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HERALD

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**WHEN
POWER BREEDS
ARROGANCE**

IN FOCUS

MOSSAD'S STRATEGIC HAND
BEHIND OPERATION RISING LION

BIG STORY

IS US PLAYING THE
ROGUE CARD?

COUNTERVIEW

INDIA'S GLOBAL ASPIRATIONS
AND THE EMERGING CHALLENGES

THE POWER PANEL



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|| FOREWORD



FROM INFLUENCE TO INTIMIDATION: THE POWER TRAP

The quote “Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely” can be changed slightly to fit today’s situation. Looking at U.S. President Donald Trump’s recent forceful actions in the economy, it would be more accurate to say: “Power leads to arrogance, and absolute power leads to absolute arrogance.” Riding to power on the wave of MAGA and anti-immigrant rhetoric, Trump has conveniently forgotten the cardinal truth of the contemporary world that no country can live in isolation, as interdependence is inevitable today.

Developments in any country have a ripple effect on other nations in varying degrees, depending on the geographical proximity or the intensity of bilateral relations. No country, however great, can afford to have a nationalist economic policy to the exclusion of other countries. USA’s economic policy, carefully crafted during many decades by the past leaders of the USA to keep its economic power formidable in the years to come due to liberal trade relations, has been thrown out of window by a politician with absolutely no experience in inter-state relations.

Trump must learn that everything in diplomacy, politics, or the economy is not just a “deal”. Sweeping unilateral coercive increase in tariffs, even for allies like Japan and South Korea, will send the wrong signals world over. Similarly, while threatening the BRICS with more sanctions for their “anti-American” and “anti-dollar” attitude, he forgets that he is taking on the BRICS+ with almost the same GDP as that of the USA! An overzealous drive for MAGA may result in global economic chaos, disruption of the supply chain, and eventually a huge recession in the USA.

This edition of *The News Analytics Herald* delves into these intricacies to find out the possibilities that may unfold and how India should remain vigilant for guarding its national interests.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeitendra Tripathi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Ambassador Jeitendra Tripathi IFS (R),
Former Ambassador to Zimbabwe

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE



WHEN POWER BREEDS ARROGANCE

As India prepares to celebrate its 78th Independence Day on August 15, 2025, the global landscape is once again being tested by the US President, Mr. Donald Trump. With his return to political prominence, Mr. Trump's renewed threats of punitive tariffs have reignited fears of

economic disruption across the world. His brand of unilateralism and economic nationalism, marked by excessive tariff measures, has targeted allies and adversaries alike, including key partners such as India.

In recent months, President Trump has openly criticised trade imbalances and threatened steep tariffs on Indian pharmaceuticals, tech services, and steel exports. These threats are less about economic reasoning and more about projecting dominance, an example of how power, when unchecked, can breed arrogance. Such rhetoric and actions not only undermine global trade norms but also destabilise the fragile balance of international diplomacy.

The current edition of The News Analytics Herald analyses the concerning signal emanating from the US and other global challenges that impact India in the near future. These developments serve as a sharp reminder of the unpredictability of the global order. As a rising power, India cannot afford to be a passive recipient of global headwinds. It must respond with strategic clarity, deepening diversified partnerships, investing in economic resilience, and asserting its own terms of engagement.

This Independence Day, the real celebration lies not just in honouring our past, but in preparing wisely for the future. India must navigate this evolving landscape with maturity, foresight, and resolve, ensuring that its voice remains independent, its economy resilient, and its global posture balanced in the face of growing uncertainty.

Jai Hind!

Sandhya Srivastava
Editor in Chief &
Business Director

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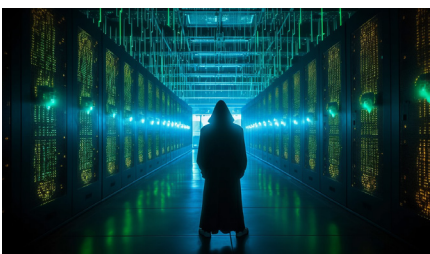


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MOSSAD'S STRATEGIC HAND BEHIND OPERATION RISING LION

IN FOCUS

The finer details and specifics of the success or failure of the recent Israel-Iran conflict will take some time to emerge, obfuscated by a bitter information war. However, what is undeniably and emphatically acknowledged is that Mossad has yet again proved its mettle. Mossad, combining technology with human operatives, both inside and outside Iran, conducting operations without any contest, has affirmed why it is the most feared and yet respected intelligence agency in the world.



LT GEN DP PANDEY(R)
FOR NEWS ANALYTICS

As the missiles and bombs started striking unsuspecting targets, killing and assassinating top military commanders and nuclear scientists, disabling key air defence establishments and damaging the uranium enrichment and other nuclear facilities, the world and especially the Iranian establishment were in shock at the precision and specificity of the attacks. Mossad's perfectionist approach to intelligence was again in evidence. Intelligence agencies of Israel had won the conflict

even before it began. Iran was made merely a pawn in the chessboard laid out by Mossad.

PRECISION INTELLIGENCE STRIKES

As key intelligence emerged that Iran was a few months away from enriching enough uranium to produce more than nine bombs, Israel had to be worried. Iran had its strategic orientation, "death to Israel", unchanged for more than 35



years. While Iran had a firm hold in the region as a key player through proxies such as Hamas, Hezbollah, Houthis, and others, who bombed, kidnapped, killed, and assassinated Israelis and anyone else who was a threat through explosive devices, rockets and missiles or even direct targeting. Nuclear weapon with Iran would have been the ultimate game changer in the region, making it the hegemonistic power with leverage, that all countries solicited, in a predominantly Sunni world. However, Iranian nukes had only one proclaimed target, Israel.

Overstretched, committed and nearing exhaustion, Israel was focused on destroying Hamas and extricating as many hostages as possible, not many were believed to be alive after 20 months of captivity since 07 October 2023. Only a few were released alive, a large number came in body bags, and the condition of the rest was largely unknown or unconfirmed. Israel was not

in a position to engage Iran militarily in a prolonged campaign, and the US administration was unwilling to intervene with force. Talks were not going anywhere, and the 60-day deadline given by the Trump administration was expiring on June 12, 2025.



AIR DEFENCE NEUTRALIZATION

Israel had no choice but to conduct a military strike across 1500 km that separated Iran along the land borders. As boots on the ground were not feasible, the air strike options had to be exercised against an equally powerful military. Iran was ranked 16th while Israel was 15th in the world military power index, with efficient and resilient air defence systems and equally dangerous long range strike ballistic missiles and combat unmanned systems in the inventory. The strike, when executed, had to be sharp, swift and short, achieving all possible end states, the principal one being destroying or at least damaging the nuclear program.

Operation Rising Lion, or Am Kalavi, from start to end, was an intelligence-based, intelligence-supported and more importantly, intelligence-driven military strike by Israel, the only type in the history of warfare. For the Israeli intelligence, there were three vital targets. The principal target was the nuclear program, which included the uranium enrichment facilities, storage areas, laboratories and the human knowledge base, that is, the lead scientists responsible for the program.

However, to facilitate the military operation of neutralising the nuclear program, there were three targets for intelligence acquisition and eventual targeting. The most critical target was the air defence systems, including radars, launchers, SAM storage areas, fixed wing assets and the Command & Control centres. These had to be destroyed or disabled through direct action by Special Forces, weapons or cyber-attacks to allow the Israeli Air Force to operate with impunity in the Iranian airspace.

The next important targets were the deadly ballistic missile

systems and long-range drones of Iran. These would have been the only major threat to Israel, military and civilians, at 1500 km. The centre of gravity of Israel was its population, and the Iranians were known to target it in a conflict scenario. While destruction of the ballistic missiles, launchers and the command control centres was impossible, a degradation of capacity would have given an edge and survivability to Israel in the long-distance aerial duels and its air defence systems to take on the expected but reduced onslaught.

TARGETED LEADERSHIP ELIMINATIONS

The last and the most important targets for intelligence were identifying, monitoring the movements and providing the pinpoint locations of the critical commanders, military and intelligence, who were required to be eliminated or neutralised to delay the response from Iran and create chaos for a period of time till the primary mission was completed.

The Israeli intelligence operation, as analysed, during the brief 12-day conflict with Iran in June 2025, had three unique, distinct, disparate yet overlapping components. The range and specialisation of tasking undertaken has never been undertaken by any other country since the Second World War. The first but obvious was intelligence data harvesting, confirming, authenticating and verifying over time for assurance of frequency and consistency. The movement pattern of the commanders, critical ones in an authoritarian regime, is highly secretive, inconsistent, and ever-changing. However, this extremely frequent movement was yet patterned.

Similarly, the air defence and ballistic missile systems also have regular changes in locations, changes in frequency of radio activity and other defensive measures to hide or deceive regarding their activity or presence. The intelligence gathering and confirmation were conducted through digital signatures and human resources on the ground. These actions were conducted prior to the strikes over months and years of investment of time and resources for an eventuality as had emerged.

The next task was the logistical support within the Iranian territory. It is believed that ballistic missile systems were inserted, and a covert base for the kamikaze drones was constructed near the capital city of Tehran. After that the Special Forces teams were infiltrated close to the commencement of Operation Rising Lion. These efforts allowed the launching of the missiles and kamikaze drones from the proximity of the targets, ensuring assured destruction and disablement. While the bombing or missile attacks on the nuclear facilities could be carried out by the Israeli Air Force but the real-time neutralisation of Air Defence systems and the military commanders required a short flight time and assured kills without raising attention.

Mossad's integration of cyber, human, and technological assets enabled Israel to dismantle Iran's defences, conduct targeted assassinations, and neutralise critical threats before retaliation.



CYBER-KINETIC INTEGRATION

The third component of the intelligence operation was direct kinetic operations. This is a matter of exception and not routine for intelligence operatives. Gathering information is par for the course, carrying out certain specialised assassinations or destruction of a target is also conducted by intelligence assets who prefer to operate alone or in very small teams. But in the instant operation, Mossad was complementing or



rather conducting, strikes ahead of the main effort on a large scale. Degrading the air defence systems by an intelligence operation, before the arrival of the Israeli Air Force, so that the Iranian airspace was owned, has been unheard of before. Combined with coordinated cyber-attacks, the physical strikes from within the territory of Iran were a marvel execution of an impossible plan. After all, the Iranian military was a professional and modern force to reckon with, both in terms of technology and committed personnel. As per inputs, the launch of kamikaze drones and the loitering missions was remotely controlled and disabled the air defence systems, paving the way for the Israeli Air Force operations with impunity. The air defence of Iran remained off and degraded till the last day of the operation. Seven B2 spirit bombers of USA that flew all across the Atlantic from their base in Missouri were able to conduct operations dropping GBU 5 MOP (Massive Ordnance Penetrator) on the nuclear facilities in Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan without being challenged over the 25 minutes they were in the Iranian air space on 22 June 2025, even after 10 days of the commencement of the conflict.

The backbone of the Iranian response, the ballistic missiles that could have caused critical and severe damage to the Israeli targets, military and civilian, traversing 1500 kms, were taken out of action before they could even participate in the Iranian retaliation. The actions taken by the intelligence assets for targeting the airfields and air assets kept the Iranian air force incapable of providing even a nominal fight.

The assassination of the most important commanders like the Commander in Chief of the Iranian military, the Commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the head of the IRGC's Aerospace Forces, among others, maimed the entire decision-making set-up. The critical time to launch a response was lost due to the absence of these key commanders.

LESSONS FOR INDIA

The intelligence operation conducted by the Israelis is instructive and was the reason why the conflict lasted only for a few days, wherein all mission objectives of Israel were achieved, and its efforts were met with minimal response from a paralysed Iranian force. The intelligence operations in the overwhelming success of Operation Rising Lion bring about significant lessons for the Indian security establishment. India is surrounded by a similar volatile and violent neighbourhood to that of Israel. The only difference is that the threat of anti-national forces is substantial within the country as compared to Israel.

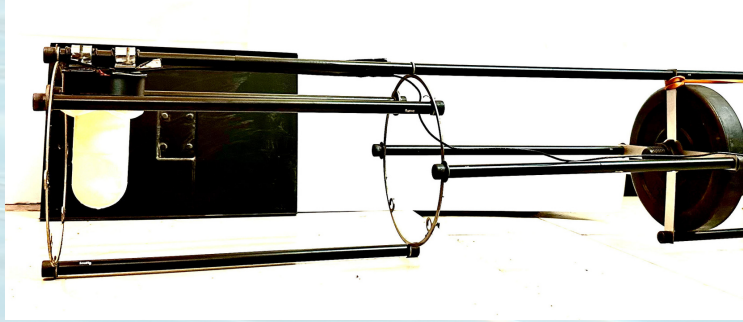
While the intelligence apparatus must prepare to thwart threats from within, it must scale up its capabilities during non-conflict periods to develop assets within target countries. It is also important that technology can be suitably leveraged for data harvesting, information denial, and targeting through both kinetic and non-kinetic assets in times of conflict.

*(Lt Gen DP Pandey (R), Former Corps Commander, Chinar Corps, DG Territorial Army, Director of Military Intelligence, Foreign Division and the Commandant of the Army War College, with experience of multiple tenures in conflict zones. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of **The News Analytics Herald.**)*

Seven U.S. B2 bombers struck Iranian nuclear sites unchallenged, dropping MOPs during a 25-minute mission on June 22, 2025.

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

- Israeli operation was an intelligence-led strike blending cyber, human, technology and kinetic tactics for swift success.
- Israeli intelligence crippled Iranian air defences, allowing Israeli and U.S. forces unopposed nuclear strikes.
- Coordinated assassinations of Iran's top commanders disrupted decision-making and delayed effective retaliation.
- Covert logistics and embedded assets within Iran enabled precise strikes and effective disruption operations.
- India should enhance its intelligence capacity using tech and human assets for proactive defence abroad.



