



# Centre for Aerospace Power and Strategic Studies



Centre for Aerospace Power and Strategic Studies

Opinions and Trends

47/25

Neighbourhood Insights Series

July 2025

## Changing World Order and Pakistan

*Azhar Dogar | 11 July 2025*

“Pakistan stands at a critical juncture in its history. The changing world order, driven by the rise of BRICS countries and the centrality of technology, demands that Pakistan act decisively to secure its place in the global arena. The next few years will be pivotal. Pakistan must prioritize the rule of law, rebuild its democratic institutions, and redefine the military’s role to foster a strong and inclusive economy.”

**Read More:** <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2025/07/11/changing-world-order-and-pakistan/>

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## Climate Security Axis

*Aisha Khan | 26 July 2025*

“China, India, and Pakistan—and one issue—water—will shape the fate of the Third Pole countries. All three nations are nuclear powers, possess strong militaries, and are entangled in unresolved political disputes. Ironically, they choose to ignore a common threat — climate change — that is far more dangerous than any military adversary. Rapidly warming temperatures are destabilising the cryosphere, especially in the Third Pole, where snow and glacial melt sustain over a billion lives. ”

**Read More:** <https://www.dawn.com/news/1926675/climate-security-axis>

## **What is on the Horizon for Pakistan-Bangladesh Defence Cooperation?**

*Maryam Raashed | 27 July 2025*

“For Islamabad, defence cooperation with Bangladesh could translate into Islamabad gaining a new regional partner to counter India’s growing activity in the Indian Ocean Region... The success of this partnership, however, will depend on sustained diplomatic engagement, tangible and an ability to navigate the region’s complex geopolitical currents.”

**Read More:** <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2025/07/27/what-is-on-the-horizon-for-pakistan-bangladesh-defence-cooperation/>

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## **Pakistan Suffers Violence of its Own Making. West’s Refusal to Learn is Even More Tragic**

*Vinay Kaura | 01 July 2025*

“Pakistan’s tragedy is not that it suffers violence, but that it suffers violence of its own making. And more tragically, the West – having seen this play before – refuses to learn anything. The ghosts of past alliances, broken promises, and abandoned morals now haunt the corridors of global power, yet the lessons remain unread. Pakistan’s present agony is the fruit of choices made in defiance of prudence and morality. For the West, especially the United States, the refusal to confront this duplicity will haunt them still – as surely as the ghosts of Kabul now haunt Washington.”

**Read More:** <https://theprint.in/opinion/pakistan-north-waziristan-suicide-bombing-terror-folly/2675319/>

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## **Pakistan Air Force: Accessing Capabilities and Modernisation Trends**

*Dr. Shalini Chawla | 07 July 2025*

“The four-day India-Pakistan conflict, triggered by the gruesome Pahalgam terror attack on April 22, showcased the decisive strikes, precision, penetration through Pakistan’s air defence system, and battlefield control of India’s defence apparatus. Pakistan’s air defence and strike capabilities struggled to perform and stood paralysed. While Pakistan continues to drive a chest-thumping victory narrative, attempting to mask its strategic defeat following the failure of its low-threshold nuclear projection and asset losses, the military will be compelled to intensify the modernisation of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF).”

**Read More:** <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/pakistan-air-force-assessing-capabilities-and-modernisation-trends>

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## **Politics of Personal Glory**

*Zahid Hussain | 23 July 2025*

“Most Sharif family members who were earlier convicted and suffered prison are now part of the power structure, although Nawaz Sharif has opted to stay in the background and lead the party. He seems happy with his daughter becoming the first woman chief minister of Punjab and with himself being glorified as a great leader and helmsman. The great champion of democracy does not seem to have any problem now when the sanctity of the vote is being crushed.”

**Read More:** <https://www.dawn.com/news/1926022/politics-of-personal-glory>

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## **Police in Terrorists' Crosshairs**

*Tariq Parvez | 26 July 2025*

“The KP government, after losing hundreds of policemen in recent years, has announced a comprehensive police security plan for some of the districts costing Rs15 billion. Going for some ad hoc measures, Balochistan is yet to come up with a comprehensive security plan. With almost half its police stations in insecure improvised buildings and roughly half the transport fleet needing to be replaced, the general security environment for police in Balochistan leaves a lot to be desired.”

