



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

INDIA'S PROXIMITY ARCHIVES

September 3, 2025

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South Asia:

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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 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:

East Asia: Leaders of SCO Member States at the 25th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), hosted by China on September 1, 2025. Source: [MOFA PRC](#)

Indian Ocean Region: The Indian Navy's First Training Squadron (1TS) – INS Tir, INS Shardul, and CGS Sarathi – at Port Victoria, Seychelles, on September 1, 2025. Source: [X/@indiannavy](#)

East Asia: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Mr. ISHIBA Shigeru addressing at the joint press in Japan on August 29. Source: [MOFA Japan](#)

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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>Xi Jinping calls for a new global governance framework against the declining Western-led order at Tianjin, China</i>
◇ <i>Protest by Palestinian Authority over US announcement of deny and revoke visas of PA members before the New York Session of UNGA in September 2025</i>
◇ <i>Pakistan and Armenia establish diplomatic relations in the margins of SCO Summit 2025</i>

South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

Unrest persists in [numerous universities in Bangladesh](#) following recent conflict between student factions and escalating campus tensions. On August 31, violent confrontation broke out between students and local residents near Chittagong University and its vicinity, leading to injuries of over 300 teachers, students, police officers, and journalists. On [August 29, clashes](#) occurred between activists of the Jatiya Party (JaPa) and Gono Odhikar Parishad in Kakrail. According to the [Human Rights report](#) released on August 31, the law and order situation in Bangladesh is deteriorating due to the increasing number of mob violence-related killings. In July, mob attacks resulted in 16 fatalities, and in August, there were 23 fatalities and 43 serious injuries from similar occurrences. In addition, another report from August documented that [223 women](#) and girls throughout Bangladesh were subjected to violence, with a majority of cases involving murder and rape.

In Bangladesh, social unrest and political violence continued without abatement after the Shaikh Hasina government fell. As the national elections scheduled for February 2026 draw nearer, the potential for increased violence within the country may rise.

On September 1, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended and addressed the 25th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), held in Tianjin, China. Along with him, several other South Asian leaders, including Pakistan's Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, Nepalese Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli, and Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu, travelled to Tianjin, China, to participate in the SCO Summit, which took place from August 31 to September 1. On the sidelines of the summit, these leaders held bilateral meetings with Chinese officials, including President Xi Jinping. At the meeting with Prime Minister Sharif, President Xi affirmed [China's support](#) for Pakistan's unity, developmental priorities, and national strength. [China's press release](#) on the meeting between PM Oli and President Xi indicates that Nepal is supportive of the Global Development Initiative (GDI), the Global Security Initiative (GSI), and the Global Civilisation Initiative (GVI) put forth by China. The Nepali Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Badri Pandey, [dismissed](#) this assertion from China, and affirmed that no such issue or topic was brought up or discussed during the meeting. In Tianjin, President Muizzu oversaw the signing of [eleven agreements](#), including Memoranda of Understanding, between the Maldives and China, with the goal of furthering

bilateral cooperation across sectors, such as capacity building, economic development, infrastructure, and renewable energy.

China is keen on expanding its presence in South Asia via ideological and economic projects such as GDI, GSI, and BRI, however, the countries in the region seem to be more cautious.

Other Developments

[Sri Lanka seeks Chinese loans in Yuan instead of USD for infra project](#)

[Bangladesh closes 3 land ports to India after New Delhi halts exports](#)

[Bangladesh wants to purchase 12 J-10C fighter jets from China](#)

[Bangladesh Army Chief Waker-uz-Zaman discusses strategic cooperation with China](#)

[India Announces 1,000 Scholarships for Afghanistan Students](#)

[Pakistan and Armenia formally establish diplomatic relations](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

After long uncertainty, on [August 29](#), Thailand's Constitutional Court dismissed Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra for an ethics violation [following her suspension](#) in July after a leaked phone call between her and former Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen emerged. Since the announcement, the ruling Pheu Thai party is still governing in a caretaker capacity with Thailand's acting Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai at the helm aiming to negotiate with the largest opposition party, the People's Party, to secure backing. However, once the People's Party announced that they would support conservative tycoon Anutin Charnvirakul, Pheu Thai announced that they would dissolve the parliament on September 3.

The dismissal of Paetongtarn Shinawatra from her role as Thailand's Prime Minister has triggered significant political instability, creating a power vacuum that multiple parties are now vying to fill. In response, Pheu Thai has advocated for the dissolution of parliament, aiming to reset the political landscape through fresh elections. This manoeuvre not only seeks to preserve the party's influence but also opens the door for Thaksin Shinawatra, the family's patriarch, to reassert himself politically.

