



# Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

## India's Proximity Archives

### April 9, 2025



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Delhi Policy Group

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

[www.delhipolicygroup.org](http://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@dpd.org.in](mailto:sanket@dpd.org.in).

### Cover Images:

**South Asia:** Leaders of BIMSTEC member countries pose for a group photograph at the 6th Summit in Bangkok, Thailand, on April 4, 2025. Source: [X/@MFAThai](https://twitter.com/MFAThai)

**Southeast Asia:** Foreign Minister of Japan, H.E. IWAYA Takeshi, Secretary of State of the US, Marco Rubio and H.E. Cho Tae-Yul, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, for the trilateral Foreign Ministers meet. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan](https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/2025/04/04_01.html)

**East Asia:** European Council President António Costa, Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov, Tajik President Emomali Rahmon and Turkmen President Serdar Berdimukhamedov at the Central Asia-EU summit, on April 4, 2025. Source: [European Council](https://www.european-council.europa.eu/media/1000000/1/related/press-releases/2025-04-04-01_en.pdf)

**Central Asia:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the UAE, in New Delhi, on April 8, 2025. Source: [Official X Handle/Narendra Modi](https://twitter.com/OfficialXHandle/NarendraModi)

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## South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

During his official visit to Sri Lanka from April 4 to 6, Prime Minister Modi engaged in [bilateral talks](#) with President Anura Kumara Dissanayake. The leaders conducted a comprehensive review of cooperative efforts in connectivity, development, economics, defence, reconciliation, and fisheries. Several projects were virtually inaugurated by the two leaders after their talks, reinforcing India's pledge to aid Sri Lanka's economic recovery. Seven [agreements](#) (MoUs) were reached, covering the sectors of energy, digital technologies, defence, health, and multifaceted support in the Eastern Province. Prime Minister Modi was also conferred with Sri Lanka's [highest honour](#) for foreign dignitaries, the Sri Lanka Mitra Vibhushana Award.

On April 4th, in Bangkok, on the sidelines of the 6th BIMSTEC summit, Prime Minister Modi held meetings with Professor Muhammad Yunus, Chief Advisor to Bangladesh's interim government, and Prime Ministers KP Sharma Oli of Nepal and Tshering Tobgay of Bhutan.

Prime Minister Modi reaffirmed [India's commitment](#) to a democratic, stable, peaceful, progressive, and inclusive Bangladesh while advising against inflammatory statements that could damage bilateral relations. Furthermore, he has expressed apprehension about the safety and security of minorities within Bangladesh. During the meeting, Dr. Yunus raised, as reported by the press, the issue of Bangladesh's [extradition](#) request concerning former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and further called for renewed discussions on the Ganges water treaty and the finalisation of the Teesta water-sharing agreement. [The progress](#) of India-Nepal collaborations in infrastructure, people-to-people ties, and energy was reviewed by Prime Ministers Modi and Oli. This was the first meeting between Prime Minister Modi, Dr Yunus, and Prime Minister Oli since assuming their respective heads of state positions.

### Other Developments

[US business delegation led by Peter Haas meets Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus](#)

[11,371 Afghan nationals repatriated so far from Pakistan since end of the deadline on March 31](#)

[India and Sri Lanka conclude bilateral debt restructuring pact](#)

[No barrier to Nepal prime minister's India visit, Oli says after talks with Modi](#)

## Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

The [6<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Heads of State/Government of the member States of BIMSTEC](#) was held in Bangkok, on April 4, 2025. The 6th Summit, themed "Prosperous, Resilient, and Open BIMSTEC", focused on fostering collaboration among member States to address their shared security and developmental challenges. This was the first in-person BIMSTEC Summit in seven years. It marked a turning point with the unanimous adoption of the Bangkok Vision 2030, a comprehensive framework aimed at guiding BIMSTEC's future. Thailand's Prime Minister called for expedited negotiations for the BIMSTEC Free Trade Area (FTA), which has been under discussion since 2004. Additionally, a maritime transport cooperation agreement was signed, expected to streamline shipping routes, enhance mutual recognition of maritime documentation, and establish dispute resolution mechanisms.

