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**INDIAN ARMY
NATIONS' PRIDE**

IN FOCUS

EUROPE'S DILEMMA OVER
TRUMP 2.0

COVER STORY

VITAL ROLE OF ARMY'S AIR ARM
IN GROUND OPERATIONS

TIMEPIECE

THE GLOBAL STAKES OF RUSSIA'S
NUCLEAR POLICY SHIFT

TNJ'S POWER PANEL



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|| FOREWORD



I am very happy to learn that News Analytics Journal has taken this initiative on the occasion of Army Day to bring into focus the contribution of Indian Army in nation building.

Indian Armed Forces play a pivotal role in both nation building and in maintaining international peace and security. Indian Armed forces have made immense sacrifices to keep the country secured and protect external borders in the volatile neighbourhood. Their role in nation building goes beyond military defence. They contribute to social, economic, and political stability, and help promote unity and integrity in a diverse and vast country like India. Indian Army is often involved in the construction of infrastructure, especially in remote and border areas contributing to economic development.

India has a long-standing tradition of contributing troops to United Nations peacekeeping missions around the world and have made very significant contribution in maintaining global peace and security. Indian Armed Forces' participation in global peacekeeping strengthens India's standing on the world stage as a responsible global power.

The Indian Armed Forces are often the first to respond during natural disasters, both within India and abroad. They have provided immediate relief during earthquakes, floods, and cyclones, showcasing India's role as a responsible and compassionate global player.

India's military also acts as a deterrent against both regional and global threats. With a nuclear capability and a modernizing military, India has positioned itself as an essential player in ensuring a balance of power in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

I would like to quote Prime Minister Narendra Modi that encapsulates the role of Indian Armed Forces **"India's Armed Forces are not only defenders of our borders, but also a symbol of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region."**

Amb. Sushil Kumar Singhal

THE NEWS ANALYTICS JOURNAL



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EDITOR'S NOTE



PRIDE IN OUR FEARLESS DEFENDERS

This special edition of The News Analytics Journal is dedicated in honour of Indian Army Day. We take immense pride in paying tribute

to the brave hearts who safeguard our nation. January 15th holds great significance in Indian history, marking the appointment of General (later Field Marshal) K.M. Cariappa as the first Indian Commander-in-Chief in 1949, symbolising the transition to Indian leadership of the armed forces.

The Indian Army embodies courage, commitment and selfless service. From the icy heights of Siachen to the challenging terrains of the Northeast, their unwavering spirit inspires millions. This edition is a heartfelt tribute to their sacrifices and valour, which ensure the security and sovereignty of our nation.

The role of the Indian Army goes much beyond guarding national boundaries, it is the backbone of our collective national strength. A nation's internal peace and growth is as much linked to the peace it could attain on its borders. Indian Army has gone beyond the call of duty on numerous times and demonstrated its steadfast commitment to safeguarding national interests at the cost of almost anything. The tradition of Nation-before-Self rubs onto the national character and is worthy of emulation by every common citizen of the country.

On this special day, let us unite to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Indian Army and to each member of this glorious professional force. To those who are not among us, their sacrifices are the foundation of our freedom and peace. The News Analytics Journal pays lasting tribute to the heroes who dedicate their lives to our motherland.

Jai Hind!

Sandhya Srivastava
Editor &
Business Director

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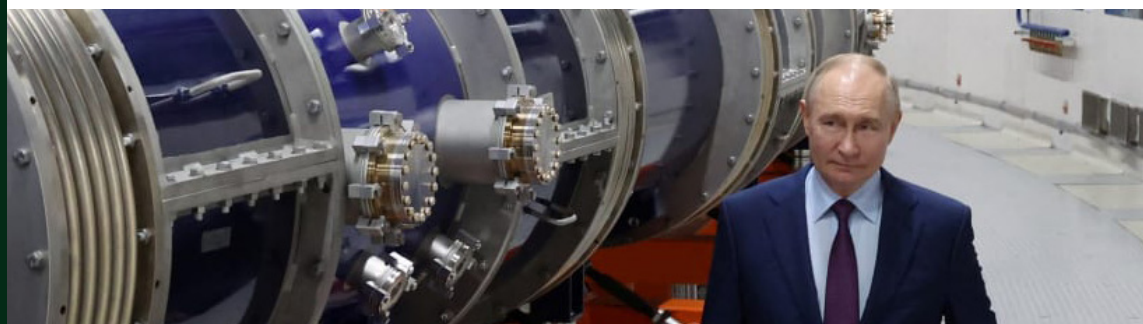
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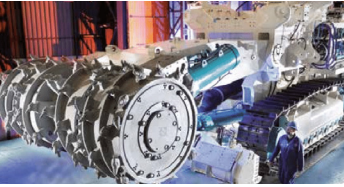
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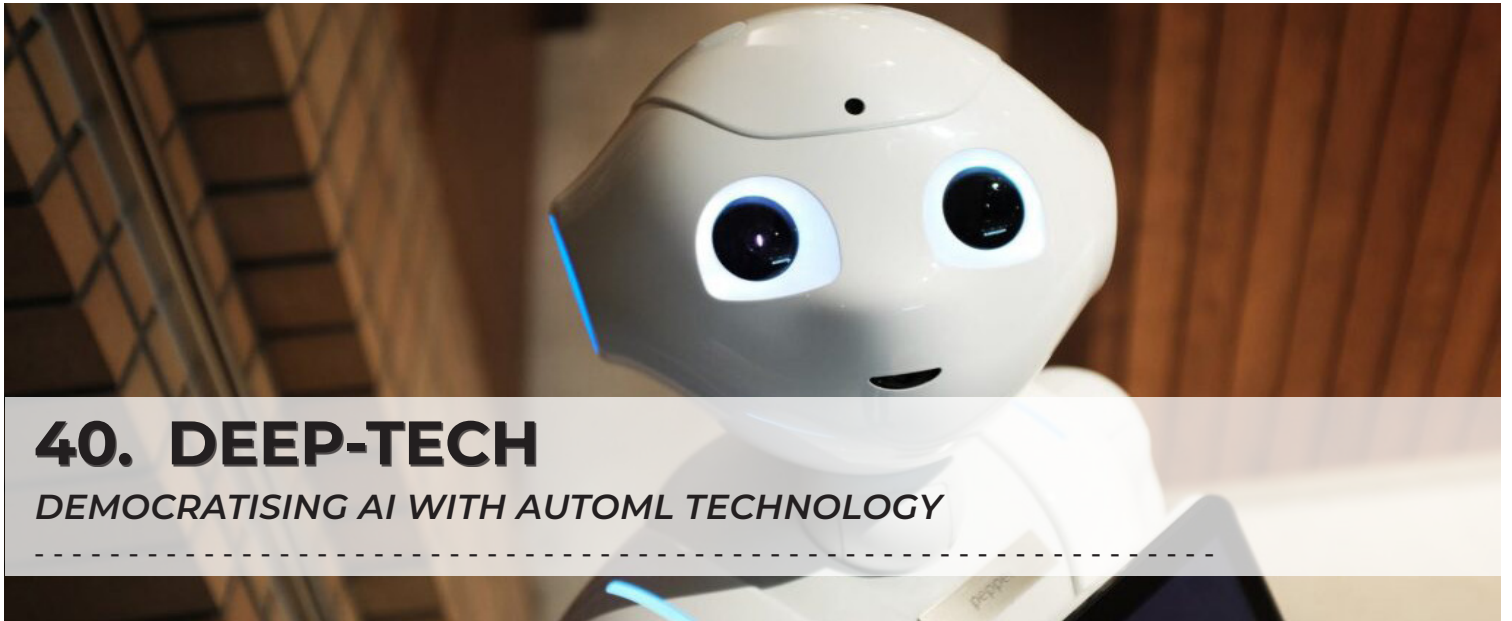
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EUROPE'S DILEMMA OVER TRUMP 2.0

IN FOCUS

As 2025 unfolds, Donald Trump's return to the presidency brings unpredictability to global politics. His "America First" policies and radical foreign affairs approach are reshaping power calculus and unsettling strategic alliances. The war in Ukraine, shifting Middle Eastern dynamics and strained U.S.-EU relations, all of it now look more complicated. Trump's stance on ending conflicts and prioritising national interests raises uncertainty, making his leadership a pivotal force in the evolving international landscape.



ROVENA CERKA, TIRANA, ALBANIA
EUROPE CORRESPONDENT, THE NEWS ANALYTICS JOURNAL

Europe seems to be losing its reliance on the US for economic stability, diplomatic support, and security. Those combined will bring immediate changes and challenges to global relations as the repercussion of Trump's slogan "America First" makes crystal clear its approach to policies that don't essentially benefit Europe, particularly when they conflict with American interests.

As Trump is warning to stop supporting any armed conflict in the world, he seems to provoke an economic threat and it is exactly this threat that is terrifying all the powerful leaders. High taxes on imported products from Europe would destroy the union's economy with unimaginable consequences. Notably, as this comes after the Russian operations in Ukraine, the consequences will be challenging for the region.



Furthermore, Trump's skepticism towards multilateralism complicates Europe's ability to navigate global challenges. European leaders have long championed multilateral institutions like the World Trade Organization and the Paris Climate Agreement. Trump's withdrawal from these has left the EU with rising nationalistic pressures.

NATO & SECURITY CONCERNS

Trump's policies pose serious challenges to the bedrock of transatlantic security, NATO. His criticism of the financial structure of NATO and his calls to EU leaders to spend more on national security have caused concern in Europe, particularly in Brussels. Although European countries have already increased security spending, Trump's suggestions that the U.S. might reduce its commitment to NATO if the EU countries don't fulfill their targets regarding defence expenses, have increased the insecurities towards Europe. It might make the European Union more vulnerable to threats from inside and outside Europe.

NATO's weakness will likely encourage its adversaries, especially Russia, to take advantage of a broken alliance. Shattered NATO may also reduce Europe's capacity to deal with challenges effectively, from cyber security to terrorism.

There is a legitimate risk that U.S. disengagement from NATO could prompt European countries to reconsider their defence strategies and, in some cases, pursue more independent, potentially divisive, military arrangements.

TRANSACTIONAL APPROACH

Trump's populist rhetoric has energised far-right and nationalist movements in Europe, causing a rippling effect across the Atlantic. European political leaders have responded favourably to Trump's brand of nationalism, from Marine Le Pen in France to Viktor Orbán in Hungary. Parts of Europe are gradually mirroring his first term's normalisation of anti-globalist sentiment, anti-immigrant policies and the deterioration of liberal democratic ideals.

The unity of Europe and its adherence to liberal democratic principles are seriously threatened by these developments. Trump's example might continue to motivate right-wing populist movements in his second term, further undermining Europe's commitment to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. In the face of such internal and external challenges, European leaders would have to strike a balance between preserving European unity and the necessity for strong domestic leadership.

The war in Ukraine remains one of the biggest global problems that he will inherit. Trump has frequently expressed some hesitation in his remarks about NATO and the Ukrainian crisis, especially when he lauded Russian President Vladimir Putin. Even if Trump did not openly encourage Russia's invasion of Ukraine, his transactional approach to international relations and his mistrust of NATO—may have unintentionally given Russia more confidence.



Europe's unity and liberal democracy face serious threats, as a second Trump term could embolden right-wing populists, weakening democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

With Trump's re-election, there are worries, the United States will lessen its backing for Ukraine in its conflict with Russia. Trump has frequently voiced concerns about the continuation of U.S. assistance to Ukraine, characterising it as an expense for American taxpayers. It may so happen that the United States stop supporting Ukraine, which will put greater onus of military assistance and diplomatic initiatives on Europe. In the absence of strong U.S. leadership, Europe might be compelled to take a more active stance against Russian advances, running the danger of escalating political tensions with the U.S. and further dividing the EU.

UNDERMINING EUROPEAN INITIATIVES

Trump's skepticism toward foreign interventions could alter the trajectory of the conflict, as well as the broader geopolitical landscape. There's also another possibility that the Europe would likely be forced to engage more diplomatically with Russia, potentially abandoning some of its initial sanctions or seeking new avenues for negotiation. In either case, the EU and its partners would have to be prepared for a scenario in which U.S. support for Ukraine or for NATO's deterrence efforts, becomes less certain.

the Iran nuclear deal. Although certain parts of the U.S. political community supported these actions, they caused instability in the area and drew condemnation from European partners who preferred multilateralism and diplomacy. The Middle East may become much more unstable during Trump's upcoming second tenure in the White House. His likely Iran strategy may lead to a resurgence of high tensions, particularly in relation to the nuclear problem.

