

Korea Chair Bulletin

INDIA - SOUTH KOREA

India, South Korea Deepen Strategic Ties at 6th Security Dialogue

India and South Korea held their 6th Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue in Seoul, reviewing bilateral ties and reaffirming their Special Strategic Partnership. Co-chaired by India's Secretary (East) P. Kumaran and South Korea's First Vice Foreign Minister Park Yoon-joo, the talks covered economic cooperation, defence, technology, and regional issues, with both sides agreeing to deepen engagement through regular high-level exchanges in 2026. [Read more](#)

South Korean Destroyer Joined India's Fleet Review and MILAN Drills

South Korea's ROKS Gang Gam-chan, a 4,400-ton destroyer, sailed to Visakhapatnam to join the International Fleet Review and the MILAN naval exercises. The drills, involving about 20 countries including the United States, United Kingdom, Japan, and Australia, focused on anti-ship and anti-air warfare, logistics, and helicopter operations to boost maritime interoperability. [Read more](#)

India Marks 77th Republic Day in Seoul, Reaffirms Strong Korea Ties

India's Embassy in Seoul hosted a ceremony to celebrate India's 77th Republic Day, highlighting the deepening partnership between India and South Korea. At the event, Indian diplomats emphasised strengthening political, economic, and cultural ties in 2026, reflecting on the successful bilateral cooperation in areas such as trade, technology, and people-to-people exchanges. South Korean attendees and Indian officials both expressed optimism about expanding collaboration in strategic sectors and enhancing mutual engagement across regional and global forums. The celebration reinforced shared democratic values and the mutual commitment to a robust and forward-looking relationship. [Read more](#)



Chung Ki-sun, Narendra Modi Hold Talks to Deepen Shipbuilding Partnership

HD Hyundai Chairman Chung Ki-sun met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi to explore expanding bilateral cooperation in the shipbuilding sector and related industries. The discussion took place on the sidelines of India Energy Week 2026, where both leaders attended a high-level roundtable with senior officials and business executives. Chung thanked the Indian government for its support of the shipbuilding industry and sought continued policy backing for HD Hyundai's projects in India. The meeting underscored shared interest in strengthening maritime and industrial ties between the two countries. [Read more](#)

Science minister shares S. Korea's AI vision at India tech conference

South Korean Science Minister Bae Kyung-hoon presented Seoul's artificial intelligence vision at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 in New Delhi. He outlined South Korea's AI transformation policies and the implementation of the AI Basic Act aimed at regulating risks such as misinformation. The summit provided a platform for countries to discuss AI cooperation across the Global South. On the sidelines, Bae also met Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei to explore potential collaboration in the AI industry. [Read more](#)



TOP NEWS FROM THE KOREAN PENINSULA

South Korea Says Civilian Drone Flights Harmed Inter-Korean Ties

South Korea's Unification Minister Chung Dong-young announced that three civilians launched drones toward North Korea on four occasions since President Lee Jae Myung took office, and these unauthorised flights have harmed inter-Korean relations, which remain highly sensitive. The incidents occurred between September 2025 and January 2026, and two of the drones reportedly crashed inside North Korean territory, according to ongoing investigations. Seoul is probing the matter as authorities caution such actions could escalate tensions on the Korean Peninsula, even though they were carried out by private individuals rather than the military.

[Read more](#)



South Korea, NATO Chief Discuss Broadening Defence Cooperation

South Korean President Lee Jae-Myung and Mark Rutte discussed ways to expand cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. They discussed strengthening strategic ties in security and defence, improving interoperability, and coordinating on global stability amid shifting geopolitical challenges. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to deeper partnership, enhanced defence collaboration, and joint efforts to address shared threats and uphold regional and international peace. [Read more](#)

Korea, Netherlands Reaffirm Strategic Partnership in Trade and Economic Security

South Korea and the Netherlands held their first high-level foreign affairs and trade dialogue in Seoul, reaffirming their strategic partnership. The talks focused on strengthening cooperation in trade, economic security, AI, semiconductors and other advanced technologies, while promoting resilient supply chains and closer coordination on regional and global challenges. [Read more](#)

South Korea Launches Task Force for Nuclear-Powered Sub Talks with U.S.

