

America's Chaotic Historic Shutdown Comes to an End?

Yes, America done well in hiding its historic government shutdown that came to an end on its 43rd day after Congress approved new funding bill. What irony is that no prime medium around the world emphasized the shutdown as it always does for the developing nations. What is the government shutdown means in America? When any ruling party in the American senate introduce budget for its governance, it must be approved by the whole congress, if not the potential funding for running the government will be stopped except the essential services like military, medicine and others.

Around 1.4 million federal workers were left unpaid or furloughed during the recent shutdown, affecting the livelihood and local economies due to reduced consumer spending. Key welfare programs like SNAP (food assistance for over 40 million Americans) and some of the military functions rendered private funding during these chaotic hours. National parks and museums have been closed, crucially affecting tourism, hospitality and local business further exacerbated the shutdown situation. Additionally, hundreds of thousands of airlines have been suffered by unpaid air traffic controllers, TSA staff shortages, and increased flight delays and cancellations. Over 20,000 planes are reportedly canceled during the shutdown.

If such precarious situation happened in South Asia, especially in India, American media could have made it headline, mocking and amusing the situation. However, since it happened in its own garden, nobody was ready to talk. The potential shutdown causes uncertainty over economic rises, paused payments, delayed contracts, and halted projects that depended on federal funding. Official data release on potential sectors, including job reports have been suspended, makes it harder for policymakers to assess and respond economic conditions.

This shutdown also exposed the vulnerability of American governance structure and hostility, highlighting the fragility of American political system. During this political standoff, the public are the one who suffered a lot. Internationally, these crises undermine faith on the Western



democratic credibility, posing the US is unable to manage fiscal discipline. Although the new funding bill has passed, it covers only next 3 to 8 months. The Democrat's demand still

unanswered and will make the situation worsen if it is not happening in the future.

Here is the table representing shutdown effects:

Impact Category	Description / Data Point
Federal Workers Affected	1.4 million unpaid/furloughed
Welfare Programs	SNAP for 40M at risk
Flight Delays	20,000+ disrupted
GDP Loss	\$3B-\$7B per 35-43 days
Tourism/Business	Local losses, e.g. \$500/day per small business
Duration of Shutdown	43 days (Nov 2025)

Author: LEA

India's ₹40 Billion Lifeline to Bhutan

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Bhutan this week underscored India's enduring commitment to the Himalayan kingdom's growth and sovereignty. Announcing a ₹40 billion line of credit and a series of new cooperation agreements, the visit reaffirmed New Delhi's role as Bhutan's principal development partner and regional ally amid rising Chinese assertiveness in the eastern Himalayas.

The agreements are covering renewable energy, health, and mental health cooperation which has marked a renewed effort to strengthen Bhutan's self-reliance in key sectors.

India will also allocate land for a Bhutanese temple in Varanasi, further deepening cultural and spiritual ties between the two nations. The inauguration of a new immigration checkpoint at Hatisar near Gelephu is expected to facilitate cross-border connectivity and trade.

For Bhutan, these developments arrive at a crucial juncture. As Thimphu embarks on its ambitious "Gelephu Mindfulness City" project, envisioned as a smart economic hub and spiritual tourism centre, India's technical expertise and infrastructure support are

expected to play a defining role. Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck has openly described the initiative as the "gateway to South Asia," and India's participation in it ensures that Thimphu's strategic compass remains aligned with democratic and developmental values rather than authoritarian influence.

In recent years, Beijing has intensified efforts to woo Bhutan through border negotiations and investment offers, hoping to drive a wedge between Thimphu and New Delhi. India's financial and cultural outreach during this visit is, therefore, as much a strategic counter-measure as a gesture of friendship.

The credit line is an economic assistance package as it is a reinforcement of trust and a reaffirmation of India's regional vision of shared prosperity anchored in stability. For India, Bhutan remains an essential buffer in the Himalayan security belt, a trusted neighbour whose partnership is vital in maintaining balance against China's westward expansion.

By combining soft diplomacy with hard economics the Himalayan partnership remains an unbroken chain of cultural kinship and strategic cooperation.

Author: Shruti Kaushik



Global Instability on the Rise

Governance Weakens as Geopolitics Harden

In the modern times, a challenging geopolitical landscape increasingly straining governance structures worldwide. In the latest update, Ukraine government control is losing as Russian forces furiously advance at multiple fronts with key cities like Pokrovsk and Kupiansk nearing a collapse. Although corruption scandals and military setbacks profoundly increased, Zelensky insisted on war that could bolstered by Western support as it would do anything to pushback Russia.

In Germany, the President Frank-Walter Steinmeier's expected to remain non-partisan, however, recently, he has taken a stronger public stance against the rise of right-wing extremism, especially targeting vies associated with the AfD (Alternative for Germany) party. Even though he is defending democratic values, his actions speak political agenda, which is unusual for German president. This stance could exacerbate political divisions amid economic stagnations, migration pressures, high energy prices, coalition fatigue that weakens the political centre. These kinds of actions already pushed people toward political extremes.

Meanwhile, in East Asia, tensions have already escalated as Japanese new Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's potential remarks on framing Chinese blockade of Taiwan as existential threat to Japan, have proved strong backlash from China. Even though western nations like the United States supports Japan for its stands, Beijing's retaliatory measures could severely hurt Japan's economic and diplomatic landscape by targeting energy security.

Additionally, in South Asia, the Taliban regime and Pakistan struggle to govern amid the rise of series of violence attacks and violation of truce. The international isolation remains affecting Afghanistan while Pakistan continues to face economy fall and facing governance challenges.

Furthermore, the United States government were shutdown for 43 days due to contrasting views in the funding bill by both democrats and republican party. Hence, many federal workers left unpaid, struggling to run day to day life. Tourism also got hurt by the close down of national parks and museum, and cancellation of flights across the U.S.

As we see, these intertwined geopolitical pressures across America, Europe and Asia implies geopolitical rivalry undermine governance efficacy, increasing uncertainty in global and national affairs.

Author: LEA

Axis Rewritten

India, Iran, and the Taliban Redraw South-Central Asian Trade Map

The Taliban's quiet but decisive shift away from Pakistan-centric trade infrastructure has triggered a deeper geopolitical churn across South and Central Asia. What began as a logistical adjustment has evolved into a regional realignment that could redefine how power, trade, and influence flow across the Asian heartland.

The long-touted transit plan linking Pakistan with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan has now been shelved. In its place, a new axis has emerged that connects Iran directly to China through Afghanistan while simultaneously extending a trade corridor with India. The implications are profound, as Afghanistan is moving away from Pakistan's chokehold, while India and Iran are gaining a renewed foothold in the region's connectivity matrix.

