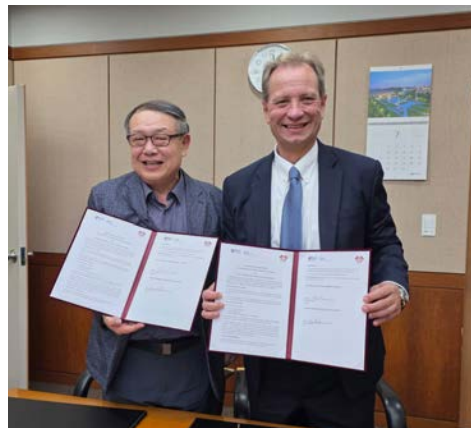


## EAI in Korea: July 2025 Research Institute Engagement Report

**CHEN Gang**

Deputy Director and Senior Research Fellow, East Asian Institute,  
National University of Singapore



(Left) EAI team with Dean Professor Park Hahnkyu; (centre) signing of Memorandum of Understanding between EAI Director Professor Alfred Schipke and Dean Professor Park Hahnkyu, College of International Studies, Kyung Hee University; and (right) at the meeting with Vice-President Choong Seon Hong of Kyung Hee University

An East Asian Institute (EAI) delegation comprising Professor Alfred Schipke (EAI director), Dr Lam Peng Er (principal fellow and Korea Centre head), Dr Chen Gang (EAI deputy director) and Assistant Professor Ryu Yongwook (Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore) visited think tanks and universities in South Korea from 6 to 11 July 2025.

On 7 July, the delegation visited Kyung Hee University (KHU) and met Executive Vice President and Provost

Choong Seon Hong, Dean Park Hahnkyu of the College of International Studies and other KHU researchers. Professor Schipke expressed interest in deepening cooperation with KHU in international relations, economics and politics, while Professor Hong welcomed the KHU-NUS collaboration, highlighting the importance of AI in joint research. On the same day, Professors Park and Schipke signed a Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of KHU's College of International Studies and the EAI, respectively at KHU.

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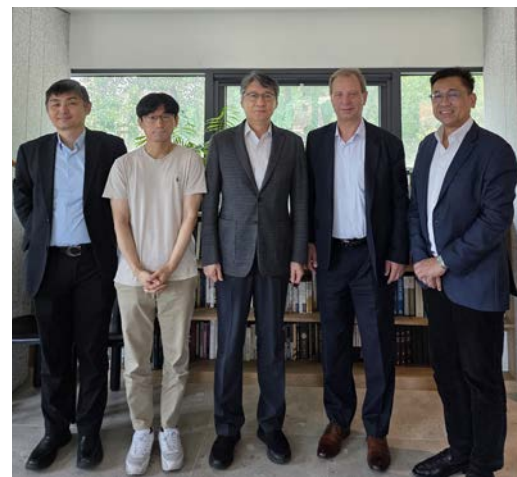
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*The EAI team in a meeting with East Asia Institute President Yul Sohn*



On 8 July, the delegation visited South Korea's East Asia Institute and discussed regional security and policy issues with President Yul Sohn and Executive Director Inhwon Oh. Professor Sohn outlined the institute's global networks, highlighting the importance of partnerships with institutes in Southeast Asia, including NTU's RSIS and NUS' EAI. Professor Schipke and Professor Sohn acknowledged the challenges posed by US President Trump's policies towards East Asian countries, agreeing that like-minded countries should work closely to manage geopolitical and tariff risks.

On that day, the delegation also visited the Asan Institute for Policy Studies (AIPS) and met Chairman and former ROK Foreign Minister Yoon Young-kwan who briefed the delegation on the Republic of Korea's (ROK) foreign policy outlook under the new administration of President Lee Jae-myung and the need to deepen cooperation with Southeast Asian countries. Professor Schipke noted East Asian Institute's plans to strengthen its Korea studies through new ROK partnerships. Dr Lam highlighted Singapore's cordial relations with both Koreas and the Korea Centre's focus on North Korean issues. The two sides agreed to expand cooperation in strategic and geopolitical studies.



*With the Chairman of Asan Institute of Policy Studies Dr Yoon Young-kwan*



*Professor Schipke with Governor Chang-yong Rhee, Bank of Korea in Seoul*

On 8 July, EAI Director Professor Alfred Schipke also met Governor Chang-yong Rhee of the Bank of Korea in Seoul.

The following day, the delegation visited the Graduate School of International Studies (GSIS) at Seoul National University. Professor Schipke and Professor Seong-Ho Sheen (GSIS Dean) exchanged views on regional studies and international cooperation. Professor Schipke outlined EAI's research focus on global supply-chain reorganisation, while Professor Sheen highlighted GSIS's focus on Northeast Asia, US policies and the Global South. Professor Sheen and Professor Kim Taekyoon, an expert on the Global South, agreed that the ROK should engage other middle and small-sized powers amid geopolitical rivalry. The two sides agreed to support each other's academic activities, including conferences, publications and visiting scholar programmes.

Further on 9 July, the delegation visited the Korea National Diplomatic Academy (KNDA) and discussed ASEAN, Indo-Pacific, Japan and China studies with KNDA Chancellor Ambassador Choe Hyoung-chan, Professor Choe Wongi, Professor Jo Yanghyeon, Professor Cho Wondeuk and Professor Kim Hankwon. The two sides agreed to enhance research on ASEAN's strategic resilience and autonomy amid geopolitical rivalry. Dr Ryu Yongwook suggested that the ROK consider joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for TransPacific Partnership, of which neither the United States nor China is a member.



*(Top) With Chancellor Ambassador Choe Hyoung-chan of the Korea National Diplomatic Academy and (below) in a meeting with KNDA researchers*



*EAI team with Professor Seong-Ho Sheen (GSIS Dean)*



On 10 July, the delegation visited the Institute of China Studies at Sungkyunkwan University. Dr Chen, Dr Lam and Dr Ryu exchanged views with Professor Jonghyuk Lee and Professor Sungmin Cho, both vice directors on contemporary Chinese studies. Professor Lee highlighted ties with research institutes in China and introduced his machine-learning methodology for understanding Chinese politics.



*At the Institute of China Studies, Sungkyunkwan University*

The delegation subsequently visited the Sejong Institute and discussed East Asia's evolving geopolitical landscape with President Kim Hyun-wook, Principal Fellow Choi Youn Jung and their colleagues. Professor Kim briefed the delegation on the institute's history, while Dr Lam suggested that EAI's Korea Centre can contribute to peace dialogue on the Korean Peninsula. Researchers at the Sejong Institute believed that the United States remains very important for South Korea's strategic interests despite challenges associated with President Trump.

On 11 July, the delegation visited the Korea Development Institute (KDI) and met KDI President Dongchul Cho, Senior Vice President Daehee Jeong, Senior Fellow Dr Jongkyu



*With Sejong Institute President Professor Kim Hyun-wook to discuss East Asia's evolving geopolitical landscape*



*President of Korea Development Institute Professor Dongchul Cho*

Lee, Professor Jinsoo Lee and Professor Jongyeon Lee. Dr Chen highlighted the EAI's growing research interest on contemporary Korean affairs and trade and investment between East Asia economies and the Global South. President Cho briefed the delegation on KDI's government-funded research and training projects and welcomed collaboration on Global South economic research. Professor Jinsoo Lee noted that the KDI School enrolls about 200 master's students annually, 50 to 60 of whom are from Southeast Asian and Central Asian countries. He proposed leveraging its extensive alumni network in the developing world for joint research and training.



*Met the Institute of Peace and Unification Studies Director Professor Bumsoo Kim, Seoul National University*

On the same day, Dr Lam Peng Er and Dr Chen Gang visited the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies (IPUS) at Seoul National University and met IPUS Director Professor Bumsoo Kim, Senior Fellow Dr Jong Jin Lee, Ms Bora Kim (managing editor of the Asian Journal of Peacebuilding, AJPB) and their colleagues. Professor Kim thanked Dr Lam for his editorial contributions to AJPB, which is indexed in Scopus and the Korean Citation Index. Both sides discussed peace and unification studies and agreed to enhance collaboration in peace research.

## Managing a Rapidly Changing World: Perspectives from China, Japan, South Korea and Southeast Asia



### Speech by H E Ishikawa Hiroshi Ambassador of Japan for Singapore

Dr. Teh Kok Peng, Chairman of the East Asian Institute, Professor Alfred Schipke, Director of the East Asian Institute, Distinguished guests, esteemed colleagues, and respected participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, Good morning.

It is a great honor to join you today at the East Asian Institute's conference on "Managing a Rapidly Changing World: Perspectives from China, Japan, South Korea, and Southeast Asia." The theme could not be more timely or relevant, as we all grapple with the challenges and opportunities of our time.

Let me begin by expressing my deep appreciation to the East Asian Institute for convening this important gathering and bringing together such a renowned group of scholars and practitioners from across East and Southeast Asia. It is particularly fitting that this conversation takes place here in Singapore, a nation that has consistently demonstrated its commitment to regional stability and prosperity. Japan greatly values Singapore's dedication and

contribution as the current ASEAN Country Coordinator for Japan. As Japan and Singapore prepare to celebrate the 60th anniversary of our diplomatic relations next year, and as Singapore assumes the ASEAN Chairmanship the year after, Japan looks forward to deepening not only our bilateral cooperation but also our partnership in the broader region at this critical juncture.

Indeed, East Asia and Southeast Asia stand at a historic crossroads. Uncertain geopolitical developments, rapid technological change, major supply-chain restructuring, and profound demographic transitions, all present us with a complex and demanding reality. These pressures test the resilience of our economies and the cohesion of our societies. At the same time, they drive us to seek stronger collaboration, enhanced innovation, and renewed progress, for none of today's challenges can be addressed in isolation.

One prominent avenue for such regional cooperation is the ASEAN+3 framework. Established in 1997 in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis, ASEAN+3 is a testament to our region's determination and capacity to work together toward common goals.

A quarter of a century ago, our region was reeling from crisis. Today, the combined GDP of ASEAN+3 countries accounts for more than 25 percent of the global total. Our collective influence on the international economic stage has grown tremendously. With this heightened economic weight comes a greater responsibility to take the initiative in addressing a variety of shared challenges in the region.

The "ASEAN+3 Cooperation Work Plan 2023-2027" demonstrates how we are fulfilling this critical responsibility. Through steady implementation of the Work Plan, we have greatly advanced financial resilience and food security,

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**UNCERTAIN GEOPOLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS, RAPID TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE, MAJOR SUPPLY-CHAIN RESTRUCTURING, AND PROFOUND DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITIONS, ALL PRESENT US WITH A COMPLEX AND DEMANDING REALITY. THESE PRESSURES TEST THE RESILIENCE OF OUR ECONOMIES AND THE COHESION OF OUR SOCIETIES.**

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thereby reinforcing regional safety nets to ensure continued stability and prosperity. We must not forget, however, that private companies are the true engines of our economies. In this regard, we are especially pleased that Mitsubishi Corporation, a leading Japanese company with a truly global presence, is represented in today's panel. Their participation allows us to benefit from their valuable experience in navigating today's fast-changing business environment. As Southeast Asia is by far the most important region for Japanese companies expanding overseas, Japan will continue to facilitate their efforts to grow and contribute to local communities while adapting to global dynamics and mitigating evolving risks.

Our cooperation also extends to other pressing issues such as aging populations, healthcare, disaster prevention, and the fight against organized cross-border scams. Japan is often described as a "front-runner" in addressing aging societies, but the challenge is equally significant in China and South Korea and is emerging even in parts of ASEAN countries as well. Together with China and South Korea, Japan will build on its experience to share expertise and work closely with ASEAN, including through initiatives such as the ASEAN Center for Active Aging and Innovation (ACAI). In this and many other areas, ASEAN+3 has immense potential as a vital platform for deeper regional cooperation.

Beyond economics, we must also pay close attention to the broader geopolitical landscape. Here, the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) is especially crucial. At a time when division and confrontation threaten the world, the AOIP's principles—rules-based order, openness, transparency, inclusivity, and respect for international law—are more important than ever. The fact that Japan, China, and South Korea all support the AOIP highlights its significance and calls upon ASEAN+3 to advance these principles together.