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IS US PLAYING THE

BIG STORY

A series of controversial moves under President Trump's new administration, including renaming the Gulf of Mexico, teasingly suggesting Canada as the 51st state, issuing tariff threats to nations, and warning American IT companies from employing Indians, has triggered global disbelief. Despite tariff and employment cautions, most countries remain unfazed, prioritising their long-term national interests over sudden outbursts of American antipathy.

NEWS ANALYTICS EDITORIAL DESK

The arrival of Mr Donald Trump after a rollercoaster election in November last year, which saw an unprecedentedly bitter campaigning and a life-threatening attack on him, has been extremely eventful for the world to date. The Trump campaign would also not have anticipated such a last-mile change of fortune with Joe Biden unceremoniously withdrawing as the Democratic nominee, handing the baton to Ms Kamala Harris exactly three months before the Presidential elections.

Mr. Trump knew he was going for a home run, but the ballots were yet to be cast. With a clear eye on the domestic electorate Trump campaign went full steam ahead with an emotive and nationalistic stance on every issue that could possibly matter to a native American citizen. Mr. Trump's "Making America Great Again" catch phrase was swiftly transformed into an 'America First' approach. It was indeed a very innocent thought and cannot be faulted; for any country in the world would want to become a great nation.

The rest of the world wouldn't even have batted an eyelid, let alone gotten concerned about the whole issue. The problems were not the need for more employment for American people or the greater economic success of America, already the richest country in the world, or improving the safety and security of the land, which considers itself the most powerful and only superpower of the world. The issues, as it seems, were the interpretation of the rightful solution for each of them.

So, more employment for American people must translate into a denial of work visas and penalising American businesses for outsourcing work to offshore countries. Improvement in America's economic competitiveness was linked to the imposition of new tariffs on trading nations, turning harmless business tools into a threatening weapon. The enhancement of America's homeland security could only be realised after the mass deportation of 'suspected foreign nationals', making the law go to any length that might be required.



ROGUE CARD?

The deportation of unlawful immigrants is no one's argument that's a fair law in any country, but tweaking the existing policies to ensure automatic disqualification as lawfully residing individuals was definitely not the ideal way. The roundly criticised Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and its questionable methods, as reported by local media, to identify, detain, and deport immigrants, were likened by many to authoritarian behaviour. Within no time, President Donald Trump made it obvious to the rest of the World that America is closing down on itself, and America's relations with everyone are under scrutiny on a scale of business profit & loss. Indeed, the White House never shied away from suggesting everything is a 'deal' and every deal will be reviewed to benefit America.



The White House promotes a "one-man-knows-all" approach, but Trump's troubling policies are worsened by flawed execution.

PRESIDENCY 2.0

While President Trump kept his administration busy with figuring out all loopholes in the way America trades globally and handles domestic crises, time refused to pause, and global challenges continue to draw concerns in World capitals. The Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) kept issuing new guidelines on retrenchment as cost-cutting measures, not willing to budge, even for agencies directly responsible for its national security; coupled with methodologies adopted by ICE, a new dichotomy was erupting. A counteraction of policy measures not limited to the economy or trade, but expanding into a larger geopolitical domain.

America's new transitioned outlook has impacted bilateral and multilateral relations. The breakneck announcement on punitive tariffs against almost everyone on 2nd April was planned to demonstrate a tough President who literally means business, rather a one-way business. Its long-harnessed relations were allowed to get strained with major countries and trading partners, including its long-term allies like Canada, Europe, and Japan.

Six months into the Presidency 2.0, the global disbelief is palpable. There's an ongoing war in Ukraine, the Middle East conflict has expanded well beyond containment levels, with new fronts erupting now and then, America's ace card, NATO, is probably facing its gravest challenge since its

inception. China continues to grow with an unabated influence across major continents and non-traditional territories. America's only global challenger, Russia, shows no qualms about American deadlines, phone calls, or occasional disappointments and continues to go about business as usual. BRICS, a conglomerate of emerging powers, distanced from the written scripts of Western hegemonic groupings, had to witness strange sermons about 500% American tariffs against de-dollarisation. It's unmistakable, but the withering of American influence is working in parallel, and there must be some logical reasoning behind why it's so.

SHORT-TERM GAINS

Unfortunately, the voices emanating from the White House continue to argue on that "one man knows all" theory. The anticipated 'gains' for America must be being briefed regularly with bureaucratic finesse in the White House as a result of its newly adopted tough global stance on trade and engagements. Like more employment opportunities for American citizens, a rising stock exchange, and more favourable re-negotiated trade deals. But some observers

view things with a more balanced perspective. If the new policy adoption by the Trump Team is concerning, its execution is even more troubling.



The capacity of Trump's Team to manage sensitive issues has been exposed and questioned by many in recent times. Trump's National Security advisor suggested he 'accidentally' added The Atlantic editor-in-chief Jeffrey Goldberg on a social media group during planning of air attacks on Houthis, later President Trump clarified, he was not informed before authorising weapons transfer pause to Ukraine by his defence secretary, the amusing saga of one's most trusted lieutenant Mr Elon Musk detaching the umbilical from Team Trump has extensively been covered in the global media.



No nation follows foreign dictates blindly; diplomacy succeeds through mutual respect, not arrogance or coercive actions like threats.

The point is, Mr Trump may have carried his MAGA cap into the Oval Office, but when domestic policies impinge on global conduct, then there are other actors who get in the picture. Global geopolitics isn't a one-way door; it's rather a roundtable where every voice is valued, every flag is respected, it's indeed a much more serious business than the business America seems to be currently chasing.



its novelty now. From a so-called punitive reciprocal tariff on existing trade to no trade deal, to a 500% tariff for being party to the BRICS de-dollarisation agenda, to now a 100% tariff for oil trading with Russia. India has been “warned off everything”. However, barring American officials and a few others in the administration, no one appears to be overtly concerned about these daily threats. Surprisingly, countries are going about their national agenda, firm in their mind that their national interests are far more important. They understand there are other ways and means available to deal with it. Indeed, the shortest response on this ‘grave issue’ was by the Indian external affairs minister, who responded by saying, “We will cross that bridge when we come to it”, aptly sums up the global opinion!

America may be willing to believe its trade tricks will make the entire world fall in line. They started with China, it didn't work; they are now negotiating a trade deal. They warned American businesses about the Chip trade; it didn't work, NVIDIA has ‘successfully’ convinced the President of its pitfalls. Larger American businesses are already bluffing American systems by circumventing import procedures to cushion the tariff impact or authorising plans to relocate to a more business-friendly ecosystem where fluctuating American laws don't interfere with whims. Now, their suggestive warnings to India. A very basic understanding seems to have been missing in the current administration's calculations; interstate relations don't work on plain mathematics, there are many imponderables at play simultaneously. Shadow signalling only has some value, especially for those surviving on handouts like having lunch

UNCONTROLLED DAMAGE

The string of unsavoury incidents post-Trump 2.0 is essentially shocking for many analysts for their sheer geopolitical ramifications. The name change of the Gulf of Mexico to “Gulf of America” prompted disbelief and even some hilarious reactions, on the creation of a fictional “American Ocean,” right from nowhere. Mr Trump's suggestion of Canada becoming the “51st state,” going as far as calling PM of Canada a “Governor”. The new urge of President Trump to interact with visiting heads of state in full media glare in the Oval Office had resulted in a global broadcast of Mr Zelensky almost being run down by unpleasant comments not befitting of anyone representing the high office of the Presidency.

The Trump team was neither far behind with threats to countries they believe don't align with the President's ideas. After some half-hearted attempts to achieve a ceasefire in Ukraine, “within 24 hours” and finding Russia well prepared to play the hard ball, a 50-day ultimatum was shot off. Roughly bordering on the threat of “cease or else”. The outcome is anybody's guess. Next in line was India. Mr. Trump's warning to American IT giants to refrain from hiring Indians was preceded by another threat to stop oil trade with Russia or face a 100% tariff.

The story of the Trump Tariff appears to have started losing





hard-earned friends and partners sooner than it can generate wealth at home? Is this the definition of “economy at the lead” in global engagement means to the new administration? If America really sustains arrogance of its power, and continues playing the rogue card, there will be a global realignment in not too far in time, but evidently at a much faster pace than American diplomacy could handle!



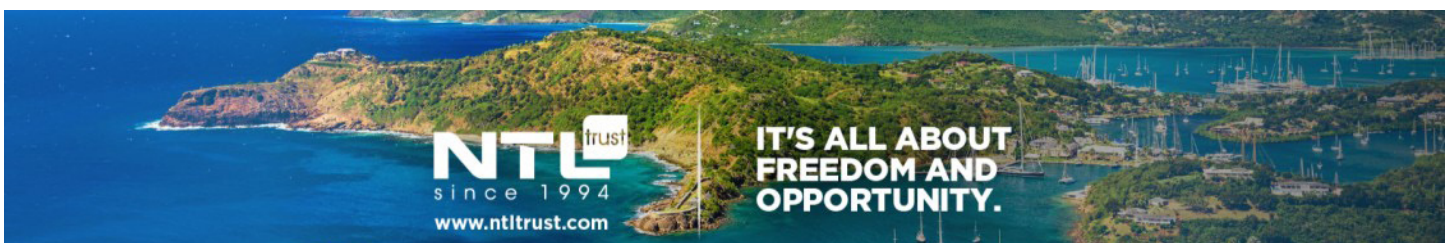
with a fresh new Field Marshal, but clear communication is priceless. Indian PM’s polite refusal to visit America from the G7 meet in Canada, citing prior commitments, was as clear a message as it could have been.

A nation, small or big, will not act on the dictates of a foreign country, no matter what. Hardly anyone is convinced that the American bombing of Iran has resulted in any alteration in the nation’s approach, let alone achieving Iran’s compliance with the diktats. Any understanding will invariably be on mutually beneficial and mutually respectful terms. The notion of arrogance is the least impressive trait in global diplomacy. China suffered for its so-called “lone wolf diplomacy”; unfortunately the America is treading the same path.

Someone needs to take the lead in Washington for a moment of reflection. Is America at a real risk of losing its very

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

- *Trump’s return transformed “America First” into strict nationalism, triggering global concerns and diplomatic unease.*
- *Economic goals led to harsh visa cuts, tariffs, and controversial immigration enforcement likened to authoritarianism.*
- *Trump’s policies strain alliances, eroding global trust and destabilising an already fragile geopolitical landscape.*
- *Short-term American gains risk long-term damage to credibility, diplomacy, and international cooperation.*
- *Global diplomacy needs respect and balance, not transactional deals driven by unilateral national interests.*



GLOBAL INFLUENCER

IRAN'S SUPREME LEADER

In recent weeks, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has emerged as a central figure not just in Tehran but on the global stage. Amid a dangerous military escalation with Israel, US airstrikes on Iranian nuclear sites, and a high-stakes ceasefire, Mr Ayatollah Ali Khamenei led from the shadows, shaping Iran's strategic posture, consolidating internal power, and recalibrating alliances. Whether declaring Iran would never surrender, overseeing high-level military appointments, or managing diplomatic currents with Saudi Arabia and Russia, he has shaped regional balance in one of the most volatile moments in recent memory.

NEWS ANALYTICS | Special Coverage

At 86, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei found himself at the helm during one of the most intense Israel–Iran confrontations in years. The conflict saw Israeli airstrikes on Iranian nuclear facilities, triggering retaliatory missile and drone strikes by Iran. In response, he remained largely out of sight, reportedly sheltering in a secure location, but maintained influence over critical decisions and messaging.

Following the ceasefire, his first televised message emphasised that Iran would continue to strike back at US bases if attacked. He rejected demands for surrender, asserting that Iran would never bow to external pressure. Though defiant, speculation about succession is growing. Observers are debating potential successors, including his son Mojtaba and key clerics, and whether the Supreme Leader is planning for a transition of power.



BUILDING HARD POWER

As the conflict receded, Mr Khamenei moved decisively to reinforce Iran's military and institutional core. There have been unconfirmed reports about the appointment of Ali Abdollahi Ali Abadi as the new commander of the powerful Khatam ol Anbia Central Headquarters, replacing his predecessor killed during the war. He also installed Brigadier General Majid Mousavi to lead the IRGC Aerospace Force, signalling renewed emphasis on missile and drone capabilities.

Khamenei also intervened domestically by urging the Iranian Parliament to align more closely with the executive branch during this period of crisis. These moves reflect his intent to recalibrate military strength and centralise authority to secure regime stability.

Despite the regional confrontation, Iran is nudging its way back into diplomatic engagement. A high-level Iranian diplomatic visit to Saudi Arabia marked a significant moment in Tehran's efforts to de-escalate and rebuild relations following the years-long rivalry. While formal normalisation remains uncertain, the dialogue indicates a pragmatic shift in Iran's foreign policy posture.

Iran has also deepened its partnership with Russia. Russian support throughout the conflict and the signing

OF THE MONTH

AYATOLLAH ALI KHAMENEI

of a renewed comprehensive strategic partnership underscore Tehran's pivot toward Moscow. This reflects Mr Khamenei's strategy of counterbalancing Western influence with stronger Eastern alignments.

MANAGING GLOBAL CONCERNS

Following the conflict, several hardline clerics issued fatwas calling for extreme punishments against political enemies, including US President Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu. These statements, while not official government policy, reflect the ideological extremes that continue to define parts of Iran's political discourse.

Domestically, Iran saw an increase in arrests related to espionage and political dissent. Over 700 individuals were reportedly detained, with a wave of executions and forced disappearances. This intensification of crackdowns also underscores Iran's resolve to suppress dissent and maintain regime control.

