



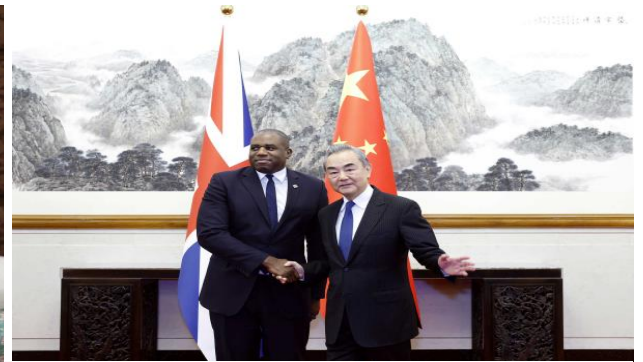
Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



India's Proximity Archives

October 23, 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:

South Asia: Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Bhutan's Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay in New Delhi on October 21, 2024.

Source: [Official X Handle/Tshering Tobgay](#)

Southeast Asia: Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Foreign Minister, Wang Yi held talks with British Foreign and Development Secretary David Lammy in Beijing, on October 18, 2024. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China](#)

West Asia: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met in Jerusalem on October 22, 2024. Source: [Official X Handle/Prime Minister of Israel](#)

Indian Ocean Region: 28th edition of the MALABAR 2024 exercise was held in the Bay of Bengal on October 9-18, 2024.

Source: [PIB](#)

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South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

Pakistan's Shehbaz Sharif-led government, along with political ally PPP and other parties, approved a [new constitutional amendment](#) on October 20. The amendment aims to address ongoing political instability in Pakistan by granting legislators more authority in appointing senior judges, with a specific focus on judicial reforms. The 26th Constitution Amendment Bill consists of 22 amendment clauses that include [provisions](#) to limit the Supreme Court's suo moto powers, establish a three-year term for the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP), and grant the prime minister the authority to select the next CJP from the three most senior judges of the Supreme Court.

The amendments received strong criticism from the [International Commission of Jurists](#) (ICJ), who described them as a damaging blow to the independence of the judiciary. Following the successful passage of the bill, the special parliamentary committee officially approved Justice Yahya Afridi as the [next Chief Justice](#) of Pakistan on October 22. The opposition party PTI rejected the constitutional amendment and declared [their plan to organise a fresh round of protests](#) throughout the country.

On October 22, demonstrators in Bangladesh attempted to [breach the presidential palace](#), demanding the resignation of President Mohammed Shahabuddin due to his recent remarks about ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Hasnat Abdullah, a prominent leader of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, has presented a set of five demands through an ultimatum. These include the immediate resignation of President Mohammed Shahabuddin, the revision of the constitution by nullifying the 1972 version, the prohibition of Chhatra League, Juba League, and Awami League, and the official recognition of the July uprising as the Proclamation of the Republic. Additionally, they insisted that the three general elections conducted after 2014 should be deemed invalid, and the elected individuals should have their assets seized. Earlier, Bangladesh's President Mohammed Shahabuddin [had said](#) that he did not have any documentary evidence of Sheikh Hasina resigning as prime minister before she left the country.

Other Developments

[PM Modi meets Bhutanese PM Tshering Tobgay, calls Bhutan a 'very special friend'](#)

[Maldives has set new foreign currency rules and failure to comply will lead to hefty fines](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Anshita Shukla

India's Minister of State for External Affairs, [Pabitra Margherita, made an official visit to Indonesia](#) from October 9-10, 2024. The Minister attended the inauguration ceremony of President Prabowo Subianto and Vice President Gibran Rakabuming Raka at the parliament complex in Jakarta on October 20, 2024. He conveyed warm greetings to the President on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The [First India-Singapore Cyber Policy Dialogue](#) was held in Singapore on October 17, 2024. The dialogue was co-chaired by Mr. Amit A. Shukla, Joint Secretary of Cyber Diplomacy, Ministry of External Affairs of India and Mr. David Koh, Chief Executive of the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore. The two countries exchanged views on the cyber threat landscape, national cyber strategies and policies, threat assessment and policies and developments in the global cyber governance dialogues and agreed to enhance cooperation in areas of cyber threat alerts and responses, exchange of experiences and best practices, particularly in protection of critical information infrastructure and joint capacity building/training activities.

