



# INDIA-SWEDEN STRATEGIC COMPASS

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CENTER FOR SOUTH ASIAN AND INDO-PACIFIC AFFAIRS

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## SPECIAL FEATURE

### Reaching for the Moon & Beyond: India's Chandrayaan-3's Historic Success

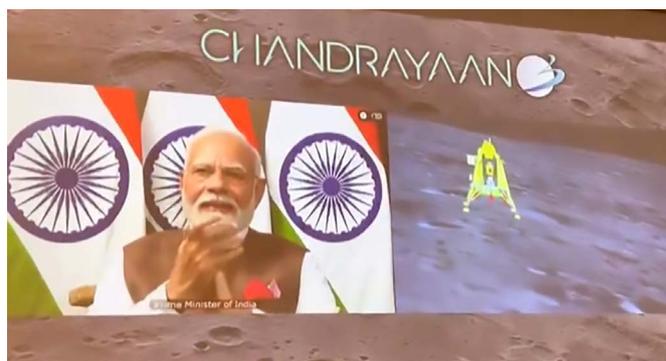
On August 23, India's third Chandrayaan (literally, mooncraft) mission was successful in landing its robotic



probe on the surface of the moon – the fourth country to do so. The scientific mission is timed for a two-week period. The solar-powered lander and the rover will carry out thermal, seismic, and mineralogical measurements on the lunar surface. The success has been lauded internationally as a “giant step for humanity, science, and innovation.”

Launched on July 14, Chandrayaan-3 was the result of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) perseverance in learning from the last failed Chandrayaan-2 attempt at soft-landing in 2019. ISRO has called it a “collaborative effort” and acknowledged the international contribution to the mission, including the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Swedish Space Corporation (SSC), among others.

In a historic feat, India has become the first country in the world to ever land on the southern pole of the moon – a region speculated to contain lunar water ice among other valuable resources – and the first non-permanent UN Security Council country to do so. That too at a fraction of the budget of other states: India's estimated cost for this mission is about US\$75 million, compared to Russia's Luna-25 mission, which cost US\$200 million. According to a July report on the global space economy by the Space Foundation, the U.S. spends about 0.28 percent of GDP



and Russia about 0.15 percent of GDP, both well ahead of India's 0.04 percent of GDP (India is seventh on the list, just above South Korea).

This success will allow India's space program to widen its reach financially, technologically, and in ambition. It will also push the private sector to invest more in the Indian space program, especially as in recent years the Indian government has been making efforts to attract private investment for its space program. As the success highlights India's expertise on cutting-edge space technologies, more investment would be expected.

More than that, it will give momentum and heft to



not just the space program but also India's currently rising global status, including in diplomatic, economic, and technological sectors, as well as in multilateral organizations.

*Sources: Hindustan Times, August 24; NYT, August 23; CNBC, August 23; Indian Express, August 23; Reuters, July 27; ISRO; @UN\_PGA, August 24.*

### **BRICS Summit: It's a (Not So) Small World, After All!**

The fifteenth BRICS Summit held in South Africa in late August 2023 was the bloc's first in-person summit since 2019. It was hosted by the South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, and brought together leaders of India, China, and Brazil, as well as several leaders of Africa and the "Global South"; Russia President Vladimir Putin was to attend virtually.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov represented the Russian Federation in Johannesburg, as an arrest warrant has been issued for President Vladimir Putin by the International Criminal Court (ICC) on charges of alleged war crimes in Ukraine. South Africa, a signatory to the ICC, would have been obliged to detain the President; hence, his absence at the BRICS Summit.

Notwithstanding the Ukraine war-related concerns, the bloc is being increasingly viewed in the non-Western world as a potentially viable alternative to West-dominated forums. This was evidenced by over 40 states vying for its membership, including 22 countries that had formally requested to join.

