



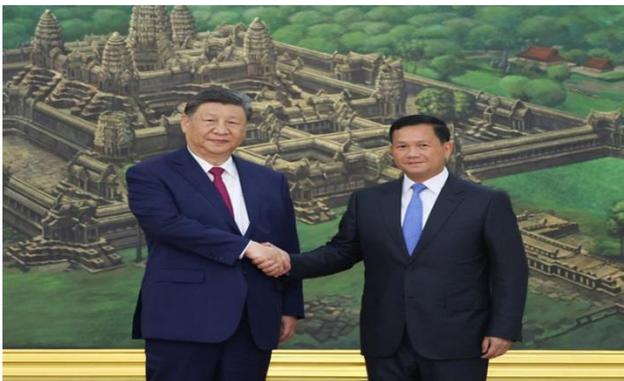
# Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



## India's Proximity Archives

April 23, 2025



Volume III, Issue 17 | April 23, 2025

**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, Jayantika Rao T.V, Divya Rai and Arshiya Chaturvedi, Research Associates. Your comments and feedback can be addressed to Sanket Joshi at [sanket@dpg.org.in](mailto:sanket@dpg.org.in).

### Cover Images:

**South Asia:** Upon his return from Saudi Arabia on April 23, Prime Minister Modi held a brief meeting at the airport with External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, and other officials in light of the terrorist incident in Jammu and Kashmir. Source: [Akashvani](#)

**Southeast Asia:** China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Defense Minister Dong Jun co-chaired the First Ministerial Meeting of China-Indonesia Joint Foreign and Defense Ministerial Dialogue with Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono and Defense Minister Sjafrie Sjamsuoddin, on April 21, 2025. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China](#)

**East Asia:** Chinese President Xi Jinping meeting with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet at the Peace Palace in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on April 17, 2025. Source: [The State Council, The People's Republic of China](#)

**West Asia:** Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi met in Jeddah on April 22, 2025. Source: [Official X Handle/Saudi Press Agency English](#)

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## South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

A [terrorist attack](#) on April 22nd in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, claimed the lives of 28 tourists. Responsibility for the attack was claimed by The Resistance Front, a group affiliated with Lashkar-e-Tayyaba. Prime Minister [Narendra Modi](#) and Finance Minister [Nirmala Sitharaman](#), who were on official visits to Saudi Arabia and the U.S., respectively, shortened their trips and returned. After arriving in Delhi from Riyadh on April 23, Prime Minister Modi met with National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar at the airport to assess the situation. In the aftermath of the attack, Home Minister Amit Shah arrived in Srinagar. The attack drew condemnation from world leaders. Concurrently, two terrorists were eliminated during an attempted incursion from Pakistan across the Line of Control near Uri [on April 23](#).

In Kabul on April 19, Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Ishaq Dar, held talks with the Taliban's Acting Foreign Minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi. His visit included a meeting with Afghan interim Prime Minister Mullah Muhammad Hassan Akhund and other officials, during which [discussions](#) covered [trade](#), security, and the forced deportation of Afghans from Pakistan. The visit came after a joint Pak-Afghan [coordination committee meeting](#) in Kabul on April 16. During the visit Dar emphasised "brotherly ties" and opportunities for trade, stating, "Our link with Central Asia depends on Afghanistan as a partner."

From April 22nd to 23rd, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif [visited Turkey](#) for bilateral talks with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Both nations pledged to cultivate their strategic partnership through enhanced defense and economic collaboration. Turkey is a significant [defense partner](#) of Pakistan, having recently constructed and delivered multiple MILGEM-class ships and offshore patrol vessels to the Pakistan Navy.

On April 17th, the Supreme Court of Russia [lifted the ban](#) on the Taliban. During the previous year, President Vladimir Putin referred to the Taliban as a counterterrorism ally, concurrently with his Kabul envoy's announcement of plans for the group's delisting. The lifting of the terrorist designation does not constitute complete diplomatic recognition of the Taliban government. However, Zamir Kabulov, Russia's Special Envoy for Afghanistan, [announced](#) that the suspension of the Taliban's designation as a terrorist organisation

eliminates legal barriers to establishing formal relations between Moscow and the Taliban.

## **Other Developments**

[Indian Union Minister Manohar Lal Visits Nepal to Strengthen India-Nepal Energy Cooperation](#)

[The King of Bhutan Jigme Wangchuck, visited Assam on April 19 to view the facilities at the Inland Waterways Terminal and the Multi Modal Logistics Park](#)

[Nepal's pro-monarchy party protests near PM's house, seeks a 'Hindu state'](#)

[Dhaka's actions led to India's closure of transshipment facility for Bangladesh: MEA](#)

[Sri Lanka shelves naval drill with Pakistan off Trincomalee as India flags concerns](#)

## Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On April 21, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Defense Minister Dong Jun co-chaired the First Ministerial Meeting of China-Indonesia Joint Foreign and Defense Ministerial Dialogue with Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono and Defense Minister Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin. Noting that is the first 2+2 Dialogue, Wang Yi said it reflects the high level of strategic mutual trust between the two countries. In the press release, [Foreign Minister Sugiono stated](#) "This dialogue is a strategic space to align steps, strengthen mutual trust, and design a new direction for future Indonesia-China cooperation." One of the main outcomes was the signing of a memorandum of understanding on the establishment of the Comprehensive Strategic Dialogue (CSD) by Sugiono and Wang Yi. Furthermore, Indonesia and China also agreed to increase maritime cooperation, including strengthening coordination between Bakamla (Indonesia's Maritime Security Agency) and the China Coast Guard.

