



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



INDIA'S PROXIMITY ARCHIVES

October 1, 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:

South Asia: On September 29, 2025, the Prime Minister of Japan, Ishiba Shigeru, held a summit meeting with Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake. Source: [MOFA Japan](#)

East Asia: China's Premier of the State Council, Li Qiang during his meeting with the DPRK Foreign Minister, Choe Son Hui in Beijing on September 29, 2025. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China](#)

West Asia: US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met at the White House on September 30, 2025. Source: [Official X Handle/PM of Israel](#)

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South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

Anura Kumara Dissanayake, the President of Sri Lanka, [visited Japan](#) from September 27 - 30 and met Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba. A press release quoted Prime Minister Ishiba expressing his desire to strengthen cooperation in the realisation of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” and further develop the “Comprehensive Partnership” with Sri Lanka. Under the Official Security Assistance (OSA) agreement, Japan has committed to providing [ten surveillance drones](#), valued at around 500 million yen, to the Sri Lankan navy. President Dissanayake also held meetings with [Defense Minister Nakatani](#) and [JICA President Tanaka Akihiko](#).

Japan has a keen interest in safeguarding the Indo-Pacific region; Sri Lanka's geostrategic position renders it an important regional player. This new agreement will further fortify the long-standing relations between Japan and Sri Lanka and will subsequently help secure supply chains traversing the Indian Ocean.

Afghanistan experienced a widespread [Internet outage](#) beginning September 29, shortly after the Taliban regime began cutting fiber-optic cables in several provinces, resulting in regional disruptions. The Taliban government has initiated measures related to morality, resulting in the disconnection of various networks. According to a September 26th post on X by Haji Zahid, a local Taliban spokesman in Balkh province, the ban was enacted by their leader, Haibatullah Akhundzada, “to prevent immoral activities.” The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has called on Taliban authorities “to immediately and [fully restore](#) nationwide Internet and telecommunications access.”

The expansion of Taliban control over the social lives of the populace under the guise of Islamic Law is endangering social stability, which may well result in a renewed regional crisis.

Prime Minister Shabaz Sharif and COAS Munir visited Washington while on en route to New York for the UNGA [and met](#) with President Trump on September 25. The visit was subsequent to Field Marshal Munir's two visits to the US in the past two months. The meeting was close-door and lasted for an hour. Subsequent to the bilateral discussions, Prime Minister Sharif, during his UNGA address, commended President Trump's active role in [facilitating a ceasefire](#) between India and Pakistan in May, a claim that India has refuted. Moreover, he nominated Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize, stating that Trump is “a man of peace.” In its 2025 [Fiscal Transparency Report](#), issued on September 26, the US Department of State recommended that Pakistan

implement parliamentary or civilian public oversight of its defense and intelligence budgets, deeming it a crucial measure to enhance fiscal accountability and transparency.

The recent improvement in relations between the US and Pakistan appears primarily transactional, as the US administration maintains its traditional scepticism towards Pakistan.

Other Developments

[US citizen released by Taliban after nine-month detention](#)

[China, Russia, Iran, Pakistan oppose reestablishing military base in Afghanistan](#)

[Nepal imposes travel ban on ousted PM Oli over protest violence](#)

[India announces 2 cross-border Rail Links with Bhutan](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [September 30](#), Thailand's Foreign Minister, Sihasak Phuanketkeow, confirmed that the Thai government is not closing the door to negotiations with Cambodia aimed at resolving the long-standing border dispute. Addressing Parliament during a policy briefing, Sihasak acknowledged that resolving the dispute between the two nations would be a formidable task, stating that the strategy must involve transcending the existing conflict. The Foreign Minister outlined the three key areas Thailand would be seeking to negotiate once talks begin: establishing a permanent ceasefire, demining and removing heavy weapons from the disputed areas, and cracking down on transnational crime to bring calm and stability to the border region.

Thailand's Foreign Minister Sihasak Phuanketkeow's statement on September 30 signals a strategic pivot in Bangkok's approach to the Cambodian–Thai border crisis, reflecting both domestic and regional geopolitical pressures. Whether these talks materialise – and succeed – will depend on both sides' willingness to compromise and the role of external mediators. The situation remains fragile, with military actions and nationalist rhetoric still potent forces on both sides.

On [September 30](#), the Pentagon awarded a contract to upgrade the Philippine Navy's primary base near the South China Sea to support small boats and unmanned surface vessels. New Mexico-based contractor Ace Builders, Inc. was selected last week for a \$975,000 design-build project of a small boat maintenance facility at Naval Detachment Oyster Bay in Western Palawan. The project was initially announced in May to increase the Philippine Navy's sustainment capabilities amid operational challenges in the South China Sea. Documents released in recent months have noted that the facility should be able to support Philippine Navy unmanned surface vessels.