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**TOGETHER WITH CHINA AND SOUTH KOREA, JAPAN WILL BUILD ON ITS EXPERIENCE TO SHARE EXPERTISE AND WORK CLOSELY WITH ASEAN, INCLUDING THROUGH INITIATIVES SUCH AS THE ASEAN CENTER FOR ACTIVE AGING AND INNOVATION (ACAI). IN THIS AND MANY OTHER AREAS, ASEAN+3 HAS IMMENSE POTENTIAL AS A VITAL PLATFORM FOR DEEPER REGIONAL COOPERATION.**

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**ASEAN OUTLOOK ON THE INDO-PACIFIC (AOIP) IS ESPECIALLY CRUCIAL. THE AOIP'S PRINCIPLES—RULES-BASED ORDER, OPENNESS, TRANSPARENCY, INCLUSIVITY, AND RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW—ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER.**

The trilateral cooperation among Japan, China, and South Korea also has a key role to play in this context. As the current Chair, Japan is committed to fostering forward-looking and dialogue-based partnerships with both China and South Korea. At the recent trilateral foreign ministers' meeting held in Tokyo this March, we reaffirmed our shared aim to work even more closely with ASEAN, while fully recognizing and supporting its centrality in the region. We also agreed to accelerate preparations for the next trilateral summit at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Japan-China-South Korea trilateral and ASEAN+3 cooperation are to complement each other. For example, the Campus Asia Program—a student exchange initiative to establish a higher educational network among universities in Japan, China, and South Korea—has already expanded into several ASEAN countries. And I am confident that we will see more such successes in the future. By working together, embracing shared challenges, and seizing common opportunities, we can better manage the complexities of this rapidly changing world and bring about security, prosperity, and inclusivity in both East and Southeast Asia.

Our shared journey is one of great promise and potential. Through collective effort, we will continue to build a brighter and more resilient future for our region.

It is in this spirit that I hope today's conference will serve as a forum for candid and fruitful discussion among experts and business leaders, and a place to chart our way forward together. I very much look forward to listening to your thoughtful insights and learning from you.

Thank you.



## Speech by H E Cao Zhongming Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Singapore

Dr. Teh Kok Peng, Chairman of the East Asian Institute of NUS, Prof. Alfred Schipke, Director of the East Asian Institute of NUS, H.E. Hong Jin-wook, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Singapore, H.E. Ishikawa Hiroshi, Ambassador of Japan to Singapore, Distinguished experts and scholars, Ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great pleasure to attend today's conference. As we speak, the international situation is intertwined with changes, chaos, and increasing uncertainty and instability. The international relations are also undergoing profound adjustments. Fragmentation is intensifying, conflicts and frictions are on the rise, and some international organizations are experiencing malfunction. At the same time, regional and cross-regional cooperation, and multilateral mechanisms have become more dynamic.

With the meetings on East Asia cooperation to be held in Kuala Lumpur next month, we are obliged to answer a question: Where should East Asia cooperation head to? Today's conference organized by the EAI is therefore highly relevant.

Asia has long been a highland for development and a hotbed for cooperation. Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister Gan Kim Yong stated at the recently held "Asia Vision Forum" that Asia will continue to be a key pillar of global peace and prosperity, and the world may embrace an Asian century in the future. However, affected by factors such as geopolitics and policy orientations of various countries, Asia also faces many difficulties and underlying concerns, which require concerted and proactive response from Asian countries.

As important economies in Asia, China, Japan and the ROK are geographically close, culturally connected and economically complementary, long playing a unique and crucial role in regional cooperation. Last year marked the 25th anniversary of the establishment of China-Japan-ROK trilateral cooperation. Next year will be the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat. 2027 will be the 30th anniversary of ASEAN Plus Three cooperation.

At this crucial inflection point, the EAI has set the theme of this year's conference as "Managing a Rapidly Changing World: Perspectives from China, Japan, South Korea, and Southeast Asia". I would therefore like to share some views from China's perspective.

The China-Japan-ROK trilateral cooperation emerged from a crisis and has grown strong in the process of turning the crisis into opportunities. Up to now, it has formed a comprehensive cooperation system with leaders' meeting as its core, 21 ministerial-level meetings as the main body and over 70 dialogue mechanisms as the underpinning, gaining fruitful results in areas such as regional economic integration, supply chain stability and technological innovation.

In 2024, the combined GDP, trade in goods and manufacturing output of the three countries accounted for 24 percent, 19 percent and 38.5 percent of the world's total. It can be said that China-Japan-ROK cooperation hinges on not only the development of the three countries but also prosperity of the region and beyond.

In addition to economic and trade cooperation, our three countries have also deepened cooperation in areas such as climate change, public health and cultural exchanges. The three countries have jointly responded to COVID-19 and carried out effective cooperation on vaccine research and development and medical supplies logistics.

By actively promoting projects such as the Asian Campus, we have enhanced mutual understanding and friendship among our peoples. With 2025 and 2026 designated as the China-Japan-ROK Year of Cultural Exchange, I believe the three countries will further deepen cooperation in fields such as culture, education and tourism.

At the regional level, under the APT framework, China, Japan, the ROK and ASEAN have carried out practical cooperation in more than 20 domains including economy, trade, finance, food and agriculture. They have established over 60 dialogue and cooperation mechanisms and formed a mature cooperation system with leaders' meeting as its core and supported by ministerial meetings, senior officials' meetings, ambassador-level meetings (CPR+3) and working group meetings.

Currently the overall situation in the region is good, and development and cooperation is the focus and overarching

## CHINA IS WILLING TO INJECT NEW MOMENTUM AND PROVIDE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGIONAL COMMON DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ITS OWN STABLE DEVELOPMENT.

trend. That said, challenges such as interference from powers outside the region, geopolitical conflicts, unresolved historical issues, competitive pressures brought by economic structural transformation, coupled with the rise of unilateralism and protectionism, and the abuse of tariffs by certain major countries, all pose new tasks for regional countries including China, Japan, the ROK and ASEAN.

We must cherish the hard-won peace in the region. The more complex the situation becomes, the more we need to eliminate distractions, work together in solidarity, strengthen the impetus for cooperation, enhance the resilience of development, steadily advance the process of regional integration, uphold Asian values, and make our Asian home a better place. Specifically, I believe we can start from the following four aspects:

Firstly, deepen economic and trade cooperation to maintain regional vitality. Economic and trade cooperation is a crucial pillar of China-Japan-ROK cooperation. The three countries should make full use of the RCEP framework to further expand trade, promote two-way investment and strengthen the connectivity of industrial and supply chains. On this basis, we should accelerate the China-Japan-ROK Free Trade Area negotiations to provide institutional guarantees for regional economic integration.

In emerging fields, our three countries should seize the opportunities brought by the new round of technological revolution, deepen cooperation in areas such as artificial intelligence and digital trade, and jointly drive digital transformation. We should also enhance coordination and collaboration under mechanisms such as the APT and the East Asia Summit, and carry out "China-Japan-ROK plus" cooperation with neighboring regions in order to drive common development in the region.

Secondly, strengthen energy cooperation to promote green transition. Climate change is a common challenge for all humanity. Faced with increasingly frequent natural disasters, the international community must take action before it is too late. China, Japan and the ROK can accelerate cooperation on carbon market and explore the establishment of a regional carbon trading mechanism to jointly promote the transformation of energy structure.

In areas such as new energy technology research and development, green finance and the development of low-carbon cities, our three countries should also strengthen collaboration. We can work with regional countries including Singapore to build a low-carbon community and contribute to the achievement of global carbon neutrality goals.

Thirdly, promote people-to-people exchanges to enhance mutual understanding among peoples. China, Japan and the ROK are close neighbors, and have a long history of people-to-people exchanges. Building an East Asia with close people-to-people bonds is an important direction of cooperation among us.

We should further deepen cooperation in culture, education, tourism and other fields. In particular, we can work with ASEAN countries through projects such as the Asian Campus to enhance mutual understanding and friendship among the younger generation, building a more solid social foundation for the future development of regional cooperation.

Fourthly, safeguard regional peace and address challenges properly. Peace and stability are prerequisites for development. The three countries should proceed from the long-term interests of the region, abandon zero-sum mentality, properly handle unresolved historical issues and sensitive topics, and earnestly respect each others' core interests and major concerns. China recently put forward the Global Governance Initiative. We stand ready to work together with Japan, the ROK and Southeast Asian countries to implement this initiative.

As an old Chinese saying goes, "A nearby neighbor is better than a distant relative." China, Japan, the ROK and ASEAN countries are neighbors and partners connected by waters and mountains. Currently, China's economy maintains steady progress, demonstrating strong resilience and huge development potential.

Despite facing challenges from economic transformation and adjustment as well as changes in the external environment, the fundamentals sustaining China's long-term economic performance remain unchanged, and China's policy of pursuing high-quality development and high-level opening-up also remain the same. China is willing to inject new momentum and provide new opportunities for regional common development through its own stable development.

The ROK and China will be the hosts of the APEC Economic Leaders' Informal Meetings in 2025 and 2026. China looks forward to strengthening coordination with all parties to jointly advance open regionalism and create an East Asian Moment for APEC. I believe that as long as we uphold the principles of mutual trust, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, deepen cooperation, and jointly address challenges, we will surely drive regional cooperation to new heights and make greater contribution to peace and prosperity in Asia and beyond.

Thank you!



## Speech by H E Hong Jin-wook Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Singapore

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my great honor to join you at this important gathering organized by the East Asian Institute of the National University of Singapore. Allow me to begin by conveying my sincere appreciation to Professor Alfred Schipke and his colleagues for their dedication in convening this conference. The choice of theme—“Managing a Rapidly Changing World: Perspectives from China, Japan, South Korea, and Southeast Asia”—is both timely and highly relevant.

### Shared Challenges in a Changing World

We live in an era of profound transformation. Strategic competition among major powers, disruptions in supply chains, rapid technological advances, and demographic transitions all pose significant challenges to our societies and economies. These developments test the resilience of our region and raise questions about how we can best safeguard stability and prosperity.

Yet I believe that alongside these challenges lie new opportunities. If approached in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect, today's uncertainties can serve as catalysts for deeper integration and innovation across East and Southeast Asia.

### Korea's Perspective

The Republic of Korea has long understood the importance of resilience, adaptability, and partnership. Having overcome war and hardship, and having built prosperity through openness and cooperation, Korea places great value on dialogue, regional stability, and constructive engagement.

Since its inauguration this past June, the new Korean government has pursued a pragmatic foreign policy that seeks practical solutions and constructive engagement. Importantly, Korea's ties with ASEAN have enjoyed consistent, bipartisan support at home—across administrations and political lines—and will continue to be strengthened in the years ahead.

This year, as we mark the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and Singapore, both our countries are working to elevate our relationship to a strategic partnership. Last year, on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of ASEAN–Korea Dialogue Relations, we were proud to upgrade our ties with ASEAN to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, a milestone that reflects the growing depth and breadth of our cooperation.

The Korean government also attaches great importance to trilateral cooperation among Korea, China, and Japan, recognizing its essential role in ensuring peace and stability in Northeast Asia. We are determined to expand this cooperation outward, engaging ASEAN—including

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THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA HAS LONG UNDERSTOOD THE IMPORTANCE OF RESILIENCE, ADAPTABILITY, AND PARTNERSHIP. HAVING OVERCOME WAR AND HARDSHIP, AND HAVING BUILT PROSPERITY THROUGH OPENNESS AND COOPERATION, KOREA PLACES GREAT VALUE ON DIALOGUE, REGIONAL STABILITY, AND CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT.

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Singapore—in a spirit of openness and partnership, with the aim of contributing to peace across the whole of Asia. In this regard, the establishment of the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat in Seoul demonstrates Korea's strong commitment to playing an active and constructive role in advancing regional dialogue and peace.

### Three Priorities for Regional Cooperation

Our region faces three particularly urgent tasks:

1. Strengthening economic resilience.

**THERE IS A KOREAN PROVERB WHICH SAYS, “ONE TREE DOES NOT MAKE A FOREST.” THIS WISDOM REMINDS US THAT COOPERATION IS NOT OPTIONAL, BUT ESSENTIAL. IN THE SAME WAY, NO NATION CAN NAVIGATE TODAY’S UNCERTAINTIES IN ISOLATION. TOGETHER, HOWEVER, WE CAN BUILD A REGION THAT IS STABLE, INNOVATIVE, AND INCLUSIVE.**

Trade and investment flows remain vital to our growth. By reinforcing regional frameworks and embracing digital and green transformation, we can build a more sustainable and inclusive economic architecture.

#### 2. Harnessing technology responsibly.

Artificial intelligence, renewable energy, and biotechnology offer immense promise. But they also raise ethical, security, and social challenges that no single nation can address alone. International collaboration is essential if technology is to serve humanity.

#### 3. Deepening people-to-people ties.

At the heart of regional cooperation are the human connections between students, researchers, entrepreneurs, and citizens. Such exchanges cultivate trust, understanding, and goodwill—the foundations upon which lasting peace and prosperity are built.

#### The Role of EAI and the Korea Center

Singapore, as a hub of dialogue and innovation, is an ideal place to discuss these issues. The East Asian Institute has long been recognized for its scholarship and for its role in fostering regional understanding.

In particular, I wish to highlight the important contributions of the Korea Center within EAI. Under the leadership of Dr Lam Peng Er and his distinguished colleagues, the Center has become a focal point for research, dialogue, and outreach concerning Korea and its role in the broader region.

I take this opportunity to extend my deep gratitude to the Center’s scholars, staff, and partners for their dedication and professionalism. Your work strengthens the intellectual and policy bridges that connect our nations.

