



# Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



## INDIA'S PROXIMITY ARCHIVES

April 15, 2026

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**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 an independently funded 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, 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. and Divya Rai, Research Associates. Your comments and feedback can be addressed to Sanket Joshi at [sanket@dpg.org.in](mailto:sanket@dpg.org.in).

*The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Delhi Policy Group as an Institution.*

### Cover Images:

1. U.S. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth hosted Indonesia's Defence Minister Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin in Washington, D.C., on April 13, 2026. Source: [Official X Handle/US Department of War](#)
2. Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif welcomed Iran's delegation led by the Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf in Islamabad on April 11, 2026. Source: [Official X Handle/Pakistan PM's Office](#)
3. Uzbekistan's President Shaokhat Mirziyoyev and Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev met in Bukhara on April 11, 2026. Source: [Official X Handle/Shaoakat Mirziyoyev's Press Service](#)

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◇ <i>The first round of U.S.-Iran dialogue in Islamabad.</i>
◇ <i>The U.S' blockade of Iranian Ports.</i>

## South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

The ongoing conflict between the US and Iran is compelling Pakistan to reformulate its foreign policy approaches towards Gulf states. As per the Saudi Arabian Ministry of [Defence](#), Pakistan has deployed fighter aircraft and supporting units to Saudi Arabia to bolster its security. Pakistan's finance minister announced on April 15th a commitment of [USD 3 billion](#) in deposits from Saudi Arabia, intended to strengthen the nation's foreign currency reserves, in addition to a prior USD 5 billion. These deposits would no longer be bound by the previous annual rollover agreement and would instead be prolonged for an extended duration. Pakistan is also [expected to settle](#) a USD 3.5 billion loan with the UAE by the month's end. Pakistan intensified its [diplomatic efforts](#) to mediate between the United States and Iran. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif of Pakistan is scheduled to commence a visit to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Türkiye on April 15th. On April 14th, senior representatives from the Pakistani, Saudi, Turkish, and Egyptian foreign ministries convened in Islamabad. This meeting served as [a follow-up](#) to a consultative session held by the respective foreign ministers last month.

*By acting as a mediator in the US-Iran war, deploying troops to Saudi Arabia, and engaging in regional multilateral forums, Pakistan is trying to mitigate the war's economic, geopolitical, and social repercussions, thereby leveraging the situation to elevate its national standing.*

New legislative measures and policy reviews are being undertaken by the governments of Nepal and Bangladesh. A "National Commitment" has been drafted by the RSP government in Nepal, led by Prime Minister Balendra Shah, after an analysis of the election manifestos of six nationally recognised political parties. The [eighteen-point draft](#) was released on April 13th to solicit feedback and suggestions. On April 8th, Prime Minister Shah departed from the customary approach of holding individual, [informal discussions](#) with foreign envoys by conducting a joint session with seventeen Kathmandu-based ambassadors. On April 9, the Bangladesh Parliament enacted the Supreme Court Judge Appointment (Repeal) Bill, 2026. This legislation serves to revoke the Supreme Court Judge [Appointment Ordinance](#), 2025, which had previously instituted a designated committee responsible for judicial appointments. The [Jatiya Muktijoddha Council](#) (Amendment) Bill, 2026, has also been passed, aiming to update current legislation and elevate the nation's acknowledgement of individuals who contributed to the War of Liberation in 1971. The National Parliament has additionally ratified the [Anti-Terrorism](#) (Amendment) Ordinance, which was enacted under the provisional administration. This ordinance

includes stipulations for prohibiting individuals or organisations implicated in terrorism, along with their respective operations.

*On one hand, democratically elected governments in Nepal and Bangladesh, post-revolution, are striving to introduce the policies that secured their electoral victory. On the other hand, they face significant challenges when confronting practical realities during the implementation of these policies.*

## **Other Developments**

[Shooting claims 11 lives in Afghanistan's Herat](#)

[Beijing says Islamabad, Kabul agree to ease tensions](#)

[Manohar Lal begins Bhutan visit; India-Bhutan sign key power agreements](#)

[Bangladesh seeks more fuel from India as neighbours repair ties](#)

## Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [April 13](#), the United States and Indonesia announced the establishment of a new Major Defence Agreement aimed at expanding military ties and “maintaining peace and stability” in Asia. In a [joint statement](#), the U.S. Department of War and Indonesia’s Defence Ministry said that the Major Defence Cooperation Partnership (MDCP) was the fruit of “decades of cooperation” and underscored “the strength and potential of the bilateral defence relationship.” The MDCP is [composed](#) of three “foundational pillars”: military modernisation and capacity building; training and professional military education; and exercises and operational cooperation. The two countries say they will pursue “cutting-edge initiatives”, including “next-generation” maritime, subsurface, and autonomous systems technologies, and maintenance, repair, and overhaul support. The statement also said that Sjafrie and Hegseth have “committed to enhance joint special forces training,” and to expand existing multilateral exercises, including [Super Garuda Shield](#).

