



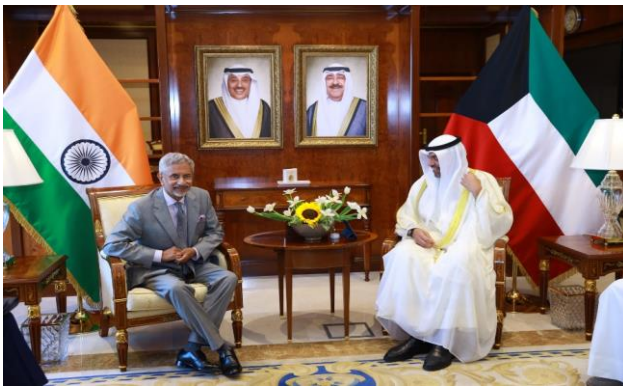
# Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



## India's Proximity Archives

August 21, 2024



Volume II, Issue 34 | August 21, 2024

**Delhi Policy Group**

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

[www.delhipolicygroup.org](http://www.delhipolicygroup.org)



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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:** Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim with Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, in New Delhi, India on August 20, 2024. Source: [Narendra Modi/Official X Account](#)

**East Asia:** Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Ms. Kamikawa Yoko, Minister of Defense of Japan, Mr. Kihara Minoru, Minister of Defence of India, Mr. Rajnath Singh, and Minister of External Affairs of India, Dr. S. Jaishankar at the third India-Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting was convened in New Delhi, India on August 20, 2024. Source: [Dr. Jaishankar/Official X Account](#)

**West Asia:** India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar met Kuwait's Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya on August 18, 2024. Source: [Dr. S. Jaishankar/ Official X Account](#)

**Central Asia:** Russian President Vladimir Putin and President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev held talks at the Zagulba Residence in Baku on August 19, 2024. Source: [President of Russia](#)

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## South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba is [visiting India](#) from August 18 to 22. She held bilateral talks with India's Minister of External Affairs Dr S Jaishankar on August 19, in which they reviewed the progress made in various bilateral initiatives and developmental projects and also discussed opportunities for further collaboration in the existing and new areas of mutually beneficial cooperation. Both Foreign Ministers noted the unprecedented opportunities in the power sector cooperation that would be available on implementation of the Long-Term Power Trade Agreement. Meanwhile, India has accepted an additional 251 MW of [electricity exports](#) from Nepal, bringing the total to 1,000 MW. Minister Deuba also met [Prime Minister Narendra Modi](#).

Taliban, on August 14 conducted a [parade at Bagram Airfield](#), showcasing US military equipment left behind after the American withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021. The event, held as part of the Taliban's celebration of what it calls "victory day". During the event, Taliban leaders reiterated their call for international engagement, claiming that they have created conditions for "good relations" with the region and the world. The UN agencies criticised the Taliban for curtailing [women's rights](#). Afghanistan is currently the only country in the world where secondary and higher education is strictly forbidden to women and girls over age 12. Taliban government has "deliberately deprived" at least 1.4 million girls of their right to an education during its three years in power, according to the United Nations.

PM Modi held a telephonic conversation on August 16 with Prof. Mohammad Yunus, the Chief Adviser of the Interim Government of Bangladesh. During the call, Prime Minister Modi reaffirmed India's support for a democratic, stable, peaceful and progressive Bangladesh. Meanwhile, more than 31 complaints were filed against Bangladesh's former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her aides, including 26 on charges of murder. A [tribunal has initiated](#) three probes into alleged mass murder charges against Sheikh Hasina. The main opposition party BNP on August 20, [urged India](#) to extradite her to face trials.

## Other Developments

[Afghanistan's Taliban sign \\$2.5B in trade, investment deals with Uzbekistan](#)

[Iran imposes deadline for Afghan refugees to leave certain regions](#)

[Pakistan conducted successful training launch of surface-to-surface ballistic missile Shaheen-II](#)

[39 candidates to run in Sri Lanka's presidential election](#)

## Southeast Asia

by

Anshita Shukla

Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Seri [Anwar Ibrahim visited New Delhi](#), India, his first visit to the South Asian region, on August 20, 2024. During his visit, he met with the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, marking the first meeting between the two Prime Ministers. The leaders upgraded the bilateral relations to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' and discussed areas of cooperation like semiconductor, fintech, defence industry, AI, and quantum technology. The delegation led by the Malaysian Prime Minister included the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dato' Seri Utama Haji Mohamad Bin Haji Hasan; the Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry, Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz; Minister of Tourism, Art & Culture, Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing; Minister of Digital, Gobind Singh Deo and Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Steven Sim.

