



Centre for Aerospace Power and Strategic Studies



REGIONAL OPINIONS AND TRENDS

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Opinions and Trends

50/25

Neighbourhood Insights Series

October 2025

Better Late Than Never

Muhammad Zahid Rifat | 07 October 2025

“China and Pakistan have at last agreed to upgrade the great game changer China Pakistan Economic Corridor CPEC which has since transitioned into its Phase 2.0 after successful completion of the first phase. The new five Corridors are for growth, innovation, green development, livelihood, regional connectivity/openness thereby prioritizing industrialization, socio-economic development, and regional connectivity.”

Read More: <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2025/10/07/better-late-than-never-2/>

The Cost of Patience and the Case for Accountability

Tariq Khan Tareen | 16 October 2025

“It is still not too late for Afghanistan to act like a responsible state and a brotherly neighbour. True regional stability depends on Kabul’s sincerity. Pakistan seeks not confrontation, but cooperation—grounded in mutual respect, verifiable security measures, and an end to terrorism emanating from Afghan soil. Only then can both nations coexist in peace, stability, and shared prosperity.”

Read More: <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2025/10/16/the-cost-of-patience-and-the-case-for-accountability/>

A US-Pakistan Opportunity

Fahad Hashmi | 25 October 2025

“For the US, Pakistan represents a credible partner in securing critical minerals. For Pakistan, it’s a chance to unlock economic potential while protecting sovereignty and community rights. Both countries now have the opportunity to move past old habits and co-write a new story — one rooted in mutual respect, shared prosperity, and forward-looking growth.”

Read More: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1951526/a-false-binary>

Our Afghan Imbrolio

Dr Raashid Wali Janjua | 28 October 2025

“Pakistan - like China, Iran and Central Asian states - will have to show a zero tolerance for breach of its borders and Afghan-inspired crime and terrorism. National Action Plan will have to be implemented religiously including legal reforms to enhance the conviction rates of terrorists.”

Read More: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2574503/our-afghan-imbroglio>

TTP is Byproduct of Pakistan’s Own Policies. Attacking Afghanistan won’t Solve Crises at Home

Atif Mashal | 29 October 2025

“The hard truth is that the TTP is a byproduct of Pakistan’s own policies, not something that originated in Afghanistan. Pointing fingers at Afghanistan won’t bring back stability or credibility for Pakistan. Unless Pakistan can break this cycle of denial, it risks slipping from a state of strategic uncertainty to a position of lasting irrelevance.”

Read More: <https://theprint.in/opinion/ttp-pakistans-attacking-afghanistan-solve-crises/2771668/>

The Climate Despair

Aima Khan | 04 October 2025

“Pakistan is on the brink of climate change, facing frequent and intense extreme weather events that threaten its economy, infrastructure, and lives. Over 33 million people were impacted by the devastating floods of 2022, which caused extensive damage, serving as a harsh reminder of this fragility. The threats to Pakistan’s infrastructure, public health, and agriculture are increasing as temperatures rise and weather patterns become more unpredictable.”

Read More: <https://www.nation.com.pk/04-Oct-2025/climate-despair>

Back to NAP

Dr. Tehmina Aslam Ranjha | 19 October 2025

“Pakistan is feeling the heat of criticism coming from both outside and inside, evaluating its counter-terrorism efforts. Pakistan’s international stature is hurt if news of conflict with banned militant groups functional in KPK and Balochistan reaches the international media. The outflow of such gloomy news damages Pakistan’s interests in various ways.”

Read More: <https://www.nation.com.pk/19-Oct-2025/back-nap>

The Lost Decade of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Dr Zafar Khan Safdar | 20 October 2025

“A decade later, the only change visible in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa is decay in governance, decay in opportunity, and decay in the very schools that should have been its lifeline. If education is the truest mirror of a government’s priorities, then KP today reflects not hope but betrayal. And betrayal, history reminds us, always comes with a cost too heavy to bear.”