The violent anti-government protests against a range of cost-of-living issues further disrupted Indonesia, making this Indonesia's worst civil unrest in years. The riots are the culmination of months of economic and political frustration. Protesters claim taxes and inflation are making life impossible for many. Organisers have been demanding that the minimum wage be raised in accordance with inflation rates. The [catalyst of the violence](#) on August 28 was a result of a motorcycle taxi driver being run over and killed by police. The unrest has stung foreign investors who had been increasing their holdings of Indonesian assets. The country's benchmark share index fell 2.4% in the first five days after the protests began, while the rupiah currency slumped 1%, making them the worst performers in Asia over that time.

The wave of violent protests that have swept across Indonesia is being seen as a major test for President Prabowo Subianto with expectations to address shortcomings of his economic agenda.

Other Developments

[Vietnam celebrates 80th independence day with a sense of jubilation](#)

[India - Thailand Joint Military Exercise Maitree - XIV Commences In Meghalaya](#)

[Singapore PM Lawrence Wong arrives in India on three-day official visit](#)

East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

From August 31 to September 1, [China hosted the 25th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Plus \(SCO+\) in Tianjin](#). The meeting was attended by leaders of the 10 SCO member states, representatives from observer states, dialogue partners, and guest countries, as well as heads of international organisations, including UN Secretary-General António Guterres. China's President, in his address, noted that the world of today is in a new period of turbulence and transformation, with global governance at a crossroads. He urged attending countries to work towards upholding the principle of peaceful coexistence and strengthening confidence in win-win cooperation. Mr. Xi also reaffirmed China's commitment to building a more just and equitable global governance system and advancing a community with a shared future for humanity, and proposed the Global Governance Initiative (GGI). The initiative, as he asserts, will focus on key principles, such as ensuring equal sovereignty for all countries regardless of size, strength, or wealth in decision-making and benefits; adhering to international law; practising multilateralism; adopting a people-centred approach; and prioritising real, coordinated actions to achieve tangible outcomes.

In a world that witnesses a grave decline of the established Western-led global order, the SCO summit that brought about large representation from Africa, Central Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia supported a call for a new, more democratic, just, and equitable global governance framework. While China's message of strengthening trust and working together for global reforms has received positive sentiment, its realisation may encounter headwinds due to internal differences between members.

On August 29, [Japanese Prime Minister Mr. ISHIBA Shigeru met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi](#) during his visit to Japan. Following their discussions, the two leaders issued the Japan-India Annual Summit Joint Statement and the Japan-India Joint Vision for the Next Decade, and held a joint press conference. They reaffirmed their commitment to advancing the Special Strategic and Global Partnership, noted the progress made since 2014, and committed to leveraging their strengths to co-create solutions for future socio-economic challenges. The two sides, while welcoming the revision of the 2008 Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation, discussed progress on transferring the UNICORN system to the Indian Navy and launching the Japan-India Economic Security Initiative to strengthen supply chain resilience. Highlighting and celebrating the early achievement of Japan's 5-trillion-yen investment target, the two sides agreed on the new goal of 10 trillion yen, with the focus of cooperation

expanding into semiconductors, AI, startups, and space. They also announced agreements on hydrogen, ammonia, the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM), and a Next-Generation Mobility Partnership while reaffirming their commitment to the high-speed rail project. The meeting also launched the Japan-India Human Resource Exchange Initiative and reiterated their shared responsibility for FOIP and the Quad.

As established alliances face uncertainty, Japan and India are strengthening their partnership, which so far has largely been limited to a comprehensive relationship with deeper engagement in defence, economic cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges.

Other Developments

[Leaders of China, Russia, North Korea and Iran gather in Beijing for huge military parade in challenge to the West](#)

[China drilling for oil and gas inside Taiwan's exclusive economic zone](#)

[South Korea factory activity shrinks for 7th month on higher US tariffs, PMI shows](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On August 29, the US Department of State announced that it would “deny and revoke visas” of [members of the Palestinian Authority \(PA\)](#) and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). This is likely to impact Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' attendance at the UN General Assembly Session to be held in New York in September 2025. The US called upon the Palestinian Authority and the PLO to reject terrorism and stop pursuing unilateral recognition of a “hypothetical state”. Palestinian Authority expressed "astonishment" at the US's decision and urged Washington to [reinstate President Abbas's visa before the UNGA](#), where Western countries such as France, Canada, Belgium, the UK, and Australia are scheduled to formally recognise a Palestinian state.

After Hamas's October 2023 terror attack on Israel, Washington and Tel Aviv clearly oppose a two state-solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Amidst stalled nuclear dialogue between Iran and the US, on August 28, 2025, the E3 (Britain, France, and Germany) launched a 30-day process that could activate the UN's [“snapback sanctions” mechanism](#) as part of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) aimed at curbing Iran's nuclear programme. On its part, Iran described the E3's decision as "illegal and regrettable" but reaffirmed its intent to continue dialogue with them. [China and Russia rejected European moves](#) to impose UN sanctions on Iran.

E3, through its decision to move for the UN's punitive snapback sanctions, intends to exert maximum pressure on Iran to re-engage with the US regarding its nuclear program and to cooperate fully with the IAEA.

