Bengal region participated in the summit. During [inaugural remarks](#) India's Minister of State Pabitra Margherita said that, "a future Free Trade Agreement (FTA) will strengthen intra-regional trade."

Other Developments

[Chinese Firm to Invest \\$20 Million in Afghanistan's Cargo Truck and Excavator Market](#)

[Nepal PM seeks boost in connectivity with India, asks officials to draw up plans](#)

[US pledges \\$8.5 mln to enhance Maldives' public fiscal management](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Anshita Shukla

Prime Minister of Vietnam, Pham Minh Chinh, paid a [state visit to New Delhi](#), India from July 30 to August 1, 2024. During his visit, he held bilateral meetings with Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, and External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar. The leaders signed [nine agreements](#) to deepen the India-Vietnam comprehensive strategic partnership and enhance bilateral cooperation in the fields of customs, agriculture, law, radio and television broadcast, culture and tourism.

Indonesia's President-elect and Defence Minister of the Republic of Indonesia Prabowo Subianto made a [working visit to Moscow](#), Russia, on July 31, 2024. During his visit, he held a meeting with President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, along with Presidential Aide Yury Ushakov, First Deputy Prime Minister and co-chair of the Russian-Indonesian Joint Commission on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation Denis Manturov, and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. The two leaders [discussed](#) ways for Indonesia and Russia to strengthen their strategic partnership and cooperation in defence, energy and education. In an official statement, Prabowo characterised "Russia as a great friend".

German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius and his Philippine counterpart Gilberto Teodoro held a [meeting in Manila, Philippines](#) on August 4. It was the first ever visit of German defence minister to the Philippines. The two ministers agreed to deepen military cooperation and to reach an agreement on the defence cooperation deal "before the end of the year, maybe already in October". According to Teodoro, the focus of the agreement would be on "mutual understanding regarding capabilities, training and exchange of information".

Other Developments

[Philippines fortifies South China Sea outpost to keep it standing for 10 more years](#)

[Myanmar military withdrew from positions close to China's border 'for safety of people'](#)

East Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On August 2, the Philippines and Japan conducted their first [joint military exercises](#) in the South China Sea. Two vessels from each side participated in a communications exercise, tactical manoeuvres, and a photographic exercise. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) stated, "this activity was part of the ongoing efforts to strengthen regional and international cooperation towards realising a free and open Indo-Pacific". This comes days after the Philippine and US navies conducted a [joint maritime exercise](#) in the South China Sea on July 31.

Japan's Defense Minister Minoru Kihara held a [meeting with the Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister](#) and Minister of National Defense, General Tea Seiha, in Phnom Penh on August 5, 2024. The two defence chiefs agreed to boost defense cooperation and exchanges between Cambodia and Japan. The Ministers also agreed to promote multilateral cooperation, including Japan-ASEAN cooperation, based on the Japan-ASEAN Ministerial Initiative for Enhanced Defense Cooperation (JASMINE). Minister [Kihara said](#) he hoped to share his "understanding of the strategic environment" in the region and reinforce defence and security cooperation among the countries. Kihara's visit coincided with Cambodia's breaking ground on a controversial [China-backed canal](#) linking the capital, Phnom Penh, with the sea, despite environmental concerns and the risk of straining ties with neighboring Vietnam. During his visit, Minister Kihara also held talks with Prime Minister Hun Manet and former Prime Minister Hun Sen, who is now president of the Senate.

On [August 6](#), during a press conference, Hong Kong's Chief Executive, John Lee Ka-chiu stated, "Southeast Asian countries support Hong Kong's bid for early accession to the Pacific mega-trade deal - Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)". Lee's statement came after he finished his three-country tour: Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, making him the city's first leader to visit these members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Other Developments

[Tim Walz And China: Close Personal Ties And Sharp Criticism Of Beijing](#)

[Taiwan's Defence Budget Will Hit New Record Next Year, President Says](#)

[Japan, Mongolia To Agree On Defense Equipment Cooperation At Summit](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei [vowed to punish Israel](#) for killing Hamas' political bureau chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran. Amidst rising tension between Israel and Iran, the US has deployed additional warships and [fighter aircraft to the Middle East](#). President Biden reaffirmed [America's commitment to Israel's security](#), including defence against missile and drone attacks by Iran and its proxies Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Houthis. On August 5, US Central Command (CENTCOM) chief [Gen. Erik Kurilla met Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant](#) in Tel Aviv to express US support.