If the United States withdraws its diplomatic efforts with Iran, Europe may have to deal with a more assertive Iranian stance, which could cause tensions about how to effectively handle Iran's nuclear aspirations. Furthermore, Trump's propensity to put immediate advantages ahead of long-term stability may incite the rise of more authoritarian governments in the Middle East, undermining European initiatives to advance democracy and human rights in the region. As Trump's transactional politics prioritise closing advantageous deals over promoting lasting peace, the European Union may find itself more and more alone in its diplomatic attempts to calm down competing aspirations in the Middle East.

Trump's focus on immediate deals over enduring peace may leave the European Union increasingly isolated in its efforts to stabilise the region.



Unpredictability and a definite determination to lessen American engagement in regional crises characterised Trump's foreign policy in the Middle East. His government supervised the contentious assassination of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani, relocated the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem and withdrew from

PROFOUND IMPLICATIONS

Europe must put a higher priority on enhancing its internal unity and collaboration in light of the likely difficulties presented by a second Trump administration. The EU must strengthen its political and economic institutions and make



sure it is better able to adapt to changes around the world. This entails developing closer trade links with international partners, especially in Asia and Africa and bolstering its defence capabilities to lessen reliance on the United States. EU's former key member UK, is faced with new difficulties post-Brexit. Even though the UK is no longer a member of the EU, its geopolitical interests are still quite similar and overlapping to those of Europe, particularly in terms of handling security risks and overseeing trade agreements.

To lessen the impact, London and Brussels need to work together more closely in areas like economic policy, defence and intelligence sharing. A more autonomous foreign policy that takes into consideration the reality of a multipolar world is another imperative for the European Union. In order to navigate the complexities of its relations with both the United States and emerging powers like China and India, the EU will need to make a stronger statement on issues like trade regulation, digital governance and climate change if Trump keeps up his disruption of established alliances and international institutions.

Donald Trump's victory in the U.S. election presents a formidable set of challenges for Europe, with profound implications for both transatlantic relations and global stability. His "America First" policies, transactional approach to diplomacy and penchant for unpredictability make it increasingly difficult for Europe to rely on traditional U.S. leadership. Whether dealing with trade disputes, NATO uncertainties or conflicts like the war in Ukraine, Europe must prepare for a world in which the U.S. is less engaged and potentially less predictable. To navigate these challenges, European nations must strengthen their internal cohesion, bolster their global influence, and ensure they are prepared for a world where U.S. leadership is not always assured.

(Rovena Cerka, senior correspondent and distinguished journalist from Albania. Renowned for her extensive work on European affairs. She covers major developments in Europe for TNJ. The views expressed by the author and any guest experts do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Journal)



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VITAL ROLE OF ARMY'S AIR

COVER STORY

The air arm of ground forces plays a pivotal role in modern military operations, blending speed, precision and versatility to support soldiers on the battlefield. This specialised component acts as the Army's eyes, ears and extended arms in the sky, transforming the dynamics of ground warfare.



AIR MARSHAL ANIL KHOSLA (RETD)
FOR TNJ

One of the air arm's primary functions is reconnaissance and surveillance. Aerial platforms, including helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), scout enemy positions, map terrain and monitor troop movements, providing commanders with critical, real-time intelligence. This enables informed decision-making and swift strategy adjustment. Battlefield air support (BAS) is another indispensable function. Attack helicopters, like the AH-64 Apache, deliver devastating firepower to suppress enemy forces and protect ground troops during engagements. The air arm's ability to provide precision strikes ensures minimal collateral damage while maximising effectiveness against enemy targets.

Logistical support is equally vital. Transport helicopters, such as the CH-47 Chinook and utility aircraft ensure rapid troop deployment, evacuation of casualties and delivery of supplies to remote or contested areas. This mobility is particularly crucial in fast-moving or rugged battle environments. Additionally, the air arm facilitates aerial assault operations, allowing soldiers to penetrate deep behind the enemy lines. Airborne units, often deployed via helicopters or paratroopers, execute high-risk missions quickly.

THE ARMY AVIATION CORPS

The Army Aviation Corps has transformed remarkably, from



ARM IN GROUND OPERATIONS

humble beginnings with observation balloons to the sophisticated use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in modern warfare. The journey began in the late 19th century when armies employed tethered observation balloons for reconnaissance. These early platforms provided a bird's-eye view of enemy positions, revolutionising battlefield intelligence during conflicts like the American Civil War. Though rudimentary, they laid the groundwork for integrating air assets into military strategy.

The advent of fixed-wing aircraft during World War I marked the next leap. Early planes were primarily used for reconnaissance, but their roles expanded to include artillery spotting, aerial photography and limited combat capabilities. By World War II, technological advances saw the introduction

AIR MOBILITY IN WARZONES

Air mobility has emerged as a critical enabler for Quick Reaction Forces (QRF) in modern warfare, providing speed, flexibility and reach in rapidly evolving conflict zones. The ability to deploy troops, equipment and supplies swiftly via aircraft ensures that military operations can respond effectively to threats or seize opportunities on the battlefield.

Helicopters are at the heart of air mobility in war zones. Aircraft like the UH-60 Black Hawk and CH-47 Chinook enable the rapid transport of soldiers and cargo to areas inaccessible by land due to rugged terrain, enemy activity, or time constraints. Their versatility allows QRFs to respond to emergencies such as ambushes, breakthroughs, or sudden



of transport planes and gliders, enabling airborne troops and rapid logistics support. The post-war era witnessed the rise of helicopters, which became a defining feature of the Army Aviation Corps. Their ability to hover, land in tight spaces and provide mobility in rugged terrain revolutionised ground-air coordination.

In recent decades, the focus has shifted to Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). These platforms provide real-time surveillance, precision strikes and electronic warfare capabilities. UAVs represent the pinnacle of automation and efficiency, operating in high-risk environments without endangering human lives.

escalations with minimal delay.

Another vital function of air mobility is medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), a role that underscores the life-saving impact of the air arm's operations. Additionally, fixed-wing aircraft contribute to air mobility by transporting larger payloads over longer distances, facilitating the movement of reinforcements, heavy equipment and critical supplies to support ongoing operations.

Helicopters have revolutionised modern warfare. They serve as the backbone of the army's air arm and offer unparalleled

Helicopters have transformed modern warfare they enable rapid troop deployment, bypassing terrain challenges, accessing inaccessible areas, and ensuring swift responses in active combat zones.

mobility, versatility and firepower. Air mobility is one of their most significant contributions, allowing forces to bypass terrain obstacles and reach otherwise inaccessible areas. Their ability to insert and extract units in active combat zones is pivotal for rapid response and maintaining the momentum of operations.

In combat, attack helicopters have redefined battlefield tactics. Armed with precision-guided missiles, rockets and advanced targeting systems, these helicopters provide close air support by neutralising enemy tanks, vehicles and fortified positions. Their agility and firepower make them indispensable for suppressing threats and protecting ground forces. Modern technologies like night vision systems, stealth features and advanced avionics allow them to operate effectively in diverse conditions.

UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS

Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), commonly known as drones, have revolutionised modern warfare. One of the most prominent roles of UAS is reconnaissance and surveillance. Equipped with high-resolution cameras and sensors, drones provide real-time intelligence to ground forces. They monitor enemy movements, map terrain and identify threats, enabling commanders to make informed decisions quickly and accurately. UAS also excel in precision strikes, delivering munitions with remarkable accuracy. Armed drones have become a game-changer in counterterrorism and asymmetric warfare, allowing the army to target adversaries with minimal risk to soldiers and reduced collateral damage.

In addition to combat roles, drones support logistics and resupply missions, particularly in contested or remote areas. Lightweight delivery drones are increasingly used to transport critical supplies like ammunition and medical equipment directly to frontline units. The versatility of UAS extends to communication and electronic warfare. Some drones act as airborne relays, maintaining communication between dispersed units, while others are equipped for electronic jamming or cyber operations.

The armies worldwide are exploring new capabilities as technology advances, including autonomous swarming drones that can overwhelm enemy

defences and AI-powered UAS for independent mission execution. These innovations promise to enhance battlefield efficiency further.

The Army Aviation Corps, established in 1986, enhances Indian Army operations with specialised aviation support, crucial for India's diverse geography and strategic needs.

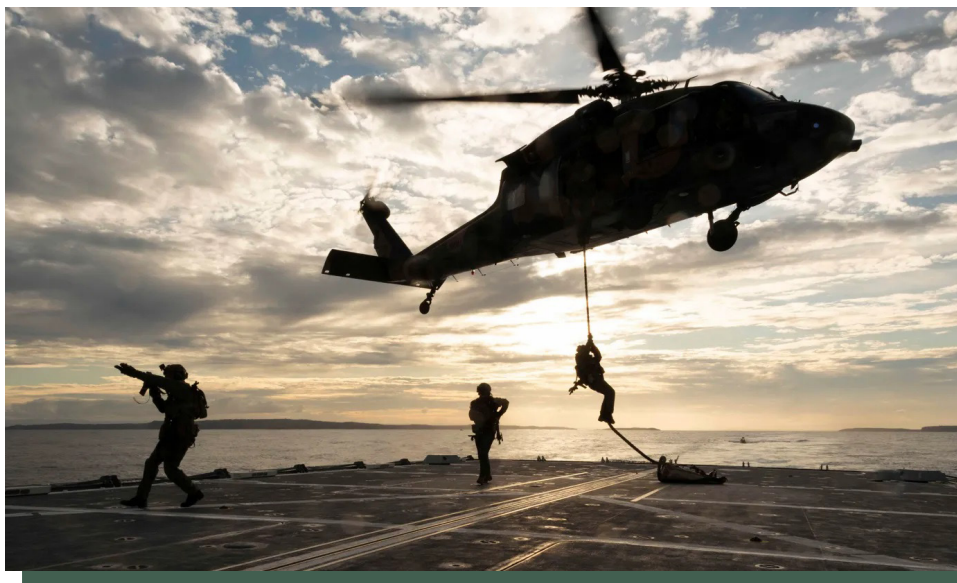
AIRBORNE FORCES

Airborne forces remain a critical component of military strategy. They have long been a symbol of speed, surprise and tactical precision in military operations. These elite units, deployed via aircraft, have evolved from traditional paratroopers to versatile aerial assault units capable of executing complex missions in modern warfare. Iconic operations like D-Day and the Battle of Arnhem showcased the effectiveness of this approach. Dropped from transport planes, paratroopers brought the element of surprise, cutting off reinforcements and capturing key objectives.

As warfare evolved, so did the role of airborne forces. Modern aerial assault units, often deployed via helicopters, now complement traditional parachute operations. Helicopters like the UH-60 Black Hawk and CH-47 Chinook have transformed these units into highly mobile and adaptable forces. Unlike static parachute drops, helicopters provide precision insertion, allowing soldiers to land precisely where needed, even in hostile or rugged terrain. Airborne forces excel in executing high-risk missions, such as seizing enemy strongholds, conducting raids and rescuing hostages. Their ability to deploy rapidly and strike deep behind enemy lines makes them a valuable asset in asymmetric warfare.

INTEGRATED AIR-GROUND OPERATIONS

Modern warfare has entered a new era where the integration of air and ground forces is redefining battlefield tactics. Known as integrated air-ground operations, this approach emphasises the seamless coordination of assets in the air and



on the ground to achieve strategic objectives with precision and efficiency.

The foundation of this synergy lies in real-time communication and intelligence sharing. Advanced systems enable ground commanders to direct air assets, such as fighter jets, attack helicopters and drones, to provide battlefield air support (BAS), reconnaissance and logistical aid. Simultaneously, aerial platforms transmit critical data about enemy positions



and terrain, giving ground forces a tactical advantage.

The Air Arm of the Indian Army, officially known as the Army Aviation Corps (AAC), plays a vital role in enhancing the Indian Army's operational capabilities. It was established in 1986 to provide specialised aviation support to ground forces, operating helicopters and other aircraft to support various military and logistical operations. Over the years, the Army Aviation Corps has become indispensable to the Indian Army's combat and support operations. The Indian Army's aviation capabilities are especially significant, given India's diverse geography, including the Himalayas, dense forests and vast border regions.

The future of the Indian Army's air arm involves integrating advanced technologies, such as UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles) for surveillance and reconnaissance, next-generation helicopters like the Apache AH-64E attack helicopters and a fleet of indigenous helicopters. The Army Aviation Corps remains a key component as India modernises its military forces.

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

The future of the Army's air arm is poised for a transformation driven by emerging technologies that promise to redefine the way ground forces conduct operations and engage in warfare. The air arm's capabilities will expand from autonomous systems to advanced weaponry, bringing new opportunities and strategic challenges for military planners and decision-makers.

One of the most significant technological advancements on the horizon is the growing use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Future UAVs are expected to become more autonomous and capable of performing missions without direct human intervention. This shift could lead to the development of swarming drones, where multiple UAVs operate in unison, overwhelming enemy defences and providing real-time intelligence to ground forces.