Despite the escalation, Iran has reopened diplomatic channels with European nations. Nuclear talks involving the UK, France, and Germany have resumed, reflecting a willingness to engage selectively with the international community. While Iran remains firm on its right to enrich uranium, this renewed dialogue suggests that Tehran is seeking economic relief and global legitimacy. Mr Khamenei's strategy appears to involve resisting militarily while engaging diplomatically, a balancing act that reinforces Iran's position without complete international isolation.



BALANCING DEFIANCE AND DIPLOMACY

Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has demonstrated that authoritarian resilience and geopolitical boldness still shape global security. By directing Iran's military posture, reinforcing leadership structures, centralising domestic authority, managing provocative rhetoric, nudging diplomacy with key global players, and reopening nuclear negotiations, he has asserted a multi-faceted approach to leadership.

Whether Iran advances a path toward complete de-escalation or doubles down on revolutionary ideology, the influence of Mr Khamenei extends well beyond Iran's borders. His ability to balance war tactics with political engagement, control internal dissent, and navigate shifting alliances makes him "*Global Influencer of the Month*", a figure whose decisions continue to impact regional and international geopolitics.

BEYOND THE UNEASY CALM

INSIGHT

A ceasefire between Iran, Israel, and the United States (US) on June 24 provided at least a temporary halt to nearly two weeks of war, with all sides claiming victory. While Israel and the U.S. boasted about crippling Iran's nuclear programme, Iran trumpeted its 'successful' retaliation, claiming to have shattered the myth of Israeli invincibility. Yet these apparent victories mask an unresolved reality: the core tensions that sparked the conflict persist.



DR. AFTAB ALAM
PROFESSOR AND HoD STRATEGIC & SECURITY STUDIES, AMU
FOR NEWS ANALYTICS

The current round of crisis started on June 8, 2025, when Israel launched coordinated air strikes deep inside Iran, reportedly crippling key military and nuclear installations and killing several top IRGC commanders and nuclear scientists. The strikes killed over 900 people—including 300 civilians, tragically many of them children—with thousands more wounded. Even residential areas and a children's hospital were not spared.

Undeterred by this, and displaying both resilience and resolve, Iran retaliated swiftly and forcefully, unleashing waves of drones and ballistic missiles. While Israel's sophisticated missile defences intercepted the majority, the salvo nonetheless inflicted notable damage.

In Tel Aviv, strikes shattered parts of a prominent biotechnology

research centre and severely damaged a commercial high-rise that housed Microsoft's Israeli offices. Most gravely, civilian areas bore the brunt of the assault, resulting in the deaths of at least 27 civilians, with scores more injured. Beyond the immediate physical destruction, these attacks critically punctured the long-held perception of Israeli military invincibility.

The crisis has reinforced a dangerous cycle of attack and retaliation, revealed the failure of deterrence and pushed the Middle East closer to a broader war.

HISTORICAL ROOTS

The roots of this confrontation run deep, shaped by decades of bitter hostility and strategic rivalry. Israel and Iran were



once unlikely partners under the Shah, cooperating quietly on security and economic matters. But the 1979 Iranian Revolution transformed Iran into an avowedly anti-Israel theocracy, branding Israel the “Little Satan” and pledging unwavering support to militant groups like Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad.

Over the decades, Tehran’s leaders, from Ayatollah Khomeini to Supreme Leader Khamenei, have repeatedly declared Israel an illegitimate state destined for collapse, with incendiary statements—such as former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s infamous call for Israel to be “wiped off the



map”—reinforcing Israel’s sense of existential peril. In turn, Israel has pursued aggressive covert and overt campaigns to undermine Iran’s regional influence and nuclear programme, including the assassinations of Iranian nuclear scientists and cyber operations like Stuxnet.

In recent years, Israel escalated its campaign against Iran’s nuclear programme and regional proxies—assassinating scientists, bombing Syria-bound arms shipments, and launching daring cyber-attacks. Iran retaliated with drone strikes on Israeli-linked tankers, enriched uranium to near-weapons-grade levels, and plotted attacks against Jewish targets abroad. The dam broke in April last year when Israel struck the Iranian consulate in Damascus, killing Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Zahedi, a senior Quds Force commander, along with other high-ranking IRGC officials.

This brazen operation, widely condemned as a violation of diplomatic protections, triggered Tehran’s unprecedented direct missile barrage that fundamentally altered regional deterrence dynamics and set the stage for even broader confrontations. Finally, in June, a long-simmering conflict that once operated through proxies erupted into direct military confrontation between two of the Middle East’s most powerful and ideologically opposed states, with implications that could ignite a much wider war.

A HESITANT AMERICA STEPS IN

The U.S. entered this volatile crisis with visible reluctance. President Donald Trump, freshly returned to power on his ‘America First’ platform, had vowed to disentangle the

country from costly overseas confrontations and focus on domestic revival under the “Make America Great Again” banner. Conscious of public fatigue with Middle Eastern conflicts and still harbouring ambitions of securing a Nobel Peace Prize for brokering international accords, Trump resisted being pulled into another regional confrontation.

However, under mounting pressure from military advisers, congressional hawks, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s vigorous lobbying for strong U.S. action, Washington ultimately struck Iran’s nuclear facilities on June 22—including the heavily fortified Fordow site with bunker-busting bombs that Israel could not penetrate, along with two other key installations at Natanz and Isfahan.

For Netanyahu, drawing Washington deeper into the confrontation served dual purposes: bolstering Israel’s deterrence posture and deflecting from intense domestic scrutiny over corruption trials and fractious coalition politics at home. Caught between allied pressure and hawkish demands from military advisers and Congress, Trump ultimately authorised the strikes. Thus, despite its initial reticence, the U.S. found itself pulled into the heart of another Middle Eastern escalation—precisely the scenario Trump had pledged to avoid.

As the fighting pauses, one big question remains: where will this dangerous cycle end, and how much more will it shake an already unstable region? What matters now is not who won—it is what happens next.

DOOMSDAY RHETORIC

At its core, the friction between Israel and Iran has long centred on the spectre of Iran’s nuclear ambitions. For more than thirty years, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has persistently warned that Iran is just “weeks away” from



creating a nuclear weapon—deadlines that never arrived and predictions that never materialised. As far back as 2002, while appearing before a U.S. congressional committee, he advocated for the invasion of Iraq, suggesting that both Iraq and Iran were racing to obtain nuclear weapons. Later, in



2007, he compared Iran to Nazi Germany, warning it would "start a world war" if it got the bomb.

His doomsday rhetoric continues even today, despite the United Nations (UN) nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and U.S. intelligence confirming that Iran halted its weapons programme as far back as 2003.



By weaponising the spectre of an Iranian nuke, Netanyahu successfully galvanised global support, pressuring allies to maintain sanctions and justifying covert sabotage (e.g., Stuxnet), targeted assassinations of Iranian scientists, and even pre-emptive strikes.

However, this persistent alarm over Iran's nuclear ambitions also starkly exposes the selective anxieties and normative double standards that shape the global nuclear order. While Western powers demand that Iran forswear even the latent capacity for nuclear weapons, they remain largely silent on Israel's undeclared but widely recognised nuclear arsenal.

These strikes likely violate international law. Their invocation of self-defence under the UN Charter fails to meet established legal thresholds: the Caroline Case standard (1837) of an 'instant, overwhelming' threat—reaffirmed by the International Court of Justice in Nicaragua (1986) and Oil Platforms (2003). International law permits self-defence only against actual armed attacks or imminent threats, leaving no room for deliberation. Yet the U.S.-Israel operations were pre-emptive, targeting speculative future risks rather than responding to an imminent attack. Such preventive use of force lacks any

basis in the UN Charter or customary law, creating a perilous precedent that could legitimise virtually any act of aggression under mere suspicion of threat.

BEYOND THE FRAGILE CALM

The implications of this confrontation extend well beyond Iran and Israel, casting a profound shadow over an already volatile Middle East and unsettling foundational tenets of the international order. At the regional level, it threatens to entrench the area in a perilous cycle of reprisals that could escalate into a broader conflict, drawing in proxies from Lebanon to Yemen and jeopardising global energy supplies. Strategically, the normalisation of pre-emptive force under the rubric of self-defence undermines the collective security framework enshrined in the UN Charter.

Most critically, it further marginalises the Palestinian question—the conflict's original fault line—thereby pushing the prospect of a just resolution ever more distant and deepening the grievances that extremist actors readily exploit. In this manner, the crisis not only destabilises the Middle East and erodes global non-proliferation norms but also perpetuates the unresolved injustices at the core of the region's enduring instability.

Ultimately, the uneasy calm now settling over the region constitutes little more than a reprieve. The underlying disputes—Iran's contested nuclear aspirations, Israel's existential insecurities, America's evolving strategic priorities, and the long-neglected plight of the Palestinians—remain wholly unaddressed. Left to fester, these unresolved crises virtually ensure that today's fragile pause will give way to tomorrow's renewed conflagration.

What emerges most starkly from this latest standoff is that deterrence, far from ensuring stability, amounts to a brittle façade masking profound vulnerabilities. The international community is thus confronted with a sobering question: How many more cycles of conflict and tenuous peace must the world endure before we arrive at a just and lasting resolution to the protracted challenges confronting the region?

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

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

- June 24 halt is temporary; unresolved core issues may reignite future conflict.
- Israel's strikes and Iran's retaliation show deterrence failed, escalating regional war.
- U.S. intervention, despite reluctance, was shaped by Israeli pressure.
- The crisis underscores nuclear double standards and the erosion of international legal norms.
- There's a deep-rooted hostility with decades of conflict since 1979, fueling instability.

INDIA'S RISE FROM LARGEST DEMOCRACY TO INDISPENSABLE POWER

DIPLOMACY

From the Balakot airstrikes to G20 presidency, from COVID-19 vaccine diplomacy to sweeping defence reforms, India's journey between 2019 and 2025 has been nothing short of transformative. This period does not merely reflect India's growing regional importance; it marks a decisive redefinition of her global identity. This doctrine, rooted in India's post-colonial ethos and multipolar aspirations, means India does not align blindly, nor does it isolate itself. Instead, it carefully crafts space to act independently, guided by national interest only.



AMBASSADOR SUSHIL KUMAR SINGHAL, IFS (R)
FOR NEWS ANALYTICS

In a world increasingly fragmented by geopolitical competition, India has made a quiet but bold pivot that it no longer asks to be counted among the powerful; it acts as one. Whether it is leading global health responses, balancing rivalries in the Indo-Pacific, mediating across ideological divides, or shaping international financial discourse, India's voice is welcomed and sought. The international community recognises India not only as the world's largest democracy, but increasingly as the most trusted, balanced democracy important in shaping the contours of a multipolar order.

India's strength today lies in its equidistance and equi-engagement. In an age where many countries are forced to choose between competing power blocs, India's stance is different and deliberate. It does not choose sides but rather creates sovereign space and espouses autonomy in global affairs. This signals that India's rise is not transactional; it is transformational. The world is witnessing not just the ascent of a nation but the emergence of a new kind of global power, one that is democratic, sovereign, development-focused, and willing to chart its own course.



2019 witnessed groundbreaking choices that heralded a new India as it conducted airstrikes in Balakot, Pakistan, in retaliation for the Pulwama terrorist attack, marking a significant departure from the policy of strategic restraint and indicating to the world that India was no longer willing to be subjected to nuclear blackmail.



With Mission Shakti, India became the fourth country globally to demonstrate anti-satellite (ASAT) capabilities, solidifying its space power credentials. The revocation of Article 370, ending Jammu & Kashmir's special status, signalled India's resolve to assert constitutional sovereignty and ensure that Indian security interests would not be compromised despite international scrutiny.

The COVID-19 epidemic bolstered India's credentials as Vishva Bandhu. India launched the Vaccine Maitri initiative, supplying over 66 million vaccine doses to more than 90 countries, when developed countries refused to assist the Global South. This humanitarian act doubled as a strategic tool of soft power, earning global goodwill. The deadly Galwan Valley clash at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) marked a turning point in Sino-Indian ties as India responded with increased troop deployment, infrastructure build-up, and economic measures, forcing China to rethink its strategy of gradual encroachment. India took a bold initiative and signed the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) with the USA, enhancing geospatial intelligence sharing, which is critical for defence planning.

India increased its defence production capabilities, developing indigenous platforms like Tejas fighters, INS Vikrant, and the Agni-V MIRV-capable ICBM. Defence exports rose sharply, crossing ₹13,000 crore (~\$1.6 billion) by 2022.

India continued to maintain deep engagement with Russia and Central Asia through the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) while also strengthening ties with the West via the Quad, underscoring its role as a multi-aligned power.

VOICE OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH

As geopolitical divisions deepened, India stepped forward as a representative voice for the Global South. India recognised that many of these countries were being sidelined in global decision-making, caught between US-led agendas and

China-centric economic dependencies. In response, India positioned itself as a third axis of leadership, one rooted in mutual respect, development priorities, and sovereign decision-making.

India convened the Voice of Global South Summit in January 2023, a first-of-its-kind virtual summit involving over 120 countries. The agenda was to amplify the priorities of developing nations on debt relief, climate finance, energy equity, and digital public infrastructure. This was not a one-off meeting, as two more meetings have taken place since then.

India has shared its successful Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) framework (like Aadhaar, UPI, and CoWIN) with willing countries as equal partners, presenting a clear alternative to surveillance-heavy Chinese tech or restrictive Western systems.

India consistently raised concerns about “climate colonialism” in forums like COP28, advocating for climate justice, technology transfer, and equitable energy transitions.

Unlike China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), India has emphasised transparent, non-exploitative development cooperation.

Through lines of credit, capacity-building programs, and infrastructure support (especially in Africa and the Indian Ocean Region), India has championed partnership over patronage, providing choices.