[Following the 2+2 dialogue](#), Foreign Minister Wang Yi told his Indonesian counterpart that China is willing to import more Indonesian products, describing the two countries as "defenders of economic globalisation and free trade". According to a Chinese Foreign Ministry readout, Wang Yi further stressed that China and Indonesia should enhance mutual trust and cooperation, jointly safeguard the multilateral trading system and defend international fairness and justice. While Sugiono did not directly respond to the comments, Indonesia's position was conveyed by the Ministry of Trade, Djatmiko Bris Witjaksono. He stated that the government has affirmed its commitment to maintaining balanced trade relations with all international partners, including the United States and China and Indonesia will continue to adhere to the principles of fair and mutually respectful multilateral trade.

On [April 22](#), Myanmar's junta announced that the ceasefire declared after last month's devastating earthquake will be extended to April 30, after aid groups and international mediators called for an extension to ease relief efforts. Despite the 20-day ceasefire, conflict monitors and residents in combat zones have reported that fighting has continued on both sides. The ceasefire was extended to April 30 "aiming to continue the rebuilding and rehabilitation process with momentum", the junta information team said in a statement.

## Other Developments

[Philippine president eases restrictions on official visits to Taiwan](#)

[Secretary Rubio's Meeting with Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono](#)

[Japanese minesweepers dock at controversial Cambodian naval base](#)

## East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

The Republic of Korea joined the [Indian Ocean Commission](#) (IOC) as an observer following approval at the 39th Council of Ministers session in Seychelles on April 16. The IOC is a regional organisation of African Indian Ocean island nations, established in 1982 to promote cooperation in maritime security, climate change, fisheries, and food security. South Korea's observer status marks a key step in enhancing Korea-Africa ties, building on the momentum of the 2024 Korea-Africa Summit, and is expected to boost partnerships with African island states in the Indian Ocean across these critical areas.

Chinese President Xi Jinping on his [official visit to Cambodia](#) met Prime Minister Hun Manet on April 17. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to deepening the "all-weather China-Cambodia community with a shared future in the new era" and even designated 2025 as the China-Cambodia Year of Tourism. Xi highlighting the long-standing "ironclad friendship" between the two nations, urged promoting political trust, cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges. He emphasised enhancing high-quality collaboration under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and expanding the "Diamond Hexagon" cooperation framework. Chinese President also highlighted China's active encouragement for its enterprises to invest in Cambodia and stressed joint action against online gambling and telecom fraud. He concluded by calling on China and Cambodia to work together to resist unilateralism and bloc confrontation and to deepen cooperation within both ASEAN and the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation framework.

Prime Minister Hun Manet reaffirmed Cambodia's [commitment](#) to the One-China policy and lauded China as its most reliable partner. He emphasised Cambodia's readiness to expand partnerships with China in trade, investment, agriculture, infrastructure, education, culture, and security. The two leaders signed over 30 cooperation agreements in this meeting, covering sectors like AI, supply chains, development assistance, customs, health, and media.

On April 16 in Tokyo, [Funakoshi Takehiro](#), Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, met with Jan Adams, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia. The meeting, which included a working dinner, focused on strengthening the "Special Strategic Partnership" between Japan and Australia.

Reaffirming their shared commitment to a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, both sides agreed to deepen cooperation in security, economics, and people-to-people exchanges. The two leaders noted that next year marks the 50th anniversary of the Basic Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.

## Other Developments

[Meeting Held with Korean Businesses Operating in India to Address their Challenges](#)

[Trump floats cutting China tariffs 'substantially' in trade deal](#)

[MOFA Spokesperson's Statement on Japanese Government's Reopening of "National Museum of Territory and Sovereignty"](#)

[Seoul launches 4th spy satellite to boost NK surveillance](#)

## West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

During his State Visit to Saudi Arabia on April 22, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi co-chaired the second meeting of the India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council (SPC) with Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman. The two leaders appreciated the [deepening of bilateral engagement and high-level visits](#) that have built mutual trust and cooperation in fields such as energy, defence, trade, investment, technology, culture, and people-to-people relations. Major issues discussed in the meeting included Saudi Arabia's commitment to invest USD 100 billion in India, establishing two oil refineries, progress on taxation, connecting payment gateways and trade settlement in local currencies, and progress in the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC). Two new ministerial committees would be established under the Strategic Partnership Council on "Defence Cooperation" and "Tourism and Culture Cooperation".

