



# Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



## India's Proximity Archives

### July 10, 2024



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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, Central Asia and Indian Ocean Region of strategic relevance to India, compiled from open-source media. The research team includes Shreyas Deshmukh, Sanket Joshi, Anshita Shukla, Jayantika Rao T.V, and Divya Rai, Research Associates. Your comments and feedback can be addressed to Sanket Joshi at [sanket@dpg.org.in](mailto:sanket@dpg.org.in).

### Cover Image:

**Southeast Asia:** President Marcos Jr. of the Philippines along with Philippines Defence Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr., Philippine Foreign Secretary Enrique Manalo, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa and Japanese Defence Minister Minoru Kihara at the signing of the Philippines-Japan Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) on July 8, 2024. (Source: [Presidential Communications Office/Official Website](https://www.pco.gov.ph/Official-Website/))

**West Asia:** Masoud Pezeshkian was elected the President of Iran on July 5, 2024. (Source: [Islamic Republic News Agency](https://www.iranica24.com/))

**East Asia:** India's External Affairs Minister Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar meeting Wang Yi, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Foreign Minister of China in Astana, on July 4, 2024. (Source: [X/@DrSJJaishankar](https://twitter.com/DrSJJaishankar))

**Central Asia:** The Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) attended the 24th meeting of the Council of Heads, in Astana, on July 4, 2024. (Source: [Shanghai Cooperation Organization](https://www.shanghaicooperationorganization.org/))

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## South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

The political situation in Nepal became unstable after CPN (UML) Chairman KP Sharma Oli announced [withdrawal of support](#) to the CPN (MC) leader Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' led government. On July 3, all the eight ministers representing the CPN-UML in the coalition government [resigned](#) en masse. Following the change in coalition in the centre, the CPN-UML also [pulled out](#) from provincial governments in Lumbini and Sudurpaschim provinces on July 4. Another coalition partner, Janata Samajbadi Party (JSP), led by Ashok Kumar Rai, [withdrew its support](#) to the government on July 5. Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal will seek a vote of confidence in the House of Representatives on July 12.

According to a [UN report](#) published on July 9, the Taliban government's morality police will play an increasing role in enforcing religious law in Afghanistan, creating a "climate of fear". The UN Mission in Afghanistan condemns the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (MPVPV) for human rights violations, noting 1,033 [arbitrary punishments](#). Meanwhile, the Taliban have slashed the salaries of women government workers who have been [forced to stay at home](#) since they seized power.

The Pakistan government on July 8 [formally authorised](#) the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), to intercept and trace calls for national security. The Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication issued a notification under the Pakistan Telecommunication (Re-organisation) Act, 1996 to this effect. Opposition leader in the [Pakistan National Assembly](#) calls move 'draconian' and 'unconstitutional'. He said the SRO would become a tool in the hands of intelligence agencies, which could be used to blackmail and subjugate all politicians and media persons.

### Other Developments

[Afghanistan extends railway reconstruction contract with Uzbekistan](#)

[Afghanistan's lithium reserves could boost India's EV ambitions: Analysis](#)

[Bangladesh writes to Nepal to proceed with power trade agreement](#)

[Bangladesh eyes Vizag port as transit hub for its trade with Sri Lanka](#)

## Southeast Asia

by

Anshita Shukla

The Philippines and Japan signed a [Reciprocal Access Agreement \(RAA\)](#) at the presidential palace in Manila on July 8, 2024, as part of the Second Philippines-Japan 2+2 Ministerial Meeting. Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr witnessed the signing by Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa and Philippines Defence Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. The Japanese Defence Minister Minoru Kihara and Philippine Foreign Secretary Enrique Manalo were also present. The landmark defence agreement allows both countries to deploy soldiers and conduct joint military exercises in each other's territories.

