



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



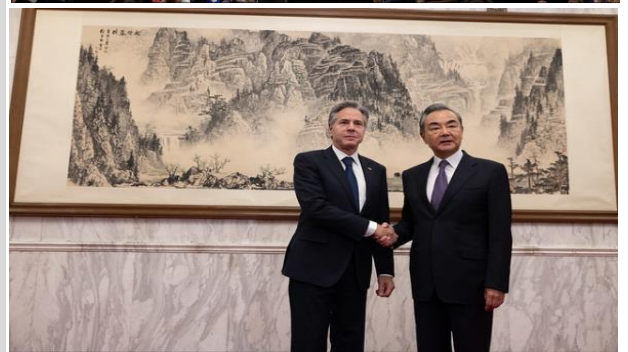
INDO-PACIFIC MONITOR

JUNE 2023

Author

Lalit Kapur

Volume IV, Issue 6



Delhi Policy Group

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

www.delhipolicygroup.org



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

INDO-PACIFIC MONITOR Volume IV, Issue 6 June 2023

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.

INDO-PACIFIC MONITOR

This publication is a monthly analytical survey of developments and policy trends that impact India's interests and define its challenges across the extended Indo-Pacific maritime space, which has become the primary theatre of global geopolitical contestation. It is authored by Cmde. Lalit Kapur (Retd.), DPG Senior Fellow for Maritime Strategy based on open source reports and publications. Your comments and feedback may be addressed to the author at lalit@dpg.org.in. To subscribe, please [click here](#).

Cover Image:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi outlines his vision for India's future and India-US relations at a joint session of the US Congress, Washington DC, June 22, 2023. Source: [Twitter@narendramodi](#)

US Secretary of State Antony J Blinken with Director Wang Yi at Beijing on June 19, 2023. Source: US State Department

INS Tarkash and FNS Surcouf in the First India-France-UAE Trilateral Maritime Exercise in the Gulf of Oman, June 7-8, 2023. Source: Indian Navy

© 2023 by the Delhi Policy Group

Delhi Policy Group

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

INDO-PACIFIC MONITOR
Volume IV, Issue 6
June 2023

Contents

Abstract	1
The Modi State Visit to the US	2
Secretary Blinken Visits China	6
India's Outreach and Capability Development	8



INDO-PACIFIC MONITOR

June 2023

Abstract

The centrepiece of the month was Prime Minister Narendra Modi's State Visit to the US from June 21-24. The visit comprised five broad components: celebration of the International Yoga Day at the UN Headquarters in New York; a summit and extended meetings with President Biden and his administration; an address to a joint session of the US Congress; and interactions with professionals, business leaders and the Indian community. In sum, the visit marked a transformational point, one where the hesitations of history are finally put to rest and the bilateral relationship begins living up to its true potential.

Just days before, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken had visited Beijing on June 18-19, meeting Foreign Minister Qin Gang, CPC Foreign Affairs Commission Director Wang Yi, and President Xi Jinping. The stronger US international position vis-à-vis China than at the time since the Anchorage Dialogue in March 2021 enabled candid conversation, though without substantive progress in smoothing frayed relations. Secretary Blinken assured his interlocutors that there was no change in the US' One China Policy and that the US did not support Taiwan's independence, but it would not accept unilateral change of status quo. The inference was that unlike in the case of Hong Kong, where China successfully changed the terms of its agreement with the UK unilaterally without facing any consequences, it could not expect the same in the case of Taiwan.

In other developments, India and Egypt entered into a strategic partnership, India and the Philippines edged towards one, and the India-France-Australia trilateral dialogue was resuscitated at the official level.

India completed the training of the first batch of Saudi Arabian naval cadets, signifying the scaling up of new frontiers in the bilateral relationship. India, France and the UAE conducted a trilateral maritime exercise on June 7-8. India gifted a corvette, INS Kirpan, to Vietnam.



The Modi State Visit to the US

Perhaps the month's most significant development from India's perspective was Prime Minister Narendra Modi's State Visit to the US, from June 21-23. The visit had four broad components spread over the three days: celebration of the International Day of Yoga at the UN Headquarters in New York¹; interaction with the US leadership; interaction with business leaders, and interaction with the Indian diaspora. All segments were planned and executed with precision.

