

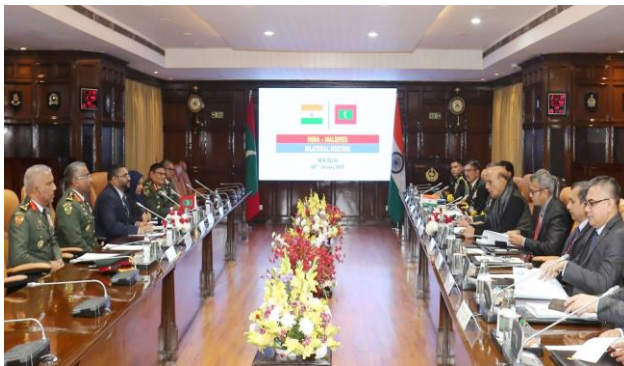


Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

India's Proximity Archives

January 15, 2025



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Delhi Policy Group
Core 5A, 1st Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003
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, 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: Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held bilateral discussions with the Defence Minister of Maldives Mr Mohamed Ghassan Maumoon in New Delhi on January 08, 2025. Source: [X/@SpokespersonMoD](#)

South East Asia: President of Indonesia, Prabowo Subianto, welcomed the Japan's Prime Minister Ishiba Shigeru, On January 11, 2025. Source: [Prime Minister's Office of Japan](#)

West Asia: The Foreign Ministers of the Gulf nations, the European Union, the UK, the US, Türkiye, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, the Secretary General of the Arab League, and the UN's Special Envoy for Syria met in Riyadh on January 12, 2025 to discuss the situation in Syria. Source: [Official X Handle/Saudi Press Agency English](#)

Indian Ocean Region: The Indian Navy's frigate INS Mormugao, along with aircraft from the Indian Air Force, recently participated in a Maritime Partnership Exercise with the French Carrier Strike Group (CSG). Source: [X/@Indian Navy](#)

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South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

On January 8th, a meeting took place in Dubai between Vikram Misri, [India's Foreign Secretary](#), and Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, Afghanistan's Acting Foreign Minister. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri affirmed India's commitment to addressing Afghanistan's pressing developmental needs, promising future development projects alongside existing humanitarian aid. Following an Afghan request, India pledged additional material aid for healthcare and refugee rehabilitation. A Taliban statement highlighted their goal of building stronger [political and economic ties](#) with India, "a major regional and economic partner".

Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held [bilateral discussions](#) with the Defence Minister of Maldives Mr Mohamed Ghassan Maumoon in New Delhi on January 08. During the talks, both sides reasserted the firm commitment to work closely in realising the joint vision for India-Maldives Comprehensive Economic and Maritime Security Partnership. Discussions also covered [extending the lease on](#) two Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) expiring this year, and the impact of foreign vessels frequently docking in Maldivian waters. The Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) received a USD 4 million gift of defense equipment from India; this included utility vehicles and berthing equipment.

India summoned [Bangladesh's Acting High Commissioner](#), Mr. Md Nural Islam, on January 13th. This followed Bangladesh's earlier summoning of [the Indian High Commissioner](#) over border fencing concerns; India asserted its security measures adhere to existing agreements and protocols. Following the interim government's assumption of power in Bangladesh, under Muhammad Yunus, the BSF reports that the [fencing project](#) has faced repeated delays.

Other Developments

[UNHCR Urges Pakistan to Halt Forced Deportations of Afghan Refugees](#)

[Sri Lankan President leaves for four-day visit to China](#)

[Bangladesh eases visa process for Pakistanis](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V

On January 11, President of Indonesia, Prabowo Subianto [welcomed](#) the Japan's Prime Minister Ishiba Shigeru at the Bogor Presidential Palace for an official visit. President Prabowo characterised the visit as a demonstration of the unwavering commitment between the two countries to strengthen and enhance their bilateral relations across multiple sectors. During the subsequent press conference, President Prabowo underscored Japan's commitment to fostering these relations by supporting his initiative to provide nutritious food for Indonesian children. The two leaders also pledged to work "[more closely on security matters](#)" and agreed to initiate discussions between defence officials regarding maritime security, including engagement in defence equipment technology cooperation.

