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# THE NEWS ANALYTICS JOURNAL

# WINGS OF INNOVATION

*The Aero India Special*

## IN FOCUS

SOUTHASIA'S DEEPENING  
POLARISATION UNDER TRUMP 2.0

## COVER STORY

AERO INDIA 2025: SELF-RELIANCE  
THROUGH GLOBAL COLLABORATION

## WAR STRATEGY

IS RUSSIA NEARING A DECISION POINT  
IN ITS THIRD YEAR OF WAR?

# TNJ'S POWER PANEL



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# || FOREWORD



## **INDIA'S DRIVE TOWARDS SELF-RELIANCE AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP**

The current model of globalisation, while creating greater opportunities and prosperity, has also led to more insecurity. Technology has created interdependencies, even as the world is going through the weaponisation of market shares and financial instruments and witnessing a rare combination of conflicts, pandemics and climatic events. In this unpredictable world, India needs to continue to build comprehensive national power, which requires, continued reforms, technology infusion and capital. The era of chips and AI, electric mobility, green and clean tech, as well as drones and space, all hold transformational possibilities for India.

India needs to accelerate internal growth and modernisation, as well as de-risk its external exposure at home. The focus will need to remain on manufacturing, creating employment opportunities, ensuring food and health security and keeping up with critical and emerging technologies. India needs to modernise its defense forces, secure its borders through greater accessibility by improved infrastructure and mitigate vulnerabilities in sensitive domains.

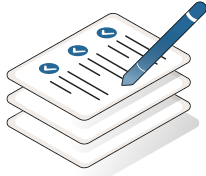
The 15th edition of Asia's biggest air show – Aero India 2025- will be held at the Air Force station, Yelahanka in Bengaluru, Karnataka from February 10-14, 2025 with the broad theme “The Runway to a Billion Opportunities”. The event will provide a platform for forging partnerships between foreign and Indian firms and the discovery of newer avenues in the global value chain to accelerate the indigenisation process in India. By utilising its talent pool and its digital capabilities, India can set rules and standards for the world. India must continue to reduce the burden of regulation, expand the forces of production and innovation, raise the level of its ambitions and strive hard for the realisation of a “Viksit Bharat”. The current issue of The New Analytics Journal takes a deep look at these very important themes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anil Wadhwa', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Ambassador Anil Wadhwa, IFS (Retd)  
(Former Ambassador to Italy, Thailand,  
Oman and Poland. He was Secretary  
(East) in the Ministry of External Affairs)

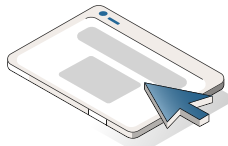
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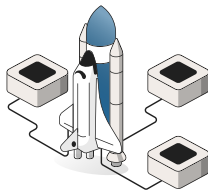
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# EDITOR'S NOTE



## NEW GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

*In this edition of The News Analytics Journal, we delve into key global developments and their significant impact on geopolitics, security and*

*self-reliance. From India's bold strides in aerospace to transformative shifts in conflict zones, our coverage offers a comprehensive perspective on these critical issues.*

*Aero India 2025 will reaffirm the country's focus on Atmanirbharta (self-reliance) in defense and aerospace. By showcasing indigenous advancements and fostering global partnerships, the event is likely to further reinforce India's emergence as a leader in cutting-edge technology and manufacturing. This edition explores the breakthroughs presented and their role in reshaping India's defense capabilities and national security.*

*In the Middle East, a new regime in Syria marks a pivotal moment for the region. With fragile power dynamics and evolving alliances at play, this leadership transition could influence the path to recovery and broader geopolitical outcomes. Our analysis examines potential strategies and their implications for Syria and its neighbours.*

*On the global stage, the Russia-Ukraine war remains a defining event, continually influencing narratives around energy security, economic stability and international alliances. As the conflict evolves, The News Analytics Journal analyses its effects on global diplomacy and order.*

*We aim to provide our readers with thoughtful insights into these dynamic events, fostering a deeper understanding of their complexities and encouraging engagement in our interconnected world.*

*Jai Hind!*

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Editor &  
Business Director

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# SOUTH ASIA'S DEEPENING POLARISATION UNDER TRUMP 2.0

## IN FOCUS

*The return of Donald Trump as the U.S. President marks a critical turning point in global geopolitics, particularly in South Asia. The region, characterised by its deep-rooted historical tensions and complex alliances, is now undergoing significant transformations, largely shaped by the resurgent "America First" agenda. Trump's policies, alongside his evolving relationships with India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, contribute to a heightened sense of regional polarisation, which presents both challenges and opportunities for South Asia.*



**SENIOR JOURNALIST, COVERS SOUTH ASIA & ASEAN REGION, FOR THE NEWS ANALYTICS JOURNAL.**

Under Trump's second term, India and the United States are poised to fortify their strategic partnership, a trajectory initiated during Trump's first administration. Central to this partnership is the Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue), a framework that has gained prominence as a countermeasure to China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific region. India, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has become a pivotal partner for the U.S. in its broader Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS), which aims to maintain a free and open region in the face of China's assertiveness.

The deepening of bilateral ties was exemplified by the meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar. This marked the first interaction following President Trump's inauguration, with discussions centring on regional security, defence collaboration, and advancements in technological innovation. The growing trust between the two nations is evident, with Jaishankar describing their relationship as "bolder, bigger, and more ambitious." As both countries align their strategies, India is positioned to play a crucial role in the

geopolitical balance of the region. However, this alignment is fraught with complications, particularly regarding India's complex relationship with China and its neighbouring countries. India's strategic calculus, while aligned with U.S. interests, will have to navigate the challenge of maintaining diplomatic ties with China without compromising its growing partnership with Washington.

Moreover, the personal rapport between Trump and Modi—



two strong-willed leaders—adds a layer of complexity to the partnership. While their bond facilitates diplomatic relations, it also risks exacerbating regional tensions. As India becomes more deeply integrated into the U.S.'s Indo-Pacific strategy, questions emerge regarding the long-term impact on South Asian stability. The closer alignment between India and the U.S. may intensify polarizing dynamics, particularly in the context of regional security and economic competition.

nation has deep historical ties with China, primarily through its participation in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This complicates Bangladesh's ability to align fully with U.S. interests, especially as Trump's administration intensifies its rivalry with China.

In 2016, following Donald Trump's victory over Hillary Clinton in the U.S. presidential election, Nobel Peace Prize



## BANGLADESH AT STRATEGIC CROSSROADS

Bangladesh's geopolitical stance has been increasingly shaped by internal political developments, notably the July Revolution in 2024, which displaced long-time Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in favour of an interim government led by Dr. Muhammad Yunus. This shift raises fundamental questions about Bangladesh's foreign policy, especially in the context of its relationships with global powers like the United States and China.

Under Trump 2.0, Bangladesh finds itself at a crossroads. The U.S. is keen to counterbalance China's influence in South Asia, and Bangladesh, strategically located in the Bay of Bengal, plays a pivotal role in this equation. However, the

laureate Muhammad Yunus, a known critic of Trump and a close ally of Clinton, openly condemned the outcome. Expressing profound disappointment, Yunus likened Trump's victory to "a solar eclipse ... black days." He criticized the election as having fallen prey to "the wrong type of politics" and urged Trump, as president, to embrace "a more generous outlook" aimed at fostering unity by "building bridges, not walls."

Yunus contributed to anti-Trump efforts during the 2016 election, reportedly angered Trump. In the wake of Trump's first victory, a Bangladeshi delegation visiting Washington was met with pointed remarks from Trump himself. Reportedly, Trump asked, "Where is the micro-finance guy from Dhaka?" and followed with, "I heard he donated to see me lose." This

*Bangladesh's balancing act between U.S. overtures and its historic ties to China, amid internal political shifts, underscores its precarious geopolitical positioning in South Asia.*



animosity highlights personal grievances that could hinder productive U.S.-Bangladesh relations under Trump's leadership.

Adding to this complexity is Trump's antagonism toward Yunus, who is viewed by the U.S. president as a prominent ally of rivals. Yunus' strong bond with Democratic leaders, such as Bill and Hillary Clinton, Obama, and Joe Biden, placed him at odds with Trump, further complicating U.S.-Bangladesh relations. Additionally, Trump's outspoken criticism of violence against Hindus in Bangladesh, coupled with his polarizing rhetoric, risks deepening divisions within the country, which could push Yunus's government closer to China and Pakistan.

Bangladesh's foreign policy is also influenced by the growing political Islam in the country, particularly the rise of radical groups like Jamaat-e-Islami. The U.S. and India view these

## PAKISTAN: A DIMINISHING PRIORITY

While India and Bangladesh navigate their shifting roles in the context of U.S. foreign policy, Pakistan seems to be relegated to the periphery of Trump's strategic focus. Under Trump 2.0, the U.S. is unlikely to prioritize its relationship with Pakistan, given the country's growing proximity to China. Trump's preference for bilateral agreements, as opposed to multilateral alliances, means that Pakistan's place in Washington's geopolitical calculations is increasingly tenuous.

Pakistan's deepening ties with China, particularly through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), complicate its relationship with the U.S. Trump's administration views Pakistan's alignment with China as a strategic challenge, especially given the broader U.S.-China rivalry. This shift in U.S. priorities further isolates Pakistan, which finds itself



developments with concern, as they present potential security risks in an already volatile region. Bangladesh's navigation of these geopolitical currents—balancing relations with China, the U.S., and Pakistan—requires a nuanced approach. The country's political instability and shifting alliances leave it vulnerable to external pressures, potentially exacerbating regional polarization.

During Trump's inauguration ceremony, Dr. Yunus reportedly sent his Foreign Adviser to Beijing, signalling a clear diplomatic message to the Trump administration. It has also been reported that Dr. Yunus plans to visit China in February. This suggests that Dhaka might be aligning its approach with Islamabad's strategy. Such a diplomatic move is likely to have significant and far-reaching implications in the evolving geopolitical landscape.

between two major powers that do not offer unconditional support.

Moreover, Pakistan's internal political dynamics—marked by domestic instability and its fraught relationship with India—further complicate its foreign policy. Although Trump has shown support for former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, his ties to Khan's political faction are unlikely to translate into substantial economic or security cooperation. Pakistan may find itself seeking alternatives for its foreign policy, including strengthening ties with China and pursuing deeper cooperation with regional powers like Russia.

Despite this, former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan remains optimistic after Trump's re-election, given his rapport with the US President. However, Pakistan's strategic pivot

toward China, as demonstrated by President Asif Ali Zardari's planned visit to Beijing, has further alienated Washington. Pakistan's mixed signals—such as Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif congratulating Trump on X (formerly known as Twitter) despite the platform being banned in Pakistan—highlight its uncertain position in the global stage.

Pakistan becomes more dependent on China, the country's geopolitical rivalry with India remains a central issue, limiting its ability to manoeuvre in a region dominated by competing superpowers. The diminishing U.S. support for Pakistan could leave the country isolated, with few diplomatic alternatives.



***India's growing alignment with the U.S. under Trump 2.0, particularly through the Quad, reinforces its strategic position but risks escalating tensions with China and Pakistan.***

## THE POLARISATION

The growing polarisation in South Asia, fuelled by the evolving U.S. foreign policy under Trump 2.0, has profound implications for regional stability. India's increasing alignment with the U.S. is pushing Bangladesh and Pakistan into opposing camps, heightening the risk of a divided and unstable region. The U.S.-India partnership, while beneficial for both countries, threatens to further strain relations with China, which views India's growing ties with the U.S. as a challenge to its regional supremacy.

In Bangladesh, the rise of radical political Islam and the influence of Islamist groups like Jamaat-e-Islami are adding another layer of complexity to the region's geopolitics. The U.S. and India are particularly wary of these developments, as they could destabilize the region further. The shift toward China and Pakistan, alongside internal political instability, places Bangladesh in a precarious position, facing increasing internal and external polarization.

The United States is a crucial market for Bangladeshi exports, especially ReadyMade Garments (RMG), which play a significant role in the country's economy, contributing 11% to its GDP and representing over 80% of total exports. However, Trump's protectionist policies, combined with the 'Yunus factor', including potential tariff hikes and travel restrictions, could jeopardize this vital trade relationship.

For Pakistan, the growing estrangement from the U.S. signals a need for recalibration in its foreign policy. As

## NEW ERA

Trump's second term heralds a new era of polarization in South Asia, characterized by shifting alliances and increasing competition among global powers. India's strengthened partnership with the U.S. is central to this transformation, but it comes with significant risks for neighbouring countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan. As South Asia grapples with rising political extremism, economic challenges, and military tensions, the future of the region will hinge on how its nations navigate these complex dynamics.

