

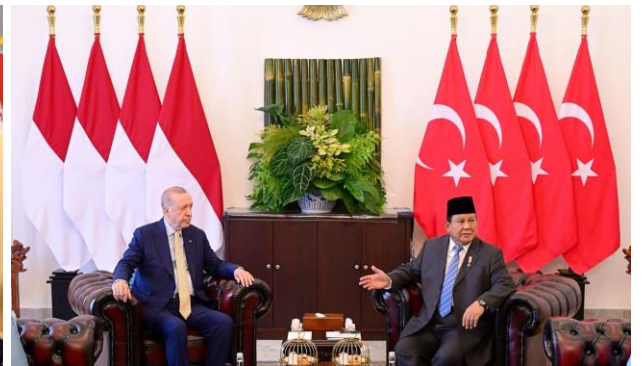


Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



India's Proximity Archives February 19, 2025



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Delhi Policy Group

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

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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: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi met President of the United States, Donald J. Trump at the White House in Washington D.C. on February 13, 2025. Source: [MEA/Flickr](#)

Southeast Asia: President of the Republic of Indonesia, Prabowo Subianto held a bilateral meeting with President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Bogor Presidential Palace, West Java Province, on February 12, 2025. Source: [President of the Republic of Indonesia](#)

East Asia: US Secretary of State and Foreign Ministers of Japan and South Korea at the Japan-U.S.-Republic of Korea (ROK) Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Munich, on February 15, 2025. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan](#)

West Asia: US delegation led by Secretary of State Marco Rubio and a Russian delegation led by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on February 18, 2025. Source: [Official X Handle/Saudi Press Agency English](#)

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South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the US on February 12-13, during which he held a bilateral meeting with President Trump. The leaders [unveiled a new initiative](#), the "U.S.-India COMPACT (Catalysing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology) for the 21st Century," designed to effect transformative change in key areas of collaboration. The Joint Statement indicates detailed discussions encompassing defence, trade and investment, energy security, technological innovation, multilateral collaboration, and people-to-people exchanges.

On February 10-12, Prime Minister Modi [visited France](#), where he and President Emmanuel Macron jointly presided over the Artificial Intelligence Action Summit. The summit underscored commitments to implementing concrete measures to guarantee that the global AI sector generates beneficial social, economic, and environmental results for the public good. The bilateral discussion between the two leaders centered on defense cooperation, geopolitical developments in Europe and West Asia, civil nuclear collaboration, and the governance applications of emerging technologies. The leaders jointly issued the '[Declaration on Artificial Intelligence](#),' aiming to align governing norms and standards with democratic principles and to leverage AI for societal progress and the common good.

Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan [visited Pakistan](#) from February 12-13, where he co-chaired the seventh session of the Pakistan-Turkiye High Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. During the visit, the two countries signed 24 agreements and MoUs to enhance cooperation in defence, energy, agriculture, information technology, health and other sectors.

Other Developments

[US-China clash over drafting Afghanistan resolution at UN signals growing diplomatic tensions](#)

[Five killed in suicide bomb blast in northeastern Afghanistan](#)

[Taliban delegation visits Japan in rare trip outside region](#)

[Nepal, India endorse investment plan for two 400 kV transmission lines](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V

Indonesia President Prabowo Subianto welcomed Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan for talks to strengthen economic and defence ties on February 12. The two leaders held the [first High Level Strategic Council meeting](#), the highest bilateral forum for the two countries. They also witnessed the signing of a dozen agreements, including on trade, investment, education, energy, agriculture, health, and religious services. They also signed a deal on the joint development of a [Baykar combat-drone factory in Indonesia](#) for military use. Erdogan pledged that his country would invest in developing Indonesia's new capital on Borneo Island. In addition, the two heads of state also agreed to [strengthen defence and security cooperation](#) which includes improving military education and training, intelligence cooperation, and counterterrorism.

Enrique Manalo, the foreign secretary of the Philippines' said he is "[deeply disturbed](#)" by a close encounter between a Chinese military helicopter and one of the southeast Asian country's fisheries aircraft over a disputed shoal in the South China Sea. He accused China's military of being "reckless" and "unprofessional" during the incident of February 18. A Chinese navy helicopter flew within 10 feet (3 meters) of a Philippine patrol plane on February 18 over the disputed Scarborough Shoal off the northwestern Philippines, which was [witnessed](#) by invited foreign media and journalists on the Philippines' plane.

The Transport Minister of Vietnam, Nguyen Hong Minh, announced to the parliament that Vietnam plans to take [loans from the Chinese government](#) to partly fund a \$8.3 billion project to build a new railway linking the two countries on February 13. He said, "Vietnam has been seeking to upgrade its aging railway systems, and has approached China for funding and technology. "Vietnam's current railway system is outdated, and the country needs a new system to support its economic development," he added.

