



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



INDIA'S PROXIMITY ARCHIVES

November 26, 2025

Authors

South Asia:

Shreyas Deshmukh

Southeast Asia & Central

Asia:

Jayantika Rao T.V.

West Asia:

Sanket Joshi

East Asia:

Arshiya Chaturvedi

Indian Ocean Region

Divya Rai

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Core 5A, 1st Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003

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: Indian Minister of External Affairs Dr S Jaishankar Held meeting with the Taliban Industry and Commerce Minister Alhaj Nooruddin Azizi in New Delhi on November 20, 2025. Source: [X/@DrSjaishankar](https://twitter.com/DrSjaishankar)

East Asia: Japanese PM Sanae Takaichi and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa at the bilateral Summit Meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa on November 23, 2025. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan](https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/2025/11/23/25112301.htm)

West Asia: India's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, and Israel's Minister of Economy and Industry, Nir Barkat, met in Tel Aviv on November 20, 2025. Source: [Official X Handle/Piyush Goyal](https://twitter.com/OfficialXHandle/PiyushGoyal)

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Contents

South Asia

Shreyas Deshmukh1

Southeast Asia

Jayantika Rao T.V.3

East Asia

Arshiya Chaturvedi.....4

West Asia

Sanket Joshi.....5

Central Asia

Jayantika Rao T.V.6

Indian Ocean Region

Divya Rai.....8

Watch Points

◇ Escalation Across the Durand Line: Afghanistan-Pakistan Relations in Crisis
◇ India-Israel negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)
◇ Malaysia's Mediation Role Under Scrutiny Amid Escalating Thailand-Cambodia Border Dispute

South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

The Taliban's Minister of Industry and Commerce, Alhaj Nooruddin Azizi, [visited India](#) with a trade delegation from November 19-25. Minister Azizi engaged in discussions with External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and also participated in delegation-level talks with Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. The talks addressed trade facilitation, market access, connectivity, and capacity-building. The Air Freight Corridor connecting Kabul with Delhi and Amritsar was announced after the meeting. Both nations decided to assign commercial representatives to their respective embassies and establish a Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry. During the five-day visit, the Afghan delegation visited trade fairs and institutions to establish a long-term supply of agricultural products, medicines, and other essential commodities to Afghanistan.

Due to strained relations with Pakistan and border closures, Afghanistan is seeking alternative trade routes and partners. As winter approaches, the precarious food security situation, the need for market access for perishable agricultural goods, and medicine imports are driving the Taliban-led government in Afghanistan to engage in proactive outreach to its immediate neighbors.

This week, there were multiple terrorist attacks on government and security installations in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, perpetrated by the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). On November 24th, three members of the [Federal Constabulary](#) (FC) were killed in a suicide attack on the force's headquarters in Peshawar. On November 23rd, three assailants attacked a under construction [medical college](#) near Dera Murad Jamali. A TTP militant assault on a [Peace Committee](#) office in Bannu district on November 21 resulted in seven deaths. Pakistan has once more accused the TTP, which is alleged to be based in Afghanistan, for these attacks. According to Zabiullah Mujahid, the Taliban government's spokesperson, Pakistan conducted [airstrikes](#) in Afghanistan on November 25, resulting in the deaths of 10 civilians, including nine children. The ISPR, the Pakistan Army's media division, [announced](#) that no such strikes had taken place.

Subsequent to the breakdown of peace negotiations between Pakistan and Afghanistan in Istanbul, the ceasefire between the two nations remained in effect. Nonetheless, the ongoing terrorist attacks in Pakistan, for which the TTP and Afghan Taliban are held responsible, imply that low-intensity conflict between them will persist in the future.

Dasho Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Bhutan, [visited Bangladesh](#) from November 22-24, during which he conferred with Chief Advisor Professor Yunus, Foreign Affairs Advisor Md. Touhid Hossain, and Commerce Advisor Sk Bashir Uddin. Discussions mainly addressed commerce, connectivity, economic partnerships, and cultural exchanges. Deliberations encompassed the Bhutanese Special Economic Zone in Kurigram and a trial run of goods from Chattogram Port to Burimari Land Port. Bangladesh and Bhutan [have formalized Memoranda of Understanding](#) concerning health cooperation and internet connectivity.

