

Korea Chair Bulletin

INDIA - SOUTH KOREA



India and SK expanding defense ties

India and South Korea are exploring deeper defense-industrial cooperation in manufacturing, technology and logistics. At their 10th Joint Committee Meeting in New Delhi, officials and companies discussed opportunities involving land systems, aerospace, defence electronics and maintenance. Existing cooperation on the K9 Vajra howitzer provides a model for future partnerships. Both sides are considering joint development, production and technology transfer, although no new contracts or programmes were announced. [Read more](#)

Hyundai Motors inaugurates new plant in Pune, India

Hyundai Motor India has inaugurated its new Pune plant, bringing its annual vehicle production capacity across India close to one million. The facility will initially produce 170,000 vehicles annually, with capacity planned to increase to 320,000 by 2030. The plant will manufacture the Venue SUV for domestic sales and exports. The expansion strengthens Hyundai's manufacturing presence in India and supports its broader production and export strategy.

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Maritime Cooperation between SK and India

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal began a four-day visit to South Korea to strengthen India-South Korea cooperation in shipbuilding, shipping, ports and maritime logistics. He met Indian maritime professionals in South Korea and encouraged them to contribute to India's ambition of becoming a leading shipbuilding nation by 2047 through technology transfer, skills development and industrial partnerships.

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Need for stronger India, SK, and Australia relations

A new research report from the University of Melbourne calls for stronger cooperation between Australia, India and South Korea to advance Indo-Pacific security and regional stability. It identifies complementary strengths in Australia's diplomatic networks, India's strategic and manufacturing capabilities, and South Korea's technological and industrial expertise, advocating deeper trilateral partnerships to support an Asian-led regional order.

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Indian man allegedly faces abuse from SK Immigration Officers

An Indian man has accused South Korean immigration officers of physically abusing him during his deportation on August 27. He alleges officers taped his mouth, covered his head, slapped and choked him, despite his saying he would not resist. Body-camera footage released during a parliamentary audit appeared to show an officer restraining him by the neck. His legal representative filed a complaint with South Korea's National Human Rights Commission, and the acting justice minister acknowledged that using duct tape was wrong. [Read more](#)



TOP NEWS FROM THE KOREAN PENINSULA

President Lee visits US for UN Assembly and Mexico

President Lee Jae Myung returned to South Korea after a trip to New York for the 81st United Nations General Assembly and a state visit to Mexico. At the UN, he advocated renewed US–North Korea dialogue and a phased approach to denuclearisation. In Mexico, he met President Claudia Sheinbaum and adopted a joint action plan to deepen economic cooperation and expand collaboration in artificial intelligence, defence and other sectors. [Read more](#)

SK and Egypt strengthen strategic relationship

South Korea and Egypt have upgraded their bilateral relationship to a strategic partnership following talks between President Lee Jae Myung and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi in Seoul. The leaders agreed to expand cooperation in defence, shipbuilding, clean energy, power infrastructure and technology. They cited joint production of South Korea's K9 self-propelled howitzers as a successful defence partnership. Lee also expressed hope that both countries would begin negotiations on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement to deepen trade ties. [Read more](#)

SK reveals energy investment plans in US

South Korea unveiled plans for major energy investments in the United States under its broader \$350 billion strategic investment package, which is linked to efforts to secure exemptions from US import tariffs. The plans include a \$22.3 billion gas-fired power plant in Texas to supply electricity to artificial intelligence data centres, investment in eight US nuclear reactors and a proposed Alaska liquefied natural gas pipeline and export terminal. South Korean investments will be capped at \$20 billion annually under a legally binding agreement. [Read more](#)

Chinese AI agent becomes closed-source after links to SK banks cyberattacks

A Chinese developer has made ARTEX, an open-source AI agent for automated penetration testing, closed-source after cybersecurity firms linked it to cyberattacks targeting South Korean banks. The developer said the project would no longer receive updates or public releases. CrowdStrike identified a suspected China-based attacker who allegedly used ARTEX and Anthropic's Claude Code to target customer data. At least nine South Korean banks have reportedly faced attacks since late September, prompting a police investigation. [Read more](#)



SK demands Ukraine Apology over NK POW disclosure

South Korea has demanded an official explanation and apology from Ukraine after President Volodymyr Zelensky disclosed at the United Nations General Assembly that two North Korean prisoners of war had been transferred to South Korea. Seoul said Kyiv had agreed to keep the transfer confidential because of diplomatic and security sensitivities. South Korea accused Ukraine of violating that agreement and subsequently denying its existence. The government said it was considering further measures over the incident. [Read more](#)



