



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

India's Proximity Archives

April 16, 2025



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Delhi Policy Group

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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, Jayantika Rao T.V, Divya Rai and Arshiya Chaturvedi, Research Associates. Your comments and feedback can be addressed to Sanket Joshi at sanket@dpg.org.in.

Cover Images:

South Asia: India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) took formal custody of 26/11 terror attack conspirator Tahawwur Rana on April 10, 2025. Source: [Official X Handle/NIA India](#)

Southeast Asia: President of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping, who is currently on a three-day official visit to Malaysia, was received at the airport by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Anwar Ibrahim, on April 15, 2025. Source: [X/@anwaribrahim](#)

East Asia: Republic of Korea's Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul with Asaad al-Shaibani, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Syrian Arab Republic, signing the Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the ROK and Syria in Damascus. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea](#)

West Asia: US Energy Secretary Chris Wright and Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman Al Saud pledged to deepen the partnership between the two countries on April 16, 2025, in Dammam. Source: [Official X Handle/Secretary Chris Wright](#)

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South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

Following his [conviction](#), Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a Canadian citizen and Pakistani national, was extradited by the United States to India on April 9 to face trial on ten counts of criminal charges stemming from his participation in the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks, which were carried out by the designated foreign terrorist organisation Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT). Rana's [transfer from Los Angeles](#) to New Delhi was facilitated by a dedicated aircraft, accompanied by security details from the NSG and NIA. In an X post, [Secretary Rubio](#) affirmed the United States and India's longstanding pursuit of justice for the 166 victims of the attacks, among whom were six American citizens. The Minister of External Affairs, Dr. S. Jaishankar, has expressed his gratitude for the [collaborative counter-terrorism initiatives](#) between India and the United States.

The Government of Pakistan convened the Pakistan Minerals [Investment Forum](#) 2025 in Islamabad on April 8th and 9th. Pakistan announced a comprehensive framework to promote mining and mineral investment opportunities domestically at an event attended by approximately 300 [international delegates](#). Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated in his address that the exploitation of Pakistan's mineral reserves, valued in the trillions of dollars, could potentially eliminate the nation's reliance on international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Amidst the escalating unrest within the mineral-rich Balochistan province, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Asim Munir, assured [security measures](#) for the interests of investors and partners. During a meeting with Prime Minister Sharif, a United States delegation headed by Eric Meyer, Acting Assistant Secretary of the State Department's Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, conveyed its [strategic interest](#) in Pakistan's mineral resources.

The Indian Government announced the termination, effective April 9th, of the [trans-shipment facility](#) which permitted Bangladeshi export cargo to utilize Indian land customs stations for onward transit to global destinations. India provided the facility to Bangladesh from June 2020. Indian apparel exporters previously petitioned the government for the withdrawal of this trade concession to the neighboring country. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs clarified that the decision [would not impact the transit](#) of Bangladeshi goods to Nepal and Bhutan through Indian territory.

On April 11th, a [public execution of four men took place](#) in Afghanistan, marking the single highest number of executions since the Taliban's resurgence. Public executions in three provincial sports stadiums have increased the total number of men executed publicly since 2021 to ten. Hibatullah Akhundzada, head of the Taliban, directed judges in 2022 to fully enforce the Taliban administration's interpretation of Islamic law, which permits the death penalty for murder. The Taliban morality police in Afghanistan have begun [detaining men](#) for various offenses, including having inappropriate haircuts and failing to attend mosque prayers.

The [Baloch Yakjehti Committee](#) and its supporters staged protests across Balochistan on April 13th, in response to the detention of Dr. Mahrang Baloch, Beebu Baloch, and other key figures. The Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) convened a [multi-party conference](#) in Balochistan on April 14th, rejecting the National Security Council's recent decisions, particularly its "hard-state" policy, and calling for the release of all detained female activists, leaders, and workers.

Other Developments

[Eight Pakistanis killed in Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan of Iran](#)

[India and Nepal sign MoU to boost agricultural collaboration](#)

[BBIN motor vehicle agreement protocol ready](#)

[Arakan Army abduct over 150 Bangladeshi fishermen in 5 months](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [April 15](#), China's President Xi Jinping arrived in Malaysia as part of a Southeast Asian tour, which is seen as delivering a personal message that Beijing is a more reliable trading partner than the United States. This is President Xi's first visit to Malaysia since 2013. Prior to arriving in Kuala Lumpur, President Xi posted an article entitled "[May the Ship of China-Malaysia Friendship Sail Toward an Even Brighter Future](#)". In his article, President Xi emphasised that the deepening "high-level strategic cooperation" was good for the common interests of both China and Malaysia", and the two countries will work together "to combat the undercurrents of geopolitical and camp-based confrontation, as well as the countercurrents of unilateralism and protectionism".