Diplomacy will be crucial in this new geopolitical order. South Asian nations must carefully balance their relationships with major powers, ensuring that their sovereignty and independence are preserved amidst intensifying global competition. The region's stability and prosperity will depend on how effectively its leaders manage the emerging polarization and strive to find common ground in a world that is increasingly defined by great power rivalries.

*(M. A. Hossain, senior correspondent and journalist from Bangladesh. He is a seasoned political and defence analyst on international affairs. He covers major developments in South Asia and ASEAN Region for TNJ. The views expressed by the author and any guest experts do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Journal)*



# AERO INDIA 2025: SELF-RELIANCE

## COVER STORY

*Aero India 2025 is set to be the epicentre of global aerospace and defence collaboration, highlighting India's evolving role as a pivotal player in international defence partnerships. This 15th edition promises an impressive line-up of global stakeholders, showcasing cutting-edge technologies and fostering bilateral and multilateral agreements. With over 50 countries participating, the event will offer a glimpse into the future of strategic alliances shaping the aerospace and defence sectors.*



**AIR MARSHAL ANIL KHOSLA (RETD)  
FOR TNJ**

Aero India 2025 is poised to serve as a testament to India's growing stature as a global defence manufacturing hub and a reliable partner in the international aerospace and defence market. Expectations include announcements of major defence deals involving technology transfer, new joint ventures and partnerships between Indian and global companies, demonstrations of co-developed and indigenously manufactured platforms, and commitments from global firms to support India's defence export ambitions.

### SUPPORT TO INDIAN INITIATIVES

Aero India 2025 is expected to be a critical platform for showcasing India's advancements in the aerospace and defence sectors, aligning with the Indian government's self-reliance initiatives (Atmanirbhar Bharat) and Make in India. These programs aim to enhance Indigenous manufacturing capabilities while fostering international collaborations to strengthen India's defence ecosystem. Foreign defence companies will likely play a pivotal role in accelerating India's self-reliance in defence manufacturing.

Many global defence companies, such as Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Dassault Aviation, and Saab, have shown interest in transferring cutting-edge technologies to India through Transfer of Technology (ToT) agreements. Technology transfer agreements could include the joint development of advanced platforms like fighter jets, UAVs, and missile systems, and the transfer of critical avionics and weapon systems for India's Indigenous defence platforms.

Companies like Airbus, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, and Thales are expected to partner with Indian firms such

as Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and private-sector players like Tata Advanced Systems and Larsen & Toubro. Joint ventures may involve manufacturing aircraft components, avionics, and even entire platforms domestically. Collaborations like Tata-Airbus for the C-295 transport aircraft and Lockheed Martin-Tata for F-21 fighter production underline these partnerships.



*Aero India 2025 will feature collaborations like Tata-Airbus and Lockheed Martin-Tata, advancing technology transfer, joint ventures, and Indigenous manufacturing for India's defence ecosystem.*

# THROUGH GLOBAL COLLABORATION

## BOOSTING DEFENCE

Several foreign firms have already set up or announced plans to establish production units in India under Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) guidelines. Boeing and Tata's joint venture for producing fuselages for Apache helicopters. Lockheed Martin and Tata's collaboration for the C-130 transport aircraft components. These facilities are expected to expand under Make in India, with potential investments announced at Aero India 2025.

Foreign companies may collaborate with Indian start-ups and DRDO to co-develop technologies tailored to Indian needs, such as AI-powered drones, cyber-security systems, and space-based defence solutions. This would strengthen

India aims to become a major exporter of defence equipment. Collaborations with foreign firms can help India achieve this by building export-oriented manufacturing hubs and co-developing products for third-party markets.

## EXPECTED GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

India-US Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) serves as a cornerstone for India-US defence cooperation. It focuses on Co-Developing critical technologies such as unmanned aerial systems (UAS), advanced jet engine technologies, AI-driven defence platforms, and joint production of components for fighter jets and rotary-wing aircraft. At Aero India 2025, announcements around technology transfers and co-production agreements are expected, including



India's indigenous capabilities while meeting global standards. International firms can help train Indian engineers and technicians, creating a skilled workforce for high-tech defence manufacturing. These efforts align with the Make in India initiative by promoting employment and building technical expertise locally by training Indian engineers and technicians.

Foreign defence contractors are increasingly sourcing components from Indian MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises). This not only reduces costs but also integrates Indian companies into the global defence supply chain. Foreign companies winning large contracts from India are obligated to reinvest a percentage of the contract value into the Indian economy, typically through local production or technology partnerships. Aero India 2025 will likely witness announcements of new offset agreements contributing to the Atmanirbhar Bharat mission.

developments in the Predator drone program and the possible localisation of parts for advanced F-21 fighter jets. These partnerships are between the Indian Ministry of Defence (MoD), the U.S. Department of Defence, and Major corporations, including Lockheed Martin, Boeing, and General Atomics, underscore India's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific security architecture and the emphasis on interoperability between the armed forces of both nations.

**Indo-French Aerospace Cooperation:** India and France share a long-standing defence partnership, highlighted by the success of the Rafale deal. The focus areas include enhancements to the Rafale fighter aircraft, co-development of next-generation aircraft engines and stealth technologies, and expanding collaboration in space exploration and satellite technologies. Aero India 2025 is expected to unveil agreements between Dassault Aviation, Safran Group, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), and ISRO on Rafale upgrades



and possibly the joint development of engines for India's AMCA project. Collaborative efforts in space technologies, especially in reusable launch systems and space situational awareness, will also take center stage.

**India-Russia Military Aviation Partnership:** Despite shifting geopolitical dynamics, India and Russia maintain strong defence ties. At Aero India 2025, Russia is expected to pitch for the Su-57 and Ka-226T helicopters. Additionally, discussions around BrahMos II hypersonic missile developments will likely underscore this partnership's (United Aircraft Corporation (UAC), Rostec Corporation, and HAL) technological depth.

**UK-India Partnership:** The UK-India collaboration in aerospace technology is a time-tested partnership. Convergence may occur between BAE Systems, Rolls-Royce, and India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) towards the co-development of the Tempest 6th-generation fighter jet, integrating advanced radar systems and electronic warfare (EW) technologies, and establishing training and simulation programs for combat readiness. Announcements

for countering UAV threats. Collaborative efforts between Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), Rafael Advanced Defence Systems, and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) on missile defence systems are also expected to garner attention.

**India-Japan Space and Defence Initiatives:** India and Japan's growing space and defence technologies partnership reflects their shared strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific. Convergence areas include the co-development of satellite-based navigation and communication systems, joint research on space debris management and space situational awareness, and collaboration on robotic lunar exploration missions. Aero India 2025 may feature announcements between the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), ISRO, and defence ministries of both nations on joint space missions and defence applications of satellite technologies.

**European Defence Partnerships:** European nations would leverage Aero India 2025 to expand their defence footprint in India. Possible areas could be Eurofighter Typhoon fighter aircraft, co-development of next-generation air-to-air



at Aero India 2025 are expected to include new agreements on technology sharing and localised component production, aligning with India's Atmanirbhar Bharat vision.

**Indo-Israel Defence Collaboration:** India-Israel defence cooperation is synonymous with innovation in unmanned systems and precision weaponry. Mutual interests include the development of high-altitude long-endurance (HALE) drones and loitering munitions, the co-production of advanced anti-drone systems and counter-UAV technologies, and enhancing missile defence systems, including Barak-8 upgrades. Aero India 2025 will highlight developments in drone warfare technologies, including AI-driven solutions

missiles and autonomous combat systems, and establishment of advanced pilot training programs. Expected highlights could include technology transfer agreements and joint ventures between Airbus, MBDA, and HAL to develop autonomous combat systems and advanced missile technologies.

**Indo-South Korea Aerospace Ventures:** South Korea's expertise in aerospace and defence aligns with India's Make-in-India initiative. Mutual areas of interest could include expanding maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) capabilities, developing advanced trainer aircraft and light combat vehicles, and collaborating on naval aviation solutions and anti-submarine warfare technologies.

# GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

Aero India 2025 could see agreements between Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) and Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL) for co-development projects, including next-generation trainer aircraft and solutions for naval aviation.

**Middle Eastern Collaborations:** Middle Eastern nations are emerging as key partners in India's aerospace ecosystem. A collaborative focus could be on co-producing aero-structures and components for UAVs and fighter jets, establishing MRO facilities for military and civilian aircraft, and developing joint UAV systems for surveillance and combat. Aero India 2025 will likely feature agreements between UAE's EDGE Group, DRDO, and Indian private aerospace firms on joint production and establishing advanced MRO facilities, enhancing regional cooperation.

**Emerging Collaborations with African Nations:** India's growing Defence exports to Africa will be a focal point at Aero India 2025. Joint Areas of Focus could be the development of cost-effective defence solutions tailored to African security needs, capacity-building initiatives, including training programs for military personnel, and the export of Indian defence platforms to African markets. Collaborative efforts between Indian defence exporters and African defence ministries could materialise in training and technology sharing will highlight India's role as a reliable partner in strengthening Africa's defence capabilities.

*India's alliances with the U.S., France, and Israel at Aero India 2025 will emphasize co-developing advanced technologies, enhancing defence capabilities, and boosting regional security collaborations.*

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Aero India 2025 is a landmark event that showcases the convergence of global defence technologies and strategic partnerships. It is likely to strengthen the synergy between foreign defence firms and India's self-reliance goals. The combination of advanced foreign technology and India's growing defence manufacturing capabilities will not only contribute to the Make in India initiative but also position India as a global defence manufacturing hub. From advanced aerospace systems to AI-driven innovations, international collaborations will shape the future of defence and security. As India positions itself as a global hub for defence production and technology, the event will be crucial in fostering alliances that strengthen regional and global security.

*(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**.)*



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# GLOBAL INFLUENCER

## JENSEN HUANG : FROM QUANTUM

TNJ | Special Coverage

In a world driven by innovation, few names resonate as powerfully as Jensen Huang. This tech luminary, celebrated for his visionary leadership as CEO of Nvidia, recently made waves with a single comment about the future of quantum computing. The aftermath? A market frenzy that wiped out \$8 billion in quantum computing valuations, leaving no doubt about the weight his words carry in the global tech landscape.

### WHO IS JENSEN HUANG?

Jensen Huang is the co-founder and CEO of Nvidia, a company that has become synonymous with cutting-edge graphics processing units (GPUs) and artificial intelligence (AI). Born in Taiwan and raised in the United States, Huang's journey from engineering graduate to tech titan is a testament to relentless ambition and innovative thinking. Known for his signature leather jacket and charismatic presentations, he is the driving force behind Nvidia's transformation into a powerhouse reshaping industries from gaming to autonomous vehicles and beyond.



### A DISRUPTOR IN QUANTUM AND AI

Huang's recent remarks on quantum computing underscored a seismic shift in tech perceptions. As he questioned the readiness of quantum technologies for mass adoption, investors reacted sharply, leading to the significant selloff. This reaction not only highlighted the speculative nature of quantum computing but also solidified Huang's status as a barometer for technological trends. His insights often spark debates, reshuffle market dynamics, and set the pace for innovation worldwide.

Beyond quantum computing, Huang's commentary has often catalyzed change. For example, his emphasis on AI-driven solutions has accelerated the adoption of machine learning in industries like healthcare, transportation, and even climate modeling. His ability to blend technical foresight with business acumen ensures that his words resonate far beyond Nvidia's headquarters.

### REVOLUTIONIZING AI AND BEYOND

Under Huang's leadership, Nvidia has achieved breakthroughs in AI, from powering advanced neural networks to enabling real-time language translations. The company's GPUs have become the backbone of AI research, influencing healthcare, automotive, and entertainment industries. Huang's strategy of leveraging AI to create accessible, transformative tools has not only elevated Nvidia but also democratized technology for businesses and researchers globally.

A standout moment was Nvidia's development of the Omniverse platform, a virtual collaboration tool that enables creators to simulate real-world scenarios. From urban planning to product design, the Omniverse is redefining how industries operate, showcasing Huang's knack for practical innovation.

