



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

INDIA'S PROXIMITY ARCHIVES

November 19, 2025

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South Asia:

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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: Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari administering the oath to Justice Aminuddin Khan as Chief Justice of the Federal Constitutional Court on November 14, 2025, in Islamabad. Source: [X/@MediaCellPPP](https://twitter.com/MediaCellPPP)

West Asia: US President Donald Trump and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman met in Washington, D.C. on November 18, 2025. Source: [Official X Handle/Saudi Press Agency English](https://www.spa.gov.sa/en/Official-X-Handle/Saudi-Press-Agency-English)

Central Asia: Leaders of Central Asian countries and Azerbaijan visit the Centre for Islamic Civilisation, prior to the seventh Consultative Meeting of Heads of State, on November 15, 2025. Source: [President of Uzbekistan](https://www.president.uz/en/news/president-of-uzbekistan-visits-center-for-islamic-civilization)

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Contents

South Asia

Shreyas Deshmukh 1

Southeast Asia

Jayantika Rao T.V. 3

East Asia

Arshiya Chaturvedi 5

West Asia

Sanket Joshi 7

Central Asia

Jayantika Rao T.V. 8

Indian Ocean Region

Divya Rai 10

Watch Points

◇ <i>Political violence and security in Bangladesh after PM Sheikh Hasina's death sentence</i>
◇ <i>UNSC resolution on International Stabilisation Force in Gaza charts a new course</i>
◇ <i>Japanese PM's remark over Taiwan, and North Korea's warning of US-ROK nuclear submarine deal, increase tensions in East Asia</i>

South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

On November 13, President Asif Ali Zardari ratified the [27th Constitutional Amendment Bill](#) subsequent to its passage by the Senate and National Assembly of Pakistan. Key aspects of the bill are setting up a Federal Constitutional Court (FCC); granting permanent immunity to the President; Army chief to be recognised as Chief of Defence Forces; office of CJCSC to be abolished; establishing a National Strategic Command; and lifelong constitutional protection to be provided to 5-star rank officers. The legislation also empowers the Prime Minister and the President to appoint and transfer judges. The FCC was [formally established](#) on November 14th, after the chief justice and four judges were sworn in. Two Supreme Court [justices resigned](#), describing the legislation as an infringement upon the Constitution and the judiciary's autonomy. The Tehreek-i-Tahafuz-i-Ayin-i-Pakistan (TTAP) opposition alliance declared a [nationwide protest](#) against the 27th Amendment.

Through the enactment of the 26th and 27th constitutional amendment bills, the Pakistan government, in agreement with the military, limited the judiciary's powers. The Pakistani judiciary has not historically exhibited neutrality; this amendment, however, has undermined its independence as a key aspect of democracy. The legislation concentrated military power with the army chief, making the institution more rigid and less susceptible to accountability.

A [special tribunal in Bangladesh](#) handed down death sentences to former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal on November 17, after convicting them of crimes against humanity in connection with the state's crackdown on a student uprising in July-August 2024. Having admitted his role in the crackdown on the protests that brought about the fall of the Hasina government, and after having testified before the tribunal against Ms. Hasina and Mr. Kamal, former Inspector General of Police (IGP) Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun was given a five-year prison sentence. Sheikh Hasina [deemed the verdict](#) as both biased and politically motivated. Bangladesh [requested the Indian government](#) to extradite Sheikh Hasina and former Interior Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs issued [a statement](#) in response to the verdict, stating that India is dedicated to the interests of the Bangladeshi people, including the promotion of peace, democracy, inclusion, and stability within Bangladesh. The verdict has led to a tense situation in Bangladesh, with [reports of clashes](#) and arson incidents across the country.

The interim government under the leadership of Professor Muhammad Yunus appears to be faltering on the political, economic, and security fronts. Thus, this ruling indicates the interim administration's intention to convey to the people that their concerns have been taken into

account and divert attention from other issues prior to the elections scheduled in February 2026.