In September 2025, an Iranian delegation led by Industry and Trade Minister Seyed Mohammad Atabak visited Kabul to accelerate joint infrastructure plans. Discussions focused on expanding Afghan access to Iran's Chabahar Port and enhancing operational capacity to handle more Afghan-bound vessels. This was not symbolic diplomacy but a calculated step toward replacing Pakistan's Gwadar route with an Indo-Iranian corridor that offers Kabul both autonomy and stability.

The visit coincided with Pakistan's airstrikes on TTP hideouts in Kabul, drawing sharp condemnation from the Taliban and renewed Indian criticism of Pakistan's destabilizing role in the region.

Iran's role adds a new dimension. The Kabul-Kandahar-Zaranj-Milak-Zahedan-Chabahar chain is fast becoming Afghanistan's preferred overland route to the sea. After months of closure due to border clashes and disputes over Helmand River water rights, the Milak crossing was reopened in October 2025 following Iranian mediation. Both sides have since agreed to expand freight movement via the Khaf-Herat railway, creating a continuous rail-to-port pipeline feeding into Chabahar.

Still, challenges persist. India's plan to build the Chabahar-Zahedan railway, a project originally worth \$1.6 billion, remains stalled since 2020. U.S. sanctions on Iran continue to complicate project financing and insurance, despite Washington's acknowledgment of Chabahar's humanitarian importance. On October 30, 2025, the United States renewed India's sanctions waiver for another six months, a crucial lifeline that will determine whether the corridor moves from aspiration to permanence.

For the Taliban, this shift represents a pragmatic turn. Pakistan's leverage, historically



For India, this marks the fruition of a long-term strategic pursuit. In February 2025, the first India-Afghanistan transit train successfully reached Rozanak station in Herat.

The cargo, sent from India to Iran's Bandar Abbas port, was then transported via the Khaf-Herat railway into Afghanistan, serving as a practical demonstration of the emerging corridor's viability. Since that corridor became operational, over 30,000 tons of goods have moved between Iran and Afghanistan by rail, bypassing Pakistani territory entirely.

At the core of this architecture lies the Chabahar Port, which remains India's crucial maritime gateway to Central Asia. Under the 10-year operational agreement signed in May 2024, Chabahar has been integrated with the International North-South Transport Corridor and is now capable of handling 8.5 million tons of cargo annually. More importantly, it provides India a reliable route to Afghanistan and beyond without dependence on Pakistan's unpredictable border politics.

The trade data underscores the momentum. India-Afghanistan trade, which stood at \$1.33 billion before 2021, plummeted after the Taliban takeover but has since rebounded strongly. By FY 2023-24, total trade reached \$997.7 million, with Afghan exports of saffron, nuts, and dried fruits surging to \$642 million. For the first time, India registered a trade deficit with Kabul, a reflection of the corridor's growing vitality and the reemergence of Afghanistan as a viable trading partner.

Diplomatic signals followed swiftly. On October 9, 2025, Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi visited New Delhi, marking his first official trip since the Taliban's return to power. India responded by upgrading its technical mission in Kabul to full embassy status.

derived from Afghanistan's dependence on Karachi and Gwadar, has eroded. India offers trade without coercion, investment without interference, and engagement free from territorial or ideological demands. During his October 12 visit to New Delhi, Muttaqi invited Indian investment in Afghanistan's minerals, agriculture, and sports sectors, while urging India to open the Wagah border for direct trade, describing it as the fastest and most natural route between two ancient partners.

China, meanwhile, stands to gain from any functional corridor. While Beijing continues to anchor the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor through Gwadar, it is simultaneously courting access through Iran and Afghanistan, ensuring redundancy in its routes to the Indian Ocean.

The strategic implications are unmistakable. Afghanistan's tilt toward Iran and India is eroding Pakistan's geographic monopoly over regional connectivity. For New Delhi, Chabahar and the Iran-Afghanistan corridor offer what decades of diplomacy could not achieve: direct overland access to Central Asia, insulated from Pakistan's politics.

The viability of this emerging axis depends on several variables, including sustained Iran-Afghanistan cooperation, India's continued infrastructure commitment, the renewal of U.S. sanctions waivers, and regional stability to secure trade routes. Yet the direction of travel is clear.

Afghanistan has chosen to diversify away from Pakistan. Iran sees Kabul as a bridge to Central Asia. India, steady in its westward engagement and quietly reshaping the regional map through infrastructure, diplomacy, and calculated patience. Together, the three are redrawing the economic and strategic contours of post-American Asia, one trade route at a time.

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LeT's Bangladesh Strategy Against India

Is Bangladesh emerging as a New Terror Front?



In the latest episode of eastern neighbour becoming adversarial, Lashkar-e-Taiba commander Saifullah Saif's inflammatory declaration at a rally in Khairpur Tameawali, Pakistan has further exposed the new dimension of menace in South Asian terrorism. Saif claimed that its Bangladesh-based operatives are already in line to carry out attack India, emphasized the term "East Pakistan", revealing a calculated attempt to establish eastern operational corridor against India.

This strategic shift coincides with recent political upheaval and Bangladesh-Pakistan defence cooperation, creating a convergence of threats to India. Dhaka's transformation into a potential terror staging stems from multiple factors including ousting of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and the formation of interim government under Muhammad Yunus. Since his inception into governance, the controversial, terror supporting organization Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir, and Ansarulaha Bangla Team got their ban lifted. JeI controls Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited and other 14 banks in the rural areas which could potentially use

terror financing. This created a permissive environment for radical entities to flourish under his governance. Reports suggest that Pakistan's ISI played a major role in the regime change in Bangladesh.

The country's extensive madrasa infrastructure that funded by mostly Middle East sources, historically served as radical procurement hub. Networks like Ahl-e-Hadith which spanning over Bangladesh and having multiple militant groups including Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh provides institutional cover for radicalization. Let has successfully exploited these pre-existing networks by deploying key operatives like Ibtisam Elahi Zaheer who is General Secretary of Pakistan's Markazi Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith and Hafiz Saeed's closes ally.

Zaheer's recent visit to Bangladesh including districts near India-Bangladesh frontier, indicates strategic planning beyond propaganda. His inflammatory speeches including "from Pakistan to Bangladesh, all Muslims will unite against the seculars" indicating the call for jihad and an ideological mobilization strategy targeting vulnerable.

The growing Bangladesh-Pakistan defence ties, discussing rejuvenating bilateral cooperation could give an institutional cover for intelligence coordination that could facilitate terror operations. Surprisingly saif's claim that "now America is with us, and Bangladesh is also getting closer to Pakistan again", reflects a calculated narrative aimed at boosting confidence and morale among LeT who got shattered by the Indian operation.