BRICS formally decided to expand this forum, and welcomed Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia,

and the UAE into its fold. The new membership will take effect on January 1, 2024. Certainly, there is merit to concerns, especially from Western quarters, about the expansion reflecting a "lack of progress" in deepening the bloc's existing grouping by inviting members with conflicting interests (e.g., Saudi Arabia and Iran). However, increasing representation (South America, Africa, and West Asia) would hopefully be the first step in building solidarity – a perhaps naïve, but nonetheless important sentiment in global geopolitics – and importantly preventing the forum from becoming a China-Russia-dominated anti-West front.

The BRICS turning into such a geopolitical agenda-driven bloc would also not be in India's favor; China's growing influence would obviously not bode well for Indian interests. Moreover, India, which is being courted by the West and is intent on utilizing its technology-, security-tilted ties with the U.S. and its allies, aims to revitalize its geo-economic power rather than engaging in a futile bloc confrontation.

In the same vein, Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address to the summit – in characteristic fashion of using acronyms to highlight goals – laid out a five-point future agenda for BRICS: "Breaking barriers, Revitalizing economies, Inspiring innovation, Creating opportunities, and Shaping the future." This was a pointedly economic and development-agenda-driven address while supporting BRICS expansion through a "consensus-based" approach. He also asked for support for India's proposal to include the African Union as a permanent member of the Group of Twenty (G-20). He also suggested the creation of a BRICS space exploration consortium, hours before India's Chandrayaan-3 soft-landed on the lunar surface.

PM Modi also addressed a session at the "BRICS-Africa Outreach and BRICS Plus Dialogue," where he emphasized on India's version of the multipolar world, while including the Global South – not just as a diplomatic term but diverse communities with a collective history against colonialism and racism. He also held bilateral meetings, including with leaders of Ethiopia, Iran, Senegal, and Mozambique, at the side lines, and only briefly interacted informally with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Furthermore, the BRICS' leaders also held several

discussions including on global economic recovery and partnership with Africa and the “Global South.” As expected, there was no consensus on a common BRICS currency at the BRICS Business Forum.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, in his remarks at the Summit, stressed the need to “reinvigorate multilateralism for the 21st century” as the world moved toward multipolarity. He stated that there was “simply no alternative to cooperation.”

*Sources: Politico, August, 24; Guardian, August 22; Deccan Herald, August 23; Narendra Modi, August 23; Indian Express, August 23; PM Modi, August, 24; Outlook, August 24; UN, August 24.*

### **Sweden’s NATO Entry All but Complicated by Turkey’s Ambitions**

In 2022, Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine that fundamentally altered Europe’s security situation forced “neutral” Sweden to apply for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership. The same year, all NATO members signed the Accession Protocol for Sweden’s membership. In March 2023, the Riksdag approved Sweden’s accession to the North Atlantic Treaty. However, Sweden still holds an invitee status until all NATO countries have completed the ratification process (29 NATO allies have thus far ratified the Protocol). Sweden’s bid has been blocked by Hungary and Turkey.

Ankara has concerns about Stockholm not doing enough against groups it considers security threats like Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which is labelled a terror group by the EU, as well as Sweden’s refusal to extradite several Turkish citizens considered terrorists by Turkey. The anti-Islamist activities, including the recent burning of Quran, have further stoked the fires. Turkey has added the advancement of its EU membership as another condition for support.

Nonetheless, in July, at the NATO summit in Vilnius, Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan agreed to forward the accession protocol for Sweden to the Grand National Assembly as soon as possible, and work closely to ensure ratification. Sweden’s bid is expected to be ratified when Turkey’s parliament next convenes in October. In August, on his return from Hungary, Erdoğan reiterated Turkey’s

conditional support for Sweden’s NATO membership.

As for Hungary, the country officially supports Sweden’s membership bid while also delaying the ratification. Hungary’s foreign minister has in early July stated that Budapest would not delay the process if Turkey dropped its opposition.

