



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

INDIA'S PROXIMITY ARCHIVES

July 30, 2025

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South Asia:

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Volume III, Issue 31



Delhi Policy Group

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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: On July 24, 2025, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with Pakistani Chief of Army Staff Syed Asim Munir in Beijing. Source: [MOFA PRC](#)

East Asia: Mr. FUNAKOSHI Takehiro, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan with Amb. Vikram Misri, Foreign Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs of India in New Delhi, July 28, 2025. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan](#)

Indian Ocean Region: Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the 60th anniversary of Independence Day celebrations of Maldives as the Guest of Honour at the Republic Square in Male on July 26, 2025. Source: [Flickr/MEA](#)

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◇ French President Emmanuel Macron's decision to recognise the State of Palestine at the UN General Assembly in September 2025

South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

During his [visit to China](#) on July 24, Field Marshal Asim Munir, the Pakistan Army Chief, held meetings with General Zhang Youxia, Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), General Chen Hui, Political Commissar of the PLA Army, and Lieutenant General Cai Zhai Jun, Chief of Staff of the PLA Army. He also met with Vice President Han Zheng and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. During discussions, [Minister Wang Yi](#) affirmed China's support for Pakistan's determined endeavours to counter all forms of terrorism. He expressed the hope that the Pakistani military would persist in its comprehensive efforts to ensure the safety of Chinese personnel, projects, and institutions within Pakistan. Their talks emphasized defense modernisation, counterterrorism programs, joint military exercises, and improved institutional collaboration.

A notable improvement in China-Pakistan relations has been observed after the recent India-Pakistan conflict. Given China's position as a principal arms provider and security ally of Pakistan, there are apprehensions regarding the domestic security situation in Pakistan. This could potentially result in a greater Chinese security presence in Pakistan in the coming years.

Islamabad hosted the Regional Chiefs of Defence Staff [Conference](#) on July 26, with Pakistan convening military leadership from the United States, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The conference's central theme was 'Strengthening Bonds, Securing Peace'. The official press release stated that the discussion covered topics such as regional security dynamics, the evolving security environment in central and south Asia, and the need for joint training programs, counter-terrorism cooperation, and coordinated humanitarian responses. General Michael Kurilla, the US CENTCOM commander, was [awarded](#) the Nishan-i-Imtiaz, a military honor, by Pakistan's President, Asif Ali Zardari, on the sidelines of the event. General Kurilla also met with Pakistani civil and military leadership.

Pakistan is seeking to position itself as the primary security provider in the region, commonly referred to as the Heart of Asia and vital to the North-South corridor, through engagement with the security establishments of regional countries, the US, and China.

The seventh [India-Nepal Boundary Working Group](#) (BWG) meeting was convened in New Delhi from July 28-29. At the meeting, both sides mutually agreed upon "Updated Modalities for Inspection, Repair & Maintenance of Boundary Pillars along the India-Nepal Boundary" and resolved to expedite the relevant activities. A meeting of the home secretaries of Nepal and India took place in New Delhi on July 23-24, with both parties addressing matters of cross-border security, and support for Nepali security forces, including other topics. Reports suggest that the meeting concluded with the finalization of the Agreement's text on [Mutual Legal Assistance](#) in Criminal Matters. The finalization of these agreements might serve as a precursor to Nepalese Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli's visit to India, which is [scheduled for](#) September 2025.

The border dispute, which periodically fuels nationalistic sentiments in both nations, coupled with the absence of a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, has complicated the extradition of criminals, including terrorists. The resolution of these matters could lead to a stronger India-Nepal relationship.

Other Developments

[China to support Bangladesh to counter US tariffs](#)

[Pakistan, Bangladesh agree on Visa-free entry of officials](#)

[Two agreements signed between Sri Lanka, Maldives](#)

[Pakistan, Afghanistan sign trade agreement](#)

[CSTO Holds Special Meeting on Strengthening Tajikistan–Afghanistan Border Security](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

Following a meeting with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet and acting Thai Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysian Prime Minister and the ASEAN Chair Anwar Ibrahim announced a [ceasefire](#) between Thailand and Cambodia on July 28. The ceasefire [came into effect](#) at midnight, on July 29. According to the Thai Army spokesman Major Gen. Winthai Suvaree, both sides agreed to halt troop movements, avoid escalation and establish coordination teams before a joint border committee meeting in Cambodia on August 4.

Malaysia's hosting of peace talks as ASEAN chair that resulted in a ceasefire bolsters the bloc's credibility, signalling its commitment to regional stability at a time when its effectiveness and relevance has faced increasing scrutiny.

On [July 25](#), the Philippine Supreme Court voted unanimously to void the impeachment of Sara Duterte on a technicality. A court spokesperson told reporters that the impeachment vote [violated a constitutional ban](#) on having multiple impeachment proceedings in a year. However, the Court made it clear that it was not absolving Duterte of the charges she faces. But the ruling means she has been granted a reprieve from possible ousting, at least until February 2026.