#### A Shared Responsibility

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, there is a Korean proverb which says, “One tree does not make a forest.” This wisdom reminds us that cooperation is not optional, but essential. In the same way, no nation can navigate today’s uncertainties in isolation. Together, however, we can build a region that is stable, innovative, and inclusive.

Let us, therefore, reaffirm our shared responsibility:

- to manage differences through dialogue,
- to pursue innovation while safeguarding trust,

- and to ensure that prosperity in our region is both sustainable and widely shared.

#### Closing

In closing, I wish once again to commend the East Asian Institute for its vision and commitment in organizing this important conference.

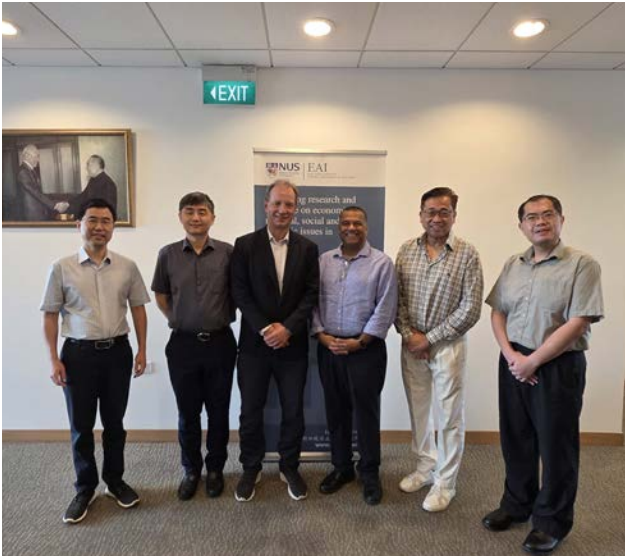
I am confident that the discussions today will contribute to stronger partnerships and a brighter future for all the peoples of East and Southeast Asia.

Thank you.

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*Note: These three speeches were delivered at the Trilateral Conference on "Managing A Rapidly Changing World: Perspectives from China, Japan, South Korea and Southeast Asia" organised by the Korea Centre, East Asian Institute, National University on 23 September 2025 at Conrad Singapore Orchard.*

## Highlights at the Korea Centre



*Dr Satu Limaye, Director of East-West Centre in Washington at EAI*



*EAI Chairman Dr Teh Kok Peng with the Ambassadors of China, Japan and Korea at the Trilateral Conference in Singapore*

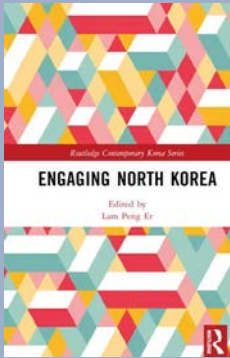


*Korea Centre Head Dr Lam Peng Er at the Global Korea Forum 2025*



*H E DPRK Ambassador Ri Kil Song (centre) with the EAI team*

## Recent Publications



### Engaging North Korea

**Editor:** *Lam Peng Er*

**Publisher:** *Routledge of London and New York*

**Year of Publication:** 2025

“ This book presents a comprehensive overview of international attempts to engage North Korea diplomatically with the aim of avoiding a nuclear war.

It highlights the difficulty of this task, concluding that the containment of North Korea currently depends more on military deterrence than on diplomatic restraint. It considers the various multilateral attempts at diplomatic engagement over recent decades and explores the different approaches of different countries, examining the domestic factors and the strategic interests which drive different countries' different approaches. It includes an account of China's growing estrangement, Russia's increasing closeness and the surprising relationship between North Korea and Sweden which has been effective in providing the North Korean people with humanitarian aid.

Revealing the story of diplomatic frustrations and failures when engaging North Korea this book will appeal to students and scholars of Korean studies, Asian politics and international relations.

”

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3. A Basic Framework for Understanding China-North Korea Relations by *Jaewoo CHOO*

### Regional Great Powers and the DPRK

4. Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the 21st Century by *Vitaly KOZYREV*
5. Japan and North Korea: Reminders of Forgotten Realities by *Haruko SATOH*

### Korean Middle Powers

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7. North Korea's Relentless Nuclear Path: Advances in Nuclear Capability and Doctrine by *Sung Chull KIM*

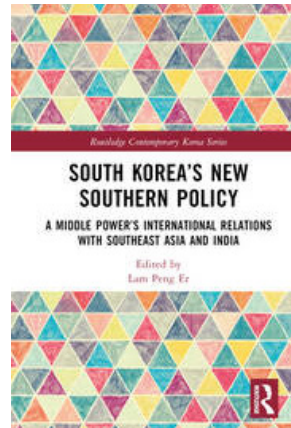
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## South Korea's New Southern Policy: A Middle Power's International Relations with Southeast Asia and India



**Editor:** Lam Peng Er  
**Publisher:** Routledge  
**Year of Publication:** 2023

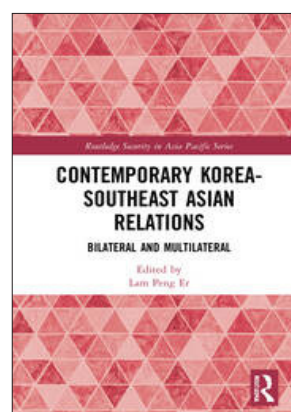
### Description:

This book examines the first regional strategy of South Korea towards Southeast Asia and India. At issue is how a middle power (a G20 country with the tenth largest economy in the world) seeks to play a larger and more comprehensive role in regions beyond the Korean peninsula. Hitherto, South Korean foreign policy has focused on nuclearizing North Korea, alliance maintenance with the United States, tricky relations with its most important economic partner China, and difficult ties with Japan marred by historical and territorial disputes. The Moon Administration has sought to diversify South Korean foreign policy by elevating ASEAN and India to the same strategic level as the United States, China, Russia and Japan. To be sure, the latter countries continue to be most significant to the Korean peninsula. However, this book offers different country and regional perspectives on Seoul's first regional grand strategy to play a role commensurate with its status as a middle power.

For more details, visit:

<https://www.routledge.com/South-Korea's-New-Southern-Policy-A-Middle-Power's-International-Relations/Er/p/book/9781032404479>

## Contemporary Korea-Southeast Asian Relations: Bilateral and Multilateral



**Editor:** Lam Peng Er  
**Publisher:** Routledge  
**Year of Publication:** 2022

### Description:

This book presents a comprehensive overview of the relations between the two Koreas and the different ASEAN states, including their relations with ASEAN as an organisation. It outlines a complex picture with both bilateral and multilateral relations in play at the same time. It charts how the present situation has arisen for each relationship, discusses current difficulties and strains, and assesses how the relationship may develop in future.

For more details, visit:

[https://www.routledge.com/Contemporary-Korea-Southeast-Asian-Relations-Bilateral-and-Multilateral/Peng-Er/p/book/9781032111797?gclid=EAlaQobChMI-duGysbl\\_gIVxYBLBR019w6SEAAAYASAAEgIMS\\_D\\_BwE](https://www.routledge.com/Contemporary-Korea-Southeast-Asian-Relations-Bilateral-and-Multilateral/Peng-Er/p/book/9781032111797?gclid=EAlaQobChMI-duGysbl_gIVxYBLBR019w6SEAAAYASAAEgIMS_D_BwE)

## CHRONOLOGY

# ASEAN - Korea Relations

## A Chronology of Key Events:

### July 2025 to September 2025

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THE Korea Centre at the East Asian Institute closely monitors Southeast Asian regional developments vis-à-vis the Korean Peninsula. This chronology considers key bilateral and multilateral interstate interactions between both Koreas and individual ASEAN countries, as well as with ASEAN as a regional institution.

#### July 2025

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| 1st           | Laos and the Republic of Korea (ROK) officially launched the second phase of the Knowledge Sharing Programme (KSP) on aviation operation system improvement for Luang Prabang International Airport at a seminar in Vientiane. Co-chaired by Kim Jeong Ryeol, KSP senior adviser and Khamla Phommavanh, director general of Laos' Department of Civil Aviation, the event brought together senior officials and representatives from both countries. The new phase aimed to strengthen aviation safety inspection systems and develop International Civil Aviation Organization-compliant training programmes for Lao aviation professionals, building on the achievements of the first phase completed in 2024. Implemented by Korea Aerospace University and funded by ROK Ministry of Economy and Finance, the project formed part of broader ROK–Laos cooperation to enhance aviation safety, capacity-building and international connectivity.                                                                                                                                                          |
| 1st           | The opening ceremony for new rice-breeding infrastructure under the Project for Establishing the Foundation for Modern Rice Production was held in the Makheo Village, Vientiane, co-chaired by Laos' Deputy Agriculture Minister Chanthakhone Boualaphanh and ROK Ambassador Chung Yang Soo. The event highlighted progress under the five-year, US\$3.85 million initiative (2023–2027) aimed at modernising rice production and benefitting 693 households. The project, implemented across three villages, had already consolidated 723 out of 904 hectares of farmland and completed major facilities, including three rice mills and seed- and rice-sorting units, each housed in new purpose-built structures.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 3rd<br>- 4th  | The ASEAN-Korea Centre held its 2025 Investment and Market Research Mission in Manila, focusing on sustainable waste management in the Maritime ASEAN region. The programme featured a dedicated seminar, site visits and stakeholder networking sessions aimed at enhancing ASEAN-Korea cooperation on waste management and circular-economy solutions. Representatives from government agencies and businesses across Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Korea participated. Sessions covered regional trends and technological innovations, with presentations from experts and organisations such as the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), Asian Development Bank, Our Sea of East Asia Network and the Philippine Alliance for Recycling and Materials Sustainability. The seminar highlighted initiatives such as AI-assisted marine litter tracking and ongoing overseas development assistance projects in Manila Bay. Participants also visited the Eco-Ikot Centre and Circular Explorer catamaran to observe local recycling and waste recovery practices. |
| 9th<br>- 10th | Cambodia's Ministry of Civil Service hosted a two-day consultative workshop in Phnom Penh in collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat to develop the Five-Year Work Plan 2026–2030 for the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM) and ACCSM+3. Representatives from ASEAN member states, China, Japan, South Korea and observer Timor-Leste attended the discussions to review progress under the 2021–2025 plan and identify priorities for the next phase. The workshop focused on strengthening regional cooperation, enhancing innovation and people-centred governance and aligning future initiatives with ASEAN Community Vision 2045.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

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| 10th    | Laos and the ROK strengthened labour cooperation through a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), expanding the seasonal worker programme to allow more Lao workers gain employment and training in Korea's agricultural sector. The agreement was signed in Vientiane by Anusone Khamsingsavat, director of the Lao Department of Employment and Park Yong Chul, mayor of Ganghwa, Incheon, in the presence of officials from both sides. The meeting, hosted by Laos Labour Minister Phoxay Sayasone, highlighted the programme's success since 2022, with over 11,000 Lao workers sent to Korea. The two countries reaffirmed their commitment to improving implementation and preventing labour desertion, underscoring the initiative's role in fostering skills development and economic cooperation.                                                                                                                             |
| 10th    | The 28th ASEAN–ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur, co-chaired by the ROK and Thailand as ASEAN Country Coordinator. The meeting brought together the foreign ministers of ASEAN member states, the ROK, Timor-Leste and the ASEAN Secretariat to discuss ways to strengthen ASEAN–ROK cooperation and address regional and global challenges. The participants emphasised the need to deepen collaboration in areas such as cybersecurity, disaster management, AI, digital and green transitions, and cultural exchange. They adopted the ASEAN–ROK Plan of Action (2026–2030) to advance the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and support the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. The meeting also reaffirmed commitment to promoting dialogue and peace on the Korean Peninsula, with ASEAN expressing its support for related efforts.                                                                             |
| 10th    | The 26th ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Foreign Ministers' Meeting took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, bringing together foreign ministers from ASEAN member states, China, Japan and the ROK, with Timor-Leste attending as an observer. The ministers reviewed progress under the APT Cooperation Work Plan (2023–2027) and discussed future priorities for collaboration. They reaffirmed their commitment to deepening regional integration and strengthening cooperation to address emerging regional challenges.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 10-11th | The ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference 10+1 Sessions with ASEAN's Dialogue Partners were held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The ASEAN–ROK session, co-chaired by Thailand and the ROK, reaffirmed both sides' commitment to deepening their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and adopted the ASEAN–ROK Plan of Action (2026–2030). The meeting highlighted cooperation in trade, investment, digital innovation, cybersecurity, disaster management, education and cultural exchange. It welcomed new ASEAN Korea Cooperation Fund-funded projects, such as the ASEAN-Korea Music Festival and Disaster Risk Management Capacity Building Programme, and noted progress in areas including health security, the digital economy and environmental cooperation. Participants also commended the ROK's continued support through initiatives spanning climate action, smart cities and people-to-people exchanges.                         |
| 11th    | The 15th East Asia Summit (EAS) Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur to review the forum's role and set priorities ahead of the EAS 20th anniversary. Ministers reaffirmed the EAS as a leaders-led platform for strategic dialogue and practical cooperation, endorsed ASEAN centrality and discussed regional security, economic resilience, sustainable development, energy transition, education and disaster management. They addressed key regional issues, including tensions in the South China Sea, crisis in Myanmar, developments on the Korean Peninsula, the war in Ukraine and the situation in the Middle East, and underlined the need for dialogue, respect for international law and humanitarian access. The meeting also prepared deliverables for the 20th EAS in October 2025 and confirmed the venue of the next EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in the Philippines in 2026.                       |
| 11th    | The 32nd ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur. Participants reviewed the ARF's role as the region's main security forum and its future direction after 2025. This meeting marked the first time North Korea did not send a representative to attend the ARF since 2000. Discussions addressed regional security challenges, including terrorism, cyber threats, transnational crime, maritime security, disaster management, non-proliferation, situations in the South China Sea, Myanmar, the Korean Peninsula, Ukraine and Gaza, and called for dialogue, restraint and respect for international law. The ministers endorsed continued work on confidence-building and preventive diplomacy, noted progress under the ARF Hanoi Plan of Action II (2020–2025), agreed to develop a new plan aligned with ASEAN's 2045 vision and welcomed the Philippines as the next ARF chair for 2026. |
| 14th    | Cambodian Secretary of State Sun Sovanna met South Korean officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Seoul, including ROK Director-General Lim Hyong-tae and ROK Director-General Lee Dong-gy, to discuss Francophonie-related activities in the Asia-Pacific region. The meeting encouraged the ROK, an observer member of the Organisation of La Francophonie, to begin preparations for hosting the 2026 Francophonie Summit and related events.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 15th    | Cambodian Senate President Hun Sen received a courtesy visit from outgoing South Korean Ambassador Park Jung-wook in Phnom Penh. The two sides highlighted the steady growth in bilateral trade, investment and cooperation across multiple sectors since diplomatic ties were established in 1997, noting that bilateral trade reached US\$438 million in the first half of 2025, up 10.7% year-on-year. Hun Sen expressed satisfaction with the expanding partnership and encouraged further collaboration, while both sides looked ahead to the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2027, expressing hopes of elevating ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

