



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

INDIA'S PROXIMITY ARCHIVES

September 10, 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: The parliament building of Nepal was set ablaze by protestors on September 10, 2025. Source: [X/@kathmandupost](#)

East Asia: President Xi Jinping addressed the virtual BRICS Summit on September 8, 2025. Source: [Official X Handle/Chinese Mission to the UN](#)

West Asia: India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Israel's Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich signed the Bilateral Investment Agreement in New Delhi on September 9, 2025. Source: [Official X Handle/Ministry of Finance GoI](#)

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Watch Points

◇ *Demonstrations in Nepal and the consequent political instability*

◇ *Israel's airstrikes in Qatar targeting Hamas leaders*

South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

Nepal is in [turmoil](#), as 22 people, primarily young, were killed starting September 8 when police shot at protestors who were calling for the eradication of corruption, nepotism, favouritism, and misgovernance. K.P. Sharma Oli, the Prime Minister of Nepal, resigned the next day due to escalating protests in Kathmandu and other parts of the country. The residences of prominent politicians including former Prime Ministers Sher Bahadur Deuba and Pushpa Kamal Dahal were targeted by the protestors. The private residence of Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and the parliament building were set ablaze by protestors. Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu has been closed. The demonstrations were initiated following a [nationwide prohibition](#) of social media and reports of a traffic accident involving a ministerial vehicle, which struck an eleven-year-old child, and then left her unattended. According to a [Nepalese Army](#) statement, it has assumed control of security in the absence of political leadership and has proclaimed a nationwide curfew commencing on September 10.

Nepal has faced political instability for decades; since 2008, it has had 14 different governments, none of which ensured sustainable development and growth. The Nepali people are growing increasingly frustrated with their leadership, but even with the government's dissolution, their political options will continue to be limited.

On September 4, Pakistan and China [executed 21 MoUs](#) and joint ventures, valued at USD 8.5 billion, and formally launched the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. The MoUs were signed between the two countries, coinciding with Pakistan's Prime Minister Shabaz Sharif's extended visit to China for the SCO summit. The MoUs cover collaboration in science, technology, IT, media, textiles, agriculture, and other fields. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met with Premier Li Qiang and participated in an investors' conference. According to Pakistan's Planning and Development Minister, Ahsan Iqbal, Pakistan and China have reached an agreement to create a consortium comprising bilateral and multilateral partners to fund the USD 7 billion [Mainline-1 railway project](#).

As part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is China's primary initiative. China's geostrategic approach to its investments, combined with Pakistan's structural weaknesses, has been detrimental to this project and has failed to yield significant developmental outcomes for the Pakistani population.

Other Developments

[Two powerful aftershocks hit Afghanistan after earthquakes killed 2,200](#)

[Due to the UNSC travel ban, the planned visit to India by the Taliban's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi was called off](#)

[Pakistan Begins Mass Deportation of Afghan Migrants Following Residency Deadline](#)

[Sri Lanka's Supreme Court has cleared a bill that seeks to abolish special privileges enjoyed by former presidents](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [September 7](#), Business tycoon and veteran politician Anutin Charnvirakul of the Bhumjaithai Party was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Thailand. His appointment marks the third change in leadership within two years, underscoring the country's ongoing political volatility. Originally a splinter faction from Thaksin Shinawatra's Pheu Thai Party in 2008, the Bhumjaithai Party has come full circle, outmanoeuvring its former parent party with the backing of the progressive People's Party during a week of intense political bargaining. The People's Party voted for Anutin on the [condition that he dissolves parliament within four months](#) to hold elections. Despite backing his premiership, the People's Party opted to remain in opposition, leaving Anutin to lead a rare minority government – a precarious position that could limit his legislative power and policy ambitions.

The Shinawatras' downfall coincides with the rise of Anutin Charnvirakul. This reflects a shift toward more conservative, technocratic leadership in Thailand. Prime Minister Charnvirakul's minority status and reliance on cross-party deals may constrain bold foreign policy moves, but it could foster a more consensus-based approach in Thailand's regional diplomacy. It could also help Thailand balance its relations with China and the U.S., and the border dispute with Cambodia.

On [September 9](#), Thailand's influential former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was sent to prison after the Supreme Court ruled his time in hospital detention was an attempt to avoid jail, a major blow for a powerful family that has dominated politics for two decades. His eight-year sentence for conflicts of interest and abuse of power was commuted to one year by the King and Thaksin was released on parole after just six months, the entirety of which he had spent in the VIP wing of a hospital claiming critical illness. The judges now said Thaksin had no severe illness and could have been treated in jail, adding both he and his doctors had intentionally prolonged his hospital stay.

The Court's finding that Thaksin faked illness to avoid jail undermines the public image of the Shinawatra family, and will have long-lasting effects on the image of his political party - Pheu Thai, especially given that in four months the new prime minister has promised to hold elections.