The Yoga Day celebrations were attended by diplomats, officials, academics, health professionals and prominent personalities including Mr Csaba Korosi, the President of the 77th UN General Assembly and participants from more than 135 countries². Visuals of the Prime Minister and over 2000 people practising yoga at the UN Headquarters in New York as well as the Hudson Promenade eloquently spoke of India's soft power and its contribution to the world.

The visit's centrepiece was interaction with the US leadership. The Prime Minister was received at the White House on all three days: a private dinner on June 21³; a ceremonial welcome followed by dialogue between the leaders and a ceremonial banquet attended by 217 dignitaries and their spouses on June 22⁴, and an India-US Hi-Tech Handshake event at the White House on June 23⁵. Other high level interactions included a 'Skilling for the Future' event with First Lady Jill Biden⁶ and a lunch hosted jointly by Vice President Kamala Harris and Secretary of State Antony J Blinken on June 23. There was no doubting the desire of the US leadership to engage India.

This desire extended to the US Congress. A resolution recognising the importance of the India-US relationship was introduced in Congress on June

¹ Prime Ministers' Visit to USA and Egypt, June 16, 2023, https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/36683/Prime_Ministers_visit_to_USA_and_Egypt

² Text of PM's Remarks at 9th Annual International Day of Yoga - 2023, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1934295>

³ Prime Minister's Private Engagement with President and First Lady of USA, https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/36708/Prime_Ministers_private_engagement_with_President_and_First_Lady_of_USA

⁴ White House Releases State Dinner Guest List, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/06/22/white-house-releases-state-dinner-guest-list-2/>

⁵ Prime Minister's India-US Hi-Tech Handshake Event, June 24, 2023, https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/36718/Prime_Ministers_participation_in_the_India-US_HiTech_Handshake_event

⁶ Prime Minister Participates in "India and USA: Skilling for the Future" event with First Lady of the US, https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/36707/Prime_Minister_participates_in_India_and_USA_Skilling_for_Future_event_with_First_Lady_of_USA



21⁷. Prime Minister Modi's address to a joint meeting of the Congress the next day put him into select group of world leaders who have addressed Congress twice (the only others on record are Winston Churchill, Nelson Mandela and Volodymyr Zelenskyy)⁸. His wide-ranging oration began by recalling that in 2016, he had told the house that the hesitations of history were behind⁹. It ended by noting that despite the two nations coming from different circumstances and history, they were united by a common vision and common destiny; that when the partnership progresses, economic resilience increases, innovation grows, science flourishes, knowledge advances, humanity benefits, the seas and skies are safer, democracy shines brighter, and the world becomes a better place. He recalled that in 2016, he had said "our relationship is primed for a momentous future". That future is today. Frequent standing ovations spoke of the resonance his speech created amongst members of the US Congress.

Interactions with at least 13 business leaders at the individual level and over 1000 at the collective level comprised the third component. A separate event with Indian diaspora at the Ronald Reagan Centre in Washington DC formed the last component, filling out a packed programme.

Takeaways from the visit are encapsulated in a joint statement running into over 6400 words¹⁰. There are at least 58 requiring follow-up action on India's part. The big ones include:

- Semiconductors. Micron Technology Inc will invest more than \$ 800 million in a new \$ 2.75 billion semiconductor assembly and test facility in India. Applied Materials will build a semiconductor centre for commercialisation and innovation in India. Lam Research will train 60,000 Indian engineers to accelerate India's semiconductor education and workforce development goals.

⁷ Resolution Recognising the Importance of United States India Relations, <https://www.foreign.senate.gov/press/dem/release/menendez-warner-and-cornyn-introduce-resolution-celebrating-us-india-relations-ahead-of-the-official-state-visit-with-the-republic-of-india>

⁸ Joint Meeting and Joint Session Addresses Before Congress by Foreign Leaders & Dignitaries, <https://history.house.gov/Institution/Foreign-Leaders/Joint-Sessions/>

⁹ Address by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi to the Joint Session of the US Congress, June 23, 2023, https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/36714/Address_by_Prime_Minister_Shri_Narendra_Modi_to_the_Joint_Session_of_the_US_Congress

¹⁰ India-USA Joint Statement During the Official State Visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to USA, June 23, 2023, https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/36711/IndiaUSA_Joint_Statement_during_the_Official_State_visit_of_Prime_Minister_Shri_Narendra_Modi_to_USA