# OF THE MONTH

## SPARKS TO MARKET SHOCKS

### MARKET MAESTRO AND VISIONARY LEADER

Huang's influence extends far beyond corporate boardrooms. His strategic investments in AI startups and partnerships with tech giants have cemented Nvidia's role as a leader in innovation. Whether it's collaborating with Tesla on autonomous driving systems or advancing the metaverse through Nvidia's Omniverse platform, his vision consistently pushes the boundaries of what's possible in technology.

Huang's foresight has also proven invaluable during economic fluctuations. By focusing on sustainable growth areas like cloud computing and AI infrastructure, Nvidia has weathered challenges that have destabilized competitors. This resilience highlights Huang's ability to marry innovation with stability, ensuring long-term success.

### BALANCING INNOVATION AND MARKET REALITIES

While Nvidia thrives on innovation, Huang remains pragmatic about market realities. His candid commentary on quantum computing reflects a broader philosophy: technology must deliver tangible value, not just theoretical promise. This perspective has not only shaped Nvidia's trajectory but also influenced how industries approach emerging technologies.

One of Huang's notable philosophies is his focus on energy-efficient computing. Nvidia's GPUs are not only powerful but also designed with sustainability in mind, addressing growing concerns about the environmental impact of tech advancements. This balance of performance and responsibility exemplifies Huang's holistic approach to leadership.

### A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

As the tech world watches Huang's every move, his focus on AI, edge computing, and sustainable technology promises to redefine the global innovation landscape. With Nvidia spearheading advancements in energy-efficient computing and AI-powered solutions, Huang's legacy as a transformative leader is only set to grow.

Huang's recent push toward AI applications in medical research further cements his forward-thinking reputation. Nvidia's AI platforms have been instrumental in accelerating drug discovery and personalized medicine, offering a glimpse into how technology can directly benefit humanity.

### SHAPING GLOBAL PERCEPTIONS

Jensen Huang doesn't just lead Nvidia; he steers the course of technological evolution. His ability to spark dialogue, shift paradigms, and inspire innovation makes him a deserving Global Influencer of the Month. His impact extends beyond technological circles, influencing policymakers, educators, and entrepreneurs worldwide.

Recent headlines, like his bold critique of quantum computing readiness, demonstrate his unparalleled ability to command attention and provoke thought. As markets, industries, and innovators align with his vision, one thing is clear: Huang's influence is both immediate and enduring.

### LOOKING AHEAD: THE LEGACY OF JENSEN HUANG

Huang's trajectory reflects a commitment to challenging norms while delivering tangible results. His leadership at Nvidia has set a benchmark for what's possible when visionary thinking meets technical expertise. As he continues to redefine industries and inspire the next generation of innovators, Jensen Huang's influence promises to shape the global narrative for years to come.



# IS RUSSIA NEARING A DECISION POINT IN ITS THIRD YEAR OF WAR?

## WAR STRATEGY

*As the war in Ukraine enters its third year, Russia stands at a decisive crossroads, grappling with whether to escalate the conflict, pursue peace talks, or maintain the current stalemate. What began as a bold attempt to assert dominance has spiralled into a protracted struggle with profound implications for Russia's domestic stability, international standing, and strategic ambitions. Each option carries significant risks and uncertainties, making the Kremlin's next move pivotal for its future and the global geopolitical order.*



**BY LT GEN A B SHIVANE (RETD)  
FOR TNJ**

As the war in Ukraine enters its third year, the Kremlin is facing a critical strategic dilemma of conflict resolution or conflict continuation. What started as a bold attempt to quickly take control of Ukraine has turned into a long and drawn never-ending war. With major changes in the global political landscape especially the election of President Trump, Russia must choose between three tough options: escalate the conflict, seek negotiations, or continue as it is. Each choice comes with its risks and uncertainties, and the decision will have profound implications on Russia's domestic stability, its global standing, and its long-term strategic goals.

### RISK OF MISCACULATION

Escalation might seem like a natural choice for the Kremlin, given Putin's tough personality and Russia's global status. By increasing military efforts, Russia could try to break the deadlock on the battlefield and pressurise Ukraine or its Western supporters to change their stance. However, this approach is risky and could lead to unintended consequences.

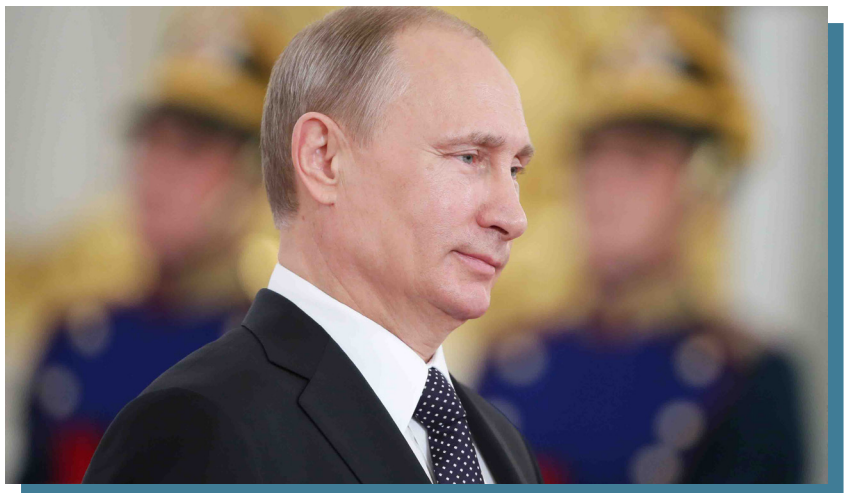
Choosing to increase the conflict would probably mean taking steps like mobilising more reserve troops, deployment of more advanced weapons, or opening new fronts. But the effects of this escalation could go beyond the battlespace. Domestically war fatigue is setting in Russia, with growing unease about conscription and the economic instability cum sanctions. Escalation risks pushing NATO to act more strongly, further arming Ukraine with advanced defensive and offensive military weapons/aid and imposing more sanctions on Russia.

Also, there's a risk of miscalculation and nuclear escalation if the West escalates the conflict. It could cross Russia's perceived threshold and lead to direct clashes with Western countries or cross the red line of tactical nuclear exchange. A disaster that the world cannot imagine.

### A DIFFICULT PATH TO PEACE?

Donald Trump's election as the next U.S. president has raised the possibility of new diplomatic talks and positive engagement. During his campaign, Trump stressed the importance of finding a negotiated solution to the conflict, aiming to protect Ukraine's borders while considering Russia's security needs. His openness to talking with Ukraine and Russia could create a window for conflict resolution, though the details of his approach are still unknown.

From Russia's point of view, negotiations could help officially



accept the territory captured during the war and prevent Ukraine from joining NATO. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and other officials have repeatedly stated that these goals are essential for any peace deal. However, Russia's willingness to negotiate must also align with its need to project victory, both domestically and internationally.

The challenges to having serious talks are significant. Ukraine's leaders are very doubtful about Russia's true motives, and President Volodymyr Zelensky is firm about getting back all of Ukraine's land. Western nations, especially in Europe, are likely to consider any concession to Russian demands setting a dangerous precedent. Additionally, Russia might see Trump's government as a chance to gain advantages rather than a real ally in making peace, which could result in protracted and unproductive talks.

*Escalating the war could push Russia into deeper conflict with NATO, heightening the risks of nuclear miscalculations while amplifying domestic economic instability and public discontent.*

conflict could further weaken Russia's sanction-hit economy, and limit its war stamina for sustained war effort. The human cost both for soldiers and civilians is also eroding domestic opinion for the war and Putin's standing. Politically, the status quo makes Russia vulnerable to shifts in the international environment, such as a renewed Western commitment to rearming Ukraine or breakthroughs in Ukrainian counteroffensives.

## THE GEOPOLITICAL BACKDROP

The geopolitical dynamics play a key role in Russia's decisions. If Trump and U.S. policy toward Russia becomes accommodative, especially if he focuses more on domestic challenges than the commitment of resources to external interventions, it could add another flavour. This could encourage Russia to act more boldly in pursuing its goals and seek a position of advantage in conflict resolution. However, Trump's way of handling alliances based on deals creates uncertainty, thus Moscow can't be sure about his long-term promises.

Europe, meanwhile, has shown a surprising level of unity in backing Ukraine, with increased spending on defence and military aid. The European Union's ongoing unity will be



## THE CURRENT COURSE

Another option is to stick with the current situation, keeping the war going at the same level while avoiding escalation or concessions. This lets Russia conserve its resources while still putting pressure on Ukraine and the West. It also buys the Kremlin more time to figure out how long the West's support for Ukraine remains sustainable, especially since that support seems to be weakening due to high costs and adverse domestic opinion in Europe.

However, this path has its challenges and a horizon. A long-lasting

crucial in 2025 and beyond, especially as it tries to balance its economic ties with Russia and its commitment to supporting Ukraine's sovereignty. The war has not only weaponised Europe, and expanded NATO, but also taken a toll on the economy impacting domestic politics.

China's role is also an important aspect. Beijing has carefully avoided openly supporting Russia while taking advantage of opportunities to boost its global position. Moscow might see China as a possible partner in pushing back against Western influence, but the relationship is uneven, with Russia



relying more and more on China for economic and diplomatic support.

*Negotiations, while potentially resolving conflict, require difficult compromises. Ukraine's resistance and Western reluctance to concede create substantial obstacles, challenging Russia's ambition to project strength internationally.*

## A CRITICAL DECISION DILEMMA

As the war in Ukraine reaches its third year, Russia faces a crucial decision. The choices made in the next few months, whether to intensify the conflict, seek peace talks, or continue to sustain it at present levels will not only determine the direction of the war but also Russia's future in geopolitics and emerging world order.

Each option comes with major risks and ambiguous benefits.



## THE KREMLIN'S WEAK SPOT

Domestically, the Kremlin is dealing with increasing problems that add complexity to its decision-making. People are unhappy about the war, especially because of economic struggles and the growing number of war casualties. This is becoming a bigger threat to the country's political stability. Major assassinations like chemical weapons chief Igor Kirillov in Moscow by Ukraine's SBU intelligence service have highlighted weaknesses in the government's security apparatus, undermining the Government's ability to handle the safety of its citizens.

At the same time, Putin's government risks looking weak. If they seem to back down or make compromises, it could encourage opposition groups and damage the strong image of Russia they've worked hard to create. Because of this, the Kremlin's decisions are shaped by the need to balance domestic opinion, and international fallouts with the harsh realities of conflict. Putin will not compromise sovereignty, power, and territorial gains.

Escalating the war could lead to stronger isolation and drain resources. Negotiating might offer a way out, but it could require compromises that are hard to accept politically. Staying the same risks a prolonged deadlock that neither side can handle forever.

In the end, Russia's next steps will depend on three key factors: its ability to keep fighting dictated by war stamina and domestic opinion, the Western support to Ukraine both in scope and sustainability, and the changing global political canvas. For now, the future remains uncertain, but one thing is clear: the decisions made in this third year of war will resonate far beyond the borders of Ukraine.

*(Lt Gen A B Shivane (Retd), Former DG Mechanised Forces Indian Army. TEDx Speaker, Strategic Defence Consultant, Analyst & Corporate Mentor. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Journal.)*

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# FAULT LINES ERUPT IN PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS

## COUNTERVIEW

*The relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan is characterized by deep historical, cultural, and political complexities, with both countries sharing over 2,600 kilometers of porous borders and longstanding ethnic and tribal ties. However, in recent years, this relationship has become increasingly difficult, especially after the Taliban's return to power in 2021. Initially, Pakistan was optimistic that the Taliban's victory would address Pakistan's security concerns. Yet, this anticipated cooperation has been marred by rising tensions and competing regional interests.*



**AMBASSADOR SUSHIL KUMAR SINGHAL, IFS (RETD)**  
FOR TNJ

On August 15, 2021, Pakistan was jubilant about the collapse of the Ashraf Ghani government in Kabul, celebrating the Taliban's return to power. This was partly because Pakistan had supported the Taliban during their earlier rule in the 1990s, and perceived them as a potential ally in reducing Indian influence in the region. Pakistan hoped for a new era of collaboration, expecting that the Taliban would prioritize addressing Pakistan's security concerns, especially regarding the TTP, a militant group though ideologically close to the Taliban that had long operated from Afghan soil and posed a major threat to Pakistan's internal security.

Then-Prime Minister Imran Khan hailed the Taliban's victory as a triumph for the Afghan people and celebrated the removal of the "shackles of slavery," referring to the U.S.-led

occupation. Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi dismissed Western concerns about the Taliban's treatment of women and minorities, labelling such criticisms as "propaganda." However, Pakistan's optimism quickly turned to disappointment as the Taliban, upon assuming power, focused on their national interests rather than aligning with the security objectives of its mentor.

