



Pakistan and BD

Imran Malik | 21 September 2024

“Pakistan must take advantage of the vacuum that has been created by the departure of Shaikh Hasina and India’s waning influence in BD. Nuclear Pakistan and BD could view this crisis as an opportunity to re-new, revive, reinforce and further cement a genuine, multidimensional, fraternal relationship. Their nexus could yet redefine the geopolitics of the larger South Asian Region along with the concomitant geostrategic implications.”

Read More: <https://www.nation.com.pk/21-Sep-2024/pakistan-and-bd>

Why Brute Force Will Not End Pakistan’s Balochistan Insurgency

Dr Farzana Shaikh | 03 September 2024

“In the face of an increasingly sophisticated insurgency with the power to extend its reach across vast swathes of civil society in Balochistan, resorting to brute force is no longer an option – if it ever was. The only way forward lies in opening channels of communication with genuine representatives accountable to the people of Balochistan rather than to Pakistan’s armed custodians of power.”

Read More: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2024/09/why-brute-force-will-not-end-pakistans-balochistan-insurgency>

Diamer-Bhasha Dam: A Solution to Our Water, Energy Woes

Gulab Umid 21 September 2024

“Pakistan has been endowed with vast water resources which, if utilised effectively, can provide solutions to two of the country’s most pressing concerns: the generation of affordable electricity and the conversion of barren land into productive agricultural zones. Despite possessing these natural endowments, the country’s approach toward water resource management has been inconsistent.”

Read More: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2497641/diamer-bhasha-dam-a-solution-to-our-water-energy-woes>

TTP’s Reach

Editorial 22 September 2024

“While there are strong ideological and doctrinal links between the Afghan Taliban and the TTP, the former are satisfied with implementing their rigid system internally, while the latter group has a wider ‘vision’, working as it does with transnational terror concerns.”

Read More: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1860374>

Imran-Specific Amendment?

Abbas Nasir | 22 September 2024

“It is clear to anyone with even a rudimentary knowledge of politics in Pakistan who is meant by the ‘executive’ in the current context. And herein lies the rub. Most elections in Pakistan have seen a degree of tweaking by the security state.”

Read More: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1860370/imran-specific-amendment>

Fatal Distraction

Maleeha Lodhi | 23 September 2024

“At a time when the country is facing mounting economic, political and security challenges, the government has been expending most of its energy on either countering the opposition or trying to arbitrarily amend the Constitution. This has become a fatal distraction from governance. It is also counterproductive. Far from weakening the opposition, it is injecting greater resolve in opposition ranks to push back against the government’s actions.”

Read More: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1860551/fatal-distraction>

China's Greed for Minerals Looks Set to Transform Afghanistan

Noman Hossain | 02 September 2024

“China has been eyeing Afghanistan’s mineral deposits for years. Therefore, soon after Beijing gave diplomatic recognition to the Taliban, the first thing that the East Asian country did was to execute its projects related to mines and minerals in Afghanistan.”

Read More: <https://www.khaama.com/chinas-greed-for-minerals-looks-set-to-turn-afghanistan-into-hell/>

Not All is Well Inside the Taliban

Lakshmi Venugopal Menon 14 September 2024

“The lack of public response to the vice and virtue law may signal that disgruntled Taliban members who disapprove of it would not risk breaking the unity of the group over policy disagreements. Silencing of dissent, however, does not help with the two major problems the Taliban is facing: growing dissatisfaction among the Afghan population and continuing international isolation.”

Read More: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2024/9/14/not-all-is-well-inside-the-taliban>

The Unfolding Human Tragedy in Afghanistan

Syed Mohammad Ali 20 September 2024

“Afghanistan is confronting many serious challenges today, including increasing water scarcity and other climate related threats. The Taliban regime seems ill-equipped to contend with these problems. The Taliban’s model of governance is myopic and intolerant. It inflicts harsh penalties for defiance.”

Read More: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2497400/the-unfolding-human-tragedy-in-afghanistan>

Navigating Challenges: The ICG Reports on Taliban Drug Ban Its Global Implications

Aidar Borangaziyev 24 September 2024

“There is a risk of political instability, criminality, corruption, social degradation, and damage to human health as a result of drug trafficking from Afghanistan. Additionally, the elimination of Afghan drug production and trafficking is a key issue in the fight against terrorism, primarily against the Islamic State, as drugs are one of the main sources of income for these groups.”