On February 14, the [25th ASEAN-India Joint Cooperation Committee \(AIJCC\) Meeting](#) held at the ASEAN Headquarters welcomed positive developments in the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) and underscored commitment to augment the partnership further. ASEAN acknowledged India's unwavering commitment in fostering a substantive, meaningful, and mutually beneficial CSP through the adoption of various ASEAN-India Leaders' Statements, expansion and strengthening of ASEAN-India cooperation

mechanisms and funding modalities, strengthening of institutional linkages, as well as implementation of numerous cooperative activities across various areas of cooperation. The Meeting pledged its full commitment to facilitating the negotiation of the draft of the new ASEAN-India POA (2026-2030). This new POA is expected to guide both sides in fully harnessing the potential of the ASEAN-India CSP, with a view to bringing tangible benefits to the peoples of both sides.

Other Developments

[Vietnam concession on Starlink aims to defuse U.S. tariff threat](#)

[Thailand receives 260 human trafficking victims from Myanmar](#)

[Singapore PM Wong unveils preelection budget: 5 things to know](#)

[Lights grow dimmer in Indonesia's civil service as President Prabowo's budget cuts bite](#)

East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

[The US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Japan's Foreign Minister Iwaya Takeshi and South Korea's Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul](#) reinforced their comprehensive trilateral partnership for security, economic resilience, and regional stability in the Indo-Pacific in Munich, on February 15. They pledged to enhance defence cooperation through trilateral military exercises, strengthen national deterrence, and strongly opposed unilateral attempts to alter the regional status quo, particularly in the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait. Further reiterating their commitment to denuclearising North Korea, the leaders emphasised addressing cyber threats and countering DPRK-Russia military cooperation.

The Indian Army and Japanese Forces will conduct the [6th edition of the Joint Military Exercise, Dharma Guardian](#), at Mount Fuji, Japan from February 25 to March 9, 2025. The exercise aims to strengthen bilateral defence ties between the two countries and enhance interoperability to undertake joint urban warfare and counter-terrorism operations under a UN mandate, contributing to regional stability and security in the Indo-Pacific.

The South Korean Authorities have [temporarily removed the Chinese AI app "DeepSeek" from its local app stores](#). This suspension was recommended by the Personal Information Protection Commission (PIPC), South Korea, which is examining the app's data processing methods, noting that reviewing and aligning the app with domestic privacy laws would require significant time. DeepSeek's R1 chatbot has been popular since its launch last month, but concerns have arisen around user data being stored on servers in China. On the pretext of these privacy and data security concerns, many other countries have adopted similar measures, including Italy and Australia. Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, is also inquiring about the potential harm of using "DeepSeek".

[Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence reported a surge in Chinese military activity](#), detecting 41 aircraft, nine People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) vessels, and one official Chinese ship as of February 17. The escalation follows recent US and Canadian naval transits through the Taiwan strait, which China criticised as being a threat to its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Other Developments

[At the 61st Munich Security Conference, Japan's Foreign Minister Iwaya Takeshi emphasised the importance of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific \(FOIP\), stronger cooperation among allies and the interconnected security dynamics of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific.](#)

[The US State Department removed an old statement from its website that dictated non-support for Taiwan, prompting a strong reaction from China.](#)

[South Korea plans to acquire 10,000 high-performance Graphics Processing Units \(GPUs\) in 2025 to enhance its national AI development and computing capabilities.](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met in Riyadh on February 18. Major issues discussed by them included [establishing a consultation mechanism](#) to address irritants in bilateral relations and taking steps to normalise operations of respective diplomatic missions; appointing high-level teams to work on a path to ending the conflict in Ukraine that is acceptable to all sides; and laying the groundwork for cooperation on mutual geopolitical interests as well as economic and investment opportunities.

Earlier, on February 17, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman met Secretary Rubio in Riyadh. Both leaders emphasised the strength of their bilateral relations over the past 80 years and vowed to [deepen economic and defence cooperation](#). They reaffirmed a commitment to implementing the ceasefire in Gaza, ensuring the release of all hostages, emphasised the importance of an arrangement for Gaza that would advance regional security, and pursue shared interests across the Middle East including Lebanon, Syria, and Red Sea security.

Secretary Rubio also met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem on February 16. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to roll back [Iran's regional aggression](#) and never allow Tehran to acquire nuclear weapons. Major issues discussed in the meeting included securing the release of hostages, post-war governance and security strategy for Gaza, the situation in Syria post the fall of the Assad regime, enforcing the ceasefire in Lebanon, and formulating a common strategy to deal with anti-American and anti-Israeli international legal institutions such as the ICJ and ICC.