On July 6, the Philippines Coast Guard (PCG) reported that China's [largest coast guard vessel anchored in Manila's](#) exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the South China Sea. The 165m "monster ship" of the Chinese Coast Guard entered Manila's 200-nautical mile EEZ on July 2. The ship also deployed a small boat, which was anchored 730m away from the PCG's vessel. The Philippine Coast Guard spokesman, Jay Tarriela, stated, "it's an intimidation on the part of the China Coast Guard". This was followed by China's Ministry of Natural Resources [on July 8](#), accusing the warship grounded by the Philippines in the Second Thomas Shoal of "seriously damaging the diversity, stability and sustainability of the reef ecosystem". The Philippines refuted China's claims and, in turn, blamed China for damaging the marine environment.

The Myanmar junta's second-in-command, [Vice-Senior General Soe Win](#), [made an official visit to China](#) on July 6. During his visit, he attended the Green Development Forum hosted by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. This made him the [highest-ranking military leader](#) to visit China in an official capacity since the 2021 coup. This comes a week after Thein Sein, President of Myanmar, visited China and met with President Xi Jinping of China.

### Other Developments

[Top Myanmar general in China for official visit](#)

[France, Britain and others allowed to intervene in Myanmar ICJ genocide case](#)

[Philippine president orders de-escalation in South China Sea, military chief says](#)

## East Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [July 4](#), on the sidelines of the 24<sup>th</sup> summit of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Astana, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Foreign Minister Wang Yi held a meeting with Indian External Affairs Minister Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar. The [two ministers were meeting for the third time](#) in the past 12 months. The [Ministry of External Affairs of India stated](#) that the two Ministers had an in-depth exchange of views on finding an early resolution of remaining issues along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) to stabilise and rebuild bilateral relations. The statement also revealed that Dr Jaishankar stressed the need to redouble efforts to achieve complete disengagement from the remaining areas in Eastern Ladakh and restore border peace and tranquillity to remove obstacles to the return of normalcy between the two countries.

During South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol's visit to the US Indo-Pacific Command in Hawaii [vowed to bolster South Korea's combined defence readiness](#) with the United States to deter North Korea's growing threats. President Yoon's visit marks the first such visit to the command by a South Korean president in 29 years and the first since it was renamed to the Indo-Pacific Command in 2018. President Yoon stated, "North Korea's evolving nuclear and missile capabilities and continued provocations are threatening security on the Korean Peninsula and in the region. A steadfast combined defence readiness is more critical than ever". According to the presidential office, Seoul and Washington's [integrated extended deterrence](#) would be the "most realistic" way to address Pyongyang's nuclear missile threat.

### Other Developments

[North Korea Dispatches Military Training Delegation To Russia](#)

[Japan And Philippines Ink Key Military Pact In Defense Ties Upgrade](#)

[Tokyo By-Elections Setback A Blow To The LDP, But Maybe Not To Kishida](#)

[Taiwan says Chinese aircraft carrier carrying out drills in Western Pacific](#)

## West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On July 6, Prime Minister [Narendra Modi congratulated Masoud Pezeshkian](#) on being elected as the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran. PM Modi reaffirmed India's commitment to further strengthen its warm and long-standing bilateral relations with Iran in the interests of both countries and the region. While President-elect Masoud Pezeshkian is considered a [non-conservative \(reformist\) leader](#), the US is unlikely to change its negotiating position concerning the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA). The White House National Security Council Spokesperson John Kirby stated that the [US will not change its position on Iran](#) as long as Tehran continues supplying drone technology to Russia that kills Ukrainians and supports terrorist groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Houthis.

Israel-Hezbollah tensions in South Lebanon showed no signs of abating. Hezbollah fired more than [200 missiles against Israeli military bases](#) in the northern Galilee region after a senior Hezbollah commander was killed in Lebanon. Meanwhile, in a telephone conversation with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Keir Starmer, Britain's newly elected Prime Minister, called on [Israel and Lebanon to exercise "caution"](#), noting that the situation along Israel's northern border was very concerning. According to reports, the British government is likely to drop its bid to delay the International Criminal Court's (ICC) [arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister](#) Benjamin Netanyahu and other officials for alleged war crimes in Gaza.

As part of the ongoing [negotiations for a ceasefire in Gaza](#), intelligence chiefs from the US, Israel, and Egypt are scheduled to meet on July 10 in Doha, Qatar.