Cooperation between Bhutan and Bangladesh has been established in the domains of trade, connectivity, hydropower, and a multi-modal transit protocol. The evolving political instability and security situation in Bangladesh thus have an impact on Bhutan. The Bhutanese PM's visit seems to have centred on the evaluation of these concerns.

Other Developments

[US Exim Bank pledges \\$1.25bn loan for Reko Diq mines in Pakistan](#)

[Gatherings banned in Nepal as fresh Gen Z protests erupt](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

During the G20 summit in Johannesburg, [Singapore's Prime Minister Lawrence Wong urged](#) countries to work together and find ways forward even without U.S. participation. Still, he emphasized that Singapore prefers America to remain actively engaged in shaping global affairs, noting the U.S. can join “at any time” when ready. Echoing his appeal at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting, PM Wong again called on world leaders to reform the World Trade Organization (WTO). He highlighted the importance of pursuing plurilateral and minilateral trade initiatives in parallel, while acknowledging that revitalizing the WTO—already a complex task—will be even harder without U.S. involvement.

PM Wong's statement that countries should “find ways forward on their own” even without U.S. involvement reflects a growing recognition that global governance cannot remain dependent on Washington. However, while emphasising its autonomy PM Wong simultaneously underscores Singapore's preference for US participation. This dual message avoids alienating Washington while encouraging other nations to act decisively in its absence.

On [November 26](#), Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim reaffirmed his country's neutrality as mediator in the escalating border dispute between Thailand and Cambodia, amid mounting criticism of his role. Speaking at a press conference during the G20 summit in Johannesburg, Anwar said he needed to “clear the air” after protests in Bangkok accused Malaysia of meddling in Thailand's sovereignty. “We only facilitated efforts to help them reach a settlement. We did not prescribe how they should resolve their problems,” he stressed, adding that both countries regard Malaysia as a “friend.” His remarks came after demonstrators gathered outside the Malaysian embassy in Bangkok, accusing him of overstepping his earlier role as ASEAN chair and interfering in Thailand's handling of the conflict.

The statement reflects how divisive the conflict has become, with some factions in Thailand and Cambodia viewing foreign-brokered truces as harmful to their interests.

Other Developments

[Philippine military says ‘no junta’ in its ranks, warns against destabilisation](#)

[Philippine President Marcos says seven arrested over corruption scandal](#)

[India, Brazil and Indonesia laid foundation for G20 Summit in South Africa: Ramaphosa](#)

East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

On November 23, [the Japanese Prime Minister, Sanae Takaichi, met the South African President Cyril Ramaphosa](#) on the sidelines of the Leaders' Meeting at the 2025 G20 Summit. Takaichi emphasised the need for greater cooperation between the two countries, particularly in the area of mineral resources, towards strengthening global supply chains and enhancing economic security. Both leaders unequivocally affirmed their commitment to continue deeper cooperation through platforms such as TICAD 9 and the G20 Summit.

African countries have become central to the increasingly technology-driven global order. Japan is proactively engaging with African states to secure mineral supplies necessary for advancing its technological capabilities and broader technology-driven economic development.

Chinese President [Xi Jinping, in a phone call with US President Donald Trump](#), categorically reiterated Beijing's claim to Taiwan. Xi underpinned Taiwan's return to China as an "integral part of the postwar international order" and indicated the use of force, if necessary to reclaim it. The Taiwanese government has issued vehement opposition to the same. The region is experiencing heightened tensions with reports of [Japan deploying offensive weapons on Yonaguni Island](#) and the US increasing surveillance in the region. A [US Air Force MQ-9 Reaper also reported to have crashed](#) recently, on November 25, off the coast of Maldo-Ri Island in South Korea.