The U.S. President Donald Trump's acknowledgment of Pakistan's counter terrorism efforts might have created a perception among militant circles that America will no longer put much pressure on Islamabad regarding Kashmir-focused terror groups. Simultaneously, the US has provided significant support to Bangladesh's interim government by USAID committed \$202 million in aid, political and economical ties. The juxtaposition of US supporting both Pakistan and Bangladesh at a same time creates a strategic confusion that militants will exploit narratively. By calculating this potential supportive environment, Pakistan once maintained a silence with Afghanistan, now targeting it, thinking it could hurt India. In reality, Pakistan is the one always suffer for its miscalculation.

Why Bangladesh became most preferable destinations for terror groups like LeT? Proximity to India's Northeast which has a porous border that limit surveillances, existence of radicalized networks like Ahl-e-Hadith institutions, and political cover from interim government that depend on Islamic political support. Hence, it pushes India to face a two-front terror challenges from both Pakistan and Bangladesh. Additionally, targeting the India's Northeast insurgent groups, combined with international terror networks could overwhelm regional security landscape.

Saif's recent declaration could not be missed as mere a propaganda. It represents an operational disclosure of strategic intent backed by Bangladesh-Pakistan cooperation, and the rehabilitation of Jamaat-e-Islami. The question is not whether Bangladesh become a launch pad for terror networks like Pakistan, but how quickly it becomes achieve its operational capability.

Author: LEA

India Launches Massive Crackdown on Terror Network after Delhi Red Fort Blast



Following the November 10 devastating bomb blast at national capital, India intensified multi-agency coordinated crackdown on terror modules. The blast killed at least 13 people and injured over 20 others. Hence, the enforcement agencies have made significant progress in dismantling what official describes as a "white-collar terror networks" linked to Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM).

Agencies have at least arrested 14 individuals including six doctors, an imam, engineers, and other highly educated professionals. Investigators identified more than 20 professionals who are the part of this terror module, operation primarily from Al-Falah School of Medical Sciences in Faridabad.

Simultaneously, enforcement agencies recovered approximately 2,900 kg of explosive

material including 360 kg of ammonium nitrate, detonators, timers, electronic wiring and related bomb-making components. Additionally, security captured rifles, pistols, ammunitions and vehicles.

Reports suggests that Indian agencies thwarted upcoming planned terror incidents which would take on December 6 for the remembrance of Babari Masjid demolition. Over 1,000 police personnel across the India conducting coordinated raids including Aryan, Attar Pradesh, Delhi, and Jammy and Kashmir. On the other side, investigation being carried out by ANIA, Delhi Police Special Cell, state police forces, Intelligence Bureau, Enforcement Directorate, and forensic departments.

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DURAND LINE

Pakistan Afghanistan Clash

Tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan's Taliban government have escalated sharply after Islamabad urged Kabul earlier this week to issue a fatwa declaring the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) insurgency "illegitimate." The request, made during back-channel talks held in the second week of November 2025, was rejected outright by the Taliban, dealing another blow to the already deteriorating ties between the two countries.

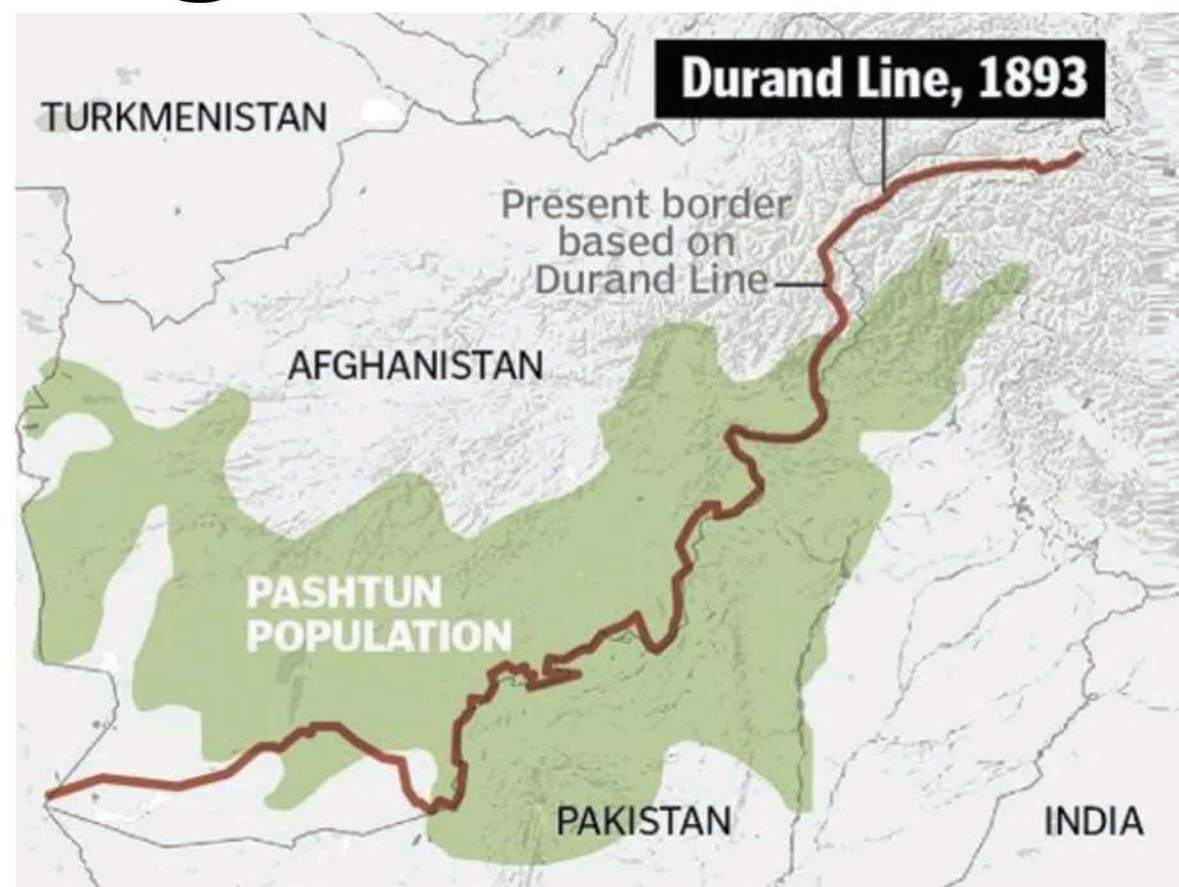
According to Taliban Deputy Interior Minister Rahmatullah Najib, Pakistan's delegation had pressed for a religious decree condemning the TTP's campaign inside Pakistan. Najib said the demand came both directly and through mediators "unfamiliar with the realities and sensitivities between the two nations." The discussions, he confirmed on November 12, ended abruptly without any outcome. The statement marks the clearest public acknowledgment so far of how strained relations have become since the Taliban's return to power in 2021.

