



TORN BETWEEN FACTIONS: HOW DOMESTIC POLITICAL FRAGMENTATION THREATENS PHILIPPINE STABILITY

ABSTRACT

Political turbulence may exist in the nation for next 6-18 months, The President might be in pressure as well due to increasing power of the opposition.

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Torn Between Factions: How Domestic Political Fragmentation Threatens Philippines' Stability

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Introduction



On 12th May 2025 when mid-term results declared in Philippines, the position of the President, **Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr.** has weakened with stronger opposition. In the Senate race, most of his coalition underperformed, and many gave support to the opposition, reducing confidence. Moreover, recently, on 26 September 2025, an

enormous widespread protest rally has been surged in the streets of the Philippines against corruption, which has been seen due to the flood project in the land.

Analysis

Local media has reported that the Armed Forces Chief Gen. Romeo Brawner received calls from retired military officials to withdraw support from President Marcos. This hinted instigating the army towards a military Coup which was reportedly turned down by the Chief.

President Marcos’s controversial appointment of Justice Secretary Jesus Crispin Rehmulla as the new Ombudsman is allegedly targeted at the Vice president Duterte, who is next in line to



become the President Philippines is facing corruption charges and Rehmulla, who would investigate these charges is a loyal of President Marcos.

The domestic politics is going through some tough times as the people are disappointed by the policy of the current government leading to major anti-corruption protests in Sept 2025. The flood Control projects scandal worth over \$9.5 billion is termed the biggest corruption scandal in the history of

Philippines. President Marcos Jr.'s political rating plumed to 25% from 42% in Feb this year.



FORESIGHT

Select Asean economies Real GDP growth

	2023	2024	Projections	
			2025	2026
Indonesia	5.0	5.0	4.8	4.8
Malaysia	3.5	5.1	4.5	4.0
Philippines	5.5	5.7	5.5	5.9
Thailand	2.0	2.5	2.0	1.7

Source: IMF

Vice President Sara Duterte faced multiple impeachment complaints in late 2024 and early 2025. Macros is pro-USA and signed Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement EDCA. While Duterte is considered pro-China. This could influence the midterm elections in 2025 and the future of the foreign policy.

Since China is continuing its offensive in the South China Sea, even declaring the disputed Scarborough Shoal as a 'national nature reserve', it seems that Beijing is losing its soft power influence in Philippines, as the country warms up to the USA.

Conclusion:

For the next 6-18 months, Philippines most likely remain politically turbulent, but protests and investigations will sustain a lot, and it might create pressure on the President of the Philippines, and it will eventually cause policy delays. Vice President Duterte is considered the frontrunner for 2028 presidential elections despite impeachment proceedings. Though the protests did take place, they did not gain the required momentum to force presidential resignation. The midterm elections altered the senate composition, but an impeachment motion is unlikely to succeed due to the balanced composition and Macros retains dominance in the House of Representatives with 104 seats. Military coups have occurred in the history of Philippines, but the current military has not indicated any signs of unrest against the macros administration.

What's in it for India?

India elevated its bilateral relations with Philippines to Strategic partnership in 2025. As Philippines navigates political turbulence, India's sustained engagement can help shape a stable regional order, promote maritime security and counterbalance China. Philippines is part of India's Act East policy, and the infrastructure projects and technological cooperation can offer strategic leverage in the shifting geopolitical order.

September's News Review

SI.No	Date	Sector	News Headline	Source
1	11-09-2025	Politics	Ateneo, La Salle join 126 groups pushing reforms	PhilStar Global
2			Senators decide to move Brice Hernandez to Pasay City Jail	Inquirer Net
3			PH actively monitoring unrest in Nepal; no Filipino affected so far	Philippines News Agency
4	16-09-2025	Politics	Planned nationwide rallies against corruption trigger AFP red alert	Inquirer Net
5			Ex-SC justice leads body probing gov't infra mess	Inquirer Net
6			VP Sara shows up alone at OVP budget hearing, waives parliamentary courtesy	Philstar Global
7			Marcos vows no kin, allies are safe in anti-corruption drive	The Manila Times
8			Duterte son files kidnapping and abduction charges against Remulla, others	The Manila Times
9			Brice Hernandez back to Senate custody	GMA News Online
10			Magalong urged to quit as Baguio mayor, focus on independent infra probe	Bombo Radyo Baguio
11			'I'm going to confront the secretary of justice': Marcoleta says Discayas need not return money to become state witnesses	ABS-CBN
12			19-09-2025	Politics
13	Chinese and Philippine ships collide near disputed shoal in South China Sea	The Asahi Shimbun		
14	Philippines urged to act as China cements control over Scarborough Shoal	Bundle		
15	22-09-2025	Politics	No military unrest amid anti-corruption rallies – Palace	Inquirer Net
16			Prayers and protest: Massive 'Trillion Peso March' crowd turns up in white on EDSA	Philstar