The two leaders also [signed an agreement](#) regarding a Japanese loan of up to 90.4 billion yen (USD 573 million) for projects including a new port construction at Patimban to improve Indonesian transportation and distribution systems. Moreover, Japan promised to give Indonesia [two high-speed patrol boats](#) through the 'Official Security Assistance'.

Prior to his visit to Indonesia, Prime Minister of Japan, Ishiba Shigeru also held talks with Prime Minister of Malaysia, Anwar Ibrahim on [January 10](#). After the bilateral meeting, Malaysia and Japan have agreed to strengthen educational collaboration to elevate bilateral ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership level. The [talks also saw](#) the two leaders agree to deepen their cooperation in education, disaster mitigation, and Palestinian development. Anwar said that Malaysia will also seek Japanese assistance in developing a non-radioactive rare earth element processing plant.

In his [first foreign policy speech](#), Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono stated that the country will expand its existing defence partnerships and step up its handling of strategic issues impacting its sovereignty, including maritime security and the safety of sea passage and fisheries. During his speech on [January 10](#), Foreign Minister Sugiono also defended the country's decision to join BRICS and said that Jakarta under President Prabowo Subianto will be "at the forefront" of efforts to reform the United Nations.

Other Developments

[Thai Defence Ministry favours Gripen jets over US F-16](#)

[Philippines protests over Beijing's 'escalatory actions' in South China Sea](#)

[Philippines installs Japanese radar systems near Taiwan amid China tensions](#)

[Malaysia to co-chair ministerial meeting of regional conference on Palestinian development with Japan in July, says PM Anwar](#)

East Asia

by

Divya Rai

Japanese Prime Minister Ishiba Shigeru, U.S. President Joe Biden, and Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. [held a virtual meeting](#) on January 12, to reinforce cooperation among the three nations. This meeting focused on trilateral maritime security, economic collaboration, and addressing China's "dangerous and unlawful behaviour" in the South China Sea. They reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening ties in light of increasing tensions in regional waters, particularly concerning China's expansive claims over the South China Sea, which have been contested by international law.

On January 15, South Korean authorities [successfully arrested](#) impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol in a historic move related to his controversial declaration of martial law on December 3, 2024. This is the first instance in South Korea's history where a sitting president has faced arrest. The arrest followed a [failed attempt earlier](#) in January when security personnel obstructed investigators from accessing Yoon's residence. In this second attempt, approximately 3,000 police officers and anti-corruption investigators were deployed to ensure compliance with the arrest warrant issued by the Corruption Investigation Office (CIO) after Yoon failed to appear for questioning regarding his martial law declaration.

On January 14, 2025, North Korea conducted a [missile test](#), launching several short-range ballistic missiles into the East Sea (Sea of Japan), as reported by South Korea's military. The missiles were fired around 9:30 AM local time and travelled approximately 250 kilometers (155 miles) before landing in the sea. This event marks North Korea's second missile launch of the year, following a previous test of a new hypersonic missile system just a week earlier. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff condemned the launch as a "clear provocation" that threatens regional peace and stability, emphasising that it violates United Nations Security Council resolutions prohibiting such tests.

Other Developments

[Prime Minister Ishiba visited Malaysia and Indonesia on January 9 and 11](#)

[Taiwan's TSMC, the world's largest contract chipmaker, began manufacturing cutting-edge 4 nanometre \(4nm\) semiconductors in the United States](#)

[China deploys 'monster ship' in the disputed South China Sea shoal.](#)

[Wang Yi visited Namibia, the Republic of the Congo, Chad and Nigeria from January 5 to 11](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken informed on January 14 that a [ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas](#) could be finalised soon, securing the release of the remaining hostages held in Gaza. As for Gaza's post-war governance, Secretary Blinken said that the Biden administration would provide the incoming Trump administration with a plan that envisions the Palestinian Authority (PA) running an interim government alongside international partners. Meanwhile, the US House of Representatives passed a bill on January 9 to [sanction International Criminal Court \(ICC\) officials](#) in response to an arrest warrant issued by the ICC against Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant accusing them of war crimes in Gaza.

