



Ceasefire or Countdown? India's Strategic DIME Response and the Future of Indo-Pak Air Power

Air Vice Marshal Anil Golani | 12 May 2025

“A Major part of ‘Operation Sindoor’ and ‘Operation Bunyan al-Marsous’ was carried out through air power with both sides not crossing each other’s borders with manned aircraft. Air forces are pivotal to Multi Domain Operations (MDO) being the only force capable of having cross-domain coercion and deterrence capabilities that make it an inescapable necessity for the future. While the IAF managed to achieve its objectives and was a major factor in Pakistan’s decision to call for a cease fire, whether a recalcitrant state like Pakistan that harbours terrorists and uses state sponsored terrorism as a means of its policy, turns out or not, the jury is out on the issue.”

Read More: <https://government.economictimes.indiatimes.com/blog/ceasefire-or-countdown-indias-strategic-dime-response-and-the-future-of-indo-pak-air-power/121094424>

The Biggest News from India-Pakistan Air Battle: The Kill Chain

John A. Tirpak | 19 May 2025

“The most important element of an air-to-air engagement in the recent India-Pakistan conflict may be how Pakistan integrated its Chinese-origin weapons and air defenses to shoot down at least one Indian Rafale fighter. The effectiveness of the kill chain may have been more important than the capabilities of the specific fighters. No details are available about where the Rafale was when it was hit, although Pakistani news agencies showed wreckage that may or may not have been the remains of an Indian Rafale on Pakistani territory. Pakistan claimed after the engagement that it had shot down five Indian aircraft—four fighters and a drone—which conducted an airstrike in Pakistan.”

Read More: <https://www.airandspaceforces.com/india-pakistan-air-battle-kill-chain/>

Op Sindoor’s Enduring Takeaway (The Ten Commandments)

Air Vice Marshal Ashish Vohra 26 May 2025

“Op Sindoor was a stupendous success and achieved its laid-down military objectives in less than four days. While the success of Op Sindoor should be celebrated for its decisiveness, highly professional and integrated execution, the Indian Armed Forces also need to do a comprehensive, honest, and unbiased analysis of the entire operation to draw the correct lessons and prepare for future more challenging battles.”

Read More: https://capsindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/CAPS_EV_AV_26_5_25.pdf

Lessons from India-Pakistan War: Were China’s Arms Overrated?

Brahma Chellaney | 27 May 2025

“The brief military conflict between India and Pakistan from May 7 to May 10 marked a turning point in South Asian security dynamics. This was not a conventional border conflict, but a high-tech showdown featuring drones, cruise and ballistic missiles and long-range air defenses. While India and Pakistan were the primary belligerents, a third power — China — played a pivotal, if indirect, role. Beijing’s involvement via the supply of advanced weapon systems and real-time satellite reconnaissance data to Pakistan turned the engagement into a revealing trial run for Chinese arms in a live combat setting. This conflict offered the first real-world glimpse into how China’s premier military technologies perform under fire.”

Read More: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/commentary/2025/05/27/world/chinas-arms-pakistans-war-lessons/>

IMF Loan Shows Pakistan has a Slogan — Beg, Borrow, Steal, Don't Give Up on Supporting Terrorism

Meenakashi Lekhi | 12 May 2025

“There are two defining images of the India-Pakistan conflict. On our side of the border is the photo of a newly-wed woman sitting next to her husband’s lifeless body in Pahalgam. And on the other side of the border is the image from the funeral of terrorists, with Pakistani army top brass attending in uniform and a casket draped in the country’s flag. It clearly shows what each country is fighting for. The subsequent \$1 billion IMF loan to Pakistan makes it clear the country is committed to its slogan—beg borrow steal; but do not give up supporting terrorism.”

