



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



India's Proximity Archives

December 4, 2024



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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, 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: On December 3, 2024, Nepal's Prime Minister met with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing.

Source: [X/@MofaNepal](#)

West Asia: UAE's President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud met in Al Ain on December 1, 2024. Source: [Emirates News Agency](#)

Central Asia: Leaders of the Collective Security Council of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) held a meeting in Astana, on November 28, 2024. Source: [President of Russia](#)

Indian Ocean Region: The Indian Navy along with the Sri Lankan Navy conducted narcotics seizure - combined operation in the Arabian Sea, on November 24-25, 2024. Source: [Spokesperson Indian Navy](#)

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Contents

South Asia

Shreyas Deshmukh 1

Southeast Asia

Jayantika Rao T.V 2

East Asia

Divya Rai 4

West Asia

Sanket Joshi 5

Central Asia

Jayantika Rao T.V 6

Indian Ocean Region

Divya Rai 7

South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

During his [official visit to China](#) from December 2nd to 5th, Nepal's Prime Minister, KP Sharma Oli met with President Xi Jinping and held bilateral discussions with Chinese Premier Li Qiang. The meeting between Nepal and China resulted in the signing of [nine agreements](#), including an agreement for the construction of the Tokha-Chhahare tunnel, an agreement to enhance Nepal-China trade, and a commitment to provide USD 20 million in cash assistance. In a statement, President [Xi Jinping](#) highlighted Nepal's importance in China's regional diplomacy, affirming Beijing's willingness to collaborate with Kathmandu to push for progress in their strategic partnership. Although the [joint statement](#) expressed a willingness to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Trans-Himalayan Multi-Dimensional Connectivity Network (THMDCN) and the BRI cooperation framework "as soon as possible," both nations have yet to set a firm date for signing the revised BRI deal.

India's high commissioner to Dhaka, Pranay Verma, was [summoned by Bangladesh](#) on December 3rd to discuss a security breach at their assistant high commission in Agartala. After meeting, Mr Verma said, "we have such a wide-ranging and multi-faceted relationship with Bangladesh that you cannot reduce it to one issue or one agenda." The Indian Ministry of External Affairs in press release condemned the breach of the Bangladesh assistant high commission premises in Agartala, describing the incident as "[deeply regrettable](#)" and stressed that diplomatic and consular properties should not be targeted under any circumstance. Meanwhile, Security has been beefed up in areas surrounding the [Indian High Commission in Dhaka](#) after an organisation named Bangladesh Civil Society has announced a programme to besiege it. India has also strengthened security along the [Bangladesh border](#) in the eight districts of northern West Bengal. The UK government has updated its [travel advisory for Bangladesh](#), warning about potential terrorist activities amidst concerns over attacks on religious minorities in the country.

Other Developments

[Afghanistan: opium production remains 93 per cent below pre-drug ban levels, says UNODC](#)

[Russian security chief Shoygu meets Afghan officials in Kabul to strengthen ties](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V

Philippine and Chinese Coastguards have reported conflicting versions of a maritime confrontation around the contested Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea, the latest row in a longstanding dispute between the two neighbours. On December 3, the [Philippine Coast Guard \(PCG\) said](#) Chinese Navy and Coastguard vessels had taken "aggressive actions" against a routine patrol by it and the fisheries bureau. [In a statement by the PCG spokesperson](#), said that the Chinese Coastguard fired a water cannon at a PCG vessel "aiming directly at the vessel's navigational antennas," The incident follows a diplomatic spat in November after China drew baseline "territorial waters" around the shoal, which Beijing claims as Huangyan Island.

On [December 3](#), Singapore and Australia agreed to seek opportunities for increased access to their respective defence facilities, including more frequent Australian visits to the city-state's air force and navy bases. During a ministerial visit to Singapore, Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles said, the two countries are set to announce an upgrade to their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership next year, including plans for closer military collaboration. During the meetings, Singapore's [Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan said](#) a stronger defence partnership would be the key cornerstone of the new 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) agreement'. The agreement between the two countries is set to be held when they celebrate 60 years of bilateral ties, with other areas of cooperation being food security, energy and climate change.