- Critical Minerals. India was welcomed as the 13th partner of the Minerals Security Partnership started in June 2022. India's Epsilon Carbon will invest \$650 million in a Greenfield electric vehicle component factory in the US, hiring over 500 employees.
- Advanced Telecommunications. India and the US launched two public-private task forces; one on the development and deployment of Open RAN systems and another on advanced telecom research and development.
- Space. India signed the Artemis Accords, joining 26 other countries to advance a common vision of space exploration for the benefit of humanity. NASA will train Indian astronauts with the goal of launching a joint effort to the International Space Station in 2024. NASA and ISRO are developing a strategic framework for human spaceflight cooperation. India approved an investment of \$ 318 million to build a Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory that will work with similar facilities in the US, Europe and Japan. Scientific payloads for the NISAR satellite will be launched by India in 2024. The US Geological Survey's Landsat Satellite Series and ISRO's Resourcesat Series have agreed to expand bilateral data exchange.
- Quantum, Advanced Computing and AI. A joint India-US Quantum Coordination Mechanism has been established. The US welcomed India's participation in the Quantum Entanglement Exchange and the Quantum Economic Development Consortium. The two countries signed an implementing arrangement to support joint research on Quantum, AI and advanced wireless technology.
- GE F414 Engine Co-Production. India and the US welcomed the proposal by General Electric to jointly produce the F414 Jet Engine in India, in partnership with HAL. A manufacturing licence agreement has been submitted for Congressional Notification. This first of its kind initiative will enable greater transfer of US jet engine technology to India.
- Sea Guardian MQ-9B. India announced its intent to procure 31 armed Sea Guardian/Sky Guardian UAVs.
- Ship Repair. The USN has concluded a Master Ship Repair Agreement with L&T Shipyard Kattupalli and is finalising agreements with MDL Mumbai and Goa Shipyard.
- The US and India resolved to strengthen Undersea Domain Awareness. The two countries agreed to place three Indian Liaison Officers in US commands for the first time. They commenced negotiations for a Security of Supply Arrangement and Reciprocal Defence Procurement Arrangement that will enable supply of defence goods in the event of unanticipated supply chain disruptions. They also finalised a Defense



Industrial Cooperation Roadmap¹¹ providing policy direction to defense industries and enabling co-production of advanced defense systems as well as collaborative research and development.

- India and the US resolved six of their seven outstanding WTO disputes. The expectation is that the seventh will be resolved by September 2023.
- The US announced its intention of joining India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.
- India and the US announced that they will hold an Indian Ocean dialogue later this year.

These were only some of the outcomes covering six broad areas: a technology partnership for the future; a next-generation defence partnership, catalysing a clean energy transition, deepening strategic convergence between the two nations, propelling global growth, and empowering future generations and protecting health. The scope of the joint statement and the enormous amount of work done in tying up deliverables speaks for itself. It is clear that the relationship is at a transformational moment, a tipping point, as it were. It will still need some nurturing to ensure follow up and actualisation of the promise, but once the process is begun and the private sector gets involved, the relationship will be taken forward by business, rather than by governments.

As the visit approached its end, Secretary of State Antony J Blinken observed, "I think what the United States and India recognise, powerfully, together is that in this 21st century, the true wealth of our nation is our people, and our ability to maximise their potential"¹². Exhorting those attending the event to forge new ventures and partnerships, invent game-changing products and services, create unimagined opportunities and "continue to be that engine powering our progress" he said, "If we do all that, I truly believe that the US and India will shape together a more peaceful, a more prosperous, a more connected future". The visit is thus a bet that India's innovation and cost-effective manpower can be harnessed to American technological strength to shape the future of the world. Whether this bet is a good or bad one will depend on how effectively the partners can deliver on the promise of the joint statement.

¹¹ Roadmap for US-India Defense Industrial Cooperation, June 5, 2023, <https://media.defense.gov/2023/Jun/21/2003244834/-1/-1/0/ROADMAP-FOR-US-INDIA-DEFENSE-INDUSTRIAL-COOPERATION-FINAL.PDF>

¹² Secretary Antony J Blinken at a US-India Strategic Partnership Forum Event, June 23, 2023, <https://www.state.gov/secretary-antony-j-blinken-at-a-u-s-india-strategic-partnership-forum-event/>



Secretary Blinken Visits China

The run up to the state visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the US witnessed US Secretary of State Antony J Blinken visiting China to meet Director Wang Yi on June 18-19, 2023. The two had met 27 months earlier, in the Biden Administration's first high-level strategic dialogue with China, on March 18-19, 2021¹³. China reacted to the Biden administration's early actions, including issue of the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance¹⁴ and the first Virtual Quad Summit¹⁵ with a wolf-warrior approach that proved counter-productive.

