

Korea Chair Bulletin

INDIA - SOUTH KOREA



PM Modi and President Lee Reaffirm Commitment to Strengthen India-ROK Strategic Partnership at G7

At the G7 Summit in Canada, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Lee Jae-myung had a productive meeting, reaffirming their commitment to strengthen the India-Republic of Korea Special Strategic Partnership, with a focus on trade, investment, technology, green hydrogen, and shipbuilding. Earlier, Prime Minister Modi had congratulated President Lee on his election, expressing hope to deepen bilateral ties. In addition, President Lee conveyed heartfelt condolences for the tragic Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad, assuring India of Korea's solidarity and support during this difficult time. [Read More](#)

Kia announces partnership with leading Engineering Institute to nurture mobility talent in India

Kia has partnered with IIT Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh to develop local automotive talent and boost India's future mobility sector. Through a memorandum of understanding, Kia pledged ₹350 million (\$4.12 million) by 2029 to support infrastructure, internships, scholarships, and joint research. A new research center will also be established. This move aligns with Hyundai Motor Group's broader efforts to collaborate with IITs on innovation and electrification technologies across India. [Read More](#)

Delhi, Seoul Discuss Clean Energy, Air Quality Projects

Delhi's Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa met officials from South Korea's Environmental Industry Association (KEIA) to boost cooperation on clean energy and air quality projects. Discussions focused on joint pilot projects, Korean green technologies, and a proposed Korea-India Environmental Innovation Forum in Delhi. Sirsa highlighted that this collaboration aligns with Delhi's ambitious environmental goals and strengthens partnerships to improve air quality and promote sustainable urban development under PM Modi's leadership. [Read More](#)

Aliawati Longkumer appointed as next Ambassador of India to North Korea

Aliawati Longkumer has been appointed India's next ambassador to North Korea. India and North Korea established consular relations in 1962 and diplomatic ties in 1973. India has historically played a peacekeeping role, notably chairing the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission after the Korean War. The two nations maintain regular consultations on mutual issues. India supports peaceful dialogue on the Korean Peninsula and has welcomed past inter-Korean and U.S.-North Korea summits aimed at easing regional tensions. [Read More](#)

IRS steps into South Korean Passenger Ship Market

The Indian Register of Shipping (IRS) marked its entry into South Korea's shipbuilding market with the launch of an inter-island passenger ferry in Mokpo. Built by MiraeroShipbuilding for Dea Bu Marine Transport, it is the first Korean-owned vessel classed by IRS. This voluntary classification highlights IRS's global reputation. The ferry will undergo key surveys before its final delivery in late June. [Read More](#)



TOP NEWS IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA



Lee Jae-myung Sworn in as South Korea's New President, Vows to Heal Divisions

Lee Jae-myung has taken office as South Korea's new president after winning a snap election with 49.4 percent of the vote, defeating Kim Moon-soo, who represented the party of impeached former President Yoon Suk Yeol. In his inauguration speech, Lee pledged to "unite the people" and prevent any future threats to democratic institutions. He promised to end divisive politics, build a pragmatic government, and immediately activate an emergency economic task force to address urgent national issues. [Read More](#)

Presidents of South Korea and China re-affirm ties through phone call

On June 10, South Korean President Lee Jae-myung held a 30-minute phone call with Chinese President Xi Jinping. Xi congratulated Lee on his election and expressed a desire to strengthen ties. Lee emphasized mutual benefit and cooperation in economy, security, and culture. They agreed to closely collaborate on the upcoming APEC Summit in Gyeongju, and Xi was invited to attend. Both leaders highlighted the importance of regional stability and reaffirmed commitment to deepening their strategic partnership. [Read More](#)

President Lee Skips NATO Summit Amid Middle East Tensions

President Lee Jae-myung skipped the NATO summit in The Hague on 24-25 June, citing urgent domestic priorities and instability in the Middle East after a U.S. strike on Iranian nuclear sites. Though initially expected to attend, his absence marks a diplomatic shift as South Korea navigates global tensions. A postponed meeting with U.S. President Trump, key to upcoming trade negotiations, adds to the uncertainty surrounding Seoul's evolving role in international security and diplomacy. [Read More](#)

North Korea Sent Heavy Weapons, 8,000 Workers to Russia in 2024

A Seoul-led sanctions monitoring group reported that in 2024, North Korea supplied Russia with heavy artillery sufficient for three brigades and sent around 8,000 workers, with plans to dispatch more in 2025. The Multilateral Sanctions Monitoring Team (MSMT), comprising 11 countries, confirmed ongoing military and labor cooperation in violation of UN sanctions. The report detailed large-scale weapons and ammunition transfers, as well as labor deployments, calling for stronger international enforcement and awareness of these illicit activities. [Read More](#)

Pentagon Reaffirms 'Ironclad' U.S.-South Korea Alliance After Lee's Election Victory