President Xi's three-country Southeast Asia tour and his "message" that [Beijing is Southeast Asia's better friend](#) than the truculent administration of US President Donald Trump comes as many countries in the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) bloc are unhappy with their treatment after the US imposed huge tariffs on countries around the world. While President Xi had planned to travel to the region before Trump's tariff announcement, the visit was fortuitously timed, with the Chinese leader positing China as a stable trading partner, in contrast to the chaotic policy backflips coming out of Washington.

On [April 9](#), Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto arrived in the Turkish capital of Ankara for a state visit aimed at deepening bilateral relations between Indonesia and Türkiye. During his bilateral visit with the President of Türkiye Tayyip Erdogan, President Prabowo [presented](#) a proposal for Turkey's cutting-edge fifth-generation fighter jet development initiative. President Prabowo candidly revealed Indonesia's desire to take part in Turkey's fighter aircraft project and [future collaboration in submarine development](#).

Other Developments

[IAF jet on Myanmar relief operation faced cyber attack in air](#)

[Ishiba calls Singapore PM Wong to convey U.S. tariff concerns](#)

[ASEAN bloc seeks dialogue with US on tariffs but won't retaliate](#)

[Singapore dissolves parliament, paving the way for May 3 general election](#)

East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

On April 10, [the Republic of Korea \(ROK\) established diplomatic relations with Syria](#), marking a historic milestone as the ROK now has formal ties with all 191 UN Member States. Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul and Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shaibani signed a Joint Communiqué in Damascus, opening a new chapter for bilateral cooperation. Minister Cho emphasised the importance of Syria's stability for global peace and expressed the ROK's willingness to assist in Syria's reconstruction and provide humanitarian aid. In return, Minister al-Shaibani expressed gratitude and called for support in easing sanctions on Syria. Cho also met with President Ahmed al-Sharaa, offering support for Syria's new inclusive government and the country's reconstruction and sustainable development.

On April 14, 2025, [Chinese President Xi Jinping held talks with Vietnamese Communist Party General Secretary To Lam](#) in Hanoi, marking the 75th anniversary of China-Vietnam diplomatic relations and the 95th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV). Xi congratulated Vietnam for its significant anniversaries and emphasised the importance of deepening bilateral relations, proposing six key measures to strengthen cooperation, including enhanced political trust, security safeguards, economic ties, people-to-people exchanges, multilateral coordination, and maritime collaboration. To Lam reciprocated with warm remarks, highlighting the strategic significance of Vietnam-China relations and reaffirming support for China's policies, including the One-China principle. The leaders witnessed the signing of 45 cooperation agreements across various sectors and issued a joint statement on advancing their comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership.

On April 15, [10 sorties of People's Liberation Army \(PLA\) aircraft and 7 vessels of the People's Liberation Army Navy \(PLAN\)](#) were detected operating around Taiwan. Out of the 10 sorties, 6 crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's northern, southwestern, and eastern Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ).

Further, [Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party \(DPP\) expelled Ho Jen-chieh](#), a former assistant to current national security chief Joseph Wu, following allegations of his involvement in a Chinese espionage case. The expulsion, decided in an emergency meeting on April 13, 2025, was a response to the serious charges against Ho, who served under Wu from 2018 to 2024. The DPP emphasised that his actions undermined the party's core values of

freedom, democracy, and the rule of law. Opposition parties, including the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) and the Taiwan People's Party (TPP), criticised the DPP for its alleged ties to Chinese espionage, demanding further investigations into potential infiltration by the Chinese Communist Party. This follows previous espionage-related detentions, including those of DPP members such as Presidential Office consultant Wu Shang-yu, former DPP staffer Chiu Shih-yuan, and councillor assistant Huang Chu-jing. These incidents, alongside the recent expulsion of Ho Jen-chieh, have raised concerns about potential Chinese espionage infiltration within Taiwan's government.

Other Developments

[North Korea is making what could be its largest, most advanced warship ever, new satellite photos show](#)

[Wang Yi: The United States Cannot Act Arbitrarily, and the Wheels of History Must not Be Reversed](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On April 12, the US Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff and Iran's Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi held the first round of [indirect talks on Iran's nuclear program](#) in Oman. Iran described the dialogue as "[constructive and promising](#)", while the US emphasised that any final agreement must establish a framework for peace, stability, and prosperity in the Middle East – underscoring the need for Tehran to cease and [eliminate its nuclear enrichment and weaponisation](#) program. According to reports, as part of a possible nuclear deal with Iran, the US would propose [transferring Iran's enriched Uranium to a third party](#), such as Russia. The Russian President's Press Secretary, Dmitry Peskov, [declined to comment](#) on any such agreement.