### Other Developments

[Erdogan to invite Assad for talks to restore Turkey-Syria ties](#)

[Will Iran's foreign policy change under a new president?](#)

[IDF jets hit Hezbollah sites in southern Lebanon after rocket fire on north](#)



## Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

The 24<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) adopted the [Astana Declaration](#) and approved 25 strategic documents covering energy, security, trade, finance, and information security on July 4. The [declaration stressed](#) the group's commitment to building a more 'representative, democratic, equitable, and multipolar world order'. It highlighted that cooperation within the organisation could form the basis for an equal and indivisible security architecture in Eurasia. During the Summit, key resolutions included cooperation programs to combat terrorism, separatism, and extremism for 2025-2027, the Anti-Drug Strategy for the next five years, and its corresponding Action Program. The People's Republic of China assumed the SCO chairmanship for the next term.

A "SCO+" meeting was also held with the theme of "Strengthening Multilateral Dialogue And Seeking Sustainable Peace And Development" which was attended by the UN Secretary-General, leaders of SCO member states, observer states like Mongolia, and chair country guests like Azerbaijan, Qatar, UAE, Turkey and Turkmenistan. In [his address](#), the Chairman of the People's Council of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, said the country would like to discuss with the SCO the possibilities of supporting their initiative on the formation of a 'Global Security Strategy', which was put forward by the President of Turkmenistan at the plenary session of the 78<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly. [Moreover](#), he also said "We propose that interested SCO states consider the parameters of their participation in energy and communication projects on the territory of Afghanistan. This includes the implementation of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline, power transmission lines, and fiber-optic communication along the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan route". According to him, this will ensure the swift and effective integration of Afghanistan into both regional and continental processes and contribute to the country's economic and social recovery, thereby stabilising the political situation in Afghanistan.

On [July 5](#), China and Tajikistan elevated their ties to a comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership during President Xi Jinping's rare visit to Tajikistan. In an act to show the Chinese people's friendly feelings towards Tajik President Emomali Rahmon, President Xi also awarded President Rahmon the "Friendship Medal", China's highest state honour for foreigners. During the meeting between the two leaders, President Xi also promised to defend the



["territorial integrity"](#) of Tajikistan. Without mentioning any foreign player by name, [Xi pledged](#) to "firmly oppose any external interference in Tajikistan's internal affairs under any pretext".

## Other Developments

[Central Asian railway to offer new link between China, Europe](#)

[Central Asian States, Azerbaijan Start Military Maneuvers In Kazakhstan](#)

[In Tajikistan, a Looming Succession Risks Fueling Instability and Radicalization](#)

[Armenia To Hold Military Drills With US Amid Worsening Relations With Russia](#)

## Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

Sri Lanka has decided to lift its [ban on foreign research ships](#) docking at its ports starting in 2025. The ban, imposed in January 2024 due to security concerns raised by India and the United States over frequent docking requests from Chinese surveillance vessels, will remain in effect until January 2025. Foreign Minister Ali Sabry conveyed the decision to NHK World Japan, stating that Sri Lanka cannot have different rules for different countries and only block China. He [also added](#), "Sri Lanka will then no longer ban foreign research ships from its ports next year after the moratorium ends in January".

The [Indian Navy's P-8I maritime patrol aircraft](#) has joined the 2024 Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise in Hawaii, which is the world's largest multinational naval exercise. RIMPAC 2024 involves 26 nations, 38 ships, 4 submarines, and over 25,000 personnel, making it the largest iteration of the biennial exercise to date.

### Other Developments

[UK warship HMS Diamond returned back to Portsmouth after 6-month deployment in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.](#)

[Second round negotiations begin between India, France for 26 Rafale Marine aircraft.](#)

[Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra reviewed the India-UK 'Roadmap 2030 during his two-day visit to London.](#)

[30<sup>th</sup> edition of bilateral exercise CARAT 2024 between US-Indonesia was conducted in the Indian Ocean Region](#)



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