Other Developments

[Afghanistan-Pakistan Talks Stall Amid Key Disagreements](#)

[Afghanistan Shifts Trade Routes from Pakistan to Iran Amid Rising Tensions: Reuters](#)

[Pakistan Govt approves Rs50b defence package for national security](#)

[India, Nepal ink pact to step up trade ties](#)

[Nepal's Election Commission publishes election schedule](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [November 17](#), Indonesia and Japan, at the 3rd two-plus-two Foreign and Defence Ministers' meeting in Tokyo, agreed to strengthen their security cooperation, mainly through transfers of defence equipment. The ministers also confirmed that they will promote joint drills between Japan's Self-Defence Forces and the Indonesian military, as well as exchanges between defence officials of the nations. Prior to the meeting, Indonesian Defence Minister Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin and Japan's Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi [travelled to the Yokosuka naval base](#), where they inspected Maritime Self-Defence Force vessels including the Mogami-class Kumano frigate and a Murasame destroyer, along with a Taigei-class submarine.

Koizumi noted that Yokosuka "provided an excellent opportunity to elevate defence relations between our two countries to a higher level," and "I believe this has laid a very good foundation for both countries to further deepen their cooperation in maritime security,". Adding that he intends to boost sales of Japanese military equipment to various countries, as such transfers represent "an important policy tool for Japan to create a desirable security environment."

Indonesia's defence modernisation drive reflects a non-aligned procurement strategy – its priority is acquiring advanced equipment to strengthen maritime and aerial capabilities, regardless of supplier. Conversely, Japan's willingness to step in is not merely commercial; it is a calculated geopolitical move aimed at countering China's expanding defence footprint in Southeast Asia. By offering equipment and security assistance, Tokyo positions itself as both a reliable partner for Indonesia and a proactive player in shaping the regional balance of power.

On [November 17](#), Thailand announced that tariff negotiations with the United States would proceed independently of its commitments to President Donald Trump regarding the border dispute with Cambodia. The statement followed Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul's conversation with Trump on November 14. Washington had previously suspended trade talks, conditioning their resumption on Thailand's adherence to the peace declaration with Cambodia signed last month. On November 15, Thai government spokesman Siripong Angkasakulkiat initially said that Thailand was informed on Friday night by the US deputy trade representative that Washington planned to halt trade talks until Bangkok "provides assurances that it will strictly comply" with the joint declaration signed in Kuala Lumpur last month. He shortly clarified in a separate statement that the leaders' call resulted in a change of stance on halting talks.

Thailand seeks to preserve robust economic engagement with the US while asserting sovereignty over its border diplomacy with Cambodia. Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul is unlikely to concede ground on the issue, given the deep public sensitivities surrounding the dispute and the political precedent set by his predecessor, Paetongtarn Shinawatra, who was ousted for mishandling the matter, especially with national elections scheduled for March 2026.

Other Developments

[Nimitz Strike Group Drills Near Scarborough Shoal with Philippines, Japan](#)

[Prabowo underscores Jordan's role in peace, Palestinian support](#)

[Thailand's Supreme Court orders ex-PM Thaksin to pay \\$542m in taxes](#)

[Tens of thousands rally in Manila over corruption scandal that implicates top Philippine officials](#)

East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

On November 14, [the US and South Korea revealed details of a new trade agreement](#), which includes lowering of import tariffs on South Korean goods from 25 per cent to 15 per cent, and significant South Korean investments of USD 150 billion and USD 200 billion in America's shipbuilding and industrial sectors, respectively. Moreover, the US has also approved South Korea building nuclear-powered submarines and pledged to work closely with Seoul to find avenues to source fuel (uranium enrichment). North Korea's state news agency KCNA, while criticising this deal, called out the US and South Korea for showing their true colours of confrontational will and hostility against the DPRK. It alleges that Seoul is pushing forward its long-standing desire to possess nuclear weapons, which will trigger a regional domino phenomenon, fuelling a nuclear arms race.

South Korea's moves toward acquiring nuclear capabilities make North Korea anxious, suspicious and resistant towards it, reflecting the classic pattern of the security dilemma.

