



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



India's Proximity Archives

October 11, 2023



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Delhi Policy Group

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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, China, and Central Asia of strategic relevance to India, compiled from open-source media. The research team includes Angana Guha Roy, Ph.D., Shreyas Deshmukh, Sanket Joshi, Anshita Shukla and Jayantika Rao T.V, Research Associates. Your comments and feedback can be addressed to Sanket Joshi at sanket@dpg.org.in.

Cover Image:

South Asia: *The fifteenth meeting of the Nepal-India Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues (BCGSI) was held on October 5, 2023, in Pokhara, Nepal. Source: [The Kathmandu Post](#)*

West Asia: *A rocket fired from Gaza hits Ashkelon in Southern Israel on October 7, 2023. Source: [The Times of Israel](#)*

China: *President Xi Jinping Meets with the Delegation of U.S. Senate Led by Majority Leader Charles Schumer on October 10, 2023. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs PRC](#)*

Central Asia: *The launch ceremony of the Central Asia-Center gas pipeline was attended by Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Russia's President Vladimir Putin, and Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on October 7, 2023. Source: [President of Russia](#)*

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South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) as well as other senior Ministers of IORA Member States and Dialogue Partners [arrived in Sri Lanka](#) for the 23rd IORA Council of Ministers scheduled for October 11. Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Ali Sabry will chair the Council. Earlier in the 25th meeting of the Committee of IORA Senior Officials held on October 9-10, Foreign Secretary of Sri Lanka Aruni Wijewardane said "Sri Lanka accords a [great deal of importance](#) to the Indian Ocean". She welcomed Saudi Arabia as a new Dialogue Partner. India's External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, [arrived in Sri Lanka](#) on October 10 to participate in the meeting. India assumed the role of the [Vice Chair](#) of the Association for 2023-25.

The 15th meeting of the India-Nepal bilateral consultative group on [security issues](#) was held in Pokhara on October 5. The BCGSI discussions covered issues related to mutual security, defence supplies, training, capacity building, joint military exercises, exchanges, including through visits, joint expeditions, and adventure activities, and cooperation in disaster management and information sharing.

Iran and Pakistan started expelling Afghan refugees. Pakistan has given all illegal immigrants until October 31 to leave the country, voluntarily or face a crackdown starting from November 1. Islamabad had been approached by human rights organisations and even the relevant UN agencies for the review of the decision. Following the announcement police in Islamabad and Quetta [detained](#) over 700 Afghan nationals for allegedly living without legal documents. Pakistan has decided that all citizens of Afghanistan will be required to enter the country with a [valid passport](#) and visa starting next month. On October 8, an Iranian government spokesperson announced the [commencement of a program](#) to organise foreign citizens residing in different parts of Iran, with a particular focus on identifying and deporting individuals deemed "illegal residents." Earlier hundreds of [Iranian protesters attacked](#) the homes of Afghan migrants in Qazvin Province. The Taliban acting Minister of Defense, Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob [condemned Pakistan](#) for expelling Afghan refugees, calling it an "unjust" decision. The Taliban is establishing a new [refugee camp](#) in the Lalapor district of Nangarhar for returning refugees from Pakistan.

Other Developments

[The European Parliament extended the GSP status of Pakistan until 2027](#)

[Powerful earthquakes in Afghanistan have killed more than 2,000 people and injured more than 9,000](#)

[Pakistan Announces 10% Process Fee on Items Imported from Afghanistan](#)

[A no-confidence motion against Parliament Speaker Mohamed Nasheed has been officially submitted to the Maldivian Parliament](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Anshita Shukla

The Philippines Coast Guard reported [obstruction by Chinese vessels](#) of its resupply mission, near Spratly Islands on October 5. The Philippines was able to successfully ship fresh supplies to its military outposts despite attempts by a "significant number" of Chinese coastguard and maritime militia vessels "to block, harass and interfere" with the mission. The Chinese Coast Guard stated that it warned two Philippine supply boats and two coastguard vessels to leave the sea and followed the ships throughout.

