



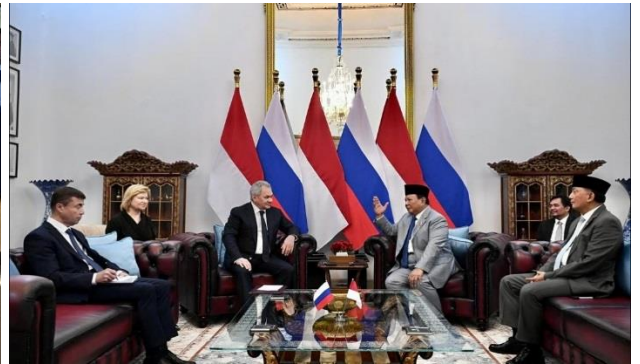
# Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



## India's Proximity Archives

### February 26, 2025



Volume III, Issue 9 | February 26, 2025

Delhi Policy Group  
Core 5A, 1st Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003  
[www.delhipolicygroup.org](http://www.delhipolicygroup.org)



# Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power

## India's Proximity Archives

Vol. III, Issue 9

February 26, 2025

### 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:** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Bhutan Dasho Tshering Tobgay at the inaugural Leadership Conclave of the School of Ultimate Leadership (SOUL), in New Delhi, on February 21, 2025.

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

**Southeast Asia:** Russian Security Council Secretary Sergei Shoigu met Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, on February 25, 2025 in Jakarta. Source: [X/@sjafriesjams](https://twitter.com/sjafriesjams)

**West Asia:** Syrian National Dialogue conference was held in Damascus on February 25, 2025. Source: [Official X Handle/Syrian Arab News Agency](https://twitter.com/OfficialXHandle/SyrianArabNewsAgency)

**Indian Ocean Region:** Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff (DCNS) of the Indian Navy, met with Admiral Datuk (Dr) Zulhelmy bin Ithnain, Chief of the Royal Malaysian Navy, on February 18, 2025 in Kuala Lumpur

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

© 2025 by the Delhi Policy Group

### Delhi Policy Group

Core 5A, 1st Floor,

India Habitat Centre,

Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003.

[www.delhipolicygroup.org](http://www.delhipolicygroup.org)

# India's Proximity Archives

Vol. III, Issue 9

February 26, 2025

## Contents

### South Asia

Shreyas Deshmukh ..... 1

### Southeast Asia

Jayantika Rao T.V ..... 3

### East Asia

Arshiya Chaturvedi ..... 4

### West Asia

Sanket Joshi..... 5

### Central Asia

Jayantika Rao T.V. .... 6

### Indian Ocean Region

Divya Rai..... 7

## South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

General Waker-Uz-Zaman, Chief of Army Staff of Bangladesh, warned on February 25th that the [nation's sovereignty](#) is imperilled by persistent internal dissension. He added that the army would continue to maintain law and order until the elected government assumed power. Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, leader of the BNP, also warned the Muhammad Yunus-led caretaker government against leading the country into [further chaos and destruction](#). On February 24, a mob attacked [Cox's Bazar air base](#), while clashes between rival [student groups](#) persisted in major cities. A surge in robberies, muggings, and pickpocketing has instilled widespread fear nationwide. In Muscat, India's External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, stressed to Bangladesh's Foreign Affairs Advisor, Mr. Touhid Hossain, the critical need for Bangladesh to [not legitimize terrorism](#).

From February 20-21, the Bhutanese Prime Minister, Dasho Tshering Tobgay, [was in India](#) to attend the inaugural SOUL Leadership Conclave. An official meeting between Prime Minister Dasho Tshering Tobgay and Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi took place during the visit; the latter reiterated India's dedication to deepening the special and historic ties between India and Bhutan.

Pakistan Army Chief General Syed Asim Munir, was on [official visit to the United Kingdom](#) on February 19-20, where he attended the 7th Regional Stabilisation Conference at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. It is a key platform for Pakistan-UK military dialogue. During the visit he held meetings with Admiral Toney Radikin, Chief of Defence Staff of UK, General Sir Roland Walker, Chief of the General Staff of the British Army, and Jonathan Nicholas Powell, the UK National Security Adviser and Home Secretary Yvette Cooper. According to the news reports UK has offered to enter a joint venture with Pakistan's defence industries, including Pakistan Ordnance Factories, Heavy Industries Taxila, and maritime cooperation in shipbuilding, command and surveillance equipment, subsystem assemblies, and system integration.