*The deal represents a strategic deepening of U.S.-Indonesia defence ties, with implications for regional security, technological cooperation, and geopolitical balancing. It strengthens the U.S. position in Southeast Asia, while testing Indonesia’s traditional non-alignment.*

On [April 13](#), the Philippines accused Chinese fishermen of deliberately dumping cyanide in the waters surrounding a contested atoll in the South China Sea, alleging that the move was intended to weaken Manila’s hold over the feature. Beijing swiftly issued a strong denial. At an interagency press briefing in Manila, Philippine security officials reported the discovery of cyanide traces on Chinese vessels operating near Second Thomas Shoal, a submerged reef in the Spratly Islands that has been the site of repeated confrontations between Philippine and Chinese coast guards in 2024 and 2025. While Philippine authorities have previously accused Chinese fishermen of using cyanide to harvest fish at Scarborough Shoal, this latest allegation carries broader strategic weight. Gen. Cornelio Valencia Jr., Assistant Director of the National Security Council, [argued](#) that the use of cyanide in this case was not simply a destructive fishing practice but part of a calculated effort to undermine the Philippines’ position at the shoal. A spokesperson for the Philippine Navy reinforced this interpretation, stating that “based on the pattern we have uncovered, this is a deliberate attempt not only to destroy the environment but to deprive the men on board of food and water.” Although no health effects have yet been detected among personnel stationed in the Spratly Islands, officials warned that the tactic could erode the sustainability of Philippine deployments in the area.

*This development shows the South China Sea conflict evolving beyond conventional military stand-offs into hybrid tactics that weaponise environmental vulnerabilities. The alleged use of cyanide to undermine Philippine deployments adds a new dimension to the sovereignty struggle, reflecting both its intensifying nature and the growing sophistication of methods, where environmental sabotage joins coast guard clashes and military manoeuvres as tools of pressure.*

## **Other Developments**

[Xi to meet Vietnam Leader as Hormuz Blockade Risks Oil Flows](#)

[ASEAN survey finds growing doubts over US on trade and security](#)

[Indonesia's Prabowo meets Putin in Moscow, pushed closer by US-Iran war](#)

## West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

A U.S. delegation led by Vice President J.D. Vance and an Iranian delegation led by Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf held their first round of direct talks in Islamabad on April 11. VP Vance informed that the two sides had [failed to reach an agreement](#) and that Iran had chosen not to accept the U.S.' terms. Washington's terms demand that Tehran end all Uranium enrichment, dismantle nuclear facilities, hand over its highly enriched Uranium stockpile, accept a broader security agreement that involves regional countries and fully open the Strait of Hormuz. Meanwhile, on April 13, the U.S. military began a [blockade of Iranian ports](#) as part of President Trump's efforts to force Tehran to open the Strait of Hormuz. The [second round of U.S.-Iran dialogue](#) is expected to take place in Islamabad in the next few days.

*Despite both the U.S. and Iran proposing a suspension of Iran's uranium enrichment, the two sides could not agree on a reasonable timeframe. It remains to be seen if they can reach a consensus on this strategic issue in the second round of negotiations.*

Over the past week, Israel conducted [massive military strikes against Hezbollah](#) targets in Lebanon, despite Pakistan's claim that the U.S.-Iran ceasefire was also applicable to Lebanon. Reports indicated that the IDF struck more than 100 Hezbollah military targets, killing at least 254 people and injuring 837. On the other hand, on April 14, a meeting between Israel and Lebanon's Ambassadors in Washington was mediated by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, where a deal was reached for [direct negotiations between Tel Aviv and Beirut](#) on key strategic issues. Reacting sharply, [Hezbollah warned that it would not abide](#) by any agreement between Lebanon's government and the "Israeli enemy".