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| 16th<br>- 17th | The ASEAN-Korea Centre held the 2025 ASEAN-Korea Youth Network Workshop in Incheon, the ROK and Phnom Penh, Cambodia, gathering 50 students from Korea and all 10 ASEAN member states. The event focused on youth-led engagement in the green economy and inclusive growth, featuring expert lectures, site visits and cultural exchanges. Participants visited institutions such as the Seoul Energy Dream Centre and Green Climate Fund in Korea, and the Sosoro Museum and Royal Palace in Cambodia. The workshop aimed to promote mutual understanding and strengthen ASEAN-Korea cooperation on sustainable development.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 17th           | Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn received a farewell call from South Korean Ambassador Park Jung Wook at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. During the meeting, Prak Sokhonn commended the ambassador for elevating Cambodia–ROK relations to a Strategic Partnership and advancing cooperation across multiple sectors during his tenure.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 18th           | South Korea's Army announced the start of a four-week training programme for around 70 military personnel from Australia, Egypt, Poland, Romania, Turkey and Vietnam to familiarise them with the K9 self-propelled howitzer and K2 main battle tank. The course, running until 25 July, included operation, maintenance and live-fire exercises conducted alongside South Korean troops. The Army also planned a follow-up session in October to include training on the Chunmoo multiple rocket launcher. The initiative formed part of South Korea's effort to promote its defence technology and expand its presence in the global arms market.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 21st           | Bank of Korea Governor Rhee Chang-yong attended the Executives' Meeting of East Asia and Pacific Central Banks (EMEAP) in Bangkok, where regional central bank leaders discussed inflation, digital finance and geopolitical challenges. Rhee participated in reviews of EMEAP's working groups and joined the Governors' and Financial Supervisors' Meeting to exchange views on tokenisation and promoting safe, inclusive digital finance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 21st           | Cambodia and South Korea jointly launched the Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes Project through Charging Infrastructure for E-mobility Promotion in Cambodia, the country's first carbon project under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. Co-organised by Cambodia's Ministry of Environment and South Korea's Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy, the event marked a key step in bilateral climate cooperation. Led by Verywords Inc, the initiative involved the donation of 8,000 electric scooters and installation of over 200 charging stations to support Cambodia's low-carbon transition. The project, aligned with Cambodia's Article 6 implementation framework and supported by the Global Green Growth Institute, is expected to generate 683,000 tCO <sub>2</sub> e in mitigation outcomes over 10 years and create around 400 green jobs, paving the way for future carbon trading collaboration between the two countries. |
| 22nd           | The Embassy of the ROK in Manila announced that the ROK government would donate 2,016 metric tons of rice to the Philippines in August to support food security and disaster response. Of this amount, 1,616 metric tons were allocated to the Department of Social Welfare and Development and 400 metric tons to the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. The donation, made under the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve's Tier-3 programme, followed the ROK's earlier contribution of 4,000 metric tons in February after Tropical Storm Kristine. The embassy said the handover ceremony would be held in Manila and reaffirmed the ROK's commitment to strengthening humanitarian and economic cooperation with the Philippines.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 22nd<br>- 25th | South Korea and Thailand held intersessional negotiations in Bangkok to advance a bilateral Economic Partnership Agreement amid global trade uncertainty. The talks focused on seven key sectors, including goods, services, investment and the digital economy, building on the sixth official negotiation held in Seoul in June. The discussions formed part of Seoul's broader strategy to pursue flexible trade agreements with high-growth Global South partners such as Thailand, to expand South Korean business opportunities and diversify export market.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 24th           | The ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre and the ROK held a wrap-up event in Phnom Penh to mark the conclusion of a four-year regional initiative enhancing victim assistance for landmine survivors in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. Funded by a USD\$2 million ASEAN–Korea Cooperation Fund grant, the programme trained over 240 professionals, engaged 5,700 survivors and developed regional guidelines and a Victim Assistance Network to strengthen coordination and support. The event also featured the premiere of the documentary Voice of Victim and included the handover of policy tools and training materials to ASEAN member states, as partners discussed prospects for a second phase of cooperation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 24th           | Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim met Kim Young Choon, the South Korean president's special envoy, during his working visit to Malaysia, at which the two sides agreed to expand strategic cooperation in trade, investment, the green transition, digitalisation and defence. Anwar noted that South Korea was Malaysia's eighth-largest trading partner in 2024 and welcomed Seoul's intention to finalise a free trade agreement and a defence industry MoU by October. The two also discussed preparations for the 2025 APEC Economic Leaders' Summit in Gyeongju and Anwar extended an invitation to President Lee Jae-myung to attend the 47th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

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| 25th           | South Korea's First Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Park Yoon-joo met Vietnamese Deputy Foreign Minister Nguyen Minh Vu in Seoul, where they agreed to expand high-level exchanges to further strengthen the Korea–Vietnam Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. The two officials reaffirmed the importance of deepening bilateral cooperation and discussed Korean Peninsula issues. Park briefed Vu on Seoul's efforts to ease tensions and resume dialogue with North Korea, and Vu expressed Vietnam's support for these initiatives and readiness to continue close cooperation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 28th           | Korea Exchange Chairman Jeong Eun-bo attended a ceremony in Ho Chi Minh City, marking the launch of a South Korea-supported market system for Vietnam's capital markets. The event was attended by Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh and other officials. Operational since May 2025, the system modernises Vietnam's trading and depository infrastructure. Jeong subsequently travelled to Thailand to meet his Thai counterpart to review progress on a clearing and settlement project and discuss further technological cooperation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 29th           | Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh met Park Chang-dal, special envoy of Korean President Lee Jae Myung, in Hanoi as part of his working visit to Vietnam. Chinh welcomed Park's visit as a sign of Seoul's strong commitment to advancing the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and called for deeper, more practical cooperation across politics, the economy, science, technology and human resource development. He also urged continued South Korean support for Vietnam's digital transformation and innovation agenda. The same day, Chinh met with leaders of the South Korean conglomerates Dunamu and Hana Financial Group to discuss cooperation in Vietnam's emerging digital and cryptocurrency sectors. He invited their participation in developing the country's pilot digital-asset market and encouraged greater investment through partnerships with the Military Bank. Both companies expressed strong interest in expanding into Vietnam and pledged to support its digital ecosystem. Earlier, Park also met Party General Secretary To Lam, reaffirming President Lee's view of Vietnam as a key regional partner and agreeing to strengthen bilateral collaboration, including in AI, data centres and science and technology, as well as coordination ahead of the APEC summits in 2025 and 2027. |
| 29th           | Lao Minister of Education and Sports Thongsalith Mangnormek received a courtesy visit from ROK Ambassador Jung Yung-soo and the UN Resident Coordinator Bakhodir Burkhanov in Vientiane. The meeting marked the minister's assumption of office and reaffirmed cooperation between Laos, the ROK and the United Nations in advancing education and sports development. The visiting officials congratulated the minister and pledged continued partnership and support, while Thongsalith expressed gratitude for their contributions and reiterated the government's commitment to reform and progress in these sectors.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 29th<br>- 31st | A delegation from the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) attended the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in Geneva, Switzerland. SPA Chairman Pak In Chol delivered a speech outlining the DPRK's views on global security and its commitment to safeguarding national sovereignty and stability. On the sidelines, he met parliamentary leaders from Russia, Vietnam, Laos, Mongolia and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, reaffirming Pyongyang's commitment to strengthening ties with friendly legislatures and promoting international peace and justice. In his meeting with Vietnamese National Assembly Chairman Tran Thanh Man, both sides agreed to enhance mutually beneficial cooperation, particularly in economic and trade exchanges in line with international regulations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 30th           | Vietnamese State President Luong Cuong met Park Chang-dal, special envoy of Korean President Lee Jae Myung, in Hanoi, reaffirming Vietnam's commitment to strengthening relations with the ROK. President Cuong commended Seoul's early diplomatic outreach and noted steady gains since the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership was established in 2022. He called for deeper cooperation in science, technology, innovation and human resource development, alongside balanced trade expansion targeting US\$150 billion by 2030. Cuong also urged for enhanced cultural and people-to-people exchanges and requested continued Korean support for the large Vietnamese community in the ROK. Park conveyed President Lee's intention to prioritise Vietnam, pledging closer collaboration to address investment bottlenecks and promote mutual growth. Both sides agreed to coordinate at international fora and reaffirmed their shared commitment to maintaining peace and stability in the East Sea in accordance with international law.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 31st           | Vietnam Fatherland Front (VFF) President Do Van Chien led a high-level delegation to the ROK to meet senior South Korean leaders and institutions in order to advance bilateral cooperation. In Seoul, he met Prime Minister Kim Min Seok, who highlighted the strong partnership and welcomed collaboration in strategic sectors such as nuclear energy and high-speed rail, while reaffirming protection for Vietnamese citizens in Korea. Chien called for closer high-level exchanges, greater investment in infrastructure and innovation, and stronger support for the Vietnamese community. Meeting Deputy Speaker Lee Hack Young, he proposed deeper parliamentary cooperation and youth exchanges. Both sides praised the rapid growth of bilateral ties, with Lee noting Vietnam's position as the ROK's third-largest trading partner. The VFF delegation also met officials of the Economic, Social and Labour Council to finalise an MoU on labour cooperation by late 2025 and held discussions with the Korea Development Institute, Gyeonggi Provincial Council, Pangyo Techno Valley and the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation.                                                                                                                                                             |