Amidst the Iran nuclear talks, during his visit to Riyadh on April 13, US Energy Secretary Chris Wright and his Saudi counterpart Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman announced that they would be signing an agreement to work together to develop [Saudi Arabia's civilian nuclear program](#).

On April 13, Syria's President [Ahmed al-Sharaa met the UAE's President](#) Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi, in his second visit to the Gulf region since the fall of the Assad regime. UAE reaffirmed its support for rebuilding Syria in a way that meets the aspirations of the people for a "future of security, stability, and prosperity". Ahmed al-Sharaa also held a meeting with the Turkish President Erdogan in Antalya on April 11. President Erdogan pledged to continue working towards [lifting international sanctions imposed on Syria](#) during the Assad regime and also called for revitalising trade and economic cooperation between Ankara and Damascus.

Other Developments

[Jordan says it has foiled attacks by the Muslim Brotherhood](#)

[Saudi Arabia plans to pay off Syria's World Bank debts, sources say](#)

[Trump holds situation room meeting on Iran nuclear deal negotiations](#)

[U.S. Strikes Spur Plans for Yemeni Ground War Against Houthis](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

The [Central Asia-European Union Summit](#) between leaders of the EU and the five countries of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) took place in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, on April 4, 2025. The EU was represented by António Costa, President of the European Council, and Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission. The [most tangible outcome](#) was the EU's €12 billion (US\$ 13.6 billion) assistance package, which is intended to support the expansion of commercial routes, the mining sector, and digital connectivity across Central Asia. However, specifics around how the funds will be distributed or how they are linked to the € 10 billion in development aid pledged at the [2024 Global Gateway Investors Forum](#), are sparse.

On [April 15](#), Japanese Prime Minister Ishiba held a summit meeting and other events with Serdar Berdimuhamedov, President of Turkmenistan, in Japan. Prime Minister Ishiba welcomed that the bilateral relations between Japan and Turkmenistan made a progress in various fields including "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue and stated that Japan would like to further strengthen economic relations taking advantage of its technology to realize energy transition of Turkmenistan with its rich natural resources through the promotion of projects such as the second GTG (Gas to Gasoline) plant and ammonia and urea plant in Kiyanly.

On [April 11](#), Secretary-General of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), Imangali Tasmagambetov met with Emomali Rahmon, President of Tajikistan, to discuss measures aimed at enhancing border security with Afghanistan. According to a statement released by the CSTO, the discussions focused in particular on the Targeted Interstate Programme — a joint initiative by CSTO member states designed to strengthen the security of Tajikistan's southern border. During his visit, Tasmagambetov also held separate talks with Emomali Sobirzoda, Tajikistan's newly appointed Minister of Defence, to further address security collaboration.

Other Developments

[Complaint against Tajik Officials Filed with International Criminal Court](#)

[The CSTO and the "Cyberus" Foundation will work to improve the security of the organization's member states in cyberspace](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

The [Africa-India Key Maritime Engagement \(AIKEYME\) 2025](#) was officially inaugurated on April 13, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, marking a significant milestone in strengthening maritime cooperation between India and African nations. This large-scale, six-day multilateral naval exercise is co-hosted by India and Tanzania, with participation from nine African countries: Comoros, Djibouti, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa, and the host nation, Tanzania. The Indian Navy is contributing three warships to the Sea Phase — INS Chennai, INS Kesari and INS Sunayna.

The fourth iteration of the joint U.S.-India amphibious exercise focused on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) operations [took place](#) from April 1 to April 11, 2025, in the Bay of Bengal. The exercise saw active participation from key units from both countries armed forces. The [harbour phase](#) of the exercise included pre-sail conferences and subject matter expert exchanges (SMEEs) on key technologies, including medical, drone, and space. While the sea phase exercise showcased a wide range of all-domain operations, emphasising amphibious assault, integrated air-sea-land operations, HADR operations, and medical evacuation (MEDEVAC). Ex Tiger Triumph was first held in 2019, with the primary aim of strengthening operational synergies, facilitated by logistics exchange under the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) and towards integrating emerging technologies between the two militaries.

Other Developments

[Tajani Highlights India's Role as a Trade Hub and Global South Leader in the Indo-Mediterranean and Indo-Pacific](#)

[Iran calls for stronger ties with economic hubs like India, China and Russia](#)



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