



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

India's Proximity Archives

February 5, 2025



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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. and Divya Rai, Research Associates. Your comments and feedback can be addressed to Sanket Joshi at sanket@dpg.org.in.

Cover Images:

South Asia: Chief Operations Officer (COO), Royal Bhutan Army (RBA) Lt Gen Batoo Tshering called on Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi on February 04, 2025. Source: [PIB](#)

Central Asia: India's Ministry of External Affairs Secretary West, Tanmaya Lal met the newly appointed Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Secretary-General Nurlan Yermekbaye on February 4, 2025. Source: [X/@MEAIndia](#)

East Asia: Japanese Foreign Minister IWAYA Takeshi and Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud held the Second Japan-Saudi Arabia Foreign Ministerial Strategic Dialogue in Tokyo. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan](#)

West Asia: US President Trump and Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu addressed a press conference in Washington DC on February 4, 2025. Source: [Official X Handle/The White House](#)

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South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

The Indian government's [Union Budget](#), presented on February 1st, allocated ₹6886 crore in grants and loans to foreign entities for fiscal year 2025-26; this represents a 37% decrease from the ₹11,035 crore allocated in the current fiscal year. The upcoming fiscal year's budget includes increased financial aid for several South Asian countries, namely Afghanistan (₹100 crore), the Maldives (₹600 crore), and Bhutan (₹1775 crore). The allocations for Bangladesh (₹120 crore), Nepal (₹700 crore), and Sri Lanka (₹300 crore) remain consistent with the previous year. India is also projected to maintain its ₹100 crore contribution to the Chabahar Port in Iran.

During an address to the Lok Sabha on February 4th, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai stated that [864.482 kilometers](#) of India's 4,096.7-kilometer border remain unfenced. According to him, the Indian government has formally [communicated](#) to the Bangladeshi government its adherence to all security protocols and agreements governing the border, encompassing both intergovernmental accords and those between the Border Security Force and the Border Guard Bangladesh. Among the impediments encountered during project completion were objections raised by the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB).

An official visit to India was undertaken by Lieutenant General Batoo Tshering, Chief Operations Officer of the Royal Bhutanese Army, from February 2nd to 5th. Meetings were held with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan. Rajnath Singh [reaffirmed India's readiness](#) to support Bhutan in capability enhancement for defence preparedness, including provisioning of defence equipment and assets to augment the capacities of Bhutan, as per its national priorities and in line with India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy. Meanwhile, the King of Bhutan, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, paid a [special visit to India](#) to attend the Maha Kumbh Mela on February 3-4.

Other Developments

[Saudi Arabia agrees to provide \\$1.2bn oil on deferred payment to Pakistan](#)

[22 security men killed in terror attacks on February 2](#)

[Don't take GSP+ for granted, says EU envoy to Pakistan](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V

On January 31, Myanmar's ruling military [extended a state of emergency](#) for another six months, just one day before the fourth anniversary of the coup. The junta intends to hold an election this year, which critics have dismissed as a sham designed to maintain the general's power through proxies. In a statement on its Telegram channel, the state-run broadcaster Myanmar Digital News said there were "still more tasks to be done to hold the general election successfully," citing the need for "stability and peace." This marks the [seventh extension](#) announced by the junta, which has struggled to suppress a nationwide uprising against its deeply repressive rule. As of now, no date has been set for the election.

On [February 3](#), Thailand's Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra said, "Former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's visit to Malaysia would bring many benefits to ASEAN". On February 2, Thaksin met Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim where they discussed several issues, including the situation in Myanmar and the state of play of cryptocurrencies. Thaksin's visit to Malaysia became possible after the Criminal Court on Friday allowed the former Thai PM to travel abroad on February 2-3, on payment of a 5-million-baht bond. PM Anwar appointed Thaksin as an [informal adviser](#) to Malaysia during its chairmanship of ASEAN this year. PM Paetongtarn said that Thaksin's meeting benefits both Thailand and Malaysia. Furthermore, she said the meeting would benefit ASEAN as Thaksin and PM Anwar focused on the situation in Myanmar, which is an important item on the agenda for Malaysia as ASEAN leader this year.