**Read More:** <https://www.dawn.com/news/1926676/police-in-terrorists-crosshairs>

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## **Taming Militancy**

*Muhammad Amir Rana | 27 July 2025*

“As Pakistan’s geopolitical landscape evolves, the establishment has begun reflecting on its strategy towards militant groups. There appears to be a growing consensus within the state to further restrict the operational space available to these groups. The JeM, in particular, is seen as a potential risk, as some of its factions and commanders defected to Al Qaeda and the TTP after 2004. Although its infrastructure has already been significantly weakened, it continues to pose a threat to internal security.”

**Read More:** <https://www.dawn.com/news/1926846/taming-militancy>

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## **Reimagining Balochistan: China Turned Xinjiang from a Restive Region to a Trade Hub. Can Pakistan do the same for Balochistan?**

*Naveed Hussain | 27 July 2025*

“Xinjiang’s dramatic transformation has caught the attention of some Pakistani analysts who argue that the ‘Root Cause’ model could possibly hold the remedy for the challenges facing Balochistan. They think Balochistan today mirrors the conditions Xinjiang faced prior to its overhaul—a vast, resource-rich, and strategically important region held back by chronic underdevelopment, widespread alienation, bad governance, simmering discontent, separatist violence, and religious extremism.”

**Read More:** <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2558094/reimagining-balochistan>

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## **Recognising Kabul Regime**

*Dr Tehmina Aslam Ranjha | 12 July 2025*

“Pakistan and Afghanistan promised to improve bilateral diplomatic relations. Establishing ambassadorial offices was the first step towards the restoration of normalcy. This was a major pro-peace development between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Taliban’s envoy in Islamabad also assumed the status of an ambassador. This development was seen as a major breakthrough in improving not only Pak-Afghan bilateral relations but also paving the way for the recognition of the Kabul regime as the legitimate one.”

**Read More:** <https://www.nation.com.pk/12-Jul-2025/recognising-kabul-regime>

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## **The Taliban-ISKP Nexus**

*Asad Ali | 17 July 2025*

“There is some rivalry between the Taliban and ISKP, which is a well-tailored hoax. Just behind this smokescreen is a convergence of strategy by which the two groups could simultaneously achieve their respective interests and destabilize Pakistan and the region. The policymakers, intelligence agencies, and regional powers now are at the point of re-assessment of the assumptions and facing this threatening nexus with clarity and determination.”

**Read More:** <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2025/07/17/the-taliban-iskp-nex/>

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## **Operation Sindoor & Beyond: Countering New Age Terrorism in South Asia**

*Priyadarshini Baruah | 09 July 2025*

“The Pahalgam massacre and Operation Sindoor highlights the need for a much more comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy. India’s blend of kinetic operations and non-kinetic measures like counter-radicalisation and diplomacy addresses both immediate threats and underlying drivers. The Shishupala Doctrine signals India’s proactive stance, ensuring decisive responses to attacks. However, the transnational nature of these threats demands sustained international cooperation to disrupt terrorist networks and promote regional stability.”

**Read More:** <https://chakranewz.com/insights/operation-sindoor-and-beyond-countering-new-age-terrorism-in-south-asia>

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## **The Enduring Shadow of Extremism: Tackling Radicalisation in the Bangladeshi Diaspora**

*Iftekhharul Bashir | 10 July 2025*

“The threat of radicalisation within the Bangladeshi diaspora is real and evolving. It demands a comprehensive, transparent, and collaborative response from the Bangladeshi government, its diplomatic missions, community organisations, and international partners. By fostering tolerance, inclusivity, and social cohesion, and by addressing the root causes of vulnerability, Bangladesh can protect its citizens and its vital economic interests from the enduring shadow of extremism.”