The episode comes amid rising hostility this month. Pakistan has intensified deportations of Afghan refugees, restricted cross-border trade, and tightened control at Torkham and Chaman crossings, citing security threats. Kabul has denounced these steps as coercive tactics, accusing Islamabad of punishing civilians for its inability to contain militancy. In response, the Taliban government has reduced trade activity and warned that "pressure politics" would only worsen tensions.

The security situation inside Pakistan continues to deteriorate. According to the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies, militant attacks have surged to their highest level since 2014, with more than seven hundred incidents recorded in 2024, most linked to the TTP. In recent weeks, the group has stepped up assaults on security installations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, prompting a renewed military crackdown. Pakistani authorities claim the TTP is regrouping in Afghan sanctuaries — an allegation the Taliban rejects as politically motivated.

The breakdown in the fatwa talks reveals a deeper shift in what was once a patron-client equation. Pakistan's military establishment, which once viewed the Taliban as a strategic asset, is discovering that Kabul now acts with autonomy.

In Kabul, the Taliban leadership has grown increasingly assertive in defending its sovereignty. Afghan officials have criticized Pakistan's recent airstrikes along the Durand Line, as well as trade blockades and restrictions



on goods transit. Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid, speaking on November 13, warned that Afghanistan would "respond firmly to any violation of its territory" and accused Pakistan of fueling mistrust and regional instability.

China, Qatar, and Turkey have attempted informal mediation in recent days, but no breakthrough has been achieved. Diplomatic sources in Kabul indicate that Beijing is particularly concerned, given its ongoing economic and infrastructure interests in both countries. Even so, Chinese influence appears limited as the Taliban leadership continues to assert political independence.

For Pakistan, the standoff comes amid economic hardship, political unrest, and eroding regional influence. Its inability to secure even symbolic cooperation from Kabul exposes the limits of its long-standing religious and ideological diplomacy. For the Taliban, this confrontation is being used domestically to

demonstrate sovereignty and defiance against foreign interference.

Regional observers in New Delhi, Doha, and Tehran view the growing rift as a major geopolitical shift. The weakening of Pakistan's grip over Kabul could reshape South Asia's security landscape — reducing Islamabad's traditional leverage but heightening the risk of unregulated militancy along the Durand Line, where border clashes and trade disruptions have intensified through November.

Pakistan's attempt to use a fatwa as a diplomatic lever has backfired, strengthening the Taliban's image as an autonomous actor.

As of mid-November 2025, bilateral talks remain suspended, and both sides continue to exchange blame for cross-border instability. What was once a relationship rooted in convenience has now become a contest of will, defined less by shared faith and more by clashing political realities.

Author: Shruti Kaushik

Political Power Struggle in Nepal's Madhesh Province

The political upheaval in Nepal's Madhesh Province has triggered one of the sharpest constitutional crises since the country's transition to federalism, and its repercussions extend well beyond Nepal's borders. What began as an early-morning political manoeuvre in Janakpur has evolved into a confrontation that exposes the fragility of Nepal's federal structure and raises fresh concerns in New Delhi about the stability of the southern plains.

The crisis unfolded in the pre-dawn hours of Monday, November 10, 2025, when Province Chief Sumitra Subedi Bhandari abruptly left Janakpur at 4 a.m., citing health reasons, and quietly travelled toward Kathmandu. Within hours, she was in Bardibas, where she appointed CPN-UML parliamentary leader Saroj Kumar Yadav as Chief Minister under Article 168(3) of the constitution. The oath was administered at 5:20 a.m. inside a hotel room. The appointment came just two days after the Jitendra Prasad Sonal-led coalition government collapsed on Saturday, November 8, after failing to secure a vote of confidence. Sonal, who had taken office on October 15 with support from 56 lawmakers under Article 168(2), resigned once it became clear his coalition partners would not back him.

Under Nepal's constitutional framework, a government should first be formed under Article 168(2) with majority support. Only if this fails can Article 168(3) be invoked to appoint the leader of the largest single party. However, Province Chief Bhandari bypassed this procedure, allowing the UML to take charge of the province despite lacking a legislative majority. The Nepali Congress and six other parties denounced the move as unconstitutional and politically orchestrated from Kathmandu.

The reaction was immediate and violent. Protesters stormed the Chief Minister's Office in Janakpur, damaged property, and discarded the national flag in anger. Demonstrators also vandalised the office of the Province Chief and burned tyres outside the Madhesh complex, accusing the UML of staging a "constitutional coup."

By Tuesday, November 11, President Ramchandra Paudel, acting on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers, dismissed Province Chief Bhandari from her post. The central government has since nominated Dr. Surendra Labh, a noted economist and specialist on Madhesh's social and political affairs, as the new Province Head. Yet the removal, while restoring a semblance of order, has not resolved the underlying constitutional dispute. The UML bloc still controls only 32 of the 107 seats in the Provincial Assembly, far short of the 54 required for a simple majority.

The episode has revealed the deep fractures in Nepal's decade-old federal experiment. Instead of serving as a model of decentralized governance, provincial politics have become arenas of opportunistic alliances, sudden defections, and central interference. The rapid

manipulation of constitutional provisions in Madhesh highlights how fragile the balance of power remains between the centre and the provinces. Legal experts argue that the appointment under Article 168(3) was not an administrative oversight but a calculated political manoeuvre designed to secure UML influence in a strategically significant province.

For India, developments in Madhesh are of direct concern. The province borders Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and shares profound linguistic, cultural, and familial links with communities across the border. Historically, Madhesh has been seen as the bridge between India and Nepal, and political unrest there often finds resonance on both sides of the frontier. Instability in Madhesh could disrupt cross-border trade, encourage migration pressures, and revive historical grievances about representation and autonomy that once strained India-Nepal relations.

There is also a strategic dimension. The UML, known for its closer proximity to Beijing, now controls provincial authority in a region where India's cultural influence has traditionally been strongest. A politically weakened Madhesh reduces India's informal leverage and strengthens forces in Kathmandu more aligned with northern interests. This evolving alignment is being watched closely in New Delhi, where officials recognise that political volatility in Nepal's southern belt can have security and geopolitical consequences far greater than its domestic appearance suggests.

