



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



INDIA'S PROXIMITY ARCHIVES

May 27, 2026

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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 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.

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. On May 25, 2026 China's President Xi Jinping met with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Beijing. Source: [MOFA PRC](#)
2. The Foreign Ministers of Australia, India, Japan and the Secretary of State of the United States held 11th Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi, India, on May 26, 2026. Source: [X/DrSJaishankar](#)
3. Japan's Emperor Naruhito attends a welcoming ceremony for Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo on May 27, 2026. Source: [Philippine News Agency](#)

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◇ *Afghanistan's deepening women's rights crisis.*

◇ *U.S. military strikes on Iran near the Strait of Hormuz.*

◇ *President Trump demands Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan, Qatar, Türkiye, and Jordan join the Abraham Accords.*

South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

From May 23-26, Pakistan's Prime Minister [Shabaz Sharif](#), and Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir visited China. The visit coincided with the 75th anniversary marking of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the countries. President Xi conveyed to Prime Minister Sharif that "regardless of changes in the international arena, China will consistently prioritise the advancement of China-Pakistan relations within its foreign policy towards neighbouring nations." In a meeting with [China's Foreign Minister](#) Wang Yi, Field Marshal Munir provided an update on the ongoing efforts to mediate the U.S.-Iran conflict. The [Joint Statement](#) further outlines mutual support for each other's global perspectives, advancement of CPEC Phase 2, and ongoing collaboration in security and geopolitical domains.

The last year has witnessed a surge in Pakistan's security cooperation and engagement with China, driven by its conflict with India, its role in West Asia, and its deteriorating relationship with Afghanistan.

The Taliban regime has implemented a controversial new [family law](#) in Afghanistan, addressing issues like marriage, divorce, and child marriage. One of its most contentious clauses states that a girl's silence upon reaching puberty can be construed as consent to marriage. The document contains a section addressing the [separation of girls](#) upon reaching puberty and marriage, which suggests that child marriage is permissible. The decision is being made amidst persistent international criticism levelled against the Taliban regarding the limitations imposed on Afghan women and girls since they regained control in 2021.

Since the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan, the internal security situation has seen improvement. However, human rights, especially women's rights, have significantly deteriorated due to the Taliban's extremist ideological governance model, which has led to the complete marginalisation of women from society.

Other Developments

[Nepal moves to defer LDC graduation until 2029](#)

[Government to launch Smart Border Project to make entire borders with Bangladesh and Pakistan impenetrable: HM Amit Shah](#)

[More than 500 children die in measles outbreak in Bangladesh](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [May 26](#), Philippines' President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. arrived in Japan for his first four-day State Visit. President Marcos said the visit forms part of the Philippines' broader foreign policy agenda to forge closer political ties, stronger defence and security cooperation, and more enduring economic partnerships with key regional partners. The visit began with a ceremonial meeting at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, where President Marcos Jr. was received by Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako. [During the state call](#), Marcos Jr. was conferred the Grand Cordon of the Supreme Order of the Chrysanthemum, while Philippines' First Lady received the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Precious Crown from the Emperor. In a reciprocal gesture, the Philippines conferred the Order of Lakandula with the rank of Supremo or Grand Collar on Emperor Naruhito, while Empress Masako received the Order of Gabriela Silang. Marcos Jr. is only the third world leader the Emperor has received on a State Visit since his accession to the throne in 2019. On May 28, Marcos Jr. is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Takaichi Sanae for talks expected to centre on security cooperation and shared concerns over China's expanding maritime presence. A key item on the agenda is the [General Security of Military Information Agreement \(GSOMIA\)](#), which would establish a legal framework for the secure exchange of sensitive military intelligence and pave the way for closer defence collaboration.

President Marcos Jr.'s state visit to Japan carries major geopolitical weight: it will strengthen Japan-Philippines defence cooperation, signals alignment against China's maritime assertiveness, and reinforces regional stability under the Indo-Pacific framework.

On [May 25](#), Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi hosted Singaporean Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan in Beijing for a working visit. The [two ministers reaffirmed](#) their countries' shared commitment to regional stability and the rules-based international order, while jointly calling for an immediate ceasefire in the Middle East and an end to the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz. In a statement issued the same day, Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the two ministers agreed on strengthening bilateral cooperation in emerging areas, including the green and digital economies and supply chain resilience. The ministers also held wide-ranging discussions on regional and international developments. Both sides [reaffirmed](#) the importance of international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and underscored the right to freedom of passage in international waterways. They agreed that ships and aircraft should enjoy unimpeded transit passage through straits used for international navigation.

Balakrishnan's emphasis on unimpeded transit is a strategic reminder that Southeast Asia's waterways are global commons, not arenas for unilateral control.

Other Developments

[Cambodian king pardons former opposition leader](#)

[Singaporean, Indonesian defence firms explore collaborations](#)

[Malaysia's energy supply secure despite global uncertainties, says PM Anwar](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On May 25, the U.S. military targeted Iranian missile launch sites and boats attempting to [lay mines in the Strait of Hormuz](#). Iran condemned the U.S.' violation of the ceasefire, stressing that striking targets near the contested Strait of Hormuz would [complicate efforts to end the war](#). Meanwhile, the new Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, reaffirmed the message of his predecessor, Late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, that the ["Zionist regime" \(Israel\) was approaching the end](#) of its existence and would cease to exist in 15 years. On the other hand, President Trump demanded that Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan, Qatar, Türkiye, and Jordan join the ['Abraham Accords'](#) and normalise/expand relations with Israel as part of any U.S. deal with Iran.