Read More: <https://timesca.com/navigating-challenges-the-icg-reports-on-the-taliban-drug-ban-and-its-global-implications/>

India's Deft Balancing Act on Foreign Policy Front

Dr Shalini Chawla 21 September 2024

“The Narendra Modi government outlined two axioms of India’s foreign policy — ‘Bharat First’ and ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’ (the world is one family) — when it came to power in June this year. Its intention has been to maintain the momentum of the foreign policy initiatives that yielded success in the last decade.”

Read More: <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/indias-deft-balancing-act-on-foreign-policy-front/>

Bangladesh: Any Similarities with Pakistan?

Dr Kamal Monnoo 11 September 2024

“First Inflation: Like Pakistan, Bangladesh had also of late been witnessing punishing inflation, which as we all know can be regarded as a single most factor for dissatisfaction with governance. The persistent inflation rate of +18% (which by the way the people believed to be much more, just like in Pakistan) post the IMF program had been back-breaking.”

Read More: <https://www.nation.com.pk/11-Sep-2024/bangladesh-any-similarities-with-pakistan>

Are We Experiencing a ‘Mobocracy’?

Taj Hashmi 23 September 2024

“The country has never been known for its discipline or obedience. This was true during the precolonial, colonial, and Pakistani periods. Unfortunately, this has continued since gaining independence. This phenomenon has many historical and cultural reasons, such as alienation from the state and exploitation by corrupt elites and state machinery. The lack of mutual trust and respect has further aggravated the situation.”

Read More: <https://www.dhakatribune.com/opinion/op-ed/359390/are-we-experiencing-a-%E2%80%98mobocracy%E2%80%99>

Why Ranil is so Confident of Winning the Presidential Election

D.B.S. Jeyaraj 14 September 2024

“The fact remains that the current economic crisis and future economic prospects for Sri Lanka are the key issues of vital concern and importance to the country. The economy and its revival or renaissance are Ranil Wickremesinghe’s strong points. It is his unique selling proposition (USP).”

Read More: <https://www.dailymirror.lk/opinion/Why-Ranil-is-so-Confident-of-Winning-the-Presidential-Election/172-291758>

Presidential Election and 1.65 million Muslim votes!

Mohasin Mithu | 08 August 2024

“The forthcoming elections will show that the country wants a change of government, a real democratic change that will oust the very same Cabinet of Ministers and the very same executive officials who together imposed the economic hardships and continued with the said “collective punishment”.”

Read More: <https://island.lk/presidential-election-and-1-65-million-muslim-votes/>

Rising Runways, Sinking Narratives: Maldives Debunk Climate Fears

Vijay Jayaraj 06 September 2024

“Similarly, there are cases of natural increases in landmass. A landmark study published in the journal Nature Communications in 2018 examined changes in 101 islands of the Pacific atoll nation of Tuvalu over a period of 40 years. Despite sea-level rise, the total land area of the islands had increased by nearly 3%. On an individual basis, 74% of the islands had grown, while only 14% had shrunk.”

Read More: <https://co2coalition.org/2024/09/06/rising-runways-sinking-narratives-maldives-debunk-climate-fears/>

Experts Weigh in on Rise of Middle Powers in Central Asia, Highlight Greater Agency

Assel Satubaldina 03 September 2024

“Kazakhstan has also long been working to build cooperation with Azerbaijan across the Caspian Sea, a process that has gained momentum in the past two years. The nation also extended its efforts beyond the region through various international initiatives to establish a presence on the global stage, including in an area of specific expertise, which for Kazakhstan is nuclear non-proliferation advocacy.”

Read More: <https://astanatimes.com/2024/09/experts-weigh-in-on-rise-of-middle-powers-in-central-asia-highlight-greater-agency/>

Azerbaijan’s Energy Journey

Muhammad Ali Pasha 19 September 2024

“When the world recognized the independence of Azerbaijan at the end of the twentieth century the country concerned itself with protecting its own interests and regulating the use of natural resources with justice. An important milestone in this course was the ink on the Contract of the Century on September 20, 1994.”