Previewing the visit to China, the US Coordinator for the Indo-Pacific Dr Kurt Campbell observed that the Biden administration had inherited an approach that acknowledged the China challenge but without the tools to deal with it. It had moved purposefully thereafter. It had, in his words, "strengthened America's ability to outcompete China by rebuilding the economy from the bottom up and middle out, by enhancing our ability to innovate, rejuvenating our industrial capacity, protecting our technology, and - critically - by deepening our relationships with allies and partners around the world"¹⁶. In support, he cited the Quad Summits, the AUKUS alliance, the strengthened US partnership with ASEAN including through the first ever summit with ASEAN leaders in the US, the Pacific Islands Summit, launch of the IPEF, deepening of alliances with Japan, the Philippines and ROK, the US-India initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies, the rapprochement with the EU and convergence between the US, EU and key Indo-Pacific partners on the approach to China.

In contrast, China had alienated Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Australia, India and the EU through its confrontation, assertion and lack of accommodation. China-US dialogue had ground to a virtual halt: this was the

¹³ For an overview, see Lalit Kapur, 'The Anchorage Dialogue' in the Indo-Pacific Monitor, Volume II, Issue 3, March 2021, https://www.delhipolicygroup.org/uploads_dpg/publication_file/indo-pacific-monitor-2280.pdf

¹⁴ Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, March 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/NSC-1v2.pdf>

¹⁵ Quad Leaders' Joint Statement: "The Spirit of the Quad", March 12, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/12/quad-leaders-joint-statement-the-spirit-of-the-quad/>. Identical statements have been released by other Quad members.

¹⁶ Deputy Assistant to the President and Coordinator for Indo-Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell and Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel J Kritenbrink on the Secretary's Upcoming Travel to the People's Republic of China and the United Kingdom, June 14, 2023, <https://www.state.gov/deputy-assistant-to-the-president-and-coordinator-for-indo-pacific-affairs-kurt-campbell-and-assistant-secretary-of-state-for-east-asian-and-pacific-affairs-daniel-j-kritenbrink-on-the-secretary/>



first visit of a US Secretary of State to China since 2018 and the first US Cabinet-level visit since 2019. Both sides had agreed to restoration of the bilateral dialogue at the Bali Summit in November 2022¹⁷. Secretary Blinken was to have visited China to re-commence the bilateral dialogue in February 2023. However, the Chinese balloon incident led to that visit's cancellation¹⁸.

Secretary Blinken spent about eight hours in discussion with Foreign Minister Qin Gang, about three and a half hours with Director Wang Yi and about an hour with President Xi Jinping¹⁹. The Secretary had a threefold objective: strengthening high-level channels of communication, making clear the US position and intentions in contentious areas, and exploring areas where the two could work together on shared transnational challenges²⁰. Contentious areas were discussed candidly. Secretary Blinken claimed to have clarified that China-US relations were based on the fundamental pre-condition and assurance that the status of Taiwan will be resolved peacefully. There was no change in the One China Policy: the US did not support Taiwan's independence, but would not accept unilateral change of status quo. The inference was that unlike in the case of Hong Kong, where China successfully changed the terms of its agreement with the UK unilaterally without facing any consequences, it could not expect the same in the case of Taiwan. The Taiwan Relations Act still applies, and US forces are bound by it. Whether this will extend to physical intervention was left to China to judge.

Secretary Blinken accepted assurances that China would not provide Russia lethal aid in Ukraine. North Korea's provocations and China's human rights abuses in Xinjiang and Tibet were stated to have been discussed²¹, but there is no indication that the discussion yielded any dividends. Assurances were provided that the US did not intend to decouple from China, the objective was to de-risk and diversify²². There is, however, no indication that these assurances will satisfy China.

