



# Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



## India's Proximity Archives

### November 15, 2023



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Delhi Policy Group

Core 5A, 1st Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003

[www.delhipolicygroup.org](http://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, 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](mailto:sanket@dpg.org.in).

### Cover Image:

**South Asia:** Indian and Bangladesh Naval contingents participated in the 4th edition of Bilateral Exercise BONGOSAGAR-23 on November 7-9, 2023. Source: [PIB](#)

**Southeast Asia:** Indonesia's President Joko Widodo and United States President Joe Biden reaffirmed their 75-year partnership by elevating it to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' on November 13, 2023. Source: [X/@WhiteHouse](#)

**East Asia:** The G7 Foreign Minister's meeting was held in Tokyo on November 8, 2023. Source: [Official X Handle/Secretary Antony Blinken](#)

**West Asia:** The joint extraordinary Arab and Islamic Summit was held in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on November 11, 2023. Source: Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

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## South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

On November 15, Japan [signed an agreement](#) with Bangladesh to provide patrol boats worth 575 million Yen under the Official Security Assistance (OSA) framework. Bangladesh as a "Strategic Partner" of Japan is the second country to receive aid under this framework after the Philippines. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan [press release noted](#) that "this programme enables to provide patrol boats to Bangladeshi Navy which is expected to strengthen its capabilities for monitoring and surveillance, and disaster relief and to contribute to maintenance and enhancement of maritime security not only in the Bay of Bengal but also the whole Indo-Pacific region."

Sri Lanka's Supreme Court on November 14, ruled that former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, former Finance Ministers Mahinda Rajapaksa and Basil Rajapaksa, and other top officials are responsible for the [economic crisis](#) that has arisen in the country and ruled that the group violated basic human rights. The case was filed by corruption watchdog Transparency International Sri Lanka (TISL) and four other activists.

Even after appeal from international organisations, Pakistan continued the forced deportation of [Afghan refugees](#). Around 200,000 Afghans have returned to the country via Torkham border crossing since November 1. Meanwhile, [three new border crossings](#) opened in Baluchistan on November 13 to accelerate the repatriation. The [Taliban spokesman](#), Zabiullah Mujahid, said that the deportation of Afghan refugees by Pakistan will increase the mistrust of the Afghans toward that country.

The 4th edition of Bilateral Exercise between the Indian Navy and Bangladesh Navy, BONGOSAGAR-23, and the 5th edition of Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) was conducted in the Northern Bay of Bengal from Nov 7-9. Ships and aircraft from both navies undertook joint patrolling along the International Maritime Boundary Line and subsequently conducted maritime exercises to enhance interoperability.

## Other Developments

[The Maldives Speaker of Parliament Mohamed Nasheed resigned on November 13.](#)

[Russian naval ships call at Bangladesh port after 50 years.](#)

[North Korea has decided to close its embassy in Nepal citing the financial crisis.](#)

[According to a BBC report Pakistan sold arms to Ukraine.](#)

## Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V

President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, met United States President Joe Biden at the White House on November 13, 2023. Marking a new phase in their bilateral relations, the two leaders agreed to elevate the US-Indonesia ties to a '[Comprehensive Strategic Partnership](#)', agreeing to cooperate in fields ranging from climate and energy to digital connectivity and defence. During the meeting, [President Jokowi](#) said that the partnership between the two countries could contribute to global peace. After the meeting, [a joint statement](#) said the leaders agreed "to develop a critical minerals action plan" to "increase high standard investment in the critical minerals sectors in both countries". The US is said to be reinforcing its commitment to the region ahead of President Biden's first in-person meeting in a year with [Chinese President Xi Jinping](#) on November 15, as exemplified by the meeting with Jokowi.

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Textiles, [Piyush Goyal](#), arrived in the United States to attend the various official engagements of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) from 13th to 16th November 2023. India has been invited to attend the [30<sup>th</sup> APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting 2023](#) as a '[Guest Economy](#)'. These meetings will focus on addressing trade barriers, promoting investments, and fostering greater cooperation in areas such as technology and innovation.