### PAK'S FAILING EXPECTATIONS

While Pakistan had hoped that the Taliban would assist in

eliminating the TTP, the Taliban's primary concern was to consolidate their power in Afghanistan and stabilize their government. The Taliban's leadership shares ideological ties with the TTP, which advocates for the establishment of an Islamic state within Pakistan's borders. Instead of prioritizing Pakistan's security, the Taliban maintained their close relationship with the TTP, which allowed the militant group to continue its activities from Afghan soil.

Despite material and moral support for the struggle of the Taliban against the U.S.-led forces, their refusal to act against the TTP has exacerbated tensions between the two countries. Since the return to power of Taliban 2, Pakistan



has refrained from recognizing the Taliban government, signalling growing frustration and disillusionment with the Taliban government policies.

The Durand Line, drawn in 1893 during British colonial rule, divides the Pashtun-dominated tribal areas between Pakistan and Afghanistan. While Pakistan sees the Durand Line as a legitimate international border, Afghanistan has consistently refused to recognize it, arguing that the agreement, which was made between the British Empire and Afghanistan's Emir, expired in 1993.

The dispute over the Durand Line has been a source of significant tension, particularly since Pakistan began constructing a fence along the border in 2017. The fence, which is intended to prevent cross-border militancy and facilitate border control, has been met with fierce opposition from Afghanistan, as Pashtun nationalist sentiment remains strong. For many Afghans, the Durand Line represents a colonial legacy that divided their people.

Moreover, the construction of the fence has had significant humanitarian implications, as it has separated families and disrupted traditional trade routes. Farmers have been unable to access their land across the border, leading to economic hardship and increasing resentment, which has been exploited by groups like the TTP to recruit new cadres.

difficult for Pakistan to achieve peace and security along its western border. Pakistan's frustration with the Taliban's inaction on this front culminated in a series of airstrikes and drone attacks in December 2024, targeting alleged TTP militants in Afghanistan. The airstrikes, which resulted in the deaths of dozens of people, further escalated tensions, as the Taliban accused Pakistan of targeting innocent civilians and vowed retaliation.

The TTP's continued presence in Afghanistan and its growing capacity to launch attacks inside Pakistan have created a volatile security environment. Despite repeated efforts to negotiate a peace agreement, the situation remains fluid, with both sides accusing each other of violating and failing to honour commitments.

The geopolitical position of Afghanistan at the crossroads of South and Central Asia makes her a critical player in regional security and economic dynamics. The return of Taliban to power has drawn a mixed response from Afghanistan's neighbours, each with their own concerns and interests in the region.

## STRATEGIC INTEREST

India has taken a cautious approach to the Taliban's return. While India has expressed concerns about the Taliban's treatment of women and minorities, it has also recognized



## GROWING SECURITY THREAT

The TTP has become more active under the leadership of Noor Wali Mehsud, with the group intensifying its attacks on Pakistani military and civilian targets. The Taliban's unwillingness to rein in the TTP has made it increasingly

the importance of engaging with Kabul for its regional security and economic interests. India has been involved in reconstruction and development projects in Afghanistan and has sought to maintain a presence in the country despite the Taliban's rise to power. The recent meeting in Dubai between



Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi and Vikram Misri Foreign Secretary, the highest level of contact so far has been said to have led to a promise to revive the pending projects in Afghanistan among other understandings.

Iran and Russia, similarly, have expressed concerns about the Taliban's governance, particularly its treatment of ethnic minorities such as the Hazaras, who are predominantly Shia Muslims. Both countries, however, have chosen to engage with the Taliban diplomatically, primarily driven by security concerns related to the growing influence of groups like the Islamic State-Khorasan Province (ISKP). These regional actors have engaged with the Taliban in an attempt to influence its policies and mitigate the threat posed by radical militant groups operating within Afghanistan.

China did not endorse Pakistan's claim that the attackers were Afghan nationals, further indicating its desire to maintain a more neutral stance in the Pakistan-Afghanistan dispute. This growing divergence between Pakistan and China regarding the stability of Afghanistan could have long-term implications for regional security and economic cooperation.

## CENTRAL ASIA

Central Asian countries, particularly Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, have expressed concern about the spread of militant groups like the ISKP, which has operated in northern Afghanistan. These countries fear that instability in Afghanistan could spill over into their territories, particularly as many of the militants in Afghanistan have ethnic ties to Central Asia.



## CHINA FACTOR

China, which shares a border with Afghanistan, has adopted a pragmatic approach to the Taliban. While China does not share Pakistan's historical ties to the Taliban, it views Afghanistan as an important partner in its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and has expressed interest in economic cooperation with the Taliban regime. China has invested in Afghanistan's infrastructure and resource sectors, including mining and energy, but its engagement has been cautious, driven primarily by economic interests rather than ideological alignment.

China has distanced itself from the tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan, especially about the TTP. In March 2024, when Chinese nationals were killed in attacks in Pakistan,

The Taliban, for their part, have sought to strengthen ties with their Central Asian neighbours by offering security guarantees and promising to curb cross-border militancy. However, the fragile security situation in Afghanistan, coupled with the Taliban's lack of control over all militant groups within the country, has made these assurances difficult to trust.

## ECONOMIC CONNECTIVITY

Despite the political and security challenges, trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan continues to be an important aspect of their bilateral relationship. Afghanistan remains heavily dependent on Pakistan for imports, including fuel, food, and construction materials. However, trade has been hindered by frequent border closures and security concerns,

*Central Asian states have sought to engage with the Taliban and encourage the formation of a more inclusive government that reflects the ethnic diversity of Afghanistan.*



which have disrupted the flow of goods and raised the cost of living in Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA), which allows Afghan exports to transit through Pakistan to international markets, remains a crucial element of economic cooperation between the two countries. However, the agreement has been undermined by political tensions, security concerns, and the lack of infrastructure to facilitate smooth trade.

Regional connectivity initiatives, such as the proposed trans-Afghan railway linking Uzbekistan with Pakistan, have the potential to transform the economic landscape, but the security situation and lack of investment have delayed progress on these projects.

## A FRAGILE FUTURE

The relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan is at a critical juncture, shaped by deep-rooted historical issues, security concerns, and regional geopolitics. The return of the Taliban to power has created a complex web of challenges for Pakistan, which initially saw the Taliban as a potential ally but now faces growing tensions with Kabul. Taliban's refusal to acknowledge the Durand Line and their ideological ties with the TTP have undermined the security interests of Pakistan, while Afghanistan continues to face its own set of

internal and external pressures along with regional dynamics further complicating the fragile environment.

The deteriorating security situation, coupled with the economic challenges posed by disrupted trade and the lack of cooperation on counterterrorism efforts, paints a bleak picture for the future of Afghanistan-Pakistan relations. The path forward for Pakistan and Afghanistan will depend on their ability to navigate these challenges and engage with regional and international actors in a way that promotes stability and economic cooperation. The evolving geopolitical dynamics, particularly the role of regional actors like China, may reshape the trajectory of this complex relationship.

The ultimate question remains whether both countries can find common ground amid their competing interests or whether the ongoing tensions will lead to a more permanent rupture in their bilateral ties and no one at this moment has any answer to this question.

*(Ambassador Sushil Kumar Singhal, IFS (Retd), former Ambassador to Angola. He has served in Tanzania, Belgium, Bangladesh and Hungary. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Journal.)*

# IN CONVERSATION

**“Our Hope is to Get Rid of Hezbollah”** - Ashraf Rifi, Member of Parliament, Lebanon



**Ms Nadia Hallak**  
TNJ Arab Correspondent

In the past 79 years, Lebanon has not witnessed a smooth transition of power from one president to another. Over two years of political vacuum resulted in another vacuum, causing the paralysis of economic, financial and political institutions, due to a war dictated by Hezbollah's decision in Lebanon. However, the election of General Joseph Aoun as President of the Lebanese Republic ended the presidential void during the 13th session of the Lebanese Parliament on 9th of January. Does the white smoke signal the start of a

new phase of institutional stability in Lebanon?

The News Analytics Journal(TNJ), Arab correspondent Ms. Nadia Hallak in an exclusive interview with Mr. Ashraf Rifi (AR), honourable Member of Parliament, Lebanon spoke on the crises Lebanon has endured over the years, the future of Lebanon, and it's international relations with other major powers, including India. He was General Director of the Lebanese Internal Security Forces (Lebanese Police Chief) and later served as Minister of Justice —excerpts from the interview.

**TNJ: After two years... Lebanon ends the presidential vacancy crisis. How will things proceed after President Joseph Aoun takes office and will he face any challenges in performing his duties?**

**AR:** All Lebanese are betting on this term with the presence of President General Joseph Aoun. There is a very large bet on significant changes because the country cannot afford half-solutions or grey-area solutions. His inaugural speech has been a great source of hope for the Lebanese. His behavior, character and performance have given the Lebanese people hope and I hope he can pull the country out of its crisis. We do not know if he will face challenges, but our hope in him is great, as he is viewed as a president who can save Lebanon.

**TNJ: Do you think President Joseph Aoun will be able to put pressure on Hezbollah to implement Resolution 1701 and hand over its weapons?**

**AR:** The international resolution 1701 was approved by Hezbollah and signed by its government. It stipulates that only the Lebanese state has the right to hold weapons. The Lebanese Army, Internal Security Forces, General Security, State Security, Customs and municipalities are the only bodies allowed to possess weapons.

Anyone else carrying weapons in Lebanon outside these entities will be legally questioned and held accountable.

**TNJ: Will we see Hezbollah transform into a purely political party in Lebanon in the near future?**

**AR:** In my opinion, Hezbollah cannot remain a military party, i.e., a faction that holds weapons and makes decisions about peace and war. Hezbollah has destroyed the country with its choices and decisions. It must retreat and become an ordinary citizen or move toward politics. However, I am not sure how far its Shiite base will accept that it only plays a political role.



**MR. ASHRAF RIFI**

Honourable Member of Parliament  
Lebanon

**TNJ: How do you comment on naming Nawaf Salam as Prime Minister? What does this mean for Lebanon, which has suffered under a corrupt system of successive governments?**

**AR:** Prime Minister Salam has played an important role and has a good reputation. We are hopeful with his appointment as Prime Minister. I believe the Lebanese are putting their hopes in him, as he represents a government that is not based on political quotas, unlike the mafia-like governments of the past. Those who have ruled the country in the past have stolen from and destroyed Lebanon. It is time for honest, patriotic, and reformist figures who can save the country from its crises, so I believe there is a great deal of hope placed in him.

**TNJ: Why did the opposition not nominate you as the Prime Minister?**

**AR:** This is not a personal matter, but rather a matter of national salvation. Any person we believe can save the country, we will support him and stand by him in his reform project. We have played our role as the opposition and contributed to reaching this advanced stage.

**TNJ: Regarding the Syrian file, with the fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime, Lebanon finds itself facing a new phase that presents political and security challenges. How do you view these developments?**

**AR:** We certainly congratulate the Syrian people and the Syrian revolution for defeating the regime of Bashar al-Assad. I said to the Syrians in my letter of congratulations, "You have overthrown your tyrant and now we must overthrow our tyrant in Lebanon, which is Hezbollah," this Iranian project does not represent us. We reject it and will not allow our children to grow under its shadow. We resisted it before and we will resist it today with bare chests.

In the past, Hezbollah had some military power, but today it has lost part of its military capabilities. Through our political resistance, we will rid ourselves of it and lift Lebanon from the abyss, returning it to a normal country free from any abnormalities.

**TNJ: How do you view future relations between Beirut and Damascus?**

**AR:** They should be healthy, state-to-state relations, relations between two sovereign states. We are optimistic about the future, especially after we have rid ourselves of a tyrant who does not respect humanity or even the sovereignty of Lebanon. Bashar al-Assad considered Lebanon a part of Syria, cutting it off and annexing it. Today, we see the new leadership, which we bless, saying that it respects Lebanon's sovereignty and that its borders are the official geographic boundaries between Lebanon and Syria.

**TNJ: Are there any security precautions being taken in Tripoli after the new Syrian administration has taken power in Syria? Especially some parties try to tarnish the city's image, claiming it is a capital for Islamists and extremist groups?**

**AR:** Of course, we have a political position in Tripoli and I am proud to be from Tripoli. Tripoli is a city of coexistence and a truly Lebanese city, so all the slander that came from the Syrian regime in the past when it was in Lebanon is rejected by the city. Tripoli was against the Syrian regime and unfortunately, today, after Hezbollah, as an Iranian agent, took over, the city is again accused of being a hotbed for Islamists and extremists, even though the people of Tripoli embraced the Shiites of Lebanon and Hezbollah's supporters during the war.