*Sources: AP, July 11; NATO, July 10; Medya News, August 22; AP, June 28; Euro News, July 11; Reuters, July 13.*

### **Sweden Boosts Long-Term Support to Ukraine**

On August 19, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited Sweden at the invitation of Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson. During the visit, besides meetings with the Speaker of the Riksdag, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and all-party leaders, Kristersson and Zelenskyy signed a “Statement of Intent” on enhanced cooperation between Sweden and Ukraine concerning Combat Vehicle CV90, covering its production, repair, and training. In addition, Sweden’s military support to Ukraine includes the CV90s, Stridsvagn 122 main battle tank, Archer artillery systems, advanced anti-aircraft systems, ammunition, mine-clearance equipment and personal protective equipment. However, Sweden has so far not accepted Ukraine’s request for Swedish Gripen warplanes, with officials saying that the jets are needed to defend its own borders.

Thus far, Sweden’s overall support to Ukraine amounts to €2.2 billion euros (about US\$2.4 billion), including humanitarian assistance, financial support, support for reconstruction and support for civil crisis response. Earlier in July 2023, the Swedish government adopted a new strategy for recovery and reform cooperation with Ukraine during 2023–2027. The strategy will provide a total of approximately €522 million – Sweden’s largest-ever bilateral development assistance strategy.

The strategy includes areas such as green transition, business engagement, and digital transformation, rebuilding of critical infrastructure, human rights, democracy, the rule of law, and gender equality.

*Sources: Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, August 19, 2023; Government Offices of Sweden, August 2023; NYT, August 20, 2023; Government Offices of Sweden, July 2023; AFR, July 17, 2023.*

## INDIA-SWEDEN

### Boosting India-Sweden Security Ties

On August 24, the ninth round of the India-Sweden Joint Working Group meeting on defense cooperation took place in New Delhi. The meeting was co-chaired by Joint Secretary (Aerospace), Department of Defense Production, Ministry of Defense Sh. Jayant Kumar and Military Adviser, Department of Acquisition, Research & Development, Ministry of Defense, Sweden Brigadier General Olof Hultgren.

India-Sweden relations are based on innovation, technology, investment and research and development collaborations, but defense ties are also on the upswing. The General Security Agreement signed in 2019 on the exchange and mutual protection of classified information enables a comprehensive partnership.



In 2021, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between Society of Indian Defense Manufacturers (SIDM) and Swedish Security and Defense Industry (SOFF) to promote bilateral defense industrial relations.

Sources: @SpokespersonMoD, August, 24; SIDM

### Boosting Climate Neutrality: Tata Steel Joins LeadIT

India's leading steel manufacturing company Tata Steel has joined the Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT) – a global initiative launched by the governments of Sweden and India at the United Nations Climate Action Summit in September 2019 – to push the envelope for net-zero emissions in heavy industry. LeadIT brings together cross-sectoral stakeholders, namely decision-makers in the private and public sectors, to share best practices and develop policies that help accelerate this transition.

The Tata Steel-LeadIT collaboration aims to help in the adoption and implementation of cutting-edge carbon negative technologies in the steel industry, as well as popularize the use of climate-smart solutions among consumers globally. It will also provide momentum to Tata Steel's ambitious goal of attaining carbon neutrality by 2045, which matches Sweden's target, and is five years ahead of the EU's.

Sources: LeadIT, July 2023; The Week, July 2023.

### Thomas Dennerby Reappointed Head Coach of Indian Women's Football Team

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has re-appointed Swede Thomas Dennerby as the national women's team head coach ahead of the 19th Asian Games (September) and Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Olympic Qualifiers Round 2 (October). The Indian team (popularly called the "Blue Tigresses") qualified for Round 2 with wins over Kyrgyz Republic in a two-legged play-off earlier this year.

In an interview with a media outlet, Dennerby talked about the future challenges and how effective, collaborative teamwork can constructively impact the players. He also highlighted the importance of strong



defense, creative offense, and discipline for India to “go all the way” through the qualifying rounds, even against better teams.