China's persistent and aggressive posturing toward Taiwan has prompted regional powers to counter-posture against Beijing, strategically signalling their security commitments in the region and reassuring the allies. This is accelerating greater recalibration of security strategy and power projection in the Indo-Pacific.

Other Development

[North, South Korea in 'very dangerous' standoff: Yonhap quotes President Lee saying](#)

[Joint Press Release on the Minerals Security Partnership \(MSP\) Principals' Meeting](#)

[Li Qiang Meets with Russian President Vladimir Putin](#)

['Return' to China not an option for Taiwan's people, Premier says](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

India's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, visited Israel between November 20-22, deepening [India-Israel strategic and economic cooperation](#). During Minister Goyal's meeting with Israel's Minister of Economy and Industry Nir Barkat, the two sides signed the Terms of Reference which would guide negotiations for the India-Israel Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Major issues discussed with the Israeli side included opportunities for Indian workers, partnership in cybersecurity, desalination and wastewater management, agriculture and food security, AI, fintech, quantum computing, and pharmaceuticals.

In the midst of higher US tariffs, India-Israel FTA negotiations underscore Delhi and Tel Aviv's intent to expand bilateral trade, delivering a mutually beneficial outcome for both sides.

According to an executive order issued by the US President Donald Trump on November 24, certain chapters or other [divisions of the Muslim Brotherhood](#) will be designated as Foreign Terrorist Organisations. The US officials described this executive order as a "tectonic act" that would target the Muslim Brotherhood, a transnational network that operates across the Middle East and beyond.

The Muslim Brotherhood is not confined to Egypt alone; several other movements have been born from it, such as Hamas in Gaza and the AKP in Turkey. The US's designation of the Muslim Brotherhood as a foreign terrorist organisation would represent a severe blow to the Egyptian organisation, and it represents the culmination of several countries' efforts throughout the Middle East and North Africa.

Israel eliminated [Hezbollah's Chief of Staff](#) Haytham Ali Tabatabai in an airstrike in Beirut, Lebanon, on November 23. Reportedly, this was the IDF's fifth airstrike in Lebanon since a ceasefire was agreed with Hezbollah in November 2024.

Israel's continued airstrikes on Hezbollah leadership in Lebanon underscore its determination to prevent Hezbollah from rebuilding.

Other Developments

[Syrian security forces use gunfire to disperse rival protests in Alawite heartland](#)

[UN nuclear watchdog seeks reengagement with Iran, chief says](#)

[Gaza truce progress slow as Israeli-Hamas violence persists](#)

[Turkey, Egypt, Qatar discuss second phase of Gaza ceasefire deal, Turkish source says](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [November 21](#), Kazakhstan and Armenia elevated their ties to a strategic partnership following talks between President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan in Astana. A [joint statement](#) marked the start of a new phase in cooperation, accompanied by the signing of 15 intergovernmental and interagency agreements. These agreements cover classified information protection, land for diplomatic missions, a 2026–2030 trade and economic roadmap, and collaboration in industry, agriculture, healthcare, science, education, digitalization, and peaceful atomic energy. They also establish new cultural links between national museums, libraries, and film institutions. During the visit, President Tokayev awarded Prime Minister Pashinyan Kazakhstan's highest honor, the Order of Altyn Qyran (Golden Eagle), recognizing his contributions to Armenia's development, regional peace, and bilateral relations.

The decision to award Prime Minister Pashinyan Kazakhstan's highest honor carries clear geopolitical symbolism. It elevates the new strategic partnership beyond a ceremonial gesture, signalling that the relationship is intended to deliver tangible outcomes in areas such as trade, transport, and economic modernization. The honor serves both as a diplomatic endorsement and as a strategic signal that this partnership is meant to be functional, future-oriented, and regionally significant.

