



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



INDIA'S PROXIMITY ARCHIVES

January 7, 2026

Authors

South Asia:

Shreyas Deshmukh

Southeast Asia & Central Asia:

Jayantika Rao T.V.

East Asia:

Arshiya Chaturvedi

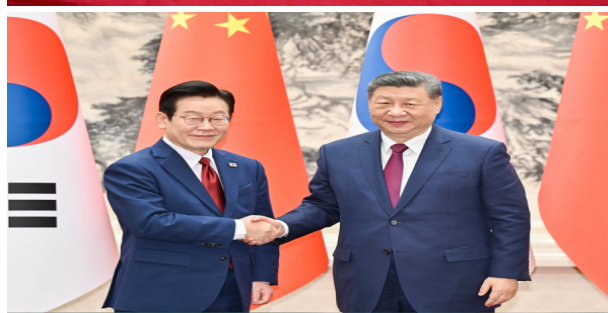
West Asia:

Sanket Joshi

Indian Ocean Region:

Divya Rai

Volume IV, Issue 1



Delhi Policy Group

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

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@dpg.org.in.

Cover Images:

South Asia: China's Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi and Pakistan Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar held the Seventh Round of China-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue in Beijing, On January 4, 2026. Source: [MOFA PRC](#)

East Asia: President Xi Jinping with President Lee Jae Myung of the Republic of Korea at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China, on January 5, 2026. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China](#)

West Asia: Indian Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi met the Commander of UAE's Land Forces, Major General Yousef Maayouf Saeed Al Hallami, in Abu Dhabi, on January 5, 2026. Source: [Official X Handle/Indian Army](#)

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Watch Points

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◇ <i>Thai-Cambodian truce under strain</i>
◇ <i>Return of Somali Piracy in the Horn of Africa</i>

South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

In Beijing on January 4, China's Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi and Pakistani Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar presided over the seventh round of the China-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' [Strategic Dialogue](#). Wang Yi used the occasion to criticise the United States' actions in Venezuela, stating that no country should assume the role of 'global police'. Mr. Dar did not comment on China's statement but did mention Pakistan's support for China's view on multilateralism. Both countries have agreed to strengthen high-level exchanges and interactions at all levels and to intensify strategic communication and action coordination, thereby promoting the development of the CPEC. Concurrently, the Pakistan Navy is [conducting](#) a Pakistan-China Joint Oceanographic research cruise in the Northern Indian Ocean.

The China-Pakistan strategic dialogue statement suggests differing priorities between the two countries. A strategic challenge could arise for Pakistan due to its strengthening ties with the US and its reliance on China.

During a visit to Pakistan on January 6, a Bangladesh [military delegation](#), headed by Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan, held discussions with Pakistan Air Force Chief Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu. Media reports indicate that the discussions addressed the potential procurement of JF-17 Thunder aircraft, in addition to strengthening operational cooperation and institutional synergy between both air forces. The integration of air defence radar systems of both nations has also been discussed. Pakistan also provided assurance of an accelerated delivery of Super Mushshak trainer aircraft, along with a comprehensive training and long-term support system to the Bangladesh Air Force.

Frequent meetings between high-ranking military officials from Pakistan and Bangladesh indicate a heightened strategic decision-making process, leading potentially to near-term implementation of decisions made during these meetings.

Other Developments

[Atrocities against minorities continue in Bangladesh](#)

[Maldives parliament passes proposed amendment to merge parliamentary and presidential elections](#)

[UN Requests \\$1.71 billion for Afghanistan humanitarian aid in 2026](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

Thai forces accused their Cambodian counterparts on January 6 of [violating](#) the 10-day-old truce by firing mortar rounds into Ubon Ratchathani province, with one soldier wounded by shrapnel and evacuated for medical treatment. In a later statement, however, the Thai military said the Cambodian side had contacted them to explain “there was no intention to fire into Thai territory”, adding that “the incident was caused by an operational error by Cambodian personnel.”

The Thai-Cambodian truce hangs by a thread, where even “operational errors” risk reigniting the border clashes, highlighting deep mistrust between the two nations.

In his [New Year's address](#), Malaysia's Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim pledged a series of reforms for the country in 2026, including vows to ramp up anti-corruption efforts. Anwar said his government would table bills in parliament to separate the powers of the attorney-general and public prosecutor – a long-debated initiative that proponents hope would make the judiciary more independent – as well as set up an ombudsman office and introduce a freedom of information law. The new push comes after former prime minister Najib Razak was handed a major prison term of 15 years in jail in the 1MDB-linked corruption case. It also comes as Anwar faces growing doubts about whether his government can deliver big institutional change in Malaysia without alienating major powerbrokers.