Artificial intelligence (AI) will further enhance the operational efficiency of the Army's air arm. AI-powered drones and helicopters can make real-time decisions based on battlefield data, optimising flight paths, targeting and coordination with ground forces. This increased automation will allow air assets to act faster and more decisively, potentially reducing the reliance on human operators and increasing battlefield agility.

Another key focus area is the development of next-generation helicopters and vertical lift aircraft. Newer platforms with tilt-rotor design promise to deliver unprecedented speed, range, and agility, enabling faster troop insertion, mobility in complex terrains and effective response to emerging threats.

Innovation and adaptation will shape the future of the Army's air arm. As technology evolves, so must the strategies for effectively utilising air assets in combat, humanitarian missions and national defence. The integration of advanced technologies and the challenges of modern warfare will determine how the air arm continues to shape the outcome of military operations in the years to come.

As modern warfare increasingly relies on hybrid strategies, integrating air-ground coordination and joint operations between air forces and ground units continues to be a strategic focus for armies globally. In modern warfare, air and ground forces integration has become increasingly seamless. Advanced communication systems enable real-time coordination, ensuring air assets complement ground manoeuvres effectively. The future of army aviation will likely see further advancements in combat helicopter design, drone warfare and next-generation vertical lift aircraft to enhance mobility, lethality, and precision in ground operations.

*(Air Marshal Anil Khosla (R), Former Vice Chief, Indian Air Force. Researcher & Analyst Distinguished Fellow - USI & CAPS. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of **The News Analytics Journal**.)*

GLOBAL INFLUENCER

DONALD TRUMP:

TNJ | Special Coverage

Donald Trump remains a figure impossible to ignore as he prepares to reclaim the U.S. presidency in January 2025. Known for his polarising persona and disruptive leadership, Trump is poised to reshape global politics. His announcement of plans to overhaul NATO contributions and renegotiate trade deals has sparked admiration, apprehension, and resistance. Love him or loathe him, Trump's return ensures he will dominate headlines and drive significant international policy shifts in the months ahead.



The Trump Legacy

Donald Trump's presidency from 2017 to 2021 was marked by a 'disruptor' approach to politics. From withdrawing the U.S. from the Paris Climate Agreement to engaging in tariff wars with China, Trump's policies were characterized by an "America First" ethos. His tenure saw significant economic growth but was also riddled with controversies, including the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Capitol riots on January 6, and strained relationships with traditional allies.

Yet, his return to power reflects a deep undercurrent of support from a base

that views him as a champion of conservative values, economic nationalism, and a bulwark against "woke" liberal ideologies. This month, Trump's positioning on key issues such as international alliances, trade policies, and climate action is reigniting debates on how his leadership will reshape the global order, especially after his recent assertion at a rally that "NATO must reform or risk irrelevance," a statement that has both alarmed and energized global leaders.

Driving Global Economic Strategies

Trump's return to the White House is poised to shake up global economic dynamics. A self-proclaimed dealmaker, he has promised to renegotiate trade agreements, focusing on protecting American industries and reducing trade deficits. His first presidency's hallmark economic strategy—engaging in aggressive tariffs on China—will likely resurface, potentially reigniting tensions between the two largest economies.

Moreover, Trump's renewed push for domestic energy production could challenge global efforts to transition to renewable energy sources. His previous emphasis on fossil fuels and the rollback of environmental regulations suggest that his economic agenda will prioritize short-term industrial gains over long-term sustainability.

Revamping U.S. Foreign Policy

In November 2024, Trump's foreign policy rhetoric has already begun making waves, with his promise to revisit NATO funding and reevaluate the U.S.'s role in multilateral organizations signaling a return to the transactional diplomacy that defined his earlier tenure. Critics argue that this approach undermines alliances, but Trump's supporters contend it strengthens U.S. bargaining power.

On the geopolitical front, Trump's return could lead to significant shifts in U.S.-China relations, with a likely focus

OF THE MONTH

PRESIDENT-ELECT USA

on limiting Beijing's influence in technology, trade, and security. Similarly, his stance on the Russia-Ukraine war will be closely watched, as Trump has previously hinted at prioritizing diplomacy over military aid to Ukraine—a position that could alter the dynamics of the conflict.

A Polarising Climate Agenda

Climate activists worldwide are bracing for a potential rollback of environmental initiatives. Trump's withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement during his first term and his skepticism about climate change are clear indicators of his priorities. As the world grapples with record-breaking temperatures and extreme weather events, Trump's emphasis on energy independence through fossil fuels may clash with global climate goals.

However, his approach is not without support. Proponents argue that his policies can bolster energy security and create jobs in traditional industries, though critics warn of long-term environmental repercussions.

Championing Conservative Social Policies

Trump's influence extends beyond geopolitics and economics to the cultural and social fabric of the United States. In November 2024, his rhetoric on issues like immigration, gun rights, and abortion rights has reignited debates that resonate globally. Trump's proposed measures, such as tighter border controls and a focus on "traditional family values," signal a continuation of his alignment with conservative ideologies.

These policies are likely to spark reactions from international human rights organizations and activists, who view them as regressive. Yet, they appeal to his core base, solidifying his image as a leader who speaks directly to his supporters' concerns.

Domestic and Global Response

Domestically, Trump's upcoming presidency faces the monumental task of governing a deeply polarized America. His leadership style—often confrontational and unapologetically direct—has energized his supporters but alienated a significant portion of the electorate. This polarization has implications beyond U.S. borders, as global leaders navigate their relationships with a nation divided along political and ideological lines.

Trump's impending presidency has elicited a spectrum of reactions from world leaders. While some, like Hungary's Viktor Orbán, express optimism about renewed bilateral cooperation, others in Europe and Asia remain cautious, recalling strained alliances and unpredictable policy shifts during his previous term.

Looking Ahead: An Unpredictable Path

As Donald Trump prepares to retake the presidency, one thing is certain: his leadership will be anything but conventional. His ability to dominate global discourse, whether through social media, headline-grabbing statements, or bold policy moves, ensures that he will remain a central figure in international politics.

While his return may herald significant shifts in U.S. domestic and foreign policies, it also underscores the enduring appeal of his brand of politics. For better or worse, Trump's presidency promises to be a defining chapter in the global narrative, influencing everything from economic strategies to social policies. As the world braces for his comeback, one question remains: will his leadership redefine the global order, or will it deepen existing divisions? Recent headlines, such as his bold claim that NATO is at a crossroads, amplify the anticipation of how his decisions will resonate globally. The answer, much like Trump himself, is bound to be polarising.

THE GLOBAL STAKES OF RUSSIA'S NUCLEAR POLICY SHIFT

TIMEPIECE

Russia under its updated nuclear doctrine, titled "Fundamentals of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Nuclear Deterrence," asserts the right to employ nuclear weapons not only in retaliation to a nuclear strike but also in response to a conventional weapons attack that poses a "critical threat" to its sovereignty, territorial integrity, or that of its ally, Belarus. In contrast, the earlier doctrine from 2020 permitted the use of nuclear weapons only if an attack endangered "the very existence of the state."



**AMBASSADOR ANIL WADHWA, IFS (RETD)
FOR TNJ**

Russia announced on November 19, 2024, that the Russian government's policy on the use of nuclear weapons had been updated. The document outlines a wide range of contingencies that might trigger nuclear weapons use, especially regarding non-nuclear weapons threats to Russia and its allies, and has lowered the threshold for nuclear use. The update of the Russian nuclear doctrine was previewed by President Putin in comments on September 25, 2024, just days after it was reported that US President Joe Biden had decided to authorise Ukraine's use of US-supplied long-range Army Tactical Missile Systems (ATACMS) to strike targets deeper into Russia as a means of thwarting ongoing Russian attacks on Ukrainian territory. Russia had warned that such a move would change the nature of the conflict.

Under the revised nuclear doctrine, titled "Fundamentals of

the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Nuclear Deterrence" Russia reserves the right to use nuclear weapons not only in a response to a nuclear attack, but also to respond to a conventional weapons attack that creates a "critical threat" to its "sovereignty, and territorial integrity" or to that of Russian ally, Belarus. The previous version of Russian nuclear weapons doctrine issued in 2020, reserves the right to use nuclear weapons if an attack on Russia threatens "the very existence of the state".

President Putin proposed treating aggression by non-nuclear states, supported by nuclear powers, against Russia or its allies as a joint attack, potentially deterring Western military aid to Ukraine.



REVISED POLICY

The revised policy also states that Russia may use nuclear weapons in the event there is "reliable information on the launch of ballistic missiles attacking the territories of the Russian Federation and /or its allies or the use by the enemy of nuclear or other types of weapons of mass destruction on the territory of the Russian Federation and/or its allies, on military formations and/ or facilities of the Russian Federation located outside its territory". Another scenario involves a response to the "receipt of reliable information" on the massive launch (take off) of aerospace attack weapons (strategic and tactical aircraft, cruise missiles, unmanned hypersonic and other aircraft) and their crossing of the "state border of the Russian Federation".

The catalogue of what Russia considers military dangers which will evoke a military response includes the expansion of military coalitions and proximity of their infrastructure to Russian borders, actions aimed at isolating Russian territory by blocking vital transport links, attacks on ecologically hazardous sites that could lead to manmade disasters and large-scale military exercises near Russian borders. The addition of ‘anti-satellite warfare’ to an existing provision on the militarisation of outer space is interesting, considering US alarm over potential Russian nuclear-capable anti-satellite weapons as well as Moscow’s expressed concern about US programmes related to these capabilities. As the conflict on the ground in Ukraine has escalated, so have Russian nuclear threats. Russia has conducted military drills with Belarus involving tactical nuclear weapons. Additionally, it withdrew its ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 2023 and has also announced last month that it is fully ready to resume testing if necessary.

In his 24th September 2024 pronouncement, President Putin had already suggested the new provision that aggression against Russia and/or its allies by any non-nuclear state with participation or support from a nuclear state will be considered a joint attack. This appears designed to deter Western military aid to Ukraine by framing such support as a potential justification for nuclear escalation. Yet, despite this warning, on 17th November the US approved the Ukrainian request for authorisation to use ATACMS missiles outside its own borders, and shortly thereafter, the UK and France followed suit in lifting restrictions on Ukrainian use of Storm Shadow missiles on targets inside Russia.



UNINTENDED ESCALATION

After Biden’s approval, Ukraine fired a bunch of ATACMS and Storm Shadow missiles into Russia. With a countdown of less than two months before an incoming Trump administration, the Biden administration is essentially signaling to Ukraine that it will support its efforts to retain the small portion of Russian territory it holds, to use it as a significant bargaining chip in future potential negotiations. Following this, Russia retaliated by launching a nuclear-capable experimental ballistic missile “Oreshnik” with a range of several thousand kilometers against the Ukrainian city of Dnipro. This signaled a warning to Ukraine’s allies: a broader conflict may loom unless the

West adjusts its policy.

Despite Russia’s readiness to escalate through advanced weaponry, Russia’s decision to notify the US Defence Threat Reduction Agency, only 30 minutes prior, was clearly aimed at preventing misinterpretation and mitigating the risk of immediate nuclear escalation. This reflects Russia’s recognition of the dangers of miscalculation and unintended escalation, highlighting the intent to avoid inadvertently triggering a nuclear war.

The possibility of escalation with the use of low-yield nuclear weapons on the battlefield has not been ruled out by Russia. Although unlikely, such a decision might come as a nuclear warning shot over a remote area in Ukraine if Russia perceives an imminent threat to it, or as stated in the revised doctrine, the “sovereignty/ territorial integrity of Russia or Belarus” is at stake. Russia has thus created a calculated

spectrum of potential nuclear responses that forces adversaries to contemplate the possibility that even actions that fall well short of threatening Russia’s existence as a state could lead to a worst-case scenario. The purpose is not only deterrence but also an attempt to divide Europe based on how much risk they are willing to take in supporting Ukraine. The changes are targeted at NATO in the context of Ukraine.

In a rare televised address, President Putin warned that the war in Ukraine has “acquired elements of a global character”. This was echoed by Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, who said “The threat is serious and real when it comes to

The existence of nuclear weapons perpetuates the risk of catastrophic war, where mistakes could escalate rapidly, posing strategic dilemmas for Russian adversaries in rare nuclear-use scenarios.



the global conflict”. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has said that "never before" has the threat of a nuclear war been greater, blaming the US for its “aggressive and hostile” policy towards North Korea.