¹⁷Readout of President Joe Biden's Meeting with President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/11/14/readout-of-president-joe-bidens-meeting-with-president-xi-jinping-of-the-peoples-republic-of-china/>

¹⁸ For an overview of the incident, see Lalit Kapur, "China's Balloon Over America and Implications for India", February 2023, https://www.delhipolicygroup.org/publication/policy-briefs/chinas-balloon-over-america-and-implications-for-india.html#_ftnref21

¹⁹ Secretary Antony J Blinken with Margaret Brennan of CBS News, June 19, 2023, <https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinken-with-margaret-brennan-of-cbs-news/>

²⁰ Secretary of State Antony J Blinken's Press Availability, <https://www.state.gov/secretary-of-state-antony-j-blinkens-press-availability/>

²¹ Ibid

²² Ibid.



The Secretary's first objective has been partially fulfilled: the readouts from both China and the US²³ make clear their intent to resume dialogue. China's Foreign Minister has agreed to visit the US at a mutually convenient date²⁴. Military communication channels, however, have not been opened, Secretary Blinken clarified that China has not yet agreed to move forward in this area²⁵. On the second objective, both sides reiterated their positions. Whether they understand each other, or accept each other's explanations, is still not clear. On the objective of cooperating in the face of common challenges, the only takeaways appear to be China's support to expand the Black Sea Grain Initiative thus enabling export of grains from Ukraine and food security for developing countries, and an agreement to explore the setting up of a joint working group to shut off the flow of precursor chemicals, thus curbing the use of synthetic opioids and fentanyl. Whether these discussions go anywhere remains to be seen. The two sides also discussed the need to strengthen people-to-people exchanges between students, scholars and business travellers for mutual benefit, the enhancement of educational exchanges and increasing direct flights between the countries.

The ice has been broken. How fast and how far the US will go with China will depend on how far China is prepared to go. The fact that it agreed to talk and open up more channels of communication indicates China is concerned about developing India-US relations. The future of these three nations whose economies will dominate the globe in the decades ahead is inextricably interlinked; a factor India's leaders will no doubt have taken into account.

India's Outreach and Capability Development

Prime Minister Visits Egypt. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi made a State Visit to Egypt on June 24-25, 2023. The outcomes included a strategic partnership agreement, three MoUs in the fields of agriculture, preservation of archaeological sites and competition laws, and two announcements including the institution of direct Delhi-Cairo flights²⁶.

²³ Secretary Blinken's Visit to the PRC, June 19, 2023, <https://www.state.gov/secretary-blinkens-visit-to-the-peoples-republic-of-china-prc/>

²⁴ Qin Gang Holds Talks with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, June 18, 2023, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb_663304/wjbz_663308/activities_663312/202306/t20230619_11099469.html

²⁵ Secretary of State Antony J Blinken's Press Availability, Op Cit.

²⁶ List of Outcomes: State Visit of Prime Minister to Egypt (June 24-25, 2023), https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/36741/List_of_Outcomes_State_visit_of_Prime_Minister_to_Egypt_June_2425_2023



India France Australia Trilateral. The India-France-Australia Trilateral took a step forward at the Second Focal Points Meeting between officials at New Delhi on June 20, 2023²⁷. The three nations expressed satisfaction at resumption of the trilateral dialogue and agreed to resume cooperation on the three established pillars: Maritime Safety and Security including HADR, Marine Global Commons and Environment, and Multilateral Engagement. They identified key projects to be initiated in the coming months and agreed to explore the possibility of a meeting of Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the UNGA session.

India-Philippines Relations. The Fifth Meeting of the India-Philippines Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation, held at New Delhi on June 29, 2023, resulted in a joint statement²⁸. The wide range of areas of cooperation agreed upon, including political dialogue, defence cooperation, maritime cooperation, law enforcement cooperation, trade and investment, development cooperation, health and pharmaceuticals, tourism and civil aviation, agriculture, financial technology, science and technology, space, consular matters, cultural exchanges and education spoke of a strategic partnership in the making. The sentiment was well captured in an Op Ed by Enrique Manalo, the Philippines Foreign Secretary, published on the eve of the visit²⁹.