Hezbollah has always described its opponents, particularly Sunnis, as "Takfiris" and Extremists, while labeling Christians as Israeli agents and independent Shiites as "Shiites of the embassies." Today, all these accusations have fallen and it is Hezbollah that is the Iranian agent. Tripoli is open to all sects and religions and we have no discrimination. It is a national, Lebanese, moderate city, contrary to all accusations from Hezbollah and the former Syrian regime, which killed, tortured, and looted Lebanon for years.

**TNJ:** Lebanon has gone through tough times. Do you think India could play a role in contributing to its stability and development?

**AR:** There is no doubt that India has the human, material and technological capabilities to play a positive role. The Lebanese are certain that India has the necessary capabilities and there is continuous communication between Lebanon and India for investment and to benefit from India's potential.

Forms of cooperation between the two countries in the future will either be through official persons or the private sector. The Lebanese have a wide diaspora in countries around the world, including India and they are well aware of the technological advancements in India and their significance. The private sector will surely be able to benefit from their technology. On the official level, while India is geographically distant from Lebanon, we encourage the Lebanese state to take advantage of the capabilities of friendly countries, including India.



**TNJ:** The Indian peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon, as part of UNIFIL, has been working very professionally for the last 25 years in collaboration with local communities in ongoing sustainable development efforts. How would you describe the relationship between the two countries?

**AR:** The Lebanese people thank India for its involvement with Lebanon and its support of the Lebanese people. India sent a battalion of armed forces to maintain the security of the Lebanese people in the south and this is greatly appreciated by the Lebanese people toward India and its armed forces.

*(The responses by Mr. Ashraf Rifi are his personal views on the specific issue as communicated to Ms. Nadia Hallak during the interview held in Beirut on 13th January 2025. The News Analytics Journal strives to bring views of opinion makers representing varying perspectives to benefit the readers.)*



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# NEW EGYPTIAN ASYLUM MEASURES SIGNAL SHIFT IN REFUGEE RIGHTS

## LONG SHOT

*Egypt's new asylum laws mark a critical juncture in its approach to refugee management, reflecting the complex balance between national security, resource constraints, and humanitarian obligations. As a long-standing sanctuary for displaced populations from Sudan, Syria, Gaza, and beyond, Egypt faces mounting pressure to reform its overstretched asylum system. Against this backdrop, Egypt's role as both a haven and a transit point for refugees underscores the urgent need for policies that prioritise dignity, integration, and international collaboration.*



**JUSTUS NAM,**  
**EXPERT ON AFRICA AND AN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**  
**SCHOLAR NAIROBI, KENYA**  
**FOR TNJ**

Egypt has long been a sanctuary for refugees fleeing conflict and instability across the Middle East and Africa. Strategically positioned at the crossroads of Africa and the Arab world, it has served as both a haven and a transit point for displaced individuals, particularly those escaping violence in Sudan, Syria, and Gaza. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Egypt currently hosts over 288,000 registered refugees and asylum seekers, with the majority hailing from these regions. This figure

does not account for the thousands who remain unregistered, underscoring the scale of Egypt's role in managing displacement amid limited resources.

### REVISED ASYLUM LAWS

The recent introduction of new asylum laws has sparked significant debate over Egypt's approach to refugee management. Framed by the Egyptian government as a necessary reform to streamline an overstretched asylum system, the laws have



been criticized for potentially undermining fundamental human rights. While they aim to formalize and regulate the asylum process, provisions such as stricter eligibility criteria, restrictions on movement, and limited access to essential services reflect an increasingly securitized and exclusionary policy framework. Central to the legislation is the formalization of a process that was previously managed predominantly by UNHCR. Refugees are now required to register, attend interviews, and await official status determination. This structure is intended to bring clarity to what has often been a fragmented system. However, these measures come with significant costs. Refugees are confined to designated zones or detention centres while awaiting decisions, a process that can take months or even years, effectively curbing their freedom of movement. The law also grants authorities broader powers to monitor, detain, and deport individuals deemed undesirable, raising serious human rights concerns.

## EGYPT'S HOSTING LEGACY

Egypt's refugee policy has evolved over decades, shaped by regional geopolitics and domestic challenges. During the late 20th century, Egypt became a refuge for Palestinians displaced by successive conflicts with Israel. In the 1990s, it absorbed waves of Sudanese refugees fleeing civil wars. Although these movements were initially met with solidarity, the rising economic pressures and resource constraints gradually hardened attitudes. Compared to other regional host countries such as Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, Egypt's response has been more constrained by legal and financial limitations. Jordan, for example, hosts over 1.3 million Syrian refugees and has developed robust aid mechanisms with international partners, while Lebanon has shouldered a disproportionate burden relative to its population, hosting nearly 1.51 million refugees. Turkey, with its integration-focused approach, offers a potential model, leveraging international support to expand access to education and employment.

However, Egypt's refusal to sign the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol restricts its obligations under international law, leaving refugees vulnerable to arbitrary detention and limited legal recourse. The implications of the new asylum criteria are profound. Refugees from conflict zones like Sudan, Syria, and Gaza may find it increasingly difficult to meet the requirements for asylum, leaving many without legal protections. Data from UNHCR shows that approximately 60% of asylum applications worldwide are rejected due to restrictive eligibility standards. In Egypt, similar outcomes could leave thousands at risk of statelessness or forced return to unsafe conditions. Furthermore, economic and social restrictions imposed by the law exacerbate the vulnerability of refugees. Access to work, healthcare, and education—already limited—has become even more uncertain. For example, over 70% of Sudanese refugees in Egypt live below the poverty line, with many relying on informal labour to survive.

Syrian refugees, who constitute nearly half of Egypt's registered refugee population, also face significant challenges. Although Egypt has provided relative safety compared to the devastation in Syria, Syrians often report difficulties in accessing essential services. For instance, only 42% of school-age Syrian children in Egypt are enrolled in formal education, according to UNICEF. The law's emphasis on integration programs is unlikely to address these gaps if basic rights and services remain inaccessible. The situation is even more dire for Palestinians from Gaza. Many have lived in displacement for generations, with little hope of securing permanent settlement or citizenship. The new law's provisions, including detention and deportation risks, could further erode their already fragile protections. Amnesty International has highlighted the increased likelihood of detention for undocumented Palestinians in Egypt, exacerbating their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse.



*By restricting employment, healthcare, and education opportunities and enforcing stricter eligibility criteria, the law risks perpetuating cycles of dependency and marginalisation.*



Amid these challenges, individual stories of refugees illustrate the human impact of these policies.

## STORIES OF RESILIENCE

Fatima, a Sudanese widow who fled violence in Darfur with her children, found herself confined to a detention facility upon arriving in Cairo. Without the ability to work or access support, her family's survival depended on sporadic aid. On the other hand, Mahmoud, a Syrian refugee, and former teacher, managed to open a tutoring centre for refugee children in Alexandria. His story is a testament to the potential for refugees to contribute meaningfully to their host communities when given the opportunity. Similarly, Yousef al-Masri, a young Palestinian entrepreneur, has established a thriving bakery in Cairo, employing both refugees and Egyptians. His success is a small yet impactful example of integration and the potential for refugees to enhance local economies.

and hope. Youth, such as Mahmoud's students or those employed by Yousef al-Masri's bakery, are not just beneficiaries of aid but contributors to their communities when empowered. Their stories remind us that refugees are not a monolithic group; they are individuals with dreams, talents, and the ability to shape the future. Egypt's environmental challenges further complicate refugee management. Overcrowded urban areas and detention centres strain already limited resources like water and energy.

However, these challenges also present opportunities for collaboration. Refugees can be part of solutions, contributing to sustainable projects that benefit both host and displaced communities. Stories like Yousef's bakery hint at a broader potential for refugee-led initiatives to foster local resilience. Equally important is the need to bring the voices of refugees themselves into the policy arena. Policies crafted without the



In light of these obstacles, the mental health toll on refugees adds another layer of vulnerability. Fatima, for instance, endures not only the daily hardships of displacement but also the lingering trauma of losing her home and husband to war. In the detention centre where she lives with her children, the lack of mental health support deepens her sense of isolation. Similarly, young refugees like Mahmoud's students in Alexandria often carry the emotional scars of disrupted childhoods. Yet, they hold incredible potential when allowed to heal and learn in supportive environments. Women and youth, in particular, are vital to refugee resilience.

Despite limited opportunities, many women like Fatima become leaders in their communities, providing stability

input of those they impact risk alienating and marginalizing the very people they aim to protect. Establishing dialogue platforms or councils where refugees can share their experiences and insights would humanize decision-making and build mutual understanding between refugees and host communities.

## EGYPT'S STANCE

Hosting refugees places significant demands on Egypt's economy, particularly during a period of financial instability. Inflation surged to 38% in 2024, and unemployment remains high, further straining public services like healthcare and education. Despite these challenges, refugees have made notable contributions to Egypt's informal economy.



Syrian refugees, for example, have established small businesses that generate jobs and stimulate local economies. Such contributions underscore the importance of policies that enable rather than restrict refugee participation in the workforce.

Human rights organizations have raised concerns over Egypt's non-signatory status to key international conventions. This position not only limits refugee protections but also weakens accountability for rights violations. Reports from organizations like Human Rights Watch highlight instances of arbitrary detention, deportation, and restricted access to legal representation. For refugees already facing systemic barriers, these practices exacerbate their precarious status. International scrutiny has called for reforms to align Egypt's policies with global standards, but progress has been slow. Managing a refugee population of this magnitude is not a task Egypt can shoulder alone. International actors, including UNHCR, donor nations, and NGOs, play a critical role in bridging gaps in funding and capacity. Advocacy efforts should focus on aligning Egypt's policies with international human rights standards, emphasizing the protection of displaced individuals rather than their exclusion.

movement, and access to essential services. Transparency in asylum procedures is essential to prevent abuses of power and build trust within the refugee community. Additionally, expanding access to education and employment opportunities through international support can help integrate refugees into Egyptian society and foster long-term stability.

The consequences of inaction are dire. If restrictive policies persist, Egypt risks exacerbating regional instability and undermining its position as a stabilizing force in the Middle East and North Africa. Furthermore, Egypt's approach could influence neighbouring countries, potentially triggering a ripple effect of restrictive measures across the region. Egypt's new asylum laws represent a pivotal moment in its refugee policy. While the government's emphasis on efficiency and security is understandable, these goals must not come at the expense of fundamental human rights. Refugees from Sudan, Syria, Gaza, and beyond are among the world's most vulnerable populations. Their rights to safety, dignity, and a chance to rebuild their lives must remain paramount. This is not just Egypt's challenge; it is a global one. As displacement crises grow in scale and complexity, the international community must rally behind host nations

***Financial aid is crucial to enhancing Egypt's infrastructure for refugee management. Technical assistance can help streamline asylum processes while ensuring fairness and transparency.***

## RIPPLE EFFECT

To strike a balance between efficiency and human rights, Egypt must adopt a more holistic approach. Legal protections for refugees should be enhanced to align domestic laws with international standards, ensuring rights to safety, freedom of

to ensure that principles of humanity and justice prevail.

*(Justus Nam is an expert on Africa. He is an international relations specialist from Nairobi, Kenya. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Journal.)*



# CHINESE NAVY'S SWIFT MODERNISATION SPARKS GLOBAL ATTENTION

## DIPLOMACY

*In the past two decades, the Chinese Navy, officially known as the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), has undergone one of the most significant and rapid expansions and modernisations of any navy globally. This transformation reflects China's broader ambitions to assert itself as a global power, both regionally and on the world stage. This article will explore the key factors behind the PLAN's growth, the specific areas of modernisation and the implications of this rise from regional and global security perspectives.*



**LT CDR NITIKA RAI (RETD),  
FORMER INDIAN NAVY OFFICER  
FOR TNJ**

China's naval expansion is not a sudden phenomenon but the result of strategic shifts underway since the late 20th century. Historically, China's navy was relatively small, poorly equipped, and primarily focused on regional defence, with limited capability for projecting power overseas. For much of the Cold War period, the PLAN was largely focused on coastal defence, emphasizing countering potential threats from the United States, Taiwan, and Japan.

