



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



India's Proximity Archives

November 22, 2023



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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, 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 Minister of the Earth Sciences of India, Kiren Rijiju, paid a courtesy call on the President of Maldives, Dr. Mohamed Muizzu, November 18, 2023. Source: [President of Maldives Website](#)*

Southeast Asia: *The 17th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) was convened in Jakarta, Indonesia on November 15, 2023. Source: [ASEAN](#)*

China: *US President Joe Biden met with Chinese President Xi Jinping in San Francisco on November 16, 2023. Source: [Official X Handle/President Biden](#)*

Central Asia: *Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the inaugural session of the 2nd Voice of Global South Summit virtually on November 17, 2023. Source: [Narendra Modi](#)*

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Contents

South Asia

Shreyas Deshmukh 1

Southeast Asia

Jayantika Rao T.V 2

East Asia

Sanket Joshi 3

West Asia

Sanket Joshi 4

China

Angana Guha Roy 5

Central Asia

Jayantika Rao T.V. 6

South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

On November 17, Dr. Mohamed Muizzu took oath as the [eighth President](#) of Maldives. India's Minister of Earth Sciences, [Kiren Rijiju](#), attended the swearing-in ceremony of President Muizzu in Male. On the sideline of the ceremony, President Muizzu [held a meeting](#) with Mr Rijiju and "formally requested the Government of India to withdraw its military personnel from the Maldives." Both sides [agreed to discuss](#) "workable solutions" to continue the use of Indian military platforms by the Maldives and also reviewed the progress of the implementation of various projects in the Maldives with the support of India.

Bangladesh Election Commission has announced that it will hold the [12th parliamentary elections](#) on January 7, 2024, for 300 seats. BNP has already declared that it will boycott the elections. The [political violence](#) in the last three weeks killed at least five people and [197 arson attacks](#) were reported across the country. Bangladesh Supreme Court on November 19 dismissed an appeal by [Jamaat-e-Islami](#) seeking to overturn a 2013 ruling that barred it from participating in elections for violating the constitutional provision of secularism Bangladesh.

UK's High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott, on November 18 met PPP Co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari. Also, the US Ambassador Donald Blome held [meetings with leaders](#) of various political parties, including PMLN leader Nawaz Sharif, PPP leader Yousuf Raza Gillani and IPP leader Jahangir Tareen, to discuss Pakistan's political landscape and significance of an 'enduring' relationship between Pakistan and the United States. This was the second meeting of Nawaz Sharif with a foreign dignitary after his return from London.

Other Developments

[Trade Agreement Signed Between Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan](#)

[India - Sri Lanka joint military exercise Mitra Shakti – 2023 commenced on November 16, in Pune](#)

[Kabul raises issue of refugee assets with Islamabad](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V

On November 16, India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh attended the [10th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting - Plus \(ADMM-Plus\)](#) in Jakarta. In his address, he affirmed ASEAN's centrality and appreciated its role in promoting dialogue and consensus in the region. He also reiterated India's commitment to freedom of navigation, overflight and unimpeded lawful commerce in international waters in accordance with international laws, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982. Minister Rajnath Singh called for regional security initiatives that are "consultative and development-oriented to reflect the larger consensus among various stakeholders".

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh also held [bilateral meetings](#) with his Indonesian and Vietnamese counterparts on the sidelines of the ADMM-Plus meeting on November 16, 2023 focussing on boosting overall bilateral ties including defence industrial collaboration. In his [meeting with Vietnamese National Defence Minister](#) General Phan Van Giang, the ministers reviewed the progress in the implementation of the 'Joint Vision Statement on India-Vietnam Defence Partnership'.

During the 17th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) which was held in Jakarta, on November 15, the member states adopted [the Jakarta Joint Declaration of the ADMM for Peace, Prosperity and Security](#) which reaffirmed the ADMM's commitment to strengthening defence cooperation amongst ASEAN member states and plus countries to address regional security challenges while upholding ASEAN centrality and unity. The ADMM discussed a number of defence and security issues including the deteriorating situation in the Israel-Hamas war where numerous ASEAN member states citizens are stuck.