The recent award represents the latest instalment in a broader series of U.S.-funded military infrastructure initiatives in the Philippines, aimed at reinforcing Manila's strategic posture in response to escalating Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea. This development underscores Washington's intensifying efforts to deepen defence and security cooperation with the Philippines, a key treaty ally, as part of its broader Indo-Pacific strategy.

Other Developments

[Unrest in Philippine military? Ire of old guard could spell trouble for Marcos](#)



[ASEAN readies new trade deals for 'future without US](#)

[Relatives weep for scores of missing children after deadly Indonesia school collapse](#)

[Meeting on FMR, Myanmar border fencing inconclusive](#)

East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

On September 29, Li Qiang, the Premier of the State Council of China and Choe Son Hui, the Foreign Minister of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), [met in Beijing](#). The agenda of the meeting was to expand discussions on various areas for deepening and developing China-DPRK relations on common grounds as agreed upon by President Xi and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in early September. Mr Li Qiang reiterated China's commitment to maintaining close exchanges and interactions at all levels and pursuing cooperation across various fields with the DPRK to achieve shared interests and developmental goals. He even expressed gratitude for North Korea's consistent support on matters concerning China's core interests and major concerns. Choe Son Hui reciprocated similar sentiment for cooperation between the two countries for mutual development and shared interests, noting that North Korea fully supports China's vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind, the four global initiatives proposed by Chinese President Xi, along with China's stance on core issues, including Taiwan, Xinjiang, Xizang, and Hong Kong.

China and North Korea's ties have been inconsistent, beginning with strong cooperation during the Korean War and the 1961 Friendship Treaty, but later strained over North Korea's nuclear program, where China even supported the imposition of UN sanctions in 2017. However, as China-US rivalry has intensified over the years in the region, China prioritises Kim's regime stability in North Korea and leveraging its strategic fear against Western Alliances to gain some ground in the region against the US.

On September 25, South Korea's Minister of Foreign Affairs Cho Hyun met his Australian counterpart, Minister Penny Wong, to discuss [bilateral relations](#) and regional developments. The South Korean leader emphasised the active high-level exchanges that have been happening between the two countries since the new administration reflects close strategic communication, which will be critical in advancing bilateral cooperation across areas, including defence. Australian Minister Wong, noting South Korea as Australia's most important partners, expressed her hope for deeper cooperation and strategic communication on regional issues.

Australia has been actively engaging with countries such as South Korea and Japan to strengthen cooperation and enhance preparedness against shared regional threats in the Indo-Pacific.

Other Development

[Honouring commitments with concrete actions and jointly writing a new chapter in Global Climate Governance](#)

[In the race to attract the world's smartest minds, China is gaining on the US](#)

[Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs AKAHORI's attendance at the United Nations Security Council high level open debate on "Artificial Intelligence and International Peace and Security"](#)

[The conservative hardliner who could become Japan's first female PM](#)

[Taiwan seeks bigger tech presence in India as US demand rises, trade body chief says](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

US President Donald Trump and Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met at the White House on September 30. President Trump announced a [20-point peace plan for Gaza](#) that called for its redevelopment and turning it into a deradicalised terror-free zone that would pose no threat to its neighbours. The plan stipulates that Gaza will be governed by a temporary transitional government led by a technocratic, apolitical Palestinian committee, supervised by an international transitional body. This body, known as the "Board of Peace", will be chaired by President Trump, with other members, including former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and others. The Palestinian Authority and the [Arab-Islamic world welcomed the Gaza peace plan](#) and affirmed their confidence in President Trump's ability to find a path to peace.

The US peace plan for Gaza presents Hamas with an "existential dilemma", since the terror group will have to decommission its weapons and dismantle its infrastructure above and below ground. It remains to be seen if Hamas shows a willingness to accept such a plan.

On September 29, the UAE's Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York. UAE warned Israel that Arab-Israeli normalisation ([Abraham Accords](#)) [would be hindered](#) if Israel annexed the West Bank (Judea and Samaria). Abu Dhabi also urged Israel to engage constructively with President Trump's Gaza peace plan.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces pressure from conservatives to apply Israeli sovereignty to Judea and Samaria (West Bank) as the ancient Biblical land of the Jews. Nevertheless, this land is intended to be part of an eventual Palestinian state, and the UAE's warning to Israel not to annex the West Bank may serve as a deterrent for the present.