**Read More:** <https://rsis.edu.sg/rsis-publication/rsis/the-enduring-shadow-of-extremism-tackling-radicalisation-in-the-bangladeshi-diaspora/>

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## **July Uprising: Who Gains if the Unity is Cracked?**

*Saimum Parvez | 21 July 2025*

“After the fall of the Hasina regime, it became necessary for key stakeholders in the July uprising to come to a mutual understanding in order to preserve this newly formed identity. But such an understanding never materialised. On the contrary, a jarring scramble for power has emerged, so intense that it now threatens the very unity that had once driven the anti-Hasina movement. Just a year after the fall of the Hasina government, we find ourselves face to face with this worrisome scenario.”

**Read More:** <https://en.prothomalo.com/opinion/op-ed/3d9biawsx5>

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## **Bangladesh in the Age of Global Economic Flux**

*Dr. Abdullah Shibli | 27 July 2025*

“For developing small countries like Bangladesh, policymakers and market participants need to recognise that we have entered a new phase known as the "vigilant economy." This term refers to an economic state where elected leaders take initiatives to monitor economic indicators and potential risks closely, and are prepared to adjust policies or strategies as needed. It implies a cautious approach, acknowledging progress in some areas but remaining alert to factors that could derail that progress or create new challenges.”

**Read More:** <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/views/open-dialogue/news/bangladesh-the-age-global-economic-flux-3948311>

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## **Sri Lanka: Strategic Competition in the Indo-Pacific**

*Col. R. Hariharan | 27 July 2025*

“While examining the strategic competition between China, India, and the US, with focus on Sri Lanka in the Indo-Pacific region, we need to remember the island State’s unique geostrategic location. Sri Lanka dominates the sea lanes of communication, mid-way. Sri Lanka, in combination with the choke points of the Bay of Bengal, Malacca Strait, and the Lombok and Sunda Straits, can bring maritime traffic in the Indo-Pacific to a halt.”

**Read More:** <https://www.themorning.lk/articles/qwd9Dyotdzx4sBERTnXh>

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## **Government Meets Int’l Expectations**

*Dr Jehan Perera | 08 July 2025*

“In both the IMF and UN interventions in Sri Lanka, it is the Sri Lankan Government and the society that will need to sustain any promise made and solution reached. Those from international global institutions will come and go but Sri Lankans will need to live with the consequences of the decisions made. It is therefore important that the Sri Lankan parties to the problems that need to be addressed and both political representatives and those from the civil society should be consulted and their buying obtained.”

**Read More:** <https://www.themorning.lk/articles/cxeUMqOamLKGT6pa3mYz>

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## **Sri Lanka's Reform Drive Faces Tariff Risks**

*Prof. M. Udara Peiris | 10 July 2025*

“Sri Lanka’s fragile fiscal recovery could stall if pending U.S. tariffs erode tax revenue and unsettle investors. Trade uncertainty may delay tax hikes, stall subsidy reforms, and disrupt bond offerings—widening deficits and prompting higher risk premiums from lenders. Sri Lanka, still rebuilding its credit after default, now faces this predicament as even relatively favourable tariff terms could trim up to 162 million dollars from annual revenue, or around 25 % of the near term ISB payments. Most of this loss stems from tax exemptions on U.S. imports, not from reduced export tax revenue.”

**Read More:** <https://www.dailymirror.lk/opinion/Sri-Lankas-reform-drive-faces-tariff-risks/172-313840>

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## **Lessons from ‘India Out’ to ‘India In’**

*Radhey Tambi | 15 July 2025*

“The shift from “India Out” to “India In” offers an important lesson for policymakers and analysts regarding the swinging nature of small countries as they assert their sovereignty and seek overall growth and prosperity. As global instability increases, this trend is likely to become more frequent and widespread. New Delhi needs to adopt a reformed approach as it implements the Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across the Regions (MAHASAGAR) initiative.”

**Read More:** [https://capsindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/CAPS\\_IB\\_RT\\_15\\_7\\_25.pdf](https://capsindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/CAPS_IB_RT_15_7_25.pdf)

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## **The Maldives at 60: Strategy of Small Island Diplomacy**

*Nilantha Ilangamuwa | 27 July 2025*

The 60th anniversary of the Maldives’ formal disengagement from British defence arrangements in 1965 is not merely a calendrical milestone, but an analytical aperture into the evolving morphology of small state diplomacy. Far from the theatrical ruptures of anti-colonial movements in Asia and Africa, the Maldivian case embodies a quieter, more complex narrative—one of procedural negotiation, historical fluidity, and geopolitical literacy. The arc of Maldivian diplomacy is not simply one of resilience but of strategic authorship.”