Vietnam's Communist Party General Secretary To Lam made his [first official three-day visit](#), since he was appointed party chief, to Beijing on August 19, 2024. During his visit, he held a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Chinese Premier Li Qiang and other Chinese top officials. The leaders signed 14 documents spanning cross-border railways, cooperation between central banks, media, health and the quarantine and inspection of coconuts, crocodiles and durians. General Secretary Lam described bilateral relations with China as a "top priority in Vietnam's external policy".

The President-elect of Indonesia Prabowo Subianto, current Defence minister, made [his first official visit to Canberra, Australia](#) from August 19-20, 2024. During his visit, he met with Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and concluded a treaty-level defence cooperation agreement. The agreement will allow Australian and Indonesian militaries to operate from each other's countries. PM Albanese characterised the agreement as a "historic treaty" that would "bolster our strong defence cooperation by deepening dialogue, strengthening interoperability and enhancing practical arrangements".

### Other Developments

[Thai Constitutional Court removes PM Srettha Thavasin from office](#)

[US meets Myanmar opposition, pledges expanded support](#)

[Philippines, China trade blame after vessels collide in South China Sea](#)

## East Asia

by

Anshita Shukla

The third [India-Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting](#) was convened in New Delhi, India on August 20, 2024. The meeting was co-chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Ms. Kamikawa Yoko, Minister of Defense of Japan, Mr. Kihara Minoru, Minister of Defence of India, Shri Rajnath Singh, and Minister of External Affairs of India, Dr. S. Jaishankar. The ministers held wide-ranging discussions on regional and global issues, bilateral security and defence cooperation, the role of women in preventing conflict, and people-to-people exchanges. The joint statement noted progress made for the transfer of Unified Complex Radio Antenna (UNICORN) and related technologies.

The United States and South Korea commenced their [annual summertime military exercises, Ulchi Freedom Shield](#), on August 19, 2024. The exercise scheduled to end on August 29 will reflect "realistic threats" across all domains, including the North's missile threats but also GPS jamming, cyberattacks and other lessons learned from recent incidents, according to the US and South Korean militaries. The drills will involve 19,000 South Korean troops with 48 rounds of combined field training, including field manoeuvre, live fire and amphibious exercises.

Chinese Foreign Minister [Wang Yi made an official visit to Naypyitaw](#), Myanmar on August 14, 2024. During his visit, he met with Myanmar junta leader Min Aung Hlaing and held discussions to conduct an "all-inclusive election", restive border areas, eradication of online gambling and scams and economic cooperation. The Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper reported that China's Foreign Minister stated "necessary technological assistance will be provided for Myanmar to conduct the census-taking process. Moreover, essential aid will be given for the election." Wang Yi also met with former commander-in-chief and military ruler Than Shwe.

## Other Developments

[North Korea's Kim and Russia's Putin vow deeper ties on Korean liberation day](#)

[Biden Approved Secret Nuclear Strategy Refocusing on Chinese Threat](#)

[South Korea's Yoon offers new dialogue channel with North Korea](#)

[China's No. 2 Official Travels To Russia To 'Deepen' Ties As Ukraine War Grinds On](#)

[Japan's Ruling Party To Pick New Leader, Successor To PM Kishida Next Month](#)



## West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On August 18, India's External Affairs Minister [Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Kuwait](#). He met the country's Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Prime Minister Ahmed Abdullah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya. The two sides discussed ways to deepen their bilateral relationship, particularly in trade and investment, pharma, technology, and education. Streamlining labour and manpower issues was also discussed.

On August 18, the US, Egypt, and Qatar met in Doha as mediators to reach an agreement on a [ceasefire between Israel and Hamas](#), as well as the release of hostages held in Gaza. The three countries' senior officials are scheduled to meet in Cairo this week to finalise a deal to de-escalate regional tensions. Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Israel, Egypt, and Qatar from August 17-21. Secretary Blinken urged Hamas to accept the "bridging proposal" regarding the ceasefire, adding that [there is no time to waste](#). However, President Biden informed that Hamas was backing away from a hostage deal and [a ceasefire remains elusive](#). Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) also claimed responsibility for a [suicide bombing attempt](#) in Israel's financial hub Tel Aviv.

In a speech to Türkiye's parliament on August 15, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas stated that he is [willing to travel to Gaza](#), even at the risk of his life. Hamas had violently evicted Mahmoud Abbas and his Fatah faction from Gaza in 2007. Meanwhile, a spokesperson for the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) indicated that Iran would wait for the [appropriate time to act against Israel](#) in response to Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh's assassination.

