



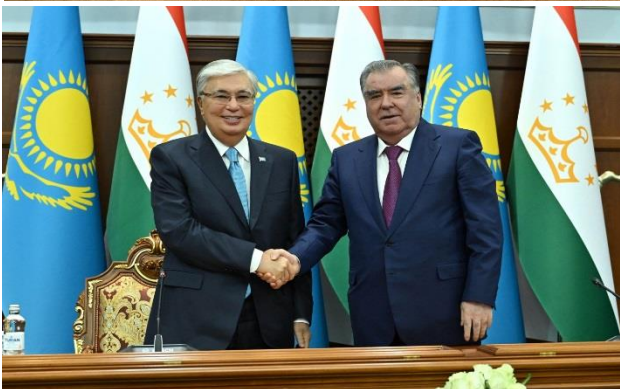
Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



India's Proximity Archives

August 28, 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.

Cover Image:

Southeast Asia: *The Indian and the Singapore delegation at the Second India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR) in Singapore on August 26, 2024. (Source: [Dr. S. Jaishankar/Official X Account](#))*

East Asia: *Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi hosts U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan at Yanqi Lake near Beijing, on August 27, 2024. Source: [Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)*

Central Asia: *Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and Tajikistan's President Emomali Rahmon held a briefing for media representatives after their bilateral negotiations in Dushnabe, Tajikistan, on August 22, 2024. Source: [The President of the Republic of Kazakhstan](#)*

Indian Ocean Region: *MV Sounion, a Greek-flagged oil tanker, was caught on fire on August 23 in the Red Sea. Source: [EUNAVFOR ASPIDES](#)*

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South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

On August 23, 2024, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a historic visit to Kyiv, Ukraine, marking the first visit by an Indian leader since Ukraine's independence in 1991. During the trip, PM Modi held discussions with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, focusing on enhancing bilateral relations and addressing the ongoing conflict with Russia. The [Joint Statement](#) reiterated "India's commitment to a peaceful resolution of the conflict through dialogue and diplomacy". After his return, PM Modi held telephonic call with [President Biden](#) and [President Putin](#), respectively on August 26 and 27 and shared insights from his recent visit to Ukraine.

On August 26, terrorists launched coordinated attacks across the Balochistan. Militants took control of a highway and shot dead 23 people, mostly labourers from Punjab, and attacked the hotel and the railway bridge connecting Balochistan to the rest of the country. The death toll includes 35 civilians and 14 members of the security forces, while the military said troops killed 21 militants. Prime Minister Shabaz Sharif called on a cabinet meeting in which they [approved PNR 60 billion](#) additional funds to ongoing military operation "Azm-i-Istehkam" launched to curb terrorism.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Poland from August 21-24, 2024, where he held talks with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk in restricted and delegation level formats in Warsaw. Both the leaders decided to upgrade the relationship between two countries to a 'Strategic Partnership'. They also discussed various aspects of the bilateral partnership, including trade and investment, science and technology, defense and security, cultural cooperation, and people-to-people ties, conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia and reform of United Nations and other international institutions. As outcome of the meeting a [Joint Statement](#) and an Action Plan [2024-2028] for the Implementation of the [India-Poland Strategic Partnership](#) were issued.

Commander of the People's Liberation Army Ground Forces Gen Li Qiaoming [visited Pakistan](#) on August 26, during which he held high-level military talks with Pakistan Army Chief Gen Asim Munir. According to the press release the talks were focused on situation along the Line of Control (LoC), the China-India border tensions, the developments in Kashmir and Afghanistan. Gen Li was also called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Defence Minister Khawaja Asif.

Other Developments

[Thailand postpones Bimstec Summit](#)

[Biden, Modi discuss situation in Bangladesh, stress early restoration of normalcy](#)

[Three Chinese warships arrive in Colombo for formal visit](#)

[Taliban government announced the ratification of Law on the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Anshita Shukla

The [Second India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable \(ISMR\)](#) took place in Singapore on August 26, 2024. The Indian delegation consisted of Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Dr S Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs, Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry, and Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Electronics and Information Technology, Railways, Information and Broadcasting. The two sides reviewed progress of the India – Singapore Strategic Partnership, in areas of digitalisation, skills development, sustainability, healthcare and medicine. They added two new pillars – advanced manufacturing and connectivity – to expand bilateral cooperation. During their visit, the Indian ministers called on Tharman Shanmugaratnam, President of Singapore and Lawrence Wong, Prime Minister of Singapore.