Read More: <https://theprint.in/opinion/forthwrite/imf-loan-pakistan-beg-borrow-steal-dont-give-up-on-terrorism/2622691/>

Türkiye–Pakistan–Azerbaijan Trilateral Defence Cooperation

Syed Fazl-e-Haider | 26 May 2025

“The JF-17 and Kaan fighter jet agreements is a clear statement that Pakistan and Türkiye will continue to bolster Azerbaijan’s military capabilities, with trilateral defense cooperation expected to deepen further. If successful, the Kaan project will lay the groundwork for expanded trilateral collaboration among Türkiye, Pakistan, and Azerbaijan in launching additional large-scale defense initiatives. It will also create opportunities for future bilateral or trilateral joint ventures in the defense industry among the three nations.”

Read More: https://centralasiacaucasusinstitute.substack.com/p/turkiye-pakistan-azerbaijan-trilateral?utm_medium=android&triedRedirect=true

How Asim Munir’s Promotion to Field Marshal Sets a Dangerous Precedent for Pakistan

Tehmeena Rizvi | 24 May 2025

“The convergence of internal interest and external conflict raises serious questions about the ethical and strategic dimensions of civil-military relations in Pakistan. It also signals a dangerous precedent wherein regional peace and bilateral stability can be subordinated to individual career ambitions. If the promotion of a single general can be facilitated through such high-stakes manoeuvring, then the broader institutional integrity of the military becomes compromised, not in appearance, but in its underlying rationale and operational logic.”

Read More: <https://www.firstpost.com/opinion/how-asim-munirs-promotion-to-field-marshal-sets-a-dangerous-precedent-for-pakistan-13891238.html>

Faith, Fear, Fragility

Muhammad Amir Rana | 25 May 2025

“One of the major factors responsible for this state of affairs is religious bigotry, which continues to persist across the country. Uncertainty and scepticism are two major expressions of growing fear, and ordinary folk who have already lost trust in the state’s delivery system are now losing belief in each other. The state has managed sectarian-related violence in the country. Still, the sectarian divide is not only persisting but also expanding in its ugliest form, where mobs and individuals alike take the law into their own hands and are ready to kill anyone who does not belong to their faith and breach their privacy whenever they want.”

Read More: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1913198/faith-fear-fragility>

The Drowning Karachi Coast

Noor Ul Ain Tahir | 28 May 2025

“The perpetual pollution crisis at Karachi Port serves as a stark reminder of Pakistan’s long-standing environmental governance negligence and inefficiencies. Despite multiple legal frameworks, institutional efforts and infrastructure projects, the envisioned goals of sewage treatment and marine conservation remain largely unattainable.”

Read More: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2548133/the-drowning-karachi-coast>

Coast Capture

Arif Hasan | 28 May 2025

“All over Pakistan, Karachi is known for its coast and the citizens of Karachi identify themselves with it. It is the only thing that anti-people rulers have left to them. Let us not destroy whatever little is left of it by leaving Karachi’s coast alone. All development, if it is to take place, should enhance the natural ecology of the coast so as to teach Karachi’s future generations about the coast and its various elements. It is suggested that the various persons who have taken this decision take into consideration. And so should the citizens of Karachi, irrespective of their ethnicity.”

Read More: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1913817/coast-capture>

The China, Pakistan, and Taliban Triangle

Muhammad Farhad Jalal | 26 May 2025

“China’s primary objectives in Afghanistan are twofold: exploiting the country’s vast natural resources and securing its volatile border regions. Pakistan, a strategic ally of both China and the Taliban, has played a pivotal role in facilitating ties between Beijing and Kabul’s new rulers. One of the key factors behind the warming of Taliban–China relations has been Pakistan’s mediation. For the Taliban, who ascended to power with Islamabad’s backing, any engagement with a foreign power is seen as a step toward international recognition. However, the reality remains that regional actors view the Taliban largely through a pragmatic, interest-based lens.”