After serving as finance minister for more than a decade under three presidents, [Dr Sri Mulyani was suddenly removed](#) along with five ministers, a day after an abrupt Cabinet reshuffle in Indonesia. The reshuffle came in the wake of violent protests and the looting of lawmakers' homes, including hers. Some lauded Dr Sri Mulyani as a

“disciplined guardian of the state budget”, while others described her exit from Cabinet as a “credibility shock”. On September 9, she officially handed over her role to seasoned economist Purbaya Yudhi Sadewa, who held various senior government positions before helming the Indonesian equivalent of the US federal deposit insurance corporation in the past five years. Following the news of Dr Sri Mulyani’s exit on Sept 8, the Jakarta Composite Index, which measures the movement of all stocks listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange, declined two days in a row – 1.28 per cent and 1.78 per cent on September 8 and September 9 , respectively – reflecting investors’ concerns. Indonesian bonds and currency also fell, signalling a sell-off by wary investors.

The government's efforts to ease public discontent over the controversial regional budget are undermined by the dismissal of Dr. Sri Mulyani, a key figure trusted by foreign investors. Her removal signals instability and may erode investor confidence. The protests stem from inadequate planning and funding of Prabowo’s social programs – particularly meal initiatives – which remain unresolved.

Other Developments

[Brunei, Vietnam strengthen ties with growing trade, new cooperation areas](#)

[Vietnamese State leader meets Russian President in China](#)

[US sanctions billion-dollar cyber scam networks in Myanmar and Cambodia](#)

East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

On [September 8, China's President Xi Jinping addressed the Virtual BRICS Summit](#), where he called for "Forging Ahead in Solidarity and Cooperation". Emphasising the persistent and pervasive practices of hegemonism, unilateralism, and protectionism, Xi argued that BRICS countries, as the vanguard of the global south, should promote the spirit of openness, inclusiveness, and win-win cooperation to jointly defend multilateralism, the multilateral trading system, and build a community with a shared future for humanity. He also expressed China's willingness to work with member states to implement the Global Development Initiative, through Belt and Road cooperation, along with deepening collaboration in other areas, including business, finance, science, and technology.

China has been consistently emphasising agenda points such as Global South solidarity, global governance reforms, and safeguarding the international economic and trade order to position itself within the Developing category in the Developed-Developing divide. This is particularly so because China's global status remains unsettled, as many argue that, given its economic clout, it can no longer be considered a developing country.

[On September 5, the 12th Japan-Australia 2+2 Ministerial Meeting](#) was held in Tokyo. Japan's Foreign Minister, IWAYA Takeshi and Defence Minister, NAKATANI Gen, along with Australia's Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Richard Marles and Foreign Minister Penny Wong, issued a Joint Statement emphasising strengthened Japan-Australia security cooperation as a central pillar of coordination in the region. The year 2026 marks the 50th anniversary of the Australia-Japan Basic Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, and the two countries have decided to enhance bilateral security through operational cooperation, joint exercises, and liaison officer exchanges, as well as defence industry collaboration. The leaders welcomed Australia's decision to upgrade with a Japanese Mogami-class frigate and collaboration for AUKUS "Pillar 2" for advanced capability projects. The two sides also agreed to strengthen cooperation on economic security, supply chain resilience, critical minerals, energy, undersea cables, strategic communication, cybersecurity, and information security. They even deliberated numerous regional and international issues and expressed their stance on unilateral changes to the status quo in the East and South China Seas, North Korea's nuclear and missile activities, and Russia-North Korea military cooperation.

Japan and Australia are continuously strengthening their bilateral relationship to counter common threats and further their national interests in the region.

Other Developments

[Trilateral Quantum Cooperation](#)

[North Korea conducts its final ground test of a solid-fuel engine for long-range missiles](#)

[Taiwan records 27 PLA aircraft, 7 PLAN vessels around its territory](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On September 9, the Israel Defence Forces [conducted an airstrike against Hamas](#) leaders in Doha, Qatar, where the Palestinian militant group has its political base. This military strike took place following a [terror attack in Jerusalem by Hamas](#) on September 8, which resulted in at least six fatalities and several injuries. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu informed that the IDF's action against Hamas "terror chiefs" based in Qatar was an independent operation for which [Israel takes full responsibility](#). Qatar condemned Israel's attack on residential buildings housing Hamas Political Bureau members as "cowardly" and a flagrant "violation of international law" that poses a serious threat to Qatar's security and safety.

While the US has denied any involvement in Israeli military strikes against Hamas in Qatar, such strikes demonstrate US-Israeli cooperation in dismantling Hamas's terror network across the Middle East.

A deal has been reached between the [International Atomic Energy Agency \(IAEA\) and Iran](#) regarding the resumption of inspections at the nuclear sites of Iran that were attacked by the US and Israel in June 2025. This development comes in the face of the threat that the UN Security Council would activate "snapback sanctions" against Iran for failing to comply with JCPOA 2015.