After the sweeping reciprocal tariffs announced by the US on April 2, Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, the current chair of the ASEAN called for a united ASEAN response. Anwar, who is the current ASEAN chair, said in a video address on [April 7](#) that Southeast Asian countries are among those hardest hit by the new U.S. measures. Cambodia was slapped with 49% tariffs and Vietnam assessed a 46% duty. He asserted that the sweeping tariffs mark only "the beginning of greater challenges" in the external economic environment. Anwar said his trade and industry minister, Zafrul Aziz, would meet on April 10 with his counterparts from other ASEAN Member states to "formulate and align our position."

The [dramatic arrest](#) of the Philippines' controversial former president in March has resulted in Rodrigo Duterte being kept in a cell in The Hague for more than three weeks on charges of crimes against humanity for the [deadly antidrug campaigns](#) he oversaw in the Philippines. The former president is still on the ballot in elections for mayor in his home base next month, a race that political analysts say he stands a good chance of winning. A wave of sympathy for Duterte has also prompted candidates in other races to express support for him.

### Other Developments

[Philippines adds speedy warship to maritime arsenal](#)

[US tariffs will significantly impact Singapore's growth; Budget 2025 to help in short term: PM Wong](#)

## East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

[South Korea will be holding snap presidential elections on June 3](#) after the Constitutional Court removed President Yoon Suk Yeol from office for imposing martial law in December 2024 and briefly using military force against lawmakers amid political deadlock. Although the martial law lasted only six hours, it was widely seen as an authoritarian move, leading to Yoon's impeachment and arrest on insurrection charges, though he was later released. Prime Minister Han Duck-Soo is currently serving as acting president. In the high-stakes political environment with ongoing economic turmoil triggered by US tariffs and mounting geopolitical and regional tensions, Democratic Party leader Lee Jae-Myung, who narrowly lost to Yoon Suk Yeol in 2022, has emerged as the front-runner, holding 34% support as per recent polls.

[China strongly condemns the United States tariffs on all its trading partners](#), calling it a violation of WTO rules and disrupting the global economic order. Labelling the move as unilateralism, protectionism, and economic bullying, China criticises the US for weaponising tariffs to advance its interests under the guise of fairness while undermining global cooperation and the multilateral trading system. China reaffirms its commitment to openness, fair trade, and mutual development, asserting that economic globalisation and multilateralism are essential for shared progress. Emphasising that development is a universal right, China urges all countries to reject protectionism and hegemonism, uphold fairness and justice, and work together for a cooperative and inclusive global economy.

On April 3, a [trilateral meeting was held in Brussels between the Foreign Ministers of Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the US Secretary of State](#). The leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen solidarity and cooperation based on shared principles like the rule of law to enhance regional and global peace and stability. They expressed serious concern over North Korea's nuclear and missile activities, its growing military ties with Russia, and its cybercrimes, including cryptocurrency thefts funding its weapons programs, and pledged close coordination on these issues, including support for the complete denuclearisation of North Korea. The ministers also discussed regional security challenges, including unilateral attempts to alter the status quo by force, and agreed to pursue concrete cooperation on economic security.

## Other Developments

[G7 foreign ministers' statement on China's large-scale military drills around Taiwan](#)

[Japan to extend sanctions against North Korea for two years](#)

[South Korea fires 'warning shots' after North Korean soldiers' cross demarcation line](#)

[Taiwan sees hike in Chinese military activity](#)

[South Korea and Taiwan follows Japan's lead in India's semiconductor Push](#)

[MOFA Spokesperson's Commentary on Japan's Diplomatic Bluebook 2025](#)

[Tariff Effect: Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba warns US President Donald Trump over call](#)



## West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On April 8, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, [the Crown Prince of Dubai](#), Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the UAE, visited India. He met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The two sides discussed ways to further deepen ["India-UAE comprehensive strategic partnership"](#). Earlier, on April 5, India's Ministry of External Affairs informed that the UAE and India have agreed to develop an [energy hub in Sri Lanka's port city of Trincomalee](#).

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met US President Donald Trump at the White House in Washington D.C. on April 7. Despite Israel being the US's closest strategic ally, President Trump refused to commit to removing the [17 percent reciprocal tariff](#) imposed on Israeli imports. PM Netanyahu, on his part, committed to removing trade barriers and affirmed support for free and fair trade with the US.

Further, during this meeting, President Trump announced that the US and Iran would [engage in "direct" talks](#) regarding Tehran's nuclear program, scheduled to commence on April 12 in Oman. Iran, however, asserted that the [talks would be held "indirectly"](#), with Oman acting as a mediator between Iran's Foreign Minister Sayyid Abbas Araghchi and US Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff. President Trump had previously warned that if Iran failed to reach a nuclear agreement with the US, there would be direct military action against its nuclear program.