The strategic pivot came in the late 1980s and early 1990s when China's leaders recognized the need for greater naval capabilities to secure the country's growing economic and geopolitical interests. The Chinese economy was opening up, and maritime trade, especially through the South China Sea, became increasingly vital. Concurrently, China sought to exert more influence over its maritime borders and ensure its access to global shipping lanes.

### MODERNISATION PROGRAM

In the past decade, the PLAN has expanded its fleet dramatically, not only in terms of sheer numbers but also in the quality and sophistication of its ships. According to various military assessments, China's naval fleet has surpassed the United States in total number of ships, though the U.S. maintains an edge in the quality of its vessels, particularly with its aircraft carriers and nuclear-powered submarines. As of 2025, the PLAN boasts around 355 ships, including more than 60 major surface combatants, roughly 50 submarines, and a large number of auxiliary ships.

A key driver behind the PLAN's fleet expansion has been China's focus on enhancing its capability to control maritime trade routes, protect its territorial waters, and assert influence in regional disputes. The expansion is characterized by a mixture of homegrown designs and acquisitions of foreign technology, including from Russia.

**Technological Advancements:** The PLAN's fleet modernization program has seen the introduction of more advanced platforms, including new destroyers, frigates, amphibious assault ships, and aircraft carriers. These platforms significantly enhance the Navy's operational capabilities in areas such as anti-air, anti-surface, and anti-submarine warfare, as well as power projection.

**Aircraft Carriers:** A major symbol of China's growing naval



ambitions is the commissioning of its aircraft carriers, which enable the PLAN to project power beyond its immediate waters. The first carrier, Liaoning, was commissioned in 2012 and is based on a Soviet-era design but heavily modified with Chinese technologies. In 2017, China launched its first indigenously built aircraft carrier, Shandong, a more advanced and larger vessel. A third carrier, Fujian, which is China's first fully Indigenous CATOBAR (Catapult Assisted Take-Off But Arrested Recovery) carrier, was launched in 2022 and is expected to be operational in the coming years.

**Destroyers and Frigates:** The PLAN has rapidly developed and commissioned a range of advanced destroyers, including the Type 052D and Type 055 classes. The Type 052D is a multi-role destroyer that features advanced radar and stealth

Shenyang J-15, which can operate from its aircraft carriers. Furthermore, the PLAN is exploring the use of drones, both for surveillance and potentially for strike missions. The development of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) is seen as a key aspect of China's future naval warfare strategy.

**Amphibious Capabilities:** Given the ongoing territorial disputes in the South China Sea and with Taiwan, China has been keen on strengthening its amphibious warfare capabilities. The PLAN has developed a range of amphibious assault ships, such as the Type 071 LPD (Landing Platform Dock), which can carry both troops and equipment to contested shores. The PLAN has also developed more advanced amphibious vehicles, which enhance its ability to project power over land from the sea.



capabilities, while the larger Type 055 destroyer is often considered a "super-destroyer" capable of operating as a command ship in fleet operations. These ships have enhanced the PLAN's ability to engage enemy ships, submarines, and aircraft in complex battle environments.

**Submarines:** The submarine fleet has also grown significantly, particularly in the area of nuclear-powered submarines. The PLAN currently operates a mix of nuclear and diesel-electric submarines, including the Type 094 and the Type 095 nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines. These submarines give China the capability to launch nuclear weapons from the sea, a significant deterrent that has altered the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific.

**Naval Aviation and Drones:** In addition to ships, China has invested heavily in naval aviation, which complements its surface combatant fleet. The PLAN has expanded its fleet of carrier-based aircraft, including fixed-wing fighters like the

*As of 2025, the PLAN stands as the largest navy in the world by ship numbers and is increasingly capable of projecting power far beyond China's immediate waters.*

## STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL GOALS

The rapid expansion and modernization of the PLAN reflect China's evolving naval strategy, which centres around the concept of "maritime power." This strategy seeks to secure China's maritime interests, protect sea lanes, and assert its territorial claims, especially in contested waters such as the South China Sea and the East China Sea.

**Power Projection:** China's naval modernization is not solely about regional defence; it is also about power projection. By increasing its naval capabilities, China aims to secure its maritime trade routes and extend its influence into the wider



Indo-Pacific region and beyond. The PLAN has increasingly been conducting long-range deployments and joint exercises with other navies, signalling its readiness to operate far from its shores.

**Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD):** One of the primary operational goals of the PLAN is to develop an Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) strategy. This involves creating a defensive bubble around China's maritime borders, primarily to deter U.S. and allied naval forces from intervening in the region. The PLAN's increasing investment in advanced missile systems, both on ships and submarines, as well as its growing network of military installations in the South China Sea, reflects this strategy.

**Deterrence and Naval Diplomacy:** China's expanding naval power also serves as a tool of deterrence and diplomacy. With a growing fleet capable of projecting power, China can send messages of strength and resolve to its regional rivals, including Taiwan, Japan, and the Southeast Asian nations involved in territorial disputes in the South China Sea. Moreover, the PLAN's increasing involvement in international naval exercises, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian missions enhances China's status as a global naval power.

The growing capabilities of the PLAN have intensified the security competition in the Indo-Pacific. Nations like India, Japan, and Australia are strengthening their own naval forces in response, often through partnerships like the Quad (the U.S., Japan, India, and Australia) to counterbalance China's rising naval power. Similarly, Southeast Asian nations are investing in naval defence capabilities to safeguard their maritime interests against China's increasingly assertive posture.

China's maritime claims, particularly in the South China Sea, have been a point of contention with international law and other claimants. The PLAN's expansion increases Beijing's ability to enforce its claims, potentially undermining the principle of freedom of navigation that underpins global maritime law.

The Chinese Navy has undergone a remarkable transformation in recent years, emerging as a powerful, modern force capable of projecting influence well beyond China's shores. The PLAN's rapid modernization reflects China's broader ambitions on the global stage and its desire to secure its maritime interests, protect critical sea lanes, and assert control over contested waters. While this naval buildup has strengthened China's

***China's maritime claims and PLAN's expansion threaten freedom of navigation, challenging international law and raising concerns about global trade disruptions and maritime security in contested waters.***



## GLOBAL AMBITIONS

The rise of the PLAN has far-reaching implications, not just for regional security but for global maritime stability. While the U.S. Navy remains superior in terms of operational reach, technological sophistication, and nuclear-powered vessels, China's rise challenges American naval dominance, particularly in the Indo-Pacific. The presence of the PLAN in strategic maritime chokepoints such as the South China Sea has raised concerns in Washington, which sees the region as critical to global trade.

security posture, it has also introduced new challenges for regional and global stability, particularly as it competes with other powers like the United States and its allies in the Indo-Pacific region. The future of the PLAN will be a key factor in shaping the strategic landscape of the 21st century, as China continues to assert itself as a maritime power.

*(Lt Cdr Nitika Rai (Retd), former Indian Navy Officer. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of **The News Analytics Journal**.)*



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# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

## TRUMP TARGETS BRICS WITH TARIFFS



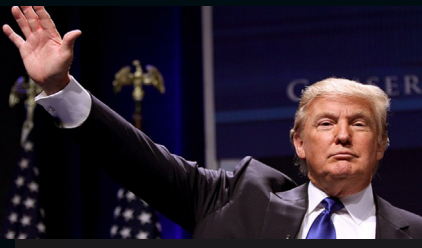
On his first day as U.S. President, Donald Trump announced plans to impose a 100% tariff on all business transactions between BRICS nations and the U.S. Citing this as a firm stance rather than a mere threat, Trump emphasized his administration's intent to protect American economic interests. The proposed tariffs are expected to strain trade relations with BRICS countries—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. This announcement follows Trump's earlier warning to the European Union to increase energy imports from the U.S. or face similar tariffs. Analysts warn such aggressive trade policies could further destabilize global economic dynamics.

## RUSSIA WARNS AGAINST U.S. PANAMA CANAL TAKEOVER PLAN



Newly inaugurated U.S. President Donald Trump declared plans to “take back” the Panama Canal, calling it vital to American interests. In his speech, Trump criticized high tolls and alleged Chinese control over canal operations, suggesting potential military action to reclaim the waterway. Russia condemned these threats, asserting Panama's sovereignty and urging adherence to international treaties ensuring the canal's neutrality. Panamanian President José Raúl Mulino firmly rejected U.S. interference, stating that control over the canal is “non-negotiable.” The canal, a strategic maritime route linking the Atlantic and Pacific, handles 40% of U.S. container trade, heightening tensions over Trump's stance.

## US PROPOSES KOREAN-STYLE ARMISTICE FOR UKRAINE



The US is reportedly exploring a Korean-style armistice to address the Russia-Ukraine conflict, allowing Russia to retain 20% of Ukrainian territory under a monitored ceasefire. Both President-elect Donald Trump and outgoing President Joe Biden acknowledge the improbability of expelling all Russian forces, including from Crimea. European forces might oversee the ceasefire, while security guarantees are negotiated. Russia insists on Ukraine's neutrality and retention of its annexed regions. Ukrainian President Zelensky rejects formal territorial concessions but stresses diplomacy as a pathway forward. This proposal highlights a shift in the US stance and global efforts to stabilize the region.

## US DEPLOYS UPGRADED NUKES IN EUROPE



The United States has fully deployed upgraded B61-12 nuclear bombs across Europe, including bases in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Türkiye, as part of NATO's nuclear-sharing program. Reports suggest additional deployments to the UK are planned. This move, seen as bolstering NATO's nuclear deterrence, has drawn sharp criticism from Russia, which warns of a proportional response. Amid escalating tensions, Russia has tested its Oreshnik hypersonic missile and finalized plans to station these weapons in Belarus by 2025, further intensifying global concerns over nuclear brinkmanship.

## ISRAEL-HAMAS CEASEFIRE SPARKS HOPE



The Israel-Hamas ceasefire, effective January 19, 2025, brings cautious hope for peace after 15 months of intense conflict. Celebrations erupted in Gaza as displaced Palestinians began returning home despite the delay in truce implementation. The ceasefire's first phase includes releasing 33 hostages by Hamas and hundreds of Palestinian detainees by Israel. Humanitarian aid is set to increase significantly. However, challenges loom as negotiations for the ceasefire's second phase approach. With infrastructure severely damaged and thousands displaced, Gaza faces a long road to recovery. The truce signals a step toward peace but remains fragile.

## HASINA SURVIVES ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT



Former Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina revealed surviving an assassination attempt last August, minutes before fleeing to India during intense student protests. The unrest, triggered by controversial government job quotas, resulted in over 500 deaths and forced Hasina to abandon her residence. Currently residing in India without formal asylum, she faces extradition demands by the interim Bangladeshi government, accusing her of complicity in protest-related violence. India recently extended her visa despite cancelled passports by Dhaka authorities, highlighting diplomatic challenges while maintaining bilateral ties.

## IRAN, RUSSIA PLAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENTS



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow to advance agreements on building a nuclear power plant in Iran. The leaders also prepared to sign a 20-year strategic partnership treaty, signalling strengthened ties amid Western concerns. This pact is expected to include defence collaboration, raising alarms over Iran's drones reportedly used in Ukraine and alleged missile transfers to Russia, which Tehran denies. Both nations assert that their cooperation is not aimed at other countries. The visit, Pezeshkian's first to the Kremlin since taking office, marks a deepening alignment between the two sanctions-hit states.

## CHINA PROBES US CHIP EXPORTS



China's Commerce Ministry announced an investigation into US exports of "mature chips," alleging unfair subsidies that harm domestic industries. Unlike high-end chips for AI, these are used in everyday products like home appliances. The move follows recent US export rules restricting advanced chip technology to China, as part of efforts to limit rivals' access to critical tech. Beijing claims US subsidies provide an unfair advantage, while the Biden administration's measures aim to maintain competitive edges in tech. Details about the investigation's timeline remain unclear.