Anwar Ibrahim's reform pledges signal Malaysia's bid to strengthen judicial independence and restore credibility in the government after the 1MDB scandal and, more recently, former prime minister Najib Razak's 15-year conviction.

Other Developments

[Philippines arrests ex-general who called for President's ouster](#)

[Myanmar's military-backed party takes lead in first phase of polls](#)

[Anutin says China offered 20m yuan to help Thailand and Cambodia rebuild after conflict](#)

East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

On January 5, [President Xi Jinping met South Korean President Lee Jae Myung and discussed China-ROK relations](#). Xi emphasised the importance of the two countries' relationship and remarked that as friends and neighbours, the two countries should engage more closely with one another. The Chinese president also noted that China's policy towards the ROK has focused on continuity, stability, and shared progress and stressed that both sides should carry this approach forward to effectively navigate a transforming and turbulent world order. This would require enhancing mutual trust, respecting each other's chosen development paths, accommodating each other's core interests and major concerns, and remaining committed to resolving differences through dialogue and consultation. Acknowledging the longstanding and critical nature of the bilateral relationship, President Lee indicated South Korea's intent to sustain the momentum of early diplomacy in the new year to facilitate the recovery of China-ROK relations by seeking common ground and setting aside differences, while also deepening the ROK-China strategic cooperative partnership. There was no joint statement.

South Korea is a perfect example of the geopolitical dilemma of middle powers caught between great-power rivalry. Balancing its relationship with China and the US is both imperative and challenging, as the former is its most critical economic partner and the latter a major security ally.

On January 4, [Taiwan's National Security Bureau published a report on China's Cyber Threats to Taiwan](#). It observes that Chinese cyberattacks targeting Taiwan's critical infrastructure rose by 6 per cent in 2025 compared to 2024, which is a cumulative increase of 113 per cent since 2023. With an average of 2.63 million attacks a day, key sectors such as energy, emergency rescue and hospitals are experiencing the sharpest year-on-year increases. This reflects China's hybrid warfare format, wherein intensified military drills are accompanied by threats such as disinformation campaigns and cyberattacks.

By integrating cyber threats with conventional military operations, states can exert comprehensive, multi-domain pressure on their adversaries.

Other Development

[Han Zheng Meets with German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul](#)

[Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministries' Official Telephone Meeting on North Korea](#)

[India launches new e-business visa for Chinese nationals](#)

[Taiwan detects 8 sorties of Chinese PLA aircraft, 7 naval vessels around its territory](#)

[North Korea says latest missile tests involves hypersonic weapons system](#)

['Unilateral bullying': China slams US over Maduro arrest; maintains no country can act as world 'policeman'](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

Indian Army Chief [General Upendra Dwivedi visited the United Arab Emirates](#) on January 5 and 6. He met the UAE's Land Forces Commander, Major General Yousef Maayouf Saeed Al Hallami and discussed enhancing military engagement, training convergence, and deepening overall [defence cooperation between India and UAE](#). In his remarks at UAE's National Defence College, Gen. Dwivedi discussed the evolving global security landscape and the nature of conflict, emphasising the importance of [technology in modern warfare](#).

Indian Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi's visit to UAE underscores New Delhi's continued engagement with friendly countries in the Gulf to strengthen defence cooperation and military-to-military ties.

On January 6, Israeli [Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar visited Hargeisa](#), Somaliland's capital, marking the first visit by an Israeli leader to the breakaway region since Tel Aviv recognised Somaliland. FM Sa'ar held meetings with Somaliland's President Cabdiraxmaan Cirro and Foreign Minister Abdirahman Dahir Adam, reaffirming Israel's resolve to vigorously advance relations with Somaliland. Somalia condemned Israeli Minister's visit to Somaliland as "unlawful" and a "serious violation" of its sovereignty.

Israel's formal recognition of Somaliland, a strategically positioned region across the Gulf of Aden from Yemen, is intended to mitigate the military threat posed by the Iran-backed Houthis.

Before the capture of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro by the US in Caracas on January 3, President Trump warned Iran that if it continues to kill anti-regime protestors, [the US would come to their aid](#). Meanwhile, in the midst of Iran's protracted economic crisis, [anti-government protests have widened](#), with reports of some protestors being killed.

Iran has experienced one of the highest inflation rates in the world due to Western sanctions, angering the country's middle class and fuelling widespread anti-government protests.