The [second Myanmar-Russia joint maritime security exercise](#) commenced in the waters of the north Andaman Sea on October 20, 2024. From the Russian Pacific Fleet, four corvettes and a logistics vessel will participate in the "harbour phase" exercises. The official statement by the Global New Light of Myanmar warned fishing boats and aircraft not to travel around the area but did not say if any Russian ships or personnel were taking part in that exercise.

Other Developments

[Vietnam Parliament elects army general Luong Cuong as President](#)

[Indonesia's Prabowo swears in Cabinet of more than 100 ministers, deputies](#)

East Asia

by

Anshita Shukla

On October 22, Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri announced that India and China have reached an [agreement on "patrolling arrangements"](#) along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the border area". The agreement is intended to lead to "disengagement and a resolution of the issues that had arisen in these areas in 2020 and we will be taking the next steps on this", remarked Vikram Misri. The Foreign Ministry spokesman of China, Lin Jian, stated that "now both sides have arrived at a resolution on the relevant matter, which China views favourably." Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping are scheduled to hold a bilateral meeting on October 23, the first interaction between the two leaders since 2019.

British Foreign Secretary David Lammy commenced a [two-day diplomatic visit to China](#) on October 18-19. The visit is part of the new Labour government's plan of a "pragmatic" reset of relations in light of escalating tensions between the two countries. Foreign Secretary Lammy is only the second top British diplomat to visit China in six years. The visit aimed to demonstrate Britain's strategic commitment to enhancing ties with Beijing, notwithstanding significant areas of disagreement like the Ukraine war and Hong Kong. On [October 18](#), Lammy had meetings with Chinese Vice-Premier Ding Xuexiang and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. During these meetings, both sides underlined the need to strengthen dialogue and cooperation in the spirit of mutual respect, which serves the long-term interests of both countries.

On October 22, China commenced [a live-fire exercise](#) near Taiwan. The Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) of Pingtan announced that "gun firing" would take place in a limited area close to the Chinese mainland, about 105 km from Taiwan. Taiwan's Defence Ministry, in response to the drills, stated that "the exercises could be part of Beijing's tactics to bolster its intimidation in conjunction with the dynamics in the Taiwan Strait". This comes a day after the USS Higgins and the Canadian frigate HMCS Vancouver made a ["routine" transit](#) through the Taiwan Strait on October 20.

Other Developments

[North Korea's UN representative denies Pyongyang sent troops to Russia](#)

[China says it is beefing up efforts with US to combat smuggling](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

Israel Defence Forces (IDF) killed [Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar](#) in Gaza, the mastermind of the terror attack on Israel on October 16. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu described Sinwar's death as the [beginning of the end of the war in Gaza](#) and said that if Hamas gave up its weapons and returned hostages, the war could end tomorrow. Meanwhile, Lebanese terror group Hezbollah launched a drone attack on [PM Netanyahu's holiday residence](#) in northern Israel. Amidst this, on October 22, Secretary of State Antony Blinken met Prime Minister Netanyahu in Jerusalem to reaffirm the US' ironclad [commitment to Israel's defence and security](#) .

Secretary Blinken urged Israel to capitalise on its success in bringing Yahya Sinwar to justice by [securing the release of all hostages](#) as well as resolving the Gaza conflict in a manner that will provide lasting security for Israelis and Palestinians. He also discussed ongoing efforts to achieve a diplomatic resolution along the Lebanon border. On the other hand, a classified US intelligence document regarding [Israel's plans for retaliation against Iran](#) was reportedly leaked in the public domain on October 15-16.

Before the BRICS Summit in Kazan, UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on October 20. Both sides pledged to [deepen their "strategic partnership"](#) and discussed issues related to conflicts in West Asia and Ukraine. President Putin thanked the UAE for its mediation efforts in the [exchange of prisoners of war](#) between Ukraine and Russia. Besides the UAE, Egypt, Iran, and Ethiopia would attend their first BRICS Summit as full members, underscoring the importance of the West Asia-North Africa region to the group.