He believes that women’s football in India is developing, and that the team could realistically aim to be in the World Cup 2027. But to achieve that goal several key criteria must be fulfilled, including passion for the game, hard work, and long-term planning, among others.

*Sources: Sportstar, May 2023; ESPN, July 2023; AIFF, July 2023*

### **India and Sweden Attend Ukraine Peace Talks**

In early August, India and Sweden participated in a Saudi Arabia-hosted peace conference comprising about 40 countries including Ukraine, the U.S., the European Union, and four BRICS nations – excluding Russia. The peace talks attended by the senior officials of these states aimed to draft key principles on ending the war. China, which did not attend the June round of talks in Copenhagen, was represented by the Special Envoy for Eurasian Affairs Li Hui.

The talks are already being considered significant given the expanse of the Non-Western states in attendance. Although there was no joint statement, the closed-door meeting is speculated to establish working groups to discuss multilateral issues such as global food security, nuclear safety, and prisoner releases amid a push for a leaders’-level meeting by the end of this year.

India’s representative, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, emphasized the importance of dialogue and diplomacy as the only viable path to achieve a lasting, comprehensive resolution to the crisis. He asserted that sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected by all states without exception. Swedish National Security Advisor Henrik Landerholm met the Ukrainian Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine Andriy Yermak. Yermak thanked Sweden for its financial program for the reconstruction of Ukraine and expressed hope for a bilateral agreement with Sweden. Landerholm also highlighted Sweden’s (and the EU’s) support for the Ukrainian peace plan.

*Sources: Euractive, August 2023; Outlook, August, 2023; Guardian, August 2023; @hlanderholm, August, 7, 2023; President of Ukraine, August.*

### **Sweden Boosts Security at Embassies**

In June, the burning of a Quran in Sweden on one of the holiest days in Islam – Eid al-Adha – sparked protests and anger across the Muslim world, with the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan slamming Sweden and Iraq expelling the Swedish ambassador. Sweden’s government, too, condemned the incident as “Islamophobic.”

Unfortunately, the ensuing tensions have led to heightened threat levels (from a “legitimate” target to a “priority” target) against Swedish interests. For example, representatives of terrorist groups have called for attacks against Sweden and its embassy in Baghdad was stormed.

Therefore, in the wake of such incidents, the Swedish government has also ramped the security in its missions abroad. It has also reached out to several Muslim countries to rebuild trust and confidence.

For this purpose, in early August, the Swedish Foreign Minister Tobias Billström had a discussion with more than 20 ambassadors of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member-states in Stockholm. Days earlier, Justice Minister Gunnar Strömmer had touted the use of emergency powers under the Public Order Act as a potential solution to prevent such acts.

*Sources: Al Jazeera, July 2023; AA, August 5, 2023; Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 2023; Reuters, August 2023; Government Offices of Sweden.*

### **Fostering Collaboration: Insights from Indian Ambassador’s Meetings in Riga and Technological Partnerships**

Tanmaya Lal, India’s residence Ambassador to Sweden & Latvia visited Riga on August 18 and met with Member of the Speaker of the Saeima, Zanda Kalniņa-Lukaševica, discussing issues relevant to the cooperation between the two sides. Certain sectors for collaborations were noted, particularly in information and communication technologies. Amb. Lala acknowledges this potential by referring to Latvia’s proficiency in the IT domain, including advancements in space technology. During the discussion, the speaker of the Saeima highlighted the establishment of the European Union-India Trade and Technology Council, suggesting that it is a mechanism for solving strategic



challenges related to the field of technology, trade, and security. As technology was on the main agenda of his visit to Latvia, Amb. Lal also met with Anna Andersone, founder and CEO of RigaTechGirls and discussed her work to improve the digital divide to encourage girls and women into education and entrepreneurship. Ms. Andersone visited Delhi in the spring where she addressed the “Shaping Digital Transformation” Panel during the CII India Europe Business and Sustainability Conclave. RigaTechGirls’ engagements encompassed discussions both at the Center for European Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University and within the confines of the Latvian Embassy. These interactions included diplomats, representatives from NGOs, and delegates from UN women in India.