## Other Developments

[China eyes continued arms sale to Bangladesh](#)

[US releases USD 397m for Pak F-16s monitoring](#)

[Trump appoints official to retrieve US weapons from Afghanistan](#)

[Afghanistan says Pakistan carrying out mass expulsion of refugees](#)

## Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V

On [February 25](#), the largest and longest-running multinational military exercises in the Asia-Pacific region, 'Cobra Gold', began in Thailand, with some 8,200 personnel from 30 countries working together to improve their defences against cybersecurity threats. Thailand and the United States will cohost the annual drill that runs through March 7. Singapore, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea and Malaysia are full participants, while China, India and Australia are involved on a limited basis, contributing exercises such as delivering humanitarian assistance.

On February 24, Japan and the Philippines agreed to [boost military cooperation](#) amid mutual concern over China's growing assertiveness in the region. Japanese Defence Minister Gen Nakatani and Philippine Defence Secretary Gilberto Teodoro, Jr said they had agreed to establish a "strategic dialogue" between their countries' militaries and a "high-level framework" for defence equipment and technology cooperation. The two ministers also discussed [the situation in the East and South China Seas](#), and confirmed their opposition to China's attempts at unilaterally changing the status quo by force.

Russian Security Council Secretary Sergei Shoigu started a [working visit to Indonesia and Malaysia](#), on February 24, to discuss security and defence issues. "During the visit, talks are planned on current issues of bilateral relations, including security and defence, as well as the development of cooperation in other areas of mutual interest," citing the press office of the Security Council, RIA reported. [Indonesian officials said](#) ahead of Shoigu's arrival that the sides would exchange views on international and regional issues as Russia hopes to deepen its defence engagement with Southeast Asia countries.

### Other Developments

[ASEAN Defence Ministers gather in Penang for retreat](#)

[Airlines diverted as Chinese navy holds drills off Australian coast](#)

[China opposes Vietnam building activities on South China Sea reef](#)

## East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

The trial of [ousted South Korean President](#) Yoon Suk Yeol concluded on February 25, following his final statement before eight judges in the Constitutional Court. The trial is reviewing his impeachment, which was approved by the National Assembly on December 14, 2024, leading to his suspension from office after imposing martial law in South Korea. The Constitutional Court will determine whether the declaration of martial law was unconstitutional and whether the president was committed to upholding the Constitution. If the constitutional court rules in favour of impeachment, Yoon will become the second president in South Korean history to be impeached. Yoon is also facing a separate criminal investigation for insurrection over his declaration of martial law in December, punishable with life in prison or even the death penalty.

On Saturday, February 22, local [authorities in Japan's](#) Shimane Prefecture, hosted the annual "Takeshima Day" event, reaffirming Japan's territorial claim over the Liancourt Rocks, known as Dokdo in South Korea and Takeshima in Japan. The event was attended by high-ranking officials of Japan's central government. The Liancourt Rocks, a group of islets in the Sea of Japan, have been a longstanding territorial dispute between South Korea and Japan. The South Korean government has responded by condemning and calling for the immediate abolition of the event.

[Taiwan's coast guard detained a cargo ship](#), Hong Tai 58, having links to China on February 25, following the disconnection of an undersea cable near the Penghu Islands in the Taiwan Strait. This is the second such incident as a Chinese-linked vessel was suspected of damaging a sea cable earlier this year. Recognising the critical role these communication links play in facilitating Taiwan's economic and security interests, Taipei's navy and other agencies have intensified efforts to safeguard them. The coast guard deployed three vessels to detain the Hong Tai 58, which is registered in Togo but had Chinese crew members after it had dropped anchor near the cable around the time of the disconnection.

### Other Developments

[President Xi and President Putin had a phone conversation, discussing China-Russia relations.](#)

[Trump indicated possibility of a trade deal with China after friendly talk with Xi.](#)

## West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

On February 25, [Syria's capital Damascus hosted a national dialogue](#) to chart a new path for the country following the fall of the Assad regime. Major issues discussed included preserving the unity and sovereignty of Syria over its [entire territory](#), condemnation of the Israeli incursion into Syrian territory, reform of state institutions, state monopoly on arms, the outlawing of armed formations outside of official institutions, and rejection of discrimination based on race, religion, or sect. Ahmed al-Sharaa, the Syrian Interim President, described the dialogue as the beginning of a new historical phase after a decade of civil war; however, the absence of Kurdish leaders raised questions about the country's unity and inclusion. Meanwhile, on February 24, the European Union [suspended a range of sanctions against Syria](#) in sectors such as energy, banking, transport, and reconstruction.

On February 21, the leaders of seven Arab countries including Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Qatar, UAE, Kuwait, and Bahrain met in Riyadh to discuss an alternative to US President Donald Trump's plan to displace Gaza residents and turn the Palestinian enclave into the "Riviera" of the Middle East. Reportedly, the meeting focused on an Egyptian proposal for USD 20 billion to be provided over a [three-year period to rebuild Gaza](#), but no official confirmation was given.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met in Tehran on February 25, pledging to continue deepening their [comprehensive strategic partnership](#). Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi reiterated that there would be no talks with the US regarding Tehran's nuclear program as long as Washington continues its maximum pressure policy.