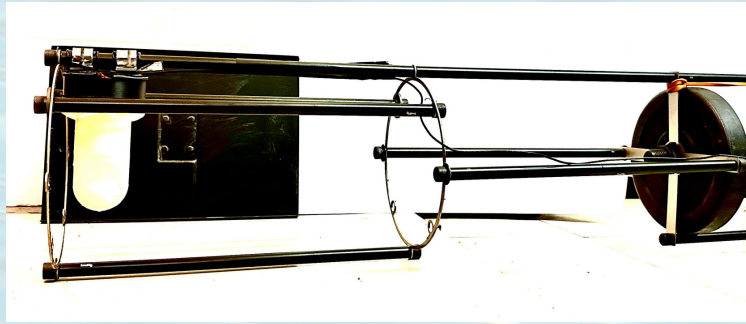
RUSSIAN RED LINES

US President-elect Donald Trump will officially enter the White House on 20th January 2025. While on the campaign trail, President-elect Trump vowed to end the war in Ukraine “within 24 hours”. Those around him like Vice President-elect JD Vance, have signaled that this will mean compromises for Ukraine, likely in the form of giving up territory in the Donbas and Crimea. That goes against the stance of the Biden administration, whose latest decisions point to a desire to get as much aid through the door as possible before President-elect Trump enters office.

The kinds of weapons now provided to Ukraine – such as artillery, main battle tanks, ATACMS missile systems, and F-16 fighters – are far more sophisticated than the weapons

provided to Ukraine prior to 2022. Russian red lines are being crossed repeatedly, even though these may be incremental. The ATACMS whose use was authorised by the US, France and UK have their telemetry controlled by NATO, and they were limited in numbers with a predetermined range. However, as long as nuclear weapons exist, so does the risk of nuclear war. Mistakes can quickly lead to escalation, resulting in a catastrophic nuclear exchange. Russian strategic adversaries will face a dilemma in the unlikely scenario of the use of nuclear weapons. Disregarding a hypothetical strike will increase insecurity while trying to destroy Russia’s nuclear arsenal will certainly lead to an all-out nuclear war. Silence or ambivalence risks normalising this reckless behavior.

*(Ambassador Anil Wadhwa, IFS (R) has served as Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs and is former Ambassador to Italy, Oman, Thailand, Poland, Lithuania and San Marino. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of **The News Analytics Journal**.)*



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SOUND IS ESSENTIAL

ACCUSATION OF GAZA GENOCIDE HAUNTS ISRAEL

COUNTERVIEW

The article delves into allegations of genocide against Israel in its ongoing war with Gaza since October 2023. It explores historical and legal contexts of genocide. It examines international responses, including United Nations reports and International Court of Justice (ICJ) rulings, highlighting the dire humanitarian situation. Despite symbolic rulings by global courts, enforcement remains unlikely due to geopolitical dynamics, notably U.S. support for Israel, raising questions about accountability amid worsening conditions in Gaza.



DR. AFTAB ALAM
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FOR TNJ

It is ironic that Israel, whose own origin and identity are deeply intertwined with the crime of genocide, has been accused of committing the same heinous crime against Palestinians in its ongoing war against Hamas that began on October 7, 2023. A recent United Nations (UN) report released on November 14 by a special committee investigating Israel's actions in Gaza found that its military assault is consistent with the characteristics of genocide. The Committee noted that *"through its siege over Gaza, obstruction of humanitarian aid, alongside targeted attacks and killing of civilians and aid workers, despite repeated UN appeals, binding orders from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and resolutions of the Security Council, Israel is intentionally*

causing death, starvation and serious injury, using starvation as a method of war and inflicting collective punishment on the Palestinian population."

Similarly, Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, a Geneva-based independent organisation for the protection of human rights, in its report marking one year of the Gaza war, also traces the clear elements of genocide perpetrated by the Israeli army. On December 5, Amnesty International declared that there is sufficient evidence to believe that Israel's conduct in Gaza amounts to genocide. Since the start of the Gaza war last year, more than 45,000 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli army, the majority being women and children.

Additionally, approximately 100,000 have been injured, with thousands of bodies still lying under the rubble and in the streets, unreachable by rescue and medical teams. More than 62,000 are reported to have died of starvation. According to the UN, the war has also caused the displacement of at least 1.9 million people, about 90% of Gaza's current population of 2.1 million people.

Raz Segal, an Israeli historian and director of the Holocaust and Genocide Studies program at Stockton University, described the Israeli counter-offensive against Hamas in Gaza as a "textbook case of genocide." Similar sentiments have been echoed by Craig Mokhiber, former director of the



New York office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, who described Israel's Gaza onslaught as the "most clear-cut case of genocide that he had seen in his career."

HISTORY OF GENOCIDE

It is pertinent to recall that Israel was founded as a Jewish state in the aftermath of the systematic state-sponsored genocidal killing of six million Jews in the Holocaust by Nazi Germany. It was in this context that Raphael Lemkin, a Polish lawyer of Jewish descent, coined the term genocide in 1944 by combining two words, "genos," which means race, nation, or tribe in ancient Greek, and "cide," meaning to kill in Latin, to describe the horrors of the world's most heinous crime. He initiated a global movement to outlaw genocide, which finally culminated in the adoption of a Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide on December 9, 1948, by the UN General Assembly, which recognised it as an international crime.

The Genocide Convention defines genocide as "any of the ... acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such." The acts include "killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group, deliberately inflicting

operations in Gaza, South Africa moved the ICJ on December 29 last year, alleging that Israeli actions in Gaza were in breach of the Genocide Convention. In its 84-page application to the ICJ, South Africa accused Israel of committing genocidal acts, including killing Palestinians, causing serious mental and bodily harm and deliberately inflicting conditions meant to "bring about their physical destruction as a group," as evident in the mass levels of deaths and destruction and the total siege of basic necessities.

Since these acts alone cannot constitute genocide unless committed with a specific intent to destroy Palestinians, in whole or in part. South Africa cited the incendiary statements and dehumanising rhetoric of Israeli officials calling for the "total destruction" and "erasure" of Gaza, and the need to "finish them all." It also accused Israel of failing to hold its senior officials and others accountable for their direct and public incitement to genocide.

The historical irony of these allegations is striking, given Israel's foundation after the Holocaust and the coining of the term "genocide" to describe Nazi atrocities.



on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part, imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group and/or forcibly transferring children of the group to another group." The crime of genocide has two elements: intention and execution, both of which have to be proven when accusations are made.

Amid growing international criticism of Israel's relentless

ICJ RULINGS

In a significant development, the ICJ delivered an interim judgment on 26 January 2024, ruling that at least some of Israel's actions in Gaza amount to genocide. Though the ICJ failed to order an immediate cease-fire as sought by South Africa, but categorically ruled that Israel must take all possible measures to prevent genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.



It ordered six provisional measures, including limiting the death and destruction caused by its military campaign, preventing and punishing direct and public incitement to genocide, and taking immediate and effective steps to ensure that humanitarian assistance is provided to civilians in the besieged Gaza Strip. Most crucially, the court also ordered Israel to preserve evidence of genocide and to submit a report to the ICJ within a month.

Later, on March 28, in view of the worsening conditions of life faced by Palestinians in Gaza, the ICJ again directed Israel to take all necessary and effective measures to ensure the unhindered provision of basic services and humanitarian assistance, including food, water, electricity, fuel, shelter, clothing, hygiene and sanitation requirements, as well as medical supplies and medical care to Palestinians throughout Gaza. The court also directed to ensure that its military does not commit acts that constitute a violation of any of the rights of the Palestinians in Gaza under the Genocide Convention.

In view of the Israeli military offensive in Rafah and the risk of irreparable harm to Palestinians, the ICJ on May 24, rendered its third order on the indication of provisional measures. The court noted that steps taken by Israel to ensure the safety of the civilian population in Gaza were not sufficient. The court also held that the measures indicated in its previous orders were not ‘sufficient to address the change in the situation.’ The court ruled that Israel must immediately “halt its military offensive and any other action in the Rafah Governorate, which may inflict on the Palestinian group in Gaza conditions of life that could bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.”

It must also be noted that soon after the ICJ’s January order, a United States (U.S.) federal court in California ruled that Israel’s military campaign in Gaza “plausibly” amounts to genocide. The lawsuit was filed seeking an order directing the president and other U.S. officials to exert their influence

over Israel to stop its bombing, lift the siege in Gaza and stop providing or facilitating the sales of weapons and arms to Israel.

While Israel may ignore ICJ rulings, they hold symbolic value, highlighting violations in Gaza and shaping global opinion against its military actions.

INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS

In theory, the ICJ’s genocide rulings are legally binding, but the court has no mechanism to enforce its judgments. In situations of non-compliance, the only recourse left is to approach the Security Council, the UN’s highest decision-making body, with a request to take special measures to enforce the ICJ’s judgment. Israel, however, has managed to avoid international obligations because of the unconditional backing of the U.S. and its European allies, who have vetoed almost all UN Security Council resolutions critical of Israel, without fear of any repercussions.

It would be naive to expect Israel to abide by the ICJ rulings or that they would have any practical consequences, but still they have certainly immense symbolic value in the decades-long struggle of those who wanted to hold Israel accountable for its violations of international legal norms applicable during armed conflicts as the conditions in Gaza are worsening day by day. The decision may undoubtedly contribute to building international public opinion against Israel’s conduct of military operations in Gaza.

(Dr Aftab Alam, is a Professor who teaches international law at Aligarh Muslim University and heads its Strategic and Security Studies Programme. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Journal.)

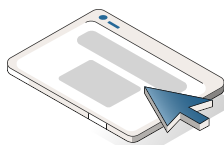
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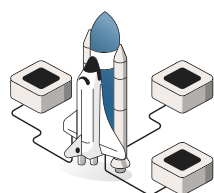
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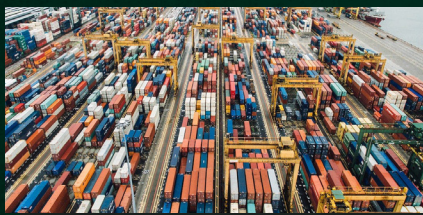
IN THE SPOTLIGHT

FRENCH CARRIER STRIKE GROUP TO VISIT JAPAN IN 2025



The French Charles de Gaulle Carrier Strike Group will visit Japan between February and March 2025, marking the first deployment of a French carrier group to the region in over 40 years. The mission includes joint exercises with India, US, Japanese, Australian, and Canadian navies, showcasing France's military presence and reinforcing partnerships in the Indo-Pacific.

INDIA TO CUT TARIFF ON U.S. GOODS TO EASE TRADE RELATIONS



India is preparing to reduce tariffs on certain agricultural products, medical devices, and luxury motorcycles, mainly imported from the U.S., to secure a broader trade deal under President-elect Donald Trump. Sources in New Delhi suggest cuts on items like pork, currently taxed at 45%, and high-end goods such as pacemakers and Harley-Davidson motorcycles, which face 25%-60% tariffs. The move aims to address Trump's concerns over "reciprocal tax" threats on Indian goods.

EU SUSPENDS GEORGIAN DIPLOMATIC VISAS



The European Commission has proposed suspending visa-free travel for Georgian diplomats following violent crackdowns on protests against the government's decision to delay EU membership talks until 2028. Demonstrations have intensified over reports of police brutality and opposition arrests, compounded by irregularities in recent elections. The measure targets holders of diplomatic and service passports, sparing the general population to avoid affecting protesters. While Hungary and Slovakia opposed stronger sanctions, the proposal gained sufficient support. The EU urges Georgian authorities to respect human rights and halt anti-EU actions. Georgians have enjoyed visa-free travel to the EU since 2017 under a partnership strategy.

US FLAGS PAKISTAN MISSILE THREAT



The United States has labeled Pakistan's ballistic missile program an "emerging threat" due to advancements enabling missiles to possibly reach beyond South Asia. The U.S. Deputy National Security Adviser Jon Finer voiced concerns over Pakistan's rocket engine capabilities. New U.S. sanctions target Pakistan's state-run defense agency, which Pakistan criticized as "biased" and destabilizing. Accusing the U.S. of double standards in arms policies, Pakistan warned the measures could harm global peace, reflecting rising tensions and regional security challenges.

TOP RUSSIAN GENERAL KILLED IN MOSCOW BOMBING



Russian Lt. Gen. Igor Kirillov, accused of using chemical weapons in Ukraine, was killed in a Moscow bombing claimed by Kyiv. The explosion, triggered via a scooter bomb, also killed his assistant. Ukraine's security service confirmed involvement, labeling Kirillov a war criminal. Russia called it a "terrorist act" and launched an investigation.

ITALY'S PM URGES PRAGMATISM TO PREVENT US TRADE TENSIONS



Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni urged the EU to adopt a pragmatic approach to avoid a trade war with re-elected US President Donald Trump, who plans steep import tariffs. Meloni, seen as a close ally of Trump, emphasized cooperation to prevent disputes. The EU, with a \$208.6 billion goods trade surplus with the US, faces rising tensions.

INDIA'S NSA DOVAL, CHINA'S FM WANG YI HOLD KEY TALKS ON LAC



Indian NSA Ajit Doval met Chinese FM Wang Yi in Beijing to discuss peace along the LAC and restoring ties strained by the Ladakh stand-off. The talks, part of the 23rd Special Representatives' round, resumed after five years. China expressed readiness to enhance trust, manage differences, and stabilize relations through dialogue and mutual respect.