Other Developments

[Taiwan's Presidential Front-Runner Picks U.S. Envoy As Running Mate](#)

[Philippines Launches Joint Sea, Air Patrols With U.S. Military](#)

[Philippines Woos Neighbours To Craft Code On South China Sea](#)

[Myanmar: Is The Rule Of Junta Under Threat?](#)

East Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

North Korea reportedly launched its [first military reconnaissance satellite](#) 'Malligyong-1' into orbit on November 21, despite condemnation from the US and its allies. South Korea, Japan, and the US informed that they were evaluating whether the launch had been successful. Washington asserted that the satellite launch violated multiple UN Security Council resolutions and was likely to destabilize East Asia's security situation. On its part, South Korea announced that it will suspend an inter-Korean agreement intended to lower military tensions.

As North Korea and China pose growing security threats to Japan, the US State Department approved a USD 2.35 billion deal for 400 [Tomahawk missiles](#) with a range of 1,600 kilometres that will give Tokyo the ability to strike far-off enemy bases and command and control centres.

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation ([APEC Leaders' Summit](#) 2023) was held in San Francisco, California, on November 16-17 under the theme "Creating a Resilient and Sustainable Future for All". APEC Leaders' [Golden Gate Declaration](#) reiterated its commitment to deliver a free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent, inclusive, and predictable trade and investment environment. For this, APEC reaffirmed the importance of the rules-based multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) at its core. On the sidelines of the APEC Summit, Japanese Prime Minister, Fumio Kishida met with Chinese President, Xi Jinping, during which the two leaders reiterated the importance of [close strategic communication](#) to build a stable and constructive relationship.

Other Developments

[Japan and China agree to work on stable relationship, though only vague promises in seafood dispute](#)

[President Macron Expresses "Deep Concern" to Xi Over Russia, North Korea Military Ties](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

The Israeli government approved a Qatari-mediated [ceasefire agreement](#) with Hamas on November 22 for a four-day period in Gaza to free 50 hostages who had been abducted into the Gaza Strip during Hamas' terrorist attack on October 7. Tel Aviv informed that this deal was the "first stage" of the return of all hostages. Earlier, in a virtual extraordinary summit held on November 21, 'BRICS' called for the immediate cessation of [hostilities between Israel and Hamas](#), as well as humanitarian aid and protection of civilians in Gaza.

China hosted a delegation of foreign ministers from Arab and Islamic nations on November 20, reiterating its call for a ceasefire in Gaza and opposing any [forced displacement of Palestinian civilians](#). Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, met with Egypt's President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi in Cairo where she expressed gratitude to Egypt for [facilitating humanitarian aid to Palestinians](#) in Gaza. In addition, Egypt and the EU also opposed the forced displacement of Palestinian civilians and called for a two-state solution.

In advance of the 15th anniversary of Mumbai terror attacks, Israel has designated Lashkar-e-Taiba as a terrorist organization, demonstrating Tel Aviv's determination to strive for a [unified global front in the fight against terrorism](#). Meanwhile, the US Ambassador to India, Eric Garcetti, has stressed that the Israel-Hamas conflict may stall progress on India-Middle East-Europe economic corridor (IMEC) and I2U2, but is confident that these [ideas will "stand the test of time"](#).