South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has formed a task force to prepare negotiations with the United States on acquiring nuclear-powered submarines. The team will coordinate technical, legal and policy discussions to strengthen deterrence, deepen defence cooperation with Washington, and enhance Seoul's long-term maritime security capabilities. [Read more](#)

Korea, U.S. Hold Talks to Boost Joint Military Logistics Cooperation

Senior military officials from South Korea and the United States met in Seoul to discuss strengthening joint military logistics cooperation, marking the first official engagement between South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff and the U.S. Defence Logistics Agency. They explored ways to enhance combined sustainment capabilities, emphasising that robust logistics support is crucial for maintaining their combined defence posture in a changing security environment. Both sides agreed to expand and regularise communication and coordination to ensure immediate and continuous support in contingencies, reaffirming the importance of logistics in the long-standing Korea-U.S. alliance. [Read more](#)



SECURITY/NORTH KOREA



South Korean Intelligence Says Kim Jong Un Has Chosen Daughter Kim Ju-Ae as His Successor

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is reportedly preparing to designate his daughter, Kim Ju-ae, as his successor, according to South Korean intelligence and international media reporting. This move, if confirmed, would mark a historic shift in the leadership succession of the secretive state, where power has traditionally passed through male members of the Kim family dynasty. Analysts say Kim Ju-ae's emerging public profile and symbolic role in state propaganda could be part of long-term grooming, but details about timing and official succession plans remain unclear amid the opaque politics of Pyongyang. [Read more](#)

South Korea to Take Lead as Pentagon Scales Back North Korea Deterrence

The United States Department of Defense's new National Defense Strategy signals a more limited U.S. role in deterring North Korea, with South Korea expected to take primary responsibility for peninsula defence. The shift reflects Washington's focus on homeland security and broader challenges like China's rise. While Seoul has strengthened its military capabilities, it has voiced concern over reduced U.S. involvement. The strategy also omits reference to North Korea's denuclearisation. [Read more](#)

Missile Launches by North Korea Raise Regional Security Concerns, Say S Korea and Japan

North Korea fired suspected ballistic missiles from near Pyongyang on January 27, with the projectiles landing in waters east of the Korean Peninsula without damage. South Korea and Japan condemned the launches as weapons tests violating United Nations Security Council resolutions, calling them a threat to regional peace and urging Pyongyang to stop further provocations. [Read More](#)

South Korea Imposes Travel Bans on 3 People Amid Probe of Alleged Drone Flights into North Korea

South Korea has banned three civilians from traveling while investigating alleged drone flights into North Korea. Pyongyang accuses Seoul of violating its airspace, but the government denies military involvement and is examining possible civilian actions. The probe could further strain inter-Korean relations and hinder efforts to restart dialogue. [Read more](#)

North Korea Unveils Expanded Nuclear War Deterrent Plans at Party Congress, State Media Says

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has said his ruling Workers' Party congress will unveil "next-stage" plans to strengthen the country's nuclear war deterrent, state media reported. The announcement came after Pyongyang tested a large-caliber multiple-rocket launcher, which KCNA described as having improved strike power, mobility and accuracy. Kim framed military buildup and reliable offensive capabilities as key to deterring conflict. The congress is likely to outline new defence priorities amid ongoing tensions with South Korea and Japan, who condemned recent missile launches toward the sea off the Korean peninsula. [Read more](#)



SCI-FI/ENVIRONMENT/INVESTMENT/SOCIETY



Large US Fuel Spill Reported at Air Bases in South Korea

South Korean authorities say more than 42,000 liters of aircraft fuel spilled last month at a U.S. Air Force base in Gunsan, marking one of the largest such leaks in recent years. The incident involved fighter jet fuel and occurred at a facility that supports U.S. military operations on the Korean Peninsula. A second separate fuel leak was also confirmed around the same time, prompting environmental and safety concerns. Officials are investigating the causes and the potential impact on local soil and water, as well as measures to prevent similar spills in the future. [Read more](#)