G20 PRESIDENCY

India's G20 presidency marked a new high in diplomatic influence. Under the theme “One Earth, One Family, One Future,” India championed initiatives on biofuels, digital public infrastructure, and climate resilience, among others. India made efforts and secured African Union membership in the G20 and achieved a rare consensus on the G20 Leaders' Declaration despite Ukraine tensions. In fact, India acted as a bridge-builder between West and East, North and South, affirming its role as not just a participant, but a platform.

India deepened naval partnerships with France, Australia, and Indonesia, and expanded the scope of the MILAN naval exercises. The Indian Navy became focused on securing choke points in the Indo-Pacific and took up the role of first responder in the region.

The Government of India has approved Phase III of the Space-Based Surveillance (SBS) programme, deploying over 50 surveillance and communication satellites, enhancing deterrence and network-centric warfare capability.

Strategic agreements have been signed with the UAE, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Nigeria in wide-ranging sectors including energy, arms, and logistics. India was the pivot in the signing of

the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) during the G20. India has strengthened the SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) doctrine, especially with Indian Ocean island nations like Mauritius and Seychelles.

Following a terrorist attack at Pahalgam killing 26 civilians in cold blood, India launched limited but precise air and missile strikes across the Line of Control using drones and cruise missiles, showcasing its ability to hit Pakistani military and



terrorist infrastructure targets with precision. India has signed \$7 billion deal for Rafale-Marine fighters for its aircraft carriers. Indigenous development of hypersonic systems, combat drones, and 5th-generation fighter engines advanced rapidly. Defence exports crossed ₹23,000 crore (~\$2.76 billion), making India a serious player in the global arms market.

India led mediation efforts in the Myanmar crisis, supported ceasefire talks in Israel-Palestine, and intensified engagement in Central Asia, reflecting a more proactive global stance.

THE NEW INDIAN DOCTRINE

India's foreign policy today is defined not by who it aligns with but what it protects. This doctrine of strategic autonomy is not neutrality. India chooses to act in its own interest but with global consequences. Today, India is seen as the indispensable democracy, a voice the world needs to hear and heed. India doesn't pick sides but creates space for multipolar cooperation. It is democratic but pragmatic, nationalist but inclusive, sovereign but globally engaged. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the G20, "This is not an era of war, it is an era

for dialogue and diplomacy." And in this new era, India is the necessary voice of balance.

India does not seek to dominate or dictate. It offers a new strategic vocabulary, one that prioritises dialogue over diktats, multipolarity over monopoly, and sovereignty over subordination. In this century of contestation, India offers something rare: a path of cooperation anchored in conviction. And in doing so, India is not just shaping its future, it is reshaping the world's.

In an era marked by disrupted alliances, weaponised trade, and polarised politics, India is emerging as a certainty that the world is learning to rely on.

ONGOING CHALLENGES

India's trajectory toward global leadership is faced with serious challenges. Despite enhanced deterrence, the LAC remains volatile, with continued PLA provocations and infrastructure build-up. India needs to be vigilant and engage with China without hindering its agenda of becoming a developed country by 2047. Cross-border terrorism actively aided and abetted by Pakistan persists as a strategic threat requiring long-term vigilance and counter-intelligence dominance.

India must continue to balance US strategic alignment with its longstanding Russia partnership, especially in defence and energy, particularly during the Presidency of Donald Trump, which has been posing challenges on a daily basis.

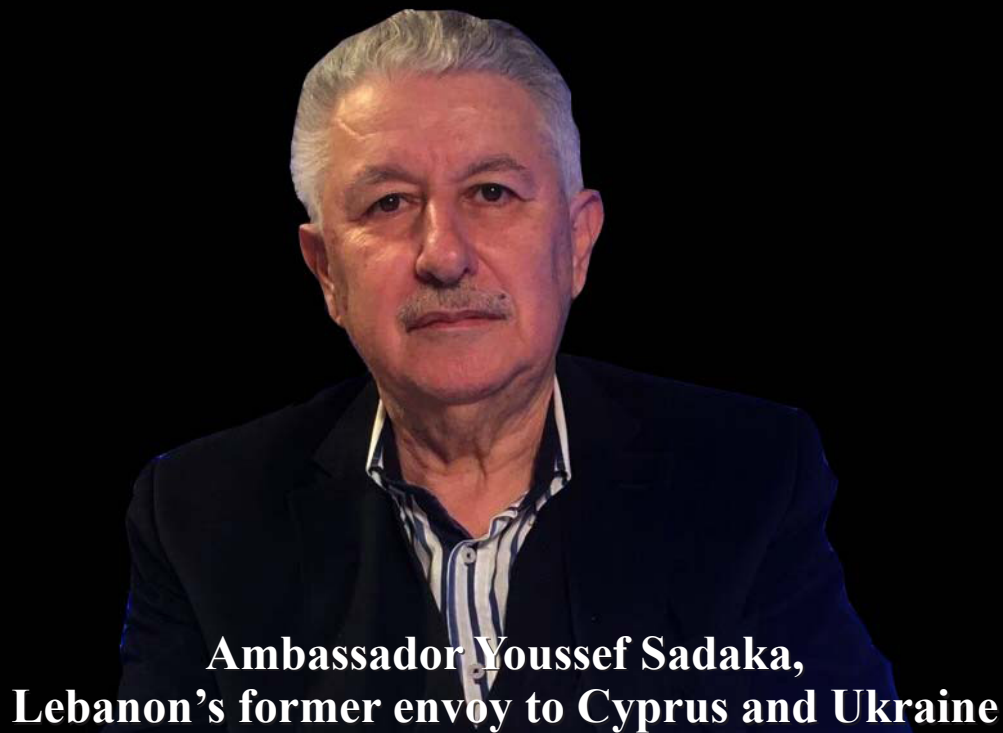
India must be nimble-footed and reconcile its development needs with climate responsibilities, while resisting unfair burdens placed on emerging economies. For India's soft power to resonate globally, it needs to ensure inclusive growth, address rural-urban divides, and strengthen human capital. As digital space becomes contested, India must secure its cyber infrastructure, AI ecosystem, and semiconductor supply chains without dependence on any country.

(Ambassador Sushil Kumar Singhal, IFS (R), 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 Herald.)

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

- *From Balakot to G20, India now shapes—not just follows—global discourse.*
- *India balances ties with the West, Russia, and the Global South without bloc allegiance.*
- *Championing equitable development, digital access, and climate justice.*
- *Indigenous defence production, space surveillance, and precision strikes signal new deterrence.*
- *China's assertiveness, Pakistan-backed terror, and tech dependencies require sustained vigilance.*

IN CONVERSATION



**Ambassador Youssef Sadaka,
Lebanon's former envoy to Cyprus and Ukraine**



Nadia Hallak
News Analytics,
Arab Correspondent

Since October 7, 2023, the Gaza war has triggered sweeping instability across the Middle East, evolving into a multi-front conflict. By June 2025, it culminated in a direct Israel-Iran clash, redefining regional alliances and disrupting traditional strategic frameworks. India holds major strategic interests in the region, and is deeply concerned with both its close partners in direct confrontation. Ms Nadia Hallak, The News Analytics

Herald, Arab Correspondent, interacted exclusively with a seasoned expert in Middle Eastern affairs and Former Lebanese Ambassador Youssef Sadaka, Lebanon's former envoy to Cyprus and Ukraine, offering deep insights into the recent developments. Excerpts from the conversation.

Q: Mr Ambassador, greetings from the News Analytics. How do you assess recent developments in the region, particularly the escalation in Gaza and Southern Lebanon?

What happened in Gaza post-October 7 cannot be described as anything but a full-scale genocide. Israel went far beyond retaliating against Hamas; it unleashed disproportionate and systematic violence that targeted both people and infrastructure. Over 50,000 were killed, tens of thousands injured, half of them women and children, in indiscriminate

bombings of camps, hospitals, schools, and vital infrastructure.

What's even more alarming is the erosion of deterrence. Israel is behaving like a state above international law, knowing fully well it will face no real consequences. Despite growing global sympathy for Gaza, Western political stances have remained weak, even complicit. Making matters worse, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has fully yielded to far-right ministers like Ben Gvir and Smotrich, dragging Israel into a spiral of extremism with no apparent exit.

As for Lebanon, it paid a steep price the moment Hezbollah entered the fray. Israel's response did not distinguish between military and civilian targets, hitting power plants, roads, bridges, and entire border villages. Airstrikes have killed at least 5,000 Lebanese civilians and injured thousands more.

Though a ceasefire agreement was reached, it was fragile and unilateral. Israel has consistently violated its terms, continuing with targeted assassinations and limited strikes. This reflects a calculated Israeli policy aimed at dismantling any deterrent infrastructure in Lebanon, a lesson internalised since the 2006 war, which continues to haunt Israel's military establishment.

not just as a mediator, but as an active combatant, using B-2 bombers and bunker-busting munitions. Washington sought to contain the escalation before it spiraled into an all-out regional war.

Q: How would you evaluate the Gulf states' stance on this war? Can we say there is a unified Gulf position, or are there underlying divergences?

Most Gulf states adopted a neutral and calculated stance. This reflects a broader shift in regional policy; the Gulf is no longer interested in military entanglements or ideological alignments. The focus now is on economic stability and internal security.



Q: Following that fragile ceasefire, June brought an unprecedented direct confrontation between Israel and Iran. How do you interpret this strategic shift, and what does it mean for regional stability?

What happened on June 13, 2025, marked a strategic watershed. It was the first open and direct military confrontation between Israel and Iran, two non-neighborly states with decades of proxy conflict history. This war played out across multiple domains: In the air, Israel deployed F-35 jets and high-precision drones.

At sea, Iranian tankers and vessels in the Gulf were targeted. In cyberspace, Iran faced the largest cyberattack on its infrastructure since the Stuxnet virus. Iran's nuclear facilities at Natanz, Isfahan, and Fordow suffered partial destruction, setting back its nuclear program by several years.

However, neither side emerged victorious. Both incurred heavy losses, prompting direct U.S. military intervention

At the same time, the absence of a unified Arab initiative to address this escalation has created a dangerous vacuum in the regional power balance. The failure to act collectively underscores the fragmentation and conflicting priorities within the Arab world.

Q: What about the role of Europe and Asia? Why do we see such noticeable disengagement?

Europe's role has significantly diminished. The EU appears paralysed, incapable of taking clear stances, and largely following Washington's lead. Even France, once active in Lebanon and Syria, has fallen silent. As for China and India, they remain distant observers. Neither has stepped in diplomatically or otherwise.

In contrast, the United States has emerged as the sole decisive actor in matters of war and peace in the region. It has gone beyond traditional mediation to direct control over key developments in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, and even in nuclear diplomacy with Iran.

Q: Where do you see the region heading? Is there any scope for a new Arab-led initiative?

At this moment, I don't believe the Arab world has the cohesion or capacity to launch a collective regional security initiative. Deep divisions persist, and national priorities vary widely. However, once relative stability returns to Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria, it may be time for key states like Saudi Arabia and Egypt to engage in proactive diplomacy not through alliances or confrontations, but through balanced, regional cooperation.

A viable initiative must be built on regional integration, inclusive dialogue with Iran and Turkey, and a commitment

These balanced relations are unlikely to disrupt the region's military dynamics, especially in the absence of significant arms transfers from India to Iran. India's approach is marked by a consistent and sophisticated diplomacy, widely recognised for its multilateralism and professionalism. Indian diplomats are often selected from among the country's most highly educated elites.

Through its active role in the BRICS and other regional organisations, India has proven itself to be a political and economic force to be reckoned with. Its diplomatic finesse allows it to navigate the complexities of the Middle East without becoming entangled in its conflicts.



to sovereignty and development. Only such a balanced approach can lift the region out of the cycle of endless wars.

Q: Given India's strong ties with both Israel and Iran, how do you see New Delhi navigate its diplomatic position amid escalating tensions between its two key partners, especially with growing concerns about energy security and regional stability?

India continues to enjoy broad respect in the Middle East, largely due to its historic resistance to British colonialism through the philosophy of non-violence. This legacy remains deeply rooted in the political consciousness of the region, particularly in countries like Iran, which view India as a non-colonial power with a proud history of anti-imperial struggle.

As an emerging global power with a rapidly growing economy, India appears capable of maintaining a delicate balance in its diplomatic relations with both Iran and Israel, despite the mounting regional tensions. It holds strategic partnerships with Israel and the United States on one hand, while preserving strong political and economic ties with Iran on the other.

Q: Lastly, how badly was Iran affected by this war? Do you believe it will continue supporting its regional proxies?

Iran suffered a major strategic blow. Nearly all its regional proxies have been weakened: In Syria, the regime has lost substantial control. In Lebanon, Hezbollah has taken unprecedented losses. In Yemen, the Houthis have become direct military targets. In Iraq, the Popular Mobilization Forces have been partially neutralised.

Moreover, Iran's nuclear program has been severely disrupted, and its domestic situation is deteriorating under the weight of economic and social crises. Given these realities, I doubt Iran will continue supporting its proxies with the same vigor. Instead, Tehran is already exploring dialogue with Washington, seeking sanctions relief and a path back to negotiations on its nuclear program, ballistic missiles, and regional influence.

This war has forced Iran to reassess its priorities. The future will not resemble the past. Any state that expands externally at the expense of its internal stability will eventually be forced to retrench simply to survive.

YOUR TAKE

News Analytics receives a high volume of thoughtful comments and perspectives from well-informed readers worldwide, all of which we review with care. We are pleased to share a selected cross-section that reflects the diversity of our global readership. Please continue sending your insights to info@newsanalytics.in we value your engagement.



JJ Murray
Ontario | Canada

Commenting on News Analytics DnD Forum’s post of: 500% Tariff Threatens India-Russia Oil Trade, Impacts Economy

How the hell can he actually do that? These are two free countries trading with each other. It has nothing to do with the US. Trump is insane.