## August 2025

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| 1st - 3rd     | The Vietnam–ROK Festival took place at the East Sea Park in Da Nang to commemorate the 33rd anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The opening ceremony was officiated by Vice-Chairman Tran Chi Cuong, who emphasised the festival's role in deepening cooperation across trade, tourism, science and culture. The event featured over 80 booths, performances and cultural exchange activities, and marked Da Nang's milestone of welcoming its one-millionth South Korean visitor of the year. South Korean Consul General Chang Ho-Seung highlighted Da Nang's growing importance as a hub for investment and tourism, noting the city's 335 Korean-invested projects worth about US\$2.2 billion. Concurrently, the "Meet Korea in Da Nang" conference underscored Da Nang's appeal as a strategic gateway for South Korean businesses, with 345 active Korean projects and nearly 870,000 Korean visitors in the first half of 2025. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to expanding cooperation in smart urban development, digital industries and sustainable growth. |
| 4th           | The ASEAN-Korea Centre signed an MoU with Jeollanam-do province to strengthen friendly relations and promote exchanges ahead of its participation in the 2025 Namdo International Culinary Expo in Mokpo in October. The agreement outlined cooperation in trade, investment, tourism and cultural exchange. As part of the Expo, the Centre planned to operate an "ASEAN Pavilion" from 1 to 5 October, showcasing culinary dishes from all 10 ASEAN member states and hosting interactive events to highlight Southeast Asian cuisine and culture. The Pavilion aimed to foster sustainable culinary tourism and deepen mutual understanding between ASEAN and South Korea.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 6th           | South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Hyun held a phone conversation with Vietnam's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Bui Thanh Son to discuss strengthening cooperation in the economy, science and technology. Cho highlighted active high-level exchanges between the two countries since President Lee Jae Myung took office and called for continued collaboration on regional and global issues. Son affirmed that Vietnam regards South Korea as a reliable and key partner and expressed hope for further progress in their strategic partnership, while also wishing Seoul success in hosting the upcoming APEC summit in Gyeongju.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 7th           | The 2025 Seongnam Trade Mission was held in Vientiane, organised by Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency Vientiane, Seongnam city and the Seongnam Industry Promotion Agency to strengthen Korea–Laos economic and technological cooperation. The event brought together 13 South Korean companies and 47 Lao businesses through over 90 business-matching meetings across sectors such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT), health care, green technology and beauty innovation. A highlight was the signing of an MoU between ACT Inc. and Be Beauty, marking the introduction of Korean beauty technologies to Laos. The mission also included visits to the Lao National Internet Centre and Solutek System Lao, reinforcing collaboration in technology and digital infrastructure.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 8th           | Coinciding with ASEAN Day, the ASEAN-Korea Centre inaugurated the Seoul ASEAN Hall at the Korea Press Centre as a new hub for ASEAN-Korea cultural, tourism and economic exchange. The Hall featured permanent and special exhibition zones and was designed as a venue for ASEAN-related events. Senior Korean officials, ambassadors from the 10 ASEAN member states and representatives from cultural and business sectors attended the ceremony. The opening exhibition, "Fruity Fruit: Colourful Days in Southeast Asia", showcased Southeast Asia's artistic and everyday life through the theme of tropical fruit, symbolising the growing cultural familiarity between ASEAN and the ROK. The event marked a milestone in shifting ASEAN-Korea cooperation towards deeper people-centred and cultural engagement.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 8th           | As part of the 58th ASEAN Day celebrations, ASEAN Secretary-General Dr Kao Kim Hourn and ROK Ambassador to ASEAN H E Lee Jang-keun, jointly inaugurated the ASEAN Secretariat's new electric vehicles and charging stations. Funded by the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund, the initiative aimed to strengthen the Secretariat's operational capacity through the adoption of clean energy technologies. Members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN also attended the ceremony, marking a symbolic step towards greener operations at the ASEAN Headquarters.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 9th<br>- 13th | Vietnamese Party General Secretary To Lam paid a four-day state visit to the ROK at the invitation of President Lee Jae Myung, marking a major milestone in bilateral relations. During the visit, Lam held talks with President Lee, met senior Korean leaders, delivered a policy speech at Yonsei University and attended the Vietnam–ROK Economic Forum where multiple cooperation agreements were signed across energy, industry, digital infrastructure and human resource development. He also inaugurated the Vietnamese Consulate General in Busan, unveiled a statue of President Ho Chi Minh and joined celebrations for the 30th anniversary of Ho Chi Minh City–Busan ties. Both sides adopted a joint statement to deepen their comprehensive strategic partnership, strengthen political trust, expand economic and technological cooperation, and enhance collaboration in education, climate response and people-to-people exchanges. The visit was hailed by both governments as opening a new chapter in Vietnam–ROK relations.                                                        |

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| 11th           | Vietnamese Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism Nguyen Van Hung and ROK Minister Chae Hwi Young co-chaired a Vietnam–ROK dialogue on cultural industry cooperation in Seoul, held during Party General Secretary To Lam's state visit. The meeting gathered senior officials and leading creative enterprises to discuss strengthening cultural industry links under the comprehensive strategic partnership. Both sides recognised opportunities for synergy between Vietnam's cultural heritage and talent and Korea's technological and marketing strengths. The dialogue focused on policy sharing, investment opportunities and Vietnam's goal for culture to contribute 7% of GDP by 2030. Agreements included cooperation in film, music, fashion and copyright, as well as joint ventures, training and content co-production. New partnerships were formalised, including between Vietnam Multimedia Corporation and T3 Entertainment, and for the "Saigon Oppa" film project. Deputy Prime Minister Bui Thanh Son expressed hope that the outcomes will soon yield concrete programmes promoting cultural exchange and industry growth. |
| 12th           | Vietnam's CMC Technology Group signed an MoU with Samsung C&T during the Vietnam–ROK Economic Forum in Seoul to jointly develop a hyperscale data centre in Ho Chi Minh City worth up to US\$1 billion. The first phase of the project, located in Saigon Hi-Tech Park, will cost US\$250 million and deliver 30 megawatts, with capacity exceeding 100 MW in subsequent phases. Samsung C&T, known for major global infrastructure projects, will lead investment and implementation, integrating eco-friendly design and advanced digital technologies. The centre, described as the city's "AI heart", is designed to meet global standards for cybersecurity and green operations. CMC Chairman Nguyen Trung Chinh said the partnership marked a key step in advancing Vietnam's ambition to become a regional data and AI hub. CMC also signed 14 additional MoUs with Korean technology firms and universities to enhance cooperation in AI, data centres and workforce development.                                                                                                                                                           |
| 11th<br>- 15th | The 34th ASEAN Land Transport Working Group Meeting and related events took place in Phnom Penh, gathering senior transport officials from ASEAN member states, Timor-Leste and dialogue partners including China, Japan, South Korea and the United States. The programme included side meetings on ASEAN highways, road safety and railways, focusing on enhancing regional connectivity, improving road safety and promoting sustainable land transport infrastructure. Chheang Pich, undersecretary of state at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, thanked all participating delegations and partners for their collaboration.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 12th           | LG CNS signed an MoU with Vietnam Posts and Telecommunications Group (VNPT) and Korea Investment Real Asset Management to build an artificial intelligence data centre in Vietnam. The agreement, concluded during the ROK–Vietnam Business Forum held alongside Vietnamese President To Lam's state visit to Seoul, outlined plans to jointly develop a hyperscale data centre and collaborate on infrastructure such as servers, storage and network systems. LG CNS also agreed to work with VNPT on smart engineering projects, including smart factories and logistics development.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 12th           | The "Contemporary Art 2025" exhibition opened at the National Academy of Fine Arts Gallery in Vientiane, showcasing works by eight Lao and 12 South Korean artists. Jointly organised by the National Institute of Fine Arts and the Artistic Asia Association, the event was attended by ROK Ambassador Jung Yung-soo, alongside officials, artists and cultural representatives from both countries. The exhibition, now in its fourth edition, aims to deepen Laos–South Korea artistic dialogue through shared creative expression and technical exchange. It was scheduled to run until 17 August, featuring a joint workshop to promote cross-cultural collaboration in the arts.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 12th           | A delegation from Khanh Hoa province, led by Party Secretary Nghiem Xuan Thanh, met HD Hyundai leaders as part of Party General Secretary To Lam's state visit to the ROK. HD Hyundai announced plans to enlarge its Nam Van Phong shipbuilding facility and develop a supporting industry ecosystem. Both sides agreed to maintain regular dialogue and resolve project bottlenecks to deepen collaboration. At the Vietnam–ROK Economic Forum attended by To Lam, ROK Prime Minister Kim Min-seok and over 400 corporate delegates, the Khanh Hoa People's Committee signed an agreement with SK Innovation Co. Ltd. to establish a Specialised Energy–Industry Cluster in the province. The project includes an LNG power plant, a distributed energy system and LNG logistics infrastructure, projected to generate around US\$45 billion in socio-economic benefits by 2050.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 12th           | South Korean Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back met his Vietnamese counterpart, Phan Van Giang, in Seoul to discuss expanding defence and arms industry cooperation. The talks took place during Vietnamese President To Lam's state visit to South Korea. The two ministers agreed to expedite revisions to their defence cooperation memorandum to broaden collaboration between their armed forces. Following the meeting, the two countries signed an agreement for the transfer of the decommissioned South Korean patrol ship ROKS Jecheon to Vietnam, the third such transfer, following deliveries in 2017 and 2018.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

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| 13th | South Korean cryptocurrency exchange operator Dunamu signed an MoU with Vietnam's Military Commercial Joint Stock Bank to support the establishment of a cryptocurrency exchange in Vietnam. The agreement, concluded at the South Korea–Vietnam business forum, includes cooperation to develop legal frameworks for virtual assets and transfer technologies used in Dunamu's Upbit platform. Dunamu also pledged to share its expertise in digital infrastructure and workforce management to help build a stable digital-finance ecosystem. The partnership underscores Vietnam's growing virtual-asset market, with over 20 million users and annual transactions exceeding US\$800 billion.                                                                                                                                 |
| 13th | Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO) signed an MoU with Vietnamese energy firm Petrovietnam (PVN) to develop Vietnam's nuclear power workforce and strengthen bilateral energy cooperation. The agreement, PVN's first with a foreign partner in the nuclear sector, aims to support Vietnam's goal of operating four nuclear reactors by 2035. The signing followed a summit between South Korean President Lee Jae Myung and Vietnamese leader To Lam in Seoul, where both sides agreed to expand their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and increase bilateral trade to US\$150 billion by 2030. KEPCO also announced plans to enhance collaboration with Vietnam in renewable energy.                                                                                                                                  |
| 14th | South Korea's Hanwha Aerospace signed a US\$250 million government-to-government agreement to export 20 K9 self-propelled howitzers to Vietnam, marking the first South Korean arms sale to the country and the first K9 export to Southeast Asia. The deal represents a milestone in defence cooperation between Seoul and Hanoi, which had previously received only decommissioned patrol ships. The agreement followed Vietnamese President To Lam's state visit to Seoul, underscoring both nations' commitment to deepening strategic and economic ties.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 14th | Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto received a courtesy call from South Korea's Presidential Special Envoy, led by Cho Jung-sik, a senior member of the ROK National Assembly. Cho delivered President Lee Jae-myung's message reaffirming Seoul's commitment to strengthening the Indonesia–Korea Special Strategic Partnership and invited President Prabowo to visit Seoul. Earlier, the delegation met House Speaker Puan Maharani and Foreign Minister Sugiono to discuss support for Indonesia's Asta Cita agenda and expand Korean investment. Both sides also exchanged views on regional affairs and ASEAN–ROK cooperation, underscoring the continued growth of the partnership.                                                                                                                                      |
| 14th | The fourth ASEAN Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of Ministries of Foreign Affairs Meeting Plus Three Consultation took place in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam, co-chaired by Haji Azmi bin Haji Abdul Rahim of Brunei's Ministry of Home Affairs and Kimizuka Hiroshi of Japan's Immigration Services Agency. The meeting brought together heads of immigration and consular departments from ASEAN member states, China, Japan and the ROK, with Timor-Leste attending as an observer. Participants discussed opportunities for cooperation in immigration, consular affairs and border management, and ASEAN members expressed appreciation to the Plus Three partners for their continued support in enhancing regional capacity and collaboration.              |
| 14th | The Lao Agribusiness Association launched its flagship project to promote the cultivation of roselle, sesame and large onions for export to the ROK at the 3F Lao Sustainable Agriculture Cooperative farm in Vientiane province. The event gathered government officials, business representatives and agricultural cooperatives, and featured a drone demonstration by the Department of Crop Production. An MoU was signed to enhance cooperation in high-value crop production, alongside a purchase agreement for 120 tonnes of dried roselle worth 16.2 billion kip between the Lao Agribusiness Association and ROKA Korea Co. Ltd, marking a major step in Laos–Korea agricultural trade collaboration.                                                                                                                   |
| 14th | South Korea and Laos marked the 30th anniversary of their re-established diplomatic relations with a media event in Vientiane celebrating achievements in health sector cooperation. Attended by Vice-Minister of Health Aphone Vichathep, ROK Ambassador Jung Yung-soo and representatives from major media outlets, the event highlighted South Korea's Official Development Assistance projects that have strengthened Laos' healthcare infrastructure, including the Children's Hospital, Medical Product Supply Centre and the University of Health Sciences Hospital under construction. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to advancing public health collaboration, recognising Korea as Laos' largest health donor and pledged to deepen cooperation to enhance healthcare access and resilience across the country. |
| 14th | South Korean President Lee Jae Myung held a phone conversation with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr to discuss expanding cooperation in trade, infrastructure and shipbuilding. It was their first discussion since Lee took office in June. The two leaders noted South Korea's role as the Philippines' largest investor and top source of tourists and agreed to sustain strong bilateral exchanges. They discussed advancing trade and investment under the Korea–Philippines free trade agreement (FTA) and enhancing collaboration in infrastructure projects such as maritime bridges, railways and shipbuilding. President Lee also acknowledged the Philippines as a long-standing ally, while Marcos expressed hope for further strengthening the strategic partnership elevated the year before.              |