Read More: <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2025/10/20/the-lost-decade-of-khyber-pakhtunkhwa/>

Constitutional Hero

Hamdah Tahir | 21 October 2025

“Despite its myriad challenges, Pakistan has rarely faced a constitutional crisis so severe in its history so as to justify martial law, the suspension of fundamental rights, or the resort to extra-constitutional governance. From Balochistan’s grievances to political polarisation in Islamabad, from economic meltdown to insurgencies, no crisis, except perhaps East Pakistan’s secession, has demanded a departure from democratic principles.”

Read More: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1950300/constitutional-hero>

The Surrender Policy

Ali Hassan Bangwar | 26 October 2025

“Banditry in northern Sindh is largely sustained by two complementary factors: firstly, the systematic socioeconomic, political, and educational marginalisation of the people in the area. And secondly, the entrenched sociopolitical and institutional influence of parasitic pirs and clerics and tribal and feudal warlords.”

Read More: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2574503/our-afghan-imbroglio>

A False Binary

Umair Javed | 27 October 2025

“Among the many problems the country is currently dealing with, the TLP and TTP offer two varying dimensions of the same one. The debate on what to do with them is currently caught in a bizarre binary of ‘operations/ violence’ vs ‘talks/ negotiations’. This binary is both meaningless and unproductive.”

Read More: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1951526/a-false-binary>

Crisis Delayed Not Solved

Atif Mehmood | 28 October 2025

“Amidst worldwide uncertainty, the economy of Pakistan tries a subtle balancing act. Following years of catastrophe, some signs point in the direction of stabilisation, however such advancements are tenuous. The very big question in the air now stands thus: can incremental advancements withstand shocks from the effect of floods, outside pressure and political volatility?”

Read More: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2574502/crisis-delayed-not-solved>

State & Religious Extremism

Zahid Hussain | 29 October 2025

“The growing population is adding to the ranks of the unemployed in the country, which means it is also providing easily swayed recruits to extremist groups. Our education system itself creates extremist mindsets. Just banning the TLP without addressing these issues is not going to solve the problem of religious extremism.”

Read More: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1951922/state-religious-extremism>

Pakistan and the Taliban in Istanbul: This Time, the Haqqanis are Not Absent

Shujauddin Amini | 27 October 2025

“The Taliban’s primary objective is to “manage tensions” with Pakistan. In this regard, the Haqqanis, who have long favored maintaining close ties with Islamabad over cultivating relations with New Delhi, are better positioned to handle the Istanbul negotiations and steer both sides away from the current state of confrontation.”

Read More: <https://8am.media/eng/pakistan-and-the-taliban-in-istanbul-this-time-the-haqqanis-are-not-absent/>

Brotherhood Beyond Borders: Pakistan-Afghanistan

Firdous Syed | 28 October 2025

“Pakistan must move beyond notions of having a sphere of influence in Afghanistan, while Afghanistan must abandon expansionist ambitions or refusal to recognize internationally established borders. Both nations must avoid being drawn into external power games aimed at destabilizing the region.”

Read More: <https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/brotherhood-beyond-borders-pakistan-afghanistan-peace>

Hyper-Politicization and Collective Folly in Afghanistan

Muhammad Ayub Ayubzad | 22 October 2025

“In Afghanistan, the phenomenon of political obsession has emerged as a pervasive social and political ailment, transforming nearly every sphere of life into a battleground of partisan interpretation and conflict breeding, in turn, a destructive form of collective foolishness. Together, these two forces have trapped society in a vicious cycle of fruitless criticism and estrangement from constructive, forward-looking thought.”

Read More: <https://8am.media/eng/hyper-politicization-and-collective-folly-in-afghanistan/>

Radical Islamists on the Upswing in Bangladesh and Pakistan

P.K. Balachandran | 28 October 2025

“Radical Islamists are gaining ground in Bangladesh and Pakistan. In Pakistan, they are getting more organised, militant and terroristic, while in Bangladesh, they are expanding their ideological reach, a development which could reshape domestic electoral outcomes and relations with India.”