Jen Ho
Singapore | Singapore

The fear of losing the hegemon is making some people to behave irrationally. The world is not about you alone.



Kamran Khan
Sindh | Pakistan

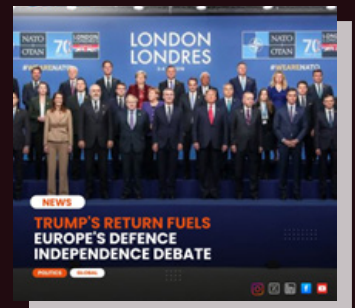
Multipolarity is the new world order USA global trade war is grave violation of international law. USA’s domestic laws can’t be applied globally.



Sasa Radovanovic | Director at BioEnergy Ltd
Maribor, Slovenia

Commenting on News Analytics DnD Forum’s post of: Unclear NATO Budget Clause Risks Unity, Transparency and Trust

Defence what? Hipocarcy?



Solomon Drury
Greater Izmir | Turkey

Commenting on News Analytics DnD Forum’s post of: Russia To Complete S-400 Delivery and SU 30MKI Upgrades by 2027

After Iran's russian air defence systems were wiped out by Israel with no apparent losses, I wonder why India is buying them?



INDIA REIGNITES HUMAN SPACEFLIGHT DRIVE MAKING SPACE AS STRATEGIC FRONTIER

BATTLEGROUND

On June 25, 2025, India marked a historic milestone in its space exploration journey when Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, a distinguished Indian Air Force (IAF) test pilot, soared into orbit aboard the Axiom-4 (Ax-4) mission. The Ax-4 mission, a collaborative effort involving NASA, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), the European Space Agency (ESA), and Axiom Space, underscores India's ambition to become a global space power.



**AIR MARSHAL ANIL KHOSLA (R)
FOR NEWS ANALYTICS**

Born on October 10, 1985, in Lucknow, Group Captain Shukla is a seasoned IAF test pilot with over 2,000 hours of flight experience on aircraft like the Su-30 MKI, MiG-21, and Jaguar. Commissioned in 2006 after graduating from the National Defence Academy with a bachelor's in computer science, he later earned a master's in aerospace engineering from the Indian Institute of Science. As the mission pilot for Ax-4, launched on a SpaceX Falcon 9, Shukla monitored flight systems, supported docking, and ensured crew safety during the 28-hour journey to the ISS.

As the second Indian astronaut to reach space and the first to visit the International Space Station (ISS), Shukla's achievement, 41 years after Wing Commander Rakesh Sharma's 1984 flight aboard a Soviet Soyuz, signifies India's triumphant return to human spaceflight.

Launched from NASA's Kennedy Space Centre, Ax-4, led by veteran astronaut Peggy Whitson, included mission specialists from Poland and Hungary, marking their return to human spaceflight after decades. The 14 to 21-day mission involves over 60 experiments from 31 countries. India's seven experiments focus on microgravity plant growth (fenugreek and green gram), microbial behaviour, muscle regeneration, and tardigrade resilience, advancing space agriculture, biotechnology, and health sciences for long-duration missions and Earth applications.

The mission reflects a shift toward commercial spaceflight. A 2024 U.S.-India agreement allocated a NASA seat to ISRO, enabling NASA to prioritise



deep-space missions while Axiom Space manages low Earth orbit operations.



This milestone is a pivotal step for the Gaganyaan program, India's first indigenous human spaceflight initiative, and reflects its broader strategic vision in a rapidly evolving space race.

THE NEW SPACE RACE

The 21st century has transformed space from a realm of scientific exploration into a strategic arena of geopolitical rivalry, commercial opportunity, and national interest. Once dominated by superpowers vying for prestige through moon landings, space is now a multipolar landscape where the United States, China, Russia, India, and private entities compete for influence, profit, and security. The stakes are high, encompassing military capabilities, resource extraction, and technological supremacy, as nations and companies race not just to explore but to shape the future.

Space is increasingly militarised, with nations developing anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons, directed energy systems, and cyber tools to disrupt critical assets like GPS, reconnaissance, and communication satellites. The U.S., China, and Russia have tested ASAT capabilities, while India demonstrated its prowess with a 2019 ASAT test. The doctrine of “space deterrence” is now integral to defence strategies, with satellite resilience and redundancy becoming priorities. Orbital debris from such tests poses a threat to commercial satellites and international cooperation, yet the absence of binding global norms heightens the risk of escalation.

Space exploration drives innovation in AI, robotics, materials science, and propulsion, bolstering national competitiveness. Breakthroughs in hypersonics, nuclear propulsion, and in-situ resource utilisation (ISRU) could revolutionise defence and interplanetary travel, with civilian applications enhancing industrial leadership. Resources like lunar helium-3, a potential fusion fuel, and asteroid metals critical for electronics offer economic promise. Diplomatically, space power translates to geopolitical influence. Navigation systems like GPS, Galileo, and BeiDou confer strategic leverage.

The commercialisation of space is a transformative trend. Companies like SpaceX, Blue Origin, Virgin Galactic, and OneWeb are pioneering technologies that redefine access to orbit. Reusable rockets have slashed launch costs, satellite mega-constellations like Starlink provide resilient communication, and space tourism is becoming a reality. Lunar and asteroid mining, although still in its early stages, promises access to resources such as helium-3 and rare metals, potentially reshaping the global economy.

GLOBAL PLAYERS IN THE SPACE RACE

The United States has maintained its space superiority since the Apollo era. However, its focus has shifted from symbolic missions to systemic control in recent years. NASA's Artemis program, which aims to return astronauts to the Moon and eventually launch a mission to Mars, reflects scientific ambition and a strategic desire to secure permanent infrastructure beyond Earth. At the same time, the U.S. Space Force, established in 2019 as the sixth branch of the U.S. military, demonstrates an explicit acknowledgement that space is now a warfighting domain. Beyond governmental initiatives, U.S. strategy heavily relies on public-private collaboration.

SpaceX has revolutionised launch technology with reusable rockets, significantly reducing costs and increasing launch frequency. These capabilities not only benefit commercial



goals but also provide logistical and tactical advantages in a military context. The deployment of Starlink, A satellite internet constellation, offers dual-use utility, with the potential to provide secure communications during terrestrial conflicts, as seen in Ukraine.

China has emerged as the most formidable challenger to U.S. dominance in space. With the Chinese Communist Party's state-backed, long-term strategic planning, space is central to China's ambitions to become a global superpower. The China National Space Administration (CNSA) has launched missions to the Moon (Chang'e series), Mars (Tianwen-1), and built its space station, Tiangong, in low Earth orbit. China's doctrine emphasises “civil-military fusion,” integrating civilian scientific missions with military readiness.



The BeiDou satellite navigation system is a clear example, providing independence from U.S.-controlled GPS and enhancing the precision of China's missile systems. China has also demonstrated anti-satellite (ASAT) capabilities, raising concerns about the weaponisation of space. In 2007, its successful ASAT test against one of its satellites marked a turning point in the strategic perception of space conflict.

Russia's space program, led by Roscosmos, builds on its Soviet-era legacy with reliable Soyuz rockets and extensive experience in crewed missions. The Luna-25 mission,

there. As India plans its first crewed mission (Gaganyaan), its space ambitions are increasingly aligned with long-term geopolitical calculus.

Scheduled for 2027, Gaganyaan aims to send three astronauts to a 400-kilometer orbit for three days, showcasing India's independent human spaceflight capability. Shukla, alongside Group Captains Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair, Ajit Krishnan, and Angad Prathap, trained in Russia and Bengaluru. Shukla's Ax-4 docking experience will refine Gaganyaan's operations.



though unsuccessful in 2023, reflects ongoing lunar ambitions, while partnerships with China on the International Lunar Research Station signal strategic alignment. Russia's anti-satellite (ASAT) capabilities and GLONASS navigation system underscore its focus on maintaining military and technological influence in space.

INDIA: THE COST-EFFECTIVE CONTENDER

India has become a rising space power through its cost-effective and technologically ambitious missions. ISRO has demonstrated its capacity with landmark missions such as Chandrayaan (Moon), Mangalyaan (Mars), and most recently, Chandrayaan-3, which made India the first country to land on the Moon's South Pole. With its 2019 Mission Shakti ASAT test, India joined the exclusive club of nations capable of disabling satellites in orbit, underscoring its intention not only to explore space but also to defend its national interests

Gaganyaan is a cornerstone of India's ambitions, including the establishment of the Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS) by 2035, with its first module launching in 2028, and a lunar mission by 2040. Engaging over 500 Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), ISRO aims to capture 8% of the global space market by 2033, building a \$44 billion space economy and positioning India among elite spacefaring nations. The mission's hands-on experience prepares ISRO for BAS and lunar goals while elevating India's global standing.

ULTIMATE HIGH GROUND

Space is no longer a remote frontier of science fiction; it is the ultimate high ground in a multipolar world. Whether through state actors racing to establish dominance, private companies transforming exploration into enterprise, or militaries securing orbital advantage, the dynamics of space are shaping the 21st-century balance of power. Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla's Ax-4 mission marks a new chapter in India's space journey. By carrying the Indian flag to the ISS, he paves the way for Gaganyaan, BAS, and lunar ambitions. Rooted in global collaboration and strategic vision, the mission positions India as a rising space power. As Shukla declared, "This is the beginning of India's human spaceflight," a call to action for a nation poised to touch the stars with glory.

(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 Herald.)

ISRO's development of a human-rated launch vehicle (HLVM3), life support systems, and precursor missions, such as the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) and PS4-Orbital Experiment Module (POEM-4), ensures readiness.

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

- Group Captain Shukla's Ax-4 flight marks India's human spaceflight comeback.
- His mission boosts India's Gaganyaan readiness for independent crewed spaceflight by 2027.
- Space is now a geopolitical frontier; India's role boosts security and influence.
- India partners with NASA, ESA, and private firms, preserving strategic autonomy.
- India eyes \$44B space economy, station by 2035, Moon missions by 2040.



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GLOBAL POWER STRUGGLES INTENSIFY AMID ARCTIC MILITARISATION

WAR STRATEGY

As global temperatures rise, the world is witnessing the unveiling of a new geopolitical chessboard—one that lies in the far north, once thought to be frozen, inaccessible, and politically dormant. But the Arctic is thawing, quite literally and figuratively. The melting ice is unlocking new maritime routes and exposing rich reserves of oil, gas, and minerals. As a result, global powers—including Russia, the United States, China, and NATO allies—are pivoting to this region with renewed strategic interest.



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What was once a remote expanse of snow and silence is now at the heart of military build-ups, strategic dialogues, territorial assertions, and scientific expeditions. The competition in the Arctic is intensifying, and while it may not yet be a flashpoint, it is undoubtedly becoming a key theatre in the 21st-century geopolitical contest. For India, a traditionally non-Arctic nation, the challenge lies in navigating this evolving domain without being left behind.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND NEW RISKS

The Arctic is warming at nearly four times the global average, and this phenomenon is unlocking a series of cascading effects that are reshaping international politics.

The Northern Sea Route (NSR), which hugs Russia's northern coastline, has emerged as a shorter and potentially cost-effective alternative to traditional shipping lanes like



the Suez Canal. For instance, the route between Europe and Asia via the NSR can reduce shipping distance by up to 40%, significantly lowering fuel costs and transit time.

Other routes, such as the Transpolar Sea Route (through the central Arctic Ocean), are becoming increasingly navigable during summer months. These developments present transformative opportunities for global shipping, trade, and logistics.



However, these routes also come with operational risks—unpredictable ice conditions, environmental hazards, lack of infrastructure, and unclear jurisdiction. Hence, militarisation and governance of these waters become crucial.

THE MAJOR PLAYERS IN THE ARCTIC

Russia has the longest Arctic coastline and considers the region vital to its national identity and economic strategy. It has been the most aggressive in its Arctic posture:

- **Military Expansion:** Russia has built or renovated at least 13 military airfields and deep-water ports in the Arctic, some capable of supporting nuclear-capable bombers and advanced missile systems.
- **Northern Fleet:** It maintains its Northern Fleet headquartered in Murmansk, which includes icebreakers, submarines, and warships.
- **Energy Exploration:** With substantial investments in LNG facilities like the Yamal LNG project, Russia seeks to dominate Arctic energy markets.

Russia asserts control over the NSR and requires foreign ships to seek permission to transit, often escorted by Russian icebreakers—a practice questioned by the U.S. and others under freedom of navigation principles.

The U.S. has historically had limited Arctic infrastructure, but that is changing.

- **Pentagon's Arctic Strategy (2021):** The U.S. recognises the Arctic as a "strategic corridor" and is increasing its military presence in Alaska and the Greenland-Iceland-UK (GIUK) gap.
- **Icebreaker Gap:** Compared to Russia's 40+ icebreakers, the U.S. only has two (one operational), though it

plans to build more under the Polar Security Cutter program.

- **NATO's Involvement:** NATO has labelled Russia's Arctic activity as destabilising and conducts regular joint exercises with Arctic Council members like Norway, Canada, and Denmark.

NATO sees the Arctic as critical for monitoring Russian submarines and missile systems and maintaining strategic deterrence.

Though geographically distant, China declared itself a "Near-Arctic State" in 2018 and released a formal Arctic Policy white paper.

- **Polar Silk Road:** As part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China is exploring Arctic shipping routes to enhance global trade connectivity.
- **Scientific Research and Dual-Use Infrastructure:** China operates research stations in Iceland and has proposed building infrastructure in Greenland. Many of these projects, while civilian in nature, have potential military applications.
- **Resource Ambitions:** China is investing in Arctic mining and LNG, partnering with Russia on the Yamal project.