The Japanese Prime Minister, Sanae Takaichi's November 7th remark, suggesting a possible Japanese military's involvement in a China-Taiwan conflict, [is seeing the continued exacerbation of tensions between China and Japan](#). These include summoning of each other's ambassadors, the Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson cautioning Japan against sending any wrong signals to Taiwan independence separatist forces and Chinese state media calling the remarks "dangerously provocative". China has also issued a warning for travellers and students visiting Japan, and Japan likewise cautioned its nationals travelling to China. A Chinese coastguard ship was also reportedly seen on November 16, near the Japan-administered Senkaku Islands, which China claims as the Diaoyu Islands.

More recently on November 17, China's embassy in Japan on its social media account asserted that it has not ruled out the use of force to seize Taiwan, and any intervention by Japan would be viewed as aggression toward China, which would be responded to with a decisive counterstrike. While Japanese PM Takaichi has refused to back down from her statement, some reports indicate that a high-level envoy is en route to Beijing to pacify the situation.

Takaichi is attempting to position Japan as assertive and proactive. This shift is well reflected in her early policy directives focused on strengthening Japan's defences to counter an increasingly aggressive China, while also meeting Trump's demand for allies to increase their security spending. However, it is important to consider whether Japan can afford a potentially

deeper rift with China resulting from its sudden assertive posturing in the region, with its current domestic challenges.

Other Developments

[In a first, Taiwan to distribute security handbook to all households as China threat rises](#)

[In China's global lending spree, the US has been the biggest beneficiary, study finds](#)

[China suspends Japanese film releases amid diplomatic row over Taiwan](#)

[South Korea agrees to join UAE's Stargate AI data centre project](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On November 17, the [United Nations Security Council](#) adopted a US-sponsored resolution endorsing President Trump's Gaza peace plan and authorising an International Stabilisation Force to be deployed in Gaza. Thirteen UNSC member-states voted in favour of the resolution, none opposed it, while China and Russia abstained. US Ambassador to the UN, Mike Waltz, described the adoption of the Gaza peace plan as “charting a new course for the Middle East”, stressing that the UNSC resolution provides troop contributing countries with a framework to move forward with the International Stabilisation Force and global financial institutions a path to channel investment. This would help the international community dismantle Hamas and support Gaza's reconstruction and development.

While the Palestinian Authority (PA) and Israel welcomed the UNSC resolution on the International Stabilisation Force, Hamas reportedly rejected it, asserting that it "imposes an international guardianship mechanism" on Gaza. It remains to be seen how the international force will coordinate its operations in Gaza, given Hamas' refusal to cooperate.

On November 18, President Trump and Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman met at the White House to further strengthen the [strategic partnership between the US and Saudi Arabia](#). Major issues discussed in the meeting included the strategic defence agreement, strategic partnership for AI, securing supply chains for Uranium, permanent magnets, and critical minerals, cooperation in civil nuclear energy, accelerating Saudi investments, cooperation in financial markets, and an MoU in the field of education and training. Saudi Arabia has been designated as [the US's "major non-NATO ally"](#) (MNNA), a status which will facilitate Riyadh's access to advanced US military hardware, including F-35 fighter jets.

Israel opposes the US's plans to sell F-35 fighter jets to Saudi Arabia, as this could erode the IDF's Qualitative Military Edge (QME) in the region. It remains to be seen how Washington adheres to its commitment to maintain Israel's qualitative military edge over its Arab neighbours.

Other Developments

[Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Solidifies Economic and Defence Partnership with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia](#)

[US-E3 draft resolution at IAEA board demands swift cooperation from Iran](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [November 15-16](#), Central Asian leaders met in Tashkent for the seventh Consultative Meeting of Heads of State, emphasising stronger political dialogue, economic integration, and collective security. The Tashkent meeting focused on strengthening institutional foundations of regional cooperation, with proposals to transform the current consultative system into a long-term strategic platform called the “Community of Central Asia,” complete with a rotating Secretariat, a Council of Elders and enhanced roles for national coordinators. During the meeting, Central Asian leaders unanimously approved [Azerbaijan's accession to their consultative format as a full member](#). In his opening remarks, Uzbekistan’s President Shavkat Mirziyoyev [proposed](#) turning the loose consultative mechanism into a formal regional body under the working title, the “Community of Central Asia.” In the security domain, the leaders endorsed a Concept of Regional Security and Stability, calling for coordinated efforts to counter terrorism, extremism, cyber threats, and transnational crime. They also discussed mechanisms to monitor vulnerabilities in water and energy infrastructure.

