

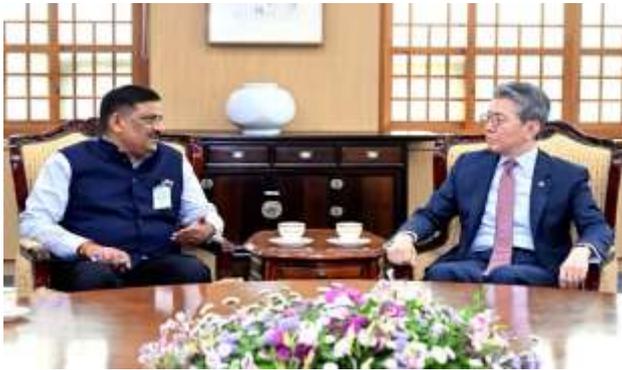
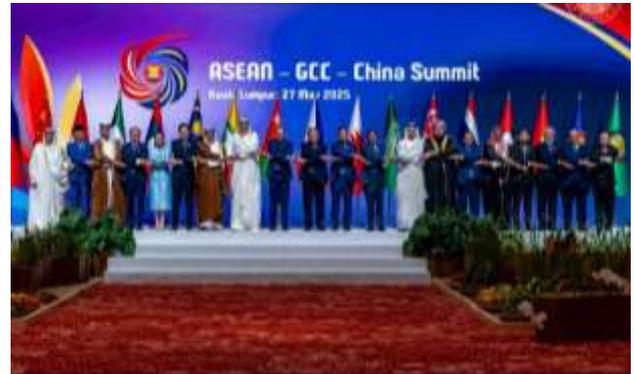


**Delhi Policy Group**  
Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



# India's Proximity Archives

May 28, 2025



**Volume III, Issue 22 | May 28, 2025**

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

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

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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](mailto:sanket@dpg.org.in).

### Cover Images:

**South Asia:** 2nd India-Maldives High Level Core Group (HLCG) meeting was held on May 26 in New Delhi.

Source: [X/@MoFAMv](https://twitter.com/MoFAMv)

**Southeast Asia:** ASEAN-GCC Leaders together with China's Premier Li Qiang pose for a photo during the ASEAN-GCC-China Summit at Kuala Lumpur Convention Center in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on May 27, 2025. Source:

[X/@anwaribrahim](https://twitter.com/anwaribrahim)

**East Asia:** Republic of Korea, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Kim Hong Kyun met with the All-Party Parliamentary Delegation of India, led by Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Mr. Sanjay Kumar Jha. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea](https://www.mfa.gov.kr)

**Indian Ocean Region:** Consequent to the sinking of the Liberian container vessel off Kerala, the Indian Coast Guard deployed its pollution response ship ICG Ship Saksham and Dornier aircraft to monitor the area for any oil spill.

Source: [X/@IndiaCoastGuard](https://twitter.com/IndiaCoastGuard)

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## South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

Dr. Abdulla Khaleel, the Maldivian Minister of Foreign Affairs, [visited India](#) between May 25 and 27, as head the Maldivian delegation to the second India-Maldives High-Level Core Group (HLCG) meeting on May 26. A review of the progress made in implementing the India-Maldives Vision Document, with a focus on the comprehensive economic and maritime security partnership, formed the core of the bilateral discussions. Implementation of the Joint Vision was further deliberated upon, focusing on the intensification of political discourse, defense and security cooperation, development partnerships, and the expansion of trade, economic, health, and people-to-people initiatives. A bilateral meeting also took place between the Foreign Minister, Dr. Khaleel, and the External Affairs Minister of India, Dr. S. Jaishankar.

An informal [trilateral ministerial](#) meeting was held in Beijing on May 21, with the participation of Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi, and the Taliban's Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi. The press release stated that the meeting aimed to improve cooperation by strengthening communication and mutual trust. China and Pakistan reaffirmed their commitment to expanding the [China-Pakistan Economic Corridor](#) (CPEC) into Afghanistan. China affirmed its [support for Pakistan and Afghanistan](#) in maintaining their territorial integrity and sovereignty. Subsequent to the meeting, Pakistan and Afghanistan indicated their intention to enhance bilateral relations and, in principle, consented to an [exchange of ambassadors](#). In a statement, [Wang Yi expressed](#) China's approval of these developments and its commitment to providing ongoing support for improved Afghanistan-Pakistan relations. This unscheduled high-level trilateral meeting occurred amidst signs of strengthening India-Taliban relations.