The [13th edition of Joint Military Exercise AGNI WARRIOR \(XAW-2024\)](#), a bilateral exercise between the Indian Army and Singapore Armed Forces, concluded at Field Firing Ranges, Devlali (Maharashtra) on November 30, 2024. The three-day exercise conducted from November 28 to 30, 2024, witnessed participation by the Singapore Armed Forces contingent comprising 182 personnel from the Singapore Artillery and the Indian Army contingent comprising 114 personnel from the Regiment of Artillery.

XAW-2024 aimed to maximise mutual understanding of drills and procedures to achieve jointness as a multinational force under the United Nations Charter. The exercise showcased joint firepower planning, execution and use of New Generation Equipment by the Artillery of both Armies.

Other Developments

[Thailand PM protests Myanmar's Navy firing at Thai fishing boats](#)

[Malaysia proposes laws to arrest, obtain private data, in clampdown on harmful online content](#)

[Philippine President and Vice President clash on a feud that's testing an Asian Democracy](#)

East Asia

by

Divya Rai

In an unprecedented move, South Korea President Yoon Suk Yeol [declared](#) "emergency martial law" in an unannounced television address on December 3. He accused the opposition of sympathising with North Korea and paralysing the government with anti-state activities. After the declaration of martial law, South Korea plunged into political turmoil, with parliament swiftly rejecting the move and protests erupting across the nation. Yoon's own party leader, Han Dong-hoon, the National Assembly speaker [opposed the move and declared](#) the measure invalid. In a rapid response to the martial law declaration, the South Korean National Assembly convened and voted unanimously to reject the martial law order. This vote effectively nullified the president's decision. Martial law was withdrawn within six hours of announcing it. It was the first time since 1980, that martial law was declared in South Korea.

China [banned](#) exports of "dual-use items" related to gallium, germanium, antimony and superhard materials to the United States with immediate effect. This move came a day after Washington's [latest](#) crackdown on China's semiconductor industry, curbing exports to 140 companies, including chip equipment maker Naura Technology Group, and opens new tab. The ministry also added, a stricter review of end-usage for graphite dual-use items to the United States is required. The curbs will strengthen enforcement of existing limits on critical minerals exports that Beijing began rolling out last year, but apply only to the U.S. market,

Japan [deployed](#) a surveillance aircraft and a naval vessel responded after sighting of a Russian submarine. The Russian Kilo-class submarine was located approximately 50 kilometres south of Yonaguni Island, which is Japan's westernmost territory situated just east of Taiwan. Accompanied by a Russian naval ship, the submarine was observed moving northeast between Yonaguni and the nearby Iriomote Island. This marks the first instance of a Russian submarine being detected in these waters, according to statements from Japan's Joint Staff.

Other Developments

[China and Russia completed the second phase of 9th joint air strategic patrol joint](#)

[Xi Jinping expands anti-corruption purge as top Admiral Miao Hua faces investigation](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

The Sunni Islamist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) swept into the city of Aleppo in Syria on November 30, marking its first major [assault on President Bashar al-Assad's regime](#) since 2020. Syria has redeployed its army in the region while the Russian Air Force conducted airstrikes in Aleppo and Idlib in support of the Assad regime. In a joint statement issued on December 1, the US, UK, France, and Germany emphasised [the need for de-escalation](#), the protection of civilians, and a Syrian-led political solution to the conflict in accordance with UNSCR 2254.

Continuing the deepening of a [special strategic partnership](#) between the UAE and Saudi Arabia, Emirati President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud met in Al Ain on December 1. During their meeting, the Saudi Crown Prince extended greetings on the occasion of the UAE's 53rd National Day (Eid Al Etihad) and the two sides discussed possible ways to further develop their bilateral relations. Major issues discussed included strengthening Gulf cooperation, advancing joint efforts towards regional security and stability, fostering Arab cooperation, and pursuing a just, comprehensive, and lasting two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Meanwhile, French President Emmanuel Macron met Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud in Riyadh on December 2. The two leaders signed a [strategic partnership agreement](#) aimed at deepening their bilateral relations and working together to de-escalate conflicts in the region, including helping to consolidate the fragile ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon. Reportedly, France and Saudi Arabia intend to co-host an international conference on the [establishment of a Palestinian state](#) in June 2025.

US President-elect Donald Trump warned Hamas that if the remaining Israeli hostages held in Gaza were not released before January 20, the [US would strike Hamas and its backers harder](#) than ever before.