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| 18th | Speaking at Bursa Malaysia's Invest Malaysia event, Malaysian Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Zafrul Aziz stated that Malaysia has concluded negotiations for an FTA with South Korea and plans to sign the deal in October 2025. He said the agreement reflects Malaysia's commitment to expanding market access amid global uncertainties. Tengku Zafrul noted that Malaysia has finalised 18 FTAs, including two signed earlier in the year and resumed talks with the European Union. He also underscored Malaysia's neutral foreign policy, stressing the importance of engaging all partners equally, and discussed regional trade challenges, including potential US semiconductor tariffs and transshipment issues, highlighting efforts to safeguard Malaysia's key export sectors.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 19th | Vietnam's Minister of Public Security General Luong Tam Quang met Shin Jung Hoon, chairman of the ROK's National Assembly Public Administration and Security Committee, in Hanoi to strengthen bilateral law-enforcement cooperation. The meeting coincided with the 80th anniversary of Vietnam's People's Public Security Force. Quang highlighted the success of Party General Secretary To Lam's recent state visit to Seoul, which ushered in a new phase of the comprehensive strategic partnership, with security collaboration as a central pillar. Both sides agreed to deepen practical cooperation through mechanisms such as the strategic security dialogue and the deputy minister-level police conference, focusing on intelligence sharing, combating transnational crime and capacity building. Quang stated his appreciation of South Korea's support, including a US\$14 million forensic science project, and called for enhanced collaboration across multiple sectors. Shin reaffirmed the South Korean legislature's commitment to advancing law enforcement cooperation and strengthening bilateral relations. |
| 20th | Senior defence officials from South Korea and Singapore met in Seoul to commemorate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations and expand bilateral defence cooperation. ROK Vice-Defence Minister Lee Doo-hee and his Singaporean counterpart, Chan Heng Kee, discussed advancing collaboration in areas such as artificial intelligence to address manpower challenges and enhance operational efficiency. The two sides emphasised the importance of maritime security for regional stability and agreed to strengthen cooperation through regular consultations and naval exchanges, while pledging continued coordination on multilateral security issues.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 20th | HD Korea Shipbuilding and Offshore Engineering (HD KSOE) signed a 290 billion-won (US\$207 million) agreement to acquire Doosan Enerbility's Vietnam subsidiary, Doosan Vina. Located about 120 kilometres south of Da Nang, Doosan Vina manufactures thermal power plant boilers, port cranes and LNG plant modules. HD KSOE plans to retain existing operations while converting the site into a regional production base for independent cargo tanks and port cranes, supporting the company's expansion in eco-friendly ship components. The deal aims to strengthen HD KSOE's competitiveness and profitability amid growing global demand for green maritime technologies.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 21st | Ninh Binh provincial leaders met representatives of the Korea Federation of Small and Medium Businesses (KBIZ) to strengthen investment cooperation. Vietnamese Party Secretary Truong Quoc Huy reaffirmed the province's commitment to providing optimal conditions for Korean investors, highlighting that their success contributed to Ninh Binh's own development. Chairman Pham Quang Ngoc reported that the province hosted 212 active Korean projects worth US\$2.7 billion, mainly in automobile assembly and electronic components, which had helped form key industrial hubs such as Hyundai Thanh Cong Vietnam. He emphasised that Ninh Binh's expanded territory, improved infrastructure and strong connectivity would further attract investors. KBIZ Chairman Kim Ki Moon expressed appreciation for local support and proposed expanding collaboration in smart factories, artificial intelligence and transport infrastructure to spur socio-economic growth.                                                                                                                                                         |
| 21st | UNICEF announced that the ROK has provided significant contribution to support conflict-affected and vulnerable children and families in Myanmar. The funding aims to expand life-saving services in health, nutrition, child protection, water, sanitation and hygiene, particularly in areas hit by displacement, conflict and the recent 7.7 magnitude earthquake. The assistance sought to improve access to essential healthcare, safe water and psychosocial support amid worsening humanitarian conditions. Both the Korean Mission in Myanmar and UNICEF highlighted the partnership's role in delivering urgent relief to those most affected by ongoing crises.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 21st | The ASEAN-Korea Centre inked an MoU with Jeonbuk province and Jeonju to promote exchanges with the ASEAN region, following Jeonju's bid for the 2036 Summer Olympics. The agreement aims to enhance cooperation in trade, investment, tourism and cultural exchange, while fortifying people-to-people ties. With ASEAN tourists and students already accounting for a significant share of international visitors, the move signals intensifying engagement. The partnership marked an important step towards expanding regional collaboration and developing joint projects in culture, tourism and education.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

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| 21st-22nd          | Thailand's Ministry of Education hosted the 20th ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Education (SOM-ED) and the 15th ASEAN Plus Three SOM-ED in Bangkok, rallying education officials from ASEAN member states, Timor-Leste and the Plus Three countries, alongside representatives from regional and international education organisations such as Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation, ASEAN University Network, UNESCO and UNICEF. The discussions focused on deepening regional cooperation and advancing joint initiatives with the Plus Three partners to enhance resilience, connectivity and innovation in education across the region.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 21st - 22nd        | Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono undertook a working visit to Seoul to strengthen bilateral ties with the new South Korean government under President Lee Jae Myung. During meetings with ROK Prime Minister Kim Min-seok and Foreign Minister Cho Hyun, the two sides reaffirmed their commitment to elevating the Indonesia–Korea Special Strategic Partnership, with an announcement expected during President Prabowo's forthcoming visit. Discussions focused on expanding cooperation in food security, energy, digital transformation, defence industry and cybersecurity, while also addressing ASEAN–ROK relations and regional issues. The visit underscored the continued growth of Indonesia–Korea relations, first established in 1973.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 24th               | The ROK–Vietnam Global Exchange was held at the Chunghyodang relic site in Bonghwa, North Gyeongsang province, to celebrate a millennium of shared heritage. Co-hosted by the Bonghwa county, Vietnamese Embassy, Vietnam's Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and the Ly clan in Korea, the event featured a topping-out ceremony for a new community centre, a Vietnam Culture Day and the unveiling of a statue of King Ly Thai To in Vietnam Village. Cultural performances, traditional dress showcases and Vietnamese cuisine animated the festivities. Governor Park Hyeon Guk highlighted Bonghwa's historic connection to descendants of Vietnam's Ly Dynasty and described the initiative as the foundation for a future "K-Vietnam Valley". Vietnamese Deputy Minister Ho An Phong and ROK Ambassador Vu Ho emphasised the event's significance in deepening cultural exchange and commemorating the millennium-old link forged by Ly Long Tuong's migration to Korea. |
| 25th               | Financial Services Commission Vice Chairman Kwon Dae-young and Vietnamese Deputy Finance Minister Nguyen Duc Chi met in Seoul to strengthen financial sector cooperation, particularly on stock market systems, through policy and knowledge exchanges. They also discussed collaboration in insurance, financial technology and related fields. The talks built on ongoing cooperation in developing Vietnam's financial IT infrastructure, following a 2016 agreement to modernise Hanoi's stock and derivatives markets. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing bilateral trade and financial ties, aligning with Presidents Lee Jae Myung and To Lam's goal of lifting trade volume to US\$150 billion by 2030.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 25th               | VFF President Do Van Chien met Kwon Sung Taek, chairman of the Korea–Vietnam Economic and Cultural Association (KOVECA), in Hanoi to strengthen people-to-people ties and cultural cooperation. Chien welcomed KOVECA's initiatives following Party General Secretary To Lam's recent state visit to the ROK, including an elderly care model and a joint workshop with Vietnamese partners. He commended the association's efforts to promote understanding of Vietnamese leaders through translated publications and reaffirmed the VFF's commitment to supporting cultural, social and charitable collaboration. Kwon highlighted Seoul's priority on ties with Hanoi and announced plans for an exhibition and seminar marking the 135th anniversary of President Ho Chi Minh's birth, as well as the distribution of trilingual editions of Ho Chi Minh's Prison Diary to Korean leaders and enterprises.                                                                         |
| 25th Aug - 5th Sep | South Korea's Marine Corps made its debut in Exercise Super Garuda Shield, a high-impact drill co-led by the United States and Indonesia in Jawa Barat, south of Jakarta. A 20-member South Korean contingent, consisting of special reconnaissance and infantry troops, took part in urban, jungle and amphibious warfare training. Originally a bilateral exercise launched in 2007, Super Garuda Shield has evolved into a major multinational event involving over 6,000 personnel from 13 countries, including Australia, Japan and Germany.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 26th               | Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh met Roh Tae Moon, acting head of Samsung Electronics' Device Experience Division, in Hanoi to urge deeper investment in Vietnam's high technology and R&D sectors. Prime Minister Chinh called for greater cooperation in semiconductors, digital transformation, IT infrastructure, human resource training and technology transfer, anchored in mutual benefit. He commended Samsung's contributions to Vietnam's socio-economic development and highlighted the strong bilateral foundation supported by both nations' communities. Roh highlighted Samsung's US\$23.2 billion investment footprint, two billion mobile phones produced since 2009 and generating US\$31.8 billion in revenue in the first half of 2025. He reaffirmed Samsung's long-term commitment to Vietnam and thanked the government for its support in boosting local supplier capacity and industrial competitiveness.                                           |

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| 28th | The ROK Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy and Singapore's Ministry of Trade and Industry held the second Korea–Singapore Digital Economy Dialogue in Singapore, building on the 2023 Korea–Singapore Digital Partnership Agreement. Co-chaired by Deputy Ministers Jongwon Park and Jane Lim, the meeting gathered 33 digital enterprises from both countries to exchange best practices and explore cooperation in areas such as small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) digital transformation, digital finance and sustainable digital infrastructure, further advancing bilateral collaboration in digital innovation.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 29th | South Korea and ASEAN held virtual talks to upgrade their FTA in response to evolving global trade dynamics. Officials from Seoul and agencies, met all 10 ASEAN member states to explore incorporating modern trade provisions, including supply chain resilience and digital economy cooperation and more, into the existing FTA framework, originally established through agreements on goods (2006), services (2007) and investment (2009), to future-proof the pact for the current economic context.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 31st | VFF President Do Van Chien welcomed the Vietnam–Korea Business and Investment Association (VKBIA) delegation in Hanoi during the 80th anniversary celebrations of the August Revolution and National Day. Chien commended the VKBIA for advancing Vietnam-ROK economic ties and urged for continued cooperation in green industry, renewable energy, smart cities and high-tech sectors, affirming the VFF's ongoing support. VKBIA President Tran Hai Linh highlighted the association's six years of strategic partnerships with major Korean corporations, facilitation of local partnerships and initiatives in education, tourism and social responsibility. He pledged to further expand cooperation with Vietnam's northwestern provinces to deepen people-to-people and economic exchanges. |

### September 2025

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| 1st | The Eighth ASEAN–ROK Heads of Intellectual Property Offices Meeting took place in Seoul, co-hosted by Commissioner Wan Ki Kim of the Korean Intellectual Property Office and Director Suon Vichea of Cambodia's Department of Intellectual Property. The meeting was followed by the ASEAN–ROK IP Symposium, which brought together over 100 intellectual property professionals from ASEAN and South Korea to exchange views on strengthening regional IP cooperation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2nd | Backed by the ROK, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) ramped up aid to Myanmar communities hit hardest by the March 7.7 magnitude earthquake. The initiative formed part of the ROK–UNDP global programme REVIVE (Relief, Employment and Vital Infrastructure for the Vulnerable in Emergencies), aimed at facilitating early recovery and long-term resilience. The partnership supported debris removal, infrastructure restoration, livelihood creation and improved access to essential services. Both sides reaffirmed their resolve to help Myanmar rebuild amid humanitarian and economic challenges.                                                                               |
| 2nd | Indonesian Ambassador Cecep Herawan officially presented his credentials to South Korean President Lee Jae Myung at the presidential office in Seoul.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 2nd | HD KSOE launched its first vessel project in the Philippines with a steel-cutting ceremony at the HD Hyundai Subic Shipyard, marking the construction of a 115,000-ton petrochemical carrier. Attended by Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr and the South Korean and US ambassadors, the event signified the company's first undertaking since leasing part of the Subic facility in 2024 to establish its second overseas shipyard. The initiative aimed to boost HD KSOE's competitiveness in the global merchant ship market and strengthen ties with the Philippine government, while serving as a strategic base for the Seoul–Washington "Make American Shipbuilding Great Again" project. |
| 3rd | The 18th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment and the 20th Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution convened in Langkawi, Malaysia, reaffirming ASEAN's commitment to advance regional cooperation on environmental protection and sustainable development. Anchored in Malaysia's 2025 ASEAN chairmanship theme of inclusivity and sustainability, ministers also engaged counterparts from Japan, the Plus Three countries and the European Union to review ongoing initiatives and explore future collaboration on biodiversity, climate change, environmental education, sustainable cities and marine pollution.                                   |
| 3rd | DPRK Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un met several Southeast Asian leaders during the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the World People's Victory over Fascism in Beijing. In his meeting with Vietnamese State President Luong Cuong, Kim recalled his 2019 visit to Hanoi and reaffirmed Pyongyang's appreciation of bilateral ties. Both sides agreed to enhance delegation exchanges, deepen political trust and create new momentum for relations between the two Parties, States and peoples. Kim also met Myanmar Acting President Min Aung Hlaing and Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim.                                                                                                  |
| 4th | Under Secretary of State Ke Sovann of Cambodia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation met Pak Chol Jun, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the North Korean Embassy. The meeting focused on cooperation and engagement within various international organisations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