Training of Saudi Naval Cadets. 55 cadets from Saudi Arabia's King Fahd Naval Academy successfully completed 24 days of afloat training, including seamanship, navigation, fire fighting and emergency drills³⁰, on board IN Ships Tir and Sujata from May 16 - June 7, 2023³¹. The quality of training provided was appreciated by the Saudi Directing Staff during an interaction with the Chief of India's Naval Staff on June 1, 2023³². Relations between the Indian and

²⁷ India-France-Australia Trilateral Dialogue Second Focal Points Meeting, June 20, 2023, https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/36688/IndiaFranceAustralia_Trilateral_DialogueSecond_Focal_Points_Mee ting

²⁸ Joint Statement on the 5th India-Philippines Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation, https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/36743/Joint_Statement_on_the_5th_IndiaPhilippines_Joint_Commissi on_on_Bilateral_Cooperation

²⁹ Enrique Manalo, "Manila and New Delhi: A 21st Century Partnership", June 29, 2023, <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/it-is-time-to-realise-the-potential-of-india-philippines-relations-8691329/>

³⁰ Indian Navy and Royal Saudi Naval Force Collaborate for Maiden Afloat Training of Saudi Cadets, <https://newsonair.gov.in/News?title=Indian-Navy-and-Royal-Saudi-Naval-Force-Collaborate-for-Maiden-Afloat-Training-of-Saudi-Cadets&id=461184>

³¹ Maiden Training of Cadets of Royal Saudi Naval Force (RSNF) on board First Training Squadron, <https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/maiden-training-cadets-royal-saudi-naval-forcersnf-board-first-training-squadron>

³² Admiral R Harikumar, CNS Meets the First Batch of Royal Saudi Naval Forces Cadets Undergoing Afloat / Sea Training at Southern Naval Command, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1929222>



the Royal Saudi Navy are at a relatively nascent stage. The feedback provided by Saudi trainers (on the quality of training) and cadets (on the quality of accommodation and other facilities) will determine whether this experience is repeated and bilateral bonds strengthened, or the RSNF turns to other avenues.

INS Trishul visits Port Anjouan. INS Trishul, mission-deployed in the Western Indian Ocean, visited Port Anjouan from May 31 – June 2, 2023³³. Part of the Union of Comoros, Anjouan is a relatively isolated autonomous volcanic island in the Mozambique Channel that formed part of the Union of Comoros when it gained independence (from France) in 1975. It seceded in 1997, re-joined the Union in 2002, declared independence in 2007 and was forcibly re-united in 2008. The visit enabled interaction with senior government officials, professional interaction with the Comoros Armed Force and the Coast Guard, the conduct of a medical outreach camp, a training workshop and repairs to communication equipment and a navigational radar in the port. The port visit is part of India's outreach under the SAGAR policy, providing India's capabilities for the betterment of the region.

INS Satpura Participates in Exercise Komodo 2023. INS Satpura arrived Makassar on June 4, to participate in Indonesia's multilateral Exercise Komodo-2023 on June 8³⁴. Ships from more than 30 navies including the US, British, Chinese, Russian, Japanese, South Korean and Pakistan also participated³⁵. The ship also represented India in the International Fleet Review by President Joko Widodo on June 5 and participated in other events including an international maritime security symposium, a city parade, cultural programmes and a band performance.

India-France-UAE Maritime Partnership Exercise. INS Tarkash, FNS Surcouf and aircraft from France and UAE participated in the first ever India-France-UAE maritime partnership exercise in the Gulf of Oman on June 7-8, 2023³⁶. As geopolitical competition gathers pace in the vital Gulf region, the exercise marks the inception of yet another trilateral partnership to stabilise the region.

India Conducts Multi-Carrier Operations. The Indian Navy showcased its increasing maritime capability through the conduct of multi-carrier operations

³³ INS Trishul at Port Anjouan, Comoros, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1929295>

³⁴ INS Satpura arrives at Makassar, Indonesia, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-satpura-arrives-makassar-indonesia>

³⁵ US Navy Joins 30-Plus Nations for Multinational Exercise Komodo, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1512937/us-navy-joins-30-plus-nations-for-multinational-exercise-komodo/>

³⁶ India, France and UAE Complete Maiden Maritime Partnership Exercise, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1931023>



and the coordinated deployment of more than 35 aircraft in the Arabian Sea on June 10, 2023³⁷. The seamless integration of two mobile airfields enabling the conduct of joint operations is a complex undertaking, with only the USN having the requisite capability, and perhaps Japan, France and the UK possessing the requisite institutional experience.