Continuing the deepening trend of [India-Qatar strategic partnership](#), India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani met in New Delhi on February 18. Qatar's Emir hailed India's efforts in creating a conducive environment for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Foreign Institutional Investment (FII) and pledged to invest USD 10 billion.

Other Developments

[Israel, Hamas reach deal on release of six remaining live hostages](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [February 17](#), Kazakh Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Murat Nurtleu and Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó held talks in Astana, reaffirming their commitment to deepening strategic ties and expanding economic cooperation. Special emphasis was placed on boosting trade and economic relations. Further steps to deepen economic ties were discussed, including opening Hungarian bank branches in Kazakhstan, constructing a multimodal cargo terminal in Budapest, boosting Kazakh oil exports to Hungary, and establishing uranium and critical minerals trade. A significant move in these efforts will be the creation of a joint investment fund.

On [February 13](#), President of Kyrgyzstan Sadyr Japarov received the Secretary General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Imangali Tasmagambetov. The parties exchanged views on issues of ensuring regional security and stability, as well as interaction within the organization. Sadyr Japarov was presented with an action plan for implementing the decisions of the autumn (2024) session of the CSTO Collective Security Council and fulfilling the priority areas of the organization's activities during the chairmanship of Kyrgyzstan. The President expressed confidence that the country's priorities, laid down during the chairmanship of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2025, will have a positive impact on improving the collective security system in all basic elements: coordination of political activities, military cooperation, countering transnational challenges and threats.

On [February 12](#), Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan presented the stages through which the ideology of a "real Armenia" should evolve to the parliament. According to him, the first step is for that ideology to be formulated in a written document, which he stated is in its final stage. To succeed, he will have to win a three-front fight to overcome opposition from Azerbaijan, Russia and a powerful bloc of domestic critics. [Pashinyan](#) told the MPs that he has [received assurances](#) of support from US and French officials for what he is trying to accomplish, describing an [impromptu meeting](#) with US Vice President JD Vance in Washington in early February as "very important and very productive."



Other Developments

[Interaction between CSTO, CIS discussed in Moscow](#)

[Azerbaijan sues Armenia in Hague arbitration court for environmental damage](#)

[Uzbekistan to Host Historic First EU-Central Asia Summit in April](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

INS Shardul and a P8I maritime surveillance aircraft [arrived](#) in Bali, Indonesia, to participate in the Indonesian Navy International Fleet Review (IFR) 2025. Following the IFR, the platforms will participate in Exercise Komodo, a multilateral naval exercise enhancing maritime interoperability and regional security. The International Fleet Review (IFR) 2025 and the Multilateral Naval Exercise Komodo (MNEK) are [taking place](#) in Bali, Indonesia, from February 15-22, 2025. Over 20 countries are participating in the events, including the US, Russia, China, India, and Australia.

The multinational maritime exercise AMAN-2025, organised by the Pakistan Navy, [concluded](#) with an International Fleet Review (IFR) in the North Arabian Sea on February 11, 2025. The motto of the exercise was "Together for Peace". Approximately 60 countries participated with naval warships, aircraft, marines, special operations forces, and observers. Alongside other international naval forces, the PLA Navy ships, the Type 052D guided missile destroyer Baotou and the Type 903A replenishment ship Gaoyouhu, participated in various drills and operational activities. The exercise also [included](#) the AMAN Dialogue, addressing maritime security challenges. The theme was "Secure Seas, Prosperous Future", highlighting issues such as strategic competition, piracy, and climate change.

The 8th Indian Ocean Conference (IOC) [took place](#) in Muscat, Oman, on February 16-17, 2025. This year's conference theme was "Voyage to New Horizons of Maritime Partnership". The conference was organised by the India Foundation (India-based think tank) in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Oman and S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies. Dr. S. Jaishankar [addressed the inaugural session](#) and spoke about India's contributions to the Indian Ocean region through strengthening capabilities, forging partnerships, and providing leadership. He highlighted examples such as stabilising economies, collaborative connectivity initiatives like the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), training other navies and coast guards, ensuring trusted communication, and institution-building in the Indian Ocean region. The Indian Ocean Conference was started in 2016 in Singapore by the India Foundation.

Other development

[Indian Naval Ships Sujata and Veera arrived at Sihanoukville Port, Cambodia](#)

[Australia handed over Shallow Water Multi-Beam Echo Sounder to the Sri Lanka Navy Hydrographic Service \(SLNHS\)](#)

[Indonesian Naval Ship KRI BUNG TOMO—357 paid a goodwill visit to Sri Lanka](#)

[Sri Lanka and United Kingdom inked a bilateral arrangement to strengthen collaboration in hydrography](#)



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