Read More: <https://theeuropetoday.com/2024/09/19/azerbaijans-energy-journey/>

The Next War: Israel vs. Iran

Abdulrahman al-Rashed 5 September 2024

“For decades, Israel’s main strategy has been based on the likelihood of a regional war, once focused on Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Today, this strategy is targeted against Iran, which it views as the primary existential threat, due to its pursuit of a nuclear military capability and missile development that could reach Israel’s major cities. This makes Iran – not its proxies – the next target for Israel.”

Read More: <https://english.alarabiya.net/views/2024/09/05/the-next-war-israel-vs-iran>

Pezeshkian's Economic 'Surgery': Will it Heal or Hurt Iran?

Majid Mohammadi 7 September 2024

“However, Pezeshkian is banking on two factors. First, cooperation from all regime factions, a strategy that helped secure parliamentary approval for his cabinet. Second, he hopes the economic pain will not impact a large portion of the population, emphasizing the need to protect vulnerable groups.”

Read More: <https://www.iranintl.com/en/202409064434>

Hezbollah's Strategic Gamble in Terrorism: Is it Paying Off?

Seth J. Frantzman 23 September 2024

“Iran wants to preserve Hezbollah intact as a long-term threat. It has invested a lot in this group and doesn't want to risk losing the capabilities that Hezbollah has acquired. These include drones, long-range missiles, and precision-guided munitions. Hezbollah is likely gambling on a war of attrition until it gets the order from Iran to increase its attacks in quantity and quality.”

Read More: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-821326>

The Third Lebanon War Between Israel and Hezbollah has Begun. What's Next?

Alex Plitsas 23 September 2024

“Another important question: What will Iran do? Tehran may push for a quick end to preserve Hezbollah, as it may not want to lose its largest proxy force in the region. Hezbollah would play a key retaliatory role if Israel were to strike Iran's nuclear sites, a problem that is still simmering in the background of an increasingly volatile regional conflict.”

Read More: <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/the-third-lebanon-war-between-israel-and-hezbollah-has-begun-whats-next/>

Pager Attacks: What Next for Hezbollah?

Kabir Taneja 18 September 2024

“Hezbollah’s ‘low-tech’ pager communication network has already been busted, making it harder for the group to operate, debate, and deploy forces. In the short term, if not tactically, Israel has been managing to secure at least psychological victories against Hezbollah and its ilk. In the long term, things remain as uncertain as before. It won’t be surprising if the Gaza crisis and accompanying regional tensions spill well into 2025.”

Read More: <https://www.ndtv.com/opinion/lebanons-pager-attacks-whats-next-for-hezbollah-6593630>

REGION IN PICTURES

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk meets with Pakistan's Army Chief Gen. Asim Munir, in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, Sept. 18, 2024.



Pic Credits: Voice of America (VOA)

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met with Abdulmajeed Al Smari, Deputy Minister for Protocol Affairs, Saudi Arabia on September 8, 2024 for a two-day visit to attend the first India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) foreign ministers' meeting.



Pic Credits: The Indian Express

Anura Kumara Dissanayake of the neo-Marxist National People's Power coalition is sworn in as Sri Lanka's president on September 23, 2024.



Pic Credits: Financial Times

The 2nd Meeting in the Central Asia plus German Format that took place in Kazakhstan's capital of Astana on September 17, 2024 brought together the five Central Asian heads of state and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz.



Pic Credits: Asia-Plus



Centre for Air Power Studies

The Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS) is an independent, non-profit think tank that undertakes and promotes policy related research, study and discussion on defence and military issues, trends, and development in air power and space for civil and military purposes, as also related issues of national security. The Centre is headed by Air Vice Marshal Anil Golani (Retd).

Centre for Air Power Studies

P-284, Arjan Path, Subroto Park, New Delhi 110010

Tel: +91 11 25699130/32, Fax: +91 11 25682533

NOTE: **Regional Opinion and Trends** aims to capture prevailing opinions in South Asia and West Asia.

Editor: Dr Shalini Chawla e-mail: shaluchawla@yahoo.com

Compilation and Designing: Ms Anadi, Ms Priyadarshini Baruah and Mr Rohit Singh

The views expressed in this brief are those of the author and not necessarily of the Centre or any other organisation.