The crisis also exposes a growing pattern in Nepal's political landscape as frequent government collapses, partisan interpretation of constitutional clauses, and the erosion of public faith in the federal structure. In less than a month, Madhesh has witnessed two governments fall, a province head removed, and state offices vandalised. Such instability undermines the promise of federalism as envisioned in Nepal's 2015 Constitution and risks turning decentralization into a façade of control by the central elite.

The appointment of Dr. Surendra Labh, with his expertise in Madhesh's socio-economic realities, may bring short-term calm, but the institutional damage runs deep. For the people of Madhesh, the crisis has reinforced a perception of betrayal and exclusion. For India, it serves as a reminder that Nepal's internal political convulsions, particularly in its southern plains, are inseparable from regional stability and cross-border security.

Nepal's federal democracy and Madhesh episode illustrates how constitutional provisions can be weaponised for political convenience and how quickly faith in democratic institutions can erode when legality is subordinated to power. If unchecked, such trends threaten not only Nepal's internal cohesion but also the delicate equilibrium of South Asia's Himalayan frontier.

Author: Shruti Kaushik

Russia Accused for Satellite sabotage UK space command & Germany mentioned openly

As contemporary warfare shifting its paradigm from physical to digital and beyond, there are increased reports of satellite sabotages what experts calling the "shadow war in orbit" registered across the globe. In the recent escalation, the United Kingdom and the Germany has publicly accused Russia of stalking, jamming, and interfering with their critical satellite networks, raising alarm of weaponizing space. As these developments unfold amid geopolitical frictions, India could potentially face similar hybrid threats as it is expanding its own capabilities.

The accusation against Russia surfaced prominently this week, with German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius revealed that Russian reconnaissance satellites have been actively tracking Intelsat assets that are vital to German Armed Forces and their NATO allies. Simultaneously, UK's Space Command reported instances of Russian satellites shadowing British orbital infrastructure, coupled with ground-based jamming that disrupts signal

integrity.

Western experts claiming that this kind of interference could cascade into real-world chaos including grounding aircraft, derailing financial transactions reliant on GPS, and severing military command chains. Such practices became routine activities for Russia during its war on Ukraine. However, Russia denied all these allegations, accusing West of its own space aggressions.

Adding complexity, intelligence community pointed China as an equally formidable player in this domain. While Europe focusing on Russia, analysts warn that such tactics are exportable, potentially targeting any nation with strategic orbital assets. For India, the implications are particularly acute. India is no stranger to space militarization after 2019 when it demonstrated Anti-satellite weapons (ASAT) designed to incapacitate or destroy satellites that potentially poses threats to space security and international relations.

However, recent increased GPS spoofing

incidents where fake signals trick receivers to miscalculate positions, have aligning with hybrid warfare from border adversaries, mirror the jamming techniques now causing troubles to Europe. Electronic warfare tools like spoofing and jamming are low-cost, deniable, and devastatingly effective. In 2024, India has reportedly coupled with orbital 'dogfights' involving Chinese satellites, prompting a defensive pivot.

Since space becoming new ground for war, countries like India achieving greater heights in space, need to accelerate its investments in resilient technology and AI-driven anomaly detection to counter such threats from both state and non-state actors. Although adversaries employing electronic warfare tactics to disrupt navigation, communication, and military operations, India which caught between aspirations and vulnerability, the message is unequivocal in the theatre of space, vigilance is the ultimate shield.

Author: LEA



ASEAN-GCC High-Level Talks in Jakarta



The timing of the meeting carries a broader strategic undertone. As the term "Asia-Pacific" gives way to "Indo-Pacific," ASEAN finds itself balancing competing interests of major powers such as the United States, China, India, and Japan. Building up ties with the Gulf provides ASEAN an additional axis of engagement, one less defined by rivalry and more by shared pragmatism.

Analysts note that this partnership fits neatly into ASEAN's hedging strategy, allowing member states to engage multiple partners while maintaining autonomy. The GCC, too, is pursuing diversification of its global ties, viewing Southeast Asia as a vital corridor for investment, food security, and maritime connectivity.

While the meeting did not produce headline-grabbing announcements, its significance lies in continuity. Both sides reaffirmed their intent to turn frameworks into tangible results. Joint working groups on clean energy and digital cooperation are expected to meet soon, with concrete initiatives likely to surface ahead of the 2026 summit.

Author: Shruti Kaushik



ASEAN and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) held their second high-level consultation in Jakarta this week, reaffirming their shared commitment under the ASEAN-GCC Framework of Cooperation 2024-2028. The meeting, hosted at the ASEAN Secretariat, underscored a growing convergence between Southeast Asia and the Gulf amid shifting Indo-Pacific dynamics.

Officials from both blocs reviewed progress made since the Riyadh Summit last year and identified new areas for collaboration, including renewable energy, digital trade, Islamic finance, and the halal industry. ASEAN Secretary-General Kao Kim Hourn described the partnership as "a bridge between two dynamic regions with complementary strengths," highlighting the Gulf's investment potential and ASEAN's expanding consumer markets.

Trade between ASEAN and the GCC has crossed USD 120 billion, and discussions for a free trade agreement are gathering momentum, with Indonesia aiming for completion by 2026. Both sides view economic diversification as a shared priority, with Gulf nations seeking to

move beyond hydrocarbons and ASEAN economies looking for fresh investment in infrastructure and technology.

Rhetoric as Strategy Decoding Trump's Claim



In a latest interview, President Donald Trump claimed even Pakistan conducting nuclear test, while he defends his position of resuming nuclear test, pointing at countries like Russia, China, and North Korea who are all also indulging in similar test.

Pakistan, a hostile neighbour harbouring terror outfits within its soil, is one of the nuclear-powered nations. Unlike India's conspicuous no-first-use (NFU) nuclear policy that emphasizes "credible minimum deterrence" and assured retaliation, Pakistan haven't failed to maintain ambiguity about its nuclear doctrine. It stresses both "credible" and "full spectrum" deterrence, means developing and maintaining nuclear weapons targeting both nuclear as well as conventional military threats. Pakistan maintains both deterrence as responsive to India's conventional superiority.

The official declaration about its nuclear policy is scarce and often interpreted ambiguously from press statements from Pakistan's Inter Service Public Relation (ISPR), interviews and speeches of higher officials, Heads, Advisors to National Command Authority and Strategic Plans Division (SPD) which holds the primary nuclear authority.