EU CHIEF VOWS PERMANENT BREAK FROM RUSSIAN ENERGY



The European Union's new energy chief, Dan Jorgensen, has committed to creating a roadmap aimed at eliminating the bloc's dependency on Russian energy. Despite significant strides in reducing reliance on Russian coal, oil, and gas since the war in Ukraine began, imports of Russian liquefied natural gas (LNG) have increased. Five EU nations also remain reliant on Russian nuclear fuel. Jorgensen plans to present his strategy by March 2025, focusing on gas, oil, and nuclear energy, while strengthening ties with alternative suppliers like the US. The plan aligns with the EU's goal of full energy independence from Russia by 2027.

IRAN'S NUCLEAR PLAYBOOK

LONG SHOT

On 22 November 2024, Iran escalated its nuclear activities, announcing advanced centrifuge deployments following the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) resolution for greater transparency. This development challenges the U.S., with the Trump administration poised to recalibrate its strategies amid Iran's brinkmanship. This article analysis the background of the Iran nuclear strategies, the IAEA' role and potential US intervention.



NADIA HALLAK, BEIRUT, LEBANON
ARAB CORRESPONDENT, THE NEWS ANALYTICS JOURNAL

Iran's announcement on November 22 to launch a series of "new and advanced" centrifuges marks a significant escalation in the ongoing standoff over its nuclear program. This decision came as a direct response to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s resolution urging Tehran to cooperate more transparently with nuclear inspections. The move not only raises concerns about nuclear proliferation but also presents a critical challenge for the incoming U.S. administration under President Donald Trump.

Iran's nuclear strategy, characterised by a mix of defiance and strategic ambiguity, has long tested the international community's resolve. To understand how this new chapter in Iran's nuclear playbook may unfold, it is essential to analyse the underlying motivations, potential repercussions and policy options available to the United States and its allies.

IRAN'S CALCULATED BRINKMANSHIP

Iran's nuclear ambitions date back decades but have become a focal point of global attention in the 21st century. The 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), negotiated under the Obama administration, temporarily froze Iran's nuclear development in exchange for sanctions relief. However, President Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA in 2018 and the subsequent "maximum pressure" campaign of economic sanctions reignited tensions.

Since 2019, Iran has incrementally violated the JCPOA's restrictions on uranium enrichment, stockpiling and centrifuge development. Its recent declaration to deploy advanced centrifuges is the latest tactic in a familiar pattern: calculated escalation designed to strengthen its bargaining

position while avoiding a complete breakdown in diplomacy. Iran's decision to advance its nuclear program stems from several strategic considerations.

Leverage for Negotiations: By enhancing its nuclear capabilities, Iran increases pressure on the U.S. and Europe to return to negotiations on terms more favourable to Tehran. Experts like Mark Fitzpatrick, a former U.S. State Department official and nuclear policy analyst, argue that Iran is "creating facts on the ground" to gain leverage before any diplomatic engagement with the new U.S. administration.

Domestic Politics and Prestige: The announcement also serves its domestic audience. Amid economic hardships exacerbated by sanctions and public discontent, the Iranian leadership portrays defiance against international pressure as a point of national pride. Hardliners within Iran see nuclear



advancements as a critical tool for securing the regime's survival.

Deterring Military Action: A more advanced nuclear program complicates potential military options for adversaries. Michael Knights, a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, notes that “a more robust and dispersed nuclear infrastructure creates greater uncertainty for planners contemplating pre-emptive strikes.”

LEGACY & CHALLENGES FOR US

President Trump's maximum pressure strategy has undoubtedly weakened Iran economically, but critics argue that it failed to achieve its ultimate goal of curbing Tehran's nuclear ambitions. Instead, Iran has responded by accelerating its program, effectively erasing many of the JCPOA's gains. For the incoming Trump administration, navigating this crisis will require balancing firmness with diplomacy.



THE RISK OF ISOLATION

The IAEA resolution that prompted Iran's response reflects growing international frustration with Tehran's lack of transparency. Inspectors have repeatedly flagged concerns about undeclared nuclear sites and unexplained traces of uranium. However, Iran's decision to escalate could deepen its isolation.

If Iran proceeds with deploying advanced centrifuges, it risks provoking a unified response from the P5+1 countries (the U.S., U.K., France, Russia, China and Germany), potentially leading to renewed sanctions. Such a scenario could destabilise Iran's economy further while undermining its diplomatic standing, especially with European powers that have so far advocated for a balanced approach.

Options for Engagement: While hardliners in Washington advocate for continued pressure, many experts warn that unyielding sanctions may push Iran closer to nuclear breakout capability. Suzanne Maloney of the Brookings Institution suggests that “sanctions alone cannot compel Iran to abandon its nuclear ambitions.” Re-engagement through a revised nuclear agreement could provide a pathway to de-escalation.

Military Deterrence: The U.S. will need to work closely with allies, particularly in the Gulf and Europe, to counterbalance Iran's actions. Strengthening regional missile defence systems and deepening ties with Israel and Saudi Arabia may serve as a deterrent against further Iranian provocations.

Regional Dynamics: Iran's nuclear program cannot be viewed in isolation. Its actions are deeply intertwined with

Any Escalation on the part of Iran threatens regional stability, raising nuclear arms race concerns and jeopardising global non-proliferation frameworks.

regional rivalries, particularly its proxy conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Yemen. A broader strategy addressing these dynamics is essential for any long-term resolution.

THE BROADER IMPLICATIONS

Iran's nuclear advancements have far-reaching implications beyond the immediate U.S.-Iran dynamics. If Iran succeeds in advancing its nuclear program, other regional powers—such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey—may feel compelled to develop their own capabilities. A nuclear arms race in the Middle East would severely undermine global non-proliferation efforts. Iran's defiance of the IAEA threatens the integrity of the international nuclear oversight framework. Failing to enforce compliance could set a dangerous precedent for other states with latent nuclear ambitions. Escalation of the crisis could disrupt global oil markets, particularly if tensions lead to military confrontations in the Strait of Hormuz—a critical chokepoint for global energy supplies.

credible military deterrent. Conducting joint military exercises with Gulf allies and reinforcing naval deployments in the region could signal resolve without escalating the situation unnecessarily. Securing the cooperation of China and Russia—both of whom have economic ties with Iran—will be critical for enforcing any future agreements. Balancing competing interests in this arena will be a significant diplomatic challenge.

Iran's decision to deploy advanced centrifuges underscores the precarious state of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. While Tehran's actions reflect a calculated effort to gain leverage, they also heighten the risk of miscalculation and escalation. For the new U.S. administration, charting a course through this crisis will require a nuanced blend of pressure and diplomacy. By addressing Iran's nuclear ambitions within the broader context of regional security and global norms, the U.S. can work to avert a deeper conflict while preserving its strategic interests.

Diplomacy is vital, but the U.S. must balance military deterrence, Gulf alliances, naval strength, and cooperation with China and Russia to address Iran effectively.



US TO REINVIGORATE ALLIANCES?

To address the challenges posed by Iran's nuclear playbook, the U.S. should leverage its alliances to reinvigorate the P5+1 framework. This would provide a unified platform for addressing not only Iran's nuclear program but also its ballistic missile development and regional activities. Offering targeted sanctions relief in exchange for verifiable steps toward compliance could incentivise Tehran to de-escalate. Such measures would need to be carefully structured to prevent abuse.

While diplomacy is essential, the U.S. must maintain a

The stakes are high, and the window for effective action is narrow. Whether through renewed negotiations, enhanced deterrence, or a combination of both, the coming months will be pivotal in shaping the future of the Middle East and the international nuclear order.

(Nadia Hallak, senior correspondent and distinguished journalist from Beirut, Lebanon. She has extensively worked in the Arab region and covers major developments in the Arab world for TNJ. The views expressed by the author and any guest experts do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Journal.)

THE GEOPOLITICS OF OCEANS AND MARITIME TRADE

SPECIAL FEATURE

Oceans have always been integral to global trade, serving as vast highways for the movement of goods and resources. Today, approximately 90% of global trade by volume is conducted via maritime routes, making oceans critical for economic interdependence and development. However, this reliance also brings challenges, as maritime chokepoints and geopolitical competition have far-reaching implications for global stability.



**DR. ASHOK SANGAPPA ALUR, VICE CHANCELLOR,
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The interconnected nature of the global economy hinges on a few vital chokepoints such as The Strait of Malacca, The Suez Canal and The Panama Canal. The Strait of Malacca is a narrow waterway between Malaysia and Indonesia which handles nearly a third of global trade and half of China's oil imports. Any disruption there, such as piracy or military conflict, would cause significant economic ripple effects worldwide.

The Suez Canal stretches 193 Km in Egypt, linking the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea. It facilitates the swift transit of goods between Europe and Asia. The 2021 Ever

Given incident, where a single vessel blocked the canal for six days, delayed \$9 billion worth of goods daily. The Panama Canal is essential for trade between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. This canal saves ships a 13,000-kilometer journey around South America's Cape Horn. Its expansion in 2016 allowed larger vessels to pass, significantly boosting trade efficiency.

IMPACT OF DISRUPTIONS

During 2021, the global supply chain crisis underscored the vulnerabilities of maritime trade. The given incident alone caused global shipping delays, increased freight



costs, and reduced product availability in key markets. Similarly, rising piracy incidents off the coast of Somalia have prompted multinational naval interventions, costing billions in security operations.

Statistics highlighting Maritime Trade Dependence indicate that the Maritime transport accounts for 80% of global merchandise trade by volume and 70% by value. According to the International Chamber of Shipping, over 50,000 merchant ships are currently in operation worldwide. Asia dominates maritime trade, with ports like Shanghai, Singapore, and Shenzhen handling a significant portion of global cargo.

Thus, it can be said that oceans are the backbone of global trade, with key chokepoints playing pivotal roles. Disruptions in maritime routes can lead to widespread economic consequences. Collaborative efforts are needed to ensure the security and efficiency of these trade networks.

Piraeus in Greece illustrate China's strategic investments:

- Gwadar Port: Positioned near the Strait of Hormuz, this port gives China access to the Arabian Sea, bypassing the vulnerable Malacca Strait.
- Hambantota Port: When Sri Lanka couldn't repay Chinese loans, it leased the port to a Chinese company for 99 years, sparking concerns about debt diplomacy.
- Piraeus Port: By acquiring a majority stake, China turned it into Europe's fastest-growing port, strengthening its foothold in the EU.

While China's investments have improved infrastructure in developing nations, they've also raised concerns about sovereignty and strategic vulnerability. Countries like Djibouti, home to China's first overseas military base, highlight how ports can serve dual commercial and military purposes. Counter strategies include the Blue Dot Network by the U.S., Japan, and Australia which aims to promote transparent and sustainable infrastructure development. India's Chabahar



STRATEGIC COMPETITION

The battle for influence over maritime routes extends to investments in port infrastructure, which are essential for trade and strategic control. This competition reflects broader geopolitical rivalries, especially between China and other global powers. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) aims to create a network of infrastructure projects, including ports, to facilitate trade and strengthen its global influence. Ports such as Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, and

Port in Iran serves as a counterweight to Gwadar, enabling access to Central Asia while bypassing Pakistan.

It can be said that the ports are essential for both trade and strategic military positioning. China's BRI investments have reshaped global maritime infrastructure but raised concerns about debt diplomacy.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

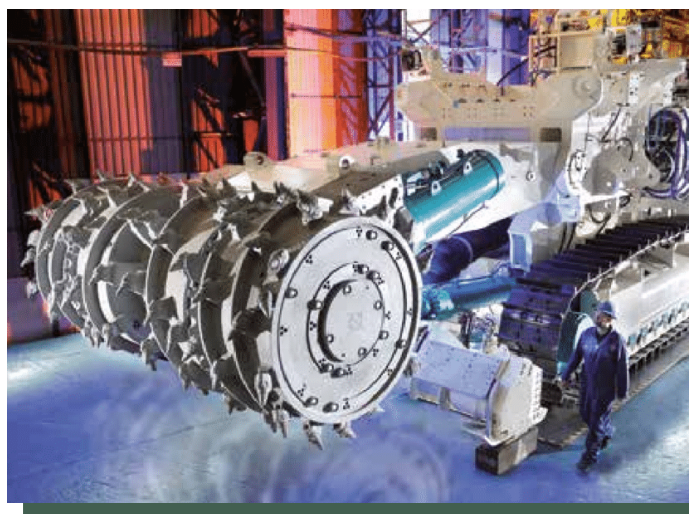
The oceans are a treasure trove of resources, from hydrocarbons to rare minerals. Deep-sea mining, in particular, represents a frontier of opportunity and contention. The economic potential of Deep-Sea mining includes the Clarion-Clipperton Zone in the Pacific Ocean which contains vast deposits of polymetallic nodules rich in cobalt, nickel, and manganese.