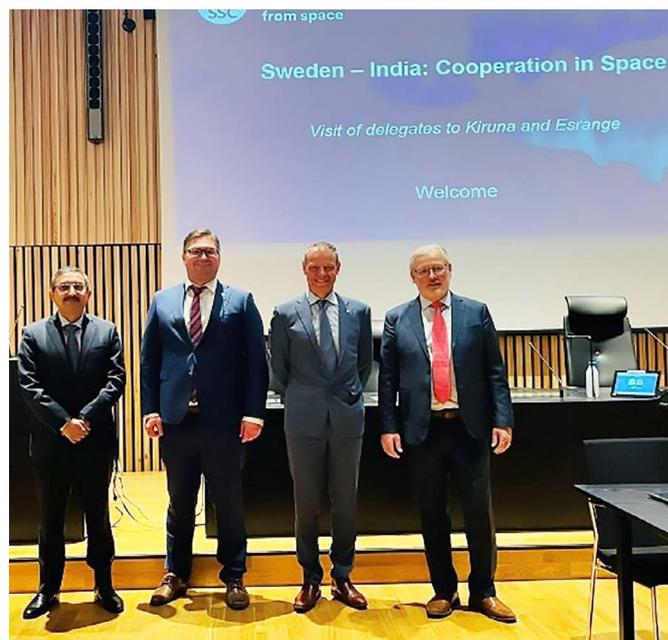


Amb. Lal also met with H.E. Ms Gunda Reire, Head of Office of President in Riga on August 18, in which the ambassador appraised her visit to India for the Raisina Dialogue; a conference hosted by the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. They further elaborated on future cooperations in multilateral, India-EU, EU-Indo-Pacific, and regional developments.

Sources: @Tanmaya\_Lal, CNBC, March 1, 2023, saeima.lv.

## Strengthening Space Collaboration – India and Sweden’s Lunar Exploration Partnership

The success of the Chandrayaan-3 space mission in late August has resulted in great appraisal globally for the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), not to mention from the organizations collaborating partners in the Nordic countries. Sweden and India have for a long time jointly collaborated on projects related to space, with one of the more prominent being the Chandrayaan-1 mission and the SARA (Sub-keV Atom Reflecting Analyzer) experiment. It marked a clear collaborative initiative between the Swedish Institute of Space Physics (IRF), in Kiruna, Sweden and the Space Physics Laboratory at Vikram Sarabhai Space Center (SPL-VSSC). The University of Bern and contributors from Japan (JAXA) also partook in this project. The primary goal of the SARA experiment was to investigate and attempt to understand the interaction between solar and lunar winds, and it, with the Chandrayaan-1 mission, was seen as a great success



as the effective operation of SARA resulted in a plethora of groundbreaking scientific findings through the accurate measurements it produced. Since then, the collaboration between IRF and the Indian Space Research Organization has evolved with an exploration of the planet Venus on the Shukrayaan-1 in 2020, using satellite instruments to measure how particles from the sun interact with the planet’s atmosphere. Swedish collaboration with the Indian

counterpart has evidently led to successful experiments and progress in space, and optimism by politicians to continue the collaboration between the two countries is prominent; with Tanmaya Lal, Indian Ambassador to Sweden & Latvia, stating that he looks forward to collaborations in future projects in the space sector between the two respective nations.

Sources: *Economic Times*, @Tanmaya\_Lal, spl.gov.in,

## INDIA-NORDIC

### Young Delegates from Denmark and Iceland Visit India

During August 17-26, more than 15 young leaders from nine democratic countries, namely Ireland, Namibia, the U.S., Iceland, Luxembourg, Italy, Denmark, Albania, and Moldova visited India under the “Gen Next Democracy Network” program, hosted by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Ministry of External Affairs. The program aims to acquaint these delegates with the heritage, culture, and functioning of Indian democracy. This delegation is the 11<sup>th</sup> batch to visit India under the framework.