Read More: <https://www.dailymirror.lk/opinion/Radical-Islamists-on-the-upswing-in-Bangladesh-and-Pakistan/172-323417>

Will This Year’s Election Manifesto also be Full of Empty Promises?

Bulbul Siddiqi | 01 October 2025

“To build the Bangladesh of our dreams, political parties must reach a consensus on core development goals something that is currently missing. This lack of unity causes our vision for progress to become fragmented along political lines, revealing a glaring absence of long-term thinking and planning for the national interest. As a result, every political transition brings with it a shift in development priorities, disrupting progress and pushing us further back as a nation.”

Read More: <https://en.prothomalo.com/opinion/op-ed/npzr755ur0>

Bangladesh's Cyber Threats Outsmart Banking Security

Mamun Rashid | 21 October 2025

“Bangladesh’s financial sector is racing to digitize, yet cyberattacks, MFS fraud, and WhatsApp phishing are rising faster than defenses, straining public trust and threatening national security. A new assessment from the Bangladesh Cyber Security Intelligence (BCSI) says core banking and other critical systems remain dangerously exposed.”

Read More: <https://www.dhakatribune.com/opinion/op-ed/394473/bangladesh%E2%80%99s-cyber-threats-outsmart-banking>

BNP's Notes of Dissent Show that Old Habits Die Hard

Tanim Ahmed | 29 October 2025

“BNP’s approach at the consensus commission discussions seems to have been guided by the assumption that it will win the next election and form government with a considerable majority. What was meant to be a collective effort to build a stronger, more accountable system of governance for citizens has thus turned into an exercise in expedience.”

Read More: <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/views/winkers-aweigh/news/bnps-notes-dissent-show-old-habits-die-hard-4021331>

Mismatched Between Sri Lanka's Potential and Performance

Sunil Abhayawardhana | 16 October 2025

“Manipulated by the West, Sri Lanka has tied both its hands behind its back with the new Central Bank Act. The door to development has now been shut for Sri Lanka. Therefore, one wonders how the government hopes to bring about development on the required scale. The power and purpose of ‘money’ should be understood.”

Read More: <https://island.lk/mismatch-between-sri-lankas-potential-and-performance/>

Sri Lanka's Tamil Leaders Left High and Dry: The UNHRC, a Toothless Tiger?

Mohamed Ayub | 25 October 2025

“The human rights chief’s request to the member states to initiate legal action against Sri Lankan rights violators in 2021, Amnesty International expressed its doubts about such action by those countries. Now the UNHRC itself seems to be not happy with its own strategy in respect of Sri Lanka.”

Read More: <https://www.dailymirror.lk/opinion/Sri-Lankan-Tamil-leaders-left-high-and-dryThe-UNHRC-a-toothless-tiger/172-323219>

SL's Accountability and the Tamil Polity's Predicament

Veeragathy Thanabalasingham | 26 October 2025

“The future approach to be adopted by the Tamil polity should be based on the experience of the efforts made by it over the last 16 years to enlist the help of the international community to hold the Sri Lankan Government accountable. The Geneva resolution of 6 October clearly shows that the international community has no interest in applying pressure on the Sri Lankan Government regarding the issue of accountability.”

Read More: <https://www.themorning.lk/articles/SvMEKhXEhLz17sq40JWV>

Nepal Fighting Wars on Two Fronts: Damage by Gen Z-Guised Infiltrators and Heavy Rains

Jiba Raj Pokharel | 09 October 2025

“Nepal is currently battling crises on two fronts. First, the country is engaged in reconstruction efforts following widespread destruction caused by infiltrators disguised as members of Generation Z. Second, it has been forced to respond to severe, country-wide rainfall before it could even recover from the shock of the earlier violence and arson. The rainfall was particularly devastating in Ilam district, where 34 lives were lost.”