South Korea Reports Second Foot-and-Mouth Disease Case

South Korea has confirmed its second foot-and-mouth disease case of the season at a local livestock farm, health authorities said. The outbreak was detected about three weeks after the first reported case, prompting veterinary officials to intensify monitoring and control measures to prevent further spread among cattle and pigs. FMD is a highly contagious viral disease that affects cloven-hoofed animals and can lead to severe economic losses in the agriculture sector. The government is likely to enhance biosecurity protocols on farms and restrict animal movements to contain the virus and protect the livestock industry. [Read more](#)

South Korea-US Parliamentarians' Union to Discuss Trade Issues

The Korea-US Parliamentarians' Union will meet the American Chamber of Commerce in Korea to discuss trade barriers, regulatory issues and ways to boost bilateral commerce. The talks aim to strengthen economic ties between South Korea and the United States and improve conditions for American firms operating in Korea. [Read More](#)

South Korean Citizens Nominated for Nobel Peace Prize

South Korean activists have been recommended as candidates for the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize for their collective resistance against former martial law imposed in South Korea. The nomination honours ordinary citizens who opposed authoritarian measures and stood up for democratic principles, highlighting civil society's role in safeguarding rights and freedoms. Supporters say the nomination recognises the power of peaceful public protest and the importance of democracy in South Korea's modern history, drawing attention both domestically and internationally to the significance of civic engagement in challenging oppressive policies. [Read more](#)

South Korea Faces Workforce Stagnation Amid Demographic Decline

South Korea's working-age population is projected to begin shrinking from 2030 as the nation grapples with an ageing society and persistently low birth rates, raising concerns about future economic growth, labour shortages and pressure on welfare systems, according to new demographic forecasts. The decline could have profound impacts on the workforce, productivity and public finances unless policies to boost fertility and participation rates are implemented. [Read more](#)



10 MOST READ ARTICLES

[The Korea Herald](#) in *Korean Embassy advises Korean nationals to leave Iran amid possible US military strike* reports on the South Korean Embassy's advice to Korean nationals in Iran to leave the country due to rising tensions and the possibility of a U.S. military strike on Iran.

[The Korea Times](#) in *Life sentence for ex-president triggers political backlash* highlights the political fallout after a South Korean court sentenced former President Yoon Suk-yeol to life in prison on insurrection charges.

[The Korea Herald](#) in *S. Korea signs document confirming govt. support for Canadian submarine bid* reports on South Korea backing Canadian defense firms in a submarine export deal with Canada.

[Bloomberg](#) in *South Korea Express Regret to North over Drone Incursions* states that South Korea formally expressed regret to North Korea over civilian-launched drone incursions that violated inter-Korean agreements and threatened stability.

[Reuters](#) in *North Korea's Kim Jong Un says new military goals to be set at party congress* states that North Korea's Kim Jong Un saying his ruling party congress will set new military goals to bolster the country's defense and nuclear deterrent.

[The Chosun Daily](#) in *Japan's Foreign Minister Repeats Dokdo Claim; South Korea Demands Retraction* reports that South Korea protested after Japan renewed its claim over the disputed Dokdo islets.

[The Chosun Daily](#) in *South Korea-U.S. Officials Discuss Summit, Peninsula Issues* reports that South Korea and the United States agreed to boost coordination on security issues.

[The Korea Times](#) in *Seoul to deploy robots to improve disaster management* highlights Seoul's plan to deploy robots and AI technology to strengthen disaster response and emergency management.

[Reuters](#) in *North Korea says South Korea should take steps to prevent violation of its sovereignty* highlights that North Korea urged South Korea to take steps to prevent future violations of its sovereignty after an alleged drone airspace incursion.

[The Korea Herald](#) in *NK leader leaves room for US engagement, rebuffs Seoul* mentions that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un signaled willingness to improve relations with the United States if Washington drops its "hostile policy," while rejecting South Korea's dialogue efforts as insincere.



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.

Prof. C Raja Mohan - Distinguished Fellow & ROK Chair, CSDR



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