The young leaders not only visited the Parliament of India in Delhi and participated in the cultural activities in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), but also met with the J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. Sinha shared his views on the “transformational journey” of the Indian territory.

Sources: *Greater Kashmir*, August 24; ICCR

### Norway’s Carlson Defeats India’s Chess Prodigy Praggnanandhaa in FIDE World Cup 2023: “Chess Is in Good Hands!”

As the 18-year-old Rameshbabu took on Norway’s world number one Magnus Carlsen in the final of the International Chess Federation (FIDE) World Cup in Baku, Azerbaijan, Praggnanandhaa was vying to become the first Indian to win the title since 2002. The Indian has played against the Norwegian on several occasions and even defeated him last year at the Airthings Masters rapid chess tournament.



However, this time it was not to be, as the 31-year-old Norwegian outhustled him in the final, despite the Indian’s thus far excellent run. This was also Carlson’s first FIDE title in his 12-year reign at the top of world chess rankings.

Sources: *Al Jazeera*, August 22; *HT*, August 24.

### Indian High-Level Indian Delegation Visits Norway

A delegation of high-level officials, headed by Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Parshottam Rupala, along with Minister of State L. Murugan, visited Norway from August 21 to 24. It engaged in bilateral conversations with key Norwegian officials. The primary aim of the visit was to enhance the bilateral ties between India and Norway in the sectors of fisheries and aquaculture, in alignment with the India-Norway MoU signed in 2010.

The delegation also participated in Aqua Nor 2023, the world’s foremost trade expos for aquaculture technology and innovation. The Indian officials interacted with several Norwegian businesses in the areas of fish health, feed, genetics, equipment, processing, and marketing. The visit will not only serve as a valuable learning opportunity but also push forward potential collaborations and investments in these sectors.

Sources: *DD News*, August 21; *PIB*, August 24.

## INDIA-EU

### PM Modi's Day-Long Visit to Greece

On August 25, immediately after his visit to South Africa for the BRICS Summit, PM Modi landed in Greece for a day-long trip at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Greece Kyriakos Mitsotakis. This is the first visit by an Indian prime minister to Greece in 40 years.

In recent years, India and Greece have strengthened bilateral cooperation in multiple areas such as transport, defense, trade & investment, and people-to-people exchanges. The Ambassador of Greece to India Dimitrios Ioannou has expressed Greece's intention to become "the gateway to Europe for India." As a maritime nation, Greece supports the vision of a free, open, prosperous, peaceful and rules-based Indo-Pacific, and by extension India's "Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative" (IPOI). This visit is set to give impetus to upgrading their relationship. The talk between Modi and Mitsotakis was focused on deepening bilateral relations.

Notably, President Katerina Sakellaropoulou conferred on Modi the "Grand Cross of the Order of Honor." They also had a constructive discussion on several relevant themes, including shared values of democracy, success of Chandrayaan Mission, women-led development, and India's G20 presidency. He also interacted with Indian and Greek business leaders, as well as with the Indian community in Greece.

Sources: *Hindustan Times*, August 25; *News18*, August 25;

### G20 Helps Propel the India-EU Engagement

The European Commission Executive Vice-President and Commissioner for Trade Valdis Dombrovskis was in India from August 22 to 27. He attended the G20 Trade and Investment Ministers' Meeting, and also co-chaired the EU-India high-level dialogue on trade & investment (with the Indian Minister of Commerce & Industry Piyush Goyal). The EU is looking to deepen its economic and multilateral engagements with its strategic partner India.

Dombrovskis has called the G20 meet, which took place six months before the 13th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), as an "opportunity



to drive forward the multilateral trade agenda at a time of global turbulence." The agenda of the G20 ministerial meeting in Jaipur, includes multilateral trade, inclusive and resilient trade, supply chains, green technology.