*A direct dialogue between Israel and Lebanon, brokered by the U.S., will be critical to the disarmament of Iran-backed Hezbollah.*

### Other Developments

[UAE President receives Indian Minister of External Affairs](#)

[No deal in Islamabad due to US extortion](#)

[UAE pulls US\\$ 3.5 billion from Pakistan after Iran war mediation](#)

[President Xi Jinping Meets With Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, the UAE](#)

## Central Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On April 11, Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev held a meeting in the historical city of Bukhara. The two sides pledged broader efforts to [expand trade and strategic cooperation](#), as well as a joint clean air initiative. Kazakhstan's leader emphasised that Uzbekistan remains a "reliable strategic partner" and that there are no political disagreements, which helps in the implementation of bilateral agreements.

*Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, two key strategic partners in Central Asia, plan to deepen cooperation in the extraction and processing of rare-earth metals, connectivity, water and energy cooperation, and the development of the IT industry.*

[China is turning towards Central Asian countries](#) for energy supplies and to offset disruptions in shipping in the Strait of Hormuz due to the U.S.' blockade of Iranian ports. Chinese Vice-Premier Ding Xuexiang will embark on a three-day visit to Turkmenistan beginning April 15, where he will attend ground breaking ceremony of the fourth phase of the Galkynysh gas field.

*Amidst the ongoing conflict in West Asia, China plans to diversify its energy imports and expand trade with reliable strategic partners in Central Asia, such as Turkmenistan.*

### Other Developments

[Central Asia Welcomes Ceasefire, Urges Talks as Energy Risks Persist](#)

[Kyrgyzstan Tests Alternative Transport Route to Russia That Bypasses Kazakhstan](#)

[Kazakhstan Could Become an Alternative Supplier of Petroleum Products to Asia](#)

[Kyrgyz officials in Washington seeking investment](#)

## Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

India's Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) has [acquired](#) a 51% controlling stake in Colombo Dockyard PLC (CDPLC), Sri Lanka's largest shipyard, for USD 26.8 million, marking MDL's first foreign acquisition. This move restructures CDPLC's board, with MDL's Chairman Capt. Jagmohan (Retd) as Non-Executive Chairman, alongside three MDL nominees. The timing of the acquisition coincides with CDPLC's largest shipbuilding deal in its 52-year history. In November 2025, the shipyard signed a contract with Orange Marine of France to build two Cable Laying and Repair Vessels worth around USD 150 million. Construction is already underway, with delivery expected in 2028 and 2029. Beyond the acquisition itself, MDL has been working to plug CDPLC into India's maritime network. On April 7, CDPLC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Dredging Corporation of India (DCI), under which CDPLC will serve as DCI's preferred partner for drydocking, repair, and maintenance work.

*The deal provides India a key foothold at Colombo Port, enhancing access to vital shipping lanes and countering China's influence in Sri Lanka, such as its Hambantota Port stake. It aligns with Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047, a long-term plan to build up India's shipbuilding capacity and maritime influence.*

The first edition of Naval Commanders' Conference-2026 [commenced](#) at Nau Sena Bhawan, New Delhi, on April 14, 2026. Adm. Dinesh K Tripathi, Chief of the Naval Staff, delivered the inaugural address and commended the Navy's achievements in safeguarding India's maritime interests, including energy security amidst the ongoing conflict in West Asia, increased tempo of operations, and enhanced inter-service synergy. CNS laid emphasis on the continued focus on combat readiness and adapting emerging technologies to build a Future Ready force. The CNS reiterated the Indian Navy's commitments in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond in the emerging geostrategic scenario, and the significance of a cohesive and credible approach through proactive engagements with Friendly Foreign Countries (FFCs) in multilateral and bilateral exercises. Operational highlights, including salient issues pertaining to jointness, capability enhancement (afloat and ashore), maintenance and refits, multi-domain safety practices, training, foreign cooperation, HR issues, and innovation and indigenisation, were discussed during the Conference.

*The Indian Navy Commanders' Conference is a key strategic forum for aligning naval leadership on India's maritime priorities amid escalating regional tensions. It reviews operational doctrines, inter-service synergy, and innovations to guide Navy's Vision 2047 for blue-water capabilities.*

## Other Developments

[Chagos Islands handover to Mauritius paused over Trump's stance](#)

[LPG tanker Jag Vikram crosses Strait of Hormuz; first India-flagged vessel to transit after Iran-U.S. ceasefire](#)

[INS Trikand concluded her port call at Mombasa, Kenya](#)

[The U.S. imposed a blockade on the Strait of Hormuz on after peace talks with Iran collapsed over the weekend](#)



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