



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



India's Proximity Archives

April 2, 2025



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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: President Xi Jinping met with Chief Adviser of the Bangladeshi Interim Government Muhammad Yunus in Beijing, on March 28, 2025. Source: [MOFA PRC](#)

Southeast Asia: Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. greets US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on his arrival to the Presidential Palace in Manila, Philippines, on March 28, 2025. Source: [X/@SecDef](#)

East Asia: Japanese Prime Minister Ishiba Shigeru meeting the Secretary of Defense of the US, Pete Hegseth, on March 30, 2025. Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan](#)

Central Asia: President Sadyr Japarov of the Kyrgyz Republic, President Emomali Rahmon of Tajikistan, and President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan held a trilateral meeting on March 31, 2025. Source: [President of the Kyrgyz Republic](#)

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South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

From March 26–29, Muhammad Yunus, chief advisor to Bangladesh's interim government, visited China to attend the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) in Hainan Province. The visit coincided with the celebration of fifty years of diplomatic relations between both countries. Muhammad Yunus and President Xi Jinping conducted a [bilateral discussion](#) in Beijing on March 28. President Xi highlighted the critical need for both nations to firmly support one another's "core interests and principal concerns". A bilateral [agreement](#) on economic and technical cooperation was signed, accompanied by eight memoranda of understanding largely pertaining to soft power initiatives. A formal instrument for the commencement of the China Industrial Economic Zone and a Commercial Agreement for the Mongla port's modernisation and expansion was also signed.

On March 26, in observance of Bangladesh's National Day, the Indian Prime Minister addressed a [letter](#) of felicitation to Chief Advisor Professor Muhammad Yunus and the Bangladeshi citizenry. In the letter, PM Modi wrote that, "The spirit of the Liberation War of Bangladesh continues to remain a guiding light for our relationship, which has flourished across multiple domains, bringing tangible benefits to our peoples."

Two significant public [demonstrations](#) took place in Kathmandu on March 28th, with one organized by the Socialist Front and the other by pro-monarchy factions. Following speeches delivered by the leaders of the four parties, the Maoist protest concluded peacefully. Violent clashes between security forces and pro-monarchy protesters resulted in two deaths and [112 injuries](#). Following protests, law enforcement officials have apprehended [111 individuals](#), among them Rabindra Mishra, Vice-chairman of the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP). Amidst the turmoil, Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli called an emergency [cabinet meeting](#) to address the situation, placing [blame on Gyanendra](#). Former King Gyanendra Shah [has been fined](#) NPR 793,000 by Kathmandu Metropolitan City for the damage he caused to public property during a protest.

Other Developments

[Pakistan delays forced deportation of Afghan refugees by 10 more days](#)

[India to supply 600MW power to Nepal also at night](#)

[Bangladesh demolishes 1971 war mural](#)

Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth used his first trip to Asia to try to [reassure allies](#) that the United States was committed to deterring Chinese “threats” to the region. On [March 28](#), during a press conference in Manila, Secretary Hegseth said that the Trump administration would work with allies to ramp up deterrence against threats across the world, including China’s aggression in the South China Sea. He further blamed the previous Biden administration for insufficient actions that emboldened aggressors like China over the years. He said the US military was being rebuilt under President Donald Trump and was re-establishing its “warrior ethos” in the region. During his meeting with Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr, he also stated “Friends need to stand shoulder to shoulder to deter conflict, to ensure that there is free navigation whether you call it the South China Sea or the West Philippine Sea”.

As the death toll from the earthquake on March 28 rises sharply, Myanmar’s shadow National Unity Government has announced a two-week offensive [unilateral partial ceasefire](#) to enable relief efforts. It said that in [areas it controls](#), it will “collaborate with the UN and international non-governmental organizations to ensure security, transportation, and the establishment of temporary rescue and medical camps.” It is unclear how much influence the NUG declaration will have with all the ethnic groups fighting the military, particularly since aerial strikes by the military in resistance-held areas even in the earthquake affected areas. The State Administration Council (SAC) did not immediately respond to the NUG's statement.

However, on [April 1](#), Myanmar junta chief Min Aung Hlaing rejected the ceasefire proposals as concerns mount over how the civil conflict could hinder relief efforts. “Some ethnic armed organisations are not currently engaged in combat but are organising and training for future attacks,” General Min Aung Hlaing said during a fund-raising event on April 1 in Naypyitaw, the country’s capital. “As their actions are still considered attacks, the Tatmadaw (Myanmar army) will continue to take necessary security measures,” he said

On [April 1](#), the Philippines’ military chief said his country would “inevitably” be involved if neighbouring Taiwan was invaded while warning China was working to infiltrate the Filipino military and other institutions. General Romeo Brawner made the comments as [Beijing’s military surrounded Taiwan in large-scale exercises](#) it said were practice for a blockade of the self-ruled island,

which China has vowed to one day bring under its control. "Start planning for actions in case there is an invasion of Taiwan," he told troops in northern Luzon island.