SECURITY/NORTH KOREA

South Korea Warns Changing OPCON Transfer Conditions Could Jeopardise Handover

South Korea's Defence Ministry spokesperson Chung Binna warned that changing the requirements for transferring wartime operational control (OPCON) from the United States could make the handover impossible. Her remarks followed comments by US Forces Korea commander General Xavier Brunson that the security environment and operational plans had changed since the original conditions were established. Chung clarified that her comments were personal and that Seoul and Washington remained committed to their agreed transition plan. [Read more](#)

NK dismisses findings of their mines causing SK soldiers injury

North Korea rejected South Korea's findings that North Korean mines caused a September 21 blast that seriously injured South Korean soldiers near the Demilitarized Zone. Pyongyang called Seoul's investigation a premeditated attempt to implicate the North and justify further diplomatic and military measures. Its Foreign Ministry threatened "immediate and powerful counteraction" if South Korea violated North Korean territory, warning that it would respond more firmly to protect its borders. [Read more](#)

SK denies Ukraine allegations of helping Russia in Energy Supply

South Korea's presidential office rejected Ukrainian allegations that South Korean fuel shipments helped ease Russia's energy crisis amid Ukrainian drone attacks on Russian refineries. The allegations followed a report claiming petroleum products were shipped from South Korean ports to Russia aboard tankers, including some under Western sanctions. Seoul said it had consistently enforced sanctions and export controls against Russia. It added that the reported transactions had not been sufficiently verified and that it was examining the facts. [Read more](#)

SK's medical aid rejected by NK leader Kim Yo Jong

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's sister, Kim Yo Jong, rejected South Korea's planned medical aid to Pyongyang, calling it a political provocation and an infringement on North Korea's sovereignty. She criticised Seoul for publicising efforts to obtain a UN sanctions exemption and referring to shortages of medical supplies. South Korea had secured approval to send medical equipment worth approximately \$6.8 million to a Pyongyang hospital but still needed North Korea's cooperation. [Read more](#)



FM Cho Hyun meets Marco Rubio; discussions on NK-US dialogue

South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Hyun met US Secretary of State Marco Rubio in Washington to discuss bilateral ties, regional security and the resumption of North Korea-US dialogue. Cho pledged that Seoul would act as a "pacemaker" to support renewed talks and pursue denuclearisation through diplomacy. The ministers also reaffirmed their alliance, discussed South Korea's strategic investment in the United States and agreed to coordinate on restoring freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz. [Read more](#)



SCI-FI/ENVIRONMENT/INVESTMENT/SOCIETY

Serious Crimes Agency Chief appointed amid controversy

President Lee Jae Myung appointed Kim Ji-yong as the inaugural chief of South Korea's Serious Crimes Investigation Agency, ending a two-week vacancy amid controversy over his prosecutorial record. Kim's appointment faced criticism from Lim Eun-jung, a senior agency official, over his handling of a 2018 sexual misconduct case. A civic group subsequently filed a defamation complaint against Lim, which has been assigned to the Nagency's anti-corruption unit for investigation. [Read more](#)



Claims on Korean-American student involved in alleged Cornell case sparked online

Claims spread online that a Korean-American student named in a civil lawsuit alleging sexual assault involving seven Cornell University students is the grandson of former South Korean Prime Minister Lee Hong-koo. Social media users circulated photographs and family connections to support the claim, but the relationship has not been independently verified. The case concerns alleged sexual assault at a fraternity house in 2024; the defendants have not been convicted, and the criminal investigation has been reopened. [Read more](#)

JY Park addresses 'Fanomenon' controversy at National Assembly

J.Y. Park, founder of JYP Entertainment, testified at a National Assembly audit over allegations of preferential treatment and trademark irregularities surrounding Fanomenon, a government-backed global K-pop festival. He denied that the project favoured participating entertainment agencies, arguing that it could generate wider economic benefits across industries such as gaming and fashion. Park acknowledged procedural shortcomings in JYP's advance overseas trademark applications and said the rights would be transferred to the event's organising entity. [Read more](#)

SK team denounce Asia Games over 'operation irregularities'

South Korea's delegation criticised organisers of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games over transport, accommodation and administrative problems that disrupted athletes. The men's basketball team was moved from cramped temporary containers after flooding and bed-size issues, while transport failures caused the team to miss a training session before its final against Japan. South Korea requested a meeting and formal apology, but said organisers must introduce concrete measures to prevent similar problems at future events. [Read more](#)