# DAVOS 2025: A PLAYGROUND FOR THE ELITE?

## ECO SYSTEM

*The World Economic Forum (WEF) 2025 in Davos continues to be a focal point for global leaders and business elites. While known for shaping policies and fostering collaborations, it faces criticism for being an exclusive, elite-dominated event. Protests over inequality, climate inaction, and lack of representation highlight growing concerns. Despite attempts at inclusivity with themes like "Rebuilding Trust," the WEF must translate its vision into concrete action, fostering transparency and representation to remain relevant in addressing global challenges.*

**DR SANDEEP SHASTRI , FORMER VICE CHANCELLOR AND SENIOR POLITICAL SCIENTIST ALONG WITH ASSISTANT PROFESSOR DR SANJAL SHASTRI FOR TNJ**

### REPUTATION THAT PRECEDES

The World Economic Forum (WEF) to be held in Davos towards the end of January has attracted considerable attention. Though the WEF is a private, non-governmental organization, it has over the years attracted several major world leaders. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the WEF summit in 2018, delivering the keynote address. Other world leaders like Xi Jinping, Nelson Mandela, and Jair Bolsaloro have also participated in the WEF. While the WEF is a private corporate event, given the presence of important business

and political figures, it has important policy and diplomatic implications. Important international agreements like the deal between Israel and the Palestinian Authority in 1994 were signed on the sidelines of the WEF meeting.

Over the past several years the WEF has come under severe criticism. In a world that is rife with inequality, the WEF is seen as an elite person's club, a representation of all that is wrong with the international system. The hefty attendance fees make attending the WEF only possible for the extremely



wealthy and influential. Non-whites, women, and members from less developed economies are under-represented at the summit. Yet, despite the lack of diversity and representation, the WEF wields enormous influence when it comes to policymaking. Therefore, the question naturally arises, does the WEF represent all segments within the international system? Is it an organization that only serves the interest of the elite? If so, how can the WEF address some of these concerns? These are some of the questions this piece tries to answer.

and his supporters often talk about the ‘deep state’, a network of un-elected bureaucrats who exert a strategic influence on policy matters. Similar accusations have been made by common citizens across the world. There is a popular perception in several democracies that despite electing leaders through a popular vote, the policy-making process is inherently opaque, with unelected individuals having undue influence. The WEF’s opaque structure, high registration fees, and closed-door discussions open it up to similar accusations. The closed-door interactions between

*Protests at Davos spotlight frustrations over corporate influence and exclusivity, as activists demand democratized decision-making and tangible action on pressing issues like climate change and inequality.*



## A POPULAR PERCEPTION

The annual WEF has at many times been met with protests. In 2023, climate activists held widespread protests on the summit’s sidelines. They accused business and political leaders of doing precious little to address concerns over climate change. They wanted climate issues to get greater attention at the summit. Similarly, in 2022, protests were organized with slogans like ‘smash WEF’ being raised. The summit was accused of being a forum for ‘crony capitalists’ to further their business interests at the cost of the larger public good. Almost every WEF summit has been accompanied by protests by various organizations ranging from climate activists to those calling for greater democratization in global decision making and cutting down the influence of corporate organizations in policymaking.

These repeated protests on the sidelines of the WEF underscore an important point. Popular perception sees this event as an elite club. This perception speaks to a common concern people around the world have. In the US, Trump

the super-rich and policymakers make these perceptions and criticisms more credible.

## ADDRESSING POPULAR CONCERNS

The WEF leadership has taken several steps to address some of the key concerns. The conference themes have reflected issues of larger global interest. ‘Rebuilding Trust’ is the central theme of the 2025 summit. Likewise in the past, summits have focused on issues like sustainability, inclusion, shared norms, and responsibility. They have also funded research that focuses on issues like climate change and inequality. In the shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic, the WEF proposed the ‘green recovery’ strategy. This plan would build sustainability and equality in the world’s attempt to navigate out of the Covid crisis.

These attempts by the WEF have tried to undo some of the negative publicity that the forum has gathered over the years. Despite these attempts, strong criticism of the forum still exists. Critics argue, that the talk of sustainability and

equality is just on paper and there is no tangible action taken on the ground. At the end of the day, the forum is still inaccessible to the common citizen. Closed-door meetings between business leaders and policymakers remain an important element. With it comes to ensuring transparency and a more diverse representation, the WEF has still not taken any tangible action.

moment, these are mainly coming out in the form of reports and policy briefs but no actionable plans. Given the WEF's extensive influence, it has the potential to push important changes regarding global climate policy.

At the end of the day, one cannot overlook the extensive influence an organization like WEF wields. By walking the

***To rebuild trust, the WEF must reduce entry fees, facilitate diverse voices, and prioritize actionable solutions over rhetoric, ensuring its policies reflect global interests equitably.***



## WALK THE TALK

As we prepare for WEF 2025, what is the way forward? In a world marked by inequality, does the WEF hold any relevance? As much as the WEF has been at the receiving end of rightful criticism, the event still holds significant influence in shaping global policy on key issues. The forum's influence can be used to shape global policy on key issues like climate change. For this, the WEF needs to go beyond merely including words like sustainability and inclusiveness in the annual theme. These words have to be matched with clear action. Importantly, the forum needs to be made more accessible. Abolishing the sky-high registration fees would be a good first step. This will need to be done alongside inviting and sponsoring participants from the global south. This way, the forum would have greater representation from other regions of the world.

The extensive talk about inclusiveness and sustainability will need to be translated into concrete policy. At the

talk on issues like inclusiveness and sustainability, the forum can address some of its harshest critics and bring in meaningful changes on the ground. One would be hoping the members of the forum make a genuine effort to translate all the words into tangible action.

This year the summit focuses on Rebuilding Trust. The building blocks for creating a trusted ecosystem revolve around representation, equitable participation, transparency, and targeted and enunciated action plans. Rebuilding Trust as a goal assumes that there exists a trust deficit. Bridging this deficit is a key goal the summit needs to pursue.

*(Dr Sandeep Shastri is the former Vice Chancellor of JLU and currently the Vice President (Bangalore campus) NITTE Education Trust. Dr Sanjal Shastri is an Assistant Professor of FLAME University, Pune. The views expressed are of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Journal.)*

# SOUTH KOREA'S SELF-COUP FIASCO

## INVESTIGATING

*South Korea is undergoing a legal-constitutional crisis. Early last month, the President of the country Yoon Suk Yeol tried to impose martial law on the nation on the pretext of curbing anti-national activities and ensuring the security of the country. This drastic measure, marked by arrests and the suspension of Parliament, violated the Constitution. The backlash led to his impeachment and legal battles, leaving the nation polarized. Rival factions rally in Seoul, intensifying uncertainty.*



**AMBASSADOR JEITENDRA TRIPATHI, IFS (RETD)  
FOR TNJ**

If we look at the timeline of the developments that unfolded last year, it all happened in 11 days. On 3rd December 2024, accusing the major opposition party Democratic Party of anti-state activities, President Yoon Suk Yeol declared martial law which resulted in the suspension of the parliament, arrest of Democratic Party (DPK) leaders along with some prominent members of his party- Peoples Progressive Party (PPP), and the prohibition on “gathering of the National Assembly”.

This announcement of martial law was made by the president on national TV late on the night of 3rd December. Surprisingly, the Prime Minister of the country was kept out of the loop and it is alleged that only the “Choongam Group” (the ministers who had studied with the president in the Choongang School, Seoul) were consulted. The premises of the National Election Commission too were raided.

## THE AFTERMATH

However, in the wee hours of the next day, the members gathered on the premises of the National Assembly (N.A.) and 190 members out of the total strength of 300 unanimously passed a resolution to lift martial law. This included 172 members of opposition and curiously, 18 of the President’s PPP. On 7th December, President Yoon apologized to the nation and promised not to repeat this act.

Despite the apology, on 14th December, he was impeached by the National Assembly and was suspended from office. 204 members, including 12 from PPP, voted for the impeachment. Prime Minister Han-Duck-Soo took over as the acting president but he too was impeached on 27th December by a majority (192 members) of the NA. A committee comprising 18 members (10 from DPK, 7 from PPP, and one independent) was formed to look into this



matter and submit its report in two months. Parallely, a case was filed in the West District court of Seoul against the deposed president but Yoon refused to appear on the pretext that whatever he did was in the interest of the nation. When a second summons from the court too was not entertained by Yoon, currently holed up in the Presidential Palace surrounded by his security guards, a third summon was issued on 11th January and the impeached president expressed his inability to appear before the court citing his security risks.

Since then, the people from rival factions have been demonstrating on the roads of the capital Seoul and the Chief of Presidential

Security has also resigned citing death threats. The matter is still in the court which is yet to decide on its next course of action.

Yoon, who is a former Prosecutor General of South Korea, was sworn in as president after the general elections in 2022. The two years after the election, Yoon witnessed

*President Yoon's actions, driven by political schisms and shrinking support, highlight deep divides within South Korea's leadership, raising questions about governance and constitutional adherence.*

## DECRYPTING THE EVENTS

While Yoon Suk Yeol still tries to defend his actions as necessary to prevent anti-national activities in the country because of North Korea's actions including flying the so-called "balloons" over South Korean air space, it is also believed that the balloon fear was stage-managed by him to create an excuse for imposition of martial law. What does the Constitution say about the procedure of such an imposition? Article 77 of the South Korean Constitution of 1987 provides that "The President must immediately notify the National Assembly of the imposition of martial law. The National Assembly can lift it with a simple majority and the President shall comply."

frequent floor-crossing by many members of The N.A. As a result of the elections for the National Assembly in April 2024, the Democratic Party of Korea, the main opposition group, retained its majority but fell short of a two-thirds majority in the House of 300 members as it won only 176 seats.

Emboldened by this slimming of DPK's presence in the National Assembly, the President tried to impede the N.A. from carrying out legislative procedures. It was then that the leader of the opposition, Lee Jae Myung, expressed fear that Yoon might manoeuvre to de-stabilize the House. Since the election of Yoon in 2022, more than eight criminal cases have been slapped on the leader of the opposition Lee



Also, the National Assembly cannot be suspended and no member of the National Assembly can be arrested or detained except when caught in the act of committing a crime. Thus, it was clear that President Yoon acted in clear violation of the constitution.

Now, one may ask what prompted him to impose martial law which is the 17th such measure since South Korea's independence in 1948 but first since the current constitution came into force in 1987. The political schism started when

who terms it as a political witch-hunting, an allegation that is likely to be true.

The international media was quick to comment on the developments on 3rd December. While The Associated Press termed this "an attempted self-coup," the "Reporters without Borders" criticised the presidential act as "particularly concerning given his demonstrated hostility toward critics since his election". While the spokesman in the U.S. Department of State, Vedant Patel expressed a grave concern,

Kurt Campbell, the Deputy Secretary of State called it “badly misjudged.”

might be in contention with 8.7%, & 7.1% and 2.8% support respectively.

***The Democratic Party's centre-left agenda could reshape South Korea's diplomatic ties, potentially favouring dialogue with North Korea and balancing relations with China, Russia, and the West.***



## THE NEXT CHAPTER

The question is what happens now? The court has 180 days to pronounce its verdict. If it is against Yoon, elections for a new president must be held within two months of such pronouncement. In case Yoon is evicted, who are the likely candidates for the next election? Lee Jae Myung, the leader of DPK, who lost the last election to Yoon by a razor-thin difference of 0.69%, will be a potential candidate from the opposition as he enjoys, according to the latest survey, 36% of the voters surveyed. He might be challenged by Kin Dong-Yeon (the current governor of Gyeonggi province).

However, there is a long list of possible contenders from the PPP. Han Dong Hoon, a minister in Yoon's cabinet who voted in favour of the impeachment motion and later resigned in late December, is a potential candidate with a latest popular inclination of 6.5%. The other candidates Hoong Joon-Pyo (Mayor of Daegu), Oh Se-hoon (mayor of Seoul), and Ah Cheol-Soo (member of National Assembly)

It is evident that the PPP of the impeached president has hit the nadir of popularity during the last two years as the president's support from the people dived to 17% only in November. So, the center-left DPK of Lee Jae Myung stands a good chance to grab the top post from the conservative PPP of the impeached president. If this happens, one can see a resumption of dialogues with North Korea, a move to improve relations with China and Russia while, at the same time, retaining ties with the U.S.A. and the West. However, it all depends on the mood of the voters at the time of the election if Yoon is evicted by the court.

*(Ambassador Jeitendra Tripathi, IFS (Retd.), Former Ambassador to Zimbabwe. He has vast experience in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America. He was also India's Ambassador to Zimbabwe. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Journal.)*

# GLOBAL EVENTS

## SECUREX SOUTH AFRICA | 2025

**Securex West Africa 2025:** It is the largest exhibition for commercial, cyber, perimeter, homeland security, fire, and safety in West Africa. It is planned from 11 - 13 March, 2025. It engages over 3,000 highly focused professionals in Africa's largest economy.