While Sara Duterte has not been pardoned, the 8 months' reprieve could prove her politically advantageous. This window not only enables her to consolidate public support and rebuild her political base, but also significantly reduces the likelihood of a renewed impeachment attempt in February 2026, giving her a firmer ground as she eyes a bid for the presidency in 2028.

On [July 29](#), Indonesia signed a contract to buy 48 Kaan fighter jets from Turkey, sealing the Southeast Asian nation's latest purchase aimed at modernising its ageing military hardware. Indonesia and Turkey "signed an implementation contract" on July 26 on the sidelines of the International Defence Industry Fair in Istanbul. However, production is not expected to begin until 2028. At the same Fair, under the aegis of Indonesian Defence Minister Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin, Indonesia also signed a memorandum of understanding with Turkey's Tais Shipyard to purchase two Milgem Istif class frigates.

Indonesia's recent signing of defence agreements has shed light on its desire to accelerate military modernisation, emphasising President Prabowo's wish to change Indonesia's image from a passive to an assertive player. However, it also brings into question Indonesia's capacity to finance the new systems amid economic challenges.

Other Developments

[Indonesian tariff negotiator says US deal far from finalized](#)

[Singapore expresses readiness to collaborate with Andhra Pradesh in key sectors](#)

[Singapore prepared to recognise State of Palestine in principle, says envoy at high-level UN meeting](#)

East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

From July 27 to 29 Japanese Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Funakoshi Takehiro [visited New Delhi](#) to hold meetings with Indian officials, including Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr. Pramod Kumar Mishra. In the meeting with Mr. Misri on July 28, the two leaders discussed strengthening Japan-India ties across security, economic, and people-to-people domains, particularly in the context of Prime Minister Modi's upcoming visit to Japan. They also reaffirmed their nations' commitment to cooperation within the Quad framework to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific and agreed to maintain close coordination on regional and global issues.

Japan and India have traditionally shared cordial relations, but limited strategic alignment has constrained meaningful cooperation. However, the changing global order and push for diversification present a critical opportunity to enhance bilateral ties and advance shared strategic interests.

Amid ongoing [trade negotiations](#) with the US, the South Korean government has proposed a multibillion-dollar initiative, "Make American Shipbuilding Great Again" (MASGA), in alignment with the Trump administration's strategic goal to revive US shipbuilding. Trade Minister Kim Jung-kwan, in discussion with Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, presented a plan for significant investments in the US shipbuilding by state-backed institutions like the Export-Import Bank of Korea and Korea Trade Insurance Corporation. The said proposal aims to strengthen South Korea's leverage in the ongoing tariff negotiations.

The US is a key market for South Korea's auto sector, but the imposition of a 25% tariff by the Trump administration has negatively affected Korean automakers. South Korea is leveraging initiatives like MASGA to secure more favourable trade terms, similar to Japan, which secured a tariff reduction from 25% to 15% in the recently announced Japan-US deal.

Other Development

[North Korea dismisses US intent to resume diplomacy on denuclearisation](#)

[Taiwan's semiconductor talent shortage reaches 34,000 in May](#)

[Li Qiang to Attend the 2025 World AI Conference & High-Level Meeting on Global AI Governance](#)

[Trump's tariff deal offers scant relief for Japan automakers as bigger threat looms](#)

[India overtakes China in smartphone exports to the U.S. as manufacturing jumps 240%, report shows](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On July 24, French President [Emmanuel Macron announced his decision to recognise](#) the State of Palestine at the United Nations General Assembly scheduled to be held in September 2025 in New York. As the humanitarian crisis in Gaza continues to worsen, President Macron stressed the importance of an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, the release of all hostages, enabling humanitarian aid, and the [establishment of a demilitarised Palestinian State](#) that would lead to peace in the region. President Trump expressed [concerns about a humanitarian catastrophe](#) in Gaza, including images of children starving. In response to claims of starvation, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated that the IDF had allowed enough humanitarian aid to reach Gaza. However, Hamas intercepts the supplies and accuses Israel of preventing their entry into Gaza.

French President Macron's decision to recognise the State of Palestine highlights the increasing concerns in Europe regarding the situation in Gaza that resembles famine, as well as Paris's intent to align itself more closely with the "Global South" on Palestinian statehood.

Saudi Arabia and France co-hosted a UN conference on a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict on July 29. Prince Faisal bin Farhan, Saudi Foreign Minister, informed that the final document adopted at the conference provided an integrated and actionable framework to implement the two-state solution. Saudi Arabia emphasised the importance of the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, calling for the establishment of a Palestinian State on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Although Saudi Arabia and France have pushed for greater recognition of the State of Palestine in the West, the US's opposition to recognition of Palestine will continue to be a major obstacle for Palestine's full UN membership.