These resources are critical for renewable energy technologies, such as electric vehicle batteries and wind turbines. Deep-sea mining could disrupt marine ecosystems, threatening species that thrive in extreme environments. The International Seabed Authority (ISA) has struggled to establish comprehensive regulations, leading to calls for a mining moratorium.

THE COOK ISLANDS

The Cook Islands have granted licenses for exploration in their waters, hoping to tap into lucrative seabed resources. However, environmental activists warn of potential harm to local fisheries and biodiversity. Deep-sea mining offers immense economic potential but carries significant environmental risks. Regulatory frameworks are still in development, leading to uncertainty and debates. Balancing economic interests and environmental sustainability remains a critical challenge.

The Gulf of Aden and the Strait of Malacca have long been piracy hotspots, necessitating international naval patrols. West Africa's Gulf of Guinea has seen a rise in incidents, with kidnappings and hijackings becoming more common. In the South China Sea, overlapping territorial claims have led to frequent confrontations, with China's artificial islands and militarisation intensifying disputes. Arctic routes, opened by melting ice caps, have sparked competition between Russia, the U.S., and other Arctic nations.



THE PACIFIC ISLAND NATIONS

Countries like the Maldives and Tuvalu are leading calls for stronger international action on climate change, as they face existential threats from rising seas. In a nutshell, climate change is transforming the geopolitical landscape of oceans. Cooperation on environmental sustainability is essential for global stability. Exclusive economic zone (EEZ) disputes highlight the intersection of resource management and geopolitics.

While the oceans separate the continents, they also offer a medium of connectivity. As the massive biodiversity and opportunity for growing the Blue Economy exists there also looms challenges of motivated disruptions as witnessed in the Red Sea recently by the Houthis. The idea of economic linkages through the ocean remains the most economical means of trading the world over. It is these opportunities

Climate change and environmental degradation are reshaping ocean geopolitics, with rising sea levels, marine pollution, and resource depletion creating new challenges

OPERATION ATALANTA

The European Union's Operation Atalanta has successfully reduced piracy off the coast of Somalia through naval patrols and international collaboration. The maritime security challenges range from piracy to territorial disputes. International cooperation is crucial to addressing these threats. The emerging routes like the Arctic introduce new security considerations.

Coastal nations face threats to infrastructure, while island nations risk submersion due to threat of rising sea levels. Plastic waste and oil spills impact biodiversity and human livelihoods. Conflicts over fishing rights and offshore energy resources often involve geopolitical tensions.

and challenges that continue to play up in a geopolitical context. There is an earnest need to come to an executable understanding of keeping the Geopolitics away at least from the global shipping lanes and consider them as shared heritage. Environmental sustainability will have to be at the center of all such efforts without any preferential rights for anyone.

(Dr. Ashok Sangappa Alur, Vice Chancellor, Kodagu University, Karnataka Government. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Journal.)

CURTAIN RAISER

AERO INDIA 2025: A GRAND AFFAIR IN BENGALURU

BY TNJ EDITORIAL DESK

Aero India is Asia's one of the biggest air show and defence exhibitions, held every two years at Yelahanka Air Force Station in Bengaluru. The event is organised by Defence Exhibition Organisation of the Ministry of Defence (MOD). The dates, Feb 10th to 14th have been set for the upcoming 2025 event. The venue remains the same. Over 100 countries worldwide are expected to participate, with 500 exhibitors from the aerospace, defence and civil aviation sectors. This spectacular event enchants its audience with daily flight demonstrations of Aerobatic teams, next-generation unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and advanced fighter jets while expansive exhibition halls display an array of military and civilian aircraft. Equally important, the event provides a fertile meeting ground for industry-shaping deals and policy discussions, further aligning with India's "Make in India" and "Atmanirbhar Bharat" (self-reliant India) objectives.

Aero India represents India's self-reliance in defence manufacturing and opens gates for collaborative ventures. The show has evolved from being a relatively modest expo into a major global event that plays host to influential defence conglomerates like Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Airbus, Dassault Aviation, and Embraer. This upcoming week-long spectacle will highlight the Indian Air Force's (IAF) progress with indigenous fighters like the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), while also unveiling advances in futuristic programs such as the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA). With climate change becoming a pressing concern, Aero India 2025 will also focus on sustainable and green aviation initiatives. Global aircraft manufacturers and defence industries will present eco-friendly propulsion systems, including early prototypes of electric and hydrogen-powered aircraft, sparking potential alliances in research and development.

A GLIMPSE OF THE HOST VENUE

Yelahanka Air Force Station has been a long-standing host venue to Aero India since its inception in 1996. The station provides a vast runway and secures facilities specifically designed to host large-scale defence expos.

रक्षा मंत्रालय
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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION

2025
AERO INDIA
The Gateway to a Billion Opportunities

Asia's Biggest Air Show
AERO INDIA 2025
10th-14th February 2025 | Air Force Station, Yelahanka, Bengaluru, Karnataka

Yelahanka is located close to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and leading research institutions such as the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in the northern part of Bengaluru. This advantageous proximity ensures a network of experts, engineers, and government officials who can seamlessly collaborate on new defence initiatives.

Over the years, The Yelahanka Air Force station has witnessed significant infrastructure upgrades to ensure the accommodation of the largest cargo planes and advanced fighter jets. Additional hangars, extended runways, and newly constructed pavilions have been built to enhance the exhibitor and visitor experience. During the event, to ensure safety and efficiency, the Indian Air Force coordinates closely with local authorities to manage traffic flows, security protocols, and crowd control measures—safeguarding not just the expo’s participants, but the surrounding community as well.



BREATHTAKING AERIAL AND STATIC DISPLAYS

Aero India is known for its signature high-octane flight demonstrations. Indian Air Force in coordination with other nations enchant the audience with their daily display of precision aerobatics. The Surya Kiran Aerobatic Team—flying in their signature red-and-white aircraft—and the Sarang Helicopter Display Team—performing in their beautifully painted Dhruv helicopters—are both set to captivate audiences in the upcoming event.

International participants are likely to bring their own A game, featuring advanced fighter jets and massive transport aircraft that will demonstrate their capability in rugged conditions. These live demos provide an up-close understanding of how different technologies perform in action, offering valuable insights to defence delegations evaluating new procurements.

Parallely, over 500 companies—from global defence powerhouses to niche startups—are expected to exhibit their cutting-edge avionics systems. These static displays and exhibitions form the backbone of the show’s business and educational components. Visitors get a chance to observe advanced fighter jets, helicopters, cargo planes, and UAVs, each representing the latest in aeronautical engineering. These displays allow potential buyers, defence analysts, and aviation enthusiasts to scrutinize aircraft up close, understanding their features, armaments, and operational capacities.

With the new shifts in the geopolitical world, the exhibitors are prepared to showcase AI-driven drone swarms, robotic ground vehicles, and secure communication platforms—each further defining the future of defence.

HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCES AND BUSINESS DEALS

Parallel to the main expo, a series of conferences and high-stakes negotiations is likely to convene at 2025 Aero India. These Policy-driven sessions will host defence ministers and senior military officers from various countries, who will deliberate on international cooperation, technology transfer protocols, and evolving threat landscapes. Critical discussions may address cybersecurity, space-based defence systems, and the strategic implications of drone warfare. On the industry side, specialized seminars will dive into areas such as sustainable aviation fuels, AI-driven supply chain management, advanced materials science, and digital twin technology.

By bringing global experts together, Aero India 2025 fosters cross-pollination of ideas that could define defence and aerospace for the coming decade. The expo provides a crucial opportunity for business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-government (B2G) meetings.

Recent editions of Aero India have yielded deals worth billions of dollars, and 2025 is expected to be no different. Joint ventures—especially those involving Indian firms collaborating with foreign partners—will likely be front-and-centre, reinforcing India's global footprint in defence exports.

India has evolved from a major importer of defence equipment to an emerging exporter. Indian government, over the last decade, has taken the initiative to incentivize foreign direct investment (FDI), encouraged private sector participation, and laid down clear roadmaps for technology transfer. Aero India highlights the progress in these areas, enabling indigenous players such as HAL, Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) to present their advanced offerings.



BENGALURU- THE SILICON VALLEY OF INDIA

Bengaluru, known for a hub for high-tech industries in India, is set to transform itself into a global stage for cutting-edge aviation and defence technology. The city reaps substantial economic and cultural benefits from hosting Aero

India. Throughout the event, hotels witness near-full occupancy, restaurants see an uptick in customers, and local transport providers cater to a surge in international visitors. The city's infrastructure receives a facelift as roads, telecommunications networks, and public amenities undergo improvements. Aero India boosts Bengaluru's global reputation as the "Silicon Valley of India."

This influx of delegates often extends their stay, exploring cultural landmarks such as the Lalbagh Botanical Garden, the Bangalore Palace, and Vidhana Soudha. Many visitors also plan trips to neighbouring attractions like Mysuru, Coorg, or Hampi, thereby contributing to Karnataka's tourism sector. In this way, Aero India's influence extends beyond defence deals and helicopter stunts, leaving a lasting mark on the city's economic landscape.



IGNITING YOUNG MINDS

Aero India is more than extravagant aerial displays and exhibitions- it also offers significant educational outreach programs. The event has dedicated "student days", which gives an opportunity to schools and colleges to arrange visits for their students to see aircraft up close, talk to pilots, and attend interactive workshops that explain the basics of aeronautical design. This exposure ignites the imaginations of young minds who could become tomorrow's aerospace engineers, pilots, or researchers.

Aero India 2025 is committed to showcasing indigenously developed aircraft, promoting collaborative research, and facilitating robust global partnerships that directly support the country's drive toward self-reliance. This bi-yearly event creates an ecosystem that nurtures new ideas and breakthroughs.

By bringing together the best of defence aerospace and space innovation, Aero India carves a unique identity at the crossroads of technology, security, and exploration. These interactions are critical in shaping not just India's defence strategy, but also the global conversation around sustainable aviation, space security, and advanced military technology. By the event's conclusion, a host of new agreements, technological showcases, and policy shifts will likely pave the path for future innovations—cementing Aero India 2025 as a landmark occurrence in the international defence and aviation sector.

SOUTH CHINA SEA SECURITY ON A KNIFE'S EDGE

INVESTIGATING

Tensions are escalating in the South China Sea due to China's assertive territorial claims, militarisation, and confrontations, particularly with the Philippines. It is due to the region's strategic importance, rich resources, and global shipping relevance. This article explores the Philippines' non-escalatory response, the U.S. and allies' military logistics planning, and the role of advanced equipment in ensuring operational readiness. Emphasizing international collaboration underscores the need for stability and adherence to maritime laws in this geopolitically crucial area.



NOEL ADALIA DIMASACAT, DEFENCE ANALYST AND EAST ASIA SCHOLAR, MANILA, PHILIPPINES FOR TNJ

The South China Sea is a hotspot of geopolitical tension due to China's assertive actions and expansive territorial claims marked by the controversial nine-dash line. In spite of the 2016 United Nations tribunal ruling that officially invalidated China's claims, Beijing continues to assert dominance through militarisation and land reclamation efforts. This region's rich natural resources, vital shipping lanes and strategic military advantages make it highly significant, raising concerns among neighbouring countries and global powers. Moreover, this land reclamation effort within the West Philippine Sea has caused extensive damage to coral reefs, which are vital ecosystems supporting a diverse range of marine life. The term "West Philippine Sea" is not a new nomenclature, it has been in use by the international community

since at least 1961, mentioned in geology and oceanography papers.

Recent incidents, like the water cannon attack on a Philippine vessel by Chinese coastguard ships and a Chinese vessel hitting a Philippine Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) ship with a high-intensity red laser six times, have escalated tensions. The Philippines has continued its resupply missions for BRP Sierra Madre (i.e. an old Philippine Navy ship intentionally ran aground in Ayungin Shoal to assert Philippine sovereignty) but has avoided deploying its Philippine Navy warships to prevent further provocation. This delicate and precarious balance highlights the need for a well-coordinated response from the United States and its allies to maintain stability and security in the region.



The prevailing situation in both the South China Sea and the West Philippine Sea is highly volatile – a dangerous powder keg. China has significantly militarised its occupied artificial man-made islands and deployed advanced weaponry, leading to confrontations with the Philippines and other Southeast Asian nations. Meanwhile, the increase in foreign military presence, including Russian submarines and plans for a new U.S. naval base in Palawan, underscores the strategic importance of this Asia Pacific region. The Philippines has adopted a non-escalatory approach, focusing on non-aggressive maritime patrols and resupply missions, but continues to face harassment from the Chinese Coast Guard.

Incidents like China's use of red lasers against Philippine vessels highlight rising tensions. The Philippines employs non-escalatory measures, avoiding outright provocations.