Read More: <https://sam.media/eng/the-china-pakistan-and-taliban-triangle/>

India’s Evolving Afghan Policy: From Humanitarian Outreach to Strategic Diplomacy

Imran Khurshid | 26 May 2025

“Engaging with the Taliban is not a concession but a reflection of India’s evolving strategic realism. If global powers like the United States can engage with controversial actors—such as Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) leader Abu Mohammad al-Jolani in Syria, who was on the US Rewards for Justice list with a \$10 million bounty until December 2024—India should not hesitate to advance its national interests through constructive dialogue with the current Afghan leadership. Prioritising national interest means proactively shaping bilateral relationships rather than waiting for others—such as China or other such inimical countries—to take the lead.”

Read More: <https://www.firstpost.com/opinion/indias-evolving-afghan-policy-from-humanitarian-outreach-to-strategic-diplomacy-13891815.html>

Between the Dragon and the Deep Sea

Fazlul Halim Rana | 23 May 2025

“Bangladesh’s engagement with China illustrates a foreign policy grounded in pragmatism rather than partisanship. Its strategy is neither a pivot nor a passive accommodation, but a calibrated stance shaped by national development goals, regional dynamics, and a historical commitment to non-alignment. Rather than succumbing to external pressure, Bangladesh is cultivating a space of autonomous diplomacy engaging with all sides while maintaining a sovereign trajectory. Echoing Deng Xiaoping’s advice to “hide brilliance and bide time,” Dhaka’s restrained, measured approach is not a sign of weakness but a testament to diplomatic maturity.”

Read More: <https://www.dhakatribune.com/opinion/op-ed/382005/between-the-dragon-and-the-deep-sea>

Bangladesh and the Peter Pan Syndrome

Ziauddin Choudhury | 24 May 2025

“One expected a change in behaviour in the country and people after a movement started by our youth but ultimately engaging all sections of people. They thought it would return the country to rule of law and discipline. An exit from a corrupt clique should have ushered responsible governance and behaviour by people who replaced that tyrannic regime. True, it was not a change through elections, but it was a change effected by a popular movement. But unfortunately, the change of leadership did not percolate to all levels. If anything, the change has led to greater irresponsibility, lawlessness, and demands for instant gratification, the outpouring of which has brought the country to a standstill.”

Read More: <https://www.dhakatribune.com/opinion/op-ed/382061/bangladesh-and-the-peter-pan-syndrome>

How Far is the Interim Government Able to Win Confidence?

Kallol Mustafa | 26 May 2025

“BNP and several other political parties are putting pressure on the government regarding the election. Many of them believe that this government represents a specific group. There is a perception that the government shows partiality towards NCP. When it comes to reforms, there is a disconnect between the words and actions of the government and its ally, NCP. The excessive enthusiasm of some government figures over corridors and ports has also raised suspicions. To overcome the current situation, the government must become more sincere about reforms and justice, and that sincerity must be visible to the public. Reforms should not be limited to rhetoric. This must be reflected in the government’s actions.”

Read More: <https://en.prothomalo.com/opinion/op-ed/neubivg2zk>

The Economic Cost of Corruption

Madhusa Thavapalakumar | 25 May 2025

“If corruption were taxed, Sri Lanka might have paid off its debt by now. From inflated tenders to phantom commissions at every turn, we have perfected the art of paying more for less. So normalised is this dysfunction that following the rules can sometimes feel like the riskier option. Want a permit? Wait months, or pay and have it by Friday. Want a promotion? Hope your uncle knows a minister. Want to do business? Brace yourself. But behind the jokes, shortcuts, and survival strategies, corruption is draining Sri Lanka’s economy from the inside out. It drives away investment, bloats public spending, undermines services, and corrodes trust in every institution it touches.”

Read More: <https://www.themorning.lk/articles/L8L67CL0k98VNO5Ecfr>

The Distinction Between a Soldier and a Terrorist

Major General Dr. Boniface Perera | 26 May 2025

“The LTTE terrorist, operated outside the bounds of law, engaged in wanton violence, and sought to destroy the very fabric of the nation. Their legacy is one of terror, destruction, and immense human suffering. Recognising this indelible divide is not about condoning every action in war, but about acknowledging the profound moral and legal difference between defending a nation and seeking to tear it apart through indiscriminate violence. For Sri Lanka to truly heal and prosper, this fundamental distinction must remain clear, serving as a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made for peace and the enduring cost of terror.”