China's growing footprint is viewed with suspicion by Western powers, wary of dual-use capabilities and its long-term strategic aims.



Russia's military expansion, China's resource ambitions, and NATO's strategic posturing are transforming the Arctic into a new arena of global power competition and security challenges.

RISKS OF MILITARISATION

The Arctic Council—comprising eight Arctic nations and several observers—was long considered a venue for peaceful cooperation on environmental and scientific issues. However, with Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, cooperation has frayed. Western countries have suspended direct cooperation



with Moscow in many Arctic Council forums.

There are no binding treaties that prevent the militarisation of the Arctic beyond the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and bilateral agreements. As a result, the region is increasingly witnessing submarine activity and missile testing. Surveillance and radar coverage have been expanded with heightened military exercises near contested areas.



The race for Arctic dominance risks turning the region into a Cold War-style theatre, particularly as climate change accelerates access.

INDIA'S ARCTIC INTEREST

India may not be an Arctic nation, but the region's evolution has significant implications for its strategic, environmental, energy, and maritime interests.

Melting Arctic ice can affect monsoon patterns and sea-level rise in South Asia. India has invested in Arctic scientific research and operates a research station, Himadri, in Norway's Svalbard.

India's growing energy needs make Arctic oil and gas resources increasingly attractive. Strategic partnerships in Russian Arctic projects, like the Arctic LNG 2, are crucial to long-term diversification.

The Arctic offers alternative trade routes that could complement India's Sagarmala and Act East policies. Moreover, increased Chinese activity in the Arctic demands careful monitoring.

India has been an Observer in the Arctic Council since 2013 and participates in scientific research and environmental dialogues. It must deepen this engagement and seek inclusion in governance frameworks shaping Arctic norms.

HOW INDIA SHOULD MOVE?

India's Arctic strategy should be pragmatic, multi-dimensional, and forward-looking.

It needs to expand Arctic research in areas like glaciology, climate modeling, and polar biology. Strengthen bilateral ties with Arctic nations, especially Norway, Canada, and Russia, for joint research programs. Upgrade infrastructure at Himadri and consider establishing a second research facility.

Increase investment in Arctic energy and logistics corridors. Collaborate with Russia on Arctic shipping, particularly for Indian goods transiting to Europe and vice versa. Join cooperative ventures on shipbuilding, especially ice-class vessels, with partners like South Korea or Japan.

Strengthen India's own polar maritime capabilities. Develop dual-use icebreakers and train a cadre of polar navigators. Encourage Indian shipping lines and logistics firms to explore Northern Sea Route opportunities in coordination with global partners.

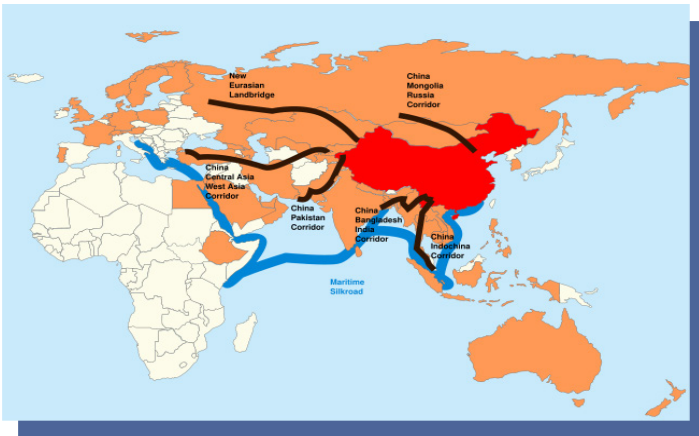


Push for observer states like India to have a voice in Arctic Council reforms or alternative platforms. Encourage environmental safeguards, sustainable resource exploitation, and rule-based maritime conduct.

Monitor Chinese investments and scientific missions in the Arctic closely. Collaborate with like-minded countries such as Japan, France, and Germany to ensure that Arctic governance remains multilateral, transparent, and inclusive.

The Arctic is no longer a distant and dormant frontier. It has become a bustling zone of economic ambition, strategic

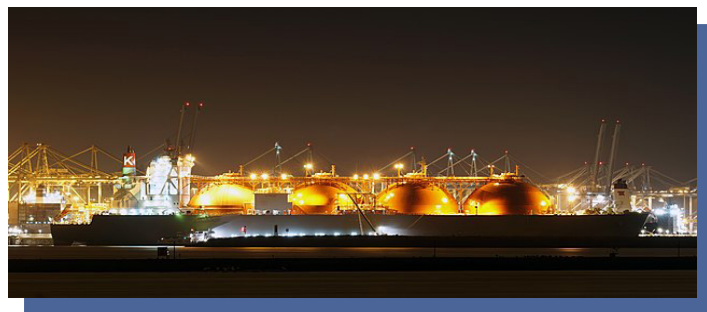
India must deepen scientific research, secure energy partnerships, enhance maritime capabilities, and proactively participate in Arctic governance to safeguard its strategic and environmental interests.



global trade routes, climate outcomes, and security architectures. India, with its growing stature and global aspirations, must not treat the Arctic as a fringe issue but rather as an essential chapter in its emerging global narrative.

The ice may be melting, but the competition is only heating up.

(Lt Cdr Nitika Rai (R), former Indian Navy Officer and senior consultant at Ernst & Young. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Herald.)



manoeuvring, and military assertion. Russia is fortifying its icebound defences, the U.S. and NATO are trying to reassert control, China is making subtle but significant moves, and the traditional framework of Arctic cooperation is under stress.

For India, the challenge is clear: Stay engaged, stay informed, and stay prepared. The future of Arctic geopolitics will shape

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

- Arctic militarisation accelerates as climate change unlocks resources and strategic shipping routes.
- Russia leads in Arctic military assets, while the U.S., NATO, and China expand strategic presence.
- India eyes the Arctic for climate research, energy needs, trade routes, and countering China's rise.
- India must boost polar research, dual-use maritime assets, and Arctic partnerships for sustainable engagement.
- India needs proactive diplomacy to help shape emerging Arctic governance and secure strategic interests.



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IN THE SPOTLIGHT

CHINA BEGINS TIBET MEGA-DAM PROJECT



China has officially begun construction of a massive hydroelectric dam on the Yarlung Tsangpo River in Tibet, known downstream as the Brahmaputra. The \$167 billion project, set to include five hydropower stations, aims to support China's carbon neutrality goals and supply power to other regions while also meeting Tibet's needs. However, the project has triggered concerns in India and Bangladesh over potential downstream impacts, including water flow disruption and ecological damage. India has raised diplomatic concerns, while China insists the project will not harm lower riparian states. Environmental groups also warn of risks to the fragile Tibetan plateau.

EU UNVEILS €2 TRILLION BUDGET



The European Commission has proposed a €2 trillion budget for 2028–2034, marking a strategic shift in EU financial planning. Commission President Ursula von der Leyen aims to make the budget more adaptable to crises, reduce programme complexity from 52 to 16, and introduce new EU-wide taxes. The budget focuses on agriculture, competitiveness, and external action, while also allocating €400 billion for crisis loans and €100 billion for Ukraine's reconstruction. The plan faces intense negotiations as member states debate spending priorities, rule-of-law conditions, and controversial own-resource mechanisms to repay pandemic-era debt.

GERMANY DENIES MISSILE REQUEST TO UKRAINE



Germany has declined Ukraine's renewed request for Taurus long-range cruise missiles, despite escalating Russian air assaults. Defence Minister Boris Pistorius confirmed the decision, citing national security limitations and NATO obligations. The Taurus, developed by Germany and Sweden, can hit targets up to 500 km away with high precision and stealth, making it a sought-after weapon by Kyiv. Ukrainian officials view it as a battlefield game-changer, especially for striking fortified Russian targets. Germany has already sent three Patriot systems but says further transfers aren't feasible. Russia has warned of dire consequences if Berlin reverses course and supplies Taurus missiles to Ukraine.

SHUBHANSHU SHUKLA RETURNS TO EARTH



Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla and his three Axiom-4 crewmates have safely returned to earth. from the International Space Station (ISS) after an 18-day mission. Their SpaceX Dragon capsule undocked at 4:50 pm IST on July 14, with splashdown happening off California's coast at 3 pm IST on July 15. Shukla, who became the second Indian in space after Rakesh Sharma, led microgravity experiments on muscle loss and microalgae-based food. The team

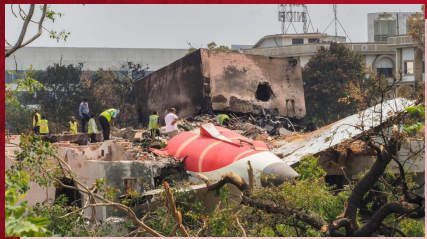
also studied cancer biology, blood flow, and astronaut mental health. The spacecraft is carrying 250+ kg of scientific cargo, closing a milestone mission for India's growing space ambitions.

AUSTRALIA EXPECTS CHINESE SPY PRESENCE



Australia anticipates Chinese surveillance during its massive Talisman Sabre military drills from 13-27 July with the US and 17 other allies across Australia and Papua New Guinea. More than 30,000 troops have participated in the exercises. Australian Defence Minister Pat Conroy confirmed China has been observing since 2017 and is expected to do so again, gathering intelligence on procedures and communications. Australia has also reiterated concerns about China's attempts to build a military base in the South Pacific, a claim China denies as a "false narrative." Interestingly the drills unfolded during Prime Minister Albanese's diplomatic visit to China.

FUEL SWITCH MYSTERY Baffles INVESTIGATORS



The preliminary report into the Air India Flight 171 crash reveals a disturbing mystery: both fuel control switches were inexplicably moved to "cut-off" seconds after take-off, causing both engines to shut down. One pilot is heard questioning the move, but neither claims responsibility. Investigators are puzzled, given the design prevents accidental activation. The crash killed 260 and occurred within 40 seconds of take-off from Ahmedabad. With no evidence of mechanical failure or pilot error, focus has shifted to voice identification and electronic anomalies in fuel systems. Experts stress the urgent need for cockpit video recorders.

FOREIGN MINISTER OF RUSSIA AND US MEET



In Kuala Lumpur, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio met Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov for a 50-minute discussion on the sidelines of the ASEAN summit. Rubio relayed President Trump's frustration over the lack of progress in ending the Ukraine war and called for a clear roadmap. Amid escalating Russian attacks, including massive drone strikes on Kyiv, Rubio hinted at a possible shift in U.S. policy, mentioning talks of sanctions and a harder stance. The dialogue followed prior engagements as Trump balances diplomacy with increasing criticism of Moscow's inaction.

HEGSETH PAUSED UKRAINE ARMS SUPPLY WITHOUT TRUMP'S NOD



U.S. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth authorised a pause in weapons shipments to Ukraine without informing the White House, sparking confusion in the Trump administration and angering allies. President Trump distanced himself from the move, directing a partial restart of arms transfers, including Patriot missiles. Key officials, including Secretary of State Marco Rubio, were also unaware of the decision. The halt reportedly stemmed from concerns over U.S. stockpiles, though no evidence of critical shortages was shared with Congress. The incident reflects ongoing disarray within Trump's national security team and rising tensions over aid to Ukraine amid stalled peace talks with Russia.

INDIA'S GLOBAL ASPIRATIONS AND THE EMERGING CHALLENGES

COUNTERVIEW

As we navigate the twenty-fifth year of the 21st century, it seems an appropriate moment to sit back and reflect on where the nation is positioned as of now and the journey ahead. Further, as we celebrate seventy-eight years of independence and prepare in the next two decades for realising a 'Viksit Bharat', the emerging challenges also assume relevance. This narration attempts to capture the key factors and forces that are shaping the nation's global aspirations and the multiple pathways as we move forward.



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FOR NEWS ANALYTICS

While preparing the text, the author was reminded of a famous line from the Bhagavad Gita. Lord Krishna advises Arjuna: “Whatever happened was good. Whatever is happening in the present is also good, and whatever will happen in the future will also be good.” This quote reflects, in important ways, the transformation of Bharat—about the past, the present, and the future. It is the apparent connection between global aspirations, visible opportunities, and the emerging challenges.

GLOBAL ASPIRATIONS

From the lens of the contemporary, there are three key A's that need to drive our future strategy – Attitude, Aspirations, and Approach. Today, beyond a shadow of doubt, attitudes have sharply changed, aspirations have significantly altered, and approaches have undergone a key transformation.

As survey researchers, the individual studies have focused on understanding people's perceptions. This narrative begins



by contextualising India's emerging global presence through some key observations. Indian Prime Minister Modi made an important point when he said that today, India dialogues with other countries as equals on the world stage. There is no high or low; we dialogue with everyone as equals. Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar noted that India now holds a visible place in the global pecking order. He stated that India is alive to the challenges that contemporary nations face, and today, India is visible.



Furthermore, the Indian Defence Minister recently suggested that the voice of India is now taken more seriously across the world. India's equitable dialogue with global partners, rising visibility, and recognised voice is a reflection of its growing credibility.

According to a study by the PEW Research Center, India ranks fourth among the most visible nations globally, with 28% of respondents recognising India's global standing. While one can debate the rankings (with China at first, Russia second, and the United States at third), the fact that India is in the top four is an important indication of India's rising global prominence.

Most of the Indians emphasised India's cultural strength, economic self-reliance, and prioritising domestic challenges over global image across age groups.

PERCEPTION SHIFT

When one approaches the discussion on India's contemporary global presence, we mount our telescope on the ground and seek a bottom-up approach. How do people of India perceive their country? When we refer to popular perceptions, we are often referring to the image of India that people have. In a recent study published by Lokniti-CSDS (in which both the authors were privileged to be involved), a representative sample of India's population asserted that India's image had vastly improved in the past few decades. More on this study, later in this narrative.