Although no credible evidence of Pakistan been conducting nuclear weapon test in the 21st century, report suggests that making/procurement of nuclear weapons rapidly increasing, estimated 200-nuclear weapon stockpiles by late 2020s. In recent years, the United State had sanctioned few entities in Pakistan for developing intercontinental

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Washington's New Footprint in Damascus Signals Strategic Realignment in Post-Assad Syria

The United States is preparing to establish a permanent military presence in Syria's capital, marking a significant recalibration of its Middle East strategy. According to senior regional sources, the U.S. has initiated groundwork to build a base at a key air facility in Damascus, a move seen as both a strategic assertion and a diplomatic balancing act in the post-Assad landscape.

C-130 transport aircraft have reportedly begun preliminary runway assessments at the proposed site, with officials indicating that the base lies near what will become a "De-Conflict Zone" under the U.S.-mediated Syrian-Israeli Non-Aggression Treaty. The development follows months of behind-the-scenes negotiations between Washington and the newly installed government of Ahmed al-Shahra, better known as Abu Mohammed al-Jolani.

While the new Syrian administration has avoided public acknowledgment of the agreement, citing national sovereignty and independence from foreign powers, multiple military sources in Damascus confirm that discussions have focused on logistics, refueling, surveillance, and humanitarian operations. Official statements continue to emphasize full Syrian control over the installations, though analysts note the government's quiet acceptance of the deal suggests a calculated attempt to avoid triggering nationalist sentiment.

The timing is notable. President Donald Trump is expected to host al-Jolani at the White House next week, marking the first official visit by a Syrian head of state since the civil war began. The visit is expected to center on economic reconstruction and sanctions relief, though the military accord is expected to dominate closed-door discussions.

The strategic calculus behind Washington's move appears layered. U.S. officials publicly frame the initiative as a mechanism to prevent renewed conflict between Syria and Israel. Yet the decision to position forces in the Al-Mazza district, one of Damascus's most fortified and symbolically significant areas, underscores deeper motives. Al-Mazza's vantage point provides control over routes linking the capital to the Mediterranean coast and Damascus International Airport, while its proximity to key security installations and diplomatic compounds makes it an unrivaled observation post.

From this location, American forces would gain the ability to monitor the movements of Syria's military and foreign contingents, including Russian units still active in parts of the country. The presence effectively extends Washington's intelligence reach across the Levant, strengthening its role as both mediator

ballistic missiles which covers the U.S. in its range. Since, Pakistan is nuclear powered and its alleged under-developing ballistic missile cover the U.S., perceived as nuclear threat and mired into sanctions.

After 1998 nuclear test, there is no known nuclear weapon test has been carried out. Without citing any credible evidence, Trump's claim that Pakistan has been indulging in nuclear weapon test could be interpreted as a strategic signal rather than a factual claim. In this current geopolitical paradigm, the United States maintains adversarial or ambivalent relations with countries like Russia, China, and North Korea. By rhetorically linking Pakistan to this group, America might be signaling heightened vigilance on the nuclear proliferation in South Asia and most importantly it could be seen as a strategic warning against Pakistan's tilt toward China.

Furthermore, the time of such statement could reflect the broader regional calculations. As the United States being the largest and primary security guarantor in the Gulf, the recent Israel's aggression in the Middle East, fueled a sense of insecurity among Arab and Muslim countries, and the need of strong deterrence capabilities including nuclear deterrence against nuclear-armed actors like Israel. The Saudi-Pakistan defence agreement could be seen as the product of that necessity, which raises questions about the credibility of longstanding U.S. security commitments in the region. In this sense, Trump's statement might not only increase the possibility of economic consequences for Pakistan, but also a diplomatic signaling for Islamabad to remain neutral and distance form U.S. matters in the Middle East.

From the Indian perspective, Trump's statement can be interpreted as a diplomatic advantage indicating the U.S. is aligning more closely with India's perspective on regional security threats. While portraying Pakistan as a nuclear risk, legitimizes India's cautious stances toward its hostile neighbour. At the same time, his claim reinforces India's image as a responsible nuclear power in the region compared to the unpredictable nature of Pakistan.

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and power broker in a volatile geography.

Regional observers link the new deployment to Washington's broader strategic architecture supporting Israel's security ambitions, including what insiders refer to as the "Corridor of David" is a proposed logistics and energy corridor connecting Israel, Jordan, and northeastern Syria. In this framework, a U.S. camp in Damascus would function not only as a stabilizing presence but as a shield for Israeli interests, enabling a reconfiguration of influence across the southern front.

The move also reduces U.S. reliance on bases in Iraq, where sustained pressure from armed groups and political factions has complicated American operations. Establishing a foothold in Syria provides a platform to project power across Iraq's western frontier while maintaining pressure on both Tehran-backed militias and the Iraqi government.

The deployment carries regional implications beyond Israel and Iraq. In recent months, Turkey has sought to expand its own footprint in Syria, reportedly conducting surveys in the coastal city of Latakia with an eye on establishing a military installation. The U.S. initiative in Damascus can be interpreted as a preemptive counterweight to Ankara's growing assertiveness. By positioning itself first, Washington signals to Damascus that stability flows through American oversight but not Turkish intervention.

This aligns with Israel's interests, given Tel Aviv's concerns over Turkey's increasing activities near the occupied territories. To mitigate potential friction within NATO, Washington is expected to tacitly permit Ankara broader latitude in northern Syria, particularly in Kurdish regions, while maintaining exclusive operational control in Damascus and the country's central corridor.

Economically and strategically, the planned U.S. base in Damascus consolidates Washington's influence in a region critical to both energy transit and post-war reconstruction. For Syria's new leadership, the arrangement offers international legitimacy and a potential path toward economic relief. For Washington, it is an opportunity for defining the regional order that safeguards Israel's interests, limits Turkish reach, and curtails Iranian influence.

The move, however, risks reigniting latent anti-American sentiment within Syria. Public discontent remains high over the government's muted response to Israeli airstrikes and perceived erosion of sovereignty. Should these grievances deepen, Washington's newest footprint in the heart of Damascus may become both a strategic asset and a lightning rod in the region's shifting balance of power.

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China's JL-1 Debut Completes Nuclear Triad and Signals



China's debut of the Jinglei-1 (JL-1) air-launched ballistic missile has formally signaled that Beijing now considers its nuclear triad fully operational across air, land and sea. The missile, unveiled during last week's military parade in Beijing, marks the first time China has publicly showcased all three components of its nuclear deterrent in one display as a deliberate message at a moment of strategic rivalry with the United States.

The JL-1, a nuclear-capable long-range ballistic missile carried by the H-6N bomber, has a reported range of up to 8,000km and travels at hypersonic speeds with terminal maneuverability. Its design allows it to bypass layered missile defence networks, making interception significantly more difficult. For China's defence planners, the missile offers a survivable second-strike capability from the air, something they have sought for years to reinforce their 'no first use' nuclear doctrine.