Political parties and the military are urging the Bangladeshi interim government to expedite the electoral process. During an address to [officers on May 21st](#), Bangladeshi Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman stipulated that the national election should be conducted by December 2025. With respect to the establishment of a humanitarian corridor to Myanmar's Rakhine State, General Waker-Uz-Zaman stated that such a decision necessitates the authorisation of an elected government and strict adherence to established procedures. General Waker-Uz-Zaman indicated that the transfer of Chattogram port's operational control to foreign entities requires consultation

with both the public and political leaders. In a subsequent statement, the Army Headquarters confirmed the [complete cooperation](#) and alignment between the government and the military.

On May 24, representatives from various [political parties](#) convened with Chief Advisor Professor Muhammad Yunus to present their demands, primarily concerning electoral and other [reforms](#). A meeting of the National Economic Council's (ECNEC) executive committee, encompassing all [government advisors](#), was subsequently called by the chief advisor. News reports indicate that Chief Advisor Mohammad Yunus [contemplated resignation](#) under pressure, but subsequently reversed his decision. Following the meeting, he restated his stance on the upcoming election, emphasizing the [government's commitment](#) to holding elections by June 2025.

### **Other Developments**

[PM Shehbaz Sharif visiting to Türkiye, Iran, Azerbaijan and Tajikistan from May 25 to 30 to acknowledge their support during Pakistan-India escalation](#)

[Bangladesh Cancels Naval Shipbuilding Contract with India](#)

[CSTO Member States to begin sending Weapons to Afghanistan Border](#)

[Afghans can apply for Indian visas again, including investors, artists, sportspersons](#)

## Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

French President Emmanuel Macron and First Lady Brigitte Macron [arrived in Jakarta](#), on May 27, 2025, for a state visit. On the following day, French President Emmanuel Macron met Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto to discuss issues like boosting defense and trade cooperation. Indonesian Defense Minister Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin [confirmed](#) that Indonesia and France are set to sign a letter of intent to expand defense cooperation which will include the procurement of French-made Rafale fighter jets and Scorpène evolved submarines. Macron's visit to Indonesia, running from May 27 to 29, is part of a broader Indo-Pacific diplomatic tour that includes stops in Vietnam and Singapore.

On [May 24](#), Chinese Premier Li Qiang arrived in Jakarta, for a three-day official visit to Indonesia. On May 25, Chinese Premier Qiang met with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto where they discussed ways to elevate political mutual trust and strategic coordination between the two countries to a higher level. Following the meeting, the two sides signed several MoUs and reached cooperation agreements in such areas as tourism, exports of agricultural products, traditional medicine, investment, strategic commerce and media. Following his visit to Indonesia, Chinese Premier Li Qiang attended the trilateral meeting - ASEAN-GCC-China Summit in Kuala Lumpur.

Southeast Asian leaders under the aegis of ASEAN are holding their [first ever summit](#) with China and the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), as they seek to insulate their trade-dependent economies from the effect of steep tariffs from the United States. At the same time, the annual ASEAN-GCC summit took place, wherein Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, said stronger ties between the two blocs would be key to enhancing collaboration, building resilience and securing sustainable prosperity. Besides Anwar, Chinese Premier Li Qiang and the Crown Prince of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah - representing the GCC chairman - also [made opening remarks](#) before the closed-door summit, which was held after the ASEAN-GCC Summit earlier on May 27. The meeting adopted the joint statement of the ASEAN-China-GCC Summit.