Other Developments

[Iran says US missile demands block path to nuclear talks](#)

[Turkey severs economic ties with Israel, closes airspace to gov't flights, arms shipments](#)

[Will a US-backed economic zone incentivise Lebanon to disarm Hezbollah?](#)

[UK still intends to recognise a Palestinian state, David Lammy to tell MPs](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [August 28](#), Kazakhstan and Tajikistan signed the Treaty on Friendship, Good-Neighbourliness and Cooperation for the Development of Central Asia in the 21st Century during Kazakh Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Murat Nurtleu's visit to Dushanbe. According to the Kazakh Foreign Ministry's press service, the implementation of the treaty's provisions will provide a powerful impetus for strengthening mutually beneficial and comprehensive regional partnerships.

The signing of the treaty has been done with the intention to deepen regional cooperation to build resilience and autonomy against geopolitical shifts that the countries faced after the Ukraine War.

On [September 1](#), the 25th meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State was held in Tianjin, under the chairmanship of the Chinese President Xi Jinping. It was the largest meeting in the bloc's twenty-five-year history. [During the meeting](#), Central Asian leaders laid out their strategic priorities and called for further reform of SCO institutions and expansion of its dialogue partners. Following the meeting, 24 documents were approved, including the Tianjin Declaration, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Development Strategy until 2035, as well as a number of thematic statements. Following the Council of Heads of States, there was a "SCO Plus" meeting on the topic "Turning Multilateralism into Action, Ensuring Regional Security, and Promoting Sustainable Development".

The outcomes of the Tianjin Declaration were overshadowed by the powerful visuals of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visit to China after five years and his interaction with President Putin and Xi, giving the summit a largely performative character. However, for smaller member nations, this meeting provided an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to regional cooperation and alignment with the major powers in the bloc.

On the sidelines of the 25th meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State, Pakistan and Armenia formally established diplomatic relations. On August 31, at a formal event in Tianjin, Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Mohammad Ishaq Dar, and Armenia's Foreign Minister, Ararat Mirzoyan, exchanged a Joint Communiqué, thereby officially launching bilateral relations between the two nations. This move came just a day after Pakistan hinted at recognising Armenia's sovereignty, over 30 years after Armenia declared independence in 1991.

Armenia's change in relation with Pakistan highlights a potential challenge to India's growing strategic partnership with Armenia and reinforces the need for India to counterbalance the Turkey-Azerbaijan-Pakistan alliance.

Other Developments

[Azerbaijan Claims India Blocked Its SCO Full Membership Bid Over Pak Support](#)

[Central Asia as a strategic bridge between East and West: Discussion on EU-Central Asia Cooperation at the Bled Forum in Slovenia](#)

[Xi urges China, Tajikistan to deepen alignment of development strategies, promote cooperation in various fields](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

On September 1, 2025, the ships of the Indian Navy's First Training Squadron (1TS) – INS Tir, INS Shardul, and CGS Sarathi – [arrived](#) at Port Victoria, Seychelles, as part of their long-range training deployment in the Southwest Indian Ocean Region. During the port call, the senior officer will engage with key dignitaries from the Government of Seychelles, senior officers of the SDF, and officials from the Indian High Commission. The visit includes professional exchanges, cross-deck visits, and training interactions between the two navies. This deployment marks the third visit of Indian Navy ships to Seychelles in 2025, underlining the growing bilateral maritime engagement. It is closely aligned with India's broader MAHASAGAR vision for fostering security and cooperation across the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Seychelles is a critical maritime partner in the Western Indian Ocean for India. The visit – the third in 2025 – shows sustained momentum in defence engagement, not just symbolic goodwill.

Indian Naval warships INS Tamal and INS Surat [successfully concluded](#) their port call at Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, further bolstering maritime cooperation between the two nations. As part of the visit, both warships conducted a Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with the Royal Saudi Naval Force (RSNF) Corvette HMS Jazan before resuming their deployment. During the stay in Jeddah, Indian Navy personnel engaged extensively with counterparts from the RSNF and the Saudi Border Guard. Discussions centred on addressing non-traditional security challenges in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean Region, with both sides emphasising the importance of joint operations and enhanced information sharing.

The deployment of INS Tamal and INS Surat demonstrates India's ability to project naval power and remain a net security provider for the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). It also signals India's commitment to bilateral partnerships beyond South Asia, positioning the Indian Navy as a credible maritime partner from the Arabian Sea to the Red Sea.

Other Developments

[14th edition of the India-Thailand joint military Exercise MAITREE-XIV is scheduled from September 1 to 14, 2025](#)

[Pakistan and Bahrain have agreed to boost cooperation in naval training and regional maritime security operations](#)

[India and the USA are scheduled to hold the 21st edition of the Joint Military Exercise Yudh Abhyas 2025 from 1st to 14th September 2025](#)

[INS Kadmatt participated in Papua New Guinea's 50th Independence Day celebrations](#)



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