On the sidelines, Minister Goyal has also held bilateral meetings with [Ambassador Katherine Tai](#) - US Trade Representative, Mr [Dukgeun Ahn](#), Minister of Trade for the Republic of Korea and [Gan Kim Yong](#), Singapore's Minister for Trade and Industry.

In a coordinated offensive, several insurgent groups in Myanmar are battling the junta in various parts of the country. On [November 15](#), a rebel group announced that dozens of Myanmar security force members have surrendered or been captured. The Arakan Army, fighting for autonomy in Rakhine State, arrested 10 soldiers and at least 28 policemen surrendered. However, the junta's spokesperson, Zaw Min Tun, has accused the rebel groups of "destroying the whole country" and dismissed reports of captured military posts as "propaganda".

## Other Developments

[China To Conduct Joint Military Exercises With 5 ASEAN Countries](#)

[Top Taiwanese Security Official Doubts Chinese Capability To Invade By 2027](#)

[A long-jailed former Philippine senator who fought Duterte's brutal drug crackdown is freed on bail](#)

[South Korea's Vice Defense Minister Kim Seon-ho will join ASEAN-led regional security meeting in Indonesia](#)

## East Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

The G7 Foreign Ministers condemned North Korea's repeated [launches of ballistic missiles](#) and the transfer of arms to Russia at their meeting on November 8 in Tokyo. The G7 condemned Russia's war in Ukraine, supported Israel's right to defend itself, and reaffirmed its commitment to a [free and open Indo-Pacific](#) that is inclusive, prosperous, secure, and based on the rule of law. For its part, North Korea criticised the G7 as a ["remnant of the Cold War"](#) that needs to be dismantled to defuse the current international crisis and restore global stability.

On November 10, US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, met with South Korea's President, Yoon Suk Yeol, marking the [70 years of the US-ROK alliance](#). There was a commitment from the two countries to continue to support Ukraine and to increase humanitarian assistance to Palestinian civilians in Gaza.

On November 12, the [US, Japan, and South Korea](#) held a trilateral defence ministerial meeting. Secretary Austin reiterated Washington's commitment to the alliance and extended deterrence commitments to Japan and South Korea, backed by the full range of U.S. capabilities, including nuclear capabilities. As part of the three countries' defence cooperation, [real-time missile warning data](#) will be shared from December 2023 to facilitate the detection and assessment of North Korea's ballistic missile launches. To conduct military exercises more systematically and efficiently, they intend to develop a [multi-year joint trilateral exercise plan](#).

During a [visit to Japan from November 8-10](#), V. Muraleedharan, India's Minister of State for External Affairs, held discussions with Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Iwao Horii, on strengthening the bilateral strategic and global partnership between the two countries.

### Other Developments

[Chinese, Japanese diplomats meet ahead of possible Xi-Kishida meeting at Apec summit](#)

[Xi Jinping tells Anthony Albanese China-Australia ties are now 'on the right path'](#)



## West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

Amidst the conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) passed a resolution on November 9 condemning [Israel's settlement activities](#) in "the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan". India was among 145 countries that voted in favour of this resolution, while seven countries including the US, Israel, Canada, Hungary, Marshall Islands, Nauru, and Micronesia voted against it. Meanwhile, India and the US reiterated their [support for Israel against terrorism](#), called for adherence to international humanitarian law regarding civilian protection, and urged the immediate release of hostages held in Gaza.

Saudi Arabia hosted the [Joint Arab Islamic Extraordinary Summit](#) in Riyadh on November 12. The Summit welcomed the UN General Assembly's resolution adopted on October 26 calling for an immediate, sustained humanitarian truce leading to cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hamas. The Arab Islamic Summit [emphasised the Arab Peace Initiative](#) and reaffirmed the importance of the Palestinian cause in achieving peace in the region.

Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, announced that the IDF will continue to [oversee Gaza's security](#) following the conflict with Hamas and will not rely on international forces to do so. Mahmoud Abbas, the President of the Palestinian Authority (PA), indicated that the PA will only retake Gaza as part of a comprehensive political solution that includes the establishment of a Palestinian state along the 1967 borders.

### Other Developments

[Saudis helped block Arab summit bid to sever all contacts with Israel](#)

[What is happening at Gaza's al-Shifa hospital and why?](#)

[G7 calls for humanitarian pauses in Gaza, hostages' release](#)

[Blinken acknowledges disagreements within the State Department on Israel-Hamas war in an email to staff](#)

[UAE's COP28 President applauds India's renewable leadership at G20 Forum](#)

## China

by

Angana Guha Roy

[Indian and Chinese Brigade commanders held talks](#) to maintain stability on the Indo-Tibet border ahead of the winter season. Both sides are taking measures to prevent any untoward incident in the coming months, as the two militaries start taking winter posture. The ongoing talks are a part of the confidence-building measures (CBMs), which were discussed during the Corps Commander-level talks.

[US President Joe Biden and Xi Jinping](#) are scheduled to meet on the sidelines of the APEC summit. Biden characterized the meeting as a chance to right ties that have floundered in recent years. "We're not trying to decouple from China. What we're trying to do is change the relationship for the better," Biden said during a press briefing before heading to San Francisco.

[Anti-corruption officials in Nepal have begun an investigation](#) into a flagship airport financed and built by Chinese state-owned companies. Nepal's \$216 million international airport in Pokhara is built on borrowed loans from China. The airport built by China CAMC Engineering, the construction arm of a state-owned conglomerate, has failed to attract any regular international flights, raising concerns about whether it will generate enough revenue to repay loans to its Chinese lenders. Nepali officials have asked Beijing to change the loans into a grant to ease the financial burden, but China has not agreed to do so.

## Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

The [16<sup>th</sup> Economic Cooperation Organisation Summit](#) was held under the chairmanship of the Republic of Uzbekistan in Tashkent on November 9, 2023. Bringing together key regional stakeholders, the summit focused on the critical need for accelerated regional economic integration. As [Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov](#) aptly pointed out, the organisation has the potential to become a powerful tool for regional integration, grounded in shared economic interests. The participants also talked about the need to increase the ECO's global profile through fostering regional and global partnerships.

The delegation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, led by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Murat Nurtleu, took part in the extraordinary [joint summit](#) of the League of Arab States (LAS) and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Riyadh on November 11, 2023. The joint summit's theme was to discuss the "[Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people](#)". In his speech, [Minister Nurtleu stated](#) that Kazakhstan fully supports the legitimate rights of Palestinians to self-determination and the creation of an internationally recognised Palestinian state within the 1967 borders with its capital in East Jerusalem. At the end of the Summit, the participants adopted a resolution declaring that the Gaza Strip is an inseparable part of the Palestinian territories on the West Bank and Israel must be held responsible for the armed conflict.

On November 8, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Roman Vassilenko participated in the [first ministerial meeting of the Central Asian and G7 countries](#) that took place in an online format. Prospects for cooperation in regional security, economy, transport, energy and investment, combating global warming and protecting the environment, water management, and tourism were discussed at the meeting. The delegates also had a substantive exchange of views on the impact of geopolitical turbulence on Central Asian countries, including the challenges associated with global instability and disruption of supply chains, as well as ways to overcome them.

### Other Developments

[Presidents of Kyrgyzstan and France hold talks in Paris](#)

[China to Host SCO Year of Tourism 2023 Forum Next Week](#)

[A New Road To Be Built Between Uzbekistan And Kazakhstan](#)

[Turkmenistan And UAE Discuss Prospects For Partnership Development](#)



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