The [annual multi-national military exercises](#), Super Garuda Shield, commenced in Sidoarjo, East Java on August 26, 2024. The two-week exercises are participated by -Indonesia, US, Australia, Japan, Britain, Singapore, South Korea, Canada, New Zealand and France. Around 4,400 troops from Indonesia, 1,800 US troops and several hundred from other countries are deployed to participate in the exercises. The exercises will include staff and cyber exercises, airborne operations, joint strikes, an amphibious exercise and simulated land operations.

On August 24, the Philippines accused China of "[firing flares at one of its aircraft](#)". The Chinese jet "engaged in irresponsible and dangerous manoeuvres" and deployed flares multiple times at a Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) plane that was making a "maritime domain awareness flight" near Scarborough Shoal. "Such actions undermine regional peace and security and further erode the image of the PRC (People's Republic of China) with the international community", according to the official statement of the Philippines. The US Ambassador to the Philippines, Mary Kay Carlson, in a post on X "call on the PRC to cease provocative and dangerous actions that undermine a Free and Open Indo-Pacific".

Other Developments

[Malaysia steps up pro-Palestinian stance, straining ties with U.S.](#)

[Japan, Indonesia, others agree to build sustainable fuel supply chain](#)

East Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

In hopes of maintaining their channel of communication to “stabilize” bilateral relations, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan in Beijing on [August 27](#). Acknowledging the rocky relationship over the past few years, Wang expressed his hope that this new round of China-U.S. strategic communication could promote bilateral relations following the “San Francisco vision”. Prior to the meeting, the [Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded](#) to the “unreasonable accusation” by the US that China is a threat to the international order. He stated that “China will not follow the old path of Western colonial plunder”, but instead adheres “to peaceful development, pursues win-win cooperation, and firmly maintains the international system and international order with the United Nations at its core”.

On [August 22](#), Taiwan President Lai Ching-te made his first visit since taking office in May to the sensitive Kinmen islands that sit next to the Chinese coast and have been the scene of stepped-up tensions between Taipei and Beijing. Taiwan has controlled Kinmen, and the Matsu islands further up the Chinese coast, since the defeated Republic of China government fled to Taipei in 1949 after losing a civil war with Mao Zedong’s communists. No peace treaty or armistice has ever been signed. [During his visit](#), Lai said that Taiwan wants to “continue a life of democracy and freedom” and rejects being ruled by China’s Communist Party. Furthermore, he insisted that Taiwan “ardently loves peace” and hopes for peaceful development across the Taiwan Strait”. He also added that his government continues to spend more on strengthening the military and will defend Taiwan.

On [August 26](#), Japan says a Chinese military intelligence-gathering aircraft entered its territorial airspace off remote islands in the East China Sea, the first time Tokyo has accused the People’s Liberation Army Air Force of an airspace violation. A map released by the Japanese Defense Ministry showed the Chinese aircraft, a Y-9 reconnaissance plane, flying in a rectangular circuit pattern off the eastern side of the Danjo Islands when it briefly headed west and crossed into the islands’ territorial airspace for about two minutes. The Japanese Defense Ministry said it scrambled Air Self-Defense Force fighter jets to respond to the alleged intrusion, but no confrontation with the Chinese plane was reported. [In response to the incursion](#), Japan’s Foreign Ministry said it summoned Shi Yong, Charge d’affaires of the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo, “to

deliver a solemn protest and strongly request that the Chinese side prevent any recurrence”.

Other Developments

[U.N. Agency Urges China To Review Xinjiang Policies Tied To Rights Abuses](#)

[Kishida Eyes Visit To South Korea In Early September](#)

[Australian Senator Upholds Motion Denying China's U.N. Claim To Taiwan](#)

[Shinjiro Koizumi Is Public's Favorite For Next LDP Leader, Poll Shows](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On August 25, the Lebanese militant group [Hezbollah launched hundreds of rockets](#) and drones at Israel, in retaliation for the killing of its [senior commander Fuad Shukur](#). The Israeli military pre-empted with airstrikes on Hezbollah rocket launchers and drones in Lebanon. The Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) spokesman informed that Hezbollah's attack was mostly thwarted and that [no military base was damaged](#). According to General Charles Q. Brown, Jr., Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Iran remains a significant threat as it considers attacking Israel. However, the [risk of a broader regional conflict](#) has eased somewhat in the near-term as Israel and Hezbollah exchanged fire without further escalation.