Other Developments

[Hegseth dangles second Typhon missile system for Philippines](#)

[U.S. and Philippines launch army drills with 5,000 soldiers](#)

East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

[The Third Japan-India Space Dialogue](#), held in Tokyo on April 1, facilitated discussions on space policy, security, bilateral cooperation, global navigation satellite systems, space situational awareness, and international space norms. Marking the start of the "Japan-India Science Technology and Innovation Exchange Year," both sides emphasized strengthening collaboration between JAXA and ISRO and fostering industry ties. The Japanese delegation was led by Assistant Minister SAITA Yukio and Director-General KAZEKI Atsushi. The Indian delegation was headed by Joint Secretary Muanpuii Saiawi and ISRO's Scientific Secretary M. Ganesh Pillai. Officials from various ministries and agencies participated, agreeing to hold the dialogue regularly to enhance space cooperation.

[Secretary of Defence Pete Hegseth on his visit to Japan](#) reassured Japan about the Trump administration's commitment to strengthening the US-Japan military alliance to deter China's growing assertiveness. He confirmed plans to accelerate the creation of a new joint US-Japan military command in Tokyo, conduct more joint exercises near Taiwan, and uphold security cooperation commitments. He emphasised that "America first does not mean America alone," highlighting the strong partnership between the two nations. The visit, which included a symbolic stop at Iwo Jima, aimed to solidify defence ties amid rising regional tensions.

[China has launched large-scale military drills around Taiwan](#), citing separatist activities, with the PLA conducting combat readiness exercises, blockade simulations, and law enforcement patrols near the island. Taiwan detected 71 PLA aircraft and 19 naval vessels, deploying countermeasures in response. Beijing also intensified its propaganda campaign, releasing videos and posters depicting a full-scale assault on Taiwan and portraying President Lai Ching-te as a "parasite" over a burning Taipei. A cartoon also mocked Taiwan's domestic politics, showing Lai holding jailed opposition figure Ko Wen-je in a cage. Analysts suggest China aims to pressure Taiwan and influence US policy while normalising military activities. Taiwan has heightened its defence readiness, fearing an attack disguised as a drill.

Taiwan's increasing readiness for a potential military conflict with China reached a new milestone with the [recent handover of Taiwan's first F-16V fighter jet in a ceremony at Lockheed Martin's](#) plant in South Carolina. As part

of a NT\$263.43 billion deal, Taiwan has purchased 66 F-16Vs, upgrading its existing fleet, with deliveries expected to be completed by 2026. The jets will be stationed at Chih Hang Air Base, and Taiwan is investing NT\$4 billion to extend pilot training in Arizona.

Other Developments

[Trump tariffs: China, Japan, South Korea to jointly respond to US' tariffs](#)

[MOFA Spokesperson's Statement on Japan's Authorization of High School Textbooks](#)

[Trump says there is 'communication' with North Korea's Kim Jung Un](#)

[Wang Yi Holds Talks with French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Noël Barrot](#)

[N Korea's Kim inspects test of 'AI suicide attack drones'](#)

West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

Turkey's main opposition party, the Republican People's Party (CHP), held major [anti-government demonstrations](#) on March 29 to protest the arrest of Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu. Protestors claimed that İmamoğlu's arrest, stemming from a corruption investigation on charges widely perceived as baseless, highlights the [authoritarian tendencies of President Erdogan's](#) administration. The CHP has nominated Ekrem İmamoğlu as its Presidential candidate for the 2028 election.

In a television interview on March 29, US President Donald Trump threatened [direct military action against Iran](#) if it refused to agree to a new nuclear deal. He also threatened to use "secondary tariffs" against Iran as part of his administration's "maximum pressure" policy. Reacting sharply, Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, declared that any military action by the US and Israel against Iran would be met with a [robust response from Tehran](#). Iran, through Oman, responded to President Trump's letter calling for a new nuclear deal. The Iranian government reiterated that it would not engage in direct negotiations with the US but was [open to indirect talks](#).

Meanwhile, on April 1, [Israel conducted a major strike in Beirut](#), Lebanon, further testing the shaky ceasefire with Hezbollah. The Israeli military informed that Hezbollah terrorist Hassan Ali Mahmoud Bdeir, who assisted Hamas operatives in planning and carrying out attacks against Israeli civilians, was killed in the strike in Beirut.