**Read More:** <https://www.themorning.lk/articles/aNcMyCOOcuXNSxCyN8zZ>

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## **Nepal as a Land-Linked Country**

*Hikmat Singh Ayer | 25 July 2025*

“By working together, China, Nepal and India can promote eco-adventure circuits, such as rafting and other water-based activities along the Mahakali and Tista Rivers or plan Himalayan vehicle rallies from Lasha-Kathmandu to Delhi. Shared Himalayan ecology deserves shared stewardship. Besides strengthening infrastructure development ties, Nepal, China and India should continue to deepen their soft diplomacy of art, music, food and cultural exchanges. Their concerted efforts will play a vital role in transforming landlocked Nepal into a land-linked country.”

**Read More:** <https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2025/07/25/transforming-nepal-into-a-land-linked-country>

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## **Nepali Congress at a Strategic Crossroads: The Urgency of Unity Amid Emerging Threats**

*Rajendra Bajgain | 17 July 2025*

“Nepal’s political landscape is transforming rapidly. At such a moment, the Nepali Congress (NC)-long considered a guardian of democratic ideals and centrist politics—is confronting an unprecedented convergence of challenges. The rise of alternative political figures like Balen Shah and Kulman Ghising, the growing aggression of the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RASWAPA), and the potential consolidation of leftist forces have all exposed serious vulnerabilities within Congress. It is now time for introspection, strategic restructuring, and most importantly- internal unity among top leaders.”

**Read More:** <https://thehimalayantimes.com/opinion/nepali-congress-at-a-strategic-crossroads-the-urgency-of-unity-amid-emerging-threats>

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## **Everything Old is New Again: Mongolia and Central Asia Forge Relations**

*Eldaniz Gusseinov | 14 July 2025*

“Mongolia and the republics that would become modern Central Asia left a shared Soviet orbit and embarked on markedly different paths. Geography separated them from the Altai and the Gobi, while geopolitics shifted their attention toward larger neighbors. Mongolia and the Central Asian countries are beginning to rediscover their ancient roots and opportunities for cooperation.”

**Read More:** <https://astanatimes.com/2025/07/everything-old-is-new-again-mongolia-and-central-asia-forge-relations/>

## **Steel Diplomacy: Central Asia's Southern Push via Afghanistan**

*Nikola Mikovic | 16 July 2025*

“The Taliban is strengthening ties with the Global South—particularly Central Asia—in search of investment for railway infrastructure. For landlocked Central Asian nations, Afghanistan is a key transit point on the shortest route to the Arabian Sea, offering an alternative to routes through Russia, China, or westward via the Caspian. This strategic position is why regional actors are eager to invest in the construction of the railway network in Afghanistan, fully aware that the new route would help them achieve at least some of their geopolitical and geoeconomics interest.”

**Read More:** <https://timesca.com/steel-diplomacy-central-asias-southern-push-via-afghanistan/>

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## **Kazakhstan in Afghanistan: From Rhetoric to Infrastructure**

*Aidar Borangaziyev | 17 July 2025*

“Afghanistan has the potential to significantly enhance regional connectivity, including via the so-called “Five-Nation Corridor” (China–Kyrgyzstan–Tajikistan–Afghanistan–Iran). While this initiative exists mostly on paper for now, construction of the Herat–Mazar-i-Sharif railway could serve as a catalyst for its revival. At the very least, it would offer Tajikistan access to the Persian Gulf and the Lapis Lazuli Corridor, which connects through Turkmenistan to Turkey. In this context, trans-Afghan projects are becoming not just logistical routes, but a tool for regional consolidation.”