Hangul Day Celebrations

Around Hangul Day on October 9, South Korea hosts cultural celebrations honoring the Korean writing system. The Sejong Hangeul Festival, held from October 9–11, features performances, exhibitions, contests and interactive activities celebrating Hangul's creativity and heritage. The Gamcheon Culture Village Alley Festival in Busan, however, is scheduled for October 31–November 1, rather than the Hangul Day holiday, with local performances and cultural activities. [Read more](#)



10 MOST READ ARTICLES

Reuters in [South Korea to open Sejong presidential office by 2029, move 350 institutions from Seoul](#) [South Korea completes Arctic-Europe commercial voyage, eyes regular service despite risks](#) reports that South Korea's PanStar Acro completed the country's first commercial round trip to Europe via the Arctic in 50 days. The route could cut shipping times by a third, with regular services targeted by 2030. However, ice conditions, higher operating costs, insurance expenses and tensions over Russia could complicate its expansion.

Reuters in [South Korea unveils \\$747 billion energy transition plan through 2035](#) reports that Seoul has announced a 1,000 trillion won (\$747 billion) green transformation strategy to expand renewable energy, decarbonise heavy industry and stimulate economic growth. The plan targets 100 gigawatts of renewable energy capacity by 2030 and aims for electric and hydrogen-powered vehicles to exceed 70% of new vehicle sales by 2035.

Reuters in [Seoul affirms US investment pledges, intent to help with Strait of Hormuz free passage](#) reports that South Korea reaffirmed its \$350 billion investment commitments to the United States and willingness to contribute to restoring free passage through the Strait of Hormuz. Foreign Minister Cho Hyun discussed the issues with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio. Both sides also reaffirmed cooperation on North Korea's denuclearization and regional security.

Reuters in [South Korean court orders North Korea to pay damages over 2020 liaison office demolition, media reports](#) reports that a Seoul court ordered North Korea to pay 44.6 billion won (\$32.5 million) in damages for demolishing the inter-Korean liaison office in Kaesong in June 2020. The ruling followed a lawsuit filed by South Korea in 2023. However, Seoul has no practical means of forcing Pyongyang to pay the compensation.

The Korea Herald in [Hangang Bus, housing crisis take center stage in Seoul city audit](#) reports that Seoul's river-bus service and housing affordability were major issues during a parliamentary audit of the city government. Opposition lawmakers questioned alleged bribery linked to the Hangang Bus project and possible attempts to conceal related documents. Mayor Oh Se-hoon said the allegations remained unresolved and defended the project, while housing prices and government real-estate policies also drew scrutiny.

The Korea Herald in [Data manipulation found at 30 election commissions](#) reports that a special counsel investigation found falsified voter-turnout entries at 30 election commissions during South Korea's June 3 local elections. Officials allegedly altered overall voter tallies to match incorrectly entered hourly turnout figures. Investigators reviewed records and interviewed around 70 election officials, while prosecutors and police searched the National Election Commission headquarters and six local offices as part of a wider investigation into election irregularities.

The Korea Herald in [US drops case against ex-CIA analyst accused of aiding S. Korea](#) reports that US prosecutors agreed to defer prosecution of former CIA analyst Sue Mi Terry, who was accused of acting as an unregistered agent for South Korea and receiving luxury gifts. Under the agreement, charges will be dropped after 12 months if she complies with conditions, including restrictions on travel and contact with South Korean intelligence officials. Terry has denied wrongdoing.

The Korea Herald in [N. Korea-China bridge nears opening amid signs of economic bargain: report](#) reports that the New Yalu River Bridge connecting China's Dandong with North Korea's Sinuiju is nearing operation after a 12-year delay. Analysts suggest Pyongyang may have used the project to negotiate better economic terms with Beijing. While the bridge could improve trade and transport links, it may also increase North Korea's trade deficit and economic dependence on China.

The Korea Herald in [S. Korea to offer \\$300,000 worth of humanitarian aid to quake-hit Panama](#) reports that South Korea will provide \$300,000 in humanitarian assistance to Panama following a 7.7-magnitude earthquake on October 9. The disaster damaged 29 health facilities, 419 educational facilities and more than 800 homes, according to UN data. Seoul plans to deliver the assistance through international organisations to support emergency response and early recovery efforts.

The Korea Herald in ['Bring an interpreter': Migrant workers struggle to seek justice](#) reports that language barriers are preventing migrant workers in South Korea from filing labour complaints and tracking cases. Only 60 multilingual consultants serve seven regional labour offices, despite rising numbers of foreign visitors seeking assistance. Some workers are asked to arrange and pay for their own interpreters, while others struggle to understand official guidance and may wait years for responses to complaints.





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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