One of the authors vividly remembers what he experienced

when he first travelled abroad for work in 1992. One often heard the question, "India has a future?" It was phrased as a question mark. However, when the same author travelled to Australia in February 2025, he heard the same sentence, but this time it was not a question. It was an exclamation: "India has a future!"

The former reflected a mood three decades ago, and the second encounter reflects a reality today. One notices three significant events in the recent past. The first shift is how the presence of an influential diaspora is being leveraged to bolster India's image abroad. Taking advantage of the presence of people of Indian origin abroad has helped enhance India's reputation and global presence.

Secondly, the context of this rising global presence is also reflected in the deeper content and engagement. For instance, when in Australia recently, one met a local who said, "I am working for an Indian company." This was not something one would have heard in the 1990s. Now it is very common. People abroad are now working for Indian multinationals like Infosys, Wipro, Tata, Reliance, Adani, Bharti, Kotak, and Birla, among others. The presence of these Indian companies abroad plays a key role in bolstering our global presence.

Thirdly, a clear focus of Indian diplomacy in recent times has been on the economic and cultural domain. Earlier, diplomacy was mainly linked to politics. This shift is seen in the focus on "Bharat First," and probably the Foreign Service officers are being specially trained in economic and cultural diplomacy.



The study highlights a clear focus on the cultural and economic factors. People were quick to assert India's cultural strengths and the transforming economic outlook. Across age groups, people were of the view that India was ahead of other nations when it came to its cultural strengths. People also asserted an emerging trade and economic self-reliance. However, people were more emphatic on the need to focus on our domestic challenges rather than placing too much emphasis on prioritising our global image.



India's global visibility is because of its active engagement with the world and willingness to address global issues. India's voice is sought for and recognised for its credibility.



a focus on three crucial and connected areas: recognising the need to encash the demographic dividend, fulfilling India's rising aspirations, and approaching 'Atma-Nirbhar Bharat' from the crucial lens of 'emancipating the mind'. Leveraging the demographic dividend would require carefully curating our higher education system. The focus on skills, competencies, and practical learning needs to be the key. Given the visible retreat of the state from the higher education sector, a meaningful partnership between private players and government agencies appears to be the need of the hour.

FUTURE READINESS

Young India is an aspirational India. Young India is also an unequal India. Addressing the emerging aspirations, as well as ensuring social equity and justice, needs to be the way forward. The call for an 'Atma-Nirbhar Bharat' by 2047 needs a focus on self-reliance in multiple spheres. The most important among these is the emancipation of the mind. If one were to return to the Bhagavad Gita, one notices a key message of Lord Krishna to Arjuna. As Arjuna was unsure of whether he should fight his own teachers, elders, and relatives, Lord Krishna reminded him of the need to 'emancipate the mind' to move forward!

At the end of the day, the power of visionary leadership, addressing domestic compulsions, enhancing our soft power, and getting the younger population future-ready seems to be the key to resolving challenges and leveraging global opportunities.

(Dr. Sandeep Shastri is Vice President (Bangalore campus), NITTE Education Trust. Dr. Sanjal Shastri is an Assistant Professor, International Relations at FLAME University, Pune. The views and any data references presented are by the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News Analytics Herald.)

DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND

One often discusses emerging global opportunities and challenges through the lens of the demographic dividend. India has a young population, with the average age of an Indian today being 28.8 years. By 2050, 40% of the global workforce will be from India. This demographic shift represents an opportunity for India. Yet are we preparing ourselves twenty-five years before we reach that landmark to take advantage of the situation? This is our key challenge. While introducing and commending the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the Prime Minister asked the question: Are we preparing ourselves for this future? His emphasis on moving from "what to learn" to "how to learn" is crucial for ensuring that our young people can adapt and contribute to the global workforce. Preparing them to learn independently, without always needing answers from the classroom, seems to be the key.

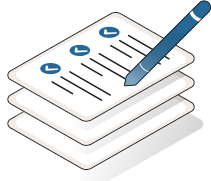
Managing India's demographic dividend, with an estimated one billion Indians in the global workforce by 2050, requires

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

- *India's transformation shows rising global influence through changed attitudes, aspirations, and strategic approach.*
- *India ranks among the top global players with growing visibility and equal international standing.*
- *Diplomacy now focuses on economic strength and cultural identity, beyond just politics.*
- *India's young population is an asset, needing education reform and skill development.*
- *Future readiness requires mindset change, youth empowerment, and visionary leadership for self-reliance.*

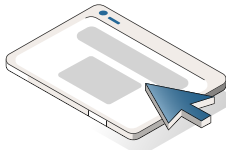
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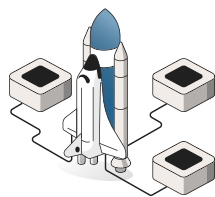
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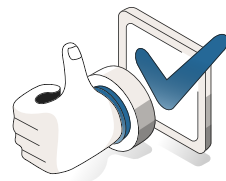
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QUANTUM COMPUTING AND NATIONAL SECURITY

DEEP-TECH

What if every password you've ever trusted could be cracked in hours? What if the encryption protecting your bank account, your government's military communications, and your nation's power grid suddenly became as vulnerable as a diary left open on a park bench? These scenarios aren't distant possibilities. They represent the approaching reality of quantum computing. This technological shift represents more than an incremental advancement. It's a fundamental disruption that will reshape national security, economic competition, and international relations.

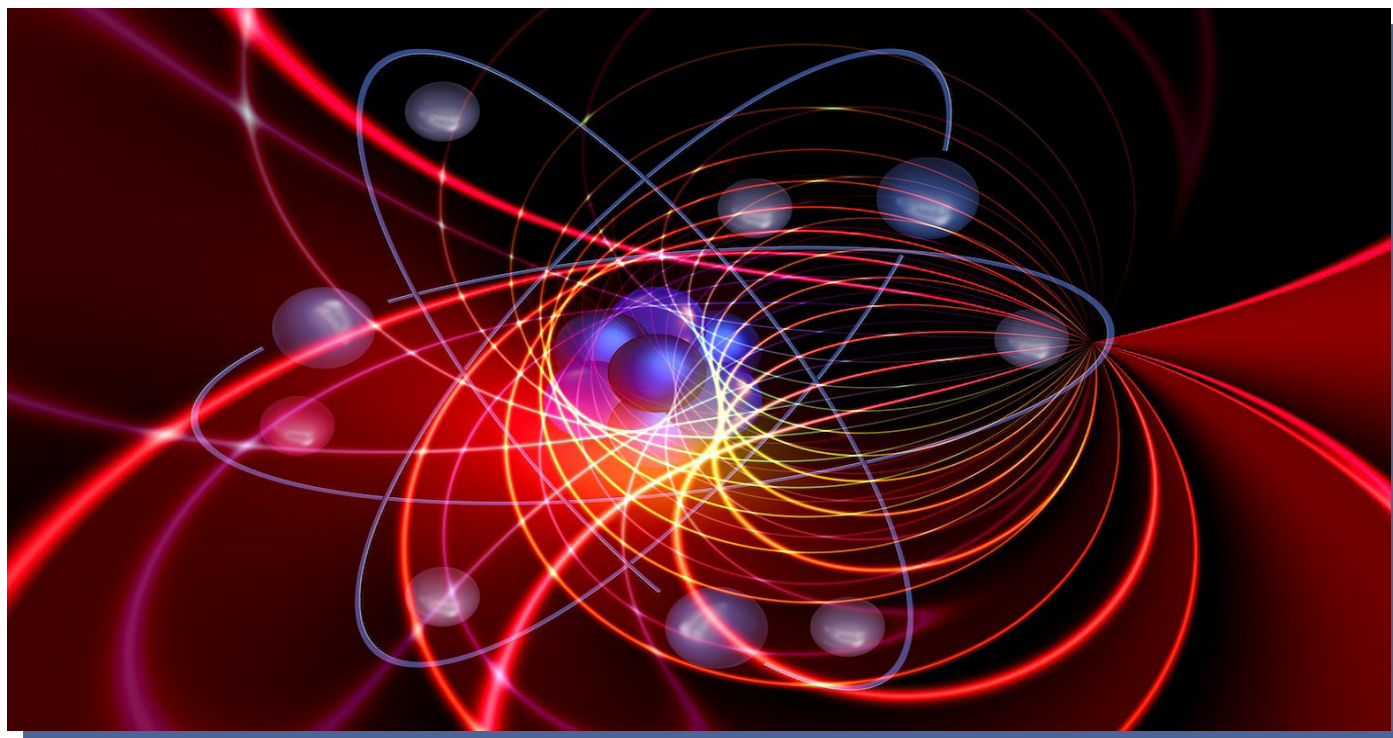


DR. AMIT DUA
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The mathematics underlying our current encryption systems creates what security experts call a "computational moat". This is a problem so difficult that even the world's most powerful supercomputers would require millions of years to solve it. RSA-2048 encryption, protecting 94% of global HTTPS connections and processing 2.3 billion daily web sessions, depends on factorising a 617-digit number. Classical computers would need 300 trillion years to break this encryption using current methods. Quantum computers equipped with

Shor's algorithm could accomplish the same task in approximately 8 hours using 4,099 logical qubits. Even though such quantum computers are not available yet. We need to be prepared for the inevitable future.

The race to develop cryptographically relevant quantum computers has become as strategically important. Infact, it's as important as the nuclear arms race of the 20th century; with similar implications for global power dynamics.



THE QUANTUM FOUNDATION

To understand quantum computing's threat to current security systems, we must first grasp how quantum computers differ from the classical systems we use today. Classical computers process information using bits that exist in definite states. They store and process the data in binary, i.e., 1 or 0. These systems solve problems by checking possibilities sequentially. Quantum computers operate using quantum



bits, or "qubits," which can exist in multiple states simultaneously through a phenomenon called superposition. A qubit resembles a spinning coin that's both heads and tails until observed. This allows quantum computers to explore multiple solutions simultaneously. When you have 300 qubits in superposition, they can represent more possible states than there are atoms in the universe.

The real power emerges from quantum entanglement, where qubits become connected regardless of physical distance. When entangled qubits are measured, they instantly influence each other's states. This creates computational capabilities that grow exponentially with each additional qubit. This quantum parallelism enables algorithms that can solve specific mathematical problems exponentially faster than classical approaches.

When quantum computers work in perfect harmony using quantum entanglement, applying Shor's algorithm, they can break any encryption and communication security.

THE GLOBAL QUANTUM RACE

The quantum computing landscape resembles a high-stakes technological competition with profound geopolitical implications. IBM's 1,121-qubit Condor processor has progressed toward fault-tolerant quantum computing. Their quantum roadmap projects 100,000 physical qubits by 2033. This will be sufficient for cryptographically relevant

applications, given current error correction overhead ratios. Google is not behind. Their Sycamore processor performed a set of specific calculations in 200 seconds that would require classical supercomputers 10,000 years. More significantly, their recent quantum error correction research achieved below-threshold error rates for small logical qubits. It gave hope and the feasibility of scaling quantum computers to larger and more stable systems.

China's quantum ambitions present the most concerning competitive challenge. With over \$15 billion of known investments in quantum research, tangible results are for the world to see. Chinese scientists demonstrated the Jiuzhang photonic quantum computer, achieving quantum advantage in specific calculations. Their quantum communication network already spans thousands of kilometers. It suggests an advanced infrastructure development beyond even the current Western intelligence estimates. China's quantum program operates with limited transparency. This makes accurate capability assessment difficult for India and competitor nations.

Current quantum computers operate with 100-1,000 qubits but suffer from high error rates, requiring extensive error correction. Breaking RSA-2048 needs approximately 4,099 logical qubits, translating to 400,000-4 million physical qubits depending on error correction efficiency. The known thresholds needed for fault tolerance are way out of limits and require continued improvement. Where are we? The timeline for cryptographically relevant quantum computers



(those capable of breaking RSA-2048) remains actively debated among experts. Conservative projections suggest 15-20 years before such systems emerge, while aggressive estimates propose 5-10 years based on recent algorithmic improvements and hardware breakthroughs. IBM's roadmap indicates potential capability by 2033, assuming continued progress in error correction and qubit scaling.



SECURITY IMPLICATIONS

Quantum computing threats extend far beyond abstract cybersecurity concerns. It stretches to critical infrastructure, military operations, economic systems, and diplomatic communications. The scope of vulnerable systems reflects decades of reliance on RSA and ECC encryption across every sector of modern digital infrastructure.



The mathematics protecting India's 1.4 billion digital identities through AADHAAR, securing 8.5 billion monthly UPI transactions, and safeguarding defence communications across our borders depends entirely on RSA-2048 encryption. India processes approximately 40 billion digital transactions annually through systems vulnerable to quantum attacks. Our digital infrastructure spans from rural banking correspondents using biometric authentication to satellite communications monitoring the LAC. The quantum threat affects not just our technological sovereignty but our ability to maintain strategic autonomy in an increasingly connected world where cryptographic capabilities determine geopolitical influence.

Water treatment facilities implement RSA certificates for remote monitoring systems serving entire metropolitan areas. Breaking these encryption keys allows contamination of water supplies through modified chemical dosing commands or disabled safety systems. Military communications present perhaps the most severe national security risks. NATO's classified networks authenticate member nation communications using RSA-2048 certificates across 30 countries. Breaking these keys compromises joint military planning, intelligence sharing, and defense coordination among allied forces.

The Reserve Bank of India's Real Time Gross Settlement system processes ₹30 trillion in daily interbank transfers using RSA authentication. State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, and other major institutions secure customer transactions and internal communications through RSA-based systems vulnerable to quantum attacks. Not just India but global trade using the SWIFT network processes \$5 trillion daily through RSA-authenticated messages between 11,000 financial

institutions. Quantum attacks could expose bank-to-bank communications, revealing transaction patterns, liquidity positions, and financial strategies while enabling unauthorised modification of transfer instructions or payment redirections.