Qaid Farhan Alkadi, an [Israeli-Bedouin Arab hostage](#) who Hamas held since the terror attack of October 7, 2023, was rescued on August 27 by the Israeli Defence Forces and Shin Bet. As the US, Egypt, and Qatar continue to mediate for a ceasefire and hostage deal between Israel and Hamas, Iran's newly appointed Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi informed that Tehran would back any [ceasefire deal that Hamas agrees to](#).

In the midst of ongoing tensions between Israel and Palestine, Israel's Minister of National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir has suggested building a [synagogue on the site of Temple Mount](#) (Al-Aqsa Mosque) in Jerusalem. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) [condemned Ben-Gvir's comments](#) as "outlandish" and "preposterous" warning that it would "inflame the situation" and cause more instability in the region. UAE and Saudi Arabia reiterated the need to respect the "historical and legal status of Al-Aqsa Mosque".

Other Developments

[China, Egypt hold joint naval exercise in the Mediterranean Sea](#)

[As China-Saudi ties develop, so will cross-border yuan use, ratings agency says](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [August 22](#), a historic treaty on allied relations between Kazakhstan and Tajikistan was signed during Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's state visit to Tajikistan. After the meeting and negotiations between the leaders of Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, [a ceremony of signing of 16 new documents of cooperation](#) was held in the presence and with the participation of the heads of state. In a joint statement after bilateral negotiations, the President of Tajikistan, [Emomali Rahmon stated](#) that the important agreement will "open a new page in the annals of cooperation between the two countries and will be the solid foundation of our strategic partnership".

On [August 21](#), during a press event, Maria Zakharova, Spokesperson of Russia's Foreign Ministry, said the "doors" are open for Armenia to return to full cooperation with the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). She said, "Ultimately, there is no alternative to the CSTO and Russia as guarantors of the stability of this country. This has been tested not for years but for centuries."

Other Developments

[Practical Work on TAPI Project to Commence Soon](#)

[Azerbaijan agrees to boost INSTC infra as Putin visits Baku](#)

[Azerbaijan Launches Bid To Join BRICS After Putin Visit](#)

[A 'Coordinated Silence' in Central Asia Amid Ukraine's Kursk Incursion](#)

[Tajikistan, Kazakhstan Ink Mou To Collaborate On Uranium And Rare Earth Metals Mining](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

On August 22, EUNAVFOR ASPIDES conducted a [Safety of Life at Sea](#) (SOLAS) operation in response to the MV Sounion's urgent request for assistance after it was attacked by Houthi rebels on August 21 in the Red Sea. On August 23, the vessel was attacked by an unknown source, which resulted in a fire posing a significant environmental threat due to the large volume of crude oil on board. The tanker is carrying 150,000 tons crude oil. The Sounion was the [third vessel](#) operated by Athens-based Delta Tankers to be attacked in the Red Sea this month.

The ongoing strategic rivalry between India and China in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) has intensified as their naval ships docked simultaneously at the port of Colombo, Sri Lanka, on August 26, 2024. The Indian Navy's guided-missile destroyer [INS Mumbai](#) arrived for a three-day visit, marking its first port call in Sri Lanka and the eighth visit by Indian Navy ships this year. At the same time, three [Chinese warships](#), including the destroyer Hefei and two amphibious ships, docked at Colombo. Both Indian and Chinese ships are scheduled to conduct separate passage exercises with the Sri Lankan Navy upon their departure on August 29.

The general cargo ship MV ITT Puma (IMO 8116128), sailing under the Indian flag, sank approximately 70-90 nautical miles south of Sagar Island, West Bengal on August 25, 2024. On August 26, 2024, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) [successfully rescued](#) 11 crew members from the MV ITT Puma. The distress signal was received late on August 25, prompting a rapid response from the ICG's Regional Headquarters in Kolkata, which deployed two ships and a Dornier aircraft for the rescue operation. The coordinated sea-air rescue operation was completed successfully.

Other Developments

[Indian Coast Guard \(ICG\) Offshore Patrol Vessel Sujay made a port call at Jakarta, Indonesia.](#)

[Indian Naval Ship Tabar reaches Spain.](#)



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