Other Developments

[PM of India welcomes President Trump's Peace Initiative on Gaza Conflict](#)

[Tony Blair's return to Middle East diplomacy reopens old wounds and new doubts](#)

Central Asia

by

Divya Rai

Deputies in Kyrgyzstan's parliament voted on September 25, 2025, [to dissolve parliament](#), paving the way for early parliamentary elections. The vote passed overwhelmingly with 84 votes in favour, 5 abstentions, and 1 absence. Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov has five days to set the date for snap parliamentary elections, which are expected to be held on November 30, 2025. The decision to dissolve parliament was motivated by concerns about the logistical and administrative challenges posed by holding parliamentary elections in November 2026, which would be very close to the presidential elections scheduled for January 2027. Additionally, the electoral system has changed from a mixed system (both party lists and single-mandate districts) used in 2021 to a fully single-mandate district system, with all 90 MPs to be elected from single-member districts in the upcoming elections. Until the new parliament is elected, the current parliament will continue its functions.

The move is widely seen as part of President Japarov's strategy to consolidate power and strengthen his political grip ahead of the presidential elections scheduled for January 2027. Under new electoral rules that favour single-member districts and impose high financial barriers to candidacy, favour wealthy candidates and established political actors close to current power centres, especially supporters of President Sadyr Japarov.

Uzbekistan has [confirmed plans to build a large nuclear power plant](#) (NPP) featuring two 1000-megawatt VVER-1000 reactors and two smaller modular RITM-200N units at the same site in the Jizzakh region. The construction is part of an integrated approach combining large and small reactors to provide stable baseload power and balance renewable energy sources like wind and solar. The project is a cooperation with Russia's Rosatom and aims to meet Uzbekistan's sharply increasing electricity demand, which is forecasted to nearly double by 2030. The first concrete for the small modular reactors is expected to be poured in 2026, with full operational capacity of the larger plant by 2035. On the other hand, Kazakhstan is [also advancing its nuclear energy](#) plans, having held a national referendum in October 2024 where 70% of voters supported the development of nuclear energy. In 2025, Kazakhstan selected Russia's Rosatom to lead the construction of its first nuclear power plant. The project is at a survey and planning stage, with an indicative roadmap approved outlining steps for implementation, including engineering and design phases.

This dual expansion highlights Central Asia's emerging role in nuclear energy development with support from Russian technology and expertise. Both countries see nuclear power as a key

component of their future energy mix to ensure a stable, low-carbon energy supply amid increasing electricity consumption.

Other Developments

[Kazakhstan backs Trump's Gaza peace initiative](#)

[Uzbekistan and Ukraine pledge to strengthen ties during UN Assembly meeting](#)

[Uzbekistan's president, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, has issued instructions to deepen ties with the United States](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

The Indian Navy's stealth guided missile destroyer INS Imphal, currently mission-deployed in the Arabian Sea, [conducted](#) a PASSEX (Passage Exercise) with the United States Navy's USS Gridley. The exercise was part of the ongoing endeavours by both maritime powers to bolster their cooperative capabilities. It featured tactical manoeuvres, cross-deck flying operations, anti-piracy VBSS (Visit, Board, Search and Seizure) training, and an exchange of best practices, all aimed at improving naval interoperability and maritime security cooperation. Upon completion, both warships continued with their respective scheduled deployments.

The recent exercise between both the navies reflects a significant step in consolidating operational synergy and strategic trust amid the India-US tariff disputes. It also adds momentum to the evolving India-US defence partnership while complementing existing platforms such as the Quad and bilateral logistics agreements.

The Indian Navy's First Training Squadron (1TS), comprising INS Tir, INS Sujata, INS Shardul and the Coast Guard Ship ICGS Sarathi, [successfully concluded a three-day port call](#) at Mombasa, Kenya. The Indian Navy and Kenyan Navy were engaged in a wide range of professional interactions, cross-training visits and joint training exercises at harbour. The visit ended with a PASSEX (Passing Exercise) with the Kenya Navy Ship KNS Shupavu, reaffirming the strong maritime partnership between India and Kenya under the maritime visions of MAHASAGAR and BAHARI. This engagement not only strengthened naval cooperation and interoperability but also highlighted India's commitment to promoting maritime security, collective training and regional capacity building in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

The deployment reinforced the Indian Navy's commitment to capacity building, collective maritime security, and fostering enduring partnerships in the Indian Ocean Region.

Other Development

[Indian Navy has successfully achieved the first-ever mating of its Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle \(DSRV\) with foreign submarines](#)

[13th Indian Navy-South African Navy Staff Talks concluded in Cape Town from September 24 to 26, 2025](#)

[INCOIS to set up 'shore stations' for better ocean monitoring](#)



[India confirms first-ever natural gas discovery in Andaman Sea](#)



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