The agreement between Iran and the IAEA to resume nuclear site inspections illustrates that Iran has no choice but to engage in dialogue with the West in the face of the possibility of snapback sanctions.

A 'Bilateral Investment Treaty' (BIT) was signed on September 8 in New Delhi by India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and [Israel's Finance Minister](#) Bezael Smotrich. It is expected that the agreement will provide greater certainty and protection for investors, facilitate the growth of trade and mutual investments by ensuring minimum standards of treatment, and provide an independent dispute resolution mechanism through arbitration.

The Bilateral Investment Treaty between India and Israel highlights the investment-friendly environment in both countries, as well as their desire to deepen cooperation in the fields of cybersecurity, defence, innovation, and high-technology.

Other Developments

[UAE warns White House that Israeli annexations could unravel Abraham Accords](#)

[Israel orders Gaza City residents to leave as military prepares to occupy city](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [September 8](#), the 3rd trilateral consultations between India, Iran, and Armenia, co-chaired by Mr. Anand Prakash, Joint Secretary (PAI); Mr. Mohammad Reza Bahrami, Director General for South Asia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran; and Ms. Anahit Karapetyan, Head of the Asia-Pacific Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, was held in Tehran. The sides emphasised expanding and deepening cooperation, especially in the fields of connectivity, including the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and Armenia's "Crossroads of Peace" project. The parties also reviewed and highlighted initiatives aimed at further developing relations in economic, trade, and other areas of mutual interest.

This trilateral dialogue is more than a diplomatic formality – it's a blueprint for reshaping connectivity, influence, and alliances across South Asia, the Middle East, and the Caucasus. It reflects a shared desire among mid-sized powers to assert agency in a world increasingly defined by great-power competition.

During President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's visit to China, [Kazakhstan concluded over US\\$ 1.5 billion worth of oil and gas projects](#) with Chinese companies. At a meeting with oil and gas workers at the president's office, Tokayev stated that several "beneficial" bilateral agreements were concluded during the visit. On September 5, the Kazakh President said, "New strategic projects are planned". During the talks with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, on September 2, Tokayev [discussed](#) "in detail issues of cooperation in the nuclear industry, including plans to bring in Chinese technologies and train qualified specialists".

The surge in Kazakhstan-China deals reflect a strategic deepening of bilateral ties, driven by mutual economic interests and regional ambitions. As such, Kazakhstan's expanding economic and strategic ties with China are reshaping the geopolitical balance in Central Asia, particularly in relation to Russia.

Other Developments

[Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan Agree on Joint Water and Energy Measures](#)

[Russia's Gasoline Export Ban: Limited Shock, Broader Lessons for Central Asia](#)

[Armenia Prepares for U.S. Talks on Landmark Transit Corridor to Azerbaijan](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

INS Surat [conducted a passage exercise](#) on September 7 with the Italian Navy's Andrea Doria-class destroyer ITS Caio Duilio. The exercise, held under the command of the Force Commander of Operation ASPIDES, Rear Admiral Andrea Quondamatteo, was carried out in close coordination between the Indian Navy and European Union forces. The drill featured coordinated tactical manoeuvres, seamanship evolutions, communication exercises, and cross-deck helicopter operations, including aircraft tracking. The interaction strengthened operational familiarity, facilitated best-practice exchanges, and reinforced bilateral maritime interoperability before both ships resumed their planned deployments.

The engagement between the Indian Navy and the Italian Navy aligns closely with Operation ASPIDES' core mandate: securing freedom of navigation by protecting merchant shipping and boosting maritime awareness in high-risk sea lanes like the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea, Sea of Oman, and the northwest Indian Ocean.

INS Trikand, the Indian Navy's stealth frigate, [arrived](#) at Alexandria, Egypt, on September 1, 2025, during her ongoing deployment to the Mediterranean Sea. During the port call at Alexandria, INS Trikand will also engage in a host of activities to enhance bilateral and multilateral cooperation. These include discussions with senior military officials, cross-deck visits, cultural exchanges, and sports fixtures to promote people-to-people connections. The ship, alongside the contingents from the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force, participated in Exercise Bright Star 2025, hosted by Egypt from September 1 to 10. The exercise co-hosted by US Central Command spans across the air, land, and sea domains and saw participation from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Greece, Cyprus, and Italy.

The presence of INS Trikand in the Mediterranean and participation in Exercise Bright Star 2025 are strategically important for India, as they align with its broader interests extending beyond the Indian Ocean into the Mediterranean region, which is a critical global connectivity corridor. It extends India's traditional Indian Ocean orientation and improves its influence on key global sea lanes and helps counterbalance competing actors such as China and Turkey.

Other Developments

[Singapore is set to buy four Boeing P-8A maritime patrol aircraft](#)

[The launch ceremony of 11th ACTCM Barge was held on September 8](#)

[IMO-led Djibouti Code of Conduct/Jeddah Amendment \(DCoC/JA\) launched a new working group with the aim to streamline naval cooperation in the region](#)



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