Amidst the continuing Israeli airstrikes on Gaza, reports indicated that the IDF is clearing ground and [constructing watch towers in the Palestinian enclave](#). Since March 2, Israel has refused to allow [humanitarian aid to flow into Gaza](#) until Hamas releases all remaining hostages.

### Other Developments

[Saudi Arabian foreign minister in US to plan Trump visit to kingdom](#)



## Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

Central Asia and the European Union announced a strategic partnership at the [inaugural Central Asia-EU summit](#) on April 4, focusing on transport, energy and digital projects to boost regional cooperation. The summit saw European Council president António Costa and EU Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen hold two days of talks with the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The main “deliverable” of the meeting, according to an EU [press release](#), is a €12 billion assistance package, providing assistance for expanding trade transit routes, developing the mining sector, addressing water and climate issues and promoting digital connectivity.

The [joint statement](#) issued by the leaders was mainly a 20-points of aspirations and already established areas of joint interest. While some analysts have claimed that traction could be seen, others have complimented the EU’s “Global Gateway” strategy as being an alternative to China’s Belt and Road Initiative.

US President Donald Trump’s decision on April 2, to impose tariffs on economies around the world is going to have huge consequences for Central Asia. Kazakhstan presently having the largest trade turnover with the United States among Central Asian states, was hit by a tariff of [27 percent](#). However, the more significant consequences will come because of [high tariffs on the Europe Union and China](#). Although no country in Central Asia sees the United States as its major economic partner, Trump’s trade war with the EU and China is expected to impact all Central Asian nations in one way or another. Their strong economic ties with China and the growing EU presence in the region were once seen as a strategic advantage. Now, it seems to represent a double-edged sword. Nevertheless, this also means that Trump’s tariff policy could also give Beijing certain leverage over Washington in the strategically important region.

[Recently](#), a video went viral in Central Asia in which Imangali Tasmagambetov, the head of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) said that the organization would be ready to respond if European states decided to send peacekeeping forces to Ukraine: “If such risks arise, the CSTO will be ready to offer various options for assistance within the framework provided for in the organization’s statutory documents and, of course, approved by all member states.” The statement by Tasmagambetov sparked an [online backlash](#) in

Kazakhstan and generated fears that the country might have to send troops to Ukraine in the near future.

## **Other Developments**

[One Military Alliance \(CSTO\) Monitors Woes of another \(NATO\)](#)

[Kazakhstan Presents Reforms at 150th Assembly of Inter-Parliamentary Union](#)

[Controversies and Rejections: What Future Awaits the CSTO?](#)

## Indian Ocean Region

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

On April 5, 2025, Raksha Mantri Shri [Rajnath Singh flagged off the Indian Navy's Offshore Patrol Vessel INS Sunayna](#) from Karwar, Karnataka, marking the launch of the Indian Ocean Ship (IOS) SAGAR, a flagship maritime initiative under India's "Security and Growth for All in the Region" (SAGAR) vision. The event coincided with the 10th anniversary of the SAGAR doctrine and National Maritime Day. The mission involves 44 naval personnel from nine Indian Ocean Region (IOR) nations including Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania, reflecting India's deepening commitment to regional maritime security, cooperation, and a rules-based order in the IOR. Their joint training will encompass a wide range of naval operations, including firefighting, seamanship, and engine room management, to enhance interoperability among participating nations.

The Defence Minister [also inaugurated several key infrastructure projects at the Karwar](#) Naval Base in Karnataka, worth over ₹2,000 crore, under Project Seabird. These developments include berthing and refit facilities, marine utilities, residential units, and sustainable support infrastructure. Developed under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative, over 90% of materials were sourced domestically, contributing significantly to local economic and industrial growth. This infrastructure expansion is part of a broader strategy to bolster India's naval capabilities, featuring state-of-the-art facilities to support the Indian Navy's operational requirements and reinforce India's strategic interests in the region.

### Other Developments

[The Indian government has dispatched another aid package consisting of food supplies and medicines, under Operation Brahma via INS Gharial to Myanmar.](#)

[INS Tarkash undertakes Passex with Royal New Zealand navy ship HMNZS Te Kaha](#)



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