### Other Developments

[Trump envoy will push for Gaza truce extension in the region this week, he says](#)

[Readout of Secretary Hegseth's Meeting with Saudi Minister of Defence, His Royal Highness Khalid bin Salman](#)



## Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic [aim to explore new opportunities](#) to expand trade, accelerate the launch of the Industrial Trade and Logistics Complex on their border, and enhance transit and transport cooperation. President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev emphasized these priorities during a meeting with Adylbek Kasymaliev, the chairman of the Kyrgyz Cabinet of Ministers and head of the Presidential Administration, who arrived on his first official foreign visit to Astana on February 25.

On [February 25](#), the Deputy Chairman of the Kyrgyz Cabinet of Ministers Edil Baisalov announced that the first ever trilateral summit of the presidents of the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan will take place in Khujand on March 31. "This meeting will mark a new chapter in cooperation, dialogue, and shared prosperity in Central Asia," he said. This follows the signing of the final protocol on the delimitation of the Kyrgyz-Tajik border on February 21.

On [February 24](#), Pakistan and Azerbaijan signed agreements and memorandums of understanding (MOUs), chiefly about trade and energy, during a visit to Azerbaijan by Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. PM Sharif arrived in the Azerbaijani capital, Baku, for a two-day visit to hold talks with President Ilham Aliyev and other top officials. This is Sharif's second visit to the Central Asian country since taking office in February of last year. During Sharif's visit, Azerbaijan's state-owned oil company, SOCAR, exchanged several MOUs with Pakistan's oil trading and refining companies, including one to complete a pipeline in the South Asian country, Pakistan's state-run news agency reported. Following a visit to Azerbaijan, Prime Minister Sharif proceeded [to Uzbekistan](#) for discussions on trade, energy, and defense collaboration, reflecting Pakistan's ongoing economic engagement with Central Asia.

### Other Developments

[Kazakhstan to Launch Three Joint Terminals with China This Year](#)

[Kazakhstan to Develop Joint Satellites with Mongolia and Congo](#)

[Azerbaijan, Pakistan aim to jointly produce J-17, a China-made fighter jet](#)

[Armenia received Azerbaijan's response regarding peace treaty](#)

[From Armenia To America, Demand For Indian Drone, Anti-Drone Systems Increases; Billions In Revenue Expected](#)

## Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff (DCNS) of the Indian Navy, [met](#) with Admiral Datuk (Dr) Zulhelmy bin Ithnain, Chief of the Royal Malaysian Navy, on February 18 in Kuala Lumpur. This meeting was [held on the sidelines](#) of the Malaysia-India Defence Cooperation Committee (MIDCOM) meeting. During their discussion, they expressed satisfaction with the growing engagements between the two navies. They [shared experiences](#) in maintaining Scorpene class submarines and explored further avenues of cooperation in maritime security, training, shipbuilding, and participation in international maritime events like the International Fleet Review, MILAN, Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), and the Goa Maritime Conclave.

The G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting [was held in](#) Johannesburg, South Africa, on February 20-21, 2025. This meeting marked a significant event under South Africa's presidency of the G20, the first time an African nation has led the group. The country's G20 presidency, themed "Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability," seeks to address pressing global issues such as poverty, climate change, and economic inequality, while also advancing Africa's development agenda. Key discussions included global challenges such as climate change, disaster risk reduction, and economic issues. Several foreign ministers attended, including those from Japan, India, China, and Turkey. Several bilateral meetings took place on the sidelines, including between India and China. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio [boycotted the meeting](#), citing a refusal to "coddle anti-Americanism".

The Zolfaghar 1403 joint military exercise, [conducted](#) by the Iranian Army, began on Saturday, February 23, 2025, and concluded on Tuesday, February 26, 2025. The large-scale drills spanned a significant area from the Makran coast to the Sea of Oman and the northern Indian Ocean. The exercise involved elements from the Ground Forces, Air Defense Forces, Air Force, and the Strategic Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, along with the Joint Air Defense Headquarters of Khatam al-Anbiya. The exercise featured the deployment of sophisticated air defence systems, cyber defence mechanisms, and enhanced drones equipped with air-to-air missiles for aerial interception. Russian-made Yak-130 advanced jet trainer and light combat aircraft [participated in its first operational](#) mission, working alongside two MiG-29 fighter jets.

## Other developments

[First Training Squadron of the Indian Navy concluded its visit to Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam](#)



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

[www.delhipolicygroup.org](http://www.delhipolicygroup.org)