Following Lee Jae-myung's election as South Korea's president, Pentagon spokesperson Maj. Pete Nguyen reaffirmed the United States' "ironclad" commitment to defending South Korea and upholding the bilateral alliance. Lee, a liberal Democratic Party candidate, won against conservative rival Kim Moon-soo in an election triggered by the April ouster of former President Yoon Suk Yeol, who was removed after declaring brief martial law in December. The U.S. stressed continued strong ties with Seoul. [Read More](#)



SECURITY



Korea, Indonesia Finalize Deal to Reduce Jakarta's KF-21 Fighter Jet Payments

South Korea and Indonesia have agreed to reduce Jakarta's contribution to the KF-21 fighter jet project to 600 billion won (\$443 million), down from 1.7 trillion won. Signed at a Jakarta arms exhibition, the revised deal resolves previous tensions over delayed payments and alleged tech theft. Future negotiations will determine technology transfer terms, while broader defense cooperation is expected to expand. [Read More](#)

Korean, U.S. Troops Conduct Special Operations Drills in Jeju

South Korean and U.S. forces held joint special operations training on Jeju Island from May 7–23 to enhance interoperability against North Korea's threats, including "gray zone" tactics. The drills focused on small unit tactics, cyber and forensic skills, and CBRN material identification. U.S. commander Brig. Gen. Derek Lipson emphasized their commitment to deterrence and regional stability amid ongoing North Korean provocations, including recent missile launches. [Read More](#)

Vice Ministers of Russia and North Korea discuss closer cooperation

North Korea and Russia have agreed to boost cooperation between their internal security agencies, according to state media. Vice Ministers Ri Song-chol and Vitaly Shulika held talks in Pyongyang, emphasizing camaraderie and expanding collaboration. The Russian delegation also met with North Korean Public Security Minister Pang Tu-sop and toured landmarks like the Juche Tower. The visit reflects growing ties between the two nations' public safety ministries amid broader strategic alignment. [Read More](#)

South Korea, US Military Chiefs Pledge Stronger Trilateral Security Ties with Japan

South Korea's Adm. Kim Myung-soo and U.S. Gen. John Daniel Caine held their first video talks, vowing to enhance trilateral security cooperation with Japan. They agreed to boost momentum ahead of the upcoming defense meeting in South Korea this July. Emphasizing joint responses to North Korea's growing threats and ties with Russia, both sides reaffirmed the need for strong capabilities and posture to counter emerging regional security challenges. [Read More](#)



Korea Set to Finalize \$6 Billion K2 Tank Export Deal with Poland in June 2025

South Korea is expected to sign a \$6 billion deal with Poland this month to export 180 additional K2 tanks, marking Seoul's largest-ever arms export contract. Of these, 117 will be made by Hyundai Rotem, while the rest will be produced locally by Poland's PGZ. The deal, delayed by political issues, follows a 2022 agreement and includes tech transfers and upgrades, reflecting Poland's defense buildup after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. [Read More](#)



SCI-FI/ENVIRONMENT/INVESTMENT



Thousands Rally in Seoul for LGBTQ+ Rights

The 26th Seoul Queer Culture Festival drew wide participation from politicians, farmers, foreign embassies, and civil society in central Seoul on Saturday. Featuring rainbow-themed booths and a pride parade through major landmarks, the event faced protests from conservative religious groups but saw no major conflict. Despite the National Human Rights Commission boycotting the event, its staff maintained a presence.

Supporters, including lawmakers and celebrities, expressed hope for improved LGBTQ+ rights under newly elected President Lee Jae-myung.

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Seoul Cultural Spending Rises to \$157 as Live Arts Surpass Cinema

Seoul residents are increasingly engaging in cultural activities, spending an average of 214,000 won in 2024—a 27% rise since 2022—according to the Seoul Foundation for Arts and Culture. Attendance at live events and galleries surpassed moviegoing, and digital content consumption is rising. However, accessibility gaps persist, especially among people with disabilities. Interest in AI-generated content is growing, though opinions vary. Overall, cultural participation has rebounded to pre-pandemic levels, with 76.1% attending in-person events.

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SK Group and AWS set to build South Korea's largest AI data center

SK Group has partnered with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to build South Korea's largest AI data center in Ulsan, featuring 60,000 GPUs. The project, starting with a 41MW phase by 2027 and expanding to 1GW, aims to become Northeast Asia's top AI hub. Joint investments from SK and AWS will total several trillion won. The site's proximity to an LNG power plant ensures energy stability for the massive AI infrastructure initiative. [Read More](#)

Foreign Investment in Korean Securities Hits 2-Year High: Bank of Korea

Foreign investment in Korean securities saw a major rebound in May, with a net inflow of \$9.29 billion—the highest since May 2023—driven by easing domestic political tensions and improved global trade sentiment. Foreigners became net buyers of Korean stocks for the first time since July 2024 and continued bond purchases for the fourth month. The Bank of Korea cited trade negotiations and strong bond demand as key factors behind the surge. [Read More](#)