## Other Developments

[US-Philippine military exercise joined by Japan and South Korea Forces](#)

[Thailand faces heavier challenges under Trump tariffs](#)

[ASEAN set to create permanent Myanmar envoy in bid to end crisis](#)

[ASEAN tilts toward China and Gulf states as Trump tariffs bite](#)

## East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

On May 26, South Korea's [Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Kim Hong Kyun met with the All-Party Parliamentary Delegation of India, led by MP Sanjay Kumar Jha](#), to discuss the recent terrorist attack in Kashmir and the regional situation. Before the meeting, Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul briefly greeted the Indian delegation. The Indian side outlined the details of the attack and the government's response, while Vice Minister Kim expressed deep concern and sympathy for the victims, reaffirming South Korea's firm stance against terrorism and its commitment to international counterterrorism efforts. He also welcomed the May 10 ceasefire between India and Pakistan and encouraged continued dialogue to promote regional stability.

[Japan welcomed the agreement between the United Kingdom and Mauritius on May 23 concerning the Chagos Archipelago](#), including Diego Garcia. UK government signed the deal transferring sovereignty of the Chagos Islands to Mauritius while securing a 99-year lease for the UK-US military base on Diego Garcia, for £101 million annually. Recognising the archipelago's strategic importance in the Indian Ocean and its role in maintaining peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific, Japan commended both governments for reaching a consensus through constructive dialogue.

[Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence \(MND\) reported a sharp increase in Chinese military activity](#) around the island. On May 27, 61 PLA aircraft sorties and multiple naval vessels were detected, many crossing the Taiwan Strait's median line and entering Taiwan's Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ). Taiwan is closely monitoring the situation and enhancing its military readiness. Defence Minister Wellington Koo emphasised the need for deterrence amid escalating threats. He noted that the Taiwanese armed forces are undergoing significant transformation, including revamped training for conscripts and officers, a focus on asymmetric warfare, and extended compulsory service.

President Lai Ching-te stressed the importance of stockpiling military supplies and preparing for prolonged conflict. The upcoming Han Kuang exercises, scheduled for July 9–18, aim to do the same, testing Taiwan's defence plans against potential Chinese aggression. This is in response to [China's efforts to enhance its capability to launch a sudden attack on Taiwan](#) by accelerating air and military operations, deploying new artillery systems, including a new

rocket system capable of striking any part of Taiwan and maintaining the heightened readiness of amphibious and air assault units.

## Other Developments

[Speech by H.E. Li Qiang Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China at the Opening Ceremony of the ASEAN-China-GCC Economic Forum](#)

[Wang Yi to Chair the Third China-Pacific Island Countries Foreign Ministers' Meeting](#)

[North Korea, China Slam Trump's 'Golden Dome' Space Shield As Global Arms Race Trigger](#)

[South Korea's Presidential Candidate Lee Jae-myung Leads in Opinion Polls](#)

[Japan-U.S. Consultation on U.S. Tariff Measures](#)

[SE Asian leaders meet China's Li and Gulf states to bolster ties](#)

[South Korea presidential candidate Lee says to restore hotline with North Korea](#)

## West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On May 23, the US and Iran concluded the fifth round of their nuclear talks mediated by Oman in Rome. Although the two sides described the talks as constructive, Oman's mediators cautioned that ["some but not conclusive progress"](#) had been made in nuclear negotiations. The Iranian government has maintained that it will not suspend its [enrichment of Uranium](#) as a condition for securing a nuclear deal with the US. Among the other obstacles to reaching a nuclear deal is Tehran's refusal to ship abroad its [highly enriched Uranium stockpile](#) and engage in discussions over its ballistic missiles programme. Amidst this, US intelligence assessment reportedly indicated that [Israel was planning to launch an attack](#) on Iranian nuclear facilities, with or without American support, if nuclear negotiations collapsed.

Reacting to this, on May 22, in a letter to the United Nations, Iran's Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi warned that Tehran would hold the US as a "participant" in any [military adventurism by Israel](#) and would adopt special measures to protect its nuclear sites from any attacks or sabotage.

On May 23, a [major shift in US policy towards Syria](#) was signalled by the issuance of the Caesar Act sanctions waiver by Secretary of State Marco Rubio to increase investments in Syria to facilitate the delivery of basic services and the reconstruction of the war-ravaged country. The European Union has also decided to lift [economic sanctions on Syria](#). Meanwhile, reports indicated that [Syria's new regime and Israel](#) are in direct contact and have held meetings on the security situation in the region.