LOGISTICS BUFFER

Urgent military logistics planning and management by the US and its allies in the South China Sea region are very important due to the area's strategic importance and the potential for conflict escalation. The South China Sea and the West Philippine Sea are vital maritime routes for global and local trade. The South China Sea has about one-third of the world's shipping passing through it. Any disruption in this Asia Pacific region could have a significant economic impact, affecting global supply chains and world energy markets. Moreover, this Asian region is rich in natural resources, including oil and natural gas, making it a critical hotspot for territorial disputes between claimants.

conflict. Military logistics management involves the strategic planning and execution of moving and maintaining military forces, their equipment, supplies and personnel. This ensures that military operations are supported with the necessary resources to achieve mission success. Key components include transportation, supply chain management, maintenance & repair, storage & warehousing, inventory control, coordination, communication, infrastructure development and resource allocation.

Transportation is critical for moving troops, equipment and supplies by land, sea, or air to ensure they safely reach the right place at the right time. Supply chain management



Effective and efficient logistics planning ensures that military forces have the necessary supplies, equipment and support to sustain operations in this conflict zone. The challenging geography and vast distances in the South China Sea require meticulous implementation and resource allocation. Establishing a network of arming and refuelling points near the potential “Forward Edge of the Battle Area”, as well as a pre-positioned logistics buffer, can help maintain operational readiness and counter potential hostile threats. By enhancing logistics capabilities, the US and its allies can better and faster respond to any conflicts and maintain stability in this region.

LOGISTICS PLANNING

Should hostilities erupt in the South China Sea and the West Philippine Sea, the US and Allied Forces' military logistics planning and management will be crucial for managing the

involves procuring, storing, and distributing supplies such as food, fuel, ammunition and medical supplies. Maintenance and repair ensure that all military equipment, vehicles and machinery are in good working order through regular maintenance and quick repairs. Storage and warehousing protect supplies and equipment from damage or theft and ensure they are readily available when needed. Inventory control tracks and manages inventory levels to prevent shortages or surpluses of critical supplies.

Effective logistics management requires seamless coordination and communication between various military branches and units. Infrastructure development involves building and maintaining facilities such as reinforced warehouses, depots and transportation networks to support logistics operations. Resource allocation ensures that all units have what they need without waste or duplication. Overall, military logistics

management ensures that military forces are always ready, well-supplied and capable of sustained operations, regardless of the challenges they face. This critical function supports the overall mission and effectiveness of the military.

Military logistics planning and management, leveraging advanced naval and air assets is crucial for sustaining operations and deterring hostilities in this volatile region.

and supply distribution. The Army also deploys mobile field hospitals for medical support and casualty care, ensuring readiness and resilience in the region.

The US Merchant Marines play a crucial role with container ships for transporting bulk cargo and supplies, tankers for fuel and other liquids and roll-on/roll-off ships for moving wheeled vehicles and heavy equipment. Together, these assets and resources form a robust logistics network that supports the operational effectiveness and mission success of US



SPECIALISED EQUIPMENT

A comprehensive military logistics implementation plan for the US military branches in the Southeast Asian region involves various specialised equipment and assets. The US Navy utilises amphibious assault ships, like the USS San Antonio, for transporting Marine troops, equipment and logistics support vessels, such as the USS Miguel Keith and USNS Spearhead, for resupplying ships at sea and troops on land. The US Air Force employs strategic airlifters, including the C-17 Globemaster III and C-5 Galaxy, for transporting heavy equipment and supplies, with the C-130 Hercules for lighter cargo airlift. Tanker aircraft like the KC-135 Stratotanker is used for aerial refuelling of cargo planes.

The US Marines and US Navy rely on Landing Craft Utility (LCU) and Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) for transporting cargo and personnel to shore and heavy lift helicopters like the CH-47 Chinook and CH-53K King Stallion for transporting troops and equipment. Similarly, the US Army uses CH-47 Chinook and CH-53 Super Stallion helicopters for heavy lift operations, alongside transport trucks for ground logistics

military forces in the Southeast Asian region, enhancing their ability to respond swiftly and efficiently to any arising conflicts.

MAINTAINING STABILITY

The South China Sea and the West Philippine Sea situation demands a strategic and well-coordinated approach from the US and its allies to counter China's currently aggressive posture. Effective logistics management, enhanced capabilities and strong partnerships with allies are key to maintaining stability and security in the Asia-Pacific region. By investing in these areas, the US and its allies can deter potential conflicts and uphold international laws governing maritime disputes.

(Noel Adalia Dimasacat, is a Defence Analyst & East Asia scholar specialising in technology. He is also the Chief Technology Officer at GWT Philippines. He is the Awardee of World CIO 200-2024 & 2023 – Transformative Technology Leader. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Journal.)

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10th - 14th February 2025

Air Force Station, Yelahanka, Bengaluru, Karnataka

DEMOCRATISING AI WITH AUTOML TECHNOLOGY

DEEP - TECH

Traditionally, AI development involves complex, resource-intensive processes, but AutoML simplifies these steps by automating data cleaning, feature selection, hyperparameter tuning, and deployment. Through platforms like Google Vertex AI, businesses can leverage predictive tools quickly and cost-effectively. If you want to apply such a system in your organization, this article is worth the read—it may even be more rewarding than hiring an experienced data scientist. The article explores how AutoML democratizes AI, making it accessible to businesses of all sizes.



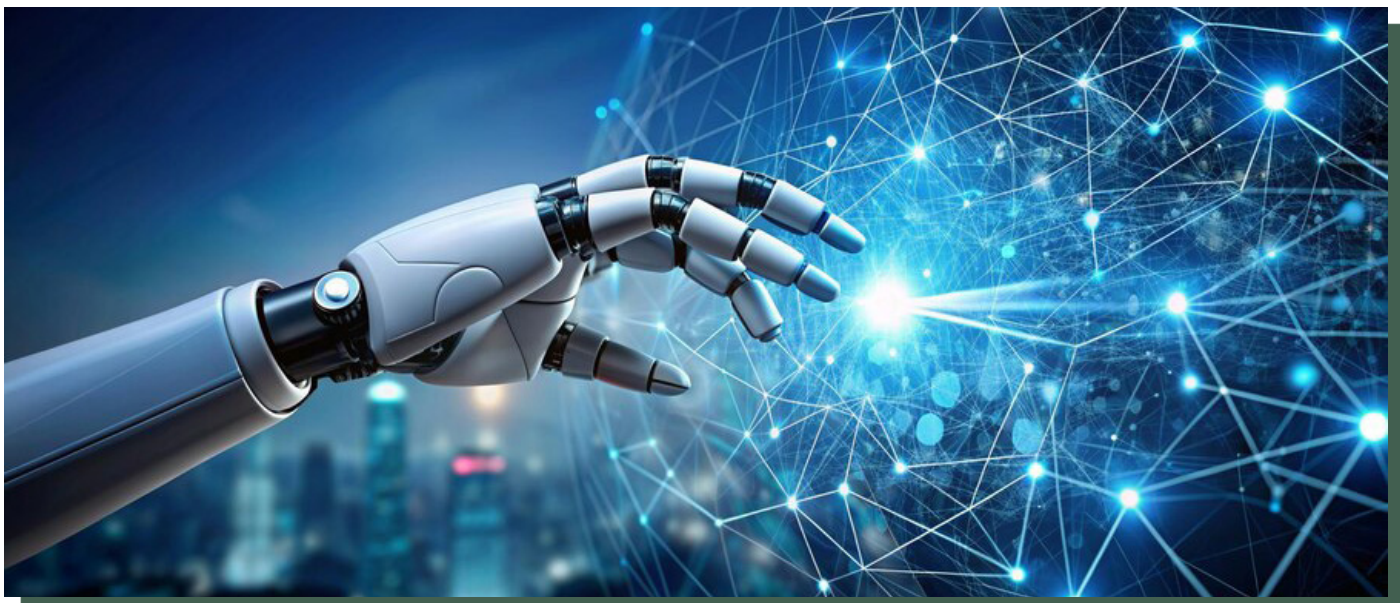
DR. AMIT DUA, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCINECE, PILANI FOR TNJ

How does YouTube know what I want to see next? How does Instagram glue me for hours? Such personalised experiences are now common, thanks to advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML). Can I use AI for my business? Using AI means long development cycles, high costs, and slow returns on investment. The large corporations have unlimited resources. They can hire data scientists to perform complex series of steps. From gathering and cleaning data, choosing the right algorithms, tuning endless parameters, and finally deploying a working model. What about my small business? I have limited money and want the return on investment faster.

This is where Automated Machine Learning (AutoML) steps in. AutoML accelerates AI development, lowering costs and delivering faster, data-driven insights. By reducing the need for specialised experts and streamlining the entire process, it allows decision-makers to focus on the big picture—innovation, growth and competitive advantage—rather than getting bogged down in technical details.

AI AND ML MODELS

Before exploring how AutoML simplifies these challenges, let's review the traditional AI and ML model-building steps. Data Collection and Cleaning: Consider a grocery store



predicting future milk sales. The data might include past sales, seasonal patterns, and promotional campaigns. Such information often arrives messy and scattered, with missing values or irrelevant entries. Cleaning and organizing this data is like tidying a cluttered room—time-consuming but essential. It requires dealing with missing values, strange outliers, or incorrect entries.

Feature Engineering and Model Selection: With clean data, the next step is selecting the right features and algorithms. Sometimes, a simple decision tree works well. Other times, more advanced methods like neural networks offer better accuracy but demand greater computational power. The best choice depends on the problem's complexity, data volume, and available resources.

Hyperparameter Tuning: Models have internal parameters (hyperparameters) that need adjusting for peak performance. Finding the right combination is often a trial-and-error process, similar to perfecting a recipe. Neural networks, gradient-boosted trees, and other complex models are especially sensitive to these adjustments. Essential hyperparameters for

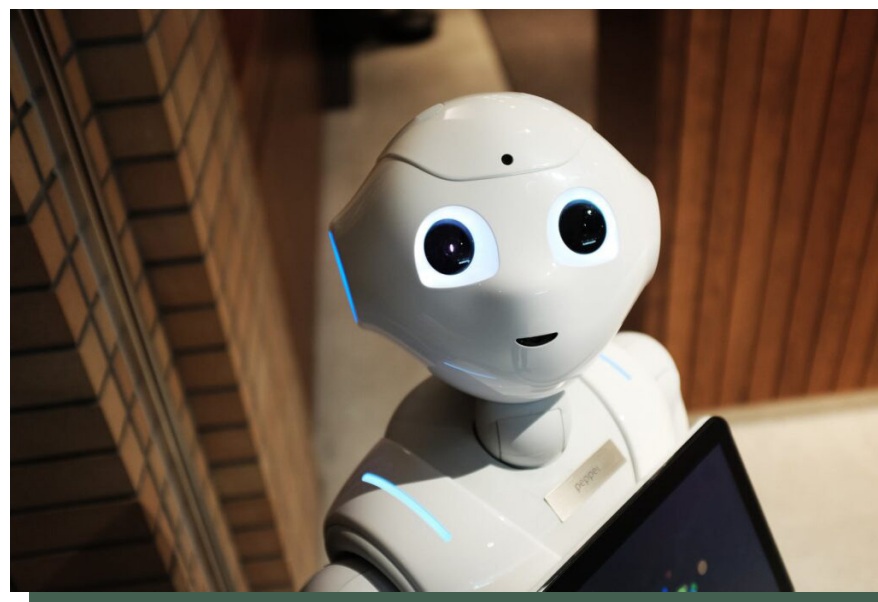
you must test it against benchmarks to confirm that it meets your standards. Only then can it be deployed into a real environment—such as a retail platform optimizing inventory or a healthcare system assisting doctors in making diagnoses.

These tasks can be intricate and resource-intensive. However, understanding them clarifies why AutoML is such a game-changer.

HOW AUTOML WORKS?

AutoML platforms handle many of these steps automatically, thus ensuring that even users with limited technical expertise can build effective AI models. They clean data, select features, and transform variables, reducing the need for manual data wrangling. Consider a global e-commerce firm that once spent months fine-tuning forecasts. After adopting AutoML, they cut development time, quickly rolling out more accurate predictions and responding faster to market changes.

Hyperparameter tuning also becomes more efficient with AutoML. Instead of blindly guessing settings or relying



on tedious grid searches, AutoML tools use intelligent optimization techniques—like Bayesian optimization or Population-Based Training—to pinpoint the best parameters swiftly. This saves time and often yields better outcomes.