Polls suggest that most Korean Manufacturers see Carbon Policy as Regulatory Burden

A recent survey by the Federation of Korean Industries found that 64.2% of major manufacturers view Korea's carbon neutrality policy as a regulatory burden, with only 4.2% seeing it as incentive-driven. Most respondents doubted the feasibility of Korea's 2030 emissions target. The FKI warned that the country's carbon-intensive industries and a regulation-heavy approach could harm business performance and competitiveness, calling for a shift toward more incentive-based climate policies. [Read More](#)



10 MOST READ ARTICLES

Korea Times, in ***Army conducts 1st live-fire drills involving cluster bombs***, reports on South Korea's military using cluster munitions for the first time in a large-scale live-fire exercise. The article underscores the evolving deterrence posture of South Korea's armed forces and the significance of these exercises for readiness and operational integration. [Read More](#)

Chosun Ilbo, in ***N. Korea sends combat engineers to Russia, seeks bigger rewards***, reports that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un dispatched military engineers to Russia to assist in operations there. The article highlights Pyongyang's intent to deepen military cooperation with Moscow, possibly in exchange for technological or economic gains, signaling a strategic shift in North Korea's foreign engagements. [Read More](#)

Korea Times, in ***Korea, U.S. expected to generate mutually satisfactory trade outcome: President***, reports that President Lee Jae-myung expressed confidence on June 24, 2025 that talks with the U.S. will yield a trade deal satisfactory to both nations. The article underscores the importance of coordinating trade policy with national security goals and highlights ongoing efforts to manage economic ties amid global and regional uncertainty. [Read More](#)

Korea Times, in ***Korean Navy, Marine Corps to join multinational drills in Australia***, reports that South Korea's Navy and Marine Corps will participate in the upcoming biennial Talisman Sabre exercise in Australia, scheduled from July 3 to 27, 2025. The article underscores Seoul's growing role in enhancing combined-arms readiness and interoperability with allied forces reflecting South Korea's strategic shift toward broader defense engagement and increased responsibility within multinational security frameworks. [Read More](#)

Chosun Ilbo, in ***Lee skips NATO, sending his adviser instead. Will that be enough?***, reports that President Lee Jae-myung chose not to attend the NATO summit personally and instead dispatched a senior adviser. The article questions whether this decision supports effective alliance-building or reflects a missed diplomatic opportunity, especially as Seoul balances global partnerships with domestic needs. [Read more](#)

Chosun Ilbo, in ***North Korea goes silent after Seoul halts propaganda broadcasts***, reports that following South Korea's decision on June 11, 2025 to stop loudspeaker broadcasts across the DMZ, Pyongyang has maintained an unusually low profile along the border. The sudden silence is being viewed by Seoul as a potential sign of de-escalation and reciprocal restraint, though the South remains cautious, noting that the quiet could be temporary. [Read more](#)

Korea Herald, in ***Seoul seeks to minimize fallout from US strikes on Iran***, reports that South Korean officials are actively working to manage diplomatic and security fallout after U.S. strikes targeted Iranian nuclear facilities. The article notes concerns about potential impacts on global oil prices and regional stability, while highlighting Seoul's efforts to maintain a balanced stance between its strong alliance with Washington and its trade relations with Iran. [Read more](#)

Korea Herald, in ***S. Korean, US diplomats agree on efforts for bilateral alliance, trilateral cooperation with Japan***, reports that on June 21, 2025, South Korean and U.S. diplomats reached a consensus to strengthen their bilateral alliance and expand trilateral collaboration with Japan. The agreement emphasizes enhancing joint responses to regional security threats, particularly from North Korea, and coordinating more closely on diplomatic, defense, and economic fronts. [Read more](#)

South China Morning Post, in ***South Korea and US seek to revive talks with North Korea as Kim Jong-un rejects Trump letter***, reports that Seoul and Washington are pushing to restart dialogue with Pyongyang, despite Kim Jong-un rejecting a message from former U.S. President Trump. The move highlights current diplomatic tensions and North Korea's reluctance to engage. [Read more](#)

NDTV, in ***South Korea appoints first civilian defence minister in over 60 years***, reports that President Lee Jae-myung named Ahn Gyu-back as the country's first civilian defense minister since 1961. The move signals a push for stronger civilian oversight after last year's martial law crisis. [Read more](#)



The Korea Chair Bulletin provides research-driven insights into India-South Korea relations, covering policy shifts, strategic dialogues, and emerging trends. It also highlights key developments and news from the Korean Peninsula.

Korea Chair Bulletin

The Republic of Korea Chair at CSDR aims to enhance the understanding and cooperation between India and the Republic of Korea through research and policy engagement. Launched in Jan 2025, with a grant from the Korea Foundation, the Chair intends to create broader awareness and in-depth understanding of the India-ROK relationship, which remains limited despite growing governmental engagement.

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