Washington-based analysts note that China retrofitted the H-6 platform in 2019 to carry an ALBM precisely to preserve its nuclear forces in a crisis. Once airborne, the bomber adds mobility and unpredictability to China's arsenal, complicating any adversary's pre-emptive strike calculations. While U.S. assessments increasingly discuss the possibility of China using a limited nuclear strike on U.S. military forces during a Taiwan confrontation, Beijing maintains its official stance that nuclear weapons would only be used in retaliation.

Despite the significance of the JL-1, experts point out that China's current bomber is the limiting factor. The H-6N, derived from a Soviet-era design, remains vulnerable to long-range air defence radars and interceptor aircraft. Even with mid-air refuelling, its real-world penetration capability against U.S.

or allied defences is limited. Chinese military commentary has acknowledged this vulnerability, noting that the H-6N could not realistically reach distant targets such as the U.S. mainland without interception.

For this reason, the JL-1 is being viewed as a transitional asset, bridging the gap until the PLA fields the long-anticipated H-20 stealth bomber. U.S. defence forecasts place the H-20's likely debut in the early to mid-2030s, although Chinese officials say development is moving without major hurdles. Once operational, the H-20 is expected to offer intercontinental range, stealth shaping, and the ability to carry multiple long-range nuclear and conventional missiles—bringing China's air-based nuclear deterrent closer to the capabilities of the U.S. B-2 and B-21 platforms.

Chinese analysts suggest that the JL-1 is only the first in a growing family of Jinglei missiles, with longer-range, more precise variants already under development. A stealth bomber armed with extended-range ALBMs would give China a credible intercontinental strike option from the air and enhance its ability to signal nuclear intent during a crisis. Air-launched nuclear weapons, by virtue of being observable and deployable without immediate use, also serve as a tool of coercive signaling applying psychological pressure on adversaries without crossing the nuclear-use threshold.

There is also emerging speculation that future Jinglei-series missiles could be adapted for launch from the Y-20 heavy transport aircraft. Such a configuration would mirror U.S. experiments with air-launched ballistic systems from transport platforms and would offer China an additional degree of flexibility, range and unpredictability.

The JL-1's appearance in the parade therefore carries a significance beyond a simple equipment debut. It marks a milestone in Beijing's effort to build a resilient nuclear deterrent able to withstand first-strike attempts, complicate adversary planning and reinforce China's geopolitical posture in the Indo-Pacific and beyond. As the H-20 approaches eventual rollout and longer-range Jinglei variants come online, China's air-based nuclear capabilities are set to evolve from a stopgap solution into a formidable pillar of its strategic force.

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Turkey Deploys ASELSAN's Advanced Counter-Battery Radar Across Army Units



ASELSAN's next - generation weapon-detection radar, now fielded across multiple Turkish Army units, has emerged as one of the most advanced counter-battery and early-warning systems currently in service. Designed to detect and track enemy mortars, artillery shells and rockets in real time, the radar is reshaping battlefield situational awareness and significantly improving force protection for frontline troops.

Using an electronically scanned S-band array, the system identifies incoming projectiles within seconds of launch and computes both the point of origin and the projected point of impact with high precision. These coordinates are instantly transmitted to the command-and-control centre, enabling rapid counter-battery fire before enemy units can reposition. Defence officials say this capability has become indispensable in modern conflicts, where mobility and rapid shoot-and-scoot tactics increasingly complicate traditional detection methods.

A defining feature of the radar is its ability to monitor friendly fire. By tracking outgoing mortar or artillery shots and calculating their impact points, the system provides automatic correction parameters, improving accuracy and reducing ammunition wastage. This dual-use function tracking hostile fire for neutralisation and friendly fire for accuracy makes the radar a force multiplier across both offensive and defensive missions.

Developers emphasize that the radar's active electronic scanning in azimuth and elevation gives it the speed and agility required to follow multiple targets in challenging environments. Its terrain-following capability ensures performance remains reliable even in mountainous or uneven terrain. With an instrumented range extending to 250km, the radar offers wide-area surveillance that covers deep battle zones and vulnerable approaches.

Operational mobility is another hallmark of the system. It can be deployed rapidly, controlled either locally by a two-person crew or remotely through an integrated command interface. Transportability by A400M aircraft makes it suitable for rapid reinforcement missions, overseas deployments or emergency repositioning during intense operations. Turkish defence planners have noted that this mobility aligns with the military's evolving doctrine of flexible, highly responsive fire-support units.

The radar integrates seamlessly with existing command-and-control systems, supporting user-defined alarm zones, friendly-unit identifiers and automated threat alerts. Its modular architecture, advanced built-in test capability and high mean time between failures ensure 24/7 continuous operation, an essential requirement for border security missions and prolonged combat scenarios.

Analysts say the deployment reflects broader global trends in artillery warfare, where precision radar support now determines survivability as much as armour or fortification. Conflicts in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and the Caucasus have shown that armies equipped with fast-reacting detection radars can drastically reduce casualties from indirect fire while gaining a decisive edge in counter-battery engagements.

For Turkey, ASELSAN's system also carries strategic significance. It demonstrates Ankara's growing self-reliance in defence electronics and strengthens export potential in regions seeking affordable yet sophisticated counter-artillery solutions. As modern battlefields become increasingly dominated by long-range fires, ASELSAN's weapon-detection radar is expected to play a central role in protecting ground forces and sustaining operational tempo in high-intensity theaters.

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Entering the Age of Hypersonics, AI Warfare & Directed-Energy Weapons



As global militaries racing toward advanced warfare including hypersonic weapons, autonomous combat systems, cyber-electronic warfare, and directed-energy platforms, India entering a decisive 15-year window (2025-2040) in which modernization cycle is no longer optional but need, define whether India became capable of credible deterrence against technologically advanced adversaries.

Why this transformation is urgent because future conflict will be fast, multi domain, unmanned, and data driven. Countries equipped with advanced AI-enabled sensing, autonomous weapons, hypersonic delivery and energy-based intercept are the one who is going to dominate the battlespace.

The South Asian competitor China has already begun developing such competencies including hypersonic glide vehicles, quantum-secure communications, shipborne laser systems, drown swarms, integrated C4ISR networks, and unmanned naval flotillas. For India, this gap expected to be filled within a decade. Another concern is India is the only major power facing two nuclear-armed adversaries with collusive potential.

How advanced capabilities will shift India's posture? By 2030, India should aim to field hypersonic cruise missiles and enhance terminal guidance systems so that it could be able to penetrate advanced air defences especially in both China and Pakistan's interior. Hypersonic weapons are having long-range precision strike capabilities which could strengthen second-strike survivability and deterrence stability. Additionally, hypersonic supports strategic decision in the Indian Ocean.