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| 5th | The ROK and the United Nations World Food Programme launched the “Responding with Emergency Assistance for Conflict-affected Households” initiative to provide emergency aid to families in Myanmar affected by conflict and the March 2025 earthquake. Supported by a US\$10 million contribution from Korea, the project seeks to deliver food and cash assistance to 300,000 people and nutrition support to 24,000 women and children. Implemented in partnership with local organisations, the initiative aims to address severe hunger and malnutrition amid Myanmar’s worsening humanitarian crisis, underscoring Korea’s global leadership in food security.                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 5th | Thailand and the ROK held the inaugural Korea–Thailand Joint Cultural Committee (JCC) Meeting in Seoul, co-chaired by Nikorndej Balankura, director-general and spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Thailand, and Seo Bihn, director-general for public diplomacy and cultural affairs of the ROK. Officials from various Thai ministries and agencies participated. The meeting discussed expanding bilateral cooperation across culture, education, creative industries, tourism and sports, including exchanges in arts, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics education, film, music and martial arts. Established in August 2024, the JCC marked Thailand’s first cultural cooperation mechanism of its kind, in line with the 2022–2027 Joint Action Plan to strengthen the Thailand–ROK Strategic Partnership.         |
| 5th | Thailand’s MFA hosted a meeting between Nikorndej Balankura, director-general and MFA spokesperson, and Lee Jaewoong, spokesperson and deputy minister for public affairs of the ROK. The two sides exchanged experiences and best practices in countering misinformation and disinformation, particularly those impacting foreign policy and international relations, and discussed ways to enhance strategic communications and public diplomacy. They also explored further cooperation, including regular joint consultations between the spokespersons of both ministries.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 6th | The Embassy of the ROK, in collaboration with the Philippine Department of National Defence and the Philippine Veterans Association of the Korean War, held a commemorative ceremony at the Korean War Memorial in the Libingan ng mga Bayani to mark the 75th anniversary of the Philippine Armed Forces’ participation in the Korean War. Attended by around 300 participants, including officials, veterans and their families, the event honoured the courage and sacrifice of Filipino soldiers, with Ambassador Lee Sang-hwa expressing Korea’s enduring gratitude for the Philippines’ support during the war.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 8th | South Korea’s Ministry of National Defence held a ceremony to mark the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Command and honour the sacrifices of UN troops who fought in the 1950–53 Korean War. Hosted by Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back, the event brought together ministerial and vice-ministerial representatives from 22 nations, including the defence chiefs of the Philippines.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 8th | South Korean Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back met Philippine Defence Secretary Gilberto Teodoro in Seoul on the sidelines of the Seoul Defence Dialogue to expand defence and arms industry cooperation. Ahn expressed gratitude for the Philippines’ participation in the Korean War and its continued contribution to the UN Command. The two ministers agreed to deepen defence collaboration under the strategic partnership established in 2024 and acknowledged the significant role of South Korean firms in supporting the Philippines’ military modernisation efforts.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 9th | The eighth ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN) Annual Meeting was held in Malaysia, hosted by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government as ASCN chair. Delegates discussed the development of the ASEAN Smart City Action Plan 2026–2035, reviewed progress in membership and ongoing projects, and exchanged experiences in advancing smart city initiatives. The meeting was followed by a Smart City Expert Talk, which explored collaboration with the private sector, effective governance and investment strategies. Both events ran alongside the Smart City Connect Exhibition under the theme “Fostering Stronger Cooperation Towards a Common Goal for Smart and Sustainable Urban Development in ASEAN”. Representatives from Japan, the ROK and the United States also participated to strengthen cooperation on regional smart city development. |
| 9th | Bina Puri Holdings Bhd signed an MoU with Korea’s Hanil Electric Group Co Ltd to act as the engineering, procurement, construction and commissioning (EPCC) contractor for Hanil’s planned RM220 million manufacturing plant in Sarawak. The MoU granted Bina Puri priority participation in the EPCC tender and made it Hanil’s exclusive representative for promoting and distributing its products in Malaysia, with potential expansion into Southeast Asia. Both firms also agreed to explore integrating Hanil’s technologies into Bina Puri’s future projects. The signing marked a flagship undertaking for Bina Puri under its new management and a key step in its financial recovery, while strengthening Hanil’s market presence in the region.                                                                                                    |

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| 9th  | Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister Ho Duc Phoc met ROK Ambassador Choi Young Sam and representatives of Korean businesses in Hanoi to discuss expanding bilateral economic cooperation. Phoc highlighted that Vietnam–ROK relations were at their strongest, with the ROK as Vietnam’s largest foreign investor at US\$87 billion in foreign direct investment and bilateral trade reaching US\$81.5 billion. He outlined Vietnam’s goals for high-income status by 2045 through innovation, digital transformation, green energy and financial centre development, and sought closer cooperation with the ROK in these areas. Choi reaffirmed Seoul’s readiness to share expertise in finance, digital assets and market upgrading, while business representatives from the Korean Chamber of Commerce expressed interest in further investment in infrastructure, energy and semiconductors. Phoc assured continued government support for South Korean enterprises and called for open dialogue to resolve challenges and sustain long-term collaboration. |
| 9th  | Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister Ho Duc Phoc met Thaco Chairman Tran Ba Duong and Hyundai Rotem CEO Lee Yong-bae in Hanoi to discuss potential cooperation on Vietnam’s high-speed railway projects. Phoc emphasised that modern infrastructure, including high-speed rail, is central to Vietnam’s strategy for sustainable double-digit growth driven by innovation, digital transformation and green development. Duong outlined Thaco’s investment plans in urban rail, while Lee highlighted Hyundai Rotem’s five decades of experience in rail technology and expressed interest in contributing through technology transfer, localisation and training. Phoc welcomed the proposal, urging the firm to present its designs to the Ministry of Construction and reaffirmed the government’s support for South Korean enterprises in Vietnam as part of broader efforts to deepen bilateral cooperation.                                                                                                                                               |
| 10th | The Philippine Department of Finance clarified that there was no loan agreement with South Korea for the ₱28.7 billion “PBBM Rural Modular Bridge Project”, noting that prior discussions had ended in 2024 due to technical misalignment; the project is now being considered for French financing. Earlier, on 9 September, South Korean President Lee Jae-myung had announced the suspension of a ₱700 billion infrastructure loan, citing concerns over potential corruption linked to ongoing investigations in Philippine flood control projects. He explained that the project has yet to begin and that halting it would prevent any misuse of public funds.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 11th | The sixth ASEAN Plus ROK Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime was held in Melaka, Malaysia, co-chaired by Thailand and the ROK. The meeting reviewed the outcomes of the preceding senior officials’ consultations and adopted the new ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime – ROK Work Plan on Cooperation to Combat Transnational Crime (2026–2028), which is set to take effect the following year. Ministers discussed practical measures to strengthen collaboration under the existing and new work plans, in alignment with the ASEAN–ROK Joint Vision Statement for Peace, Prosperity and Partnership. The Philippines offered to host the next consultation in 2026.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 12th | South Korea’s Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy (MOTIE) held its first director-level virtual meeting with Vietnam’s MFA to follow up on the outcomes of the August Korea–Vietnam summit during General Secretary To Lam’s state visit to Seoul. Co-chaired by Kim Jong-chul and Do Van Su, the talks involved embassy officials and representatives from key Korean organisations. Discussions focused on resolving delays in VAT refunds for Korean textile firms in Vietnam, maintaining investment incentives for HD Korea Shipbuilding’s acquisition of Doosan Vina, and addressing the global minimum tax regime. Both sides also explored cooperation in energy, infrastructure and supply chains, agreeing to establish a regular consultation mechanism to enhance collaboration in foreign investment and industrial development.                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 15th | South Korea’s MOTIE held a virtual meeting with Vietnam’s Ministry of Industry and Trade for the fourth Korea–Vietnam Plus Joint Working Group session to follow up on the outcomes of the August summit held during General Secretary To Lam’s state visit to Seoul. Co-chaired by Kim Jong-chul and Do Quoc Hung, the meeting brought together officials from both governments, their embassies and related agencies. Discussions centred on strategies to achieve the bilateral trade target of US\$150 billion by 2030, progress on an MOU for nuclear energy workforce development and solutions to challenges faced by Korean renewable energy investors in Vietnam. Vietnam pledged to work with relevant ministries to address these issues, while MOTIE affirmed its commitment to supporting Korean businesses through ongoing bilateral consultation mechanisms.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 15th | South Korean Vice Defence Minister Lee Doo-hee met his Philippine counterpart, Irineo Cruz Espino, in Seoul to strengthen defence and arms industry cooperation. The two officials exchanged views on regional security and agreed to enhance collaboration through joint training and personnel exchanges. Lee expressed appreciation for Manila’s purchase of 12 South Korean FA-50 light attack aircraft and sought support for Korean defence firms’ participation in the Philippines’ military modernisation projects. Espino acknowledged the role of Korean systems in advancing his country’s defence capabilities and affirmed his commitment to mutually beneficial industrial cooperation. The meeting followed recent talks between the two nations’ defence chiefs at a Seoul security forum.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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| 15-16th       | The 13th Mekong–ROK Business Forum was held in Ho Chi Minh City, focusing on digitalisation and innovation as key drivers of transformation and regional cooperation. Co-organised by Vietnam's and the ROK's foreign ministries, the forum gathered officials, experts and business leaders to explore strategies for enhancing economic collaboration, digital transformation and sustainable growth. Discussions highlighted the role of SMEs and start-ups, as well as Korea's expertise in technology and smart logistics, in fostering competitiveness and supply-chain resilience. Participants exchanged experiences on digital trade platforms and logistics development, seeking to align the forum's outcomes with the forthcoming Mekong–ROK Action Plan (2026–2030).                                                                |
| 16th          | A youth-focused community event was held at Kampong Luong Primary School in Pursat province, jointly organised by KOICA Cambodia, the Cambodia–Korea Alumni Association (CAMKAA) and World Friends Korea (WFK) volunteers. Attended by over 600 participants, the event featured the donation of bicycles, school supplies, textbooks and hygiene items, alongside free health consultations by the National Paediatric Hospital and medical services provided by People for Medical Cooperation International's mobile clinic. CAMKAA and WFK volunteers conducted nutrition and hygiene education sessions for children, complementing KOICA's Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (2025–2029). The event underscored the strength of Cambodia–Korea cooperation in supporting youth development, health and education at the community level. |
| 16th          | South Korea's foreign ministry raised the travel alert level for parts of Cambodia amid rising cases of employment scams and illegal confinement. A Level 2 advisory, urging travellers to exercise caution, was issued for Phnom Penh, while a special Level 2.5 alert was applied to Sihanoukville province, Bokor Mountain in Kampot and Bavet city near the Vietnamese border. The heightened advisory, effective for 90 days with possible extensions, advised South Korean nationals to avoid travel to or to leave the affected areas. The ministry also recommended that those already in these regions to relocate to safer locations.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 17th          | Three Vietnamese provinces, Tay Ninh, Nghe An and Quang Tri, jointly held a conference in Seoul to promote their economic potential and seek investment partnerships with businesses from the ROK. The event was attended by around 150 participants, including representatives from major Korean corporations such as GS, SK, Hanwha Energy and Hyundai.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 18th<br>-19th | The ASEAN-Korea Centre hosted the ASEAN-Korea Sustainable Innovation Talks and Workshop at Hotel Naru Seoul MGallery, bringing together around 100 environmental, social and governance (ESG) experts and stakeholders from ASEAN and Korea. The two-day event explored ways to advance ESG practices through innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence. It featured panel discussions on ESG strategies, AI's economic and environmental impact, and global regulatory trends, alongside presentations by ASEAN and Korean experts. The second day focused on networking and collaboration through small-group discussions and innovation sprints. The event forms part of a sustained ESG initiative, which will culminate in the publication of a report highlighting corporate ESG case studies across ASEAN and South Korea.  |
| 22nd          | South Korea and Thailand began the seventh round of negotiations in Seoul for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), aimed at strengthening bilateral trade and economic cooperation amid global uncertainties. The five-day talks focused on advancing discussions in seven key sectors, including goods, services, investment and the digital economy. Originally planned as an Economic Partnership Agreement, the framework was upgraded to a broader CEPA in August to include cooperation on supply chains, SMEs, tourism and environmental initiatives. South Korea's Ministry of Trade highlighted the CEPA's role in deepening ties with Thailand, ASEAN's second-largest economy and establishing a long-term institutional foundation for expanded bilateral collaboration.                                           |
| 22nd          | Malaysian Trade Minister Tengku Zafrul Aziz said in a Reuters interview that the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) will consider adding new members and enhancing trade cooperation when its leaders meet in Kuala Lumpur next month. He noted that the summit, to be held alongside the ASEAN meetings, will be the first RCEP leaders' gathering since the pact was signed in 2020 and will provide an opportunity to discuss updates to the agreement and review applications from countries seeking to join the bloc.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 23rd          | Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister Ho Duc Phoc met Kim Sung-tae, chairman and CEO of the Industrial Bank of Korea (IBK), in Hanoi to expand financial cooperation between Vietnam and the ROK. Phoc reaffirmed the strong bilateral partnership, particularly in economy, trade and investment, and expressed Vietnam's support for foreign enterprises, including IBK. Kim announced the establishment of a wholly foreign-owned IBK bank in Vietnam, aimed at supporting SMEs and financing infrastructure and financial-sector projects. Both sides discussed strengthening SME credit support, technological investment and recovery mechanisms, with Phoc welcoming IBK's contribution to Vietnam's economic development.                                                                                                                     |