Read More: <https://www.dailymirror.lk/opinion/THE-DISTINCTION-BETWEEN-A-SOLDIER-AND-A-TERRORIST/172-309787>

‘Cassandras’ and the Upcoming Crisis

Rohan Samarajiva | 29 May 2025

“Perhaps the government has heard enough about the economy from us Cassandras. So, let’s talk politics and morals. The NPP’s General Election performance in the North and the East was impressive. Many thought those results portended a realignment of regional politics. But six months of inaction have dimmed those hopes. The NPP is fast losing ground among the minorities who have disproportionately suffered under the PTA. Wouldn’t quick action on the PTA halt the slide? Shouldn’t this cruel law be removed on moral grounds? Who can defend coerced confessions in languages the accused do not understand? Who can condone torture and excessive detention without charges being proved?”

Read More: <https://www.dailymirror.lk/opinion/Cassandras-and-the-upcoming-crisis/172-310069>

Nepal’s Carbon Trade: Big Hopes, Small Gains

Sudeep Thakuri | 04 May 2025

“Nepal's positioning in the global carbon trade presents both an economic opportunity and a climate responsibility. With its low emissions, carbon-rich forests, and REDD+ support, Nepal can address climate change and earn valuable income for sustainable development. As the world move toward net-zero targets, countries like Nepal, though not major emitter, hold the key to carbon neutrality. With timely investment in policy, infrastructure, and community engagement, carbon trade could open a new chapter in Nepal's green economy.”

Read More: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/opinion/nepals-carbon-trade-big-hopes-small-gains>

Parrotting of Socialism: Merely in Words, Not in Action

Jiba Raj Pokharel | 07 May 2025

“The commitment made in the constitution regarding the pursuance of socialism and also in every year's plan and programme has thus been merely an exercise in hypocrisy. It is often parroted in discussions, debates and deliberations but is never implemented. Socialism has thus remained as a photograph of the little conserved but grossly neglected ruinous monuments. The BPKSIN deserves to be showered with innumerable praises for bringing out the much-needed album of BP's socialism in Nepal.”

Read More: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/opinion/parrotting-of-socialism-merely-in-words-not-in-action>

Strengthening Grassroots Federalism

Khim Lal Devkota | 27 May 2025

“While the Constitution’s preamble sets the tone for Nepal’s federal vision, the Local Government Operation Act provides the functional blueprint. It emphasises accessible services, citizen participation, transparency, accountability and equitable resource distribution. Local governments are the democratic foundational pillars that empower federalism. Their role also includes enhancing intergovernmental coordination and implementing legislative, executive and judicial functions at the local level.”

Read More: <https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2025/05/27/strengthening-grassroots-federalism>

Almaty Meeting: China–Central Asia Format Deepens

Zeynep Gizem Özpınar | 12 May 2025

“The Almaty meeting marks a turning point in which the geopolitical importance of Central Asia is rising again, and China is trying to steer this rise through institutional mechanisms. In this context, the biggest challenge for the countries of the region in the coming period is to manage their cooperation with China without turning into unilateral dependency relations and to produce balanced policies that will preserve their strategic autonomy within multipolar balances. This will only be possible through foreign policy strategies that use multilateralism in a truly balanced manner, do not neglect alternative partnerships, and have high domestic political resistance and social legitimacy.”

Read More: <https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/almaty-meeting-china-central-asia-format-deepens>

Tajik–Taliban Relations Slowly Warm, But Both Sides Hedge their Bets

Alexander Thompson | 14 May 2025

“Tajikistan is maintaining a delicate balance with the Taliban. On one side, Dushanbe is developing economic links with Afghanistan, none more important than the electricity deals that have seen Tajikistan export increasing amounts of power southward in recent years. On the other side rest political considerations. Tajik officials still style Dushanbe as the defender of the interests of ethnically Tajik Afghans, who comprise roughly a quarter of Afghanistan’s population. They also dance around the issue of recognizing Taliban control of Afghanistan.”