The U.S.' military strikes on targets in Iran demonstrates the fragile nature of the ceasefire between the two countries. It heightens the risk of renewed full-scale war between Tehran and Washington.

Amidst Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's pledge to "crush" Hezbollah, the Israeli military has [intensified its strikes on Hezbollah targets](#) in southern Lebanon. Since April 8, even as [Pakistan claimed that Lebanon was included](#) in the ceasefire between the U.S. and Iran, Israel has pounded Hezbollah with drones and rockets.

Israel's repeated military strikes against Hezbollah targets in Lebanon demonstrate another failure of the U.S.-Iran ceasefire mediated by Pakistan.

Other Developments

[Iranian delegation in Qatar as talks on US ceasefire extend](#)

[UN Security Council condemns attack on UAE nuclear plant](#)

[U.S. Aircraft Combat Losses in Operation Epic Fury: Considerations for Congress](#)

[Iran and UAE clash at BRICS foreign ministers' meeting](#)

[Board of Peace blames breakdown of ceasefire in Gaza on Hamas's refusal to disarm](#)

[Oil Price Today \(May 27\): Crude oil hovers near \\$100 amid mixed cues on Iran war peace deal](#)

Central Asia

by

Divya Rai

On May 20, the United Nations General Assembly [adopted](#) by consensus a resolution titled “Peaceful Settlement of Border Disputes.” More than [40 countries](#) co-sponsored the document presented by Kyrgyzstan jointly with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. According to Kyrgyzstan’s Foreign Ministry, the [main purpose of the resolution](#) is to share with the international community the historic achievement of the three Central Asian countries in resolving border disputes through peaceful means, including dialogue and negotiations, in accordance with the UN Charter and international law. The resolution proposes what Kyrgyz officials described as a simple and universal principle: when states face border disputes, the way forward should be peaceful, lawful, and based on dialogue.

The adoption of the resolution is another confirmation of the ability of Kyrgyzstan and its neighbours to peacefully resolve complex issues that had remained unsettled for decades.

Russian President Vladimir Putin [will pay a state visit](#) to Kazakhstan from May 27 to 29 at the invitation of Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. During bilateral talks, the two presidents are expected to discuss the current state and future prospects of Kazakhstan–Russia relations, with a focus on strengthening a comprehensive strategic partnership and allied cooperation between the two countries. The visit will also coincide with major regional economic meetings in Astana involving leaders of the Eurasian Economic Union.

Energy is one of the key issues during the visit, including increasing the transit of Russian oil through Kazakhstan. Russia is using this visit to anchor Kazakhstan deeper into its economic and political orbit amid Western sanctions pressure, while Kazakhstan plays a careful balancing act – accepting Moscow's embrace to extract economic benefits without surrendering its multi-vector foreign policy.

Other Developments

[On May 28, heads of state from EAEU member countries will participate in the Eurasian Economic Forum](#)

[Astana will host a meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

On May 26, the foreign ministers of the United States, Japan, India, and Australia [convened](#) in New Delhi for the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). The meeting reaffirms the group's longstanding "free and open Indo-Pacific" framework and introduces concrete initiatives across four pillars—maritime and transnational security, economic prosperity and security, critical and emerging technologies, and humanitarian assistance and disaster response. Under the maritime and transnational security pillar, the Quad announced the operationalisation of the Indian Ocean Region programme of the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) through the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region in Gurugram. The countries also unveiled the Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Collaboration (IPMSC) initiative, aimed at enhancing coordination and real-time maritime information sharing, with an initial focus on the Indian Ocean Region. India will host the next Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission following the inaugural edition conducted from Palau to Guam in 2025.

The Quad foreign ministers' meeting in New Delhi signals growing institutional maturity, with concrete deliverables like the IPMSC and the IPMDA, moving the grouping operational role beyond just diplomatic dialogue.

The Indian Navy successfully [concluded](#) the landmark IOS SAGAR deployment with the flag-in of INS Sunayna at Kochi on 20 May 2026, marking one of the most comprehensive multinational naval engagements in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The mission, carried out jointly with 38 personnel from 16 partner nations—Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Maldives, Mozambique, Myanmar, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor Leste, and the United Arab Emirates—underscores India's growing role as the Preferred Security Partner in the region. The deployment included port calls at Malé, Phuket, Jakarta, Singapore, Yangon, Chattogram, and Colombo, featuring passage exercises, cross-deck interactions, subject-matter expert exchanges, and coordinated seamanship evolutions. The crew also participated in the IONS Maritime Exercise IMEX 2026 Table Top Exercise at Kochi.

IOS SAGAR deployment is instrumental in enhancing interoperability and strengthening regional navies' capacity to counter non-traditional threats like piracy, illegal fishing, narcotics trafficking, and smuggling. The mission reaffirms the Indian Navy's commitment to building trusted partnerships and fostering a secure, rules-based maritime order in the IOR.

Other Development

[INS Kolkata successfully responded to a suspected piracy threat involving merchant vessel MV Mashallah 1 in the western Indian Ocean](#)

[IMO has released a statement on the resurgence of piracy in the western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden region](#)

[Fresh US strikes near the Strait of Hormuz prompted Iran to accuse Washington of breaching the ceasefire](#)



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