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'Defence 4.0' and Technological Self-Reliance A Strategic India-Israel Defence Pact

In an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape, India continues to modernize and achieving self-reliance in its defence sectors. The recent MoU signed at Tel Aviv between India and Israel, exemplifies determination and a strategic realignment in how India approaches its defence modernization.

Although historical defence ties between the two democracies have existed for decades, the latest agreement implies a fundamental shift in scope and ambition. Over the past decade, approximately 42.1 percent of all Israel arms exports directed to India. India imported numerous military hardware including radars, surveillance and combat drones, UAV, and missiles. Specific system like Barak 8 missile defence system alone have exceeded \$6 billion over recent times.

Once just meant for defence procurement and intelligence sharing, now become a co-creating the future defence technology. The recent MoU emphasis on artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, autonomous systems, and joint research and development frameworks indicates a clear message that future warfare not only depends on conventional weapons, but also with data, algorithms, and digital resilience.

India's defence modernization historically relied on technology imports from Russia, France, and the United States, dependencies that has exposed supply chain disruptions and geopolitical coercion. Hence, this new partnership addresses a critical strategic vulnerability, emphasis on co-development and co-production that offers a pathway to genuine defence technological self-reliance and aligning perfectly with government's *Aatmanirbhar Bharat* vision. India's growing domestic defence industry directly benefits from the Israel's expertise in AI-driven surveillance systems, precision-guided weapons, drone technology, and broader security solutions.

One specific component 'cybersecurity' is more appealing as Israel is bearing 'Cyber Nation', a well-earned designation, the country

has developed world-class capabilities in defending critical infrastructure against state sponsored attacks. Given similar threats to India in the South Asia and facing sophisticated cyber-attacks from multiple hostile actors including regions like Kashmir and along its borders, this collaboration give an invaluable knowledge transfer. It is inevitable placing advanced weapon systems for securing defence infrastructure as hybrid warfare increasingly blurs the lines between conventional and digital battlefields.

The terrorism dimension adds strategic urgency. Both nations face persistent terror threats and cross-border militancy. Adding Israeli's technological agility with India's strategic depth, the partnership will enhance deterrence and operational effectiveness in counter-terrorism operations. On the economic side, this MoU will facilitate domestic manufacturing sector, bolstering indigenous defence production. Indian firms particularly those in aerospace and defence clusters would gain more access to cutting-edge technology transfer while providing Israeli companies scale and cost advantages. This could eventually position India as a exporter of advanced defence mechanism to Asian, African and Middle Easter markets, strengthening its global strategic position.

The timing is also geopolitically crucial. One side, Beijing continues military modernization and other side Pakistan diversifies its defence partnership, rendering advanced mechanisms from China, Turkey, and other countries, pushed India rapidly modernizing and securing defence capabilities.

Moving forward, the real test lies in a successive implementation. Converting MoU into an operational collaboration is significant, spanning across navigating bureaucratic procedures, intellectual property concerns, and technology export regulations across both nations.

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Sina Unveiled the Largest Unmanned Cargo “W5000”

China has unveiled the largest unmanned cargo aircraft known as “W5000”, developed by Beijing-based startup Air White Whale. This UAV aimed primarily at civil cargo logistics as prominent e-commerce and portal players including JD.com, China Eastern Airlines Logistics and China Post, have attended the launch ceremony. W5000 would enhance the business accessibility and fulfill the possible regional mission to Southeast/Central Asia, Russia, and Japan. Its large payload and modernization reportedly would save 60% of operational expenses and increase more than 40% of productivity.

Analysts have noted China is building island bases in South China Sea that potentially lacks airfields. UAV like W5000 would be ideal for routine resupply without any disruption, even if so, no more casualties. It would also bolster the growing military presence in rugged region like Russian borders or Tibetan high altitudes. While traditional transportation faces significant challenges, W5000 will mitigate those. Additionally, this type of drone could service forward facilities and partnering countries like Russia and Pakistan, deepen the Chinese influence.

As we can observe the existing conflicts between countries like Russia and Ukraine, continuous resupply is inevitable in the future conflicts. Hence, autonomous drones like W5000 could be the difference between sustaining forces under attack. When ports and runways are under attack, such UAV cargo would deliver ammunition, fuel, and food to bases in and out of remote islands. Like other cargo UAVs, W5000 could carry emergency supplies to disaster zones or inaccessible areas. While it can carry rapid medial delivery, it also capable of carrying ammunitions and aid hazardous situations.



Beyond the battlefields, W5000 would advances China's commercial logistics and e-commerce ambitions as its low operating cost attract civil users. Since, one ground pilot can fly 6-7 UAV at once, it would attract major e-commerce platforms to accommodate such opportunities. It ensures same-day freight across provinces and even borders, boosting country's economic potential. It would further fulfil the demand or access where China's Belt and Road initiative could not reach so far. China often uses its advances in technology to bind its partner nations. Hence, W5000 will likely export to BRI nations and others that seeks cheap airlift.

On the other hand, the production of W5000 reiterates China's climb to the forefront of UAC and autonomous aviation technology. China has already dominated consumer and light-drone sectors. For instance, DJI covers ~70% of the commercial drones in the market, and now it is pushing heavy cargo UAV also.

In the current moment, no U.S. or European drones are matching the W5000 capabilities, as Western programs focusing on smaller autonomous transports. Chinese policy makers utilized this gap and pushing the developments of heavy-lift drones.

For India, W5000's heavy payload and long range could be utilized by PLA for routine resupply of forward mountain posts and high-altitude logistics nodes where conventional routes are not available. It will likely reduce India's efforts to isolate PLA outposts in the disputed area by targeting supply chains. Since it carries less risk for Chinese, India would be getting pressure in the Indian Ocean and northeastern Indian Ocean littorals. The presence of autonomous aircraft without risking aircrew, complicates India's surveillance and denial strategy. India needs to improve its ISR and electronic air traffic integration because it is hard to distinguish commercial cargo with UAV cargo. This cost-effective UAV trunk services could undercut regional freight costs while bolstering BRI's logistics links, likely deviate potentially from Indian routes and hubs. If W5000 become commercial, India likely faces sever competition in the region.

Overall, China's W5000 cargo aircraft marks a significant step in Beijing's ability to project logistics, influence regional supply chains and advance its leadership in aero space innovation and technology. While China can use it for dual purpose, civilian and military, India have to accelerate its own UAV development and strengthen supply-chain security, regional partnership, stability and fair competitiveness.