**Read More:** <https://timesca.com/kazakhstan-in-afghanistan-from-rhetoric-to-infrastructure/>

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## **War with Iran Exposes the Emptiness of the ‘Axis of Autocracy’**

*Daniel R. DePetris | 01 July 2025*

“As Israeli and U.S. munitions were slamming into numerous Iranian nuclear, military and economic targets, Tehran’s so-called friends and allies stood on the sidelines. Indeed, over the last several years, a budding assumption has taken hold within the foreign policy establishment that the United States’ most significant competitors and enemies — China, Russia, Iran and North Korea are not only teaming up to complicate U.S. foreign policy goals and undermine American power but to shift the global balance in an authoritarian direction.”

**Read More:** <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2025/07/01/iran-war-axis-of-autocracy-myth-00433037>

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## **Billions Lost, Nothing Gained: The Strategic Collapse of Iran's Nuclear Program**

*Dr. Majid Rafizadeh | 16 July 2025*

“The true status of Iran’s nuclear program following the recent joint Israeli and US military strikes, two main aspects must be carefully examined: the physical infrastructure that forms the backbone of the program, and the stockpiles of enriched uranium that give the program its potential for weaponization. These two elements—hardware and material—are not interchangeable. One without the other renders a nuclear ambition incomplete. And in the case of Iran, both have taken devastating blows, raising the question of whether decades of national sacrifice, international confrontation, and financial commitment have just been rendered meaningless.”

**Read More:** <https://english.alarabiya.net/views/2025/07/16/billions-lost-nothing-gained-the-strategic-collapse-of-iran-s-nuclear-program>

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## **Iran's Plan to Abandon GPS is about Much More than Technology**

*Jasim Al-Azzawi | 27 July 2025*

“Iran’s possible shift to BeiDou sends a clear message to other nations grappling with the delicate balance between technological convenience and strategic self-defence: The era of blind, naive dependence on US-controlled infrastructure is rapidly coming to an end. Nations can no longer afford to have their military capabilities and vital digital sovereignty tied to the satellite grid of a superpower they cannot trust. GPS was not the only vulnerability Iran encountered during the US-Israeli attacks.”

**Read More:** <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2025/7/27/irans-plan-to-abandon-gps-is-about-much-more-than-technology>

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## **Putting Syria Back on Track**

*Zaid Al Kami | 24 July 2025*

“What is happening today in Syria goes beyond security matters to more complex dimensions tied to the future of the country’s demographic makeup, social fabric, and state identity. The demographic conflict in Sweida is not merely a local shift, but a dangerous card – one that, if played, will not serve the people of Syria, but will instead benefit only those regional powers seeking to dismantle the country and reshape it along sectarian, regional, and transnational loyalty lines.”

**Read More:** <https://english.alarabiya.net/views/2025/07/24/putting-syria-back-on-track00433037>

## REGION IN PICTURES

On 6-7 July 2025 Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the Outreach Session on ‘Strengthening Multilateralism, Economic-Financial Affairs and Artificial Intelligence’, along with BRICS members, partners and outreach invitees, at the 17th #BRICS Summit.



Pic Credits: Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

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On 26 July 2025, Pakistan hosted a major defence conference in Islamabad, bringing together top military leaders from the United States, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The Central & South Asia Chiefs of Defence Conference focused on building stronger regional ties under the theme “Strengthening Bonds, Securing Peace.”



Pic Credits: Daily Times

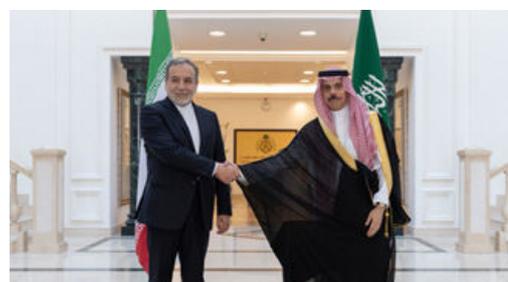
On 25 July 2025 Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited to Maldives, the Indian Prime Minister held wide ranging talks with the Maldivian President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu at the President’s Office.



Pic Credits: Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

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Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan received Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on July 8, 2025, in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The meetings followed high-level Saudi visits to both the United States and Russia aimed at powering diplomatic engagement on the Iranian nuclear file and the Gaza war.



Pic Credits: Al-Monitor



**Centre for Aerospace Power and Strategic Studies**

The Centre for Aerospace Power and Strategic Studies (CAPSS) 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).

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

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