The Foreign Ministers of the Gulf nations, the European Union, the UK, the US, Türkiye, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, the Secretary General of the Arab League, and the UN's Special Envoy for Syria met in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on January 12 to discuss the situation in Syria. They discussed steps to support the Syrian people in their [efforts to rebuild Syria](#) as a unified, independent, and secure Arab state for all its citizens. Towards this end, all parties reaffirmed their support for a Syrian-led political transition involving all sections of the country. Major issues touched in the meeting included concerns about the Israeli incursions into the buffer zone and neighbouring sites in Mount Hermon and the Quneitra Governorate, the importance of lifting sanctions, creating conditions for Syrian refugees to return to their country, and combating terrorism.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian are scheduled to meet in Moscow on January 17, where they are expected to sign a ["Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement"](#) deepening cooperation in trade and investment, transport and logistics, and humanitarian spheres.

Other Developments

[Lebanon's army chief elected President, showing weakened Hezbollah](#)

[Israel bombs power station and two ports in Houthi-controlled Yemen](#)

[6 EU nations call for temporary Syria sanctions relief](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan Jeenbek Kulubayev and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Murat Nurtileu held a meeting to strengthen relations and cooperation between the two countries on [January 11](#). During the meeting, the ministers discussed various bilateral cooperation topics, including political, trade, economic, investment, water and energy, transit and transportation, and cultural and humanitarian cooperation. The ministers expressed mutual commitment to strengthening the relationship based on friendship, fraternity, and good neighbourliness. The ministers also expressed their intention to enhance cooperation on multilateral platforms such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Organization of Turkic States.

The Chairperson of the Senate of Kazakhstan, Maulen Ashimbayev met Zhao Leji, the China's chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee and Wang Huning, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), on [January 13](#). Noting that China and Kazakhstan are good neighbours, friends, and partners, Chairman Zhao said the two countries' presidents made new plans to promote the development of bilateral relations to a higher level last year. Ashimbayev said that, under the guidance of the two heads of state, Kazakhstan-China relations have entered a golden period of fast growth. [During his meeting with Chairman Huning](#), he stated that the Senate of Kazakhstan will work with the CPPCC National Committee to promote the implementation of the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative, and make contributions to the development of bilateral relations.

Other Developments

[Switzerland ready to host meeting between Putin and Trump](#)

[Counter-Terrorism Committee conducts assessment visit to Turkmenistan](#)

[Kazakhstan to Reduce Border Crossing Time at Nine Checkpoints with China, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

The Indian Navy, in collaboration with the Indian Air Force, [carried out](#) a Maritime Partnership Exercise with the French Carrier Strike Group led by the FNS Charles de Gaulle. This exercise, part of France's Mission Clemenceau 25, occurred in the Indian Ocean and featured intricate maritime manoeuvres, including joint air operations and tactical drills involving INS Mormugao and the French naval vessels. Indian Sukhoi and Jaguar fighter jets participated alongside French Rafale Marine jets in anti-aircraft drills, demonstrating impressive interoperability between the two forces. This exercise has effectively laid the groundwork for the forthcoming VARUNA bilateral naval exercise.

The AHOY - 2025 [marks the 4th edition](#) of the Tiger Triumph exercise, a joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) initiative between the U.S. Navy and the Indian Navy. This exercise will be hosted by the Eastern Naval Command (ENC) in Visakhapatnam, with specific dates to be announced soon, as mutually agreed upon during the recent Foreign Policy Conference in Vizag, Andhra Pradesh. The exercise aims to enhance cooperation and coordination between the two navies in response to humanitarian crises and disaster scenarios.

Wang Yi made a [surprise visit](#) to the Maldives on January 10, 2025, during which he held discussions with President Mohamed Muizzu regarding the state of bilateral relations. This visit comes amid the Maldives' recent warming relations with India, following back-to-back visits by Maldivian foreign and defence ministers to India earlier in January. During the meeting, President Muizzu emphasised the urgency of fast-tracking key infrastructure projects outlined in previous agreements between the two nations. Wang Yi reassured that China would continue to support the Maldives in safeguarding its national sovereignty and independence while exploring development paths suited to its conditions.

Other Developments

[INS Tushil made a port call in Lagos, Nigeria, on January 12, 2025](#)

[The Indian Navy is all set to simultaneously commission INS Nilgiri, INS Surat and the diesel submarine INS Vaghsheer](#)

[Utkarsh, the second of two Multi-Purpose Vessels \(MPVs\), was launched on January 13, 2025](#)



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