The [23rd meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry](#) plus three was convened in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on October 6. The meeting was chaired by Datuk Seri Haji Mohamad bin Sabu, Minister of Agriculture and Food Security of Malaysia. The countries agreed to prioritise helping each other overcome rice supply shortages and other food-related problems. Minister Mohamad Sabu stated, "ASEAN collaboration means if we face rice issues, ASEAN member countries will give priority to ASEAN nations". During the meeting, the countries also discussed sustainable forest management, climate change mitigation and adaptation, animal and plant health and disease control, capacity-building and human resource development.

The Supreme Court of Myanmar [rejected appeals](#) by the former leader Aung San Suu Kyi on October 8. The jailed leader appealed against dozens of convictions for crimes ranging from treason and bribery to violations of the telecommunications law and denied any wrongdoing. This was followed by an [artillery strike](#) on a displaced persons camp in north-east Myanmar, near the Chinese border, killing 29 people on October 10. The camp is controlled by the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO), one of several ethnic insurgent groups fighting for self-rule for many decades.

Other Developments

[Israel-Hamas war divides Southeast Asia as trade, religion determine responses](#)

[Southeast Asia won't be 'split between two camps' over US-China rivalry, Singapore's Lee Hsien Loong says](#)

East Asia

by

Anshita Shukla

North Korea has [criticised the US Department of Defence's](#) unclassified version of its 2023 Strategy for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction characterising North Korea as a 'persistent threat'. A spokesperson for North Korea's Defence Ministry accused the US of increasing nuclear threats, citing joint military drills with South Korea, and sending a strategic nuclear submarine, as reported by state-run KCNA. The North Korean military will counter the US military strategy with the "most overwhelming and sustained response strategy", as stated by the spokesperson.

On October 9, China [extended its investigation](#) into Taiwan's trade barriers by three months till one day before Taiwan's presidential and parliamentary elections. Taipei has accused Beijing of attempting to interfere in the country's election. The Taiwanese government's Office of Trade Negotiations said the extension of the probe "once again proves that China's so-called trade investigation is politically motivated and an attempt to interfere with our elections with economic coercion". The country further stated that the probe by China is a violation of WTO norms.

North Korea criticised France for ["outdated gunboat diplomacy"](#) over the deployment of a patrol aircraft in waters near the peninsula on October 6. This comes a week after the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan announced that France will conduct surveillance of illicit maritime activities including ship-to-ship transfers by North Korean-flagged vessels using aircraft from Futenma Air Station in Okinawa, Japan. The country urged France to stop "dangerous actions" that threaten peace in the region.

Other Developments

[Taiwan seeks 'peaceful coexistence' with China, says Tsai in final national day speech](#)

['Dramatic' North Korea-Russia rail traffic increase hints at arms supply to Putin as carriages more than triple](#)

[Japan starts second round of Fukushima waste water discharge](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

In response to a major terror attack launched by the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas on October 7, Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, declared a ["state of war"](#). Hamas launched more than [4,500 rockets from Gaza](#), killing more than 1,000 Israelis and capturing more than 50 hostages. In light of this, Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and [expressed solidarity with Israel](#). A joint statement issued by the United States, France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom expressed [steadfast support for Israel](#) and condemned Hamas' acts of terrorism.

Saudi Arabia called for an [immediate ceasefire](#) between Israelis and Palestinians as well as civilian protection in the region. Further, it urged the international community to fulfill its responsibilities by achieving a credible two-state solution. To achieve lasting peace in the region, China also called for the [early resumption of peace talks](#) between Palestine and Israel.

Iran's Mission to the United Nations denied any involvement in terrorist attacks on Israel, but stated that Tehran "firmly supports the [aspirations of the Palestinian people](#)". Iran's Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, [praised the attack on Israel](#) as a "courageous and self-sacrificing move by the Palestinians in response to years of crimes committed by usurper Zionist regime (Israel)".