PREPARING FOR THE QUANTUM FUTURE

Can India afford to remain a passive observer in the quantum revolution when our entire digital infrastructure, from UPI transactions to AADHAAR authentication, relies on encryption that quantum computers may soon render obsolete? How prepared are our critical systems when a quantum breakthrough could expose everything from defense communications to banking networks? These questions demand urgent attention as India navigates the intersection of quantum computing capabilities and national security imperatives.

The National Mission on Quantum Technologies allocates ₹8,000 crores over five years for quantum research and development. The Indian Space Research Organisation has demonstrated quantum communication experiments. While institutions like IISc Bangalore, BITS Pilani, and TIFR Mumbai conduct quantum research, these efforts remain significantly smaller than Chinese or American investments. Indian quantum startups, including QNu Labs and QpiAI, are developing quantum key distribution systems and quantum computing platforms. QNu Labs has deployed quantum-secured communication networks for Indian government agencies. QpiAI focuses on quantum machine learning applications for Indian markets.



Indian companies represent emerging capabilities but require substantial scaling to achieve strategic relevance. The timeline for cryptographically relevant quantum computers is stiff for India's preparation.



Addressing quantum threats requires immediate action across multiple fronts, beginning with post-quantum cryptography development and extending through comprehensive infrastructure modernisation. CRYSTALS-Kyber provides quantum-resistant key exchange using Module Learning with Errors (M-LWE) problems that remain computationally difficult even for quantum computers. CRYSTALS-Dilithium offers digital signatures through the same mathematical foundation. These lattice-based cryptographic systems rely on the difficulty of finding short vectors in high-dimensional lattices, problems where current best attacks scale exponentially with lattice dimension.

Implementation challenges include significantly larger

key and signature sizes compared to current standards. These size increases impact bandwidth consumption, storage requirements, and embedded systems with memory constraints. The challenges do not end here. The performance benchmarks show mixed results across different operations. CRYSTALS-Kyber key generation requires approximately 29,000 cycles on modern processors versus 23 million cycles for RSA-2048, demonstrating efficiency improvements in some areas. However, signature generation in CRYSTALS-Dilithium requires 174,000 cycles compared to 116,000 for RSA-2048 signing. This indicates performance trade-offs requiring careful evaluation. In the current scenario where the patience level of people is lower, we are perhaps not ready to trade off time to mitigate security risk.

The quantum revolution presents both existential threats and transformational opportunities for India. Success requires coordinated action across government, industry, and academia to build quantum-resilient infrastructure while developing indigenous quantum capabilities. India's response to quantum computing will significantly influence our national security, economic competitiveness, and technological sovereignty in the coming decades.

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

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

- *Quantum computing can break widely used encryption like RSA-2048 in hours, threatening national security.*
- *China, the U.S., and others lead the global quantum race; India lags behind in investment and infrastructure.*
- *Key Indian systems, AADHAAR, UPI, RBI, and defence, use encryption vulnerable to future quantum cyberattacks.*
- *India's ₹8,000 crore quantum mission is a start, but far below global standards.*
- *Immediate shift to post-quantum cryptography is essential to secure India's digital future.*

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THE NEXT BIG

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Official site: <https://smdsymposium.org/attend-the-symposium/>

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The 7th Annual Counter-UAS Summit is scheduled for August 19–20 at Arlington, VA, USA. As drone threats evolve and adversaries adopt increasingly sophisticated tactics, counter-UAS solutions must adapt rapidly. In response, the Institute for Defense and Government Advancement (IDGA) presents the 7th Annual Counter-UAS Summit, bringing together U.S. and allied defense leaders, innovators, and experts at the forefront of this critical domain.

This year's summit will feature cutting-edge insights into emerging CUAS technologies, operational strategies, and lessons from recent global conflicts, including Ukraine-Russia and Israel-Gaza. Explore integration into combined arms operations and shape the future of counter-UAS capabilities.

Official site: <https://www.idga.org/events-counteruas-usa>

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Official site: <https://www.targikielce.pl/en/mspo>

THING

DEFCROS 2025



In a world where security challenges are rapidly evolving, DEFCROS 2025 emerges as a key platform for innovation, dialogue, and collaboration. It is scheduled to be held from 11-12 September in Croatia. As a leading defence and public safety expo in the region, it brings together government officials, law enforcement, military leaders, private security experts, and industry innovators.

Focusing on dual-use and crossover technologies, DEFCROS highlights solutions that bridge military, police, and civilian applications. By connecting manufacturers, developers, and start-ups, the event accelerates the deployment of versatile, future-ready technologies critical to navigating today's complex security environment.

Official site: <https://defcros.com/>

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Get ready for a landmark Asia-focused event at the Advanced Air Mobility Asia Symposium (AAM Asia), taking place from 16–18 September 2025 at Aichi Sky Expo, Aichi Prefecture, Japan. This premier gathering will spotlight the evolving AAM landscape across Asia, offering exclusive insights into cutting-edge test programs in Japan and Korea. Explore the full AAM ecosystem—from infrastructure and air traffic management to maintenance, regulations, and use cases. Join global stakeholders to tackle regional challenges and shape opportunities in the world's fastest-growing aerospace market.

Official site: <https://aam-asia.com/>

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Official site: <https://fireindia.net/>

CYBERSECURITY: TO OUTSOURCE OR NOT TO OUTSOURCE?

ECOSYSTEM

In today's digital landscape, cybersecurity is no longer optional—it's essential. Businesses of all sizes face threats from cyberattacks that can cause financial loss, reputational damage, or even permanent closure. Should companies handle cybersecurity internally or outsource it to specialised third-party providers? Each approach has advantages and risks, and the right decision depends on factors like budget, expertise, industry risks, and the need for around-the-clock protection.



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Cyberattacks occur when criminals attempt to break into computer systems to steal data, money, or cause damage. This is why cybersecurity—protecting your systems from these threats—is more important than ever. Now, many business owners and managers face a tough question: Should we handle cybersecurity ourselves, or should we hire an outside company to do it for us? Answers remain challenging.

WHAT IS CYBERSECURITY?

Cybersecurity means protecting your computer systems, networks, and data from digital attacks. Think of it as locking your house when you leave or setting up an alarm system to keep burglars out.

Without cybersecurity, businesses are open to risks such as data breaches (when sensitive information like customer data is stolen), ransomware attacks (when hackers lock your files and demand money to unlock them), phishing scams (fake emails that trick employees into giving away passwords) and website shutdowns (when hackers overload your site to

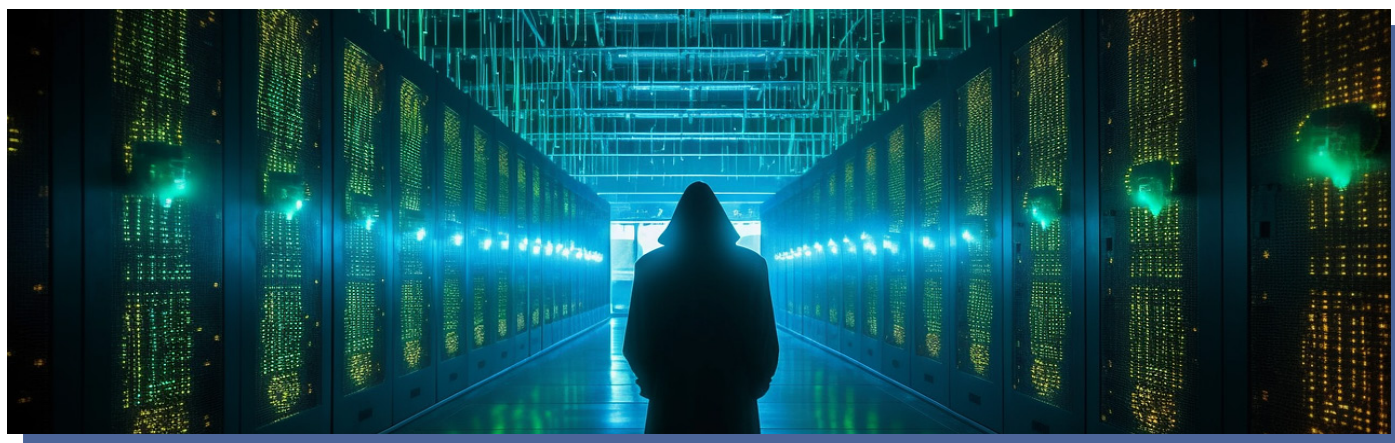
make it crash). These attacks can cost companies millions of dollars, harm their reputation, and even force them to shut down.

To outsource means to hire an outside company (often called a "third-party provider") to take care of your cybersecurity.

These companies specialise in protecting businesses from cyber threats. They often provide services like:

- Monitoring your network 24/7
- Running security tests
- Setting up firewalls and antivirus systems
- Responding quickly to attacks
- Keeping software up to date
- Training your employees to spot threats

In contrast, if you keep cybersecurity in-house, you use your own staff and resources to do these tasks.



OUTSOURCING CYBERSECURITY PROS

There are many reasons why outsourcing can be a smart choice, especially for small or mid-sized businesses:

Access to Experts: Cybersecurity is complicated and always changing. Hackers keep finding new tricks, and software updates come out all the time. Outsourcing gives you access to trained experts who know the latest threats and how to stop them.



Cost Savings: Hiring and training a full-time cybersecurity team can be expensive. You need to pay salaries, buy software, and keep staff trained. Outsourcing can often be cheaper, since you pay only for the services you need.

24/7 Protection: Cyberattacks can happen at any time—even in the middle of the night. Outsourcing companies often have teams that watch your systems 24/7, ready to act immediately.

Latest Technology: Cybersecurity firms invest in the newest tools and software. When you outsource, you benefit from advanced protection without having to buy expensive technology yourself.

Scalability: As your business grows, your security needs will grow too. Outsourced providers can easily adjust their services to match your size and budget.

Outsourcing provides access to expert knowledge, advanced tools, and 24/7 monitoring, but requires trust and may reduce a company's direct control over cybersecurity decisions.

OUTSOURCING CYBERSECURITY CONS

Outsourcing isn't perfect. There are also risks and downsides to consider:

Less Control: When you outsource, you give up some control over your cybersecurity. You rely on an outside company to keep your systems safe. If they make a mistake, your business could suffer.

Communication Gaps: If your outsourced provider is in another city—or another country—it can sometimes be

hard to communicate quickly or clearly, especially during an emergency.

Data Privacy Risks: When you give a third party access to your data, there's always a risk that it could be misused, either by accident or on purpose. You need to trust your provider completely.

One-Size-Fits-All Solutions: Some providers offer general solutions that may not fit your unique business needs. You may have to push to get a personalised approach.

Dependency: If you rely too heavily on an outsourced company, you might not build any internal knowledge or skills. This can make it hard to take back control later if needed.

KEEPING CYBERSECURITY IN-HOUSE

Handling cybersecurity yourself also has its advantages. With an in-house team, you control everything. You decide how your systems are protected and how quickly to respond to problems. Your internal team understands your business inside and out. They can create security plans that match your exact needs.

When a cyber threat appears, your in-house team is right there. You can respond more quickly without waiting for an outside company to act. By keeping cybersecurity internal, you don't need to share your sensitive data with outsiders. That reduces the risk of information leaks.



But having your own cybersecurity team comes with challenges, too. Hiring skilled cybersecurity professionals is expensive. You also need to buy software and keep everything updated; costs can add up quickly. There's a shortage of cybersecurity talent around the world. It can be difficult to find and keep good people, especially if you're a small business.

Your internal team might only work during business hours. But cyberattacks can happen at any time, including nights, weekends, and holidays. Cybersecurity threats change fast. Your team needs regular training to stay up to date, which takes time and money.



Keeping cybersecurity in-house offers personalised solutions and greater privacy but demands higher costs, continuous training, and the challenge of maintaining up-to-date defences against evolving threats.



24/7. They handle simple updates themselves but call in outside experts for complex threats or audits. This approach gives businesses the flexibility to save money while still getting expert support.

SECURITY IS NOT OPTIONAL, IT'S A MUST

Whether you choose to outsource or not, one thing is clear: cybersecurity is not optional. No business is too small to be targeted, and the risks of doing nothing are far greater than the cost of protecting yourself.

You lock your doors at night. You install smoke alarms. You buy insurance.

There's no one-size-fits-all answer. The best choice depends on your company's size, budget, industry, and internal skills.

Here are some key questions to help you decide:

- Do we have the budget to hire skilled cybersecurity staff?
- Can we afford the tools and software we need for strong protection?
- Are we in a high-risk industry (like finance or healthcare) that requires strong security and compliance?
- Can we monitor our systems 24/7?
- Do we trust an external company to handle our sensitive data?
- Is our business growing quickly and in need of flexible, scalable protection?

If you answered “no” to many of these, outsourcing might be the smarter, safer option. Many companies today choose a hybrid approach; they keep some cybersecurity functions in-house and outsource others.

For example, they train internal staff to recognise phishing emails but use an outside firm to monitor their systems



Cybersecurity is just another form of protection. So, to outsource or not to outsource? That's your decision. But make sure it's an informed one, because in the digital age, your business depends on it.

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

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

- *Cybersecurity is vital for businesses to guard against data breaches, ransomware, and evolving cyber threats.*
- *Outsourcing offers cost-effective access to experts, the latest technology, and 24/7 system monitoring.*
- *In-house cybersecurity offers control, quick response, and tailored strategies, but demands high costs and resources.*
- *A hybrid approach—combining in-house management with outsourced expertise—can balance cost, control, and coverage.*
- *Outsourcing cybersecurity depends on budget, internal skills, industry risks, and trust in external partners.*

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