Read More: <https://thehimalayantimes.com/opinion/nepal-fighting-wars-on-two-fronts-damage-by-gen-z-guised-infiltrators-and-heavy-rains>

Nepal's Media Reckoning

Dr Ghanshyam Bhatt | 26 October 2025

“Post-Gen Z, Nepal faces a fragile political landscape: a weak and temporary government, fractured democratic institutions, if not collapsed, low morale of law enforcement agencies, and questionable credibility of the judiciary. In this environment, the role of the media becomes even more critical. If it turns negative, sensationalist, or irresponsible, the nation risks repeating the chaos of the uprising—another disaster waiting to unfold.”

Read More: <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/nepals-media-reckoning-45-71.html>

Nepal-China Relations Under Karki Government

Mohammad Maruf Hasan | 28 October 2025

“The initial interactions between the Karki administration and Chinese officials indicate that bilateral relations are expected to persist along their existing path, focusing on economic collaboration, infrastructure advancement and diplomatic backing on fundamental matters such as the One China Policy.”

Read More: <https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2025/10/28/nepal-china-relations-under-karki-government>

Kazakhstan at 35: Art of Middle Power in New Geopolitical Reality

Glenn Agung Hole | 25 October 2025

“When Kazakhstan this year celebrates the 35th anniversary of its Declaration of State Sovereignty, it signifies far more than historical symbolism. It marks the story of how a nation born from a collapsing empire has evolved into Eurasia’s foremost middle power – a state that not only survives among great powers, but masters the art of balancing, adapting, and influencing them.”

Read More: <https://astanatimes.com/2025/10/kazakhstan-at-35-art-of-middle-power-in-new-geopolitical-reality/>

Tajikistan and the Taliban - Talking and Fighting

Bruce Pannier | 28 October 2025

“The Tajik government seems to be following its Central Asian neighbors in accepting that the Taliban are now their neighbor, and there is much to be gained by cooperating with the Taliban government in trade and transit of goods through Afghanistan. It is ironic that as ties between the two parties are finally, albeit slowly, improving, they are experiencing outbreaks of armed conflict with each other.”

Read More: <https://timesca.com/tajikistan-and-the-taliban-talking-and-fighting/>

Azerbaijan-Kazakhstan Cooperation Transforms Eurasia’s Geopolitical Map

Paul Goble | 29 October 2025

“Baku and Astana did not declare the formation of such a bloc, but their actions regarding support for the Middle Corridor route bypassing Russia, their recognition of Azerbaijan as part of a greater Central Asia, and their inclusion of Kazakhstan as part of an expanded Turkic world highlights how ties between Baku and Astana are moving to redraw the geopolitical map of that part of the world.”

Read More: <https://www.eurasiareview.com/29102025-azerbaijan-kazakhstan-cooperation-transforms-eurasias-geopolitical-map-analysis/>

Will there be a Second Round of War between Iran and Israel?

Oral Toğa | 21 October 2025

“Iran’s ability to strike Israeli territory with its missiles broke the prevailing sense of defeat among its supporters across the region. The narrative that Iran had deterred Israel and forced it into a cease-fire gained traction in domestic and allied media. Open-source intelligence further indicated that Israel’s air defense stockpiles had reached critical levels by the sixth day of fighting.”

Read More: <https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/op-ed/will-there-be-a-second-round-of-war-between-iran-and-israel>

REGION IN PICTURES

PM Modi welcomed UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer in Mumbai on 9 October 2025, marking the start of high-level bilateral talks aimed at strengthening India-UK strategic and economic relations.



Pic Credits: The Indian Express

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar during a meeting with his Afghani counterpart Amir Khan Muttaqi, in New Delhi on 10 October 2025



Pic Credits: DD News

Afghan Defence Minister Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob Mujahid and Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif shake hands following the signing of a ceasefire agreement mediated by Qatar and Turkey, in Doha, Qatar, October 19, 2025.



Pic Credits: Reuters

Pakistan Federal Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik and Salehuddin Ahmed, adviser for finance of Bangladesh, sign documents at the 9th Session of the Bangladesh-Pakistan Joint Economic Commission (JEC) in Dhaka on 27 October 2025.



Pic Credits: Firstpost



Centre for Aerospace Power and Strategic Studies

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