### Other Developments

[China and Saudi Arabia Emerge as Largest Buyers of Russia's Fuel Oil](#)

[How Israel Gathers Intelligence to Find Hostages in Gaza](#)

[Scottish government suspends all meetings with Israel](#)

## Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

Russian President Vladimir Putin [held talks](#) with his Azerbaijani counterpart as part of a two-day trip to secure Moscow's under-pressure trade routes and shore up ties in the region, on August 19, 2024. President Putin [reaffirmed his support](#) in facilitating the signing of the peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia and to resolve logistical and economic issues. Additionally, business links were high on the agenda, with [President Aliyev announcing that \\$120 million](#) had been earmarked to boost cargo transport between the two countries. Several documents were signed, including agreements on climate change, low-carbon development, and investment promotion.

[In a new opinion piece](#) titled "The Renaissance of Central Asia: Towards Sustainable Development and Prosperity", the Kazakh president argued that the region has acted "as a single geopolitical and spiritual arena, endowed with significant natural resources, substantial human capacity, and an infinite cultural and historical heritage". In President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's vision, the ongoing complexity of the military and political situation along the periphery of Central Asia paves a straightforward way for collaboration in defence policy and security. Furthermore, the Kazakh president advises the pursuit of comprehensive strategies for addressing pivotal concerns "in the fight against traditional and emerging threats", as well as "active collaboration with the United Nations and other international and regional organisations". His opinion piece has left many pondering what his message means. [Luca Anceschi](#), a lecturer at the University of Glasgow stated that President Tokayev was indirectly saying "that they are not on Russia's side in Ukraine, like Belarus is, but they are not with Ukraine either. They have ties with the West but are not pro-Western either".

On [August 20](#), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) announced that it will soon conduct a series of exercises in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to maintain stability in the Central Asian region. "Russia has consistently undertaken efforts to cultivate the CSTO's potential as an effective mechanism for maintaining stability, not only in its member states but also in the broader Eurasian region. The exercises aim to develop joint actions to protect stability in Central Asia and promote collective security actions, especially considering the current situation in Afghanistan," Mikael Agasandyan said. The director of the first department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs with responsibility for the CIS also noted interest in the

CSTO's activities from several Eurasian states who share the opinion on the importance of creating a unified, indivisible and reliable security environment on the continent.

## Other Developments

[Tajikistan-Kyrgyzstan Border Demarcation Completed](#)

[Turkey, Turkmenistan Inch Closer To Sending Natural Gas To Europe](#)

[Discussion Held On Potential Business Ties Between India And Kazakhstan](#)

[CSTO: No Request For Military Assistance From Russia Over Situation In Kursk Oblast](#)

## Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

Admiral Aleksandr Alekseyevich Moiseyev, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Federation Navy, is on [an official visit to India](#) from August 19 to 22, 2024. Upon his arrival, he was received by Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, the Chief of the Naval Staff of the Indian Navy in New Delhi. Both naval leaders engaged in discussions aimed at enhancing the existing cooperation between the Russian and Indian navies. Admiral Aleksandr Alekseyevich Moiseyev met the Chief of Defence Staff, the Defence Secretary, the Vice Chief of the Air Staff, and the National Maritime Security Coordinator of India, as part of his official engagements in New Delhi. In addition, he is visiting Mumbai, where he will hold bilateral discussions with the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command, as well as visit indigenous warships and submarines.

The USS Spruance, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer of the United States Navy, [arrived at the Colombo Port](#) in Sri Lanka on August 19, 2024, for a replenishment visit. The ship, measuring 160 meters in length, is manned by a crew of 338 personnel and is commanded by Commander Thomas Adams. The Sri Lanka Navy welcomed the USS Spruance upon its arrival, and the ship is scheduled to depart today, August 20, 2024, after completing its replenishment activities.

On August 18, 2024, Hon'ble Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh [inaugurated](#) several significant facilities for the Indian Coast Guard in Chennai and Puducherry. The event included the opening of a state-of-the-art Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre and a Marine Pollution Response Centre in Chennai, along with a new Coast Guard Air Enclave in Puducherry. These new installations are expected to enhance India's maritime safety capabilities significantly.

### Other Developments

[Indian Navy's frontline stealth frigate, INS Tabar arrived in Gothenburg, Sweden for a two-day visit](#)

[Saudi Arabia orders its first Deep Sea-Capable Research Vessel, RV Thuwall II](#)

[Chinese, Tanzanian Peace Unity-2024 exercise concluded](#)

[Joint Agency Task Force - Operation Sovereign Borders, Australia delivered two \(02\) of the three \(03\) All - Tertian Vehicles \(AVTs\), to the Sri Lanka Coast Guard](#)

[The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Maldives, Moosa Zameer meet the United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken](#)



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