Other Developments

[Kremlin backtracks from comments on Saudi BRICS membership](#)

[Iraq says killed top ISIS group figure](#)

[IDF: Hezbollah hiding \\$500 million in gold, cash in bunker under Beirut hospital](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [October 16](#), Kazakhstan's Presidential Press Secretary Berik Uali stated in an interview that, at present and likely for the foreseeable future, Kazakhstan will not pursue BRICS membership. In his opinion, the decision is influenced by the multi-stage process required for membership consideration, as well as other factors pertaining to the developmental prospects of the association. Furthermore, in response to a question about which organisation Kazakhstan prioritises, Uali went on to say that Tokayev has repeatedly spoken out in favour of the UN as a "universal and uncontested organisation."

On [October 16-17](#), Kazakhstan hosted the Astana Think Tank International Forum. The theme of the two-day meeting was "Middle Powers in the Changing Global Order: Strengthening Security, Stability and Sustainable Development." Experts from 22 countries – heads of leading think tanks, politicians and diplomats – participated and spoke at the event. Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev addressed the forum. During his speech, President Tokayev said "While major powers are consumed by rivalry or simply cannot reach a compromise, middle powers often become mediators in settling disputes, thus supporting the fundamental basis of global cooperation."

A delegation from Uzbekistan met officials from India's Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation and discussed areas of collaboration, including developing a pharmacovigilance system and reducing adverse effects of pharmaceutical products, officials said on [October 16](#). The official statement said "Several important issues were discussed during the meeting, including the development of a pharmacovigilance system, reducing the adverse effects of pharmaceutical products, and identifying ways to prevent potential risks. It was emphasised that strengthening international cooperation in this area is crucial for ensuring public health".

Other Developments

[Iraq and Turkmenistan Finalize Gas Supply Agreement](#)

[Armenia Still Undecided About Participation In COP29 In Azerbaijan](#)

[Uzbekistan Prepares for the Polls: Embracing a New Electoral System](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

The 28th Edition of Multinational Maritime Exercise MALABAR 2024 involving Quad nations—India, the United States, Japan, and Australia—[concluded](#) on October 18 in Visakhapatnam. This edition featured extensive participation from warships, helicopters, long-range maritime patrol aircraft, and submarines, engaging in advanced exercises across surface, sub-surface, and air warfare domains. Key activities included surface weapon firings, anti-air operations, air defence drills, anti-submarine warfare exercises, and complex seamanship evolutions. [Begun](#) in 1992 as a bilateral drill between the Indian Navy and the U.S. Navy, the MALABAR Exercise has evolved into Multinational Maritime Exercise involving all Quad nations, with Japan joining in 2015 and Australia in 2020.

The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) [Maritime Exercise \(IMEX-2024\)](#) recently concluded in Iran's territorial waters in the Persian Gulf from October 18 to October 20, 2024. The exercise saw participation from the navies of Bangladesh, India, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand, highlighting regional collaboration. IMEX-2024 aligns with the broader goals of the IONS, which promotes maritime security and cooperation among Indian Ocean littoral states. The exercise is primarily focused on enhancing interoperability among member navies through Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations.

The Naseem Al Bahr naval exercise, [conducted jointly](#) by the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy of Oman, took place off the coast of Goa from October 13 to 18, 2024. It consisted of two phases: the harbour phase, which included professional interactions such as subject matter expert exchanges and planning conferences. The sea phase, where vessels INS Trikand and RNOV Al Seeb conducted various naval operations, including gun firings at inflatable surface targets, close-range anti-aircraft drills, and replenishment at sea approaches (RASAPS). The exercise also featured helicopter operations from INS Trikand performing cross-deck landings and vertical replenishment (VERTREP) with RNOV Al Seeb, as well as Over-the-Horizon Targeting (OTHT) provided by the Indian Navy's Dornier aircraft to enhance operational effectiveness.

Other Developments

[The Indian Navy's Water Jet Fast Attack Craft, INS Kalpeni, arrived in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on October 19, 2024](#)

[INS Shardul recently concluded its visit to Port Rashid, Dubai, on October 16, 2024](#)



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