Other Developments

[Iran holds 'frank' nuclear talks with European powers amid sanctions threat](#)

[Hamas must surrender control of Gaza and disarm, Palestinian PM says](#)

[UK to recognise Palestine in September if Israel doesn't change course](#)

[EU and Arab League reaffirm support for two-state solution, urge Hamas to disarm](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [July 25](#), Tajik authorities launched a new wave of deportations targeting Afghan refugees and asylum seekers, sparking alarm among rights groups and in the United Nations. Afghan Christian converts who fled Taliban persecution and sought refuge in Tajikistan have also told British media that they are under threat of detention and deportation. Many have warned that being returned to Afghanistan could be a death sentence, given the Taliban's hostility toward religious minorities. Additionally, UNHCR and other rights groups have pointed out that some of those being deported are employees or military personnel from the ousted Afghan government who could [face ill-treatment and possibly execution](#) back in Afghanistan.

Tajikistan's mass deportation of Afghan refugees comes at a time when Dushanbe is cautiously warming ties with the Taliban regime, revealing a complex geopolitical recalibration. While Tajikistan historically opposed the Taliban and harboured Afghan resistance figures, the deportations, signal a transactional approach - Tajik authorities may be appeasing Taliban concerns.

Kazakhstan, Central Asia's largest economy, is facing a convergence of pressures, from [currency depreciation](#) and geopolitical turmoil to [volatile oil markets](#) and contentious fiscal reforms, that are testing its economic resilience. On July 28, US President Donald Trump [shortened](#) a previously issued 50-day ultimatum to Russian President Vladimir Putin, giving him just 10-12 days to agree to a peace deal with Ukraine. This development added to the mounting uncertainty already impacting Kazakhstan's economy. Adding to the pressure with Trump's announcement on July 7, of 25% tariff on Kazakhstani goods, Kazakhstan's already fragile industrial sector has been rattled and spooked investors.

As Kazakhstan navigates a storm of external shocks and domestic challenges, the coming months will test the government's ability to balance fiscal discipline with economic support. Without a decisive shift in trade dynamics or geopolitical relief, Central Asia's largest economy may face a prolonged period of volatility that reshapes its growth trajectory.

Other Developments

[Zangezur: The corridor that could break the Caucasus](#)

[Turkmenistan's strategic reentry into gas diplomacy](#)

[Azerbaijan flexes its muscles amid rising tensions with Russia](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

Prime Minister Narendra Modi [paid a state visit](#) to the Maldives from July 25 to 26, to serve as the Guest of Honour at the Maldives' 60th Independence Day celebrations, being the first Indian Prime Minister to attend this event. Key highlights of the visit included comprehensive bilateral talks with President Mohamed Muizzu, during which they [reviewed progress](#) on the India-Maldives Joint Vision for a Comprehensive Economic and Maritime Security Partnership adopted in 2024. India extended a significant ₹4,850 crore (approximately USD 565 million) Line of Credit to support Maldivian infrastructure and economic development and restructured existing debts to ease repayment burdens. Additionally, the two leaders signed six Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) covering areas such as fisheries cooperation, pharmacopoeia, meteorology, digitalisation, and infrastructure development.

PM Modi's visit to the Maldives laid a strong foundation for a multi-dimensional partnership and signalled a robust turnaround from previous strains. The visit reinforced the importance of the Maldives in advancing India's "Neighbourhood First" and Vision MAHASAGAR policies.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the United Kingdom from July 23 to 24, 2025, at the invitation of UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer. During the visit, Modi and Starmer held wide-ranging discussions that covered the full spectrum of India-UK bilateral relations and formally [adopted the India-UK Vision 2035](#). The India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Vision 2035 partnership emphasise deepening strategic cooperation, particularly in defence and security. The leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation under the Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative, including the establishment of a Regional Maritime Security Centre of Excellence in the Indian Ocean to address non-traditional maritime threats. The UK will utilise India as a regional logistics hub for armed forces in the Indian Ocean Region. Additionally, the existing Foreign and Defence 2+2 dialogue will be elevated to enhance coordination on strategic and operational matters. Both countries also adopted a 10-year Defence Industrial Roadmap to promote joint research, innovation, and manufacturing in advanced defence technologies. The agreement is expected to accelerate co-development and co-production in defence industries, enabling faster mutual recognition of testing and certification processes.

This comprehensive, future-focused partnership under Vision 2035 is set to catalyse growth and technological advancement, particularly in defence and security sectors. The collaboration will significantly expand UK-India defence partnership and position India as a strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific while advancing shared interests with the UK on global security challenges.

Other Developments

[The 9th Indian Navy–UAE Navy Staff Talks were concluded in New Delhi](#)

[INS Delhi, INS Shakti, and INS Kiltan arrived at Tien Sa Port in Da Nang, Vietnam, as a part of the Indian Navy's operational deployment to Southeast Asia](#)

[The Sri Lanka Navy successfully concluded the the 'Trincomalee Naval Exercise - 2025' \(TRINEX - 25\)](#)

[INS Sandhayak was on a three-day maiden visit to Jakarta, Indonesia](#)



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