On October 5, Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Managing Director of the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, and India's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal co-chaired the 11th India-UAE [High-Level Joint Task Force on Investments](#). The two sides explored avenues for facilitating investments in areas of mutual interest such as food and energy security, climate change mitigation, and space technologies. UAE's Al Etihad Payments and NPCI International Payments Limited announced a partnership to develop the UAE's first [national domestic card scheme](#) (DCS).

Other Developments

[Iran Helped Plot Attack on Israel Over Several Weeks](#)

[China, Saudi Arabia launch joint naval special operations exercise](#)

[US moves carrier strike group to the eastern Mediterranean](#)

[EU and GCC call for 'sustained aid' to Palestinians after prospect of suspension](#)

China

by

Angana Guha Roy

[The Territorial Army \(TA\) of India](#) has inducted its first batch of Mandarin-trained officers and posted them to forward areas along the LAC in support of the regular Army's drive to enhance expertise in the Chinese language, Tibetology and the like amid the continuing military confrontation in eastern Ladakh. Five Chinese language interpreters were inducted into the TA in August after an extensive selection process on the basis of Mandarin proficiency and officer-like-qualities.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) of India arrested four persons on October 19, [including a Chinese National and the managing director](#) of Lava International mobile company, in connection with a money laundering probe against smartphone maker Vivo. In its remand application, the ED alleged that the accused had cheated the government by entering India in a "disguised and fraudulent manner to set up an elaborate Chinese-controlled network throughout the country... carrying out activities prejudicial to the economic sovereignty of India".

[A group of senators led by Majority Leader Chuck Schumer](#), met Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on October 9. During their meeting, Schumer said, he was "disappointed" by what he described as China's lack of "sympathy" for Israel after a surprise attack by fighters from the Palestinian militant group Hamas. The Chinese Foreign Ministry statement urged "relevant parties" to immediately cease hostilities to protect civilians mentioning "The fundamental way out of the conflict lies in implementing the two-state solution and establishing an independent State of Palestine." The statement did not mention Hamas.

Other Developments

[Tibet border reopening provides relief to Nepal villagers](#)

[Bhutan-China border demarcation talks inching towards completion: Bhutan PM Tshering](#)

[B'desh PM Hasina inaugurates largest infra project built with Chinese loan](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

During his working visit to the Russian Federation on October 7, President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, attended a [ceremony to launch the transit of Russian gas](#) through Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan via the Central Asia-Center gas pipeline. This initiative was hailed by President Putin as an "enormous trilateral energy project" that will be implemented using the gas pipeline system built in the 1960s. President Tokayev also emphasized the crucial role of the project in strengthening regional stability and energy security in Central Asia.

Iraq and Turkmenistan have [signed a preliminary agreement](#) to address the energy crisis in Iraq by importing much-needed gas for the country's "insufficient and dilapidated energy grid". The plan is for Iraq to [import up to 10 billion cubic meters of gas](#) from Turkmenistan as part of a five-year, three-way swap deal involving Iran, which is situated between the two countries. However, the financial details of the arrangement have not yet been revealed.

Bujar Osmani, [the Chairman-in-Office of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe \(OSCE\)](#), who also serves as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of North Macedonia, wrapped up his visit to Turkmenistan on October 9. During his meetings, he put forth his ideas on how to overcome the current challenges in the OSCE region and urged the need to optimize the use of OSCE tools in bolstering Turkmenistan's reform agenda.

Other Developments

[The 17th Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Economic Commission is Planned in Ashgabat in November](#)

[Thousands of Turkmen Leave Turkey Amid Renewed Pressure As Some Eye Move To Russia](#)

[OSCE Delegation Commends Kazakhstan's Efforts to Build Trust, Cooperation During Visit](#)



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