China and Russia condemned the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh and expressed concern that the [incident could lead to further regional turmoil](#). In his meeting with Russia's Security Council Secretary Sergei Shoigu on August 5, Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian vowed to [expand strategic relations with Russia](#). Russia is reportedly delivering air defence systems and radar equipment to Iran.

Lebanese militant group Hezbollah vowed a strong response to Israel's targeted assassination of its [commander Fuad Shukur](#). Hezbollah continued drone attacks in northern Israel. Yahya Sinwar was named the new head of [Hamas' political bureau](#) on August 6. Meanwhile, reports claimed that the US, Israel, and UAE are collaborating to create a [new national committee of Palestinian leaders](#) and business community to administer Gaza following the war.

Other Developments

[Iran President stresses expansion of ties with Russia](#)

[Israel-Hamas war: UAE shows diplomatic sway with Gaza as tensions escalate](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

The European Union (EU) High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission, [Josep Borell, visited Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic](#) from August 1 to 3. In Kazakhstan, Borell said, "it was important to me to come here, to Astana, to reaffirm our strong commitment to strengthen our cooperation with Central Asia as a whole, and Kazakhstan in particular". During the [talks with the Kyrgyz officials](#), he agreed to strengthening political, economic and cultural cooperation between the European Union the Kyrgyz Republic, and reviewed the progress of implementation of the roadmap for strengthening ties between the European Union and Central Asia.

On July 31, Russia completed the [withdrawal of its border guards](#) from Yerevan's Zvartnots International Airport, a move that Armenia demanded in March amid mounting tensions between the two countries. Since Armenia's independence, Russian border guards have been stationed at Zvartnots as well as along Armenia's borders with Turkey and Iran in a show of the close military ties between the two countries. In March, Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian announced that his government had given Moscow until August 1 to remove the border guards from the airport, stating that Armenia has the capacity to carry out border controls there "without the help of the Russian side". The Russian Foreign Ministry criticised the move, saying that Yerevan risks inflicting "irreparable damage" to Russian-Armenian relations and jeopardising Armenia's security and economic development. Nevertheless, the [Russian border guards will continue to serve on Armenia's borders](#) with Turkey and Iran, as stated by Armenia's National Security Service (NSS). The NSS explained that the border guards of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) are now stationed at Armenian-Turkish and Armenian-Iranian border checkpoints according to an agreement signed between the two countries in 1992.

Other Developments

[Turkmenistan and Philippines hold political consultations](#)

[Turkmenistan launches container train service from India to Uzbekistan](#)

[Pakistan, Turkmenistan to accelerate work on Trans-Afghan gas pipeline](#)

[Armenian soldiers seen wearing Indian made night vision during Eagle Partner 2024](#)

[CSTO: Armenia not planning to participate in military exercises to be held in September](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

The Indian Navy's Shishumar-class submarine, [INS Shalki](#), made a port call at Colombo, Sri Lanka, from August 2 - 4, 2024. During this visit, the Commanding Officer of INS Shalki paid a courtesy call on Rear Admiral WDCU Kumarasinghe, the Commander of the Western Naval Area of the Sri Lanka Navy. Earlier, Kalvari class submarines INS Karanj and INS Vagir had visited Colombo in February 2024 and June 2023.

On July 30, 2024, the [Maritime Partnership Exercise \(MPX\)](#) took place in the Baltic Sea between the Indian Navy's INS Tabar and the Russian Navy's ship Soobrazitelnyy, following harbour activities in St. Petersburg. The MPX involved a series of complex naval manoeuvres, including communication drills, Search & Rescue tactics and Replenishment at Sea serials. This exercise is part of ongoing efforts to enhance maritime cooperation between India and Russia.

Chinese Navy's amphibious dock landing ship Qilianshan (Hull 985) [arrived](#) off the coast of Mozambique on August 2, 2024, to participate in the ["Peace Unity-2024"](#). The joint military exercise, which is scheduled to take place from August 6 to 8, involves China, Tanzania, and Mozambique. During the exercise, troops will engage in a series of drills focusing on [four key areas](#): joint maritime patrols, visit, board, search, and seizure (VBSS), maritime rescue operations and anti-terrorism and anti-piracy tactics.

Other Developments

[The Russian naval ships, the Guards missile cruiser "Varyag" and the frigate "Marshal Shaposhnikov", made a port call at Kochi on August 7, 2024.](#)

[Turkish President submitted a proposal for the deployment of Turkish Navy forces to Somalia's territorial waters.](#)

[Norwegian navy will contribute to the UK Carrier Strike Group deployment to the Indo Pacific in 2025.](#)



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

www.delhipolicygroup.org