He also engaged with the leaders of EU companies in India and welcomed the establishment of the Federation of European Business in India (FEBI). There are about 4,500 EU companies in India, and as of 2021, the EU accounted for 11 percent of total investment into India.

Sources: *Print*, August 21; *EU Delegation to India & Bhutan*, August 21; *EU in India*, August 24

### New EU-India Joint Naval Exercises

On August 6, the European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) and India conducted a joint activity at sea under framework of the EU "Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific." The two partners conducted similar exercises in June 2021 in the Gulf of Aden as part of an anti-piracy operation. In August 2022, they conducted

different sea joint activities with two Indian Navy destroyers in the Gulf of Oman.

Such attempts strengthen the maritime cooperation and reaffirm their commitment to a free, open, inclusive, and rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region, as well as the primacy of international law, including the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). In recent years, they have increased interoperability cooperation measures at sea, including joint naval exercises and port calls, as a means to secure the sea-lanes of communication. They are also seeking to increase maritime domain awareness programs in the Indo-Pacific.

Sources: EUEA, June 2021; EU NAVFOR, August 2022.

### Netherlands Presents Credentials to President Murmu

In late August, Indian President Droupadi Murmu received credentials from the envoys of six nations, including the Netherlands, at a ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Besides the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Netherlands Marie Louisa Gerards, the following officials presented the credentials: Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela Capaya Rodriguez Gonzalez, Ambassador of the Republic of Colombia Victor Hugo Echeverri Jaramillo, Ambassador of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria Ali Achoui, Ambassador of the Federative Republic of Brazil Kenneth Felix Haczynski da Nobrega, and High Commissioner of Australia Philip Green.

Sources: Print, August 21; Ministry of External Affairs.



## INDIA-GLOBAL

### “Tectonic Shift”: Apple’s Supply Chains Accelerate Away from China to India

The fragile geopolitical situation due to the U.S.-China tensions, including in the Taiwan Strait, have dangerously affected the global supply chains. This is compounded further due to reported deteriorating business environment in China, in large part courtesy Xi’s rising autocratic tendencies that have changed “China’s own economic fundamentals.” So, in a bid to avoid further ramifications, companies in the post-COVID-19 era have already started the diversification process away from China into Southeast Asia, particularly Vietnam, and India.

In a massive change of strategy, the technology giant Apple has reportedly decided to scale up its domestic plans in India. Apple has been manufacturing iPhones in India since 2017, and the iPhone SE was the first model assembled in the country. The company currently makes about 7 percent of its iPhones in India, which is expected to significantly increase: As per *Nikkei*, in early 2023, “Apple told suppliers to prepare to build at least 20% of total iPhone annual production in India in the coming years.” The Pro iPhones models are still exclusively manufactured in China.

Notably, Apple’s Chief Executive Tim Cook recently noted that the company achieved “strong double digits” growth to report record revenue in India for the June quarter. As per industry estimates, Apple shipped about 6.5 million “Made in India” units in 2022; India projects the figure to go up to 9 million units in 2023, reflecting a 40 percent growth.

A Bloomberg report has indicated that Foxconn is gearing up to assemble the upcoming iPhone 15 at its Tamil Nadu plant. Moreover, the other suppliers Pegatron and Wistron (the latter’s Karnataka plant would soon be acquired by the Tata Group) are also looking to manufacture iPhone 15 in India. This would be a big win for the “Made in India” initiative.

Sources: NPR, August 16; *Nikkei*, August 2; *Bloomberg*, August 16; *Mint*, August 4.



### **UK Security Minister in India to Boost Security Ties**

In early August, the UK Minister for Security Tom Tugendhat was in India for a three-day visit to bolster security-centric bilateral cooperation and attend the final G20 Anti-Corruption Ministerial Meeting. Tugendhat, along with a high-level government delegation, met with his counterpart Jitendra Singh on the sidelines of the G20 Anti-Corruption Ministerial Meet held in Kolkata and reaffirmed closer cooperation between the two partners.