The air forces of the Philippines and the United States held two staged joint patrol and training exercises over the hotly disputed Scarborough Shoal on [February 4](#). The joint patrol and air-intercept drills over the Scarborough Shoal off the northwestern Philippines were the first by the long-time treaty allies since US President Donald Trump took office again. Philippine air force spokesperson [Maria Consuelo Castillo said](#), "The exercise aimed to enhance operational coordination, improve air domain awareness, and reinforce agile combat employment capabilities between the two air forces". In response, China said the Philippines conducted a "joint patrol" with the US in a bid to "undermine peace and stability".

Other Developments

[Thai PM to meet Xi in Beijing, attend Asian Winter Games](#)

[Singapore passes law against foreign interference in race-based organisations](#)

[Trump tariffs could benefit Malaysia-Singapore special economic zone, trade chief says](#)

[George Yeo joins Malaysia PM Anwar in meeting with informal ASEAN adviser Thaksin](#)

East Asia

by

Divya Rai

The Second Japan-Saudi Arabia [Foreign Ministerial Strategic Dialogue](#) took place on February 3, 2025, in Tokyo. This meeting was co-chaired by Japan's Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya and Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud, coinciding with the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two nations. The ministers signed a memorandum to establish a Strategic Partnership Council, aimed at enhancing cooperation across various sectors, including economy, energy, and security. They discussed the ongoing instability in the Middle East, emphasising their commitment to work together for peace and stability in the region. They also discussed ongoing cooperation in clean energy initiatives, particularly under the "Lighthouse Initiative" launched in July 2023.

China announced the imposition of a 15% [tariff on](#) imports of coal and liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the United States, effective February 10. This move is a response to President Donald Trump's implementation of a 10% tariff on Chinese imports, which was justified by the US as a measure to address trade imbalances and combat the influx of fentanyl from China. In addition to the tariffs on coal and LNG, China will also levy a 10% tariff on crude oil, agricultural machinery, and certain vehicles from the US.

Reports indicate that North Korean troops sent to support Russia's invasion of Ukraine have been [withdrawn](#) from the front lines after suffering significant casualties. Approximately 10,000 soldiers were believed to have been deployed to assist Russian forces in the Kursk region, but they have not been seen in combat for several weeks, according to South Korea's Yonhap news agency. The South Korean National Intelligence Service (NIS) [noted](#) that North Korean units ceased combat operations in the Kursk area since mid-January, likely due to heavy losses. Reports suggest that around 300 North Korean soldiers may have died, with an additional 2,700 sustaining injuries during their deployment.

Other Developments

[Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and U.S. President Donald Trump will hold their first summit talks in Washington](#)

[North Korea criticised Marco Rubio for labelling the nation a "rogue state"](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

US President Donald Trump announced during his meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington on February 4, that "the US will take long-term [ownership of the Gaza Strip](#)", undertake the dismantling of unexploded bombs and other weaponry, and foster economic development. President Trump said he spoke with several leaders about this proposal, which would bring [stability and economic prosperity to the Middle East](#). He reiterated the US's commitment to work with Israel to dismantle Hamas and restore peace in the region. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu commended Trump's willingness to "[puncture conventional thinking](#)" and pursue fresh ideas for achieving strategic objectives in the Middle East.

Further, President Trump signed executive orders that ended the US's involvement in the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), [prohibited US funding of UNRWA](#) (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East), and reimposed "[Maximum Pressure](#)" on [Iran](#) to disrupt its nuclear program.

The Six-Party Arab Consultative Meeting was held in Cairo on February 1, including Foreign Ministers of Egypt, Jordan, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, PLO, and the Arab League Secretary General. In a joint statement, the Arab nations welcomed the [Gaza ceasefire agreement and exchange of hostages](#) while rejecting any infringements on the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people through settlements, expulsions, demolitions, annexations, or displacements that threaten stability and provoke further conflict". The meeting discussed UNRWA's crucial role in the region, the need to plan and implement a comprehensive reconstruction plan for Gaza with the assistance of the international community, as well as the pursuit of a two-state solution to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Other Developments

[Saudi Arabia, India Seek to Expand Industrial Partnerships](#)

[Syria's leader Sharaa aims to restore US ties, no contacts yet with Trump administration](#)