By officially bringing the South Caucasus into the Central Asian cooperation framework, the leaders attempt to pave the way for the formation of a single space of cooperation - space for broader connectivity.

On [November 17](#), Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan agreed to deepen political, economic, and humanitarian cooperation during President Serdar Berdymuhamedov’s state visit to Tashkent, where he met with President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. The two leaders identified new opportunities to expand mutual trade and strengthen collaboration across industry, energy, transport, mechanical engineering, agriculture, and water management. They also committed to enhancing interregional ties, including convening the next Forum of Regions in Khiva. A central goal of the talks was to raise bilateral trade to US\$ 2 billion by diversifying the range of goods exchanged and more effectively utilizing the free trade regime. The newly launched Shavat-Dashoguz cross-border trade zone was highlighted as a key driver of this effort, with plans to replicate the model in other areas, beginning with the Alat-Farab corridor. The visit concluded with the signing of a [Joint Statement](#) and the exchange of multiple intergovernmental and interagency agreements spanning trade, healthcare, agriculture, transport, biological safety, justice, forestry, and regional cooperation.

The Uzbekistan–Turkmenistan agreements reflect a broader recalibration in Central Asia – toward intra-regional integration, resource diplomacy, and strategic hedging. This shift underscores the region's growing determination to balance external influence while building indigenous frameworks of cooperation, positioning Central Asia as a more autonomous actor in the evolving geopolitical landscape.

Other Developments

[Armenia, EU officials meet to discuss partnership and regional peace](#)

[Kazakhstan, Russia Sign Landmark Comprehensive Alliance Declaration](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi [embarked](#) on an official visit to the United States from November 12 to November 17 to further enhance the longstanding maritime partnership between the Indian Navy and the United States Navy. Admiral Tripathi held a series of high-level discussions with Admiral Samuel J Paparo, Commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command, and senior officials of the US Navy. They held discussions to review the key pillars of the India-US defence cooperation, including strengthening maritime security and maritime cooperation, enhancing interoperability.

The [discussions](#) also covered priority areas of mutual maritime interest, including deeper information sharing and maritime domain awareness, building on mechanisms like IPMDA and linkages with the Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region, safeguarding sea lines of communication and critical undersea infrastructure, coordinated responses for HADR and SAR missions, counter-piracy, and non-traditional security challenges, more complex and regular bilateral/multilateral exercises (including MALABAR, PASSEX, and CMF /MILAN frameworks) to refine joint warfighting, logistics, and sustainment, collaboration in emerging domains - unmanned systems, ISR, cyber, and space-enabled maritime operations - to bolster readiness and resilience at sea.

The coincidence of a high-level bilateral visit with a major multilateral exercise highlights the significance of the foundational India-US shared vision for the Indo-Pacific. The visit also means a stronger, more integrated, and forward-looking India-US defence relationship, solidifying operational and strategic cooperation in the face of evolving regional security dynamics.

The [Indian Navy is set to commission MAHE](#), the first of the Mahe-class Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Watercraft (ASW-SWC), at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai, on November 24, 2025. Built by Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), Kochi, Mahe represents the cutting edge of India's Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative in naval ship design and construction. The ship embodies agility, precision and endurance - qualities vital for dominating the littorals. Equipped with advanced sonar, radar, and weapons systems, the ship is designed for anti-submarine warfare, coastal patrols, underwater surveillance, low-laying missions. Its primary role will be to safeguard India's Critical maritime approaches and counter underwater threats in littoral regions.

The introduction of these vessels significantly enhances India's coastal defence capabilities by providing a specialised platform for countering underwater threats in its shallow coastal areas, a critical security need given the increasing naval presence and submarine activity in the Indian Ocean Region.

Other Developments

[INS Savitri engaged in a joint training session with personnel from the Mozambique Navy at Port Beira](#)

[35th IMBL meeting between Indian and Sri Lankan Navies/Coast Guards was held onboard INS Sukanya](#)

[Germany will be participating in the next edition of Exercise Tarang Shakti and Milan in 2026](#)



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