On [November 22](#), Kyrgyz law enforcement on Saturday carried out a series of arrests, searches and interrogations of opposition figures and journalists ahead of a snap parliamentary election on November 30. The [crackdown was carried out under Article 278 of the Criminal Code](#), "Organization of Mass Unrest," with authorities in three cases also alleging attempts to "violently seize power" — a charge increasingly used against dissent. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, a "destructive group" was preparing mass protests following the announcement of parliamentary election results. The group allegedly included politicians, former deputies, civil servants, and law enforcement officials, with investigators claiming they sought to recruit members of the criminal underworld and sports organizations to incite clashes. Officials said the unrest was planned to begin in the south before spreading to Bishkek and other regions, creating an "effect of mass discontent." Separately, the Interior Ministry confirmed the arrest of Social Democratic Party leader Temirlan Sultanbekov, charging him with organizing mass riots. Local media also reported that Kadyrbek Atambayev, son of former President Almazbek Atambayev, and former first lady Raisa Atambayeva were questioned; Raisa Atambayeva was released later the same day.

The November 22 crackdown in Kyrgyzstan reflects a deliberate move by the government to consolidate power ahead of snap parliamentary elections, signalling a shift away from the country's reputation as Central Asia's most open political system. President Sadyr Japarov, who rose to power amid political turmoil in 2020, appears to be using the upcoming November 30 snap elections as an opportunity to tighten control and weaken rivals, particularly allies of former President Almazbek Atambayev.

Other Developments

[Food Conditions in the Turkmenistan Army Under Scrutiny](#)

[Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan Presidents Hold High-Level Talks, Affirm Strategic Partnership](#)

[CSTO Summit in Bishkek: Armenia's Boycott, Russia's Agenda, and a New Secretary General](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

The 7th National Security Adviser (NSA)-level Meeting of the Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) [was held in](#) New Delhi, India, on 20 November 2025. The meeting was hosted by Ajit Doval, National Security Adviser of India, and attended by his counterparts from Member States – Maldives, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. The Republic of Seychelles participated as an observer, while Malaysia joined the meeting as a guest for the first time. At the 7th NSA-level meeting, the first Secretary General, appointed by India, presented a comprehensive review to the CSC Member States on the decisions taken at the 6th NSA-level meeting in Mauritius on 7-8 December 2023 and activities undertaken since then under the five pillars of cooperation. Member States discussed pathways to further enhance cooperation across these priority areas through joint initiatives, training programmes, and capacity-building activities. The Conclave also welcomed the decision of the Republic of Seychelles to accede to the CSC as a full Member State.

The meeting underlined the CSC's gradual consolidation as a sub-regional security architecture centred on the Indian Ocean Region, with a clear focus on functional cooperation amid varying bilateral equations, especially declining India–Bangladesh relations. At the same time, Seychelles' decision to join as a full member, and Malaysia's first-time participation as a guest, show that the CSC is gaining in recognition and could evolve into a wider Indian Ocean mini-lateral.

The Indian Naval Ship INS Sahyadri, as a part of its ongoing operational deployment, [participated](#) in bilateral exercise AUSINDEX 2025 alongside HMAS Ballarat of the Royal Australian Navy. The warships & aircraft of the two navies engaged in intense joint naval drills and operations in the Northern Pacific. The exercise is aimed at significantly boosting interoperability and deepening strategic partnership between the two maritime nations. This comes shortly after the recently concluded Malabar Exercise 2025, where Australia, India, Japan, and US forces participated in and around Guam, November 10-18. AUSINDEX 2025 reinforced the growing ties between India and Australia, underscoring their shared commitment to a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.

The exercise significantly consolidated the India–Australia defence partnership across domains and demonstrated that the bilateral naval relationship has matured into one that can operate together in complex anti-submarine and advanced air operations, directly contributing to shared maritime domain awareness and warfighting interoperability.

Other Developments

[Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi meets Seychelles Chief of Defence Forces, Major General Michael Rosette, in New Delhi](#)

[A third Chinese research vessel, 'Shi Yan 6', capable of geophysical ocean research, is heading to Mauritius](#)

[INS Savitri reaches Seychelles to strengthen maritime cooperation and launch joint EEZ surveillance](#)



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