



# CUTS International *Global Affairs*

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Editorial

## **Geopolitics Without a Pause Button: From Alaska to Asia**

Geopolitics, it seems, has no summer break. As August winds down, the world's chessboard is anything but tumultuous—pieces are shifting, players are improvising, and the Global South is learning to play both offence and defence at once. As we argued in a recent [Asian Age column](#), Trump's tariff threats may well turn out to be a blessing in disguise—a wake-up call for New Delhi to recalibrate both its economic and strategic responses.

Take Russia-India-China (RIC) ties. After years of frost, Beijing is suddenly promising to meet New Delhi's rare-earth needs. A welcome gesture? Yes. A strategic masterstroke? Maybe. In diplomacy, nothing is ever "rare"; except rare sincerity. Meanwhile, Xi Jinping popped up in Tibet for the first time since 2021, signalling that Beijing's grip is tightening even as the Dalai Lama, now 90, looms over succession debates.

Across the Pacific, the much-hyped Alaska meet between Presidents Trump and Putin was supposed to be the "big thaw" for the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Instead, we got more ice than fire. Trump's cryptic "*there is no deal until there's a deal*" left analysts scratching their heads and Ukraine still bleeding. For a leader who promised to end the war in 24 hours, the clock is ticking louder than ever.

Asia, meanwhile, is buzzing with military drills. South Korea and the US kicked off Ulchi Freedom Shield, while Indonesia rolled out its "Super Garuda Shield", yes, even exercises now come with superhero branding. North Korea, not to be left behind, is turbocharging its nuclear arsenal. Clearly, peace doesn't make it into the training manuals.

But here's where things get interesting. China isn't just flexing in Asia; it's wooing Europe's periphery. Serbia, the Western Balkans' heavyweight, has been buddying up with Beijing joint exercises, high-profile visits, and a warm invitation to China's September military parade. Meanwhile, Chinese solar exports are lighting up Africa at record speed. Who said Beijing only thinks in terms of coal and steel?

India, of course, is playing its own long game. Buying Russian oil by the barrel, Modi's first China visit in seven years, and deepening BRICS conversations; New Delhi is scripting a foreign policy that's more about bridges than walls. Yet, the big question remains: can India keep balancing while Washington grows unpredictable? Some wry voices say, "America's counterweight to China is now looking for its own counterweight to Trump".

For the Global South, the lesson is clear. This isn't the Cold War redux, but a hot mess of power plays where middle powers must be both nimble and bold. Platforms like BRICS+ could become the insurance policy ensuring we don't just inherit yesterday's divisions, but co-author tomorrow's rules based order.

The world may not yet have a ceasefire, but perhaps it's time for a reset button. After all, in geopolitics, just like in chess, sometimes the best move is not about capturing, but about creating space.

Purushendra Singh  
Editor

**P.S.:** The Armenia–Azerbaijan ceasefire is holding for now—but for how long? More importantly, what lessons from this fragile peace can be applied to other hot wars, from Ukraine to Gaza, where diplomacy still struggles to find traction?

### Message for our Readers

This is the 93rd edition of the fortnightly news wrap from the Centre, which carries select published news or comments on a relevant issue. There are equally important issues which may have been missed out to keep the news wrap short and swiftly readable.

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### Jaishankar-Wang Yi discuss Trade, Stability

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in New Delhi to discuss trade restrictions, border tensions, and global issues, such as the Ukraine conflict. Both leaders stressed the importance of mutual respect and sensitivity to move forward after a difficult phase in bilateral relations.



- [Japan expected to advance legacy semiconductor, LCD production transfer to India](#) |

DigiTimes Asia

- [Trump's 50% tariffs on India over Russian oil purchases take effect](#) | Public Broadcasting Service
  - [BOK: 15% Reciprocal Tariff on Exports to US to Slow Down Growth This Year](#) | KBS World
  - [US Approves Potential \\$1.85 Billion Sale of F-35 Sustainment to Poland](#) | US News
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### **Putin-Kim to Join Xi at Chinese Military Parade**

Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong-un will join President Xi Jinping in Beijing next week a military parade, signalling collective defiance amid intensifying Western pressure.



- [Israel faces new pressure over hospital strikes as Trump chairs Gaza meeting](#) | CNBC
  - [Xi tells Modi that China and India should be partners, not rivals](#) | Nikkie Asia
  - [South Korea, US to deepen nuclear energy partnership, Seoul says](#) | The Gazette
  - [Sweden agrees to sell 4 Saab Gripen fighter jets to Thailand](#) | Bangkok Post
  - [Belgium, Italy, and Romania seek to buy Sidewinder air-to-air missiles from the U.S. through the NATO agency](#) | Defence Industry Europe
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# Energy and Climate



## Pakistan to Renegotiate LNG Deal with Qatar

Pakistan is seeking to renegotiate its long-term liquefied natural gas (LNG) import agreement with Qatar, as the country faces an oversupply driven by declining industrial demand and reduced electricity consumption.



- [Heavy rains hit the Himalayas, spread havoc in India and Pakistan](#) | Dawn
- [Jamaica's disaster response capacity gets tech boost through Canadian drone donation](#) | Canada-Caribbean Institute
- [What role does your money play in the climate crisis?](#) | The Economic Times
- [Groups seek to influence plastic pollution treaty talks at the UN as negotiations wind down](#) | Associated Press

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# Geo-Politics

## Putin-Trump Summit Ends in a Stalemate



The Alaska Summit between Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump ended after three hours without major breakthroughs, raising concerns over unresolved issues. Diverging expectations from both leaders highlighted the complexities of US-Russia relations.



- [China calls for 'enhancing trust,' India seeks peace at border as top diplomats meet](#) | Anadolu Ajansı
- [Trump and Putin still walking on thin ice](#) | The Economic Times
- [Japan proposes 'economic zone' linking Indian Ocean to Africa, seeks greater role in the region](#) | Associated Press
- [Myanmar's military chief to visit China to attend summit, state media says](#) | The Straits Times
- [The U.S.-India breakup: A personal dispute with global implications](#) | Washington Post



## US to take 10% Stake in Intel

The U.S. government will acquire a 10 percent stake in Intel via an US\$8.9bn investment aimed at strengthening domestic chip production and enhancing national security. The move reflects growing geoeconomic competition in semiconductors, particularly with China.



- [Indian exporters say 50% US tariff 'impossible' to cope with](#) | Reuters
- [Prime Minister visits a semiconductor facility in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture](#) | PIB
- [Ukraine confident Poland will keep funding Starlink satellites to help with frontline communications](#) | Irish Independent
- [Trump sticks to South Korea tariffs despite \\$150bn investment pledge](#) | Nikkie Asia

- [Textile exporters may shift base abroad to cater to US markets](#) | Financial Express



### **ITUC-Africa Calls for People-Centred AfCFTA Implementation**

ITUC-Africa has urged a people-focussed implementation of the AfCFTA to ensure inclusive benefits for workers and communities. The union body advocates a dedicated labour protocol, greater union participation in governance, and robust oversight mechanisms to safeguard social justice, decent work, and protections for vulnerable groups.



- [India Post suspends booking of mail to US: Here's all you need to know](#) | Mint

### **CUTS EVENT**

[Securing the Indo-Pacific's Digital Arteries: India-Australia Collaboration for Cyber and Maritime Resilience](#)