It aims to strengthen your presence in West Africa, gain insights into market demands and growth opportunities, or drive sales, Securex West Africa provides an unparalleled opportunity to connect with the targeted market face-to-face.

*Official site: <https://www.securexwestafrica.com/>*

**Emerging & Disruptive Technology for Defense 2025 :** The event is scheduled from 19-20 March, 2025. It is designed to bridge the gap between key stakeholders, foster collaborative partnerships, and provide access to unique expertise.

The conference will convene senior leaders from the US Department of Defense, Five Eyes nations, NATO, academia, and industry innovators. Together, they will advance the dialogue on establishing common IT frameworks, implementing AI-enabled technologies, and digitizing the armed forces.

Operating under the Chatham House Rule, the conference ensures confidentiality with no media or press in attendance. Participants are strictly vetted, and admission is restricted to approved citizens only. Join us to be part of this pivotal discussion on the future of defense technology.  
*Official site: <https://www.americanconference.com/emergingtechnology/>*



**World Border Security Congress 2025 :** The World Border Security Congress is a premier three-day event uniting international experts in border security, migration management, and protection. This high-level forum will examine policies, address challenges, and explore advanced technologies shaping secure border and migration systems.

Spain's strategic location between Africa and Europe creates unique border challenges, with the Canary Islands and enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla as key entry points for migrants and trafficked goods. Patrolling extensive maritime borders demands resources, while dismantling decentralized trafficking networks remains complex.

The Congress offers a vital platform for fostering global cooperation, sharing insights, and advancing innovative solutions for a safer, more secure future. Official site: : <https://world-border-congress.com/>

# AHEAD



**UDT 25 :** The event is planned from 25-27 March 2025. Undersea Defence Technology (UDT) is the largest global event dedicated to the advancement of undersea defence. This multi-faceted exhibition and conference reflects the community's commitment to continuous learning and development. Over three days, UDT gathers the brightest minds in the defence industry from Europe and beyond.

Designed to equip nations to address a growing diversity of threats and challenges, UDT brings together researchers, military end-users, and professionals from across the entire supply chain. Participants will have the opportunity to evaluate emerging solutions in one of the harshest environments known to man. Join us to explore the latest innovations and strategies in undersea defence technology  
Official site : <https://www.udt-global.com/>

**6th Aerospace & Defence MRO South Asia Summit 2025 :** At the Aerospace Defence MRO South Asia Summit, organized by the Aerospace Media Group, returns on March 26–27, 2025, at its prestigious new venue, the India International Convention Centre (IICC), Yashobhoomi, New Delhi. Co-located with MRO XPO India and Aircraft Interiors India, the event offers a larger and more dynamic platform than ever.

South Asia's MRO industry, fueled by rising air traffic and strategic importance, is rapidly expanding, with India leading the charge. Valued at \$2.6 billion, India's MRO sector is projected to surpass \$4 billion by 2030 under the "Make in India" initiative.  
Official site: <https://mrosouthasia.com/>



**Military Robotics and Autonomous Systems 2025 :** Join us for the 2025 Military Robotics & Autonomous Systems (MRAS) Conference, now expanded and more impactful than ever. In today's volatile world, where conflict risks are escalating, integrating robotics and autonomous systems (RAS) has become critical for minimizing risks while enhancing operational efficiency and capacity.

With uncrewed systems increasingly deployed in Ukraine and NATO nations conducting tactical experiments with mission-ready UXS, the RAS community must focus on safe and effective implementation.

MRAS 2025 includes a dedicated focus day and four specialized streams, offering invaluable insights into global RAS programs, capabilities, challenges, and future opportunities in military robotics.  
Official site: <https://www.smgconferences.com/defence/uk/conference/robotic-autonomous-systems>



# ON THE WAY TO 6G: ADVANCEMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

## DEEP-TECH

*Every 10 years, a new generation of mobile networks changes the world. 2G enabled SMS, 3G brought the internet to your pocket, 4G built the app economy, and 5G powered AI-driven automation. But 6G? It's about to rewrite the rules. This article understands technical details of 6G lucidly. You can't afford to ignore it.*



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

Mobile communication has evolved through multiple generations, each improving spectral efficiency and user experience. The shift from simple voice calls to a reality where billions of devices seamlessly exchange data has transformed industries and daily life. The early days of mobile technology relied on Time Division Multiple Access (TDMA) in 2G, followed by Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) and Orthogonal Frequency Division Multiplexing (OFDM) in later generations. Each technique played a role in maximizing how efficiently data was transmitted over limited frequency resources.

To understand why each generation achieves higher transmission speeds than its predecessor, it's important to

consider how wireless networks utilize channels. A channel serves as the medium through which information is exchanged between devices. In earlier generations, networks allocated fixed time slots (TDMA) or unique codes (CDMA) to manage data transmission efficiently. However, as demand grew, these approaches struggled to accommodate the increasing number of users.

Frequency bands, the specific ranges of electromagnetic frequencies used for transmitting signals, became another critical factor in mobile evolution. By the time 4G emerged, networks adopted OFDM, which splits the spectrum into multiple subcarriers, reducing interference and allowing data to flow smoothly over longer distances. Instead of



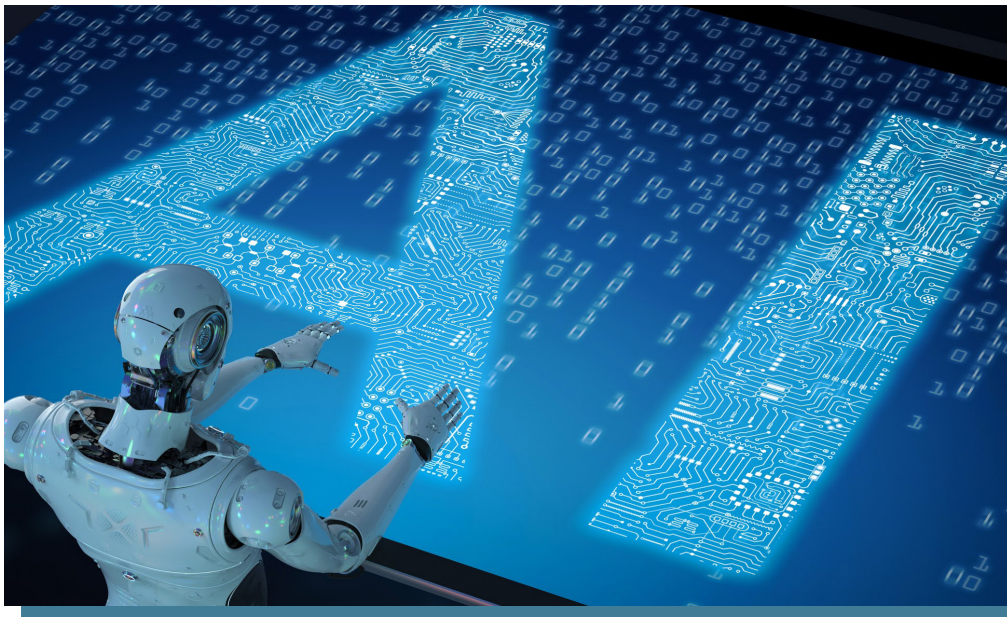
sending information through a single frequency, OFDM enabled parallel transmission across smaller channels, greatly improving efficiency.

To further enhance reliability, modern networks also combat issues like multipath fading, which occurs when signals take multiple paths due to reflections and obstructions. This results in interference or weakened signals. By leveraging techniques like massive MIMO (Multiple Input Multiple Output) and beamforming, 5G significantly improved signal strength and speed. Massive MIMO uses multiple antennas at base stations to serve multiple users simultaneously, while beamforming ensures that signals are directed precisely to the intended recipient rather than being broadcast indiscriminately.

dropped calls, improve connectivity in high-traffic areas, and ensure a seamless user experience. For instance, during large events, the network could automatically prioritize essential services without manual reconfiguration.

A significant leap forward in digital interaction will come through holographic communication. Unlike standard video calls, which transmit flat images on a screen, this technology will allow real-time, three-dimensional projections of individuals. This could transform virtual meetings, education, and remote collaboration, making interactions feel more natural. However, for this to work seamlessly, networks must achieve ultra-low latency and support immense data processing speeds—something 6G is being designed to handle.

*Frequency bands and advanced techniques like OFDM significantly improved data transmission efficiency, enabling smoother communication by splitting the spectrum into multiple subcarriers and reducing interference.*



Take a deep breath in. I know it's a bit too much. THz, AI, holographic communication. But, that's how technology is upgraded. If several devices, communication speed, and latency were a priority in 5G, 6G not only achieves but does it an order better with security. How do communication standards provide security?

Yes! You guessed it. Security will also reach new heights with quantum key distribution (QKD). To understand it easily, traditional encryption methods rely on mathematical complexity to deter hacking attempts, but as quantum computing

## CORE TECHNOLOGIES

6G aims to go beyond just improving speeds—it seeks to redefine how networks function. One of the most discussed advancements is the use of the Terahertz (THz) spectrum, which lies between microwave and infrared frequencies. This spectrum enables unprecedented data transmission rates, exceeding 1 terabit per second (Tbps). However, the challenge with THz waves is their limited range and difficulty in penetrating obstacles like walls. To address this, researchers are developing advanced beamforming techniques and intelligent relay systems that extend signal reach without excessive energy consumption.

Another major shift in 6G is AI-driven network automation. Unlike current networks that require human intervention for optimization, 6G will use artificial intelligence to analyze network traffic, detect congestion before it occurs, and allocate resources dynamically. This will drastically reduce

advances, these protections could become vulnerable. QKD employs the principles of quantum mechanics, where any attempt to intercept a communication alters its state, making unauthorized access immediately detectable. This approach provides an unprecedented level of security, ensuring that future digital communications remain tamper-proof.

## GLOBAL CHARACTERISTICS OF 6G

Another fundamental enhancement in 6G is edge computing. Today, most data processing happens in distant cloud servers, causing delays in response times. With 6G, more processing will occur closer to the user—whether in a device, vehicle, or local base station. This will be particularly crucial for applications such as self-driving cars, where split-second decisions can mean the difference between safety and accidents. A vehicle that processes its navigation data instead of relying on a distant server will be able to react faster to obstacles and changes in traffic conditions.



6G will also integrate communication with sensing capabilities. While 5G focuses on ultra-reliable low-latency communication (URLLC), 6G will enable networks to interpret and respond to environmental conditions. Road infrastructure, for example, will not only allow vehicles to communicate but also detect weather changes, road hazards, and traffic patterns in

efficiency, reducing human intervention while maintaining precision and quality.

Healthcare will also see revolutionary changes. Remote surgeries performed by robotic systems will become more reliable, enabling expert medical care in remote



real-time, improving safety and efficiency. This level of awareness could significantly benefit industries like disaster prevention, healthcare, and automated logistics. We have seen in the Russia-Ukraine war the role of drones and satellite communication. 6G in the architecture provides a clear road map for communication not only in the air but in the water as well.

areas. AI-powered diagnostics, combined with real-time patient monitoring through ultra-fast networks, will allow doctors to assess conditions with near-instant feedback. Wearable devices will go beyond simple fitness tracking to actively detect early signs of illness and provide actionable insights.

Beyond Earth, 6G will unify terrestrial, aerial, and space-based networks, making connectivity truly global. Remote regions, deep oceans, and even outer space missions will benefit from seamless communication. This expansion could unlock new possibilities for research, navigation, and emergency response, ensuring that no location remains digitally isolated.

Education and entertainment will evolve, offering more immersive and interactive experiences. Virtual classrooms will bridge geographical divides, allowing students to participate in lifelike digital learning environments. Gaming and media will become more engaging, with extended reality (XR) environments blending digital content with physical spaces to create truly interactive experiences.

*6G brings seamless communication across land, sea, and space, transforming industries worldwide. With technological advances like this, a world where connectivity feels as natural as breathing no longer seems distant.*

With AI ensuring network efficiency and satellite-backed communication providing seamless global coverage, 6G has the potential to erase technological barriers and create an interconnected digital world. The question no longer revolves around whether 6G will happen, but rather how prepared we are to harness its full potential. As we stand at the threshold of this new era, one thing is certain: the way we communicate, work, and interact with technology is about to undergo another profound transformation.

## THE FUTURE OF 6G

The arrival of 6G will transform industries and daily life in ways that go beyond speed improvements. Urban environments will become smarter, with real-time traffic management and infrastructure that adapts dynamically. Automated factories will leverage AI-driven robotics to improve production

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