Other Developments

[GCC Summit calls for 'intervention' to protect civilians in Gaza](#)

[Hamas and Fatah are near an agreement on who will oversee postwar Gaza](#)

[Iran expresses Syria's frustration with Turkey in a tense visit](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On November 28, Kazakhstan hosted a summit of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), including a meeting involving the leaders of the Russia-led military alliance's member states. Following the meeting, the heads of state inked 14 separate documents, including a declaration in which they declared their commitment to develop further the CSTO and their intention to continue interaction between member states. The members approved the [Declaration of the Collective Security Council](#).

Prior to the CSTO meeting, Russia-Kazakhstan talks took place at the Akorda residence, on [November 27](#). Following the consultations, the presidents signed a joint statement; several intergovernmental, inter-agency and business documents were also signed. Vladimir Putin and Kassym-Jomart Tokayev addressed the plenary session of the 20th Russia-Kazakhstan Interregional Cooperation Forum in Ufa, via videoconference. During the discussions, Vladimir Putin and Kassym-Jomart Tokayev deliberated on the advancement of the [strategic partnership](#) and alliance between the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan across diverse domains.

On [December 1](#), Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Foreign Minister Wang Yi chaired the fifth China-Central Asia Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Chengdu. The five foreign Ministers of the Central Asian countries attended the meeting. The [ministers discussed](#) economic cooperation, regional security challenges, transportation and logistics cooperation, climate and environment, and the growth of cultural and humanitarian ties. Additionally, they agreed to strengthen cooperation in environmental sustainability, including water resources, renewable energy and environmental protection. The officials stressed the need to implement joint infrastructure projects, simplify trade procedures, stimulate investment within the Belt and Road Initiative, strengthen measures to combat terrorism, extremism, and transnational crime, and coordinate efforts in cybersecurity.

Other Developments

[TAPI Gas Pipeline Project launched in Afghanistan](#)

[Azerbaijan isn't reexporting Russian gas to EU, Brussels insists](#)

[Russia's strategic posturing and Putin's November visit to Kazakhstan](#)

[Chinese FM meets counterparts of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

On November 28, 2024, the Ministries of Defence of India and the United Kingdom [signed](#) a Statement of Intent (SoI) in Portsmouth for cooperation on design and development of an electric propulsion systems for the Indian Navy. This agreement was part of the third Joint Working Group Meeting of the Electric Propulsion Capability Partnership. The SoI establishes a framework for co-design, co-creation, and co-production of electric propulsion capabilities for future naval vessels, including Landing Platform Docks (LPDs) that are planned to be constructed at Indian shipyards.

The Indian Navy conducted a narcotics seizure – combined [operation](#) with the Sri Lankan Navy in the Arabian Sea. Following intelligence from the Sri Lankan Navy, extensive surveillance was conducted using Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft and Remotely Piloted Aircraft, with inputs from the Information Fusion Centre in Gurugram. The operation successfully intercepted two Sri Lankan-flagged fishing vessels involved in narcotics smuggling and resulted in the seizure of approximately 500 kg of crystal meth and the apprehension of nine crew members.

On December 3, 2024, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) [granted](#) Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for five capital acquisition proposals totalling over ₹21,772 crore. Among these proposals is the procurement of 31 New Water Jet Fast Attack Crafts (NWJFACs) for the Indian Navy, designed for low-intensity maritime operations, surveillance, patrol, and search and rescue missions close to the coast. Additionally, the DAC approved the acquisition of 120 Fast Interceptor Crafts (FIC-1), which are versatile vessels capable of escorting high-value naval units such as aircraft carriers and destroyers.

Other Developments

[Second India-UK 2+2 Foreign and Defence Dialogue held in New Delhi on 3 December 2024](#)

[High-Level Meeting of the Djibouti Code of Conduct-Jeddah Amendment \(DCOC-JA\) was held in Dar es Salaam](#)

[8th ACTCM Barge, LSAM 22 was launched on November 28, 2024](#)

[25T Bollard Pull \(BP\) Tugs Bhishm and Bahubali was inducted at the Naval Ship Repair Yard \(NSRY\) in Visakhapatnam](#)

[Ministry of Defence \(MoD\) of India signed a contract with Cochin Shipyard Limited \(CSL\) for the Short Refit and Dry Docking \(SRDD\) of the INS Vikramaditya](#)



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