### Other Developments

[Syria's al-Sharaa meets Erdogan in Turkiye as sanctions lifted](#)

[Arab League calls for funds to rebuild Gaza at summit in Baghdad](#)

[Iran-US nuclear talks: key points of contention](#)

## Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [May 27](#), Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif arrived in Azerbaijan for a trilateral meeting with Turkey and Azerbaijan. The meeting follows these countries' support for Pakistan during India's Operation Sindoor. The trilateral meeting is expected to focus on increased military and defence cooperation. During Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev's bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, they reaffirmed their countries' shared commitment to diversifying strategic partnership through investment in mutually beneficial avenues. The leaders reiterated that both countries had stood by each other on every occasion and would continue to do so.

On [May 23](#), Deputy speaker of the National Assembly (NA) of Armenia, Hakob Arshakyan, received Indian Ambassador Nilakshi Saha Sinha. The Deputy Speaker of the NA highlighted the high-level bilateral visits of recent years, active parliamentary cooperation, and dialogues between the foreign ministries and defense ministries of the two countries. In this context, Arshakyan described the appointment of an Indian military attaché in Armenia as an important step. According to the deputy speaker of the NA, special importance is attached to Armenia's membership in the International Solar Alliance, which is a joint initiative of India and France. He further emphasised that Armenia reaffirms its support to India on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir and "peace has no alternative".

On [May 26](#), Kazakh Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Murat Nurtleu assured of Kazakhstan's unchanged and active position in supporting multidisciplinary cooperation within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) during a meeting with SCO Secretary General Nurlan Yermekbayev. The officials reviewed the current activities of the SCO and preparations for the high-level events planned for this year, including preparations for the summit of heads of state in China.

### Other Developments

[India to host 5 Central Asian foreign ministers in June](#)

[Astana Gathers the World: Forum Elevates Kazakhstan's Diplomatic Stature](#)

[Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Zangezur Corridor: What's at stake for India?](#)

## Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

The Indian Coast Guard and Indian Navy carried out a [coordinated response](#) to rescue crew from the Liberian container vessel MSC ELSA 3, which sank off the Kochi coast on May 25, 2025. The emergency began on May 24, when MSC ELSA 3 was en route from Vizhinjam to Kochi. The vessel went down with 640 containers, including 13 with hazardous cargo and 12 containing calcium carbide. It was also loaded with 84.44 MT of diesel and 367.1 MT of furnace oil. Given potential environmental hazards, the ICG activated full pollution response preparedness, deploying its pollution response ship Saksham and using aircraft with advanced oil spill detection and mapping technology to conduct aerial surveillance and monitor the area. As of the latest reports, no major oil slick has been [detected](#), but authorities remain vigilant.

The maiden Joint Operational Sea Training (OST) of the South African Navy submarine SAS Manthatisi was [successfully completed](#) at Simon's Town, South Africa. This training was conducted by the Submarine Work Up Team under Headquarters Sea Training of the Indian Navy, in close collaboration with the Submarine OST Team of the South African Navy. This joint initiative marks a significant step in strengthening naval cooperation and interoperability between the Indian Navy and the South African Navy. The training focused on enhancing operational readiness, crew proficiency, and the sharing of best practices in submarine operations.

On May 22, 2025, the United Kingdom [signed an agreement](#) to transfer sovereignty of the Chagos Islands to Mauritius, while leasing back the key military base at Diego Garcia for £101 million a year. [Under this deal](#), Mauritius regains control over the Chagos Archipelago, but the UK and the United States will continue to have unrestricted military access to Diego Garcia, ensuring ongoing military operations, exercises, and navigation rights for both nations. The agreement also establishes a 24-nautical-mile buffer zone around Diego Garcia, prohibiting any construction or installations without UK approval. Development on the wider Chagos Islands will be jointly managed by the UK and Mauritius, and foreign security forces will be banned from the outer islands. Additionally, the UK will contribute £40 million to a trust fund to support the Chagossian community annually for 25 years. The UK government has highlighted that this deal is essential to secure the legal and operational future of the Diego Garcia base, address international legal challenges, and prevent foreign influence in the region.

## Other Developments

[10th Africa-Indian Ocean \(AFI\) Region Aviation Week is being held in Zimbabwe, from May 26-30, 2025](#)



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