Before travelling to the G20 meet, the UK minister met with India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, and announced new funding of about £95,000 (approximately INR 9886278,81 crore) to combat pro-Khalistan (a secessionist movement outlawed in India) extremism. The funding comes amid concerns around security exemplified by the attack on the Indian High Commission in London earlier this year. Tugendhat also visited the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to discuss "joint challenges posed by child sexual exploitation and abuse, and fraud," and met with the Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval to discuss global security affairs.

*Sources: India Today, August 11; Independent, August 11; PIB.*

### **India-U.S. to Address Important Trade Concerns**

Bilateral government procurement, collaboration on critical minerals supply chains, and the recent restrictions imposed on import of laptops and personal computers by India were discussed in the ministerial-level meeting between India and the U.S. in late August. Both partners are seeking to resolve any pending trade disputes. For example, the remaining dispute at the World Trade Organization (WTO) is concerning poultry products.

During PM Modi's visit to the U.S., India and the United States resolved six outstanding trade disputes mutually. This meeting was a follow-up discussion to strengthen ties.

*Source: Indian Express, August 25.*

### **Morgan Stanley Labels India the Most-Preferred Market Among Emerging Markets**

The global banking firm Morgan Stanley has upgraded India's rating to "overweight," an upgrade from "equal weight," ranking the country's markets as number one (up from the sixth position).

India is now the "most-preferred market among emerging markets," due to India's "reform and macro-stability agenda." Foreign portfolio inflows are expected to go up and its young demographic profile will also bring dividends. Thus, the Indian markets are looking at a booming future. In contrast, in China, the markets are seeing a downward trend, as China is downgraded to "equal weight" – a sign of the changing times.

*Sources: Reuters, August 3; Indian Express, August 4.*



## EDITOR'S NOTE

### India's "Multi-Alignment" Goes Global

In the last five years, the ongoing U.S.-China trade rivalry has turned into a full-blown battle for supremacy. Moreover, post Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the battle lines between authoritarian and democratic powers, exemplified by China-Russia versus the U.S.-led allies, have only grown bolder. However, India, among others from the Global South, refused to be drawn into this ideological quagmire, instead focusing on its strategic national interests amid providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine and calling for an end to the war through diplomacy and dialogue.

Moreover, India, which was much criticized in some Western circles for its diplomacy (the so-called "silent" or "non-aligned 2.0" diplomacy), continued to stress on its new multi-alignment-based foreign policy that has drawn rich dividends with its almost equi-focused multi-directional (e.g., Neighborhood First, Connect Central Asia, Act East, and Act/Link West, among others) approach.

Reportedly, the rest of the world, too, has entered this new era of multi-alignment. Alec Russell in an article in *Financial Times*, entitled "The à la carte world: our new

geopolitical order," has argued that the increasingly fragile bipolarity has allowed a range of countries (from the developed Japan to the rising India to the emerging "Global South") to assert their "geostrategic entrepreneurialism." Notably, the so-called "non-aligned" world has moved into the "multi-aligned" age. The strengthening of not just bilateral relationships but also several minilateral (e.g., Quad or AUKUS) as well as new and expanding (resurgent) multilateral (IPEF, SCO, or BRICS) ties are reflecting the churning in global geopolitics.

At the same time, it must be highlighted that, from the non-Western perspective especially, it is not just an "opportunistic" endeavor – at least no more than what the West-dominated governance institutions have been doing for years – but a necessary movement toward representative, equitable, if not yet multipolar, world order. If the latest BRICS and the upcoming G20 summits accomplish even a fraction of their ambitious goals and pave the way for Global South and the middle powers (the latter also as "bridge builders") to contribute to the world economy, the liberal world order will only benefit. Sweden must take strong note of these developments, and must aim to strengthen ties with India, and vice-versa.

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