When it comes to evaluation and deployment, AutoML simplifies the process. Using techniques like cross-validation, it estimates model accuracy and helps rank the best candidates. Some platforms align results with business metrics, ensuring that chosen models deliver real-world value. Integration with Machine Learning Operations (MLOps) frameworks further streamlines deployment and maintenance, allowing organizations to scale AI solutions confidently and cost-effectively.

decision trees are maximum depth, minimum sample split; in neural networks, we need to fine-tune the values of the learning rate, the number of hidden layers, the activation functions. Similarly, if we use the random forest algorithm, we need to fine tune value of estimators, maximum features, minimum samples leaf; and the Support Vector Machine (SVM) algorithm needs to decide the value of C, kernel, gamma parameters, etc. They all are specific parameters and are truly important for performance tuning.

Benchmarking and Deployment: After refining the model,

APPLYING AUTOML

AutoML's biggest contribution is democratizing AI. Prominent platforms like Google AutoML (now Google Vertex AI), IBM Watson AutoAI, Microsoft Azure AutoML, and Amazon SageMaker Autopilot, etc remove technical barriers. They let companies focus on strategic goals—improving customer satisfaction, boosting efficiency, and innovating continuously—instead of wrestling with code. Let us see one of these tools in action.

Applying Vertex AI to a business like a grocery store looking

AutoML platforms streamline the complex process of building AI models by automating essential tasks like data cleaning, feature engineering, and hyperparameter tuning.

to predict future milk sales demonstrates the power of Google's advanced AutoML capabilities. I am using Google Vertex AI, you can use any of the AutoML tools. We start with raw sales data like daily quantities sold, seasonal trends, and promotional effects. Vertex AI takes this scattered data and transforms it into actionable insights with minimal effort. Begin by uploading your dataset to the Vertex AI platform. This step requires organizing your data into a tabular format, ensuring you have a date column for timestamps and a target column for milk sales. Once uploaded, Vertex AI automatically detects the structure of your data and prepares it for model training.

DEMOCRATIZING AI

As these tools grow more sophisticated, AI will become as integral to our routines as smartphones or the internet. Barriers that once slowed AI adoption—complexity, cost, and a steep learning curve—are crumbling. AutoML encourages experimentation, allowing organisations to test ideas faster and refine them at lower risk. We stand on the threshold of a new era in which AI is not limited to large corporations or research labs. Consider starting small and I encourage the readers to try any AutoML platform and run a pilot project. It may be worth your time. As AI becomes a partner amplifying

By automating evaluation and deployment, it aligns AI models with business goals, providing real-world value. With advanced techniques like Bayesian optimization, AutoML achieves better performance in less time.

Next, Vertex AI simplifies the modeling process by automating feature selection and hyperparameter tuning. For example, it intelligently chooses the right algorithms for time series forecasting, such as sequence-to-sequence models, while optimizing parameters like forecast horizon and historical context windows. With just a few configurations, such as specifying the number of days to predict and the historical range for analysis, your model begins training. Within a short time, your grocery store gains a powerful predictive tool capable of estimating milk sales for the next month.

When the model is ready, Vertex AI's batch prediction feature lets you input future dates and instantly generates sales forecasts. These predictions empower the grocery store to optimize inventory, plan promotions, and reduce waste. With Vertex AI's ability to handle vast datasets and multiple variables, businesses like grocery stores can shift their focus from data wrangling to strategic growth, leveraging AI to stay ahead in a competitive market. This integration of AI into day-to-day operations is an efficiency booster for any business.

our ingenuity, the journey from raw data to meaningful insights promises to be smoother, more rewarding, and open to all.



(Dr Amit Dua is an Associate Professor at BITS, Pilani and Founder of YET Pvt. Ltd. He is a TEDx speaker and the author of books on Machine Learning and Machine Learning for Education. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Journal.)

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GLOBAL EVENTS



G7: Canada will assume the presidency of the G7 in January 2025, taking a leading role in setting the agenda for the world's most advanced economies. The G7 presidency rotates annually among its members, and Canada's leadership is expected to focus on key global challenges, including climate change, economic stability, and international security. As host of the G7 Summit, Canada will aim to foster multilateral cooperation on pressing issues such as technological innovation, global health, and geopolitical tensions. This marks an opportunity for Canada to influence global policy and strengthen its position on the world stage through collaboration with its G7 partners.

DONALD TRUMP : Donald Trump's second inauguration as the 47th President of the United States is set for Monday, January 20, 2025, on the West Front of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. This marks the 60th presidential inauguration in U.S. history. The day's events include the swearing-in ceremony, a signing ceremony, an inaugural luncheon, a pass-in-review, a procession, and a parade. Inaugural balls will also take place at various venues before and after the ceremonies. Notably, several Democratic members of Congress have announced plans to boycott the event. The inauguration will highlight both traditional and contentious aspects of the political transition.



AISSE 25 : In an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, national security threats such as terrorism, extremism, trafficking, and cyberattacks transcend borders, necessitating bilateral and multilateral efforts to counteract them. From January 20th to 22nd, 2025, the international elite of the security sector will convene at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre in Malaysia for the Asia International Security Summit & Expo 2025 (AISSE'25).

Hosted by the Ministry of Home Affairs Malaysia and the Royal Malaysia Police (RMP), and organized by Alpine Integrated Solution (AIS) and the Royal Malaysia Police Cooperative, AISSE'25 is poised to be the region's most prominent security event. This summit will gather law enforcement and public security decision-makers, government officials, technical experts, and professionals to collaborate on enhancing global peace and security. Official site: <https://aisse.my/>

AHEAD



IMH 2025 : The 24th annual International Military Helicopter (IMH) conference is set to convene at the Novotel London West in London, UK, bringing together the most influential stakeholders from the global rotary wing community. IMH 2025 will gather over 450 specialists and decision-makers from the military, industry, R&D, and academia to explore future procurement activities and investments aimed at delivering next-generation capabilities for tomorrow's missions.

As peer-on-peer competition intensifies, NATO and partner nations must strategize on operating rotary aviation in highly contested and congested airspace. The development of advanced rotorcraft capable of executing specific mission sets in a modern multi-domain battlespace, while maintaining survivability and effectiveness, has become crucial.

Official site: <https://www.defenceiq.com/events-militaryhelicopter>

AERO INDIA 2025 : Aero India is Asia's largest air show, attracting participants from around the world. It is being held at Bengaluru from 10-14 Feb 2025. Aero India 2025 is the ultimate international meeting ground for the aerospace sector, fostering innovation, collaboration, and knowledge exchange among professionals globally. This event serves as a premier platform for industry leaders to connect and shape the future of aerospace.

The show is a key platform for business exchanges, product showcases, and forging strategic partnerships. It's where the next generation of aerospace innovation takes form, making it essential for businesses looking to influence the industry's trajectory.

Official site: <https://www.aeroindia.gov.in/>



NAVDEX 2025 : The Naval Defence & Maritime Security Exhibition (NAVDEX), held in conjunction with the world-renowned International Defence Exhibition and Conference (IDEX), offers a specialized platform for the naval defense and maritime security sectors. NAVDEX is dedicated to advancing naval defense through immersive demonstrations, showcasing cutting-edge naval technologies, and featuring naval vessels.

Together with IDEX, NAVDEX provides a unique opportunity to connect with a global audience, network with industry leaders, and establish your position as a leader in the maritime industry. In an increasingly complex world, maritime security is of utmost importance. NAVDEX unites industry leaders and innovators to address the evolving challenges facing our oceans.

Official site: <https://www.navdex.ae/>

COP30: WHO WILL BELL THE BILL?

ECO SYSTEM

The 29th Conference of Parties (COP29) convened in Baku Azerbaijan, in November 2024, agreed to a USD 300 billion annual climate finance goal by 2035 to help poorer countries fight climate change. However, it was far short of the trillion-dollar figure demanded by developing countries like India. The question is, who will bell the bill? This article understands the Climate Finance Divide, worsening climate crises, and the stage set for COP30 in Belém, Brazil, to address critical climate finance gaps.



**ADITI, ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER,
DELHI TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
FOR TNJ**

The 29th Conference of Parties (COP29) convened in Baku Azerbaijan, in November 2024, agreed to a USD 300 billion annual climate finance goal by 2035 to help poorer countries fight climate change. However, it was far short of the trillion-dollar figure demanded by developing countries like India. The question is, who will bell the bill?

CLIMATE EXTREMES

According to the State of the Climate Update of the World Meteorological Organization, the year 2024 is on track to be the hottest on record and temporarily hit 1.5°C above the pre-industrial level. Greenhouse gas levels are also at record

observed levels. The stronger national climate plans (Nationally Determined Contributions, or NDCs), become due for all countries in 2025. Furthermore, the existing finance goal of USD 100 billion which was extended under the Paris Agreement in 2015, is due to expire in 2025. Against this backdrop, the “Finance COP29” was convened in Baku Azerbaijan, in November 2024 to set the new global climate finance goal that will provide finance flows to developing countries consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development.

The COP29 as part of the United Nations Framework Convention



on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was attended by nearly 200 countries. The primary focus was to improve the financial support for developing countries and set strong climate goals. The new finance goal, known formally as the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on Climate Finance, aims to empower the countries to build the resilience of their peoples and economies against climate exigencies and share in the vast benefits of the clean energy boom.

billion per year and adaptation finance needs are estimated at USD 215 to 387 billion annually for up until 2030. The COP29 noted with concern the gap between climate finance flows and needs, particularly for adaptation in developing countries.

Equitable outcomes for all nations have to be ensured by adhering to the integrity and spirit of the Paris Agreement. Article 2, paragraph 2 states that the Paris Agreement will be



The NCQG aims to triple funds for developing countries, but annual adaptation needs remain unmet, ranging from USD 215-387 billion through 2030.

CLIMATE FINANCE GAP

Countries reached the Baku breakthrough agreement at COP29 as the existing USD 100 billion per year goal is set to expire in 2025. The NCQG promises to triple the finance to the developing countries, from the previous goal of USD 100 billion annually, to USD 300 billion annually by 2035. However, the Indian delegation called the figure USD 300 billion figure “a paltry sum” as it falls short of the needs of developing countries for climate finance, particularly for meaningful and ambitious adaptation and mitigation actions.

Another decision at COP29 included securing efforts of all actors to work together to enable the scaling up of finance to develop countries, from public and private sources to at least reach USD 1.3 trillion per year by 2035. The Sixth Biennial Assessment and Overview of Climate Finance Flows highlights that the needs reported in nationally determined contributions of developing country parties are estimated at USD 5.1 to 6.8 trillion for up until 2030 or USD 455 to 584

implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances. With the deadline for submitting updated national NDCs in 2025, nations were encouraged to update their climate commitments to be more ambitious, investable and equitable as part of the five-year update cycle. Furthermore, developed nations must adopt a proactive stance in fulfilling their climate finance commitments under the NCQG in order to instill trust in the climate finance process.

INDIA'S CONCERN

According to India's submission on the NCQG, the fund flow under the new goal should be affordable, accessible, new, and additional. In consonance with Article 9 of the Paris Agreement, there is a need for public and grant-based resources for adaptation since grants are less financially burdensome. The NCQG calls for deploying a range of instruments, in



Finalising Article 6 mechanisms enables carbon markets to unlock USD 1 trillion yearly by 2050, offering significant cost reductions for implementing national climate plans.

particular non-debt-inducing instruments to urgently address global climate change and poverty. Highly concessional finance must be made easily accessible, especially to developing countries that are particularly vulnerable and have significant capacity constraints, such as the least developed countries and small island developing States. India's concern was to address the ability to adapt to and foster resilience against the adverse impacts of climate change.

The NCQG could not fully achieve its intended goal of aligning climate finance contributions from developed countries with the needs and priorities of developing countries in order to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. According to some developing countries, the climate finance contributions were not aligned with the needs and priorities of developing countries.

WHO BELLS THE BILL?

The answer lies in the climate market. Financial flows from compliant carbon markets are estimated to reach USD 1 trillion per year by 2050. They also have the potential to reduce the cost of implementing national climate plans by USD 250 billion per year. With regards to new finance flows, COP29 ended the decade-long wait

for the conclusion of Article 6 (Paris Agreement) negotiations on high-integrity carbon markets and the countries agreed on standards for a centralised carbon market under the United Nations (Article 6.4 mechanism). COP29 underscored the importance of additional contributions by developing countries for climate action, including through South-South cooperation. South-South climate finance flows remain significantly underreported, with 22% to 27% of all climate finance provided through Multilateral Development Banks attributed to the developing countries, amounting to USD 13.3 to 19.89 billion.

The NCQG along with Article 6 and additional climate fund flows will forever change the global climate finance architecture by redirecting investment to the developing world. Even though COP29 failed to make any progress on fossil fuel phaseout, it marked a key milestone for operationalizing carbon markets. The forthcoming World Economic Forum meeting in Davos in January 2025 will be the first major public-private forum post-COP29. It should provide impetus to actionable initiatives and provide planners and policymakers with a way to set the agenda for COP30, being convened in November 2025 in Belém, Brazil.

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