[Saudi Crown Prince Meets with Syrian President](#)

[Syria's al-Sharaa, Turkiye's Erdogan talk Kurdish fighters, defence pacts](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

India's Ministry of External Affairs Secretary West, Tanmaya Lal met the newly appointed Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Secretary-General Nurlan Yermekbayev on [February 4](#). In a post on X, the Official Spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs, [Randhir Jaiswal said](#), "discussions focused on various avenues of cooperation in SCO" and "the visit underscores our commitment to enhancing regional cooperation, security, and trade & economic development". During his visit, Yermekbayev will also meet External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar and Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh at Hyderabad House, as per an official statement.

[In a report released by the Azerbaijani government](#) on February 4, it was confirmed that the deadly Azerbaijan Airline crash on December 25 was a direct result of damage to key flight systems caused by foreign objects. The report details that the Kazakh Ministry of Transport has found "numerous through and blind damages" on the fuselage, the tail section, and the aft part of the aeroplane, including its stabilisers. Furthermore, the investigators retrieved unidentified metallic debris that caused damage to the aircraft's hydraulic systems following "two external noises". Kazakhstan's transport ministry also published a [53-page report](#) in which it referred to "external objects" and included photographs of the plane riddled with holes. According to Kazakhstan's probe, the crew had reported to air traffic control in Russia's city of Grozny about losing a GPS signal and shortly later lost control of the plane. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has [demanded](#) that Russia admit it fired at the plane and accused Moscow of initially trying to cover up the cause of the crash, an unusually forthright accusation of his country's traditional ally.

On [February 4](#), Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev met with Turkmen Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov. Meredov also [met](#) with Kazakh Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Murat Nurtleu where they discussed the prospects of their countries' relationship, focusing on key areas such as politics, trade, energy, transport, and cultural exchanges. A major topic was expanding trade, with both sides agreeing to push efforts to reach the goal of \$1 billion in trade turnover, doubling the current trade volume, which has consistently exceeded \$500 million over the past two years. They also highlighted the significant potential for collaboration in energy and transport, emphasising the need to explore these areas.

Other Developments

[New Collaborating Centre for Nuclear Security in Tajikistan](#)

[Japan's Ishiba aims for resource partnerships with Central Asia outreach](#)

[Armenia: Council extends the mandate of the EU civilian mission for two years](#)

[The CSTO Secretary General had a meeting with the Director of the SCO RATS Executive Committee](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

The 13th Indian Navy-Royal Thai Navy [Staff Talks](#) were held in Bangkok, Thailand, co-chaired by Rear Admiral Nirbhay Bapna, ACNS (FCI), and Rear Admiral Chaksawat Saiwong, Director of the Office of Policy and Planning, Naval Operation Department of the Royal Thai Navy (RTN). The discussions centred on several key areas, including the future trajectory of technological collaboration, enhanced training programs, interoperability between the two navies, and bilateral as well as multilateral engagements aimed at collaborative pursuits in maritime security. During the visit, RAdm Nirbhay Bapna also had the opportunity to interact with Vice Admiral Tadavut Thatphitak-Kul, Deputy Chief of Staff of the RTN.

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and the Indonesian Coast Guard (Badan Keamanan Laut Republik Indonesia—BAKAMLA) [renewed their](#) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Maritime Safety and Security Cooperation for an additional three years during the 2nd High-Level Meeting held at the Coast Guard Headquarters in New Delhi on January 27, 2025. The meeting was co-chaired by ICG Director General Paramesh Sivamani and BAKAMLA Chief Vice Admiral Irvansyah, who led an eight-member delegation visiting India from January 24 to 28, 2025. Discussions at the meeting focused on enhancing operational collaboration in critical areas such as maritime search and rescue, pollution response, and maritime law enforcement.

Other Developments

[JS Bungo and JS Etajima, vessels from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force \(JMSDF\) Mine Sweeper Division 3, visited Kochi, India](#)

[Chinese ships Lan Hai 101 and Lan Hai 201 spotted in the Arabian Sea](#)

[INS Tushil was welcomed by the South African Navy Ship SAS Amatola during its maiden entry into the Indian Ocean Region](#)



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