Other Developments

[Israel Ships "Legitimate Target", Warn Yemen's Houthis After Seizure Of India-Bound Vessel](#)

[At UN, India Opposes Terrorism, Supports Humanitarian Pauses in Israel-Hamas War](#)

[China and Saudi Arabia sign currency swap accord to foster bilateral commerce, giving a boost to the yuan's globalisation](#)

China

by

Angana Guha Roy

In their first in-person meeting in a year, US President Joe Biden met with Chinese President Xi Jinping in San Francisco on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit. President Biden praised "real progress" with President Xi as they [agreed to restore military-to-military communications](#) in a bid to ease soaring tensions. Shortly after his meeting with Xi, [Biden called Xi a dictator](#) during a media interaction. Beijing responded to President Biden's comment by slamming it as "extremely incorrect and irresponsible political manipulation". According to Mao Ning, a spokesperson for the China Ministry of Foreign Affairs, some careless individuals are always trying to cause trouble and damage China-U.S. relations, but their attempts will not succeed.

[European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen](#) has warned the EU's 27 member states to get moving with de-risking economic ties with China or prepare for their businesses to be steamrollered by unfair Chinese competition. "Geopolitics and geoeconomics need to be considered even more closely together and dealt with on a European level", she added.

[Australia's Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, has accused the Chinese navy](#) of "dangerous, unsafe and unprofessional" conduct after an incident in international waters near Japan, marked a potential friction point with Beijing. Australia's Defense Minister Richard Marles in a statement said that Australian divers aboard the long-range frigate HMAS Toowoomba were trying to clear fishing nets from its propellers on November 14 when a Chinese destroyer approached. Despite being warned that a diving operation was underway, the Chinese destroyer operated its sonar in a manner that "posed a risk to the safety of the Australian divers who were forced to exit the water," the statement said. Responding to the statement [Beijing said the Australian claims were unfounded](#). "We urge the Australian side to respect the facts, stop making reckless and irresponsible accusations against China," defence ministry spokesman Wu Qian said, adding China "did not engage in any activities that may have affected the Australian divers", the statement said.

Other Developments

[Nepal-China ties tense up over TikTok, airport](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On November 17, India hosted the [2nd Voice of Global South Summit](#) virtually. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Murat Nurtleu, was invited by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar to [participate in the panel](#) discussion on "India and the Global South: Joint Development for a Better Future". Minister Nurtleu emphasised the strategic partnership between Kazakhstan and India, highlighting the importance of mutually beneficial cooperation between Kazakhstan and the Global South. He emphasised the need to develop connectivity and diversify transport routes to strengthen this relationship further. He also stressed the importance of joint measures to reduce biological risks and recalled Kazakhstan's President's initiative to establish an International Biosafety Agency for technology transfer and experience exchange among countries.

The President of the Kyrgyz Republic, Sadyr Japarov paid [an official visit to Japan](#) on November 17-20. On the first day of the visit, the official Kyrgyz delegation had a meeting with Japanese Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, as well as other members of the Imperial family. There were also meeting with the speaker of the Japanese Parliament and the manager of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) where the development of inter-parliamentary relations as well as the strengthening of partnership with Japan including the involvement of reputable financial institutions were discussed.

On November 20, Kyrgyz Republic Sadyr Japarov [held talks](#) with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. The leaders discussed many issues including the status and future of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Japan and the upcoming 'Japan + Central Asia' meeting scheduled for 2024. Prime Minister Kishida emphasised the readiness of the Japanese Government to expand mutually beneficial partnership with Kyrgyzstan in the trade, economic and investment spheres. The leaders also [signed a joint statement](#) on the new era of friendship and an all-encompassing comprehensive partnership between the Kyrgyz Republic and Japan.

President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon paid an [official visit to Russia](#) on November 21-22 where he [met Russian President Vladimir Putin](#) before continuing on to Belarus for the Collective Security Treaty Organisation Summit on November 23. The [agenda of the talks](#) include "state and

development prospects of mutually beneficial cooperation in the trade, economic, and humanitarian spheres and other key aspects of the Russia-Tajikistan strategic partnership”.

Other Developments

[Iran, Turkmenistan Ink Agreements in Roads, Power, and Trade Sectors](#)

[The Collective Security Treaty Organization Summit will meet in Minsk on November 23.](#)



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