Other Developments

[After debilitating strikes, Trump tells Houthis: Stop shooting at us and 'we will stop shooting at you'](#)

[Russia condemns Trump's threat to bomb Iran over nuclear standoff](#)

[Netanyahu rescinds appointment of new Shin Bet chief after one day](#)

[Trump confirms he will travel to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE in coming weeks](#)

Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [March 31](#), President Sadyr Japarov of the Kyrgyz Republic, President Emomali Rahmon of Tajikistan, and President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan signed the Treaty on the Junction Point of State Borders and the Khujand Declaration on Eternal Friendship. These documents were signed during a trilateral summit in Khujand, Tajikistan, underscoring the commitment of the three nations to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity while fostering constructive dialogue and cooperation in Central Asia. The Kyrgyz Republic issued a statement saying, "The agreements open up new prospects for strengthening mutual trust, maintaining stability, and developing integration processes in the region."

On [April 1](#), the Armenian Foreign Ministry has stated that Armenia officially informed the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) Secretariat that it 'will refrain from signing' the CSTO's resolution on the 2024 budget, and 'from participating in the financing of the organisation's activities envisaged by it'. Earlier in March, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Pankin told the Russian state-run media outlet RIA Novosti that if Armenia does not pay its contribution to the CSTO by the end of 2025, 'nobody will probably kick anyone out, nobody will leave automatically'.

Kazakhstan is taking [big hits](#) as Trump and Putin feud. A week ago, Kavkazskaya oil depot in Russia's Krasnodar region, part of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC), [was damaged](#) after drone attacks, with Russia pointing fingers at Ukraine. According to Kazakh journalist Oleg Chervinsky, the CPC was included in Trump's ceasefire moratorium on strikes from both Russia and Ukraine, suggesting the latest drone attack violation of those terms. The continuing attacks on Kazakhstan's energy infrastructure can have dire ramifications for the country.

Other Developments

[Iran and Turkmenistan to launch first passenger train](#)

[The CSTO has agreed on Plan for a regional operation to counter illegal migration in 2025](#)

[EU-Central Asia: Preparing for first-of-its-kind summit meeting aimed at bolstering trade](#)

Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

The 14th edition of the Indian-Russian bilateral naval exercise, INDRA, was [conducted](#) from March 28 to April 2, 2025, off the coast of Chennai. The exercise was conducted in two phases; the Harbour Phase from March 28 to 30 included an opening ceremony, subject matter expert exchanges, reciprocal visits, sports fixtures, and pre-sail briefings. The Sea Phase, taking place from March 31 to April 2 in the Bay of Bengal, featured advanced naval drills such as tactical manoeuvres, live weapon firings, anti-air operations, and helicopter cross-deck landings. Participating vessels include Russian ships Pechanga, Rezkiiy, and Aldar Tsydenzhapov alongside Indian ships Rana and Kuthar. The exercise aimed to enhance naval interoperability and strengthen diplomatic ties between India and Russia through shared operational practices and collaborative training efforts. This exercise, which began in 2003, has been a cornerstone of the enduring maritime partnership between India and Russia.

On March 28, 2025, a catastrophic earthquake measuring 7.7 on the Richter scale struck near Mandalay, Myanmar, resulting in widespread devastation across Myanmar and neighbouring Thailand. In response to this disaster, the Government of India initiated Operation Brahma on March 28, aimed at providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) to the affected regions. Under the same operations, the Indian Navy [dispatched](#) ships Satpura and Savitri from the Eastern Naval Command on March 29, followed by ships Karmuk and LCU 52 from the Andaman and Nicobar Command on March 30. These vessels are carrying approximately 52 tonnes of essential relief materials such as clothing, food, medicines, and emergency supplies.

The Pentagon has [reportedly](#) deployed at least six B-2 stealth bombers to Diego Garcia, an Indian Ocean Island, representing 30% of the U.S. Air Force's fleet of these aircraft. Recent satellite images show the bombers on the tarmac alongside support aircraft, with the base located approximately 3,900 kilometres from Iran's southern coast. Later on, Pentagon spokesperson Sean Parnell confirmed that the U.S. military is deploying additional aircraft and "other air assets" to the Indian Ocean region to enhance America's defensive posture amid escalating tensions in the Middle East. This move aligns with ongoing military operations and signals a commitment to maintaining regional stability. However, this move is interpreted as a message to Iran amid rising tensions in the Middle East, coinciding with U.S. President Donald

Trump and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth's warnings of potential further actions against Iran and its proxies.

Other Developments

[INS Tarkash, made a port call at Djibouti as part of its deployment in the Western Indian Ocean](#)

[DRDO and the Indian Navy successfully conducted a flight test of the indigenously developed Vertically-Launched Short-Range Surface-to-Air Missile \(VLSRSAM\)](#)

[INS Tarkash successfully intercepted and seized over 2500 kg of narcotics in the Western Indian Ocean](#)



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