The second round of indirect talks between the US and Iran concerning Tehran's nuclear program was held in Rome, Italy, on April 19, under the mediation of the Sultanate of Oman. Reportedly, the two sides held "constructive" dialogue and agreed to hold [expert-level "technical discussions"](#) beginning April 26.

Amidst this, Russian [President Vladimir Putin met Oman's Sultan](#) Haitham bin Tariq Al Said in Moscow on April 22. Among other issues, the two leaders discussed the progress of negotiations in Oman-mediated US-Iran talks. [Russia could play a significant role](#) in any future nuclear deal between the US and Iran as a possible destination for Iran's stockpile of enriched Uranium, as well as being an arbiter for deal breaches.

### Other Developments

[List of Outcomes: State Visit of Prime Minister Modi to Saudi Arabia](#)

[China says Iran's foreign minister will visit on Wednesday \(April 23\)](#)

[US confirms third round of nuclear talks with Iran after 'very good progress'](#)

[Saudi defence minister visits Tehran before Iran-US talks](#)

## Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev visited China for a state visit on April 22. Following the talks between President Xi and President Aliyev, the two leaders announced the establishment of a [comprehensive strategic partnership](#) between the two countries. They also witnessed the [signing of 20 cooperation documents](#) in the fields of jointly building the "Belt and Road", justice, green development, digital economy, intellectual property, aerospace and other fields. During the meeting, Chinese President Xi Jinping said that [tariff and trade wars](#) undermine the legitimate rights and interests of all countries, hurt the multilateral trading system and impact the world economic order.

On [April 22](#), Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and Chairman of the Halk Maslahaty (People's Council) of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov discussed the prospects for strengthening the multifaceted strategic partnership at an informal meeting in Turkistan. The leaders emphasized the need to identify new growth opportunities and implement systemic measures to increase trade turnover to USD 1 billion in the coming years. Their discussions also focused on expanding cooperation in the gas sector, particularly Kazakhstan's potential involvement in the Galkynysh field development project in partnership with foreign stakeholders. President Tokayev highlighted the significance of regional transport projects, including the construction of the Turgundi–Herat–Kandahar–Spin-Boldak railway. He noted that its successful implementation would diversify transport routes and open up new export markets.

After the CSTO's spokesperson claimed that Afghanistan remains a major source of security challenges, on April 17, Hamdullah Fitrat, deputy spokesman of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, [rejected the claims](#) emphasising that serious steps have been taken to secure borders and prevent drug smuggling. He stated "Afghanistan assures all countries, including CSTO member states, that no security threat originates from Afghanistan. Furthermore, the Islamic Emirate has made significant efforts in countering drug trafficking and strengthening border security. All countries must fulfill their responsibilities in ensuring regional security."

## Other Developments

[Kazakhstan Plans to Open Trading House in Afghanistan](#)

[Central Asian Leaders To Join Putin at Moscow's WWII Parade](#)

[Italy expands wings in Central Asia aiming to emerge as key global player](#)

[EU project on law enforcement and security reforms concludes in Armenia](#)

## Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

INS Sunayna, [deployed to Africa as part of](#) the Indian Ocean Ship (IOS) SAGAR mission, arrived at Nacala Port, Mozambique, on 17 April 2025 after participating in the India-Africa maritime exercise AIKEYME 25 in Tanzania. During its stay, the ship engaged in a variety of joint activities and outreach programmes with the Mozambique Navy, including embarking Mozambique Navy personnel as Sea Riders for a joint surveillance mission in Mozambique's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

The Indian Navy [successfully completed](#) a major refit of the Maldivian Coast Guard Ship MNDF Huravee at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai, as part of India's commitment to regional maritime security under the 'MAHASAGAR' vision and the 'Neighbourhood First' policy. Since arriving in Mumbai on November 13, 2024, the ship underwent extensive maintenance of its machinery, weapons, and sensors, along with habitability upgrades. After rigorous harbour and sea trials, equipment checks, safety audits, and operational training, Huravee set sail for the Maldives on 21 April 2025. This 'Make in India' vessel, handed over to the Maldives in May 2023, has played a vital role in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, as well as medical evacuation operations across the Maldivian archipelago, further strengthening India-Maldives defence cooperation.

Despite earlier [reports](#) suggesting that the six B-2 Spirit stealth bombers [deployed](#) to Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean had begun using the U.S. Air Force's limited GBU-57A/B Massive Ordnance Penetrator (MOP) bunker-buster bombs against Iranian-backed Houthi targets in Yemen, U.S. officials have now confirmed that none of these bombs have been employed so far. Instead, other high-explosive munitions, likely including the GBU-31, have been used in the strikes. The deployment of the six B-2 bombers, which began in late March 2025, supports [ongoing](#) air operations against the Houthis, but the highly valuable GBU-57 MOPs remain reserved and unused in this conflict to date.

## Other Developments

[3rd edition of the Indian Navy's Meteorological and Oceanological Symposium – Meghayan 25 – was held on April 14](#)

[Indian Naval Ships INS Chennai and INS Kesari departed from Dar es Salaam on 19 April 2025, following the successful completion of the \(AIKEYME\) exercise](#)



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