Read More: <https://eurasianet.org/tajik-taliban-relations-slowly-warm-but-both-sides-hedge-their-bets>

Kazakhstan: Central Asia's AI Powerhouse

Yegor Denisov-Blanch | 21 May 2025

“Kazakhstan has achieved impressive results in the global AI revolution. Sustaining this lead demands tackling the language barrier directly. While nurturing local language AI is important long-term, the immediate strategic imperative is clear: embrace English as the primary language of technology to ensure Kazakhstan remains at the forefront of innovation and competitiveness.”

Read More: <https://astanatimes.com/2025/05/kazakhstan-central-asias-ai-powerhouse/>

Time is Running Out: The Iran-US Nuclear Standoff Reaches a Critical Juncture

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh | 21 May 2025

“Public condemnation from the Supreme Leader paired with diplomatic engagement by the President and Iran’s nuclear negotiating team – has long been a fixture of Iran’s approach to the United States. During the Obama administration’s efforts to secure the JCPOA, Khamenei repeatedly expressed doubts about American reliability. Yet, those expressions of mistrust occurred even as Iranian negotiators, operating with the quiet backing of Khamenei himself, sat across from American diplomats in Geneva and Vienna. This strategy appears to serve multiple strategic purposes for the Supreme Leader. On the one hand, it allows him to appease hardline factions within Iran. On the other hand, this tactic enables Khamenei to distance himself from any potential failure.”

Read More: <https://english.alarabiya.net/views/2025/05/21/time-is-running-out-the-iranus-nuclear-standoff-reaches-a-critical-juncture>

The Gulf Reshapes the Middle East Away from Iran and Israel

Mahmoud Hamdy Abo El-Kasem | 25 May 2025

“The Gulf states are reshaping not only the regional landscape but also the global order through diverse partnerships in advanced technological cooperation, particularly in AI, rare earth minerals, international trade corridors, military collaboration, crisis mediation, and the coordination of more peaceful political stances. These partnerships will help identify the most influential international and regional powers in the future, shaping the regional power structure, the character of the international system, and the flow of its interests and relationships.”

Read More: <https://rasanah-iiis.org/english/monitoring-and-translation/articles/the-gulf-reshapes-the-middle-east-away-from-iran-and-israel>

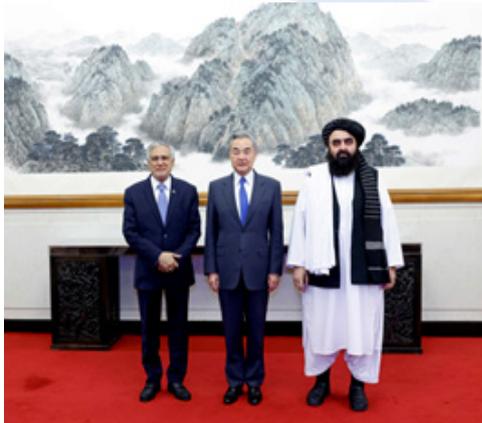
REGION IN PICTURES

U.S. President Donald Trump and Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed Bin Salman attend a bilateral meeting in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 13 May 2025.



Pic Credits: Türkiye Today

The foreign ministers of China, Pakistan and Afghanistan met on 21 May, 2025, in Beijing for an informal trilateral meeting.



Pic Credits: Ministry of Foreign Affairs The People's Republic of China

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif hold a trilateral meeting in Lachin, Azerbaijan, on 28 May 2025.



Pic Credits: Reuters

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Maldives Abdulla Khaleel. The Maldivian foreign minister expressed “firm support” to India in tackling terrorism in the aftermath of the Pahalgam attack in a high-level core group meeting in New Delhi on 26 May 2025.



Pic Credits: The Wire



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