17			PTFoMS slams attack on journalists during violent protests	Philippine News Agency
18			Manila Police: 72 arrested due to violent acts during Sept. 21 protests	ABS-CBN
19			Protest turns into riot as 'demonstrators' attack establishments along Recto Avenue	ABS-CBN
20	25-09-2025		Corruption, 'nepo babies': How the Philippines' protests echo Nepal agitation, where they diverge	The Indian Express
21			Duterte's counsel to ICC: Philippines won't block his interim release	Philstar
22			Magalong resigns as ICI adviser	Inquirer Net
23	02-09-2025	Economy	Exact amounts': Senators flag P50 billion in flood control items in 2026 budget	ABS-CBN News
24	08-09-2025		Philippines extends land leases to 99 years to attract foreign investors	LT Reality
25			Philippines Inflation Rate at 5-Month High	Trading Economics
26	11-09-2025		Philippines pauses purchase plans for F-16s from US due to funding 'chokepoint'	South China Morning Post
27	16-09-2025		Marcos OKs salary hike for GOCC workers	Philippines News Agency
28	19-09-2025		PSEi rises further as US Fed rate cut euphoria lingers	Inquirer Net
29			Philippines 'remarkably resilient' to US tariffs, says Japan rating firm	Inquirer Net
30	22-09-2025		PhilHealth gets ₱60B back: Marcos announces fund return to expand health care	The Manila Times
31	25-09-2025		Maya Bank, Atome partner to expand credit access in the Philippines	IBS Intelligence
32			Rights Issue to Fund Initial Vehicle Shipment under \$1.29 Billion EV Deal with the Philippines	Machine Maker
33	02-09-2025	Foreign Affairs	Filipinos in Jakarta told to stay indoors	Philippine Daily Inquirer



			amid violent protests	
34	08-09-2025		Why Cambodia is 'highly important' to Philippines as Marcos eyes trade, anti-crime	MyNews
35			Australia, Canada, the Philippines and the U.S. conduct Maritime Cooperative Activity	pacom.mil
36			Ukraine eyes joint drone production deal with the Philippines	NavelNews
37			Philippines President in India updates: India, Philippines announce strategic partnership.	The Hindu
38	11-09-2025		European Union backs Philippines fight vs corruption	PhilStar Global
39			Philippines-Japan defense agreement enters into force today	PhilStar Global
40			South Korean president stops loan for DAR's 'PBBM Bridges' project over corruption concerns	Rappler
41			Taiwan deepens economic collaboration with Philippines	Taiwan Today
42	16-09-2025		Chinese Coast Guard Targets Philippine Ships Near Disputed Shoal	Bloomberg
43	19-09-2025		US Embassy urges citizens in PH to stay vigilant amid protests	ABS-CBN
44	22-09-2025		Philippines, Sri Lanka Successfully Conclude Third Political Consultations in Colombo	Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippines
45	25-09-2025		Marcos Cancels UN General Assembly Trip, DFA Secretary to Represent Philippines	Asian Journal News
46			PH seeks 'future-oriented' cooperation with China as ties mark 50	Philippine News Agency
			DFA defends embassy officials' visit to Duterte	The Manila Times
47	08-09-2025	Defence	Army launches welfare program for CAFGU in Zamboanga Sur	Philippine News Agency



48	11-09-2025		1st aerial Spike NLOS missile launch marks PH Navy drill off Zambales	Philippine News Agency
49	19-09-2025		Philippines' new warship aims to boost its South China Sea defences – but is it enough?	South China Morning Post
50	02-09-2025	Social	Taal Volcano eruption unlikely despite increased SO2 emission	Philippine News Agency
51			Richard Gomez apologizes after posting personal info of journalists online	Rappler
52	11-09-2025		Flood control funds to be realigned to health, education in 2026 budget	Inquirer Net
53	22-09-2025		Over 2,700 residents evacuated as Super Typhoon Nando threatens Luzon	ABS-CBN
54			Classes suspended in parts of Cagayan Valley due to Nando	Inquirer Net
55			Philippines unveils new technologies to detect and manage African Swine Fever	News Medical Life Sciences
56	25-09-2025		2 cops file sex charges vs Marikina lawmaker	Inquirer Net

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