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| 23rd        | South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Hyun met Vietnam's Foreign Minister-designate Le Hoai Trung in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly to discuss bilateral relations and the upcoming APEC summit. Cho expressed hope that Vietnamese President Luong Cuong would attend the APEC meeting in Seoul and emphasised the importance of further strengthening the strategic bilateral partnership. Trung reaffirmed Vietnam's high regard for its relationship with South Korea and pledged continued efforts to deepen cooperation. Cho also briefed his counterpart on Seoul's peace initiatives for the Korean Peninsula and sought Vietnam's support.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 22nd - 24th | Nguyen Xuan Thang, Politburo member and president of the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics (HCMA), paid a working visit to the ROK to advance Vietnam's strategic priorities on new growth models and follow up on the outcomes of Party General Secretary To Lam's state visit in August. During the trip, Thang met officials at the Vietnamese Embassy in Seoul, leaders of the Korea National Diplomatic Academy (KNDA), the National Human Resources Development Institute (NHI) and Samsung Group, and he attended the ceremony marking the 10th anniversary of the Vietnam–Samsung Global Leadership Programme. Both sides reaffirmed commitments to strengthen cooperation in education, high technology, innovation and capacity-building, with KNDA and HCMA agreeing to deepen policy research collaboration, while NHI pledged continued training support for Vietnamese officials. Thang also commended Samsung's AI and data initiatives and encouraged closer collaboration with Vietnam's digital sector. The visit reaffirmed efforts to advance the Vietnam–ROK comprehensive strategic partnership in science, technology and human resource development.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 23rd        | The 57th ASEAN Economic Ministers' Meeting took place in Kuala Lumpur. The meeting, held alongside sessions of the 39th ASEAN Free Trade Area Council and the 28th ASEAN Investment Area Council, noted progress in finalising the Joint Scoping Paper for a potential upgrade of the ASEAN–Korea Free Trade Area (AKFTA) and anticipated the launch of negotiations on this at the 26th ASEAN–Korea Summit, reaffirming ASEAN's aim of keeping its free trade agreements relevant and forward-looking.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 24th        | <p>Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn held a bilateral meeting with South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Hyun on the sidelines of the 80th United Nations General Assembly in New York. During the meeting, Prak Sokhonn briefed his counterpart on recent developments in Cambodia's border disputes with Thailand and reaffirmed his government's commitment to easing tensions, rebuilding trust and fully implementing agreements to normalise bilateral relations. Cho voiced serious concern over organised human trafficking networks luring victims into cyber fraud operations and urged Cambodia's active cooperation to ensure the safety of affected citizens. Prak pledged close collaboration, reaffirming the importance of people-to-people exchanges. The two ministers also discussed strengthening bilateral trade and investment ties, and Cho sought Cambodia's continued support for South Korea's peace initiatives on the Korean Peninsula.</p> <p>On the same day, Vietnamese President Luong Cuong met Taewon Chey, chairman of SK Inc. and the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), on the sidelines of the 80th UN General Assembly. The meeting focused on expanding cooperation between Vietnam and the ROK, with the president commending South Korea's contributions to Vietnam's socio-economic development, particularly in its support for the Vietnam National Innovation Centre in training semiconductor engineers and advancing LNG energy projects. He encouraged continued development of Vietnam's innovation ecosystem and called for coordination with local authorities on future projects. Chey reaffirmed the ROK's commitment to deepening investment in Vietnam, highlighting plans for LNG power, green growth and comprehensive energy initiatives, and expressed appreciation for Vietnam's support in facilitating the group's operations.</p> |
| 24th        | The People's Committee of Can Tho City held a working session with enterprises from the ROK to explore cooperation and investment opportunities in the Mekong Delta. Deputy Party Secretary Nguyen Tuan Anh welcomed the visit as a sign of South Korean investors' growing interest in the city, which has already attracted 14 projects worth around US\$316 million and two official development assistance projects from the ROK. The meeting focused on potential collaboration in high technology, logistics, renewable energy, smart urban development and tourism, while South Korean firms expressed interest in digital transformation, smart transport and port operations. The session concluded with the signing of five MoUs covering science, technology, finance and digital innovation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 24th        | The 22nd ASEAN Economic Ministers–ROK (AEM–ROK) Consultation was held in Kuala Lumpur, co-chaired by Malaysia's Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul Aziz and Korea's Minister for Trade Han-Koo Yeo, with Timor-Leste participating as an observer. The meeting reviewed trade and investment ties and discussed global economic challenges affecting supply chains and micro, small and medium enterprises. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to open and rules-based trade under the WTO, welcomed progress on the AKFTA upgrade and related studies, and noted ongoing cooperation in technology, renewable energy and standards. They also highlighted initiatives such as the Technology Advice and Solutions from Korea programme and the ASEAN–Korea Standards Cooperation Network, while reaffirming support for Timor-Leste's ASEAN integration efforts.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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| 24th        | ROK First Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Park Yoon-joo met Indonesia's new Ambassador Cecep Herawan in Seoul to discuss preparations for the upcoming APEC and Korea–ASEAN summits and to strengthen bilateral cooperation. Park expressed hope for deeper collaboration across political, economic, security and international spheres; both sides agreed to maintain close coordination to ensure the success of the summits. Park also outlined Seoul's peace initiatives towards North Korea and sought Indonesia's continued support. Ambassador Herawan, recalling his previous posting in Seoul, conveyed his affection for South Korea and commitment to advancing the bilateral partnership.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 24th - 25th | Malaysia hosted the ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting (ADSOM) and ADSOM-Plus in Desaru, Johor, reaffirming ASEAN's unity and centrality ahead of the upcoming ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and ADMM-Plus. Chaired by Defence Ministry Secretary-General Datuk Lokman Hakim Ali, the meetings gathered defence senior officials from all ASEAN member states, the ASEAN Secretariat, and observer Timor-Leste, alongside eight Plus Countries for ADSOM-Plus, including the ROK. ADSOM endorsed 10 new defence cooperation initiatives and agreed on measures to enhance regional readiness and address emerging security challenges. ADSOM-Plus reviewed progress in seven Expert Working Groups covering maritime security, counterterrorism, military medicine, peacekeeping, humanitarian mine action, disaster relief and cybersecurity. Both meetings reaffirmed the importance of ASEAN centrality and collective resilience as the foundation of regional defence cooperation. |
| 25th        | On the sidelines of the 57th ASEAN Economic Ministers' Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, ASEAN Secretary-General Dr Kao Kim Hourn met ROK Minister for Trade H E Yeo Han-Koo. The meeting reviewed progress on implementing the ASEAN–Korea Free Trade Area, including plans for its upgrade, and discussed ways to further strengthen ASEAN–Korea economic cooperation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 25th        | The Fourth Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Ministers' Meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur, co-chaired by Indonesia's Vice-Minister of Trade Dyah Roro Esti Widya Putri and Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Yoji Muto. Ministers from ASEAN, Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and the ROK reviewed regional economic developments and reaffirmed their commitment to implementing the RCEP to promote free, fair and rules-based trade. They discussed preparations for the 2027 General Review, commended progress by RCEP committees and welcomed initiatives on electronic commerce and technical cooperation. The meeting also endorsed new mechanisms for accession and stakeholder engagement to ensure the agreement's continued inclusivity and relevance.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 25th        | The Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade, together with the Vietnamese Ministry of Finance and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), held a workshop in Hanoi to review progress on the KOICA-funded project promoting energy-saving and energy-efficiency investments under Vietnam's green growth action plan. Attended by around 100 participants from government agencies, industry and international organisations, the event highlighted achievements from the 2021–2025 initiative, which aimed to reduce energy intensity, strengthen green finance and cut emissions. Officials noted that the project enhanced industrial energy efficiency, supported provincial green growth planning and established benchmarks for key sectors such as steel, cement, paper and textiles. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to advancing sustainable development and expanding Vietnam–ROK cooperation in green growth and the energy transition.                                |
| 26th        | South Korea's LS Cable and System announced that it had secured a 147.7 billion-won (US\$108.3 million) contract to supply high-voltage cables to Singapore. The deal followed an earlier 201.5-billion-won agreement signed in April with SP PowerAssets, Singapore's state-owned power transmission authority, bringing the company's total orders from Singapore in 2025 to 349.2 billion won. Under the new contract, LS Cable will provide 230-kilovolt cables and related equipment for Singapore's turnkey power grid project, scheduled for completion by January 2033.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 26th        | HD Hyundai announced the establishment of a wholly-owned subsidiary, HD Hyundai Asia Holdings Pte Ltd, in Singapore to strengthen oversight of its overseas operations. The company revealed that HD Korea Shipbuilding and Offshore Engineering (HD KSOE) would invest 452.1 billion won (US\$319 million) for a 60% stake in the new unit on 28 November, with affiliates also contributing capital. HD Hyundai Heavy Industries would invest 252.4 billion won for a 31.1 percent share, while HD Hyundai Mipo Dockyard would commit 72.5 billion won for an 8.9% stake, consolidating the group's regional oversight of its global businesses.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 27th        | Hue city hosted the opening of the Vietnam–ROK Culture Day 2025, a two-day event featuring about 100 booths showcasing cultural, tourism, culinary and traditional products from both countries. Jointly organised by the Hue People's Committee and the ROK Embassy in Vietnam, the event formed part of a nationwide series promoting bilateral friendship and cultural diplomacy. It highlighted Hue's growing role as a hub for international cultural exchange and cooperation in tourism, trade and creative industries. Officials underscored the ROK's longstanding partnership with Hue, noting multiple KOICA-funded projects and Korean investments that have significantly contributed to the city's development and deepened people-to-people ties.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

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| 29th | South Korean President Lee Jae Myung received the credentials of Singapore's new Ambassador Wong Kai Jiun during an official ceremony at the presidential office in Seoul.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 30th | The Vietnamese MOF held a conference with around 50 South Korean enterprises operating in Vietnam to strengthen dialogue and address tax and customs policy issues. The event aimed to update businesses on recent regulations, promote compliance and enhance the Vietnam–ROK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in trade and investment. Ambassador Choi Young Sam noted that the tax and customs dialogue, launched in 2008, has been a key platform for policy exchange and called for a transparent and stable tax environment. Deputy Minister of Finance Cao Anh Tuan reaffirmed the MOF's support for foreign investors, highlighting tax and customs reforms, digital transformation initiatives and a US\$9.14 billion support package introduced earlier in 2025. He encouraged Korean enterprises to strengthen innovation and competitiveness while contributing to Vietnam's economic development. |
| 30th | A gas power plant in Pulau Indah, Malaysia, co-owned by South Korea's Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO), was officially inaugurated upon completion. The ceremony was attended by KEPCO CEO Kim Dong-cheol and Malaysian officials. KEPCO, which holds a 25% stake in the 1,200-megawatt facility, will manage the project throughout its lifecycle and expects to generate around 11.6 trillion won (US\$9.3 billion) in revenue over 21 years. The milestone coincided with the 65th anniversary of South Korea–Malaysia diplomatic relations. During his visit, Kim also met Tenaga Nasional Berhad executives in Kuala Lumpur to discuss expanding cooperation in renewable energy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

This chronology of events is cross-referenced from the following ministries, institutions, and news sources:

*The ASEAN Secretariat; The ASEAN-Korea Centre; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lao People's Democratic Republic; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia; The Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Singapore; The Government of Timor-Leste; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea; The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy of the Republic of Korea; The Ministry of Economy of Finance of the Republic of Korea; The ASEAN-ROK Financial Cooperation Centre; Korea Net; Channel News Asia; The Borneo Bulletin; Khmer Times; Phnom Penh Post; The Jakarta Post; Laos News Agency; The Star; The Philippine News Agency; The Straits Times; Bangkok Post; Vietnam News Agency; Vietnam Plus; The Korean Central News Agency; NK News; Yonhap News Agency; and The Korea Times.*