International Yoga Day Celebrations. Even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi led International Yoga Day celebrations at the UN in New York, Indian Naval ships fanned out in the Indian Ocean to spread the Yoga message. INS Tarkash visited Muscat, in the Sultanate of Oman³⁸. INS Trishul visited Port Toamasina, in Madagascar³⁹. INS Kiltan visited Chattogram, in Bangladesh⁴⁰. And INS Sunayna visited Mombasa, in Kenya⁴¹. INS Sunayna later also visited Beira, Mozambique⁴².

Other Goodwill Visits. INS Trishul arrived in the Seychelles on June 28 to participate in the Seychelles National Day Celebrations⁴³.

INS Kirpan Gifted to Vietnam. Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh announced the gifting of INS Kirpan to Vietnam on June 19, 2023. The announcement was made during the call by Vietnam's Minister for National Defence, General Pham Van Gang on him⁴⁴. In parallel, the Commander-in-Chief of the Vietnamese People's Navy, V Adm Tran Thanh Nghiem called on CNS Admiral Hari Kumar⁴⁵. The ship departed Visakhapatnam on her final journey to Vietnam on June 28⁴⁶.

³⁷ Combined operations of INS Vikramaditya and INS Vikrant, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/combined-operations-ins-vikramaditya-and-ins-vikrant>

³⁸ INS Tarkash at Muscat, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1935041>

³⁹ INS Trishul visit to port of Toamasina, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1935040>

⁴⁰ INS Kiltan Arrived Chattogram, Bangladesh <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-kiltan-arrived-chattogram-bangladesh>

⁴¹ INS Sunayna Visits Mombasa, Kenya <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-sunayna-visits-mombasa-kenya>

⁴² INS Sunayna Arrives Beira, Mozambique, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/ins-sunayna-enters-beira-mozambique>

⁴³ INS Trishul arrives in Seychelles to Participate in Seychelles National Day Celebrations on June 29, 2023, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1936027>

⁴⁴ Raksha Mantri and Minister of National Defence of Vietnam Hold Talks in New Delhi to carry forward bilateral defence cooperation, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1933401>

⁴⁵ CNS With Vietnam Delegation Visit, <https://indiannavy.nic.in/content/cns-vietnam-delegation-visit>

⁴⁶ INS Kirpan sets sail for Vietnam, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1936047>



Agni-Prime Test. The first pre-induction user flight test of the Agni Prime missile was successfully done from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island on June 7, 2023⁴⁷. The test paves the way for induction of the missile into service.

Launch of Third Shallow Water ASW Craft. Anjadip, the third of the ASW shallow-water craft being built by GRSE Kolkata and L&T Shipyard, Kattupalli, was launched on June 13, 2023⁴⁸. The keel for the 7th ship of the class was also laid at the same venue. The first ship of the class is expected to be delivered by December 2023, adding to India's capability for coastal ASW operations.

DAC Clears Acquisition of MQ-9B. The Defence Acquisition Council accorded the Acceptance of Necessity for acquisition of 31 MQ-9B (16 Sky Guardian and 15 Sea Guardian) High Altitude Long Endurance Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems from the US through the FMS route on June 15, 2023⁴⁹. The US Government had indicated that these would cost \$3072 million, or roughly \$ 100 million per drone. The final price, however, is still being negotiated.

Medium Refit of INS Shankush. The Ministry of Defence signed a contract with Mazagon Docks Limited for the medium refit and life certification of INS Shankush, the second Shishumar-class submarine commissioned in November 1986⁵⁰. The estimated cost is Rs 2725 crores (\$ 340 million), and delivery after refit is due in 2026. INS Shishumar had earlier undergone similar refit and certification commencing 2018.

⁴⁷ Agni Prime Ballistic Missile successfully flight-tested by DRDO off Odisha Coast,

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1930689>

⁴⁸ Launch of 'Anjadip' Third Ship of ASW SWC and Keel Laying of the 7th Ship of the ASW SWC Project at M/s L&T Kattupalli on 13 Jun 23,

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1932044>

⁴⁹ Acquisition of MQ-9B Drones: Speculative Reports Uncalled For,

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1935160>

⁵⁰ MoD signs a contract of Rs 2725 Crores with Mazagon Docks Shipbuilders for Rs 2725 crores for Medium Refit along with Life Certification,

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1936402>



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

www.delhipolicygroup.org