Other Developments

[India refrains from taking sides in Saudi & UAE conflict over Yemen](#)

[Syrian government and Kurdish-led SDF trade blame as violence resumes in Aleppo](#)

[Syria, Israel agree to US-backed coordination mechanism after Paris talks](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

In a [January 5 interview](#) with the Turkistan newspaper, Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev outlined the key outcomes of 2025 and set priorities for the year ahead, stressing that Kazakhstan has entered a new stage of modernisation marked by irreversible reforms, economic resilience, and an accelerated push toward digital transformation. During his interview, Tokayev stressed that Kazakhstan's geographic position obliges the country to [pursue a balanced, independent, and principled foreign policy](#), including active participation in shaping global discussions. However, he stressed that he has “no desire whatsoever to act as a mediator in international disputes”. Tokayev described transit and logistics as a cornerstone of Kazakhstan's long-term strategy, emphasizing the country's unique position at the crossroads of major continental routes.

In his interview, Tokayev has framed Kazakhstan's modernisation around digital transformation and its strategic role as a transit hub. His insistence on an independent, non-mediating foreign policy underscores Astana's bid to balance global engagement with sovereignty.

On [January 6](#), Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Jeenbek Kulubaev spoke to his Belarusian counterpart, Maxim Ryzhenkov, to discuss key bilateral issues and upcoming high-level visits. Ahead of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Heads of State meeting in Bishkek this year, the ministers exchanged views on the summit agenda and cooperation within the organisation. [At the same time](#), Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to the Republic of Kazakhstan Aleksei Bogdanov met with the head of the Kyrgyz diplomatic mission in Astana and exchanged views on the international agenda and agreed to maintain contacts on issues of mutual interest.

Kyrgyzstan's outreach to Belarus ahead of the SCO summit underscores Bishkek's bid to deepen ties and shape regional agendas. These parallel diplomatic engagements highlight Kyrgyzstan's effort to balance great-power dynamics by strengthening mid-tier partnerships within Eurasia.

Other Developments

[Kazakhstan, Croatia Discuss Expanding Bilateral Cooperation](#)

[Central Asia Can Depend on Azerbaijan for Path to West, Aliyev Says](#)

[The Venezuela Effect: Oil, Sanctions, and Kazakhstan's Strategic Dilemma](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

The Maritime Security Centre for the Indian Ocean (MSCIO) [confirmed](#) that armed groups carried out an attack on a Chinese fishing vessel named *Liao Dong Yu 578*, operating in waters off the coast of Puntland, Somalia. The incident [occurred](#) on the New Year, January 1, 2026, but it has not yet been confirmed whether the armed groups took control of the vessel or its crew. *Liao Dong Yu 578* is a vessel with a previous history of piracy incidents. Reports indicate that the ship was earlier hijacked by pirates off the coast of Puntland in November 2024 and was released in January 2025 after a ransom estimated at nearly \$2 million was paid.

Piracy off Somalia's coast, dormant for years, has surged again through coordinated strikes in the Somali Basin and western Indian Ocean. These incidents not only indicate a widespread piracy revival but also underscore the ongoing ineffectiveness of maritime counter-piracy strategies.

The African Union Commission (AUC) and the United Arab Emirates [reaffirmed their commitment](#) to deepening strategic cooperation, following a high-level meeting between Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, and Sheikh Shakhboot bin Nahyan Al Nahyan, UAE Minister of State, in Addis Ababa. The meeting built on the first round of political consultations held in Abu Dhabi in September 2025 under the 2019 Memorandum of Understanding. In a joint statement, both sides reviewed progress achieved since the inaugural consultations, exchanged views on priority areas of cooperation, and reaffirmed their commitment to sustained political dialogue and an expanded UAE-AU partnership. They emphasised the centrality of Agenda 2063, particularly the flagship initiative "Silencing the Guns by 2030", as well as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). They also agreed to intensify cooperation and welcomed the UAE's launch of the \$1 billion "AI for Development" initiative, announced at the G20 Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg in November 2025.

Access to Africa's fast-growing markets diversifies UAE trade beyond traditional partners, unlocking FDI in energy, agriculture, tech, and tourism. UAE also leverages its logistics hub status to boost re-exports and investments. This elevates UAE as Africa's key gateway while positioning AU nations in global supply chains.

Other Developments

[Pakistan, China launch joint oceanographic cruise in Arabian Sea](#)

[INSV Kaundinya crew halfway to Oman, debunks supply shortage claims](#)

[Chief of the Army Staff will visit the United Arab Emirates \(UAE\) and Sri Lanka](#)

[Yemeni Coastguard made a large drug seizure in the Bab el Mandeb area](#)



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India

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